

Demaz Sketch Grammar

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1 Language Context

Demaz, pronounced [dɛmaz], is a language spoken by the Demazan people in Okharf, a matriarchal community of around 4,000 inhabitants. Governed by a monarchy and its advisors, the Demazans live in small villages circling their Queen's castle. Because of the surrounding mountainous topography, the Demazan people rarely receive visitors or leave their land. They live off the Earth, relying on hunting and foraging for their food. A peaceful people protected from threats by their environment, the Demazans prioritise family, farming, sewing, and storytelling, reflected in their language.

In Demaz, the oral storytelling tradition is highly valued, and, while written forms of sacred texts exist, the spoken practice is prioritised. All Demazan individuals learn to write; however, the practice is only utilised to send letters within the community. Isolated from other individuals, all speakers of Demaz communicate in the same dialect, affected only by lexical variety between villages.

Demaz is part of the Cushitic language family and is inspired in part by Afar, an East Lowland Cushitic language. Modifiers, complements and specifiers all precede their heads (Hayward, 2017). Words in Demaz have various related meanings, eg. house, shelter, and home are represented in the same way, as people live simple lifestyles and have no need for extensive language. Likely related to the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis of the 1930s, where 'the way people think is influenced by the language they speak' (Perlovsky, 2009, 518), there is a causal relationship between cognition and language (Perlovsky, 2009). Words tend to be long due to complex morphology, while roots are relatively short (Mous, 2012). Consequently, sentences contain fewer highly inflected words. Likewise, female is the default gender (Hayward, 1996), which underlines the matriarchal influence. Through SOV, inflected verbs, and affixes, Demaz as a language demonstrates the community's matriarchal organisation, connection to the environment, and oral tradition.

2 Phonology

2.1 Consonants

Consonants in Demaz express eight places of articulation - bilabial, alveolar, retroflex, palatal, velar, and glottal - as well as five manners of articulation - plosive, nasal, fricative, approximant, and lateral approximant.

Bilabial: plosive /b/, nasal /m/, fricative /f/, approximant /w/

Alveolar: plosive /t, d/, nasal /n/, fricative /s, z/, approximant /ɹ/, lateral approximant /l/

Retroflex: plosive /dʒ/, fricative /ʒ/

Palatal: approximant /j/

Velar: plosive /k, g/

Glottal: fricative /h/

(Gordon, 2016, 45) cites a survey from Maddieson (1984) sharing "the 20 cross-linguistically most common consonants." Many of the consonants present in Demaz's phonemic inventory overlap in both Maddieson's table and the table of Afar's consonants: including /b, f, m, w, t,

Table 1: Consonant Phonemes of Demaz

	<i>Bilabial</i>	<i>Labiodental</i>	<i>Alveolar</i>	<i>Retroflex</i>	<i>Palatal</i>	<i>Velar</i>	<i>Glottal</i>
<i>Plosive</i>	b		t d	ɖ		k g	
<i>Nasal</i>	m		n				
<i>Fricative</i>		f	s z	ʂ			h
<i>Approximant</i>	w		ɹ		j		
<i>Lat. Approximant</i>			l				

s, l, d, n, j, k, g, h/. Additional phonemes include /d/ which is present in Afar, /z/ present in loan words, and /ʂ/ and /ɹ/ which are not. In total, there are 17 consonants in Demaz. There is no voiceless bilabial /p/, reflecting its absence in the Cushitic languages (Mous, 2012), a gap which is likely present for aerodynamic reasons (Gordon, 2016, 21). Demaz exhibits sixteen consonant clusters. Within a root, the most complex cluster is CCC. The longest appears as CCCC and only occurs when an affix is attached to a root - *okshrot*, /okʂkɹat/, meaning stick, where *ok-* is an prefixed form of *oko* meaning small. These clusters are organised by the manner of articulation of the first consonant.

