

'ōSet'akhtü Njèènshwajgarr

Foreword

“The Language of Njenfalgar”, or *'ōSet'akhtü Njèènshwajgarr* in the language itself, is a language I invented to hone my conlanging skills. The result is rather unnaturalistic, but inventing it taught me a lot (if only about the limits of naturalism). I have kind of abandoned it at some point, but I remember it with kindness.

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1 Phonology

The next three sections tabulate the sounds of 'ōSet'akh. Between brackets is given the romanization used in this document.

1.1 Consonants

	bilabial	dental	alveolar	retroflex	palatal	velar
nasal stops	m ⟨m⟩		n ⟨n⟩			ŋ ⟨ng⟩
plosives	p ⟨p⟩		t ^h ⟨t⟩			kx ⟨kh⟩ g ⟨g⟩
fricatives		s̥ ⟨th⟩	s ⟨s⟩ z̥ ⟨sz⟩	s̥ ⟨sh⟩ s̥ ^w ⟨shw⟩	ç̃ ⟨'⟩	x ⟨ch⟩ x̃ ^j ⟨ch'⟩
trills			r̥ ⟨rh⟩ r ⟨rr⟩			
approximant					j ⟨j⟩	

1.2 Vowels

Vowels exist in oral and nasal variants. Mark that nasality is only contrastive in /a:/. There are short, mid-long and long vowels, but length is only contrastive in /a:/. The vowel /ε/ has a long and a short allophone, where there short one is used after /s̥^w/, and the long one otherwise.

1.2.1 Oral vowels

The oral vowels are tabulated below. Mark that /ɪ/ is an allophone of /i/, occurring in endings. The same is true for /ɤə/ as allophone of /y:/.

	front		central	back
closed	i ⟨i⟩	y: ⟨ü⟩		
	ɪ ⟨i⟩	ɤə ⟨ue⟩		
mid	ɛ: ⟨ee⟩	ø: ⟨ö⟩	ə ⟨e⟩	
mid-open	ɛ̃ ⟨è⟩			
	ɛ̃: ⟨èè⟩			ɔ: ⟨o⟩
open	a ⟨a⟩			
	a: ⟨aa⟩			

There also exists a short version of /y/, but it leads a marginal existence.

1.2.2 Nasal vowels

There are only two nasal vowels, and they are both long.

	front	central	back
closed			
mid-closed			õ: ⟨õ⟩
mid			
mid-open			
open	ã: ^h ⟨ãh⟩		

1.3 Stress

Each word has one syllable which is stressed. The placement hereof is not predictable, except that *aa* is always stressed. The stress can, however, never fall on schwa or on the mute vowels *ì* and *ue*. It does not change place when adding affixes, giving (denoting stress with underline): *rrorrna* (scary), *rrorrnain* (to scare) and *rrorrnaèè* (non-punctual form). Exceptionally, it does, when some unstressed *ãh* changes into *aa* when adding a suffix, like in *chütãh* (current, common gender) → *chütaa'* (current, neuter gender).

1.4 Phonotactics

Basically, there are no rules governing phonotactics.

The main fixed rule is that *shw* must always be followed by *a* or *è*, and that *è* is always preceded by *shw*. Also *ãh* must always be word-final. If a word ending in *ãh* gets a suffix, *ãh* is changed into *aa*, as in *shõ'ãh* (nose) → *shõ'aakh* (nasal).

Certain combinations of sounds are impossible. Sibilants, for example, never form clusters. Also *ch* can never be followed by a *shõ'aakh* (⟨'⟩) – instead the combination *ch'* is used. One other impossible combination is *rh* + *rr*. If it occurs, which can happen when putting an article in front of a word, the first trill is always voiced like in *gerh* (plural neuter article) + *rrameseshwè* (shadows) → *gerrrrameseshwè* (the shadows). The opposite combination is possible, like *gerr* (plural common article) + *rhõkheshwa* (names) → *gerrrrõkheshwa* (the names).

Furthermore, the mute vowels *ì* and *ue* are confined to endings. schwa is usually interconsonantal.

1.5 Script

The script runs right-to-left, and is alphabetic. All letters have a name, and the alphabet derives its name (*Ènmanting*) from the first three letters, *èèn* (⟨èè⟩), *man* (⟨m⟩) and *ting* (⟨ng⟩). There is no capitalization. When romanizing, the first letter (or the second if the first is a *shõ'aakh*) of the root of common names and of the first word in the sentence is capitalized, as in “aJõnèèj” (proper name, accusative).

