

Reference Grammar

Reference Grammar of the Sivesian Language: Siveye

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1st Edition



Preface

Siveye (Síve lot) is a language isolate, spoken primarily in the Zagros mountains of southwestern Iran with smaller populations of speakers in northwestern India, southern and eastern Europe, and the Caucasus.

Iranian Siveye is the most spoken variety with around 40 thousand speakers in Iran. As a language isolate, it has retained several unique features in its Grammar including a valency based split-ergativity system, four noun classes, plurality based stem changes, and the dual and paucal number on nouns. Although, due to its historical linguistic proximity to neighboring languages, such as Common Turkic, Classical Persian, and Arabic, it has imparted and loaned-in several grammatical and phonological features such as an Ezafe suffix, an agglutinative polar question marker on verbs, and phonemic aspirated and breathy plosives.

Dialects spoken in India, Europe, The Levant and Iraq have slight variations in phonology and grammar, with each taking less influences from Persian and more influences from the local languages, notably Gujarati and Hindi, Serbo-Croatian and Turkish, and Levantine Arabic respectively.

There is no standard

This is my version of author's notes. Personally, I find most reference grammars boring to read, and for the ones that do try to spice it up and add some personal touches/interesting in-text stuff, I don't really like the style and think separating the linguistic and personal stuff is my best course of action. When I have something interesting to say about the evolution, implementation, comparisons to other languages, or revelations I made while working on a specific section, this is how I'll note them down. You may notice that this paper is structured like a Wikipedia page; intentional!

This is my favorite conlang that I've made! It's gone through 3 revisions over ~a year and was originally based on Australian Aboriginal languages. And while its proto language has retained some Australian features, it is now a language influenced by Proto-Turkic, Persian, and Arabic. This was originally a school project to show off something I've created, but it's gone much further than that and is now a personal artlang! It is made to be naturalistic, albeit with a healthy amount of personal embellishment and making things up.

I took a lot of inspirations from a lot of different sources in the creation of Siveye.

History

Prior to the 2nd Century AD, Sivesians had primarily lived as pastoral nomads, shepherding sheep, goats, and camels.

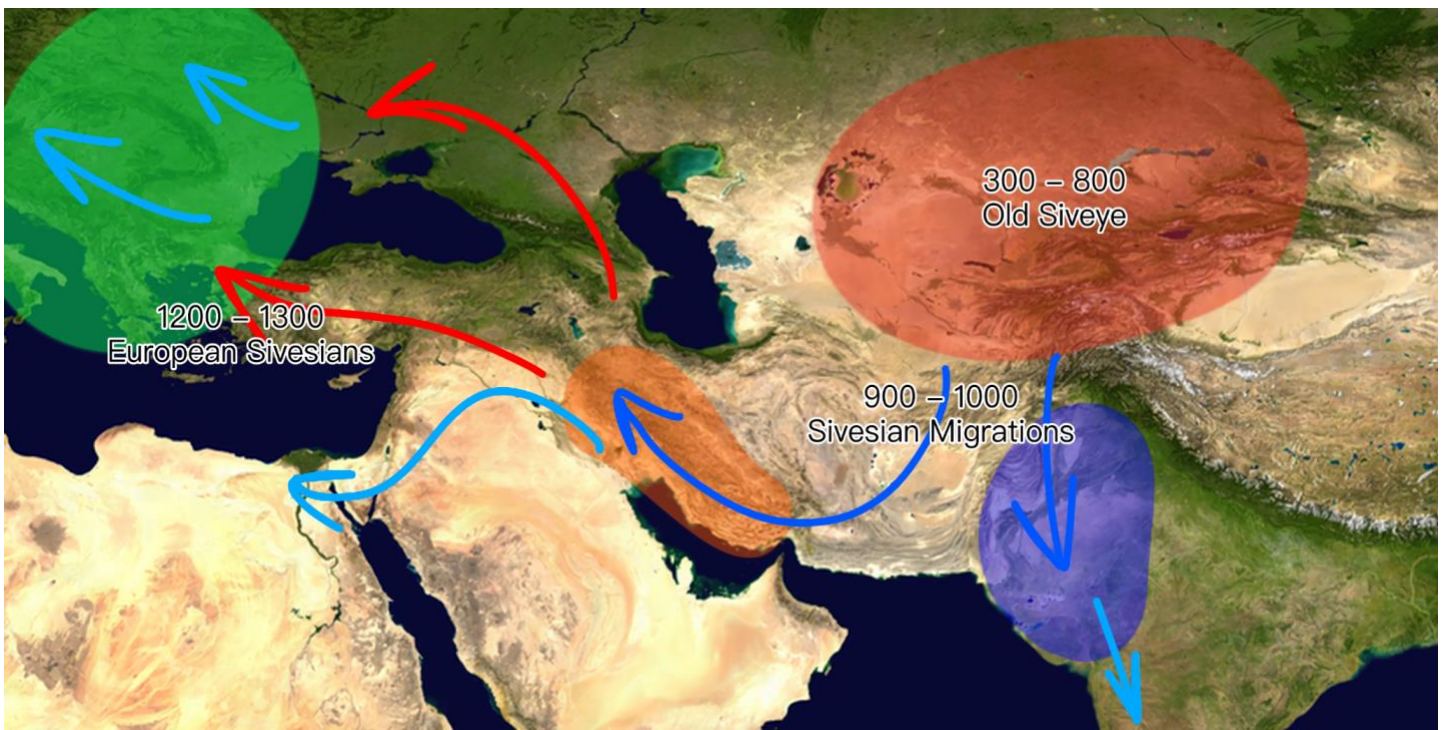
The Sivesian people first developed a shared, insular identity in Central Asia, where they remained and continued their nomadic lifestyle up until the Turkic Migrations brought in new swaths of people into the area. Consequently, Sivesians largely began a subsequent migration out of Central Asia; they traveled down south into the Sassanid Persian Empire and then split into two directions from there. Some Sivesians continued through the empire and settled in and around the Zagros Mountains while retaining their nomadic lifestyle; while the others traveled east into India and eventually settled down within the Iranian nations of the Western India, including the Western Satraps and East Kushan nations.

