

LANGTIME CHAT, EPISODE 39

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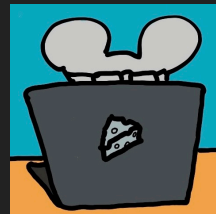
**GRAMBANK TRIVIA!**

<b>Languages</b>	2,467
<b>Features</b>	195
<b>Datapoints</b>	441,663 (362,025 excl. "not known")

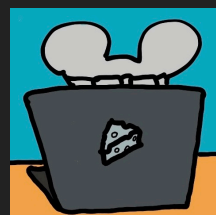
# GRAMBANK FEATURES LIST

<https://grambank.clld.org/parameters>

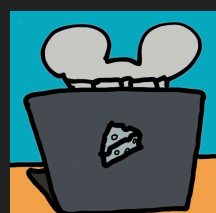
All features presented as yes/no questions with three possible answers:



absent



present



not known



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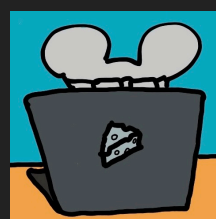
All features presented as yes/no questions with three possible answers:



absent (*nope, it's as absent as 'oza yamoza' in Engála*)



present (*yep, that feature is noted in this language*)



not known (*it needs more study in this language*)

# DAVID'S TASK

For each feature provided, decide which answer represents the majority of Grambank's documented natlangs:



**no** (*the feature is absent in most natlangs*)



**yes** (*the feature is present in most natlangs*)

# ARE THERE DEFINITE OR SPECIFIC ARTICLES?

(Feature GB020)

NOTE: The morpheme has to mark definiteness or specificity without also conveying spatial deixis.

# ARE THERE DEFINITE OR SPECIFIC ARTICLES?

(Feature GB020)

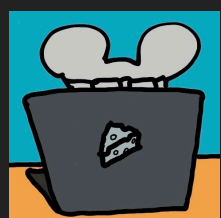
OUT OF 2,403 LANGUAGES SURVEYED...



1,374 languages (~57%)



824 languages (~34%)



205 languages (~9%)

**MOST NATLANGS DON'T MARK  
DEFINITENESS SEPARATE FROM OTHER  
FEATURES (SUCH AS DEIXIS).**

**EXAMPLES FROM LANGUAGES THAT DO  
INCLUDE...**



# AITON EXAMPLE (Morey 2005)

*mə nan a māt nε wā*

time that minister DEF say

‘Then the mister said’

# GANDA EXAMPLES (Crabtree 1902)

*entebe ebiri*

chair DEF-two

‘the two chairs’

*entebe biri*

chair two

‘two chairs’

**DO INDEFINITE NOUNS COMMONLY  
HAVE INDEFINITE ARTICLES?** (Feature  
GB021)

# DO INDEFINITE NOUNS COMMONLY HAVE INDEFINITE ARTICLES? (Feature GB021)

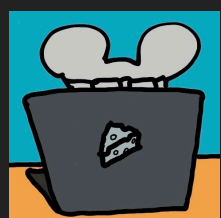
OUT OF 2,425 LANGUAGES SURVEYED...



1,920 languages (~79%)



301 languages (~12%)



204 languages (~8%)

**EVEN MORE NATLANGS LACK  
INDEFINITE MARKERS FOR NOUNS.**

**EXAMPLES FROM LANGUAGES THAT DO  
INCLUDE...**



# NJANGA EXAMPLE (Robson 2011)

*wū bàrkī jò:*

3SG built house

‘He built (one) house.’

*wū bàrkī jò: má:n*

3SG built house INDE

‘He built a house.’

# LIMBU EXAMPLE (van Driem 1987)

*yaŋdhik pi raŋε?*  
money-INDE give  
'Give me a rupee.'

*thik yaŋ labdzok*  
one money costs  
'It costs one rupee.'

**AN EXAMPLE OF A LANGUAGE LACKING  
INDEFINITE MARKERS INCLUDES...**

# ASSINIBOINE EXAMPLES (Cumberland 2005)

***thaspq awótapí akán øyqká***

apple table on sit

‘the/an apple is on the/a table’

***hokšína thápa aøøp<sup>h</sup>á***

boy ball hit

‘the/a boy hit the/a ball’

# ARE NOMINAL CONJUNCTION AND COMITATIVE EXPRESSED BY DIFFERENT ELEMENTS?

(Feature GB027)



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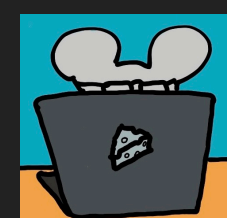
## OUT OF 2,421 LANGUAGES SURVEYED...



