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Author: Madeline Palmer

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Section V:

Noun-verbs

5.1. Overview

If all words in Srínawésin are inherently verbs how to the Sihá refer to people, places and things, the definition of nouns? As noted earlier, although all words are basically verbs *they are often used with the sense of a noun*. Take the following example:

That-which-is-a-wolf pounces upon that-which-is-a-deer

Although this is an extremely stilted and frankly terrible English sentence, the above example is the easiest way of understanding the noun-to-verb continuum in Srínawésin. As English works differently then the Dragon Tongue the two nouns *wolf* and *deer* appear by default in this example but if one places them into a verbal construction such as *that-which-is-a-X*, the above example actually *contains no true nouns*. This is the essence of the way the Sihá approach what we call ‘nouns’; they are *verbal constructions in and of themselves which take on certain noun qualities in order to refer to their referent*, i.e. the referent of the verbal unit is the “noun.” This seems to be a unnecessarily complex concept in terms of the languages of the Younger Races, but not only does this method reflect the mentality of the Kindred, but it also allows them a great deal of linguistic freedom and fluidity which is reflected in the languages of the Younger Races by various derivative constructions that move noun to verb and back again.

If the example above was translated into Srínawésin it would be:

Níxwalír innéháqsan ixíyíl ni

There are three verbs in this sentence and one inflected particle with verb-like qualities. *Inneháqsan* is comprised of *inne-* which is an object prefix while *-háqsa + an* can be glossed as “it is a deer to itself.” *Ixíyíl* is formed of the subject prefix *i-* and *-xíye + íl* is “it is a wolf/dog to itself.” These are verbs both in form and in intention but the only *true-verb* is *níxwalír* “suddenly-upon a large prey animal-pounces-by a predator.” The object and subject of the sentence are both verbs, they possess the verbal reflexive endings *-an* and *-íl* respectively but they are used with *noun intention*, occupying the places of object and subject. However, since the above Srínawésin sentence is basically a string of verbs with the proper verbal endings, how can the verbs be divided up into true-verbs, subjects and objects? Consider:

Tsihíšéš’n

(*tsi+HÍŠÁ+éš+’n*)

(Incomplete present+TO HEAR/LISTEN+Class I Reflexive Subject+present tense certainty evidential)

She/he/you is listening (to herself/himself/yourself or just listening in general)

Unušéš’n

(*u+NUŠÁ+éš+’n*)

(Subject Marker Cyclical tense+MY HATCH-SISTER+Class I Reflexive+certainty evidential)

It’s my hatch-sister (as an answer to a question such as “who is listening?”)

Both examples are virtually identical, both possess verb roots (*híšá-* and *nušá-* respectively), both occur with the proper Class I Reflexive suffix *-éš*, both have prefixes inflected for tense (*tsi-* and *u-*), both serve as a complete utterance and both occur with a certainty evidential contracted to *-’n*. However the first example is a true-verb the second is a noun-verb. There are three things which can distinguish these two constructions from one another, 1) Reflexive vs. Subject Ending differentiations, which are not useful in all cases, 2) the lack of direct objects in noun-verbs (although again, this is not always useful due to certain adjectival constructions see **6.3.3. Adjectival Morphology: Active** below and 3) the prefixation of

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noun-prefixes. One of the primary differences between true-verbs and noun-verbs is which of the many subject suffixes are attached to a root. As discussed above, there are essentially two types of subject suffixes; *non-reflexive* and *reflexive*. Reflexive subject endings indicate that the subject and the object are the same referent, i.e. they refer to the same being, and while many true-verbs have reflexive usages many do not:

<i>Tsitsitsíš shiSláya sa Snáréš'n</i>	Bloody Face is sunning/warming himself	(Reflexive)
<i>Saenšáwéts iSláya sa Snáréš'n</i>	Bloody Face saw <u>him/her/you</u>	(Non-Reflexive)

Consider the subject-ending patterns on the noun-verbs below:

Srínawésin	English	Literal Translation
<i>Hawax</i>	goat	(it is a goat to itself)
<i>Hínin</i>	fish	(it is a fish to itself)
<i>Tsitsír</i>	the sun	(it is warm to itself)
<i>Sléxúš</i>	mother	(she is a mother to herself)
<i>Qxuyerít</i>	innumerable bats	(they are bats to themselves)

Srínawésin	English	Literal Translation
<i>Šathawésin</i>	thin clouds	(they are thin clouds)
<i>Yárúqx</i>	head	(it is a head)
<i>Xnahuha</i>	hill, mound	(it is a hill)
<i>Swéhésin</i>	song, poem	(it is a song, poem)
<i>Yútsisu</i>	wave on the sea	(it is a wave on the sea)

In the first set of examples without exception *all the class markers are reflexive* indicating that the form represents *a being doing something to itself to render it in the state of X*. However, in the second series of endings they are *non-reflexive* indicating that the form represents *something which is simply being X* and is not participating in the action. These two forms follow the same distribution of the two verbal examples above (reflexive and non-reflexive) but the examples above can all serve as the basis of *noun-verbs*. The reason for this is once again the concept of *Intentional vs. Unintentional* actors (see **4.6. Voice: Intentional vs. Unintentional** above for review, if needed). The first set of noun-verb examples are all *intentional* actors (capable of intent, desire and wishes) while the second are all *unintentional* actors (incapable of these desires or plans). As noted in **4.6.** above if an intentional actor is in a state, by definition, *it is in that state to itself* or put in that state by another and is thus always *reflexive*. Thus, when a root is used to form an *intentional noun-verb* it is done so with a reflexive subject ending (*-sihéš* is *-sihá+éš* ‘it is a dragon **to itself**) while if a root is used to form an *unintentional noun-verb* it cannot take a reflexive subject ending but rather a simple subject ending (*-šathawésin* is *-šatha+wé+sin* ‘they **are** clouds’). Intentional vs. Unintentional distinctions therefore show up not only in true-verbal forms but also in how noun-verbs are formed. Intentional noun-verbs are always formed by *reflexives* while unintentional noun-verbs are formed with *simple subject* suffixes. Unfortunately because this distinction occurs in both true- and noun-verb forms this is not always a perfect indicator whether the word one is presented with is a verb or a “noun.” It is useful in that reflexive endings will *often* refer to a noun-verb but not always because reflexives are also used to form “intransitive” meanings as well as adjectival intentions with intentional beings.

The second distinction between true-verbs and noun-verbs are that the “nouns” could technically be considered to be transitive in nature (they often occur with reflexive subject endings and reflexive verbs are inherently transitive, although the subject and object are the same referent) they *do not occur* with infixed objects as do true-transitive-verbs, either explicitly or as implicit affixes (although as in all natural languages there are exceptions, see **5.3.2. Agentive Derivation**):

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True-Verb

Tsayxleyawír axíyewí'ła

(tsa+ix+LEYA+wé+ír+'ła)

(Incomplete past+**Class III Object**+TO TRACK BY SCENT ALONE+Plural+Class II Subject+present tense hearsay evidential)

I heard the wolves were tracking it (large prey) by scent alone

Noun-Verb

*Áwxqátsíth

(a+úx+QXÁTSÍ+éth)

(Past Subject Prefix+**Class IX Object(?)**+BONE+Class IX Subject)

Bones(?)

The second example is incorrect because the construction *-qxátsíth* means 'is a dead bone' and to add the object infix and make *-úqxátsíth* would mean 'it is a dead bone to another dead thing,' which is strange sounding but still grammatical in the strictest sense. However, since noun verbs cannot occur with direct objects once this semi true-verb *-úqxátsíth* has the past tense subject prefix *a-* added to it, it becomes ungrammatical. This is a useful distinction but cannot always be relied upon because true-verbs involving unintentional subjects are often intransitive and therefore would also never have direct objects. To make matters worse, certain adjectival constructions often occur with forms which function like "direct objects" but are used in a noun-sense (see **6.3. Adjectives** below) and agentive forms outlined below are also an exception to this type of rule. However, the last and most reliable way of differentiating true-verbs from noun-verbs can be partially illustrated with the examples below:

True-Verbs

Syusániwéha urúnawéha'n

The mountains are slowly changing (geologic aspect)

Náhínewala nan!

