

1 Nominal Morphology

1.1 Definitions and Features

The basic structure of the Qevesa noun consists of a stem composed of a root and zero or more derivational affixes, plus declensional affixes.

Nouns, like verbs, are highly regular in their declension. There is no grammatical gender, although some nouns, such as body parts, do possess an inherent gender. Explicit constructions to indicate gender are used only when necessary, and these are seldom used except in the formal or literary language. Nouns may be classed according to animacy, a feature which is only indicated by the declension affixes.

Qevesa nouns decline to indicate two non-inherent features: number and case. Most nouns have three numbers, a singular, dual or collective, and plural, although a small, closed set have a natural number and receive inverse marking. There are fourteen cases in the standard written language: nominative, ergative, accusative, secundative, genitive, essive, instrumental-committative, inessive, adessive, illative, allative, elative, ablative and comparative. A fifteenth case, the vocative, exists in some spoken dialects, but this is falling out of use¹.

The citation form of all nouns is the nominative singular.

1.1.1 Animacy

Nouns in the Teralo family of languages display a property known as animacy, in which nouns referring to humans, animals and other things perceived as having consciousness or life decline differently to other nouns in some forms. The animacy of a noun must be known in order to properly decline it to the primary cases and to indicate pronominal forms.

Animate nouns refer to humans, animals, spirits, some plants, and some meteorological and geological phenomena. This includes personal names, possessions, and some body parts. Most living but inanimate life forms are not included, such as the majority of plants, as well as microbial life forms. Animacy is a fixed feature, so nouns may not switch between animate and inanimate declensions other than under exceptional circumstances.

¹It is interesting to note that the vocative case is commonly used when insulting people regardless of dialect.

1.1.2 Proper Nouns

Proper nouns may be formed from words existing in the language², often supported by gender markers to disambiguate them from common nouns, especially when used as personal names. A noticeable morphological feature of proper nouns is that their case markers are enclitic rather than suffixed, separated by a colon or a non-breaking space. Proper names are seldom pluralised.

1.2 Nominal Declension

Qevesa noun words consist of the stem, followed by number, possessor and case marking:

- (1) *stem*-NUMBER-POSSESSOR-CASE

1.2.1 Case

Qevesa possess fourteen cases (fifteen if the marginal vocative is included), which are divided into two groups. The primary cases, of which there are four, indicate morphosyntactic roles of the noun with respect to the verb; the remaining ten cases are the secondary cases, and these are mostly locative and adverbial cases. The case suffixes are described in Table 1.1.

| Case | | Postconsonantal | | Postvocalic | |
|----------------------------------|------|-----------------|--------|-------------|--------|
| | | ANIM | INANIM | ANIM | INANIM |
| Nominative | NOM | -a | -ina | -∅ | -na |
| Ergative | ERG | -am | -inom | -yam | -nom |
| Accusative | ACC | -aş | -inoş | -yaş | -noş |
| Secundative | SDT | -ot | -inot | -yot | -not |
| Genitive | GEN | -aik | -inok | -k | -inok |
| Essive | ESS | | | -ël | |
| Instrumental (Comitative) | INS | | | -ëtti | |
| Inessive | INE | | | -ëssi | |
| Adessive | ADE | | | -ëdi | |
| Illative | ILL | | | -ësto | |
| Allative | ALL | | | -ëfti | |
| Elativ | ELA | | | -ëspo | |
| Ablative | ABL | | | -ësko | |
| Comparative | COMP | | | -ënno | |
| (Vocative) | VOC | | -ó | | -yó |

Table 1.1 *Case suffixes*

²See Section ?? on page ?? for derivation of proper nouns.

1.2.1.1 The Primary Cases

The primary cases indicate the morphosyntactic role of the noun with respect to the verb.

1.2.1.1.1 Nominative

The nominative case marks the topic of the verb phrase. Its actual role is indicated on the verb, using the topical agreement suffixes as described in Section ??.

1.2.1.1.2 Ergative

The ergative case marks the voluntary experiencer of an intransitive verb, the agent of a transitive verb, or the donor of a ditransitive verb.

