The languages of Kahal and Troil, at the time of the great war

Contents

1 General description

This document describes some languages as they were spoken in the time of the war between the empires of Kahal and of Troil, and it is limited to some languages of the two empires. I mainly describe Sar and Troil's language, with an extra section about what are commonly called the Koromlindi languages (but I do not limit myself to the variant of the eastern mountains, and, in fact, I say more about the variant of the plains, which lack a specific name). A last section describes some other languages of note.

1.1 Geopolitical situation

In order to understand the linguistic landscape, some remarks about the political divisions are in order.

The region covered by this document consists of a vast plain in the east and a mountain range in the west. The lands north and south are less hospitable, with mostly arid deserts; and there are no political entities to speak of there.

The plains are completely incorporated into the Empire of the Sun, governed from Khlv — officially called "the Eternal City of the Goddess of the Sun". It is a theocracy, with the High Priest being head of state. He gets instructions and guidelines directly from Kahal, the Sun Goddess herself. Sar, the language of the capital, is used as a *lingua franca* throughout the empire.

In the mountain range of the west, few people live. There used to be a thriving civilization, but the expansion of the Empire of the Sun into the foothills has incited the most powerful country there —the Empire of Earth— to pull back deeper into the mountains. The other countries have been overrun by the Sun, and only the Empire of Earth itself does still exist, remotely and without any contact with the outside world. Its capital is Gël, where Troil's language —or Troilgulm— is spoken. This is also the language used in interethnic contacts within this empire. The country is governed by the Earth Goddess Troil, who communicates with her priests in the main underground temple in Gël.

Among other important peoples are the Koromlindi, or just the Lindi for short. They originated in the mountains, but in times immemorial a branch split off, migrating to the plains. Their language is an important interlanguage in the regions where they live, both in the Sun and in the Earth lands.

One last notable kingdom is Gaishu, which used to be an ally of Earth, but which is now subjected to Sun. Its language is still used as a *lingua franca* in the former sphere of influence of the Gaishu kingdom.

1.2 General linguistic situation

The linguistic landscape is everywhere very diverse. Almost all languages are isolates, and the few groupings that do exist must usually be considered as dialects, rather than as different languages. The reason is, of course, that the active meddling of the deities of the planet has accelerated the natural evolution, and spoken language has emerged in literally thousands of independent places. There has not yet been time for a natural equilibrium to form. *Sprachbundes*, however, have formed already.

Common traits shared by the languages under consideration are lack of tones, the use of glides, the liberal use of /l/ and /r/ to make complicated consonant clusters, scarcity of special vowels (other vowels than front unrounded and back rounded are very rare), and the rareness of flection and fusion (using isolation and agglutination instead).

The languages from farther north usually have tones. In the mouth of the River Sur, front rounded vowels abound and fusion is more the norm. And, finally, in the foothills between the mountains and the plains, the linguistic diversity is very high, resulting in different exotic features every second village. Near the territory of the former kingdom of Gaishu retroflexes and simple syllable structure have become areal features.

1.3 Final notes

In the time of the war, writing was not yet invented. Anecdotical accounts of "making scribbles in wax, and suddenly remembering just about anything" seem to point at the private development of some proto-writing. In this document, I use IPA to write down the languages under consideration.

2 Sar

Sar is the language of Khlv, the capital of the Empire of the Sun, and of the surrounding area. It is used as a *lingua franca* throughout the empire.

2.1 Phonology

The phonology of Sar stands out by its excessive use of consonant clusters. Non-Sar-speaking tribes often make fun of the language, saying one must "hate vowels" in order to speak it well. A famous tongue-twister is "tsr̩qktʃkfpsqχqs" ("he really just kept counting them").

Native speakers and grammarians distinguish four "lasters" or "kl̩xkr" /ɐ, ə, l̩, r̩/ which play the role of vowels, two "colorers" or "ɣɐ-qək^jəkr" /w, j/ and a series of "ornamentals" or "ɣɐ-reggr", which are ordinary consonants.

The exact realisation of *lasters* and *ornamentals* depends on the dialect, and even within dialects on the speaker, and often one speaker mixes different realisations. In the accent of Khlv, the *colorers* are usually realised as labialisation or palatalisation of the consonant coming before, while other dialects would rather merge *colorer* and *laster* to make other vowels. For example, for the word "ŋxjɐl" ("to wait") the realisation may vary from [ɲɕɐl] over [ŋx^jæl] to [ŋxɛl]. In this document I will transcribe the vowels and consonants with their underlying representation, and the glides as superscript ("ŋx^jɐl").

It often happens by adding affixes that two identical consonants come together. In that case, one geminated consonant usually results, as in "lɐk" ("to go") plus "-kf" (past tense marker) giving "lɐkkf" ("went"), realised as [ˈlɐkːf]. Mark that this is not valid for *t* plus *ts*, as these must be considered as different sounds. In the locative ending they come together as "-tts", usually realised somewhat like [-tə̆ts].

Voicedness is not contrastive for the starting consonants of suffixes. If a suffix is appended to a word ending in a voiced consonant, the suffix turns voiced as well. For example:

g^jr̩nz ("to despise") + -kf (past) + -qχ (third person masculine singular subject) + -qs (third person masculine singular object) → g^jr̩nzgvgɣgz ("he despised him").

In this example one can also see that uvular consonants are velarised when voiced, as Sar has no voiced uvulars.

2.2 Nominal system

Sar nouns distinguish three genders: divine, common, and neuter. Adjectives have to agree with the gender of the noun they belong to. The common gender has the two sub-genders masculine and feminine, depending on the sex of the person under consideration. If the sex is unspecified, there is no general preference on which gender to choose.

There are two numbers: singular and plural. Number is expressed by suffixes, but it is possible not to mark it, as is often done in the singular.

	generic	singular	plural
"divinity"	q^wərl	q^wərl	q^wərl**tʃ**
"male inhabitant"	mp^jə-vɐdzɐrlkr	mp^jə-vɐdzɐrlkr**ɐ**	mp^jə-vɐdzɐrlkr**px**
"female inhabitant"	l̢-vɐdzɐrlkr	l̢-vɐdzɐrlkr**ɐ**	l̢-vɐdzɐrlkr**q**
"stone"	x^wɐr	x^wɐr**hɐɲ**	x^wɐr**mə**

There are three fundamental cases (nominative, accusative and genitive) and an oblique infix used to append a variety of other suffixes. Other relations are expressed by using postpositions, which always govern the genitive case.

	nominative	accusative	genitive	locative (with oblique infix)	inessive (with postposition)
"divinity"	q^wərl	q^wərl**s**	q^wərl**kl**	q^wərl**tts**	q^wərl**kl** dɐtts
"inhabitant"	vɐdzɐrlkr	vɐdzɐrlkr**s**	vɐdzɐrlkr**kl**	vɐdzɐrlkr**ɐtts**	vɐdzɐrlkr**kl** dɐtts
"stone"	x^wɐr	x^wɐr**s**	x^wɐr**kl**	x^wɐr**ətts**	x^wɐr**kl** dɐtts

2.3 Verbs

Sar inflects verbs for subject, object, aspect and mood, all with a variety of suffixes. (Mark that "aspect" is not seperate from tense, and "mood" is likewise conflated with other stuff.) Verbs can also take prefixes of motion and location (like *lɐk* "to go" → *sədəv-lɐk* "to rise"), and there exist some suffixes of derivation (like *bɐlɐnt* "to speak" → *bɐlɐntnə* "to tell"). These are always immediately attached to the root.

The third person suffixes for subject and object differentiate the three genders, and in the singular also the two sexes. Mark that these personal suffixes can be omitted if they are clear from the context.