Around the 13th century, a growing number of Sivesians began leaving South Asia as the Mongol Empire grew in power and began conquering Persia and clashing with the surrounding areas. Iranian Sivesians traveled up the northern Zagros Mountains and the Armenian Highlands and around the Black Sea through the Caucasus Mountains and across the Bosphorus into Eastern and Southern Europe. European Sivesians have linguistically and culturally diverged significantly from Iranian Sivesians and have since been influenced by Slavic and other Balkan languages.

Around the same time, many Indian Sivesians began emigrating within the Indian Subcontinent. As a result, Indian Sivesians have a much smaller and more scattered population that lacks a shared cultural identity. Indian Siveye is now only spoken by scattered groups of elderly speakers.

Smaller groups of Sivesians instead travelled across West Asia and into North Africa, where they assimilated into the Nomadic Berber cultures of Morocco and Algeria, around the Atlas Mountains.

Both European and African Sivesians have largely given up their pastoral culture in favor of itinerant or purely nomadic lifestyles.



Phonology

Vowels

Notes:

- The phonemicity of /e:/ is debatable. Clusters of /je/ and /je/ word-finally have been simplified in all dialects; however, some have retained a distinction between them and /e/ as /e:/. In careful speech, such clusters are still pronounced noticeably longer than typical realizations, but the distinction is regularly collapsed in rapid speech.
- /e/ becomes /je/ word initially and after vowels when word initial.
- /u:/ and /i:/ are pronounced [ʊ] and [ɪ] by younger speakers
- /a/ is pronounced closer to [ɛ] in unstressed syllables
- /e/ and /o/ reduce to /i/ and /u/ at the ends of words

| VOWELS | Front | Central | Back |
|--------|--------|---------|------|
| Close | i i: | ɨ | u u: |
| Mid | e (e:) | ə | o |
| Open | | a a: | |

Consonants

Siveye had a notable sound shift where word-initial voiceless plosives and all geminated plosives became aspirated. This has resulted in aspirated and breathy plosives becoming phonemic in the language, primarily due to influence from neighboring Persian and Indo-Aryan languages.

| CONSONANTS | Labial | | Dental | | Palatal | | Velar | | Uvular | |
|---------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|--------|---|
| Nasal | | m | | ɱ | | ɲ | | (ŋ) | | |
| Stop | p p ^h | b b ^h | t t ^h | d d ^h | tʃ tʃ ^h | dʒ dʒ ^h | k k ^h | g g ^h | (ʔ) | |
| Tap | | | | r | | | | | | |
| Fricative | | v | ʃ | ʒ | (ç) | (ʒ) | | χ | | ʁ |
| Approximant | | | | | | j | | | | |
| Lateral approximant | | | | l | | | | | | |

Notes:

- /r/ is pronounced [ɹ] in coda position
- /tʃ tʃ^h dʒ dʒ^h/ are pronounced as fricatives [ʃ ʒ ʒ^h] intervocalically. Aspirated fricative allophones are prone to merging with their unaspirated counterparts in rapid speech.
- /k^h/ and /p^h/ are typically pronounced [x] and [φ] respectively in rapid speech.
 - Speakers of dialects that regularly lenite the above aspirated plosives also typically devoice breathy plosives /b^h/ and /g^h/ to [p^h] and [k^h] respectively.
- /v/ pronounced as an approximant [w] in coda position near back vowels.
- /j/ and /v/ are commonly elided in rapid speech.
- /χ/ and /ʁ/ are both pronounced [χ] by younger speakers, merging the phonemes.
- /ɲ/ is pronounced [j] in coda position and between vowels
- A glottal stop [ʔ] may be inserted between word boundaries when one ends in a back vowel and the next begins with another. When either is a front vowel, an epenthetic /j/ is added.

Phonotactics

Siveye has a maximum CLVC syllable structure and word-initial stress.

- /p^h, b^h, t^h, d^h, tʃ^h, dʒ^h, k^h, g^h, dʒ, ɲ/ are only permitted in the onset
 - /dʒ/ is only found at the beginnings of words, apart from certain loanwords.
- [ŋ, ɻ] are only permitted in the coda
- Only /r, s, l/ are permitted to be geminated. There may be sequences of the same consonant next to each other when words are affixed, but these are analyzed as consecutive segments and not phonemic gemination. Only /r, s, l/ may be found geminated within word roots.
 - When /r/ is geminated, it is pronounced as a trill [r]. [r] does not otherwise occur in the language.
- The only medial consonant found in native Siveye words is /r/. However, /j/ and /v/ may rarely be found in medial position in Hindustani and English loanwords.
- All other consonants not listed are allowed to be in both the onset and coda.

Vowels /u:, i/ are only found in stressed syllables, outside of recent loanwords.

Siveye has vowel reduction: /a, o, e/ turn into /ə, u, i/ word-finally. When additional suffixes are added, these vowels often revert to their unreduced forms.

