

# BRYATESLE TELËGJAK

ՅԼԱՍՈՂԻՄԶ ԳՂԻՂՇԷՅ

/br̄iɔtɛʃlɛ/

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„Rock'n'roll is a thing that needs to die.”

– Secret Chiefs 3,

First Grand Constitution and Bylaws

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## Preface

The speakers of bryatesle, to use a phrase borrowed from object oriented programming, are a subclass of, to use the terminology of Platon, die Begriff of humans. This means they, by far, inherit most of the properties and functions of humans, but that I have the opportunity to add or overwrite some features. Of course, the problems suddenly abound due to the fact that I do not know all the properties of humans - and this, subsequently, becomes more obvious the more detailed my description of something about them is. This, especially applies to the language. In the syntax, I have dared create a couple of underlying functions, that are easily explained using the standard syntactic tree as an illustration. Since most of the bryatesle syntax in fact predates those functions, it will be less consistent than the other *-bild* languages. (Bryatesle's post-facto „-bild” name is „Avbild”).

I am, however, not in possession of such knowledge that I would be able to say if these functions are anything like those that really operate in human syntax.

Bryatesle originally did not have any specific goals except for 'non-IEness', but it acquired a number of other goals quite early on, and eventually dropped the original goal entirely. Some ideas developed out of a correspondance with J. Y. Chzang of the conlang list. At this time, I also came into contact with scientific methods of describing and analysing syntax, viz. X-bar, and with the Russian language – which also has been an important influence.

The goals I have in mind with Bryatesle are: to describe and construct the usage of a nonstandard case system that is consistent, usable, productive and convincing, yet have some case usages be highly idiomatic; to construct a language that does not use infinitives, but utilizes verb duplication, and other workarounds; to utilize a limited set of pure adjectives, and use other means of expressing other qualities; finally, all features should be consistent, and also interoperate to produce various effects and constructions.

I also do not wish to make weird features only for the sake of having weird features, just in case anyone is discontent with the helping of weirdness served herein: anyone can make weirdness, it takes work to make a consistent weirdness out of somewhat average parts.

Finally, this document was not written with the reader in mind, but rather as a way for me to organize my own ideas. Since the ammount of text was substantial anyway, I just cleared up the most obtuse parts, and deemed it publishable.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work is dedicated to my brothers, Patrik and Henrik.

Direct personal feedback (through mail correspondence and chat) was an important part of the early shaping of Bryatesle, but also some of the later progress has derived a lot of good from it, and I have to thank J Y Chzang, Vegfarandi, Khang, and unassorted #almeans for their time and feedback.

Other conlangs have contributed mostly inspiration, but also a tiny bit of direct influences to Bryatesle, and among these, Ahribar's Arendron, J S Burke's Noyahtowa, Maknas's Rosaket and Zompist's Verdurian are important.

Those who have directly contributed to Bryatesle in one form or another include Khang, who made a script, and Jonathana Tegire who made a font of that script. Without those contributions, Bryatesle wouldn't be as impressive today.

I am also highly indebted to the scientific community, from whose work my conlanging draws a lot, SIL, whose IPA font I use, and Linguistic Enquiry, whose journal I've enjoyed a lot.

## ABBREVIATIONS & SYMBOLS

abl	ablative
acc	accusative
ad.	adjunct
adj	adjective
adv	adverb (a lexical term)
advl	adverbial (a constituent)
ap	adjective phrase
coll	collective
collg	collective gender
egwoiift	ebba grön: we're only in it for the drugs
erg	ergative
excl	exclamative
dat	dative
dl	dual (a residual inflection)
fem	feminine
irreslt	irresultative
masc	masculine
neg	negative
neut	neuter
nom	nominative
np	noun phrase
part	partitive
pl	plural
poss	possessive
pp	postposition phrase
pres	present
obl	oblique
op	oblique phrase
rcp	reciprocal
rslt	resultative
sg	singular
sggn	suggestion affix
sp	sentence phrase, clause phrase
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
voc	vocative
vp	verb phrase
Zw	Zimbabwe
Ø	zero morph, zero constituent

## **Concultural information**

### ***Anthropology***

The majority of bryatesle speakers are black, have epicanthic folds, and even less pointy ears than your average human being. Their hair is slightly curly. They live slightly longer than your average human under the same circumstances if exposed to a healthy and balanced diet and a suitable lifestyle.

The diet of all humans in this conworld requires a slightly larger portion of proteins than that of humans in the real world, but is otherwise not very remarkable.

Some speakers might be of other races, or even other species too, and there are communities with the majority of speakers being of a different race from the majority, but there probably are no bryatesle communities where the majority are nonhuman.

(The only other species on their world to be known to have the ability to use language are certain kinds of birds, which in certain geographical areas tend to live close to human communities).

### ***Culture***

The culture is not particularly uniform, mostly because of the wide areas settled by the Bryatesle, and the even wider areas they are in contact with. This will not describe the culture very deliberately, except insofar as it has direct relevance on some linguistic phenomena.

# Phonology

## Ortography

Bryatesle is written using a Bryatesle script – which is unique to the Bryatesle and the various languages spoken by smaller communities among the Bryatesle. The script was designed by Khang. The alphabet is relatively well suited to the phonemic system, but due to historical reasons, the correspondence is not as straightforward as it could be.

The vowel system is a bit peculiar: it's an atypical five vowel system, with the following cardinal vowels as basis:



*Table one: the vowel system arranged in a vowel trapezoid.*

There is also a vowel length distinction in some positions, although in most dialects, these either are collapsed together with the short vowels or diphthongized, or qualitatively distinct.

