

# lang2

**grammar of a constructed language**

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# Introduction

## 1 Origins

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**lang2** is an *a priori* artlang originally conceived to fulfill a speedlang challenge, then modified to handle a relay, then finally molded into its own project. Although I had no clear motivations in mind when beginning it, I found that the confluence of random decisions—the Gleb-generated inventory, challenge stipulations, the early translation choices—made the project into something I really enjoyed.

## 2 Goals

The overarching goal is to create something I enjoy. The project is meant to be naturalistic, but when naturalism conflicts with aesthetic, aesthetic will be prioritized.

A primary way to grow this language and develop new ideas will be through translation of poetry and scientific journals. I hope that these will push the limits of my syntactical rules while also developing an interesting corpus. I'll also try to use 5MOYDS and hopefully at some point a journal to expand my ability to speak the language and get an intuitive sense for what constructions it prefers.

As I develop this conlang, my goals will be to prioritize analytic constructions (like periphraxis) over morphological ones, write in-depth documentation of how information structure manifests in the language, and ...

## 3 Lore

**lang2** is set in a worldbuilding project I create as a hobby. The language is an isolate spoken on the eastern coast of a peninsula, once the language of citystates and now a common language throughout a number of coastal countries. It is heavily influenced by East Cape, the *de jure* language of the peninsula. The world the speakers know is analogous to our 1930s.

# **Part I**

## **PHONOLOGY**

1.1 Consonants

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1.2 Vowels . . . . . 3  
1.3 Allophony . . . . . 3

**lang2** has 14 consonant phonemes. There are four distinguished places of articulation: labial, plain alveolar, sibilant alveolar, and dorsal. There are four distinguished manner of articulation: stops, fricatives, approximants, and nasal approximants.

	Labial	Alveolar	Sibilant	Dorsal
Stop	p (b)	t (d)	ts (dz)	k (g)
Fricative	f	ʈ	s	x
Nasal	m	n	nz	
Approximant	w	ɹ		j

Table 1.1: Consonants

**Nasal Sibilant** The nasal sibilant /nz/ is a typologically odd segment. The prototypical representation of this sound is [ɲ], a voiced fricative with simultaneous nasal release; however, phonetic research suggests that true fricatives cannot be fully nasalized. Thus, this segment’s typical realization may be better represented as a slightly fricated approximant [n̠ʝ], although some speakers may realize it as a weakly nasalized [n̠z] or a fully nasalized approximant [n̠ɹ]. Nevertheless it patterns as a nasal sibilant in both distribution and allophony and is thus phonemically represented as /nz/.

See [Ohala et al. \(1998\)](#) for further discussion of nasal fricatives.

**Labial Fricative** The fricative /f/ has a marginal distribution, mostly appearing in loan words and onomatopoeia. Most instances of historical /f/ underwent debuccalization and were subsequently lost. Although /x/ also appears frequently in onomatopoeia, its distribution is more widespread and it is not considered marginal.

**Sibilant Affricate** Although the phone [ts] is rather common in the corpus, its underlying form is not always the phoneme /ts/. The underlying phoneme is usually elucidated by inflection. For example, both *tskla* “steering wheel” and *ckla* “great uncle” share the same surface form, [tskɫə]. However, when inflected for the plural, the former becomes [tasəkʰaʒəɹ] and the latter [tsəkʰaʒəɹ]. As

Affrication of stop-fricative clusters and pre-[s] schwa deletion are common processes that yield [ts], discussed further in §*TODO*.

such *tsekla* is analyzed as /tasekɫa/, whereas *cekla* is analyzed as /tsekɫa/.

## 1.2 Vowels

**lang2** has 8 vowel phonemes, 5 plain and 3 nasalized.

	Front	Mid	Back
High	i		u
Mid	e ě <ɛ>	(ə ə̃)	o ō <ɔ>
Low		a ǣ <ɑ>	

Table 1.2: Vowels

**TODO:**

This section about vowel neutralization probably belongs in morphophonology? It also has to do with the supersegment stress.

**Vowel Neutralization** Mid and low vowels /e a o/ and their nasal counterparts are reduced to [ə ə̃] in unstressed syllables. Schwa is not phonemic, but neutralization is common, so it appears frequently throughout the corpus. In speech, the underlying vowel becomes evident when stress is shifted due to morphological processes.

The surface form is typically romanized <ɑ> even for underlying /e o/. Dictionaries typically denote the *shadow vowels* as *nbm.*, an abbreviation of *nabam* “shadow.”

## 1.3 Allophony



# Supersegments

# 2

## 2.1 Stress

## 2.1 Stress . . . . . 4

Stress in **lang2** is lexically and morphologically productive. Stress typically falls on the penultimate syllable of a word; atypical vowel stress is marked with an acute. Stress is also morphologically productive, distinguishing between unmarked and distal deixis. Affixation causes stress shifts as well. The frequency of stress shifting often causes stress-based minimal pairs to become homophones.