And I suddenly jumped on the fish! (sudden aspect)

Xíháqsasuwéts iSlá sa Snáréš ni

Bloody Face is usually hunting female deer (habitual aspect)

Noun-verbs

Tsnixítsawésu

Over the trees (locative)

Qsanqsáthíqx

Into (my) stomach (locative)

Xishúnéš!

O dragons! (vocative)

Átsihusúnwéhen

Because of the strange demon-things (functional)

All of the examples above have prefixes attached to the verb-roots (the second examples of both true-verbs and noun-verbs even share the same root *qsáthi-*) and the prefixes are all inflected for tense but only the true-verbs make use of the *aspect prefixes*, the noun-verbs use a *variety of locative, vocative, functional and other prefixes*. This simple fact is by far the best way of determining if a word is a true-verb or a noun-verb as the only affixes which may occur with "nouns" are "noun" affixes such as locatives, vocatives and so forth. Therefore "nouns" are verb roots with noun prefixes and true-verbs are verb roots with aspect prefixes, absolutely without exception. There are several difficulties with these distinctions because several of the *aspect prefixes* are almost identical with several noun-prefixes. The most problematic and reoccurring of these are the aspect prefixes *ní-/ná-/nú-* 'suddenly, startling' and *ši-/ša-/šu-* 'just beginning to' compared with the noun-prefixes *ni-/na-/nu-* 'at a location, at a place' and *ší-/šá-/šú-* 'moving past a location.' The only difference between these sets of prefixes is that some have voiced vowels and others have unvoiced vowels, and this can be problematic, even for experienced speakers. Davis notes several draconic jokes

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which use the similarity of these forms in order to form puns or jokes, which seem to have double meanings. For instance:

Šhásásin

(Ši+HÁQSÁ+sin)

(moving past a location present tense+THIN CLOUDS+Class VIII Subject)

Went past thin clouds in the air

Šihásásin

(Ši+HÁQSÁ+sin)

(beginning action aspect present tense+THIN CLOUDS+Class VIII Subject)

They are just beginning to be thin clouds (Lit.)

The thin clouds are just beginning to form

Although the second translation does not really make very much sense when translated literally it would be understood to mean ‘The thin clouds are just beginning to form’ in this context. This play on meaning and translation is central to the Shúna’s idea of *Xániwésin* or “poetry” treated below in 7.6. **Xániwésin Poetry.** Jokes and puns aside, many of which frankly do not make any sense to me whatsoever, this is a vital difference between the usages of the verb-roots and combined with the other methods of differentiation noted above; these make the defining difference between true-verbs and noun-verbs and mark their usage in either a “verb-like” way or a “noun-like” way.

5.2. “Is” and Noun-Verb Verbality

Although there are “nouns” and “verbs” in Srínawésin, they can often be used in ways which defy such simple distinctions. It is possible in most languages to use a noun to constitute an entire statement, for instance, the English example:

What did you see?

The crane on the water.

The second example has no verb, but is still grammatical and perfectly sensible in this English context. It answers the question of “*what* was seen” and when placed in a full utterance it would be:

I saw the crane on the water

The important difference between Srínawésin and such forms in English is that not only are these constructions used more often, but they are, in fact, essential to the functioning of the language. The reasons for this are that there is no word for “*is*” in Srínawésin and no way of expressly saying “it is a crane” (although the evidential sentence enclitics might also serve as “*is*” in this function, see 7.3.1. **Evidential Sentence Enclitics, Aspect Markers and Adverbs** below). Therefore, in order to say “it is a crane,” a root goes through a complex semantic procedure whereby it takes on a noun-verb meaning but is *rederived* back into a true-verb (with the appropriate affixes) while *still retaining a noun-verb meaning*. This appears to be extremely difficult to understand but once the basic procedure is understood it becomes simpler. The reason for this is that in Srínawésin reflexives attached to intentional roots and subject endings attached to unintentional roots give the meaning of a noun-verb to a root:

–tsútsix

(–tsútsí+ax)

a crane

–ráhúth

(–ráhú+éth)

a dead tree stump

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When these roots form the basis of an entire statement or are used in a stative way, the proper verb affixes (i.e. aspectual prefixes) are attached, giving the entire phrase the meaning of ‘it is a...’ (with additional locatives and evidentials in these examples:

Tsitsútsíx niháxusu’n (it is) the male crane on the water
Tsiráhúth ixírúnáha’n (it is) the dead tree stump next to the mountain

Noun-verbs used in a verbal way are essentially *stative* in nature, they *state* such-and-such a state or condition, in this case that of a noun existing. As noted in section 4.6. **Voice: Intentional vs. Unintentional** above although both of the examples above may be translated ‘it is a...’ the true, literal translations would appear as:

Tsitsútsíx niháxusu’n it-is-a-male-crane-to-itself on the water
Tsiráhúth ixírúnáha’n it-is-a-dead-tree-stump next to the mountain

The difference between the two is that the first is *intentional* the second *unintentional*, as noted in the section above. Noun-verbs (carrying the proper noun prefixes) may also carry the meaning of how they participate in an entire sentence *even if stated without the rest of the sentence*; the rest of the sentence is merely understood from context:

Innehurúnáha nihú!
The mountain right here! (object of a sentence)

The prefix *inne-* means that ‘the mountain right here!’ is the direct object of a verb and implies that the someone is *doing something to the mountain* and could be used to answer the question “What do you see?” but *not* “Where are you?” The reason for this is that the answer in the second case would not be the direct object of a verb and thus it could not be the answer to this question. However, if the noun-verb has a *locative* prefix (one which denotes the location of something) it could be used to answer a question such as this:

Nixúháha’x, xisayés? Where are you, friend?
Nihurúnáha qsér! On the mountain right here, obviously!

Questions as well as statements may be comprised entirely of noun-verbs without true-verbs, the verbality being carried entirely by the nouns themselves:

*Tsiwahinar níxéxúhár’x?*¹
Where (is) Jupiter way up in the sky?

Although the various noun-verb prefixes such as subject, object and locatives will be discussed below, for now it is important to note that noun-verbs do not require a true-verb in order to complete a grammatical sentence and often occur with “verbal” meanings with no true-verb expressly stated:

Inneháqsan ríth! Would that you (do something) to the female deer!

¹ This is an example of a Srínawésin riddle, one which has an “obvious” answer and allows the asker to use a very rude word *qsér* without starting a fight. Interestingly, the first half of the question is entirely *unvoiced* while the second is entirely *voiced*, and this might be a poetic aspect of the sentence to draconic ears.

