

The Thiguka Language

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By Lemuria

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About

Thiguka is a constructed language that Lemuria has continued to develop since April 2024. This contains a full description of Thiguka's grammar, ready for your reading pleasure.

Glossing abbreviations

AGR ADJ is used for adjective agreement.

- (1) tu~gu-elo tubi
 AGR~ADJ-yellow water
 'urine'

PROX is used for the proximal determiner.

MED is used for the medial determiner.

DIS is used for the distal determiner.

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1 Phonology

Perhaps one of the rarest characteristics of Thiguka phonology is its complete lack of phonemic nasals. Thiguka has 11 consonants, 6 vowels, and 6 diphthongs.

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Velar
Plosive	p, b			t, d	k, g
Fricative		f	θ	s	
Rhotic				r	
Lateral				l	

Table 1: Consonant Phonemes

	Front	Back
Close	i	u
Close-Mid	e	o
Open	a	ɑ

Table 2: Vowel Phonemes

Diphthongs	ai	ei	ui	au	ɑi	ia
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Table 3: Diphthongs

The [r] consonant is realized by Lemuria as the English approximant, however one may also pronounce it as a flap or trill if desired.

[ia] is very rare in a priori Thiguka words, being exclusively used for loanwords such as Enya (Elija).

1.1 Nasals

Thiguka completely lacks nasals. [n] is an allophone of [l], while [m] is an allophone of [b], and [ɲ] is approximated as any one of [g, lg, k, l]. The chosen consonant differs depending on the context the velar nasal is in; for example, a speaker would not want to use [g] in for ‘fang’ [faŋ], because then they would be uttering a racial slur.

Table 4: Examples of nasal consonant approximations in Thiguka

English	English IPA	Thiguka	Thiguka IPA
Lemuria	[li.ˈmɜr.iə]	Liburija	[ˈli.bur.ia]
Enya	[ˈɛn.ja]	Elija	[ˈelia]
Lena Raine	[ˈlɛnə ˈrem]	Lela Reyl	[ˈlela ˈreil]

1.2 Stress

Thiguka places stress on the first syllable of the root word. However, stress is not a phonemic feature in Thiguka, and English speakers speaking Thiguka with English stress rules will be readily understood.

1.3 Phonotactics

Thiguka syllable structure is (C)(C)V(C).

Words may not end in [k, r, l]. If due to loanwords, or conjugations the word ends up ending in these three forbidden consonants, either add a dummy -a suffix, or remove the offending consonant.

Words may not end in consonant clusters.

Two diphthongs separated by a single consonant are not allowed — *aybay.

Vowels next to each other, that are not diphthongs, are pronounced with a glottal stop inserted between them.

2 Grammar

Thiguka has an agglutinative grammar, a nominative-accusative case marking system, subject-verb-object word order, a tense-aspect system, a single copula with 37 irregular forms that inflect for time, person, and number, and a 38th irregular form that acts as a general-purpose copula.

2.1 Plurality

Plurality marking is optional. If the speaker does not know the quantity of a noun, they may simply omit it.

Table 5: Plurality

Plurality	Suffix
None (zero)	-pa
Singular	-sa
Dual	-gula
Plural	-elah

2.2 Case

Table 6: Cases

Case	Suffix
Nominative	-pah
Accusative	-tay
Dative	-lay
Genitive	-pafay
Locative	-kala
Instrumental	-kithi

2.3 Adjectives

Adjectives in Thiguka are placed before words. To attach an adjective to a word, the first syllable of the modified word, followed by *-gu-* should be attached to the adjective.

- (2) ri~gu-gulid rifari
AGR~ADJ-good music
'good music'

Adjectives can be used as nouns too:

- (3) Pothu-pafay gu-gulid-pah kufa pelu-tay-elah falusaya-sa pothu-tay
3SG-GEN ADJ-good-NOM allow person-ACC-PL admire-PRS 3SG-ACC
'Their greatness made them likeable.' (Their goodness made people like them.)

2.4 Determiners

Thiguka has proximal, medial, and distal determiners. Determiners are placed before root words.