Stressed vowels have three phonetic differences from unstressed vowels. First, they typically have a rising pitch. Second, they are typically longer than unstressed vowels. Third, onsets before long vowels have a longer VOT than other onsets, a manifestation of slight aspiration or breathiness.

Secondary stress falls on alternating syllables starting from primary stress and spreading left. For example, *kagəsa* “army” has regular stress on the penultimate syllable, but when inflected in plural form, it surfaces as *kegəsaʒar* [ke.gə'sa.ʒəɹ]. Secondary stress prevents the reduction of /e a o/ to [ə], but, unlike primary stress, does not cause length or VOT increase.

For example, *təka* “tree” has typical stress and is unmarked, but *təká* “reindeer” has atypical ultimate stress and is thus marked.

## TODO:

This all just got recently moved from allophony because it's better analyzed as a morphophonological phenomenon, probably. So some of it will have to be re-written with that framing in mind. Probably means a lot more double slashes and "it only occurs across morpheme boundaries" type stuff.

## 3.1 Consonants . . . . 5

## 3.2 Vowels . . . . . 6

### 3.1 Consonants

**Voicing** Nasal and stop clusters are realized as voiced stops, occasionally prenasalized. The resulting phones  $[(^{(m)}b \ ^{(n)}d \ ^{(n)}d\bar{z} \ ^{(n)}g)]$  are romanized **<b d j g>**. Clusters where the nasal is the onset of a syllable, not a coda, do not assimilate, so /pn/ is still realized [pn].

These clusters assimilate in place to the stop, so /np/ surfaces as [b], not as [d].

Although the assimilation process is most common across morpheme boundaries or in loan words, voiced plosives can be found in some native morphemes. However, since these phones only occur word-medially in limited and predictable distribution, they are not traditionally considered phonemic. Most native words with voiced plosives are transparent compounds, such as *ebar* "below" (← *ez* + *par*) or *kageša* "army" (← reduplication of *kəša*).

Some scholars argue that voiced plosives are phonemic or becoming phonemic because of their presence in loan words and verb conjugations.

Some words, especially some conjugations of *m*-stem verbs, are spelled with a word-final voiced stop, but the stop is still typically realized as a medial cluster. For example, *sed* "they tell me" is underlying /semt/ and realized  $[se^{(n)}d(\ə)]$ . For some speakers, especially younger speakers or those in informal contexts, the final schwa is elided.

## TODO:

Affrication and assibilation would make more sense if it was only across morpheme boundaries, but I have some words that I like where it's morpheme-internal. How should I handle that? It could be reworked as a diachronic process, made phonemic, a morphophonemic process—but it needs more thought.

**Affrication** Alveolar plosive and fricative clusters are realized as a sibilant affricate. Clusters of /ts/, /tʃ/, /tʃ/ and /tx/ all neutralize

to [t͡s], romanized as <c>. The /tn̄z/ cluster likewise affricates, but is realized as [t͡ʂ], romanized as <cz>.

The voiceless nasal affricate is notoriously hard for non-native speakers to pronounce and is often used as a shibboleth.

**Assibilation** Sibilant and non-sibilant fricative clusters are realized as sibilants. Unvoiced sibilants /ts s/ clustering with /f x ʃ/ are realized as [s:], romanized as <cc> or <ss> depending on the underlying phoneme. The voiced sibilant /n̄z/ instead is realized as [ʂ:] in such clusters, romanized as <zz>.

## 3.2 Vowels

**Schwa Deletion** The reduced vowel [ə] is often deleted between consonants, especially non-alveolar stops, and the sibilants /ts s n̄z/. For example, *ksarat* /kosɑːt/ is commonly realized as [ksɑːt], and spelled accordingly. The elision process results in word-final or word-initial [s] or [ʂ] being the only syllable-internal clusters. However, these clusters are not consistently realized, and occasionally have an epenthetic schwa, especially word-finally.

Nasalized schwa [ã] rarely undergoes deletion as it is typically longer than [ə].

Note that /ts/ surfaces [s] in these environments.

### TODO:

Something here about word-final clusters. I haven't been consistent about when it's spelled as a cluster or when it's spelled with the vowel, and I need to either commit to the inconsistency, or figure out how that works.

### TODO:

There might end up being an isogloss map of schwa deletion: most dialects delete ahead of sibilants, some ahead of sibilants and approximants, and others in all environments?

## 4.1 Roots

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4.2 Frequencies . . . 7

**Nouns** Most nominal roots are of the form CV(C)CV. Nominal roots infrequently end in a consonant, typically /s/ or /r/ for neuter nouns. Rarely, nominal roots end in /m n/ or /k/.

**Verbs** Most verbal roots are of the form (C)VC or CV(C)CVC. /t/ is the most common root-final phoneme, although there are some /m/ and /r/ stems as well.

**Affixes** A smaller set of phonemic segments are allowed in affixes. Neither the labials /p f m w/ nor the high vowel /u/ appear in true affixes. In the fossilized partial reduplication process, the reflexes of labial are either /k/ (← /p f/) or /n/ (← /m w/). The high vowel /u/ lowers to /o/, often simply realized as [ə].