Plosive

plosive /kt/, /kd/

fricative plosive approximant /kʂkɹ/

lateral approximant /tl/

Nasal

plosive /nt/, /ng/, /mk/

Fricative

plosive approximant /ʂkɹ/

plosive lateral approximant /skl/

approximant /fɹ/

lateral approximant /zl/

Approximant

fricative /wʂ/, /rf/

Lateral Approximant

plosive /lk/

plosive lateral approximant /lgl/

nasal /ln/

2.2 Vowels

Demaz contains all five vowels as in most Cushitic languages (Mous, 2012); the presence of long and short forms means that there will be 10 total realisations of the vowels, represented below:

Unrounded

(close) /i/

(mid) /e/

Rounded

(close) /u/

Table 2: Vowel Phonemes of Demaz

	Short	Long	Long	Short
	i	i:	u:	u
	e	e:	o:	o
<i>short</i>			a	
<i>long</i>			a:	

(mid) /o/

Open

/a/

There are no vowel clusters or diphthongs (Hayward, 1974). Furthermore, rounded and unrounded vowels do not occur within the same root; however, /a/ is neutral within these constraints and can occur with either set of vowels (Hayward, 1974). This is a form of vowel harmony, where ‘all vowels in adjacent moras or syllables within a domain like the phonological or morphological word... systematically agree with each other with regard to one or more articulatory features’ (Krämer, 2003, 3). Krämer (2003) highlights the pattern of roundness (labial) vowel harmony in Turkish, which is combined with backness harmony. He asserts that labial harmony is rare (van der Hulst and van de Weijer 1995 cited in (Krämer, 2003, 7))- typically occurring with another harmony simultaneously, often height or backness (Krämer, 2003). Because Demaz is not restricted in its vowel set, roundness harmony is not a ‘byproduct’ of either vowel limitations or another form of harmony (Krämer, 2003, 10).

3 Lexicon

3.1 Word Classes

The word classes of Demaz are: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and postpositions. Demaz also includes conjunctions, which are affixed onto nouns as clitics (Hayward, 2017). Pronouns are subsets of nouns, utilising the same plural marker as nouns. Adjectives and adverbs are optional (Mous, 2012). However, adjectives do agree in number with the nouns they modify, and adverbs are a restricted set (Mous, 2012). The right-headed nature of the language dictates that modifiers, complements and specifiers all precede their heads (Hayward, 1996)(Hayward, 2017). Roots tend to be shorter, with additional meaning agglutinated on (Mous, 2012). For example, *demk* means human, and *oko* means little, so *okdemk* indicates child.

3.2 Swadesh List

4 Verbs

Verbal inflection includes aspect, tense, mood, person marking, modality, and negation (Mous, 2012), affixed through grammaticalization (Croft, 2012);(Croft, 2022). Suffixing and sequences of suffixing in Cushitic languages are more prevalent than prefixing, although both

Table 3: Swadesh List

ID	Word	Phonemic	Gloss	Part of Speech	Category
1	welg	[wɛlg]	animal	noun	animal
2	raf	[ɾɑf]	bird	noun	animal
3	ong	[ɑng]	head	noun	body part
4	yash	[jɑwʂ]	water	noun	environment
5	gloyash	[glojɑwʂ]	rain	noun	environment
6	shkrot	[ʂkɾɑt]	tree	noun	environment
7	shkrotli	[ʂkɾɑtli]	forest	noun	environment
8	okshkrot	[okʂkɾɑt]	stick	noun	environment
9	deharf	[dehɑɾf]	earth	noun	environment
10	glod	[glɑud]	sky	noun	environment
11	inarf	[inaɾf]	mountain	noun	environment
12	shay	[ʂaj]	star	noun	environment
13	falb	[falb]	house	noun	structure
14	dedemk	[dɛdɛmk]	woman	noun	human
15	fademk	[fadɛmk]	man (adult male)	noun	human
16	demk	[dɛmk]	man (human being)	noun	human
17	okdemk	[okdɛmk]	child	noun	human
18	hib	[hi:b]	name	noun	human property
19	skleg	[sklɛg]	eat	verb	body action
20	tung	[tung]	hunt	verb	impact
21	muz	[mʌz]	think	verb	perception action
22	frid	[fɾɪd]	see	verb	perception action
23	keln	[keln]	hear	verb	perception action
24	waz	[wejz]	say	verb	perception action
25	sosh	[soʂ]	sew	verb	misc. action
26	nild	[ni:ld]	walk	verb	motion
27	lof	[lof]	breath	verb	motion
28	ret	[ɾet]	make	verb	motion
29	gud	[gud]	place	verb	motion
30	barz	[bɑɾz]	love	verb	human action
31	inte	[inte]	big	adjective	property
32	oko	[oko:]	small	adjective	property
33	sulku	[sʊlku]	good	adjective	property
34	nokt	[nokt]	bad	adjective	property
35	azli	[azli:]	hungry	adjective	property
36	klef	[klɛf]	lonely	adjective	property
37	unta	[unta:]	more	adjective	quantifier
37	stid	[sti:d]	again	adverb	time
38	omb	[omb]	now	adverb	time
39	da	[dɛj]	in	postposition	location
40	dag	[dɛjg]	into	postposition	location
41	go	[go]	to	postposition	location
42	re	[ɾ]	from	postposition	location
43	ba	[ba]	on	postposition	location
44	he	[hij]	and	conjunction	conjunction
45	tis	[tis]	because	conjunction	conjunction
46	yon	[jan]	until	conjunction	conjunction