Siveye has a notable tendency to epenthesize plosives when in {[Fricative],[Nasal]} _ r position. Specifically: /ɣr, sr, zr, mr, nr/ are illegal clusters in Siveye. To remedy, these clusters are turned into /gr, str, zdr, mbr, ndr/ respectively. These changes are most noticeable in negated verbs, where all their personal suffixes begin with /r/ and commonly cause such epenthesis.

Stress & Prosody

Stress in Siveye is nearly always on the first syllable of a word, with the exception that clitics such as those expressing numbers or conjunctions do not take stress and keep the stress on the original syllable. Secondary stress falls on every odd syllable following the first syllable.

Stressed syllables are mainly distinguished from unstressed ones by their pitch; stressed syllables take a high pitch.

Raidag duraisādaci
PLU.sons and-PLU.daughters
[ˈraj.dəg du.ˈraj.sə.ˌdɛ.ʃi]
Sons and daughters

Penurron sanau vezen ausevuvar
INDEF-sun-PAT her.LOC out.of shine-Z
[pʰe.ˈnu.r:ɔn ˈsa.nɛʊ ˈwe.zen ˈaʊ.se.ˌu.wəɾ]
A sun shines from within her

Orthography

Romanization

| CONSONANTS | Labial | | Dental | | Palatal | | Velar | | Uvular | |
|---------------------|--------|------|--------|------|---------|------|--------|------|--------|----|
| Nasal | | m | | n | | ñ | | | | |
| Plosive | p pp/p | b bb | t tt/t | d dd | c cc/c | j jj | k kk/k | g gg | | |
| Tap | | | | r | | | | | | |
| Fricative | | v | s | z | | | | ğ | | rh |
| Approximant | | | | | | i/y | | | | |
| Lateral approximant | | | | l | | | | | | |

| VOWELS | Front | | Central | | Back | |
|--------|-------|--|---------|--|------|-----|
| Close | i í | | y | | | u ú |
| Mid | e | | ǎ | | | o |
| Open | | | a á | | | |

The i/y distinction for /j/ is my Tolkien-esque orthography add-in. <y> is used in common words and places where it looks nicer, mostly at the beginnings of words.

Voiceless aspirated stops are written as a single consonants word initially, and doubled word-medially.

Nastaliq

Due to intermixing between Iranian and Indian Sivesians over the languages lifetime, Siveye is now most commonly written in the Nastaliq script, rather than the more common Perso-Arabic Script.

Here is a sample text written in Nastaliq:

پو غورو بوغاي جآيندروني عولناب رود آروسال آپچوعا لباب ار

Porhoru borhaic jáiendroní golnavru dárosal áccogalbavar.

A stick is used in order to catch the pink salmon.

كو وب ام ميل آزاد دو بوغوب ويز اتعودو بايع ب و جومالبارام

Ko úvam el ázád duborhovu ezatru dubáiğomorh vu jumalbaram..

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights

Vocabulary

Native Sivesian words make up the majority of Siveye vocabulary. Of the loanwords it has acquired, most are of either Persian or Arabic origin, along with some from several other languages, including Proto-Iranian, English (Modern), Hindi, Turkish, and Qashqai. There is a notable amount of vocabulary derived from and relating to sheep and goat husbandry.

Eastern Sivesian dialects are notable for frequently code-switching with Siveye and other Indian languages and commonly combining the two languages as is common for Hindi and English, while European Dialects have loaned-in more words from Turkish, Slavic languages, German, and English.

Notable Constructions

Comparisons

Comparisons in Siveye are conveyed by usage of a locative construction where the main noun being compared is given its own clause with the adjective saying, “[noun] is [adjective]” and the second noun is put in the Locative after the main clause in apposition.

Bábnă varu ainloiub, mámiarh varu.
dad-PAT my be.old-he, mom-LOC my
My father is older than my mother.
lit. *father of-mine is-old, to-mother of-mine*

“To have”

There is no verb for “To have” in Siveye. To exemplify possession in a sentence, Siveye uses the verb “cez” (to have), followed by the possessed item in the Locative with the postposition “vu.”

Bevassi dañau vu cez
dress her.LOC with there.is
She has a dress

Vocative

Siveye uses Vocative particle for addressing people and other nouns

Jukkonan an!
Jack VOC
Jack!

And

The conjunction “and” works like all other conjunctions in Siveye: going before the affected clause. However, due to Arabic and Persian influence, it is instead analyzed as a prefixing clitic.

Raidag duraisădaci
PLU.sons and-PLU.daughters
Sons and daughters

Yes and No

There are 3 words for answering polar Yes-No questions in Siveye. To avoid the ambiguity of replying “yes” to a negative question (“You didn’t go, did you?” “Yes” “What? Do you mean ‘Yes, I did go’ or ‘Yes, I did *not* go?”), Siveye employs a Three-form system for answering questions. There are separate words for replying Yes to an affirmative question and Yes to a negative question; there is a single word for replying No.

Raddămvi? – Eă! Raddămnai.
Did you eat? – Yes! I ate

Raddămarvi? – Rozi! Raddămnai.
Didn’t you eat? – Yes! I ate

Raddăm(ar)vi? – Yenă. Raddăramnai.
Did(n’t) you eat? – No. I did not eat

Grammar

Syntax

Word order in Siveye is quite lax and allows for words to be ordered based on topicality. In Old Siveye, the word order was governed by the noun class of each word in the sentence, ordered Masculine, Feminine, Zoic, then Inanimate. However, in Modern Siveye the word order is more often analyzed as a topic-comment system where the main topic of discussion is fronted to the beginning of the sentence and then any comments on it are put subsequently, along with any other arguments. However, due to linguistic prescriptivism among speakers, ordering arguments based on animacy is seen as more formal and is generally used more often in formal speech and as a sign of respect among speakers.