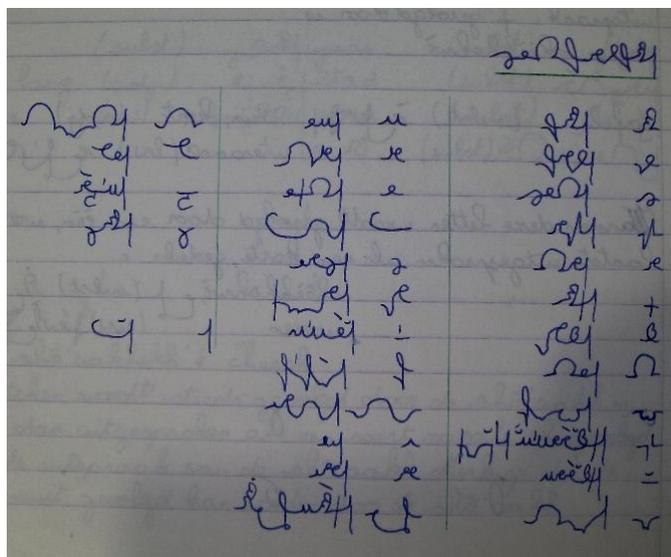


Figure 1: The Ènëmànting in handwriting. The columns show the letters at the right and the names of the letters at the left. Stress and other features that are normally not shown in writing are indicated with diacritics.

The script is more or less phonemic, but it usually reflects the underlying form of words. For example, in *nemakhì* (unpleasant) the sound *ì* is written with the letter *khi* (<kh>) to reflect its etymology from *nemakh* (pleasant) plus *-kh* (negation). Some exceptions to phonemicity exist, however, as, for example, the sound *ngg* has a letter of its own (called *nggaj*), but is sometimes also written with *ting* plus *geen* (<ng> + <g>), without any rule.

Apart from the letters, there are some other signs of punctuation. The most important of these is the *'āh*, which denotes the beginning of a word. Full stops are used only in between sentences, not at the end of a paragraph. Question and exclamation marks are put at the beginning of a sentence or phrase. For example, in the sentence:

a'ōMèèjnta khi khapeson üsh chajipièè khinapinkh, ichi nèèn üsh mang nimarhèè?

a-'ō-mèèjnta khi khapeson üsh chajipi-èè khinap-in-kh , ichi nèèn
 ACC-the-everything no word AUX.NPCT.3SG can-NPCT say-INF-NEG , because who
üsh mang nimarh-èè
 AUX.NPCT.3SG IRR understand-NPCT

No word can say everything, for who would understand?

the question mark would come after *ichi* (because). In romanization, the rules of Latin script are used for punctuation.

2 Syntax and word order

The normal word order is VSO:

Khinèèpash Jorr a'ōszorrprron.

Khinèèp-a-sh Jorr a-'ō-szorrprron
 ask-PRS.PCT.SG-3SG Jorr ACC-the-bike

Jorr asks for the bike.

It is, however, possible to put some parts of the sentence in front of the main verb, allowing SOV and OSV. In these last two cases, subject and object are distinguished by case.

The language is prepositional, and has adverbs after adjectives. Possessed objects come before their possessor. Adjectives, however, come in front of their heads:

pajshō pèè thōrhen

pajshō-∅ pèè thōrhen
big-C very_much_so man

a *really* big man

Questions are formed by intonation, without any change in syntax. The intonation drops at the end of a question, and goes up slightly at the end of an affirmative sentence.

3 Cases and prepositions

3.1 Nominative and accusative

The language has an accusative alignment, with an unmarked nominative case used in subject, attribute of “to be” and in some other positions, and a marked accusative case used in direct object and also in some other positions.

3.2 Possession

Possession is expressed by a possessed *and* a possessive case. For substantives, however, there is no distinction between possessive and nominative, and for pronouns it is the possessed case which is identical to the nominative.

It is possible to mark a noun for both accusative case and for possessedness.

Mark that family relations and the like are *not* expressed using possessive construction, but with the preposition *sjaszō*.

3.3 General prepositions

Prepositions govern different cases, sometimes changing meaning when governing another case. The main cases are: nominative, accusative, possessed and possessive.

There are prepositions, however, which combine different cases. For example, it is possible for a preposition to govern the possessed case with pronouns, but substituting it for the accusative when a noun follows. The preposition *sjaszō* is one example hereof.

3.4 Relative clauses

Relative clauses are formed with the antecedent marked in a special antecedent case:

Nggōchiarr o i'ìèègerren shèèntangash khjūtharh.

Nggōchi-a-rr o i-'ì-èègerren shèèntang-a-sh khjūtharh
see-PRS.PCT.SG-1SG ACC ANT-the-girl be_located-PRS.PCT.SG-3SG over_there

I see the girl standing over there.

Non-restrictive relative clauses repeat the antecedent, possibly as a pronoun:

Nggo amerherrièè aJōnèèj szū i akheekhingichnèèrreshwa ngisaanjash.

Nggo *amerherri-èè* *a-Jònèèj* *szü* *i* *a-kheekhingichnèèrr-eshwa*
 AUX.NPCT.2SG resemble-NPCT ACC-Jònèèj he ANT ACC-plant-PL
ngisaanj-a-sh.
 plant-PRS.PCT.SG-3SG

You look like Jònèèj, who is planting trees.

4 Nouns

4.1 Gender and article

Nouns can be classified into two genders, here called common and neuter. It is in general not possible to tell what gender a noun is from its citation form alone. All nouns denoting living beings are in the common gender.