Table 4: Pronoun Chart

person	singular	plural
1st (inclusive)	ga	gali
1st (exclusive)	-	gagali
2nd	su	suli
3rd (feminine)	de	deli
3rd (masculine)	fa	fali

are exhibited, while infixing is rare (Mous, 2012). Verbal affix ordering follows a strict pattern: non-human marker, negation, pronoun/number, modality, root, tense, aspect, mood. The first two are particles, while the latter five are affixed to the root.

4.1 Person, Number, and Gender

Personal pronoun affixation onto the verbal root reflects person. In Demaz, pronouns, and therefore person, only refer to humans. In Cushitic languages, personal pronouns distinguish person, number, and gender (Mous, 2012). Gender is only expressed in third person human verbs through the prefixed person pronouns (Mous, 2012). Because the pronoun can appear as the subject, its affixation renders it redundant; therefore, it is common for sentences to lack surface subjects (Bliese, 1981). Pronouns will be explored in Section 6.2. First person, second person, and third person non-human verbs do not exhibit gender. Meanwhile, non-human is marked with the particle *a* and uses the plural prefix.

In Demaz, number is exhibited through affixation and ‘codes how many arguments take part in the action’ (Aikhenvald, 2014, 114). The singular is the base form and has \emptyset affixation. The plural is expressed through the prefix *ti-*, and is used for non-humans in place of the person pronoun prefix.

- (1) a. *ga-skleg- \emptyset - \emptyset*
 1PL.eat.PRS.DCL
 "I eat"
- b. *suli-skleg- \emptyset - \emptyset*
 2PL.eat.PRS.DCL
 "You all eat"
- c. *de-skleg- \emptyset - \emptyset*
 3SG.F.eat.PRS.DCL
 "She eats"
- d. *a ti-skleg- \emptyset - \emptyset*
 NH 3PL.eat.PRS.DCL
 "They (animals) eat"

4.2 Modality

Modality notes the non-spatial setting of events, including speakers' attitudes, possibility, and obligation (Aikhenvald, 2014). Demaz has two forms of modality affixed onto the verb: epistemic and desiderative. Epistemic encapsulates the speaker's uncertainty about an event, reflected as a long /i:/, which, when next to the short /i/ of a plural pronoun, assimilates to a single long /i:/. Meanwhile, desiderative expresses the speaker's desire, exhibited through -ro-.

Epistemic: /i:/

- (2) *fali-skleg-∅* [fali:sklɛg]
3M.PL.EPI.eat.DCL

"They may be eating"

Desiderative: -ro-

- (3) *ga-ro-skleg-∅*
1SG.DES.eat.DCL

"I want to eat"

4.3 Tense, Mood, and Aspect

Tense expresses time. Aikhenvald (2014) states that many languages have multiple forms for past tense. Demaz has 4 tenses: present, near past (within the past week), far past (beyond the past week), and future. Present is the base form; near past, far past, and future are all affixed onto the verb.

