A grammar of tsəwi tala

Phonology

	labial	coronal	dorsal	glottal
nasal	m	n	ŋ	
plosive		t	k	ʔ
fricative		s		h
glide	w		(j)	

	front	central	back
high	i iː ĩ i̧ ş ş̩ː		u uː ũ ṵ f̩ʷ f̩ʷː
mid		(ə̃)	
low		a aː ã a̧	

Phonotactics

Syllable structure
Overall syllable structure is ((N/F)C)V$^{(S)}$(P)
Where
- N is any nasal
- F is any fricative
- C is any consonant
- V is any vowel or syllabic consonant
- ^{S} is any suprasegmental;
  - nasalisation
  - length
  - creakiness
- P is a plosive /t k ʔ/

The syllable structure PwV can occur due to w being the onset of a syllable followed by P in the coda, which syllabifies as V.PwV, even though phonemically that is illegal.

Consonants
- The nasal stops /m n ŋ/ are triggered by a following nasal vowel within a word boundary, or following a nasal vowel syllable finally (which surfaces as ṼNə), otherwise surfacing as [b d ɣ] with intervocalic realisations [β̞ l~ð̞ ɣ~ɦ] (~ indicates free variation). The sequence /NwṼ/ yields [mː nm ŋm]
- The word /nə̃~n̩/ may suggest a marginal syllabic nasal phoneme, although this is under some debate, as the assumption that the voiced stops are inherently nasal would explain the nasality on what it otherwise an epenthetic vowel.

- The plosives /t k/ are realised [t k] word initially and syllable finally before /t k s h/, [r h] intervocalically, and [s h] word finally and syllable finally before /m n ŋ/. When forming a cluster on a syllable boundary with /w/, /k/ surfaces as [ɣ] and /t/ as [z]. /ʔ/ only occurs intervocalically as [ʔ], or syllable finally word internally as compensatory lengthening on the following consonant, and is generally inserted before a word initial vowel
- The fricatives /s h/ are realised [ts h] word initially, and [s h] elsewhere, with /s/ realised as [s] before /fʷ(ː)/ and [t] before /ʂ(ː)/
- The glide /w/ also progressively assimilates in nasality to the following nasal vowel, surfacing as [m] in these environments, and [w] everywhere else.
- Initial clusters are resolved by insertion of [ə] between the two consonants apart from sequences of Nw, which remain without the schwa

Vowels
- Long, creaky, or nasal vowels constitute a phonemically heavy nucleus
- Syllabic fricatives /s fʷ/ correspond to the modal vowels /i u/ only when following a plosive before an unvoiced consonant. /sː fʷː/ correspond to the sequences /iP and uP/. These are from devoicing of high vowels between unvoiced segments, which did not occur to long vowels. This can also occur word finally, due to loss of /ʔ/ in that position. /#sʂ(ː)/ sequences become [tʂ(ː)], while /#hF(ː)/ become [ʔF(ː)]
- The modal vowels /i iː u uː a aː/ are realised as [i iː ʊ uː a æː] in open syllables, and [ɪ ɪː o ʊː a æː] in closed syllables
- The nasal vowels /ĩ ũ ã/ are realised [ɛ̃ ɔ̃ ʌ̃]
- The creaky vowels /ḭ ṵ a̰/ are realised [ɪ̰ ʊ̰ ɐ̰], and are long in stressed environments and open syllables, and short elsewhere
- /ə/ is a previously epenthetic vowel, which broke up previous /FC/ clusters, and so only occurs after /s h/ (breaking up (#/V)FC(V) clusters) or after /m n ŋ/ (breaking up (V)NC(V) clusters). Is is realised either [ə] or [ɵ].
- The existence of a nasal schwa phoneme /ə̃/ is posited for the behaviour of the word /nə̃/. Other analyses include a floating nasalisation or reduced vowel, or following the pronunciation of many speakers, a syllabic nasal phoneme.
- Sequences of vowels are broken up by an epenthetic glide [j~w]. [j] is used adjacent to /i/, and [w] else. In nasal environments this transforms to [ɲ~ŋʷ] with the same distribution. Vowels in phonemic hiatus must agree in phonation.
- [w] backs and lowers the following oral vowels, so in open syllables [i iː ʊ uː a æː]>[ɪ ɪː o ʊː ä aː], and in closed syllables [ɪ ɪː o ʊː a æː]>[ë ïː ö oː ä aː], and [ə]>[ɵ], while [β] raises high vowels [{ʊ(ː) o}]>[u(ː)]
- The stressed vowel of a polysyllabic word is the phonemically penultimate vowel, unless the final syllable is heavy (contains both S and P), in which case the final syllable receives stress, or unless the stress falls on the second vowel in a hiatus, in which case the stress falls on the first vowel of the pair. This syllable receives higher pitch and louder volume than unstressed vowels.

Neutralisation and alternate phonemic analyses
/k h/ are neutralised in phonemically to [h] intervocalic situations
/m w/ are neutralised to [m] in nasal settings
/w/ and the epenthetic glide in non nasal hiatus resolutions not involving /i/ are neutralised to [w]
/t s/ are neutralised to [t] before /ʂ(ː)/
/k ŋ/ are neutralised to [ɣ] before [w]

These neutralisations leave phonemic analysis to be debatable or underspecified in many word forms, due to the minimal morphology which causes changes to the surface realisations of various phonemes.

Alternate analyses posit syllable final [s h] as part of the /s h/ phonemes, with various types of fortition creating [tt kk] intervocalically. This analysis suggests other historical forms for the development of phonation differences to the one used in this grammar, which posits that they come from coda nasals and glottal stop, and the fricatives caused length. Both theories are being further investigated at this time.

Phone chart

For clarity in transcription a chart of the consonant phones present in the language is presented below

	labial	*alveolar*	*palatal*	*velar*	*glottal*
nasal	m	n	ɲ ⟨y⟩	ŋ ŋʷ ⟨w⟩	
stop	b	t ts d		k	ʔ
fricative		s z		ɣ	h
glide	β̞ ⟨b⟩ w	l~ð̞ ⟨l⟩	j ⟨y⟩	ɰ̥~ɦ ⟨ɣ⟩	
tap		ɾ ⟨r⟩			

Sample words

/mika/ [biha] ⟨biha⟩
/suːtŋwã/ [tsʊːsŋmɐ̃] ⟨tsuusŋmã⟩
/sf̩ːŋwã/ [sf̩ʷːŋmɐ̃] ⟨sffŋmã⟩
/sĩt/ [tsɛ̃s] ⟨tsĩs⟩
/ɣ̩ntaː/ [ʔʊ̥ːləræː] ⟨uləraa⟩
/ũntaː/ [ʔɔ̃nəræː] ⟨ũnəraa⟩
sffŋmã sftmã

Romanisation

The romanisation works on a principle of representing the phonetic shape of the word rather than the phonemic analysis, for clarity and readability

Vowels

Oral vowels are written ⟨*a i u*⟩ and doubled when long ⟨*aa ii uu*⟩

Syllabic consonants behave the same way, being written ⟨*s f*⟩, or ⟨*ss ff*⟩ when long. Syllabic ⟨*s*⟩ only appears in illegal positions for the consonantal phoneme /s/, and so they aren't differentiated by use of alternate glyphs

Nasal vowels are written with a tilde ⟨*ã ĩ ũ*⟩. Creaky vowels are written with an underdot ⟨*a̰ ḭ ṵ*⟩

The schwa is written in as ⟨*ə*⟩, with no phonation specified, as it takes the same phonation as the following vowel