- (4) ka~gu-parthas kasa kaela
AGR~ADJ-pink.purple PROX.DET tree
'this sakura tree'

- (5) ka~gu-parthas saka kaela
 AGR~ADJ-pink.purple MED.DET tree
 ‘that sakura tree near you’
- (6) ka~gu-parthas asila kaela
 AGR~ADJ-pink.purple DIS.DET tree
 ‘that sakura tree’

2.5 Tense-aspect

Thiguka has a tense-aspect system.

Tense and aspect are optional. If tense and aspect are omitted, the verb becomes infinitive; or the time it took place becomes ambiguous, granting it time-independence.

- (7) katarila
 outer.space.travel
 ‘to travel through outer space’
- (8) ras-katarila-ta
 outer.space.travel
 ‘to have accidentally traveled through outer space’
- (9) ge-katarila-sa
 PROG-outer.space.travel-PRS
 ‘to be currently traveling through outer space’

Table 7: Tense

Tense	Suffix
Past	-ta
Recent past	-tu
Present	-sa
Future	-tha

Table 8: Aspect

Aspect	Prefix
Perfective	pa-
Perfect	fe-
Progressive	ge-
Imperfective	sa-
Contemplative	kas-
Accidental	ras-
Intentional	ka-

2.6 Pronouns

Thiguka completely lacks gender distinction in pronouns, and has a clusivity distinction in first person pronouns.

Thiguka has no T-V distinction in pronouns. Politeness may be achieved by attaching positive adjectives to second-person pronouns, but this is discouraged and goes against Lemuria’s intentions.

Table 9: Pronouns

person/number	First	Second	Third
singular	thaka	kake	pothu
plural		katake	rafu
inclusive plural	situ		
exclusive plural	pata		

2.7 Template

Thiguka positions morphemes in a specific order, based on whether it is a noun or verb.

2.7.1 Noun

For nouns, the order is as follows: Derivational prefixes, Negation or intensifiers, Stem, Case, Adverb suffixes, Plurality.

2.7.2 Verb

For verbs, the order is as follows: Derivational prefixes, Negation or intensifiers, Aspect, Stem, Tense, Adverb suffixes

2.8 Derivation

Thiguka has multiple methods of taking in new words into its lexicon; such as compounding and the addition of derivational prefixes.

A few select examples of Thiguka derivational prefixes are:

1. fah-, agent prefix akin to English -er
2. ri-, intensifier
3. li-, negation
4. filay-, “in the presence of a cat”

(10) fah-katarila
AGT-space.travel
‘space traveler’

(11) fah-filay-katarila
AGT-with.cat-space.travel
‘one who travels through space with a pet cat’

(12) fah-filay-li-katarila
AGT-with.cat-NEG-space.travel
‘one who does not travel through space with a pet cat’

2.9 Copula

Thiguka has a single copula with 38 irregular forms.

Table 10: Copula forms

Person	Past	Recent Past	Present	Future
1SG	lasata	lasatu	lasa	lasatha
1DU	lagulata	lagulatu	lagulasa	lagulatha
1PL	lelahtaw	lelahtaw	lelahsa	lelahtha
2SG	kaketa	katu	kasa	katha
2DU	kagulata	kagulatu	kagulasa	kagulatha
2PL	kelahta	kelahtu	kelahsa	kelahtha
3SG	gulata	gulatu	gulaya	gulatha
3DU	poguta	pogutu	pogusa	pogutha
3PL	lotares	lotures	lores	lotheres

3 Orthography

Thiguka's orthography is phonetic, and is as follows.

Table 11: Thiguka orthography

IPA	Letter
p	p
t	t
k	k
b	b
d	d
g	g
f	f
s	s
r	r
l	l
θ	th
a	a
e	e
i	i
o	o
u	u
ɑ	ah
ai	ay
ei	ey
ui	uy
au	aw
ɑi	auy
ia	ija

Thiguka follows English punctuation conventions.

Loanwords are respelled to fit this orthography. The native spelling can be provided after the loanword in a parenthesis, for example:

Lela Reyl (Ilgis: Lena Raine) gulaya tagu-Arika tarifari.

