

Concuture relay 2020: The torch in Dal'a

Zhi <Ovahb>¹ ezh <Shildamub>² shol'a. Rivamwen Ovah'a ezh Shildam'a hhalhhiz ghaan'a ve <Beda'a>³ ghaa owen. Ghoghwen Shildam'a <elub ower> Ovah'a do owen ezh ghoghwen Ovah'a elub foghur Shildam'a do owen. «Zhi amagh hhalub diangur elur de, Beda'a doweod anur Shildamqor ezh vahlod anur Ovahqor.»⁴

Hhanwen Ovah'a eltulel'a do ahmbalsh <Seon'a>⁵ do fol i owen. Teedahmbinwen zhin hhaan <xaawdinsh> elsh ve owen. Ghomwen hhaan iwar sholhham Shildam'a xaawdinub ahmbalsh turen owen. Modah, egangwen hhaan elur owen ezh duzwen hhaan rum ahmbalul owen ezh dizhalwen hhaan hhal Shildam'a do owen. Xhomwen Shildam'a owen: “Ahhaani rahh be-ezh-qogh ahmbalul,” ezh mahwen Ovah'a owen.

Modah, hhadwen hhal ahmbalul hhomonsh feng i. Ji, ahwar xaawdinjil ahmbalul bogh.

Qurwen salah Shildam'a qorsh hhaanub palur zagh ezh falwen hhaan laash i. Xhomwen Shildam'a owen: “Elahd temsh 'angub pel'a. 'aghwen tam 'al rahh xaawdinjibal owen ezh ghomd 'ang ewar zhi bensch «iwar qoghham ngen 'alub tem'a 'alub sodangbal turen.»⁶”

Deghwen rivamaghub bir hhal owen. Shiwen hhal tulel'a bogh owen ezh egangwen hhal elur owen ezh egomwen hhal ngamsal za hhal tu owen.

«Ji, emmezhinwen hhal. Xhowen hhal bidalur bogh xaawdinul dem hhalhhiz owen.»⁷

¹ Ovah is the god of shade, rest, and remembrance.

² Shildam is the goddess of harvest, bounty, and physical labour. The child of Ovah and Shildam was Hharzim—a great explorer in the time before Beda.

³ Beda was thought to be the first Dal of the region, unifier of the many nomadic tribes, and creator of the modern calendar.

⁴ This sentence, as translated from the previous version of the torch, is the reason for most of the liberties I needed to take in rendering this text into the Dal'a concuture. Because names for days of the week are discussed, I needed to use the people for whom the days of the week are named—in this case, Ovah and Shildam. Because Ovah and Shildam are gods, they are immortal, which also caused me to change the end of the story as well.

⁵ Seon is the goddess of health, water, and vision, and is one of the chief deities of the Dal'a pantheon.

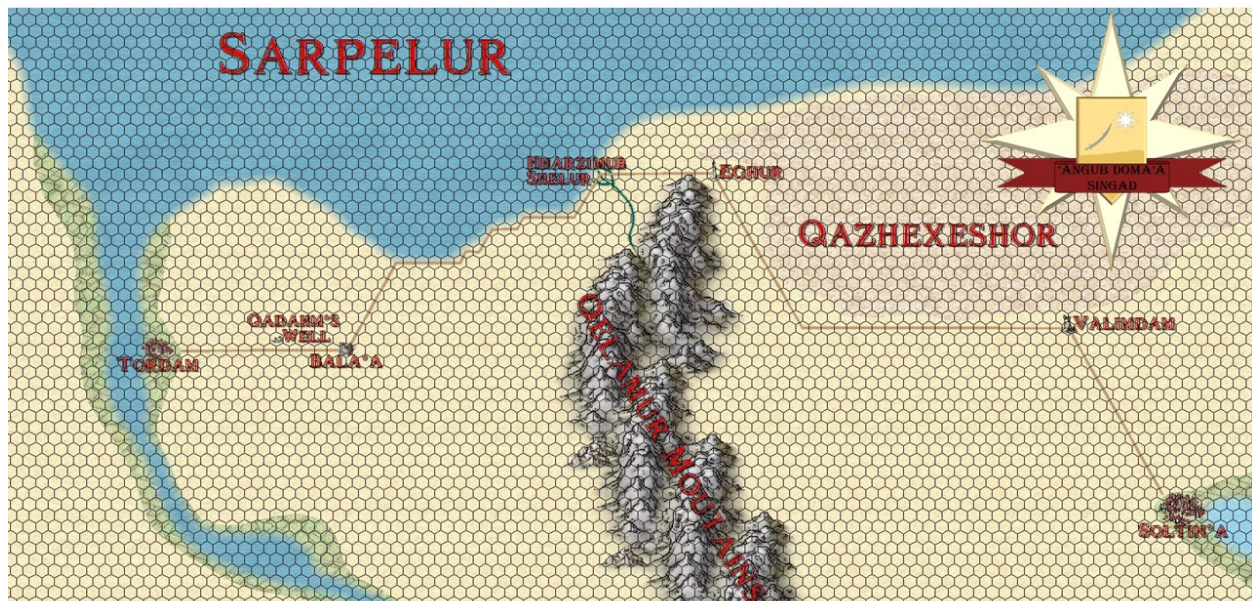
⁶ The notion of death during childbirth (either of a mother or a child) is a taboo topic in Dal'a. The torch as I received discussed the possibility of the child dying at birth—both for the taboo reason as well as who the characters in this culturally-translated torch are—this sentence was truncated.

⁷ As with the previous note, the characters in this story are deities and thus incapable of dying. I am now using this legend as a folktale explaining why *xaawdin* is an honoured gender noun and why the child of Ovah and Shildam (hharzim, not named in the story) was considered human, but accomplished greater-than-human deeds during his life.

Dal'a is my newest conlang. It is being created as the local language for a new Dungeons & Dragons setting where my games take place. The Dal'a region is a desert region on the shore of Sarpelur (the Perch Sea). The region is a great trade hub, as such, they have many interactions with other cultures of the world of Toril (the planet that many Dungeons & Dragons games are set in—an official setting by Wizards of the Coast). Thus, the people of the Dal'a region speak the Waterdavian common language quite fluently (though, typically with retroflex consonants, and with a verb-initial sentence structure—transfer effects from their L1).

As a major trade region, the people of Dal'a have no local currency of their own, simply weighing the precious metals composing coins from other regions, and often cutting them into pieces instead of making change via lesser-value metal coins. They have adapted much of Westernized culture, but the Dal'a culture still looms in the background—myths about cyclopes, deified hawk figures, and warnings of the Vahdeel, vicious illusionists who inhabit Qazhexeshor (the red wastes). Throughout the desert, old, abandoned temples to their many gods still stick out through the sands, and a knowledge of the old religions is still passed down—many containing stories that will help a traveler pass more safely.

One of the major things that draws travellers to the Dal'a region each year is the Zhoqem'a—a great 600-mile race across the desert where most do not survive, but the winners' pot is extreme enough to cause hundreds to risk their lives each year. A great part of modern Dal'a culture is based around contests like the Zhoqem'a, and on trade with outsiders.



Itha brugim tuApfudraSithigeuz' girt.
3pl say/tell/ask-HAB ACC.SG-Apfu-COR-Sithi-GEN-A.learned.thing/fact/story/parable
'they tell Apfu and Sithi's story.'

ApfudrakteSithi kabvukir kapfa tuiadhmi ua
Apfu-RECIP-Sithi like/admire/love-PST in.front/beside ACC.SG-moment/time/phase/period comp

<vatstudrakargave> s' akir muadza Sithi usApfu
<Sun-COR.SG-Galehaven¹> 3.PL-Be-pst old/elder/ancient Sithi DAT.SG-Apfu

amdifir <tuadh' getikas>.
Show/teach/introduce/instruct-past.perf <ACC.SG-tree-GEN-flower>.
'Apfu and Sithi loved each other in the time that <the sun and Galehaven> were ancient[.] Sithi showed <the blossom of a tree> to Apfu.'

Apfu usSithi amdifir <tuadh' geifkadz>.
Apfu DAT.SG-Sithi Show/teach/introduce/instruct-past.perf <ACC.SG-tree-GEN-strength/might...>
'Apfu showed the might of the tree to Sithi.'

Rud atrumiurtgev' isak fimdefkir,
Because.of NOM-house-GEN-king give/lend/allow/permit-PERF-PST

utha gradefkir idzpavde.
3.PAC ??-PERF-PST the.next.day
'As a result, the house of the king permitted them [??] the next day.'

Vu Apfu mafifkir tugabtu maizram aruAdhmias'
And.then Apfu take/accept-PERF-PST ACC.SG-egg from-forest NOM-to/for-Adhmias'

fimdetamkir.
Give/lend/allow/permit-IMPERF-PST.
'And then, Apfu took an egg from the forest to give to Adhmias'.'

Tha riefkir <tuipras'ki> biuadh'.
3.SG See/witness/notice/find-PERF-PST <ACC-river.falcon / helpful/humble/nobel/person> in/around.tree
'He noticed a river falcon in a tree.'

Tha praukutamkir ua Sithi kabvudasur
3.SG propose/suggest/assert-IMPERF-PST comp Sithi like/admire/love-FUT-POT

<tuipras'kigegabtu>.
< ACC-river.falcon / helpful/humble/nobel/person-GEN-egg>
'He suggested that Sithi might like a river falcon's egg.'

¹ Sister planet, culturally analogous to Earth's moon

Tha uz' gifkir ruadh' vu tha
 3.SG climb/ascend/learn-PERF-PST To/for/towards/onto/into/because.of-tree and.then 3.SG

rithefikir tuigabtu.
 Touch/grab/hold-PERF/PST ACC.PL-egg
 'He climbed into the tree and then he grabbed the eggs.'

Tha ruSithi tsifir tuigabtu.
 3.SG to/for/towards/because.of-Sithi carry/bring/transport-PST-PERF ACC.PL-egg
 'He brought the eggs to Sithi.'

Sithi brufkir "Akabia! Bva dia fimdefkir
 Sithi ask-PERF-PST Thank.you 2.SG 1.SG give/lend/allow-PERF-PST

tuidris' amitstamita."
 ACC-PL-bright/brilliant/splendid/also.true/correct-twelve-thing/stuff
 'Sithi said "Thank you! You gave me these splendid twelve things.'"

Apfu rasafkir.
 Apfu smile-PERF-PST
 'Apfu smiled.'

Vuru utha murkefkir tuigabtu vu utha
 And.so 3.PAC burn/heat/cook/boil-PERF-PST ACC.PL-tree and.then 3.PAC

zarafkir itha.
 Lift/raise/teach/educate/enlighten-PERF-PST 3.PL
 'And so, they burnt the trees and then lifted[??] them'

Akigabtu adzathamkir tuigabtugeruam.
 NOM.PL-egg hide/conceal-IMPERF-PST ACC.PL-tree-GEN-animal.infant
 'The eggs were hiding baby birds.'

Biadhmi, aSithi dzatefkir turithmi
 Suddenly, NOM-Sithi put/place/set-PERF-PST ACC-hand/finger

ruiba vu tha uadketamkir.
 to/for/towards/onto/into/because.of-belly/torso and.then 3.SG panic/fret/stress-imperf-pst
 'Suddenly, Sithi put a hand onto her belly, and then she began panicing.'