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5.3. Noun-verb Morphology

Srínawésin nouns are built of a root upon which various affixes are attached in order to specify the noun's relationship in the utterance but while noun-verb morphology parallels verbal morphology in many ways but is significantly simpler. While the subject markers of true-verbs are essential to the understanding of the way a verb is being used, they are less so in noun-verbs because all intentional noun-verbs have *reflexive* subject markers and only unintentional noun-verbs have subject endings. Although this is always true, the subject markers for noun-verbs are important in two ways: they still define the *class* of the noun in question, a vital part of Srínawésin sentence's grammar through agreement as well as the *meaning* of the noun in question (see 3.3. **Derivational Structure** above), and they continue to determine the *number* of the noun in question, singular, plural or innumerable:

-shúnéš	dragons	(Class I, plural)
-sihéš	dragon	(Class I, singular)
-siháx	a group of small prey-animals	(Class III, singular)
-sihéth	a group of dead things	(Class XI, singular)
-shúnaréshá	innumerable group of inedible animals	(Class IV, innumerable)

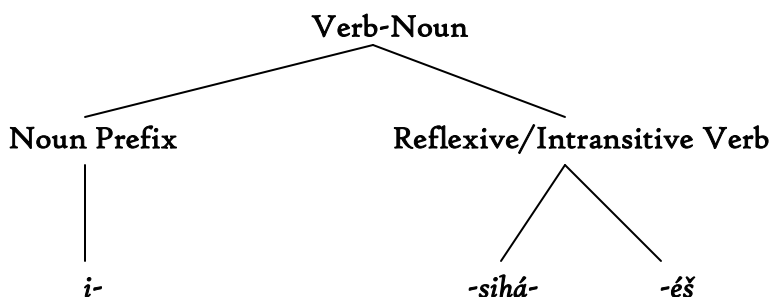
The roots of all the noun-verbs above are identical, *sihá-* 'things alike, similar things,' (although the root *shúna-* is the plural form of the root *sihá-*) but the translation of the nouns are significantly different, not only in *number* but also in *class*. As the *class* of the noun is pivotal in determining the way the root is to be translated, you cannot simply ignore the class of the subject ending of any noun in question if a sentence is to be understood. Although number and class are important features of the subject class markers in noun-verbs and cannot be ignored, for the purposes of noun morphology *the combined root-subject suffix unit may be regarded as a unit which is defined as a "noun" upon which further noun suffixes may be attached*. Thus a noun is formed from a root upon which a reflexive class or simple subject marker is appended (which additional phonological processes of assimilation take place):

-sihá+éš → -sihéš a dragon

Once this is done however, the "noun" can be regarded as an indivisible unit upon which the various noun-prefixes are then attached:

i+sihéš	→	isihéš	the dragon (present tense subject of the sentence)
átsi+sihéš	→	átsisihéš	because of the dragon (past tense)
u+sihéš	→	usihéš	the dragon (cyclical tense subject)
narú+sihéš	→	narúsihéš	up until the dragon (past tense)
sláha+sihéš	→	sláhasihéš	with the dragon (past tense)

The process of the derivation of a verb-root to a verb with "noun-like" qualities to a full noun-verb can be described schematically as:



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Noun affixes *always* occur as *prefixes* attached to the noun-verb and although a variety of prefixes may be attached the original noun-verb (and in a certain and definable pattern), they will always be attached to the *head* of the noun rather than occur as suffixes. The affixation of the noun-prefixes occurs in a very regular pattern which never varies, which is helpful not only for learners of Srínawésin but also for any attempt to understand the morphology of noun-verbs. In comparison to the morphology of true-verbs, the morphological structure of nouns is relatively simple and rarely varies from this simple pattern:

(Noun Prefix + (Proximal) + (Inalienable Possessive) + [ROOT^{REFLEXIVE/INTRANSITIVE VERB}])^{NOUN}

Proximal infixes will be dealt with in **5.4.7. Proximals** and possessives in **6.4.2. Inalienable Possession** but both of these forms are optional and not required to form a functioning noun-verb.

Thus a noun may be analyzed as:

Sríwíqsáqsáshá hi!

(*Srí+wí+(QSÁQSÁ+shá)*^{RV})^N (*hi*)

(towards present tense+that over there+(crow+Class VI singular reflexive)^{RV})^N (command)

Towards-that-crow! (Lit.)

(Give it) to that crow over there!

Although there is no true-verb in the above utterance, it still carries a type of verbal meaning, namely that of “give it,” which is primarily carried by the command evidential *hi* at the end of the sentence. This utterance would be the answer, for instance of a question such as “What should I breathe fire at?” And the response indicates towards what that fire should be directed at or “given.” Although in the above example the directive *srí-* is used in the morphology of nouns “noun prefixes” are simply any one of the various prefixes noted below; object/subject prefixes, locatives and directives, contrastives and so on. Additionally, the proximal infixes are not required and nouns are often found without them:

Axnaqséshá

(*a+(Ø)+(XNAQSÉ+shá)*)

(subject past tense prefix+(**no proximal**)+(IT-IS-A-SPIDER)^V)^N

It-was-spider (that did it) (Lit.)

(it was) a spider (that did it)

As opposed to noun-forms with a proximal infix:

Áwíxnaqséshá

(*a+wí+(XNAQSÉ+shá)*)^V)^N

(subject past tense prefix+**that over there**+(IT-IS-A-SPIDER)^V)^N

It-was-that-spider-over there (that did it) (Lit.)

(it was) that spider over there (that did it)

Both of the above utterances are statements in and of themselves, although they occur with the past tense subject prefix *a-*, which would make them the answer to a question such as “what spun that web?” or another question regarding the subject of an action. Although the base of the noun-form may be simple (such as *xnaqsé-* and *-shá*) or of a more complex form (see **6.3. Adjectives** below), the basic morphology of all nouns corresponds to the form given above, namely that of a noun prefix, the optional proximal and then the root of the noun. It is also important to note that with the exception of the proximal infixes and

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possessives, for a noun to be a noun it *must possess a noun prefix of some type*. Thus, the utterance below is considered ungrammatical as it lacks the requisite noun prefix:

*-wíxnaqsésha

*that spider over there

The exact context of a sentence determines *which* prefix a noun might require, but *all* noun-verbs require a noun-prefix to make them a noun, just as all true-verbs require an aspect-prefix to make them a true-verb. Possession within Srínawésin, and the possessive infixes it uses as denoted by the morphological structure above, is a rather complicated matter and is dealt with in the language in a variety of different ways depending on whether the possessed object is *inalienably* or *alienably* possessed (see section 6.4 **Possessive Forms** below).

5.3.1. Anomalous Plural Forms

The usual plural forms of noun-verbs has been covered above and usually is achieved by the application of the affix *-wé-* or *-ré-* to the root along with the simple subject or reflexive subject class marker. However, as noted in 4.5.2. **Draconic Number**, there are certain specific roots to which these affixes *cannot be applied*, but rather are pluralized by the use of a wholly different verb root which carries a plural sense. Thus, an instance as below can be found:

-sihéš

‘a dragon’

-shúnéš

‘dragons’

The root *sihá-* ‘alike, to be alike, one of the Kindred’ is *inherently singular* and cannot appear with plural affixes:

-siháwéš/-siháréš

‘dragons/innumerable dragons’

The only way to pluralize roots which are inherently singular are to use the corresponding plural root which carries the same semantic meaning but which is *inherently plural*. Inherently plural roots usually occur *without* plural affixes but still carry a plural meaning to them despite the lack of an affix:

-shúnéš

‘dragons’

-shúnawéš/-shúnaréš

‘dragons/innumerable dragons’

This is because the root already carries a plural meaning to it and any additional indication of plurality is redundant. It is important to note that although a plural root such as *shúna-* does not occur with the plural affixes, it still is plural and any affixes which must agree in number with it must also be plural in the standard way:

Xúhání sa ixíqsáthiwéts unneqxe híwén unnenárinwén **ushúnéš** úsyá!

The Kindred (pl.) dearly love to eat male and female reindeer whenever they can get them!

