

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CHAKFEM LANGUAGE:

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Reading and Writing in the Chakfem Language

Chakfem Language is Chadic in origin. As in all its sister languages, namely Mwaghavul, Mushere, Kofyar, Goemai, and even Hausa, its writing is phonetic, which means that words are written as they sound. But like all these other languages, Chakfem is a tonal language, which means that one word, more often than not, means more than one thing depending on the tone with which the speaker pronounces it.

These two features of the language, i.e. its being phonetic in writing and tonal in reading, present two serious problems. First, since words in the Chakfem Language are phonetic in writing, words that have the same phonetic orthography but different meanings cannot be distinguished orthographically just like the English distinguish between *rice* and *rise*, *cite*, *sight* and *site*. (The problem associated with this shall be considered more fully in the introduction of: *Rule Guiding the Application of Tonal Consonants*, immediately after this section). Secondly, since the language is tonal, ambiguity can arise in reading since pronouncing certain words in low, middle or high tone can give it a meaning other than the one intended by the writer. To explain what has been said more clearly, I shall make use of the following examples in the Hausa Language:

Sample 1. Na wurgi gadar da dutse
I stoned the bridge with a stone
I stoned the ibex with a stone

Sample 2. Ya dauki ciwon dan'ueansa
He is infected with his brother's sickness or
He took his brother's 'ciwo' fruit.

Sample 3. Mutuwa ta ratsa iko bisanka mai nasara
Death has lost its power over you the victorious one or
Let death lack power over you the victorious one

(The first meaning is in the present perfect indicative, while the second is in the imperative).

In the Chakfem Language, tonal differences in word pronunciations can cause serious distortions of meaning also. Consider the word '*sat*' which could mean pillar, herself and say if pronounced in the low, middle, and high tones respectively.

E.g. low tone (doh) sat means *pillar*
Middle tone (ray) sat means *herself*
High tone (me) sat means *say, said, told.*

Many Chakfem words can be pronounced in these three basic tones to either mean different things altogether or different forms of the same word, (e.g. noun and verb forms). Consider the following examples.

Sample 5. A nyi meng sat yil
She is the one who threw a pillar down or
She is the one who threw herself down
She is the one who stopped over and told the world.

Sample 6: Waar kih mwop ret pwet
Their gruel is very good
Their law is very good
Their fat (polluting the air) is very good

Many such ambiguities do exist in all tonal languages and their writers have developed various means to deal with them. The most prominent that is known to me is the use of special characters which carry tonal marks over them. This is what the writers of Mwaghavul and Gass have used, apart from the introduction of special letters to achieve consonant and vowel sounds that are not adequately covered by the ordinary letters of the English alphabet. The Hausas have chosen not to use any such characters with tonal marks at all. They leave everything to context to determine. But experience has shown that context can be a very poor judge in this area. Many readers of Hausa as a second language never get it right at all, especially Christians reading the Psalms, where almost the indicative mood is read in the imperative, thereby causing the meaning and import of the scripture to change completely.

If we had employed the use of tonal marks to write the sentences in samples 5 and 6, the following would be the result as shown in samples 7 and 8 below:

Sample 7. A nyi mēng sāt yil
She is the one who threw a pillar down or

A nyi mēng sāt yíl
She is the one who threw herself down

A nyi méng sāt yil
She is the one who stopped over and told the world

Sample 8: Wáár kih mwop rét pwēt
Their gruel is very good

Wààr kih mwop rét pwēt
Their law is very good

Wāār kih mwop rét pwēt
Their fat (polluting the air) is very good

But if, however, we chose the other option of letting context determine tone and, therefore, meaning, then we will, of course, have to put up with a lot of ambiguities and even contradictions in our reading of the Chakfem Language as has already been amply shown. Here lays the disadvantages of this method.

But the use of tonal marks are by no means the only way to indicate tones of words in a tonal language. Another method is to introduce what I shall call tonal consonants, which do not alter the phonetics of the words in any way, yet adds tone to them by their very nature and by convention also. Let us go back to our simple word which we started with, ‘sat’.

Sample 9:	With tonal marks		With tonal consonants
	<i>(Low tone)</i>	Sàt	satd (pillar)
	<i>(Middle tone)</i>	Sāt	sat (to herself)
	<i>(Low tone)</i>	Sát	satt (say, said, tell, told)

The advantages of the use of tonal consonants over tonal marks are many. These include the following:

First; tonal consonants do not require the use of unconventional characters, special software or customized keyboards to execute word processing as is required in tonal marks.

Second; inexperienced typists can type words spelt with tonal consonants more easily than those typed in tonal characters, which requires special skills of importation from files on the computer program.

Third; e-mails and text messages can be more perfectly typed and sent using tonal consonants than with characters that carry tonal marks.

Fourth, reading is made slow while trying to identify the direction of tonal marks when reading words typed with characters carrying tonal marks. While words typed with tonal consonants are easily recognizable, and they show what they stand for at first sight.

It is for these advantages and many more that I have decided to choose to use tonal consonants above the other two conventions in my writing of the Chakfem Language. This is significant for two reasons – simplicity and the fact that Chakfem people have never been known to use tonal marks in their writing as can be amply shown in their names of people and places.

To lay a good grip on the application of tonal consonants in the spelling of words, you must be very conversant with the ensuing section- *Rules guiding the use of tonal consonants*.

Rules Guiding the Use of Tonal Consonants

A. Introductory Comments:

a. The Problem of Allotropes

The application of tonal consonants only helps the reader to pronounce a specific word in the *intended* tone. This is just a part of the solution to the problem of a language that is both tonal in nature and phonetic in writing. Because each word is to be written the way it sounds, the reader ends up writing all words that have the same sounds though different meanings (allotropes) in the same *phonetic cast* that their common sounds dictates. English has solved this problem partly by trying as much as possible to give each word its own spelling, though they may share the same phonetic sound with another or other words. For example; *sleigh, slay* /slei/and, *sew, sow, so/sæu* etc have the same phonetic sound, but are written differently to make each word independent of context. It should be noted also that there are still many words in English which mean different things but are spelt exactly the same way, e.g. 'bear' is both a four-footed savage animal and also the verb which means to hold up, to carry, to endure etc.