Tha brufkir "tukukuv' ivdzauvatam
 3.SG ask-PERF-PST ACC.SG-infant PASS-grow/nurture/brainstorm/have.idea-IMPERF

ruimbza bidiagezavme.
 To/for/towards/into/onto-birth/creation/start/beginning on/in/at/around-1.SG-GEN-womb.
 'She said "an infant is growing in my womb.'

Dia ubastefkir tuigabtugeruam vuru dia
1.SG unintentionally.hurt-PERF-PST ACC.PL-tree-GEN-animal.infant and.so 1.SG

praukutam ua itha s'a krus rud dia.
Propose/suggest/assert-IMPERF comp 3.PL 3.PL.be motionless/dead/inan because.of 1.SG
'I have unintentionally hurt these baby birds and so I think that they will die because of me.'

Sa duat ua adiagekukuv' ausafkas
3.SG.Be Star/sign/omen/clue comp NOM-1.SG-GEN-infant.baby die-PERF-??

biadhmi ua dia pfimbzufkdas tha.
In.that.moment comp 1.SG give.birth/create-PERF-FUT 3.SG
'[This] is a sign that my baby might die when I give birth to them.'

Dia dhiauz'ekir tubvageusef."
1.SG neg-know-PST ACC.SG-2.SG-GEN-name/word/title
'I didn't know your title.'

Thadrakteuras' dzurefki.
3.SG-RECIP-happiness/joy run/flee/leave/abandon-PERF-PST
'Their joy in one another abandoned [them].'

Tha dzurefki ruizram vu tha uz'gifikir
3.SG run/flee/leave/abandon-PERF-PST to/for...-forest and.then 3.SG climb/ascend/learn-PERF-PSt

ruadh'.
To/for/towards/onto/into/because.of-tree
'She ran to the forest and then she climbed into a tree.'

Tha pumzifikir mauadh' rupfa vu tha
3.sg jump/leap/corss-PERF-PST out.from-tree to/for...rock/stone/boulder and.then 3.SG

ausafki biadhmi.
Die-PERF-PST In.that.moment
'She jumped from the tree to the rocks below, and then, in that moment, she died.'

Smooth translation with some assumptions

This is the story of Apfu and Sithi. Apfu and Sithi loved each other in the time before <the sun and Galehaven> were ancient. Sithi showed <the blossom of a tree> to Apfu, and Apfu showed the might of the tree to Sithi. As a result, the king named the next day after <XX>.

Apfu went to the forest to get an egg for a sacrifice to Adhmias'. There, he noticed a river falcon in a tree. He thought that Sithi might like a river falcon's egg. He climbed the tree and grabbed all the eggs and brought them to Sithi. Sithi said "thank you for these 12 splendid eggs!" Apfu smiled.

And so they cooked the eggs and had a feast. Inside the eggs were baby river falcons.

Suddenly, Sithi put a hand to her belly and began to panic. She said "an infant is growing in my womb. We have unintentionally hurt these baby birds, and I think that is an omen that our baby might die when I give birth to them, and will never know our names."

The lovers' joy abandoned them. They ran into the forest and climbed a tree then leapt onto the rocks below and died.

Translation adapted for Dal'a conculture

This is the story of Ovah and Shildam. Ovah and Shildam had loved each other in the era before Beda. Shildam showed the blossom of the date palm tree to Ovah and Ovah showed the strength of the date palm tree to Shildam. As a result of their encounter with the date palm tree, Beda named the fourth day Shildam's hand and the fifth day Ovah's hand.

Ovah went to the date palm grove to get a gift for Seon. There, he noticed a hawk in a date palm tree. He thought that Shildam might like a hawk egg. And so, he climbed the date palm tree and he grabbed all the eggs and he brought them to Shildam. Shildam said: "Thank you for these twelve eggs" and Ovah smiled.

And so, they cooked the eggs to have a feast. However, there were baby hawks inside the eggs.

Suddenly, Shildam put a hand onto her belly and she began to panic. She said: "an infant is growing in my womb. We have unintentionally hurt these baby hawks and I think that this is an omen that our baby may never know our names."

The lovers' happiness abandoned them. They ran into the grove and climbed a date palm tree and leapt over the rocks below them.

But, they didn't die. They flew into the sky as hawks themselves.

A User's Guide to Dal'a

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1. Preamble

This guide is designed to help you understand the proper usage of the Dal'a language, as designed for the Dungeons & Dragons game *Prize of Dal'a* by Joseph W. Windsor.

In this guide, you will encounter linguistic jargon referring to lexical categories such as nouns, verbs, and adjectives; grammatical concepts such as tense, aspect, and agreement; and, linguistic transcription practices such as phonetic transcription and inter-linear glossing. As much as possible, each of these concepts are explained where they occur with examples provided using both English and Dal'a examples to help the user; however, a few extra explanations are given here.

Throughout this book, a number of different bracketing tools are used in various examples, which require some explanation. Slant brackets around phonetic transcriptions (/.../) denote something called *phonemic representation*; this is the form of the sound that exists in a speaker's mental dictionary. For example, pay close attention to where your tongue is placed in your mouth when making the /n/ or /m/ sounds in the following words: indecision, ingredient, implosion. Although it might seem obvious that the m-sound in implosion is made with a neutral tongue position and closed lips (how we make an m-sound) and the first n-sound in indecision is made by raising your tongue to a position just behind your upper row of teeth (how we make an n-sound), do you notice there is something very different about how you physically produce the first n in ingredient? Most English speakers produce the first n in ingredient farther back in the mouth at a place called the velum (where the hard palate transitions to a softer surface). The reason we do this is to easily change between the n-sound and the following g-sound. The sound /g/ is a velar sound (produced at the velum), and so pronouncing the /n/-sound in the same place makes the transition between the two sounds easier. Similarly, /m/ is a bilabial sound, as is /p/, so in the word implosion, having the nasal bilabial /m/ sound directly before the non-nasal bilabial /p/ sound facilitates easier pronunciation—and the same is true of the /n/ and /d/ combination in indecision, both are produced at the alveolar ridge. Regardless of whether we produce our /n/ as [n] (alveolar) or [ŋ] (velar) has no bearing on our understanding, so we undergo a sound change to facilitate simpler articulation. To denote this sound change, we switch from the slant brackets (/.../) to the square brackets ([...]). Linguistically, this transcription difference represents the sounds as we store them in our mental grammar (/.../) and the sounds as we actually produce them ([...]). The third type of bracket that you might encounter in this grammar is the angled bracket (<...>). The angled brackets simply refer to spelling conventions. So, I could talk about the first <n> in 'ingredient' being an /n/ that is produced as an [ŋ].

Another linguistic convention that is frequently used in more complex examples is something called interlinear glossing. Interlinear glossing is a tool that allows linguists to break down all the complex parts of a word or phrase so that they may be seen in isolation. For example, take the English word indecision. We can actually break this word down into three component parts: in- decide -ion. In an interlinear gloss, we do this on separate lines where the first line represents how the word/phrase is written, the second one breaks out each of these component parts (called morphemes), the third defines each of the morphemes, and the final provides a translation. This becomes especially helpful when looking at a foreign language (e.g., Dal'a) where you don't know how the language works yet. For an example, here is the Dal'a word 'the rains':

baɖa|ʂa|
 baɖa|-ʂa|
 rain-DEF.PL.COM
 ‘the rains’

In this example (which is not a full sentence for simplicity), we find out that what is written in the first line is actually composed of two morphemes: the noun *baɖa|*, which is a common noun, and a definite plural ending that is used specifically for common nouns (allowing us to generalize across the class of common nouns). We can confirm this hypothesis by looking at a similar noun with honoured grammatical classification (gender):

baŋaŋba|
 baŋaŋ-ba|
 parent-DEF.PL.HON
 ‘the parents’

In full sentences, this method of glossing allows the reader to understand what each part of the sentence is and to understand the various components under discussion:

raɖ	ʔa _N	qiŋ	χi ʂa	za	βaʒi	i
ra-ɖ	ʔa _N	qiŋ	χi -ʂa	za	βaʒi	i
want-PRES	1.SG	2.SG	sand-DEF.PL.COM	over	race	INFIN

‘I want you to race over the sands’

In this example, it is easy to see that the verb ‘want’ is expressed in the present tense by the word *raɖ*, the first person singular (‘I’) is expressed by the pronoun *ʔa_N*, the second person singular (‘you’) is expressed by the pronoun *qiŋ* and ‘over the sand’ is expressed with *χi|ʂa| za—ʂa|* was explained above as the common ending for common plural nouns, but this example shows us that while English would be in the order ‘over the sands’, in Dal’a, the word ‘over’ comes at the end. Finally, this example shows us that there is another difference in ordering—while English puts ‘to race’ before ‘over the sands’, the opposite is true in Dal’a, with *βaʒi i* ‘to race’ occurs after *χi|ʂa| za* ‘over the sands’.

2. The Sounds of Dal'a

Each of the basic sounds of the Dal'a language are listed below, using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) transcription system. To hear these sounds pronounced in a standardized format, you can find an interactive IPA chart here: <http://www.ipachart.com/> (last visited February 27, 2020).

2.1. Consonants

The Dal'a consonant inventory consists of 24 sounds, represented in Table 1. Symbols that appear in red are variant pronunciations that are described in §2.4.

	Labial	Post-Alveolar	Retroflex	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Stop	p b		t̠ d̠	q ɢ		ʔ
Nasal	m		ɳ	ɴ		
Trill				ʀ		
Tap			[ɽ]			
Fricative	ɸ β	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ	χ	ħ [ʕ]	h
Approximant	w	j	ɻ			
Lateral Approximant			ɭ			

Table 1: Consonants of Dal'a

The following list provides tips on pronunciation for each of these sounds.

/p/ This sound is similar to the <p> in the English word 'pay' or 'apple'. Note that in English, the /p/ sound is frequently accompanied by an additional burst of air ([p^h]), this is not needed in the Dal'a pronunciation of this sound; using this additional burst of air after /p/ identifies a person as a non-native speaker of the language.

/b/ This sound is similar to the in the English word 'bay' or 'obey'.

/t̠/ This sound is similar to the <t> in the English word 'tea' or 'obtain', but is pronounced by rolling the tip of the tongue further back in the mouth instead of making contact with the roof of the mouth slightly behind the top row of teeth (where you pronounce the English /t/). Note that in English, the /t/ sound is frequently accompanied by an additional burst of air ([t^h]), this is not needed in the Dal'a pronunciation of /t̠/; using this additional burst of air after /t̠/ identifies a person as a non-native speaker of the language.

/d̠/ This sound is similar to the <d> in the English word 'day' or 'ardent', but is pronounced by rolling the tip of the tongue further back in the mouth instead of making contact with the roof of the mouth slightly behind the top row of teeth (where you pronounce the English /d/). In certain positions (described in §2.4), this sound is produced as [ɽ], which is a quick flick of the tongue to the same position as /d̠/ similar to the fast production of <tt> in the English word 'butter' or the <dd> 'ladder'.

/q/ This sound is not typically found in English. The /q/ sound is produced further back in the mouth than the English <k> (/k/), at the uvula—the dangling ball in the back of the mouth, but still requires a complete stop of the airflow through the mouth like /p/, /t/, and English /k/.