However, this is further complicated by the fact that there are certain rare roots which have different inherently plural forms *but which still occur with the plural and innumerable suffixes*. One instance is the roots *šnaya-* and *syeru-* ‘vine, vines’:

Słíhašnayasu

It is with (in between) the vine

Słíhasyeruwésu

It is with (in between) the vines

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Słhasyerurésu It is with (in beteen) the innumerable vines

These forms would be analyzed as below:

Słhašnyasu
(*słha*+(ŠNAYA+*su*)^V)^{NV}
(with/in-between+(VINE+Class IX Animate))
(It is) with (in between) the vine

Słhasyeruwésu
(*słha*+(SYERU+*wé*+*su*)^V)^{NV}
(with/in-between+(VINES+plural+Class IX Animate))
(It is) with (in between) the vines

Słhasyerurésu
(*słha*+(SYERU+*ré*+*su*)^V)^{NV}
(with/in-between+(VINES+innumerable+Class IX Animate))
(It is) with (in between) the innumerable vines

In this case even through the root *syeru-* is inherently plural as opposed to the inherently singular root *šnaya-*, it is one of the rare roots which apparently takes a plural markers *-wé-* and *-ré-*. Even rarer then this form are root complexes which all refer to the same referent but which have *entirely different roots for each of the three numbers*, singular, plural and innumerable. There are only a few instances of this in all of Davis' notes and interestingly they all seem to refer *only* either animals, insects or plants. An instance of this may be found in the roots *qsére-*, *slátsú-* and *qxuhan-* or 'gnat(s)':

<i>Tsíwíqséreshá'n</i>	There is a gnat over there
<i>Tsíwíslátsúshá'n</i>	There are gnats over there
<i>Tsíwíqxuhanshá'n</i>	There are innumerable gnats over there

In every one of these rare tri-root instances, the anomalous plural roots *never occur with plural markers*, as shown above, in comparison to the bi-root instances which sometimes can have them and sometimes cannot. This system seems difficult and needlessly complex but it appears to be a simple result of how the language has evolved over time and nothing else.² There appears to be no pattern to these forms and they must be memorized individually. For lack of a better system in the lexicon below all roots which have a wholly different singular or plural root are marked with '◊' while those which have a singular and plural form which *does* take the plural suffixes is marked as (◊) and those which have three separate roots for each of the numbers is marked ◊◊◊.

5.3.2. Agentive Derivation

An agentive is whereby a noun is formed from a verb and which the noun-referent is the same as the subject of the derived verb. In English this is usually expressed by the suffix *-er* such as in:

² In case anyone is inclined to feel that this is a nonsensical system for a language, English has something similar in *ox/oxen*, *child/children*, *man/men*, *mice/mouse* and my personal favorite plural forms which are identical to the singular forms such as *moose/moose*, and *deer/deer*. Each form has historical reasons for being the way it is, but that doesn't make it easier for a learner of the language.

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To run → runner (run+er) “A person who runs”

A ‘runner’ is ‘one who runs,’ or ‘one who performs X.’ In the Dragon Tongue there are two ways to form agentive nouns out of true-verbs, the Verbal Agentive and the Clause Agentive. The Verbal Agentives are essentially transitive verbs in almost every way; they are comprised of a verbal root, have a direct object but *instead of having an aspect marker to make it a true-verb they have an appropriate noun-prefix* to denote their place in the sentence. Also, although they have a direct object (which they ordinarily could not have as a noun), they have a *reflexive* subject ending (if they are intentional actors) which they ordinarily could not have:

Xisláyayánáréshá! O innumerable blood drinkers! (mosquitoes, insects, biting flies)

This form is analyzed as:

Xisláyayánáréshá!
 (xi+((sláya+YÁNA)^{TV}+ré+shá)^{REFLEXIVE VERB})^{AGENTIVE NOUN-VERB}
 (vocative+((blood+TO DRINK)^{TV}+innumerable plural+ClassVI Reflexive)^{RV})^{AGENTIVE NV}
 O innumerable drinkers of blood! (Lit.)
 O blood drinkers!

In this form the transitive verb-form *-sláyayánáréshá* ‘innumerable inedible things which drink blood’ (which is incomplete and ungrammatical since there is no aspect prefix attached to turn it into a true-verb) is used as the basis of a *noun* which is formed by the addition of the vocative prefix *xi-* which forms an agentive meaning. Any noun prefix (covered in **5.4. Verb-Noun Affixes**) can be prefixed to this type of agentive derivation:

Tsisithrisariš isláyayánáréshá rísí! Would that all these **blood drinkers** weren’t biting me!

It can be difficult to tell the difference between these agentive forms of transitive verbs and verbal adjectives (covered in **6.3. Adjectives**) but there are several ways to tell the two types of usages apart. Unlike adjectives, they never appear with the particle *sa* and do not have any of the voice variations that adjectives do. Agentive forms can be differentiated from transitive verbs in that they have *noun-verb prefixes* and *never aspect prefixes* as usual true-verbs do and they have reflexive/intransitive endings despite having direct objects.

The second type of agentives is Clause Agentives. These agentive types are formed by constructing a dependent clause which has the meaning of ‘one who does X to Y.’ This is similar to English as transforming the sentence “I saw the blood drinkers” to “I saw the ones who drink blood.” Although this sounds stilted in English, it is a grammatical sentence and can replace the agentive ‘blood drinkers’ easily. This type of construction appears as:

Tsisithrisariš isa xisláyayánáréshá nisa rísí! Would that **all those that drink blood** wouldn’t bite me!

Dependent clauses and the ways they are constructed will be covered in **7.6. Clauses**, but for now it is enough to know that agentive forms can be created in this way. The two ways of forming agentives are not *semantically* equivalent in Srínawésin, Verbal Agentives are more commonly used, especially in casual speech among friends and acquaintances while the Clause Agentives appear to be used more with strangers, unknown dragons, enemies and others one “isn’t quite sure about.”

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Davis notes that Verbal Agentives denote trust and friendship while Clause Agentives at minimal indicate distance and “formality”—if such a word could ever apply to dragons—if not distrust.

5.4. Verb-Noun Affixes

As noted above, noun-verb affixes always occur as *prefixes* to the root, but the exact meaning of these various prefixes comes in six grammatical themes, *object/subject/reflexive* nouns of true-verbs, the various *adjectival* prefixes, *because of* or *by means of* prefixes, *locative* and *directives*, the *vocative* prefix and the various *proximals*. With the exception of proximal infixes and the vocative prefix the various grammatical classes of noun-prefixes *are mutually exclusive and cannot occur on the same noun at the same time*. Thus:

**Ashaxnaqséshá*

*(*a+sha+(XNAQSÉ+shá)*)^V^N

*(Subject past tense+Reflexive Past Tense+(IT-IS-A-SPIDER)^V)^N

*the spider (both a subject *and* a reflexive subject/object?)

The above utterance is ungrammatical as it has both a subject marker *a-* and a reflexive marker *sha-* attached to the root *-xnaqsésha* which violates the rules of Srínawésin and is also incredibly nonsensical. There are certain exceptions to the mutual exclusion of noun prefixes and these are noted below, but they remain far in the exception rather than the norm.

5.4.1. Inflection of Prefixes

As noted in section 3.5. **Inflection of Affixes**, many affixes in Srínawésin are inflected for tense, whether past, not-past or Cyclical and this is true of all noun prefixes, the only exception being the proximal infixes as well as certain other markers such as the vocative prefix.

5.4.2. True-Verb Object, Subject and Reflexive Prefixes

This set of prefixes indicates whether the noun they are attached to is the subject, object or reflexive subject of the true-verb within the clause. These prefixes are inflected for tense in the usual way although there are several differences in which the draconic language treats the subjects and objects of its sentences from those of the Younger Races. As noted above, Srínawésin can be thought of as a tripartite language, although this is not completely true under the definition of this term. These distinctions have been covered repeatedly in sections §4.1.1. **Srínawésin’s Ergativity**, 4.6. **Voice: Intentional vs. Unintentional**, and 5.1. **Overview** above.

Srínawésin does not seem to possess the concept of an indirect object of certain verbs such as *give*, *borrowed*, *threw at* and so forth (indirect objects are objects which a verb is directed *toward* but usually not acted upon such as *I gave Bloody Face the meat*, “the meat” being the direct object of the verb *to give* and *Bloody Face* being the indirect object). An “indirect object meaning” is found however in the *directive* class of prefixes in section 5.4.5. **Locatives and Directives** below.

