

Măttay Torch

Mambu vu ‘yyan manh vula vu Suushiji yungata ‘Afu Puk Vyrnugu vu vavalyk ryndlu rhă. Kani ‘orhōlũ t’ăvũwărlũ ‘yyanka vu rhăvîshkayynh ‘akhăry.

Luvuwka ngulu ngyl vyrnulu anul ka ‘orhōkăy khăt’ô vu yinguvlu p’ăkũrỹ. Mimiryninh khăt’ô ndanyu manh khêtăjỹn yet’ôrỹnh qăngỹwăr ngyl ‘ylhu yurar ka kaju tanar. Katuk ‘orhōkăy khăt’ô ngyl p’ăkũrỹ. Atyn tukkay pafar t’ătôqô yiyi yin ‘orhōkăy pundula ngura yucar. Tukka yinyu va’ury yiyi ‘orhōkă manh yiju yin ‘orhōkă ‘a’akay ‘atlatar yaja yurar tukkal mokhêrỹ. Yin ‘a’aqă ‘atlakkayynh vyk yurar khăt’ô ka p’ă mylar. ‘A’aqă lapuwar yay khôshula mbumbumar. ‘Orhōkă yajary yay khôshula ndanyu pundu ‘arynkal khăt’ôkă nerhă ndanyu punduka ‘arynkal shiviry.

Mimiryninka yayajakay va’ury. Kani lufytlayu ‘akhary yynh. Khôshula shiviry jakhqô yay kani ‘ylhury yay ‘orhōkă kayu rynjury. Khôshula mbumbumar yay kani ndanyu pundulu nuntary yay kani lufytlayu khôolũw rhăvîs ‘aqôs ‘aryn ryndlu ‘akhăry.

Khôovî yay qômỹkkuka rhăvîshkay manh ‘orhōkăy t’ăvũwăru rynjury miryn. Yi miryninh rynjy qôm, kani ka ‘ay ‘orhōkăy myrhăvêkhă ‘yndokhôn yiyi ka rynjy qôrhôn furuqô yay Suushiji rhăkhôn.

Phonology and Orthography

Măttay phonology is characterized by simple syllables, penultimate stress, and creaky vowels. Maximum syllable structure is CLVC, while minimum is CV. Meanwhile, the romanization follows a near one-to-one correspondance to the phonology.

Consonants

		Labial	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Glottal
Stops	Tenuis	p /p/	t /t/	j /dʒ/	k /k/	q /q/	/ʔ/
	Pharyngeal	p' /pʕ/	t' /tʕ/				
	Pre-nasal	mb /mb/	nd /nd/	nj /ndʒ/	ng /ng/		
Nasals		m /m/	n /n/	ny /ɲ/	nh /ŋ/		
Fricatives		v /v/ f /f/	s /s/	sh /ʃ/		kh /x/	
Approx. & Rhotics		w /w/	r /r/	y /j/		rh /R/	
Laterals				l /l/ lh /ɬ/			

Geminate consonants are romanized by doubling the consonant, except nasals which only double the initial n. Similarly, coda nasals only write the n when assimilating to following consonant.

Vowels

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i /i/	y /ɥ/	u /u/
Mid	e /e/		o /o/
Open			a /a/

Vowels can be long or creaky voiced. Long vowels are romanized by doubling the vowel, while creaky vowels are accented with a tilde. Long, creaky vowels are doubled with only the first accented, ie ãa /g:/. Y /ɥ/ is never long; yy will always be /jɥ/ or /ɥy/.

When stress does not fall on the penultimate syllable in polysyllabic words, it is marked on the vowel with an acute accent. Long vowels are only accented on the first, like long, creaky vowels. When marking stress on creaky vowels, the tilde is substituted with a double acute accent. Some words will have their stress explicitly marked, when otherwise unnecessary, to clarify usage or to differentiate homophones.

Grammar

Mättay is a fusional, verb-final, largely dependent-marking language that orders arguments according animacy. When arguments possess equal animacy, default ordering is SOV.

Functionally, Mättay has five parts of speech: noun, adjective, verb, adverb, and particle. Most roots exhibit some degree of zero derivation, with some having three or more applicable parts of speech. Conversely, some roots change meaning entirely with part of speech.

Nouns

Nouns are marked for plurality, definiteness, and case.

Nouns are preceded by genitives, numbers and other quantifiers, and certain adjectives, while all other adjectives, relative clauses, and postpositions follow the noun, in that order.

Plurality

Plurality is optionally marked with reduplication of the first syllable. Codas undergo assimilation and occasionally other sound changes, altering the root. The plurality of unmarked nouns is malleable and inferred from context. For etymological reasons, some nouns are pluralized with the *my(r)*- prefix.

