

A New Description of Eniy
A Taapaqi-Zhadnganic Language of the Gnagus Region

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Chapter 3

Phonology

3.1 Phonemes

The Eniy language, as it is spoken in the Gnagus region, has 17 consonant and 6 vowel phonemes.

3.1.1 Consonant Phonemes

	Plosive		Fricative		Nasal
	Voiceless	Voiced	Voiceless	Voiced	Voiced
Bilabial	p	b	ɸ	β	m
Dental	t	d	θ	ð	n
Palatal		ɟ		ʝ	
Velar	k	g	x	ɣ	
Uvular	q				

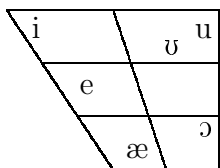
The phonemes /θ/, /ð/, /t/ and /d/ are usually realized as dental consonants [θ̪], [ð̪], [t̪], and [d̪]. However, as will be seen in the phonology section, [θ̪] and [ð̪] are in complementary distribution with their interdental counterparts [θ̩] and [ð̩], and alveolars [s] and [z]. The phonemes /t/ and /d/ can be realized as either dental or alveolar plosives. In very specific phonological contexts, [r^w] is also an allophone of /d/.

A voiced allophone of /q/, [ɢ], also occurs.

The phoneme /j/ has a number of realizations in complementary distribution. They vary regionally in patterns that will be described later, but in the Gnagus region the phones are [j], [ɟ], and [j̥], depending on context.

The plosives all have short and long versions, which contrast only when syllable-initial.

3.1.2 Vowel Phonemes



There are six vowels in Eniy according to most accounts and my own observations. Some who describe the language claim that it has only five, considering [u] and [ʊ] to be realizations of the same phoneme. However, this is not the case for most dialects. Although contrasts between /u/ and /ʊ/ are rare, they do exist.

Vowels have two contrasting lengths. Vowels articulated one after another are theoretically distinct from diphthongs of the same two vowels; the difference is marked orthographically but it is seldom observed in the spoken language.

3.1.3 Regional Differences

Accent among Eniy speakers is most readily identified phonetically by the realization of the phonemes /j/ and /n/. Deeper into the desert, the pronunciation of /n/ is generally [n], as it has been for several centuries (although the original pronunciation was in fact [ŋ] in ages past), but nearer the cities it is often [ŋ], under the influence of Xaaqut. (FINISH)

3.2 Phonotactics and Phonological Processes

Eniy generally permits clusters containing a maximum of two consonants. The consonants must share their state of voicing, i.e clusters such as /*sd/ or /*ðp/ are not permitted. (When ⟨sd⟩ or ⟨zp⟩ appears in the orthography, then it either represents a closed syllable followed by another syllable with an initial consonant, or is the consequence of conformance to morphemic spelling, with the cluster being voiced when it is pronounced.)

Consonants representing plosives in the orthography which are doubled (e.g. ⟨pp⟩, ⟨ddy⟩) are in fact long, not two separate articulations. Articulations such as /mp:ɛ/ are seen, although somewhat uncommonly.

3.2.1 /j/

The phoneme /j/ has complementary allophones [j], [j̥], and [ɟ]. /j/ is realized as [ɟ] in consonant clusters and syllable-finally after a diphthong or long vowel. [j̥] occurs when /j/ is the lone final consonant of a closed syllable containing a short vowel. . [j] occurs everywhere else.

3.2.2 /q/, /x/ and /ɣ/

[ɣ] is how /q/ is realized in combination with a voiced consonant in a cluster, and, often, between vowels.

Following /q/, /x/ is usually realized as [χ], but this is not universal.

3.2.3 /t/ and /d/

Alone, /t/ and /d/ are uniformly dental in their articulation. However, they are alveolar after /θ/ and /ð/. Interestingly, /θ/ and /ð/ undergo the same transformation, they are pronounced dental when alone and alveolarly after /t/ and /d/.

When /d/ occurs after a rounded vowel (/u/, /ʊ/ or /ɔ/), and before the front vowels /i/ or /e/, it is pronounced [r^w].

3.2.4 /θ/ and /ð/

/θ/ and /ð/ are realized as the interdental [θ̠] and [ð̠] following any bilabial sound, such as /ɸ/ or /β/.

