

Finishing Up Syntax

grab-bag of some remaining syntactic topics:

- ‘have’
- coordination
- anaphora
- comparatives, superlatives

but first!

Ŝáluvyoç (ked) vályoç
speak I Váloç.ACC
'I speak Váloç'

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and also!

lo-jov'-av-en-eX-l'hej

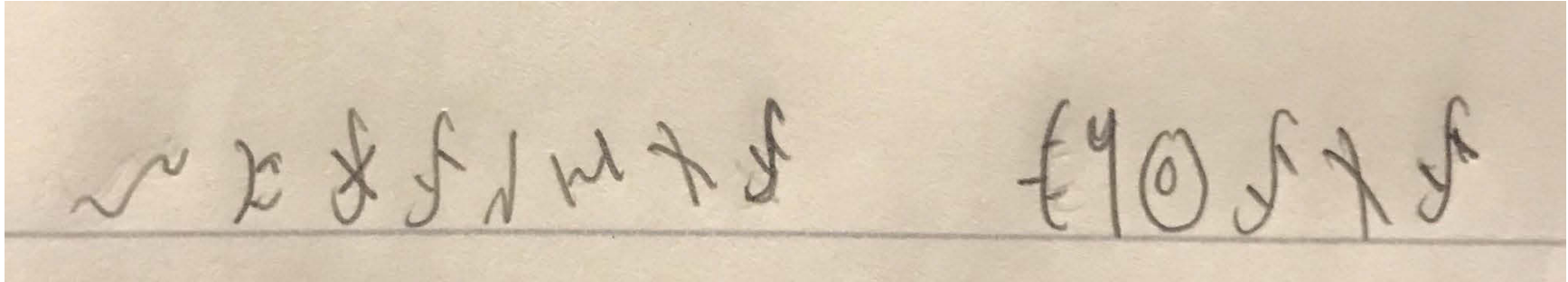
CONTINUALLY-exhale-1SG-connecting-3PL-l'hej

'I speak L'hej'

l'	h (e)	j
continual	useful	exhaling

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moreover!



kiogul-ag wufgag
speak-1SG Wushgog
'I speak Wushgog'

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furthermore!

gΛ Skerio samei

I Skerio speak

‘I speak Skerio’ (Sarbari Sarkar)

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and!

땡 그 明平ese

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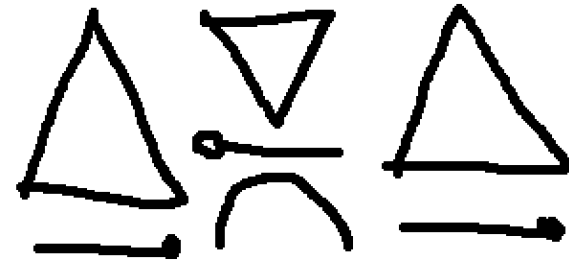
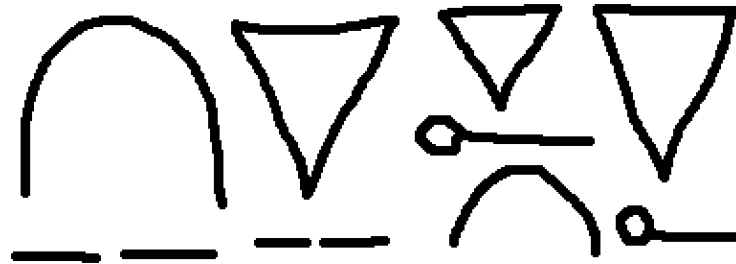
tiŋ kuusœ piŋsutysə

taste I UHL-46

‘I speak UHL-46’ (Karen Gu)

(Universal Humanoid Language)

and also!