3.0.1 Proper nouns and hyphens

Proper nouns are capitalized, but if they are being attached to a word — treated as an adjective, the prefix that comes before the adjective is usually separated from the adjective by a hyphen: *tagu-Ayris*, not

**Taguayris* or **taguAyris*.

Writers also have the option of placing hyphens between proper nouns and affixes. *Reyl-pah* and *Reylpah* are both correct. However, this should usually not be done for proper nouns: **kaela-taygula* outside of glosses.

4 Lexicon

Thiguka, as of May 2024, has about 350 defined words, with slight bias towards Internet and music-related terminology.

Thiguka's full lexicon is available at <https://github.com/thiguka/lexicon> in both tab-separated values format and an Anki deck. A select few words from Thiguka's lexicon are as follows:

4.1 Swadesh-Yakhontov list

Because of the author's laziness and some holes in the lexicon, he is only able to provide a 35-word Swadesh-Yakhontov list below:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. I — thaka | 19. tooth — tutho |
| 2. you (singular) — kake | 20. tongue — kageta |
| 3. this — kasa | 21. hand — aysi |
| 4. who — kalisu pelu | 22. know — kala |
| 5. what — kalisu | 23. die — dasay |
| 6. one — isa | 24. give — salath |
| 7. two — dalata | 25. sun — asalisa |
| 8. fish — gothi | 26. moon — luti |
| 9. dog — aso | 27. water — tubi |
| 10. louse — lafauy | 28. salt — salu |
| 11. blood — rahsa | 29. stone — sute |
| 12. bone — bole | 30. wind — lufah |
| 13. egg — logi | 31. fire — apay |
| 14. horn — kipi | 32. year — fasate |
| 15. tail — taysa | 33. current year — saro |
| 16. ear — eyla | 34. full — hakath |
| 17. eye — fathas | 35. new — bage |
| 18. nose — fothes | 36. name — leyle |

4.2 Unusual roots

Thiguka has some specific roots that many natlangs would need an entire sentence or even paragraph to describe. These roots are an extension of Lemuria's personality, condensing the things and concepts of significance to his life into one word.

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. ketala — fear of being banned by a moderator on the Internet while asleep | someone (Catarina) in the Conlangs Discord Network too many questions about 3SG.GEN far-future world. |
| 2. filay- — from English feline; prefix to indicate "with cat present" | |
| 3. katarila — space travel; because Lemuria asked | 4. orielija — to sail away. Combination of Orinoco + Enya (whose name gets loaned as Elija due to Thiguka being a Lo Lasals Lalgua.) |

4.3 Interesting etymologies

Thiguka has some specific roots with interesting etymologies.

1. *lirisara* — to forget something completely obvious; – coined when in the Conlangs Discord Network, Lemuria asked what a "saralang" was in the Hiidaden thread of "projects", failing to realize that the creator's name was Sarah.
2. *gahlirithi* — a violin; – short form of *Gahli-japafay lahrithi* ("Gallia's music instrument"), from Gallia Kastner, a violinist who appeared in Lemuria's recommended one day.
3. *ukagahli* — to throw a sheep into a river; – because Lemuria observed Gallia throw a sheep into a river while playing a video game in June 2024. This itself is also an unusual root.

4.4 Twitch

Thiguka has its fair share of Twitch-related terminology. Lemuria knows a lot of indie musicians who sing for their viewers on the site and of course, can't help but have words just for Twitch.

1. *Telits* — Twitch moves their viewers to another stream after ending; blend of *Telits* ("Twitch") + "ofefi" ("to move")
2. *Telitslisa* — n. fem. Female Twitch streamer
3. *Telitstoli* — n. masc. Male Twitch streamer
4. *Telitspelu* — n. neut. Twitch streamer
5. *teligara* — v. to stream on Twitch
6. *telufefi* — n. a Twitch raid; when a streamer
7. *teliri* — v. to fall asleep while watching a Twitch stream
8. *telires* — n. along a Twitch raid train (directionality)

5 Syntax

5.1 Word order

Thiguka always uses a subject-verb-object word order. While hypothetically it may be possible to use alternate word orders due to Thiguka case marking, SVO is the intended order and alternative orders will cause possible confusion.