3.2.5 /ɸ/ and /β/

/ɸ/ and /β/ are pronounced [f] and [v], respectively, after any dental.

3.2.6 Long Consonants

The “long consonants”, /p:/, /b:/, /t:/, /d:/, /q:/, and /ɟ:/, do not contrast with their short forms except when syllable-initial in almost all dialects, always being pronounced short.

3.2.7 Nasals

Vowels before a nasal are nasalized. In the case of a bilabial nasal, the vowel may also become more rounded. Word-final nasals are often dropped when alone in the coda of a syllable, although the vowel will retain the nasalization. When this process occurs is dependent on the region.

3.3 Writing System

Today, Eniy is most often written using the system of Romanization devised by Yosef Nan, one of the first Terran scientists to visit Dramidia, in the last century A.I. The system, being morphemic, has aged well despite some changes in pronunciation, and it matches the indigenous writing system very well.¹

¹It should be noted that, all things considered, Eniy has changed little with time. Written Eniy of twenty centuries ago is still intelligible to modern readers, although semantic drift is a possible source of confusion. Some take this as a testament to the conservative character of

Long ago, Eniy and related languages were written with the Old Vulpinian alphabet, but after the Lhew Conquest, some clans adopted the Pan-Vulpinian Abjad that is still used today in the writing of Xaaqut. The Old Vulpinian alphabet was revived a few centuries ago for other Vulpinian languages, as part of an effort to promote nomadic heritage and culture.

Although educated literate speakers are usually familiar with all three, most of the nomad clans nearer urban areas write in either the Romanization (which is based on Old Vulpinian), or in Old Vulpinian itself. Less cosmopolitan clans write in either the Pan-Vulpinian Abjad or Old Vulpinian.

3.3.1 Principles

Both the Roman system of writing Eniy and the Old Vulpinian alphabet from which it takes many conventions are founded on the principle of morphemic spelling, whereas the abjad is phonemic. This complicates conversion between the abjad and the other systems, a process requiring knowledge of the language.

When describing a root morpheme, of course, the Roman system and the Old Vulpinian alphabet are phonemic.

3.3.2 Letters

Letter	Variants	Sound	English Approximation
A		a	Bag
E		e	Beg
I		i	Beak
O		ɔ	Bog (Some dialects)
U		u	Boot
Ū	W	ʊ	Book
M		m	Mom
P		p	Pop
B		b	Bib
F		ɸ	Feif
V		β	Vie
N		n	None
T		t	Toot
D		d	Dad
S		θ	Theme
Z		ð	The
K		k	Kick
G		g	Gig
Kh	X	x	Loch (Some dialects)
Gh	R	ɣ	(Not in English)
Q		q	(Not in English)
Y		j	You, Vision
Dy	J	ʃ	(Not in English)

the speakers.

The alphabet of the standard Romanization is thus: ⟨ A B D E F G H I K M N O P Q S T U Ũ V Y Z ⟩, having 21 letters. Three digraphs are used: ⟨Dy⟩, ⟨Gh⟩, and ⟨Kh⟩. The letter ⟨H⟩ only appears in digraphs.

3.3.3 Orthography

The punctuation marks ⟨,⟩, ⟨.⟩, and ⟨?⟩ are used exactly as in English. The ⟨!⟩ marks all imperative sentences. In texts written with a reader who is not a native speaker in mind, it is usual to separate verb prefixes and suffixes from the verb stem with a ⟨-⟩, and likewise noun stems from their inflections. This makes it considerably easier to find an unknown word in a dictionary if one is not already quite familiar with the language.

Rarely, one may encounter text with ⟨Ō̃⟩, ⟨Ẵ⟩, and other vowels with tildes above taking the place of the sequence /Vn\$/ or /Vm\$/ where that sequence represents a nasalized vowel. This is a breaking with the phonemic principle, since the dialects of Eniy do not agree on which sequences spelled with a vowel followed by a final nasal are realized as sequences of a nasalized vowel and then a nasal stop, and which are realized as a nasalized vowel only. The most common place this is seen is in dialect-specific pronouncing dictionaries. (Which may also distinguish between approximant and fricative realizations of /j/, writing the former ⟨y⟩ and the latter ⟨ž⟩.)