There is very little attempt in the writing of the Chakfem Language to resolve the problem as the English have tried to do, except in areas where phonetic options do exist as in 'shiih' (refuse) and 'shiiy' (leg, foot or meaning). Otherwise, this problem has been left entirely for context to resolve, for the fact that Chakfem language is phonetic in writing and tonal in reading. To do otherwise is to try to have your cake and yet eat it at the same time.

b. The Problem of Different Forms of Words

But if we wrote every word in the tone it should be read, we would end up creating different spellings for different forms of the same word (e.g. the noun or verb forms) and this may correspond with another word that has a different meaning altogether, which will further compound the problem of meaning. Take for example, thief is 'wat' (high tone = *watt*), while steal is 'wat' (low tone = *watd*). If we employed the tonal consonants in the brackets the words thief and steal in Chakfem which are the same in phonetic will appear very different and difficult to recognize as being of the same origin. But not only that, 'watt' also means an oil sift. Now in Chakfem to steal is 'mang *watt*', yet *watt* also means an oil sift. Here we have the problem of inconsistency in the same form (verb) as used in a sentence and standing alone, just because the tone of the verb differs in a sentence with its tone as an independent word. **To avoid this, all forms of the same word are to be left in the tone of their verb forms.** In the above example, 'wat' is both thief and steal. So to steal is to 'mang wat', or 'shin wat', where wat is thief in the noun form. This presents very little ambiguity, if any. It is for this reason that even though Chakfem language is tonal in

speech, it is not completely tonal in writing. If we understand this, then we are in a better position to understand and appreciate the rules guiding the application of tonal consonants in the writing of Chakfem language.

c. Basic Tones In Chakfem Language:

It has been shown that there are three basic tonal notes in the pronunciation of Chakfem words, namely *low tone*, *middle tone*, and *high tone*. These tones correspond to the first, second and third note on the musical scale which are d: r: m: But there are circumflexed notes that are very difficult to describe in this simplistic term, they are rather to be considered as modulation of any of these notes. These are beyond the scope of this book. We shall consider how to achieve just each of these basic tones in the spelling of words in Chakfem. For those who speak Chakfem naturally, the following chart will drive home the above description of the tonal notes, but for those to whom Chakfem is a second language, they will do well to think of the tonal notes in terms of the first three musical notes, even though these are just close approximations.

Low Tone (doh)	Middle Tone (ray)	High Tone (me)
Gurum (man)	Sherrep (fish)	Tass (Mushrooms)
Mat (woman)	Reep (girl)	Zhepp (children)
Mwos (wine, beer)	Lwaa (meat)	Waarr (gruel, pap)
Tekhes (ordour, scent)	Tihm (sheep)	Mwoos (cat)
La'a (child, born ...)	Shit (grass)	Laah (wound)

B. Application of Tonal Consonants

General Rule for the Application of Tonal Consonants:

The General rule is that tonal consonants are applied **only** to words which have more than one meaning if pronounced in different tones and are **not in any way** different forms of the same word, or words that have the same roots. For this reason, the application of a tonal consonant suggest the existence of other words with the same phonetic sound but different meanings. E.g. 'sarr suggests there is a word sar, and shaann suggests there is another word shaan, sha'an also suggests there is shaan, while zheell suggests that there is another word zheel mang suggests there is no other word as mangg

a. High tones:

The following are words pronounced in high tone

- i. Any word which ends with a vowel or vowels (other than 'i') and followed by an 'h'
- ii. Any word which ends in 'i' followed by 'hh' or in 'ii' followed by 'y'
- iii. Any word which has its last consonant repeated

Sample 10:

High tone (i)

Chakfem	Hausa	English
Teh	domin	so that, in order to
Seh	chan	that, there
Taah	fadi, yaka,	come, fall down
PyaaH	fari, sa'a	white, good luck
`beeh	tsage, `bare	spit, lacerate
Pihh	bayar	give

High tone (ii)

Satt	fada, gaya,	say, said, tell
Ratt	tara	a fine,
Lapp	karba, amsa	receive, answer
Yess	kashi	bone
Pangg	dutse	stone
`Dakharr	kankara	ice, snow
Shumm	sunu	name
`dinn	dazu	a short while ago
`bokk	gona	farm land, farm of
Zheell	wahala	suffering

High tone (iii)

Shiiy	kafa, ma'ana	leg, meaning
Shiih	`ki	refuse, reject, deny

Middle tones:

- i. All words spelt in their natural phonetic orthography without any tonal consonant added is in the middle tone, though they could also be low or high tones if there are no competitors in those tones.
- ii. All words with the rough glottal 'kh' sound are in the middle tone in their natural form, though they may be in low or high tone just as other forms of the same word.

Sample 11:

Middle tone (i)

Chakfem	Hausa	English
Pang	mesa	viper
Shang	cire, suntuwa	pull, a find
Tihm	tunkiya	sheep
Tar	kirikiri	carpet grass
Waar	tusa	fat, pollute the air
Saam	kwanta, barci	lay down, sleep
Kam	sanda	stick

Shum	a ci kwayar hatsi	eating of grains
Sam	sauka, saukowa	come down stay at
Middle tone (ii)		
Takhal	tauna	chew, munch
Kakhal	taba, tabi	taste (of food)
Nihkhin	a wurin	there (placae)
Nakham	macen doki	female horse
Lokhom	kuturta	leprosy

Low tones:

- i. All words with double vowels which have an apostrophe inserted between the vowels are in the lower tones in their most natural form and remain so even if their other forms are in another tone.
- ii. All 'wu' or 'wuu' words are also in the lower tones unless they already have a tonal consonant imposed at the end.
- iii. All words with the rough glottal 'gh' sound are in the lower tone
- iv. All words ending in 'd' or 'b' 'z' and 'g', though not necessarily 'ng' are low tones, in this case, the d, b z and the g sound t, p, s, and k respectively.