Definiteness

Definite nouns inflect for proximal and distal deixis. Proximal nouns inflect based on the *-ka* suffix. Distal nouns inflect based on the *-ji* suffix. Indefinite nouns do not share a single suffix upon which they are based.

Case

Nouns inflect for five different cases: nominative, translative, dative, locative, and instrumental-comitative. Translative can act as a general lative, and dative can act as a benefactive, as well.

Case declensions are built upon the definiteness declensions.

The proximal definite declensions are built upon the *-ka* suffix, except the translative which is built upon *-qã*. Thus, to inflect proximal cases, suffix the following, according to case.

- Dative: *-y* (/j/)
- Locative: *-w*
- Instrumental-comitative: *-jynh*

The distal definite declensions are built upon the *-ji* suffix. To inflect distal cases, drop the *-i* from the stem and add the following.

- Translative: *-ekhã*
- Dative: *-u*
- Locative: *-itlu*
- Instrumental-comitative: *-yn*

The indefinite declensions have single stem. Nominative case inflects by moving the stress to the ultimate syllable. Translative is built up on the *-khã* suffix. Locative is built on the *-lu* suffix. While dative and instrumental-comitative are identical to the respective distal definite forms.

Pronouns

	Nominative	Translative	Dative	Locative	Instrumental-comitative	Proclitic
	e					

First, exculsive	la lani	lakhã lakhẽ	layu lanyu	lalu lilu	layynh laninh	la-
First, inclusive	laymu	laykhã	laymuk	laymul	laymunh	
Second	‘umu muni	mokhã mokhẽ	‘umi munyu	mulu milu	‘uminh muninh	‘u(m)-
Third	kaa kani	qãkh qẽkhẽ	kayu kanyu	kalu kilu	kayynh kaninh	ka-
Reflexive	yin	yerhã	yinyu	yilu	yinh	n(i)-

Pronouns inflect for case and plurality. The above chart lists the singular then the plural for the applicable pronouns. Inalienable possession mandatorily takes the proclitic on the possessed noun. Take note, the second person proclitic retains and assimilates the m before nasals.

The reflexive pronoun, while still used for reflexives, was used as resumptive pronoun in certain conditions. But as this usage was since supplanted, it extended as an avoidant pronoun in politeness. Thus, it is used as a pronoun for the subject even when the subject is a pronoun.

Determiners

	Nominative	Translative	Dative	Locative	Instrumental-co mitative
Proximal	kal	kakhã	kaju	kalu	kajynh
	kakal	kakakhã	kakaju	kakalu	kakajynh
Distal	yit	yekhã	yiju	yitlu	yishynh
	yishi	shekhã	shiju	shitlu	shishynh
Interrogative	mánh	márhã	maju	mallu	majynh

Determiners can also act as indefinite pronouns, eg *kal vyryn* “that violet one” or *maju* “whom”.

Nominal Particles

Nominal particles fall into categories: postpositions and relativizers.

Postpositions come and the very end of their phrase after relative clauses and decline their objects in the nominative.

Mättay has two relativizers: *manh* and *min*. Most relative clauses use *manh*, while *min* is only used for relativizing genitives and postpositional objects. The relativizer is placed between the noun and the clause and essentially acts as a dummy subject. Therefore, relative clauses must use passive constructions when the noun being modified does not act as the nominative of the relative clause.

Adjectives

Adjectives are rarer among roots, as most zero derive from verbs or nouns. Like nouns, those that cannot be zero-derived are formed from the participle.

Adjectives inflect for case, and optionally plurality. Plurality declines with the prefix *my(r)*-. Case declinations are highly reduced, leaving most adjectives with only an additional vowel or altered final coda. While numbers and quantifiers fulfil a similar role to adjectives, they do not agree with the noun.

Verbs

Mättay exhibits a robust verbal system, including five tenses, four aspects, and two moods directly conjugated on the verb and several more through auxiliaries, particles, and syntactic constructions. Furthermore, multiple copulae can take differentially marked objects to convey different meanings.

Verb Classes

Monotransitive verbs have five classes defined by the argument structure.

Action verbs fall into one of three classes, which all have the agent as their subject (nominative). Class I: experience verbs take a dative object. Class II: transformation verbs take a translative object. Class III: location verbs take a locative object.

The final two classes are the sensation and emotion verbs, which mark the source with the nominative and the experiencer with different objects. Class IV: sensation verbs take a locative object. Class V: emotion verbs take a dative object.

Conjugation

Verbs conjugate for seven basic TAM forms. Combinations of four of these are what produce the additional forms. The unmarked form is present or gnomic.