Nouns can get one of two prefixes functioning as definite articles, depending on their gender. Common nouns get 'i- and neuter nouns have 'õ- in the singular. The plural definite is formed with *gerr-* and *gerh-* respectively. There is no indefinite article.

4.2 Plural

Formation of the plural depends on the gender. Common nouns have an ending *-shwa*, neuter nouns receive *-shwè*. If a word ends in a consonant, a schwa is added between the root and the ending, as in *anggchükh* (lover) → *anggchükheshwa* (lovers).

	common	neuter
indefinite singular	<i>athngiö</i> ((a) plant)	<i>shisza</i> ((a) corridor)
definite singular	<i>'iathngiö</i> (the plant)	<i>'õshisza</i> (the corridor)
indefinite plural	<i>athngiöshwa</i> (plants)	<i>shisza^{shwè}</i> (corridors)
definite plural	<i>gerrathngiöshwa</i> (the plants)	<i>gerhshisza^{shwè}</i> (the corridors)

Table 1: Nouns in the nominative case.

4.3 Possessed case

In the singular, the possessed case is formed with an suffix *-tü* for all genders. In the plural, the ending is *-shü* for common nouns and *-shèè* for neuter nouns, with an epenthetic schwa if the word ends in a consonant.

Mark that the definite article is needed to express “A’s B”, for example: *'õüt_najeshtü Sõjikhõ* (Sõjikhõ’s book). Without it, it would mean “one of A’s Bs”, as in *üt_najeshtü Sõjikhõ* (a book of Sõjikhõ’s).

	common	neuter
singular	<i>'iachinoötü</i> <i>gej</i> (my room)	<i>'õshpajngötü</i> <i>gej</i> (my part)
plural	<i>gerrachinoöshü</i> <i>gej</i> (my rooms)	<i>gerhshpajngöshèè</i> <i>gej</i> (my parts)

Table 2: The possessed case of nouns.

4.4 Accusative and antecedent

Both the accusative and the antecedent case are formed by adding a prefix to the word. This comes in front of the article. For the accusative, the prefix is *a-*, for the antecedent it is *i-*. If either prefix is followed by a vowel, an epenthetic *shō'aakh* (⟨'⟩) is added.

Pronouns do not have an antecedent form, so instead an adposition *i* (in front or behind the pronoun) is used.

It is not possible to have a noun in antecedent and accusative case at the same time. Instead, the accusative case will be replaced by an adposition having the same function.

5 Personal and possessive pronouns

The personal pronouns have three forms: nominative, accusative and possessive. They are tabulated below. The nominative forms are used in the subject if it is stressed, otherwise they are dropped.

There is a distinction between masculine and feminine in the common gender. For people, the split is made according to sex. Objects and plants are masculine, animals are feminine.

In the plural, the common gender is used when one is talking about a group consisting of different objects, even when all those objects separately would be neuter. For example: *'ōcha'em o gerhnengosheshwè* (the moon and the spaceships) → *thāh* (they).

Some pronouns have an unstressable vowel as their only nucleus. When one wants to stress such a pronoun, an “empty preposition” is usually used. They are given below.

	nominative	accusative	possessive
1st person singular	<i>mèè</i>	<i>gen</i> (<i>i gen</i>)	<i>gej</i> (<i>ü gej</i>)
2nd person singular	<i>'āh</i>	<i>èè'</i>	<i>èèj</i>
3rd person singular	masculine feminine neuter	<i>szü</i> <i>angg</i> <i>jìg</i> (<i>jìg</i>)	<i>sakh</i> <i>ch'o</i> <i>asz</i>
			<i>saō</i> <i>ch'ō</i> <i>ath</i>
1st person plural	<i>eeng</i>	<i>rhö</i>	<i>rhue</i> (<i>i rhue</i>)
2nd person plural	<i>'ō</i>	<i>neesh</i>	<i>neesh</i>
3rd person plural	common neuter	<i>thāh</i> <i>shwè</i>	<i>gō</i> <i>ashwè</i> <i>üshwè</i> (<i>ueshwè</i>)

Table 3: Personal and possessive pronouns. Some pronouns have different forms when stressed; those are given between parentheses.

6 Adjectives

Attributive adjectives agree in gender with the noun they belong to. If this noun is of the common gender, their form is just the citation form, while if the noun is neuter, the adjective gets a suffix *-ʔ*. After a consonant, this suffix is pronounced *-ʔ̣*. When predicatively used, adjectives are invariant.

Both comparative and superlative are formed with a prefix *eej-*. In order to say “more X than...” the adjective is followed by either the noun in the accusative case, or the possessive pronoun. The superlative is followed by a noun in the possessed case, or a pronoun in the accusative form.

7 Adverbs

Adverbs are always invariant. They form comparisons with other adverbs.