/g/ Much like the /q/ sound is produced slightly further back in the mouth than the English /k/, the /g/ sound is the relative equivalent of the English /g/, simply articulated further back in the mouth, at the uvula (see /q/ above for description).

/ʔ/ This sound is rarely found in English, it is how one might pronounce the hyphen in 'uh-oh'; it is a total stop of the air flow, but trapping the air in the voice box rather than in the mouth like /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /q/, and /g/.

/m/ This sound is the same as the <m> in the English word 'may' or 'mother'.

/ŋ/ This sound is not found in most English dialects. Just as the tongue tip is curled further back in the mouth to form /t/ and /d/, /ŋ/ is produced like the English <n> in 'noble' but with curling the tongue tip back to the same place as for /t/ and /d/.

/N/ This sound is not found in English. This sound is made at the back of the mouth, at the uvula (see description of /q/ above), and allowing the airflow to go through the nose instead of through the mouth, as you do for the <n> in the English word 'noble' or the <m> in the English word 'moble'.

/R/ This sound is not typically found in English; this is what some people refer to as the French R, it is a rolled r-like sound produced at the back of the mouth, at the uvula (see description of /q/ above).

/ϕ/ This sound is similar in sound to an English <f>. To produce an /f/ sound, the bottom lip is placed in close proximity to the upper teeth; /ϕ/ is produced slightly differently by placing the two lips close together and trying to make an /f/ sound without using the teeth.

/β/ Just as /f/ is to /ϕ/, /v/ is to /β/. The /β/ consonant is articulated in the same manner as /ϕ/, but trying to produce a /v/ rather than an /f/ (the difference being an extra hum accompanying the sound due to the vocal chords vibrating—a voiced sound as opposed to the voiceless /ϕ/ or /f/).

/ʃ/ This sound is pronounced like the <sh> in the English word 'ship'.

/ʒ/ This sound is pronounced like the <s> in the English word 'vision'.

/ʂ/ This sound is similar to the <s> in the English word 'say', but with the tongue tip curled back further in the mouth, the same as you do for /t/ and /d/.

/zʌ/ This sound is similar to the <z> in the English word 'zoo', but with the tongue tip curled back further in the mouth, the same as you do for /t/, /ʂ/, /d/, and /ŋ/. In certain positions (described in §2.4), this sound is produced as [ɾ], which is a quick flick of the tongue to the same position as /zʌ/ similar to the fast production of <tt> in the English word 'butter' or the <dd> 'ladder'.

/χ/ This sound is not typically found in English. If you think of /ʂ/ as a fricative version of /t/ (the tongue is put in the same place in the mouth, but turbulent air is allowed to escape instead of having the airflow completely stopped) /χ/ is the fricative version of /q/ (described above).

/ħ/ This sound is like nothing found in most dialects of English. This sound is a pharyngeal fricative; it is produced by trying to make an /h/ sound (described below), but halfway between where you would normally make an /h/ in the voicebox and the /χ/ produced at the uvula, somewhere in the back of the throat (at the pharynx). In certain positions (described in §2.4), this sound is produced as [ʕ], which is the same as /ħ/, but with the additional hum of the vocal folds as described for /β/ above.

- /h/ This sound is the same as the <h> in the English word 'hay' or 'hotel'.
- /w/ This sound is the same as the <w> in the English word 'way' or 'awash'.
- /j/ This sound is the same as the <y> in the English word 'yellow' or 'you'.
- /ɹ/ This sound is produced similar to the <r> in the English word 'red' or 'arrow', but with the tongue tip pulled further back in the mouth similar to /d/ or /ŋ/. In certain positions (described in §2.4), this sound is produced as [ɹ], which is a quick flick of the tongue to the same position as /ɹ/ similar to the fast production of <tt> in the English word 'butter' or the <dd> 'ladder'.
- /l/ This sound is similar to the <l> in the English word 'like' or 'alloy', but with the tip of the tongue pulled further back in the mouth similar to /ɹ/ or /ŋ/.

2.2. Vowels

The Dal'a vowel inventory consists of seven basic vowels:

Front Vowels	Back Vowels
/i/	/u/
/e/	/ʌ/ /o/
/æ/	/ɑ/

Table 2: Vowels of Dal'a.

- /i/ This sound is produced like the <ee> in the English word 'see'.
- /e/ This sound is produced similar to the <ay> in the English word 'say' but does not subtly raise towards the /i/ position halfway through the vowel like in most English dialects.
- /æ/ This sound is produced like the <a> in the English word 'cat'.
- /u/ This sound is produced like the <oo> in the English word 'zoo'.
- /o/ This sound is produced similar to the <oe> in the English word 'toe' but does not subtly raise towards the /u/ position halfway through the vowel like in most English dialects.
- /ɑ/ This sound is produced the same as the <o> in the English word 'sock'.
- /ʌ/ This sound is produced like the <u> in the English word 'cut'. Unlike the other vowels in Dal'a (see §2.4), there is no long variant of this sound.

2.3. Stress

Stress in Dal'a is typically instantiated by a raise in amplitude (loudness) and may be accompanied by a slight increase in pitch or syllable duration. By default, the stressed syllable is the final syllable in the word; however, syllables containing the /æ/ or /ɑ/ vowel may steal the stress from the final syllable (stressing a syllable with the /ɑ/ vowel is preferred over stressing a syllable with the /æ/ vowel).

In words where multiple syllables contain /ɑ/ or /æ/ vowels, primary stress is assigned to the right-most one.

Secondary stress (instantiated by slightly less prominence than a primary stressed syllable but more than an unstressed syllable), is applied to every other syllable proceeding from right to

left away from the primary stressed syllable—every intervening syllable is unstressed, as is every syllable to the right of the primary stressed syllable.

2.4. *Sound Changes*

Sometimes, when adding affixes or creating compound words, two sounds will come together that trigger a sound change, which alters the word's pronunciation. These sound changes are listed below in their respective subsections. Sound changes described in this section tend not to be represented in the spelling convention, merely in contemporary pronunciations of the words, except for Sonorant Hiatus (§2.4.5).

2.4.1. *Pharyngealization*

Any consonant that appears immediately before the /ɑ/ or /æ/ vowel becomes pharyngealized. In terms of pronunciation, this is largely the equivalent of adding the /ħ/ consonant between the consonant being pharyngealized and the vowel.

In the case of /ʔ/, instead of a secondary articulation, /ʔ/ is replaced with [ħ] entirely.

2.4.2. *Intervocalic Voicing*

When a consonant appears between two vowels, it becomes voiced. In terms of Table 1, whenever a sound on the left-hand side of a column comes between two vowels, it becomes the sound on the right-hand. For example, if /s/ comes between two vowels, it is pronounced as /z/ instead. This is still true if the second vowel is /ɑ/ or /æ/, causing the consonant to become pharyngealized as per §2.4.1.

In the case of /χ/, no voiced variant is available in Table 1. Instead, when /χ/ appears between two vowels, it is replaced with [ʀ].

Similarly, there are no voiced variants of /ʔ/ or /h/ in Table 1. Instead, when /ʔ/, /h/, or /ħ/ comes between two vowels, they become [ʕ].

2.4.3. *Intervocalic Rhoticization*

While voiceless sounds become voiced between two vowels, /d/ and /z/ undergo a different sound change, taking on an R-like quality to be pronounced as [ɽ].

2.4.4. *Vowel Lengthening*

Vowels are sometimes lengthened when they are not followed by a consonant in the same syllable; this can be recognized by a single consonant appearing between two vowels (single consonants always belong to the vowel after them in this situation) or by being at the end of the word with no consonant after them—these are called open syllables. In an open syllable, a vowel becomes long, being held for between 1.5x and 2x the length of the normal vowel. This sound change never applies to /ʌ/.

The exception to this rule is intervocalic /w/ and intervocalic /j/; vowels do not lengthen before either of these sounds.

2.4.5. Sonorant Hiatus

When two sonorant sounds appear adjacent to one another, usually through morphological processes like suffixation (e.g., adding a determiner like the definite common -i), sonorant hiatus (two sonorant sounds in adjacency) is resolved by inserting the /ʌ/ vowel between the two sonorant sounds.

The sonorant sounds are those sounds listed in the Nasal, Tap/Trill, and Approximant/Lateral Approximant rows of Table 1.

baɖa[+ -i → [baɖa[ʌ.i]
 'rain' def.com 'the rain'

2.5. Writing in Dal'a

The Dal'a inventory of sounds (phonetic inventory) consists of 24 consonants and seven vowels, as described earlier in this chapter. The table below details how these sounds are written, both in terms of a Romanization, as well in the Dal'a writing system.

IPA	Romanization	Dal'a	IPA	Romanization	Dal'a
/a/	a		/o/	o	
/æ/	ah (OR) aa		/p/	p	
/b/	b		/q/	q	
/d/	d		/ɹ/	r	
/e/	e		/ʀ/	gh	
/f/	f		/s/	s	
/g/	g		/ʃ/	sh	
/h/	h		/t/	t	
/ħ/	hh		/u/	u	
/i/	i (OR) ee		/ʌ/		
/j/	j		/β/	v	
/l/	l		/w/	w	
/m/	m		/ɣ/	x	
/n/	n		/z/	z	
/N/	ng		/ʒ/	zh	
			/ʔ/	‘	

3. Using Nouns

Nouns are words used to name persons, places, things, or ideas/concepts. Nouns indicate what is the subject (the thing doing the action described in the sentence), or the object (the thing having the action described in the sentence done to it). Nouns in Dal'a are categorized by grammatical gender, either Common or Honoured. Grammatical gender has very little effect on the way a noun is used in a sentence but may affect which affixes are used with it, similar to how nouns may be Masculine or Feminine gendered in languages like French or Dutch and take different determiners (words for 'a'/'the') such as *la table* 'the table' versus *le livre* 'the book' in French.

The grammatical gender of nouns does not necessarily reflect the importance of a give object; for example, the noun $\chi\text{æw}\text{d}\text{i}\eta$ 'hawk' is Honoured gender and the noun $\text{ba}\text{d}\text{a}\text{l}$ 'rain' is Common gender. However, a speaker may change the specified gender of a noun by using the opposite gender's definite article (see §3.4) to produce a pragmatic effect; for example: $\text{ba}\text{d}\text{a}\text{l}\text{?}\text{a}$, using the honoured definite suffix $-\text{a?}$, becomes 'the much-needed rain' rather than just 'the rain' if the common definite suffix $-\text{l}$ was used ($\text{ba}\text{d}\text{a}\text{l}\text{l}$). In the dictionary in Chapter 9, nouns are listed as *n.* with their default grammatical gender, either COM for 'common' or HON for 'honoured'.

