Title: Taadži Linguistics

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Introduction

The Tade Taadži language grew out of a broader worldbuilding project begun in late 2020. I wanted to construct a language that allowed me to play to my strengths, and from which I could work on my weak points—I felt confident in my culture-building, and in creating and evolving a written script that would be aesthetically pleasing while also being feasible to write with authentic tools. However, with little formal linguistics training, creating a unique grammar without an Indo-European bias is a difficult process for me. To get me started, I began with the phonemic inventory of Proto-Uto-Aztecan and a few aesthetic goals for the writing system, and slowly evolved from there. Tade Taadži is thus an ongoing project, and a member of a language family that can provide a fun space for me to learn and experiment.

Abstract

Tade Taadži is the representative conlang of an ongoing worldbuilding project, focusing on a culture that arises from dispossessed peoples transported to an isolated archipelago. This article will provide a brief historical context for the language, describe its grammar and its logo-phonetic writing system. Notable features include an extensive system of ligatures in formal texts, and a five-gender personal pronoun system. Any setting-specific terms provided in the document can be assumed to be those used by the Taadži culture, rather than local endonyms.

Fig. 1. An atlas of the planet Karawâhe, labeled in Lanje Taadži glyphs. The glyph representing the Naasengo species is redacted, in accordance with Taadži cultural taboos. The remaining glyphs represent the homeland of the ancestral cultures of the Taadži (left), and the Taadži themselves (right).
History

Tade Taadži originates on an Earth-like planet with near-zero axial tilt. This creates more extreme temperature gradients, and stronger mid-ocean currents. To simplify the conlang creation process, this planet features two major humanoid species, eventually referred to as the Naasengo and the Taadži.

Geographic isolation kept these species largely separated from each other. (Fig. 1) The smaller, gregarious Naasengo that occupied the larger territory gave rise to the imperialist ‘Agâlè culture, which colonized large portions of the main continents. After learning of a navigable passage through the treacherous waters near the western mountain range, they came in contact with the ancestors of the Taadži culture.

This species was larger (avg 2.3-2.4m), and evolutionary pressures to adapt to local parasites and strong sunlight left them hairless, thicker-skinned and possessing dark sclera and a distinctive green color to their blood, due to high levels of circulating biliverdin. While their thick skin provided them better protection from both biting insectoids and sunburn, it left them less capable of sweating to achieve evaporative cooling. Decorating the body with mud or other body pigments was a common strategy to reduce sun exposure.

Local trade and exploration had resulted in some limited contact between proto-Taadži and southwestern Naasengo cultures, but their existence had been previously unconfirmed by the ‘Agâlè.

While seemingly primitive to the ‘Agâlè due to their relative lack of metalworking technology, these proto-Taadži peoples were a mix of settled and nomadic cultures, many of whom had well-developed literary traditions, monumental ritual sites and/or well-established population centers, and some possessed a far more advanced understanding of medical theory and technique. Many worshiped celestial bodies as their mythic ancestors, leading to their eventual name: Taadžipanu, or Children of the Sun and Moon.

While initially welcoming to the newcomers and establishing trade, the Taadži cultures eventually began to push back against colonial projects within their homeland, and the kidnapping of their people. The ‘Agâlè responded aggressively, with captured Taadži transported in slave ships to an isolated colonial project on a mid-oceanic archipelago.

Enslaved Taadži were not permitted to write and deliberately divided into groups that limited same-culture contact. These measures were intended to decrease their capability to organize and rebel, leading to the creation of a pidgin and the loss of writing technology.

Despite this, the Taadži mounted an increasingly organized series of slave revolts, contributing to the failure of the colonial venture. As a result, the ‘Agâlè left the archipelago, leaving the Taadži behind on the most isolated land mass on the planet. While poorly adapted to their new environment, enough Taadži survived to form a genetically viable population. This archipelago remained isolated from the outside world for centuries to come, outlasting the ‘Agâlè and possibly the entire Nassengo species.

Fig. 2 A map of the Taadži archipelago, or Taadžipanuhe. This project focuses on Tade Taadži, a linguistically conservative eastern language spoken near the original colony (centered at star).
While the creole language of the Taadži peoples developed into multiple branches as they slowly radiated to new foraging and fishing grounds, this project currently focuses on one relatively early dialect, Tade Taadži.

**Linguistics**

Tade Taadži has a Nominative-Accusative alignment and an SOV word order, with OVS subordinate clauses. The language is head-final, with adjectives and descriptive clauses preceding the noun or verb they modify, and postpositions are used. The possessee is marked rather than the possessor. The language has recently transitioned from analytic to mostly synthetic, with noun-adjective agreement in case and plurality. Verbs feature optional person-marking.

**Length and Phonotactics**

Tade Taadži features contrasting vowel and consonant length. Until recently, Tade Taadži had no distinction between voiced and unvoiced consonants. A weak distinction is evolving, but in most cases voicing is non-contrastive. The basic syllable structure of Tade Taadži is as follows:

(C)(V,S)(C), with S = m, n, ŋ, j, ɫ, and w.

Geminate consonants, long vowels, and nasal vowels are contrastive versus their basic counterparts. Plosives must be spaced by a central vowel if compounding would place them in proximity.

The sibilant affricates ts/dž can’t follow plosives or sibilants except t/d, ŋ can’t follow plosives, sibilants or rhotics, rhotics can’t follow labial(ized) or glottal plosives.

**Stress**

Stress defaults to the first non-affix syllable.

If there are one or more long vowels in a non-final position, the stress falls on the first long vowel. If there are geminate consonants, the non-ultimate syllable following the long consonant or incorporating it as its onset takes the stress, unless it is an affricate or fricative.

**Romanization**

The romanization used in this text is focused on aiding the reader in acquiring consistent pronunciation of Tade Taadži, and follows IPA transcription fairly closely (Table 1). It is thus more descriptive than the minimal pairs that native Taadži speakers would identify, including distinctions between voiced and unvoiced consonants, and distinctions between vowel sounds that are found in specific phonotactic contexts. Length or gemination indicated in the romanization with double letters. In digraphs, the sonorant is doubled. Thus, /ŋː/ is rendered as nng, /t͡s/ is rendered as tss, and /d͡ʒː/ is rendered as džž.