Generally, verbs go at the end of the sentence (unless very topical to the discussion), nominal adjectives go after nouns, verbal adjectives and other participles go before nouns, determiners go before nouns, postpositions go after nouns, relative clauses go after their nouns, and adverbs go before words.

Indirect Objects

Indirect objects are typically placed after direct objects in a sentence, followed by the postposition “rhoc.”

However, Siveye also retains a Dative Shift construction from Old Siveye where the Patientive indirect object is placed directly before the Patientive direct object. This is primarily used in literary and formal contexts.

Pubágron ocoron rhoc úzzegmărunai
INDEF-treat-PAT cat-PAT to gave-I-it.Z-PFV
I gave a treat to the cat

Ocoron pubágron úzzegmărunai
cat-PAT INDEF-treat-PAT gave-I-it.Z-PFV
I gave the cat a treat [old fashioned]

Subordinate Clauses

Subordinate clauses use the conjunction “că” to link the main clause to the subordinate clause. When using a postposition or conjunction to introduce a subordinate clause, they take the suffix -c(ă).

Mat vairmă că osagabbunnai
I know-I that said-he-it-PFV
I know that he said it

Mat risășian rasiĉ osagabbun vairmăddinai
I person-PAT who-that said-he-it know-I-it.F-PFV
I know the person that said it

Morphology

As a general rule-of-thumb for affixing suffixes, u > o, i > e, ä > a when not at the end of a word, and ai > aj, au > av when a suffix beginning with a vowel is added.

When proper nouns take inflections, an apostrophe is added between the noun and any suffixes added, like in Turkish.

Penurron Jon'arh vezen ausevuvar
INDEF-sun-PAT John-LOC out.of shine-Z
A sun shines from within John

T-V Distinction

Siveye utilizes regular T-V distinction, much like the surrounding languages of Persian and Turkish do.

Stem Alterations

All nouns and verbs in Siveye have both long and short forms, generally indicated by an alteration in the initial syllable, be it either a backing/lengthening/diphthongization of the initial vowel, metathesis of the rhyme and onset, consonant mutations, a mix of these strategies, or simply no distinction between the two. Conjunctions and postpositions do not have corresponding long forms.

On nouns, the long form is used to form plurals of nouns, while the short form is the default dictionary word. Plurality is always distinguished when it can be.

On verbs, the long form is used for most non-finite verb forms, while the short form is used for infinitives, participles, and when used alongside suffixed auxiliary verbs. While the short form is considered the dictionary form of verbs, long forms are actually used more often and have greater influence over the phonological development of the short form than vice versa; some verbs have had their short forms regularized to be more similar to the long form.

Recent loanwords are often adapted with stem alteration patterns, however some irregular words are unchanged in the long form and are left ambiguous to certain short-long form distinctions made.

| Short form | Long form | Strategy |
|------------|-----------|---|
| val | vúl | Vowel Alternation |
| jávă | jávă | Unchanged |
| gonu | auggu | Metathesis + Vowel Alternation |
| rokkonla | auranla | Metathesis + Vowel Alternation + Epenthesis |
| cirbu | kairbu | Depalatalization + Vowel Alternation |
| ñyrhu | ñairhu | Vowel Alternation |
| kámpiuter | kúmpiuter | Vowel Alternation (By analogy) |
| dáinosor | dúnosor | Vowel Alternation (By analogy) |

Split Ergativity

Siveye has a high degree of Split Ergativity in its morphology.

Intransitive verbs specify whether or not the Agent of the sentence is performing the verb intentionally or unintentionally by governing the subject into either the Agentive or Patientive. If a verb is done intentionally, the subject is put in the Agentive case and clarifies that the verb is performed intentionally, not habitually, or with intent, which often gives the verb a distinct definition. If the action is performed unintentionally or without volition on behalf of the subject, the noun is put into the Patientive case, specifying the verb was performed unintentionally or habitually.

Vevon airdojjau
bread-P mold-INAN
The bread molds [no one's fault]; The bread goes moldy

Which contrasts with...

Vevu airdojjau
bread.A mold-INAN
The bread [seemingly] molds itself; The bread molds quickly [bread's fault that it molded]

The two sentences have the same words, but the case marking on the word for bread is different. The verb "erdojja" (To mold) is not a verb with different/distinct Agentive and Patientive definitions, but this example shows how putting the subject in different cases can affect the sentence's meaning.

Most intransitive verbs have two separate definitions that typically span different words in English; however, many stative verbs that are typically used as adjectives, when their noun is put in the Patientive, take on a habitual meaning instead.

Nouns

Nouns in Siveye are always marked for 3 Cases, 4 Genders, 2 Numbers, Volition, and Definiteness.

Noun Classes

There are 4 noun classes in Siveye: Masculine, Feminine, Zoic, and Inanimate. All nouns have an inherent gender, typically indicated by a suffix, which determines the agreements on verbs and adjectives. Nouns do not necessarily correspond to their natural/intuitive gender.

2nd person pronouns only distinguish Masculine and Feminine genders.