There are no rules to form adverbs from adjectives. Some adjectives have adverbs matching them, like *'angchìgek* (in love) → *jāngchekha* (amorously), without there being rules how to go

from one to the other. Adjectives which are derived from another word usually have an adverb to match which is derived from the same word, as *meshiaajikh* (usual), which is derived from *meshiaajin* (to be used to), and has the adverb *meshiaajö* (usually). Adjectives which do not have a parallel can be made into an adverb by circumlocution: “in an X way”, as: *oisherh'ì tsèèshpens* (beautifully, in a beautiful way)

8 Verbs, aspects and tenses

Verbs are conjugated for person (first, second and third, singular and plural), for tense (present, past and future), for aspect (punctual and non-punctual) and for modality (positive or negative). Apart from these finite forms, an infinite exist with ending *-in* or *-uen* (which is the citation form), and several participles and gerunds.

Below all endings are given for verbs in *-in*. Verbs in *-uen* are identical, except that an extra *-i-* has to be added to form the full root. When an ending starts in *ì*, this vowel and the extra *i* are again contracted to *-ue-*.

Also, when the root ends in the same vowels as the one the ending begins with, one vowel is dropped.

8.1 Punctual and non-punctual

There are two aspects: punctual and non-punctual. The punctual aspect denotes that the action are state is confined to a limited amount of time, while the non-punctual denotes longer periods, habits or general statements. For example:

general statement (non-punctual):

Shwèng jãh rhõkhenèè.

Shwèng jãh rhõkhen-èè
Shwèng AUX.NPCT.1SG be_called-NPCT

My name is Shwèng.

habit (non-punctual):

Jãh tagirrèè jö ch'õ' a'õchinamöterr.

jãh tagirrèè-∅ jö ch'õ-' a-'õ-chinamöterr
AUX.NPCT.1SG sleep-NPCT in this-N ACC-the-bed

I sleep in this bed.

statement valid during a certain period of time (punctual):

Tagirrèèarr jö ch'õ' a'õchinamöterr.

tagirrèè-a-rr jö ch'õ-' a-'õ-chinamöterr
sleep-PRS.PCT.SG-1SG in this-N ACC-the-bed

I'm sleeping in this bed.

stative expression (non-punctual):

Ingchantee' õing üsh chèè.

ingchantee' õ-ing üsh chèè
icy_cold the-weather AUX.NPCT.3SG be.NPCT

The weather is icy-cold (in this place).

stative expression (punctual):

Ingchantee' 'õing gish.
ingchantee' 'õ-ing gi-sh
 icy_cold the-weather be.PRS.PCT.SG-3SG

The whether is icy-cold (right now).

The punctual aspect is formed by direct conjugation of the verb. The non-punctual is formed with the auxiliary verb *sìn* plus a non-punctual participle.

8.2 Present, past and future

There are three tenses: present, past and future.

Present and past punctual are formed by adding the appropriate ending to the verbal root. These endings consist of a vowel denoting the tense (-*a*- in present singular, -*i*- in present plural and -*ee*- in the past tense) plus a consonant for the personal conjugation. The non-punctual present and past are formed with the appropriate personal conjugation of *sìn* with root plus -*èè* for the present and the infinite for the past.

The future is formed by adding the particle *khün* in front of the present tense form.

	punctual present	punctual past	non-punctual present	non-punctual past
1st person singular	sh <u>a</u> charr	sh <u>a</u> cheerr	j āh sh <u>a</u> chèè	j āh sh <u>a</u> chìn
2nd person singular	sh <u>a</u> chang	sh <u>a</u> cheeng	ng go sh <u>a</u> chèè	ng go sh <u>a</u> chìn
3rd person singular	sh <u>a</u> chash	sh <u>a</u> cheesh	ü sh sh <u>a</u> chèè	ü sh sh <u>a</u> chìn
1st person plural	sh <u>a</u> chì	sh <u>a</u> chee	s ì sh <u>a</u> chèè	s ì sh <u>a</u> chìn
2nd person plural	sh <u>a</u> chìj	sh <u>a</u> cheej	s ìj sh <u>a</u> chèè	s ìj sh <u>a</u> chìn
3rd person plural	sh <u>a</u> chìth	sh <u>a</u> cheeth	s ìth sh <u>a</u> chèè	s ìth sh <u>a</u> chìn

Table 4: Conjugation of the verb *shachìn* (to ski).

8.3 Negation and irrealis

Negation of the verb is achieved by adding the suffix -*kh* to the positive form. In compound tenses, the suffix is added to the very last verb:

Khün jāh chèè èèshmìg. (I will be a writer.) → *Khün jāh chèèkh èèshmìg.* (I will not be a writer.)

khün jāh chèè-kh èèshmìg
 FUT AUX.NPCT.1SG be.NPCT-NEG writer

An irrealis marker also exists. It has the form *mang* and is added as a separate word to the verb form. Its exact position is rather free. It indicates that the utterance does not describe a real fact:

Jāh mang khantjeshièè.
jāh mang khantjeshi-èè
 AUX.NPCT.1SG IRR work-NPCT

I would work (but I don't).

It is usually used as the first word of a work of fiction.

8.4 Auxiliaries

Auxiliary verbs are usually followed by the infinitive of the main verb. The auxiliary is conjugated for tense, aspect, person and number, while the main verb gets an eventual negation marker:

'Anggü moshanikhìnk.

'anggü-∅ moshanikh-ìn-kh
want.PRS.PCT.PL-1PL read-INF-NEG

We don't want to read.