![Table 1. Phonology and romanization of Tade Taadži. Romanization is listed (in parentheses) when it differs from IPA.](table.png)

*Table 1. Phonology and romanization of Tade Taadži. Romanization is listed (in parentheses) when it differs from IPA.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Labial</th>
<th>Coronal</th>
<th>Dorsal</th>
<th>Laryngeal</th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>Central</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alveolar</td>
<td>Palatal</td>
<td>Velar</td>
<td>Glottal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>ŋ (ŋ)*</td>
<td>ŋ (ŋ)</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>i, ø</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>p, b</td>
<td>t, d</td>
<td>k, g</td>
<td>? (‘)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plosive</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sibilant affricate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ts, dʒ~dž (dž)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricative</td>
<td>s, z</td>
<td>x, ɣ (ğ)</td>
<td>h</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximant</td>
<td>w~v</td>
<td>l, t (l)</td>
<td>j</td>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td>(a, à)</td>
<td>å</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhotic</td>
<td>r<del>r</del>r (r)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a marginal phoneme only found in a few words.*
Nouns and Adjectives

There is only a very weak distinction between nouns and adjectives, which are treated the same grammatically. They are better thought of as concrete and abstract or descriptive nouns. Tade Taadži is early in the process of transitioning from an analytic to a synthetic language, and thus features five fairly regular declension patterns. Noun and Adjective cases are Nominative, Accusative, Possessed, Allative, Instrumental, and Vocative. Adjectives agree with the case of the noun they modify. Adjectives or modifying nouns come before the primary noun.

Nominative marks the actor for both transitive and intransitive verbs, and modifiers of verbs. It is unmarked in the singular form.

Ozà humà. / oze hu:me/ repptomammal.PL.NOM sleep.STAT “Animals sleep.”

Accusative marks the patient of transitive verbs.

Naiddahe saangwus haapu. / naid:he sa:nyus ha:pu/ Naiddahe.NOM shy.prawn.ACC see.NEARPAST “Naiddahe saw a darting prawn."

Possessed marks an object possessed by something (his book, the person's word), an origin (people from the islands), and apposition (my sister, a healer). Possessed nouns come before the noun they modify, and can be compound-forming, though the case marker may be dropped depending on sound similarity. The word order of (concrete) noun adjuncts also follows this pattern (ex. "face mask" would be literally rendered "mask (of the) face").

Uzumi papà kamitsigwísi kìi. / uzumi papà kamit'sigwísi ki:/ body.paint.POS moon.NOM crater.PL.ACC exist.STAT “The dark markings on the face of the moon are craters.”

Allative marks motion toward (I went to the house), direction (I went north), and also marks indirect objects of most verbs (I gave the stone to her). The Allative comes after the Nominative and Accusative.

Aratmàpà jadu ida aannagu. / aratmepe jadu id:a a:n:agu/ Aratmàpà.NOM sea.ALL go.INFV want.PRES “Aramatìpà wants to go to the sea.”

Instrumental acts as the agent of passive voice construction (I was hit by the stick), and to indicate location (I work in the field), time (I work today), participation in an action (she benefited from her mother’s love), substance of composition (a wheel of cheese), source (a portion of food), and comitative statements (I went in the company of the fisherman). Instrumental nouns follow the noun they modify.

Laranwà kushìngyr sintsddur sydurpy. / laranwe kushìñjìr sìnts:ɛ:ur sydurpy/ tree.PL.NOM east.PL.INST wind.INST curve.STAT “Trees from the east are bowed because of the wind.”

Vocative identifies an addressee, and is the default case in most dialects for referring to the gods. Some dialects may use the vocative only as a pejorative, while others are beginning to use the vocative as a topic marker.

Xummmaa, nga 'us tsà pávà pawapso? / xum:a: na 'us tsà pawapso?/ friend.VOC 2S.NOM ACC Q.INFML therefore do.NEARPAST-that.ACC “Oh friend, why did you do that?”

Table 2. Taadži declensions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>NOM</th>
<th>ACC</th>
<th>POS</th>
<th>ALL</th>
<th>INST</th>
<th>VOC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. -t/d/ts/dí/sí*/w/h/(V)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-wus</td>
<td>-di</td>
<td>-du</td>
<td>-ddur</td>
<td>dà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. -y/i/e/(r)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-us</td>
<td>-e</td>
<td>-u</td>
<td>-yr</td>
<td>uu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. -N/ʃi/(V)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-ns</td>
<td>-mi</td>
<td>-my</td>
<td>-mr</td>
<td>maa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. -u/o/(r)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-us</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td>-u</td>
<td>-ur</td>
<td>oo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. -a(r)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-as</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>-ar</td>
<td>òà</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>NOM</th>
<th>ACC</th>
<th>POS</th>
<th>ALL</th>
<th>INSTR</th>
<th>VOC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. -t/d/ts/dí/sí*/w/h/(V)</td>
<td>-za</td>
<td>-zat</td>
<td>-zabi</td>
<td>-zá</td>
<td>-zur</td>
<td>-zá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. -y/i/e/(r)</td>
<td>-ʃ</td>
<td>-ʃs</td>
<td>-ẹ</td>
<td>-(V)ngyr</td>
<td>-(V)ngu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. -N/ʃi/(V)</td>
<td>-wa</td>
<td>-was</td>
<td>-wi</td>
<td>-wy</td>
<td>-wur</td>
<td>-wà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. -u/o/(r)</td>
<td>-wi</td>
<td>-wis</td>
<td>-wi</td>
<td>-wu</td>
<td>-wur</td>
<td>-wo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. -a(r)</td>
<td>-ągą</td>
<td>-agas</td>
<td>-agi</td>
<td>-ągą</td>
<td>-agar</td>
<td>-ągą</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standalone particles acting as case markers may be used for emphasis, to separate different noun phrases in the same case, and/or to mark the end of a subordinate clause. For the nominative case, an appropriate pronoun may be used (see page 7). This is a remnant of the analytic grammar of the early Taadži creole which has maintained useful grammatical functions.

Sot suwus sage hadžëddàzat joovú mavàrà yr jåddigopu xummr taat 'us haapu. / sot suwus sage hadžëddà:zat jo:vo mavare jà:go pu xum:ə t:at 'us ha:pu/ 3S.NOM pot.ACC take.PRES shellfish.ACC.PL water cook.INF INST bay.ALL friend.INST 3SM.NOM ACC see.PAST “She saw that he took the pot to boil shellfish with a friend.”
Verbs

Verbs have four tenses: Remote Past, Past, Present, and Future. Tense is strictly absolute (centered on the "now") unless directly quoting someone.

Table 3. Taaddži tenses. The 3rd and 4th conjugations are differentiated by etymological roots of a given verb.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb Stem</th>
<th>Remote</th>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Future</th>
<th>Imperative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-a,ã,i,i,x,p,t</td>
<td>-Vdžu</td>
<td>-Vpu</td>
<td>-Vgu</td>
<td>-Vzi</td>
<td>-Vdžã</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-e,o</td>
<td>-Vdže</td>
<td>-Vpe</td>
<td>-Vge</td>
<td>-Vzi</td>
<td>-Vdžã</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-u</td>
<td>-adže</td>
<td>-ape</td>
<td>-age</td>
<td>-azi</td>
<td>-adžã</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-u(s)</td>
<td>-udžas</td>
<td>-upas</td>
<td>-ugas</td>
<td>-uzis</td>
<td>-udžã</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remote Past tense is usually used to refer to events that occurred more than one day ago. It can also function as a discontinuous past tense, where the event has experienced a change. It may also be used for recent events that the speaker was present for but does not clearly remember.