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da-va-vod-vo

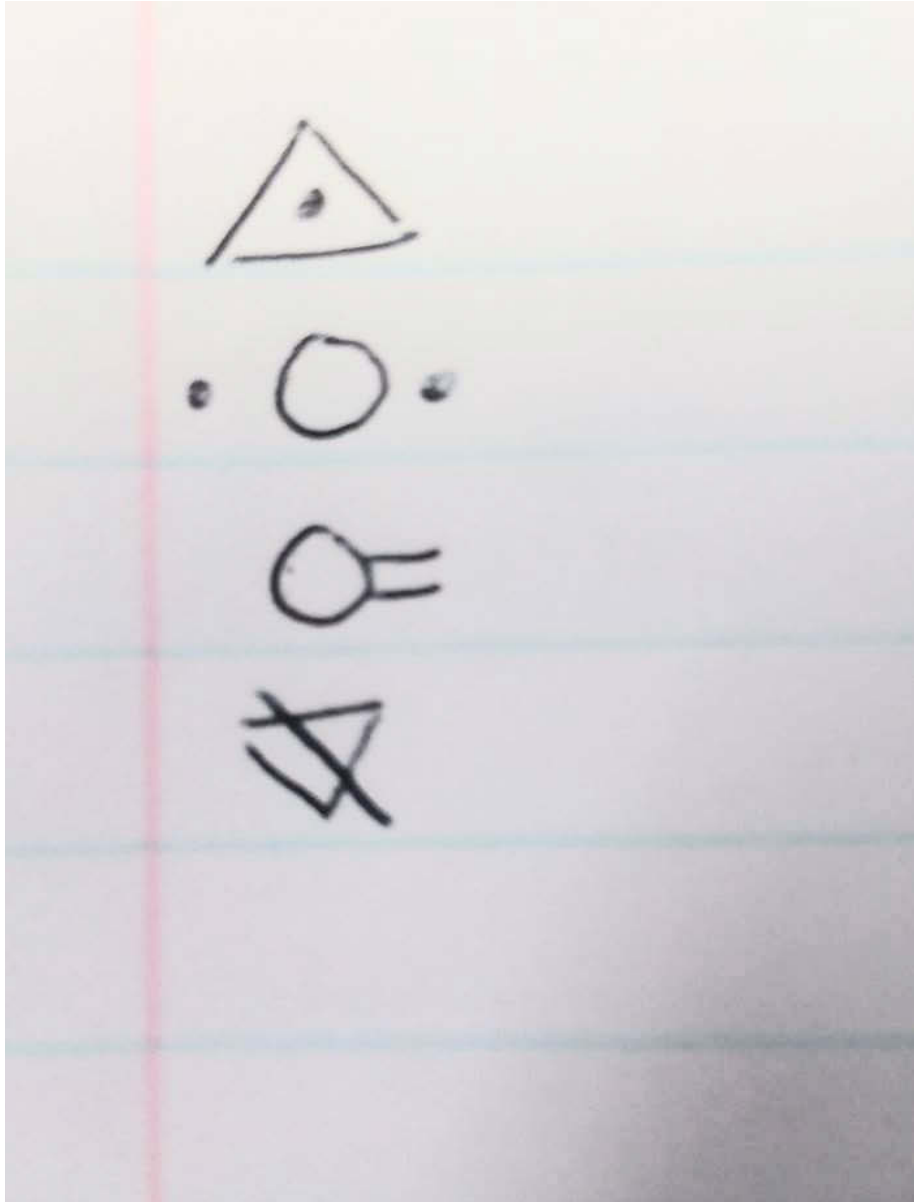
bivodbi

make-3UNSPEC-speech-1SG

bivodbi

‘I speak Bivodbi’ (Jackie Bredenberg)

and finally!



pi xa za k^ho

speak I zak^ho

‘I speak Zakho’

(Megan Goodell)

What should the next sentence be?

What should the next sentence be?

‘My hovercraft is full of eels’?

okay, on to some topics:

- ‘have’
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- comparatives, superlatives

‘have’

One place where languages *don't* vary, for the most part, is how subjects and objects are distributed...

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e.g., probably every language has a word for ‘eat’, in which the subject is the thing doing the eating, and the object is what gets eaten.

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You could imagine the opposite verb (‘tae’)...

‘have’

...but there isn't a ‘tae’.