It is also possible to have an auxiliary followed by a finite verb, in which case it would be translated with a relative clause:

Tèèrrarr mèèpueth babooneshwa jö ch'õ' a'õaachpeng.

tèèrr-a-rr mèèpue-th baboon-eshwa jö ch'õ-' a-'õ-aachpeng
wish-PRS.PCT.SG-1SG sit.PRS.PCT.PL-3PL baboon-PL on this-N ACC-the-rock

I wished there were baboons on this rock.

The passive construction is formed in an analogous way:

Szèètarr szeentang.

szèèt-a-rr szeenta-∅-ng
AUX.PASS-PRS.PCT.SG-1SG listen-PRS.PCT.SG-2SG

I'm being listened to by you.

8.5 Copulae

The verb “to be” is a special case, in that it can be conjugated for its attribute, instead of for its subject. This is only the case when the predicate is a noun and one of certain word orders is used. For example in the sentence

Üsh chèè göntarra Jorr o Jõnèèj.

üş chèè göntarra Jorr o Jõnèèj
AUX.NPCT.3SG be.NPCT family Jorr and Jõnèèj

Jorr and Jõnèèj are a family.

the verb has the singular form to agree with the predicate (a family), while the subject (Jorr and Jõnèèj) is plural. The verb is also irregular: the infinitive is *khün*, the present punctual is formed on the root *gi-* (without the *-a-* of the singular conjugation, but turning into *gü-* in the plural), and the past punctual and present non-punctual have root *ch-*.

Other copulae have their predicates formed with the preposition *szi* plus accusative:

Tshücharrgeesh szi gethtamekh akhatishuekh szüszash i jö aTchanjpchõ.

tshücharrg-ee-sh szi gethtamekh-∅ a-khatishuekh szüszash i jö a-Tchanjpchõ
become-PST.PCT-3SG PREP musical-C ACC-group famous.C to in ACC-Tchanjpchõ

It became a music ensemble known all the way to Tchanjpchõ.

Adjectives have the form adjective + *akhi* instead of the accusative.

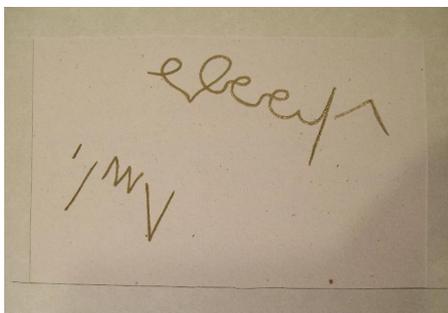


Figure 2: An example of the script with numbers. It is read, “*Jaami mich rranszeshwè o èèngg!*”, meaning, “Merry 2010!”

9 Numerals

Cardinals from one to ten are tabulated below.

1	<i>āh</i>
2	<i>mich</i>
3	<i>rhej</i>
4	<i>sèèt</i>
5	<i>khü</i>
6	<i>ga'</i>
7	<i>eeng</i>
8	<i>jüsh</i>
9	<i>to</i>
10	<i>èèngg</i>

Ordinals are formed by adding *se ngüch* after the cardinal.

10 Example text

Üsh khün Maarriüs arrichmakh ithorhen üsh mü'ashwèjìn jö a'Ojrröpa: eengāh se cha'emeshwè sjaszö aJöpitèerr. Üsh mü'ashwèjìn jö aTchanjchö: ishiga' nggèesh japrha. Üsh naagirrìn khün szekhsaig o aain i agerhmükhishwajeshèè önggek 'ipemösh.

Ötheesh i 'iszekhsaüt jö a'ionjö jö aTchanjchö o sheèngkhaeesh. agerhMèèjn thiszarheshwè tipuen öthin jö a'iah se japrha üsh kejangchìn ichi sith tipuenkh i 'iszekhsaüt.

Jö ch'aa a'öachèèn szekhsaütekh 'ipemöshütü Ojrröpa khinèèpeesh ee 'ageesh khantjeshuen sjaszeeng thäh. Khinapeesh a öngg.

Maarriüs was a young man who lived on Europa, one of Jupiter's moons. He lived in Tchanjchö, a rather important city. He dreamed of being a astronaut and of exploring the borders of the solar system.

He studied astronautics at the university of Tchanjchö and he did his best. He declined all invitations to go and study in the capital, because they would not lead him to space.

Then, the astronautics organization of Europa asked him if he did not want to work for them. He said yes.

üsh khün Maarriüs arrichmakh-Ø i-thorhen üsh mü'ashwèj-ìn jö
 AUX.NPCT.3SG be.INF Maarriüs young-C ANT-man AUX.NPCT.3SG live-INF on
a'-Ojrröpa : eengāh se cha'em-eshwè sjaszö a-Jöpitèerr. üsh mü'ashwèj-ìn
 ACC-Europa : one of moon-PL of ACC-Jupiter. AUX.NPCT.3SG live-INF

jö a-Tchanjpchõ : ishiga-’ nggèsh japrha. üsh naagirr-in khün
in ACC-Tchanjpchõ : important-N rather city. AUX.NPCT.3SG dream-INF be.INF
szekhsaìg o aa-in i a-gerh-mùkhhishwaj-eshèè õnggekhh-∅ ’i-pemõsh.
astronaut and explore-INF PREP ACC-the-border-PD.PL solar-C the-system.