Tsudu tyjaddału. /tsudu tjd:jadʒu/ beach.ALL 3SF.go-RPAST
“Tsudu tyjaddału. /tsudu tjd:jadʒu/ beach.ALL 3SF.go-RPAST
“Tsudu jinmr tyjaddaçu. /tsudu jinmr tjd:jadʒu/ beach.ALL todayINST 3SF.go-RPAST
“I think she went to the beach today”

Past tense or Simple Past tense refers to events within the past day, or when the speaker wants to emphasize the clarity of their memory.

Tsudu jinmr tyjddapu. /tsudu jinmr tjd:apu/ beach.ALL todayINST 3SF.go-PAST
“Tsudu jinmr tyjddapu. /tsudu jinmr tjd:apu/ beach.ALL todayINST 3SF.go-PAST
“She went to the beach today”

Present and Future tenses can be used for statements that would refer to the continuous or perfective aspect, but not for gnomic or attributive (see below).

Tsudu tyjddagu. /tsudu tjd:agu/ beach.ALL 3SF.go-PRES
“Tsudu tyjddagu. /tsudu tjd:agu/ beach.ALL 3SF.go-PRES
“She’s going to the beach”

The Infinitive is the uninflected form of the verb with its stem included, and can be used as the Gnomic aspect, describing general truths rather than specific events. The infinitive is often used in multi-verb constructs, including some with grammatical functions (Table 4).

Tsudu tyjda. /tsudu tjd:a/ beach.ALL 3SF.go
“Everyone knows that she goes to the beach.”

Attributive verbs can be created by removing the verb stem. This is not represented in the writing system. They are treated as an adjective, and precede any word they modify.

Kavax sugarmavat tetaadžus kavaxege. /kavax sugarmavat tetaadžus kavaxege/ burn.ATTR fire-pit.NOM child.ACC warm-PRES
“The burning fire pit warms the child.”

Perfective aspect is created by taking the infinitive verb and adding the verb kus (“to come”). This is a serial verb construction with kus taking most inflection, except for nominative person marking (see pg. 6).

Pavā annar tsgjur, xitsejejan kav haadī nammy a’ukiju kusuadže. /pave an:ar tsgjur xif:ejan s kav ha:di nanmi a’ukiju kusan/ make.INFV dry.clay.INST rock.INST, wet-clay.ACC watch.ATTR eye.POS sun.ALL 1P-set.down PERF.RPAST
“We laid the clay in the sun to make bricks.”

Passive verbs are formed in a similar manner, using the auxiliary verb su (“to take”). The subject of the verb is placed in the instrumental case, and the object remains in the accusative.

Jaadns ‘ogmr sukype sadže. /ja:dns ‘ogmr sukipe sadʒe/ storm.ACC delicate.plant.INST break PASS.RPAST
The delicate plant was broken by the storm.

Hypothetical mood is created in the same way, with the auxiliary verb kaanja (“to hear”).

Uvaswovus jinmr irtyr rat su kaanja. /uvaswovus jinmr irtyr rat su ka:anja/ earthquake.ACC bridge.INST today.INST cut PASS.HYP.PAST
“The bridge could have been cut in today’s earthquake.”

The hypothetical mood can also be used to construct if/then statements. The “then” clause is the primary clause, and takes the hypothetical mood. The “if” clause is dependent. When describing a hypothetical action, the clause is marked with the instrumental case. When describing a precondition beyond one’s power to affect, the allative case is used.

A’ujvoonuvaarazisi 1r kmg tsa’iwus ajihopá kaanja. /a’ujvoonuvaarazisi 1r kmg tsa’iwus ajihope ka:anja/ 1P-boil-FUT-this INST eat.ATTR safe.ACC this.be.at.INFV HYP.PAST
“If we boil this, then it will be safe to eat.”

Axohuumaiz kushyxanā up laramiigopu tyjazzadda kaanja. /axohu:mezi kushyxanā up larami:goopu tjd:jad:a ka:anja/ that.calm.sea-FUT tomorrow.NOM ALL reef.ALL 3SF.boat.travel HYP.FUT
“If tomorrow has calm seas, then she’ll paddle out to the reef.”
Imperative mood is formed either through the verb tsā ("to require" or "must"), or through its grammaticized suffix form –Vdžā.

Laranwadu ngakahha tsagu!
/laranwadu ŋakahːa t͡sagu/
forest.ALL 2S.run must-PRES
"You must run to the forest!"

Tsawus kapu pavadžā!
/t͡sawus kapu pavadʒã/
health.ACC 2S.ALL make-IMP
"Be healthy!",(or less literally, a formal "Hello!")

Verbs can optionally be marked for person in the nominative and accusative case in most dialects of the language, with some additionally marking the instrumental case. This is not required, nor are pronouns required if sufficient context is established. In multi-verb constructions, the nominative marking is applied to the first verb, and the accusative and/or instrumental marking is applied to the final verb.

Note: If a vowel is phonotactically required to attach a person marker to a verb, but none is given in the table, then an echo vowel is used. If the preceding syllable has a consonantal nucleus, it is either echoed or /ɨ/ is used.

Axoggudarã
/axogːudarɐ/
3P.FAR.NOM-teach-1S.ACC-3P.NEAR.INST
“They teach me about that/them.”

Serial verb construction is possible in Tade Taadži. The initial verb in a serial construct takes nominative person marking. All non-final verbs and are kept in the infinitive. The first verb takes nominative marking, and the final verb takes accusative, instrumental, and/or tense marking.

Kare Hyb Patsaahi pn‘owaranwas rarizi mavarawapasai.
/kare hib patsaːhi pn̩ʔowaranwaɾi mavarawapasai/
All jump moon.fish.NOM tuber.PL.ACC 3S AND -gather cook.PAST-3PNEAR
Kare Hyb Patsaahi gathered the tubers and cooked them.

Table 4. Other verb conjugations in Tade Taadži.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mood/Form/ Voice/etc.</th>
<th>Conjugation/Inflected Auxiliary Verb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infinitive</td>
<td>V + stem</td>
<td>To X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attributive</td>
<td>V - stem</td>
<td>the X-ing /Noun/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfective</td>
<td>INFV + kus (&quot;to come&quot;)</td>
<td>X-ed; Finish X-ing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive</td>
<td>INFV + su (&quot;to take&quot;)</td>
<td>is/was/will be Xed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothetical</td>
<td>INFV + kaanja (&quot;to hear&quot;)</td>
<td>would/could/might X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Person marking on Tade Taadži

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb Marking</th>
<th>NOM</th>
<th>ACC</th>
<th>INST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1S</td>
<td>t(o)-</td>
<td>-t, -dã</td>
<td>-(o)t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2S</td>
<td>ng(a)-</td>
<td>-k(à)</td>
<td>-kat, -gat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S Fem.</td>
<td>ty-</td>
<td>-s, -ze</td>
<td>-(z)at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S Lean Fem.</td>
<td>pi-</td>
<td>-t, -di</td>
<td>-(b)it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S Androgynous</td>
<td>ra-</td>
<td>-r(à), -à</td>
<td>-(r)at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S Lean Masc.</td>
<td>ki-</td>
<td>-k(u), -(g)it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S Masc.</td>
<td>ta-</td>
<td>-t, -dã</td>
<td>-yt, -dyt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>NOM</th>
<th>ACC</th>
<th>INST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1P</td>
<td>aʻu-</td>
<td>-(i)t</td>
<td>-rat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2P</td>
<td>aka-</td>
<td>-sà</td>
<td>-rage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3P Near</td>
<td>aj(i)-</td>
<td>-sai</td>
<td>-rã</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3P Far</td>
<td>ax(o)-</td>
<td>-so</td>
<td>-rage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pronouns

Tade Taadži has first, second, and third person pronouns, which take declension. The first and second person pronouns have singular and plural forms.

