

Kamalian Grammar
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PREFACE

1.1. An Introduction to Kamalian Grammar

Kamalian is a Kamalic language spoken by about 580 million people in Kamalia and Neptutia. It is not related to any other spoken language on Poseidon, not even the Sumi languages spoken in the Ice and Tundra region of Kamalia. The main dialect, the King Kanaq dialect, had been the official language of the Kingdom of the Kamalian Counties since long before Americans discovered Poseidon in 2010. Other dialects include the Puguq and the Ahaxtinux.

Kamalian is a highly synthetic language that allows the creation of long words by stringing together roots and suffixes. Its morphosyntactic alignment is ergative. Nouns are inflected for one of the eight cases and for possession. Verbs are inflected for switch-reference, modality, polarity, person, telicity, number, and tense and objects may be joined to them to form a transitive sentence. Nouns are inflected for case, number, and possession, and adjectives may be joined to them. Basic word order is Subject Object Verb.

SYNTAX

2.1. Morphosyntactic Alignment

Kamalian language uses case to express grammatical relations between participants in a sentence. Nouns are inflected with one of the two core cases or one of the ten oblique cases.

Kamalian is an ergative language. This means that, instead of treating the grammatical relations as in most Earth languages where grammatical subjects are marked with nominative case and objects with accusative, the grammatical roles are defined differently. In Kamalian, the ergative case is used for agents of transitive verbs and for possessors. Absolutive case is used for patients of transitive nouns and subjects of intransitive nouns.

Intransitive:

Iluk alaka "The man eats"
man.ABS eat.3s

Transitive with agent and object:

Ilup akala'itit "The man eats meat"
man.ERG eat.3s.meat.ABS

2.2. Synthesis

Kamalian employs a form of polysynthetic sentence structure that is responsible for the language's long words. In a sentence, there are three types of words in a complete sentence; Nouns, Verbs, and Particles. Verbs are highly complex and will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Nouns

Nouns are sometimes, but not always, joined synthetically to other parts of a sentence. When a noun is the argument the sentence, it always comes first. A complex argument in Kamalian would follow an outline like this:

“SR.(adjective).noun.case”

So, if an adjective modifies the argument of a sentence, it is joined to the noun. Adverbs are not derivationally related to their corresponding adjectives and are placed in the same segment where the adjective would go. Moving on to the agent of a sentence, when a noun appears as the agent of a transitive sentence, it follows this outline:

“(SR).(modality).(polarity).verb.person.(telicity).(adjective).noun.case”

If a noun appears as the agent of a transitive sentence, it comes as the very last synthetic morpheme of the verb. Adjectives which may modify the agent are placed after the verb and before the agent noun.

Particles

Particles are isolated morphemes that express a grammatical mood or conjunction. These are usually short, most consisting of two or fewer syllables.

2.3. Relative Clauses

Relative clauses are simple in Kamalian. There is no need for pronoun retention, as is the case in English (e.g. The man **who** is over there). Only a simple verb is used, and if necessary, switch-reference is employed (see 3.1.1. Switch-Reference).

Iluk ulatisuk “The man who is over there”

“man.ABS be.3s.over-there.ABS”

Iluk aipujalua “The man that I see”

“man.ABS SR.see.1s”

Iluk aipujalua aipqaqugatalip “The man I see that is wearing a hat”

“man.ABS SR.see.1s SR.wear.hat.ERG”

2.4. Definiteness

Definiteness distinguishes between entities which are specific and identifiable in a given context (definite) and entities which are not (indefinite). In Kamalian, whether participants are already known to the speaker or new in the discourse is not marked.

Iluk “A man OR The man”

“man.ABS”

VERBS

3.1. Inflection

The morphology of Kamalian verbs is extremely complex, but covers lots more information than that of English verbs. All verbs are regular and follow this phoneme-by-phoneme outline.