Diphthongization is mostly a process inherent in Eniy word formation, but in the rare cases where two consecutive vowels that would ordinarily form a diphthong are to be pronounced as a sequence monophthongs, they are marked with the dieresis. (E.g. ⟨oë⟩, ⟨ei⟩.)

The forms of the copula pronounced /a/, /e/, and /i/ are conventionally written ⟨ä⟩, ⟨ë⟩, and ⟨ï⟩ to distinguish them instantly from various particles and prepositions. By a similar rationale, the particle read /de/ is written ⟨dë⟩.

3.3.4 Varriants

The varriants of the Romanization system are mostly towards the end of eliminating digraphs and replacing them with letters present in the Roman alphabet but otherwise unused in the Romanization of Eniy. For instance, ⟨r⟩ and ⟨x⟩ frequently stand for /r/ and /x/ instead of the standard digraphs ⟨gh⟩ and ⟨kh⟩. This is a quite practical measure. Although it reduces the readability for a speaker of English, it improves slightly the ease of use for the Eniy writer; further, when all digraphs are eliminated, it simplifies the process of teaching reading.

Thus, while the varriants listed in the table above are not part of the official standard, they are very commonly encountered in printed Eniy material, and they are not usually considered “wrong.”

3.3.5 Pan-Vulpinian Abjad

The Pan-Vulpinian Abjad is derived from the ancient Lhew consonantal writing system.² The adaptation to Eniy is as satisfactory as most of the others, although none of the Zhadngan languages are as well suited to a consonantal writing system as Ancient Lhew was. (Indeed, the vowel pointing of Lhew is thought to have begun in the other Dramidian languages that were adapted to the script, and later adopted into the Lhew orthography.)

Character	Eniy	Rom.	Xaaqut	Rom.	Xaapame	Rom.
	ǰ	dy	(dj)	-	ǰ, c	q, x
	ȳ, x	gh, kh	ȳ, x	q, x	ȳ, x	q, x
	ǫ, θ	z, s	ǫ, θ	ǫ, ɸ	ǫ, θ	dh, th
	j	y	ǰ, ȝ	j, c	ǰ, ȝ	j, c
	β, φ	v, f	v, f	v, f	β, φ	v, f
	(ǫ)	-	(ȝ)	-	z, s	z, s
	b, p	b, p	b, p	b, p	b, p	b, p
	d, t	d, t	d, t ^h	d, t	d, d ^h	d, t
	g, k	g, k	g, k ^h	g, k	g, k	g, k
	-	-	ʔ	h	ʔ	h
	m	m	ᵿ	m	ᵿ, ᵿ̇	m, mh
	n	n	ᵿ	n	ᵿ, ᵿ̇	n, nh
	(j)	-	j	y	j	y
	(ǫ)	-	ɹ	r	ɹ	r
	(ȳ)	-	ʋ	w	ʋ	w
	(b:)	-	ᵿ	l	ᵿ	rh

3.3.6 Indigenous Writing System

The native writing system of Eniy (and most Zhadnganic languages) is the so-called Old Vulpinian script, an alphabet that has existed (in its essential form) since at least the 38th century AI. From its initial development until around the 31st century, it remained fairly fluid, but its form became fixed under the influence of the great Nomad Engravers of that time, who also formulated its stylistic conventions and codified punctuation.

²Recall that the Lhew were a coastal Vulpinian nation who conquered much of the planet around the thirtyith century AI, spreading their language and culture to both urbanized and nomadic Vulpinians

The script is always written in a cursive manner, similar to the Arabic or Devanāgarī writing systems of Earth, or the Myoadl script of Gnomistan, although it differs from all of these in the fact that it is a true alphabet rather than an abjad or abugida. A non-cursive style, actually the original form of the language, is used in engravings and in primitive typographical situations.

