Yuktepat

Introduction

Yuktepat [juk.te.pat], composed of *yuk* [juk], "(spoken) language," and *Tepat*, "Tepat," refers to the official language (and substandard dialects) spoken by the inhabitants of the old Tepat Empire. Yuktepat is traditionally divided into three periods, Old, Classical, and New. Archaic Yuktepat is also sometimes used to refer to a variety of the language predating any written records. An additional distinction must be made between Spoken and Written Yuktepat. Written Yukepat, properly referred to as *Mwentepat* (*mwen*, "writing, written language") may also refer to its use as an academic and administrative language by the Swíra, who spoke the unrelated Swíra language.

Characteristics of Yuktepat:

- SVO, head-initial
- Non-pro-drop (subject pronouns)
- Analytical and isolating
- Extensive use of classifiers
- Verb-framing
- Grammar described as
  - "Linear"
  - "Quantitive"
  - "Contextual"

Old Yuktepat refers to all varieties of Yuktepat before the language was standardized and made official throughout the Empire. Knowledge of old Yuktepat as it may have been spoken comes from three chief sources: internal reconstruction from later varieties of the language, analysis of phonetic elements in characters, and to a lesser degree borrowings into other languages. For our concerns, Old Yuktepat is entirely a written language, with little certainty as to how it was spoken, except through internal reconstruction.

	SPOKEN	WRITTEN
WHOLE	*yuk* "language"	*mwen* "writing"
UNIT	*hoq* "word, morpheme"	*klût* "glyph"

Classical Yuktepat refers to the standard language of the Tepat Empire during its heyday of cultural hegemony over the region, and specifically to that language as used in Tepat City. The traditional dividing line between Old and Classical Yuktepat is the Great Language Reform, which included the Character Simplification Program. The two chief sources of knowledge about Classical Yuktepat are the linguistic descriptions of the period and borrowings into Old and Classical Swíra. The Tepat believed their language to be very well designed and described that design in detail. Their texts include grammars that analyze syntax and indicate pronunciation with precision by a system of phonetic shorthand developed from logographs. (This system was later developed for use to spell inflections in Swira.) The values of the phonemes given in texts can be deduced from descriptions of tongue position and lip-shape in those same grammars, and the observable phonetic values in Swira loanwords and reflexes in the modern Yuktepatic languages. Increasingly during the Classical Tepat period, the Tepat Empire encompassed regions of ethnically different people, and they adopted Mwentepat as a written language, although it is not known to what degree their spoken language resembled Yuktepat, or whether it was related at all.

New refers to everything after the collapse of the Empire due to the invasion of the Swíra, and thus refers to two things: the spoken and written language that is official in the New Tepat Kingdom, and the several unofficial, usually unwritten colloquial dialects (now separate languages) spoken by peasant communities in pockets throughout the south of the Swíra Empire. The modern languages are all related.

The present article deals primarily with written Classical Yuktepat.

In the linguistic typology of later Swiric theories of linguistics, Yuktepat is a “linear” (as opposed to to “radial”) and “quantitative” (as opposed to “qualitative”) language. The concept of a linear language would correspond to our idea of a language with strict word order - and furthermore, which does not permit more than two arguments per verb. Quantitative here refers to the language’s extensive class of quantifiers (including numerals) which perform functions covered in most languages by other types of words, such as demonstratives, conjunctions, and negatives. Furthermore, it was a contextual language rather than an “innate” one (i.e., word-class was determined syntactically rather than morphologically or lexically).

Relations

The most closely related language to Classical Yuktepat - perhaps better considered a highly divergent dialect - is Old Yuknotoq. Yuknotoq, in all its stages, is notable for being more conservative than its Yuktepat counterpart. Yuknotoq has preserved separate subject and object pronouns, the original functions of the relativizers, and lacks predicators. Its conservatism extends to the writing system. Mwennotoq is written in Tepat Script, but lacking the reforms and revisions that characterized the later Tepat script. Yuknotoq however has distinctive innovations, such as a new copula and a differentiation of alienable and alienable possession, the latter evolving under the influence of nearby Hamtum languages. In addition, its vocabulary includes many items from Hamtum languages that have not been borrowed into Classical Yuktepat.

Outside of Yuknotoq, Yuktepat’s closest relative is Kəcə (Ičkəcə) on the eastern coast. Together with many other languages of the central zone of Tiptum, they constitute the Macro-Tepatic or Tepatu-Petugalic languages.