Short	Long	Transcription	Phoneme
ɨ	ɨ̃	<i>	/i/, /i:/'
ɥ	ɥ̃	<y>	/i/, /i:/'
ɯ	ɯ̃	<u>	/u/, /u:/'
ɛ	ɛ̃	<e>	/e/, /e:/'
ɑ	ɑ̃	<a>	/a/, /a:/'

*Table two : the vowel graphemes, transcription and phonemes. Notice that the realisations are 'ideal' and somewhat theoretical – in dialectal use, they will not line up this easily.*

The consonants are distributed over five different points of articulation, bilabial, interdental, postalveolar/alveopalatal, velar and glottal.

	bilabial	dental	postalveolar	velar	glottal
Stops	p b	t̪ d̪	t̠ d̠	k g	
Fricatives	ɸ v <sup>1</sup>	s̪ z̪	ʃ <sup>2</sup>	x	(h)
Laterals		l̪	l̠		
Trills			r̠		
Nasals	m	n̪	n̠		

	bilabial	dental	postalveolar	velar	glottal
Stops	ᵍ ᵑ	ᵗ ᵎ	ᵗ̠ ᵎ̠	ᵑ ᵑ	
Fricatives	ᵑ ᵑ	ᵗ ᵗ	ᵗ̠	ᵑ	(h) <sup>3</sup>
Laterals		ᵗ	ᵗ̠		
Trills			ᵗ̠		
Nasals	ᵑ	ᵗ	ᵗ̠		

Stop and question mark: ᵗ ᵗ

Obsolete sounds: the palatal stops ᵑ and ᵑ . These do occur in writing and are, depending on context realised either as /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/, /x/, /s/ or /r/. This also has morphophonemic significance. In a few words, the archiphonemes ᵑ and ᵑ were written 3ᵑ and 2ᵑ. I have chosen to romanize them using <k<sup>i</sup>> and <g<sup>i</sup>>.

/r̄/ was earlier a postalveolar [ 3̠ ].

Samples of the script:

3ᵑ 2ᵑ 3ᵑ 2ᵑ 3ᵑ 2ᵑ 3ᵑ 2ᵑ 3ᵑ 2ᵑ

## Phonetic processes

Various phonetic processes occur in the morphophonology of Bryatesle. Notable among

<sup>1</sup> Occasionally even more of a labiovelar approximant.

<sup>2</sup> For convenience often transcribed as /s/ because of the lack of a [s]-like phoneme.

<sup>3</sup> /h/ has not occurred in the prestige dialects for hundreds of years, except in very limited – and predictable – positions. It was absent from the standard dialects already when the alphabet was devised and has therefore not been included.

them are the shifts between postalveolar and dental, which is conditioned on various vowel shifts, the 'collapse' of the palatal pseudophonemes into velar or postalveolar realisations depending on the vowels, and the usual devoicings, fricativizations, etc.

## **Stress**

Stress falls, usually, on the initialmost closed or long syllable. Vowels only show length distinction in stressed syllables, but underlyingly long vowels still are written with the graphemes for long vowels.

Occasionally, if the final syllable of a preceding word carries stress, an initial stress will be moved to the second syllable instead, and cause the vowel to be lengthened, in case it is an open syllable.

Secondary stresses generally occur every second syllable counting from the main stress.

## **Hiatus avoidance**

Hiatus (vowel clustering) is avoided by insertion of a glottal stop. Unstressed vowels following glottal stops tend to devoice in all regional varieties, but this is considered substandard.

Some morphemes have, because of historical reasons (usually underlying consonants that have been dropped in some forms), acquired other hiatus avoidance consonants, viz. n, r, v.

A full list of these will be provided.

the secondary subject inflection -(n)in, -(n)ir, -(n)in, -(n)yx.

The reflexive or reciprocal verbal prefix sy(v)-.

## **Allophony**

All phonemes have a variety of realisations – allophones. These often are caused by simple phonetic phenomena like assimilation and cöarticulation.

## **Consonants**

### **Palatalization**

Nearly all consonant phonemes can acquire a vague palatalization when preceding /i/

### **Labialization**

Nearly all consonant phonemes can acquire a vague labialization when preceding or following /u/. This occasionally can carry over several consonants, and even affect other vowels, especially in contexts like /uCVCu/.

In some dialects, /s/ and /x/ have voiced allophones, when between two voiced elements. /s/

seems to be more resistant against acquiring voicing though. (Notice: voicelessness is, in Bryatesle, a more resistant feature than voicing, so /s/ and /x/ trigger voicelessness in vowels whenever they can – rather than vowels triggering voicedness in /s/ and /x/ whenever these two come in conflict.)

## Vowels

/a/ often rises towards /o/ when preceding laterals in some dialects. /a:/ likewise has a tendency towards becoming /o:/<sup>4</sup>.

/i/ often closes towards a nearly [j]-like realisation, as does /u/ and /i/ at their respective points of articulation. /ɛ/ occasionally also closes towards /i/.

Following the hiatus-avoidance glottal stop [ʔ] unstressed vowels often are unvoiced – especially when preceding a voiceless consonant (even another [ʔ]).

## Collapse of distinctions in certain positions

The most notable collapse of a distinction is the collapse of the dental-postalveolar distinction in all positions but preceding front vowels. Another important one is the collapse of voice-voiceless in final positions. Some kind of underlying information is retained, but the realisations do not reflect this.

