

LTS Mini Relay Torch – Xwere Gonom

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1 Text

Ke' oꝛohmiš dzoanom dağ ken garan na łatharin žei ihaža'narad, hetši'giğwed, hara'džiriğwa žii dloogin. Ti' ło' aṭhanizad kii henere, mikaalii žii xigwin keđen, mi-haulii.

[k'ε? ɔɾɔh'miʃ tsoa'nɔ 'tʰay k'ɛ ka'rã na łatʰa'rĩ 'zei ihaža'na'raɬ hetʃ'iʔki'ɣ'wεɬ haraʔtʃi'rɣ'wa zi: tɬo:'kĩ || t'iʔ 'łɔ? aṭʰani'zaɬ 'k'i: he'nere mi'ka:'li: zi: xi'k'wĩ k'ε'tɛ mihaɣ'li: ||]

2 Vocabulary

The following part-of-speech abbreviations are used in the entries provided:

<i>adj.</i>	adjective	<i>prep.</i>	preposition
<i>adv.</i>	adverb	<i>v.i.d.</i>	intransitive dynamic verb
<i>conj.</i>	conjunction	<i>v.i.s.</i>	intransitive stative verb
<i>n.a.</i>	non-human animate noun	<i>v.t.d.</i>	transitive dynamic verb
<i>n.i.</i>	inanimate noun	<i>v.t.s.</i>	transitive stative verb
<i>pn.</i>	pronoun		

Declinable forms are entered in their unmarked direct form followed by the marked inverse (= DAM) and oblique forms. Animates are also followed by the corresponding plural forms. Verbs are entered with the uninflected stem followed by the third person inanimate singular forms of the imperfective (Ø-stem), terminative (?-stem) and optative (h-stem).

dağ, -iga, -in <i>n.i.</i> house, home, abode, residence, dwelling, settlement, inhabited area.	haul-, ahaula, ihau'litl, ipauhliš <i>v.i.d.</i> to wait.
dloogi, -ge, -n <i>n.i.</i> 1 • field, open ground, flat stretch of country devoid of trees.	hen, -ge, -in; -ed, -ere, -erin <i>pn.</i> it (third person singular, non-human animate).
dzoan, -ga, -om <i>n.i.</i> 1 • ground, floor, earth.	kaal-, akaala, ikaa'litl, ikaališ <i>v.t.d.</i> to hide.
gar-, agara, ige'ditl, igehdiš <i>v.i.s.</i> to be (copular verb).	ke' <i>adv.</i> prohibitive (i.e. negative imperative) negator.

keḁe, -ge, -n *n.i.* tree (especially deciduous trees whose leaves are floppier rather than they are rigid, such as oak trees).

ken *prep.* 1 • from, away from (indicating a source). 2 • after (temporal). 3 • because of (indicating a cause). 4 • by (indicating a cause, agent, doer, author).

kii, -ge, -n *pn.* you (non-consanguineous second person singular).

łatha, -ga, -n; -d, -ra, -rin *n.a.* 1 • demon, phantom, spirit, ghost, spectre.

na *prep.* 1 • to, towards (indicating a destination). 2 • up to, until. 3 • to (indicating a recipient). 4 • for (indicating a beneficiary). 5 • for (indicating a purpose). 6 • for (i.e. in exchange). 7 • of (i.e. denoting attributive possession).

ža'nar-, aža'nara, iže'ne'ditl, iže'nehdiš *v.i.d.* to go under one's own steam near, around or within somewhere;

also used of aimless motion, motion to and fro, coming and going.

radž-, aradža, ire'džitl, irehdžiš *v.t.d.* to hunt, to catch.

rom-, ařoma, ořo'mitl, ořohmiš *v.t.d.* to build, to construct, to make, to create.

ti' lo' *conj.* 1 • when. 2 • if.

tšig-, etšige, itši'gitl, idžihgiš *v.i.s.* 1 • to be quick, to be fast, to be swift. 2 • to act fast, to do something quickly.

řhan-, ařhana, iřha'nitl, iřahniš *v.t.s.* 1 • to see. 2 • to notice, to realise.

xigwi, -ge, -n *n.i.* crown of the head.

žei *adj.* 1 • bad (of poor quality, not fit for purpose). 2 • wrong, incorrect. 3 • harmful, noxious. 4 • evil, wicked, immoral. 5 • spiteful, malicious. 6 • devious, underhanded, conniving, sly, cunning.

ži *prep.* 1 • at, by, in, on. 2 • during. 3 • under (e.g. the sun, pressure, etc.).

