

Dzoqi the Language

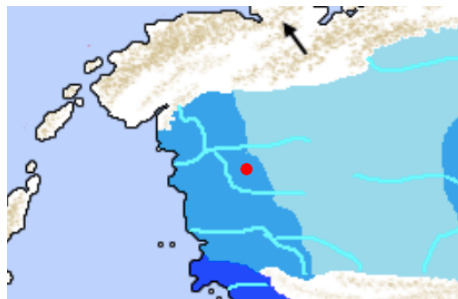
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Reconstruction Relay, 2020

Introduction

This is a constructed language, part of the Team B languages in the 2020 Reconstruction Relay, organised on the ZBB and set in the Akana conworld.

With a few exceptions, I've kept references to cultural and material context fairly generic, preferring to leave decisions about that sort of thing to people more versed in Akana. In case it matters, I've assumed that Dzoqi speakers subsist on horticulture, fishing, hunting, and gathering. They seem to practice a mix of ancestor worship and animism, and to divide into two exogamous clans, or moieties. For a bit of concreteness I've chosen a location, which I've marked with a red dot on the following map of the northwest bit of South Peilaš:



You can think of the Dzoqi speakers as inhabiting the area between the two rivers, going east to, but probably not really into, the savannah or scrubland to the east.

As for the language, it's pretty consistently head-final along the clausal spine and noun-final in the noun phrase; the ordering of a verb's arguments is pretty free. Arguments and possessors are distinguished by case-marking, and the verb also has interacting systems of egophoric and speech-act participant marking. The verb can take habitual, perfect, and past inflections, and also has a few subordinating forms. There are also a handful of focus and evidential and speech-act-specifying clitics. Er, and a bunch of other stuff.

Glossing abbreviations

1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
ABS	absolutive (egophor)
ACC	accusative
ADJZR	adjectivaliser

ADV	adverbial ‘case’
ALL	allative (preposition)
BABS	biabsolutive verb, one with two nonagentive arguments
BEN	benefactive (preposition)
CL	classifier
COMP	complementiser
COP	copula
DET	determiner
DISTAL	distal demonstrative
DITR	ditransitive verb
EGO	egophor
EMPH	emphatic pronoun
ERG	ergative (egophor)
EVID	evidential
EXIST	existential copula
EXPL	expletive subject
FOC	focus particle
GEN	genitive
HAB	habitual
HS	hearsay (evidential)
HU	human gender
IND	indirect (evidential)
INDEF	indefinite
INST	instrumental
IRR	irrealis (imperative, conditional)
LOC	locative
MOD	modal
NEG	negative
NH	nonhuman gender
NMLZ	nominaliser
OBL	oblique
PAST	past tense
PL	plural
PRF	perfect
PROX	proximal demonstrative
Q	question particle
QUOT	quotative particle
REFL	reflexive
S	singular
SAP	speech-act participant (agreement)
TOP	topic marker
TR	monotransitive verb
UNACC	unaccusative (patientive intransitive) verb
UNERG	unergative (agentive intransitive) verb

1 Phonology

1.1 Inventory

Table 1 shows the consonants. I depart from IPA conventions (only) by writing β and χ as **v** and **x**. The only really noteworthy allomorphy among the consonants is that **t** is usually [θ] in coda, except before pause.

	Labial	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Glottal
<i>Nasal</i>	m	n		ŋ		
<i>Plosive</i>	b	t d ts dz		k g	q	
<i>Fricative</i>	β <v>	s			χ <x>	h
<i>Oral sonorant</i>		l r	j	w		

Table 1: Dzoqi consonants.

Dzoqi has five vowels, which I'll write **a e i o u**; their realisation is generally [ə e i o u], with some lowering next to uvulars.

You might want to analyse **j w** as positional allophones of the high vowels. The way I've treated certain bits of morphophonology is probably incompatible with this analysis, but that's not a very decisive argument.

1.2 Phonotactics

All consonants can occur in onset, as can (the nonsyllabic allophones of) the high vowels. The syllable onset can also be empty; only opening vowel sequences occur across syllable boundaries.

The syllable nucleus can be a single vowel, which might be long. There are also three vowel sequences that are pronounced as diphthongs: **ai au oi**.

Most syllables are open, and only **s** and **t** can occur in coda.

1.3 Stress

Stress is moraic trochaic, calculated from the right, potentially leaving a word-initial syllable unfooted. Only LL and H feet are permitted, a rule that's enforced by reduction of the heavy (and stressed) syllable in what would otherwise be a HL foot (cf. §1.4.1). Coda consonants do not contribute to syllable weight.

1.4 Processes

1.4.1 Syllable reduction

As noted earlier, Dzoqi does not allow HL feet, and this requires that some heavy syllables be reduced in weight. Luckily this is easy. The syllables in question will always contain either a long vowel or a diphthong. Long vowels can simply shorten. Diphthongs **ai** and **au** become **e** and **o**, respectively. **oi** becomes **os** in a syllable with no coda, and otherwise simply reduces to **o**.

1.4.2 Syllable expansion

Dzoqi has a two-mora constraint on content words, and arguably there are cases where this requires a light syllable to become heavy. It's easy: the vowel lengthens.

1.4.3 Foot simplification

Within a foot, certain VCV sequences get simplified to a long vowel or diphthong, as follows:

- **aji, ahi** → **ai**
- **eji, ehi** → **ee**
- **iji, ihi** → **ii**
- **oji, ohi** → **oi**
- **uji, uhi** → **oi**
- **uhu** → **uu**
- **ohu** → **oo**
- **ahu** → **au**

No sequences involving **wu** get simplified only because the sequence **wu** never occurs.

1.4.4 Vowel lowering

There are actually two processes here.

Vowels generally lower when next to an uvular consonant or **h**. These are not categorial shifts, and they are structure-preserving, so maybe you'd classify them as phonetic rather than phonological. I won't be indicating these shifts orthographically.

Unstressed (short) high vowels also lower before pause, merging **i** with **e** and **u** with **o**. I'll represent these shifts when giving full-sentence examples, but not when citing particular forms in isolation.

1.4.5 Vowel hiatus

Dzoqi phonotactics forbids vowel sequences across a syllable boundary. When morphology produces such sequences, they unfortunately tend to get resolved in morpheme-specific ways. Consequently, I'll discuss what happens in detail only when discussing particular bits of morphology; see especially §2.3.1 on genitive **-oo**, and §3.2 on both egophoric **-i** and perfect **-ut**. Strategies include vowel deletion, vowel coalescence, diphthongisation, and glide insertion.

1.4.6 s fortition

When onset **s** follows a coda consonant, whether it is **s** or **t**, the coda is deleted and the onset becomes **ts**. This process can be fed by reduction of **oi** to **os**.

1.4.7 Consonant alternations

There are a number of consonant alternations that occur frequently but unpredictably when words get suffixed, as one can see for example by comparing the nominative and oblique stems of many nouns. These alternations especially involve **t~h**, **t~s**, **k~h**, and **q~x**.

2 Nouns and the noun phrase

Dzoqi nouns inflect only for case. (Pronouns do also distinguish gender and number, but only suppletively.) They divide into two animacy classes, but a noun's class is revealed only by agreement. As far as I can tell, Dzoqi nouns are all mass nouns, except when they occur with explicit numbers—which require classifiers—and in contexts that require a distributive interpretation.

A noun phrase can consist entirely of the head noun, and such a noun phrase could receive an indefinite, definite, or generic interpretation. There's no definite article, and though there are ways of signalling indefiniteness, none of them are ever obligatory.

The noun phrase is rigidly noun-final, except for a small number of focus particles. The most neutral order is DEM–NUM–ADJ, with relative clauses (participles) falling in with the adjectives and possessors with the demonstratives. Some variation is possible, though.

2.1 Gender

Dzoqi distinguishes a human gender from a nonhuman ones. This distinction shows up overtly in just two places: in the pronouns, and in agreement on adjectives. The distinction works somewhat differently in the two cases.

Semantically speaking, the distinction is fairly unremarkable. For the most part, nouns referring to human beings are in one class, and other nouns are in the other. The ancestors and the more human-like of the other spirits get counted with humans, small infants have a somewhat ambivalent status, and anthropomorphisation is reasonably common, at least in stories. One important class of nouns that are counted as human in apparent defiance of semantics are nouns referring to certain human activities or attitudes, like **doboje** *hunt, hunting* and **bai** *desire*, which are counted as human. Other semantic oddities arise from derivational morphology. For example, the noun suffixes **-taat** and **-mi** always produce nonhuman nouns; potential surprises include **gotaat** *a gathering of elders* and **mimi** *baby*.

Adjective agreement consistently tracks grammatical gender; really, it is the only way to be sure of a noun's grammatical gender. Personal pronouns follow semantics more closely; even when there's a clear antecedent, pronoun choice will usually be still be determined by the referent, not by the noun.

2.2 Personal pronouns

Table 2 shows the personal pronouns.

Most pronouns decline like regular class I nouns, with identical nominative and oblique stems (see §2.3 below). (One detail: 1s ACC **no** almost always

	S	PL
1	no	vaa vaan
1+2		deŋa
2	de	detəŋa
3HU	ma	muta mutaan
3NH	hu	

Table 2: Personal pronouns.

takes the **-la** allomorph of the accusative suffix.) The exceptions are the 1s and 3PL pronouns, which inflect as class III-ŋ nouns; I have supplied their oblique stems.

The third person pronouns distinguish gender. As noted above, they do so semantically: the human pronouns are used just for those that Dzoqi culture recognise as humans. This class includes the ancestors and some spirits, and does not always include small infants. Only the human pronouns distinguish number in the third person.

The nonplural pronouns are ‘weak’ in their nominative forms—being monomoraic, they require a phonological host to lean on. Since pronouns tend to congregate before the verb, they often end up as proclitics on the verb. This is a purely phonological or prosodic process, however, syntactically speaking they are just pronouns.

Pronouns are a bit more flexible in Dzoqi than in some other languages. It’s possible to use them with numbers, for example: not only do you find **no teet dza** *we three*, but also *teet dza noo three of us*. In the latter, **no** becomes *noo* not because it’s in the genitive case but because in this configuration it must stand as an independent phonological word.

2.3 Case

There are seven cases, though most nouns can only inflect for six of them. I’ll start with the morphology, then move on to usage.

2.3.1 Case morphology

On the analysis assumed here, each noun has both a nominative and an oblique stem (though for a good many nouns these are identical). Some nouns (class IV nouns) have in addition a locative stem; and genitive and instrumental forms must sometimes be listed separately. (The lexicon lists any such irregular forms with an asterisk. It is trivial to determine which case they represent, since all instrumentals and no genitives end in **-a**.)

Where the nominative and oblique stems differ, they tend to do so in the following ways:

- The oblique stem can end in a consonant that is absent in the nominative.
- There are a number of consonant alternations that occur frequently, **t~h**, **t~s**, **k~h**, and **q~x**. It cannot be predicted which consonants will occur in which stem. Notably, the fricatives can co-occur with the plosives in a single stem.

- Corresponding syllables can also differ in weight, generally in unsurprising ways. One such pattern is arguably an artefact of my analysis: I have normally represented a noun's nominative stem by its surface form even when that form is predictable. For example, I give **ema aima** for *nose*, even though unsuffixed **aima** can only surface as **ema**; an alternative analysis would give the nominative stem also as **aima**.

Nouns fall into five classes, depending primarily on how they form their genitive and instrumental cases. The patterns for the first four are as given in [Table 3](#). The fifth class consists of nouns that I'm just treating as irregular.

	CLASS I	CLASS II	CLASS III	CLASS IV
<i>Nominative</i>	NOM	NOM	NOM	NOM
<i>Accusative</i>	OBL+(e)na	OBL+(e)na	OBL+(e)na	OBL+(e)na
<i>Oblique</i>	OBL+(e)	OBL+(e)	OBL+(e)	OBL+(e)
<i>Adverbial</i>	OBL+(e)t	OBL+(e)t	OBL+(e)t	OBL+(e)t
<i>Locative</i>	OBL+(e)lis	OBL+(e)lis	OBL+(e)lis	LOC+(e)lis
<i>Genitive</i>	NOM+oo	OBL+oo	OBL+oo	LOC+oo
<i>Instrumental</i>	OBL+a	OBL+a	NOM+Ca	OBL+a

Table 3: Dzoqi case morphology. Each noun has a NOM and an OBL stem, and class IV nouns also have a LOC stem.

There aren't many; one is **nii yam** (**nii nena nii nilis nejoo newa**).

There are some characteristic bits of morphophonology here.

- Many oblique forms have an **e** that occurs only after a consonant-final stem. One consequence that you might find counterintuitive: a noun's oblique case form need not be identical to its oblique stem, since only the latter can be consonant-final.
- The accusative suffix optionally (but frequently) becomes **-(e)la** when the rightmost consonant in the stem is **n**.
- The genitive **-oo** suffix simply replaces a stem-final short vowel. Stem final long vowels usually resolve into an unsurprising vowel+glide sequence, though just to be safe I've explicitly listed all such forms in the lexicon as if they were irregular.
- The instrumental form of class III nouns has a slot for a consonant. It will be filled with a **g**, **ŋ**, or **b**, depending on the noun. Which to use is often predictable from the oblique stem (even though the suffix is added to the nominative stem): if the oblique stem ends in a nasal, you'll suffix **-ŋa**; if it ends in **q** or **x** you'll usually suffix **-ba**, and sometimes also if it ends in a long vowel, diphthong, or **k**; and otherwise you'll suffix **ga**. The lexicon tells you which consonant it is for each class III noun; for example, **etkoo** *moon* is listed as a class III-ŋ noun.
- The instrumental **-a** suffix, used in all but class III nouns, simply gets added to a stem-final vowel. If the vowel is **a**, it lengthens; otherwise the expected glide is inserted to resolve hiatus.

- A nontrivial number of class **iv** nouns form their instrumental using the strategy of class **iii**; these are treated as irregular, and listed explicitly in the lexicon.

2.3.2 The nominative

I take the nominative to be an unmarked case. That's to say, a noun doesn't occur in its nominative form for any particular reason, it just occurs that way when nothing forces it to take some other case. In effect, the nominative is not so much a case as a lack of case. Consequently, I do not mention it in glosses.

(Maybe, though, it's not obvious that the nominative is *morphologically* unmarked, since many nouns have a nominative stem distinct from their oblique stem, with no obvious reason to say one of the stems is more basic, from a morphological point of view.)

The subject of a finite clause is normally nominative.

(1) **vaanoo saatsaa voo terelis hekukase=wa**

vaan -oo saatsaa voo ter -elis he -ku -ka -se
1p -GEN ancestor big sea -LOC live -HAB -EGO.ABS -PAST
 =wa
 =IND.EVID

“Our ancestors lived by the ocean”

(2) **hexe ha ejamena dzise**

hexe ha ejam -ena dzii -se
Hexe INDEF fish -ACC eat -PAST

“Hexe ate some of the fish”

(3) **texe vorose**

texe voro -se
Texe dance -PAST

“Texe danced”

Both arguments of the copula **i ihut** will be nominative:

(4) **hexe jaamau ise**

hexe jaamau i -se
hexe healer COP -PAST

“Hexe was a healer”

The existential copula **hos hotut** will generally have one locative or genitive argument, and one nominative argument; it never takes an accusative argument (cf. §4.2.2).