Nasals

- */m/* ⟨**m b**⟩: /mi/ [bi] bi, /mãt/ [mɐ̃s] mãs, /amuː/ [ˈʔaβṵː] abuu, /mwa̰mwi/ [ˈbwɛ̰ːβwɪ] bwa̰bwi, /imwĩ/ [ˈʔɪmːɛ̃] immĩ

- **/n/** ⟨**n d l**⟩: /nũmi/ [ˈnõbi] nũbi, /inũa/ [ʔiˈnõŋʷʌ̃] inũwã, /ni̯ʔa̱/ [ˈdɹ̩ːʔɐ̯ː] di̱ʔa̱, /anaːt/ [ʔaˈlæːs] alaas, /hkĩnaː/ [həˈhɛ̃læː] həhĩlaa
- **/ŋ/** ⟨**ŋ ɣ**⟩: /ŋãik/ [ˈŋʌ̃ɲɛh] ŋãyĩh, /ŋiːsa/ [ˈɣiːsa] ɣiisa, /uŋiːta/ [ʔuˈɣiːɾa] uɣiira, /uːsŋwĩ/ [ˈʔuːsõ̃ŋmɛ̃] uusəŋmĩ, /a̱ŋwit/ [ˈɐ̯ːɣwës] a̱ɣwis

Plosives

- **/t/** ⟨**t r z s**⟩: /tia/ tiya [ˈtija], /utaː/ [ˈʔʊræː] uraa, /skatwu/ [tsəˈhazwö] tsəhazwu, /ĩtĩt/ [ʔɛ̃ˈrɛ̃s] ĩrĩs
- **/k/** ⟨**k h**⟩: /kaniː/ [ˈkaliː] kalii, /mĩka/ [ˈmɛ̃ha] mĩha, /mĩkta/ [ˈmɛ̃kta] mĩkta, /maːkwa/ [ˈbæːɣwä] baaɣwa, /a̱ʔak/ [ˈʔa̱ːʔa̱h] a̱ʔah, /a̱ʔka̱/ [ˈʔa̱kːa̱ː] a̱kka̱
- **/ʔ/** ⟨∅ **ʔ**⟩: /iːʔu/ [ˈʔiːʔʊ] iiʔu, /kĩʔat/ [ˈkɛ̃ʔas] kĩʔas, /uʔmiː/ [ˈʔobːiː] ubbii

Fricatives

- **/s/** ⟨**ts s**⟩: /sutŋi̱/ [ˈtsosɣɹ̩ː] tsusɣi̱, /aswiː/ [ˈʔasəwɪː] asəwii
- **/h/** ⟨**h**⟩: /hãts̱/ [ˈhʌ̃ts̱] hãts, /si̱hiː/ [ˈtsɹ̩ːhiː] tsi̱hii

Glides

- **/w/** ⟨**w**⟩: /waːtit/ [ˈwaːɾɪs] waaris, /ũwũ/ [ˈʔõ̃mõ̃] ũmũ
- [*epenthetic glide*] ⟨**y w**⟩: /uːi/ [ˈʔuːji] uuyi, /mĩã/ [ˈmɛ̃ɲʌ̃] mĩyã, /tauk/ [ˈtawöh] tawuh, /ũũt/ [ʔõ̃ˈŋʷõ̃s] ũwũs

Alphabetisation

The alphabet order (used for dictionaries and wordlist) is as follows

a ã a̱ b d (ə) f ɣ h i ĩ i̱ k (l) m n ŋ (r) s t u ũ u̱ w (y) (z) (ʔ)

Letters in parentheses never occur word initially, and so don't get their own dictionary sections. Double letters are generally not considered their own letters, but may be considered their own sounds/segments by some speakers

Grammar

Verbs

Modal particles

There are three modal particles whose usage overlaps slightly

- **ạ** - *indicative:* this covers indicative, gnomic, factual (it is often pronounced as /‿ạ/; the glottal stop is only present in careful speech)
- **tsi** - *potential:* this covers counterfactual, future, probabilistic outcomes, conditionals, and imperatives
- **ɣwa** - *desirative:* this covers desire, intention, causation; this is also used for reported speech

These have corresponding negative forms

- **dạ** - *negative*: covers a factual negative (there is not, there cannot be~there was not - logical impossibility)
- **duts** - *counterfactual*: covers a counterfactual negative (it did not happen, it will not happen - conditionally/probabilistically) - used for reported speech in the negative
- **ŋãs** - *involitional*: covers undesired, unintentional and unexpected (but still affirmative) outcomes, as well as the negative imperative

One of these is mandatory within a clause with a verb, and you cannot use more than one. They come at the end of clauses apart from when they are used as a copula.

Copular constructions

As copulae, these 6 verbs do not have to have a sentence final modal particle associated with them, and so the discourse markers **iih** (*then*) or **nə** (*so*) is often appended to make the sentence feel more natural.

> **tsãh ạ kiyaa *nə*?**
> who IND UN.MOB so?
> *Who is that?*

In this construction, the object position of the verb can be filled with no noun phrase or a noun phrase headed by a demonstrative, adjective, numeral or just a plain noun, or a preposition.

Tense!
Regular tense marking

The two tenses are *past* and *nonpast*, with the past being marked with partial reduplication of the final syllable

$CV > CVCV (*bats* > *batsts* - organise)
$V > VʔV (*mĩyã* > *mĩyãʔã* - fell)
$VC > VCVC (*ĩs* > *ĩrĩs* - eat)
$C¹VC² > C¹VC²C¹V(C¹) (*iʔus* > *iʔuttu* - walk)
$NwV(C) > NwV(C)wV(C)

The reduplication of a long vowel will result in a short vowel in the final syllable (*asəwii* > *asəwiiwi*)

some regular tense marking is irregular due to suppletion and irregular vowel mutations. e.g. tsiis > tsiris (not expected tsiiris)

Irregular tense marking

The past forms can sometimes be suppletive, such as in **mũʔa**, which has a past form **mũddu** (showing the pattern of collapsed stem verb formation from earlier stages in the language, which is no longer productive)* or **tff** (to take) which has a past form **nĩ** which is completely unrelated

*This nonproductive affix -/nu/ surfaces as /Cnu/ in closed syllables, and deletes the vowel in final open syllable verbs, taking the phonation of the vowel, unless there are no phonemic consonants, in which case it acts as a suffix.
- **mũʔa mũddu** */mũʔa mũʔnu/* - to drink
- **tsiŋã tsiŋənũ** */siŋã siŋnũ/* - to experience
- **wịh wịhdu** */wịk wịknu/* - to see
- **uuyi uuyilu** */uːi uːinu/* - to love

While it would be expected that **kaas** */kaːt/* (grow) would produce *__kaasdu__ */kaːtnu/*, it instead produces the irregular **kaalu** */kaːnu/* (grew)

Some of these verbs have doublets with normal past tense marking, most notably *wịh~wịhdu* with its alternate form **wịɣwị**. This acquired the meaning of *to know* (as you know what you have observed), and behaves as a defective verb, with an inherently habitual sense.

Aspect

Aspect is not grammatically marked on verbs - it is often a lexical feature present in the verb roots themselves (such as *ɣạʔạ* [cooking] and it's perfective counterpart *mĩsnã* [cook]). However certain verbs can be combined in a phrase as a serial verb construction to indicate aspect
- *tsskạ* (finish) X - to have just completed something, to have done something
- *iʔus (iʔuttu)* (walk(ed)) X - to be doing something, continuous (past)
- *mãks ŋĩ* (stand LOC) X-sa - perfective, momentane (assumed past)
- *ịsị ŋĩ* (live LOC) X-sa - habitual, gnomic
- *kaas dị* (grow towards) X - change of state, become
- *tsụ* (make) X - null, verbaliser, imperfective

Otherwise verb chaining must include reinstatement of the modal particle VERB [OBJ.] MOD ∅ VERB [OBJ.] MOD, where the object clause can be used but the second verb must come immediately after the previous modal particle, with the assumption that the subject is the same.