Nouns are part of a template that contains things such as determiners, demonstratives, adjectives, and numerals. This template is referred to throughout this document as an argument—a general term that refers to the entire noun template that can be inserted into the sentence as a subject, object, or indirect object (all defined in chapter 5). The structure of the argument is provided in the following template with the individual elements explained in detail in their own sections below:

(Possession) > (Demonstrative) > (Numeral) > Noun-Determiner > (Adjective) > (Adposition)

3.1. Determiners

(Possession) > (Demonstrative) > (Numeral) > Noun-**Determiner** > (Adjective) > (Adposition)

Every noun used in a Dal'a sentence requires a determiner; that is to say, it must be specified as 'a something(s)' or 'the something(s)'. In English, only two determiners are used, the indefinite 'a' and the definite 'the'. In Dal'a, the determiner used to specify a noun is taken from the following Table:

		DEF	INDEF
SG	COM	$-\text{l}$	$-\text{f}$
	HON	$-\text{?}\text{a}$	
PL	COM	$-\text{s}\text{a}\text{l}$	$-\text{l}$
	HON	$-\text{b}\text{a}\text{l}$	

Table 3: Determiners in Dal'a

In order to use one of these determiners, select the correct determiner based on the number of things being specified (singular [SG] or plural [PL]) and the definiteness (definite 'the' [DEF] or

indefinite 'a' [INDEF]). Finally, locate the correct determiner for the grammatical gender of the noun (common [COM] or honoured [HON]). Once the specifications needed are found in Table 3 based on these criteria, the suffix indicated is added to the end of the noun (note that the sound change rules in §2.4 may need to be applied to these affixes, as seen in 'hawks', which uses the sound change rule from §2.4.5):

χæwɖiŋ *n. HON. Hawk.*

χæwɖiŋʃ	'a hawk'
χæwɖiŋʌ	'hawks'
χæwɖiŋʔa	'the hawk'
χæwɖiŋba	'the hawks'

baɖaɭ *n. com. Rain.*

baɖaɭʃ	'a rain' (usually refers to a downpour/sprinkle of rain, not a droplet)
baɖaɭʌ	'rains' (usually refers to a rainy season or rains in the general sense)
baɖaɭʌɪ	'the rain'
baɖaɭsa	'the rains'

As can be seen in the above examples with baɖaɭ 'rain', English has the capability of referring to something in the general sense, as in, 'dogs can run fast'. To achieve this sense in Dal'a, simply use the plural indefinite.

As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, a speaker can purposely mis-match the specified grammatical gender of a noun such that, for example, even though baɖaɭ is specified as common gender, the honoured gender could be applied to it to indicated elevated status; contrastively, common gender can be applied to a noun specified as honoured gender, providing a pejorative connotation:

χæwɖiŋ *n. HON. Hawk.*

χæwɖiŋʌɪ	'the hawk' (indicates the speaker thinks this hawk is wretched)
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baɖaɭ *n. com. Rain.*

baɖaɭʔa	'the rain' (indicates revered rain, frequently translated as 'much-needed')
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3.2. Proper Nouns and Pronouns

(Possession) > (Demonstrative) > (Numeral) > **Noun-Determiner** > (Adjective) > (Adposition)

As a general rule, proper nouns (names of people or places) are specified by the definite, honoured determiner -ʔa (unless the speaker intends insult, in which case the common gender definite determiner -ɪ is used instead).

Pronouns, as provided in Table 4, on the other hand, do not need to take any determiners. Pronouns are considered to be honoured gender when they stand alone, but may take a determiner to change this status (common gender, definite singular or plural to produce an insulting connotation; or, honoured gender, definite singular or plural to produce not just honoured, but revered connotations).

	SG	PL
1 st Person	ʔa _N	ʔa _L
2 nd Person	qiŋ	qa _L
3 rd Person	ħæŋ	ħa _L
NON-SPECIFIC	æwa _L	
REFLEXIVE	_____ħiz _L	

Table 4: Pronouns of Dal'a

Of specific note, the non-specific pronoun is used when the subject of the sentence is unknown (see Chapter 5 for further details); to create the passive voice (see § 4.6); or, to be generic, similar to ‘one does not always get what they want’ or ‘they say...’.

The Reflexive pronoun is formed by adding ‘one’ /ħiz/ after the specific pronoun. For example, ‘anhhiz ‘myself’, ‘alhhiz ‘ourselves’, qinhħiz ‘yourself’... Additionally, hhalhhiz can also be interpreted as ‘each other’ in addition to ‘themselves’.

3.3. Numerals and Quantification

(Possession) > (Demonstrative) > (**Numeral**) > Noun-Determiner > (Adjective) > (Adposition)

In addition to simply specifying a noun as plural, it is sometimes necessary to specify a particular number of objects (e.g., five hawks). In order to specify a particular number of objects, a numeral is added before the noun-determiner slot of the template, and the appropriate plural determiner is added to the noun:

βæ _L χæwdiŋ _L	‘five hawks’
βæ _L χæwdiŋ _{ba_L}	‘the five hawks’
βæ _L šomban _L	‘five trout’
βæ _L šomban _{sa_L}	‘the five trout’

Other quantifiers may also be used in this slot of the argument template, such as bæwe ‘some’, [iš ‘most’, nem ‘few’, or ɟum ‘all’. Further, these quantifiers may appear with a numeral to provide additional specificity:

ɟum βæ _L χæwdiŋ _{ba_L}	‘all five hawks’
ɟum βæ _L šomban _{sa_L}	‘all five trout’

Number	Cardinal	Ordinal
1	/hiz/	/hizod/
2	/be/	/beod/
3	/dʌʂ/	/dʌʂod/
4	/dowe/	/doweod/
5	/βæ/	/βæ od/
6	/gem/	/gemod/
7	/ʃem/	/ʃemod/
8	/ɬonul/	/ɬonulod/
9	/ɑ dæm/	/ɑ dæmod/
10	/qor/	/qorod/

Table 5: Dal'a numerals

To form an Ordinal number (e.g., ‘first’, ‘second’, ‘third’ ...) the suffix -od is added onto the cardinal number root.

Numerals above ten are formed by using a phrasal construction: be-ezh-qogh, literally ‘two and ten’ or ‘twelve’, or dowe-ezh-beqorgh, literally ‘four and two-tens’ or ‘twenty-four’.

3.4. Demonstratives

(Possession) > (**Demonstrative**) > (Numeral) > Noun-Determiner > (Adjective) > (Adposition)

Demonstratives are similar to definite articles, but they allow us to situate a noun in relative space to the speaker of the sentence. In English, we generally have only two demonstratives, which are further specified for a singular/plural distinction: ‘this/these’ and ‘that/those’. In Dal'a, there are three demonstratives, which do not change based on number or grammatical gender: ɬɑh, zi, and βo.

The demonstrative ɬɑh is used to refer to things you can see (or point to). Typically, this demonstrative is translated as ‘this’ in English, but is frequently used in situations where most English speakers would use ‘that’. For example if someone was at the other end of a room from you and pointed to a bag on a table, in English, they would ask for ‘that bag’, but Dal'a, they would ask for ɬɑh ɬowiʔɬ ‘this bag’ because it is visible and able to be pointed to. This demonstrative can also be used as a pronoun when accompanied by a gesture (e.g., pointing to an object).

The demonstrative zi is used to refer to things you cannot see, but are familiar with, and is usually translated as ‘that’. For example, you could ask for ‘that plumber’ that the person you are talking to trusts, but is not present as zi ɬonχeɬʔɑ. This demonstrative can also be used to refer to a previous sentence as it ‘that’s what I meant!’ or ‘...this is the reason that...’

The demonstrative βo is used for things that are at or beyond the visual range, or for unreal things. English does not have great equivalents of this demonstrative, but it could be used for things like ‘yonder city is where you’ll find her’ or for expressing feelings ‘I’ve got this feeling, deep inside of me’. This demonstrative is not usually used as a pronoun in the modern language.

Without exception, demonstratives that modify nouns/arguments (*i.e.*, those that are not used as pronouns) can only be used with nouns that use a definite determiner; demonstratives cannot co-occur with indefinite nouns.

3.5. Adjectives

(Possession) > (Demonstrative) > (Numeral) > Noun-Determiner > (**Adjective**) > (Adposition)

Adjectives are words that provide descriptions of nouns, words like ‘big’, ‘small’, ‘long’, ‘short’, ‘old’, or ‘young’. Using adjectives in Dal'a is very straightforward; adjectives follow the noun in the argument and can be used directly from the dictionary with no additional affixes required. Adjectives are not specified as common or honoured gender and can modify a noun of either grammatical gender equally well.

If an adjective is being used as an argument by itself, the adjective then must take a determiner, usually agreeing with the thing it is referring to for which grammatical gender it takes:¹

ḡombaq ^Λ ḡaq		biqah ^ʔ ḡaq	
ḡombaq- ^Λ	ḡaq	biqah- ^ʔ	ḡaq
trout-DEF.SG.COM	fresh	camel^butter-DEF.SG.HON	fresh
‘the fresh trout’		‘the fresh butter’	
ḡombaq ^Λ ḡaq ^Λ		biqah ^ʔ ḡaq ^ʔ	
ḡombaq- ^Λ	ḡaq- ^Λ	biqah- ^ʔ	ḡaq- ^ʔ
trout-DEF.SG.COM	fresh-DEF.SG.COM	camel^butter-DEF.SG.HON	fresh-DEF.SG.HON
‘the trout is fresh’		‘the butter is fresh’	

3.6. Adpositions

(Possession) > (Demonstrative) > (Numeral) > Noun-Determiner > (Adjective) > (**Adposition**)

Adpositions, typically called prepositions in English due to the fact that they come before the noun, are words that provide additional information about the spatio-temporal relationship the noun has with other elements of the sentence—words like ‘with’, ‘of’, ‘to’, ‘from’, ‘beside’, ‘before’, ‘after’... In Dal'a, these words appear at the end of an argument:

ḡi ^Λ ʔ	‘over the sand’
ḡi ^Λ heḡ ʔ	‘over the hot sand’
ḡi ^Λ te	‘out of the sand’
ḡi ^Λ heḡ te	‘out of the hot sand’

¹ Note that there is no verb ‘to be’ in Dal'a.

χἰ|Λἰ ḡi 'through the sand'
 χἰ|Λἰ heη ḡi 'through the hot sand'

3.7. Denoting possession

(**Possession**) > (Demonstrative) > (Numeral) > Noun-Determiner > (Adjective) > (Adposition)

To denote possession, a possessor is included in the argument template; the possessor can be up to a full argument itself, but is frequently only a noun or pronoun. To mark a noun/argument as a possessor (thing that possesses the main noun in the argument), it takes the suffix $-(\Lambda)b$ (the vowel is only included if the noun ends in a consonant, it is deleted if the noun ends in a vowel). This suffix replaces the determiner suffix listed in Table 3; rather than using a singular/plural, common/honoured, definite/indefinite determiner, only $-(\Lambda)b$ is applied to the noun, regardless of the grammatical gender or number of the noun. The possessed noun behaves normally (takes the appropriate Table 3 determiner suffix) as described in the previous sections.