1.2.1.1.3 Accusative

The accusative case marks the involuntary experiencer of an intransitive verb, the patient of a transitive verb, or the recipient of a ditransitive verb.

1.2.1.1.4 Secundative

The secundative case marks the theme of a ditransitive verb.

1.2.1.2 The Secondary Cases

The secondary cases are mainly adpositional and locative cases.

1.2.1.2.1 Genitive

The genitive case indicates the possessor of another noun. Pronominal possessors are indicated by means of a suffix on the possessed item.

1.2.1.2.2 Essive

The essive case indicates duration and time. It also indicates a temporary state of being or existence.

1.2.1.2.3 Instrumental (Comitative)

The instrumental case indicates the means by which the action is performed. It may also be used in a comitative sense, i.e. to indicate the person in whose company the action is carried out.

1.2.1.2.4 Inessive

The inessive case indicates internal location.

1.2.1.2.5 Adessive

The adessive case indicates external location.

1.2.1.2.6 Illative

The illative case indicates motion from the exterior to the interior.

1.2.1.2.7 Allative

The allative case indicates motion towards the noun.

1.2.1.2.8 Elative

The elative case indicates motion from the interior to the exterior.

1.2.1.2.9 Ablative

The ablative case indicates motion away from the noun.

1.2.1.2.10 Comparative

The comparative case indicates a likeness to something, or the standard to which something is compared.

1.2.1.3 Use of the Locative Cases

The locative cases are logically grouped. There are two positions (internal and external) and three directions (static, movement towards and movement away). Combining these results in the six cases, illustrated in Table 1.2.

| | Interior | Exterior |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Static | Inessive | Adessive |
| Movement towards | Illative | Allative |
| Movement away | Elative | Ablative |

Table 1.2 *Locative cases*

Finer distinctions in location are given with postpositions, which are described in Section ??.

1.2.2 Number

Qevesa possesses at least three forms of grammatical number: singular, dual/collective, and plural. In addition, a number of irregular nouns, such as body parts, possess a natural number, for which there is a singulative form to indicate exactly one of the noun. Number is indicated by appending a suffix, inserting an epenthetic *-e-* if the stem ends in a consonant, and lengthening the final vowel if the stem ends in a vowel. Some examples are given on page 5 in Example 2.

The suffixes for number are given in Table 1.3.

The dual number is of particular note. By itself, it indicates that there are exactly two of the noun. However, if a quantity is to be specified, such as with a number word or quantifier, the dual form

| | | Suffix |
|------------------------|-----|--------|
| Singular | SG | -Ø |
| Dual/Collective | DU | -(e)v |
| Plural | PL | -(e)s |
| Singulative | SGV | -sen |

Table 1.3 *Grammatical number suffixes*

is also used. The singulative is used to indicate exactly one of the specified item, in situations where the expected number differs from the actual number.

- (2) *miara* ‘eye’ *miaráv* ‘two eyes’ *miarás* ‘eyes’
 tolik ‘boy’ *tolikev* ‘two boys’ *tolikes* ‘boys’
 cavoik ‘friend’ *cavoikev* ‘two friends’ *cavoikes* ‘friends’

1.3 Articles

Qevesa possesses a definite article but no indefinite article. It normally consists of *la*, but before a vowel the <a> may be elided and the article attached as a proclitic *l’*-. *To be written...*

Move this to syntax?

1.4 Pronouns and Pronomial forms

Pronouns are roughly equivalent to nouns in terms of syntax and morphology. They serve as substitutes for other nouns or noun phrases that have previously been mentioned or can be inferred from context. There are a number of types of pronouns in Qevesa, including personal pronouns, demonstrative pronouns and interrogative pronouns.

The class of determiners is a special case, in that they can also act as articles for other nouns or noun phrases.

1.4.1 Personal Pronouns

The personal pronouns stand in for other nouns, indicating that noun’s person, number and case. Most personal pronouns refer only to animate referents: a separate inanimate pronoun is used for inanimate referents. There are two first person plural pronouns, an inclusive, which includes the listener, and an exclusive, which does not.