713 languages (~29%)



1,065 languages (~44%)



643 languages (~27%)

**DIFFERENT ELEMENTS REPRESENT THE  
COMITATIVE AND CONJOINING NOMINALS  
IN MOST NATLANGS.**

**HOWEVER, A LOT OF LANGUAGES NEED  
MORE RESEARCH!!**

# OLDER TURKISH EXAMPLE

(Kornfilt  
1997)

*Mary-le John*

Mary-and/with John

# MODERN TURKISH EXAMPLE (Kornfilt 1997)

*Mary-le John*

Mary-with John

*Mary ve John*

Mary and John

(The *ve* was borrowed.)

# MAALE EXAMPLE (Amha 2001)

*táání suuggatsí laaléllóna zagéne*

I chief woman-COM saw

‘I saw the chief with the woman.’

*táání suuggatsína laaléllóna zagéne*

I chief-CONJ woman-CONJ saw

‘I saw the chief and the woman.’



**MAALE WAS CODED AS HAVING THE SAME  
ELEMENT FOR BOTH.**

**EVEN THOUGH IT REQUIRES TWO INSTANCES FOR  
THE “AND” READING AND ONLY ONE FOR THE  
COMITATIVE, IT’S THE SAME SUFFIX.**

IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN  
INCLUSIVE AND EXCLUSIVE? (Feature  
GB028)

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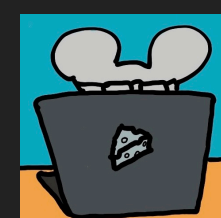
OUT OF 2,451 LANGUAGES SURVEYED...



1,114 languages (~45%)



1,243 languages (~51%)



94 languages (~4%)

**OH-SO-SLIGHTLY MORE NATLANGS  
DISTINGUISH INCLUSIVE “WE” FROM  
EXCLUSIVE “WE.”**

# IS THERE A GENDER DISTINCTION IN INDEPENDENT 3RD PERSON PRONOUNS?

(Feature GB030)

NOTE: This includes gender/noun class distinctions in  
the language's demonstratives.



# IS THERE A GENDER DISTINCTION IN INDEPENDENT 3RD PERSON PRONOUNS?

(Feature GB030)

## OUT OF 2,438 LANGUAGES SURVEYED...

 1,804 languages (~74%)

 566 languages (~23%)

 68 languages (~3%)

**MOST NATLANGS LACK A GENDER  
DISTINCTION IN THEIR THIRD-PERSON  
PRONOUN FORMS.**

**IS THERE A DUAL OR UNIT AUGMENTED FORM (IN  
ADDITION TO PLURAL OR AUGMENTED) IN THE  
PRONOUN SYSTEM?** (Feature GB031)

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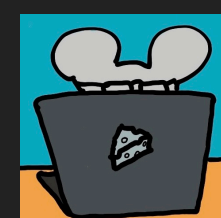
OUT OF 2,394 LANGUAGES SURVEYED...



1,718 languages (~72%)



616 languages (~26%)



60 languages (~3%)

**THE MAJORITY OF NATLANGS  
SURVEYED LACK A MARKED  
DIFFERENCE FOR THE DUAL IN THEIR  
PRONOUN SYSTEM.**

**ARE THERE THREE OR MORE DISTANCE  
CONTRASTS IN DEMONSTRATIVES?** (Feature  
GB035)

# ARE THERE THREE OR MORE DISTANCE CONTRASTS IN DEMONSTRATIVES? (Feature GB035)

OUT OF 2,428 LANGUAGES SURVEYED...

 1,111 languages (~46%)

 1,075 languages (~44%)

 242 languages (~10%)

**SLIGHTLY MORE NATLANGS LACK THREE OR  
MORE DISTANCE DISTINCTIONS IN THEIR  
DEMONSTRATIVES, BUT IT'S CLOSE TO AN  
EVEN SPLIT.**

**EXAMPLES FROM A LANGUAGE THAT DOES  
INCLUDE...**



# THAYORE EXAMPLE (Gaby 2006)

*yuk waarrmin inh parr ngathnmak*

THING thing DEM.SPKR.PROX child my  
'these things belong to my children'

*minh ulp-thn paatharr nganh*

MEAT DEM.ADR.PROX-ERG bit me  
'that animal bit me'

*pam ith koowmiing minthurr*

man DEM.DIST face good  
'that man has a nice face'

**MOST NATLANGS ALSO LACK VISIBLE-  
NONVISIBLE AND ELEVATION  
DISTINCTIONS IN THEIR  
DEMONSTRATIVES.**

# IS THERE PRODUCTIVE MORPHOLOGICAL PLURAL MARKING ON NOUNS? (Feature GB044)

NOTE: It restricts the "yes" answers to bound morphological markings. Also, reduplication strategies do not count (they are not considered separate morphological marking).