õth-ee-sh i a-’i-szekhsaüt jö a-’i-õniõ jö a-Tchanjpchõ
study-PST.PCT-3SG PREP ACC-the-astronautics at ACC-the-university in ACC-Tchanjpchõ
o shèèngkha-ee-sh. a-gerh-mèèjn thiszarh-eshwè tip-uen õth-in jö
and do_one’s.best-PST.PCT-3SG. ACC-the-all invitation-PL go-INF study-INF in
a-’i-ãh se japrha üsh kejangch-in ichi sìth tip-uen-kh i
ACC-the-one of city AUX.NPCT.3SG decline-INF because AUX.NPCT.3PL go-INF-NEG to
’i-szekhsaüt.
the-astronautics.

jö ch’aa a-’õ-achèèn szekhsaütekh ’i-pemõsh-tü Ojrrõpa khinèp-ee-sh ee
on that.N ACC-the-time astronautic the-organization-PD Europa ask-PST.PCT-3SG if
’agee-sh khantjesh-uen sjaszeeng thãh. khinap-ee-sh a õngg.
want.PST.PCT-3SG work-INF for them. say-PST.PCT-3SG ACC yes.

11 Selected and annotated vocabulary

Below are a list of the prefixes, suffixes and free words occurring in the text. They are ordered according to the ’õSet’akh alphabet.

11.1 Prefixes

a- accusative; in front of a vowel, it becomes <i>a’</i> .	’õ- definite article for neuter gender words in the singular	singular
gerr- definite article for common gender words in the plural	’i- definite article for common gender words in the plural	eej- comparative and superlative of adjectives
gerh- definite article for neuter gender words in the plural		i- antecedent marker; in front of a vowel, it becomes <i>i’</i> .

11.2 Suffixes

-èè non-punctual present ending	-eej 2nd person plural punctual past verbal ending	-üt ending to derive a noun from a verbal root
-ang 2de person singular punctual verbal ending	-eeth 3rd person plural punctual past verbal ending	-in infinitive ending; if the root ends in <i>i</i> , this vowel and the ending are contracted to <i>-uen</i> • non-punctual past ending
-arr 1st person singular punctual verbal ending	-kh adjectival ending added to nouns; it has the form <i>-ekh</i> after a consonant •	-ij 2nd person plural punctual present verbal ending; if the root ends in <i>i</i> , this vowel and the ending are contracted to <i>-uej</i>
-ash 3rd person singular punctual verbal ending	-õ adverbial ending added to the root of verbs	-ith 3rd person plural punctual present verbal ending; if the root ends in <i>i</i> , this vowel and the ending are contracted to <i>-ueh</i>
-shèè possessed case plural neuter gender; an epenthetic schwa is inserted after a consonant	-ì 1st person plural punctual present verbal ending; if the root ends in <i>i</i> , this vowel and the ending are contracted to <i>-ue</i>	-shwè plural for neuter gender words; an epenthetic schwa is inserted after a consonant
-shü possessed case plural common gender; an epenthetic schwa is inserted after a consonant	-ig someone who; if the root ends in <i>i</i> , this vowel and the ending are contracted to <i>-ueg</i>	-shwa plural for common gender words; an epenthetic schwa is inserted after a consonant
-tü possessed case singular	-ikh adjectival ending added to the root of verbs; if the root ends in <i>i</i> , this vowel and the ending are contracted to <i>-uekh</i>	
-’ neuter ending for adjectives; it is pronounced <i>-’i</i> after a consonant		
-ee 1st person plural punctual past verbal ending		
-eeng 2de person singular punctual past verbal ending		
-eerr 1st person singular punctual past verbal ending		
-eesh 3rd person singular punctual past verbal ending		

11.3 Lexical words

èèshmìg (common noun) writer; it is derived from the verb *èèshmin* (to write books)

èègerren (common noun) girl

èèngg (numeral) ten

èèn (neuter noun) the letter ⟨èè⟩

Èèmantìng (proper name) the alphabet of 'òSet'akh

mèè (personal pronoun) I; accusative: *gen*, possessive: *gej*

mèèjn (noun) each one of

mèèjnta (neuter noun) everything; always used in definite form

mèèpuen (verb) to be seated, to sit

mang (particle) irrealis marker

Maarriüs (proper name) a boy's name

man (neuter noun) the letter ⟨m⟩

mü'ashwèjìn (verb) to live

mükhishwaj (neuter noun) border, end

mich (numeral) two

meshiaajö (adverb) usually; it is the adverb derived from *meshiaajìn* (to be used to)

meshiaajikh (adjective) usually; it is the adjective derived from *meshiaajìn* (to be used to)

meshiaajìn (verb) to be used to; it is the verb derived from *meshiaaj* (habit)

moshanikhìn (verb) to read

ngüch (neuter noun) row

ngisaanjìn (verb) to plant

rrames (neuter noun) shadow (of something or somebody)