Aspect affixes come in front of the personal conjugation. If the aspect is generic, not important or clear from the context, there is no affix. The affixes are:

- *-tɐt*: continuous

- *-kʃ*: past/perfective

- *-əɲ*: perfect

- *-f*: inceptive

- *-h^wɐ*: prospective

Mood affixes come between aspect and conjugation. No affix implies an ordinary positive statement. There is an affix for negation, for stressed positivity, for possibility (potential) and

for marking hearsay (reportative). Note that it is, for example, not possible to combine hearsay with negation —in such cases, an auxiliary verb must be used, usually *əd* ("to be"). The existing affixes are:

- *-ps*: positive

- *-x*: potential

- *-ɐɣ*: negative

- *-mʲə*: reportative

One example using all possible slots is:

Teŋk-tʃʷənʷɐqfmʲəhəsqs.

tɐŋk-tʃʷən-wɐq-f-mʷə-həs-qs
upwards-dig-back-INCP-REP-3PL.C-3.N

I heard they are starting to dig it back up.

There also exists an infinitive suffix *-fəŋ*. In order to form the participle, the adjectival suffix *-tsʷə* must be added. With this last suffix, the object conjugation comes last, and there can be no subject conjugation.

2.4 Syntax

The syntax of Sar is rather free. It has mostly head-last tendencies, which are sometimes stricter (postpositions always come after) than in other cases (the positions of subject and object are almost completely arbitrary).

Compound sentences usually involve the particle *jɐ* in some way.

Ḷ-ʃəg əddʒə, jɐ tɐwɐŋklxʷətsʷəjəkr əd, rʷḷg, jɐ lṛntsərpl.

ḷ-ʃəg   əd-dʒə , jɐ   tɐwɐŋkl-xʷə-tsʷə-jə-kr əd , rʷḷg , jɐ   lṛn-ts-ər-pl
M-person be-2SG , CONJ hide-PASS-ADJ-REFL-C be , but , CONJ watch-HBL-1SG-2SG

You are the man who was hiding, but I still managed to see you.

2.5 Longer example

The following text is an exerpt from the High Priest's speech before the war against the lands of Troil.

Lṛnplʷəŋnʷɐ ʒḷp fəŋrəwɐʃ. Lṛnpl ənʒgl jəʃəʒməs, ŋɣɐvməs qɐqʷɐŋmʲətts, tɐwɐŋkl-xʷəəntsʷə dənslməs vɐdzɐrlkrpxəwɐʃ pʲḷnd-qɐqɐqχʷətsʷə pɐmkl ʃəgətts. Ndzɐppxkl ʃəgʷɐʃ vəɣə-tsḷqlmə, jɐ tʃəmftsʷə mvṛxs ṛd-qəkʲə xʷɐrshə tɐŋk-tʃʷən. Ndzɐppxkl ʃəgʷɐʃ ɣɐ-rɐgvəŋmə. . .

Rʷḷg, jɐ ədhəs ṛd-qʷərlɐɣ. Nʃə xɐs ɣɐ-səŋhəs ndʒɐwɐʃ, jɐ gʲṛnzvəŋ əd, rʷḷg bɐlɐnt-nəwəŋ ṛd-pɐxʲɐŋkɐl Kɐhɐlɣʷɐ. Pḷŋkl kʲɐzls nəŋgʷərqʃ lɐkplʷəŋ pɐməʃɐ, jɐmfʃɐ, jɐmfkl ɣɐ-ntsʷḷʃətts ŋkḷd-ɣɐtsrmʲəʃɐ; əd, ʒḷp fəŋrətts ʃəgbɣɐʃɐ wɐʒ. Lɐjɐgrs mpəʒ-dʒəvəŋhəs əd rʷɐlʃ, rʷḷg, jɐ əd, ɣɐ-ʃṛmɐɣhəsʷəŋ wɐʒ. Pʲḷnd-lətʷədzlpshəs xɐs, jɐ dʒəvəŋ, rʷḷg, jɐ Pɐwɐʃ ɣʲɐnd ədɐɣhəs.

She showed me this land. She showed its cities, the hamlets in the vales, the hidden corridors the citizens have hewn out of the flesh of the earth. They have mines where they dig up precious metals and coloured stones. They have art. . .

But they are godless! They hold nothing but disdain for the sun, glorious Kahal told
me. Every day, She sends Her rays down to the earth, to us, to the peoples in the
empire, and even to the people in that realm. She gives us and them the gift of life,
but still they don't honour Her. They reap what She gives them, and they do not
thank Her in return.

lr̩ɲ-pl-wəŋ-nʷɐ ʒl̩p fəɲr-ə-weʃ. lr̩ɲ-pl ənʒ-gl jəʃəʒ-mə-s , ŋɣɐv-mə-s
see-APPL-3SG.D-1SG this land-OBL-INS. see-APPL it-GEN city-PL-ACC , hamlet-PL-ACC
qɐqʷɐɲ-mʲə-tts , tɐweŋkl-xʷə-əɲ-tsʷə-∅ dənsl-mə-s vɐdzɐrl-kr-px-ə-weʃ
valley-PL.OBL-LOC , hide-PASS-PRF-ADJ-N tunnel-PL-ACC live-NMLZ-PL-OBL-INS
pʲl̩nd-qɐqɐq-xʷə-tsʷə-∅ pɐm-kl ʃəg-ə-tts. ndzɐp-px-kl ʃəg-weʃ vəɣə-tsl̩ql-mə ,
inwards-hew-PASS-ADJ-N earth-GEN body-OBL-LOC. he-PL-GEN body-INS stone-pit-PL ,
jɐ tʃəmf-tsʷə-∅ mvr̩x-s r̩d-qəkʲə-∅ xʷɐr-s=hə tɐŋk-tʃʷən. ndzɐp-px-kl
CONJ few-ADJ-N metal-ACC with-colour-N stone-ACC=and upwards-dig. he-PL-GEN
ʃəg-weʃ ɣɐ-rɐg-vəŋ-mə. . .
body-INS make-beautiful-INF-PL. . .

rʷl̩g , jɐ əd-həs r̩d-qʷərl-ɐɣ. nʃə xɐ-s ɣɐ-səɲ-həs ndʒɐ-weʃ , jɐ
but , CONJ be-3PL.C with-god-NEG. one thing-ACC make-midriff-3PL.C sun-INS , CONJ
gʲr̩nz-vəŋ əd , rʷl̩g bɐlɐnt-nə-wəŋ r̩d-pɐxʲəŋ-kɐl kɐhɐl=ɣʷɐ. pl̩ɲ-kl kʲɐzl-s
despise-INF be , but say-ATT-3SG.D with-light-D Kahal=NOM. self-GEN rays-ACC
nəŋgʷər-qʃ lɐk-pl-wəŋ pɐm-ə-ʃɐ , jɐmf-ʃɐ , jɐmf-kl ɣɐ-ntsʷl̩-ʃ-ə-tts
day-every go-APPL-3SG.D earth-OBL-LAT , we-LAT , we-GEN make-rule-NMLZ-OBL-LOC
ŋkl̩d-ɣɐtsr-mʲə-ʃɐ ; əd , ʒl̩p fəɲr-ə-tts ʃəg-bɣ-ɐ-ʃɐ wɐʒ. lɐjɐgr-s
live-river-PL.OBL-LAT ; be , this land-OBL-LOC person-PL-OBL-LAT also. gift-ACC
mpəʒ-dʒɐv-wəŋ-həs əd rʷɐl-ʃ , rʷl̩g , jɐ əd ,
outwards-give-3SG.D-3PL.C be live-NMLZ , but , CONJ be ,
ɣɐ-ʃr̩m-ɐɣ-həs-wəŋ wɐʒ. pʲl̩nd-lətʷədzl-ps-həs xɐ-s , jɐ
make-honour-NEG-3PL.C-3SG.D also. inwards-take-POT-3PL.C thing-ACC , CONJ
dʒɐv-wəŋ , rʷl̩g , jɐ pɐ-weʃ ɣʲɐnd əd-ɐɣ-həs.
give-3SG.D , but , CONJ She-INS grateful be-NEG-3PL.C.