> **kff mĩyã ũs du ɣwa disạh buu du ɣwa?**
> 2 slice OB.PR.AQ 3 DES scrape OB.ME.ST 3 DES?
> Would you chop those ones (which are soaking) [and then] peel those ones (which aren't)?

For other situations a conjunction must be used (see below).

Valency

The passive is formed with the verb **tsiŋã/tsiŋənũ** - *to suffer, experience* replacing the lexical verb. The lexical verb is marked as a participle (with -**sa**) and becomes the object of the sentence. The agent is marked with **asĩ**

> **abbạs ạhạạhạ biha tsạ ạ**

stick scratch-PST hand 3 IND
A stick scratched their hand
biha tsạ tsiŋənũ ạhạạsa asĩ abbạs ạ
hand 3 suffer:PST scratch-PTPL AG stick IND
Their hand was scratched by a stick
The passive is not often used, especially when the agent is known.

The use of the passive with an intransitive verb creates an involitional causative
bụyạ həmĩ tsskạ tsiŋã tsũwũsa asĩ ĩmũssa tala ạ
branch tree finish suffer shake-PTPL AG shake-PTPL ground IND
The branches of the trees were just made to sway by the shaking of the earth
Compare:
mĩhmĩ tsskạ tsiŋã ahĩsa asĩ ĩmũssa tala ạ
forest finish suffer destroy-PTPL AG shake-PTPL ground IND
The forest was just destroyed by the shaking of the earth

For a causative where the patient has some volition in the action (whether by actively carrying out the action, or desiring it to happen), the verb **ɣis** (to take) is used

kuŋərã ɣis həmĩ kaas ạ
water take tree grow IND
Water makes trees grow

kff ɣis mũ ĩs ibi du ạ
2 take 1 eat DEM 3 IND
You made me eat that

As mentioned before, the anticausative is formed with **kaas dị + V** (to grow into). An aspectual distinction is made between the V and V-sa forms, whereby the imperfective is the former and the perfective the latter.

ibi ụzwih kaalu dị ahĩsa ạ
DEM box grow:PST to break-PTPL IND
The box broke

ibi ụzwih kaalu dị ahĩ ạ
DEM box grow:PST to break IND
The box was being broken

bi ụzwih tsiŋənũ ahĩsa asĩ ibi ũmũ ạ
DEM box suffer:PST break-PTPL AG DEM person IND
The box was being broken by the person

Reflexives and reciprocals
The reflexive is formed with the noun **wãs** (*soul, mind>self*) and a pronoun agreeing with the subject.
mũ wịhdu wãs mũ tsi
1 see-PST soul 1 CF

I probably saw myself/I might have seen myself

tsạ uuyi wãs tsạ ạ
3 love soul 3 IND
They love eachother

It is always grammatically ambiguous whether the reciprocal or reflexive is used, as **tsii** (*together*) would be ungrammatical to use with the reflexive marker, so number is left to context

Footing and focus shifting
If a monosyllabic verb with no object is used, speakers may add *tsụ* (verbaliser) before it so it doesn't feel too bare as a phrase.
    du kaas ạ > du tsụ kaas ạ - it's growing/it grows/tis growing
The second is more likely to be used as a standalone phrase. This type of construction with a dummy pronoun is used to focus the verb, by reducing the markedness of the object, while still remaining a syntactically valid construction.

Unergatives and unaccusatives
Transitive verbs can be made unergative by use of the dummy pronoun **du** as the object. This functions as a subject focus marker, with no nominal less marked than it. This can also be done for prosodic reasons, as above, for ambitransitive verbs.
    *tsạ kaas ạ > tsạ kaas du ạ - he's growing (something)
Here the first example would be ungrammatical with this transitive reading of **kaas**, so the **du** is mandatorily supplied for syntactic/lexical reasons
    kff wịh ạ > kff wịh du ạ - you see/you are observing/you look (at it)
Here both examples are syntactically sound, but the second would generally be preferred prosodically

The generic pronoun **da** can be used as the subject of a clause to make it unaccusative. This is again used as a shift in focus, with the direct object being marked as more central to the discourse. This is infrequent, and most uses of **da** are as an agent nominaliser.

Nominalisation and other derivation
-sa
There is one suffix *-sa* which marks verbs as participles, or adjectivisation on nouns.

-sa on a verb stem indicates a participial usage (so the act of going rather than one who goes)

subject and object nominalisation
da X(-sa)
if the subject of the verb is agentive, it takes the bare stem, otherwise the -sa form is used, both creating a noun which is "one who does/is doing X"
da uuyi - lover (AGT)
da kaassa - grower (PAT)

da ɣu - hider, one who conceals themself (AGT)

da ɣusa - sleeper (PAT)

da tiləhaas ~ da tiləhaassa - married person

some verbs can take either, with either the same or different meanings

patients are nominalised with kftĩ (thing, item) if they are nonhuman, and ũmũ (person) if they are human

ũmũ uuyi - someone who is loved (lovee)
kftĩ uuyi - a beloved item, object of care

locative nominalisation
ŋĩs uuyisa - place of loving

Demonstratives

Demonstrative pronouns
Nouns can be preceded by various demonstratives, which can subsequently replace them (dummy noun is the weak third person pronoun)

The demonstratives are quite complex, and have 26 forms contrasting on different states and deixis:
- **distance**: *proximal* (near speaker), *medial* (near listener), *distal* (further from both)
- **attainability**: *obtainable*, *unobtainable* (discussed in more detail below)
- **position**: *static* (on a flat surface, otherwise not moving, this is the neutral association), *aquatic* (in/on water), *airborne* (in air), *concealed* (hidden away, invisible, unknown location/state), *mobile* (moving, changing state)

	obtainable			*unobtainable*		
	proximal	*medial*	*distal*	*proximal*	*medial*	*distal*
static	bi	buu	biih	ibi	isũ	ibịh
aquatic	ũs		ũkka	ũwũs	ụh	
airborne	tas	tiʔis	mmĩkka	aras	abaas	abwịh
concealed	ɣinã	ɣəla	ɣanãh	iŋənã		ɣịlạ
mobile	tsuh	kaa	kuuh	kiyaa		ịyụ

Obtainability refers to a variety of different interrelated phenomena
- if a referent can physically be held (such as a ball Vs the reflection of a ball in a mirror, or a cup of water Vs water in an open body)
- whether it can be retrieved (such as a person who could be brought over Vs someone who cannot, for social reasons (rank/class) or because they are unknown to the SAP)*
- whether the SAP is capable of possessing it (such as a skill they do or do not have, or something that would be difficult to obtain, such as a fly or lizard - this distinction

being expanded to alienable and inalienable possession in regards to social relations and emotional attachment to objects and other owned items; my house (which I love dearly) Vs my house (which I don't understand myself to be able to physically have)*).

- ○ This can be expanded to a general realis/irrealis distinction (with sensations being obtainable and emotions being unobtainable - the assumption here that one can cause a sensation to happen whereas emotions can only be experienced nonvolitionally, or reference to a thing which has been made real Vs the idea of a thing that has not yet been made - that house (which exists) Vs that house (which has been planned but not made)).

These prerequisites are quite convoluted and depending on context and what is being emphasised (either the obtainability or unobtainability of the referent) the same thing can be referred to with either.