The underlying features reappear when the phonetic context changes. Due to the frequent vowel changes in the morphology, the dental-postalveolar distinction recurrently drops and resurfaces.

## Morphophonemic dissimilation

A certain number of verbs and nouns exhibit different consonant shifts caused by dissimilation. This is especially common with dentals and postalveolars, which often cause each other to shift around:

ᵛᵛ > ᵛᵛ

ᵛᵛ > ᵛᵛ

dek > dēt and zēm > rezē. Examples of a postalveolar going dental, and a dental going postalveolar (with a historical sound change messing the regularity up) under influence from another consonant that would have the same point of articulation. This is an irregular sound change, and which words are affected varies from dialect to dialect. Analogy and other historical processes has further served to muddy the waters. The average learner will want to learn the forms according to prestige dialects – but even there, there are words that exhibit both forms with and without dissimilation.

---

<sup>4</sup> dialectal isoglosses and phonoglosses will be made, eventually. When I've gotten around to making a map in the first place. There you go. The existence of [o] will be a minority feature, promise.

## Morphosyntax

The morphosyntax of Bryatesle makes use of two sets of cases, but has to compensate for the lack of infinitives. The case usages might at times be rather unpredictable, idiomatic, or otherwise unruly.

### ***The primary cases***

The primary case system of Bryatesle is very similar to some indoeuropean case systems; it contains four cases – nominative, accusative, dative and a generic fourth case (ablative, instrumental, prepositional, whichever – for this document, I've adopted the term ablative).

### **Nominative ( / ergative ) and accusative**

Nominative marks the subject as well as the subject complements. It also, to a certain extent marks topics, when the topic is distinct from the subject.

The nominative is unmarked for masculines and feminines. For the neuters, a masculine nominative (possessive?) pronoun precedes the NP which is in a specific, gender-determined case. (For the java-literate among us, the nominative masculine pronoun sort of 'typecasts' the neuter noun into a gender suitable for transitive subjects).

The accusative marks direct objects, the objects of some adpositions, the object complements and occasional other peculiarities. For feminines and masculines it is distinct from the nominative, but not for neuters.

### **Dative and ablative**

Dative and ablative cover their usual usages in IE languages. Nevertheless, a complete rundown of what the dative does would look like this: indirect object, object of some verbs, oblique object with some verbs, subject of certain verbs of perception, object of several postpositions, noun attribute to some NPs, especially as owner of possessed nouns, and direction/location for nouns denoting locations.

Scythe would look like this: takemblē<sup>5</sup>      ႁႁႃႁႃႁႃႁႃ

Ablative fills a similar wealth of roles: (oblique) object with irresultative verbs , negative object (with partitive or if possessed with possessive), origin with nouns denoting locations, some noun attributes to NPs , object of several postpositions and occasionally as a kind of translative origin (the logical subject is marked as ablative in certain sentences that describe transitions.)

---

5 The /l/ in takembel and similar forms is a singular marker specific to certain nouns derived from verbs, which explains why it disappears in some singular forms – it is not part of the stem, but it still is fairly recurrent. Other consonants can behave similarly. /l/ is not that frequent in inflections as the example would make it seem.

Scythe: takemblity    **ᄃᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇ**

Special usages are marked in the lexicon with *+dat* and *+abl* respectively.

## Exclamative and vocative

Vocative is your vanilla vocative, used to get the attention of someone.

Exclamative is conversely used to direct the attention of the listener to something. Equivalents in English would be "Look at that ... !", "Beware of the ... !", "Mind the ... !", "Oh, fuck it's ...", luckily enough without any odd vowel changes resulting from it.

voc/exl takemblem    **ᄃᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇ**

## The secondary cases

Bryatesle has two case systems. All nouns are always marked with the primary cases. Occasionally, a noun will be marked with a secondary case to further specify its role in a clause, its semantic role, or something else. Only one secondary case can go in the secondary case slot at a time, so there are no combinations of secondary cases.

Some of the secondary cases – the possessive and the partitive – go back to very early ancestors of Bryatesle, whileas other secondary cases are rather late innovations – no older than perhaps a millenium at most. This explains why some of them are very fusional, whileas others behave in a clearly agglutinating manner.

## The possessive

Possession is usually marked on the possessed noun rather than the possessor. It is probably the most fusional of all secondary cases, and has a separate ending for all case combinations. This case is way older than the other secondary cases, which explains why it behaves a bit differently from them.

nom    takembunë    **ᄃᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇ**    *undecided: takembunë or takembene*

acc    takemblan    **ᄃᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇ**

dat    takemblar    **ᄃᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇ**

abl    takemblënt    **ᄃᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇᄇ**

Normally, the possessor will be either in the dative or ablative case and the first element in the noun phrase. (Possessors in partitive usually mark consistence).

The possessive is not used to express what something consists of, subjects of subordinated verbs, etc.

## The reciprocal object

This case here I made up because I wanted a case I could describe only somewhat semiaccurately exactly what it does, referring to "idiomatisch Sprachgebrauch", "not very predictable" and whatnot. But the basic use is to mark two objects that are made to act upon each other in a way or another, so nearly some kind of double instrumental, but not quite. You wouldn't beat two rocks together, you would beat them-re.obj.. But then, there are loads of odd usages with this one, and I will have to work out lots of examples in order to convey them. Also, some verbs will get specific meanings when used with it, and those will be marked with a *+rcp* in the lexicon.