2.6 Vocabulary

This list gives the words, particles and affixes used in the examples above.

-ɐ (noun suffix) singular suffix for common nouns

-ɐ- oblique infix common gender

-ɐɣ (mood suffix) negative

bɐlɐnt (verb) to talk

bɐlɐntnə (verb) to tell

dɐtts (postposition) inside

dənsl (noun) path, tunnel, corridor

dʒəv (verb) to give

-ə- oblique infix neuter gender

əd (verb) to be

əd, . . . wɐʒ even

ənʒ (pronoun) it

-əɲ (aspect suffix) perfect aspect marker

-ər (conjugational suffix) 1st person singular subject

-f (aspect suffix) inceptive aspect marker

fəɲr (noun) land, country, realm

-fəŋ (suffix) infinitive

gʲr̩nz (verb) to despise

gʲr̩nzvəŋ (noun) contempt

ɣɐ- (prefix) to make something such

ɣɐ-ntsʷl̩ (verb) to rule

ɣɐ-ntsʷlʃ (noun) kingdom, empire

ɣɐ-qəkʲə (verb) to colour

ɣɐ-qəkʲəkr (noun) "colourer", the glides of Sar

ɣɐ-rɐg (verb) to make beautiful

ɣɐ-rɐggr (noun) "ornamental", consonant

ɣɐ-rɐgvəŋ (noun) art

ɣɐ-səɲ (verb) to feel, to have feelings

ɣɐ-ʃr̩m (verb) to honour

ɣɐtsr (noun) river

ɣʲɐnd (adjective) grateful

-ɣʷɐ (clitic) nominative marker

-hɐŋ (noun suffix) singular suffix for neuter nouns

-hə (clitic) and

-həs (conjugational suffix) 3rd person plural common, both subject and object

-hʷɐ (aspect suffix) prospective aspect marker

jɐ conjunction

jɐmf (pronoun) we, our people

-jə (conjugational suffix) reflexive suffix

jəʃəʒ (noun) city

Kɐhɐl (proper noun) Kahal, the Goddess of the Sun

-kɐl (adjectival suffix) divine gender marker

-kf (aspect suffix) past tense marker

kʲazl (noun) sun rays

-kl (case suffix) genitive

kl̩x (verb) to last

kl̩xkr (noun) "laster", sound that can be a syllable nucleus

-kr (suffix) somebody who, something which ● (adjectival suffix) common gender marker

-ktʃ (verbal suffix) continuously

l̩- (noun prefix) feminine

lətʷədzl (verb) to take
lɛjɐgr (noun) gift
lɛk (verb) to go
lɛkpl (verb) to send
lr̩n (verb) to watch
lr̩npl (verb) to show
lr̩nts (verb) to manage to see
-mə (noun suffix) plural suffix for neuter nouns
-mʲə (mood suffix) hearsay
-mʲə- contraction of -mə + -ə-
mpəʒ- (verbal prefix) outward
mpəʒ-dʒəv (verb) to give
mpʲə- (noun prefix) masculine
mvr̩x (noun) metal
ndzɐp (pronoun) he
ndʒɐ (noun) sun
nəŋgʷər (noun) day
nəŋgʷərqʃ (adverb) every day, dayly
-nʷɐ (conjugational suffix) 1st person singular object
-nə (verbal derivational suffix) softener of meaning
nʃə (number) one
ntsʷl̩ (noun) rule, law
ŋɣɐv (noun) hamlet
ŋkl̩d (verb) to be, to live
ŋkl̩d-ɣɐtsr (noun) people, tribe
ŋxʲɐl (verb) to wait
Pɐ (pronoun) He, She (divine gender)
pɐm (noun) the world, the earth
pɐxʲɐŋ (noun) light
pʲl̩nd (verbal prefix) inwards
pʲl̩nd-lətʷədzl (verb) to reap
pʲl̩nd-qɐqɐq (verb) to hew out
-pl (verbal derivational suffix) applicative ● (conjugation suffix) 2nd person singular informal object
pl̩n (pronoun) oneself
-ps (mood suffix) positive
-px (noun suffix) plural suffix for masculine nouns

-q (noun suffix) plural suffix for feminine nouns
qɐqɐq (verb) to hew
qɐqʷɐŋ (noun) valley
qəkʲə (noun) colour
-qs (conjugation suffix) 3rd person neuter object, both singular and plural
-qʃ (suffix) every (in time expressions)
qʷərl (noun) god, goddess, divinity
-qχ (conjugation suffix) 3rd person singular masculine subject
rɐg (adjective) beautiful
r̩d- (prefix) having, with
r̩d-pɐxʲɐŋ (adjective) glorious
r̩d-qəkʲə (adjective) coloured
r̩d-qʷərlɐɣ (adjective) godless
rʷɐl (verb) to live
rʷɐlʃ (noun) life
rʷlg (conjunction) but
-s (case suffix) accusative
Sɐr (proper noun) Sar, the language of the Empire of the Sun
sədəv- (verbal prefix) skywards
sədəv-lɛk (verb) to rise
sən (noun) midriff
-ʃɐ (oblique case suffix) lative case marker
-ʃ (suffix) substantivising suffix
ʃəg (noun) person, body ● a *shig*, the hominid species inhabiting the planet of the empires of Troil and Kahal, the ones speaking the languages described in this document, *dzəx* in Troilgulm
ʃr̩m (noun) honour
tɐŋk- (verbal prefix) upwards

tɐŋk-tʃʷən (verb) to dig out, to dig up
-tɐt (aspect suffix) continuous aspect marker
tɐwɐŋkl (verb) to hide
tɐwɐŋklxʷəəntsʷə (adjective) hidden
-ts (verbal derivational suffix) possibility marker
tsl̩ql (noun) pit
tsr̩q (verb) to tap, to touch, to count
-tsʷə (suffix) adjectival suffix
-tʃ (noun suffix) plural suffix for divine nouns
tʃə (conjugation suffix) 2nd person singular informal subject
tʃəmf (number) few
tʃəmftsʷə (adjective) rare, precious (of a metal)
tʃʷən (verb) to dig
-tts (oblique case suffix) locative case marker
vɐdzɐrl (verb) to live, to inhabit
vɐdzɐrlkr (noun) inhabitant
vəɣə (noun) stone
vəɣə-tsl̩ql (noun) mine
-wɐq (verbal derivational suffix) back
-wɐʃ (oblique case suffix) instrumental
wɐʒ (adverb) also
-wəŋ (conjugational suffix) 3rd person singular divine, both subject and object
-x (mood suffix) possible
xɐ (noun) thing, piece
xʷɐr (noun) stone
-xʷə (verbal derivational suffix) passive marker
ʒl̩p (determiner) this, that

3 Troilgulm

The language of Troil, or, by its native name, Troilgulm, is originally the language of the people living in and around Gël —which has become the capital city of the realms of Troil. It used to be the *lingua franca* of the entire mountain range west of the plains, but the expansion of the empire of Kahal and the subsequent shrinking of the sphere of influence of the Empire of Earth has seen the use of Troilgulm been abandoned in all regions closest to the plains.

3.1 Phonology

Troilgulm has a very rich syllable structure. There is a great variety of vowels, both long and short, and there are plenty of diphthongs and even triphthongs. The consonant inventory is rather ordinary, but it allows for some interesting consonant clusters.