“(mood) (switch-reference).(modality).(polarity).VERB.(tense).person.(telicity)”

Switch-Reference

Kamalian employs a switch reference marker which is a prefix and always comes as the first component in a verb. This simply means that if a verb has a different subject than that of the verb in the previous clause, it takes a switch-reference marker. As an added use, switch-reference can also be used to denote another 3rd person. For purposes of simplicity, in this document, the switch-reference marker is abbreviated to “SR”

With switch-reference

Muhu akalu, aipakalua “If you eat, I eat”

“conditional eat.2s, SR.eat.1s”

Without switch-reference

Muhu akalu, sunjupu “If you eat, you drink”

“conditional eat.2s, drink.2s”

Switch-reference as a denotation of 3rd person

Tulutixa aipunalanuak “He said that he (the other man) saw me.

“say.in-the-recent-past.3s SR.see.3s.me”

Modality

Modality is used to express possibility or necessity. In Kamalian, the modality affix is placed after the switch-reference affix and before the polarity indicator.

Deontic Modality

Autulakulutnasaq “It should be bigger”

“it/he/she deontic.be.3s.more.big”

Ui autulakulutnasaq “It should only be bigger”
“only it/he/she deontic.be.3s.more.big”

Hua autulakulutnasaq “It should even be bigger”
“even it/he/she deontic.be.3s.more.big”

Necessary Modality

Aunulakiuksasaq “It needs to be bigger”
“it/he/she necessarily.be.3s.more.big”

Ui aunulakulutsasaq “It only needs to be bigger”
“only it/he/she necessarily.be.3s.more.big”

Hua aunulakulutsasaq “It even needs to be bigger”
“even it/he/she necessarily.be.3s.more.big”

Epistemic Modality

Muhu ulutasil, aipaupuluasasaq “If you are small, that means I am big”
“conditional be.2s.small, SR.epistemically.be.1 s.big”

Muhu ulutasil, ui aipaupuluasasaq “If you are small, that only means I am big”
“only conditional be.2s.small, SR.epistemically.be.1 s.big”

Muhu ulutasil, hua aipaupuluasasaq “If you are small, that even means I am big”
“even conditional be.2s.small, SR.epistemically.be.1 s.big”

Other Modalities:

English	Affix	Kamalian
I think that it is cold outside.	-auk-	Aukula' upik.
I know that it is cold outside.	-auq-	Auqula' upik.
I hope that it is not cold outside.	-aug-	Auganula' upik.
It might be cold outside.	-aux-	Auxula' upik.
I want it to be cold outside.	-aul-	Aulula' upik.
It can be cold outside	-auŋ-	Auŋula' upik.
It is supposed to be cold outside.	-aus-	Aulula' upik.
It is probably cold outside.	-aum-	Aumula' upik.

Polarity

Polarity is an aspect of grammar used to distinguish between affirmative and negative verbs. In English, affirmative polarity is unmarked, while negative polarity is expressed with the words “not” or “don’t”. This is more or less the case in Kamalian. Affirmative polarity is unmarked while negative polarity is marked with the affix “-an-”. The polarity indicator comes before the root verb and after the modality affix.

Affirmative Polarity:

Halunua “I see”

“see.1s”

Negative Polarity:

Anhalunua “I don’t see”

“NEG.see.1s”

Tense

Tense in Kamalian is far more descriptive than many Earth languages because it is not related to any Earth language. Kamalian tense structure may at first seem strange to a non-native speaker because it gives an exact time of day for when the action takes place. Tense is identified with an affix that falls after the root verb and before the personal ending.

Tense	Affix
In the remote future	aux
In the near future	ux
Tomorrow night	uŋ
Tomorrow	aŋ
Tomorrow morning	iŋ
Tonight (future)	um
Today (future)	am
This morning (future)	im
Tonight (past)	uk
Today (past)	ak
This morning (past)	ik
Last night	uq
Yesterday	aq
Yesterday morning	iq
In the recent past	ix
In the remote past	ax

With tense:

Haqapiŋua’umamux “In the morning, I will go down to the shore”
“go.in the morning.1 s.shore.ALL”

Personal Inflection

Kamalian denotes two translations for the 1st person plural inflection, an inclusive and an exclusive. Personal inflection is marked with an infix that comes after the tense affix and before the telicity marker.