ḡANΛb	ḡombanΛἰ	ḡanη	zα
ḡAN-Λb	ḡombanη-Λἰ	ḡanη	zα
1.SG-POSS	trout-DEF.SG.COM	fresh	over

'... over my fresh trout'

ḡANΛb	ḡum	βæ	ḡombanη-Λἰ	ḡanη	zα
ḡAN-Λb	ḡum	βæ	ḡombanη-Λἰ	ḡanη	zα
1.SG-POSS	all	five	trout-DEF.SG.COM	fresh	over

'...over all five of my fresh trout'

ḡaḡ	ḡoηu	rudḡimΛb	am	ḡum	βæ	ḡombanη-Λἰ	ḡanη	zα
ḡaḡ	ḡoηu	rudḡim-Λb	am	ḡum	βæ	ḡombanη-Λἰ	ḡanη	zα
DEM	eight	beggar-POSS	old	all	five	trout-DEF.SG.COM	fresh	over

'...over all five of these eight old beggar's fresh trout'

Further, this process is iterative; multiple possessors may be added, each added to the possession slot of each possession argument:

ḡANΛb	banηanΛb	manηaḡΛb	ḡimΛἰ
ḡAN-Λb	banηanη-Λb	manηaḡ-Λb	ḡim-Λἰ
1.SG-POSS	parent-POSS	dog-POSS	bone-DEF.SG.COM

'my parents' dog's bone'

A caveat to this process is that it occasionally triggers a process of PRO-drop. If the subject of the sentence and the immediately following possessive pronoun are identical in who they refer to, the subject pronoun is dropped. For example, take the sentence 'I fix my course by the King's

star': We expect the equivalent of a literally translated 'fix me my course...', but, because 'me' 'ang and 'my' 'angub refer to the same person, the subject pronoun 'ang is dropped:

Goldamud	'angub	vishor	dalub	vina'a	sho	dahl
[go damΛd]	ʔaΛab	βiʃoɿ	dɑ Λb	βiŋɑʔɑ	ʃo	dæ]
Goldam-d	'ang-b	visho-r	dal-b	vina-'a	sho	dahl
fix-PRES	1.SG-POSS	course-DEF.SG.COM	king-POSS	star-DEF.SG.HON	by	HAB

'(I) set my course by the king's star'

3.8. Vocative Address

A special form that a noun may take (typically reserved for proper nouns *i.e.*, names, and only then in the most formal register of speech) is the vocative address. When a noun is put in the vocative, then an honourific marker, similar to an adposition (and using the adpositional slot in the argument template) follows the noun; the honourific is αʃα.

This synonymous with the archaic English construction 'Oh John...'

4. Using Verbs

Verbs describe the action denoted by the sentence. Verbs indicate what the subject of the sentence is doing (or what the object of the sentence is having done to it). Verbs are denoted in the dictionary as *v*. The form of the verb provided in the dictionary is the citation form—the form of the verb lacking tense information, used only with infinitive verbs/verbal nouns (explained in §4.3, 4.4). Unlike arguments, verbs do not have a large template that they follow, instead, the verb template is the full sentence, which is described in Chapter 5. In this chapter, changes that are specific to verbs are discussed. The subsections below detail how to alter the verb to indicate different grammatical functions such as indicating past, present, or future tense or negation, as well as auxiliary verbs that provide additional information about the verb.

4.1. Tense

There are three tenses that verbs in Dal'a may be expressed in, the present tense, the past tense, or the future tense. Each of these tenses are expressed by applying a suffix to the citation form of the verb. Unless otherwise specified by the addition of an auxiliary verb (discussed in §4.2), the default interpretation of the verb is the participle, what we would translate into English as the *-ing* form of the verb—meaning that the action is ongoing.

The present tense is marked on a verb with the suffix *-d*:

balɒd ʔaɪ	'I am sleeping'
omɒd ʔaɪ	'I am eating'
βaziɒd ʔaɪ	'I am racing'

The past tense is marked on a verb with the suffix *-weɲ*:

balɒweɲ ʔaɪ	'I was sleeping'
omɒweɲ ʔaɪ	'I was eating'
βaziweɲ ʔaɪ	'I was racing'

The future tense is marked on a verb with the suffix *-ɬam*:

balɒɬam ʔaɪ	'I will be sleeping'
omɒɬam ʔaɪ	'I will be eating'
βaziɬam ʔaɪ	'I will be racing'

4.2. Auxiliary Verbs

Auxiliary verbs provide additional information about the verb's interpretation. They are stand alone words that occupy a separate part of the sentence template provided in Chapter 5, typically occurring at or near the end of the sentence. Auxiliary verbs provide information such as stating that the action denoted by the verb is completed, or that it happens on a regular cycle; auxiliary verbs also allow the speaker to provide information about mood, such as asserting that something

must happen, can happen, or may happen. There are very few suffixes that auxiliary verbs can take.

In order to denote that the action conveyed by the primary verb of the clause is completed, the perfective auxiliary verb *owen* is used, which gets interpreted based on the tense suffix used with the main verb:

βαζιδ ʔAN owen	‘I am done racing’
βαζιwen ʔAN owen	‘I had raced’
βαζισam ʔAN owen	‘I will have raced’

In order to denote that the action conveyed by the primary verb of the clause happens on a frequent, recurrent cycle, the habitual auxiliary verb *dæ|* is used, which gets interpreted based on the tense suffix used with the main verb:

βαζιδ ʔAN dæ	‘I race (every day)’
βαζιwen ʔAN dæ	‘I raced (every day)’ (or, ‘I used to race’)
βαζισam ʔAN dæ	‘I will race’ (does not necessarily infer frequency)

In order to denote that the action conveyed by the primary verb of the clause is necessitated in some way, the necessity auxiliary verb *dεz* is used, which gets interpreted based on the tense suffix used with the main verb:

βαζιδ ʔAN dεz	‘I must be racing’
βαζιwen ʔAN dεz	‘I must have raced’
βαζισam ʔAN dεz	‘I will need to race’

On the other hand, if you want to denote that the action conveyed by the primary verb of the clause is possible in some way, the possibility auxiliary verb *ʔurɛn* is used, which gets interpreted based on the suffix used with the main verb:

βαζιδ ʔAN ʔurɛn	‘I can race’
βαζιwen ʔAN ʔurɛn	‘I could have raced’
βαζισam ʔAN ʔurɛn	‘I might race’

Further, if you want to denote that the action conveyed by the primary verb of the clause is permitted in some way, the permission auxiliary verb *zæwem* is used, which gets interpreted based on the suffix used with the main verb:

βαζιδ ʔAN zæwem	‘I am allowed to race’
βαζιwen ʔAN zæwem	‘I was allowed to race’
βαζισam ʔAN zæwem	‘I will be allowed to race’

In certain instances, some auxiliary verbs may be modified by a mood suffix to provide a slightly different connotation. For example, if the future tense is used on the verb and the perfective auxiliary is modified by the conditional -am suffix, we get:

βαζιςam ʔan oweŋam 'I would have raced'

Combinations of other auxiliary verbs with the -am suffix work similarly:

βαζιςam ʔan tuŋam 'I could race'

βαζιςam ʔan zæwemam 'I would race'

A second suffix that certain auxiliary verbs may take is the imperative –o suffix, which can be applied to the necessity, possibility, or permissive auxiliary verbs to give different types of commands. When using the imperative –o suffix on an auxiliary verb, the main verb appears in the citation form (the bare form of the verb with no tense information). Further, no subject is included with the verb when giving commands, and typically no object either, unless a distinction between singular and plural is necessary:

βαζι deŋo 'I need you to race!'

βαζι tuŋeŋo 'Will you please race?'

βαζι zæwemo 'Race!'

The primary difference between these three forms is that when the necessity auxiliary is used, it indicates an immediate need for the action to be done; when the possibility auxiliary is used, it indicates a request; and, when the permissive auxiliary is used, it is a simple command.

4.3. Infinitive Verbs

Infinitive verbs are the equivalent of the English 'to verb', and are used when a second main verb is required in a single clause in Dal'a; in other words, when the concept of 'need', for example, cannot be expressed with an auxiliary verb. To use a verb in the infinitive, no tense information is applied to the verb, and the infinitive particle i follows:

βαζιδ	ʔan	qin	dez	(with necessity auxiliary)
βαζι-d	ʔan	qin	dez	
race-PRES	1.SG	2.SG	NECESS	
'I need you to race'				

ραd	ʔan	qin	βαζι	i	(with infinitive particle)
ρα-d	ʔan	qin	βαζι	i	
want-PRES	1.SG	2.SG	race	INFIN	
'I want you to race'					

While, in English, the object of the infinitive verb follows the normal syntactic pattern, in Dal'a, the object of the infinitive verb is treated as the indirect object of the main verb (explained further in Chapter 5).

raḍ	ʔAN	qiŋ	χilʂal	za	βazi	i
ra-ḍ	ʔAN	qiŋ	χil-ʂal	za	βazi	i
want-PRES	1.SG	2.SG	sand-DEF.PL.COM	over	race	INFIN
'I want you to race over the sands'						

4.4. Verbal Nouns

The verbal noun, sometimes called the gerund, is used in instances where the action described by a verb is the event that creates the subject or object of a sentence. For example, 'shoot' is a verb (/gimæ/), but 'the shooting' is an argument with 'shooting' as a noun in this case. To form a verbal noun in Dal'a, the suffix $-\chi$ is added to the verb (e.g., gimæχ 'the shooting'). Note: definite/indefinite suffixes are not applied to verbal nouns; their definiteness and number are implied from context rather than being specified through suffixation.

This form is sometimes used in compound words describing something where tense is inappropriate; for example, /ŋoŋimχfiŋḍoza/, the 9th month of the Dal'a calendar is literally 'falling moon', but because this month can be discussed when the moon is not presently 'falling', as such, the present tense is avoided, and the $-\chi$ verbal noun suffix is used instead.

Verbal nouns are always common gender, unless the speaker wishes to ameliorate the word, as described in §3.1.

4.5. Negating Verbs

Negating a sentence is as simple as adding a negation prefix to the verb. Which negation prefix depends on the verb type: Tensed verbs take the negation prefix em-; infinitive verbs take the negation prefix iŋ-; imperative verbs take the negation prefix iŋ-; and, auxiliary verbs take the negation prefix eħ-.

raḍ	ʔAN	qiŋ	χilʂal	za	βazi	i
ra-ḍ	ʔAN	qiŋ	χil-ʂal	za	βazi	i
want-PRES	1.SG	2.SG	sand-DEF.PL.COM	over	race	INFIN
'I want you to race over the sands'						

em raḍ	ʔAN	qiŋ	χilʂal	za	βazi	i
em -ra-ḍ	ʔAN	qiŋ	χil-ʂal	za	βazi	i
NEG -want-PRES	1.SG	2.SG	sand-DEF.PL.COM	over	race	INFIN
'I don't want you to race over the sands'						

raḏ	ʔAN	qin	χilʃal	za	in βazi	i
ra-ḏ	ʔAN	qin	χil-ʃal	za	in -βazi	i
want-PRES	1.SG	2.SG	sand-DEF.PL.COM	over	NEG -race	INFIN

‘I want you to **not** race over the sands’

i βazi	χilʃal	za	zæwemo
i -βazi	χil-ʃal	za	zæwem-o
NEG -race	sand-DEF.PL.COM	over	PERMIS-IMP

‘**Do not** race over the sands!’

βazid	ʔAN	qin	χilʃal	za	eh ḏez
βazi-ḏ	ʔAN	qin	χil-ʃal	za	eh -ḏez
race-PRES	1.SG	2.SG	sand-DEF.PL.COM	over	NEG -NECESS

‘I **don’t need** you to race over the sands’

4.6. Passive Voice

The construction in English where an anonymous subject is the doer of the action (e.g., ‘I was hit (by someone)’ as opposed to ‘John hit me’), is called the passive voice. To use the passive voice in Dal’a, the non-specific pronoun æwaɪ is used, which roughly translates as ‘one does X’:

raḏ	æwaɪ	qin	χilʃal	za	βazi	i
ra-ḏ	æwaɪ	qin	χil-ʃal	za	βazi	i
want-PRES	NON-SPEC	2.SG	sand-DEF.PL.COM	over	race	INFIN

‘One wants you to race over the sands’ /
‘You are wanted to race over the sands’

5. Syntax

A sentence, in the most basic terms, consists of three elements: A subject, the thing doing the action; a verb, the action itself; and, possibly, an object, the thing having the action done to it. In English, the typical order of these elements is Subject > Verb > Object; if you hear the sentence ‘the dog bit the mailman’ you are unlikely to think that there is a vicious mailman out there going around biting dogs.