In reality, this case came from the idea of having a pronoun that refers back to the objects, and is reciprocal and later merged with the object, while the subject-referring reciprocals merged with the verb. There is a cognate prefix in the verbal morphology, which marks reflexivity or reciprocity.

The pronoun had the phonetic form *syvus*, **հսջԷհ**, and the inflection has the form *-sus*. The verbal prefix has the form *sy(v)-*.

## The secondary subject

The secondary subject is another peculiar case. It can do a number of things to subject-like nouns. It can lessen the degree of volition (or degree of participation) – therefore, certain verbs that express necessity cause the subject to use this case. Also, sometimes, objects of passives will take this case. A third, similar construction is a kind of topicalized possessor (this only works with animate subjects), which is affected by the outcome of the verb, but is not a direct object or anything, just so happens to be a genitive-like attribute to the subject.

Another construction using the secondary subject case demotes the semantic subject to secondary subject status, and the instrument, to subject status. This is very common.

<b>ՍՅԸԻՅՆ</b>	<b>ՅՍԾՆՅԱԳՅՆ</b>	<b>ՎԶՅՆ ՅԳԻՅԳ</b>
Markusir	kampiyter	vekeritset
Markus-2 <sup>nd</sup>	computer	type-irresultative
Markus types using the computer.		

With the accusative as the main case, it often expresses the first object of a bivalent causative verb chain, or occasionally the only object of a causative. It also is mandatory when an object has a verbal complement (like in “I saw her run”), where the verbs in Bryatesle are, of course, finite. Therefore, it'd come out as “I her.ss ran saw” - “I her ran saw” would rather mean that I saw her while I was running, or ran her while I was seeing.

With the dative as the main case, it does pretty much the same things as with the accusative. In the very few occasions when it'd be needed with an ablative, the dative is used. The secondary subject inflections only occur with the ablative in a few dialects.

The pronoun *it* originates from *had* different forms depending on gender and number, so *masc niten*, *fem niten*, *neut niter* and *plural niteg*. The inflections are *-(n)isr*, *-(n)isn*, *-(n)isr* and *-(n)yx*.

Special usages are marked in the lexicon as *+ss*.

## The partitive

The partitive generally marks that only a part of the noun is referred to – that an action did not extend to the entire noun or group referred to. It does also mark a certain kind of diminutiveness, or negativity, doubtfulness, incompleteness of an action. Finally, it marks consistence, membership, partaking, and similar concepts. Its usage is a bit idiomatic, but not on the level of some of the other cases here. There are nouns, postpositions, adjectives as well as verbs which exhibit peculiar behaviour with partitives. With adjectives, it often denotes that the quality does not extend throughout the referred to thing.

nom takemblu	የህንጻውክፍ
acc takembluzë	የህንጻውክፍኛ
abl takemblër	የህንጻውክፍህ

Because, like the possessive, the partitive is one of the oldest secondary cases, it is relatively fusional.

Special usages and reactions in general are marked in the lexicon as *+part*.

## The definite article

Basically this corresponds with the English *bestimmter Artikel* 'the' (*species* actually being the technical term for the distinction between 'the' and 'a'), but has a slightly different distribution, and won't coincide with the other secondary cases. In some declinations, it is identical to the inverse genitive. Also, many a mass noun will always take this marking when the secondary case slot is empty. (These mass nouns are marked in the lexicon with *+def tantum*). Verbs generally don't interact with the definite article, and the few exceptions there are are either very general or very specific.

In a few dialects, only nonneuters have definite forms, which then are identical to the possessive form. In others, feminines have unmarked definite, whileas masculines and neuters are identical to the possessive form.

## Negativity agreement on nouns

Since the negativity particle usually appears quite late in the clause, objects (or intransitive subjects) are marked for negativity. In most dialects, the marking on intransitive subjects is rather optional (or ranks lower than the other secondary cases and therefore often is left out

in case of a conflict), but in a number of dialects the marking on the object is also optional, or as in some of the northernmost dialects, completely abolished. The negativity agreement indicates a certain indefiniteness too - you would seldom use it if the object is definite.

The negativity agreement is, in most dialects, identical with partitive ablative and partitive accusative, feminine and masculine using either of them in different contexts, and neuter only using partitive ablative.

Some pronouns have forms distinct from the partitive ablative/accusative.

Our friend - die Sense - would come out as takembluze or takemblër. **የህንጻው ስጋ** or **የህንጻው ግሩም**.

## Suggestion marking on nouns

This is used to mark that something is a suggestion, either as a kind of really weak imperative, or with irreal verb moods ("he could've taken the car-suggestion, no?"). The same suffix is used to mark other word classes, but I list it with the other secondary cases because of its being in complimentary distribution with the others. It has the form -ki in all positions, and is generally not stressed when suffixed to nouns. (The extreme form /nki/ known to occur in some remote villages being an exception, the suggestive form of 'nek').

There are no *peculiar* usages of the suggestion marking; however, certain common phrases using it exist, and are marked with +*sggn* in the lexicon.

## Number

Bryatesle nouns also inflect for number; the number is not as straightforward as in some languages – there exist singular, plural, partitive and undefined numbers; of these, only the two first are real numbers, but the other two behave in somewhat similar fashions, and convey somewhat similar information.

## Singular

Singular is usually the basic form. There are certain nouns that won't occur in other numbers than singular. These are marked in the lexicon as *sg. tantum*.