(5) **hexoo aa hos**

hexe -oo aa hos
Hexe -GEN fish EXIST

“Hexe has some fish”

Topics marked with **do** take nominative case even if they correspond to the object of the embedded verb.

(6) **ate do, no mana nikaut**

ate do no ma -na ni -ka -ut
man TOP 1S 3S -ACC *see* -EGO.ABS -PRF
 “The man, I see him”

Vocative expressions are nominative:

(7) **ai haskeluu! no dena nikaut**

ai haskeluu no de -na ni -ka -ut
oh fool 1S 2S -ACC *see* -EGO.ABS -PRF
 “Fool! I see you”

Simple answers also usually use the nominative, even when they correspond to the object in the question:

(8) **de mina dzii=a? aa=o**

A: de mi -na dzii -j =a
 2S *what* -ACC *eat* -EGO.ERG =Q

B: aa =o
fish =FOC

“What are you eating? Fish.”

2.3.3 The accusative

A verb’s object takes the accusative case, as in several examples above, for example (2).

With a ditransitive, both objects take accusative:

(9) **mutana galutarena no inise**

muta -na galutar -ena no ini -j -se
 3PL -ACC *snake.skin* -ACC 1S *show* -EGO.ERG -PAST
 “I showed them the snakeskin”

Selected recipient and destination arguments generally take the accusative in monotransitive constructions as well:

(10) **hexe teqena tsihese**

hexe teqe -na tsihee -se
Hexe Texe -ACC *help* -PAST
 “Hexe helped Texe”

(11) **gojukena muta sise**

gojuk -ena muta sii -se
lake -ACC 3PL *go.down* -PAST
 “They went (down) to the lake”

Accusative-marked objects produce culmination entailments, whether they are patients, recipients, destinations, or whatever. For example, (11) entails that they actually reached the lake. There are two main ways to avoid such implications: using a progressive verb form (§6.2.1), or demoting the object. The latter strategy involves coding patients with the oblique case, as in (17) below, and recipients or destinations with the allative postposition *oi*, as in (15). Though this strategy does not involve any marking on the verb, you can think of it as involving a sort of antipassivisation.

There's no differential object marking in Dzoqi. Even sort of fake objects, like durations, take accusative:

(12) **vamu gerekena vaa danise**

vamu gerek -ena vaa dan -i -se
all day -ACC 1PL walk -EGO.ERG -PAST
 “We walked all day”

Focus does not affect accusative-marking:

(13) **texena hexe=o qitese**

texe -na hexe =o qitee -se
Texe -ACC Hexe =FOC kill -PAST
 “It was Hexe who killed Texe”

(14) **hexe texena=ho qitese**

hexe texe -na =ho qitee -se
Hexe Texe -ACC =FOC kill -PAST
 “It was Texe that Hexe killed”

2.3.4 The oblique

The main use of the oblique is on the complements of postpositions:

(15) **gojuka oi muta sise**

gojuk -e oi muta sii -se
lake -OBL ALL 3PL go.down -PAST
 “They went (down) towards the lake”

(16) **no ma hexe si giijutse**

no ma hexe si gii -jut -se
1S 3S hexe BEN bring -EGO.ERG:PRF -PAST
 “I brought it for Hexe (on Hexe's behalf)”

(Cases like (16), where the oblique is the same in form as the nominative, are common.)

The oblique can also be used as a sort of partitive case, to cancel the implication of culmination that you get with an accusative-marked object. Like this:

(17) **texe ejame dzise**

texe ejam -e dzii -se
Texe fish -OBL *eat* -PAST
 “Texe was eating at the fish”

2.3.5 The adverbial

This case is very restricted: besides pronouns and proper nouns, very few nouns can occur in the adverbial case. And the case also has a very specific use, to indicate the point of view from which a statement is made. (Maybe it’s not really a case.)

(18) **noot es aa vomu**

no -t es aa vomu
 1S -ADV PROX *fish* *enough*
 “In my opinion, these fish are enough”

(19) **hexet texe vamoo suu daukiit**

hexe -t texe vamoo suu dauke -ut
Hexe -ADV *Texe* *all* *die* *must* -PRF
 “According to Hexe, Texe must die.”

A phonological detail: the singular pronouns are often monomoraic, and cliticise onto the following word, but their adverbial form must be an independent phonological word; this is why you find **noot** *according to me* rather than **not**.

These point-of-view adverbials can be fully integrated into the clause, as above, but they can also be **do** topics:

(20) **hinoiminet do, ha bamii silis dziikuu**

hinoimin -et do ha bamii silis dzii -kuu
tradition -ADV TOP DET *young* *first* *eat* -HAB
 “According to tradition, the young eat first”

(As you can see, **hinoimee hinoimin** *tradition* is one of the nouns that can take the adverbial case.)

2.3.6 The locative

The locative is used to indicate locations, including temporal locations. Syntactically, a noun in the locative case is an adverb; to use it as an adnominal modifier, you first have to convert it into an adjective using the suffix **-tu**.

2.3.7 The genitive

The genitive is primarily used to mark possessors. By extension, though, it can be used to encode a fair range of relations.

An important difference from English is that a noun phrase containing a possessor need not be interpreted as definite. That is, if Hexe refers to **noo**

qoot dza koi *my two sisters*, you can't infer from that that she has only two sisters.

Also, genitive nouns can only be used as attributively modifiers. For a corresponding predicate adjective, you can add the suffix **-tu(t)**.

2.3.8 The instrumental

The instrumental is primarily used to flag tools or means, broadly speaking. Like the locative, it produces adverbs. The **-tu** suffix is also available here, but adjectived instrumentals are far less common than adjectived locatives.

2.4 Demonstratives

The demonstratives have both determiner and pronoun forms, given in [Table 4](#). When used as determiners, they normally come first in the noun phrase. They distinguish just two degrees of separation, proximal and distal.

	Determiner	Pronoun
<i>Proximal</i>	es	ese ese
<i>Distal</i>	mu	mute muhe

Table 4: Demonstratives.

The determiner forms can also be used with a classifier ([§2.6](#)), omitting the head noun; the result is unspecified for number. It's a difficult question how this construction differs from just using the pronominal forms. You rarely get demonstratives used with classifiers when the head noun isn't dropped.

2.5 The article ha

There's an article **ha** that normally occurs before numbers and that is incompatible with demonstratives. It has a discourse-linked indefinite sense, often partitive or contrastive. Like demonstratives, it can be used with a classifier in the absence of the head noun.

2.6 Numbers and classifiers

The basic numbers are given in [Table 5](#). It's a decimal system with hints of an underlying base-5. 10, 20, and 100 get two forms; the second is used when followed by another number in a compound number, such as **oraja qoot** *twelve*. Multipliers simply follow their base with no modification: **qoot hamaja teet oraja ana** 235. The biggest complication is that sometimes **qoraa** *twenty* is used as a multiplier instead of **oraa** *ten*, as in **teet qoraja eda** *threescore and four*, 64.

When a number occurs as part of a noun phrase, it must be followed by a classifier or measure word. Measure words are typically just regular nouns, like **gojee** *bucket*, which could be used to measure out water, for example. Classifiers are more grammaticalised, and generally don't have an obvious synchronic source (the main exception is **dza**, used to count people, presumably

1	qee
2	qoot
3	teet
4	eda
5	ana
6	aṇaqee
7	aṇoot
8	aṇateet
9	aṇahana
10	oraa, oraṇa
20	qoraa, qoraṇa
100	hamaa, hamaṇa

Table 5: Numbers.

deriving from **edza** *person*). The choice of a classifier is determined by the noun, usually quite strictly. [Table 6](#) gives some common classifiers.

CL	Category
<i>bi</i>	surfaces and covers and things with two salient dimensions
<i>doo</i>	rigid things mostly with one salient dimension, like sticks or trees
<i>dza</i>	people
<i>go</i>	kinds, especially animal species
<i>he</i>	animals; incidental things; this also serves as a sort of fallback or elsewhere classifier
<i>kee</i>	places or locations; periods of time; events; characteristics or properties
<i>kii</i>	actions; types or kinds of people or artefacts (rather than species)
<i>kusi</i>	tools, artefacts, buildings, monuments
<i>towa</i>	points, joints, and holes
<i>si</i>	points or tips and things that stick out; fingers, toes, teeth, noses...
<i>su</i>	smallish round things, like stones or fruit
<i>tii</i>	portions, shares, servings
<i>toi</i>	floppy things mostly with one salient dimension, like vines or fish or snakes
<i>tsami</i>	edible things

Table 6: Classifiers.

Many of the classifiers are prosodically deficient, being monomoraic; they cliticise onto the preceding number.

The number and classifier will normally precede modifiers such as adjectives or relative clauses but follow demonstratives and other determiners. However, both orders can be reversed. In particular, nonrestrictive modifiers usually precede numbers, as in [\(21\)](#), and a number can precede a demonstrative to yield a partitive sense, as in [\(22\)](#).

(21) **nuu qauneret qee dza bamedza hexe ise**

nuu qauneret qee dza bamedza hexe i -se
 very naughty:HU one CL child Hexe COP -PAST
 “Hexe was a very naughty child”

(22) **teet dza mu bamedza nuu qaneret=is**

teet dza mu bamedza nuu qaneret =is
three CL DISTAL child very naughty:HU COP

There are three other quantifiers that I'll mention here, though they don't exactly pattern with the numbers. The only item that can precede them in the noun phrase is the article **ha**, for a partitive sense; they precede even demonstratives. These are **vamu** *all*, **vomu** *many, much*, and **waas** *some, a few, several*. **vamu** is always discourse-linked, the other two can be. These do not require a classifier, and occur freely with nouns that you might intuitively classify as mass nouns (though it's not really obvious that Dzoqi itself needs a distinction between mass and count nouns).

These quantifiers, as well as the combination of a number and a classifier, can occur on their own as noun phrases, usually with a partitive sense.

2.7 Adjectives

Dzoqi has an open class of adjectives, though many adjectives are obviously derived.

Most adjectives agree with the associated noun in gender, whether used attributively or predicatively. This can involve unpredictable stem changes, and I've just listed both forms in the lexicon for all adjectives. As a general rule, though, the animate forms of adjectives end in **-t**.

There are three more particular patterns that are quite common:

- Many adjectives are NH **-neet** and HU **-neret**.
- Many others are NH **-oo** and HU **-oket**. (The nonhuman form of these adjectives often resemble genitives.)
- Adjectives can be derived from many adverbs, including the locative forms of nouns, using a suffix NH **-tu** and HU **-tut**.

2.8 Interrogatives and indefinites

Table 7 gives the interrogative and indefinite pronouns. These distinguish hu-

	Human	Nonhuman
<i>Plain</i>	<i>be who, someone</i>	<i>mi what, something</i>
<i>D-linked</i>	<i>beta which</i>	<i>mita which</i>
<i>NPI</i>	<i>bejai anyone</i>	<i>mijai anything</i>

Table 7: Interrogatives and indefinites.

man from nonhuman. Plain **be** and **mi** can be used both as determiners and as pronouns, and in both uses can have either an interrogative or an indefinite sense. Discourse-linked **beta** and **meta** (corresponding to English “which (of them)”) can only be used as interrogatives, but again as either determiner or pronoun. The negative polarity items **bejai anyone** and **mijai anything** can only be used as indefinite pronouns; they occur only in downward-entailing contexts, such as within the scope of negation.

2.9 Focus particles

There are three focus particles that can cliticise onto the end of a noun phrase. These are privative **=o** *only, precisely*, and additive **=ha** *also* and **=ai** *even, any*.

=o *only, precisely* is especially suited for nouns that end up in the pre-verbal focus position (§4.3), but nouns there do not always take **=o** and nouns with **=o** need not be syntactically focused. It'll often be used when English signals focus only using intonation:

(23) **de sugaluna=o nikaut qo=a?**

de sugalu -na =o ni -ka -ut qo =a
2S snake -ACC =FOC see -EGO.ABS -PRF Q =Q

“You saw a *snake*?”

=ha *also* is the focus particle that's used most often to signal especially interesting new information. Again corresponding English sentences will often signal focus using only intonation.

(24) **sugaluna=ha no nikaut**

sugaluna -na =ha no ni -ka -ut
snake -ACC =FOC 1S see -EGO.ABS -PRF

“I saw a snake”

=ai *even, any* indicates that you're mentioning an extreme case or amount. In downwards-entailing contexts, it often cooccurs with an indefinite determiner, yielding a sense a lot like *any*.

(25) **askiluna hexena=ai mu aa inese**

askilu -na hexe -na =ai mu aa ine -se
happiness -ACC Hexe -ACC =FOC DISTAL fish give -PAST

“Even Hexe enjoyed those fish”

(26) **mi ejamena=ai no dziimise**

mi ejam -ena =ai no dzii -mi -se
what fish -ACC =FOC 1S eat -NEG -PAST

“I didn't eat any fish”

3 The verb

I'll start with transitivity classes, then introduce the morphology, then discuss what the bits mean.

Some verb forms are treated elsewhere: the imperative (§4.9), the participle (§8.2), and the two converbs (§8.4.1).

3.1 Transitivity classes

Dzoqi lacks any productive valency-adjusting morphology. However, it does allow objects to be omitted quite freely (§5.1). Such omitted objects are not interpreted pronominally, so this is a sort of zero-marked detransitivisation, not pro-drop. Accordingly, the lexicon will tell you how many selected arguments a verb *can* take, but not how many it *must* take.

The lexicon will also tell you whether the most prominent argument—the subject—is agentive or not. On this point, semantics are an imperfect guide. Notably, motion verbs like **sii sijuut** *go down* are treated as non-agentive even though they’ll often be used to describe intentional action. If that’s counter-intuitive to you, you just have to remember it. (Maybe it’ll help to remember that a path can also go down to the lake.) Also, experiencer verbs tend to treat their subjects as patients rather than as agents.

You end up with five transitivity classes:

- *Unaccusatives* have a single non-agentive argument.
- *Unergatives* have a single agentive argument.
- *Transitives* have a single agentive argument (the subject) and a single nonagentive argument.
- *Biabsolutives* have two non-agentive arguments. This class includes many verbs that take an experiencer subject, for example.
- *Ditransitives* take an agent argument and two non-agents; typically one of those is a recipient.

The identification of one of a verb’s arguments as subject is generally unproblematic in Dzoqi. That’s to say, there’s rarely anything in the morphosyntax that treats something other than the highest thematic argument as structurally more prominent. Two caveats: Dzoqi does not link subjecthood with topicality to nearly the extent that some languages do; and the use of the expletive pronoun **hu** as subject is fairly common, even with verbs that do have a selected argument that in principle could be subject (§5.3).

3.2 Verbal morphology

The verb has one prefixal position and four suffixal positions. The most distinctive categories are the egophors, of which there are two, one agent-oriented and one patient-oriented. There’s also a habitual, a perfect, and a past tense; there’s a prefix that under certain conditions agrees with a first- or second-person argument; and negation is marked by suffix on the verb.