Their written glyphs function both independently and as radicals for verb person-marking. (For more about the writing system, see pg. 11)

Third person pronouns are split into five grammatical genders, each matching a social role within Taadži culture. These roles are loosely mapped onto a continuum of most to least feminine, but the actual realization of these roles is inconsistent across cultures, and has minimal correlation to sex or reproductive role.

Sot– translated to English as “she/her/hers”.

Pit– translated to English as “xe/xer/xers”.

Ran– translated to English as singular “they/them/their’s”.

Kur– translated to English as “e/em/eirs”.

Taat – translated to English as “he/him/his”.

These pronouns are only used for people who have been introduced to the speaker, or members of the same cultural group who wear unambiguous signs of their social role, in dress, body paint, or tattoos. Some communities only use gendered pronouns in familiar or extremely casual speech.

When referring to children, outsiders, or unmarked Taadži adults, impersonal pronouns (it or this/that) are used. Taadži religious practices believe in an immortal, reincarnated spirit that had a role assigned to it upon their creation by the gods, which is forgotten upon entering a physical existence. Thus, children are expected to declare their own role during a maturation ceremony, at which point gendered pronouns may be used. Note that verb person marking for these impersonal pronouns is not used, thus formal speech tends to limit person marking to first and second person only.

Plural pronouns do not reflect gender in the third person, instead splitting between “near” and “far” categories: A speaker will use the “near” pronoun for a group that is close to them on the gender spectrum or familial relation, and the “far” pronoun for all others.

Nearness counts as 2 steps towards masculine/feminine for female/male speakers, 1 step in either direction for all others. Familial nearness is dependent on the culture and context.

There is a weak remnant of a grammatical gender system in the endings of nouns and adjectives, which is mostly used to determine the use of near/far person markers on verbs in informal speech. Adjectives no longer agree with the gender of their noun, but poetic or deliberately archaic speech may use personal pronouns in agreement with a noun’s gender.

Sot kapyğiŋ harawus paduu tymavadžusai. /sot kapyğiŋ harawus padu: timavadsusai/ 3F.NOM village.POS ancestor.ACC 1P.ALL 3F.NOM.tell.story.RPAST-3P.NEAR.ACC “She tells us a story about the ancestor of her village.”

Taat harazat odorö taanngare kiiguso. /ta:t harazat odorö ta:n:are kiiguso/ 3M.NOM ancestor.PL.ACC thought 3M.NOM crush able.to-PRES-3P.FAR.ACC “He isn’t making any sense”, lit. “He could confuse the ancestors.”

Table 6. Taadži pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>NOM</th>
<th>ACC</th>
<th>POS</th>
<th>ALL</th>
<th>INST</th>
<th>VOC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3S Mascul.</td>
<td>tuu</td>
<td>taas</td>
<td>rii</td>
<td>lanu</td>
<td>ladi</td>
<td>laas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2S</td>
<td>nga</td>
<td>kàà</td>
<td>kii</td>
<td>kapu</td>
<td>kadi</td>
<td>kaas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S Fem.</td>
<td>sot</td>
<td>sade</td>
<td>dà</td>
<td>sadu</td>
<td>sadi</td>
<td>saas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S Lean Fem.</td>
<td>pit</td>
<td>pide</td>
<td>pi</td>
<td>piduu</td>
<td>pidi</td>
<td>paas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S Androgynous</td>
<td>ran</td>
<td>rà</td>
<td>rabu</td>
<td>radi</td>
<td>raas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S Lean Masc.</td>
<td>kur</td>
<td>kure</td>
<td>ku</td>
<td>kubu</td>
<td>kudi</td>
<td>kaas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3S Masc.</td>
<td>taat</td>
<td>taade</td>
<td>tàà</td>
<td>tabu</td>
<td>taadi</td>
<td>taas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>NOM</th>
<th>ACC</th>
<th>POS</th>
<th>ALL</th>
<th>INST</th>
<th>VOC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1P</td>
<td>aduu</td>
<td>saduu</td>
<td>iduu</td>
<td>paduu</td>
<td>raduu</td>
<td>aatuu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2P</td>
<td>agà</td>
<td>sagà</td>
<td>igà</td>
<td>pagà</td>
<td>ragà</td>
<td>aagà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3P Near</td>
<td>ajit</td>
<td>sajit</td>
<td>ijit</td>
<td>pajit</td>
<td>rajit</td>
<td>aajit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3P Far</td>
<td>ağa</td>
<td>sağa</td>
<td>iğa</td>
<td>pağa</td>
<td>raga</td>
<td>aaga</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Impersonal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOM</th>
<th>ACC</th>
<th>POS</th>
<th>ALL</th>
<th>INST</th>
<th>VOC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Near (this, it)</td>
<td>jìt</td>
<td>jur</td>
<td>ji</td>
<td>jur</td>
<td>jàà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far (that, it)</td>
<td>xat</td>
<td>xur</td>
<td>xi</td>
<td>xur</td>
<td>xaa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Interrogatives

Tade Taadži has a pair of basic question words used for formal/inanimate and informal/animate queries, **hhat** and **tsã**. In their base form they can be most easily translated as “what?” or “who?” if used alone. If placed at the end of a sentence, they act as a marker for a yes/no question. Conjugated forms of **hhat** and **tsã** produces more specific meaning. These can be placed in sentences to ask specific questions in context. If conjugation isn’t sufficient, helper words can be used to clarify meaning (see table below).

Nominative or Accusative forms can be translated as “what?” or “who?” **Hhat ymyypwas suudžu?** /hːat i mpl̩ was suঘdʒu2/ “Q.FML.NOM fermentation.jar.PL.ACC open.RPAST” “Who opened the fermenting food?”

**Pit tsans sudu kiːpu?** /Pit tsans sudu kiːpu2/ “3SDF.NOM Q.INFML.ACC jar.ALL give-PRES” “What did xe put in that jar?”