# IS THERE PRODUCTIVE MORPHOLOGICAL PLURAL MARKING ON NOUNS? (Feature GB044)

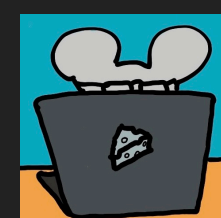
OUT OF 2,398 LANGUAGES SURVEYED...



1,020 languages (~43%)



1,282 languages (~53%)



96 languages (~4%)

**MORE NATLANGS MARK OVERT,  
DISTINCT PLURAL MARKING THAN NOT.**

**EXAMPLES FROM A LANGUAGE THAT  
DOES INCLUDE...**

# SWEDISH EXAMPLE

(Teleman et al. 1999)

"boat"

singular

plural

indefinite

båt

båtar

definite

båten

båtarna

**AN EXAMPLE OF A LANGUAGE LACKING  
BOUND PLURAL MARKERS  
INCLUDES...**

# SAMOAN EXAMPLES

(Mosel &  
Hovdhaugen 1992)

"house"

singular

plural

specific

le fale

fale

non-specific

se fale

ni fale



**SINGULATIVE MARKING FOR NOUNS IS  
LARGELY ABSENT, AS IS DUAL  
MARKING.**

**IS THE ADNOMINAL POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTION  
DIFFERENT FOR ALIENABLE AND INALIENABLE  
NOUNS?** (Feature GB059)

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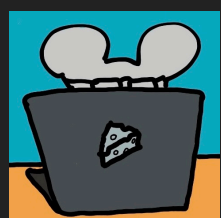
OUT OF 2,387 LANGUAGES SURVEYED...



1,070 languages (~45%)



961 languages (~40%)



356 languages (~15%)

**MOST NATLANGS (BY A SMALL  
MARGIN) HAVE THE SAME STRATEGIES  
FOR ALIENABLE AND INALIENABLE  
POSSESSION.**

**FOR EXAMPLE...**

# SPANISH EXAMPLES

*mi dedo*

my finger

'my finger'

*el dedo de Ana*

the finger of Ana

'Ana's finger'

*mi hermano*

my brother

'my brother'

*el hermano de Ana*

the brother of Ana

'Ana's brother'

*mi libro*

my book

'my book'

*el libro de Ana*

the book of Ana

'Ana's book'

**LANGUAGES WITH DIFFERENT STRATEGIES  
INCLUDE...**

# LUISEÑO EXAMPLES (Grune 1997)

*no-ta*

my-sinew

‘my sinew (in my body)’

*no-ta-ki*

my-sinew-POSS

‘my sinew (for the bow that I’m making)’

# NAKANAI EXAMPLES (Johnston 1980)

***la luma taku***

ART house my

‘my house’

***la lima-gu***

ART hand-my

‘my hand’



**IN GENERAL, KIN TERMS AND BODY PARTS  
ARE CONSIDERED INALIENABLE BY  
LANGUAGES WITH DIFFERENT STRATEGIES.**

**OFTENTIMES, INALIENABLE POSSESSION IS  
MARKED WHILE ALIENABLE POSSESSION IS  
UNMARKED.**

**DO CORE ADJECTIVES (DEFINED SEMANTICALLY AS PROPERTY CONCEPTS SUCH AS VALUE, SHAPE, AGE, DIMENSION) ACT LIKE VERBS IN PREDICATIVE POSITION? (Feature GB068)**

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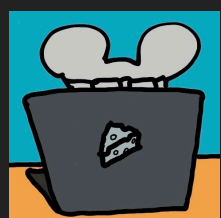
OUT OF 2,436 LANGUAGES SURVEYED...



1,002 languages (~41%)



947 languages (~39%)



487 languages (~20%)

**SLIGHTLY MORE NATLANGS DO NOT  
TREAT PREDICATIVE ADJECTIVES AS  
VERBS.**

**AN EXAMPLE OF A LANGUAGE THAT  
TREATS PREDICATIVE ADJECTIVES LIKE  
VERBS IS...**

# BORORO EXAMPLE (Cromwell 1979)

*imagore*

1SG-speak

'I speak/spoke.'

*ikurere*

1SG-tall

'I am/was tall.'

**AN EXAMPLE OF A LANGUAGE THAT  
TREATS PREDICATIVE ADJECTIVES  
DIFFERENTLY FROM VERBS IS...**

# IRISH EXAMPLES (Greene 1966)

*téann Sean*

go.PST Sean

‘Sean went.’

*is breoite é*

be.PRS ill he

‘He is ill.’