Verbs fall into four inflection classes depending on how they form the habitual. Many also take unpredictable forms before the vowel initial perfect and ergative egophoric suffixes. But other than that everything is remarkably regular for the vast majority of verbs.

3.2.1 The habitual and the absolutive egophor

There are four suffixes used to mark the habitual aspect: **-kuu**, **-ku**, **-hu**, and **-ha**. There’s a strong tendency for **-kuu** and **-ha** to occur with transitive verbs

and **-ku** and **-hu** with intransitive ones; but there are exceptions. The lexicon gives the habitual suffix for each listed verb.

The inflection classes also differ with respect to the absolutive egophoric suffix, for those verbs that can take it. In some cases the two suffixes are clearly fused, both phonologically and morphophonologically, so I treat them as occupying the same morphological ‘slot.’ [Table 8](#) gives the details.

	Before -miit	Before -ut	Word-finally	Elsewhere
-kuu verbs				
HAB	-kuu	-kuu	-kuu	-kuu
EGO.ABS	-ke	-ka	-ka	-ka
HAB+EGO.ABS	-kuke	-kuuka	-kuka	-kuuka
-ku verbs				
HAB	-ku	-ku	-ku	-ku
EGO.ABS	-ke	-ka	-ka	-ka
HAB+EGO.ABS	-koo	-:↑ka*	-kuha	-kuka
-hu verbs				
HAB	-:↑	-ku	-hu	-ku
EGO.ABS	-:↓	-ka	-ka	-ka
HAB+EGO.ABS	-koo	-:↑ka	-kuha	-kuka
-ha verbs				
HAB	-he	-:ha	-ha	-ha
EGO.ABS	-:↓	-ka	-ka	-ka
HAB+EGO.ABS	-haa	-:↓ka	-haha	-haka

Table 8: The habitual and absolutive egophoric suffixes. Some suffixes have effects on the vowel in a preceding syllable, as explained in the main text.

Allomorphy is conditioned by two following suffixes, **-ut**, expressing the perfect, and **-miit**, expressing the negation of the perfect. Note that **-ut** only triggers allomorphy when it directly follows, so the suffixes take their elsewhere forms before **-jut** (where the perfect suffix is preceded by the ergative egophor). And **-miit**, expressing negation and the perfect, does trigger allomorphy even when shortened to **-met**. That’s to say, the conditions under which these suffixes alternate are morphological rather than phonological.

As you can see, some suffixes are marked with : along with either ↑ or ↓. These indicate effects on a vowel in the preceding syllable:

- If the preceding syllable has a single vowel it will lengthen if short and either rise or lower (depending on whether it’s ↑ or ↓); **a** rises to **e**.
- If the preceding syllable has a diphthong, and this is either a **-hu** or a **-ha** verb, then it’s the offglide rather than the nucleus vowel that is affected by this process; the nucleus vowel then deletes and is replaced by the offglide. For example, if **ai** is subject to this sort of lowering, it will become **ee**.
- If the preceding syllable has a diphthong, and this is the **-:↑ka** suffix on a **-ku** verb, then no lengthening takes place and it’s the nucleus vowel that raises. (In the table I’ve marked this suffix with an asterisk to hint at its different behaviour.)

There’s one more occasional complication: if the **-hu** suffix follows **a**, **o**, or **u** within the same foot, simplification occurs, resulting in **au**, **oo**, or **uu**.

3.2.2 The ergative egophor, negation, and the perfect

The combination of negation with the perfect, **-miit**, behaves like a single suffix—it has unpredictable allomorphy, and conditions distinctive allomorphy in preceding suffixes, as noted in the previous section. And the ergative egophor cannot co-occur with negation, as if they were part of a paradigm. So these suffixes behave as if they shared a single morphological slot. [Table 9](#) gives the resulting forms.

EGO.ERG	-i, -j
NEG	-mi
PRF	-ut
EGO.ERG+PRF	-iit, -et, -jut
NEG+PRF	-miit, -met

Table 9: The ergative egophoric, negative, and perfect suffixes.

The morphophonology:

- Many verbs take unpredictable forms before the ergative egophoric suffix and the perfect suffix. The lexicon simply lists these forms for all verbs, omitting the ergative egophoric forms from nonagentive verbs.
- Allomorphy in the EGO.ERG and EGO.ERG+PRF suffixes is conditioned by the preceding segment: you get **i** after a consonant and **j** after a vowel. This is *not* affected by the unpredictable allomorphy just mentioned.
- The EGO.ERG -j will, if word-final or followed by a consonant, merge with the preceding vowel, usually with unsurprising results; the main things to note are that **ej** becomes **ee** and **uj** becomes **oi**. When the stem ends in a diphthong, however, the results can be unpredictable.
- Allomorphy in the NEG+PRF suffix is conditioned by prosody, **-met** occurring (only) when the suffix does not get a whole foot to itself (equivalently: when it is followed by an unstressed syllable); and similarly for the **-et** allophone of the EGO.ERG+PRF suffix.

One more thing about the ergative egophoric suffix. It is not unusual for this suffix to have no obvious effect on the surface form of the verb. Its presence can still sometimes be detected, however, because it will prevent the SAP agreement prefix from occurring (see below).

3.2.3 The past tense suffix

The past tense suffix is **-se** and its behaviour is perfectly regular. Its most confusing habit is that it becomes **-tse** after a coda consonant (which is dropped). This and the allophony of NEG+PRF **-miit** means that for NEG+PRF+PAST you get **-me.tse**, with syllabification as shown.

3.2.4 The SAP agreement prefix

The SAP agreement prefix takes two forms, **t-** before a vowel and **se-** before a consonant.

3.3 SAP agreement

A verb will take the SAP agreement prefix if one of its core arguments is a speech act participant that does not trigger egophoric marking. For the purposes of this rule, all of a verb's selected objects, along with its subject, count as core arguments.

The main tricky point here is the way this interacts with egophoric marking; these interactions will be illustrated in the next section.

3.4 Egophoric marking

The Dzoqi verb can take two egophoric suffixes, which I've distinguished as ergative and absolutive. I'll try to explain here what's up.

An egophoric suffix occurs when the verb has a suitable argument. I'll start with the simplest case, simple affirmative clauses with first-person subjects. With these, there'll always be an egophoric suffix:

- (27) **ejamena no vamoo dzitise**
 ejam -ena no vamoo dzit -i -se
fish -ACC 1S *all* *eat* -EGO.ERG -PAST
 "I ate all the fish"

- (28) **gojukena no sika**
 gojuk -ena no sii -ka
lake -ACC 1S *go.down* -EGO.ABS
 "I'm going to the lake"

These examples also illustrate the rule that if an argument is registered by an egophoric suffix, it cannot trigger SAP agreement.

Which suffix you get depends on whether Dzoqi syntax treats the argument in question as an agent or a patient. In the examples just given, the subject of **dzii dzitut** *eat* is treated as an agent, the subject of **sii sijuut** *go down* is treated as a patient. (See §3.1 for some details.)

Not only subjects can trigger egophoric marking, objects can too; they only ever trigger the absolutive egophor. Ditransitives and biabsolutives are a bit tricky: it's only ever the highest patientive—generally an experiencer or a recipient—argument that can trigger egophoric marking. The same rule extends to the copulas: only the higher of the two arguments (intuitively, the subject) can trigger (absolutive) egophoric marking.

Another wrinkle is that if an argument is possessed, then it's the possessor rather than the head noun that counts.

Here are a few more examples:

- (29) **sugaluna no gutetse**
 sugalu -na no gut -iit -se
nake -ACC 1S *skin* -EGO.ERG:PRF -PAST
 "I've skinned the snake"

(30) **galutarena no nikase**

galutar -ena no ni -ka -se
snakeskin -ACC *no* *see* -EGO.ABS -PAST

“I saw the snakeskin”

(31) **muta nola galutarena inikase**

muta no -la galutar -ena ini -ka -se
 3PL 1S -ACC *snakeskin* -ACC *show* -EGO.ABS -PAST

“They showed me the snakeskin”

(32) **noo aa hoska**

no -oo aa hos -ka
 1S -GEN *fish* EXIST -EGO.ABS

“I have a fish”

(33) **muta noo ejamena dziikotse**

muta no -oo ejam -ena dzii -ka -ut -se
 3PL 1S -GEN *fish* -ACC *eat* -EGO.ABS -PRF -PAST

“They’ve eaten my fish”

In all of these, it’s a first person argument that triggers egophoric marking. That’s the usual pattern in declarative main clauses; but there are other patterns.

One is that in an interrogative clause, it’s second person arguments that trigger egophoric marking:

(34) **sugaluna de dzitise qo=a?**

sugalu -na de dzit -i -se qo =a
snake -ACC 2S *eat* -EGO.ERG -PAST Q =Q

“Did you eat the snake?”

(35) **askiluu doo hoskaut qo=a**

askiluu de -oo hos -ka -ut qo =a
happiness 2S -GEN EXIST -EGO.ABS -PRF Q =Q

“Are you happy now?”

You can think of it this way. In an indicative main clause, the speaker is presenting themselves as the authority concerning the facts at issue; but in a question, the speaker is treating the addressee as the authority. You get the ergative egophoric suffix when the verb has an agent argument that corefers with the relevant authority, and the absolutive egophoric suffix when the highest non-agent argument corefers with the authority.

That’s not quite right, because this is a syntactic phenomenon at heart. It’s not always the case when you ask a question that you’re treating your addressee as an authority, for example—think of rhetorical questions, or questions asked on a test. But Dzoqi egophoric marking doesn’t care about that, it just cares whether it’s a declarative or interrogative clause. (35) is a case in point: its verb will take the egophoric suffix whether or not it’s asked as a genuine question.

Indirect speech reports raise a bunch of complications, because with indirect speech reports it's not the current speaker or addressee who's the authority, it's the speaker or addressee of the reported speech act. That means you get sentences like this:

(36) **ejamena ma dzitise ii texe gose**

ejam -ena ma dzit -i -se ii texe goo -se
fish -ACC 3S *eat* -EGO.ERG -PAST COMP *Texte* *say* -PAST
 “Texte_i said that he_i ate the fish”

(For the next bit I'll use subscripts to indicate coreference and lack thereof.)

In this example, the reported speech is attributed to Texte, so he is the relevant authority for assessing the embedded clause. The ergative egophoric marking on the verb thus indicates that the subject pronoun **ma** refers to Texte himself, and not a third party.

Consider now this pair of sentences, in which the fish become *my* fish:

(37) **noo ejamena texe dziikase**

no -oo ejam -ena texe dzii -ka -se
 1S -GEN *fish* -ACC *Texte* *eat* -EGO.ABS -PAST
 “Texte ate my fish”

(38) **noo ejamena ma sedzitise ii texe gose**

no -oo ejam -ena ma se- dsit -i -se ii
 1S -GEN *fish* -ACC 3S SAP- *eat* -EGO.ERG -PAST COMP
 texe goo -se
Texte *say* -PAST
 “Texte_i said that he_i ate my fish”

(37) is a regular matrix clause. The first person possessor of the object then corefers with the clause's authority, namely the speaker, so you get an egophoric marker on the verb; because this is not an agent argument, it's the absolutive egophor that appears. Following the usual rule, this means that the first person possessor does not trigger SAP agreement.

In (38), the same statement is put in an indirect speech context, with Texte speaking. Now Texte is the relevant authority when assessing the embedded clause. The verb in that clause bears the ergative egophoric suffix, which tells us that its agent argument—its subject—corefers with the relevant authority, namely Texte. Meanwhile, the first person possessor of the object no longer corefers with the relevant authority, so it does not trigger its own (absolutive) egophoric marking, and thus is free to trigger SAP agreement.

If you understand that, then you understand how all this is supposed to work. Here's another example:

(39) **moo ejamena texe dzikase ii hexe gose**

ma -oo ejam -ena texe dzii -ka -se ii hexe
 3S -GEN *fish* -ACC *Texte* *eat* -EGO.ABS -PAST COMP *Hexe*
 goo -se
say -PAST
 “Hexe said that Texte ate her fish”

Here Hexe is the relevant authority, and the egophoric marking on the verb indicates that the possessor of the object corefers with that authority: Hexe is saying that Texe ate her fish, not someone else's.

Incidentally, in contexts like this, Dzoqi allows what appear to be violations of Condition C of the binding theory:

(40) **ejamena texe dzitise ii ma gose**

ejam -ena texe dzit -i -se ii ma goo -se
fish -ACC *Texe* *eat* -EGO.ERG -PAST COMP 3S *say* -PAST
 “He_i said that Texe_i ate the fish”

Of course the English example is ungrammatical—you have to swap the pronoun and the coreferring name. But the sentence is fine in Dzoqi. (And we'll see in a bit that this isn't because of the difference in linear order.)

You can also have embedded questions, and in embedded questions it's the addressee of the reported speech act who's the relevant authority.

(41) **ejamena ma dzitise qo hexe texena gose**

ejam -ena ma dzit -i -se qo
fish -ACC 3S *eat* -EGO.ERG -PAST Q.COMP
 hexe texe -na goo -se
Hexe Texe -ACC *say* -PAST
 “Hexe asked Texe_i whether he_i ate the fish”

One more can of worms. As noted in §2.3.5, pronouns and proper names can take an adverbial case, to indicate the point of view that frames the sentence. These adverbial forms establish an authority, often distinct from the speaker, and it's that authority that conditions egophoric marking in the embedded statement.

It can look like this:

(42) **texet ejamena ma dzitise**

texe -t ejam -ena ma dzit -i -se
Texe -ADV *fish* -ACC 3S *eat* -EGO.ERG -PAST
 “According to Texe_i, he_i ate my fish”

This is another configuration in which apparent Condition C violations are possible (and this time the issue plainly isn't linear order):

(43) **maat ejamena texe dzitise**

ma -t ejam -ena texe dzit -i -se
 3S -ADV *fish* -ACC *Texe* *eat* -EGO.ERG -PAST
 “According to him_i, Texe_i ate the fish”

(The English seems unproblematic, plausibly because the pronoun doesn't c-command out of the adjunct phrase. I haven't worked out exactly what I want to say about the Dzoqi construction, but you might think the adverbial pronoun has to c-command both the verb and its subject in order to condition egophoric marking and control coreference. Maybe I'll figure that out another time, when I understand this stuff better.)

An important subtlety here is that these point-of-view adverbials can be overtly topicalised, and when they are, they no longer condition egophoric marking:

- (44) **texet=do, ejamena ma dzise**
 texe -t =do ejam -ena ma dzii -se
Texe -ADV =TOP *fish* -ACC 3S *eat* -PAST
 “According to Texe_i, he_{i□j} ate my fish”

The last thing here is that the hearsay evidential **=mat** can interact with egophoric marking just like an adverbial pronoun, indicating that the argument associated with the marking is the source of the hearsay:

- (45) **ejamena ma dzitise=mat**
 ejam -ena ma dzit -i -se =mat
fish -ACC 3S *eat* -EGO.ERG -PAST =HS.EVID
 “Texe_i ate the fish, he_i said.”