In Dal'a, the typical order of the sentence elements is Verb > Subject > Object; thus, our example sentence would be ordered ‘bit the dog the mailman’ where the thing being bitten follows the thing doing the biting, which both follow the action of the bite itself.

In addition to these three basic sentential elements, the template of the Dal'a sentence is as follows, with each of the elements explained in detail in subsequent sections, except those that are explained in previous sections e.g., the Vocative, which was explained in §3.8 or the Infinitive, which was explained in §4.3.

(Vocative) > (C) > (Q) > Verb > (Adv) > Subj > (DO) > (IO) > (infin verb) > (Aux)

5.1. Adverbs

(Vocative) > (C) > (Q) > Verb > (**Adv**) > Subj > (DO) > (IO) > (infin verb) > (Aux)

Adverbs are descriptors that tell you how an action is being done, words like ‘quickly’, ‘slowly’, or ‘argumentatively’. Additionally, adverbs can be used to further describe when or where an action takes place with words like ‘yesterday’, ‘tomorrow’, ‘soon’, ‘here’, or ‘there’.

In Dal'a, if an adverb is present in the sentence, it immediately follows the verb, interceding between the main verb and the subject:

βαζιweη	qæmbiη	qiη	oweη
βαζι-weη	qæmbiη	qiη	oweη
race-PST	quickly	2.SG	PERF
‘you raced quickly’			

5.2. Direct and Indirect Objects

(Vocative) > (C) > (Q) > Verb > (Adv) > Subj > (**DO**) > (**IO**) > (infin verb) > (Aux)

Just like the Subject (Subj) is a basic noun phrase (argument), the same is true of the Direct Object (DO) and Indirect Object (IO). Each of these slots in the above template can be filled with an argument, as described in Chapter 3.

φeɖ	ʔa _N	ɪaḥ	ɖaɪbaɭ	ḥaɭ	ɖo
φe-ɖ	ʔa _N	ɪaḥ	ɖaɪ-baɭ	ḥaɭ	ɖo
give-PRES	1.SG	DEM.VIS	money.DEF.PL.HON	3.PL	to
'I am giving this money to you'					

Largely, the order of the three arguments in a clause containing a subject, DO, and IO follows the same order as the equivalent sentence in English with other sentence elements adjusted for the Dal'a sentence order. Frequently, the IO in a Dal'a sentence takes an adposition.

5.3. Asking Questions

(Vocative) > (C) > (Q) > Verb > (Adv) > Subj > (DO) > (IO) > (infin verb) > (Aux)

When it comes to asking questions in Dal'a, there are two basic strategies that you can employ, depending on the type of question being asked: Yes/no questions or content questions, each of which are described below and have to do with filling the Q (question) slot of the sentence template with a question word.

5.3.1. Yes/No Questions

The most basic questions are questions that require only an affirmative/negative response, known as yes/no questions. To form a yes/no question in Dal'a, all that is needed is that the question word /ḥoŋ/ is added before the verb, in the Q slot of the sentence template. Subjects, objects, etc., are still added to the sentence template as normal.

Answering a yes/no question is done by responding with an affirmative (bare) or negative verb, conjugated with the correct tense morpheme (auxiliary verbs are not needed in a response):

ḥoŋ	βaɪɪɪam	qɪŋ	βaɪɪɪam	emβaɪɪam
ḥoŋ	βaɪɪ-ɪam	qɪŋ	βaɪɪ-ɪam	em-βaɪɪ-ɪam
Q	race-FUT	2.SG	race-FUT	NEG-race-FUT
'will you be racing?'			'yes'	'no'

5.3.2. Content Questions

Only slightly more complicated than yes/no questions are content questions, questions that ask for specific information, sometimes called wh-questions by English speakers—those that ask who, what, where, when, why, and how. In Dal'a, content questions are created by adding the question word /ḥoŋ/ to the Q slot of the template, and adding a question pronoun to the appropriate subject/DO/IO slot of the template to indicate what the question is asking.

/qɪb/	'who'	/u.ɪ/	'why'
/muɖ/	'where'	/qɪmbɪŋ/	'how'
/βaɖ/	'when'	/qɪmbeɟ/	'how much / how many'

ħon	βaziƣam	qib
ħon	βazi-ƣam	qib
Q	race-FUT	who

‘who will be racing?’

ħon	βaziƣam	qin	muɖ
ħon	βazi-ƣam	qin	muɖ
Q	race-FUT	2.SG	where

‘where will you be racing?’

ħon	βaziƣam	qin	muɖ	ɖo
ħon	βazi-ƣam	qin	muɖ	ɖo
Q	race-FUT	2.SG	where	to

‘where will you be racing to?’

ħon	βaziƣam	qin	βaɖ
ħon	βazi-ƣam	qin	βaɖ
Q	race-FUT	2.SG	when

‘when will you be racing?’

Content question are answered with regular, full sentences, though they may be truncated as long as the appropriate information is conveyed.

5.4. Embedded Clauses

(~~V~~oative) > (C) > (Q) > Verb > (Adv) > Subj > (DO) > (IO) > (**infin verb**) > (Aux)

Embedded clauses are subordinate to matrix clauses, providing additional information. These clauses contain the second tensed verb of a multi-verb sentence: e.g., In the sentence [I know [that you love sweet-bread]], ‘that you love sweet-bread’ is embedded within the matrix clause ‘I know X’. Embedded clauses behave in mostly the same ways as matrix clauses (the types of sentences that have been under discussion up till this point), simply following the IO with another sentence template (the same way that a possession follows numerals/quantifiers in an argument with another full argument) with a few minor exceptions.

First, if a sentence (matrix or embedded clause) contains an auxiliary, that auxiliary goes at the end of the sentence, even if it modifies the verb in the matrix clause. A sentence with multiple auxiliaries puts all of the auxiliaries at the end of the sentence where the final auxiliary in the sentence modifies the first verb in the sentence, the second last auxiliary modifies the second verb, and so on. If the same auxiliary verb would be applied to all verbs in a clause, only a single auxiliary need be used: For example, if all of the verbs in a sentence are perfect, only one instance of *owen* at the end of the sentence need be used.

Second, the embedded clause frequently begins with a complementizer (C); the choice of complementizer used to head the embedded clause depends on the function of the embedded clause, explained subsequently.

Third, Vocatives may not appear in embedded clauses.

If the embedded clause uses the matrix clause as its subject (as in '[I know the person [**who** teaches second grade]]'), the complementizer /ewɑq/ is inserted into the (C) slot of the template, with the remainder of the embedded clause being inserted between the IO and the Aux portions of the template, the same place an infinitive verb would normally be placed.

If the embedded clause contains its own subject (as in '[I know [**that you** love sweetbread]]'), the complementizer /iwaq/ is inserted into the (C) slot of the template with the remainder of the embedded clause being inserted between the IO and the Aux portions of the template, the same place an infinitive verb would normally be placed.

If the embedded clause is a 'then' clause (as in '[if you made supper [**then** I would eat it]]'), then the complementizer /eʒ/ is inserted into the (C) slot of the template with the remainder of the embedded clause being inserted between the IO and the Aux portions of the template, the same place an infinitive verb would normally be placed. It should also be noted that this complementizer can also head a matrix clause to connect the following sentence to something that was said previously (kind of like a sentence that begins with 'and' in English); similarly, /eʒ/ is also the coordinator 'and', as described in the next section.

5.5. Coordination

Coordination is the ability to combine multiple nouns/arguments, multiple verbs/clauses, or multiple sentences. In English, the most common methods of coordination are using 'and', 'or', or 'but', and the same is true in Dal'a with the conjunction (*conj.*) coming between the elements being coordinated.

To provide the sense of 'and' between elements, the conjunction /eʒ/ is put between them.

To provide the sense of 'or' between elements, the conjunction /ħædq/ is put between them.

To provide the sense of 'but' between elements, the conjunction /raʒ/ is put between them.

When multiple sentences are being coordinated, the appropriate conjunction is applied between each sentence; when multiple nouns/arguments or multiple verbs are being coordinated (as long as the same conjunction is being used for all coordinations), the conjunction is only used between the last two elements in the series.

5.6. Predicate Adjectives

Sometimes, the thing that will be the object of the sentence is not an argument (noun phrase), but rather, an adjective: e.g., in the sentence 'he is wise' where 'wise' is an adjective rather than a noun/argument. To use an adjective as an argument, to take the place of an object in the sentence, all that is needed is to apply the appropriate determiner suffix to the adjective according to Table 3: Adjectives agree with the subject of the sentence for grammatical gender and number.

6. Creating New Words by Extension

Sometimes an affix is needed to turn a word into something closely related, for example, the suffix /-ɪɔ/ turns a verb into a noun and gains the meaning 'one who does'; so, if -ɪɔ is added to the verb /φe/ 'give' we get [φe.ɪɔ] 'giver'.

Another affix, -/om/, changes a noun into an adjective. So the noun /βaɪm/ 'North' becomes [βaɪmom] 'northern'.

6.1. Compounding

Although the typical order in an argument is Noun > Adjective, compounds that contain these two word types are typically presented in the opposite order. For example, /χeʃoɪ/ is a noun that means 'badlands' or 'wates' and /qaze/ is an adjective meaning 'red'. If one were to talk about badlands that happen to be red, the order would be χeʃoɪɬ qaze 'red wastes' (with an indefinite plural suffix on the noun). However, if one wanted to talk about the badlands to the East of the capitol city, Tordam, they would talk about qazeχeʃoɪɬ (with a definite singular suffix because it is a singular place) with the adjective preceding the noun.

6.2. Diminutives

Although an infrequently used morpheme, the suffix -ji can be applied to a noun to indicate offspring, young, baby, or sometimes a runt of a litter. When this suffix is applied to proper nouns, it implies 'junior', and is typically only used if a child has the same name as a parent.

7. Idioms

/βomɬɑR/ *v.* To ripen or make ready. The idiomatic phrase *ro ʔɑN qiŋ βomɬɑR i* 'let me ripen you' is generally received by tourists as 'let me give you some advice,' but the resulting advice is typically bad. To 'ripen' someone under this guise is to specifically give them bad advice to mark them as a foreigner for someone else's gain; this could be as harmless as warning someone against a particular shop and steering them to a friend's market stall, or instructing them on the "proper" greeting gesture of holding the hand straight above one's head as a greeting (rather than the correct bent elbow for this gesture).

Among Dal'a speakers, the phrase *βomɬɑR hæn/ħɑl* 'they're ripe' refers to an easy target, or calls someone gullible; this phrase is often used with the 2nd person pronoun as a gentle way of poking fun at someone: *βomɬɑR qiŋ* 'well aren't you ripe!'