*The conceptual metaphors HAVING A RELATIONSHIP WITH SOMEBODY IS HAVING OBTAINED THEM and THINGS THAT ARE IMPORTANT CAN ALWAYS BE OBTAINED are important to note here

Deixis

Deictically, the salience of a referent to the topic can dictate whether it is referred to using obtainable or unobtainable demonstratives. *This thing at hand* would usually be referred to with ***ibi*** but when discussing two, such as when comparing two situations to come to a decision, the less obtainable/realis one would use ***ibi*** and the other ***bi***. For discussing more referents on a scale, the salience spectrum goes ***bi>ibi>biih>ibịh***.

Alternatively a referent can be identified as concealed to diminish its relevance.

Temporal and spatial deixis

The nouns ***ha*** (time) and ***ŋĩs*** (place) can be used with any demonstrative to refer to a time or place, and either noun rarely occurs without a demonstrative.

> *mũ **bi ha** mmũha ạ*
> I'm coming **now**
> *kff iitsts tsạ **biih ŋĩs** ạ*
> you saw her over there

Pronouns

Pronouns are treated as nouns, and there are various pronoun like words used often -
The basic SAP set are used for informal situations, the 1p formal is self flagellating - i.e. it is used when the person you are speaking to has a higher rank.
The third person pronouns are formally just descriptions of roles or relationships (i.e. parent, job title, elder, etc) and these are the formal second person pronouns too.
The other third person pronouns are either the human third person ***tsạ***, the weak pronoun ***du***, or demonstratives, based on the conversation and how the referent has been brought into the discourse deictically.

	1	2	3
informal	mũ	kff	tsạ, du, da

formal	tsi̱ṛa̱	[*NOMINAL*]

du is used as a dummy pronoun in many grammatical contexts, as detailed in above sections [WHICH ONES BESTIE] but otherwise is used for non agent inanimates.
da is an infrequently used generic pronoun (like generic you or one), and is generally reserved for gnomic statements and hypotheticals
The contrast between ***da*** and ***du*** is largely one of agency, with the former being an agentive and latter patientive, but they are generally not used in the same contexts

The most basic interrogative pronouns are ***tsãh*** and ***nũh***, meaning *who* and *what* respectively.

Honorifics
The honorific system is quite complex but there are two governing factors - formality and familiarity. While informal situations generally assume familiarity, the highest formality also assumes familiarity. Being distant is only formal to a point, but the most reverent use of language assumes someone who knows you very well, whether you know anything about them or not. Formal and unfamiliar forms are used with those interacted with over jobs, legal matters, and people completely unknown (guests to the community, etc.etc.). Continual use of this kind of formality suggests an intentional separation. The highest formality is based on the idea of intergenerational respect, and is reciprocal.

tsəhazwu - mister, sir
ffŋĩ - ma'am, miss
aaʔi̧ - aunt; older woman with close familial relationship
kstaa - uncle; older man with close familial relationship
biibi - grandma; older woman with familial relationship who is to be revered; community elder; my lady
daala - granddad; older man with familial relationship who is to be revered; community elder; sir
ŋmĩyũ - diminutive affectionate honorific - used for people close to the speaker, usually younger or socially deferent in some way

nominal negation and TAM
negation
hu̱ru - false >hu̱s - nominal negator
there's some nominal tam maybe too

i̱luŋã - to stop, finish > duŋã - nominal negator: previous, former, old (i.e. NEG.PST)

duhu - zero - to mark zero number/absence of a countable item

mood
potential events which haven't happened yet are obtainable and concealed and their distance from the speaker (temporally) is reflected in proximity
hypothetical past events are unobtainable and concealed

tense
the present and things within it are obtainable and proximate and static

the past is mobile because it moves away from you and it's unobtainable. its proximity reflects the temporal proximity of the event

Adjectives
Adjectives are a basic word class in tsəwi tala, and go after the nouns that they modify, although some may optionally be placed before the noun, usually with a slight change in meaning, and some may only occur before the noun.

Stative verb construction
Due to the lack of a copula, they can be used with the mood particles to create stative verb constructions.

When forming a stative verb construction, the adjective must precede the mood particle, and cannot take an adverb. This places it at the end of the clause, any other information needs to be marked and go before the stative verb

Locational adjectives
spatial relation outside of the three postpositions is conveyed through constructions with adjectives indicating state of being

kaattĩ - lying flat on the floor, on the ground; face down
buu (du) kaattĩ - that one over there which is lying down on the floor/the face down one (over there)
buu (du) ạ kaattĩ - that one over there is lying down on the floor/that thing over there is face down

colour terms!
basic colour terms are all adjectives, and all of them have associated metaphorical meanings
further terms can be made with a construction [(like) the colour of X], but are not considered primary colour terms
tsəhị̇tti (/skị̇ʔti/) [tsə̱ˈhɪ̱t:i]
adj: red* (in colour); bright, lively, fresh
*I'm imagining bright reds, oranges and bright (not pale) pinks being classed as *tsəhị̇tti*, not darker things like earth, blood (when dry), or a lighter pinkish colour

Adverbs
Adverbs precede the lexical verb or topic.
tsii (together) expresses explicit plural when used with pronouns, as well as the jussive mood (when paired with the desirative)
iih, mũ tsii mĩyũ ɣwa? - well, shall we go then?~lets go then.
wu (again)
huwa (only, just) (from huha - once)
kawus (truly, wholly, completely) (from kawu set/whole + tsi like)

Time (and space)

adverbs of time and space are made from nominalised verbs - ha/ŋĭs VERB-sa + VERB - while X-ing, Y/where X-ing, Y

ha ɣusa iits - to see while sleeping = to dream

verb phrases and the like cannot be constructed into adverbs like this so conjunct clauses have to be employed

time skin become dark then fruit is ripe
ha hanũs kaas dị mãɣwa iih ɣaya ạ sskwisa
the fruit is ripe when/after the skin has become dark

time Danny enter then 1 cook-PST 3 IND
ha Danĩ mmũha iih mũ ɣạʔạʔạ du ạ
I cooked when/after Danny came in

DEM fruit time that skin does-sa dark DEM becomes ripe
ibi ɣaya ha hãŋãs hanũs tsụ-sa mãɣwa ibi kaas dị sskwisa ạ
the fruit becomes ripe as/while the skin darkens

Danny time that 1 cook-PTPL 3N 3A enter-PST IND
Danĩ ha hãŋãs mũ ɣạʔạ-sa du tsạ mmũh-du ạ
Danny came in as/while I was cooking

Questions

When you have a question marker it marks a question
hah - when
ŋĭkka - where
tsãh - who
nũh - what
nəmã/nəmmã/nmã (and so) - an elicitation for more information, used as the head of a question or an entire question in itself, similar to the use of why in English to ask further questions

these question words normally are either nominals or adverbs (in the case of hah)

for hah it assumes adverbial position unless there is another adverb already there in which case it throws the adverb out to the front of the sentence

kawus mũ hah tsụ bi du ạ?
when will I do all of this stuff?