The distant past conjugation, ironically, derives from a suffix in the distant past that has eroded so thoroughly that it has very inconsistent form. This conjugation also forms the participle. When combined with the immediate future, it marks the distant future tense; with the immediate past, it marks the renarrative mood.

The conditional is built off the suffix *-khǒl*. Conditional clauses also open with conjunction *yí*. If an event is presumed inevitable, the verb may not conjugate for the conditional. Additionally, when combined with the immediate past and future, this conjugation instead marks perfect aspect.

The iterative is based on *-at(l)*. The immediate past/present perfect and immediate future are based on *-(n)u/-u(m)* and *-va*, respectively, and cannot combine with each other. The progressive and habitual are based on *t'ǒ-* and *shi(r)-*, respectively, and cannot combine with each other.

Passives

Passives can promote any object to the nominative case by appending the respective particles after the verb.

- Translative: *khǎw*
- Dative: *joqǒ*
- Locative: *loqǒ*
- Instrumental-comitative: *ngaqǒ*

The original subject can be reintroduced in the instrumental-comitative case.

Copulae

Mǎttay has three copulae: equative, locative, and subordinating. The equative and locative have multiple uses depending what case the object is in, while the subordinating is used for subordinating clauses strictly with the co-copula construction.

Equative

For brevity, only the three oldest forms are herein conjugated.

- Present: *qǒm*
- Distant past: *qǒmǎr*
- Conditional: *qǒrhǒl*

As discussed, the copula's uses change with object.

- Translative: becoming, transformation
- Dative: attributive
- Locative: place of origin
- Instrumental-comitative: inalienable possession

Locative

For brevity, only the three oldest forms are herein conjugated.

- Present: *rhã*
- Distant past: *rhãrỹ*
- Conditional: *rhãkhõl*

As discussed, the copula's uses change with object.

- Translative: change of place or time
- Dative: inanimate, alienable possession
- Locative: comitative, current location or time
- Instrumental-comitative: animate, alienable possession

Additionally, the locative copula can be used intransitively for existential clauses.

Subordinating

For brevity, only the three oldest forms are herein conjugated.

- Present: *yur*
- Distant past: *yurar*
- Conditional: *yulu*

Co-copulae

The copulae can take the main verb of a clause as an auxiliary, in a construction known as the co-copula. This is mandatory for verbalization of certain adjectives.

The existential co-copula conveys an intensive emphasis, and when the main verb is fronted (and second person dropped), it forms the imperative construction.

The locative co-copula emphasizes volition and intention. Mirroring the imperative, when the main verb is fronted, it forms the optative.

The subordinating co-copula marks the verb as belonging to the main clause. The subordinating clause made into a relative clause of a relevant determiner. This is the mandatory construction if the subordinating clause is nested in a relative clause already. Otherwise, the subordinate clause may be move to after the co-copula and determiner optionally dropped.

Verbal Particles

There several other particles used in the verb complex, but the main two to remember are negative and interrogative.

The negative particle *p'ã* comes before the verb and any auxiliaries.

The interrogative particle *maa* comes at the very end of the sentence.

Adverbs

Adverbs are quite simple as, like particles, the do not inflect. Unlike particles, they convey little grammatical information.

Particles

Particles have three main classes: conjunctive, verbal, and comparative. As particles make up a significant component of the verb complex, verbal particles have been already discussed therein.

Conjunctions

Nouns have two conjunctions exclusive to them, *'ay* “and” and *vyn* “or”, and one that is used between verbs too, *shu* “nor”.

When nouns are combined in the conjunctive phrase, the conjunction is repeated and only the final noun declines for case. This has led *'ay* and *vyn* cliticizing and eventually assimilating and reducing.

	<i>'ay</i>	<i>vyn</i>
Proximal	-la	-lun
Distal	-ta	-tun
Indefinite	-(<i>'</i>)ay	-(l)un

Do note, they only cliticize to the noun. If there are adjectives or relative clauses following the noun they remain as is.

Like nouns, verbs only conjugate the final noun, except for distant past and conditional, which must be the same on all conjuncted verbs. Unlike nouns, most verbal conjunction can be used both between verbs and clauses, like *yiyi* “then” and *yun* “or”. Of course, subordinating conjunctions, like *njuu* “because”, are exclusively between clauses.

Comparison

Comparison follows three basic formulae: adjectival, objective, and verbal.

Adjectival comparison has the first noun described with the relevant adjective and the second noun conjuncted to it with the relevant comparison particle, eg. *kal vryyn yaa yit* “this one is more violet than that one”.

Objective comparison has a complete clause with the first object conjuncted to another clause with second object and a dummy copula, eg. *la ‘afu yaa kakal qõm* “I sleep more than them”.