	Singular	Plural	
		Inclusive	Exclusive
1st	-ua	-ia	-iu
2nd	-u	-i	
3rd	-a	-ui	

Telicity

Telicity is the property of a verb that presents an action as being complete. This is like saying in English, “John built a house”, which implies that the construction is completed. However, if the sentence were, “John built a house, but he did not finish”, then it would be atelic, or incomplete. Telic verbs are not

marked in Kamalian, but a number of degrees of atelicity are shown with suffixes.

Telic:

Kapisikua “This morning, I built it”
“build.this–morning(past).I”

Atelic (partial):

Kapisikuanuq “This morning, I started to build it”
“build.this–morning(past).I.partial”

Atelic (medial)

Kapisikualuq “This morning, I started to build it, but I only got halfway”
“build.this–morning(past).I.medial”

Atelic (near completion)

Kapisikuahuq “This morning, I nearly finished building it”
“build.this–morning(past).I.near–completion”

Atelic (unknown)

Kapisikaṅuq “He was building it this morning, but I don’t know how far he got.”
“build.this–morning(past).he.unknown completion”

Mood

Mood is marked with a particle that proceeds the verb it modifies.

Indicative mood is not marked.

Indicative mood:

Haqapua “I go”
“go.1s”

Interrogative mood:

Nuhu haqapua? “Do I go?”
“interrogative go.1s”

Imperative mood:

Au haqap! “Go!”
“imperative go”

Conditional mood:

Muhu haqapua, aipaunhaqapu “If I go, then you must go”

“conditional go.1s, SR.necessarily.go.2s”

Causative mood:

Puhu haqapumua “Because I am going tonight”

“causative go.tonight.1s”

Frequentive Mood:

Akalua kuhu uluasimip “I eat when I’m hungry”

“eat.1s frequentive be.1s.hungry”

3.2. Voice

Kamalian distinguishes between 3 grammatical voices; Active, Passive, and Reciprocal. The active goes unmarked in all cases but the passive and reciprocal are marked with a particle that follows the verb, or as a suffixed final consonant to a mood particle, if one is employed. These examples use the conditional mood.

Active Voice/Indicative:

Uḡalumuanak “I will see her tonight”

“see.tonight.1 s.her”

Passive/Indicative:

Uḡalumuanak nu “I will be seen by her tonight”

“see.tonight.1 s.her passive”

Passive/Conditional:

Muhun uḡalumuanak “If I will be seen by her tonight”

“conditional.passive see.tonight.1 s.her passive”

Reciprocal/Indicative:

Uḡalia xu “We see eachother”

“see.1 p-INC reciprocal”

Reciprocal/Conditional:

Muhux uḡalia “If we see eachother.”

“conditional.reciprocal see.1 p-INC”

NOUNS & PRONOUNS

4.1. Case

The two grammatical core cases, ergative and Absolutive are used to express grammatical and syntactical roles of participant noun phrases. The 10 oblique cases express relation to movement or manner.

Case	Singular	Plural
Absolutive	-t /-k/-q	-x
Ergative	-p	-kt
Instrumental	-muk	-nuk
Allative	-mux	-nux
Locative	-mit	-nit
Ablative	-mix	-nix
Initiative	-mik	-nik
Terminative	-mut	-nut
Comitative	-kuk	-guk
Equative	-kut	-gut
Prosecutive	-kux	-gux
Benefactive	-kik	-gik

4.2. Personal Pronouns & Possession

Possession of Kamalian nouns is expressed through the joining together of the corresponding pronoun to its modifying noun. Notice how an aspect of clusivity is distinguished between the 1st person plural exclusive, and the first person plural inclusive.

	Singular	Plural	
		Inclusive	Exclusive
1st	nuak	niak	niuk
2nd	nuk	nik	
3rd	nak	nuik	

A reflexive possessive pronoun “niq” is also used to denote reflexivity.