## Formation

Usually, the singular is the least marked form, and also the form you will find in a lexicon. The various cases are appended to something called the 'singular stem'. Some declinations have a nominative case marker even in the singular. Some nouns – plurale tantum and indefinite tantum do not have singular forms, even tho' they could be derived from the existing forms.

## Plural

Plural usually expresses that a multitude of things are referred to. The gender system of the singular is not carried over – human masculines and feminines are brought together into a human gender, whileas all others are considered inanimate plurals. The case system is retained rather intact, with the exception of inanimate definite, which is identical to the inanimate nominative. There is also a tiny residue of the dual, which for all purposes will be explained together with the plural. There are also a number of nouns that will only occur in the plural (or in the defunct dual), and these are marked *plurale* or *duale tantum*.

### **Formation**

## Partitive

Partitive is really a metanumber – there exists partitive plurals and partitive singulars. All cases do not carry over to the partitive numbers, but all gender distinctions existing in the number do. Partitive surfs the line of number and case, and that is why I've included it in both listings.

## Undefined

The undefined number is **not** used to convey that the number is unknown or anything; it has somewhat odd usages.

In most dialects, the undefined number only appears in compounds and similar structures.

The undefined number only has two cases – nominative and oblique. For most nouns, nominative undefined is identical to the nom sg, but there are exceptions, where the undefined sg is identical to the noun stem, or occasionally to slightly altered forms of it. The undefined oblique is invariably formed by the noun stem + e.

A very few nouns have exceptional undefined forms, and three nouns occur only in undefined forms – one of the many words for fish, people and family. Some dialects use the undefined number in other constructions, especially with mass nouns, general statements, etc. In those dialects, the undefined number often is used to express eternal, or general truths – the sky is blue, fishermen like good weather, etc. This it always does in combination with irresultative verbs.

### **Formation**

The bare noun stem. The oblique case acquires an -e in addition.

## Overview of the nominal morphology

	Fem	Masc	Neut	Plur
Nominative	<i>various</i>	<i>various</i>	<i>various</i>	<i>various</i>
Accusative	-e, -ë	-ak	-	-(v)eku, (-uku)
Dative	-a, -ë	-e, -ë	-yn	-(u)mex
Ablative	-eta, -ëta	-ity, -ity	-ity, -ity	-(u)rsi
Vocative	-am, -em	-am, -em		
Exclamative	-(e)ny	-(e)ny	-(e)ny	-(u)ny

With possessive:

Nominative	-ela, -ëla	-unë	-unë	-uvu
Accusative	-ei, -ëi	--an	-unë	-(v)ekux
Dative	-ir, -ir	-ar	-ënt, -ent	-(v)emxi
Ablative	-ing, -in	-ënt, -ent	-ënt, -ent	-(v)emxi

With partitive:

Nominative	-u	-u	-ur	-ub
Accusative	-eze, -ëze	-uze	-ur	-(v)emze
Oblique <sup>6</sup>	-er, -ër	-ër, -er	-yr	-vemxe

With definite:

Nominative	-në	-unë	++ek	-ven
Accusative	-nyk	-an	++ek	-ver
Ablative	-ir -ir	-ar	++ek	-(v)emxi
Dative	-am, -em	-ënt	++ek	-(v)emxi

Secondary subject marking:

	-(n)isr	-(n)isr	-(n)isn,	-(n)yx
--	---------	---------	----------	--------

Attaches to nominative, ablative or accusative.

The reciprocal object:

	-sus	-sus	-sus	-sus
--	------	------	------	------

Attaches to any case.

Suggestion marking:

-ki attached to any other form.

## Verbal morphology

Bryatesle, of course, has a baroque verb inflection. However, it doesn't inflect for any other moods than indicative and imperative. In fact, the only categories inflected for on the verb are person, number, (gender), resultativeness, transitivity, and finally – to some extent – tense. That is three categories that all verbs are inflected for, if we count person/number/gender as one. In addition, there are derivational affixes, tho' these

<sup>6</sup> The partitive, as mentioned, does not combine with dative; to some extent, it is justified to consider them a combined oblique form instead.

generally do not affect the nonderivational morphology much – except when transitivity is strongly affected by the derivation.

## Resultativeness

One notable distinction in the Bryatesle verbal system is that of resultativeness. Resultativeness can affect several other things of the language: the very meaning of the verb, the usage of cases, postpositions, adverbs and [...]. In a few instances even transitivity is altered. (Generally, intransitives

### **Adverb congruence**

Adverbs of time usually select one form (abl, part) when being irresultative and another (acc, def) when being resultative. The forms are often, however, retentions from earlier forms of the morphology, and thereby retain archaic inflections. Here are some common expressions of time.

Locative usages of case often follow this distribution:

	origin	location	direction
resultative	(abl)	<b>dat</b>	-
irresultative	abl( <b>part</b> )	acc( <b>part</b> )	<b>dat</b>

When direction is expressed resultatively, an irresultative verb has to be linked to the main verb. The usual choice is (an often reduced) 'go'.

Finally, nouns that only denote a location, at times occur as nominatives when marking location (as if 'I am London' was a valid way of saying 'I am in London' – something that is possible with certain clefting-like constructions in English, tho' mostly due to omission of prepositions), abl when marking origin and dative when marking direction.

This feature is, however, limited to certain dialects.