Normally, though, **=mat** occurs with no indication of the source of the hearsay, just as you’d expect:

- (46) **hexe hexena qitese=mat**
 hexe hexe -na qitee -se =mat
Hexe Hexe -ACC *kill* -PAST =HS.EVID
 “Hexe killed Hexe, they say”

3.5 The perfect

I’ll start with the present perfect, for simplicity. It’s used to describe a current situation, highlighting a contrast with some other situation. ^[1]

Often this other situation is a recently past situation, and you get a change-of-state reading:

- (47) **texe voroot**
 texe voro -ut
Texe dance -PRF
 “Texe is dancing now”

You’ll notice that this doesn’t get translated with an English perfect, because the English perfect doesn’t have this use. Instead I’ve used “now” to indicate the salient contrast: Texe is dancing *now*, but wasn’t dancing a while ago.

One of the issues in that example is that **vororo voroot dance** is an activity verb: it describes something going on, but does not itself encode a change of state. So the implication that the dancing is a new activity is supplied entirely by the perfect.

Stative and habitual constructions can interact with the perfect in the same way:

^[1] Er, strictly speaking this should be the nonpast perfect, since there’s no very consistent way to mark future as opposed to present tense. So it goes.

- (48) **texoo askiluu hotut**
 texe -oo askiluu hot -ut
Texe -GEN *happiness* EXIST -PRF
 “Texe is happy now”

- (49) **texe ejamena dziikuut**
 texe ejam -ena dzii -ku -ut
Texe *fish* -ACC *eat* -HAB -PRF
 “Texe eats fish now”

(48) could be used to indicate that Texe has just become happy, and (49) that he has acquired a new habit.

Note that these are not inchoatives: the focus is on the resulting state, not on the change that led to the resulting state.

When the verb is telic, the resulting sense is resultative, and in this case it generally is reasonable to translate with an English perfect.

- (50) **texe ejamena dzitut**
 texe ejam -ena dzit -ut
Texe *fish* -ACC *eat* -PRF
 “Texe has eaten the fish”

There’s still a change of state here, but that’s encoded in the verb; what the perfect adds, on the change of state reading, is the implication that the eating was carried out in the past, but that the resulting state continues to obtain.

I mentioned earlier (§2.3.3) that accusative objects give rise to culmination entailments. That’s true here, too: (50) entails that the fish in question got fully eaten (and presumably that’s the result whose continued salience the sentence is reporting on).

It’s also important here that the current relevance of the past event must take the form of a result state that the event produced and that continues into the present. The Dzoqi perfect cannot be interpreted as an experiential perfect; for example, (50) cannot be interpreted to mean that Texe has eaten fish at one or more times in the past. (To say that, you’d use a regular past tense.)

Much the same can be said with nondurative verbs like **hit hilut** *arrive*, though here English also doesn’t really welcome an experiential perfect. You get sentences like this:

- (51) **hexe hilut**
 hexe hil -ut
Hexe *arrive* -PRF
 “Hexe has arrived”

As you might expect, this sentence would entail that Hexe is still present.

It’s not the case, though, that the (present) perfect always implies a change of state reading. It does always foreground a contrast between the current situation and some alternative situation, but that alternative situation need not be an actual past situation. It can also be a situation the speaker expected to obtain, or a situation that they or the addressee thought obtained. The result is a sort of counter-expectation reading.

Alternative interpretations are thus possible of the preceding examples.

(52) **texoo askiluu (tiva) hotut**

texe -oo askiluu tiva hot -ut
Texe -GEN *happiness* *still* EXIST -PRF
 “Texe is (still) happy?!?”

Here it’s a surprise, not a new situation, that Texe is happy, and the adverb **tiva still**, *again* is perfectly at home here, as it would not be on a change-of-state interpretation.

And here is (50) again, with a new interpretation:

(53) **texe ejamena dzitut**

texe ejam -ena dzit -ut
Texe *fish* -ACC *eat* -PRF
 “Texe is eating the fish?!?”

Notice that on this counter-expectation interpretation, the event is no longer implied to be in the past: the contrast is between Texe’s actual, current fish-eating and the expected situation, in which Texe is leaving the fish alone.

It can be a fairly subtle question whether a particular use of the perfect more supports a change-of-state or a counter-expectation interpretation. Er, but I don’t have time to go into such subtleties.

I’ve so far been talking only about the present perfect, but the perfect can also occur in the past tense. In fact the only difference that makes is that it puts the situation described in the past; everything else remains the same. In particular, unlike with the English past perfect, you cannot generate past-in-the-past readings by embedding a perfect under past tense.

Finally, there’s no universal perfect. The nearest Dzoqi analog of an English sentence like “I have been living here for three years” would just use a regular nonpast verb.

3.6 The habitual

The habitual has two main uses.

First, it can indicate that the clause describes a regular sort of event or behaviour—something that recurs predictably.

This could involve a pattern in someone’s behaviour:

(54) **texe dorotjusija totoikuu**

texe dorotjusi -a totoi -kuu
Texe *spear* -INST *hunt* -HAB
 “Texe hunts with a spear”

Or you could be describing behaviour typical of a species or other kind of thing:

(55) **edza=do metnilis muta heku, aa=do gojelis muta heku**

edza =do metni -lis muta he -ku
person =TOP *ground* -LOC 3PL *live* -HAB
 aa =do goj -elis muta he -ku
fish =TOP *water* -LOC 3PL *live* -HAB
 “Humans live on the ground, fish live in water”

The habitual can also be used to indicate that the described behaviour or state is characteristic of the subject:

(56) **texe ejamena dziikuse**

texe ejam -ena dzii -kuu -se
Texe fish -ACC eat -HAB -PAST
 “Texe was eating fish, as usual”

The difference is that in this use, you’re still talking about a particular event, not (just) a pattern.

The previous sentence is actually ambiguous, since it could also be used to mean *Texe used to eat fish*. With a specific subject and a stative predicate, though, often only the second sort of interpretation is available:

(57) **hexoo askeluu hosku**

hexe -oo askeluu hos -ku
Hexe -GEN happiness EXIST -HAB
 “Hexe is happy, as usual”

You could still force a recurrence interpretation by adding an adverb like **kekee** *often* or **vamoo** *always*, however.

One point to be wary of: verbal negation follows and thus scopes over the habitual suffix:

(58) **ejamena no sedziikumi**

ejam -ena no se- dzii -ku -mi
fish -ACC 1S SAP- eat -HAB -NEG
 “I do not habitually eat fish”

Notably this does not mean *I habitually do not eat fish*, which is the natural way to interpret the English “I do not eat fish.” For that sort of meaning you need a periphrastic construction (§6.2.2).

3.7 Tense

The past tense is used (only) when the time the clause is telling you about entirely precedes the reference time. There’s no marked present, and no morphosyntax specific to the future; so I’ll refer to anything that isn’t marked as past tense as nonpast.

Mostly that’s the utterance time, but in embedded finite clauses, the reference time shifts to a time determined by the matrix predicate. In indirect speech reports, for example, that’ll be the time of the reported speech act.

Consider this example, repeated from (36) above:

(59) **ejamena ma dzitise ii texe gose**

ejam -ena ma dzit -i -se ii texe goo -se
fish -ACC 3S eat -EGO.ERG -PAST COMP Texe say -PAST
 “Texe said that he ate the fish”

Here the embedded verb is in the past tense. Its pastness must be evaluated relative to the time of the reported speech: this sentence indicates that Texe's supposed eating of the fish took place before the reported speech act.

Superficially the English translation seems to be working the same way. But here's another example:

- (60) **ejamena ma dziti ii texe gose**
 ejam -ena ma dzit -i ii texe goo -se
fish -ACC 3S *eat* -EGO.ERG COMP *Texe* *say* -PAST
 "Texe said that he was eating the fish"

In this case, Dzoqi has a nonpast embedded verb, implying that Texe was claiming to be eating even as he spoke, or perhaps that he was going to be eating later. But even in this case, English wants a past tense.^[2] The English translation is actually ambiguous in a way that the Dzoqi original is not, since it also allows an interpretation according to which Texe's eating entirely preceded his speech act, just like in (59).

There's a subtlety here involving aspect. English "Texe said that he was eating" allows a reading where the saying and the eating are simultaneous only because the embedded clause uses a progressive construction; in "Texe said that he ate," the eating must have been first because there's no progressive. So though the difference in interpretation between the two sentences seems sort of tense-like, it actually results from a difference in aspect.

Dzoqi tense does not interact with aspect in the same way. There is a progressive construction, which we'll get to in §6.2.1, but it's not nearly as common as the English progressive, and it is totally fine to use simple verb forms to talk about the present. That's to say, where in English you might say "I am eating," in Dzoqi **no dziti** on its own is perfectly fine.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, you also use plain nonpast verbs in many cases where English will want a universal perfect. Like this:

- (61) **iiskinet no teet kee todzona heka**
 iiskinet no teet kee todzo -na he -ka
here 1S *three* CL *year* -ACC *live* -EGO.ABS
 "I've lived here for three years"

(Though in this case a progressive is also possible, see (108).)

4 Simple clauses

For the purposes of this section, a simple clause is one that contains a single verb. I'll be going over the most common constituent order patterns in common sentence types, including the positions of adjuncts of various sorts.

^[2] You *can* say "Texe said that he is eating the fish"—but only if context allows the eating event to be in your own present or future; if it is now in the past but was present at the time of the reported speech act, English requires a past tense.

4.1 Basic constituent order

Dzoqi is mostly verb-final, with the exception of some clitics and (in embedded clauses) the complementisers. In some sense S O V is a basic or neutral order, in that if you control for all other factors, that's the order you're most likely to get (and you're more likely to get S IO O V than any other particular variation of that). But I can't promise you that as a result S O V actually ends up being significantly more common than O S V, because there are a bunch of other factors, and it doesn't happen so often that none of them are in play.

Here are some factors that seem to affect word order in simple clauses, with no appreciable effect on markedness, intonation, or interpretation:

- Relatively interesting constituents tend to be earlier, backgrounded ones closer to the verb.
- More animate arguments tend to get mentioned earlier, less animate ones later.
- Prosodically heavy elements tend to come earlier, lighter ones later. In particular, there's a strong tendency to put bare pronominal arguments as close to the verb as possible; and anything with a phrasal or clausal modifier is very likely to go first.

The prosodic factor in particular tends to push in the opposite direction of any tendency to put topical constituents early in the clause, given that topical constituents will often be represented by pronouns. This especially affects the placement of first- and second-person pronouns, which are all but guaranteed to be topical and to have highly animate referents, and are quite unlikely to be backgrounded, but which nonetheless mostly occur close to the verb.

4.2 Copular clauses

Dzoqi has two copulas that are used in a variety of clause types.

4.2.1 *i to be*

Dzoqi verbs are remarkably well-behaved, and the copula **i ihut** is no exception. Only the unaffixed form is irregular. Normally you might expect **i** to become **ii**, to satisfy Dzoqi's minimal word constraint. However, you never get that. Instead you get a clitic that attaches to the preceding word. Unexpectedly, the clitics is **=(i)s**, the vowel dropping after a stem vowel; this is presumably from **is to stand**.

The copula has a number of uses, some of which I get to in §6.2. Here I'm only interested in its use with nonverbal predicates.

Here are some examples with noun and adjective predicates:

- (62) **hexe jaamau ise**
 hexe jaamau i -se
 Hexe healer COP -PAST
 “Hexe was a healer”

(63) **muwaneret vaa ikase**

muwaneret vaa i -ka -se
angry 1PL COP -EGO.ABS -PAST
 “We were angry”

(64) **iskinetut jaamau hexes**

iskinet -tu -t jaamau hexe =s
here -ADJZR -HU *healer* *Hexe* COP
 “Hexe is the healer here”

As you can see from (64), identity statements have the same syntax as nominal predications.

You can also use *i* with clausal predicates:

(65) **ejamena vamoo de sedzise ii avaa ise**

ejam -ena vamoo de se- dzii -se ii avaa i
fish -ACC *all* 2S SAP- *eat* -PAST COMP *reason* COP
 -se
 -PAST
 “The reason is that you ate all the fish”

4.2.2 The existential copula **hos**

Naturally the existential copula can be used to support locative predicates:

(66) **noo heme kunelis hoska**

no -oo heme kun -elis hos -ka
 1S -GEN *hut* *river* -LOC EXIST -EGO.ABS
 “My hut is by the river”

When the located person or thing is indefinite, you’ll get an existential or presentative sense.

(67) **kunelis qee he tetu hos**

kun -elis qee he tetu hos
river -LOC *one* CL *boar* EXIST
 “There is a boar by the river”

Possession gets coded with an existential copula and a genitive-marked possessor:

(68) **kego noo hoska**

kego no -oo hos -ka
fishing.spear 1S -GEN EXIST -EGO.ABS
 “I have a spear”

(69) **mu kego noo hoska**

mu kego no -oo hos -ka
 DISTAL *fishing.spear* 1S -GEN EXIST -EGO.ABS

“That spear is mine”

As you can see, the possessor triggers egophoric marking regardless of which argument is being treated as topical.

4.3 Exhaustive focus

As in many verb-final languages, a constituent can be focused by being placed immediately before the verb. This can but need not be one of the verb’s core arguments. If it’s a noun phrase, it can take the focus clitic **=o** *only, precisely*, but this is always optional.

An element focused this way must be verb-adjacent; it will follow even pronominal arguments.

Here are two examples:

(70) **texena hexe(=o) qitekutse**

texe -na hexe =o qitek -ut -se
Texe -ACC *Hexe* =FOC *kill* -PRF -PAST

“It was Hexe who killed Texe?!?”

(71) **hexe texena(=o) qitekutse**

hexe texe -na =o qitek -ut -se
Hexe Texe -ACC =FOC *kill* -PRF -PAST

“It was Texe that Hexe killed?”

Without the **=o** the transcribed form of these sentences would be ambiguous, because nothing would prevent informationally neutral sentences from having the same constituent orders. However, the focused element will form a prosodic phrase with the verb, which other preverbal constituents won’t, and it will also attract phrasal pitch accents: the focus construction will be distinctive prosodically at least.

There also can be word order differences. A noun phrase that follows a pronominal argument must be focused, for example. And manner adverbs cannot occur between a focused element and the verb, but can follow any other constituent. So (72) is not relevantly ambiguous: the object is not focused because it precedes the manner adverbial **askiloo kire** *happily*:

(72) **texe ejamena askiloo kire dzii**

texe ejam -ena askiloo kire dzii

“Texe is eating the fish happily”

(Er, I have not sorted out adverb placement enough to be sure whether **texe askiloo kire ejamena dzii** would be ambiguous. I think likely it is, because likely manner adverbs are fairly free in their placement, but I haven’t made up my mind about this for sure.)

As you can easily verify, focusing the subject or the object of a verb does not affect case-marking in any way.

The focus position before the verb can also host a variety of clausal adjuncts, including circumstantial adjuncts that you might expect to find high in the clause:

(73) **texe ejamena goitselis dzise**

texe ejam -ena goitselis dzii -se
Texe fish -ACC at.dawn eat -PAST

‘‘It was this morning that Texe ate the fish’’

(This sentence would be appropriate if you had to correct someone who’s just said that Texe ate the fish last night, maybe.)