Because /u/ and /w/ pattern similarly, some phonemic analyses conflate them.

## 4.2 Frequencies

### WIP Lexifer file

with: std-ipa-features coronal-metathesis

letters: a Ɂ b c d e ɛ f g h i k l m n o ɔ p r s t u v y z

C = t s k n y h r c m z l p v f

N = s r m n k

P = t m r

V = a e i Ɂ o ɛ ɔ u

random-rate: 40

words: CVC?CVN? C?VC?CVP C?VP C?VN?

filter: mt > d; nt > d; zt > d; mc > j; nc > j; zc > j; mk > g; nk > g; zk > g; mp > b; np > b; zp > b;

## **Part II**

### **MORPHOSYNTAX**

The **lang2** noun phrase is largely analytic, but nouns do inflect for deixis and number. Nouns have three broad inflection patterns, largely related to the way they inflect for plurality.

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## 5.1 Stems

Nouns are broadly divided into four stems based on their inflectional patterns. Most noun stems are vocalic stems, ending in a vowel. Vocalic stems are usually common gender except for loanwords, which are prescriptively assigned neuter gender. Most native neuter nouns are either *r*-stems or *s*-stems, the latter being more common. Rarely noun stems will end in other consonants, but these have no shared patterns.

*S*-stems can end in any sibilant, typically *-s* but also *-c* or *-z*.

**Vocalic stems** Vocalic stems have fairly regular, agglunative inflection patterns. However, the proximal plural is shortened to *-rran* for most speakers.

	Generic	Proximal	Distal
SG	<i>metka</i>	<i>metkan</i>	<i>matkó</i>
PL	<i>matkozar</i>	<i>matkorran</i>	<i>matkazár</i>

**Table 5.1:** Inflection of vowel-stem *metka* “bowl”

**Neuter stems** Neuter stems share a common inflection pattern. For both neuter stems, the proximal surfaces as /on/ instead of /n/. The proximal plural also shortens for neuter stems, but takes the form *-zza-*, influenced by the assibilation morphological process.

	Generic	Proximal	Distal
SG	<i>retus</i>	<i>ratusan</i>	<i>ratús</i>
PL	<i>ratuzzar</i>	<i>ratuzzan</i>	<i>ratuzzár</i>

**Table 5.2:** Inflection of *s*-stem *retus* “blade”

Although no longer morphologically productive, the endings on *s*-stems and *r*-stems derive from historical derivation processes. Many roots are reflected in both endings, but the shared meaning between them is not always transparent.

	Generic	Proximal	Distal
SG	<i>pebar</i>	<i>pabaran</i>	<i>pabár</i>
PL	<i>pabazzar</i>	<i>pabazzan</i>	<i>pabazzár</i>

Table 5.3: Inflection of *r*-stem *pebar* “garden”

## 5.2 Deixis

Nominal deixis has a variety of uses, including evidentiality, distance, familiarity, and topicality. Verbs and adjectives exhibit agreement for deictic reference. There are three deictic categories, *generic*, *proximal*, and *distal*.

I had this idea, then found out that, as usual, a natural language had it first. Read [Huijsmans, Reisinger, and Matthewson \(2020\)](#) for more about the Salishan languages.

### 5.2.1 Generic

The unmarked or dictionary form of a noun is used when the noun is widely understood or well-known, for immaterial referents that cannot be deictically located, or if evidence of the referent is not known. If direct or reported evidence exists, it’s felicitous or questionably grammatical to use unmarked form.

### 5.2.2 Proximal

The proximal form of a noun is used when the speaker is certain, nearby, or familiar with the noun. It can also be used for the conversational topic. This form most commonly denotes direct evidence, meaning the speaker has personal experience with the marked noun. It is marked with the suffix *-n*.

*-n* is morphophonemically //on//, where //o// doesn’t surface for vocalic stems.

**Direct evidence** The canonical meaning of the proximal form is direct evidence, often translated as “I saw.”

**TODO:**

The definiteness constructions probably need to be reworked to square better with (a) the stuff I’ve learned about definiteness and (b) the use of the deictic forms for topic/focus.

**Definiteness** Proximal forms can be used to describe the definiteness of a referent. This construction is only used for weak, uniqueness-based definiteness (eg. “the Moon”), never for strong, anaphoric definiteness (eg. “the book”). For strong definitess, the noun *sin* “???” is used alongside distal form, as in (1b).

- (1) a. **Nassoïn kəstecik su kageša su kagéstapa.**  
*nassoi-n kəstecik su kageša su kagéstapa*  
 king-PROX command and army and navy  
 “The king (that we know) commands both army and navy.”
- b. **sah ez-Rosəm pít ató sin.**  
*sah tɛ=rosəm pít ató sin*  
 soon PREP=cook hold\DIST grain\DIST ???  
 “The rice (that you mentioned) is about to be cooked.”