5.2 Questions

Two primary strategies for asking questions in Thiguka are to create declarative statements about the listener and allow the listener to fill in the blanks.

The intonation of these questions is rising; similar to English.

- (13) Kake-pafay leyle las
2SG-GEN name COP
'Your name is?'

Thiguka has one single determiner, 'kalisu' (what?).

A noun can be placed after 'kalisu' to further form the other English wh-words.

Table 12: Translations of English wh-words

Thiguka	English wh-word
kalisu	what
kalisu pelu	who
kathisa	why
kalisu pasla	where
kalisu tayle	when

'kathisa' is a shortened form of 'kalisu thilpahelah kufa kaketay'.

- (14) Kalisu thil-pah-elah kufa kake-tay?
What thing-NOM-PL coerce 2SG-ACC?
'What made you do it?'

An example of 'kalisu' is as follows:

- (15) Kalisu las kakepafay leyle?
what COP 2SG-GEN name
'What is your name?'

5.2.1 Polar

Polar questions are marked by the particle *kalu* added to the end of a sentence.

- (16) Kake las pe gu-gulid pelu kalu?
2SG-NOM COP AGR~ADJ person POLAR
'Are you a good person?'

To further specify what is being doubted or asked about, *kalu* can be moved to the end of the word being asked about in question.

- (17) Kake las pe gu-gulid kalu pe gu-Arika pelu ?
2SG-NOM COP AGR~ADJ-good POLAR AGR~ADJ-America person
'Are you a good American person?'

“(assumes the person is American, but doubts whether they are “good”)”

5.3 Possession

Possession is conveyed using the genitive case suffix *-pafay*.

- (18) Thaka-pafay kaela-gula
1SG-GEN tree-DU
'My two trees'

5.4 Negation

Negation is conveyed with the morpheme *li*, which can either be a prefix or a particle.

Negation cannot negate negation. Adding more negation only strengthens the negation instead of canceling it out.

- (19) Li! Thaka-pah li kisu-tha pothu-tay
No! 1SG-NOM NEG kill-FUT 3SG-ACC
'No! I will not kill them!'
- (20) Li-thaka-pah kisu-ta pothu-tay,
NEG-1SG-NOM kill-PST 3SG-ACC
'No, I didn't kill them.'
lit. 'Not-me killed them.'
- (21) Li-li-li-li-thaka-pah kisu-ta pothu-tay,
NEG-NEG-NEG-NEG-1SG-NOM kill-PST 3SG-ACC
'I definitely did not kill them.'

5.5 Relative clauses

Thiguka uses the relative marker 'si', which begins a clause used as the relative clause. It goes after the noun phrase that is being relativized.

- (22) Kasa pekulugusag-tay, si thaka-pah ri-kala, gulaya ri-gulid.
PROX.DET moderator-ACC REL 1SG-NOM INT-know COP.3SG.PRS INT-good
'This moderator, who I know, is good.'
- (23) Asila pekulugusag-pah-elah pa-ithesatha-ta kasa pelu-tay-sa si li ga~gu-ri-palad
DIST.DET moderator-NOM-PL PFV-ban-PST PROX.DET person-ACC-PL REL NEG AGR~ADJ-INT-bad
gasari
action
'Those moderators banned someone who did nothing wrong.'

5.6 Adverbial clauses

Thiguka also uses the relative marker 'si' for adverbial clauses. 'si' is prefixed to multiple words to further communicate the type of adverbial clause.

Temporal clauses:

- (24) Thaka-pah gulaya li-sifata ifil thaka-pafay laysa-pafay ta~gu-ri-gulid tayle
1SG-NOM COP.3SG.PRS NEG-alive in 1SG-GEN mother-GEN AGR~ADJ-INT-good time
'I was not alive during my mother's golden age.'

Causal clauses:

- (25) Kare-pah, si-dasili li-kala kolusute, gulaya li-gu-asaga pafay situ-pafay
Karen-NOM REL-reason NEG-know computer, COP.3SG.PRS NEG-ADJ-allow have 1PL.INCL-GEN
lahpeled-pafay saleyfata
company-GEN occupation
'Karen, because she does not know computers, is not allowed to have a job at our company.'