3 Grammar notes¹

3.1 Introduction and overview

Xwere Gonom [l^hx^wεrε kɔ^hnɔ̃] is strongly head-initial, exhibiting a basic VSO constituent order, prepositions and postposed adnominal modifiers. It possesses three cases and displays differential argument marking depending on the animacy of subjects and objects. Verbs agree with their absolutive argument in person and number and are inflected for one of eleven aspects/moods. Number is a salient morphological category for animate referents only. Pronouns and verb agreement distinguish clusivity in the first person and consanguinity in the first person inclusive and second person; in the third person, there is a distinction between humans, other animates and inanimates.

1 The following glossing abbreviations are used: 1 = first person, 2 = second person, 3 = third person, AN = animate, ANT = anterior, COND = conditional, CONSEC = consecutive, CONT = continuative, CS = consanguineous, DAM = differential argument marking, DISTR = distributive, DU = dual, EXCL = exclusive, H = human, IMM = immediative, IMPF = imperfective, INAN = inanimate, INCL = inclusive, NCS = non-consanguineous, NEG = negative, NH = non-human, OBL = oblique, OPT = optative, PF = perfective, PL = plural, PROG = progressive, REL = relative, SG = singular, SIMUL = simultaneous, TERM = terminative.

3.2 Phonology

3.2.1 Phonemic inventory

There are thirty-six consonant phonemes. These are shown in Table 1 below in IPA alongside their romanisation.

	Bilabial	Dental/Alveolar		Retroflex	Palatal	Velar		Glottal
		Central	Lateral			Plain	Lab.	
Nasal	m /m/	n /n/						
Plosive	p /p/	d /t̪/		ɖ /ʈ/		g /k/	gw /kʷ/	ʔ /ʔ/
	b /b/	t /t̪ʰ/		ʈ /ʈʰ/		k /kʰ/	kw /kʷʰ/	
Affricate		dz /ts/	dl /t̪l/	dʒ /t͡ʃ/				
		ts /tsʰ/	tl /t̪lʰ/	t͡ʃ /t͡ʃʰ/				
		tsh /tsʰ/	tlh /t̪lʰ/	t͡ʃh /t͡ʃʰ/				
Fricative		s /s/	ɬ /ɬ/	š /ʃ/		x /x/	xw /xʷ/	h /h/
		z /z/		ž /ʒ/		ç /ç/	çw /çʷ/	
Approx.		r /r/	l /l/	ɽ /ɽ/	y /j/		w /w/	

Table 1: Consonant phoneme inventory

There are sixteen contrastive monophthongal combinations of quality, length and nasality. These are given in Table 2 below.

	Front	Back
High	i /i/ in/im /ĩ/	
	ii /i:/ iin/iim /ĩ:/	
Mid	e /ɛ/ en/em /ẽ/	o /ɔ/ on/om /õ/
	ee /e:/ een/eem /ẽ:/	oo /o:/ oon/oom /õ:/
Low	a /a/ an/am /ã/	
	aa /a:/ aan/aam /ã:/	

Table 2: Monophthong inventory

In addition to these monophthongs, there are seven diphthongal qualities, all of which can occur as oral and nasal. These can be seen in Table 3.

	Front	Back
High	ia /i̩/ ian/iam /ĩ̩/	
Mid	ei /e̩/ ein/eim /ẽ̩/ eu /e̩/ eun/eum /ẽ̩/	oi /o̩/ oin/oim /õ̩/ oa /o̩/ oan/oam /õ̩/
Low	ai /a̩/ ain/aim /ã̩/ au /a̩/ aun/aum /ã̩/	

Table 3: Diphthong inventory

3.2.2 Stress

Stress is weight sensitive and anchored towards the right edge of the word: a final syllable is stressed if it is heavy (i.e. contains a diphthong, long vowel, nasal vowel or coda consonant), otherwise stress is penultimate.

3.2.3 Vowel assimilations

Let /i, e, o, a/ be cover symbols for all high front, mid front, back rounded and low vowels respectively.² In what is essentially a form of vowel harmony, lexically-specific instances of /i/ and /a/ assimilate to the quality of neighbouring vowels. Ignoring any intervening consonants, assimilable /i/ becomes /o/ when adjacent to rounded vowels and assimilable /a/ becomes /e/ when adjacent to front vowels. Such alternations can be found in many affixes as well as in a certain number of roots. In addition to this, certain instances of /i/ may not trigger the assimilation of /a/ to /e/. This assimilation is responsible for alternations in the vowels of affixes marking categories such as case (§3.3.2), number (§3.3.3), agreement (§3.4.1) and aspect (§3.4.2).