Personal pronouns are declined to the primary cases by suffixation; other case constructions use a stem derived from the case ending combined with the suffix form of the pronoun. Although a genitive form of the personal pronouns exists, the suffix form is preferred.

The base forms of the pronouns are given in Table 1.4, and the cases with personal suffixes are given in Table 1.5.

| | Stem | | Cases | | | | |
|----------|------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| | Root | Suffix | NOM | ERG | ACC | SDT | GEN |
| 1SG | ye | -ě/-ye | ye | yem | yeş | yet | yek |
| 2SG | ta | -ta | ta | tam | taş | tayot | tak |
| 3SG | mi | -mi | mi | mim | miş | miyot | mik |
| 1DU;INC | yév | -yév | yéva | yévam | yévaş | yévot | yévaik |
| 1DU;EXC | čév | -čév | čéva | čévam | čévaş | čévot | čévaik |
| 2DU | táv | -táv | táva | távam | távaş | távot | távaik |
| 3DU | mív | -mív | míva | mívam | mívaş | mívot | mívaik |
| 1DU;INC | yés | -yés | yésa | yésam | yésaş | yésot | yésaik |
| 1DU;EXC | čés | -čés | čésa | čésam | čésaş | čésot | čésaik |
| 2DU | tás | -tás | tása | tásam | tásaş | tásot | tásaik |
| 3DU | mís | -mís | mísa | mísam | mísaş | mísot | mísaik |
| 3;INANIM | ňet | -ňet | ňeta | ňetam | ňetaş | ňetot | ňetaik |

Table 1.4 *Personal pronouns*

1.4.2 Reflexive and Reciprocal Pronouns

Qevesa does not possess reflexive or reciprocal pronouns as most verb roots have forms that indicate reflexive³ or reciprocal⁴ actions. The word *máka* ‘self’, may be used as a reflexive pronoun to avoid ambiguity, but this is rare.

1.4.3 Demonstrative and Correlative Pronouns

Qevesa has three degrees of demonstrative pronouns:

Proximal

The proximal series is marked by the prefix *to-*, and refers to things closer to the speaker than the listener;

Medial

The medial series is marked by the prefix *ko-*, and refers to things closer to the listener than the speaker; and

Distal

The distal series, marked by the prefix *isá-*, refers to things that are far from both speaker and listener.

There is also an interrogative series, which is marked with the prefix *qe-*. Demonstrative pronouns must agree in number and case with their antecedent, unlike all other types of modifiers, such as adjectives.

³See Section ??, page ??

⁴See Section ??, page ??

| | | Cases | | | | |
|----------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| | | ESS | INS | INE | ADE | ILL |
| | | ěl- | ětt(i)- | ěss(i)- | ěd(i)- | ěsto- |
| 1SG | -ye | ělye | ěttye | ěssye | ědye | ěstoye |
| 2SG | -ta | ělta | ěttita | ěssta | ědita | ěstota |
| 3SG | -mi | ělmi | ěttimi | ěssmi | ědmi | ěstomi |
| 1DU;INC | -yé ^v | ělyé ^v | ěttyé ^v | ěssyé ^v | ědyé ^v | ěstoyé ^v |
| 1DU;EXC | -čé ^v | ělčé ^v | ěttčé ^v | ěssčé ^v | ědčé ^v | ěstočé ^v |
| 2DU | -táv | ěltáv | ěttitáv | ěsstáv | ěditáv | ěstotáv |
| 3DU | -mív | ělmív | ěttimív | ěssmív | ědmív | ěstomív |
| 1PL;INC | -yé ^s | ělyé ^s | ěttyé ^s | ěssyé ^s | ědyé ^s | ěstoyé ^s |
| 1PL;EXC | -čé ^s | ělčé ^s | ěttčé ^s | ěssčé ^s | ědčé ^s | ěstočé ^s |
| 2PL | -tás | ěltás | ěttitás | ěsstás | ěditás | ěstotás |
| 3PL | -mís | ělmís | ěttimís | ěssmís | ědmís | ěstomís |
| 3;INANIM | -ňet | ěľňet | ěttiňet | ěssňet | ědňet | ěstoňet |