Initial	Medial	Final	Engraved	Value	Transliteration
				p	p
				ϕ	f
				t	t
				θ	s
				b	b
				β	v
				d	d
				ð	z
				m	m
				n	n
				k	k
				g	g

Initial	Medial	Final	Engraved	Value	Transliteration
				x	kh, x
				y	gh, r
				ʃ	dy, j
				q	q
				ɟ	y
				æ	a
				e	e
				i	i
				ɔ	o
				u	u
				ʊ	û, w

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Chapter 13

The Desert Chapoe

The Desert Chapoe (*khapoe*) is a Dramidian holy book dating to the thirty-third century AI, prior to the arrival of Gnomish missionaries representing the Universal Church of the Empire.¹ The Desert Chapoe contains a mixture of religious, philosophical, and historical material. Over time, some of the religious sections have been modified to be more compliant with current thought, and there is some uncertainty as to the content of the original. Also, the historical sections of the book were expanded with little reservation for most of its history; this has led to substantial regional variation in the content. (Although some sections, thought to be the most ancient, are almost universally included.) The Chapoe's philosophical content is apparently the oldest part of the book, having been modified relatively little. Scholars are divided about the origin of the material, although they generally agree that it is eclectic and formed the original nucleus of the book.

The Chapoe expresses the dualism of most indigenous nomadic philosophy. Thanks to sages who bridged the gap between nomadic and settled cultures, these ideas spread into urban Dramidia, where, in later centuries, they contributed to the syncretic theology of the Temple of the Uncasued Ones.

13.1 Background

The version of the Chapoe from which this is taken is a modernized-language edition published as a polyglot edition in Old Terran, Eniy, English, and the original language, classical literary Xaapame.

It represents the Gnagan textual tradition, which is thought to represent the earliest versions quite well, although some of the historical material is without a doubt of later origin.

¹The Universal Church of the Empire was the religion of about half of the Gnomish population during the Fifth War of Gnomish Expansion, which was taking place at this time. Ultimately, the Gnomish Empire collapsed, and the Universal Church fell into sectionalism, opening the way for the ascendancy of the Fik Earl.

13.2 Fsero Encounters the King's Geomancer

13.2.1 Introduction

The excerpt is the story of the asthetic priestess Fsero and her encounter with the royal geomancer of Yxi. The king of that city is said to have oppressed the nomadic people of the Fabig valley some time in the 35th Century AI, well before contact with offworlders and even the Lhew conquest. In fact, most of the stories date from the period of urbanization following the invention of the Anti-Yogh Defense. Fsero, the namesake of thousands of Vulpinian women in the present day, was a niece of the Yxian king. She rejected her uncle's calous treatment of the nomads and lived among them.

13.2.2 The Eniy Version

1 Dim Fsezo khiSubaem noi Qodzami Enmu

2 Fsezo se ot ndozooiuban om tindoaqqe sutaqqe quidadzuqû. 3 Ot Kamvoineizda izefoinazet aäku, 4 eyitt kamddyeni etsum pama enaivena. 5 Eyin Fsezo tadofonoi tuvo u sadyue noi Syuene quisuya, 6 e abeni kamddyeni qipian fo amoü.

7 E "Se taket efinet! Onii aïa?" du agu 8 moaezd ai saindabeme veme.

9 Fsezo dyaigu eyiz ens u yeyuzemenedn fes su yoqendi noi kamddyeni enainena. 10 Fsezo e "Yo ens, e onii eigheni kamddyeni aïa dë fozai," agu feizda uzemenaqoik.

11 Fsezom eyidy "soi de foze," aqa bavaezd. 12 Enez pama enaiaqa khefet: "Kamddyemii tadufu om misubakampaqqi zdoayoddisa dyane, 13 ot kamusu isekdadyeida."

14 Fsezo e "koi subaem gai fakyifozine ö" agu. 15

13.2.3 Translation into English

1 Saint Fsero and the King's Geomancer

2. Fsero arose to an especially humid evening of the foggy season. 3 She thanked the Giver of Moisture for the bounty, 4 and went to check the condensing plates. 5 When Fsero passed over the ridge of the rock outcropping on which the Shu encampment was situated, 6 she saw that the condensing plates had been destroyed.

7 "What a calamity!" She exclaimed, 8 at the sight of the shattered remains of the plates. 7 "Who would do such an evil thing?"

9 Just then, Fsero stopped speaking, because she had caught sight of a town-dweller amidst the remains of the plates.

10 "You there, do you know what has happened to our condensing plates?" Fsero asked the man, using the urban dialect.