Sample 12:

Chakfem	Hausa	English
Low tones (i)		
Wa'ar	doka	law
Shwa'a	shuka	sow
Wo'or	jari, kasuwanci	trading, marketing
Wo'o	maciji	snake

Lower tones (ii)

Chakfem	Hausa	English
Twu	kasha	kill
Gwuu	kirana	cactus
Shwuk	wuka	knife
Pwuk	miya	soup
Shwu	gudu	run
Lwus	toshe	plaster
`Dwurum	kure	to corner
`Dwuu	taron mutane	crowd

Lower tones (iii)

Chakfem	Hausa	English
Shaghal	ku`di, karfe	money, metal
Paghal	buki	celebration
Tagham	kursiyi	throne

Kaghal	makale	to get stuck
`Daghar	tauraro	star

Lower tones ‘iv’

Chakfem	Hausa	English
Satd	umudi	pillar
Kob	mashi	spear
Gakg	rumpa	shack, hut
Kasz	dauro	millet

A Chart of Low, Middle and High tones in the Chakfem Language

The following table should help to drive home the points we have been studying so far. Study the table carefully to re-enforce what you have learnt so far.

Low tone	Middle tone	High tone
Ba (go back)	Baa (has already)	
Ka’ a (come up)	Kaa (like)	Kaah (head, above, in the process of)
Kaam (wide, width, public)	Kaam (widen, width)	
Tal (question)	Tal (ask)	Tall (pick or remove forcefully)
Shang (bag)		shangg
shang	shang	
Tang plant, sow, seek)	Tang (sprout leaves,)	
Koghom (Dry wind) easterlies	Kokhom (mulch)	
Teghem (blood)	Tekhem (front of, in front)	
Ga’ am (slowly)		Gaamm (a male un-castrated sheep)
Nar (A skin worn on the waist for dance)		
Kasz	kas	kass
Kapb (part of a broken house)	Kap (guts)	Kapp (all)
Satd (pillar)	Sat (herself)	Satt (say, tell)
Shing (Mortar)		Shingg (to twist the face, go fierce)
Ran (writing, letter)	Ran (write)	Rann (joke)
Laa (child, born)	La (plural of born)	Laah (a sore, wound, or feel hunger)
Shwuk (knife)	Shuk (to yourselves)	Shukk (to produce or grow tiny

		rashes or fruits or young ones)
Kwub (Birth after twins)		Kwupp (fold, especially with the had) singlar

LONG AND SHORT VOWEL SOUNDS IN CHAKFEM

Long vowel sounds are achieved by double vowels, irrespective of the tonal consonant added. Short vowel sounds are indicated by the use of just one vowel in the word.

Sample 15: Long	short
Kaam	kam
Kaah	ka
Koos	koss
Pyiill	pyil
Khiihn	kihn
Chiiyt	chitt
Shiiyt	shit

NUMBER

Nouns: Nouns in Chakfem achieved number in two ways, by inflection and by prefixes and suffixes:

- By inflection:** Most nouns do not admit of number by inflection; however, there are a few exceptions to this rule. Study the following chart for nouns that allow for inflections.

<i>Singular</i>			<i>Plural</i>		
Chakfem	Hausa	English	Chakfem	Hausa	English
mis	<i>miji</i>	<i>male</i>	daas	<i>mazaje</i>	<i>males</i>
mat	<i>mace</i>	<i>woman</i>	shwarrap	<i>mata</i>	<i>women</i>
laa	<i>yaro</i>	<i>child</i>	zhep	<i>yara</i>	<i>children</i>
wureep	<i>Yar'uwa</i>	<i>sister</i>	wuraapp	<i>Yan'uwa</i>	<i>sisters</i>

- By the Prefix 'mih'

Singular			Plural		
Chakfem	Hausa	English	Chakfem	Hausa	English
gukamm	<i>malami</i>	teacher	mihkamm	<i>mallamai</i>	teachers
nihkamm	<i>malama</i>	teacher	shwarrapkamm	<i>mallamai</i>	teachers
gusattkyeen	<i>anabi</i>	prophet	mihstattkyeen	<i>anabawa</i>	prophets
gulop	<i>Mala'ika</i>	angel	mihlop	<i>Mala'iku</i>	Angels

c. By the prefix 'mwop'

Singular			Plural		
Chakfem	Hausa	English	Chakfem	Hausa	English
tihm	rago	sheep	Tihm mwop	tumaki	sheep
Koo	sa	cow	koo mwop	kaji	chickens
bul	tsuntsu	bird	Bul mwop	tsuntsaye	birds
shwuk	kadangare	lizard	shwuk mwop	wakake	knives

Verbs: Verbs achieve number by inflections; however, not all the verbs can be inflected. When verbs are inflected to show number, they indicate:

- the repetition of an activity by one person or
- some kind of activities done by many people, but not one activity done by them at the same time.

Chakfem		Meaning of plural
singular	Plural	
twu	twa	One kill many or many kill one each
shwu	shwa	Many people run
`dall	`dyallang	One swallow many, or many swallow one each
`daar	dyarrang	One stand many, or many stand each
shwaa	shwaa	Many drink but things to drink are uncountable nouns
shwut	shwat	Beat one or many, repeatedly. either by one or by many
ji	ja	Many come, or one come many times
mang	kok	One take many things, or many take many things one each

THE CHAKFEM ALPHABET

The Chakfem alphabet consists of 26 letters and they sound almost exactly as in the Hausa orthography, the exceptions being 'V' which is non-existent in Hausa. 'Q' and 'X' are not needed to sound any Chakfem word, however two new letters, ('B `b, and `D `d) which are B b. and D d with grave accent marks preceding them. It should be noted that these accent marks are not in any case accent marks to determine the tones with which words which contain them are to be pronounced. No, they are sounds which do not exist in English but in all languages of Chadic expression that I know are necessary to make certain plosive sounds. `B, `b, `D `d sound like B b and D d, respectively when the breath is drawn inwards while pronouncing each. The Mwaghavuls have chosen to use the Hausa equivalents of these letters, which are the

hooked ‘b’ and ‘d’. The choice of the grave accent marks to go with these letters B and D to produce `B and `D is to avoid the problem associated with the use of special characters as has been stated elsewhere before.