- **Masculine** - Masculine nouns do not typically have a unique ending. If any, -u
 - rhu**ba**ial, saivogmi, tábeg, memen, kosu
Mind, Story, Word, Town, Country
- **Feminine** - Feminine nouns typically end in -i, -í, or (rarely) -ǎl
 - risǎdaci, úñi, vonvi, ñǎrhǒmi, kospi
Daughter, Baby, Sky, Eye, Neighborhood
- **Zoic** - Zoic nouns typically end in -ru
 - ambru, avabru, ciriendru, moceru, losceru
Day, Ram, Ewe, Young ewe, Young ram
- **Inanimate** - Inanimate nouns typically end in -u
 - agcu, ubu, núrhoggu, kospu
Stone, Group, Orange, Residence

Niche language Burushaski has a very similar gender system to this. I didn't know about its existence before making my gender system so it's nice to know that it is, infact, realistic.

Cases

Siveye has 3 cases, along with Ezafe, which acts slightly differently than other cases. There is little irregularity in regard to case suffixing

Agentive nouns are the default dictionary form of nouns. They are used with the subject of intentional intransitive verbs and with all transitive verbs, and they are also governed by some postpositions. It does not take an affix.

Risǎsi nairhdau
woman.A see-F-IN
The woman sees it

Patientive nouns are used for the subjects of unintentional intransitive verbs and the objects of transitive verbs. Additionally, several postpositions govern their nouns into the patientive, usually with a meaning around “to; towards; onto”. On its own, when not indicating the patient of a transitive verb, it is used much like a Sublative case [onto].

Vevon airdojjau
bread-P mold-INAN
The bread molds [no one's fault];
The bread goes moldy

Ávoron nairhmǎru
tree-P see-I-ZOIC
I see the tree

Rhǎgvon vúlma
street-P walk-I
I step onto the street

On regular lexical nouns, the **Locative** is used for the meaning “in [blank].” For pronouns, they are instead used to form genitive constructions, being used like adjectives that go before nouns to show possession. Additionally, several postpositions govern their nouns into the locative, usually with a meaning around “in, inside of; from; out of; of”. Locative nouns always take a postposition and are not generally used independently or given any innate meaning.

Due to a merger in Old Siveye between the Genitive and the Locative, the case has inherited some genitival uses, notably within the pronouns, where the case is still used to show possession.

Kospiarh rhyly kum
neighborhood-LOC at I.am
I am in the neighborhood

Váru kospi
my.LOC neighborhood.A
My neighborhood

Kospiarh ovas kum
neighborhood-LOC out I.am
I am outside the neighborhood

I try to use only “Locative” in this paper, but on my google sheet where I do everything and by mistake I may refer to it as the Genitive. They are interchangeable while reading this paper

Ezafe is a loaned-in feature from Persian and is marginally considered a case in the same respect as those previously listed. It is used to show possession on nouns by marking the possessor, and used on nouns when before attributive nominal adjectives. However, because adjectives are not their own word class and are ambiguous as to whether they are acting as a noun or adjective, ambiguity can arise between whether a word marked with Ezafe is describing it as an adjective or denoting possession. This ambiguity is usually left up to context. On a surface level, it is very similar to a Construct case as in Arabic.

This ambiguity between “the bar’s stool” and “The bar-stool” was a complete oversight until I realized while writing this paper. So much of conlanging is accidental!

Ezafe is not a case in the strictest sense, as it is allowed to be stacked on top of other case suffixes.

Juvmí jumonvu
fruit-EZAFE red
The red(‘s) fruit

Mavelluí kospoznu
life-EZ nomad
The nomad’s life / The nomad-like life

I completely misunderstood how Ezafe worked when I first implimented it. I thought it went on the adjective and then put the adjective after the noun. Now, it goes before! In a future Siveye or just in a couple centuries later, Siveye’s syntax will probably become more head-initial and less head-marking.

Each case's realization differs based on the stem and gender of the inflected noun. While by no means an exhaustive display of how cases can be realized, here is a basic overview of the most common suffixing patterns:

| Case Inflection | Masculine | Feminine | Zoic | Inanimate |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|--------|-----------|
| Agentive | soglom | ñyrhomi | noru | salu |
| Patientive | soglomnă | ñyrhomial | noron | salrhon |
| Locative | soglomorh | ñyrhomiu | nororh | salrhu |
| Ezafe | soglomí | ñyrhomí | noruí | saluí |

Number & Number Clitics

Nouns in Siveye are only required to be marked for Singular and Plural, but there are two additional and optional numbers that nouns may be marked for: Dual and Paucal. However, for mass nouns and inanimate nouns, a different system is used: General [unspecified amount], Singulative, Dual, and Paucal. The Singulative/Indefinite, Dual, and Paucal clitics all change depending on the nouns suffix in an otherwise unique system where they are either Animate (Masculine, Feminine, or Zoic), or Inanimate.

On regular nouns (animate and non-mass nouns), the default Short Form is Singular, and the Plural is marked by using the Long Form. The Dual and Paucal are formed off of the Plural by attaching the appropriate prefixes onto the plural noun.

| Number Clitics | Indefinite./ Singulative | Dual | Paucal |
|----------------|--------------------------|--------|--------|
| Animate | p(e)- | rhai- | rağ- |
| Inanimate | p(u)- | rh(u)- | rau- |

The p(e)- prefix acts as an indefinite prefix on countable nouns, and a singulative prefix on uncountable nouns. The p(u)- prefix is always a singulative marker as it only goes on inanimate, and therefor uncountable nouns.