Present: ∅

Near past: -liɕ-

Far past: -las-

Future: -od-

Aspect reflects an event's progress. Here, durative expresses that an event occurs over a long period of time, while perfective indicates that an event is completed (Aikhenvald, 2014). Gemination is very common in Cushitic languages, often in nominal plural formation as well as verbal frequentatives and habituals (Mous, 2012). In Demaz, the durative is expressed through a reduplication of the consonant vowel (CV) of the tense indicator. The perfective is exhibited through the affix -wa.

Durative: tense CV reduplication

Perfective: -wa-

Mood indicates a thought's format as a statement (*declarative*), question (*interrogative*), or command (*imperative*) (Aikhenvald, 2014). This is exhibited through the final suffix on verbs. The declarative is the base mood and therefore has ∅ affixation. Interrogatives, marked by -nu, follow the same constraints as declaratives. Imperatives do not mark for modality, tense,

or aspect. The prefixed pronoun establishes who the speaker is instructing; therefore, the first person pronouns are not utilised.

Declarative: \emptyset

Imperative: *-nu*

Interrogative: *-er*

(4) *fa-skleg-laŝ-wa*

3SG.M.eat.NP.PERF

"He ate"

(5) *deli-skleg-la-las- \emptyset*

1PL.F.eat.DUR.FP.DCL

"They (animals) ate"

(6) *welg-li- \emptyset a ti-skleg-od-er*

animal.PL.NOM NH PL.eat.FUT.INT

"Will the animal eat?"

(7) *suli-skleg-nu*

2PL.eat.IMP

"Eat!"

4.4 Negation

Negation appears as the auxiliary particle *n* which precedes the verb. In verb phrases where the subject is non-human, the negation auxiliary is placed between the non-human particle and the verb.

(8) *n de-ro-skleg- \emptyset - \emptyset*

NEG 1SG.F.DES.eat.PRS.DCL

"She does not want to eat"

(9) *raf- \emptyset a n skleg-liŝ- \emptyset*

bird.SG.NOM NH NEG eat.NP.decl

"The bird did not eat"

Table 5: Indicative Present Verbal Paradigm for *hili* "to be"

Person	Singular	Plural
1st	hilin	hilini
2nd	hilis	hilism
3rd (feminine)	hilid	hilid
3rd (masculine)	hilif	hilifi
3rd (non-human)	hiligo	hiligon

4.5 Irregular Verb "to be" and the Infinitive Form

The verb "to be" is expressed as *hili*, [hili]. It does not follow the typical verbal constraints of Demaz's verbs, and instead reflects irregular affixes.

The infinitival form is identical to the root form of the verb. In instances where the infinitive is used, additional lexical or grammatical information can be understood through an auxiliary (Mous, 2012) that is agglutinated like a typical verb. The same occurs for *hili*'s infinitival form Mous (2012). The infinitival form is not common, most often appearing with the verb to be, typically, but not always, alongside an adjective. In this instance, as exemplified below, *hili* appears in the 3rd non human form with the infinitive.

- (10) *sulku-∅-∅ su-m frid hiligo-∅-∅*
 good.SG.NOM you.SG.ACC see.INF to be.3PL.PRS.DCL

"It is good to see you"

- (11) *sulku-∅-∅ de-m frid hiligo liş-er*
 good.SG.NOM her.SG.ACC see.INF to be.SG NP.INT

"Was it good to see her?"

Otherwise, *is* appears normally, following its irregular inflection, yet agglutinating like typical verbs.

- (12) *sulku-∅-∅ hilid-∅-∅*
 good.SG.NOM to be.3SG F.PRS.DCL

"She is good"

4.6 Verbal Paradigms

5 Nouns

Nominal inflection reflects case and number through grammaticalization (Croft, 2012);(Croft, 2022), where reference classification devices - 'morphemes which denote some salient characteristics to which the noun refers' (Aikhenvald, 2014, 103) - are affixed to the root. Through morphosyntactical affixes, nouns, just as verbs, express information through longer forms.