3.2.4 Laryngeal dissimilation

Aspiration, inclusive of /h/, is a powerful feature in Xwere Gonom phonology and its presence results in the neutralisation of certain contrasts in the syllable it is found in as well as directly adjacent syllables. This may result in active alternations (especially in verb conjugations; see §3.4), some of which are more motivated than others from a synchronic point of view (for example, /x/ acts as both a trigger and target of laryngeal dissimilation, as if it were aspirated even though it is not).

Laryngeal dissimilation causes the following neutralisations. It proceeds first regressively from the right-most instance of an aspirate or /h/ and then progressively.

² At least for our purposes here, the first vowel in a diphthong should be understood as the element that determines its primary features.

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|--------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| (1) a. /b/ | → [p] | f. /tʂ', tʂ ^h / | → [tʂ] |
| b. /t', t ^h / | → [t] | g. /x/ | → [k] |
| c. /ts', ts ^h / | → [ts] | h. /x ^w / | → [k ^w] |
| d. /tʃ', tʃ ^h / | → [tʃ] | i. /h/ | → [∅] or [p] |
| e. /t', t ^h / | → [t] | | |

3.3 Nouns and pronouns

3.3.1 Humanness and animacy

Animacy is important in Xwere Gonom for whether a noun is able to be pluralised, what role the core cases indicate and also for determining agreement with pronouns and on verbs. Humanness is distinguished on both pronouns and verbs. Neither inanimate nominals nor inanimate verb forms show any marking for number.

3.3.2 Case

Xwere Gonom possesses three grammatical cases: direct, inverse (= differential argument marking) and oblique.³ The direct is morphologically unmarked whereas the inverse is marked by the suffix *-ga/-ge/-ige/-oga/-iga/-a/-e* and the oblique by the suffix *-n/-m/-in/-om*.

The language displays an integrated system of both differential object and subject marking according to an argument's animacy. The unmarked direct is used on the subject of verbs with the exception that inanimate subjects of both transitive and unergative verbs (i.e. intransitive verbs whose sole argument is agent-like) take the marked inverse. The direct is also used on the objects of transitive verbs if inanimate whereas animate objects are marked with the inverse. This is illustrated by the following examples:

- (2) Saradzoxa taž.
3.H.run.PROG woman
'The woman is running.'
- (3) Itełii taž ɖa'.
3.INAN.throw.PF woman rock
'The woman threw the rock.'
- (4) Soɖogii taž.
3.H.fall.PF woman
'The woman fell.'
- (5) Oɖogii ɖa'.
3.INAN.fall.PF rock
'The rock fell.'

3 For all I care, you can use other labels – e.g. genitive for oblique – if these ones irk you.

- (6) Saṭhana taž hiinge.
3.H.see.IMPF woman man.DAM
'The woman sees the man.'
- (7) Odžotii ɖa'ga koom.
3.INAN.hit.PF rock.DAM house
'The rock hit the house.'

The oblique has a variety of uses. Firstly, it is used to mark modifiers in phrasal noun-noun compounds:

- | | |
|---|--|
| (8) hiin gondom
man fishing_rod.OBL
'fisherman, angler' | (9) ɖoom gii'in
bridge crystal.OBL
'rainbow' |
|---|--|

Oblique pronouns are used as possessive pronouns in all possessive relationships and bare full nouns are used in the oblique with inalienable adnominal possession (see also §3.3.4).

- | | |
|--|---|
| (10) ǵwama dein
mother 1SG.OBL
'my mother' | (11) ǵwama xaanin
mother girl.OBL
'the girl's mother' |
|--|---|

The complements of prepositions are also marked with the oblique:

- (12) žii de'nin
at shade.OBL
'in the shade'

The oblique is used in the adverbialisation of adjectives and nouns:

- (13) Sadzoxa wiinin taž.
3.H.run.IMPF good.OBL woman
'The woman runs well.'

It is also used without a preposition to mark certain inherently locative nouns to express a static location, origin of motion or goal of motion. If desired, this may be disambiguated by use of a preposition. This is illustrated with *dağ* 'home' below.

- (14) a. Saṛaḍiiga dağin hiin.
3.H.come.PROG home.OBL man
'The man is coming home.'
- b. Saṛaḍiiga hiin na dağin.
3.H.come.PROG man to home.OBL
'The man is coming home.'

Certain nouns with temporal meanings, such as *zii* ‘dawn’ below, behave in a similar manner:

- (15) a. Gaarazomaan *zii*’in hau.
 2SG.CS.sleep.CONT dawn.OBL 2SG.CS
 ‘You were still asleep at dawn.’
- b. Gaarazomaan hau žii *zii*’in.
 2SG.CS.sleep.CONT 2SG.CS at dawn.OBL
 ‘You were still asleep at dawn.’