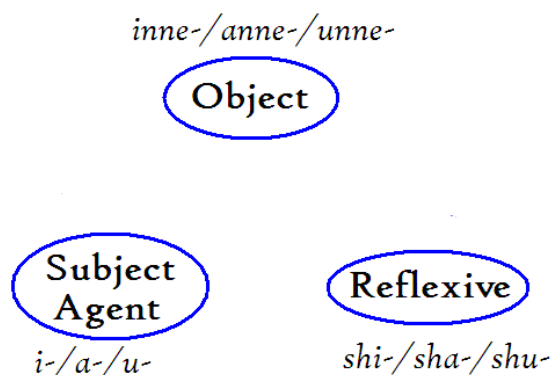
The various object and subject prefixes are (in *Non-Past*, *Past* and *Cyclical Tenses*):

<i>i-/a-/u-</i>	subject (<i>unintentional</i>) of an intransitive verb or agent (either <i>intentional</i> or <i>unintentional</i>) of a transitive verb
<i>inne-/anne-/unne-³</i>	object (<i>intentional</i> or <i>unintentional</i>) of a transitive verb
<i>shi-/sha-/shu-</i>	the subject-object (always <i>intentional</i>) of a reflexive verb

³ The double ‘n’ is a rare case of a geminate consonant in Srínawésin and thus both are pronounced. Therefore *anne-* is pronounced /an-ne/ not /a-ne/

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These three sets of prefixes thus form the basis of Srínawésin's tripartite structure, each prefix group applying as in the chart below:



It is vital to remember that the two sets of prefixes *shi-/sha-/shu-* and *i-/a-/u-*, although they both deal with the subjects of verbs, are not equivalent and cannot be used interchangeably.

For instance in the sentence:

<i>Šutséyawésu uxítsawésu wúx</i>	The trees have probably just begun to lose their leaves (The trees have probably just begun to sleep (Lit.))
-----------------------------------	---

The true-verb *tséya-* 'to sleep' is used in an *intransitive* sense because the subjects of the verb are *unintentional*; therefore the *subject* prefix *u-* is used on the word *-xítsawésu* 'trees.' Compare this to the sentence below:

<i>Šustelérétséyar utsúhúr'n</i>	The night is putting all the innumerable mosquitoes to sleep
----------------------------------	--

In this case the true-verb *tséya-* 'to sleep' is being used in a *transitive sense*, i.e. the darkness of night is *making* the mosquitoes sleep, therefore the *subject* prefix *u-* is attached to the word *-tsúhúr* 'night, darkness.' And compare to the reflexive sense:

<i>Šutséyaréshá shusteléréshá'n</i>	The innumerable mosquitoes are sleeping (themselves)
-------------------------------------	--

Whereby the (intentional) beings 'the innumerable mosquitoes' are 'making **themselves** sleep' and therefore the true-verb has the innumerable Class VI reflexive subject ending *-réshá* and the reflexive subject of the verb has the reflexive subject prefix *shu-*. Therefore, the prefix *i-/a-/u-* is used to denote the subjects (either intentional or unintentional) of *transitive verbs* and the *unintentional subjects* of *intransitive verbs*:

<i>Násuhunwéwatír ananqsatsit nahú!</i>	That over there hawk just suddenly pounced on the song birds! (Transitive, Intentional)
---	--

<i>Náxítsawénárasu asarásu'n</i>	The avalanche suddenly fell all over the forest below. (Transitive, Unintentional)
----------------------------------	---

<i>Nánárasu asarásu'n</i>	The avalanche just suddenly collapsed. (Intransitive, Unintentional)
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The prefix *inne-/anne-/unne-* is attached to explicit objects removed from the verb regardless of whether they are intentional or unintentional:

*Nátsunwałír **annehítsá sa nansuhunwéshá** ananqsatsil nahú!*

That over there hawk just suddenly pounced all over **those beautiful song birds!**

While the prefix *shi-/sha-/shu* are used only with *intentional* reflexive subjects:

*Tsixúhá sa xúnéš **shiháséš** xi, xiTsitsír xaháŠtisar?*

Why are you scratching **yourself**, Tear of the Sun?

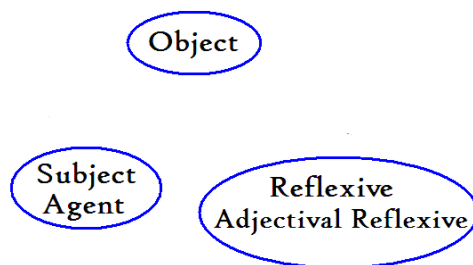
5.4.3. Adjectival Reflexive Subject, Superlative Subject and Contrastive Object Prefixes

The Dragon Tongue treats the relationship between *adjectival-verbs* and the various nouns which belong to them in a slightly different way than it does the relationship between *true-verbs* and their corresponding nouns. Adjectival-verbs will be treated in greater detail in **6.3 Adjectival-Verbs** below but the various affixes which define the relationship between these constructions and *their noun referents* are attached to the nouns so they ought to be treated here. Adjectival verbs are basically considered to be inherently *reflexive* in nature to intentional beings and *intransitive* in nature to unintentional beings:

*Tsišáthéš **shiqxísihéš'n*** this dragon is black (**to itself**) (Reflexive, Intentional)

*Tsišáthaha **iqxíšawaha'n*** this stone **is** black (Intransitive, Unintentional)

I am not sure if the evidence warrants this conclusion, but with the inclusion of adjectival forms, I would guess that Srínawésin's structure could therefore be classified as the chart below:



So adjectival subjects are treated identically to subjects of standard true-verbs in these forms. However, Srínawésin possesses a range of other adjectival prefixes which allow them to denote differences between *how much the subject is in that adjectival state* or to compare that state with others. For instance:

*Tsusyáhur **shuqsánir** nu* The moon is bright (Adj. Reflexive Subj.)

*Tsusyáhur **uwétsitsír** nu* The sun is brighter (Contrastive with unnamed object)

*Tsusyáhur **uwétsitsír húnagsánir** nu* The sun is brighter then the moon (Cont. with named object)

*Tsusyáhur **syurtsitsír** nu* The sun is **brightest of all** (Superlative)

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The first instance is a simple adjectival form which indicates that the subject (the moon) has an adjectival quality (is bright). In the second instance there is a *contrast* between the brightness of the subject (the sun) and that of another noun, which happens to be unnamed but would refer to a noun previously discussed or simply left out by the speaker. This is roughly equivalent to the English suffix *-er* such as *bigger*, *brighter* and so forth. The third instance is identical to the second, but the *object* is named rather than unnamed, i.e. the moon, and is equivalent to *then* in English. Lastly, the fourth instance the relationship between the adjectival construction and its subject (the sun) is *superlative*, or that the subject's realization of the adjective is superior to all others without exception, corresponding to the suffix *-est* in English. The prefixes used in these adjective verbal constructions are given below, inflected for tense as usual:

<i>sní-/sná-/snú-</i>	reflexive adjectival subject
<i>iwé-/awé-/uwé-</i>	contrastive <i>subject</i> of adjective (<i>-er</i>)
<i>hína-/hána-/húna-</i>	contrastive <i>object</i> of adjective (<i>then</i>)
<i>syir-/syar-/syur-</i>	superlative adjectival subject prefix (<i>-est</i>)

Adjective verbal constructions will be discussed in further detail in **6.3. Adjectives** but they can occur with all adjectival voices (see **6.3. Adjectives** below).

5.4.4. Because Of, For and By Means Of Prefixes

These series of prefixes form the basis of relating actions taken by the subject with another being or object, very roughly translating to 'because of,' 'for, for the benefit of' and 'by means of' in English:

Íš! *Ratúhasa sa háqséth sašathíx shaxráxa sa nanqxnéx átsisiwanunasin nihú!*
Hah! That foolish human ran away from my (female deer) kill **because of my voice!**

The *Auspices* or *Agency Of* prefix is only translated as "because" when it refers to a noun or a subordinate clause (see **7.6. Clauses**) *not* between clauses or sentences. "Because" between entire clauses is treated in **7.4. Conjunctive, Disjunctive, and Conditional Words between Sentences**. 'For, to benefit' and 'by means of' are used as in the following examples:

Xahú? Xyahaséš nan!?
What (did you say)!? (Who) did it **for you/him/her!**?