History

The oldest known forms of Yuktepat show a language with vestiges of fusional morphology. Different forms were used for agentive pronouns and non-agentive pronouns. In some dialects possessive pronouns were identified with agentive pronouns, and in other cases with non-agentive pronouns; the same is true for pronouns referring to the subjects of intransitive verbs. Later non-agent pronouns encroached on the domains of all the other varieties. The invariable pronouns of Classical Yuktepat are the descendants of the non-agentive pronouns of early Old Yuktepat. Similarly, there was probably a time when verbs had different forms for different tenses, however the ranks of inflected verbs quickly became very limited. The inflectional system suggested by the reconstructed verbs is highly irregular. In fact many of the forms of the verbs appear to be suppletive. The verbs “to be,” “to be a,” “to exist / have,” and “to do” had different logographic representations not only for different tenses but also for negatives, and those forms probably sounded different. By the end of the Ancient Yuktepat period most of these forms were on their way to being auxiliary verbs, particles, and prepositions. Verbs may also have had a nominalized form with a nominalizing suffix *-(V)t*, which explains the many abstract nouns in later forms of the language which are disyllabic and end in *-t*. Archaic Yuktepat may have distinguished transitive and intransitive verbs by tone or by aspiration, with intransitive verbs aspirated, and the corresponding transitive verbs unaspirated.

Archaic Yuktepat had either verb incorporation, or an alternative SOV word order. Definite object noun phrases could precede the verb sometimes, whereas indefinite ones had to follow the verb.

Yuktepat has historically been very resistant to borrowing from other languages, but within

the earliest language there is a layer of vocabulary which is usually attributed to the previous inhabitants of the Tepat Plain. This is most prominently exemplified by toponyms, but may also include names of deities, heavenly bodies, and some local flora.

As stated above, the Great Language Reform, a major standardization effort that resulted in the creation of an Academy, marked the official beginning of "Classical Yuktepat." This was also the beginning of traditional Tepatic linguistics. Classical Yuktepat linguistics was wholly prescriptive because intellectuals believed the standard language was a carefully designed force for social progress. They not only did not write in other dialects but tried unsuccessfully to eradicate them. Ironically this preserved dialectal information because many educational texts were written to correct incorrect usages and pronunciations, often indicating the regions where such mistakes were made. These mistakes often correspond nicely to forms in modern languages, which are the offshoots of the speech of uneducated provincials. Using clues from modern languages and classical prescriptions, the phonologies and vocabulary differences of several old dialects have been reconstructed. Occasionally this process has been helped by looking at old Swira loanwords, some of which came from nonstandard dialects.

Prescriptivism bore much more heavily on syntax than pronunciation though because it was oriented toward the written language, not the spoken language. Tepat linguistic philosophy was greatly concerned with proper order. The written logograms provided few clues about sound, but differences in word order were immediately apparent. It was taken for granted that in different dialects a character would have spoken forms that were different, even unrecognizably so.

However pronunciation was an important issue to those who traveled to areas where different dialects were spoken. Classical Yuktepat dictionaries usually included a rough pronunciation key for each character. It consisted of a combination of two characters whose pronunciation was assumed to be widely known. The first character represented the initial (onset), and the second the final (nucleus and coda) of the syllable. Disyllabic words / morphemes were sometimes spelled with two characters and sometimes with one character, depending on the theories favored by the person writing. Over time simplified versions of these characters became widely used as purely phonetic symbols in phrasebooks for Tepat travelers. When the Swíra conquered Tepat, their language was treated as another dialect of Yuktepat, spelled in Yuktepat logograms with a pronunciation guide given in the phonetic symbols. This evolved into the current Swíra mixed writing system, which spells roots and stems in logograms and inflections in phonetic symbols, much like the system used in Japan.

In this exposition, I have abided by the practice of keeping the main text focused on the standard language of the capital during the Classic period, by shunting all other information of a dialectal or historical (both prospective and retrospective) nature into footnotes - with the obvious exception of the dedicated chapters on history and dialects. This allows those looking for main points to read through without distraction, while the footnotes are still there for those readers who like tangents, and who like footnoes (as I do).