**DO CORE ADJECTIVES USED ATTRIBUTIVELY REQUIRE  
THE SAME MORPHOLOGICAL TREATMENT AS VERBS?**


(Feature GB069)

# DO CORE ADJECTIVES USED ATTRIBUTIVELY REQUIRE THE SAME MORPHOLOGICAL TREATMENT AS VERBS?

(Feature GB069)

## OUT OF 2,381 LANGUAGES SURVEYED...

 1,454 languages (~61%)

 404 languages (~17%)

 523 languages (~22%)

**MOST NATLANGS TREAT ATTRIBUTIVE  
ADJECTIVES SEPARATELY FROM  
VERBS.**

**A LANGUAGE THAT TREATS THEM THE  
SAME IS...**

# CHOCTAW EXAMPLE

(Broadwell 2006)

*Hattak chaahahh pgalitok.*

man tall.TNS saw-I

‘I saw the tall man.’

*Hattakat chaahahh.*

man tall.TNS

‘The man is tall.’

**A LANGUAGE THAT TREATS THEM  
DIFFERENTLY IS...**

# AKHA EXAMPLE (Hansson 2017)

*ɲàsjhà jɔné*

fish red

‘red fish’

# ARE THERE MORPHOLOGICAL CASES FOR NON-PRONOMINAL CORE ARGUMENTS (I.E. S/A/P)?

(Feature GB070)

NOTE: To count, the marking must be bound.

# ARE THERE MORPHOLOGICAL CASES FOR NON-PRONOMINAL CORE ARGUMENTS (I.E. S/A/P)?

(Feature GB070)

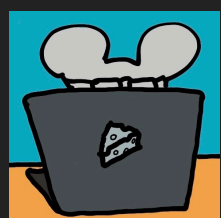
## OUT OF 2,377 LANGUAGES SURVEYED...



**1,485 languages (~62%)**



**777 languages (~33%)**



**115 languages (~5%)**



**MOST NATLANGS LACK MARKING FOR  
CORE ARGUMENTS.**

**A LANGUAGE THAT MARKS ALL CASES  
INCLUDES...**

# WARRONGO EXAMPLE

(Tsunoda 2011)

*ngaygo-ngomany-jo gando-nggo gamo bija*

1SG.GEN-ABL-ERG dog-ERG water.ACC drank

‘My dog drank water.’

**A COOL EXAMPLE OF CORE MARKING  
OCCURS IN...**

# MUNDANG EXAMPLES (Elders 2000)

*mè kō bàlrā bè*

I see elephant-PL PRF

‘I have seen elephants.’

*zá ngònrā gîi*

people slaughter-PL goat

‘The people slaughter a goat.’

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*mè kō bàlrā bè*

I see elephant-PL PRF

‘I have seen elephants.’

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people slaughter-PL goat

‘The people slaughter a goat.’

**The plural only shows up on non-subject elements! If the subject is plural, plurality is marked only on the verb.**

**ARE THERE MORPHOLOGICAL CASES FOR  
OBLIQUE NON-PRONOMINAL NPS (I.E. NOT  
S/A/P)?** (Feature GB072)

# ARE THERE MORPHOLOGICAL CASES FOR OBLIQUE NON-PRONOMINAL NPS (I.E. NOT S/A/P)? (Feature GB072)

## OUT OF 2,375 LANGUAGES SURVEYED...

 1,184 languages (~50%)

 1,041 languages (~44%)

 150 languages (~6%)

**SLIGHTLY MORE NATLANGS LACK CASE  
MARKINGS FOR NON-OBLIQUE  
NOMINALS.**

**EXAMPLES OF LANGUAGES THAT DO  
MARK THEM INCLUDE...**



# WARRONGO EXAMPLE (Tsunoda 2011)

*ngali nyinaya jarribara-ngga yamba-ngga*

we.two sit good-LOC camp-LOC

‘Let’s sit down in the good camp.’

Remember, Warrongo marks all the cases!

# ZUNI EXAMPLES

(Newman 1965)

***kalapa-k<sup>w</sup>in***

Gallup-DIR

‘(He went) to Gallup.’

***kʔak<sup>w</sup>e-‘w-an***

house-PL-LOC

‘(We stayed) at their houses.’

# NDAM EXAMPLES (Broß 1988)

*būgō* 'house' → *bùgò* 'in the house'

*gūjān* 'my stomach' → *gùjān* 'in my stomach'

*gàlè* 'concession' → *gàlé* 'in the concession'

# WHAT THIS MEANS FOR CONLANGS

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**Not much other than the fact that these features  
exist in languages.**

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**Not much other than the fact that these features  
exist in languages.**

**SO HAVE FUN EXPLORING THEM!**

**AND BE SURE TO CHECK OUT THE  
EXAMPLES OF HOW NATLANGS  
ACCOMPLISH THESE FEATURES  
FOR INSPIRATION.**