Simple polar questions just use a rising intonation

Numbers

tsǝwi tala uses a base 5 derived system, with most basic terms being derived from simple vocab

Cardinal numbers

(**duhu** none - *cannot be made ordinal or modify a demonstrative*)
hu 1 (also means finger)
iwi 2 (also means pair/both)
kurii 3 (also means a few)
ịsu 4 (also means bunch/sprig)
ạɣǝrụ 5 (also means hand)
ạʔạɣǝrụ 6 (from old augmentative - big hand)
iwi-ạɣǝrụ 7 (2+5)
kurii-ạɣǝrụ 8 (3+5)
ịtkawu 9 (small set)
iwạɣǝrụ 10 (lit. 2 fives) OR **kawu** (full/set)
hu-ŋmãrụ 11 (from 1 with 10)
kakawu 12 (big set)
kurii-ŋĭ-kawu 13 (3 with 10)
ịsu-ŋĭ-kawu 14 (4 with 10)
…
kayiwi OR **kawu-iwi** 20 (from 10 twice)
hu-ŋĭ-kayiwi 21 (1 with 10 twice)
iwi-ŋĭ-kayiwi 22 (2 with 10 twice)
…
kawuurii OR **kayu-kurii** 30 (from 10 thrice)
kạyịsu OR **kayu-ịsu** 40 (from 10 four times)
ạɣǝrụ-ạɣǝrụ 50 (lit. 5 fives)

ibi iwi - the two of them, both of them, that pair (of things)
iwi baaɣwa - (the) two feet
hǝmĭ iwi - two (of the) trees

Ordinal numbers

Ordinal numbers are slightly different. In general the -*sa* suffix applies to make cardinal numbers ordinal, but some are different

ịhhu - first, only
tsasĭh - second (also means afterwards/following)
kuriisa - third
ịsusa - fourth
…

These forms can be used either as nominals, where they are always accompanied by a demonstrative, or used as a definite marker before other nouns
　　　ibi ịhhu - the first one/the only one
　　　ịhhu nŭbi - the first/only child

Adverbs of repetition
-ha can be appended to any number to create an adverb meaning *X amount of times*. This then behaves like a normal adverb
>*iwiha iits* - to see (sth) twice
>*duhuha iits* - to never see

Ideophones and other noises
Within ideophones, the normal rules of vowel length are eschewed, with any modality of vowel being able to be long with no hiatus. Similarly hiatus shifts entirely to [j~ɲ], even in /uu/ situations and similar.

The resulting words can be any part of speech, and often derive in irregular ways.

ạhạạ - to scrape/scratch ~ **ạhạạʔạhạạ** - to bash around ~ **ạhạạsa** - adj. bashed up/scraped

bulu - wet, sopping ~ **bulubulu** - bubbling, gurgling

uyuuyu - to go smoothly (no pst.) ~ **uyuusa** - smooth, without problem or issue; flush, neat

Syntax baybee
S(Adv)V(O)M
Demonstrative noun, noun genitive, noun adjective

Genitival relationships
Noun-noun juxtaposition is always a genitive relationship. The maximal amount of adjuncts allowed in-between the two nouns is a demonstrative or numeral on the possessor. (The possessee is assumed inherently definite, and so does not take any demonstrative)
>*biha amã* - (my) mother's hands
>*ãssũ mũ* - my speech
>*sskwi ibịh ũmũ* - that person (over there, who we don't know)'s ball

Relative clauses
The particle **tsĩs** (from: **tsĩs** *like*) marks the following phrase as a relative clause, which must contain a verb immediately after it (often *tsụ* as a quasi light verb construction in the absence of a copula). The subject of the verb in a relative clause must be the head noun, and so the order of the clause is NRV(O)
>*ibịh ãssũ tsĩs tsskạ ĩmũs* - those words which finished the confusion
>*bi du tsĩs tsụ ạhạạsa asĩ tsạ* - this thing which was bashed up by him

"Prepositions" aka locative particles
Any prepositional relationship is conveyed with the prepositions *ŋĩ* (at/in/on/by/with) *dị* (towards) or *asĩ* (away) for spacial meanings and *tsĩs* (like) [etc etc] for other meanings

Prepositionally, these particles immediately precede the NP they're marking, but unlike most other prenominal particles they do not carry any assumed definiteness. They do however have the power to make verbs into verbal nouns, this heading a NP.

ŋĩ - at, in, on, near, by: located either adjacent to (in any direction) or inside something; with (comitative)

dį - towards, to (general allative): assumption of movement or direction facing towards; dative

asĩ - away, from (general ablative): assumption of movement or direction facing away; agentive

Clausal linking and connectives

iih (*then*) - indicates a temporal relationship whereby the following clause is linked to the previous by knowledge that the events passed after the previous verb; OR that it is the next logical step in the given narrative

nə (*so*) - indicates a causal relationship between the two clauses whereby the former caused the latter; OR it is the next step in a given narrative given the previous information, but it may not be logically or decontextually understood

aalu (*but*) - indicates a contrary relationship between the two clauses, either one contradicts the next, or is logically unsequential or surprising

hãŋãs (*that*) - indicates a subordinate/result clause (only one modal particle used between both classes)

ųs (*and, also, furthermore*) - indicates additional information which emphasises the previous point or builds upon it

These clausal connectors are often used as discourse particles

iih or **nə** can introduce any sentence or phrase at the start of a dialogue to open the narrative frame

aalu aalu is used for *"not too much"* or *"oh no, its fine"* or *"no worries"*.

nəmã/nəmmã/nmã (*and so*) - is another way of indicating the following information, adding more important information OR as an elicitation for more information, used as the head of a question or an entire question in itself, similar to the use of *why* in English to ask further questions

Conditionals

Conditionals are linked with **nə** (usually?) with the first verb marked in the potential mood, and the second verb marked in potential desirative counterfactual or involitional

potential	If X then Y (definite conditional)
desirative	If X then probably Y/x wants Y (indefinite conditional)
counterfactual	If X then Y does not happen
involitional	If X then probably not Y/x doesn't want Y

tsạ basəhũ ŋĩ tsi, nə mũ tsii mĩyũ ɣwa
3.HU stroll LOC POT, so 1 together go DES
If he wanders in here, then we'll all go

would you still love me if I was a worm?

nmã mũ tsi da ɣaraɣarasa iih kff uuyi mũ ɣwa?

Q 1 POT AG.NMLZ=squirm~REDUP-PTPL then 2 love 1 DES

[↗nmɐ̃ ↓mõ tsi da ɣaˌraɣaˈrasa ʔiːh kf̩ʷː ˈʔuːji mõ ↗ɣwä]

Syntactic aspect marking

Certain clause configurations show aspectual distinctions. Generally within a narrative frame, the first verb is assumed to be imperfective. Setting up two clauses in the form ***nə…iih…*** implies that the first is imperfective and the second perfective, happening within the duration of or just after the established verb.

> **nə mũ basəhũhũ ą, iih biibi dị mũ asəwiiwi ãssũ ą**
>
> so 1 stroll-PST IND, then grandma to 1 spoke-PST news IND
>
> *I was walking around, and then grandma told me some news*

a marked past tense followed by an unmarked verb in this construction suggests that the second verb is continuous

> **nə mũ basəhũhũ ą, iih biibi dị mũ asəwii ãssũ ą**
>
> so 1 stroll-PST IND, then grandma to 1 spoke news IND
>
> *So I was walking around, and grandma was telling me some news*

Sample sentences

kff wu iʔus ĩs ạ! nmã kaas dị sskwisa duts?
[kfʷː wö ˈʔiʔos ʔɛ̃s‿ɐ̯ ‖ ↗nmʌ̃ ↓kæːs dɪ̯ː ʔṣːˈkwɪsa ↗ˈdʊtṣ]
kf̣ː wu iʔut=ĩt ạ! nwã kaːt=nị ṣːkwi-sa nutṣ?
2 again stand=eat IND! Q grow=towards ball-ADJ CF?
Again you are eating! And so might you not become bloated?