Verbal comparison is similar to objective, except that the second clause only has the second verb, eg. *la ‘afu yaa ‘at’õ* “I sleep more than I eat”.

Lexicon

Root	forms present	Definitions	Parts of speech
a'a	‘a’akay	neck, throat, voice	noun
	‘a’aqã		
‘Afu Puk Vyrnugu		Proper noun (lit.cloud rock island)	noun
‘akha	‘akhary	find, discover	verb, class III
‘aqõs	‘aqõs	roots	noun
‘aryn	‘aryn	black	adverb, adjective
	‘arynkal		

	‘arynkal		
‘atlat	‘atlakkayynh	bite	verb, class II
	‘atlatar		
‘atyn	‘Atyn	elder	noun
‘ay	‘ay	and	conjunction
‘orhō	‘orhōkā	dove	noun
	‘orhōkāy		
	‘orhōlū		
‘ylhu	‘ylhu	drink	verb, class II
	‘ylhury		
‘yndu	‘yndokhōl	give	verb, ditransitive
‘yyan	‘yyan	deity	noun
	‘yyanka		
‘anu	‘anul	sacred, divine	adjective
furuqō	furuqō	peacefully	adverb
jakhqō	jakhqō	continuative adverb	particle, verbal
ka	ka	3rd person pronoun	pronoun

	kayu		
	kani		
kaju	kaju	proximate determiner	determiner
khăt'ố	khăt'ố	fire	noun
	khăt'ốkã		
khếtây	khếtâjỹn	friend	noun
khồolũ	khồolũl	white	adjective
khồovĩ	khồovĩ	rain	verb, intransitive
khồshula	khồshula	sky	noun
lapuw	lapuwar	bleed	verb, intransitive
lufytla	lufytlalu	cremains	noun
luvwu	luvwuka	river	noun
mambu	mambu	water, generally	noun
manh	manh	relativizer	pronoun
mbumbum	mbumbumar	rumble	verb, intransitive
miryn	mimiryninh	farmer	noun
	mimiryninka		

	miryn		
	miryninh		
mokhẽ	mokhẽrỹ	hear	verb, class IV
myl	mylar	touch	verb, class I
ndanyu	ndanyu	tall, high, great	adjective
nerhã	nerhã	above	postposition
ngulu	ngulu	along, across	postposition
ngura	ngura	into	postposition
ngyl	ngyl	next to	postposition
nunta	nuntary	go	verb, class III
p'ã	p'ã	negative particle	particle, verbal
p'ākũ	P'ākũrỹ	put	verb, class III
paf	pafar	shove, push, hit	verb, class I
pundu	pundu	tree	noun
	punduka		
	pundulu		
pundula	pundula	forest	noun

qǎngǵwǎ	qǎngǵwǎr	dance	verb, intransitive
Qǒm	Qǒm	equative copula	verb
	Qǒrhǒl		
Qǒmǵkku	Qǒmǵkkuka	story, idea, thought	noun
Rhǎ	Rhǎ	locative copula	verb
	rhǎkhǒl		
rhǎvīs	rhǎvīs	flower	noun
	rhǎvīshkay		
	rhǎvīshkayynh		
	myrhǎvēkhǎ		
ryndlu	ryndlu	among, between	postposition
rynju	rynjury	mourn	verb, class I
rynjy	rynjy	dead	adjective
shivi	shiviry	cry	verb, intransitive
Suushiji		Proper noun	noun
t'ǎtǒqǒ	t'ǎtǒqǒ	cruelly	adverb
t'ǎvǔw	t'ǎvǔwǎrlǔ	drown	verb, class II

	t'ăvũwãru		
tan	tanar	do, make	verb, class I
tuk	tukka	child	noun
	tukkal		
	tukkay		
	katuk		
va'u	va'ury	follow	verb, class I
valyk	vavalyk	person	noun
vu	vu	alienable possessive particle	particle, nominal
vula	vula	potable water	noun
vyk	vyk	dig	verb, class I
vyrnu	vyrnulu	land	noun
yaja	yaja	scream, yell, shout	verb, intransitive
	yajary		
	yayajakay		
yay	yay	and	conjunction
yet'õ	yet'õrŷnh	celebration, party, festival	noun

yi	yi	if	particle
yit	yiju	distal determiner	particle
yin	yin	reflexive pronoun	pronoun
	yinyu		
yinguv	yinguvlu	basket, receptacle	noun
yi yi	yi yi	then	particle
yukar	yuk	get, take	verb, class I
yungata	yungata	call, name	verb, class I
yur	yurar	subordinating copula	verb
yynh	yynh	only	adverb