rransz (numeral) thousand

rrorrna (adjective) scary

rrornnain (verb) to scare; it is the verb derived from the adjective *rrorrna* (scary)

a (preposition) accusative case marker for words that do not take the accusative prefix

amerherruen (verb) to resemble

arrichmakh (adjective) young; it is the adjective derived from the noun *arrichma* (youth)

aaìn (verb) to explore, to observe

aachpeng (neuter noun) a rock

akhi (particle) used after adjectives in lieu of an accusative case marker

achèèn (neuter noun) time, moment

achinoö (common noun) room

angg (personal pronoun) she (used for female people and animals); accusative: *ch'o*, possessive: *ch'ö*

anggchüikh (common noun) lover, boyfriend, girlfriend; derived from *anggchì* (love)

athngiö (common noun) plant (vegetative being)

shèèngkhain (verb) to do one's best

shèèntangìn (verb) to be (at a place)

shachìn (verb) to ski (not to any particular place); it has variants *shachuen* (to ski to somewhere) and *shachituen* (to ski around, to ski to and fro)

shö'aakh (adjective) nasal; it is the adjective derived from the noun *shö'äh* (nose) • (neuter noun) the letter ⟨'⟩; it is the noun derived from the adjective *shö'aakh*

shö'äh (common noun) nose

shisza (neuter noun) corridor

shpajngö (neuter noun) part (of something)

önggek (adjective) solar; it is the adjective derived from the noun *öngg* (sun)

öniö (common noun) university

teèrrin (verb) to like, to wish; it is irregular in that the past punctual and the present non-punctual are formed from the root *terr-*

tagirrèèin (verb) to sleep

tshücharrgìn (copula) to become, to turn into

ting (neuter noun) the letter ⟨ng⟩

tìpuen (verb) to go, to be going to; it is an irregular verb in that all forms but the present punctual plural are formed from the root *tìp-*; it has variants *rhèèuen* (to go to somewhere) and *tìpìtuen* (to go around, to go to and fro)

Tchanjpcö (proper name) a city's name

tsèèshpens (adverb/neuter noun) in a . . . way

to (numeral) nine

ga' (numeral) six

geen (neuter noun) the letter *g*

göntarr (common noun) a family

gethtamekh (adjective) musical; it is the adjective derived from the noun *gethtam* (music)

ch'ö (adjective) this

ch'äh (adjective) that; it is irregular in that its neuter form is *ch'aa*

'angchigekh (adjective) in love

'ö (personal pronoun) you (plural); accusative and possessive: *neesh*

'äh (neuter noun) the symbol used at the beginning of every word • (personal pronoun) you (singular); accusative: *èè'*, possessive: *èèj*

ee (conjunction) whether, if

eeng (personal pronoun) we; accusative: *rhö*, possessive: *rhue* • (numeral) seven

eengäh se one of the

khatishuekh (common noun) group; it is the noun derived from the adjective *khatishuek* (formed from its components)

khantjeshuen (verb) to work (for a job)

khapeson (common noun) word

kheekhingichnèèrr (common noun) tree; it derived from *khee khi* (without) plus *ngichnèèrr* (death)

khi (neuter noun) the letter ⟨kh⟩ • (determiner) no; always followed by a noun in indefinite form

khü (numeral) five

khün (copula) to be; it is an irregular verb • (particle) future marker

khinëèpin (verb) to ask for

khinapin (verb) to say

khejangchìn (verb) to decline

khjütharh (adverb) over there

öngg (interjection) yes (in answer to an affirmative question)

öthìn (verb) to study, to think about

i (empty preposition) used to take on the stress of an unstressable word • (preposition) antecedent marker for words that do not take an antecedent case • (when followed by the nominative case) to, having as destination, up to • (when followed by the accusative case) to, in the direction of

ing (neuter noun) weather

ingchantee' (adjective) ice-cold; its neuter form is *ingchantee'i*; it is derived from *ingchan* (like, as) plus *tee'* (ice)

ishiga (adjective) important, big

ü (empty preposition) used to take on the stress of an unstressable word

ütnejesh (neuter noun) book of fiction

ichi (conjunction) because, for

äh (numeral) one

äh se japhra (common noun) capital city

nggèèsh (adverb) rather

nggaj (neuter noun) the letter *ngg*

nggöchuen (verb) to see

cha'em (neuter noun) a moon

chajipuen (auxiliary) to be able to; marks an intrinsic ability, not an acquired one

chütäh (adjective) current

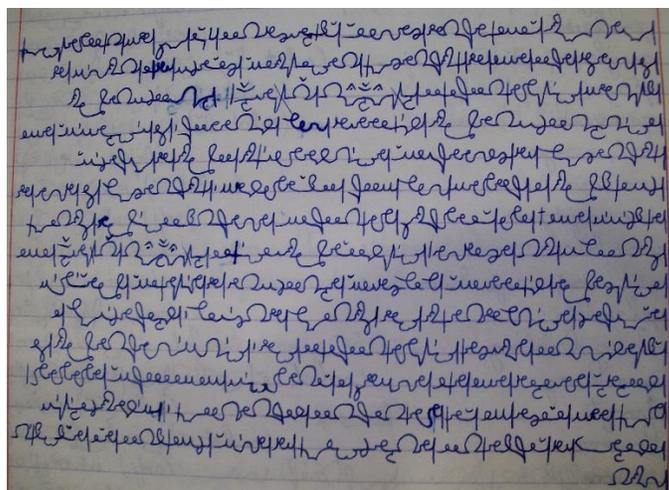


Figure 3: Translation of the first paragraph of *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* into 'õSet'akh, handwritten using the Ènmanting alphabet. This excerpt shows the language how it is written in normal text.