The language possesses eight simple vowels /a, ɛ, e, i, ɔ, o, u, ə/. Five of these can also be long: /aː, eː, iː, oː, uː/. The two glides /j, w/ can come in front or after the vowel, resulting in a great variety of combinations. There are closing diphthongs, as in *xloj* (a kind of animal), *liwr* ("beautiful"), *Troːjl* (the goddess Troil) and *haːw* ("come on"); opening diphthongs, as in *dljok* ("good"), *znwɛ* ("to talk"), *twaː* ("leg") and *lwiː* ("seven"); and there are also triphthongs, as in *mjɔw* ("forty-nine") and *waːjp* ("stone").

Consonant clusters often involve /l/ and /r/, as in *vrjul* ("colour"), *sɛrmp* ("habitation") and *glwirt* ("to fall"). Nasals also often combine with other sounds, as in *vmɔts* ("to come after") and *ʔɔjnts* (perfect aspect marker). This can result in words starting with voiced stops with nasal release, like *bmaːt* ("Earth magic"), *dnujnsɔrf* ("invader") and *gŋaː* (prospective aspect marker).

One last remark concerns the glottal stop. This is not really a phoneme in Troilgulm, but it is used at the beginning of a particle starting in a vowel, when it comes at the beginning of a lexeme. For example if the combination *dzurl* ("you") plus *i* (topic marker) is expressed in this order, one gets *dzurl-i*; while if the order is inverted, the result would rather be *ʔi dzurl*. Sometimes a glottal stop is also inserted if such a particle comes after a vowel, but less consistently so.

3.2 Nominal system

Nouns in Troilgulm normally take one of four "articles", except when the noun is undetermined. An example of this last case is the sentence:

> ʔİ dzəx zuːj zeːwjap zeːw.
> TOP *dzëh* tall being be.
> *Dzëh* are tall beings.

If the noun is determined, it takes an article, which indicates its number.

- *i*: singular

- *gə*: paucal (only used with people)

- *mork*: plural

- *tsaːj*: all of the...

  > To i-giːs tsaːj-wɛrs-fənt geːwl-znwɛ.
  > NOM SG-man INCL-child-with CONT-speak
  > A man is talking to his children.

Adjectives can come in front of the article, or in between the article and the noun. In the first case they determine which of the noun is meant, while the second positioning is used when they could be left out without changing the meaning. For example:

> Pɛrx i-waːjp? Weŋk vweːs i-waːjp.
> which SG-stone? that ochre SG-stone.
> Which stone? That *ochre* stone.
> Pɛrx i-vweːs-waːjp? Weŋk i-vweːs-waːjp.
> which SG-ochre-stone? that SG-ochre stone.
> Which ochre stone? *That* ochre stone.

Furthermore, noun phrases can get prepositions and postpositions. There is one adposition that can come either in front or after the noun phrase it belongs to: the topic marker *i*. There are two prepositions: the nominative marker *to* and the accusative marker *wal*. These two can often be omitted. In normal speech, sentences will often start with the subject without preposition, and go on with the object with preposition. Other ways of building sentences, however, are possible, and will be used more or less often depending on register of speech, dialect, speaker, etc. All other adpositions come after the noun phrase.

3.3 Verbal system

Verbs are not conjugated for person. They can only get a preparticle indicating tense or aspect. Some examples:

Wɛm-bɛt sɛrmp riː-zeːw.
I-of   house PFV-be.

That used to be my house.

ʔİ bmən   i-groːlŋ   heːs-tsjɛf.
TOP over_there SG-mountain NPRF-climb.

I've never yet climbed that mountain over there.

Some verbs can function as auxiliaries. In that case, they get the tense particle, and the main verb comes after or before them in its bare form.

Wal frəts bmjuːl tsɔm vljaŋk-bmjots.
ACC her see   not PST-can.

I could not see her.

Verbs are often compounded to create more shades of meaning or even just to embellish the style. An example of the first is *vəltbmjuːl* ("to look") from *vəlt* ("to observe") and *bmjuːl* ("to see"), or *weːŋknjɔ* ("to go away") from *weːŋk* ("gone") and *njɔ* ("to go"). The second case can be seen in *zwirŋxrals* ("to defend") from *zwirŋ* (also "to defend") and *xrals* ("to fight").

3.4 Syntax

Troilgulm's word order is mostly head-last. The order of the parts of a sentence, however, is rather free, and the function of each word is often indicated with adpositions, resolving most ambiguities.

The language is pro-drop. It also has a topic-comment structure. The topic is indicated by the particle *i*. Often the function of the topic in the sentence is indicated by the pronoun *hi* with the appropriate adposition, as in:

Troːjlgulm-i   wal hi   gŋɔjs Gəl-srɔts ʔi-gŋaj-ləl.
Troilgulm-TOP ACC TOP use   Gël-in   SG-it-near.

Troilgulm is spoken in an near Gël.

There are several ways to construct compound sentences. Ordinary subordinate clauses are often formed with the conjunction *soːr*:

Wɛm-krweː ʔi-tjoːwɛrs ʔox-hənt sɛrmp soːr ʔi-rəs-srɔts fo.
I-of   SG-son   PRS-want house that SG-earth-in be.

My son wants an underground house.

3.5 Longer example

The text below is the dream-message the High Priest of Troil received from his goddess concerning the impending war.

Wɛm-krweː ʔi-lojf Jɛlŋ-i, Slaj-bɛt Meːŋ, wal hi-bɛt mork-dluːrn geːwl-mwiːxsut, tsweːf zeːw glamnoːjn wal wɛm-bɛt tsaːj-loŋk. Tsaːj-dzurlbəlm zwirŋxrals, sər wal bmjotsjap gŋaː-hirntgwɔ tsaːj-dzurlbəlm-və. Jɔjkdner-viː njɔ sriŋ guːjl, rəmp zlɛmp-vəlttsweŋ ʔi-tiːrkgroːlŋ. ʔİ-mumpbarn-waːjp-i sjarx xli sər wal dzəx gŋwa fok, sər zrɛjtgwɔ! ʔİ wal bmaːt to i-groːlŋ zlɛmp-znjɔŋ kjur. Wal hi hɛwntsleː zri-bit. Sər sorl, sər leː zri gljaːj soːr tsweŋ. Wal bmaːt-i zlɛmp-hɛwntsleː tjoːl gŋəx, sər bəlm hɛj swark bmjots. Sər, leː dnuːlts sjarx gŋəx. Sər kjur, wal i-gljaːj swark tsɔm zlɛmp-bmjots. Njɔ-rɔjmpnjɔ zlɛmp-vweː. ʔİ wal weŋk bmaːt leːnaw Gəl-srots vjoːlmhɛwnt-waj. To wɛm zlɛmp-zram kweːf soːr zri-bit mɛls ʔi-sjarxhiːws tsweːf wal i-gljaːj swark, tsweːf bɛwsut Jɛlŋ-bɛt ʔi-rwɛnt tsaːj-dluːrn. De swits.