həwaa! ibi ãssũ bulu ạ bulu ạ!
oh.no! UO.PRX.ST news wet IND wet IND!
Oh no! This news is disheartening indeed!
[həˈwaː ‖ ˈʔiβị ʔʌ̃sːɔ̃ ˈbʊlʊ ʔɐ̯ ˈbʊlʊ ʔɐ̯]

tsiwịluu dị mũ ụləraara ibịh ãssũ tsĩs tsskạ ĩmũs mũ ạ
[tsiˈwɪ̯ːluː dɪ̯ː mõ ʔẙːləˈræːra ʔiˈβɪ̯h ˈʔʌ̃sːɔ̃ tsɛ̃s ʔɛ̃ˈmõs mõ‿ɐ̯]
siwịnuː nị=mũ ụntaː-ta imịk ãʔsũ sĩt tṣːkạ ĩmũt mũ ạ
Sjiveru to=1 display-PST UO.DIST.ST words REL finish wobble 1 IND
Sjiveru showed me that information which ended my confusion

iih da tsəbii tawuhuh hụ ɣwa; "kff tsii mũddu dị fftụ tsi?"
[ʔiːh da tsəˈβị taˈwöhoh hʊ̯ː ɣwä ‖ ↗kfʷː tsi ↓ˈmõdːʊ dɪ̯ː ˈʔfʷːtʊ̯ ↗tsi]
iːk da=smi tauk-uk hụ ŋwa; "kf̣ː si mũʔ-nu dị f̣ːtụ tsi?"
then NMLZ=meditate ask-PST all DES; "2 together drink-PST towards joy POT?"
So the monk asked all; "might you have drunk to fulfilment?"

mũ tsii ụrĩs ạ nə kuuh ha kaas dị tiləhaas tsi
[mõ tsiː ʔẙːˈrɛ̃s‿ɐ̯ nɛ̃ kuː‿hːa kæːs dɪ̯ː tiləˈhæːs tsi]
1 together rush IND so OB.MO.DI time grow=to=marry POT
We are rushing so we might get married soon

biha tsạ tsiŋənũnũ ạhạạsa asĩ abbạs ạ
hand 3 suffer-PST scratch-NMLZ AG stick IND
Their hand was scratched by a stick

mũ tsskạ iits ũmũ ạ
1 finish see person IND
I have just seen a person

du biih asəwiiwi ạ mũ tsskạ iits ũmũ ɣwa
3 UO.DIST.ST say-PST IND 1 finish see person OPT
He (over there) said that I had just seen a person

tsãh ạ kiyaa nə?
who IND UN.MOB so?
Who is that? (moving towards us, who we have no social relation to)

kff bịhạ ɣəla nũh ạ?

2 do OB.MED.COV what IND?
What are you doing? (I cannot see/I cannot work it out)

kff bịhạ buu nũh ạ?
2 do OB.MED.STA what IND?
What are you doing? (I can see what you are holding/working on/messing with and so am questioning your reasoning)

mũ bịhạ bi du ạ nə.
1 do OB.PRX.STA 3 IND so
Well, I'm doing this thing.

mũ tsiŋənũ abwịh ạɣwitsa ŋãs
1 experience-PST UNOB.AIR.DIST gossip NEG.DES
I happened to hear that gossip (and I didn't intend to or want to)

du tsụ kaas ạ
3 make grow IND
it is growing

iih, mũ tsii mĩyũ ɣwa?
then 1 together go DES?
well, shall we go then?~lets go then.

I would still love you if you were a worm
kff tsi da ɣaraɣarasa iih mũ uuyi kff tsi
2 POT AG.NMLZ=squirm~REDUP-PTPL then 1 love 2 POT
[kf̩ʷː tsi da ɣaˌraɣaˈrasa ʔiːh mõ ˈʔuːji kf̩ʷː tsi]

TTOTD

#1
today I went to improv (for the first time in a while)
mũ kiyaa ha ŋĩ ãtffsa iʔuttu dị ũwaahsa bisi-bisi ạ
1 UO.PROX.MOB=time LOC fresh-NMLZ walk-PST to perform-NMLZ surprise IND
lit. today with freshness I went to surprise performance

#2
mũ tiʔis dụbbạ mmũha Bịlinũ tsi
1SG OB.MED.CONC summer enter Berlin POT
I am (probably) going to Berlin this summer*l

#3
nə mũ ha ɣusa iits du mãɣwa tsi
[nẽ mõ ha ˈɣʊsa ˈʔiːtʂ dʊ ˈmẽɣwä tsi]
so 1SG ADV=sleep-NMLZ see 3.INAN beautiful POT
then maybe I will dream of something beautiful

#4

bi da tsəbii tsĩs tsskạ kạ həmĭ asəwiiwi ibi ãssũ ạ

[bi da tsəˈβi̧ː tsɛ̃s ˈtṣːkɇ̞ː kɇ̞ː hɛ̃mɛ̃ ʔaseˈwɪːwë ˈʔiβi̧ ˈʔʌ̃sːɔ̃ ʔɇ̞]

OB.PR.ST NMLZ=meditate REL finish=plant tree tell-PST UO.PR.ST news IND

the monk who just planted a tree told me that news

#6

da nũbba tsəwi Tsuŋmũ tsi nə kiyaa ha tsi i̧bəra

3.GEN know language China POT then UO.PR.MOB=time POT good

if you have knowledge of the Chinese language this day will have been entertaining

#7(?)

mũ bi ha tsii bi̧hạ nũh tsi?

[mɔ̃ bi ha tsiː ˈbɹ̩ːhɇ̞ nɔ̃h tsi]

1 OB.PRX.ST=time together do what POT

what are we gonna do now?

ALT

mũ bi ha tsii i̧si̧ ŋĩ bi̧hạsa nũh tsi?

[mɔ̃ bi ha tsiː ˈʔɹ̩ːsɹ̩ ŋɛ̃ bɹ̩ˈhɇ̞ːsa nɔ̃h tsi]

1 OB.PRX.ST=time live=LOC=do-PTPL what POT

what are we going to be doing now? what will we have going on (from) now?

Poetry

həmĭ ŋĩ tsawi̧ tsũwũ ạ

mũ tsalaa ŋĩ bu̧ɣạ ạ

tas tu̧ ạyi̧ di̧ duu mũ ạ

"buu abbạs mĭ ɣaya tsi"

       tree LOC patch sway IND

The tree in the garden is swaying

       1 sit LOC branch IND

I sit on its branches

       DEM bird sing ALL ear 1 IND

The birds sing into my ears

       DEM sticks bear fruit POT

These fresh branches will bear fruit

ạbəsaa awu ạ//iih du ạ kff

       flower bloom IND//then 3 IND 2

The flowers bloom//then it's yours

da uuyi mũ ạ həmĭ

u̧s tsạ kawus ạ mĩhmĭ

       NMLZ love 1 IND tree

       furthermore 3 whole.ADV IND forest

my lover is a tree

and my lover is the whole forest

mũ dəri̧ tsạ kaassa tsi

nə iits bwisii tsạ ɣwa

1 watch 3 grow-NMLZ POT
so see face 3 DES
if I watch it growing
I might see their face

mã**ɣ**wasa, uyuusa; tsĩs ha dụbbạ
magically, flowing; like the summer heat

Dictionary

<u>a</u>

aaʔị - *n/pro*: aunt; older woman with close familial relationship

abbạs - *n*: stick, stalk, branch (often new or particularly spindly); anything long and thin; anything with potential to grow bigger and stronger

aɣinãs - *n*: a functional group of items (people in a team, elements of an ecosystem, parts of a machine); a machine (any complex object which aides someone)

ahĩ - *vb*: to break, ruin, destroy

amã - *n/pro*: mother

anã - *n/pro*: father

asəwii - *vb*: to say, report, suggest

asĩ - *ptcl*: away, from

awu (*pst.* **awulu**) - *vb*: to bloom, flower, blossom, become fragrant, become visually distinct; to become ripe (when the colour changes, such as a banana); to mature (when accompanied by a significant (usually positive) outward change, such as going grey, growing facial hair)

ayi (*pst.* **addu**) - *vb*: to be after, to follow; to be later, come later

> **da ayisa** - *n*: this afternoon, this evening, later today; tomorrow: (lit. the one which comes after)