Non-reflexive:

Uḡaluanaknupik “I see his son”

“see.1 s.he.son”

Reflexive

Uḡaluaniqnupik “I see my son”

“see.1 s.reflexive.son”

4.3. Demonstrative Pronouns

Demonstratives in Kamalian are very complex and can be placed into this table:

	Singular				Plural			
	Proximal		Distal		Proximal		Distal	
	Small	Big	Small	Big	Small	Big	Small	Big
These	lik	liuk	luk	luik	lunik	luniuk	lunuk	lunuik
Those	lak	lauk	luak	lauk	lunak	lunauk	lunuak	lunauk

4.4. Interrogative Pronouns

Interrogative pronouns are function words that are used for items interrupted in a sentence. In English, they are used in questions such as the phrase, “Where is he going?” in which “Where” is the interrogative pronoun. In Kamalian, these words do not exist as separate particles, rather they are classified as nouns. A few examples:

Kupik/Where:

Ulakupik? “Where it it?”

“is.3s.where.ABS”

Ulaq/Who (Human):

Ula’ulaq? “Who is he?”

“is.3s.who.ABS”

Aḡat/What:

Lik ula’aḡat? “What is this little thing right here?”

“this(proximal,small) is.3s.what.ABS”

Nalit/When:

Nalit uḡaluanuk? “When will I see you?”

“when see.1s.you.ABS”

Agat/Where(distal):

Kamalinuxlitut ula’agat? “Which way is Kamalia?”

“Kamalia is.3s.where(distal).ABS”

Tugik/Where(proximal):

Kamalinuxlitut ulatugik? "Where is Kamalia on this map?"

"Kamalia is.3s.where(proximal).ABS"

Tikiq/Where (unknown to speaker):

Kamalinuxlitut ulatikiq? "I don't know where Kamalia is, could you tell me?"

"Kamalia is.3s.where(unknown).ABS"

Puḡat/Why

Pilipkakumit lahupapuḡat? "Why does the caged bird sing?"

"bird.ERG.cage.LOC sing.3s.why.ABS"

Kupit/How (in what manner, fashion?):

Auḡhaqapualimitkupit? "How can I get there?"

"able-to.go.1 s.there.ABS.how(in-what-manner,fashion).ABS"

Qupat/How (quality):

Apip ulaqupat? "How's the weather?"

"weather.ERG be.3s.how(quality).ABS"

MODIFIERS

5.1. Adjectives

Adjectives are syntactically the same as nouns because they can be infixed to the noun which they modify to describe it, just as this can be done to nouns to make the equivalent of the genitive case.

Degrees of Comparison

Adjectives have six basic degrees of comparison, including the positive, the sufficient, the superlative, the comparative, the superlative, and the excessive.

Positive:

Ulasasaq “It is large”

“be.3s.large”

Anulasasaq “It isn’t large”

“NEG.be.3s.large”

Sufficient:

Ulakuksasaq “It is large enough”

“be.3s.SUFF.large”

Anulakuksasaq “It is not large enough”

“NEG.be.3s.SUFF.large”

Comparative:

Ulakuksasaq aipulua “It is bigger than me”

“be.3s.COMP.big SR.be.1s”

Superlative:

Ulakualsasaq “It is the largest”

“be.3s.SUP.large”

Excessive:

Ulakalsasaq “It is too big”

“be.3s.EXC.big”

Adjectival Nouns

Adjectives are mutated into adjectival nouns by the process of adding a case ending to the adjective. In English, adjectival nouns occur in phrases such as “**The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly**”. In Kamalian, these can also be used to make generalizations and people in the 4th person.

Intransitive sentences:

Qasaxtunului’itil “The good help often”

“good.ABSp.help.3p.often”

Transitive sentences:

Qasakttunului’iqax “The good will help the needy”

“good.ERGp.help.3p.needy.ABSp”

5.2. Adverbs

As explained previously, adverbs are not derivationally related to their corresponding adjectives. This is the case with the English adjective “good” and its corresponding adverb, “well”. “Good” modifies nouns, while “well” modifies adverbs. They mean nearly the same thing, but do not sound

anything alike. Kamalian adverbs are the same way. Adverbs do not sound anything like their corresponding adjectives. Take these examples for instance:

Suhap tasisa'apilatuq "The child lives a youthful life"

"child.ERG live.3p.youthful.life.ABS"

But...

Suhap tasisasuhuq "The child lives youthfully"

"child.ERG live.3p.youthfully"