## Person / number congruence inflections

Bryatesle verbs inflect for person and number. The exact inflection used varies from conjugation to conjugation. Here is a rundown of all the conjugations:

### **1<sup>st</sup> conjugation**

Characteristics: Vowel change in plural; III sg n and pl collapse (except that III pl n in some dialects is identical to III sg nonneuter). The vowel change is consistent through the resultative paradigm, common vowel changes are e > i, u > y, a > e, i > y and less so also, e: > ei, u: > uy, a: > ei, i: > iy.

dēt, to run

Irresultative

dītat, to arrive running, or to run a distance

Resultative

I sg	dēt	dītat
II sg	der	dītar
III sg	dei	dītai
III sg n	der	dīta
I pl	dim	dītam
II pl	dine / dīne	dītane
III pl h	dīdes	dītanes
III pl n	dei / der	dītanei / dīta

vit, to walk

vytet, to arrive by foot, or to walk a certain distance

I sg	vit	vytet	
II sg	vir	vyter	
III sg	vii	vytei	
III sg n	vir	vyte	*vyta also attested
I pl	vym	vytem	
II pl	vyne	vytene	
III pl h	vynes	vytenes	
III pl n	vy / vir	vytenei / vyte	

## 2<sup>nd</sup> conjugation

Characteristics: first and second person singular irresultative collapse, animate and inanimate third person singular collapse, vowel change is not consistent through the resultative paradigm.

	Irresultative	Resultative
I sg	kran	vekzīt
II sg	kran	vekzīr
III sg	kra	vekzī
I pl	kzēm	vekram
II pl	kzēne	vekran
III pl	kzēmes	vekzēnes
III pl n	kzēmei	vekzēnei

Notice the reduplication of the initial consonant:

I sg	ben	bebit
II sg	ben	bebir
III sg	be	bebi
I pl	bim	bebem
II pl	bine	bebines
III pl	bimes	bebines
III pl n	bimeī	bebinei

## Verbs that mark tense

A limited set of verbs have distinct forms for past. These are to go, to have, to say, to get, to give.

These are used as tense auxiliaries. The person inflection is identical to the present tense.

1<sup>st</sup> declination: to say, to get

2<sup>nd</sup> declination: to give, (to go)

irregular: to go, to have

## Intensive verbs

Verbs are intensified by reduplication.

Me dēt dēt

The following constructions are attested:

Subject Verb<sup>1</sup>-*intransitive* Object Verb<sup>2</sup>-*transitive*

Subject Object Verb<sup>1</sup>-*transitive* Verb<sup>2</sup>-*transitive*

Subject Verb<sup>1</sup>-*intransitive* Verb<sup>2</sup>-*intransitive*

Some topicalized constructions are known to occur, like:

Object Verb<sup>1</sup>-*intransitive* Subject Verb<sup>2</sup>-*intransitive*

Object Verb<sup>1</sup>-*intransitive* Subject Verb<sup>2</sup>-*transitive*

Other constituents can basically replace the object too, but transitivity isn't affected the same way;

adjunct Subject Verb<sup>1</sup>-*intrans* Verb<sup>2</sup>-*intrans*

adjunct Verb<sup>1</sup>-*intrans* Subject Verb<sup>2</sup>-*intrans*

## Causatives

### Transitivity concerns

Generally, most verbs have an associated transitivity, which will be its default state. Some verbs can change transitivity without any marking, but some are less tolerant to such changes. Transitive resultatives are generally more 'transitive' than irresultative transitives – and thus change transitivity less freely.

One peculiar construction in several dialects, is when an intransitive verb is retained in an intransitive form, yet has subject as well as object. This often signifies that the object is the agent, and that the subject is an owner of it.<sup>7</sup>

### *Detransitivisation*

Making a transitive verb intransitive, usually includes adding the reflexive prefix to the verb. Some verbs take postpositions as prefixes instead.

---

<sup>7</sup> This might be removed, and transplanted into Dairwueh.

## ***Transitivisation***

Making a strongly intransitive verb transitive either is done in the form of applicatives (see below) or simply by adding an object. Verbs that have postpositional prefixes, or reflexive prefixes do simply by removing those prefixes.

## ***Applicatives***

### ***Transitivity discongruence***

Transitivity is sometimes wrongly marked on verbs. This is often caused by clefting – the extracted constituent no longer is a constituent in the clause it has been extracted from, and therefore no longer affects the transitivity.

Subjects can be exceptions from this rule, but it is not enforced.

### ***Forced intransitivity markedness***

I can see how you're thinking 'there he goes again'. :-þ

*No such thing exists.*

## **Peculiar rections**

### ***The pronouns***

#### **Personal pronouns**

*Singular*

në – nym – nyk - nuvi

#### **Demonstrative pronouns**

There are two levels of demonstration. The demonstrative pronouns inflect for gender and number. There is another series used for

#### **Interrogative pronouns**

The basic distinction is animate / inanimate – tēm vs. sēm.

ᠲᠡᠮ *tēm*, „who?”

ᠰᠡᠮ *sēm*, „what?”

When a limited number of alternatives is given, tēmbat / sēmvind is often used as the question word.

Place

Ammount

Time

Manner

...

## **Relative pronouns**

## **Reflexive and reciprocal pronouns**

[...]

Reciprocal marks that several subjects are acting on each other:

Tëm-të+acc (or appropriate case).

Sëm-së+acc.

Syvus[case] – obsolete.

## **Indefinite pronouns**

There is no notable mass / count noun distinction traceable in this system.

I think I might've rushed ahead too fast when designing this system so I suspect many horrific revisions are coming up ... nicety, huh?