I’ll mention two adverbs that show particularly interesting behaviour in focus position.

The first is **daumane**, the oblique form of the reflexive pronoun, which becomes an emphatic pronoun when focused. It’s not normally marked which of a verb’s arguments it associates with, though a focus particle can be used to clear things up if desired.

(74) **hexe texena daumane qitese**

hexe texe -na daumane qitee -se
Hexe Texe -ACC EMPH kill -PAST

‘‘Hexe_i killed Texe herself_i’’

Or: ‘‘Hexe killed Texe_i himself_i’’

(75) **hexe=ai texena daumane qitese**

hexe =ai texe -na daumane qitee -se
Hexe =FOC Texe -ACC EMPH kill -PAST

‘‘Hexe_i killed Texe herself_i’’

The quantifier **vamoo** *all, always* can also go in focus position. Again it’s often left implicit which of a verb’s arguments it associates with, and again this can be clarified with a focus particle. In addition, it can associate with the clause as a whole and mean something like *always*; this is especially common in habitual clauses.

(76) **texe ejamena(=ha) vamoo dzise**

texe ejam -ena =ha vamoo dzii -se
texe fish -ACC =also all eat -PAST

‘‘Texe ate all the fish’’

(77) **goitselis no vamoo tutkuha**

goitselis no vamoo tut -ku -ha
at.dawn 1S all sleep -HAB -EGO.ABS

‘‘I always sleep in’’

One last thing. It’s possible to focus just part of a noun phrase, and this can result in discontinuous noun phrases. This is especially common with possessors:

(78) **hemelis no hexoo tutkase**

heme -lis no hexe -oo tut -ka -se
hut -LOC 1S *Hexe* -GEN *sleep* -EGO.ABS -PAST
 “I slept in *Hexe*’s hut”

The same sort of split is possible with more or less any of a noun’s modifiers, however.

4.4 Focus particles

The focus particles that occur with nouns (§2.9) can also end up hosted by the verb, with analogous significance. To repeat, these are **=o** *but, only, precisely*, **=ha** *and, also*, and **=ai** *even*. There’s a wrinkle I haven’t sorted out yet, their scope: I’m pretty sure they can scope either under or over negation, and I’m not sure how exactly that’ll play out.

Focus particles can occur in embedded clauses, including in control constructions.

4.5 Evidentials

There are two evidential clitics. **=wa** is the general indirect evidential, and **=mat** is the hearsay evidential. Er, you wouldn’t know if from my acontextual approach to sample sentences, but these are actually pretty common in regular discourse.

The evidentials always follow focus particles, if both are present, and always take scope over negation.

4.6 Topicalisation with =do

Certain topics can occur sentence-initially and flagged by the particle **=do**. These include scene- or context-setting topics, contrastive topics, and new topics; but old/familiar topics are never flagged in this way. For most purposes topics of this sort are external to the clause. In particular, if the topic also occurs as a constituent in the embedded sentence, it requires a resumptive pronoun; and a topicalised noun phrase takes nominative case regardless of its syntactic role in the sentence.

Here are a couple of examples:

(79) **dotoje=do, dostojusi askiluna nola inekuha**

dotoje =do dostojusi askilu -na
hunting =TOP *hunting.spear* *happiness* -ACC
 no -la ine -kuha
 1S -ACC *give* -HAB:EGO.ABS
 “As for hunting, I like the spear”

(80) **aa=do, mutane no dzitise**

aa =do muta -ne no dzit -i -se
fish =TOP 3PL -ACC 1S *eat* -EGO.ERG -PAST
 “As for the fish, I ate them”

The interrogative clitic **=a** can follow **=do**:

(81) **aa=do=a, mutane no dzitise**

aa =do =a muta -ne no dzit -i -se
fish =TOP =Q 3PL -ACC 1S *eat* -EGO.ERG -PAST
 “The fish? I ate them”

The **=a** here attracts a high boundary tone, just as it does in questions.

A **=do=a** topic with no following sentence can be used to redirect a question.

(82) **de=do=a**

de =do =a
 2S =TOP =Q
 “And you?”

(83) **hexe=do=a**

hexe =do =a
Hexe =TOP =Q
 “What about Hexe?”

A first- or second-person possessor in a topicalised phrase cannot trigger SAP agreement or egophoric marking on the embedded verb:

(84) **noo heme=do, kunelis ma hoos**

no -oo heme =do kun -elis ma hoos
 1S -GEN *hut* =TOP *river* -LOC 3S EXIST
 “My hut, it’s by the river”

4.7 Adjuncts

I’m including this because it seems worth mentioning even though I don’t actually know much about how it works yet.

There’ll be some role for the expected hierarchy that puts speaker-oriented adverbs before subject-oriented ones, and those before place/time circumstantial ones and modal ones, and those before manner ones. And I think considerations of prosodic weight will have relatively little impact on the placement of such adjuncts, except that adverbial clauses will probably migrate to the front of the sentence. But most such adverbs (probably not the truly speaker-oriented ones) can end up in focus position before the verb, and subtle issues of topicality can affect at least the more noun-y adjuncts. So...

I’m even less prepared to tell you what if any rules govern the placement of the verb’s arguments among various sorts of adjunct. Basically, I have a lot to learn about how scrambling tends to interact with adjunct-placement in verb-final languages.

4.8 Questions

There are three main things to know.

First, matrix questions will normally end with the particle **=a**. I'll gloss it as Q for *question*, but I think it's more a prosodic device—it hosts a high boundary tone—than a bit of syntax. Notably, it cannot occur in embedded questions, and can occur in non-interrogative sentences, especially exclamatory ones and imperatives.

Second, polar questions take the particle **qo**. It occurs before **=a**, but after everything else in the sentence. It *does* occur in embedded questions.

Finally, question words normally occur in the preverbal focus position. Like this:

(85) **dena be senise=a**

de -na be se- ni -se =a
2S -ACC *who* SAP- *see* -PAST =Q
“Who saw you?”

(86) **dzokona be nee tsihekutse=a?**

dzoko -na be ne tsihek -ut -se =a
dog -ACC *who* *go* *help* -PRF -PAST =Q
“Who let the dogs out?”

Focusing the question word can result in discontinuous noun phrases, as with focus in general:

(87) **audana de boo nikase=a**

auda -na de be -oo ni -ka -se =a
husband -ACC 2S *who* -GEN *see* -EGO.ABS -PAST =Q
“Whose husband did you see?”

(88) **tetuna de mita kuwa tsiheki**

tetu -na de mita kuwa tsihek -j
boar -ACC 2S *which* *burn* *cause* -EGO.ERG
“Which boar are you cooking?”

Wh focus movement cannot strand postpositions, however:

(89) ***galutarena si de bee giitise**

galutar -ena si de be -Ø giit -i -se
snakeskin -ACC BEN 2S *who* -OBL *bring* -EGO.ERG -PAST
Intended: “Who did you bring the snakeskin for?”

(90) **galutarena de si bee giitise**

galutar -ena de si be -Ø giit -i -se
snakeskin -ACC 2S BEN *who* -OBL *bring* -EGO.ERG -PAST
“For whom did you bring the snakeskin?”

4.9 Imperatives

Imperatives are formed by suffixing the verb with **-ba** or **-eba**; this is the same verb form that is used in conditional clauses (§8.4.2).

The choice of allomorph is fairly straightforward. If the verb bears any inflectional suffixes, you get **-ba** after a vowel and **-eba** after a consonant. Otherwise, if the verb's habitual form has a consonant-final stem, you use that stem with **-eba**, and otherwise you use **-ba** on the regular verb stem. I'll gloss this suffix just as IRR, for irrealis.

The simplest form of imperative has a second-person addressee, who need not be mentioned; the verb must take SAP agreement, and will take egophoric marking only if it has a first-person object.

- (91) **nola kuwadena segiikaba haa**
 no -la kuwade -na se- gii -ka -ba =ha =a
 1S -ACC rope -ACC SAP- bring -EGO.ABS -IRR =FOC =Q
 "Bring me the rope!"

The use of a focus particle and **=a** are common in imperatives.

Imperatives—or hortatives, or whatever you want to call them—are possible in other persons, but the subject must be mentioned overtly; egophoric and SAP marking is just as in regular declarative statements.

- (92) **deja kuwadena giijeba haa**
 deja kuwade -na gii -j -eba =ha =a
 12PL rope -ACC bring -EGO.ERG -IRR =FOC =Q
 "Let's get the rope!"

(That example illustrates a morphophonological corner case. The ergative egophoric suffix is **j** after a vowel; normally it would still get absorbed into the **ii** of the stem, but it is enough to trigger the **-eba** allomorph of the irrealis suffix. And incidentally, if you wanted to argue that the glides are not just allophones of the high vowels, this bit of allomorphy might provide your strongest evidence.)

5 Valency and such

Dzoqi doesn't have a lot of overt morphosyntax dedicated to fiddling with a verb's valency. But there are still a few things worth talking about here.

5.1 Omitted objects

Instead of an antipassive or other sorts of detransitivisers, Dzoqi lets you simply drop or demote objects pretty freely. This isn't a form of pro-drop, since the omitted object doesn't get a pronominal interpretation. The interpretation is instead existential and nonspecific.

Compare the following two sentences:

- (93) **texe tetuna totoi**
 texe tetu -na totoi
Texe boar -ACC hunt
 “Texe is hunting boars”

- (94) **texe totoi**
 texe totoi
Texe hunt
 “Texe is hunting”

Much like in many antipassives, an object that’s been omitted in this way can be reintroduced as an oblique. Exactly how this is done depends on its semantic role. Generally speaking, patients get reintroduced using the plain oblique case, whereas recipients and goals get reintroduced using the allative postposition *oi*.

So corresponding to the previous two examples, we could have this:

- (95) **texe tetu totoi**
 texe tetu -Ø totoi
Texe boar -OBL hunt
 “Texe is hunting for boars”

The pragmatics of this alternation are a bit subtle. The object in (93) can be every bit as much indefinite or nonspecific as the object in (95), so it’s not that.

The main difference involves culmination. (93) strictly entails that the eventuality it describes involves a measure of success: if you asserted (93) and then Texe came back empty-handed, then you’d have been wrong. (95) is strictly safer, epistemically speaking: you’ll still be right even if Texe is a complete failure.

Still, no one sees the future and you’re allowed to be optimistic, and sentences like (93) generally function as a sort of default; most of the time, you’ll be willing to take the epistemic risk involved in asserting them. You’d likely only say (95), with its obvious hedge, if you really wanted to convey your doubts.

Much the same contrast exists in pairs like the following:

- (96) **kunena vaa neka**
 kun -ena vaa ne -ka
river -ACC 1PL go -EGO.ABS
 “We’re going to the river”
- (97) **kune ohii vaa neka**
 kun -e ohii vaa ne -ka
river -OBL ALL 1PL go -EGO.ABS
 “We’re heading towards the river”

(96) strictly entails that we'll make it to the river, so if I asserted that and we never ended up getting there then I'd have been wrong. But if the river is our intended destination and I have no particular reason to think we won't make it, most likely I'd assert (96) rather than (97), despite the greater epistemic risk.

5.2 Nonspecific subjects

You cannot drop nonspecific subjects, and there's no passive. The best you can do is use an indefinite pronoun, **be** *someone* or **mi** *something* (§2.8). So where you might otherwise want a passive, you'll instead do something like this:

- (98) **texena be nikutse**
 texe -na be nik -ut -se
Texe -ACC *someone* *see* -PRF -PAST
 "Texe was seen"

As far as I can tell this doesn't interact with aspect in any interesting way.

5.3 Expletive hu

Each Dzoki clause requires a subject, and sometimes this means you get an expletive; I mean you get **hu**. Like this:

- (99) **ahoo hu tutse**
 ahoo hu tuu -ut -se
cloudy EXPL *fall* -PRF -PAST
 "It was cloudy"

(Who is also the third person pronoun used with nonhuman referents: "it.")

The construction in (99) is a fairly common one when describing weather or ambiance: **tuu** *fall* has an expletive subject and takes an adjective as a sort of secondary predicate.

Many unaccusative verbs occur quite freely in a sort of pseudo-transitive construction with an expletive subject. This is especially common when the patient is nonspecific, and can also be used when presenting a new discourse referent. Here, for example, is another common sort of weather description, again using **tuu** *fall*:

- (100) **bevitena hu tuse**
 bevit -ena hu tuu -se
rain -ACC EXPL *fall* -PAST
 "It was raining"

Naturally the simpler **bevit tuse** is also correct. (But you can say **oodana hu tuse** *it was windy* but not ***ooda tuse**, possibly because wind does not exactly fall.)

Unlike in English, though, locative constructions rarely if ever make use of the expletive.

Finally, raising verbs (on which see §6.1) consistently allow an alternative construction with **hu**, and only **hu** is possible when the verb takes a finite clause as complement. Here's an example of that:

(101) **ejamena de dzise ii hus**

ejam -ena de dzii -j -se ii hu =s
fish -ACC 2S *eat* -EGO.ERG -PAST COMP EXPL COP
 “It’s that you ate the fish”

5.4 Causative constructions

Causative constructions are only lightly grammaticalised in Dzoqi. There is one verb, **emoo** *put*, that is used especially often with a causative significance, and which is semantically quite bleached in this use, but its syntax is no different from that of other verbs with a causative sense, like **etee** *order, command*. To be precise, these are all periphrastic object control constructions.

Here’s a simple example:

(102) **hexe mimina tut emose**

hexe mimi -na tut emoo -se
Hexe baby -ACC *sleep put* -PAST
 “Hexe put the baby to sleep”

As you can see, the verbs end up adjacent, with the causee following both of them. This will always be the case; for many purposes the two verbs will behave as a complex predicate, with a single set of arguments.

However, the verbs still inflect separately, so this is clearly a biclausal construction. The one syntactic restriction is that the embedded verb cannot take past tense. I also cannot think of a context in which it would be semantically and pragmatically appropriate for it to take the perfect. But all ‘lower’ inflection—including egophoric marking, negation, and the habitual—is possible on either verb.

Egophoric marking can get a bit complicated:

(103) **galutalena hexe nona hunee emookase**

galutal -ena hexe no -na hune -j
snakeskin -ACC *Hexe* 1S -ACC *prepare* -EGO.ERG
 emoo -ka -se
put -EGO.HAB -PAST
 “Hexe had me prepare the snakeskin”

Here the first person causee triggers ergative egophoric marking on the embedded verb, and accusative egophoric marking on the matrix verb.

6 Auxiliaries, sort of

This bit is about a handful of verbs that you might think of as auxiliaries. To be honest, these are mostly raising verbs with highly grammaticalised uses; it would be reasonable to think that only the progressive construction involves a true auxiliary.

6.1 Raising verbs

I might as well treat the syntax of raising verbs separately and first, since most of the cases I'll discuss here involve raising.

Superficially, raising can look a lot like control (§5.4). But there's a crucial difference: control requires that an argument of the embedded verb corefer with an argument of the matrix verb; but in a raising configuration, there's no doubled argument, there's just an argument that semantically belongs with the embedded verb but syntactically satisfies the need of the matrix verb for a subject.