**Joowmiwirdi hːat kiːgu?** /Joːw miwirdi hːat kiːgu2/ “boat.POS Q,FML give-PRES” “Whose boat is that?”

Possessed forms ask “what kind of?” or “what?”, specifically in the context of something’s possessed items or attributes. **Hhadi rywwikius ngahaap?** /hːadi riwɨwus suːdʒu2/ “Q,FML.NOM bird.ACC 2S see.PAST” “What kind of bird did you see?”

### Table 7. Compound question words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tade Taadži</th>
<th>Glyph</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hhat lê</td>
<td>Q.DISC</td>
<td>How far?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hhat kavaxe</td>
<td>Q.wait</td>
<td>How long? (≤ 5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hhat ijää</td>
<td>Q.time</td>
<td>How long? (≥ 6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hhadu kavaxu?</td>
<td>Q.ALL wait.ALL</td>
<td>Until when?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hhadur kavaxyr</td>
<td>Q.INST wait.INST</td>
<td>When?/At what time?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hhadur ijäm̩r</td>
<td>Q.INST time.INST</td>
<td>What day?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hhat hmry</td>
<td>Q.finger</td>
<td>Which? (≤ 5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tade Taadži</th>
<th>Glyph</th>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hhazâ hmr̥ы</td>
<td>Q.PL finger.PL</td>
<td>How much? (≤ 5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hhat ntà</td>
<td>Q.hand</td>
<td>Which? (≥ 6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hhazâ nžà</td>
<td>Q.PL hand.PL</td>
<td>How much? (≥ 6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hhat rumà</td>
<td>Q.roots</td>
<td>What kind?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hhat he</td>
<td>Q.place</td>
<td>Where?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hhadur h̥yr</td>
<td>Q.INST place.INST</td>
<td>From where?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hhat pava</td>
<td>Q.make</td>
<td>Why?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Postpositions

There are two main postpositions that cover many spatial and temporal relationships in Tade Taadži: paarà and lè. These are referred to as the Associative and Dissociative postpositions.

Paarà covers concepts of motion toward, into, closeness, and to be among something.

Lè has the contrasting meaning of motion away, out of, distance, and to be apart from something.

Tsigu paarà pa‘o lè tsudu a’ukuushazi.
/tsxigu pa:re pa‘o lë tsudu a’uku:shazi./ Rock.ALL ASC and DISC shore.ALL

“We’ll swim out to the rock and back to the shore.”

Kur tenannakapde kmga tsigu paarà kushyr xanmr kiddazi.

“The idol is hidden.

Syğhus lë tykupas.
/syğhus lë tikupas/ hunting-ground.ACC DISC 3F.NOM.PAST

“She has come back from the hunting ground.”

Paarà mavaddur a’uh-ybaguso.
/pa:re mavad:ur a’uh-ybaguso/ ASC now.INST 1P.NOM-be.at-PRES-3PFAR.ACC

“We are close to them now.”

Rywydu saduu lë’o lè hybagu.
/rudiwu sudu: te:so te hibagu/ Bird.NOM 1P.ACC very.far DISC remain-PRES

“The bird stays far away from us.”

(Note: as lë already means “far”, this sentence also features the intensified form lë’o, which clarifies the meaning of the phrase.)

Ydzä tsiqwur paarà lësage.
/ɪdzä tsiqwur pa:re lë:sage/ Idol.NOM stone.PL.INST ASC hide-PRES

“The idol is hidden among the stones.”

Maanu tsiqw ratyppaarar lë hybà.
/Ma:nu tsiqw ratypparar lë hibe/ Chest.NOM rock.NOM group.INST DISC be-at.GNOM

“The weathered mountain stands apart from the range.”

Both paarə and lè can be used as intensifiers, which color the adjective or action they refer to. Paarə acts a diminutive, and lè acts as an augmentative.

Te paarə tsaażà uuzu lë’o lè kuushap kii.
/te pa:re tsaz:u:zu lë:zo lë ku:shap kii:/ Small.PLL DIM fish.PL river.ALL very.far AUG swim able.to.GNOM

“The smaller fish can swim further up the river.”

Both words can be used in phrases that provide other spatial or temporal distinctions, such as pospur (“back (anatomy)”) to create postpositional phrases meaning “behind” (pospur paarə) versus “far behind” (pospur lè). Some of these are commonly used as set phrases.

Opanwà raduu lapo lë kave.
/opanwe: radu: lapo lë kave/ Mother.goddess.PL.VOC 1P.INST body DISC watch.

“The mother goddesses watch from above us.”

Pospur paarə, aduu paduujahyba tsa.
/Pospur pa:re, adu: padu: jahibe tsa/ Back ASC, 1P.NOM 1P.ALL decide.INF IMP.GNOM.

“On the other hand, we must make decisions for ourselves.”

Grammatical Suffixes

Certain suffixes are generative and can form new words. These are not always required to bring a word into a new grammatical role or alter meaning, they do decrease ambiguity. Note that since the distinction between nouns, adjectives and adverbs is role or alter meaning, they do decrease ambiguity. Note that since the distinction between nouns, adjectives and adverbs is rather weak, these suffixes provide specific guidance as to the meaning. For example, if one begins with the verb jaado (“to shout”), one can produce jaador ("a shout"), jaador ("loud(ly)"), and jaadotja ("intense(ly)").

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Suffix</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N → V</td>
<td>-(u)x(y)</td>
<td>anngà -&gt; anngàxy sand -&gt; shift; be unsteady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj → V</td>
<td>-(y)ngiy</td>
<td>xos -&gt; xosyngiy old -&gt; to ponder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V; Adj; POS</td>
<td>-(i/- á/)</td>
<td>jaado -&gt; jaadà shout -&gt; a shout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N → Adj</td>
<td>-(i/a)nɡo</td>
<td>jaado -&gt; jaadà shout -&gt; loud(ly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V → Adj</td>
<td>-(u)r</td>
<td>jaado -&gt; jaadór shout -&gt; loud(ly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N → Adj</td>
<td>-(o)t</td>
<td>anngà -&gt; anngàtt sand -&gt; sandy; fine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj; V → Adv</td>
<td>-(a)tja</td>
<td>jaado -&gt; jaadotaʃʃ shout -&gt; intense(ly)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tade Taadži features a base 6 number system, also called “senary” (abbreviated to “Sen”). When finger counting, Taadži will use the fingers on their dominant hand to count up to five, and their non-dominant hand counts multiples of six.

Numbers 1-6 and all senary places (powers of 6 rather than powers of 10) have unique names up to 1x6^6. All numerals at a given base besides the final are placed in the Possessed case, and the base is in the nominative. The final base or numeral may display noun case agreement. Paʻo (“and”) may be placed after senary bases where the numeral 1 would appear in Arabic numerals, except for the first position. ex. mi paʻo há (“Six and four”, Sen 14, Dec 10). Written forms of the numbers can combine senary bases with paʻo or digits at that base. Tade Taadži does not yet have a true word for “zero”, thus the word for “nothing” is used below.