## ***Totally undefined***

lervind / lervat - ler inflects for gender/case whereas vind / bat (literally "good") does not. This is used when a free choice is implied, or with absolute comparison (tho' less frequent in that position than nr 3, the negative).

The meaning could literally be translated as "somegood" or "anygood". It's often used with imperatives, wishes, sometimes in indirect quotations ("he told me to bring any kind of ..."), and similar. lervat is used with persons, lervind with things.

## ***Indirect questions***

*lertën*

*lervat* - somewhat archaic, but occasionally about persons.

Also used in imperatives when telling someone to, for instance go to a specific, but unknown place (go \_some\_where!, not go anywhere...)

## ***The negative***

lermud - negative, used for all negations - even indirect, and also for absolute comparisons (so "it's more beautiful than anything" and it's "it's more beautiful than nothing" are both valid).

In Bryatesle you say "I was told not to bring nothing" when you mean "I was told not to bring anything".

## ***When the speaker knows what he refers to***

lerden - ler inflects, whereas den (literally "one") does not. lertar - when a selection of options exist. "Tar" is a morpheme a bit like "teen" in "thirteen" and such. This is also used in exhortations conveying stuff like "take any/some of these" or somesuch.

When saying something like "I've brought something", where the thing is known to the speaker but not the listener.

## ***Other indefinite pronouns***

If you use the comparative of vind (or other adjective) instead with "ler ---" you get the meaning "another", tho' often with the subtext of preference. If you just generally need to say "another one", you'd use "ler meneh" (literally "any 2nd").

"Every" is formed using ler+DET vind + sg

"The wrong (one)" is formed using ler+strange for persons or ler+bul for things.

"Little" is formed from lerngyhmah > lergymah "Few" is formed from lerngyhm > lernyg

"Much", "plenty" is lerdury form durlyh "Many" is lerdur from dur.

"All" - there are many constructions for 'all', including 'whogood', a superlative of 'many', separate roots and other constructions.

## Other pronouns

### *The anaphoric particle*

### *Numbers*

### Cardinals

### Ordinals

The ordinals are formed using a more-or-less obsolete postposition with the meaning 'after, behind'.

Ḫḫedak      gjedak      (/deda:k/)

(Some dialects have a form '/Jak/, and use the postposition with other words too).

This is preceded by a numeral in the ablative, which agrees with the gender of the head of the NP.

Notice that the used number will be one lower than the position the noun occupies -

Ḫḫedak Ḫḫedak ḫḫedak

### Other numbers

### *The adjective*

The adjectives are a limited class of a couple of dozen words in Bryatesle. Most adjectives come in two basic forms, simply called the 'short' and the 'long' forms. (The *ngyxmin* and the *durij*).

The short adjectives are used with qualifiers and question particles to mark either the amount of –ness the adjective describes, or that the question pertains to “how much so-and-so” whileas the long adjectives are used without qualifiers and with question particles they convey “is it so-and-so?”. Either can work attributively or predicatively. The adjectives all can take case endings, but their paradigm is defective in comparison to the noun paradigm. By itself, the short form occasionally is employed to mean “how ADJ!”.

Also, in sentences roughly like “let’s see how strong you are”, the short form would be used, in a construction like “let’s see you-Q drask”, whileas “let’s see you-Q draskeh” would be “let’s see if you are strong”. These are marked in the table below by having one form in the mid column.

Adjectives that cannot easily be quantified – colors, and certain other adjectives, the short form marks “too” or is used with qualifiers while the longer forms usually mark attributively being something.

Comparatives and superlatives are considered forms of the short adjective.

Non-central dialects tend to have richer adjective morphologies, with intensive, imperative and even verbal forms.

	<b>long form</b>	-	<b>short form</b>
good	- vind	-	
good, nice (person)	- bat		
bad	- xus		
huge	durlyx		dur
small	ngyhma		ngyhm
high	sdruckat		sdruf
low, deep	ymnal		yvn
red	tyrdex		tyrd
blue	sinak		sen
green	vrinex		vrin
yellow	myreg		myr
strong	dreske		drask
weak	kesëx		kas?
old	velmet		valm
young	namnas		navn
beautiful	mirleh, t?ana		mer, t?an
dangerous	uerta, verex		uer, ver (also, ver!)
wet	bumnar		buvn
sweet	lyymnex, liïmnex		lyyvn, liïvn
warm	nrygex		nrug
cold	zïmne		zïvn
dark, black,			
brown, purple	trubah		trub
white	zëlban		zilëb
loud	xudev		xud
silent	vytax		command form ?vyt!?
wrong	bul		bul
right	tënëx		tën
open	sdukes		sduf
closed	tykex		tyf
ugly	blykes		blyf
heavy	sundah		sund
light	nes		nes
slow	vytker		vytek
quick	snydel		snyk
sick	snax		also weak, cold or red for some diseases



after the congruence marker, and according to the expected nominal inflection, tho' in the case of -ivi, -ënu, -ërsi and -ësë, the last vowel is dropped.

## Adverbs

### **Common adverbial constructions**

Bryatesle doesn't use very many adverbs. Most of the work done by standard adverbs in English and other western languages is done by predicatives, free-standing finite verbs, adpositional phrases and other nifty things.

There are however a number of native adverbs, which behave a bit different from other word classes. Some of these really ride the border between adverb and verb by showing person agreement with the verb, and in many dialects they also exhibit certain syntactical behaviours specific to verbs.