The following is the complete alphabet of the Chakfem orthography.

Aa Bb `B`b Cc Dd `D`d Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj
 Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv
 Ww Yy Zz

I shall separate them into two groups, Consonants and vowels, each group with its phonetic sound chart.

The Consonants:

Bb `B`b Cc Dd `D`d Ff Gg Hh Jj Kk Ll Mm
 Nn Pp Rr Ss Tt Vv Ww Yy Zz gh, kh, ch, sh,
 zh,

Phonetic sounds of the consonants.

Letters	Phonetic sound	Samples
B, b.	b	Barr, bakk, baan, bat
`B `b	mb	`bam, `bak, `baann, `bang
C, c	tʃ	(used with ‘h’ always) cham, chakk, chaa
D, d	d	dag, dan, da’am, daa,
F, f	f	fwan, fiu, fett, fet, fyii,
G, g	g	gap, gang, gong, gongg, gwu
H, h	h	hal, har, hat,
J, j	ʒ	Jingg, jakhat, jaghat jokhos, jol, ji, ja
K, k	k	kam, kamm, kat, katt, kwung, kwangg,
L, l	l	Laa, lam, laar, long, looh, le’er
M. m	m	mat, mis, mwuor, mwoorr, mendeng
N, n	n	nam, nann, nan, Naan, nihng, nihk, nihg
P, p	p	Pal, pall, paall, pa’al, pangg, pang, pwo,
R, r	r	ran, rasz, riin, rwang, ratt
S, s	s	sarr, sar, sat, satt, sang, san, ,
T, t	t	tam, , tau, ta’an, tan
V, v	v	vwang, vwu, vwat,
W, w	w	wall, wan, , wa’ar, waar, waarr, war
Y, y	y (j)	yang, yal, yaa, yess, yes, yiyi,
Z, z	z	zau, zang, zanglip, zal, zaall,
gh	gh	gha, tagham, teghem, tihghin, nihghin
kh	kh	takhan, tekhell, tekhen, tekhem
ch	tʃ	Cham, chall, chakk, choop, choor

sh	ʃ	shamm, , shangg, sheep, shim, shiym, shin
zh	ʒ	zhep, zhet, zhengg, zheng, zheell, zhaah

Vowels and their phonetic sounds

Vowel	Phonetic sign	Word samples
A, a	/ɔ/	Watt, ratt, ran, mang
E, e	/ɛ/	Ret, fett, tep, seng, sengg,
I, i	/i/	Rip, chip, chitt,
O, o	/o/	Kot, mwos, song, zong
U, u	/u/	Twupp, rup, kwupp, shwut
ih	/ɪ/	Tihm, pihh, pih, tihghin, nihghin, pihtukhup
iih	/i:/	Kiihn, ghiih
aa	/ɑ:/	Yaa, waam, saam, laar, paaht
ee	e	`deehh, seet, seer,
ii	/i:/	Lyii, fyii, myii,
uu	/u:/	Tuu, `duut, fwuut, mwuut,

Diphthongs and their phonetic sounds

au	/aw/	Lau, rau, fau, waau, `bau,
iu	/iuw/	Fiu, lihzhiw, liw, shiw-shiww
ai	/ai/	Rai, kai, lai,

SENTENCE STRUCTURES IN THE CHAKFEM LANGUAGE:

MOOD IN CHAKFEM LANGUAGE:

There are four moods in the Chakfem Language just as in the English Language, and I shall explain these moods in terms of the English Language moods. These moods are: the indicative, the imperative, the subjunctive and the infinitive. Let me introduce what each of these mood does for clarity.

The Indicative Mood: In this mood, we make assertions, state a fact or asks a question. E.g. *“He is wise.” “He drinks.” “He was here yesterday.” “I will let you know when I am in town.”*

The Imperative Mood: In this mood, we give order, make requests, entreat, or encourage the listener
*“Please, let me have that book.” “Give me that book.”
 “Stand up!” “Go!” “Let us serve God.”*

The Subjunctive Mood:

The Infinitive Mood:

THE INDICATIVE MOOD

In this section, we shall study the pattern of the verbs as they are used to make statements and to ask questions. Once again, we shall have to study these in terms of the English grammar. Those who are not familiar with rudimentary English grammar are advised to find a good book on English grammar and familiarize themselves with basic grammatical rules of the English Language. The method we shall use is to reduce the type of statements or questions that can be made or asked into common patterns which I shall call Verb patterns, abbreviated v. b. These patterns are grouped and numbered for easy association and recognition.

VERB PATTERNS IN THE INDICATIVE MOOD

1. Statements and Assertions

A: The Be verbs

Verb Pattern 1a: Noun + Be + Noun
Ni a gukamm
Mwop a lwaa`dem

1b: Noun + Be + Noun + Adjective
Ni a gurum wuyon
Mwop a lwaa`dem weet

Verb Pattern 2a: Noun + Be + Adjective
Kussuk ni a wupyaah
Baan ni a wunung

2b: Noun + Be + Adjectival Verb
Warr ni shangg
Yen ni `doot
Pwo mwop `ba'an

Verb Pattern 2c: Noun + Adjectival Verb + Noun + (Adverb)
Waar ni shangg mwop (pwet)
Mwaan ni pyaah gha (`be)
Lihr ni mwaan kihh gha (mwoorr)
Mwos wa'ar mihNaan
(Adjectival Verbs are so called because as adjectives their action makes them what they are to the object of the sentence).