chinamöterr (neuter noun) bed	opinion of • (when followed by the possessed case)	jüsh (numeral) eight
nèèn (interrogative pronoun) who, what; only for the subject	near, against, during, (working) for	Jorr (proper name) a girl's name
naagirrìn (verb) to dream, to hope	sjaszö (preposition) (when followed by an accusative noun or a possessive pronoun) of, belonging to; used to denote some relationship other than possession • (when followed by the accusative case)	o (conjunction) and • (preposition) accusative case marker for words in the antecedent case
nimarhìn (verb) to understand	jangchekha (adverb) amorously	oisherh (adjective) beautiful
nengosh (neuter noun) space-ship	jaami (adjective) merrily beautiful	Ojrröpa (proper name) Europa
nemakh (adjective) pleasant; it is the adjective derived from the noun <i>nema</i> (friend, comrade)	janggün (auxiliary) to want; it is irregular, in that the initial <i>j</i> - changes into a <i>shö'aakh</i> when it is being conjugated, and in that the past punctual is formed from the root <i>'agee-</i>	shwè (personal pronoun) they (used for neuter nouns); accusative: <i>ashwè</i> , possessive: <i>üshwè</i> , distressed: <i>ueshwè</i>
nemakhi (adjective) unpleasant; negated form of <i>nemakh</i> (pleasant)	japrha (neuter noun) city	Shwèng (proper name) a boy's name
Njèènshwajgarr (proper name) Njenfalgar	Jönèèj (proper name) a boy's name	rhökhen (common noun) name
sèèt (numeral) four	Jöpitèèr (proper name) the planet Jupiter	rhökhenin (verb) to have as name, to call, to be called; it is the verb derived from the noun <i>rokhen</i> (name)
Söjikhö (proper name) a girl's name	jö (preposition) (when followed by the accusative case) in (a room), above • (when followed by an accusative noun or a pronoun in nominative case) on top of • (when followed by the possessed case) on, but not on top (like on a chair)	rhej (numeral) three
sin (auxiliary) denotes non-punctual aspect; is irregular, and is actually never used in the infinite outside grammar books and dictionaries	jig (personal pronoun) it (used for neuter gender noun); has a distressed form <i>jig</i> ; accusative: <i>asz</i> , possessive: <i>ath</i>	thiszarh (neuter noun) invitation; it is the noun derived from the verb <i>thiszarhìn</i> (to invite)
se (preposition) (when followed by the nominative case) having as goal • (when followed by the accusative case) made from • (when followed by a nominative case noun or a possessive pronoun) belonging to, also used in the set expression <i>se ngüch</i> for forming ordinal numbers		thäh (personal pronoun) they (used for common nouns and for heterogeneous groups of nouns); accusative: <i>gö</i> , possessive: <i>go</i>
set'akh (neuter noun) language		thorhen (common noun) man
sjaszeeng (preposition) (when followed by the nominative case) according to, to the		pèè (adverb) very, really very much so
		pajshö (adjective) big, tall; only used for people
		pemösh (common noun) system, organization
		szèètuen (auxiliary) passive-making auxiliary; it is irregular in that the present punctual singular is

formed from the root *szèèt-*
 • (verb) to have to, to be obliged to
szeentaìn (verb) to listen
szi (preposition) used for the attribute of other copulae than “to be”
szü (personal pronoun) he (used for male people, plants and common gender objects); accusative: *sakh*,

possessive: *sãõ*
szüszash (adjective) known, famous; it is irregular in that its neuter form is *szüszesh*
szekhsaìg (common noun) astronaut; it is derived from the verb *szekhsaìn* (to navigate through space, to fly through space with a boosted rocket)

szekhsaüt (common noun) astronautics; it is derived from the verb *szekhsaìn* (to navigate through space, to fly through space with a boosted rocket)
szekhsaütek (adjective) astronautic; it is the adjective derived from *szekhsaüt* (astronautics)
szorrprron (neuter noun) bike

12 Abbreviations used in glosses

1	first person	FUT	future	PD	possessed
2	second person	INF	infinitive	PL	plural
3	third person	IRR	irrealis	PREP	preposition
ACC	accusative	N	neuter gender	PRS	present
ADJ	adjective	NEG	negative	PST	past
ANT	antecedent marker	NPCT	non-punctual aspect	SG	singular
AUX	auxiliary	PASS	passive		
C	common gender	PCT	punctual aspect		