My brother Yelng, God of the Sun, is preparing his armies to invade my lands. To

defend yourself, I will give you power. Go northwest during three days and you will find a volcano. The molten stone is sufficiently hot to kill a *dzëh* right away, so watch out! The mountain will also spit Earth magic. Harvest it with Sun magic. Take all Sun magic you can find for this. You will harvest too much Earth magic for one person to bear. So bring enough people. Even then, you will not yet be able to carry it all. You will have to go to and fro. Store all this Earth magic under the temple hill in Gël. I will choose someone who knows enough of Sun magic to carry it all, and to destroy the capital city and all the armies of Yelng. Now wake up.

wɛm-krweː ʔi-lojf jɛlŋ-i , slaj-bɛt meːŋ , wal hi-bɛt mork-dluːrn
I-of SG-brother Jelng-TOP , sun-of god , ACC TOP-of PL-army
geːwl-mwiːxsut , tsweːf zeːw glamnoːjn wal wɛm-bɛt tsaːj-loŋk. tsaːj-dzurlbəlm
CONT-prepare , goal be invade ACC I-of INCL-land. INCL-you
zwirŋxrals , sər wal bmjotsjap gŋaː-hirntgwɔ tsaːj-dzurlbəlm-və. jɔjkdner-viː njɔ
defend , so ACC power PROS-gift INCL-you-to. northwest-direction go
sriŋ guːjl , rəmp zlɛmp-vəlttsweŋ ʔi-tiːrkgroːlŋ. ʔi-mumpbarn-waːjp-i sjarx xli sər
day three , then FUT-find SG-volcano. SG-molten-stone-TOP sufficiently hot so
wal dzəx gŋwa fok , sər zrɛjtgwɔ! ʔi wal bmaːt to i-groːlŋ
ACC *dzëx* immediately kill , so be_careful! TOP ACC Earth_magic NOM SG-mountain
zlɛmp-znjɔŋ kjur. wal hi hɛwntsleː zri-bit. sər sorl , sər leː zri
FUT-spit also. ACC TOP harvest Sun_magic-with. so do , so take Sun_magic
gljaːj soːr tsweŋ. wal bmaːt-i zlɛmp-hɛwntsleː tjoːl gŋəx , sər bəlm hɛj
all that find. ACC Earth_magic-TOP FUT-harvest too much , so person one
swark bmjots. sər , leː dnuːlts sjarx gŋəx. sər kjur , wal i-gljaːj swark tsɔm
carry can. so , take people sufficiently many. so also , ACC SG-all carry not
zlɛmp-bmjots. njɔ-rɔjmpnjɔ zlɛmp-vweː. ʔi wal weŋk bmaːt leːnaw gəl-srots
FUT-can. go-return FUT-have_to. TOP ACC that Earth_magic store Gël-in
vjoːlmhɛwnt-waj. to wɛm zlɛmp-zram kweːf soːr zri-bit mɛls
temple_hill-under. NOM I FUT-choose someone who Sun_magic-about know
ʔi-sjarxhiːws tsweːf wal i-gljaːj swark , tsweːf bɛwsut jɛlŋ-bɛt ʔi-rwɛnt tsaːj-dluːrn.
SG-enough to ACC SG-all carry , goal destroy Yelng-of SG-capital INCL-army.
de swits.
now wake.

3.6 Vocabulary

This list gives the words, particles and affixes used in the examples above.

bəlm (noun) person
bɛt (postposition) genitive marker
bɛwsut (verb) to destroy, to break
bit (postposition) about
bmaːt (noun) *bmaat*, Earth magic
bmən (determiner) over there
bmjots (verb) can, to be able
bmjotsjap (noun) power
bmjuːl (verb) to see
de (adverb) now
dljok (adjective) good
dluːrn (noun) troops, army
dnujnsərf (noun) invader
dnuːlts (noun) people
dzəx (noun) a *dzëh*, the hominid species inhabiting the planet of the empires of Troil and Kahal, the ones

speaking the languages described in this document, *ʃəg* in Sar
dzurl (pronoun) you, singular informal
dzurlbəlm (pronoun) you, singular formal
fənt (postposition) with
fo (verb) to be located
fok (verb) to kill
frəts (pronoun) he, she
heːs (particle) negative perfect tense marker, never before
geːwl (particle) continuous aspect marker
gə (article) paucal article
Gəl (proper noun) Gël, the capital city of the Empire of Earth
giːs (noun) man
glamnoːjn (verb) to invade

gljaːj (numeral) all
glwirt (verb) to fall
gŋaː (particle) prospective aspect marker, going to
gŋaj (pronoun) it
gŋəx (numeral) much, many, a lot
gŋɔjs (verb) to use
gŋwa (adverb) immediately, right away
groːlŋ (noun) mountain
guːjl (numeral) three
haːw (particle) come on
hɛwntsleː (verb) to harvest
hɛj (numeral) one
hi (pronoun) referer to the topic
hirntgwɔ (verb) to gift, to give
i (particle) topic marker ● (article) singular article
Jɛlŋ (proper noun) Yelng, the God of the Sun, analogous to the goddess Kahal in the Sun empire

jɔjkdner (adjective) northwestern
kjur (adverb) too, as well
krwe: (postposition) genitive marker for relationships between people
kwe:f (noun) someone
le: (verb) to take
le:naw (verb) to store
ləl (postposition) near
liwr (adjective) beautiful
lojf (noun) brother, sister
loŋk (noun) land, realm
lwi: (numeral) seven
me:ŋ (noun) god, goddess, divinity
mɛls (verb) to know
mjɔw (numeral) forty-nine
mork (article) plural article
mumpbarn (adjective) molten
mwi:xsut (verb) to prepare
njɔ (verb) to go
ox (particle) present tense marker
ɔjnts (particle) perfect aspect marker
pɛrx (determiner) which
rəmp (adverb) then
rəs (noun) earth, ground
ri: (particle) perfective past marker
rɔjmpnjɔ (verb) return
rwɛnt (noun) capital city
sɛrmp (noun) habitation, house
sər (adverb) in this way ● (conjuction) so, thus
sjarx (adverb) sufficiently

sjarxhi:ws (noun) enough
slaj (noun) sun
so:r (conjuction) which
sorl (verb) to do, to act
sriŋ (noun) day
srɔts (postposition) in
swark (verb) to carry
swits (verb) to wake up
ti:rkgro:lŋ (noun) volcano
tjo:l (adverb) too
tjo:wɛrs (noun) son
to (preposition) nominative marker
Tro:jl (proper noun) Troil, the Goddess of the Earth
Tro:jlgulm (proper noun) Troilgulm, the language of the Empire of the Earth
tsa:j (article) article including all of the following noun
tsjɛf (verb) to climb
tsɔm (adverb) not
tswe:f (noun) goal ● (conjunction, preposition) in order to
tswɛŋ (verb) to find
twa: (noun) leg
və (postposition) to
vəlt (verb) to observe, to watch
vəltbmju:l (verb) to look, to watch
vəlttswɛŋ (verb) to find
vi: (noun) direction
vjo:lmhɛwnts (noun) temple hill
vljaŋk (particle) past tense marker

vmɜts (verb) to come after
vrjul (noun) colour
vwe: (verb) to have to
vwe:s (adjective) ochre
waj (postposition) underneath
wa:jp (noun) stone
wal (preposition) accusative marker
weŋk (determiner) that (near you)
we:ŋk (adverb) away, gone
we:ŋknjɔ (verb) to go away
wɛm (pronoun) I
wɛrs (noun) child
xli (adjective) hot
xloj (noun) the *hloy*, a kind of animal kept for its milk, flesh and wool, *rvos* in Koromlindi
xrals (verb) to fight
ze:w (verb) to be
ze:wjap (noun) being
zlɛmp (particle) future tense marker
znjɔŋ (verb) to spit out
znwɛ (verb) to talk, to speak
zu:j (adjective) tall
zram (verb) to choose
zrɛjtgwɔ (verb) to pay attention, to watch out
zri (noun) *zri*, Sun magic, what in the Sun empire is called *haŋ*
zwirŋ (verb) to defend
zwirŋxrals (verb) to defend

4 Koromlindi

Koromlindi or just Lindi is a language spoken by a variety of tribes, living in both the empires of Sun and Earth. There are two main dialect groups, which I will here denote by the plains and the mountains variants. They differ only in phonology and some vocabulary (especially in loanwords they took from Sar or from Troilgulm), making them mutually intelligeable with some goodwill from all speakers.

The example sentences below are given in the plains variant, and the longer example text uses the mountains variant.

4.1 Phonology

The plains variant has five-vowel system (/a, e, i, o, u/), while the mountains variant has seven vowels, two of which can be long or short (/a, ɛ, e, i, i:, ɔ, o, u, u:/). Diphthongs are not used, but two can be reconstructed: they correspond roughly to the mountains vowels /ɛ/ and /ɔ/. In the plains variant they are often /as/ and /af/. A comparison is made in the table below.

