Nguvian: A Voiced, Antonymous Conlang

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Phonological Rules and Morphology

- **Only 1 vowel phoneme is allowed in each word** (exception: initialisms and acronyms)
- /i/ - [ɪ] /iː/, /d_/

1 vowel per word is something that peaked our interest when we first started designing the language, and then when we started playing around with words in our language, we thought they sounded nicely symmetrical with only one vowel sound, so we kept the rule.

Other rules

- **Antonyms are pronounced in reverse of one another**
- [?] indicates modification (often lessening) of a word
- [?] spelled as ‘(apostrophe)

Phonological Criteria

- /l/ /l/ /l/ /l/

Inflection

- [?] indicates plural / follows the vowel of the first syllable: /v/C
- [?] modifier used to soften the meaning of a word (opposite of an intensifier). Follows the first syllable.

Prefixes

- Past tense: [na]
- Allophones:
  - [ŋə] - [ŋə]
  - [ŋə] [ŋə]
- Future tense: [an]

We decided to exclude articles from our language to increase language efficiency, and noun genders because we did not want binary thinking incorporated in our language.

The idea of a glottal stop changing the meaning of a word gave us the ability to express gradable antonyms. The way the stop modifies the sound of the word reflects that the word is semantically modified.

We chose to be sparse with our affixes, but made sure to include a past-tense prefix and what we felt were two unique infixes.

Sample Words

- **Ogged [ogged] - N. Warn**
- **Doogun [doogun] - N. Partner**
- **Ngood [ngood] - N. Rival**
- **Nguv [nguv] - N. Yet**
- **Nguv [nguv] - Colloquial**
- **Nah**
- **Juung [juung] - N. Rest**
- **Vung [vung] - Colloquial**
- **Yah**
- **Juung [juung] - Maybe**
- **Nuvu [nuv] - Adj. Cold**
- **Zeg [zeg] - N. Left**
- **Gzeg [guz] - N. Right**

Word Classes and Syntax

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Word Structures Rules

- S - (NP) VP
- NP - (ADJP) (DET) (ADJP) n (ADJP+)
- VP - V (P)
- ADJP - (ADJ) ADJ

Sample Sentences

- **Nguv**
- **Woozuh [wuzu] - N. People**
- **Vuz [vuz] - N. Me**
- **Nuvu [nuv] - Adj. Cold**
- **Zeg [zeg] - N. Left**
- **Gzeg [guz] - N. Right**

Word Creation

- **Compounding** — if vowels are the same
- **Examples:** Nuvi [nuvi] - nuvi
- **Not-yet-well-be** - person who will eventually be the speaker’s partner
- **Acronym**
- **Example:** AZU [az] literal translation from Azdavan Zabab Uhgdumumun: “fast move machine.” Refer to the standard Nguvian vehicle.

Affixing

- **Examples:** Zuv [zuv] - you
- **Joboth [joboth] - v. explain Na joboth [na joboth] - v. explain Yaad [yaad] - adj. or v. Agitlated Na Aya [na aya] - was agitated

Shifting

- **Example:** Uhgdumumun or Ught originally meant something that has many parts, but now refers specifically to a mechanical machine.

Clipping

- **Example:** Uhght is the shortened form of Uhgdumumum (Machine)

Coining

- **Example:** Rwegwedogon [rwdegodon] - n. the period of one’s life in which they have gone through their most significant change

This phrase was coined to describe the previously unnamed experience.