Here is an example:

- (104) **no meroi doi**
 no mero -i doi
 1S swim -EGO.ERG hold
 'I'm still swimming'

doi hold is just an auxiliary here, contributing a continuative sense, and it introduces no arguments of its own. That's to say, the subject, **no**, is assigned a thematic role only by the embedded verb, **mero swim**. But **no** is functioning as the syntactic subject of the matrix verb, as we can tell from the lack of an expletive subject.

Another thing to notice is that the egophoric marker goes on the embedded verb. This is a respect in which raising differs from control. In a control configuration, each verb has its own arguments, and bears egophoric marking appropriately. In a raising construction, the embedded verb introduces all the arguments, and always hosts egophoric marking.

It's the matrix verb that will show SAP agreement, however:

- (105) **de mero sedoi**
 de mero se- doi
 2S swim SAP- hold
 'You're still swimming'

The habitual can be marked on either verb, as semantically appropriate. Negation can be a bit tricky, because some raising verbs also allow NEG raising, in which case negation will normally be marked only on the matrix verb, but will be interpretable in either position. And the perfect is tricky for another reason: strictly it seems like it should be possible on both verbs, but I can't think of an example where it would be semantically and pragmatically appropriate to put the embedded verb in the perfect. Most likely that's a failure of imagination.

6.2 i to be

See §4.2.1 for the morphological behaviour of the copula **i**.

6.2.1 The progressive

The progressive is used by joining **i** with a lexical verb. This shows every sign of being a monoclausal construction, so you might think of **i** as being a true

auxiliary here. In particular, the absolutive ergative suffix can occur only on the lexical verb, and all higher affixes (including the SAP prefix) can occur only on *i*. (For semantic reasons the habitual suffix cannot occur at all.)

You get sentences like this:

(106) **texe daumanela otvena emoo ise**

texe dauman -ela otve -na emoo i -se
Texe REFL -ACC *facepaint* -ACC *put* COP -PAST

“Texe was putting on facepaint”

Progressive clauses foreground process or duration and de-emphasise end points. They cancel the culmination entailments that accusative-marked object usually produce, though if culmination is what you’re worried about you’ll probably demote the object instead. You also aren’t forced to use the progressive just because you’re describing an activity that takes place over time, there actually has to be some reason to highlight the temporal shape of the activity.

Ironically, one reason to highlight it is because it provides important background to something else you’re saying. This can give rise to the same sort of pairing of progressive and non-progressive clauses that you often get in the English past tense. Like this:

(107) **hexe olave ise hii, texe vorose**

hexe olave i -se hii texe voro -se
Hexe *sing* COP -PAST *while* *Texe* *dance* -PAST

“Hexe was singing while Texe danced”

This sort of pairing can be used for a variety of purposes, not just scene-setting; cf. §8.5.

The progressive can also be used in cases where another language might use a universal perfect:

(108) **iiskinet no teet kee todzona hekas**

iiskinet no teet kee todzo -na he -ka =s
here 1S *three* CL *year* -ACC *live* -EGO.ABS =COP

“I’ve been living here for three years”

These uses of the progressive are possible with stative verbs as well.

6.2.2 The i habitual

The habitual form of *i* can function as a raising verb. The resulting meaning is very close a regular habitual. The most salient difference is that this construction allows the habitual to scope over negation. However, since *i* allows NEG-raising, the surface form of the verbs won’t obviously reflect the actual scope:

(109) **ejamena no sedzii ikumi**

ejam -ena no se- dzii i -ku -mi
fish -ACC 1S SAP- *eat* COP -HAB -NEG

“I (habitually) don’t eat fish”

(Compare (58).)

There's some pretty subtle syntax here. The embedded verb has a first-person subject, so you might expect it to be marked with the ergative egophoric suffix and, because of that, to lack the SAP agreement prefix; the resultig form would be **dziti**. The fact that you don't get that shows that the negation, which is explicitly marked on the matrix verb, has its origin in the embedded clause—because negation is incompatible with the ergative egophoric suffix.

6.2.3 The *i* resultative

i can also be used with a perfect, resulting in an unambiguous resultative sense:

(110) **muta ninut=is**

muta nin -ut =is
 3PL go -PRF =COP
 “They have gone”
 Or: “They are gone”

The matrix verb can also be in the perfect, for a counter-expectation sense:

(111) **muta ninut ihut**

muta nin -ut ih -ut
 3PL go -PRF COP -PRF
 “They're gone?!?”

(Normally a sentence like this would probably end in a focus clitic or **=a**, I guess.)

6.3 *doi to hold* and the continuative

I don't have much to say about this, *doi to hold* can be used as an auxiliary with a continuative sense:

(112) **no meroi dotse**

no mero -i doi -se
 1S swim -EGO.ERG hold -PAST
 “I was still swimming”
 Or: “I kept swimming”

6.4 Modal auxiliaries

There are two modal auxiliaries. They are distinguished not by strength but by modal base: **kumoo** is an epistemic modal, while **dauke** is a circumstantial modal.

The imprecision with respect to strength means that there are no lexical distinctions like those between English “may,” “should,” and “must.” You can signal a *must*-like meaning by including the adverb **vamoo** *all, always*, however.

7 Postpositions and such

7.1 Postpositions proper

Table 10 gives some of Dzoqi’s most common postpositions, along with commonly appropriate glosses. The complement of a postposition always takes

Postposition	Gloss
<i>ba</i>	until
<i>dzi</i>	through, by means of
<i>dzos</i>	with (comitative sense)
<i>ku</i>	on, on top of
<i>oi</i>	towards, across
<i>oo</i>	onto
<i>oro</i>	into
<i>ne</i>	along, by means of
<i>qa</i>	from, because of, since
<i>si</i>	for (benefactive sense)
<i>sit</i>	in
<i>teme</i>	on, attached to, suspended from, depending on

Table 10: Postpositions.

oblique case.

7.2 Relational nouns

Relational nouns function a lot like postpositions, with the difference that their complement takes genitive case—you could take them to be somewhat grammaticalised nouns. I so far don’t know enough of them to justify a table; there’s **sii** *top*, **sito** *inside*, and **kire** *way, manner*. The latter is somewhat special in that it can also be modified by an adjective.

7.3 Locative adverbs

There are a number of adverbs that can be used in concern with locative expressions—involving postpositions, relational nouns, or the locative forms of regular nouns—specifying the location more precisely. They precede the locative expression they modify, maybe as if they are on the way to becoming prepositions. Here’s an example:

(113) **hexe qametii kunelis hos**

hexe qametii kun -elis hos
Hexe beside river -LOC EXIST

“Hexe is beside the river”

Other adverbs that can work this way include **doṅulis** *behind* and **sitii** *at front*.

The resulting meaning is not generally what you’d expect if the adverb were interpreted separately from the locative expression it modifies:

(114) **texe sitii maudzilis hos**

texe sitii maudzi -lis hos
Texe in.front village -LOC EXIST
 “Texe is in front of the village”
Not: “Texe is up front, in the village”

8 Clause combining

This’ll cover, or at least mention, a few ways in which you can combine clauses, including relative clauses, complement clauses, and adverbial clauses, as well as coordination.

8.1 The -xa participle

A sort of participle in **-xa** or **-qa** (the latter after consonants) is used in most subordinating contexts. I call it a participle because of its role in relative clauses. This does not mean that the embedded clause is nonfinite in any interesting sense. In fact it can take all regular verbal inflection, including the past tense and the SAP agreement prefix.

Some things cannot occur with a **xa** verb, however, including evidentials and point-of-view adverbials, speech-act-y clitics like **qo** and **a** (but focus particles can occur), or **do**-marked topics.

I’ll gloss **-xa** as NMLZ, for *nominaliser*.

8.2 Relative clauses

Relative clauses just use the **-xa** participle. Core arguments can simply be gapped, including any accusative-marked object:

(115) **no ehenisexa heme mu kusi s**

no ehen -i -se -xa heme mu kusi s
 1S *build* -EGO.ERG -PAST -NMLZ *hut* DISTAL CL COP
 “That’s the hut that I built”

When relativising nouns in other positions you can use a resumptive pronoun:

(116) **hulis no tutkasexa heme mu kusi s**

hu -lis no tut -ka -se -xa heme
 3NH -LOC 1S *sleep* -EGO.ABS -PAST -NMLZ *hut*
 mu kusi s
 DISTAL CL COP
 “That’s the hut that I slept in”

However, it’s possible instead to use an appropriate adverb instead, or simply to gap the whole corresponding noun phrase:

(117) **iiskinet no tutkasexa heme mu kusi**

iiskinet no tut -ka -se -xa heme
there 1S *sleep* -EGO.HAB -PAST -NMLZ *hut*
 mu kusi s
 DISTAL CL COP

“That’s the hut where I slept”

(118) **no tutkasexa heme mu kusi**

no tut -ka -se -xa heme mu kusi s
 1S *sleep* -EGO.ABS -PAST -NMLZ *hut* DISTAL CL COP

“That’s the hut where I slept”

8.3 Complement clauses

8.3.1 Raising and control

I’m mentioning these here only for completeness, I’ve already discussed the constructions in §5.4 and §6.1. I don’t think they hold any real surprises.

8.3.2 Finite complements

Most finite complement clauses use the complementiser **ii**, which occurs clause-finally. The exception is embedded polar questions, which use **qo** instead.

8.4 Other subordinate clauses

8.4.1 Subordinate participial clauses

The **-xa** participle can occur without a head noun as a sort of adverb. There are a number of possibilities.

Two involve additional suffixation. With **-xaa/-qaa** instead of **-xa/-qa**, you get a sort of converb that can describe accompanying action or purpose.

And with the **-xajoo/-qajoo** converb, you can describe means, reasons, or causes.

The **-xa** participle can also occur as the complement of postpositions, generally with unsurprising meanings. In particular, **ba** *until* and **oi** *towards* can be used to form purpose clauses, and **qa** *from* can be used for motives or causes.

8.4.2 Conditional clauses

The antecedent of a conditional uses the same verb form as the imperative; the consequent will normally use the root modal **dauke**. Like this:

(119) **bevitena hu tuuteba, sugaluna no giti daukiit**

bevít -ena hu tuut -eba
rain -ACC EXPL *fall* -IRR
 sugalu -na no giit -i dauke -ut
snake -ACC 1S *bring* -EGO.ERG MOD -PRF

“If it rains, I’ll bring the snake”

8.4.3 hu clauses

This is the construction used to for direct speech reports. You simply follow the quoted sentence with **hu**—which I’ll gloss as QUOT in this context—and either precede it or follow it with the speech verb, which must include a pronoun, also **hu**, corresponding to the reported speech.

It looks like this:

(120) **hexe hu gose, astsau noo hoska hu**

hexe	hu	goo	-se				
<i>Hexe</i>	3NH	<i>say</i>	-PAST				
	astsau	no	-oo	hos	-ka	hu	
	<i>exhaustion</i>	1S	-GEN	EXIST	EGO.ABS	QUOT	

“Hexe said, ‘I am exhausted’”

This construction actually has a range of uses, and can on occasion replace both **ii** clauses and subordinate clauses based on the participle. One reason for using the quoted-speech construction is the freedom to put the matrix verb first.

8.5 Coordination

Coordination need not be marked, and especially for sequential events it often is not.

The simplest and most common way to indicate coordination is with post-verbal focus particles; generally **=ha** *and* is used for neutral coordination, **=o** *but* for contrastive. These do not specify either simultaneity or sequence.

Contrast can also be signaled by using a counter-expectation perfect in the second clause.

There are a number of ways in which to indicate that two reported events should be understood to take place simultaneously. Clauses in the progressive are normally interpreted this way. You can also follow clauses with the conjunction **hii** *and, when*; you can put it on all conjoined clauses if you want, or omit it from the final one. And you can also include the adverb **hakee** *at that time, at the same time* in all coordinated clauses.

9 Lexicon

This is just a wordlist. Alternate stems are supplied for nouns, verbs, and adjectives. Glosses are pretty token, oh well. Alphabetisation follows English conventions, in particular **ts** and **dz** are both treated as sequences of two characters; **ŋ** is alphabetised immediately after **n**.

Nouns are listed with at least a nominative and oblique stem; both are given even if they are identical. For class IV nouns, the third, locative stem is also given. Any other irregular form is given, asterisked; it should be obvious which case it is; except that class V nouns have all their forms simply listed, with no asterisks. I also give each noun’s class and its gender. (Gender abbreviations: HU, human; NH, nonhuman.)

Verbs have their main stem listed along with their perfect form and (if they have one) their ergative egophoric form. I also given each verb's transitivity class and the suffix it takes to form the habitual. (Transitivity abbreviations: UNACC, unaccusative; UNERG, unergative; TR, transitive; DITR, ditransitive; BABS, biabsolutive, i.e., with two non-agent arguments.)

And adjectives have both their nonhuman and human forms listed, in that order.

- aa ejam** *ejam N.III-ŋ NH *fish*.
- aatsaa ahesijan** N.III-ŋ HU *elder (male)*.
- aha aka** N.I NH 1. *weather*. 2. *atmosphere, ambiance*.
- ahaine ahainiit ahainee** V.TR -HA *to loom over*.
- ahaineet akaineret** ADJ *hidden, obscured*.
- ahaneet aaneret** ADJ *grey*.
- ahoo ahoket** ADJ *cloudy*.
- ai** PTCL *even*. Focus particle.
- ai ajut ii** V.TR -HA *to drink, to breathe*.
- aimaa aimak** N.III-G NH 1. *tip*. 2. *first in a sequence*.
- aimee aimen** N.III-ŋ NH *tune, melody*.
- aita aिताut** V.UNACC -HU *to swell*.
- akasi ahasi aatsi** N.IV NH *cloud*.
- alamee alamen** N.III-ŋ NH *song*.
- alu aluut** V.UNERG -HU 1. *to react*. 2. *to respond* (e.g. to a greeting).
- amelone aalone ameloona** N.IV NH *territory*. Like, the territory claimed by some particular society.
- ameloo aalunut** V.UNACC -KU 1. *to wander, meander, move aimlessly*. 2. *to play*.
- amise amise** N.I NH *rainbow*.
- amo amo** N.I NH 1. *nourishment*. 2. *water (for drinking); something to drink*.
- askeluu askilu** N.III-G NH *happiness*.
- askelusii askelusihiit askelusikii** V.TR -HA *to make happy, to cheer up*.
- astsau astsaum** N.III-ŋ NH 1. *exhaustion, malaise*. 2. *boredom*.
- aqaa aqa** N.I NH *star*.
- aqoo aqoket** ADJ *clear (of the sky)*.
- ahe ake** N.I NH *leg*.
- asko asko** N.I HU *daughter, girl*.
- ate ahe** N.I HU *man, father*.
- aterees aatret** N.III-GA HU *uncle*.
- avaa avaj** N.II NH 1. *root*. 2. *basis, evidence, reason*.
- ba** POSTP *until*.