Table 6: Indicative Verbal Paradigm - *waz* "say"

Tense	Person	Singular	Plural
<i>Present</i>	1st (Inclusive)	gawaz	galiwaz
	1st (Exclusive)	-	gagaliwaz
	2nd	suwaz	suliwaz
	3rd (Fem)	dewaz	deliwaz
	3rd (Masc)	fawaz	faliwaz
<i>Future</i>	1st (Inclusive)	gawazod	galiwazod
	1st (Exclusive)	-	gagaliwazod
	2nd	suwazod	suliwazod
	3rd (Fem)	dewazod	deliwazod
	3rd (Masc)	fawazod	faliwazod
<i>Near Past</i>	1st (Inclusive)	gawazlaş	galiwazlaş
	1st (Exclusive)	-	gagaliwazlaş
	2nd	suwazlaş	suliwazlaş
	3rd (Fem)	dewazlaş	deliwazlaş
	3rd (Masc)	fawazlaş	faliwazlaş
<i>Far Past</i>	1st (Inclusive)	gawazlas	galiwazlas
	1st (Exclusive)	-	gagaliwazlas
	2nd	suwazlas	suliwazlas
	3rd (Fem)	dewazlas	deliwazlas
	3rd (Masc)	fawazlas	faliwazlas

Table 7: Imperative Verbal Paradigm - *waz* "say"

Tense	Person	Singular	Plural
<i>Present</i>	1st (Inclusive)	gawaznu	galiwaznu
	1st (Exclusive)	-	gagaliwaznu
	2nd	suwaznu	suliwaznu
	3rd (Fem)	dewaznu	deliwaz
	3rd (Masc)	fawaznu	faliwaznu
<i>Future</i>	1st (Inclusive)	gawazodnu	galiwazodnu
	1st (Exclusive)	-	gagaliwazodnu
	2nd	suwazodnu	suliwazodnu
	3rd (Fem)	dewazodnu	deliwazodnu
	3rd (Masc)	fawazodnu	faliwazodnu
<i>Near Past</i>	1st (Inclusive)	gawazlaşnu	galiwazlaşnu
	1st (Exclusive)	-	gagaliwazlaşnu
	2nd	suwazlaşnu	suliwazlaşnu
	3rd (Fem)	dewazlaşnu	deliwazlaşnu
	3rd (Masc)	fawazlaşnu	faliwazlaşnu
<i>Far Past</i>	1st (Inclusive)	gawazlasnu	galiwazlasnu
	1st (Exclusive)	-	gagaliwazlasnu
	2nd	suwazlasnu	suliwazlasnu
	3rd (Fem)	dewazlasnu	deliwazlasnu
	3rd (Masc)	fawazlasnu	faliwazlasnu

Table 8: Interrogative Verbal Paradigm - *waz* "say"

Tense	Person	Singular	Plural
<i>Present</i>	1st (Inclusive)	gawazer	galiwazer
	1st (Exclusive)	-	gagaliwazer
	2nd	suwazer	suliwazer
	3rd (Fem)	dewazer	deliwazer
	3rd (Masc)	fawazer	faliwazer
<i>Future</i>	1st (Inclusive)	gawazoder	galiwazoder
	1st (Exclusive)	-	gagaliwazoder
	2nd	suwazoder	suliwazoder
	3rd (Fem)	dewazoder	deliwazoder
	3rd (Masc)	fawazoder	faliwazoder
<i>Near Past</i>	1st (Inclusive)	gawazlaşer	galiwazlaşer
	1st (Exclusive)	-	gagaliwazlaşer
	2nd	suwazlaşer	suliwazlaşer
	3rd (Fem)	dewazlaşer	deliwazlaşer
	3rd (Masc)	fawazlaşer	faliwazlaşer
<i>Far Past</i>	1st (Inclusive)	gawazlaser	galiwazlaser
	1st (Exclusive)	-	gagaliwazlaser
	2nd	suwazlaser	suliwazlaser
	3rd (Fem)	dewazlaser	deliwazlaser
	3rd (Masc)	fawazlaser	faliwazlaser

5.1 Number, Case & Gender

Nominal number is marked overtly (Aikhenvald, 2014) and is an obligatory agreement category (Aikhenvald, 2014) between nouns and adjectives, exhibited through morpheme affixation. The singular remains the base form of nouns. The plural is reflected through the suffix *-li*.