'angub doma'a singad: This idiom is the motto of the Dal'a's dynasty; it translates as 'My gaze is lifted'. There are number of grammatical oddities with this phrase, the most significant is the order of the words: Although Dal'a is a verb-initial language, in this motto, the subject ('my gaze') precedes the verb. There are also a number of missing grammatical words, such as an auxiliary verb to create the perfect aspect (is lifted) rather than the participial aspect (is lifting). This motto is a poetic take on the full phrase: *Singad 'angub doma'a di dahl, ezh goldamud 'angub vishor dalub vina'a sho dahl* 'I lift up my gaze and set my course by the king's star', an instruction carved on the obelisk at Eghur.

Zhi amagh. This phrase literally translates as 'this because', but is an idiomatic expression that means 'As a result of ___ that' or 'It is because of this ___ that...'. This phrase can be used in conjunction with a full argument before the verb of a sentence.

Modah /moɖæ/ *excl.* A non-grammatical word that can be interpreted as 'umm' or 'and so...'. This exclamation is sometimes added to the beginning of a sentence while a speaker gathers their thoughts, but is often translated as 'and so...'. It may also be used as a tag question at the end of a sentence, where it is often interpreted as 'don't you agree?'.

Ahhaani /ɑħɑ.ɑŋi/ *excl.* Thank you. According to popular folklore, this expression was used by Beda every morning to greet the sun while he was traveling between the various nomadic tribes and working to unite all the people of what would become the Dal'a region. It literally translates as 'oh day' (the final vowel of *ani* has been lost in the modern pronunciation of 'day', but is retained in this idiomatic phrase).

8. Dal'a body language

Some body language used by speakers of Dal'a is quite formalized, and deviations from accepted gestures can be seen as rude. Some of these gestures are recorded here for quick reference.

8.1. *Pointing*

Pointing to people or objects is quite common in Dal'a conversations, but it must be done correctly. To point to a person or object, the entire hand is used, not just a single finger: The fingers of the hand are shaped into a spear-head formation with all fingers closed together and stretched straight out; the wrist is kept straight, and the entire forearm (or entire arm if possible) is used to point to the person or thing of interest; this is not a subtle gesture.

Pointing to a person or thing with a single finger or without using at least the whole forearm is considered rude at best and frequently perceived as downright insulting. Making a pointing gesture in a subtle form is considered sneaky behaviour and is associated with thieves and assassins. By using this gesture in a subtle way, you indicate to all who notice that you are not trustworthy, which frequently results in merchants increasing their price or refusing service all together if they notice this behaviour. Further, if the point is made to a person, this is an insult, typically interpreted as referring to that person as a criminal of some variety—most people will not stand this insult to their honour, regardless of any validity the implication may hold.

8.2. *Greeting*

There are two forms of a gestural greeting akin to a wave. Selection of which gesture to use is based on familiarity with the person being greeted. To greet someone who is not well known to you, or to simply get their attention, the hand is raised above the head with fingers splayed apart and a sharp bend in the elbow—almost like a child raising their hand in class, but without the enthusiasm that would cause the elbow joint to be locked. Raising the arm straight up with a fully extended elbow is not rude, it simply marks you as a foreigner who hasn't learned this subtlety of the culture. Many people view the incorrect gesture in this situation to be a signal of gullibility, and the incorrect gesture is frequently taught to outsiders to “ripen them” for the next merchant who can squeeze an extra silver measure from them.

The second greeting gesture is reserved for close acquaintances, family members, or use by the Dal to anyone (sometimes replicated by lesser politicians); this gesture uses the same finger position (splayed fingers) but the hand is held close to the body near the belly or the heart bending at the wrist rather than the elbow/shoulder.

Both gestures are made with the left hand. Using the right hand is an insult, considered to be ‘the hand one wipes their bum with’, whether that is true or not.

8.3. *Offensive Gestures*

Most cultures have some sort of hand gesture that is considered an insult: The British use the index and middle fingers in the shape of a V with the back of the hand positioned towards the person the offense is intended for; many North Americans use an extended middle finger by itself to convey aggravation/aggression. In Dal'a culture, the fingers of the right hand are curled into a circle, completed by the thumb. Traditionally, the person making this gesture would look through the

circle at the person whom the offense was intended for, as if looking through a scope; this latter part of looking through the circle is frequently not done except in exceptional circumstances. This gesture is taken to mean 'I paint a target on you', and is typically only used when someone is actually threatening, or willing to threaten, violence—though many youths will use this gesture, ignorant of the more literal meaning, causing the gesture to be used more widely with less physical intentions in modern times.

9. Dal'a to English Dictionary

9.1. A /a/

Ahha /aʃa/ *adp.* Honourific, vocative particle.

Ahhaani /aʃa.aŋi/ *excl.* Thank you.

Adahm /a[d]æm/ *num.* Nine.

Am /am/ *adj.* Old.

Amagh /amar/ *adp.* Because.

An /aŋ/ *n. com.* Day.

9.2. Ah /æ/

Ahmbal /æmba/ 1. *n. hon.* egg; 2. *n. hon.* gift. This word has an irregular plural where the indefinite plural marker is used for both the definite and indefinite: ahmbalul (instead of *ahmbalbal).

Ahwar /æwa/ *pro.* Non-specific pronoun ('one').

9.3. B /b/

Ba /ba/ *n. hon.* Mom; Dad—a short, affectionate form of /baŋaŋ/.

Badal /baɖa/ *n. com.* Rain.

Banan /baŋaŋ/ *n. hon.* Parent; Sire.

Bahwe /bæwe/ *quant.* Some.

Be /be/ *num.* Two.

Bedaqor /beɖaɖo/ *n. hon.* The second day of the Dal'a week, literally 'Beda's hand'.

Ben /beŋ/ *n. com.* Omen; Prophecy.

Beodviahl /beoɖβiæ/ *n. com.* Dusk.

Bi /bi/ *n. com.* Happiness.

Bidal /biɖa/ *n. com.* Sky.

Binahh /biŋaħ/ *n. hon.* Camel-milk butter.

Bino /biŋo/ *v.* Nap.

Bogh /bor/ *adp.* Inside; Into.

Buno /bʌŋo/ *v.* Sleep.

9.4. D /d/

Dam /ɖam/ *n. com.* Fort; Castle. Typically used in place names. -Dam creates an irregular noun; it is considered definite without relying on an additional

definite suffix: adding -ɹ to a name ending in this word is typically viewed as redundant, and a mistake of non-native speakers.

Daz /ɖaz/ *n. hon.* Money.

Dahl /ɖæ/ *aux.* The habitual aspect, indicating the action referred to in the sentence happens on a recurrent (*i.e.*, every day) time frame.

Dahmal (alternative spelling: Daamal) /ɖæma/ 1. *n. com.* Measure (of currency); 2. *n. com.* Mile. Some people maintain a distinction between Daamal as a measure of currency and Dahmal as a measure of distance (a mile), but very few.

Dahmbin /ɖæmbiŋ/ *adv.* Quickly; Swiftly; Without hesitation.

De /ɖe/ *adp.* With (accompaniment); Adjacent to.

Dem /ɖem/ *adp.* As; In the form of.

Degh /ɖeɾ/ *v.* Abandon; Flee.

Dez /ɖeɹ/ *aux.* The necessity modal auxiliary, indicating the action referred to in the sentence must happen/have happened.

Di /ɖi/ *adp.* Up; Upwards.

Diahng /ɖiæŋ/ *n. com.* Encounter; Session.

Dil /ɖi/ *n. hon.* Caster (spell-caster).

Dim /ɖim/ *adj.* High; Tall.

Dimfindozha /ɖimfiŋɖoɹa/ *n. hon.* Name of the 7th month. Literally, High-Moon.

Dizhal /ɖiɹa/ *v.* Bring.

Do /ɖo/ *adp.* To/towards; For.

Doham /ɖoham/ *adv.* Southward.

Doma /ɖoma/ *n. com.* Eye.

Doma /ɖoma/ *n. hon.* Gaze; Sight.

Dongogh /ɖoŋoɾ/ *adv.* Eastward.

Dovalim /ɖoβa/ɹim/ *adv.* Northward.

Dowe /ɖowe/ *num.* Four.

Dozihhil /ɖozihi/ *adv.* Westward.

Dozha /ɖoɹa/ *n. com.* Man; Person.

Dus /ɖʌʃ/ *num.* Three.

Duz /ɖuz/ *v.* Grab; Take.

9.5. E /e/

El /eɫ/ *n. com.* Date palm tree.

Elah /eɫæ/ *v.* Grow.

Egang /egɑn/ *v.* Climb.

Egom /egom/ *v.* Jump; Leap.

Egh /eɾ/ *n. com.* Limit; Boundary.

Ewar /ewaɪ/ *comp.* Head of an embedded clause that uses the matrix clause as the subject of the embedded clause (*cf.* 'who' or 'which').

Ezh /eʒ/ 1. *comp.* Head of an embedded clause that provides the outcome of a conditional matrix clause (*cf.* 'then...'). 2. *comp.* Head of a matrix clause that continues from a previous sentence (*cf.* 'and...'). 3. *conj.* And.

9.6. F /f/

Fe /fɛ/ *v.* Give.

Fel /fɛɫ/ *v.* Begin; Start.

Feng /fɛn/ *v.* Hold (an event or occasion). For example: to hold the zhoqem'a or to hold a feast. Sometimes translated as 'to have'.

Fin /fiŋ/ *n. hon.* Silver.

Findozha /fiŋdɔʒɑ/ *n. com.* Moon.

Fol /fɔɫ/ *v.* Get; Receive.

Fonxen /fɔŋxɛŋ/ *n. hon.* Plumber.

Fogh /fɔɾ/ 1. *n. com.* strength; 2. *n. hon.* value.

9.7. G /g/

Gem /gɛm/ *num.* Six.

Gimah /gimæ/ *v.* Shoot.

Goldam /goɫdɑm/ *v.* Fix (in place); Set upon (as in set in thinking/ways or set upon a course).

9.8. H /h/

Ham /ham/ *n. com.* South.

Hamom /hamom/ *adj.* Southern.

Hen /heŋ/ *adj.* Hot.

Hem /hem/ *adj.* Warm.

9.9. Hh /ħ/

Hha /ħɑ/ *adv.* After.

Hhad /ħɑd/ *v.* Cook.

Hhaad /ħæd/ *conj.* Or.

Hhal /ħɑɫ/ *pro.* 3rd person plural pronoun (they_{PL}).

Hhalhhiz /ħɑɫħiz/ 1. *pro.* 3rd person plural reflexive pronoun (themselves); 2. *pro.* Reciprocal pronoun (each other).

Hhan /ħɑŋ/ *v.* go.

Hhaan /ħæŋ/ *pro.* 3rd person singular pronoun (he/she/it/they_{SG}).

Hhahnhhiz /ħæŋħiz/ *pro.* 3rd person singular reflexive pronoun (himself/herself/itself/theirself_{SG}).

Hhemaqor /ħemaqɔɾ/ *n. hon.* The sixth day of the Dal'a week, literally 'Hhema's hand'.

Hhiz /ħiz/ *num.* One.

Hhomon /ħomon/ *n. com.* Feast.

Hhun /ħʌŋ/ *adj.* Fresh; New.

9.10. I /i/

Iwar /iwaɪ/ *comp.* Head of an embedded clause that contains its own subject (*cf.* 'that').

9.11. J /j/

Ji /ji/ *excl.* A non-grammatical word that can be interpreted as 'however'. It is sometimes applied to the beginning of a sentence as a counter-factual to the previous sentence.