(5MOYD #1381)

### 5.2.3 Distal

The distal form of a noun is used when the speaker is uncertain, far, or unfamiliar with the noun. It can also be used for the conversational focus. This form typically denotes indirect evidence, including inference, meaning the speaker has heard of or can make an educated guess about the existence of the marked noun. Reported deixis is marked by shifting stress to the ultimate syllable of the word.

**Indirect Evidence** The prototypical meaning of the distal form is indirect evidence, often translated as “heard about” or “they said.” As in (2), this evidence is encoded into the clause via the subject and the predicate that agrees with it.

- (2) **egi Matkó aczé sém tɛ-het.**  
*egi matkó aczé sém tɛ=het*  
 just basket\DIST two\DIST will:be\DIST PREP=be:at  
 “(She said) there will be just two baskets.”

(5MOYD #1314)

## 5.3 Number

Nouns inflect morphologically for an additive plural, but there is also a syntactic construction used to form associative plurals. The unmarked form of a noun encodes expected number, e.g. *parsa* “eyes” which defaults to a pair and must take a numeral to specify a singular.

The primary difference in the two plurals is the composition of the set: additive plurals refer to largely homogenous referents, whereas associative plurals refer to largely heterogenous referents.





**Figure 5.1:** Additive vs. associative plurals

### 5.3.1 Additive plurals

Additive plurals are used for a set of homogenous referents and never heterogenous referents; e.g. *matkozar* is “a set of the same (or similar) bowl” and never “a set of diverse bowls.”

Additive plurality is indicated through the suffix *-zar*. Morphological marking is optional and a noun can be inferred additively plural from context. As such marking is less common for small, discrete or easily countable sets or when a referent has been established plural in prior conversation. However, speakers are not always consistent with marking.

The second meaning would use the associative plural.

Mandatory plural marking is stylistically preferred in formal contexts.

#### TODO:

These tables probably belong in a different section (perhaps the overview in § *stems*), not here. Here can just re-hash the relevant bits of the inflection patterns.

Morphonologically, plural marking precedes deictic marking; plural distal nouns have accent placed on the plural suffix, as seen in Table 5.1. The morphemes  $//+n\acute{z}a\mu+on//$  are reduced to  $/\mu on/$ .

*S*-stem and *r*-stem nouns inflect similarly, except the proximal plural suffix is reduced to  $/n\acute{z}zon/$  instead.

Because the suffixes of *s*-stems and *r*-stems merge in the plural, some minimal pairs are rendered homophones when inflected. To combat this, speakers sometimes employ the use of the word *tevi* “many” as a modifier for the singular form.

When number is specified with a numeral, the noun is not marked for plurality, as in (3). This is another strategy to combat homophony.

- (3) *vęci ocza*  
       *vęci*        *ocza*  
       mercenary two

“two mercenaries”

(cf. *vqizar* “mercenaries”)

### 5.3.2 Associative plurals

Unlike the additive plural, the associative plural is not marked morphologically. The periphrastic construction ... conveys the associative meaning.

Need to figure out the specific morpheme and/or construction.  
Could be *ezzar*, *ezzu*, a longer construction ...

The associative is used for a set of heterogeneous referents. For animate (especially human) referents, the meaning is typically “a person and their associates,” as in (4). The focal referent (*i.e.* most important) is the marked noun.

Terminology in this section adapted from [Daniel and Moravcsik \(2007\)](#).

(4) **Sayanarnat otik ezzu Kanyi ez-laran.**

*sayenar-nat ot-ik ezzu Kanyi ez-lar-n*  
be.ignorant-CVB be-PROX ASSOC NAME PREP=EXPL-PROX  
“For this, Kanyi and his friends won’t be much *help*.”

The associative can also have a number of context-specific meanings, usually referring to diverse groups.

(5) a. **ezzu Akakvazi rematt**

“The diverse group of tag players entertained us ...”

## 5.4 Gender

Some archaic nouns distinguish *common* and *neuter* gender, although this is largely a prescriptive convention. Loanwords, especially technical loanwords, are typically assigned neuter gender. Some words only distinguish gender for certain uses or contexts, thus dictionaries typically denote if a given usage is expected to require neuter gender.

The gender distinction is more common in literary, academic, or scientific writings.

## 5.5 Pronouns

Pronouns are morphologically and syntactically similar to nouns ...

**TODO:**

Settle on pronominal forms—right now it's *rat* 1, *a(f)* 2, *sec* 3c, and *moc* 3N. There's some isogloss map about whether 2 is *a* or *af*.

# Verbs | 6

## TODO:

Like in § *Nouns*, it would be good to have an overview of stems and inflection patterns before diving into the meaning of the morphemes.

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## 6.1 Agreement

Verbs agree with both the deictic position of the subject noun and the person of the two least oblique arguments of transitive verbs.

### 6.1.1 Polypersonal

Transitive verbs exhibit polypersonal agreement via a suffix to the verb root. Intransitive verbs don't require person marking, but it can be used for emphasis or clarification; in such cases, either the reflexive or 3c patient morpheme is used.