- baa bowahet** ADJ *new, recent.*
- bamedza bamiidza** N.II HU *child.*
- bamii bamiit** ADJ *cute, young, new.*
- bamoo bamonut bamoni** V.TR -KUU *to catch.*
- bau baut** V.BABS -KU *to want.*
- bai bai** N.I HU *desire.*
- bajoo bajoket** ADJ 1. *desirous, eager.* 2. *anxious.*
- baraat barar** N.III-GA NH *forehead.*
- bauneet booneret** ADJ *female, feminine.*
- beta beta** N.I NH *eye.*
- betano baatnoot betanoi** V.TR -HA *to glance at.*
- bevit bevit** N.I NH *rain.*
- bi** CL *For surfaces and covers and things with two salient dimensions.*
- bismaas bismat** N.III-G NH *surprise.*
- bitsii bitsii *bitsiwa** N.I NH *hill.*
- boo bowuut** V.UNACC -HU 1. *to return home.* 2. *to return to health.*
- bowatelis** ADV *recently.*
- da danut dani** V.UNERG -KU *to walk.*
- datga datga** N.I NH *guts.*
- dauke daukiit** V.AUX -HU Modal verb, expressing root modality. Its strength (*can* vs *should* vs *must*) is generally left to context, though an obligation or necessity sense can be forced by also using the adverb **vamoo** *all*.
- de** N.I HU Second person singular pronoun.
- denee denee *denejoo** N.I NH *sweat.*
- deneeneet deneeneret** ADJ 1. *hot, sweaty.* 2. *salty.*
- deṇa deṇa** N.I HU First person inclusive plural pronoun.
- detaja detaja** N.I HU First person exclusive plural pronoun.
- do** POSTP *in, inside of.*
- doi doi** N.I NH *dry season.*
- doi dujut doi** V.TR -KUU *to hold.*
- doi dujut doi** V.AUX -KUU This gives a continuative sense. It can be used with adjectives as well as with verbs.
- doimee doimek** N.III-GA NH *mountain*
- doineet doineret** ADJ *dry.*
- donone donone** N.I NH *path, opening, gap.*
- doo** CL For fairly rigid things that are mostly aligned along a single dimension, like trees.
- dosde doide** N.II NH *container.*

dowamaa dauman N.III-ŋ The reflexive pronoun. It's consistently subject-oriented. It does not vary for person or number. The oblique form can be used to focus another argument by going in focus position.

doŋulis ADV *behind*.

dostojusi dorotjusi dorotoitsi N.IV NH *spear (for hunting)*.

dotoje dotoje dootje N.IV HU *hunt, hunting*.

dotojet ADV *on the hunt, while hunting*.

dotosde dotoide N.II NH *hunting ground*.

dotoiqe dotoiqe N.I HU *hunter*.

dza CL For people.

dzase dzaset ADJ *careful, intent*.

dzasejoo ADV *carefully, intently*.

dzaat dzar N.III-G NH 1. *belly*. 2. *middle, centre*.

dza dzamut V.BABS -KU *to learn (about)*. Often used in the perfect + copula resultative construction, with the sense *to know*.

dzamee dzamin N.III-ŋ NH *wisdom, knowledge*.

dzeroot dzeror N.III-G NH *seed*.

dzi POSTP *through*.

dzii dzitut dziti V.TR -KUU *to eat*.

dzijo dzijoot dzijoi V.TR -HA *to leak, exude*.

dzijooloo dzijoolun N.II NH *sap*.

dzimee dzimin N.III-ŋ NH *sorcery, spell, curse*.

dzimekane dziimeekane N.II HU *wildfire*.

dzimere dzimere N.I NH *rip, tear*.

dzimiiloo dzimiilun N.III-ŋ NH *wound*.

dzis dzitut dzisi V.TR -KU *to give birth*.

dzitemee dziheemin N.III-ŋ 1. *help, assistance*. 2. *substitute, replacement*.

dzituus dzitut N.III-G NH *digging stick*.

dzoko dzoko N.I NH *dog*.

dzomii dzomiiki dzomihi N.IV NH *heart*.

dzos POSTP *with*. The comitative sense much more than the instrumental sense.

dzose dzose N.I HU *luck, good fortune*.

dzosoo dzoseket ADJ *lucky, fortunate*.

dzuloo dzulun N.III-ŋ NH *saying*.

dzuro dzuro N.I NH *flea*.

dzuroneet dzuroneret ADJ *irritating*.

edza edza N.I HU *person*.

edzaa edzanut edzani V.TR -KUU 1. *to wrap, to enclose*. 2. *to enclose, to cover*.

edzijo edzejoot edzijoi V.TR -HA *to squeeze out*. The direct object is the water or whatever that gets squeezed out. If you want to mention the thing you're squeezing, use **qa** *from*.

edzime edzemiit edzimee V.TR -HA *to wound, to hurt*.

eesii eesii *eesoo N.III-G NH *sun*.

ehée ehenut eheni V.TR -KUU *to build*.

ehereet ehereret ADJ *cold*.

ehoot ehol N.III-G NH *forest*.

ejamau aamaku aamu N.IV HU *fisher*.

ejaneet aaneret ADJ 1. *slippery*. 2. *uncontrollable*.

ekaas ekuwat N.III-G NH *beginning*.

ekuwa ekuwaut ekuwai V.TR -HA *to provoke, to instigate*.

elukoo iitkom N.III-ŋ NH *moonlight*.

ema aima N.II NH *nose*.

emadzaa emadзамut emadzami V.TR -KUU *to explain*.

emoo emonut emoni V.DITR -KUU 1. *to do, to make*. 2. *to put*. 3. *to cause*.

enee enee *enejoo N.I NH *neck*.

eno enoot enoi V.TR -HA *to throw*.

enoi enujut enoi V.TR -KOO *to contain*.

eje eje N.I NH *urine*.

es DET *this*. This is the proximal demonstrative determiner.

esiineet esiineret ADJ 1. *hot*. 2. *feverish*.

esiis esitut esisi V.UNERG -KUU *to light a fire*.

etee etejut etee V.TR -KUU *to order, command*.

etkoo etkon N.III-ŋ NH *moon*.

etsiit etsilut etsili V.TR -KUU *to put in a container*.

etuu etuut etuu V.TR -HA *to drop*.

etuut etulut etuli V.TR -KUU *to bore*.

esiis esir N.III-G NH *area, region*.

esuneet iisneret ADJ 1. *round*. 2. *dulled*.

gagari gagari N.I NH *herd*.

gajau gajai *gajoo N.III-G *species of fish*.

galu galu N.I NH *mouth*.

galutaat galutal N.III-G NH *ritual snakeskin*. This is the specially prepared skin of the **sugalu** river snake, worn by the **hexabau** in certain ritual contexts.

game game N.I NH *bank of a river*.

garete garehe gaaste N.IV NH *elbow*.

gadze gadze N.I NH *frog*.

- gare gariit** V.UNACC -HU *to zig or zag, to change directions.*
- geree gerek** N.III-G NH *daytime, day.*
- geeskelis** ADV *during the day.*
- gereneet gereeneret** ADJ *hot, of weather.*
- gete gehe** N.I NH *death.*
- geteneet geetneret** ADJ *dead, forgotten.*
- getetaat geheetal** N.III-G NH *exile. (A form of punishment.)*
- gihaa gitan** N.III-ŋ NH *hold (in the ground).*
- gii giit gii** V.DITR -KUU *to bring, to carry.*
- qimeneet qimeeneret** ADJ *silent, peaceful.*
- gixee gixee *gixejoo** N.II NH *hatchet.*
- gireni gireni giisni** N.IV NH *hair, fur.*
- gitsitsaa getsitsanet** ADJ *pleased with oneself, proud.*
- gixe giqe** N.II NH *lip.*
- gixeneet gixeeneret** ADJ *sharp.*
- go** CL *For kinds, especially animal species.*
- gobo gobor** N.II NH *anus.*
- goi gujut** V.UNACC -KU *to recline, be lying down.*
- goi goj** N.III-G NH *water.*
- goigoo goigok** N.III-G NH *flood.*
- goineet goineret** ADJ *wet.*
- goitselis** ADV *at dawn.*
- goja gojaut gojai** V.TR -HA *to drink.*
- gojee gojen** N.III-ŋ NH *container, bucket.*
- gojees goojet** N.III-G NH *early morning, tomorrow.*
- gojuu gojuk** N.III-G NH *lake.*
- gona gona** N.I NH *ravine.*
- goo govut govi** V.TR -HA *to say, to speak.*
- gosi gosi** N.I NH *sickness, disease.*
- gosi gosit** ADJ *sick.*
- gota gota** N.I NH *penis.*
- gotaat gootal** N.III-G NH *a meeting of the elders.*
- gurau gurat** N.III-G NH *egg.*
- gus gutut gusi** V.TR -KUU *to skin.*
- gutuus gusut** N.III-G NH *scraper.*
- ha** DET *This is a sort of article that indicates specificity in some contexts.*
- haaru haaru** N.I NH *cave.*
- hakedza hahedzat** ADJ *alone, solitary.*

- hami hami** N.I NH *louse*. Can be used of blood-sucking insects in general.
- hanees hanet** N.III-G NH *jackal*.
- harene haasniit** V.UNACC -HU *to cool down, become cool*.
- haskeluu askilu** N.III-G NH *fool*.
- hau haut hawi** V.UNERG -KU *to make progress, to improve*.
- he** CL Used for animals and for lots of fairly random things; it's the fallback classifier.
- he himut** V.UNACC -KU 1. *to live, reside*. This most often takes a locative complement. 2. *to grow, be born*.
- hee hejut** V.UNACC -KU *to break*.
- hejahoi hejatuki hootki** N.IV NH *kidney*.
- heke heke** N.I NH *animal*.
- heme heme** N.I NH *hut*.
- henoot henor** N.III-G NH *horn*.
- heqaa hexak** N.III-G NH *bark*.
- heqaabau heqaabaku heqaabahu** N.IV HU Literally *bark woman*, the representative of the tree clan in certain rituals.
- heroo heron** N.III-ŋ NH *worm*.
- heroneet herooneret** ADJ *dogged, stubborn*.
- hinoimee hinoimin** N.III-ŋ NH *tradition*. This mostly comprises traditional teachings and narratives, as opposed to customary behaviours.
- hinosomeet hinoimeeneret** ADJ *traditional, orthodox*.
- hisqa hisqa** N.I NH *semen*.
- hit hilut hili** V.BABS -KUU *to arrive (at)*.
- hooku hookuut hookoi** V.TR -HA *to squash, to mash*.
- holisi holisi huutsi** N.IV NH *wood*.
- hoŋa hoŋa** N.I NH *eyesight, vision*.
- horeneet hoosneret** ADJ 1. *upright, rigid*. 2. *orthodox, proper*.
- hos hotut** V.UNACC -KU The existential copula.
- hotgoo hotgoket** ADJ *heavily forested*.
- hotqi hotqi** N.I HU *youth*.
- howa howa** N.I NH *species of bird*.
- hu** N.I NH Third person nonhuman pronoun (does not distinguish number).
- hune huniit hunee** V.TR -HA *to prepare*.
- huniiloo huniilun** N.III-ŋ NH 1. *meal*. 2. *service, assistance*.
- huro huro** N.I NH *leaf*.
- hutot** ADV *by mistake*.
- i *is ihut** V.UNACC -KU *to be*. Used with noun and adjective predicates and as an auxiliary. **is** is used rather than **i** for the uninflected form.

- idzo idzoot idzoi** V.TR -HA *to squeeze liquid out of.*
- ii** PTCL *Complementiser.*
- ilaa ilak** N.III-G NH *personal name.*
- ilaataat ilaatal** N.III-G NH *monument.*
- ilii ilitut iliti** V.TR -KUU *feed.*
- ina inaut inai** V.TR -HA *to suspend, keep afloat.*
- inaa inakut inai** V.TR -KUU *to produce, to make.*
- ine iniit inee** V.DITR -HA *to give.*
- ini inikut inii** V.TR -KUU *to show.*
- inii iniit inee** V.TR -KUU *to slice open.*
- iniis initut inisi** V.TR -KUU *to stand up, to place upright.*
- ininoi iniinojut ininoi** V.TR -KUU 1. *to teach.* 2. *to correct, to set right, to criticise.*
- iniski iniskiit iniskii** V.DITR -HA *to give.*
- iqise iqise** N.I NH *edge.*
- is itut** V.UNACC -KU *to be standing.*
- jaa jaan** N.III-ŋ NH *medicine.*
- jaamau jaamaku jaamahu** N.IV HU *healer.*
- jau javut** V.UNACC -HU *to sit.*
- jero jero** N.I NH *nut.*
- kaha kahat** ADJ *white.*
- kai kajut kai** V.TR -KUU 1. *to pull.* 2. *to persuade.*
- kakaat kahalut kakali** V.TR -KUU *to trick, to trap, to outsmart.*
- kanumineet kanumiineret** ADJ *full, stuffed.*
- kat kalut** V.UNACC -KU 1. *to be caught on something.* 2. *to be trapped.*
- kataa katan** N.III-ŋ NH 1. *fruit.* 2. *effect, consequence.*
- katanees katanet** N.III-G NH *nut.*
- katga katga** N.I NH *claw, fingernail.*
- kato kaho** N.I NH *parrot.*
- kee** CL *For places or locations; periods of time; events; characteristics or properties.*
- kequloo kiqolun** N.III-ŋ NH *vomit.*
- kego kaigo** N.II NH *spear (for fishing).*
- kaigono kegenojut kegonoi** V.UNERG -HU *to fish.*
- kehu kehu** N.I NH *paddle.*
- keji kejiit keji** V.TR -HA 1. *to follow (a road).* 2. *to practice (a teaching).*
- kejiis kejit** N.III-G NH *support, prop.*
- kejire kejire kiire** N.IV NH *way (of doing something).*

- kii** CL For actions; for types or kinds of people or artefacts (rather than species of animal).
- kii kiit kewi** V.TR -KUU *to collect, to gather.*
- kii kiihiit kikii** V.UNERG -HU *to shout, to call out.*
- kijee kijen** N.III-ŋ NH *lichen.*
- kina kinaut** V.UNACC -HU *to float, hang, be suspended.*
- kire** N.REL *way, manner.*
- kis kis** N.I NH *idea.*
- kitgu kitgu** N.I NH *beetle.*
- kitsitsa kitsitsat** ADJ *arrogant, overbearing.*
- kinoi kinojut** V.UNACC -KU *to know (that).*
- kodza kodza** N.I NH *canoe.*
- koha kokat** ADJ *malicious.*
- kokoha kohoka kooka** N.IV HU *villain.*
- koi koji** N.II HU *sister.*
- koku koku** N.I NH *stream.*
- ko kunut** V.UNACC -KU *to rise, to climb; to go in an upward direction.*
- koo kun** N.III-ŋ NH *river.*
- ku** POSTP *on, on top of.* This strictly express a position on top of something, for other forms of attachment and dependence use **teme**.
- kunoot kunor** N.III-G NH *mosquito.*
- kunotkane kunotkane kunotkene** N.IV NH *species of frog.*
- kuqaas kuqaas** N.III-G NH 1. *fire.* 2. *cooking fire, fire pit.*
- kusi** CL Used for tools and artefacts, including buildings and monuments.
- kuwa kuwaut** V.UNACC -HU *to burn.*
- kuwade kuwade** N-I NH *rope.*
- loise loise** N.I NH *forehead.*
- laŋa laŋa** N.I NH *venom.*
- laŋoo laŋoket** ADJ *venomous.*
- lohe loohe** N.II NH *tail.*
- loheno lohenoot lohenoi** V.TR -HA *to flick.*
- lu luut** V.UNACC -KU *to deliberate, think about what to do.*
- ma** N.I HU Third person singular human pronoun.
- maa** INTJ General curse. “My hut burned down? *Maa!*”
- mabava mabava** N.I NH *nonsense.*
- mabavano mabavanoot mabavanoi** V.TR -HA *to talk nonsense.*
- madzaa madzamut** V.BABS -KU *to understand.*
- magiwi magiwi** N.I NH *dance, celebration.*