| | | Cases | | | |
|----------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| | | ALL | ELA | ABL | COMP |
| | | ěft(i)- | ěspo- | ěsko- | no- |
| 1SG | -ye | ěftiye | ěspoye | ěskoye | noye |
| 2SG | -ta | ěftita | ěspota | ěskota | nota |
| 3SG | -mi | ěftimi | ěspomi | ěskomi | nomi |
| 1DU;INC | -yé ^v | ěftiyé ^v | ěspoyé ^v | ěskoyé ^v | noyé ^v |
| 1DU;EXC | -čé ^v | ěftičé ^v | ěspočé ^v | ěskočé ^v | nočé ^v |
| 2DU | -táv | ěftitáv | ěspotáv | ěskotáv | notáv |
| 3DU | -mív | ěftimív | ěspomív | ěskomív | nomív |
| 1PL;INC | -yé ^s | ěftiyé ^s | ěspoyé ^s | ěskoyé ^s | noyé ^s |
| 1PL;EXC | -čé ^s | ěftičé ^s | ěspočé ^s | ěskočé ^s | nočé ^s |
| 2PL | -tás | ěftitás | ěspotás | ěskotás | notás |
| 3PL | -mís | ěftimís | ěspomís | ěskomís | nomís |
| 3;INANIM | -ňet | ěftiňet | ěspoňet | ěskoňet | noňet |

Table 1.5 Cases with personal suffixes

A related set of pronouns is formed by prefixes denoting number or quantity. These include the existential, elective, universal and negative series, and combine with the suffixes in a highly regular manner.

The demonstrative and correlative pronouns are listed in Table 1.6.

| | | | Proximal | Medial | Distal | Interrogative |
|--------------------|------|-------------|------------|------------|-------------|---------------|
| | | | PROX | MED | DIST | INT |
| | | | <i>to-</i> | <i>ko-</i> | <i>isá-</i> | <i>qe-</i> |
| Human | HUM | <i>-tka</i> | totka | kotka | isátka | qetka |
| Nonhuman | NH | <i>-ra</i> | tora | kora | isára | qera |
| Location | LOC | <i>-zól</i> | tozól | kozól | isázól | qezól |
| Source | SRC | <i>-ská</i> | toská | koská | isáská | qeská |
| Destination | DEST | <i>-rve</i> | torve | korve | isárve | qerve |
| Time | TIME | <i>-lti</i> | tolti | kolti | isálti | qelti |
| Manner | MAN | <i>-ttu</i> | tottu | kottu | isáttu | qettu |
| Reason | RSN | <i>-rte</i> | torte | korte | isárte | qerte |

(a) *Demonstrative pronouns*

| | | | Existential | Elective | Universal | Negative |
|--------------------|------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| | | | EXIST | ELECT | UNIV | NEG |
| | | | <i>ane-</i> | <i>via-</i> | <i>minű-</i> | <i>domo-</i> |
| Human | HUM | <i>-tka</i> | anetka | viatka | minűtka | domotka |
| Nonhuman | NH | <i>-ra</i> | anera | viara | minűra | domora |
| Location | LOC | <i>-zól</i> | anezól | viazól | minűzól | domozól |
| Source | SRC | <i>-ská</i> | aneská | viaská | minűská | domoská |
| Destination | DEST | <i>-rve</i> | anerve | viarve | minűrve | domorve |
| Time | TIME | <i>-lti</i> | anelti | vialti | minűlti | domolti |
| Manner | MAN | <i>-ttu</i> | anettu | viattu | minűttu | domottu |
| Reason | RSN | <i>-rte</i> | anerte | viarte | minűrte | domorte |

(b) *Correlative pronouns*

Table 1.6 *Demonstrative and correlative pronouns*

The prefixes for each series of demonstratives can also be combined with case suffixes, to produce pronouns of specific direction or location, for example:

- (3) *toyessi* *qeyefti*
to-yessi qe-yefti
PROX-INE INT-ALL
in(side) here towards where?