In the Lindi language, consonants can be labialised. In the plains variant this is realised as a labiodental /v/ (as in *svek* ("to be able, can") and *dvaf* ("that, which")), while the mountains variant has the labiovelars /kʷ/ and /gʷ/ (as in *skʷek* and *dgʷo*). Further processes can, however, make the situation more complex, as in *Mal* (a proper name), which corresponds to the mountains gloss *Mgʷɔl*, and *sku:k* ("all"), which has the plains cognate *stvok*.

Another point of interest are the aspirated stops /pʰ, tʰ, kʰ/, which are realised as fricatives (/ɸ, θ, x/) on the plains. In the plains variant, this can give rise to clusters such as /fɸ/ and /sθ/, which, in many dialects, are subject to more sound changes. There is, however, no unified pronunciation at all, and this document will write the clusters without further changes reflected.

gloss	plains	mountains
*aɪ		
in	*was*	*wɛ*
one	*has*	*hɛs*
to feel	*a sθaŋdil*	*a sthɛndl*
*aʊ		
more	*maf*	*mɔ*
to protect	*a svafp*	*a skʷop*
blanket	*nam*	*nɔm*

A last remark concerns the epenthetic vowels used on the plains to break up consonant clusters, as in *Kvandar* (proper name, mountains: *Kʷɔndr*) and *bvafsul* ("to attack, to aggress", mountains: *bgʷosl*). When endings are added, the epenthetic vowel can move or disappear altogether, as in the verb *a sθaŋdil* ("to feel"), which has the past imperfective plural *mundur sθaŋdlist* ("we felt") and the future form *kve sθaŋdli* ("I will feel"). The mountains variant has for these forms: *a sthɛndl*, *mundr sthɛndlst* and *kʷe sthɛndli*.

4.2 Nominal system

The Lindi language uses inflection very sparingly. Nouns only get a diminutive and a plural suffix. In the plains variant, phonological processes can give rise to more irregular forms —the epenthetic vowel can move (as in *gifpir* ("half"), diminutive: *gifpri*). In both variants, words originally ending in a diphthong are also subject to changes in the diminutive. The table below gives the nominal inflexion of the word *rvos* (a kind of animal) in plains Lindi.

	singular	plural
default	*rvos*	*rvos**t***
diminutive	*rvos**i***	*rvos**it***

More interesting are the personal pronouns. The first person has a singular form (*kve*), a plural exclusive form (*mundur*), an inclusive form which includes a singular second person (*kvas*) and an inclusive plural form (*ves*). The second person had a singular (*θal*) and a plural form (*naf*). The third person distinguishes in both singular and plural a masculine (*fi*, *fit*), feminine (*os*, *ost*), non-personal animate (*lem*, *best*) and inanimate form (*jek*, *it*), and there is also a gender-neutral plural form (*akar*).

4.3 Verbal system

Verbs in Lindi are conjugated for tense/aspect and for the number of the subject. The table below gives the conjugation of the verb *a zvem* ("to do, to make").

	singular	plural
present	*zvem*	*zvem**t***
past imperfective	*zvem**s***	*zvem**st***
past perfective	*zvem**a***	*zvem**at***
future	*zvem**i***	*zvem**it***
infinitive	**a** *zvem*	
imperative	*zvem**u***	

As in the nominal inflection, verbs can be irregular due to phonological processes. In the plains variant, the epenthetic vowel can change place, as in the example of *a sθaŋdil* above. In

both variants, words originally ending in a diphthong are also irregular. For example, the verb *a fpas/a fpɛ* ("to say") has the past perfective singular *kve fpaza/kʷe fpajɛ* ("I said").

4.4 Syntax

The syntax of Lindi is SVO, prepositional and has adjectives in front of nouns.

Yes-no questions are formed by putting the particle *il* after the word being put to question. Other questions are formed with an interrogative word *in situ*. The formation of questions in the mountains variant is of note, in that all questions have to end in the particle *bɛs*.

> θal sθaŋdil il gvant wo kve ?
> Tʰal stʰɛndl il gʷɔnt jɛmp kʷe bɛs ?
> you feel   Q love for me Q ?
> Do you love me?

4.5 Longer example

The text below is something Rokoy told Kvandar on their way to the capital of Troil's realm. Rokoy is not a native speaker of Lindi, but he learned the mountains variant from a young age. His being with Kvandar for such a long time also influenced his speech. This exerpt, however, is given in correct mountains Lindi.

> *Akr nutrzgʷemt ɾiŋkɾiŋk: "Zof* kiŋnjoːrx *bgʷoslt ves xkʷen gast bɛs? Ves ŋgʷɛ-zgʷemat xkʷen jɛmp akr bɛs?" Fkʷe kʷe hust va pʰo. Yɛstlzir fpʰa nɔf zgʷema ɾempr jɛmp nɔf. I mesr os fpʰolzgʷema tis a vur a nomblzgʷem, dgʷo wɛ ɾost uːfr a va* Troːjl *dgʷo i nomblzgʷem puk. Zes-zessus, nɔf ŋgʷɛzgʷemt os. Nɔf demprt skʷɔs tis dgʷo os va pʰes, fkʷe wɛ huŋkl hen. Iːntl va ɾon, tʰal hust bɛs? Os fpʰolzgʷema tis dgʷo* Troːjl *nomblzgʷemi skuːk puk, kʰok fpʰa os va wɛ. ʕu, os vgʷesa fpendltmat fpʰa os uː tkʷɛk fpʰa mundr. Jɛmp i dgʷo mundr bɔt nɔf skʷek.*
>
> *Os* Troːjl *fpajɛ jɛmp kʷe!*

> They always ask: "Why do those *kingnyoorkh* [demon] attack us? What did we do them wrong?" But I know why it is. It's your goddess who told you to do so. She decided one day she would stop ruling, that it's really Troil who should rule the earth. And anyway, you treat her badly. You even think she's a woman, but she's not. The sun is a man, you know. She decided Troil would rule all of the earth, also her part. So she sent her armies into our trap. So we can destroy you.
>
> Troil told me so herself!

> akr nutrzgʷem-t ɾiŋkɾiŋk : "zof kiŋnjoːrx bgʷosl-t ves xkʷen gast bɛs? ves
> they ask-PL   always : "those demon   attack-PL us which reason Q? we
> ŋgʷɛzgʷem-a-t xkʷen jɛmp akr bɛs?" fkʷe kʷe hust va pʰo. yɛstlzir fpʰa nɔf
> wrong-PST.PFV-PL what to   them Q?" but I   know is why. goddess of   you
> zgʷem-a   ɾempr   jɛmp nɔf. i mesr os fpʰolzgʷem-a tis   a vur a
> make-PST.PFV command to   you. one day she fix-PST.PFV   thoughts to stop to
> nomblzgʷem , dgʷo wɛ ɾost uːfr a va troːjl dgʷo i   nomblzgʷem puk.
> rule   , that in root ought to be Troil who ANT rule   puk.
> zes-zessus   , nɔf ŋgʷɛzgʷem-t os. nɔf dempr-t skʷɔs tis   dgʷo os va pʰes   ,
> such-not_such , you wrong-PL   her. you have-PL even thoughts that she is woman ,
> fkʷe wɛ huŋkl hen.   iːntl va ɾon , tʰal hust bɛs? os fpʰolzgʷem-a tis   dgʷo troːjl
> but in right not_be. sun is man , you know Q? she fix-PST.PFV   though that Troil
> nomblzgʷem-i skuːk puk , kʰok fpʰa os va wɛ. ɾu , os vgʷes-a   fpendltma-t fpʰa
> rule-FUT   all   earth , part of   her is in. so , she send-PST.PFV army-PL   of
> os uː tkʷɛk fpʰa mundr. jɛmp i   dgʷo mundr bɔ-t   nɔf skʷek.
> she to trap of   we.   to NMLZ that we   destroy-PL you can.

```
os   tro:jl fpaj-ɛ         jɛmp kʷe!
she  Troil say-PST.PFV  to    me!
```