		Patient			
		1	2	3c	3N
Agent	1	-	c	s	n
	2	t	-	s	n
	3c	t	s	s	n
	3N	n	z	z	z
	REFL	k			

**Table 6.1:** Person agreement

Because many agreement suffixes share the same form, **lang2** is only occasionally pro-drop.

### 6.1.2 Deictic

Generic noun forms do not have agreement morphemes, but proximal nouns demand the verbal suffix *-ik* and distal nouns demand the verbal suffix *-q*. These suffixes are attached after polypersonal agreement suffixes.

## 6.2 Negation

Negation ...

The negative verb suffix is *-res*. It occurs before agreement affixes.

The affix's position is from its origin as an auxiliary which bore agreement.

## 6.3 Converb

The converb form of a verb is used for simultaneous action. The converb is commonly used to describe the manner of the main clause, and is also commonly used in periphrastic constructions.

The converbial suffix is *-nat*.

## 6.4 Transitivity

Transitivity is lexically fixed, but transitive verbs can still be functionally intransitive with the use of dummy objects.

Prescriptive convention holds that verbs exhibit polypersonal agreement with their dummy objects, but speakers commonly omit polypersonal marking in these constructions, as in (6b).

(6) a. ***sec Sasamsik tasa.***

*sec sesam-s-ik tasa*

3C say-3C.P-PROX letter

“He’s saying something.”

(Formal)

b. ***sec Semik lar.***

*sec sem-ik lar*

3C say-PROX EXP

“He’s talking.”

(Informal)

Informal constructions often use the more grammaticalized *lar* instead of the dummy collocative.

Not every verb has a collocated intransitive form. For these verbs, periphrastic constructions can also serve as valency-changing operations.

## 6.5 Periphraxis

Periphrastic constructions handle most temporal marking in **lang2**, covering aspects and moods. The core verb of the periphrastic construction is the only finite verb of a clause, bearing all agreement, and the semantic verb is demoted to an adjunct in converbial form or as a bare infinitive with an adpositional clitic.

### 6.5.1 ot

The verb *ot* “be” has two periphrastic constructions, a *perfective* and a *support* construction used for focus-fronting verbs.

**Perfective** In the perfective construction, the semantic verb is demoted to adjunct with the preposition *tə*.

**Support** In the support construction, the semantic verb is demoted to adjunct as a converb.

### 6.5.2 sesam

The verb *sesam* “say” has one periphrastic construction, an irrealis.

*Sesam* is often shorted to *sem* informally.

**Irrealis** In the irrealis construction, the semantic verb is demoted to adjunct with the preposition *tə*.

### 6.5.3 nenat

The verb *nenat* “” has one periphrastic construction, a subjunctive.

**Subjunctive** In the subjunctive construction, the semantic verb is demoted to adjunct with the preposition *ah*. The subjunctive construction has a more limited scope than the *sesam* irrealis construction, typically expressing counterfactuals or doubt.

### 6.5.4 het

The verb *het* “be at” has two periphrastic constructions, a *passive* and an *imperfective*, the latter typically restricted to narrative contexts.

**Passive** In the passive construction, the semantic verb is demoted to adjunct as a converb. The *het* passive is not a true passive because the verb does not change valency (*i.e.* the A-like argument cannot be omitted). Instead of valency operations, the role of this construction is typically to change verbal agreement, as in (7).

(7) a. \* **Azzár hussusarsik nassoin.**

*as-zár*                      *hussusar-s-ik*                      *nassoi-n*  
foreigner-PL.DIST exalt-3C»3C-PROX king-PROX

Intended: “(I see) the foreigners (I’ve heard about) praising the king.”

b. **Nassoin hecik azzár hussusarnat.**

*nassoi-n*    *het-s-ik*                      *as-zár*                      *hussusar-nat*  
king-PROX be.at-3C»3C-PROX foreigner-PL.DIST exalt-CVB

“(I see) the king being praised by the foreigners (I’ve heard about).”

In (7a), the hypothetical speaker intends to mark the verb as proximal to convey direct evidence, but the utterance is ungrammatical because the verb doesn’t agree with its subject, *azzár*. To correct this, the construction in (7b) is used, which takes advantage of the passive to mark the verb phrase as proximal.

In addition to its role shuffling agreement, the *het* passive can also be used to clarify sentences that become ambiguous due to focus fronting, as in (8).

(8) a. **Kanyin akakvatcik Arpatan.**

*Kanyi-n*    *akekvat-s-ik*                      *Arpat-n*  
NAME-PROX tag-3C»3C-PROX NAME-PROX

“Kanyi tagged Arpat.”

or “Who Arpat tagged was Kanyi.”

b. **Kanyin hecik Arpatan akakvatnat.**

*Kanyi-n*    *het-s-ik*                      *Arpat-n*                      *akekvat-nat*  
NAME-PROX be.at-3C»3C-PROX NAME-PROX tag-CVB

“Kanyi was tagged by Arpat.”

In (8a), it’s not clear if Kanyi is the semantic agent or a semantic patient that’s been fronted for focus. Without context, both interpretations are grammatical. The use of the passive in (8b) is less ambiguously interpreted, almost always meaning that Arpat was the semantic agent.