Linearity and Quantification

Early Sound Changes

I. Vowel harmony
   - u, i > ɨ / _Ca
   - u > y / _Ci, (_Ce)

- a > e / _Ci, (_Ce)
- a > o / _Cu, (_Co)
- e > ɤ / _Cu, (_Co)
- i > ɯ / _Cu, (_Co)
- o > ø / _Ci, (_Ce)

II. Monosyllabification (Or perhaps only vowel-loss to ensure CVC or CVCVC structure V > Ø / _# in multisyllables

III. Mutual Conformation of consonants and vowels
- a > ɒ / _q, q_
- e > ɤ / _q, q_
- i > ɯ / _q, q_
- ju > (j)y
- jo > (j)ø

IV. Unreleasing: all obstruents become unreleased in syllable-final position: C > C̚ / _.
- ts > t̚
- s > t̚
- x > k̚
- χ > q̚
- h > ʔ̚

V. Loss of epiglottals / pharyngeals: pharyngeal > glottal
- ħ > h
- ʕ > ʔ

VI. ml, nl, ˙l > pl, tl, kl

VII. [+nas] > Ø / V_C{. #}

VIII. w > Ø / [LAB]_

Modern Yuktepatic Languages

Modern languages descended from dialects of Old or Classical Yuktepat are spoken today by rural communities in several southern Kōsul provinces. Three important Yuktepatic languages, or dialect groups, still exist. In the western area of the peninsula, an old divergent western dialect has become an independent dialect group, preserving the voiced spirants and plethora of laterals of the old dialect. In the south, in several backwater communities speaking a group of similar dialects, there remains, as of old, a distinction of front and back /æ/ and /ɑ/, and the existence of front rounded vowels. Then of course there is the language of the later, post-Swíra-phase Tepat state, the official “Modern Yuktepat.” In some languages, tone and pitch accent have been exchanged for a stress accent, which falls on the original high-tone syllable of disyllabic words, and which does not fall on function words and other phonologically reduced words.

A few other minority languages are spoken which are not identifiably Tepatic, although they would have been within the Classical Tepat cultural and political sphere. These were probably groups that originally spoke other languages but adopted Yuktepat as an official language when they joined the Tepat league. Among these residual languages there remains in the west another language in the region of the old League state Qolup. While of genetically obscure origin, it has abundant Yuktepat lexical items and shares many phonological features with the nearby Western Yuktepatic languages.

Numerals in Some Modern Dialects

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
0	løm	luim	lem	lwem	lem	lwe:	wem	lvem > vlem
1	uq	waq	ɨq	wɨq	ɨq	wɨq	wɨq	vɨɣ
2	ny	nju	niw	ni	nwi > mi	niw	niw	zu
3	tam	tam	tam	tam	tam	ta:	am	tam
4	thei	thei	thei	the, thi	thie	thei	thei	thei
5	woŋ	uŋ	oŋ	woŋ	oŋ	wo:	oŋ	voŋ
6	luq	luq	luq	luq	luq	luq	lu	luɣ
7	set	set	set	set	set	set	se	sel
8	hat	hət	hat	hat	hat	hət	hə	həl
9	qou, qu	qəu	qau	qo, qu	qua	qəu	qəu	ɣəu
10	tiep	tæp	tap	tjap	tap	tjap	tya	tjap
100	høk	hjuk	hok	hjok	hok	hjok	hjo	hjok
1000	tien	tæn	tan	tjan	tan	tja:	tjan	tjan
10000	mɨn	man	mɨn	mɨn	mɨn	mɨ:	mɨn	m̩

1 creation of front rounded vowels, 2 XX, 3 loss of medials, 4 loss of final glides, 5 final glides are transposed, 6 loss of nasals with compensatory length, 7 loss of final stops, 8 far western dialects

Modern Yuktepat

Vowels:

i	y	ɨ/ɯ	u
e	ø	ə/ɤ	o
æ	œ	a/ɐ	ɑ/ɒ

Diphthongs:
ej, je, æj, jæ
øɥ, ɥø, œɥ, ɥœ
ɯɤ, ɯɤ, aɯ, aɯ
ow, wo, ɒw, wɒ

Vowels in diphthongs must agree in backness and roundedness.