### **The adverbial noun**

Another way of describing the action is by using a (mainly subject) predicative or a noun that directly predicates the verb (where the unholy mother oph phlheghmhlikhe accuuhmulathions of the letter h shall I put that syntactically??). There is only one adjective that is used in an adverbial sense and that is "good" - vind. The rest of the adjectives are nominalised first and used like nouns.

A typical construction would be: he runs, athlete.NOM -> he runs like an athlete. And similar examples, more later. Agent-forms, professions, people of certain qualities are popular.

### **The word order in the NP**

Bryatesle is rather strongly head-last; There are, however, certain rather consistent exceptions to this rule, and also certain rules as to which is head and which is dependent – certain surprises do exist.

## Adjectives

Adjectives nearly always directly precede the noun. They can be separated by conjunctions, but they are not mandatory.

## Demonstratives and determiners

### **Possessives**

The genitive does not occupy the same position as determiners, so it can coexist with any determiner<sup>9</sup>.

ՄԱՆՅԵՆԿՅԱՍ

Markusity

ՀԱՄԱՆՅԱՆՔԱՆՅԻՆ

kampiyternë

ԽՆԴԻՆԵՆԸ

lesvind

<sup>9</sup> Words like 'any', 'this', 'some', 'which', 'all'.

Markus-abl/g	computer.poss	any-good
Markus'	any	computer

ჭადიტრის	საღებო	თხევანი	საზოგადოებრივი
Kjaditrity	trubes	xepan(ë)	lesbul
Kjaditer-abl/g	dark-NEUT	seed-poss	some-false
Kjaditer's	wrong	dark	sowing grain

Note: putting the determiner after the noun is considered old fashioned. Generally, it would follow the possessor.

## Noun attributes

## Oblique noun attributes

## Relative clauses

There are two different classes of relative clauses: adjunctal and complemental relative clauses. Complemental are more intimately connected to the meaning of the noun, whileas adjunctal are incidental.

### **Relative clauses with 2<sup>nd</sup> subject marking**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> subject marking is exclusively used to express complemental relative clauses, and these relative clauses can be very minimal – one verb might suffice very well. There often are constituents left out.

### **Relative clauses with other relative markers**

The usual relative pronouns for most relative clauses are *lerden* and *lertën / lervat*, inflected for the gender/number of the antecedent, and the case it occupies in the subclause.

This is considered the least marked construction.

Some dialects use the generic anaphoric particle as relative pronoun, and most of these do not mark any case on it. A few have it followed by an inflected demonstrative pronoun, in order to mark case; this demonstrative often goes into its default place in the VP.

Clefting – which in English includes forming a relative clause – will be detailed in the Syntax of the VP chapter.

## Adverbial modifiers

Generally, the kind of adverbial modifiers that ever occur as attributes of nouns are temporal, spatial or postpositional. Even among the postpositional adverbial, most are spatial, or metaphorically spatial. These are often located [...]

## ***The word order in the verb phrase***

The verb phrase in Bryatesle always contains a verb (although, in a few circumstances, the verb can be a zero morpheme<sup>10</sup>). The verb can take a limited number of complements, and an infinite number of adjuncts.

## **The object, indirect object and adverbial complements**

The objects will precede the verb as closely as possible, the direct object preceding the indirect object.

## **Adverbial adjuncts, and other constituents**

### **Subject predicative**

*Non-NP or AP predicatives*

### **Object predicative**

*Indirect object predicative*

*On direct object predicative discongruence and usage of partitive*

*Complement movements*

## ***The word order in the subject phrase***

### **VP-constituents raised to the SP**

### ***Various transformations***

### **Clefting and pseudoclefting**

Clefting is the term used to describe the transformation from „He called” to „It was he who called”. In Bryatesle, there usually is no need for a relative clause:

it<sup>11</sup>.nom called(intr) John.nom -> It called, (being) John.

At times, when the verb is transitive, the following construction is used:

it.nom sold(intr)      John.nom      house sold

---

<sup>10</sup> Generally this occurs due to coordination or clefting or other transformations.

<sup>11</sup> A few divergent dialects allow for the usage of nonneuter pronouns. There are dialects that prefer gender congruence, and dialects that prefer the masculine.

where [house sold] is a subclause, with [John.nom] actually being ambivalently either in the main clause or subclause.

## Discongruence caused by raising or lowering of a constituent

Relative subclauses (wherein the antecedent either is subject or object) does not get gender and number congruence on adjectives – they are all

## Particles

There also occur a number of particles that are a bit difficult to include under verbal, nominal or adjectival morphology. Their phonemical form is occasionally that of a clitic, but ample evidence of their not being inflections can be found in any reasonably sized Bryatesle corpus.

<i>Particle</i>	<i>Usage</i>	<i>Sample</i>	<i>Clitic form</i>
nys	Marks questions, goes after the word most relevant to the question	Myes snax nys darlatse? Tëns?	-ns, -(n)ys (dialectal variations).
Ake	Negation	Myes snax darlatse ake.	-ke
Umen	Marks		

## Pragmatics

## Morphological tables

## Functional Lexicon

## Progress

9.6.2005

Wrote a couple of lines on case rection and resultativeness, and on resultativeness itself. Decided that tense will be formed using a few auxiliaries (with semantic loads, again, yes ma'am) that mark tense. This helps the copula-situation a bit. Get rid of a lot of morphology that way too.

11.6.2005

Wrote something about clefting, and about reciprocal pronouns, and reflexives.  
Began designing the adjective congruence.

„All right, stop. Pyjama time!”

– Eminem, Just lose it.