Demaz's nouns express three forms of case - nominative, accusative, and genitive. The nominative is the base form expressed by the subject. The accusative marker, distinguishes objects (direct, indirect, and postpositional), appearing as *-um* in consonant final instances and *-m* in vowel final instances. The genitive indicates possession through affixation onto the possessor, as in Latin (Aikhenvald, 2014). It is represented with the affix *-t*. Both case markers follow the number marker.

Gender, another agreement category (Aikhenvald, 2014), is marked on **human** nouns only. Every noun in a language belongs to a gender (Aikhenvald, 2014); therefore, gender indicates two separate meanings in Demaz. While it differentiates between masculine and feminine in **person** nouns, it distinguishes between human and non-human (Aikhenvald, 2014) nouns generally. Nouns referring to inanimate, animal, or environmental concepts do not reflect the prefixed personal pronouns. Rather, they agree with the base form of adjectives and do not have any common markers between them. There are a few exceptions to this rule - *deharf* "earth" incorporates *de-* "she". This is relevant as the Demazan people believe that the Earth provides for them. In a matriarchal society, this distinction indicates respect.

Table 9: Nominal Paradigm of *yash* "water"

Case	Singular	Plural
Nominative	yash	yashli
Accusative	yashum	yashlim
Genitive	yashut	yashlit

Table 10: Personal Pronoun Chart

Number	Person	Nominative	Accusative	Genitive
Singular	1st	ga	gam	gat
	2nd	su	sum	sut
	3rd (feminine)	de	dem	det
	3rd (masculine)	fa	fam	fat
Plural	1st (inclusive)	gali	galim	galit
	1st (exclusive)	gagali	gagalim	gagalit
	2nd	suli	sulim	sulit
	3rd (feminine)	deli	delim	delit
	3rd (masculine)	fali	falim	falit

5.2 Pronouns

Personal Pronouns

Pronouns carry morphosyntactic influence in Demaz. Prefixed to verbal roots, they are redundant and therefore optional in the nominative (Bliese 1981).

Typically, in Cushitic languages, personal pronouns distinguish person, number and gender, where gender distinction is limited to third person (Mous, 2012). However, distinct from other Cushitic languages, the plural first person pronoun ("we") can be either inclusive, referring to the speaker and addressee, or exclusive, regarding the speaker but without the addressee (Aikhenvald, 2014). This phenomenon is exhibited through the reduplication of the first syllable *-ga*: *gali*, "we", is inclusive, while *gagali*, "we", is exclusive.

Relative Pronouns

Relative pronouns in Demaz refer to previously named nouns when providing additional information. As in Afar, the relative pronoun, *-stiya* in Demaz, is suffixed on the verb of the relative clause (Bliese, 1981). The word order of relative clauses will be explored in section 7.2. The relative pronoun's form remains the same regardless of its referent's case, number, and gender (Bliese, 1981).

- (13) *raf-li-∅* *shkrot-∅-um-da* *hiligon-∅-stiya* *welg-li-m* *oko-li-m* *a*
 bird.PL.NOM tree.SGACC.in is.3PLNH.PRS.which animal.PL.ACC small.PL.ACC NH
ti-tung-∅-∅
 PL.hunt.PRS.DCL

"The birds which are in the tree hunt small animals"

Demonstrative

Demonstratives point to nouns other than the sentence's participants (speaker/addressee) (Aikhenvald, 2014). Demaz contains two forms of demonstratives: near and far, lacking the

medial “slightly distant” category of Afar (Bliese, 1981). They are *awal* “this” and “these” - nearby - and *ono* “that” and “those” - distant - and precede the noun they modify. They do not portray number, gender, or case agreement. Because there are no articles in Demaz, demonstratives can be translated as articles if needed (Bliese, 1981). Like Afar, these demonstratives can also stand alone, and are therefore treated as pronouns (Bliese, 1981). In this context, they gain a *m-* prefix.