4.6 Vocabulary

Below is given the vocabulary used in the examples. The words are first given in the plains
form, and then in the mountains form. Mark that some words, and especially prepositions and
particles, cannot always be straightforwardly translated from one variant to the other, making the
translations sometimes rather free.

a (preposition) to, used to form the infinitive form

-*a* (tense suffix) past perfective suffix

akar/akr (pronoun) they (for people)

bas/bɛs (particle) sentence-final question marker

best (pronoun) they (animate non-personal)

bvafsul/bgʷosl (verb) to attack, to aggress

dvaf/dgʷo (conjuction) that, who, which

fan/u:fr (verb) ought, should

fi (pronoun) he

fin/u: (preposition) toward, into

fit (pronoun) they (masculine)

fpas/fpɛ (verb) to say

fpendeltma/fpendltma (noun) army

fɸa/fpʰa (preposition) of

fɸolzvem/fpʰolzgʷem (verb) to fix, to attach

gast (noun) reason

gifpir/gifpr (noun) half

gvant/gʷɔnt (noun) love

has/hɛs (numeral) one

hen (verb) not to be

huŋkul/huŋkl (adjective) true, right

hust (verb) to know, to be able

i (numeral) one • (pronoun) pronoun referring to the antecedent of a subordinate clause • (particle) nominaliser

-*i* (noun suffix) diminutive suffix • (tense suffix) future tense suffix

il (particle) question marker

it (pronoun) they (inanimate)

jastalzir/jɛstlzir (noun) god, goddess, divinity

jek/i:k (pronoun) it (inanimate)

jentel/i:ntl (noun) sun

kindir/fkʷe (conjunction) but, however

kiszvem/bɔ (verb) to destroy, to ruin

–/*Koɾomɾindi* (proper noun) Koromlindi, a language consisting of two dialect groups

Kvandar/Kʷɔndr (proper name) Kvandar, a boy's name

kvas/xkʷɛ (pronoun) we (inclusive singular you)

kve/kʷe (pronoun) I

kven/xkʷen (pronoun) what • (determiner) which

lem/ɾem (pronoun) it (animate)

lemper/ɾempr (noun) command, order

liŋkliŋk/ɾiŋkɾiŋk (adverb) always

maf/mɔ (adverb) more

Mal/Mgʷɔl (proper name) Mal, the founder of the Mal tribe

meser/mesr (noun) day

mundur/mundr (pronoun) exclusive we

naf/nɔf (pronoun) you (plural)

nam/nɔm (noun) blanket

nombolzvem/noblzgʷem (verb) to rule

nuturfpas/nutrzgʷem (verb) to ask

os (pronoun) she

ost (pronoun) they (feminine)

puk (noun) earth, ground, the world

pvast mur/vur (verb) to stop

ɸes/pʰes (noun) woman

ɸo/pʰo (adverb) why

ron/ɾon (noun) man

rost/ɾost (noun) root

ru/ɾu (conjunction) so, thus

rvos/ɾgu:s (noun) the *rvos*, a kind of animal kept for its milk, flesh and wool, *xloj* in Troilgulm

-*s* (tense suffix) past imperfective suffix

stvok/sku:k (adjective) all

sθaŋdil/stʰɛndl (verb) to feel

sθer-sθersus/zes-zessus (adverb) anyway, by the way

svas/skʷɔs (adverb) even, also

svafp/skʷop (verb) to protect

svek/skʷek (particle) to be able, can

-*t* (suffix) plural suffix for nouns and verbs

tis (noun) thoughts, idea

tvask/tkʷɛk (noun) trap

θal/tʰal (pronoun) you (singular)

-*u* (verbal suffix) imperative marker

va (verb) to be

vaszvem/ŋgʷɛzgʷem (verb) to wrong, to maltreat

vbves/vgʷes (verb) to send

ves (pronoun) we (inclusive plural you)

was/wɛ (preposition) in

wo/jɛmp (preposition) for, to

xok/kʰok (noun) part

zof (determiner) that, this, those, these

zvem/zgʷem (verb) to do, to make

5 Other languages

5.1 Va'epta

Va'epta is a language widely spoken in the delta of the River Sur. Its speakers mostly live of
fishing and of crops that grow in water. They eat all kinds of river life like shellfish and algae,
resulting in their being looked at askance by the people living outside the delta.

The region where Va'epta is spoken typically has languages with front rounded vowels, and
Va'epta is no exception. It has a five-vowel system: /a, ə, i, y, u/, and vowels can be long or
short. Often, however, the length distinction goes together with a difference in quality, resulting
in pairs like /ʏ/ versus /y:/ and /ə/ versus /œ:/. In this document only the length distinction will
be marked. Furthermore the language distinguishes four points of articulation in its consonant

inventory. The voiceless stops, for example, are /p, t, c, k/, and /c/ contrasts with /tʃ/. A last point of note are the intervocalic consonant clusters as in *taptsən* ("to see", past root) and *byŋnə* ("to dance, to behave like a fool", non-past root).

As with Sar, Va'epta has an agglutinative grammar with a wealth of suffixes. Postpositions are almost always suffixed to the nouns they belong to. Verbs, for their part, agree with the subject and all kinds of possible objects, and besides aspect they also show tenses, distinguishing hodiernal, hesternal and distal pasts, and similar tenses in the future. Adjectives are almost all derived from nouns and verbs, making it a nearly adjective-less language.

The following is a Va'ee proverb.

Ɽaːʃ tə fəːgatpin: nuːkazət ɲamaɾuʔəŋ, ʃajip byŋnətuk səːpiːt.

ɾaːʃ   tə fəːg-atpin : nuːk-azə-t   ɲa-maɾu-ʔəŋ   , ʃajip byŋnə-t-uk   səːpiː-t.
chief is *fek*-like   : float-can-3SG all-above-1PL , but   dance-3SG-COND sink-3SG.

A chief is like a *fek*-boat: he can float above all of us, but if he dances too much, he'll sink.

In the vocabulary below, verbs are given with their non-past root first, followed by the past root.

byŋne/bykta (verb) to dance, to behave like a fool
-əŋ (nominal suffix) our
fək (noun) a *fek*-boat, a flat-bottomed rowing boat used by the people in the river delta
-maɾu (nominal suffix) above
mə (verb) to be, a highly irregular verb
nuːk/nuʃi (verb) to float

ɲas (noun) all, everyone
ɾaːʃ (noun) chief
səːpi:/səːptsan (verb) to sink
ʃajip (conjunction) but
-t (verbal suffix) third person singular subject marker for people
-tpin (nominal suffix) like, resembling
-uk (verbal suffix) if

Vaʔəː (proper noun) a people from the delta of the River Sur
Vaʔəpta (proper noun) Va'epta, a language from the delta of the River Sur
vagu/taptsən (verb) to see
-z- (verbal suffix) can, to be able, it takes forms like *-za*, *-tsa* and *-azə* among less regular forms

5.2 Gamfi Gaishu

The language of Gaishu, or *gamfi Gaishu*, used to be the language of the Gaishu realm when that was still independent from the Sun Empire. Even after the lands were completely conquered by the empire of Kahal, however, the language remained in general use as a *lingua franca*, and often even as the language of government. The people of Gaishu ever remained hostile towards Sar.

The language has relatively simple phonotactics, allowing only nasals (always assimilated with what comes after), glides, and /l/ and /r/ to appear at the end of syllables. It has retroflexes, which are typical of that region. Also of note are the palatalised consonants, which are in completementary distribution with retroflexes and velars.