- makii makiit** V.UNACC -KU *to come together, congregate.*
- mama mamaut mamai** V.TR -HA *to gain.*
- mamee mamenut mameni** V.UNERG -KU *to improve.*
- mamiro mameroot mamiroi** V.UNERG -HU *to say goodbye.*
- mana mana** N.I NH *hand.*
- manoi manojut manoi** V.UNERG -KU *to gossip.*
- manoski manooskiit manoskii** V.TR -HA *to acquire.*
- majuus majutut majusi** V.UNERG -KU *to tell the truth.*
- masko masko** N.I NH *bracelet.*
- maso mato maso** N.IV NH 1. *extravagance.* 2. *celebration.* 3. *plumage.*
- masoqe masoqe** N.IV HU *Literally feather man, the representative of the river clan in certain rituals.*
- modzi maudzi** N.II NH *village.*
- meetsaa menesijan** N.III-ŋ HU *elder (female).*
- meerees meeret** N.III-G HU *aunt.*
- mehoraa mehoran** N.II-ŋ NH *beard.*
- mera mera** N.I NH 1. *lineage name.* 2. *fame, reputation.*
- melado melado** N.I NH *kind of flower.*
- meladoneet meladoneret** ADJ *yellow.*
- melemi melaime** N.II NH *feather.*
- mene mene** N.I HU *woman, mother*
- mereet mereel** N.II-G NH *species of bird.*
- mero meroot meroi** V.UNERG -HU *to swim.*
- meroo meroket** ADJ *famed, well-known.*
- metni metni** N.I NH *ground, dirt.*
- mewa mewaut mewai** V.TR -HU 1. *to design.* 2. *to plan, to plot.*
- mimi mimi** N.I NH *baby.*
- mirees mirer** N.III-G NH *bird.*
- misee misin** N.III-ŋ NH *lizard.*
- mohoot motore** N.III-G NH *forest.*
- mojo mojoot** V.UNACC -HU 1. *to flow.* 2. *to escape.*
- mojote mojohe moite** N.IV NH *spring.*
- momene momene moone** N.IV HU *grandmother.*
- monehau mootai *mootoo** N.III-G NH *river bank.*
- mo munut muni** V.TR -KUU *to resist (an illness or a temptation).*
- moo moot mowi** V.TR -KUU *to comfort.*
- morojure morojure** N.I HU *hunting party.*
- mose mote mose** N.IV HU *son, boy.*

- mote mote** N.I NH *species of mushroom.*
- mowaqa mowaqa maaqa** N.IV NH *diagram.* These are diagrams carved into trees at ritually-significant locations.
- mowate mowahe mowate** N.IV HU *grandfather.*
- moxe moqe** N.I HU *giant.*
- moxevai moxevait** ADJ *silent, unspeaking.*
- mu** DET *that.* This is the distal demonstrative determiner.
- mut mulut muli** V.TR -KUU *to prepare a garden.* Like, by cutting down the trees and burning the foliage.
- muta mutaan** N.III-ŋ HU *Third person plural human pronoun.*
- muwa muwa** N.I NH *anger.*
- muwane muwaniit** V.UNACC -HU 1. *to heat up, get warmer.* 2. *to get angry.*
- muwaneet muwaneret** ADJ *angry.*
- muwoo muwokat** ADJ *angry.*
- nami nami** KNEE I NH *knee.*
- nave nave** N.I NH *savannah.*
- nare nare** N.I NH *tooth.*
- nareneet naasneret** ADJ *hard (as in, not soft).*
- nau naut nawi** V.TR -KUU *to think about, to ponder.*
- ne** POSTP *along, by means of.*
- ne ninut** V.BABS -KU 1. *to go.* 2. *to become.*
- nede niide** N.II NH *insult.*
- nehau netai *netoo** N.III-G IN *sand.*
- nemoo nemunut** V.TR -KU 1. *to obey.*
- neroi neroj** N.III-G NH 1. *tongue.* 2. *language.*
- ni nikut** V.BABS -KU 1. *to see, to catch sight of.* 2. *to meet.*
- nii nena nii nilis nejoo newa** N.V NH *yam.* (Or any similar horticultural staple that's region-appropriate.)
- niikane nehanela niihane naanelis naanoo nohaneja** N.V HU *garden.* For growing food.
- nimee nimin** N.III-ŋ NH *image, reflection, impression.*
- no no** N.I HU *First person singular pronoun.*
- noi nojut noi** V.TR -KUU 1. *to push.* 2. *to intimidate.*
- noo non** N.III-ŋ NH *throat.*
- notsemi notsemi** N.I NH 1. *stone, pebble.* 2. *testicle.*
- notve notve** N.I NH *nighttime.*
- notvelis** ADV *at night.*
- nujoo nujom** N.III-ŋ NH *back.* (The body part.)
- nukoo nuhunet** ADJ *long.*

- nuu** PTCL *very*. Used to intensify adjectives.
- nuumee nuumin** N.III-ŋ NH *property, belongings*.
- nuut** ADV *very, a lot*. Used to intensify verbs.
- ŋabe ŋabe** N.I NH *species of grass*.
- o** PTCL *but, only, precisely*. Focus particle.
- oda auda** N.II HU *husband*.
- oi** POSTP *towards, across*. Like, **doimeke oi** can be either *towards the mountains* or *across the mountains*. In either interpretation **oi** gives a destination or goal, generally without entailing culmination.
- oka oka** N.I NH *meat*.
- olave olaver** V.III-G TR *to sing*.
- olii oliit** ADJ *green*.
- oo** POSTP *onto*.
- oodaa oodah** N.III-G NH *wind*.
- oro** POSTP *into*.
- oska oska** N.I NH *light*.
- oso oto oso** N.IV NH *time*
- otve otve** N.I NH *facepaint*.
- qa** POSTP *from*.
- qai qaji** N.II NH *smoke*.
- qame qame** N.I NH *arm, branch*.
- qamee qamin** N.III-ŋ NH *foliage, bush*.
- qameŋoo qameŋoket** ADJ *lush*.
- qametii** ADV *alongside, beside*.
- qanuloo qolun** N.III-ŋ NH *consequence*.
- qari qari *qarijoo** N.I NH *berry*.
- qatii qatiit qatee** V.TR -KUU *to wash*.
- qatoo qatoi *qatoo** N.III-G NH *mushroom*.
- qawa qawa** N.I NH *racket, disturbance*.
- qawaa qawan** N.III-ŋ NH *noise*.
- qawakani qawakeniit qawakanii** V.UNERG -HU 1. *to make noise*. 2. *to be disruptive*.
- qawaneet qauneret** ADJ 1. *noisy, raucous*. 2. *disruptive, disobedient*.
- qehu qehuut qehoi** V.TR -HA *to soothe, to calm*.
- qejati qejati** N.I NH *midnight, the wee hours*.
- qemi qemi** N.I NH *finger, toe*.
- qemimoo qemimonut qemimoni** V.TR -KUU *to poke, to insult*.
- geneet generet** ADJ *male, masculine*.
- qiitaat qital** N.III-G NH *firewood*.

- qijaa qijamut qijami** V.UNERG -KU *to sneeze.*
- qima qima** N.I NH *twig.*
- qiqaa qiqaqut qiqai** V.UNERG -KU *to vomit.*
- qita qitaut qihai** V.TR -HA *to take.*
- qitee qitekut** V.TR -KUU *to kill.*
- ree riim** N.III-ŋ NH *grease.*
- riba riba** N.I NH *whip.*
- ribano ribanoot ribanoi** V.TR -HA *to whip.*
- saatsaa sijatsijan** N.III-ŋ HU *ancestors.*
- saluu saluhe** N.III-G NH *species of fish.*
- sava savat** ADJ *black.*
- seqisi seqisi** N.I HU *liar.*
- si** CL For points and tips and for various things that stick out; for a bunch of body bits, including fingers, toes, teeth, and noses.
- sigoi sigoi *sigojoo** N.I NH *blood.*
- si** POSTP The benefactive postposition.
- sii** N.REL *top.*
- sii sijuut** V.UNACC -HA *to go down.* Used generally in place of **ne** when there's a downward component to the motion.
- sijataat saatal** N.III-G INAN *clan, moiety.*
- sijatsi sijatsi saatsi** N.IV NH *clan, moiety.* Synonymous with **sijataat**.
- silis** ADV *first.*
- sineet sineret** ADJ *red.*
- sire sire** N.I NH *place, location.*
- siro siroot siroi** V.TR -HA *to destroy, to defeat.*
- sitii** ADV *up front, in front.*
- sito** N.REL *inside.*
- sitoi sisoj** N.III-G NH *okapi.*
- sitoja sitoja siitja** N.IV NH 1. *contents* (e.g. of a container). 2. *significance, meaning.* 3. *essence.*
- sugalu sugalu** N.I NH *snake.*
- su** CL For smallish roundish things, like stones or fruit.
- suu suut** V.UNACC -KU *to die.*
- taat tal** N.III-G NH *head.*
- tasme tasme** N.I NH *vulture.*
- tat talut tali** V.UNERG -KU *to fly.*
- tee tejut** V.BABS -KU 1. *to be named.* Used to say what someone's name is, for example. 2. *to be called, to be considered to be.* 3. *to count as.*
- tee tej** N.II NH 1. *ear.* 2. *name.*

- teesii teesihiit teesikii** V.UNERG -HA *to promise*. The recipient of the promise, if given, takes the benefactive postposition **si**.
- teetsi tiikiit tetsikii** V.TR -HA 1. *to listen to, to hear*. 2. *to pay attention to*. 3. *to obey, to conform to*.
- tejaa tejanut** V.UNACC -KU *to be secure, safe*.
- teloj teluj** V.UNACC -KU 1. *to hold still*. 2. *to remain, to stay*.
- temadza temaaguut temadzai** V.UNERG -HU *to lie down, prone*.
- teme** POSTP 1. *on, attached to, suspended from*. 2. *depending on, according to*.
- teroo teroi *teroo** N.III-GA NH *life, vigour*.
- terooonet terooneret** ADJ *alive, vigorous*.
- tes ter** N.III-GA NH *sea, ocean*. Usually occurs modified by **voo** *big*.
- tes tesi tetut** V.UNERG -KU *to stand up*.
- teski teskiit teskii** V.UNERG -HU 1. *to submit to, to surrender to*.
- tetu tetu** N.I NH *wild boar*.
- tesuu tesuut tesuu** V.UNERG -HU *to jump down*.
- tewa tewaut tewai** V.TR -HU *to remember*.
- tii te *tega** N.II NH 1. *measure, portion*. Also used as a measure word. 2. *position, status*.
- tisit tisid** N.II NH *bone*.
- tiva** ADV *still, again*.
- todzo todzo** N.I NH 1. *year*. 2. *ritual, ceremony*.
- todzoneet todzeneret** ADJ 1. *solemn*. 2. *perfectly balanced*.
- toha tohaut tohai** V.UNERG -HU *to hide oneself*.
- toi** CL For floppy things with one primary dimension, like vines or fish or snakes.
- toloo tolok** N.III-G NH *club*.
- tolono tolonoit tolono** V.TR -HA *to club*.
- tome tome** N.I NH *kind of snake*.
- tomi tomi** N.I NH *hole*. (For example, in the ground.)
- tomoo tomonu tomoni** V.TR -KUU *to dig*.
- tomesii tomesihiit tomesikii** V.TR -HA *to bite*.
- tonoo tonunut** V.UNACC -KU *to enter*.
- toos tor** N.III-G NH *tree*.
- tote tohet** ADJ *good*.
- totoi totojut totoi** V.TR -KUU *to hunt*.
- towa** CL Used for points, joints, and holes.
- tsaheme tsahemet** ADJ *careless*.
- tsami** CL For edible things, both plants and detached meat.
- tsataat tsatal** N.III-G NH *feast*.

tsihee tsihekut tsihee V.DITR KUU 1. *to help*. 2. *to do something for someone*.

As in, you do it so they don't have to. So: to replace someone, or substitute for them.

tsikoo tsihunut V.UNACC -KU *to go along, to follow*.

tuma tuma N.I NH *thorn*.

tumu tumut ADJ *short*.

tut tulut V.UNACC -KU *to sleep*.

tutmee tutmin N.III-ŋ NH *dream*.

tuu tuut V.UNACC -HU *to fall*. This is the main verb that's used for weather predicates, somewhat frequently with the expletive pronoun **hu** as subject.

tuus tiite *tesga N.III-G NH *weapon*.

ukaat uhar N.III-G NH *shit*.

ukii uhik N.III-G NH *liver*.

ulooulun N.III-ŋ NH *vagina*.

vaa vaan N.III-ŋ HU First person plural pronoun.

vaa vuwan *vuwaŋa N.III-ŋ NH *large island*. Especially islands off the coast.

vajo vajo N.I NH *gift, sacrifice*.

vamoo ADV *all*. Generally associates with the verb's object, though in modal contexts it can force strong readings, and if there's no object it can take on a sense like *always*.

vare vare N.I NH *shade*.

vareneet vaasneret ADJ *shady, cool*.

vee ven N.III-ŋ HU *brother*.

vekani vajaanit vekanii V.TR -HA *to greet, to welcome a visitor*.

vii viit V.UNACC -KU *to hurt, to ache*.

vire vire N.I NH *breast*.

vitgu vitgu N.I NH *foot*.

vomeŋa vomeŋat ADV *successfully*.

vomeŋoo vomeŋoket ADJ 1. *significant, important*. 2. *extremely successful or effective*. Can be used of both people and actions.

vona vona N.I NH *remainder; detritus*.

vomu vomut ADJ 1. *many, much*. Can only be used attributively. 2. *enough*. This meaning is only available when **vomu** is used predicatively.

vomutu vomutut ADJ *many, much*. A predicative variant of **vomu** *many, much*.

vo vonut V.UNACC -KU *to come*.

voo vawet ADJ *big, great*.

voro voroot voroi V.UNERG -HA *to dance*.

vuso vuuto N.I NH *flaw, error*.

vusoneet vuusneret ADJ 1. *mistaken, confused.* 2. *in disarray.* 3. *ruined, collapsed.*

vuugoo vuugoket ADJ *diseased.*

waas DET *some, a few, several.*

wami wamit ADJ *small.*

wastu wastut ADJ *few.* A predicative variant of **waas** *some.*