9.12. L /l/

Laash /læʃ/ *v.* Panic.

Lim /lim/ *n. com.* Bone.

Lis /liʃ/ *quant.* Most.

9.13. M /m/

Mah /mæ/ *v.* Smile.

Manil /maŋi/ *n. com.* Retort; Response.
 Manad /maŋad/ *n. hon.* Dog.
 Mezhin /mezɪŋ/ *v.* Die.
 Miul /miʌ/ *n. com.* Blood.
 Modah /modæ/ *excl.* A non-grammatical word that can be interpreted as 'umm' or 'and so...'. When used at the end of a sentence, this exclamation is interpreted as a tag question or 'don't you agree?'

Mud /mud/ *q.pro.* Where.

9.14. N /ŋ/

Nonim /ŋoŋim/ *v.* Fall; Sink.

9.15. Ng /N/

Ngam /ŋam/ *n. com.* Road; Rock.

Ngem /ŋem/ *quant.* Few.

Ngen /ŋeŋ/ *adv.* Never.

Ngogh /ŋOR/ *n. com.* East.

Norom /ŋOROM/ *adj.* Eastern.

9.16. O /o/

Ovahqor /oβæqo/ *n. hon.* The fifth day in the Dal'a week, literally 'Ovah's hand'.

Omo /omo/ *v.* Eat.

Oghen /oŋeŋ/ *v.* Learn.

Owe /owe/ *n. com.* Blossom.

Owen /owen/ *aux.* The perfective aspect, indicating that the action referred to in the sentence is, has been, or will be, completed, depending on the tense of the verb.

9.17. P /p/

Pal /pa/ *n. com.* Stomach.

Pel /pe/ *n. com.* Sea.

Pel /pe/ *n. hon.* Ocean; Womb.

Pon /poŋ/ *adj.* Cold

Pom /pom/ *adj.* Cool.

Puri /pu.ɹi/ *v.* Reap; Harvest.

9.18. Q /q/

Qal /qa/ *pro.* 2nd person plural pronoun (you/y'all).

Qalhhiz /qa[hiz/ *pro.* 2nd person plural reflexive pronoun.

Qazhe /qaze/ *adj.* Red.

Qelam /qe[am/ *n. com.* The name of a mountain range to the east of the Dal'a region.

Qem /qem/ 1. *v.* Test (typically a physical test); 2. *n. com.* Sport; Contest.

Qi /qi/ *adp.* By means of (with), instrumental.

Qib /qib/ *q.pro.* Who.

Qimbes /qimbeŋ/ *q.pro.* How much; How many.

Qimbin /qimbiŋ/ *q.pro.* How.

Qin /qiŋ/ *pro.* 2nd person singular pronoun (you).

Qinhhiz /qiŋ[hiz/ *pro.* 2nd person singular reflexive pronoun.

Qolor /qolo/ *n. hon.* Whale.

Qor /qo/ *n. hon.* Hand. This noun is often mis-translated as day as it appears in the six compounds for the days of the week. It is also mistakenly attributed to having a historical relation to /qOR/ leading to speculation that there used to be ten days to a Dal'a week, rather than six and that the word for 'hand' became the word for 'day' due to the ten digits on the hands; this folk etymology is incorrect.

Qogh /qOR/ 1. *v.* Know; Understand; 2. *num.* Ten; Unit of ten.

Qur /qʌ/ *v.* Place; Put.

9.19. R /r/

Rahh /ɹaħ/ *dem.* Visible demonstrative (this/these).

Rahhin /ɹaħiŋ/ *adv.* Here.

Rivam /ɹiβam/ *v.* Love.

Rivamagh /ɹiβamar/ *n. com.* Lover; Romantic couple.

Ronul /ɾonul/ *num.* Eight.
Rum /ɾum/ *quant.* All.

9.20. Gh /ɾ/

Gha /ɾɑ/ *v.* Want; Desire.
Ghazh /ɾɑʒ/ *conj.* But.
Ghaa /ɾæ/ *adp.* Before.
Ghaan /ɾæŋ/ *n. hon.* Epoch; Era.
Gho /ɾo/ *v.* Let; Allow.
Ghom /ɾom/ *v.* Think.
Ghogh /ɾor/ *v.* Show.
Ghudim /ɾudim/ *n. com.* Beggar.

9.21. S /s/

Salah /sɑlæ/ *adv.* Suddenly.
Sar /sɑ/ *n. com.* Perch (fish).
Sarfindoza /sɑɾfɪndʒɑ/ *n. com.* Name of
the 6th month, literally, Perch-Moon.
Seonqor /sɛonqor/ *n. hon.* The first day of the
Dal'a week, literally 'Seon's hand'.
Si /si/ *adp.* Through.
Singa /sɪnɑ/ *v.* Lift; Move vertically; Raise.
Sodang /sodɑŋ/ *n. hon.* name.
Sol /sɔl/ 1. *n. hon.* Lake; 2. *v.* Bestow; 3. *v.*
Name.
Sinbab /sɪnbɑŋ/ *n. com.* Trout.
Sush /sʌʃ/ *n. hon.* Lightning.

9.22. Sh /ʃ/

Shel /ʃel/ *n. com.* Fjord.
Shem /ʃem/ *num.* Seven.
Shi /ʃi/ *v.* Run.
Shildamqor /ʃiɫdamqor/ *n. hon.* The fourth
day in the Dal'a week, literally
'Shildam's hand'.
Sho /ʃo/ *adp.* By (according to). Used for
circumstances like 'authored by' or
'painted by' or 'according to', not used
for proximity (see /dɛ/)
Shol /ʃol/ 1. *v.* Enjoy; Like; 2. *n. hon.* Story;
Tale.

9.23. T /t/

Tam /tɑm/ *adv.* Unintentionally.
Taa /tæ/ *adp.* From; Along.
Te /tɛ/ *adp.* Out of.
Tee /tʰi/ *v.* see.
Teedahmbin /tʰidæmbɪŋ/ *v.* Notice (lit: see
quickly).
Tem /tɛm/ *n. hon.* Baby; Infant.
Tin /tɪŋ/ *n. hon.* House; Home.
Tin /tʰɪŋ/ *adj.* Last.
Tor /toɾ/ *n. hon.* River.
Towi' /towiʔ/ *n. com.* Bag; Purse; Backpack.
Tu /tu/ *adp.* At; Below; Under.
Tulel /tulel/ *n. hon.* Grove. (Sometimes used
to describe a forest in foreign contexts.)
Turen /tʰurɛŋ/ *aux.* The possibility modal
auxiliary, indicating the action referred
to in the sentence may happen.

9.24. U /u/ ~ /ʌ/

Umbal /ʌmbɑl/ *n. hon.* Sweet-bread. A light,
airy bread made with pineapple juice,
providing a vitamin-rich, sweet
snack—frequently served as a desert
with whipped cream and fruits.
Ur /uɾ/ *q.pro.* Why.

9.25. V /β/

Vad /βɑd/ *q.pro.* When.
Valim /βɑɫim/ *n. com.* North.
Valimom /βɑɫimom/ *adj.* Northern.
Vazhi /βɑʒi/ *v.* Race; Contest. Race is the
most common meaning of this verb, but
it can be applied to any physical contest
or sport, or it can be used in the context
of contesting a result/decision.
Vahd /βæd/ *n. com.* Mirage; Illusion.
Vahdeel /βædɛɫ/ *n. com.* A desert creature
much like the sirens of Ancient Greece,
said to use mirage to lure travelers to
their death in the desert wastes.
Vahl /βæɫ/ *num.* Five.
Ve /βe/ *adp.* In.

Viahl /βiæ/ 1. *n. com.* A songbird that sings at both dawn and dusk so regularly that those of Tordam set their watch by its song; 2. *n. hon.* Dawn; 3. *n. hon.* Song.
 Vina /βiŋa/ *n. hon.* Star.
 Visho /βiʃo/ *n. com.* Course; Heading; Path; Route.
 Vizahr /βizæ/ *n. com.* Lion.
 Vo /βo/ *dem.* Invisible, non-referential demonstrative (yon/yonder).
 Vomtagh /βomʈaʀ/ *v.* Ripen; make ready. Idiomatically used to refer to intentionally misleading a person for someone else's gain.

9.26. *W /w/*

9.27. *X /x/*

Xaawdin /xæwdiŋ/ *n. HON.* Hawk.
 Xeshor /xɛʃo/ *n. com.* Badlands; Wastes.
 Xil /xi/ *n. com.* Sand.
 Xho /xo/ *v.* Fly.
 Xhom /xom/ *v.* Say.
 Xhovar /xoβa/ *n. com.* A shape-changing beast said to be able to assume the form of a jackal or of a small humanoid; there are some who believe this creature to be a demon from another realm. In some dialects, this word is the Xhowar /xowɑ/; this pronunciation is considered foreign influence.

9.28. *Z /z/*

Za /zɑ/ *adp.* Over.
 Zagh /zɑʀ/ *adp.* Onto.
 Zihhil /zihi/ *n. com.* West.
 Zihhilom /zihi|om/ *adj.* Western.
 Zong /zɔŋ/ 1. *adp.* Off; 2. *quant.* Other.
 Zongqor /zɔŋqo/ *n. com.* Off-hand; other hand. Used in fencing when referring to a dagger held in the non-dominant hand.

Zongqor /zɔŋqo/ *n. hon.* The third day of the Dal'a calendar, literally 'off-hand ('s hand)'.
 9.29. *Zh /z/*

9.29. *Zh /z/*

Zhaawem /zæwem/ *aux.* The permissive modal auxiliary, indicating that the speaker gives permission for the action referred to in the sentence to happen.

Zhi /zi/ *dem.* Invisible-referential demonstrative (this thing I was talking about).

Zhin /ziŋ/ *adv.* There.

Zho /zo/ *n. hon.* Question.

Zhoq /zoq/ *n. com.* Race.

Zhoqem /zoqem/ *n. hon.* A great race.

Zhomanil /zomanil/ *n. hon.* Answer.

9.30. *'/?/*

'al /ʔa/ *pro.* 1st person plural pronoun (we/us).

'alhhiz /ʔa|hiz/ *pro.* 1st person plural reflexive pronoun.

'ang /ʔaŋ/ *pro.* 1st person singular pronoun (I/me).

'anghhiz /ʔa|hiz/ *pro.* 1st person singular reflexive pronoun.

'agh /ʔaʀ/ *v.* Hurt; Injure.

10. Examples

Singad	‘angub	doma’a	di	dahl,	ezh
[ʃinɑɖ]	ʔɑNΛb	ɖomaʔɑ	ɖi	ɖæ[eʒ]
sina-d	‘ang-b	doma-‘a	di	dahl	ezh
raise-PRES	1.SG-POSS	gaze-DEF.SG.HON	up	HAB	and

goldamud	‘angub	vishor	dalub	vina’a	sho	dahl
[gɔɖɑmΛɖ]	ʔɑNΛb	βiʃoɪ	ɖɑ[Λb	βiŋɑʔɑ	ʃo	ɖæ[]
Goldam-d	‘ang-b	visho-r	dal-b	vina-‘a	sho	dahl
fix-PRES	1.SG-POSS	course-DEF.SG.COM	king-POSS	star-DEF.SG.HON	by	HAB
‘I lift up my gaze and set my course by the king’s star’						