### Table 9. Numerals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decimal</th>
<th>Heximal</th>
<th>Glyph</th>
<th>NOM</th>
<th>ACC</th>
<th>POS</th>
<th>ALL</th>
<th>INST</th>
<th>VOC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td>sàà</td>
<td>sas</td>
<td>si</td>
<td>sà</td>
<td>sar</td>
<td>sàà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>ng</td>
<td>ngás</td>
<td>ngi</td>
<td>nge</td>
<td>ngmr</td>
<td>ngàà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>so</td>
<td>sus</td>
<td>si</td>
<td>su</td>
<td>sur</td>
<td>soo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>tar</td>
<td>tas</td>
<td>ti</td>
<td>tå</td>
<td>tar</td>
<td>tàà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>hã</td>
<td>hãs</td>
<td>hãi</td>
<td>hãe</td>
<td>hãr</td>
<td>hãwàà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>kyr</td>
<td>kus</td>
<td>ky</td>
<td>ku</td>
<td>kyr</td>
<td>kuu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>mi</td>
<td>mins</td>
<td>mi</td>
<td>my</td>
<td>mr</td>
<td>màà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>kyt</td>
<td>ky’us</td>
<td>kydi</td>
<td>kydu</td>
<td>kyddur</td>
<td>kydàà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>216</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>kũ</td>
<td>kns</td>
<td>kũ</td>
<td>kmy</td>
<td>kmr</td>
<td>kmàà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,296</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>nantà</td>
<td>nanus</td>
<td>nandi</td>
<td>nandu</td>
<td>nanddur</td>
<td>nandàà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,776</td>
<td>100,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>pantà</td>
<td>panus</td>
<td>padi</td>
<td>padu</td>
<td>padur</td>
<td>padàà</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46,656</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>mità</td>
<td>mi’us</td>
<td>midi</td>
<td>midu</td>
<td>midur</td>
<td>midàà</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Writing System

The Lanje Taadži writing system is logo-syllabic, arising relatively quickly after the loss of writing technology, but is completely isolated from previous scripts. The script is usually written with a reed pen when paper is available, carved into wax codices for temporary documents, and carved into stone or stucco for important texts.

Originally, glyphs could take any shape, but would often be fit into a loose grid of equal-sized spaces. As the writing system evolved and simplified, the grid structure became more pronounced. In modern formal texts, glyphs are square and have self-containing outlines. Handwritten text is often more rounded, and some scribal traditions are developing open glyphs.

Glyphs encode for multi-syllabic words, and compound words may sometimes render as a single glyph. This is often achieved through simplified radicals, by containing one glyph within another, or both.

When a word features accompanying grammatical information, it is written in a reduced form and shares the glyph block with these grammatical elements. Nominative nouns are unmarked, as are stative and infinitive verbs.

Many Taadži cultures consider the ideal proportions of a text to be a block of 6x6 glyphs. Informal texts may be of variable line length, but a formal text will attempt to fill a full 6x6 block as naturally as possible.

Texts may include some amount of ligature between glyph blocks. These ligatures are read once for every block that they cross. Ligatures joining noun phrases may be commonly seen in informal texts. Formal texts will commonly feature cross-row ligatures of repeated glyphs or grammatical elements. The value of the glyph is read every time the reader encounters it as they progress through the text.

Rotation of glyphs and use of decorative ligatures are occasionally used, usually to link thematically similar elements. These do not change the reading of the text. Rotation is usually not employed for verbs, and some rotations are not allowed for pronouns or person markers.

Variation in Glyph Structure

Some glyphs may have multiple valid forms, and their style of presentation may differ depending on local written dialect or the artistic flair of the writer. Personal pronouns are especially prone to this, as they represent adornments or body paint associated with particular social roles, which may vary between cultures. Texts meant for mass consumption may establish pronoun forms at their outset, incorporate phonetic radicals, or incorporate moon phases religiously associated with each gender.

Fig 4 A stanza from the Taadži myth describing the creation of life. The glyphs are decorated with color, and rendered with white lines on a black background, the traditional medium for especially important documents. Note the use of ligatures that cross rows and columns of the text, rotation of the "and" glyph (a pair of hands), as well as two variations on the "teach" radical determined by their size (row 4, column 5, versus row 5, column 6). For a full reproduction and translation of this text, please see page 13-15.

Of special note are glyphs relating to the Naasengo species. To avoid committing their name to text, the body of the glyph is either completely filled in with ink, or the square is left blank. Some dialects may substitute the euphemistic term Saawanjy, lit. “Unnamed” (see page 1-2).
For foreign words and concepts that are difficult to visually express, phonograms are constructed from pre-existing glyphs. Due to the syllable structure of Tade Taadži, these phonograms are often not 1-to-1 matches. Phoneme length and consonant value are somewhat flexible in phonographic use. When no phonogram exists that matches the onset and coda, underspelling is common for word-internal consonants, while at word boundaries, overspelling may be used (see page 16). This syllable structure also lowers the likelihood that Tade Taadži will adopt a purely phonetic writing system in the foreseeable future, though an alphabet or abjad may potentially develop in time.

When transcribing a foreign word or phonogram, determinative glyphs may be included by the writer to provide context. This determinative is usually not pronounced.

The practice of marking words with a determinative is most common in written documents exchanged between groups along the jagged and inaccessible southeast coast, due to more extreme sound changes which have arisen in this area (see page 2).

![Fig. 6 A. Two valid ways of writing iirà, “clean”, colorful”, “young”, “bright”, “to wash”. The first is composed of “light” (liwo) and half (roddur), the second “foam” (idžà) and “part” (rate). B. “Quenya” rendered in Taadži glyphs (xwyja, lit. “to the houses-sea voyage”), and accompanied by a determinative glyph (tade, “language” or “to say”). Note also that one of the component phonograms (xwy, “house.ALL”) is inflected, a valid method for generating desired phonograms or more elegant logographic readings. C. Radicals for use in phonograms, indicating alternate readings for the radical they contain: to read the word in its entirety, or read only the final syllable.](image-url)
In the early world, our people were nothing.

\[
\text{Taadži saas radžur lě karawãddur kiidžžu.}
\]

\[
/ˈtaː.d͡ʒi saːs ˈɾa.d͡ʒuɾ̥ ɫɵ ˈka.ɾa.wã.dːuɾ̥ ˈkiː.d͡ʒːu/\]

\[\text{taadzi.NOM nothing.ACC ash.INST DISC world.INST be.RPAST.RPAST.}\]

Only the greatest spirits walked,

\[
\text{Aratwà lè oğğwà xaddur ngot iddadžžu.}
\]

\[
/ˈa.ɾat.wɐ ɫɵ ˈoɣː.wɐ ˈxa.dːuɾ̥ ŋot iˈdːa.d͡ʒːu/\]

\[\text{powerful.PL.NOM AUG spirit.PL.NOM there.INST alone walk.RPAST.RPAST and they slowly learned the world.}\]

They learned the magic that sits in all elements.