(14) *awal shkrot-∅-∅*
 this tree.SG.NOM
 “this tree”

(15) *ono inarf-li-m ga-barz-∅-∅*
 those mountain.PL.ACC 1SG.love.PRS.DCL
 “I love those mountains”

(16) *mawal de-ro-frid-∅-∅*
 this one 3fSG.DES.SEE.PRS.DCL
 “She wants to see this one”

5.3 Adjectives and Adverbs

Adverbs and adjectives are optional in sentences (Bliese, 1981). Adjectives agree with the nouns they modify in number and case (Aikhenvald, 2014), while adverbs only have one form. Both precede the verb but follow nouns (Bliese, 1981).

5.4 Clitics

Demaz contains adpositions (Croft, 2012) expressed as postpositions to indicate movement, as in common SOV languages (Bliese, 1981). Postpositions are exhibited through case affixes (Croft, 2012) or clitics (Bliese, 1981). The postpositional phrase contains a noun phrase, typically a noun or pronoun, followed by an affixed demonstrative (Bliese, 1981). Common postpositions appear as *-da* “in”, *-dag* “into”, *-go* “to”, and *-re* “from”.

(17) *shkroli-m-dag*
 forest.ACC.into
 “into the forest”

- (18) *glod-∅-um-re*
 sky.SG.ACC.from
 "from the sky"

Conjunctions manifest as clitics when linking multiple nouns; however, they can stand alone (like pronouns) when linking clauses or phrases (Bliese, 1981). Words such as "and" and "because" are expressed through a suffixed morpheme affixing to the end of a noun or standing alone in between clauses.

- (19) *welg-li-∅-he* *raf-li-∅*
 animal.PL.NOM.and bird.PL.NOM
 "animals and birds"

- (20) *sulke-∅-∅* *hilin-∅-∅-∅* *tis* *ga-skleg-∅-∅*
 good.SG.NOM is.1.SG.PRS.DCL because 1SG.eat.PRS.DCL
 "I am happy because I am eating"

6 Syntax

6.1 Word Order

Declaratives

Demaz's syntactic word order remains Subject-Object-Verb (SOV) in declarative sentences. Optional words such as adjectives, conjunctions, adverbs, and postpositional phrases appear in a certain order within sentences, following the words they modify.

Interrogatives

Interrogatives remain SOV as well. Demaz uses the mood marker suffixed on the verb to indicate a question. Basic questions are straightforward, following the expected word order.

- (21) *inarf-li-m* *su-frid-∅-nu*
 mountain.PL.ACC 2SG.see.PRS.INT
 "Do you see the mountains?"

6.2 Clauses

Independent clauses include a subject and a verb – intransitive sentence – and typically also a direct object – transitive sentences. Dependent clauses cannot stand alone: they either do not contain one of the components of an independent clause or lack the ability to exist as on their own for clarity purposes (Aikhenvald, 2014).

Intransitive Independent Clause:

- (22) *ga-sosh-∅-∅*
1SG.SEW.PRS.DCL
"I sew"

Transitive Independent Clause:

- (23) *shay-li-m deli-frid-∅-∅*
star.PL.ACC 3PLF.SEE.PRS.DCL
"They see stars"

Dependent Clause:

- (24) *shroktli-m-da fa-nild-∅-∅-stiya*
forest.ACC.in 3MSG.WALK.PRS.DCL.who
"who walks in the forest"

Relative clauses, a type of dependent clause, 'modify the head of a noun phrase (which plays the role of an argument or an oblique within another clause)' (Aikhenvald, 2014, 232). They contain a subject and a verb, but cannot stand alone. Relative clauses are indicated with the suffix *-stiya* on the embedded verb, exemplified in (24). These clauses appear after the noun they modify and before the main verb.

7 Glossed Passage

The Demazan people embrace oral storytelling as one of their most valuable community practices. These stories pertain to historical events, interpreted through a spiritual ideology and environmental personification, and are shared on holidays and collective gatherings by elders. The glossed passage below is a fragment of popular legend *Deharfha Glod* which explains how the Demazan people came to be in their home.

- (25) *deharf-∅-∅-he glod-∅-∅ hilid-las-wa-∅*
earth.NOM.SG.and sky.NOM.SG to be.3PL.F.FP.pf.DCL
"Once, there was only Earth and Sky."