B: The Intransitive Verbs

Verb Pattern 3a: Noun + Intransitive Verb
Tihm kena mwuut
Sheep pal
Koo kena lakham

Verb Pattern 3b: Noun + Intransitive Verb + Adverb

Mat na laa dihdeen
Laalek saam kih pee`darr

Verb Pattern 3c: Noun + Intransitive Verb + Noun + (Adverb)
Tihm laa an (`dem)
Mwoor`bang mwop nwuang nyi pwet

C: The Transitive Verbs

Verb Pattern 4a: Noun1 + Transitive Verb + Noun2
Naan lop Jesu
Bilatus nas Jesu

Verb Pattern 4b: Noun1 + Transitive Verb + Noun 1 (Reflexive Pronoun) + (Noun/Adverb)
A saamm san
Wu nook shem shuk
Dumu at shiyn bis-bis
Laa nyi le laah shin shi kaah-nyi

Verb Pattern 5a: Noun1 + Transitive Verb + Noun2 + (implied Prep.) Noun3
Naan Lop Jesu yil ni (God sent Jesus to the world)
Mat na shet gwom an (My wife cooked food for me)
The underlined words are the implied prepositions
Komm dang laa yee pwolyoom

Verb Pattern 5b: Noun + Transitive Verb + Noun + Preposition + Noun
Naan lop Jesu kihh lop
Mwop pwas Jesu kih sheepmwuut
Mat ni `den `daa kihdap pangg
(It will seem to me that the preposition + the noun in the second and third sentences of the above pattern are actually adverbial phrase of place which answer the question 'where?')

Verb Pattern 5b: Noun + Transitive Verb + Adverb
Tihm so shit ni lala
Mwop lop ni Chim dool dyeell
Dih`ar sak maar kihh vurr nyi
Laareep ni tushing kihh nook ra
Mwop daampee nyi pwet

Verb Pattern 5b: Noun1 + Transitive Verb + Noun2 + Adjective
Laazang yaa wat wuyon
Miskakham ni lop loo wukihkihrihm
Randong laa la`a wutihp

Verb Pattern 6: Noun + Transitive Verb + Noun + Verb + (Implied prep.) +Noun
Naa tall nabaan pihh an
Nangkaam mang gaasgwom meng laa as

D: Linkage Verbs

Verb Pattern 7a: Noun + Linkage Verb + Adjective
He sounds clever (Kihllihng kaa nyi soon-soon se)
He looks wise (`Deeh kaa ni soon-soon se)

He appears weak (`Deeh kaa nyi a noot `ball se)

Verb Pattern 7b: Noun + Linkage Verb + Noun + (Adj./ Adv.)
Mat na pwut nihkamm (University)
Waarr shi bwakhar mwos (wu`doot)
Zhep mihze mwop pwat kum (kaah mu)

E: Modal Auxiliary:

Verb Pattern 8: *He might have gone there (Memeseh baa dum nihkhin)*
She could do her hair for her. (Kihh mak `dakk shoopkaah-nyi nyi)

2. Questions, Inquiries and Negations in the Indicative Mood

Questions: There are six (6) distinctly identifiable types of questions in Chakfem, namely:

- a. The Affirmative Question (A. Q.)
- b. The Affirmative Positive Question (A. P. Q.)
- c. The Negative Question (N. Q.)
- d. The Negative Affirmative Question (N. A. Q.)
- e. Tag Question Positive (T. Q. P.)
- f. Tag Question Negative (T. Q. N.)

Now, we shall make a simple Verb + Be + Noun statement and ask all the above types of questions to see what they are and what purpose they serve.

Statement: Nyi a guNaan
He is a Christian

The Positive Question: Nyi a guNaan ah?
(He a Christian is? = Is he a Christian?)
This suggests that one simply wants to find out if the person is a Christian

The Affirmative Positive Question a: Kan nyi a guNaan oh?/ Or Nyi kan a guNaan oh?
(So he a Christian is? = So he is a Christian?)
This suggests that its confirmed that the person is a Christian

The Affirmative Positive Question b: Nyi a guNaan kan eh? Or Kan nyi a guNaan eh?
(He a Christian is ? So he is a Christian?)
This suggests that something about the person gives him up as a Christian.

The Negative Question: Nyi a guNaan mau ah?/ Nyi a guNaan kass mau ah?
(He a Christian not? = He a Christian not, not?)
(Is he not a Christian?)

The Negative Affirm. Question: Kan shiihpe nyi a guNaan oh?
(So he a Christian not is = So he is not a Christian?)

Tag Question Positive
Tag Question Negative

Negation: There are two basic negations in the Chakfem Language: negating a statement or assertion and negating an affirmative question that has been asked.

a. *Negating a Statement or Assertion*

There are three ways to negate a statement or assertion as can be seen below

- i. Statement + Negative Adverb
- ii. Negative Adverb 1 + Statement
- iii. Negative Adverb 1 + Statement + Negative Adverb 2

The following are the negative adverbs used in negating a statement: ‘ba’, ‘kass’, ‘mau’, ‘maah’
We shall consider the three examples above in the three speech work charts below

Sample i. Statement + Negative Adverb

Statement	Negative Adverb
Mihse a kamran (This is a pen) Shwarrap mihse mwop a mihkamm (Women this they are teachers = these women are teachers).	kass, mau, maah (not)

Sample ii. Negative Adverb + Statement

Negative Adverb	Statement
Ba	Mihse a kamran (<i>This is a pencil</i>) Shwarrap mihse mwop a mihkamm (<i>Women this they are teachers = These women are teachers</i>)

Sample iii. Negative Adverb 1 + Statement + Negative Adverb2

Negative Adverb	Statement	Final Negative Adverb
Ba (<i>Not</i>)	Mihse a kamran (<i>this is a pencil</i>) shwarrap mihse mwop a mihkamm (<i>These women are teachers</i>)	kass, mau, maah (<i>not</i>)

Note the following facts about the negative adverbs, ba, mau, and kass:

1. ‘Ba’ always comes before the statement to be negated and never after it.
2. ‘Kass’ and ‘mau’ and maah always come after the statement to be negated and never before it.
3. ‘Maah’ suggests a warning in sample i. and a sense of horror in sample iii.

b. Negating an affirmative question that has been asked

There are two ways to negate an affirmative question

- i. Negative Adverb + Statement + Negative Adverb...
- ii. Negative Adverb + Negative Adverb + Statement...