<u>ã</u>

ãmĩ - *n*: wish, desire, gift

ãrị - *n*: sour/overripe fruit; mead, fruit/honey wine; (*a person*) someone sickly sweet and potentially dangerous, a red flag

> **mũʔa ãrị** - *vb.phr*: to drink mead [*vol*]; (*about a person*) to be ensnared, to have fallen into a trap; to be under someone's spell/thumb [*nvol*]

ãssũ - *n*: speech, news, information, words

ãtff - *vb*: to be new, be fresh; to go back to something with fresh eyes

<u>ạ</u>

ạbəsaa - *n*: flower, colourful leaves; desirable product of maturity

ạɣərụ - *adj*: five; a handful of, a small quantity of

ạɣwis - *vb*: to sip, nibble, inhale: to consume/take in a small amount of something; to discuss something mindless, to chat bubbles

> **ạɣwitsa** - *n*: (*of food/drink/smells*) a nibble, a taste (of something), a snatch: a portion of consumable item only for a taste and not for nutrition; (*of words*) something mildly disinteresting and mindless

ạhạạ - *vb*: to scrape, scratch

> **ạhạạsa** - *adj*. bashed up, scraped; functional but no longer aesthetically clear
>
> **ạhạạʔạhạạ** - *vb*: to bash around, make a mess of

ạyị - *vb*: to sing

b

baaɣwa - *n*: feet
basəhũ - *vb*: to stroll, pass through
bats - *vb:* to organise, put together
bayi - *n*: reason(ing), sensibleness ~ *
      bayi nũ - *n*: support, justification; *lit.* brain reasoning
biha - *n*: hand(s)
biibi - *n/pro*: grandma; older woman with familial relationship who is to be revered; community elder; my lady
bisi-bisi - *adj*: surprising, unexpected, unplanned, made up
bịhạ - *vb*: to do, make, mess around with etc. (anything with hands)
bulu - *adj*: wet, sopping, dripping with water; disheartening, sad, upsetting: something that puts a stop to one's happiness
      bulubulu - *adj*: bubbling, gurgling, unclear and moving, disturbed surface; (*of a person*) excited, chaotic, bubbly
bụɣạ - *n*: branch, arm, limb; connector
bwisii - *n*: nose, face, visage: outward facing representation of a person, representation of emotion and expression

d

daala - *n/pro*: granddad; older man with familial relationship who is to be revered; community elder; sir
dərị - *vb*: to watch (out for), look at intently; to study (visually), pore over
dwaa - *n*: head, brain; intelligence
disạh - *vb*: to scrape; to peel, skin
dumã - *vb*: be in association with, have associated with oneself, have (nonphysical)
duŋã - *ptcl*: nominal negator; *adj*: previous, former, old; *adv*: no longer, not anymore
duu - *n*: ear, ears
duusi - *vb*: (intrans.) to be sleepy, inattentive; (trans.) to not pay attention to something, overlook; to be switched off about something
dụbbạ - *n*: summer, hot season

f

ffŋĭ - *n/pro*: ma'am, miss
fftạ - *vb*: to learn something from a secondary source, to have information relayed to oneself (by a third party), to come to know something (in a roundabout way)
fftụ - *n*: joy, happiness, fulfilment, satisfaction
      dị fftụ - *adv*: enough, sufficiently (lit. to joy)

ɣ

ɣara - *vb*: to squirm, wiggle about (in a fixed place)
      ɣaraɣara - *vb*: to wiggle around, move by wiggling
            da ɣaraɣarasa - *n*: worm; any small and long insect which wiggles around to move (worms, millipedes, centipedes, caterpillars, etc)
ɣaya - *n*: fruit (of medium size, generally sweet/juicy)
ɣạʔạ - *vb*: to be cooking, cook [impf.]: generally concerns large processes of cooking which require multiple sessions, as opposed to *mĩsnã* which tends to be one session
ɣəraanĭ - *vb*: mercy, pity
ɣis - *vb*: to take; causative
ɣu - *vb*: to sleep, lay dormant; to be in a concealed/hidden space

ɣu̞ri̞ - *vb*: to have, own, possess, keep

ɣwaʔa - *n*: seed

<div align="center">

__h__

</div>

ha - *n*: duration in time

hanũs - *n*: pith, peel, rind; shell, outer skin

həbissaas - *vb*: to eat (of a bear eating), ravage; to skin, flay; to descale, pluck

       həbisaassa - *n*: one who makes pelts/hides; (euphemistically) a bear: lit. the flayer

həmĩ - *n*: tree, shrubbery; *(poetic)* lover, partner

həwa - *adv*: sadly, disappointingly, unfortunately (but uncontrollably/unstoppably)

       həwaa - *intj*: oh no! alas! oh dear!

hiiba - *vb*: to work, labour, do a skilled task or job; (as auxiliary) to strive to do smth, work hard at something, extend effort towards something; (as auxiliary) to be skilled at smth, know how to do a skill (well)

hssʔa - *vb*: to drown; to sink, fall into something (slowly)

hu - *n/adj*: finger, digit; one

huwa - *adv*: only, just from *huha* - once

hu̞ - *adj*: all, every, each

hu̞ru - *adj*: false, wrong, incorrect (not deceitful)

      hu̞s - *ptcl*: nominal negator

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iih - *ptcl*: then, after (conj.); then, well (d.m.)

iits - *vb*: to see, view (invol.)

iɣəbi̞ (*pst.* **iɣəbi̞dda**) - *vb*: to (intentionally) forget, move on from something, ignore (a past action); to make taboo

ihabba - *n*: psychedelic experience, hallucination, sleep paralysis, trip: an experience of viewing (knowledgeably) unreal things, while being in a state feeling physically restricted or trapped

ikku - *n*: smoke, incense, smell, fragrance; a mist, a haze

isbwa - *n*: corpse, carcass (human or animal)

isũkku - *vb*: to make a decision, to decide on (object takes allative case)

ittaa - *intj*: hello! hi! (general greeting);

      clipping of ***ittaa wara*** - to come home/return home, originally used as a greeting for

        entering a house or other place, where the host says ***ittaa*** and the guests say ***ittaara***

        (I/we) have come

iwa - *vb*: to reassign, give; to humble sbdy; (refl.) to take up a mantle, bear a responsibility

iwi - *n/adj*: pair: both; two

izwaa - *vb*: to plan, decide on

iʔus - *vb:* to walk, go, travel (by foot)

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ĩmũs - *n*: tremble, shake, wobble; uncertainty, falter (in an action)

ĩs - *vb*: to eat, intake, consume

ĩttạh - *vb*: to advise, help, assist; (of one's offspring) to raise, parent, grow; (of a plant) to train, prune, trim

