

A Grammar Of Thunná

ultlang

April 28, 2021

1 Phonology

1.1 Phonological inventory

| Consonants | | Bilabial | Alveolar | | Palatal | Velar | Uvular | Glottal |
|------------------|-----------|----------|--------------|-----------|---------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | | | Non-sibilant | Sibilant | | | | |
| Nasal | | m | n | | ɲ <ñ> | ŋ | | |
| Stop / Affricate | Tenuis | p | t | ts̺ <c> | c̺~tʃ̺ <č> | k | q | |
| | Aspirate | pʰ <ph> | tʰ <th> | ts̺ʰ <ch> | c̺ʰ~tʃ̺ʰ <čh> | kʰ <kh> | qʰ <qh> | ʔ <'> |
| | Voiced | b | d | dz̺ <ɟ> | ʃ̺~dʒ̺ <ž> | g | | |
| | Implosive | ɓ <bh> | d̪ <dh> | | | | | |
| Fricative | Tenuis | ɸ <f> | ɬ̺ <ś> | s | ʃ̺ <š> | x~h <x> | | |
| | Aspirate | | | sʰ <sh> | ʃ̺ʰ <šh> | | | |
| | Voiced | β <v> | ɮ̺ <ž> | z | ʒ̺ <ž> | | | |
| Approximant | Plain | w | r | | j <y> | ɰ <h> | | |
| | Lateral | | l | | | | | |

| Vowels | Front | Central | Back |
|--------|-------|---------|-------|
| Close | i | | u <u> |
| Mid | e | ə | o |
| Open | | a | |

All vowels can additionally be long, which is indicated with an acute accent in the orthography (/a:/ <á>).

2 Morphology

2.1 Verbs

Thunná marks verbs both for subject and for the direct object.

- (1) *Ižačha -p.*
 die 1
 “I die.”

- (2) *Ižačha -ph -í -qhu.*
 die -1 › 3 -CAUS
 “I kill them.”

For transitive verbs, the intransitive suffix doesn't signify the absence or indefiniteness of the object, but rather reflexivity (or reciprocity for paucal and plural, which are indicated with particles):

- (3) *Ižačha -pə -qhu.*
 die -1 -CAUS
 “I kill myself.”

If the object is unknown or indefinite, the fourth person needs to be used.

- (4) *Ižačha -ph -ó -qhu.*
 die -1 › 4 -CAUS
 “I kill.”

When an indirect object is present, the person marking must always be of the transitive variety, even if it is unclear (in which case, again, the fourth person is used.)

- (5) *Áži -p.*
 speak -1
 “I speak.”, “I am talking.”
- (6) *Áži -ph -í.*
 speak -1 › 3
 “I speak about them.”
- (7) *Áži -ph -ó Thunná =xu.*
 speak -1 › 4 Thunná with
 “I speak (using) Thunná.”

In both intransitive and transitive sentences, the tense of a verb is encoded in the subject suffix. A table of all the suffixes follows:

| Intransitive | Distant past | Near past | Present | Future |
|--------------|--------------|-----------|---------|--------|
| 1 | -sp | -m | -p | -f |
| 2 | -ht | -n | -t | -s |
| 3 | -c | -ñ | -č | -š |
| 4 | -q | -ŋ | -ś | -ž |

| Transitive | PDIS.A | PNEA.A | PRE.A | FUT.A | P.SG | P.DU | P.PL |
|------------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|
| 1 | -v- | -pp- | -ph- | -f- | -oə~ə | -o | -oa |
| 2 | -sh- | -tt- | -th- | -s- | -u | -ú | -ú |
| 3 | -šh- | -čč- | -čh- | -š- | -e | -i | -í |
| 4 | -qh- | -w- | -x- | -q- | -ó | | |

- (8) *Asqali -tt -oə aw?*
 see -PNEA.2 › 1SG Q
 “Did you see me?”
- (9) *Izačha -s.*
 die -FUT.2
 “You’re going to die.”
- (10) *Áži -šh -ó.*
 speak -PDIS.4 › 3SG
 “It has been said.”

2.2 Nouns

Most of the morphology of nouns is accomplished using postpositional particles or clitics, such as *n* (LOC) or *xu* (INSTR).

Thunna is split-ergative - it uses NOM-ACC alignment in the present and future and ERG-ABS in both past tenses. These are also marked with particles, which inflect for number.

- (11) *Asqali -čč -e naŋaq = tá ŋize.*
 see -PNEA.3 › 3SG worker ERG.PL cat
 “The workers saw a cat.”
- (12) *Asqali -š -e naŋaq = min ŋize = hi.*
 see -FUT.3 › 3SG worker NOM.PL cat ACC.SG
 “The workers will see a cat.”

| yea h | ERG | NOM | ACC |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|
| SG | tha | mu | hi |
| DU | dhá | maə | hoa |
| PL | tá | min | hin |