We shall use the following speech work chart to illustrate the above.

Let us consider the different answers that could be given to the question, ‘Mihse a kamran ah?’ = (Is this a pencil?) or ‘Mihse mwop a kamran ah?’ = (*Are these pencils?*)

Sample i. (b). Negative Adverb + Statement + Negative Adverb

Negative Adverb 1	Statement	Negative Adverb 2
Haiyau, (no), Hiih-ih, (no) Koo lee, (not at all)	mihse a kamran (this is a pencil) Mihse mwop a kamran (These are pencils)	kass, mau (not)
Haiye, (No!)		Maah (not)

Note that 'Haiye' is more of an exclamation and accepts only 'maah', and it gives a note of warning or vehemence.

Sample b i. Negative Adv. 1 + Negative Adv. 2 + Statement + Negative Adv.

Negative Adverb 1	Negative Adverb 2	Statement	Negative Adv. 3
Haiyau (No,) Koo lee (Not at all,)	ba (not)	Mihse a kamran (this is a pencil) Mihse mwop a kamran (These are pencils)	kass, mau (not)

The following are the negative adverbs used in Chakfem, **'Haiyau' or 'Hiih'ih', 'Haiye' and 'Koo lee'** (No, I say no, not at all respectively). All these are Negative Determiner Adverbs that must come *before*, and **not after**, the statement that is to be negated.

We shall take more practice with the following:

Statement: Mihse a gukamm wupwoo
(This is a teacher new = This is a new teacher)

Negations: 1. Mihse a gukamm wupwoo kass
2. Mihse a gukamm wupwoo mau
3. Ba mihse a gukamm wupwoo kass

Positive Question: Mihse a gukamm wupwoo ah?
(Is this a new teacher?)

Negative Answers: 1. Haiyau, mihse a gukamm wupwoo kass
2. Hiih-ih, mihse a gukamm wupwoo kass
3. Koo lee, ba mihse a gukamm wupwoo kass.

The exceptions to the above rule occurs only in the perfect tenses where slight modifications are introduced. E.g.

Statement: Baa waarr ni kyes
(Already gruel the finished = The gruel has finished)

Negative Statement: 1 Waarr ni kih kyes kass
2 Ba waarr ni kih kyes kass
3 Waar ni kih kyes mau

Positive Question: Baa waarr ni kyes ah?
 Negative Answers: 1 Haiyau, waarr ni kih kyes kass
 2 Hiih-ih, waarr ni kih kyes kass
 3 Koo lee, waarr ni kih kyes kass

Note that instead of the original statement 'Baa waarr ni kyes', we now has 'Waarr ni kih kyes'.
 The patterns here are,

1. Verb 1 + Noun + Deff. Art. + Verb (The statement structure)
2. Verb 1 + Noun + Def. Art. + Verb + Question Suffix (ah?) Positive Question
3. Noun + Def. Art. + Verbs (perfect) + Negation (For negative Statement) or
 - a. Negative Adv. 1 + Noun + Def. Art. + Verbs (perfect) + negative Adv. 2
 - b. Noun + Verbs (perfect) + Negative Adv.
4. Negative Adv 1. + Noun + Def. Art. + Verbs (perfect) + Negative adv. 2 (for negative answers to positive questions) *Note: You will need to tabulate these properly.*

TENSES IN THE INDICATIVE MOOD

There are three basic tenses in Chakfem just as in the English Language, namely past, present, and future.

The Present tense.

a. Present Continuous: this has pih, kaah or kihh as auxiliary verbs e.g

- 1 Gukamm pih/kaah shin kamm (The teacher is teaching)
- 2 Gukamm kihh tong kih peetong (The teacher is sitting on the seat)
- 3 Tihm pih/kaah so shit = A shee is eating grass

Note that kihh and kaah speak of an act that is being done, while kihh speaks only of an act accomplished but which is still a fact as seating, lying down,

b. The Simple Present Tense: this has kihh as its auxiliary verb; e.g.

- 1 Gukamm kihh shin kamm = A teacher teaches
- 2 Gukamm kihh tong a kih peetong = A teacher sits on a seat
- 3 Tihm kihh so shit = A sheep eats grass
- 4 Matlong ni kihh dum Jos `daar = The queen goes to Jos tomorrow

Note the similarity of the usage of 'kih' in the present continuous and in the simple present, and also its usage to express a future event as going to Jos tomorrow

But unlike English, Chakfem sub-divides its past and future into time frames which precisely tell how long ago or how long to come the event was or would be. The present Furthermore, verbs are not inflected to form past tenses or past participles as in English, rather, only a time indicator adverb is used to locate the event in time.

The following are the time divisions in past tenses and future tenses. The present tenses

Past tenses:

Gyet = time long ago, (from two years backward)
 Den = In the past (a year ago = den satse, or den dihdeen = yesterday)
 Deh = In the past (more than two days ago).

Future tenses:

Pe = will
 Pe baa = will in the immediate future, the same day
 Pe `daar = will tomorrow
 Pe pwut = will in about three days and above, but not up to a month
 Pe par = will in about a month upward.