As a clitic, the number clitic attaches to the beginning of the entire phrase as a whole; the prefix may not always go on the noun itself and may instead go on another determiner.

Rh-úr rh kúbau-í evon-í donu *[hyphens added for clarity, left unwritten in writing]*
 DUAL.INAN-these PLU.sky-EZ blue-EZ big
 Those two big blue skies.

Inanimate and Mass nouns are by default General and are ambiguous to number. The Singulative is formed by attaching the Singulative/Indefinite prefix to the unmarked noun; Inanimate and Mass nouns are permitted to take the Dual and Paucal markings too, but only if it makes reasonable sense to say such, mostly some Inanimate nouns take number markings. However, many speakers simply never use number clitics on uncountable nouns.

Number may still be expressed with the usage of independent numerals and adjectives.

Mass/Uncountable Nouns

A large amount of Siveye's core noun vocabulary consists of mass nouns. Generally, mass nouns are nouns where exact quantities are hard to determine and/or unhelpful to simply quantify. To remedy this, Siveye assigns each uncountable noun a counter word and/or number clitic in order to communicate a clearer amount of any given noun. If the exact thing being discussed is unimportant to the discussion, it may optionally be backgrounded by affixing it to the container word and leaving only the container word to hold the stressed syllable. The container word is placed before the lexical noun and put in the necessary number and case (if any), along with Ezafe suffixed on, and the lexical noun is placed after in apposition.

| Countable Animate Noun | Horn |
|------------------------|--------------|
| Singular | kojjoperu |
| Indefinite | pekojjoperu |
| Plural | újjoperu |
| Dual | rhaiújjoperu |
| Paucal | rağújjoperu |

| Uncountable Inanimate Noun | Pants |
|----------------------------|----------|
| General | gápsu |
| Singulative/Indefinite | pugápsu |
| Dual | rhugúpsu |
| Paucal | raugúpsu |

Due to the dual number, the number two "Rhai" is rarely used in the spoken language.

Pekuruí obru
 INDEF-animal-EZ sheep
 A sheep

Bojjer jávuí mukkom
 15 PLU.handful-EZ indigo
 15 handfuls of

Demonstratives & Determiners

There are 2 degrees of demonstratives in Siveye: Proximal and Distal. Demonstrative adjectives and pronouns have etymologically unrelated forms.

Demonstrative adjectives agree with their nouns in number and gender. They are placed before the noun.

| Singular | Proximal | Distal |
|-----------|----------|--------|
| Masculine | ñeyok | mukku |
| Feminine | noğol | maí |
| Zoic | ñebru | romu |
| Inanimate | oğu | komu |

| Plural | Proximal | Distal |
|-----------|----------|--------|
| Masculine | nayok | aukku |
| Feminine | nağol | áí |
| Zoic | nayebru | rağu |
| Inanimate | auğu | úrh |

There is a large set of independent determiners in Siveye, forming a set of question words, determiners, and pronouns.

| Independent Determiners | what | This | | That | | Some (Indefinite) | Any | Every | No |
|-------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|---------|----------|--------|-------------------|--------|--------|---------|
| | | Singular | Plural | Singular | Plural | | | | |
| Qualitative | astrai | [See Demonstrative Adjectives] | | | | peu | lolu | ko | santra |
| Person | rasi | zeñesi | ainzesi | risi | raiesi | poglu | logu | korhok | sogan |
| Thing | lores | noğ | nau | oğ | mau | polu | lolu | korhu | saggu |
| Place | lorisal | janai | | jáí | | piau | yăjai | kojai | jáizan |
| Time | loresăn | ñin | | min | | pinlu | yărhăn | korhăn | sinan |
| Method | lorhod | ñirhov | | morhov | | perhollu | lorhov | korhov | kavzan |
| Reason | lorak | ñerak | | morak | | peraglu | lorak | korak | ráksan |
| Destination | jărhlor | ñyrh | | myrh | | pyrhlu | yărhă | kojărh | jărhсан |
| Source | pansi | ñeban | | moban | | pebanlu | loban | koban | pansan |

Verbs

Short & Long Forms

In Old Siveye, verbs had a neat grid of TAM's formed off of all possible combinations of the short and long forms of various auxiliary verbs in combination with the given lexical verb (The long form was originally a prefix that was metastasized into the verb stem and reanalyzed as a different stem). Those in italics are no longer used in Modern Siveye.

| Tense / Aspect [Old Siveye] | - | agh- | - agh[AUX] | agh- agh[AUX] |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------|---------------|
| - | Imperative | Present | X | |
| - niru | <i>Past PFV</i> | Past IMP | <i>Perfect</i> | Past Perfect |
| - aska | <i>Future</i> | Conditional | <i>Past Cond.</i> | Fut. Perfect |

Due to Siveye speaker's preference for the long stem verb forms and eventual replacement of verb TAM's that used the short stem, the long form is now the default form of the verb used for any finite clauses.

In Modern Siveye, the long form of verbs is the more common and useful form for speakers to remember. However, the short forms are still useful in limited contexts such as the imperative and innovated perfect tenses, along with them still being used as the default dictionary form of verbs, as with all words.