6 Examples

A variety of texts have been translated into Thiguka. The first major complete translation, from mid-April 2024, is Wikipedia’s article on Lena Raine, an American music composer from Seattle who has made music for Minecraft.

The translation on Lena Raine is subject to errors, being an early text and not having been updated to reflect the latest changes to the Thiguka language as of May 2024.

6.1 Thiguka’s endonym

- (26) **thi gu-kageta** **thil**
AGR~ADJ-mouth thing
‘mouth thing’

6.2 Miscellaneous sentences

- (27) **Lahkelakesi-pah** **fusala laki!**
make.building-NOM must grow
‘The factory must grow!’
- (28) **Kalisu pelu** **pa-gasari-ta?**
what person PFV-action.V-PST
‘Who did it?’
- (29) **Kake-pah fusala lahkela lahfisipaka-tay-sa.**
2SG-NOM must make conlang-ACC-SG
‘You must make a conlang.’

6.3 Lena Raine

Lela Reyl (Ilgis: Lena Raine; berethata 1984-02-29), leylesathasi Lela Sapel (Ilgis: Lena Chappelle) aluthasi Kureyl (Ilgis: Kuraine) gulaya Taguarika alu Tagukalada tagulikageta tarifari alu lisapahsa lahkela kolugeyle-tayelah. Pelupahelah kalasa Reyltay pur pothupafay leygurutu leyboro ifil Selesete alu Maylakraf alu kigugiled kisufetelah dalata. Pothupah lahkelaathasi rifaritay ifil kolugeyletayelah sufadhas Deletarule alu Sikori: Sigukothor Sifothisa.

6.3.1 Siguaga sifata

Reylpah berethata 1984-02-29 ifil Siatel ifil Asitol. Pothupafay tali tarifari alu pothupafay laysa pelifei. Fipothupafay tagukuyri tarifagetata alu pothupah fathusita pothutay ifil tarifari. Pothupafay tali-thasi fah-fayolil. Solik Edeog sigupeke pegusifothe peli giledsa fathusita pothutay ifil pagulidi patefarielah. Reylpah pagulidi patefariethielah taguisasafi lahkela rifaritayelah pothu kalata aludhete lahkela pothupafay tagubage tarifari. Kuthifafay, pothupah kalata ifil Kornis ogukala ose Arafatelah. Kuthifafay, Kornispah salathata Reyltay lahgurifari lahkela oselufasa.

6.3.2 Sifutula

Pelupahelah kalasa Reyltay pur pothupafay leygurutu leyboro ifil Selesete alu Kigugiled Kisufetelah Dalata. Pothupah leyborota ifil Kigugiled Kisufetelah Dalata ArilaLetkala pur fagugati fasatelah gafalu fahpatere-lahkesa alu fahlahkelapahsa ritutay.

Pothupah alu Laklel Diler, gafalu oguifil ose fahlahkelapahgula ritutay ifil geylepafay lisufasa ifil 2015, Kigugiled Kisufetelah Dalata: Arfaspafaysa Thigusapagad Thilelah. Pothupah falgathata ArilaLetay ifil 2016, bulu pogufilasari pothupah lahkela rifaritayelah ifil ArilaLetpafay kolugeylelah.

Ifil 2018, Reylpah fathusita afegurayfathil koguafeltur kolugeyle esektay ifil itisayokala. Reylpah lahkela rifaritay alu lahkela kolugeyletay esektay alu Deytaireyspah (Ilgis: Dataerase) lahkela arafatayelah. Ifil 2019, pothupah fathusita riguisasafi rifari, Isakalasa.

Pothupah lahkela apay rigubage rifaritayelah ifil Maylakrafpafay 1.16 "Lether Patifekalasa" (Ilgis: Nether Update) ifil 2020. Faguisa fasatefay, pothupah alu tagukolugeyle tarifarisa Kuli Taliokapah lahkela gati rigubage rifaritayelah ifil 1.18 "Kelefitelah alu Sahlagelah: Pagudalatafasi Parafsa" patifekalasa, Faguisa fasatefay, pothupah lahkela talo rigubage rifaritayelah ifil 1.19 "Pagufaylata Parafsa".