Sample Statements in past tenses:

We shall take the past tense of the statement “ Miskakham ni pih tok`dyeell The King is judging”

Present tense: Miskakham ni pih tok`dyeell

Past tense 1 Miskakham ni den/deh/gyet pih tok`dyeell
2 Den/deh/gyet miskakham ni pih tok`dyeell

The syntaxes are as follows

1. Noun + Def. Article + Past Tense Adverb + Present cont. tense

Noun	Def Art	Past Tense Adv.	Present continuous verbs
Miskakham	ni	Gyet, deh, den,	pih tok`dyeell

2. Past Tense Adv. + Noun + Def. Art. + Present Continuous verbs

Past Tense Adv.	Noun	Def. Art.	Present continuous verbs
Gyet, deh, den,	Miskakham	ni	pih tok`dyeell

These two rules can be applied to all the types of past tenses and the future tenses as well, e.g. the perfect and simple tenses

ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT OF TENSES IN THE INDICATIVE MOOD

1. The Present Continuous Tense 1 (pih)

	Singular	Plural
1 st Person	An pih shin kamm I am teaching	Munn pih shin kamm We are teaching
2 nd Person	Gha (masc.) Yi (fem) pih shin kamm You are teaching	Wunn pih shin kamm You are teaching
3 rd Person	Nyi pih shin kamm He, she, it is teaching	Mwop pih shin kamm They are teaching

1. The Present Continuous Tense 2(without pih)

	Singular	Plural
1 st Person	An kamm I am teaching	Munn kamm We are teaching
2 nd Person	Gha (masc.) Yi (fem) kamm You are teaching	Wunn kamm You are teaching
3 rd Person	Nyi kamm He, she, it is teaching	Mwop kamm They are teaching

1. The Present Continuous Tense 3 (kaah)

	Singular	Plural
1 st Person	An kaah kamm I am teaching	Munn kaah kamm We are teaching
2 nd Person	Gha (masc.) Yi (fem) kaah kamm You are teaching	Wunn kaah kamm You are teaching
3 rd Person	Nyi kaah kamm He, she, it is teaching	Mwop kaah kamm They are teaching

1. The Present Continuous Tense 4 (kihh)

	Singular	Plural
1 st Person	A kihh tong yil I am sitting down	Mu kihh tong yil We are sitting down
2 nd Person	Gha (masc.) Yi (fem.) kihh tong yil You are sitting down	Wuh kihh twakhat yil You are sitting down
3 rd Person	Kihh tong yil He, she, it is sitting down	Mwop kihh kwang yil They are sitting down

Note that kihh in the above sense is Be verb + the main verb in the present continuous tense.

2. The Simple Present Tense

	Singular	Plural
1 st Person	A kihh shin kamm (I teach)	Mu kihh shin kamm (We teach)
2 nd Person	Gha (masc.) Yi (fem.) kihh shin kamm (You teach)	Wuh kihh shin kamm (You teach)
3 rd Person	(Nyi) kihh shin kamm (He, she, it teaches)	Mwop kihh shin kamm (They teach)

Note that the simple present is more precisely in the form of:

I do teach, You do teach and he does teach; and the do/does here is 'kihh'

3. The Present Perfect Tense 1

	Singular	Plural
1 st Person	Baa a shin kamm (I have taught)	Baa mu shin kamm (We have taught)
2 nd Person	Baa Gha (masc.) Yi (fem.) shin kamm (You have taught)	Baa wuh shin kamm (You have taught)
3 rd Person	Baa shin kamm (He, she, has taught)	Baa mwop shin kamm (They have taught)

3. The Present Perfect Tense 2 (Negative)

	Singular	Plural
1 st Person	Ba a kih shin kamm (kass, mau) (I have not taught)	Ba mu kih shin kamm (kas, mau) (We haven't taught)
2 nd Person	Ba Gha (masc.) Yi (fem.) kih shin kamm (kas, mau) (You have taught)	Ba wuh kih shin kamm (kas, mau). (You have taught)
3 rd Person	Ba kih shin kamm (kas, mau) (He, she, has not taught)	Ba mwop kih shin kamm (kas, mau). (They teach)

SPELLINGS OF WORDS IN CHAKFEM (unfinished)

Declarative nouns (the one that does)

Singular		Plural
Masc.	Fem.	
Gukamm (teacher)	Nihkamm	Mihkamm
Guyen (doctor/nurse)	Nihyen	Mihyen
Gumaar (farmer)	Nihmaar	Mihmaar
Laatapp (Shepherd)	Reeptapp	Zheptapp
Gubis (miser)	Nihbis	Mihbis
Gudong	Nihdong	Mihdong
Gutam	Nihtam	Mihtam
Gubarr	Nihbarr	Mihbarr
Gu`dyeell	Nih`dyeell	Mih`dyeell
Gulokhomm	Nihlokhomm	Mihlokhomm
Gusattkyeen	Nihsttkyeen	Mihsttkyeen
Gukollom	Nihkollom	Mihkollom
Gu`beetpwo	Nih`beetpwo	Mih`beetpwo
Gu`baann	Nih`baann	Mih`baann

Descriptive nouns (The man/woman/thing that is/has/belongs to...)

GuNaan (Christian)	NihNaan	MihNaan
Gukum (idol worshipper)	Nihkum	Mihkum
Gulokhom (laper)	Nihlokhom	Mihlokhom
Gwoyon (lord, Sir ...)	Naawuyon	Mwonan
Gwobis (evil one)	Naawubis	Mwobis
Gushwal (sick one)	Nihshwal	Mihshwal
Guvukhum blind man)	Nihvukhum	Mihvukhum
Gwopwooh (new man)	Naawupwooh	Mwopwooh
Gupyaah (poor man)	Nihpyaah	Mihpyaah
Guman (literate man)	Nihman	Mihman

The emphatic adjectives and stressed verbs

`Bih-`bal	shi-shang	rih-ran	mih-man
Zih-zok	lih-lakham	dih-dihk	kwu-kwur
Wu-wang	eh-eep	fih-fwoon	kih-kihrihm
Kwu-kwarrang	kwu-kwurum	dih-du	nyi-nyok

Note that these emphatic adjectives and stressed verbs serve each of these purposes only when used in a sentence. E.g. as adjectives, they are preceded by the prefix 'wu' and they are the object of the 'be verb', 'a'. They form the pattern Demonstrative Noun + Be + Adjective. As stressed verbs, they predicate the subject of the sentence and receive direct objects. Look at the following examples and note

particularly their rather long versions which repeat the verbs with the verb ‘be’ inset between hyphens to separate them.