The heads of noun phrases denoting a physical or temporal measurement also take the oblique in order to express distances or durations.

- (16) Saradzoxa gihsaanin hoš ħin.
 3.H.run.PROG hour.OBL many man
 ‘The man ran for many hours.’

3.3.3 *Number*

Animate nouns distinguish singular and plural whereas inanimate nouns are invariant with respect to number. Plurality is marked by the suffix *-d/-ad/-ed*, which becomes *-r/-ar/-er* when a case suffix is added. Nouns do not generally take overt plural marking when used with numerals or plural-like quantifiers, though they may optionally to stress plurality or numerousness.

3.3.4 *Adnominal possession*

Possessors follow possessees. Oblique pronouns are used as possessive adjectives. To be used as possessors of alienable possessees, nouns occur in a prepositional phrase headed by *na* ‘to’. However, with inalienable possessees (e.g. body parts, kinship terms), no preposition is required and a bare possessor in the oblique is used.

- | | | | |
|---------|---|----|---|
| (17) a. | ğwen dein
hand 1SG.OBL
‘my hand’ | b. | ğwen ħinin
hand man.OBL
‘the man’s hand’ |
| (18) a. | toan dein
fishhook 1SG.OBL
‘my fishhook’ | b. | toan na ħinin
fishhook to man.OBL
‘the man’s fishhook’ |

3.4 Verbs

3.4.1 Verb agreement

Verbs agree with their absolutive argument, i.e. the subject of intransitive verbs and the direct object of transitive verbs. This is marked by a combination of prefixation and suffixation, summarised in Table 4.

	SG	DU	PL
1(EXCL)	d-	iš-/oš- -n	iš-/oš- -d
1INCL.CS	—	y- -n	y- -h
1INCL.NCS	—	ǵ- -n	ǵ- -h
2.CS	ga/ge-	—	aga-/ege- -h
2.NCS	m-	—	am-/em- -h
3.H	s-	—	s- -d
3.NH.AN	h-	—	h- -d
3.INAN	∅-	—	∅-

Table 4: Verb agreement affixes

Note that the /h/ of the third person non-human animate prefix is deleted if the next consonant in the word is /h/ or an aspirate, resulting in syncretism with the inanimate. Similarly, the /h/ in the suffix of some plural forms may lead to laryngeal dissimilation of a preceding consonant (see §3.2.4).

3.4.2 Tense–aspect–mood

Aspect and mood are conflated into a single morphological category (hereafter referred to simply as “aspect”) and there is no morphological tense marking.⁴ Verbs are inflected for eleven aspects and overt marking for one cannot co-occur with another. These eleven aspects can be divided into nine realis and two irrealis aspects, with realis aspects further subdivided into four imperfective and five perfective aspects:

- (19) a. Realis:
- i. Imperfective:
 - imperfective, progressive, continuative, simultaneous
 - ii. Perfective:
 - perfective, terminative, immediative, anterior, consecutive
- b. Irrealis:
 - conditional, optative

⁴ At least, matrix verbs do not display tense, though certain aspects arguably express pure/strict relative tense with dependent verbs.

These are marked on the verb by a combination of stem gradation, prefixation and suffixation. Verb stems have three grades: plain (\emptyset), glottalised ($ʔ$) and aspirated (h). As one would expect, the \emptyset -grade of a verb stem is simply the verb stem without any additional special modifications. The laryngeal $ʔ$ - and h -grades are formed by right-edge-orientated infixation of coda $/ʔ, h/$ in consonant-final stems and by a simple $/ʔ, h/$ suffix in vowel-final stems. The addition of these laryngeal segments, especially $/h/$, may lead to alterations to the laryngeal features of consonants in the stem (see §3.2.4). The full range of different combinations of exponents for each aspect is summarised below in Table 5.

	Prefix	Stem grade	Suffix
IMPF	a-/e-	\emptyset	-a/-e/-ra/-re
PROG	ara-/ere-	\emptyset	-a/-e/-ra/-re
CONT	a-/e-	\emptyset	-aan/-een/-raan/-reen
SIMUL	a-/e-	$ʔ$	-iğwa/-oğwa/-iğwe/-ğwa/-ğwe
PF	i-/o-	\emptyset	-ii/-yii
TERM	i-/o-	$ʔ$	-itl
IMM	i-/o-	$ʔ$	-in
ANT	i-/o-	$ʔ$	-inen
CONSEC	i-/o-	$ʔ$	-ian
COND	a-/e-	\emptyset	-iza/-oza/-ize/-za/-ze
OPT	i-/o-	h	-iř/-ř