### 6.5.5 pit

**TODO:**

Rework the *pit* passive, which currently doesn't make a lot of sense—how is it demoting stuff, when semantically you'd expect “hold” to be transitive? Maybe *pit* means something else, maybe it will demote in a different way, maybe the valency is weirder...

The verb *pit* “hold” has one periphrastic construction, the mediopassive.

**Mediopassive** In the mediopassive construction, the semantic verb is demoted to adjunct with the preposition *ez*. Unlike the *het* passive, the *pit* mediopassive is a true passive; the A-like argument does not appear.

Unlike most other periphrastic verbs, *pit* is rarely used outside periphrasis, having largely been replaced by *akrar*.



# Adpositions

# 7

Adpositions are syntactically bound morphemes that express some relationship (often spacial) between constituents. However, they are considered words, not affixes, because the stress pattern of the noun they bind to does not shift. Their phonological independence differentiates them from affixes.

Adpositions are a closed class, composed of only 5 members; finer distinctions can be made with periphrastic constructions, such as *tɛ-kamc im* “after, to the back of.” Although many such constructions are common enough to be lexically set, they are not nearly as ubiquitous as lone prepositions.

Compare *kqsazar* “soldiers,” marked via affix, to *retus im-kɛsa*, “soldier’s blade,” marked via adposition.

## 7.0.1 im

The adposition *im* indicates possession.

## 7.0.2 ez

The adposition *ez* conveys location inside an object or large body.

## 7.0.3 tɛ

The adposition *tɛ* conveys motion relative to a location, either towards or away from.

## 7.0.4 ah

The adposition *ah* conveys location on the surface of another object.

## 7.0.5 osc

The adposition *osc* conveys location surrounding another object. It is commonly used in a temporal sense to indicate a time frame, often translated as “around the time of.”

# Adjectives | 8

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## 10.1 Clause

10.1 Clause . . . . . 23

10.2 Phrase . . . . . 23

Although the base-generated word order in **lang2** is SVO, this order rarely surfaces due to aggressive focus fronting. The most proximal, most newsworthy information is placed in the front of an utterance in first position. As a consequence, **lang2** is V2 order, mandating that a finite verb always be in second position. Adjuncts, including demoted verbal constructions, typically come after the core arguments of the verb. Often, however, the order of elements in a clause is determined by focality and evidentiality.

In practice, the most common word order in declarative sentences is SXOV or VXOS.

### 10.1.1 Fronting

The most likely phrases to be fronted are proximal or directly evident noun phrases, followed by distal or indirectly evident noun phrases. Generic noun phrases are rarely fronted except in fixed constructions.

Often, the fronted element will be the conversational focus.

### 10.1.2 Extraposition

When a content-heavy phrase needs to be fronted, a dummy noun is often used to allow right-branching extraposition. The dummy noun is lexically dependent, but the generic nouns *lar* or *manc* can also be used, although they may sound stilted.

- (9) **osc Armê kirayamik isyusan ocoan im nassoî kēstat ezzar vēci.**

*osc armê kirayamik isyusan ocoan im nassoî kēstat ezzar vēci*

PREP DMY investigate special:tribune PREP king lead ASSOC mercenary

“What the special tribune is investigating is the king’s use of mercenaries.”

## 10.2 Phrase

Phrasal elements are typically head first, so nouns precede their modifiers and verbs precede their oblique arguments and adjuncts.

## **Part III**

### **APPENDIX**

A **lang2**-to-English dictionary is provided below.

## How to use

Entries for lexical items are listed by their spelling in generic form, ignoring morphological alterations. Derived words are listed as separate entries, but their source word is given. On the other hand, idiomatic or fixed expressions are given under the lexical item.

Morphophonological information, such as *nebami* vowels, underlying form, or irregular alterations, is listed when pertinent. Furthermore, senses that are specific to a certain word form are given in *italics*, whereas senses that are specific to a field or context are given in *SMALL CAPS*.

## Examples

Examples are generally given as simple declarative sentences, avoiding where possible movement due to focus fronting. Typically examples are chosen to provide context or illustrate usage notes for a definition.

A	26
Ā	26
C	26
E	26
Ē	27
H	27
I	27
K	27
L	28
M	28
N	29
O	29
Q	30
P	30
R	30
S	30
T	31
U	31
V	31
Y	32
Z	32

## A

**adahēs** • n.← from Classical Cape **dahēs** “pee”

**1** *uncountable* sand; cf. *countable sifa* “grain of sand” **2** *idiom.* citizens (of a nation, state), subjects, followers (of a leader, celebrity) **3** *ez-adahēs* the public, the people of a place: *Natra ez-adahēs* “the Natran indigenous peoples”

**agaṛé** • n.← from Classical Cape **gamrī****1** *SAILING* star**agaṭka** • n.← from Classical Cape **gamrka** “navigator”**1** cartographer**ahka** • n.**1** 2 feet**akakvat** • v. tr.← from redup. of *akvat***1** (in a game) tag**akakvazi** • n.← from *akakvat* + *-zi***1** tagplayer (usually professional)**almani** • n.