ĩzwa - *n*: a child, young person; little thing, small version of a given thing

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i̞bəra - *adj*: good, excellent; entertaining, worth investing energy into

i̞luŋã - *vb*: to stop, finish, leave; to disappear, become nothing/irrelevant

i̞si̞ - *vb*: to live

ịsu - *adj*: a bunch of, a sprig of; four
ịzwi - *vb*: to find, track down

k

kaas (*pst.* **kaalu**) - *vb*: to grow, become older and bigger
kaattĭ - *adj*: planar, flat, horizontal; lying flat on the floor, on the ground; face down
kassu - *n*: palm of the hand, sole of the foot; thick skin
    kahassu - *n*: callous; shield, guard; scar
kawu - *n/adj*: a set; ten
kạ (*pst.* **kạlu**) - *vb*: to plant, put in the ground, grow
kftĭ - *n*: thing, item, object; gadget, tool
kibbaa - *adj*: last, final, end, finished
kĭs - *vb*: to guard, protect, shield; to cover, (over)shadow
kstaa - *n/pro*: uncle; older man with close familial relationship
kuŋərã - *n*: water (out in nature, not contained or moved by humans)
kurii - *adj*: a few; three
kũsĭ - *adj*: good, great, sufficient (or superfluous); intellectually or creatively stimulating (i.e. a good idea); well chosen, with ideal intent or application to a situation

m

mãɣwa - *adj*: black, dark (in colour); magical, wondrous, beautiful; unknowable in full, while marvellous to (try and) behold
mãks - *vb*: to stand
mərĭ - *n*: nonsobriety, altered state of mind, state of extreme emotion
    tsalaa ŋĭ mərĭ - *vb.phr*: to be in an altered state, in a headspace; to
        be drunk/high; to be in a fit of emotion, overwhelmed by emotion; to
        be overtired; etc (either alongside the speaker of apart from them)
mãsa - *vb*: to tie (up) ones hair, do a hairdo, tie back hair; to tie anything with a ribbon, twine, or string (generally tying things together); to organise many objects into one mass, collate, collect
mãsaa - *vb*: to stir the pot, aggravate a situation, give unhelpful but technically true information in order to provoke a disagreement
mãttusuh - *adj*: unforgiving, difficult to engage with; tiring, trying
mĭhmĭ - *n*: forest
mĭsnã - *vb*: to cook, have cooked, prepare food (in one go) [pfv.]
mĭyã - *vb*: to fell, cut down; chop or slice or break something long (normally in half/only once)
mĭyũ - *vb*: to go, leave, exit
mĭzwas - *vb*: to assemble people to eat a meal together; to (organise a) gossip, gather a group for the purposes of gossiping, engage in the act of gossip
mmũha (*pst.* **mmũhdu**) - *vb*: to enter, go inside, come, travel to
mũʔa (*pst.* **mũddu**) - *vb*: to drink, breathe in (vapours)

n

nãts - *vb*: to mumble, stutter, trip over saying smth; to fumble, drop, let sth fall
nə - *ptcl*: so, thus (conj.); so (d.m.)
nĭktff - *n*: awkward physical contact, a physically incoherent gesture between people; emotionally/socially awkward or uncomfortable interaction, misreading of social situation
nĭttah - *vb*: to behave like something else, possess a quirk, perform an idiosyncrasy
nũ - *n*: mind, thinking, brain
nũbba - *vb*: to learn, come into knowledge

nũbbasa - *n*: expert, sage; a person who is knowledgeable about something in particular (normally modified by what they are knowledgeable about)

nũbi - *n*: child, offspring, youth, juvenile (human only)

ŋ

ŋãŋəsũ - *vb*: to forget, have something fall out of your mind; to misremember the name of; to be confused by (the presence of) something

ŋĭ - *ptcl*: locative; at, to, by

ŋĭs - *n*: place, space, area

ŋmĩyũ - *n*: something small but significant; a lucky emblem or object - *pro*: diminutive affectionate honorific - used for people close to the speaker, usually younger or socially deferent in some way

s

sskwi - *n*: ball; any round, taut object (ripe fruits, fat animals, gourds, etc.)

sskwisa - *adj*: full, engorged, fat, swollen; pampered, looked after; (*of fruit*) ripe

t

taasii - *n*: clothes, cover (over skin)

tala - *n*: land, country, ground; the place where the *tala* live > endonym

ũmũ tala - *n*: the tala people, tala nation

tawuh - *vb*: to ask, inquire: attempt to elicit a response (verbally or through signals)

tiləhaas - *vb*: to be married, have married, be in a state of marriage/otherwise lifelong partnership

tị - *n*: broth, stock: savoury hot liquid; (of food) heart, taste, body, core; (of a person) soul, overall emotional state

tff (*pst* **nĭ**) - *vb*: to hold (sth up to/in sth), expose (sth to sth), give, present, place (sth in sth)

tfsã - *n*: lake: large body of water which moves imperceptibly

tiləɣạ - *n*: blanket, covering; warmth, coziness

tsakkạ - *vb*: to block, provide a barrier, stop movement across a boundary

tsakkạsa - *n*: wall, barrier, separator

tsahus - *vb*: to inhabit, live in, make a space ones own; to decorate or detail

tsalaa - *vb*: to sit in-between/on/surrounded by

tsawị - *n*: grove, garden, patch, orchard: any area dedicated to wild growing plants

tsəbii - *vb*: to meditate, think deeply; know oneself; be spiritual, be knowledgeable

da tsəbii - *n/pro*: monk, guide, teacher

tsəhazwu - *n/pro*: mister

tsəhịtti - *adj*: red; bright, lively, fresh

tsəhudda - *n*: snake

tsərũ - *vb*: to desire, need (sth); to be obliged (to do sth)

tsəwi - *n*: language, speech

tsəwi tala - *n*: the tala language

tsịbba - *n*: hallucination, vision, sight (of something non real); image, photo, realisation (or an object in 2d)

tsii - *adv*: together

tsiis (*pst* **tsiris**) - *vb*: to remember, think about, recall

tsiŋã (*pst* **tsiŋənũ**) - *v*: to experience, suffer, pass, partake in (unwillingly); to do anything without volition

tsĭs - *ptcl*: like; relativiser

tsisã - *n*: flame, (part of a) heat source; support, backing, influence: something which holds up or supports something else to be, such as a supportive person, environmental condition, etc

tsskạ - *vb:* to finish, complete, make complete, top off

tsstu - *n*: escape hatch, exit hole; hole in the ground made by a plant growing through it; skylight: an intentional hole letting in light from above

tsuh - *adj*: heavy, weighty, girthy, (meaty?)

tsuli - *n*: sister, girl

tsụ - *vb:* to make

tsũwũ - *vb*: to sway, wave around: move repetitively but without haste

tũhmmũ - *vb*: to stop, cease, halt (tr.)

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usəra - *vb*: to describe, detail, flesh out; to augment, improve, act as a prosthetic

    ũmũ usərasa - *n*: cyborg, augmented person (generally through use of physical prosthesis): lit. person who is augmented

utss - *vb*: to squash, squeeze; (refl.) to tense (a muscle), flex

uumũs - *vb*: to lie, swindle, cheat; (of an object) to suggest something untrue, mislead

uuyi (*pst* **uuyilu**) - *vb*: to love, be enamoured with

uyuuyu - *vb*: to go smoothly (no *pst*)

    uyuusa - *adj*: smooth, without problem or issue; flush, neat

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ũmũ - *n*: person, human

ũwaah - *vb*: to perform, put on a show

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ụləraa - *vb*: (*tr.* only) to show, display: to bear, grow, fruit, sprout

ụrĩs - *vb*: to rush, hurry, do sth quickly or hastily

ụzwih - *n*: box, container

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wara - *n*: house, home, homestead; curated environment (i.e. you don't come from a home you make a home by being in it)

waats - *adj*: like (something), similar, related (conceptually)

wãs - *n*: soul, mind; self

wịh (*pst* **wịhdu**) - *vb*: to see, observe

    wịɣwị - *vb*: to know (habitual reading; no past tense)

wu - *adv*: again