\[
\text{Hit oğğwà kavaxmi karẽs karawas odorodžže,}
\]

\[
/hit ˈoɣː.wɐ ˈka.vax.mi ˈka.ɾẽs ˈka.ɾa.was ˈo.do.ɾo.d͡ʒːe/\]

\[\text{this.PL.NOM spirit.PL.NOM magic.POS all.ACC.PL element.ACC.PL learn.RPRP}\]

But their creation remained a mystery.

\[
\text{Saa paʻo, pavmi sajit saa oğğadžžu.}
\]

\[
/saː ˈpa.ʔo ˈpav.mi ˈsa.jit saː oˈɣːa.d͡ʒːu/\]

\[\text{not and creation.POS 3P.NEAR.ACC not remember.RPRP}\]

To learn of their creation, some decided to create.

\[
\text{Pav jahybadžžu ngtsaduu pavmi sajit odor.}
\]

\[
/pav ˈja.hɨ.ba.d͡ʒːu ˈŋ̍.t͡sa.duː ˈpav.mi ˈsa.jit ˈo.doɾ/\]

\[\text{create.INF choose.RPRP some.NMNZ.NOM creation.POS 3P.NEAR.ACC learn.INF}\]

They failed many times, but they were patient.

\[
\text{Ajit ogĩ ngaavadžžu saa paʻo, ʻogadžžu.}
\]

\[
/ˈa.jit ˈo.gĩ ˈŋaː.va.d͡ʒːu saː ˈpa.ʔo ˈʔo.ga.d͡ʒːu/\]

\[\text{3P.NEAR.NOM many fail.RPRP and be.patient.RPRP}\]

Then they learned to mate,

\[
\text{Ajit harazotad odorodžže paʻo, ijãmr łè,}
\]

\[
/ˈa.jit ˈha.ɾa.zo.tad ˈo.do.ɾo.d͡ʒːe ˈpa.ʔo ˈi.jã.m̩ ɾ̥ ɫɵ/\]

\[\text{3P.NEAR.NOM mate.INF learn.RPRP and time.INST DISC and eventually they learned that some mating could create.}\]

They made the first life.

\[
\text{Moggadi liwmí karejoğģwàà paraazat odorwas pavadžžu.}
\]

\[
/moˈɡːa.di ˈiː.w.mi ˈka.reˈjoː.ɡː ˈɡːwəː ˈpa.ɾaː.zat ˈo.do.ɾo.ɾ̥ ˈpa.vadʒːu/\]

\[\text{stillness.POS light.POS master.PL.VOC first.ACC living.thing.PL.ACC create.RPRP and they rejoiced in their children,}\]

\[
\text{Ajit larwas pavadžžu paʻo, tengwu pohodžže.}
\]

\[
/ˈa.jit ˈlar.waː ˈpa.va.dʒːu ˈpa.ʔo ˈtəŋ.wu ˈpo.ho.ɾ̥ ˈdʒː ˈe/\]

\[\text{3P.NEAR.NOM plant.PL.ACC make.RPRP and children.ALL rejoice.RPRP and taught them how to create also.}\]

\[
\text{paʻo, ajit lè pav larwy odorodžže.}
\]

\[
/ˈpa.ʔo ˈa.jit ɫɵ pav ˈlaɾ.wɨ ˈo.do.ɾo.d͡ʒːe/\]

\[\text{and 3P.NEAR.NOM DISC create.INF plant.PL.ACC learn.RPRP}\]

But mated plants could not make anything,

\[
\text{Saa paʻo, larwà saa karus pavadžžu.}
\]

\[
/ˈpa.ʔo ˈlaɾ.wɐ saː ˈka.ɾu.s ˈpa.vadʒːu/\]

\[\text{3P.NEAR.NOM plant.PL.NOM not anything.ACC create.RPRP no matter how they tried.}\]

\[
\text{Ajit ogĩ ngtsaduu pavmi sajitat odor.}
\]

\[
/ˈa.jit ˈŋ̍.t͡sa.duː ˈpav.mi ˈsa.jit ˈo.do/or/\]

\[\text{3P.NEAR.NOM create.INF choose.RPRP some.NMNZ.NOM element.ACC.PL create.RPRP}\]

Then the masters of Stillness and Light

\[
\text{Xatmavadà, Moggadi paʻo Iiwmi aratwàà karejoğğwàà,}
\]

\[
/ˈxat.ma.va.dɐ moˈgːa.di ˈpa.ʔo ˈiː.w.mi ˈa.ɾat.wɐː ˈka.ɾeˈjoɣː.wɐː/\]

\[\text{that time.NOM, stillness.POS and light.POS great.VOC master.PL.VOC}\]

Eventually some plants became very elderly

\[
\text{Aazat ntsap larwà lě xozat tuuğadžžu}
\]

\[
/ˈa.ɣat ˈntsa.p ˈlaɾ.wɐ ɫɵ ˈxo.zat ˈtuː.ɣa.d͡ʒːu/\]

\[\text{3P.FAR.NOM DISC try.RPRP and not create.RPRP}\]

\[\text{later some plant.PL.ACC make.RPRP and they died, which shocked their mothers.}\]

\[
\text{paʻo, agxat hurhybadžžu paʻo, panwà saanghadžu.}
\]

\[
/ˈpa.ʔo ˈa.ɣat ˈhuɾ.hɨ.bɐ.d͡ʒːu ˈpa.ʔo ˈpa.n.wɐ ˈsaːŋ.ha.d͡ʒːu/\]

\[\text{3P.FAR.NOM die.RPRP and mother.PL.NOM shocked.RPRP}\]

\[\text{But the spirits within them remained,}\]

\[
\text{Saa paʻo, oğğwà agxat paara kiidžžu,}
\]

\[
/ˈpa.ʔo ˈoɣː.wɐ ˈa.ɣat ˈpaːɾa ˈkiː.d͡ʒːu/\]

\[\text{3P.FAR.NOM not and plant.PL.ACC remember.INF not and spirit.PL.ACC 3P.FAR.NOM ASC exist.RPRP}\]

\[\text{3P.FAR.NOM not understand.RPRP and 3P.FAR.NOM weep.RPRP}\]

And so they created pure combinations of elements.

\[
\text{Paʻo, ajit ngpavagi ngkwi karawas pavadžžu.}
\]

\[
/ˈpa.ʔo ˈa.jit ˈŋ̍.pəva.gə ˈŋ̍.kɨ.ˈka.ɾa.was ˈpa.va.dʒːu/\]

\[\text{3P.FAR.NOM many fail.RPRP and be.patient.RPRP}\]