Table 5: Summary of inflection for aspect

The imperfective presents an action or state as being temporally unbounded and, typically, as habitual, though this form can be used with stative verbs to express the progressive. The progressive describes an action or state as being performed or holding at a given moment in time, be that present, past or future. The continuative is similar to the progressive but focuses on the continuity in time of that action or state in question, especially when contrasted with the flux of other events in the discourse (i.e. very roughly having the meaning ‘still’). The continuative can also be used to present an event as continuing for an unexpectedly long or excessive amount of time. The simultaneous expresses that an action or state overlaps with another. The duration of the action/state described by the simultaneous typically fully encompasses the other action/state; its may temporally even extend beyond it but this is not crucial to the way an event is presented using the simultaneous. With stative verbs especially, the simultaneous may be used in roles fulfilled by manner adverbs in other languages.

The perfective, in contrast to the imperfective, presents an action or change of state as lacking internal temporal structure. With stative verbs this often expresses an inchoative meaning. The perfective is also sometimes used as an imperative. The

terminative expresses the end point of an action or state, which may be before or after some event in the discourse. The immediative is similar to the terminative but serves to stress the temporal proximity of events. The anterior is used to situate the entirety of one action or state as preceding another. This is often used in a similar function to the (plu)perfect in other languages. The consecutive, conversely, is used to situate one event after another. Actions or states may be described by the anterior and consecutive regardless of their relation to the moment of speech.

The most prototypical use of the conditional is to mark the antecedent, but not the consequent, in sentences expressing that some event or state is contingent on another. The optative is used to express hopes, wishes, desires and so on. Alongside the perfective, it is also functions as an imperative and (co)hortative.

3.4.3 Verbal negation

Verbs are negated with a pre-verbal particle. This is most often *xen*, as in the example below.

- (20) Xen eziḡe taḡ ḡiḡ.
 NEG 3.INAN.eat.IMPF woman meat
 ‘The woman doesn’t eat meat.’

However, there also exists a range of additional specialised negators, shown in Table 6.

Form	Use
dliḡi	“ <i>non iam</i> ” negator: something that was the case prior to the reference time no longer holds, i.e. ‘no more, no longer’
dziḡ	irrealis negator: used with the conditional and optative in declarative clauses, also used with other aspects used in irrealis contexts
ke’	prohibitive negator: used to negate both optative and conditional imperatives
maan	assertive future-time negator: forcefully denies the possibility of something happening after the reference time, also used with perfective imperatives for added force
te’	<i>nondum</i> negator: expresses that something has yet to occur prior to the reference time, i.e. ‘not yet’
tṣoḡom	avertive negator: expresses that an event was expected to happen but did not
ḡein	frustrative negator: expresses that an event happened but was not successful or did not have the expected result

Table 6: Specialised pre-verbal negators

3.6 Clausal syntax

3.6.1 Constituent order

The basic constituent order in an intransitive clause is VS:

- (26) Sarazoma taž.
 3.H.sleep.PROG woman
 ‘The woman is sleeping.’

In a (mono)transitive clause, the basic constituent order is VSO:

- (27) Abola ĩin šom.
 3.INAN.drink.IMPF man milk
 ‘The man drinks milk.’

However, word order is moderately flexible and constituents may be moved around in order to help convey the information structure of an utterance. There is even limited tolerance of discontinuous noun phrases.

3.6.2 Relative clauses

Relative clauses are formed by adding the prefix *i-/o-/y-* to an already conjugated verb. The clause in which this verb is found then acts as a post-nominal modifier. The slot that the modified noun would occupy in the relative clause is left blank, though the relativised verb nevertheless agrees if the head noun is the omitted absolutive argument of the relative clause.

- | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|----|------------------|------|---------|--|----|-------------------------|----------------|-------|
| (28) | a. | Siṭhanii | deme | ĩinge. | | b. | Ĩiin | isiṭhanii | deme. |
| | | 3.H.see.PF | 1SG | man.DAM | | | man | REL.3.H.see.PF | 1SG |
| | | ‘I saw the man.’ | | | | | ‘The man (whom) I saw.’ | | |

3.6.3 Clausal coordination

As in the examples below, clausal coordination is typically asyndetic.

- (29) Arakama deme booh, sarazomad siid.
 3.INAN.do.PROG 1SG work 3.NH.AN.sleep.PROG 3PL.H
 ‘I am working and they are sleeping.’
- (30) Diṭhanii tšemen dege, hipe’ğwian hen.
 1SG.eat.PF cat 1SG.DAM 3.NH.AN.flee.CONSEC 3SG.NH.AN
 ‘The cat saw me and then ran away.’