Reylpah lahkela rifaritay ifil araguafeltur koguapigi kolugeylekala Sikori: Sigukothor Sifothisa alu tulorta pelutayelah lahkela rifaritayelah ifil sagudalatafasi sagdathasa ifil Deletarunekala. Kolugeylepahgula fathusita ifil 2021.

6.3.3 Sigupelu sifata

Reyguteraseler Reylpahthasi rayfata aglادتaysa, Siti of Taygers aluthasi rayfasa siguelegibiti sigupeke sifothe ifil pothupafay taygurifeyla tayle.

6.3.4 Thiguolota thilelah

Asagata Reyltay pur ologubafata thiguolota thilsa aluthasi pothupafay rifari ifil Selesete risifta Giguarika Giledpafay Tarifarielah, pelupahelah rayfasa aglادتayelah alu pelupahelah fathusita thiltayelah rigulid rigukolugeyle rifari ifil fasate thiguolota thilsa ifil 2019. Pothupafay rifari ifil Selesetepahthasi risifta rigurugulid asagurifari asagasa ifil thigukolugeyle thiguolota thilelah ifil 2018.

6.4 Fun activities

This was the sample passage for Conlang Ambassadors 3, a translation activity from May–June 2024.

English

There are many forms of fun activities in general. For example, there are hobbies which such as hiking, collecting themed objects, or non-professional creative arts and crafts. Some people like to play games or sports, or just like to enjoy looking at people's pictures, listen to other people's music, or watch other people perform. So long as someone enjoys the activity it is a reasonable recreational pastime.

Thiguka

Elah lisure saparapahelah esahlasa. Fulafatasa, pafaysa thigusapara thilelah, alu aragulisaleyfata arafat lores lisugufuros lilahkela ligupera lisure. Pelupah falusaya geyletayelah, gasari isi fathasa lipothu pelu-pafay kurakatayelah, rififeyla lipothu pelutayelah, fathas pegulipothu pegusiligara pelutayelah, fathas peg-ulipothu pegusiligara pelutayelah. Kula pelupah falusaya lisuretay, pothu gulaya ligurigulid lisure.

Gloss

- (30) Elah lisure sapara-pah-elah esahlasa.
many fun.activity kind-NOM-PL exist.V-PRS
'Many fun activity types exist.'
- (31) Fulafata-sa, pafay-sa thi gu-sapara thil-elah, alu ara gu-li-saleyfata arafat-elah alu
hike-PRS, have-PRS AGR ADJ-type thing-PL, and AGR ADJ-NEG-occupation art-PL and
fulahthi lores lisu gu-furos li-lahkela li gu-pera lisure.
fun.make.thing-PL COP.3PL.PRS AGR ADJ-fun NEG-make AGR ADJ-money fun.activity.
'Hiking, having themed objects, and non-professional art are fun not-money-making hobbies.'
- (32) Pelu-pah falusaya geyle-tay-elah, gasari isi fatha-sa pe gu-li-pothu pelu-pafay kuraka-tay-elah,
person-NOM like game-ACC-PL, action of see.V-PRS AGR ADJ-NEG-3SG person-GEN image-ACC-PL,
rififeyla li-pothu pelu-tay-elah, fathas pe gu-li-pothu pe gu-siligara pelu-tay-elah.
listen.to.music NEG-3SG person-ACC-PL, see.V AGR ADJ-NEG-3SG AGR ADJ-perform person-ACC-PL.
'An unspecified amount of people like games, the act of seeing others' pictures, listening to others' music, or watching performing people.'
- (33) Kula pelu-pah falusaya lisure-tay, pothu gulaya li gu-ri-gulid lisure.
If person-NOM enjoy fun.activity-ACC, it COP.3SG.PRS AGR ADJ-INT-good fun.activity.
'If a person enjoys a fun activity, it is a good fun activity.'