11 "I do indeed know," said the urbanite in response. 12 "The condensing plates obstructed the ley-line of this rocky outcropping. 13 They were an affront to the spirit of potable water."

14 “I observe you are a geomancer. **15** But so subtle a ley-line as this, surely, could be detected only by a true master of the art,” said Fsero flatteringly. **16** “The wisdom of the royal Yxian geomancers is well known, even among the nomadic people,” she continued.

17 “Ah yes, I am indeed the chief geomancer of the king,” the sage replied.

18 “I myself know only enough of the art to appreciate true skill in others,” Fsero said. **19** “But why do you concern yourself with this small ley-line when, just inside that rock cropping, there exists a nexus manifestation of the spirit of pure water from which you could no doubt gain much prophetic insight.”

20 “A pure-water nexus, here in the inland?”, asked the geomancer, skeptically.

21 “Indeed, it must be seen to be believed,” she responded.

22 “Take me to this nexus!” He demanded.

23 “Of course,” she replied, **24** and so she began to lead him inside the rocky outcropping, where a cave existed. **25** She paused only to retrieve her walking stick, for the cave was somewhat perilous.

26 The Shu were in the habit of keeping a reserve of water in the dark part of this cave, many hundreds of liters. **27** At length, the two reached the interior of the cave.

28 The king’s geomancer was quite astounded at all the water, **29** but when he recovered from his initial shock, he asked: “I see the manifestation, but I do not hear the voice of the pure-water spirit.”

30 “It is necessary to listen with the ears of your soul,” Fsero said. **31** “Close your eyes, and fold down your ears under your hands.”

32 He did as she told him.

33 “But I still do not hear the pure-water spirit,” he complained.

34 “That’s because geomancy is bogus,” she responded, **35** and she hit him with her walking stick in the back of the head until he died.

13.2.4 Glossed and Parsed Interlinear

- (1) dim fsez-o khi-suba-em noi qodz-ami
 holy Fsero-F.NOM the-geomancer-M.ACC of king-M.VIA
^aen-mu-u
 INCP.PRS-encounter-3.DIST.SG
 “[The] pious Fsero starts to encounter the geomancer of [the] king.”
- (2) fsez-o se ot ndo-zoo-iban om ti-ndo-aqqe sut-aqqe
 Fsero-F.NOM a the fog-time-B.TEM’s very-foggy-B.ACC evening-B.ACC
 qui-da-dzuq-û
 AOR.PST-un-go.to.sleep-3.DIST.SG
 “Fsero woke up during a very humid evening of the foggy season.”
- (3) ot kam-foin-eizda ^bize-foin-azet a-ak-u
 the water-give-M.BEN his-gift-L.CAU PST.PRF-thank-3.DIST.SG
 “[she] thanked the Giver of Moisture on account of his gift.”

- (4) e-yiit kam-ddy-eni et-s-um pama
 SUB.DAT water-gather-o.ACC careful-look-INF then
 enai-ven-a
 INCP.PST-go.about-3.DIST.SG
 “[she] started to go about to inspect the water collectors.”
- (5) e-yin fsez-o tad-oyo noi t-uvo u sady-ue noi
 SUB.LOC Fsero-F.NOM ridge-F.LOC on tor-F.LOC of camp-o.ACC of
 syu-ene qui-suy-a
 Shuet-A.VIA AOR.PST-climb.over-3.DIST.SG
 “When Fsero climbed the ridge on the tor of the Shuet’s encampment,
 ...”
- (6) e ab-eni kam-ddy-eni a-qip-ian f-o
 SUB.ACC all-o.ACC water-catch-o.ACC PST.PRF-destroy-PASS-INF ^cshe-3.DISTAL.SG
 a-mo-u
 PST-PRF-see-3.DIST.SG
 “... she saw that all the water collectors had been destroyed.”
- (7)
- “”
- (8)
- “”

a Titles of stories that describe an action often use the inceptive.

b Deites are usually spoken of in the proximal in the writings of pious individuals, implying their omnipresence. This is especially true with the elemental nature-spirits of the oldest nomadic tradition

c Use of a pronoun is conventional after the use of a verb with an ambiguous subject, but not strictly required

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