It is isolating with a rather simple grammar. Of note is its SVO structure in most cases, becoming VSO after certain particles.

The text below is the beginning of an explanation about the Gaishu pantheon.

Fəŋ Gaɪʂu, ni viəkala ɕiɲʂaɪ wun Ʂaɪmu, ni Viəkala n'Təldʑiʊxupuə. Daʊ bapi ɕir waramaran zu wun kə ni tɕiʊzə Pidivuɪra, ni bənaɪ haɪdir, Zəɕikːan jiltɕi, ni viəkala ʂundriʊ.

In Gaishu, the main goddess is Shaimu, the Goddess of Fertility. Our stories say she was the daughter of Pidivuira, the earth herself, and of Zehikkan, the sky-god.

fəŋ gaɪʂu   , ni viəkala ɕiɲʂaɪ wun ʂaɪmu   , ni viəkala n' təldʑiʊxupuə. daʊ bapi ɕir
in Gaishu , SG goddess main be Shaimu , SG goddess SG fertility.   PL story we
waramaran zu   wun kə ni tɕiʊzə pidivuɪra , ni bənaɪ haɪdir , zəɕikːan   jiltɕi , ni
tell   CONJ be   she SG child Pidivuira , SG self   earth   , Zehikkan also   , SG
viəkala ʂundriʊ.
god   sky.

bapi (noun) story, legend

bənaɪ (noun) self

çinʂaɪ (adjective) main

çir (pronoun) we, it reduces to *'ir* in structures of possession after a consonant

daʊ (article) plural article

fən (preposition) in, at, it assimilates with the following word

Gaɪʂu (proper name) Gaishu, once a country in the foothills of the mountains, now a province of the empire of Kahal

gaŋfi (noun) language

haɪdir (noun) earth

jiltçi (adverb) also, too

kə (pronoun) he, she, it

ni (article) singular article, it reduces to *n'* in structures of possession after a vowel

Pidivʊɪra (proper name) Pidivuira, Gaishu goddess of the earth, Mother Earth

Şaɪmu (proper name) Shaimu, Gaishu goddess of fertility

ʂundriʊ (noun) sky

tçiʊzə (noun) child

təldʑiʊxupʊə (noun) fertility

viəkala (noun) god, goddess, divinity

waramaran (verb) to tell

wun (verb) to be

Zəçikːan (proper name) Zehikkan, Gaishu god of the sky

zu (conjunction) that

5.3 Himozylu

The language of the Himozy tribe is spoken not far from the old Gaishu kingdom, and it has seen some influence by the Gaishu language. The most notable feature the two languages share are the retroflex consonants. Himozylu has developed consonant harmony concerning them, disallowing a retroflex and an alveolar with only one monophthong in between within one word. For example, when the suffix *-ḷu* (genitive ending) is added to *Himɔzɨ* ("Himozy"), one gets *Himɔzɨlu* ("the Himozy language").

The most interesting feature of the language is its use of infixes for derivation. The word *hukai* ("light"), for example, is derived from *hai* ("light, bright") with the infix *-uk-* (a nominaliser infix).

The following text is a morning prayer.

Sɨ t^haɨ mɛvɛ hukai,	The sun gives us light,
Sɨ fimhɛ ɖukɛna,	The sun gives warmth,
Sɨ t^haɨ mɛvɛ jɔŋki,	The sun gives us magic,
Sɨ fimhɛ ɡurauŋɛ.	The sun gives life.

sɨ	t^haɨ	mɛvɛ	hukai	,	sɨ	fimhɛ	ɖukɛna	,	sɨ	t^haɨ	mɛvɛ	jɔŋki	,	sɨ	fimhɛ	ɡurauŋɛ.
sun	give	we	light	,	sun	give	warmth	,	sun	give	we	magic	,	sun	give	life.

ɖukɛna (noun) warmth

fimhɛ (verb) to give

ɡurauŋɛ (noun) life

hai (adjective) light, bright

Himɔzɨ (proper name) Himozy, a member of the Himozy tribe

Himɔzɨlu (proper name) Himozylu, the language of the Himozy tribe

hukai (noun) light

jɔŋki (noun) magic (usually denotes Sun magic)

-ḷu (nominal ending) genitive ending

mɛvɛ (pronoun) we

sɨ (noun) sun

t^hai (verb) to give to someone

-uk- (infix) nominaliser

5.4 KloTákruanka

KloTákruanka is the language spoken by the Tákruanka tribes, who live in the regions north of the Lindi tribes. Its speakers are almost all bilingual and speak Troilgulm for communicating with outsiders. Nonetheless the language is still very much alive.

It is, like the other languages from the north, a tonal language. It does not yet have the tonal richness encountered in the languages from north of the mountain range proper, however. It possesses two tones (high and low, the low tone will be unmarked in the following), and only one syllable per morpheme can get a high tone. Furthermore it is special in that it distinguishes voiceless stops (/p, t, k/), voiced stops (/b, d, ɡ/) and implosive stops (/ɓ, ɗ/).

The language is slightly fusional. It is topic-prominent, like Troilgulm, and also shares Troilgulm's system of articles.

The following sentence shows the language at work.

Rokojbú, brufu-sú klo-fekeheŋke, ke-kloníəw-sú sralíə ésremoŋgi, tewbo krasi srakelifli keɓ-ésre-law.

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rokoj-bú   , brufu-sú klo-feke-heŋke , ke-klo-nɨ́əw-sú   sra-lɨ́ə ésremoŋg-i ,
Rokoy-TOP , son-SG   of-I-COLL   , with-from-elsewhere-SG PST-go capital-ACC ,

tewb-o   kras-i   sra-kelifli keɓ-ésre-law.
place-CONJ face-ACC PST-see   with-goddess-PL.

Rokoy, our son, went with the foreigner to the capital, where they faced the goddesses.

brufu (noun) son
ésre (noun) god, goddess, divinity
ésremoŋgo (noun) capital
feke (pronoun) I, we
-heŋke (nominal suffix) collectiviser
-i, -gi, -j (nominal suffix) accusative marker
ke-, keɓ- (preposition) with
klo- (preposition) of, from
klonɨ́əw (noun) foreigner

kloTákruəŋka (proper name) kloTákruanka, a language from the northern mountains
krasa (noun) face
-ḷaw (article) plural article
lɨ́ə (verb) to go
nɨ́əw (adverb) elsewhere
-o (nominal suffix) conjunction marker
Rokoj (proper name) Rokoy, a boy's name

sr-, sra- (verbal prefix) past tense marker
-sú (article) singular article
Tákruəŋka (proper name) a Tákruanka, a member of a tribe from the northern mountains
tew (noun) place
tewbo (conjunction) where
-ú, -bú, -́w (nominal suffix) topic marker

6   Abbreviations used in glosses

1	first person	FUT	future tense	NPRF	negative perfect aspect
2	second person	GEN	genitive	OBL	oblique
3	third person	HBL	habilitative	PASS	passive voice
ACC	accusative	INCP	inceptive aspect	PFV	perfective aspect
ADJ	adjectiviser	INCL	inclusive article	PL	plural, plural article
APPL	applicative	INF	infinitive	POT	potential mood
ANT	antecedent pronoun	INS	instrumental	PRF	perfect aspect
ATT	attenuative	LAT	lative	PROS	prospective aspect
C	common gender	LOC	locative	PST	past tense
COLL	collective	M	masculine	Q	question marker
COND	conditional mood	N	neuter gender	REFL	reflexive
CONJ	conjunction word	NEG	negation	REP	reportative
CONT	continuous aspect	NMLZ	nominaliser	SG	singular, singular article
D	divine gender	NOM	nominative	TOP	topic