UTAH: if a verb refers to (for example) one entity which is intentionally causing the action to take place, and another entity which is undergoing a change, the first will be the subject and the second the object.

‘have’

Given that, it’s startling how many ways there are out there to express ‘have’.

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I have a book [*English*]

U menja kniga [*Russian*]
at me book

Kitab-ım var [*Turkish*]
book-1SG exists

coordination

Here there is not so much variation, but you will need to have this in your language somewhere...

apples **and** oranges

[Mary ate an apple] **and** [John ate an orange]

coordination

Here there is not so much variation, but you will need to have this in your language somewhere...

apples **and** oranges

[Mary ate an apple] **and** [John ate an orange]

One point of variation is whether you use the same word for both of these...

coordination

Xârâcùù (New Caledonia)

gu **mê** gè (*NP coordination*)
you and I

È nă fädë **nă** è nă bare tèpe. (*clausal*
3SG IMPF walk and 3SG IMPF also talk *coordination*)
‘He walks and he also talks’

(data from Haspelmath (ed.) 2004)

anaphora

She sees her.

She sees herself.

difference in meaning...

anaphora

She sees her.

She sees herself.

difference in meaning...

most languages have some way of expressing
this (not all!)

anaphora

She sees her.

She sees herself.

difference in meaning...

Nomiyal. [*Passamaquoddy*]

‘S/he sees h/’

Nomiyusu.

‘S/he sees h/self’

anaphora

She sees her.

She sees herself.

Nâwâw w-**ahak**-ôh. [*Wampanoag*]

see-3 3-**body**-OBV

‘S/he sees h/self’

Ispiluan ikusi dugu geure **burua**. [*Basque*]

mirror.LOC seen AUX our **head**

‘We saw ourselves in the mirror’

anaphora

She criticized herself.

*She said he criticized herself.

Ta piping ziji. [*Mandarin*]

3 criticize self

Ta shuo ta piping ziji.

3 say 3 criticize self

(ambiguous; *ziji* can refer to either *ta*)

anaphora

They love them.

They love themselves. (*anaphor*)

They love each other. (*reciprocal*)

anaphora

They love them.

They love themselves. (*anaphor*)

They love each other. (*reciprocal*)

‘Koselomawa. [*Passamaquoddy*]

‘They love them’

Koseltuwok.

‘They love each other’

anaphora

They love them.

They love themselves. (*anaphor*)

They love each other. (*reciprocal*)

Reciprocals never seem to be long-distance.

comparatives, superlatives

Mary is tall.

Mary is **taller** than John. (*comparative*)

Mary is the **tallest**. (*superlative*)

comparatives, superlatives

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Mary is **taller** than John. (*comparative*)

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not all languages have morphology on comparatives:

Zhangsan bi Lisi shuai [*Mandarin*]

Zhangsan than Lisi cool

‘Zhangsan is cooler than Lisi’

comparatives, superlatives

and some languages do something radically different:

John bl molgwe, Bill kepl molgwe [*Dom*]

John big is Bill small is

‘John is bigger than Bill’

Kayu batu bĕrat batu [*Malay*]

wood stone heavy stone

‘Stone is heavier than wood’

(more literally: ‘as for wood and stone: stone is heavy’)

comparatives, superlatives

other things not every language can do:

The table is wider than the door

The table is wider than the door is

The table is wider than the door is tall

comparatives, superlatives

a morphological generalization (Bobaljik)...

tall tall-er tall-est

comparatives, superlatives

a morphological generalization (Bobaljik)...

tall	tall-er	tall-est
bad	worse	worst

comparatives, superlatives

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bonus melior optimus (*Latin*: ‘good, better, best’)

comparatives, superlatives

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comparatives, superlatives

a morphological generalization (Bobaljik)...

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→ if the comparative is suppletive,
the superlative is also suppletive.

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Adj-COMPARATIVE-SUPERLATIVE

comparatives, superlatives

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Adj-COMPARATIVE-SUPERLATIVE

Persian	bozorg-tar	‘bigger’
	bozorg-tar-in	‘biggest’

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