Tsistráhawésu iqxéhawésu srírúnáwéha linaxítsawésu'lá
I heard that the fire is spreading towards the mountains **by means of the forest** (jumping from tree to tree towards the mountain) (Lit.)

The basic forms of these prefixes are:

<i>ítsi-/átsi-/útsi-</i>	auspices/agency of (because of), due to
<i>xyi-/xya-/xyu-</i>	for, for the benefit of
<i>lina-/lana-/luna-</i>	by means of

5.4.5. Locatives and Directives

These prefixes determine the location and direction (usually in regards to motion of some type) of the noun they modify. They are inflected for tense as usual and can occur with the various proximals in order to further delineate location and direction. These prefixes are generally

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uncomplicated and are not usually difficult for translation purposes although they do contain some concepts which are not usually found in the languages of the Younger Races, such as flying, circling around a location and so forth (in *Non-Past*, *Past* and *Cyclical Tenses*):

<i>íqxú-/áqxú-/úqxú-</i>	<i>beginning from</i> a state or location and moving toward another
<i>ixí-/axá-/uxú-</i>	<i>next to or along side</i>
<i>iši-/aši-/uši-</i>	<i>on top of</i> (laying on or physically contacting vs. <i>over</i>)
<i>íqxú-/áqxú-/úqxú-</i>	<i>starting from</i> (a specific point or location)
<i>lixi-/łaxa-/łuxu-</i>	<i>flying over</i> (circling?)
<i>nirú-/narú-/nurú-</i>	<i>until, up to, moving up until</i> a location or state is reached
<i>ni-/na-/nu-</i>	<i>at</i>
<i>niwa-/nawa-/nuwa-</i>	<i>at no place, nowhere, unknown location</i>
<i>qsin-/qsan-/qsun-</i>	<i>into or putting into</i> an object
<i>qsír-/qsár-/qsúr-</i>	<i>beneath or under</i>
<i>qxi-/qxa-/qxu-</i>	<i>towards</i> (by flying)
<i>rí-/rá-/rú-</i>	<i>through</i>
<i>rihú-/rahú-/ruhú-</i>	<i>away from</i> (a general location or condition)
<i>ši-/šá-/šú-</i>	<i>past or by</i>
<i>slíha-/sláha-/slúha-</i>	<i>with, along with, in the company of</i> (when used with two different words it often carries the meaning of <i>between</i> or <i>in between</i>)
<i>srí-/srá-/srú-</i>	<i>towards</i> (either by along the ground or in the water)
<i>tsin-/tsan-/tsun-</i>	<i>within</i> (a place) or <i>during</i> (a specific time)
<i>tsni-/tsna-/tsnu-</i>	<i>over</i> (either flying or on another object)
<i>xín-/xán-/xún-</i>	<i>towards and through</i> (by either flying, swimming or on the ground)
<i>xir-/xar-/xur-</i>	<i>flying across</i>

Although these prefixes specify some unique concepts such as moving towards an object by flying, flying over a location or otherwise, their use is as noted above and all refer to the noun to which they are prefixed to:

Ni lišáha	at a hunting territory (present tense, ownership unspecified)
Šhá qsásin	went past thin clouds in the air

In order to create *Indirect Object* constructions—such as in English “I threw the ball to the dog,” *the ball* being the direct object of the verb *to throw* and *the dog* being the indirect object, the thing which the ball was thrown towards—Srínawésin simply uses the various directional prefixes given above. For instance:

Sráhaséš sahawaqsíhú nan, xixráxašawéš!
I tossed the slab of meat **to you**, you stupid fool!

In this case *sráhaséš* means ‘towards him/her/you’ and it is understood as being ‘to you’ from the context of the sentence. Minor variations on this theme are achieved by using other directional prefixes.

5.4.6. Vocative Prefix

The vocative prefix of Srínawésin is the primary way in which the Sihá overcome the deficiency in their language (although they would not see it as such) of the 2nd Person concept. Essentially, the vocative prefix indicates that the speaker is speaking to the listener, albeit in an

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indirect way by referring to *what he or she is* rather than saying *you* per se, and is used in order to specify who or what the speaker is referring to in case there is any ambiguity. Thus the sentence below:

Xítsítsíš, saenláséch? O my friend (a dragon), you killed him/her (another dragon)?
or he/she killed you, O my friend? (slightly obscure)

The vocative form thus addresses another specifically, much as in the case of various Indo-European languages:

Á mo maccu O my sons (Old Irish)
Quinte, habitas ad casam? **Quintus**, do you live in a house? (Latin)

The vocative prefix is *not* inflected for tense (it would not seem to matter as one is usually addressing another in the present tense anyway) and thus only occurs in one form:

xi- vocative prefix, O...

This prefix can attach to any noun form, including proper names:

XiSláya sa Snarész, xíxúnész xi? Bloody Face, are you scratching off your scales again?

As noted above, the vocative prefix bears much of the task of expressing the 2nd Person which humans use so much but which dragons can do just fine without. The vocative prefix is the only “noun” prefix which *can occur with another noun prefix* (although it does this only rarely). In these constructions the vocative prefix *always comes before the second noun prefix*:

Xinnesihész tsyenlášá nin!
O You Kindred who I will slay!

The word *xinnesihész* is analyzed as:

Xinnesihész
(*xi*+(*inne*+*SIHÁ*+*ész*)^{SUBJECT NOUN})^{VOCATIVE}
(Vocative+(present tense subject+TO BE ALIKE+Class I Refl. Marker)
O You Kindred (who...)

Therefore, it might be more accurate to say that noun-verb morphology should be diagrammed as:

(Vocative) + {Noun Prefix + (Proximal) + (Inalienable Possessive) + [ROOT^{REFL./IN. VERB}]}^{NOUN}

Generally, the vocative is only used when there might be some ambiguity in the utterance and clarity needs to be expressed. Thus, the example given above would only be used if the speaker was talking to two dragons (most likely younger dragons in this case) and needed to specify which one they were talking to. If there was only one other dragon in the vicinity and the speaker was looking directly at the listener, there would be no ambiguity and they would most likely simply say:

Xíxúnész xi? (You’re) scratching off (your) scales again?

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The semantic and disambiguating usages of the vocative prefix are discussed in section VII **Sentence Structure and Speech Patterns** below.

5.4.7. Proximals

Proximals are a group of noun infixes which determine the distance from the speaker (and sometimes the listener, one of the implicit 2nd Person instances in the Dragon Tongue) in a variety of ways:

Níwłhišáha at that hunting territory **over there**

Essentially the proximal infixes can be translated as various English phrases such as *over there, here, way over there* and the like. The proximals are *not* inflected for tense and always appear in the forms below. Although the proximals do not alter for tense, they do have an effect on the prefix *preceding* them (the required noun prefix). *Voiced* proximals will alter the preceding prefix into a similarly *voiced* variant while *unvoiced* proximals have no effect on the preceding prefix, as in the example above where the phrase *axnaqsésha* becomes *áwíxnaqséshá* with the addition of the proximal infix *-wí-*. This voicing assimilation can unfortunately cause some interesting semantic difficulties although these are usually resolved by the forms of the rest of the sentence.

The proximal infixes are:

Right here (next to me)	-hu-
Right here (in the general vicinity)	'-qxí-
Over there (usually within voice range)	'-wí-
Over there (generally within sight, or 20 miles or so)	-nan-
Way over there (requires a significant trip to reach)	'-xé-

The notation “’-” indicates the preceding prefix is voiced through assimilation.