Consonants:

	[LAB]	[COR]	[ALV]	[ALV]	[PAL]	[VEL]	[UVU]	[GLOT]
[-asp]	p	t	ts	t^{l}		k	q	
[+asp]	p^{h}	t^{h}	ts^{h}			k^{h}		
spirants			s			x		h
[+nas]	m	n				˙		
liquids	w	l			j			

Dialectal Changes

Changes affecting low vowels

a > æ / (j_, _j)
a > ɑ / (w_, _w)
a > (æ, ɑ)
j > Ø /_ [+front]
æ > ɛ, ɑ > ɔ

Changes Relating to Laterals

pl, pʰl, kl, kʰl > tl, tʰl
kl, kʰl > lʸ
lj > ʎ

Palatalization

lj > ʎ
nj, mj > ɲ
ts, tj > tʃ; tʃʰ, tʰj > t・ʰ
tʃ > ts; tʃʰ > tsʰ

Other (Far Western Dialects)

q > ɣ (> h)
qʰ > x > h
ts > s, tsʰ > h
ny, ly > z, ʑ
z, ʑ > r
p > v /V_V
w > v
pw > w
ml, nl, ・l > lⁿ (nasal lateral)

Syllable-final consonants: /n ʔ/
l > r / C_

No medial glides (/j w/ > Ø)

Other dialects had different vowel systems, which variously added low mid vowels,

1. i ɛ y ø ɨ/ɯ a/ɐ u ɔ

had a low back vowel,

2. i e ɯ ɤ ɑ u o

got rid of the central vowels,

3. i e (ɨ) (ə) a u o

or distinguished between front and back low vowels.

4. i e æ ɒ o u

Other dialects might add a front rounded vowel series /y ø/, and some had two low vowels, one front and one back (unrounded). Almost all dialects had the same three vowel heights.

Glottal spreading
Aspiration shifting
Glottal shifting
Pharyngeal spreading

How Two-Syllable Words were Treated[1]

*sotoy	*soðoy	ðoy	sloy	sotö	sở̈y	sorei
*Tepat	*teβat	vat	twat	tepaʔ	tə̊t	tevar
*Qolup		lup	qlup	qoluʔ	qoup	ʁuluv
*Salam		lam	slam	salaa	saum	salav
*Phemet	*pheβet	vet	phwet	phemeʔ		phə̃t
*Phitim	*phiðim	ðim	phlim	phitii	phi̊m	phirev

*yong > *ʑong > zong, ɻong
*wong > vong

---

[1] The fricatives indicated above in parentheses developed as allophones of stop consonants occurring between vowels (i.e. when a minor syllable occurred). These fricatives were not present in Proto-Viet–Muong, as indicated by their absence in Muong, but were evidently present in the later Proto-Vietnamese stage. Subsequent loss of the minor-syllable prefixes phonemicized the fricatives. Ferlus 1992[33] proposes that originally there were both voiced and voiceless fricatives, corresponding to original voiced or voiceless stops, but Ferlus 2009[34] appears to have abandoned that hypothesis, suggesting that stops were softened and voiced at approximately the same time, according to the following pattern:

Many non-tonal languages instead developed a register split, with voiced consonants producing breathy-voiced vowels and unvoiced consonants producing normally voiced vowels. Often, the breathy-voiced vowels subsequently went through additional, complex changes (e.g. diphthongization). Examples of languages affected this way are Mon and Khmer (Cambodian). Breathy voicing has since been lost in standard Khmer, although the vowel changes triggered by it still remain.[15]

Many of these languages have subsequently developed some voiced obstruents. The most common such sounds are /b/ and /d/ (often pronounced with some implosion), which result from former preglottalized /ʔb/ and /ʔd/, which were common phonemes in many Asian languages and which behaved like voiceless obstruents. In addition, Vietnamese developed voiced fricatives through a different process (specifically, in words consisting of two syllables, with an initial, unstressed minor syllable, the medial stop at the beginning of the stressed major syllable turned into a voiced fricative, and then the minor syllable was lost).

Similarly, final fricatives or other consonants may phonetically affect the pitch of preceding vowels, and if they then weaken to /h/ and finally disappear completely, the difference in pitch, now a true difference in tone, carries on in their stead. This was the case with the Chinese languages: Two of the three tones of Middle Chinese, the "rising" and "departing" tones, arose as the Old Chinese final consonants /ʔ/ and /s/ → /h/ disappeared, while syllables that ended with neither of these consonants were interpreted as carrying the third tone, "even". Most dialects descending from Middle Chinese were further affected by a tone split, where each tone divided in two depending on whether the initial consonant was voiced: Vowels following a voiced consonant (depressor consonant) acquired a lower tone as the voicing lost its distinctiveness.