Many verbs in Siveye have been reanalyzed to be more in accordance with their long stem equivalents.

| Reanalysis | Short form | Long form |
|------------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Old Siveye | *ágtíg | *aǾágtíg |
| Old Siveye (Post-metathesis) | *táigig | *oǾógtig |
| Modern Siveye (Pre-regularization) | táieg | úgzeg |
| Modern Siveye | ágzeg | úgzeg |

Agreement + Polarity

All verbs in Siveye must agree with their subjects in person and polarity, and with their object in just person. Plurality is only shown on the verb in the 1st person, where both the inclusive and exclusive 1st person plurals are differentiated.

| Subject Agreement: | | Positive | | Negative | |
|--------------------|-----------|----------|---------|----------|--------|
| | | Singular | Plural | Singular | Plural |
| 1st | Inclusive | -m(ǎ) | -lañi | -ram(ǎ) | -ralai |
| | Exclusive | | -rhu | | -rau |
| 2nd | Masculine | -vi | -(a)rvi | | |
| | Feminine | -zi | -(a)rzi | | |

| Object Agreement: | | Singular | Plural |
|-------------------|-----------|----------|--------|
| 1st | Inclusive | -v(ǎ) | -lǎ |
| | Exclusive | | -joi |
| 2nd | Masculine | -mi | |
| | Feminine | -(a)rnǎ | |
| 3rd | Masculine | -mu | |

| | | | |
|-----|-----------|-------|----------|
| 3rd | Masculine | -b(u) | -rabb(u) |
| | Feminine | -d(ă) | -radd(ă) |
| | Zoic | -var | -rabbar |
| | Inanimate | -u | -(a)rnu |

| | | | |
|--|-----------|---------|--|
| | Feminine | -(a)ddi | |
| | Zoic | -ru | |
| | Inanimate | -n(ă) | |
| | | | |

Simple predicative sentences with a subject always use verbal negation when applicable. For non-finite sentences or any other cases where person marking isn't utilized, a nominal negator "biază" is instead used. It is used much like an adjunct as it is placed before the negated word.

Transitivity

Every verb in Siveye is classed as either Transitive or Intransitive. Several inflections center around this distinction and many nominal inflections are governed by the verb's transitivity.

Siveye, as a Split-S language, gives two separate definitions to near every intransitive verb, distinguishing whether the verb is being performed with or without volition is dependent on the noun's case (see section on nouns). While this distinction was originally grammatical, it has since solidified into a lexical distinction. In contrast, transitive verbs have comparatively fewer definitions and are always agentive. Passive constructions can still be used to turn agents into patients.

There is no morphological difference between transitive and intransitive verbs, and many transitive and intransitive verb pairs are zero derived from each other.

Nonfinite Verb Forms

There are two main types of nonfinite verbs in Siveye: Participles and Infinitives. All nonfinite forms use the short form of verb stems. Infinitives are additionally used as gerunds.

Participles are used to turn verbs into adjectives, used say a noun is the doer or having a verb done to it. Active participles are used to denote a noun as performing the action, the passive participle denotes a noun as having the action performed to it.

Infinitives are used to turn verbs into nouns, denoting the performance of the action itself. It covers a spectrum of meaning typically covered by infinitives and gerunds. Agentive infinitives denote the agentive definition, and vice versa.

| Infinitives/Gerund | |
|--------------------|------------|
| Agentive def. | [-long]-al |
| Patientive def. | [-long]-ak |

| Participles | |
|-------------|--------------|
| Active | [-long]-allo |
| Passive | [-long]-alú |

The unexpected -k ending of the Patientive Participle is a result of assimilation and rebracketing of the suffixed copula being used alongside the participle.

Reflexive

These pronouns are used to refer back to the subject of the clause. They can be applied to all persons and numbers.

| Reflexive | Patientive | Locative |
|-----------|------------|----------|
| Masculine | un | vun |
| Feminine | uz | zu |
| Zoic | uron | ussu |
| Inanimate | urhon | vurh |

In a future Siveye, these will probably become the mediopassive voice. Why didn't I just make them evolve into that from Old Siveye? Haha! Yeah, I didn't

Passive Voice

In Old Siveye, a suffix (-ghat) was suffixed onto verbs to show the passive voice after switching the roles of the agent and patient in a given sentence. However, this suffix is no longer productive in Modern Siveye and is now merely a derivational suffix used to give some verbs distinct passive definitions

In Modern Siveye, the passive is formed by putting the lexical verb into the infinitive and then suffixing the auxiliary verb "be", conjugated for person and TAM.

(Mat) Bob'on nairhambu
(I.A) Bob-PAT see-I-him
I see bob

Bob'on nyrhalbam
Bob-PAT to.see-PAS-he
Bob is seen

Tense, Aspect, and Mood

TAM suffixes do not revert word final vowels back to their unreduced variants; they remain i, u, and ä

The **Present tense** marks either the Gnostic and/or Present Continuous in context. It is formed using the long form stem and no specific suffix, along with the appropriate person markings.

Mat vairotmä
I work-I
I am working; I work

The **Imperfect tense** marks a verb as happening over a period of time in the past. This cannot be used for Past Habitual sentences, unlike many other languages allow it to be used for. It is formed off of the long stem with the suffix “-ie”

Mat vairotmie
I work-I-IMPERFECT
I was working

Omol omu saimie
from he.LOC hated-I-IMP
He was hating me

The **Perfective tense** marks a verb as happening at a singular point of time in the past. It is formed with the long stem and the suffix “-nai”

Mat vairotmänai
I work-I-PERFECTIVE
I worked

The **Future tense** marks a verb as happening at sometime in the future. It is formed with the long stem and the suffix “-us”

Mat vairotmus
I work-I-FUTURE
I work later; I will work

Omu saimus tamäc cúgabmäb
he.LOC hated-I-FUT after-that tell-I-him
He will hate me after I tell him

The **Conditional mood** marks statements dependent upon a condition being met, usually expressed either within the same sentence, or at least within the context of discussion. It is marked with the long stem and the suffix “-kar”

Mat vairotmäkar najä jái ku
I work-I-CONDITIONAL, if there you. are
I'd work if you are there

Najā cúgabmäbnai omu saimäkar
if tell-I-him-PFV he.LOC hated-I-COND
He would hate me if I told him

The **Imperative mood** marks commands. It is formed with the bare short stem along with the appropriate personal markings. It can additionally be used for 3rd and 1st person plural subjects to form the **Hortative mood**

Sadvi!
IMPERATIVE.cheer.up-you.F
Cheer up, girl!