**1** wave **2** *idiom.* influence **3** *POLITICS* soft power

**as** • n.← from Classical Cape **as** “man”**1** foreigner**asoi** • n.**1** weeb for Classical Cape culture

## A

**ākassuy** • n.← from *qkas* “payment” + *-suy***1** bank

## C

**cam** • v. tr.

**1** put (smn.) to sleep **2** *refl.* go to bed **3** *mediopassive* nap, snooze: *piran picik cam-nat tē-kamc im-pebar* “the child napped after school.” **4** *idiom.* calm (smn.) down, soothe **5** *coll.* bore (an audience): *ah-turya cad nakraran orran im-remaczi* “the comedian’s subpar performance last night bored me.”

## E

**emas** • n.**1** *ntr.* plot of land**esyî** • adj.**1** good **2** correct, appropriate

## Ē

**ervat** • v.*note:* often **errat** for younger speakers**1**

## H

**hakra** • n.**1** battle, skirmish **2** *pl.* conflict, campaign  
**3** *pl.* semester, trimester, school year**helas** • n.**1** *ntr.* mountain**hora** • n.**1** wrist**hassusar** • v. tr.← from redup. of **husar** “shout”**1** (esp. of a leader) exalt**husar** • v. tr.**1** shout at **2** praise, compliment

## I

**ihaiha** • n.**1** donkey, mule **2** *adj. pej.* dumb**isyus** • n.**1** *ntr.* shield **2** *CULINARY ntr.* apron **3** *MILITARY pl.* elite, highly trained soldiers; royal guard, special forces, black ops: **pursê im-akqssuy ksarac isyuzzar** “the special forces respond to bank robberies.”

## K

**kamc** • n.*note:* underlying /kamat̪s̪/, often [kams] but [kaḏ̪z̪(ə)] for some speakers**1** back; the part of the body opposite the face below the neck and above the thigh, including the buttocks **2** **tê-kamc im** after:**kageša** • n.← from redup. of **kəša** “soldier”**1** battalion, unit **2** (as a branch of the military) army**kagéstapa** • n.← from analogy with **kageša** and **késtapa****1** (as a branch of the military) navy



**kəsa** • n.

1 soldier 2 *ACADEMIC* (of a literary work) protagonist, hero 3 *archaic* slave, conscript

**katakz** • n.

← from *kat* “pull” + *-akz*

1 *katakz im-saycezzar* butterfly effect

**kəsasuy** • n.

← from *kəsa* “soldier” + *-suy*

1 high-ranking general 2 (with specifier) military officer: *kəsasuy ???* “field officer,” *kəsasuy ???* “medical officer”

**kəstapa** • n.

← from *kəsa* “soldier” and *taspa* “sea”

1 navy officer, sailor (on a military ship)

**kəstat** • e nbm. • v. tr.

1 lead 2 *MILITARY* be in command of: *nas-soin kəstecik su kageša su kagəstapa* “the king commands both army and navy.” 3 train (an apprentice) in *tə* a skill: *tə-caradā kəstettik rat lalasa* “auntie’s teaching me to sew.” 4 formally teach, school (a student) in *ez* a discipline: *rabahan picik kəstetnat ez-latya* “the minister was brought up in the faith.” 5 *pej.* indoctrinate

**L****lalasa** • n.

1 *KINSHIP* great aunt 2 godmother 3 *af-fectionate* mentor

**M****kipira** • n.

← from partial reduplication of *pira* “child”

1 adolescent; someone around or older than 8 years old who has not yet been ritually scarred

**kotus** • n.

1 divinity

**kotussoi** • n.

← from *kotus* + *-soi*

1 body part; soul; the perfect implements wielded by an imperfect mind

**kirqyam** • v. in.

1 delve 2 descend deeper with forward motion into *osc* some terrain (water, caves) to search for *tə* something: *tə-rasar kirqyamik osc-taspa* “he’s swimming into the sea to search for rare fish.” 3 *POLITICS* conduct an investigation into *osc* a topic: *osc lar kirqyamik isyusan ocoan im nassoi kəstat ezzar vəcī* “the special tribune is investigating the king’s use of mercenary forces.” 4 *kirqyam osc saycer* wish for good luck for *tə* someone: *tə-af kirqyam osc saycer tə-makra im-hakra* “good luck this semester!”

**ksarat** • v. tr.

1 *MILITARY* handle, respond to

**ksofa** • n.

1 deciduous tree 2 growth, development (of the mind, socially)

**latya** • n.

1 religion

**makra** • n.**1** chest; the part of the body below the neck and above the groin, including the shoulders and upper arms**mas** • n.**1** *ntr.* hour **2** *tę-kamc im-mas* *adv.* in an hour:

## N

**nakrar** • n.← from *nakrat* “” + *-r***1** performance (on stage)**nassoi** • n.← from *naf* “gem” + *-soi***1** king**nassoij** • n.*note:* often [nəs:ojd͡z(ə)]← from *nassoi* “king” + *-j* fossilized collective suffix**1** aristocrat, bourgeois **2** *archaic* royal court, royal advisors**Natra** • n.**1** the mountain range that runs down the middle of the continent

## O

**oca** • o nbm. • adj.*note:* underlying /otsoa/**1** deep **2** (of people) tall and thin, wiry, spindly**ocza** • e nbm. • n.**1** two**okva** • o nbm. • n.**1** valley**metka** • o nbm. • n.**1** rounded semi-circle hollow container; bowl, basket, vessel **2** measure word for crops or farm animals**nęcta** • n.