Modern Yuktepat

Glide-conditioned Fronting

wi, ju > y; iw, uj > yɥ

we, jo > ø; ew, oj > øɥ

ju > iw, jo > ew

Rounding of the Unrounded

wɨ, ɨw > u, wɤ, ɤw > (w)o

jɨ, ɨj > i, jɤ, ɤj > (j)e

Phonology

Among Classical Yuktepat consonants there is a preponderance of stops (and affricates, which pattern with them), which are are divided into aspirated and unaspirated. Except for nasals and liquids, all consonants are phonemically voiceless, although phonetically, obstruents may have been voiced in intervocalic position.The standard consonant system is shown below, as reconstructed by the best contemporary scholars.

	[LAB]	[COR]	[ALV]	[PAL]	[VEL]	[UVU]	[GLOT]
[-asp]	p	t	ts		k	q	ʔ
[+asp]	p^h	t^h	ts^h		k^h	q^h	
spirants			s		x	χ	h
[+nas]	m	n			˙		
liquids	w	l		j			

It is uncertain whether the affricates were /ts ts^h/ or /tʃ $tʃ^h$/. Some dialects were missing one or more of the above phonemes; in fact the official dialect eventually merged /ʔ/ with /q/. An important western dialect group is also characterized by the addition of more lateral phonemes, including lateral affricates or lateralized stops, and velarized or palatalized laterals. In traditional transliteration, /ts/ is ‹c› and /j/ is ‹y›. The aspirated consonants are written without the ‹h› superscripted, so ‹ph›, ‹th›, ‹ch›, etc. The glottal stop, from before the classical period, is written ‹’›.

Although varying from dialect to dialect, the typical Yuktepat vowel system has seven members.

	[+front]	[-front, -round]	[-front, +round]
[+hi]	i	ɨ/ɯ	u
[-hi, -lo]	e	ə/ɤ	o
[+lo]		a	

The [-front, -round] vowels may be either back or central. The high central vowel is written as ‹û› and the mid central vowel as ‹ô›. Although ‹ê›, ‹î› and ‹ô›, ‹û› are represented differently in Yuktepat grammars and transliterations, there is no reason to believe that they were pronounced differently in the great majority of dialects, or that any dialect distinguished them all. Their reflexes are generally the same in modern languages. But ‹ô› and ‹û› occur mostly in content morphemes, and ‹ê› and ‹î› occur mostly in function morphemes. Continuing to distinguish between them would seem to be part of the Tepat’s attempt to create a perfect language where, logically, both categories of words were distinguished in all areas (grammar, phonology, and semantics). But they were at most allophones.

There is also reason to believe that classical Yuktepat as spoken in Tepat City had front rounded vowels. In fact New Tepat, the official language of the modern Tepat state, has front round vowels. Whether they were already present at that distant time or not, there is no doubt that they arose from earlier diphthongs which contained front vowels and back rounded vowels together.

There is also reason to believe the mid vowels were more correctly [ɛ] and [ɔ] than [e] and [o].

Syllable Structure

The canonical Yuktepat syllable consisted of at minimum a consonant followed by a vowel. Most syllables also ended in a consonant, including the semivowels /w/ and /j/. Complex onsets, which could contain an obstruent, lateral, and a semivowel, were also allowed. Thus the syllable could be C(l)(j, w)V(C). With the exception of the coda, the syllable was arranged strictly in terms of increasing sonority. A lateral could *not* precede an obstruent, and a glide could *not* precede a lateral or obstruent. If a complex onset included a lateral, the first consonant had to be an obstruent. If a complex onset onset included a glide, the consonant before the glide had to be an obstruent or lateral.

- hûq “one”
- lop (classifier)
- jaʔ (prefix, relativizer)
- klût “glyph, character”
- lwem “zero”
- chyul “(go, come) from”
- **lkût
- **wlem
- **ychul

While any consonant could begin a word, a more restricted set were allowed in other positions. In the earliest stages of the language it is probable that all kinds of consonants could be found in codas, and that complex codas were also possible. Over time, it came to pass that all obstruents in syllable-final position were unreleased – so aspirated consonants and fricatives could not end a morpheme. Therefore the consonants permissible morpheme-finally were /p t k q ʔ m n ŋ l j w/.

Open-syllable (CV) morphemes typically (but not necessarily) did not begin with aspirated consonants, or contain the vowels /e a o/. They frequently included the vowel /ə/. Two function morphemes, /ə/ and /i/, consisted of a single vowel with no onset. Both of them were also enclitics.