Sadlañi!
IMP.cheer.up-we.INC
Let's cheer up!

The **Perfect tenses** are used to express that a verb was performed sometime in the past before the present. It is formed by suffixing the conjugated copula onto the participle form of the lexical verb.

Mat virotallokum
I work-PTCP.ACTIVE-am
I have worked

Mat virotallokumnai
I work-PTCP.ACTIVE-am.PFV
I had worked

Mat virotallokumus
I work-PTCP.ACTIVE-am.FUT
I will have worked

The **Habitual mood** marks verbs as happening over an indefinite amount of time; habitually, It is formed by sufficing the conjugated copula onto the infinitive form of the lexical verb.

Mat virotalkum
I work-INF.ACTIVE-am
I be working

Question Marking

Yes-No Questions are formed by a suffix directly after the verb: “-m(a)-” This system of question marking was loaned in from Proto Turkic.

Questions additionally take on a rising tone throughout the phrase along with the specific marking.

As vairotmazi?
[ʔas 'vaj.rot.mə.zi]
you.F work-?-you
Do you work; Are you working?

Adjectives

Adjectives in Siveye do not constitute their own word class grammatically. However, both nouns and verbs are able to act as adjectives and, in the right circumstances, take special affixes deterministic of adjectives.

Nominal

Nominal adjectives, when used as nouns, are commonly used as determiners/demonstrative-pronouns with broader meanings than other nouns, and counter words for mass/uncountable nouns. They are most typically used attributively and on Zoic and Inanimate nouns.

When a noun takes a nominal adjective and/or possessive (see Ezafe), the head noun takes Ezafe, and the adjective is placed after the described noun.

Nominal adjectives may sometimes be used in apposition to their noun to background the additional info. This is generally considered nonstandard and typical of rural dialects; it is not used in formal contexts. The adjective is placed after the noun with no suffix added, the adjective may also lack a stressed syllable. This construction is exclusive to nominal adjectives; verbal adjectives lack such a construction. Certain historic phrases have fossilized this construction, such as the name of the language “Sive lot.”

Vonví kabau
sky-EZAFE light.blue
Blue sky

Vonvi kabau kon
sky light.blue is.F
The sky is blue

Kabau vonvi
light.blue sky
Blue sky [Rural]

Korhok vonvianí kabau ñirhalluvalai
everyone sky-PAT-EZ light.blue see-PRF.we
We have all seen the blue

Verbal

Verbal adjectives are functionally identical to intransitive verbs. However, while most intransitive verbs may have two definitions based on volition, verbal adjectives typically only have 1 standard definition and volition are left unmarked, as there is little difference to be made with or without volition. They are most typically used for predicative sentences and on Masculine and Feminine nouns attributively. When used attributively, they are rendered as a participle and placed before the head. When used predicatively, they behave exactly like intransitive verbs and are given the necessary personal markings, along with any other markings the speaker may wish to use.

Tudlotallu kanu
be.stuck-PTCP canoe
Stuck canoe

Kanu taudlotu
Canoe be.stuck-INAN
The canoe is stuck

I just learned that this system of nominal and verbal adjectives is very similar to how Japanese handles adjectives. Let it be known I never knew about japanese adjectives before making this system. Again, nice to know what I'm doing is realistic. I'm less excited to learn that it's the same as a natlang out there since it's so famous and not nearly as charming when its some random language isolate in Northern Pakistan

Sample Text

English First Article of Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Siveye Translation:

Ko úvam el ázád duborhovu ezatrhu dubáiğomorph vu jumalbaram. Sanaizen agalrhu vu gaunbu, dubai un pavabíarhí ebegpopu vu úzdăb

Gloss:

all PLU-people like free and-equal dignity-LOC and-PLU.rights-LOC pertaining.to birth-PAS.M.PLU.
they.M.PAT reason-LOC with, be.gifted-M.PLU, and-be.ought.to RFLX.M.PAT INDEF-sense-LOC-EZ
brotherhood with interact.with-M.

Phonemic Realization:

/kʰo 'u: .vam el 'a: .za:d du.'bo.ɸo.vu 'e.zat.ɸu du.'ba:j.ɸo.moɸ vu 'd̥ʒu.mal.ba.ram ll 'sa.naj.zen 'a.gal.ɸu vu
'gaɯm.bu l du'.bai un 'pʰa.va.bi: .javi: 'e.be.gho.pu vu 'u:z.dəb/

Phonetic Realization:

[χo 'ʔuɯ.wem el 'a: .za:d du.'bo.ɸoɯ 'je.zet.ɸu du.'ba:j.ɸo.moɸ u 'ʒu.mal.be.rəm ll 'sa.nəj.zen 'a.gəl.ɸu wu
'gaɯm.bu l du'.bai un 'ɸa: .bɪj.jeɸ.ɪj 'je.be.kʰo.pu wu 'ʔuɯz.dəb]