← from Old East Cape

**1** *MEDICAL* lung**nik** • n.**1** flat surface, plane **2** *adj.* flat**nikhar** • o nbm. • v. in.← from *nik* “flat” + *hor* “craft”**1** to create a map of *ez* a region**nikharkah** • n.← from *nikhar* “make maps” + *rabaha* “minister”**1** geography **2** *archaic* cartography**nikhorkassoi** • n.← from *nikharkah* “geography” + *-soi***1** geographer **2** *archaic* cartographer**orra** • adj.**1** dry **2** (of food) stale **3** (of man-made objects) subpar, fragile**armé** • o nbm. • n.

← from Classical Cape

**1** ocean**ossat** • v. in.**1** (of plants) to grow in size **2** (of people) to develop emotionally, intellectually

## Q

**qkas** • n.  
 1 *ntr.* payment

## P

**pebar** • n.  
 1 garden 2 orchard 3 primary school

**pira** • n.  
 1 child; someone around or under 8 years old who hasn't yet been brought fishing

## R

**rabaha** • n.  
 1 *RELIGION* minister 2 *archaic* ministry

**rasar** • e nbm. • n.  
*note:* sometimes spelled *raxir*, pronounced [ɹaʃɛɹ], in elite circles or when exaggerating  
 ← from Old East Cape **raxir** “fish”  
 1 meat (food) 2 *archaic* fish delicacy

**recam** • n.  
 1 ritual scar made by a ceremonial blade on the upper arm near the shoulder of the dominant hand (historically on only the right arm) which symbolizes adulthood; usually done around the age of 16

**polars** • n.  
 1 evergreen tree

**pursé** • n.  
 ← from Old Cape **purcī** “plan”  
 1 robbery, heist

**recaj** • n.  
 ← from *recam* + *-c*  
 1 adulthood 2 the human condition, humanity, humanness

**retus** • n.  
 1 *ntr.* blade 2 *GEOGRAPHY* canal

**remaczi** • n.  
 ← from *remat* “” + *-zi*  
 1 comedian

## S

**samni** • n.  
 1 *GEOGRAPHY* horn

**sapa** • n.  
 ← from Classical Cape **sapa** “hunting dog”  
 1 hunter

**saska** • n.  
 ← from Old East Cape  
 1 *MEDICAL* heart

**sayenar** • v. in.

1 be ignorant, uninformed, unknowledgeable about *ez* a topic: *sayanarnat ez-latya tahqtresik asan ah-mas esyi* “ignorant of the religion, the foreigner didn’t pray at the correct hour.”

**secyar** • n.

← from *secyat* “shine” + *-r*

1 celestial object: sun, moon, star 2 *sayceran im-turya* the Moon 3 *saycer tea* moon, satellite

## T

**tahat** • ę nbm. • v. in.

1 stretch (one’s limbs) 2 reach for ??? something above oneself 3 aspire to ??? an unreachable goal: ... *akakvazi ... oca ...* “he aspired to be a tagplayer, but he wasn’t tall enough.” 4 RELIGION pray

**taspa** • n.

1 sea

## U

**ukrak** • n.

← from unknown substrate language

1 shore near volcanic rock

## V

**sécyarkah** • n.

← from *secyar* “star” + *rabaha* “minister”

1 astronomy

**sacyerkassoi** • n.

← from *sécyarkah* “astronomy” + *-soi*

1 astronomer

**sesam** • v. tr.

*note:* often shortened to *sem*

1 say (smth.)

**sifa** • n.

1 countable grain of sand 2 a tiny portion of *im* something 3 *name* girl given name

**tqsa** • n.

1 adult; one who has been ritually scarred with *recam*; someone around or older than 16

**tea** • adj.

1 dark color: blue, black, violet

**tesa** • n.

1 shore, shoreline (near the sand) 2 hair-line

**turya** • n.

1 night

**vassa** • n.

**1** tide **2** *idiom.* (of an event) historical, of great significance

**vəci** • n.

**1** mercenary, hired blade **2** *adj.* greedy  
**3** *pej.* brat, unruly child **4** *satat vəci pej.*  
 throw a temper tantrum: *vəci satacık piran  
 ihaihan af* “your dumb kid is throwing a  
 temper tantrum.”

## Y

**yifar** • n.

← from *yifat* “punish” + *-r*

**1** robbery, theft (usually of small items)

## Z

**zalmi** • n.

*note:* usually in proximal form

**1** the Sun