

Dzadza

Mo akusul mo tii oju ñu na išul oṛul imil, kunanatpa ul tiil ojul mo tataṛi dzo ta ve av tool twoocalul: "Aee! Kiveel kaol tsel iḷe pobul!"

Tool avav "Wu! Kutpaž modzi tataṛi ṛu kivee kao!"

Toṛil avav "Kiis... Ṙa usap tse ḷee av tse ḷee kiilḷe meekṛil dzo tse lo?"

"Tse utav ḷee. Kiilḷe meekṛil ḷee lo - ḷee kiñu na iš oṛ imi, dzeni tataṛi kita na ul ḷeel."

Tataṛil liš ve toṛil dzal tool.

Basics

Dzadza has **vowel harmony** based on backness. A front vowel is changed to a back vowel when it follows a back vowel, unless there is an 'a' in between. The pairs which alternate are i-i' and e-e'. Historically, when a back vowel immediately followed a front vowel, it was fronted, and vice versa, and the heights matched to the height of the first vowel. The pairs which began with front vowels were resolved into long 'ii' and 'ee', while those beginning with back vowels became 'i'i' and 'e'e'. Sequences containing 'a' do not participate in this process, but high vowels on either side of 'a' become mid vowels. E.g. 'oi' -> 'e'e', 'eu' -> 'ee', 'ai' -> 'ae'. No height-matching occurs when vowels do not touch, and in modern dzadza (so not in roots, but in derivations and inflections) front vowels are still backed after back vowels but not the other way around.

Dzadza has a three-part **noun-class system**.

Nouns in class 1 take the singular suffix *-/ø/* when indefinite, and *'-(u)l* when definite, with the 'u' if the noun ends in a consonant. This class is the default class. It also contains items thought of as particularly stable, or whose purpose requires them to be unchanging, still, large, or stagnant. An everlasting presence (whose everlasting nature is salient) would go in class 1. Forces of nature, when considered stagnant over a long time, go here.

Nouns in class 2 take the singular suffix *'-u'* when indefinite and *'-ul'* when definite. These are nouns thought to fulfill various bodily or spiritual needs, such as items involved in cooking, food, or even personal mentorship. 1st person pronouns with this

ending are used in speech to be polite, indicating the speaker is at the service of their audience. It is, however, impolite to use this ending on 2nd person pronouns.

Nouns in class 3 take the singular ending ‘-ri’ when indefinite, and ‘-ril’ when definite. These are those which are mobile, small, or are used primarily while they are moving, or whose duties require them to be flexible. For example, cars; forces of nature go here when considered dynamic or changing.

The class of most nouns is fluid in Dzadza, as they can have different meanings depending on the class used and the context of the situation, but some noun phrases have conventionalized meanings when in a certain class, which have been provided.

When a noun is first introduced it is **indefinite**, unless it can be identified by the hearer; else it is **definite**, except when referring to a general instance e.g. ‘trees (in general)’.

Adjectives follow nouns and must agree with them in class, number, and definiteness. Possessive pronouns are formed by using personal pronouns as adjectives, and, while located in the adjectival position and agreeing in definiteness, they must agree in number and class with the person they refer to. In order to make adjectives agree with nouns, they must simply take the noun-class suffix of the noun. Personal pronouns simply take the ending ‘-l’ if the noun they describe is definite.

Dzadza has three numbers (singular, dual, plural), but only the singular occurs in this text.

Personal Pronouns	1st	2nd	3rd
Class 1	le	tse	to
Class 2	lee	tsee	too
Class 3	leri	tseri	tori

Grammar Notes

- Dzaḏza has two copulas - one for 'is', 'iḷe', and one for 'is not', 'tvaḗ'.
- Normally, sentences are SVO - 'I love you', but to form commands the subject and verb are inverted - 'feed you the dog'.
- Dzaḏza has a past and non-past tense. Stories are related using the present tense, not the past tense, as in English. The past tense prefix is 'ki-'.
- In dzaḏza, reduplication serves many purposes; it makes small things smaller, big things bigger, sometimes makes nouns which perform an action habitually from verbs (e.g. 'cat' from 'hunt'), and marks verbs as being done 'in return' (e.g. 'reply' - 'avav' from 'say' - 'av').
- The word for 'which/what/that' marks a specific thing - 'the one *that* you gave me' and is not always a standalone word ('me'), but sometimes it is a prefix ('me-') attached to the specific word it's pointing out. It can function as part of a question ('which thing did you...').
- Sometimes you want to say things like 'I am called x', where the focus is on the thing undergoing the action, but not the performer. To do this, you use the prefix 'ku-', a passive marker, before the verb. The actor can be added back afterwards using the preposition 'mo', which acts like 'by' (e.g. 'I was chased by lions').
- Dzaḏza has two prepositions for 'in, on, at'. To describe being physically some place, you use 'na' ('I am in the supermarket, waiting for you.'), and when you are merely talking about a time/place/event/thing associated with some other location/time/event, you use 'mo' instead ('I lived in the forest at that time').

Prepositions:

in / at (associative)		mo
physically on/in/around		na
in order to (for this purpose)		ve
but		.ra

The prefix 'two-' turns a noun into its **opposite**.

Dictionary of roots and noun phrases

aee	wow! exclamation of admiration.
ak	secret
akus	a time; e.g. the time of your arrival = when you were arriving
av	to tell, to say
avav	to reply, respond
dzal	to hear, to listen
dzeni	then, after; indicates sequential events
dzo	that, which; relative pronoun
is	to be correct
iš	a road, a procedure or rule, a way
kive ka	particularly big or voluminous clothing, that covers the whole body; e.g. robes, shrouds, long dresses
liš	to walk quietly; can mean to perform an action without noise, to be still, or to quiet down
lo	to keep (something) secret, to conceal
modzi	true
natpa	to make something cool (or cold)
ñu	to run, to be ok, to flow (or walk, incl. along a surface), to be okay
oꝛ imi	a stone (class 1) or a stone or brick used in construction (class 3)
pob	long, high, tall

ta	to blow
tii oju	lit. godly advisor; a priest or religious devotee
u	a persons looks, their face (class 1); eyes, their pupil (class 2)
ucal	family (common ancestry, not marriage)
usap	to give; can also be used to ask for a favour, or for somebody to do something on one's behalf - 'give me you go home' means 'go home for me'.
utav	to defeat, to overcome, to win (against one in an argument)
wu	expression of surprise

Segments

Consonants	labial	dental (laminal)	alveolar (apical)	retroflex (apical)	palatal-velar (laminar)	coarticulated
plosive	p b	t			k	tp / tv
affricate		ts dz			c j	kp / kv
sibilant		s z			š ž	
approximant	v		l	ɻ, ɭ		
nasal	m		n		ɲ	

Vowels	Front	Central	Back
High	i		ɨ u
Mid	e		ɛ ɔ
Low		a	