- (26) *sulk-li-∅ hilid-la-las-∅*
good.PL.NOM to be.DUR.FP
"For a long time, they were happy."

(27) *glod-∅-∅ sulk-∅-e hiligo-wa-las-∅*
sky.SG.NOM sad.SG.NOM to be.FP.pf.DCL

"One day, Sky was sad."

(28) *glod-∅-∅ klef-∅-∅ hiligo he deharf-∅-∅ glod-∅-um sulk-∅-um a*
sky.SG.NOM lonely.SG.NOM to be.SG.NH and Earth.SG.NOM sky.SG.ACC good-SG.ACC NH
∅-ro-frid-wa-∅ tis glod-∅-um de-barz-las-∅
SG.DES.SEE.FP.DCL because sky.SG.ACC 3F.SG.LOVE.FP.DCL

"Sky was lonely, and Earth wanted to see Sky happy because she loved Sky."

(29) *Deharf-∅-∅ inarf-li-acc glod-∅-um-re de-∅-lof-las-wa-∅ he shkrot-li-m-he*
Earth.SG.NOM mountain.PL.ACC sky.SG.ACC.to F.SG.breath.FP.pf.DCL and tree.PL.ACC.and
yash-li-m de-∅-sosh-las-wa-∅
water.PL.ACC F.SG.SEE.FP.pf.DCL

"So, Earth breathed mountains to the sky, and sewed trees and rivers."

(30) *raf-li-um glod-∅-um-da-he welg-li-um deharf-∅-um-ba de-∅-gud-las-wa-∅*
bird.PL.ACC sky.SG.ACC.in.and animal.PL.ACC earth.SG.ACC.ON F.SG.place.FP.pf.DCL

"She placed birds in the air and animals on the ground."

(31) *glod-∅-∅ shay-li-m a ∅-lof-las-wa-∅*
sky.SG.NOM star.PL.ACC NH SG.breath.FP.pf.DCL

"Sky breathed stars."

(32) *sulk-li-∅ hiligon-la-las-∅ yon glod-∅-∅ klef-∅-∅ stid hiligo-las-∅*
good.PL.NOM is.PL.DUR.FP.DCL until sky.SG.NOM lonely.SG.NOM again is.SG.FP.DCL

"They were happy for a while, until Sky became lonely again."

(33) *glod-∅-∅ welg-li-m a ∅-ro-frid-las-∅*
sky.SG.NOM animal.PL.ACC NH SG.DES.SEE.FP.DCL

"This time, Sky wanted to see more living creatures."

(34) *Deharf-∅-∅ demk-∅-um de-∅-ret-wa-∅*
earth.SG.NOM man.SG.ACC make

"So Earth made man."

(35) *unta-li-m-he*
more.PL.ACC.and

"And another."

(36) *he okdemk-∅-um demk-∅-um-re de-ret-las-wa-∅*
and child.SG.ACC man.SG.ACC.from 3fsg.make.FP.pf.DCL

"And from man, she made child."

(37) *unta-li-m-he unta-li-m-he*
more.PL.ACC.and more.PL.ACC.and

"And another, and another."

(38) *he Glod-∅-∅-he Deharf-∅-∅ sulk-li-∅ hiligon-la-las-∅ tis deharf-∅-∅*
and sky.SG.NOM.and earth.SG.NOM good.PL.NOM is.DUR.FP.DCL because earth.SG.NOM
deli-t inte-∅-∅ hiligo-la-las-∅
they.GEN big.NOM.SG is.DUR.FP.DCL

"And then the Sky and the Earth were happy because their world was full. "

8 Abbreviation List

Table 11: List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
SOV	subject-object-verb
1, 2, 3	first, second, third person
NOM	nominative
ACC	accusative
GEN	genitive
SG	singular
PL	plural
INCL	inclusive
EXCL	exclusive
F	feminine
M	masculine
NH	non human
PRS	present
NP	near past
FP	far past
FUT	future
DCL	declarative
INT	interrogative
IMP	imperative
INF	infinitive
EPI	epistemic
DES	desiderative
DUR	durative
PERF	perfective
NEG	negation

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