It should be noted that proximals *can occur* with infixed verbal objects both of the *explicit and implicit kind*. In other words, they may appear with noun-verbs infixed as direct objects into transitive verbs *as well as* with infixed direct object *prefixes* which stand for the direct object. In both instances the proximal affix appears before the form it modifies, just as in normal usage:

*Sanan*hastsiqxéhets *aTsuwášáréšáwéts nananhaxaha’la* I heard that Stargazer burnt down **that holly** tree over there on the top of that mountain.

*Sanan*ánaqxéhets *aTsuwášáréšáwéts nananhaxaha’la* I heard that Stargazer burnt down **that** (animate) thing over there on the top of that mountain

5.4.8. `-sé- “But Not...”

There is an additional noun affix which must be treated, the infix *`-sé-* “but not...” The way that Srínawésin creates negative sentences will be further discussed in section 7.3. **Evidential Sentence Enclitics**, but this infix is part of verb-noun morphology so must be treated here. As will be shown below, Srínawésin sentences are almost without exception entirely positive in nature or entirely negative in nature, such as:

<i>Saxinix sa wísyewíwánets na</i>	He/she was able to catch that salamander (Positive)
<i>Hux sawtsqsáthits áqxra</i>	But he/she didn’t want to eat it (Negative)

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The exception to this positive/negative duality in the language is found in the infix `-sé- “but not...” Essentially, this infix negativises not the entire sentence, as the evidential enclitics do, but rather *only the word to which it is attached*, keeping the sentence positive (or negative) but *excluding* it from the positive (or negative) nature of the sentence, which retains its initial state. For instance the two sentences below:

<i>Sawała sa wiheyunwánets’lá</i>	I heard that he/she/you leapt upon that grasshopper and caught it
<i>Sawała sa wiheyunwánets annésésruthax’lá</i>	I heard that he/she/you leapt upon and catch that grasshopper but not the male rabbit.

The first sentence is entirely positive in nature, it states that the speaker heard that a certain action happened, i.e. that a dragon leapt upon a grasshopper and caught it. The second sentence is different with the inclusion of *annésésruthax* ‘but not the male rabbit’ which is indicated as the object of the true-verb *wána-* ‘to catch.’ The infix `-sé- excludes the word to which it is attached (*anne—sruthax* ‘the male rabbit’) and removes it from the sentence’s otherwise positive nature. Generally this can be translated into English as “but not.” This form can be used with a *negative statement*:

<i>Sawała sa wiheyunwánets annésésruthax <u>qsa</u>’lá</i>	I heard that he/she/you <u>did not</u> leap upon and catch that grasshopper but instead on the male rabbit.
--	--

As in modern English, the inclusion of two negative statements (one indicated by the evidential *qsa* and the second by the infix `-sé-) makes a positive statement, at least as regards the second element. Essentially, since the entire sentence is negative due to the evidential *qsa* the inclusion of `-sé- makes a double negative (in regards *only* to what it is attached to) and thus reverses the general negative quality of the sentence but only to the noun to which applies. This is honestly one of the most confusing aspects of Srínawésin, at least to me. The infix `-sé- voices the vowel immediately proceeding it just like the various proximal infixes and *only occurs on verb-nouns* never on true-verbs. Morphologically, this infix *always occurs immediately after a verb-noun’s noun prefix*, whether it is a subject, object, reflexive object marker, locative, directive or other prefixes as below:

(Vocative) + {Noun Prefix + `-sé-) + (Proximal) + (Inalienable Possessive) + [ROOT^{REFL./IN. VERB}]}^{NOUN}

This is because this infix *negativises* the relationship between a verb-noun and the rest of the sentence and is therefore logically prior to all other conditions and qualities of that verb-noun, whether it is the verb-noun’s proximity, possessive nature, plurality or so on. This infix can be attached to any type of verb-noun and although “but not” is the most common way of translating it, `-sé- can also be translated in a variety of other ways depending on whether the noun to which it is attached such as:

Tsixinix sa ríthírésin ítsísétsnušarésin ni
It can rain **without** there being heavy clouds in the sky

Tsiraha sa hítsá sa slanewéth ihuhawáwéth iwéséhasawéth hínáqxíháqsan násuhawán nihú!
This dead meat is really good and tasty but it **isn’t better** then that deer-meat over there!

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To make things even more difficult and confusing, the infix *`-sé-* can be attached to an *infix*ed object of a transitive verb as well!:

Saxinix sa séyasúnqseru nan!

I could **not** smell the hummingbird (but I could smell something else)!

Although adverbs will be treated later on, it is interesting that although *`-sé-* causes voicing on the syllable before it, it does *not* when in this form, i.e. it does *not* cause voicing to the particle *sa* proceeding it.

5.5. “Pronouns”

Pronouns are words or phrases which stand in for noun, saving the need for constantly repeating the names of objects within a sentence:

I see **the boy** → I see **him**

In this English example the noun phrase “the boy” is replaced with the pronoun “him” which stands in for the noun phrase and otherwise agrees with the replaced noun in terms of number, gender and other grammatical factors that are relevant to English. While other languages will divide up the nouns they use (and therefore the pronouns used to replace them) in different ways than English does, most languages generally use their pronouns in this basic fashion. Srínawésin’s use of pronoun forms is essentially the same as those of the Younger Races in most respects although the Sihá rarely make use of pronoun forms, primarily because of the structure of their language. For instance one translation of the above sentence would be:

Tsiqxéyéšáwá’n I see **the hatchling**

To “the hatchling” replaced with pronoun-form:

Tsyenšáwá’n I see **him/her/(you)**

Although in English a pronoun is used as a completely separate word, in Srínawésin the usual forms are those of affixes attached to roots, so instead of “pronouns” as separate words they appear as *pronoun affixes*, i.e. affixes which agree in number, class, person and so forth with the noun they are replacing in the sentence:

Náhínerisets aQsánir sa Qxéyéš rałuxítsawésu qsanséyusu’n

Moonchild suddenly leapt from the trees into the river and grabbed the fish with her teeth

Altered into a pronoun form (both subject and object):

Náqsríssets rałuxítsawésu qsanséyusu’n

She (dragon) suddenly leapt from the trees into the river and grabbed it (aquatic) with her teeth

It would be redundant so say:

Náqsríssets rałuxítsawésu annehínín asihés qsanséyusu’n

She (dragon) suddenly leapt from the trees into the river and grabbed it (aquatic) with her teeth

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But it remains a grammatical (if overly specific) statement and can be used to indicate emphasis or the like, although see section §7.8. **Speech Patterns, Euphemisms and Figures of Speech** on the Kindred's views on being overly specific. In the above examples the relative lack of pronoun-forms is obvious as the true-verb of the sentence hardly changes form other than the simple replacement of the infixed noun *híne-* 'fish' to the appropriate object prefix *-aq-* (agreeing in number, class and so forth). The subject ending *-ets* (Class I the Kindred) already serves as a "pronoun" as it must agree with the original explicit subject of the sentence, *-Qsánir sa Qxéyéš* 'Moonchild,' and thus when the explicit subject of the sentence is removed the subject ending of the true-verb attains a pronoun-like meaning which it did not originally have.

However, while Srínawésin has a form of built-in pronoun forms which are always used and are ubiquitous, there are a select number of grammatical forms that necessitate pronouns existing on their own as separate words rather than affix-forms (these cases do not really need to be enumerated explicitly but the most common usages are in verb modifier constructions such as possessives as well as location phrases such as *with him, in it* and the like). The Dragon Tongue creates these "pronouns" in a remarkably simple and efficient way by making use of the "empty" root *hasa-* which seems to have no independent meaning or semantic association other than to form pronouns. Essentially, in order to form a pronoun the empty verbal root *hasa-* has the simple or reflexive subject affix agreeing with the person, number and class of the original noun attached to it, thus forming the agreeing "pronoun:"

Náwalets ašiSláya sa Snaréš, xinušéš xa?

You suddenly jumped on top of **Bloody Face**, my hatch-sister?