Then they learned to mate,

\[
\text{Ajit harazotad odorodžže paʻo, ijãmr łè,}
\]

\[
/ˈa.jit ˈha.ɾa.zo.tad ˈo.do.ɾo.d͡ʒːe ˈpa.ʔo ˈi.jã.m̩ ɾ̥ ɫɵ/\]

\[\text{3P.NEAR.NOM mate.INF learn.RPRP and time.INST DISC and eventually they learned that some mating could create.}\]

\[
\text{Ajit pavà ngtsap harazotad pav kiidžžu.}
\]

\[
/ˈa.jit ˈpa.va ʹeŋ̍.tsap ˈha.ɾa.zo.tad ˈpa.vi ˈkiː.d͡ʒːu/\]

\[\text{3P.NEAR.NOM create.STAT some.NOM mating.NOM create.INF able.to.STAT}\]

And so they created pure combinations of elements.

\[
\text{Paʻo, ajit ngpavagi ngkwi karawas pavadžžu.}
\]

\[
/ˈpa.ʔo ˈa.jit ˈŋ̍.pəva.gə ˈŋ̍.kɨ.ˈka.ɾa.was ˈpa.va.dʒːu/\]

\[\text{3P.FAR.NOM pure.POS combine.NMZ.POS element.ACC.PL create.RPRP}\]

Then the masters of Stillness and Light

\[
\text{Xatmavadà, Moggadi paʻo liwmí atarwátłà karejoğğwàà,}
\]

\[
/ˈxat.ma.va.de ˈmo ˈgːa.di ˈpa.ʔo ˈiː.w.mi ˈa.ɾa.wɛ ˈka.reˈjoː.ɡː ˈɡːwəː/\]

\[\text{that time.NOM, stillness.POS and light.POS great.VOC master.PL.VOC}\]

\[\text{learned how other matings could influence the creation.}\]

\[
\text{ajit pavns hobupymà yhrmà karaatodora đdežžu.}
\]

\[
/ˈa.jit ˈpa.vn̩s ˈho.bu.pɨː.ma ˈiː.m̩.m̩ ˈha.ɾa.zo.tad ˈo.do.ɾo.d͡ʒːe/\]

\[\text{3P.NEAR.NOM creation.ACC influence.STAT other.NOM mating.NOM learn.RPRP}\]
They lived again, grew, learned new things, and died.

Agxat podja odorodže, tuuğadžžu, irâ odorodže,
/ˈa.ɣat ˈpo.dja ˈo.do.ro.ˈdʒː u ˈtuː.ɣa.ˈdʒː u ˈiːɭ ˈo.do.ro.ˈdʒː e/ 3P.FAR.NOM again live.RPRP grow.RPRP new learn.RPRP

Then they returned to gather up their old memories,
xatmavat hurhybàdžžu. Riz mawatswdžžagà oğğwy podjajddadžžu,
/ˈxat.ma.vat ˈhuɾ.ɦi.be.ˈdʒː u ˈriː ˈma.wa.ˈtsw.ˈdʒː a.ˈɡe ˈoːɭ.ˈwi̯ ˈpo.djaj ˈdː.a.ˈdʒː u/ that time.NOM, die.RPRP gather.INF old.PL.ALL memory.PL.ALL return.RPRP

and found that they were now wiser.
agxat mioğğus łê odormr tuuğadžžu kavedžže.
/ˈa.ɣat ˈmi.o.ɣːus ɫɵ ˈo.do.ɾm̩ ɾ̥ ˈtuː.ɣa.ˈdʒː u ˈka.ve.ˈdʒː e/ 3P.FAR.INST wise.ACC DISC life.INST become see.RPRP

Other great spirits began to create together,
Yymwà aratmà łê oğğwà pav pohodžže,
/ˈɨːm.wə ˈa.ɾat.mə ɫɵ ˈoɣː.wə pav ˈpo.ho.ˈdʒː e/ other powerful.PL.NOM AUG spirit.PL.NOM create begin.RPRP

They made new things from the elements,
agxat iiragas pavwas karawi ragxat pavadžžu,
/ˈa.ɣat ˈiː.ɾa.gas ˈpav.was ˈka.ɾa.wi ˈɾa.ɣat ˈpa.va.ˈdʒː u/ 3P.FAR.NOM new.PL.ACC thing.PL.ACC element.PL.POS 3P.FAR.INST create.RPRP

each according to their masteries.
kare karawã yywax pavwas pav kiidžžu.
/ˈka.ɾe ˈka.ɾa.ˈwã ˈiː.ɾa.ˈwə pav.was ˈpav ˈkiː.ˈdʒː u/ every.NOM element.NOM different.PL.NOM create.INF able.to.RPRP

Motion and Dark created the swimming creatures,
Uvas pa’o Ra’n joovns tsaaazat pavadžžu,
/ˈu.vas ˈpa.ʔo ˈɾa.ʔn̩ ˈjo.o.ɾn̩s ˈtsaː.ɭat ˈpa.va.ˈdʒː u/ motion.NOM and dark.NOM water.PL.ALL creature.PL.ALL create.RPRP

Motion and Light created the flying creatures,
Uvas pa’o liwâ karehybagas rywyzat pavadžžu,
/ˈu.vas ˈpa.ʔo ˈiː.ɾa.ˈwã ˈka.ɾe.hɨ.ˈba.gas ˈɾi.ɾi.wə.zat ˈpa.va.ˈdʒː u/ motion.NOM and light.NOM flying.PL.ALL creature.PL.ALL create.RPRP

Stillness and Dark created the roots of the earth.
Moggat pa’o Ra’n oprĩs laranwas pavadžžu.
/ˈmo.gːat ˈpa.ʔo ˈɾa.ʔn̩ ˈop.ɾĩs ˈla.ɾa.nəs ˈpa.va.ˈdʒː u/ stillness.NOM and dark.NOM earth.PL.ALL root.PL.ALL create.RPRP

These ate the plants and each other,
Hit larwas pa’o yymwas odorwas kmgadžžu,
/ˈhiːt ˈlaɾ.was ˈpa.ʔo ˈɨːm.was ˈo.do.ɾəs ˈkm̩.ga.ˈdʒː u/ these.PL.NOM plant.PL.NOM and other.PL.NOM creature.PL.ALL eat.RPRP

and sped their reincarnation, learning less,
saa pa’o, ognsłë karns panagiiddur oğğadžžu.
/saː ˈpa.ʔo ˈoɡ.n̩s.ɫɵ ˈkaɾ.n̩s pa.naˈɡːiː.ɾu oˈɣːa.ˈdʒː e/ not and more.ACC everything.ACC heaven.INST think.RPRP
Acknowledgments

David J. Peterson for the invitation to submit to *Fiat Lingua*, and Yosh000 and Spartan Creeper for editing assistance.

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<td>3rd Person Feminine</td>
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<td>Q.FML</td>
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<td>NMZ</td>
<td>Nominalizing suffix</td>
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- **Ratelanjy** /ratelanjɨ/ "piece-word", also "radical"
- **Jos(o) tarsãã** /jos tarsãː/ "water two, three notathing" from prawn-talks-to-moon
- **Dàvat Pityrsy** /dɐvat pitɨrsɨ/ "walking fire, jade (of the) graceful dancer"