Emphatic Adjectives	Stressed Verbs
Nyi a wu rih-ran satt le...	Wuh rih-ran pwo mihse wuh `den. Wuh ran-a-ran pwo mihse wu den
Bi mihse a wu zih-zok	Naan zih-zok bi mihse kihh mwop Naan zok-a-zok bi mihse kihh mwop
Pwolu a wu wu-wang	Mwop ku`di kihh wu-wang pwolu ni Mwop ku`di kihh wang-a-wang pwolu ni
Wan mihze a wu tih-toop	Fwan tih-toop wan ni Fwan toop-a-toop wan ni

Descriptive Adjectives formed on “wu” (the thing that is,)

Wubis	Wuret	Wupwooh	wusihghir
Wu`doot	wuzhukhum	wuyaawus	wuroop

Note that in descriptive adjectives, the determiner, ‘wu’ is not separated from the main adjective as in the case of emphatic adjectives above.

Compounded Verbs and Abstract Noun Forms

Verbs	Nouns
Katdpwo	katdpwo
Delkom	delkom
Manshiiy	manshiiy
Manyit	manyit
Satt`bellep	satt`bellp
Seng`bellep	Seng`bellep

Note that writing these verbs as compounds are very important as to do otherwise would result in literal understanding of the words which could cause confusion. E.g. Manshiiy is ‘understand.’ Literally it means to know the foot. Now, if we wrote it as man shiyy, the following confusion could arise.

Gha man shiyy nyi ah? (Do you know his/her foot? Or do you understand it?) These two are valid. But if we wrote ‘Gha manshiiy nyi ah?’ The only possible understanding of the question is, ‘do you understand it? As manshiiy is understand, understanding, and understood.

Compounded nouns

Kihkyeen	kih`bwoon	kihnaar	saht`bellep
Sattpwo	`balkaah	lapnook	`beetpwo
Seng`bellep	pwo`ba`an	kihllihngpee	dwakharkom
Manshiiy	shwan`dyeell	tok`dyeell	`But`doot

Personal Pronouns in Chakfem (Subjective case = ‘I’)

Persons	Singular		Plural
	Masculine	Feminine	
1 st Person:	A (I)	A (I)	Mu (We)
2 nd Person:	Gha (you)	Yi (you)	Wuh (ye/you)
3 rd Person:	Nyi (he: deflective) Ri (he: reflexive)	Nyi (she: deflective) Ra (she: reflexive)	mwop (they: deflective) runn (they: reflexive)
4 th Person:	Gwar	paa	nwaa

Personal Pronouns in Chakfem (Objective case = ‘me’)

Persons	Singular		Plural
	Masculine	Feminine	
1 st Person:	an (me)	an (me)	munn (us)
2 nd Person:	Gha (you)	Yi (you)	wunn (ye/you)
3 rd Person:	Nyi (he: deflective) Ri (he: reflexive)	Nyi (she: deflective) Ra (she: reflexive)	mwob (them: deflective) runn (them: reflexive)
4 th Person:	Gwar	paa	nwaa

Personal Pronoun: Emphasizing pronoun

Persons	Singular		Plural
	Masculine	Feminine	
1 st Person:	Wu’an (I)	Wu’an (I)	Wu’wunn (We)
2 nd Person:	Wu’gha (you)	Wu’yi (you)	Wu’munn (ye/you)
3 rd Person:	Wu’nyi (he: deflect..) Wu’ri (he: reflexive)	Wu’nyi (she: deflect..) Wu’ra (she: reflex..)	Wu’mwop (they: deflect) Wu’runn (they: reflexive)
4 th Person:	Wu’gwar	Wu’paa	Wu’nwaa

Possessive Pronoun: my, your, his, her

Persons	Singular		Plural
	Masculine	Feminine	
1 st Person:	Ma’an (mine)	Ma’an	Muun
2 nd Person:	makg (yours)	mikg (yours)	mukg
3 rd Person:	Mih’nyi (his, its own: deflect..) miin (his, its own reflex..)	Mih’nyi (her: deflect.) Ma’at (her: reflex..)	Mih’mwop
4 th Person:	mih’gwar (his)	mih’paa	mihnwaa

Possessive Pronoun: my own, your own, his own, her own, its own

Persons	Singular		Plural
	Masculine	Feminine	
1 st Person:	Ma’an-na (mine)	Ma’an-na	Muun-mu
2 nd Person:	Makg-gha (yours)	Mikg-yi (yours)	Mukg-wuh
3 rd Person:	Mih’nyi (his, its own: deflect..) miin (his, its own reflex..)	Mih’nyi (her: deflect.) Ma’at-ra (her: reflex..)	Mih’mwop
4 th Person:	mih’gwar (his)	mih’paa	Mih’nwaa

Possessive Pronoun: my, your, his, her (Material possession)

Persons	Singular		Plural
	Masculine	Feminine	
1 st Person:	kena (my)	Kena (my)	kewuh
2 nd Person:	kegha (your)	keyi (your)	mukg
3 rd Person:	kihnyi (his, its)	kihnyi (her)	kih'mwop
4 th Person:	kihgwar (his)	Kihpaa (her)	kihnwaa

Parts of one's body or relations

Sar-na	kom-na	yit-na	kwak-na mwop
Emning	em-yi	emnang	em-wuh em-ru