To:

Náwalets ašihaseš, xinušéš xa?

You suddenly jumped onto him/her (dragon), my hatch-sister?

Thus, the proper noun *Sláya sa Snaréš* 'Bloody Face' is replaced by the pronoun *-haséš* which can be analyzed as:

-haséš

(*HASA+éš*)

("EMPTY" ROOT+Class I Kindred Reflexive Suffix)

Him/her/you

This form then serves as the root for further affixes, in this case *aši-* 'past tense on top of.' Therefore a list of all possible pronoun forms is a combination of *hasa-* and the appropriate reflexive forms:

<i>-hasa</i>	I, me (formed by <i>hasa+Ø</i> first person null-affix)
<i>-haséš</i>	-him/her (Class I)
<i>-hasit</i>	it (Class II)
<i>-hasan</i>	it (Class III)
<i>-hasax</i>	it (Class IV)
<i>-hasin</i>	it (Class V)
<i>-hasashá</i>	it (Class VI)
<i>-hasar</i>	it (Class VII)
<i>-hasasin</i>	it (Class VIII)
<i>-hasasu</i>	it (Class IX)
<i>-hasaha</i>	it (Class X)
<i>-haséth</i>	it (Class XI)

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-hasáqx	it (Class XII)
-hasisu	who? (Class XIII)

A similar list of *plural* and *innumerable* pronouns would be formed in the usual way (ROOT+Plural Maker+Class Marker):

*-hasayéha	we, us (very rarely used)
-hasawéš	them/you all (Class I)
-hasawit/-hasarít	them (Class II)
-hasawén/-hasarén	them (Class III)
-hasawéx/-hasaréx	them (Class IV)
-hasawín/-hasarín	them (Class V)
-hasawéshá/-hasaréshá	them (Class VI)
-hasawér/-hasarér	them (Class VII)
-hasawésin/-hasarésin	them (Class VIII)
-hasawésu/-hasarésu	them (Class IX)
-hasawéha/-hasaréha	them (Class X)
-hasawéth/-hasaréth	them (Class XI)
-hasawéqx/-hasaréqx	them (Class XII)
-hasawísu/-hasarísu	who? (Class XIII)

Uses of these pronoun forms are fairly restricted and only crop up in particular instances, particularly possessive forms:

Ratú**hasisu sa** yešúha'x? (You) went away from **whose** cave?

These pronouns function as nouns in all ways, they can take adjectives, possessives, proximals and the like, the only difference is that the original root is replaced with the root *hasa-*.

5.6. Gender

Gender is both a vital aspect of Srínawésin's system of nouns and one which has virtually no importance whatsoever. Although this seems contradictory, it is true because gender *does occur* in a grammatical format but *not at all as it does* in Indo-European languages such as French, German, Gaelic, Welsh, Russian and the like. Instead of *grammatical gender*, which all of the above languages possess, (all words without exception have a gender, such as in Modern Welsh *tirlun* 'landscape' being masculine and *gwybodaeth* 'knowledge' being feminine) the draconic tongue possesses an *absolute gender* in that gender is only expressed grammatically in living things which are *biologically male or female*, or possess the requisite male or female sexual organs and the capacity to reproduce.

However, the Dragon Tongue goes one step further than this in a rather unique way in though they have an absolute gender expressed in their language they, in fact, *have virtually no non-gender terms for a species in its totality*. For instance, the word *-háqsan* means 'female deer, doe' and *-huxén* means 'male deer, buck' but there is *no term for generic "deer" without referring to gender!* This might seem extremely strange, but it is quite logical when viewed from the dragons' point of view: male and female animals often behave in extremely different ways, live separately, meet only to mate, travel separately, smell differently, react to danger (i.e. the dragon), and taste differently.

Although this is true in general, there are specific ways and rules in which the lack of generic non-gendered terms is applied, and thus exceptions. The biggest rule is that *there are no generic non-gendered species terms for animals which are considered prey by the dragons*, but non-prey animals possess generic terminology. The biggest example of this would be the term *-sihéš* 'dragon' which is generic and non-

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gendered. The reason for this is that other dragons are *not considered to be prey by other dragons* (at least in the consumptive sense of the word). However, *-sríxux* ‘male pig, boar’ and *-thútsix* ‘female pig, sow’ both refer to the generic concept of ‘boar’ as we know it, but there is no simple word which includes both *-sríxux* and *-thútsix* in the draconic language because they are considered to be prey animals and worthy of a gender distinction. Other, non-living objects, such as the sun, the moon, clouds, mountains and suchlike are *never gender-differentiated* as they possess no biological gender, and inedible and “disgusting” animals such as birds, insects, arthropods and so forth are also non-gendered.

Class II Predator animals appear to have a haphazard gender assignment and there seem to be several complex reasons for this. Class II creatures, unlike Classes III and IV are defined by their *predatory status* not whether they are edible or not, therefore while *many* animals which are in this class may be eaten (and often are) not all are eaten habitually and thus do not warrant a gender distinction. Additionally, many “new” species (from the dragons’ point of view) are still in a state of flux as to whether they are edible so a gender distinction has not yet been used with them. Dogs are an excellent example of this, and show the way in which Srínawésin has developed over its long life. The term *-xíyewít* originally referred to all predatory canines such as wolves, coyotes, dingoes without gender distinctions (it seemed that Moonchild often referred to Howard’s dogs as *-xíyewéx* or ‘prey-canines’ as they were non-predatory and ‘looked like a good meal.’ Needless to say Howard tried to keep them away from her as much as possible). This is because the verbal root *xíye-* has “recently” been applied to the species we call *dogs* therefore there has yet to be a gender distinction attached to them. Bloody Face informed Howard that the term *-xíyewít* originally was applied to an ancient animal which combined the traits of dogs and bears (the ancient ancestors of both species) which was considered quite edible and thus *-xíyewít* meant the *female* gender of these ancient animals while *-sátsáwít* was applied to the *male* gender of this species.

Thus, as this species began to differentiate into two definite species over (a very long) time they entered a semantic ‘gray zone’ as far as the Shúna were concerned. Eventually the word *-xíyewít* ‘female dog-bear’ was applied primarily to wolves and the like while another word *-yúšín*, which apparently was used with a wholly different extinct species, was attached to the bears of today. *-Sátsáwít* fell completely out of usage but if wolves and dogs became a big enough part of the draconic diet it would probably be attached to *male* canines as opposed to *female* canines. Similarly, bears have “recently” been eaten more and more by dragons and therefore the term *-xwáhin* ‘male bear’ has been growing in usage as opposed to *-yúšín* ‘female bear.’ Moonchild informed Howard that the two terms *-xwáhin* and *-yúšín* once referred to the male and female genders of the original extinct prey species mentioned above, so it is likely that words travel in pairs through the ages and as species come and go they are applied to new species and eventually (if they are deemed “worthy” of consumption) the gendered terms are once again used to differentiate the new species’ genders. However, I would have to live many thousands of years to prove this hypothesis correct, but it seems logical from the descriptions of the various draconic informants in Howard’s notes.

One interesting exception noted in Davis’ papers is that of *qxné(hi)-* or ‘chatterer, annoying talker’ the root used to describe humans. Although speakers often place this root in Class IV Small Prey (which would thereby need a gender specification) there does not appear to be any agreement on male vs. female distinctions amongst speakers regarding the use of this root. Neither Moonchild nor Bloody Face differentiated between female and male humans, simply using the term *qxnéhiréx* without pause. Angry Face and several of the others seemed to use *qxné(hi)-* to denote ‘chatterer/human (f.)’ and *snuha-* as ‘chatterer/human (m.),’ although to make matters even more complex Frost Song and Black Honey *reversed* this (*qxné(hi)-* ‘human (m.) and *snuha-* ‘human (f.)’)! Obviously there is no agreement on the usage amongst the Shúna or if Davis himself simply invented the language he changed how it was used and simply forgot that he had done this!