Morpheme Structure

The morpheme as well as the word was an important phonological unit. All morphemes in Classical Yuktepat were one or two syllables. Monosyllabic morphemes could be open or closed, and disyllabic morphemes always consisted of first an open syllable and then a closed syllable. These shapes were associated with different kinds of morphemes. The first pattern, CV, is found in function words. Content morphemes ended in consonants. The last pattern, CVCVC is found only

in some nouns, especially proper nouns.[2] The vast majority of morphemes were C(l)(j, w)VC monosyllables. Because of the strict morpheme forms, Yuktepat had a nearly self-segregating morphology. This was a design feature that grammarians consciously attempted to cultivate in later revisions of the standard language.

A few words of foreign origin exhibit otherwise unknown forms, such as CVCV, or had more than two syllables. There was a tendency to alter these to fit canonical morphemic forms. Otherwise longer word-forms occurred only in compound words. Compound words also had CC sequences across morpheme boundaries, but sometimes on the phonetic level these were reduced to a single consonant, and the "self-segregating" morphology was violated.

Phonotactics

The glide /j/ could not occur next to the vowel /i/, and /w/ could not occur next to /u/. Front vowels could not occur in the same syllable as a uvular consonant (several dialects took this further and did not permit them before velars either). Some dialects did not permit back vowels to occur with /j/ or front vowels to occur with /w/.

With the joining of morphemes to form compound words, several new rules came into play. First, a stop ending a morpheme and /h/ beginning the next morpheme were pronounced together as an aspirated consonant.

Phonetic Rules

1. Unreleasing: C · C̚ / _#
2. Velar assimilation: q · k / _{k, k^h, j}
3. Uvular assimilation: k · q /_{q, q^h}
4. Glottalization: C · $C^ʔ$ / ʔ_
5. Glottal Deletion: ʔ · Ø /_$C^ʔ$
6. Aspiration: C.h · .C^h
7. De-fronting: V[+front] → V [-front] / {_C[uvular], C[uvular]_}
    a. i > ɯ
    b. e > ɤ

Thus only [u o ɑ ɯ ɤ] were permitted in the environs of uvulars.

There are also some idiosyncratic cases of assimilation. The final glottal stop of /jaʔ/, which forms nouns denoting persons, assimilated totally to any following consonant except /w j/. A similar process affected the final sound of /hɨq/, "one."
/jaʔ/ + /ŋin/ → [jaŋŋin], "member"
/hɨq/ + /kal/ → [hɨkkal], "one (person)"

---

[2] Indeed, the names of most Tepat individuals are of this type, as are many place names, and the names of heavenly bodies. Most of these forms are apparently not of native origin, although it is impossible to be sure exactly where they came from. It is often assumed they were inherited from the civilization that previously occupied the area of Tepat, but nothing is known about their language. There is another class of bisyllabic nouns which are of native stock, and typically end in -Vt or sometimes -Vm. Those endings are believed to be prehistoric derivational endings, which may have been used to form nouns from verb roots. This is also believed to underlie the Kəcə noun suffix /at^l/.

Writing system

How it works and how it's organized

In many ways, Tepatic writing has evolved many of the same mechanisms as earthly writing systems such as Chinese characters. Characters are not merely representations of "pure ideas," as is sometimes believed by alphabet users, but do in fact represent words or morphemes and are thus very much language-bound; they are not "pictures" that are semantically transparent and language-neutral; and most of them are composites, formed of simpler characters with various conventionalized functions, such as giving semantic or phonetic clues.

Tepat lexicography classifies characters into three groups: (1) *Base*, (2) *Double*, and (3) *Composite* characters. Base characters cannot be analyzed into any smaller parts. They are usually simple shapes, represent simple concepts that can be represented visually or diagrammatically, and often evolved from original pictograms. Double characters consist of a pair of identical base characters (occasionally, three identical base characters). A few base characters are never actually encountered purely by themselves, but are always found with a twin. Composite characters - by far the most common - are formed by combining two or more different base characters.

Composite characters themselves form several subgroups, depending on how each of the included base characters contributes to the composite character. They are (1) *double-meaning*, (2) *double-sound (rebus)* and (3) *sound-meaning* characters. Double-meaning characters are composed of two characters which are semantically related to the meaning of the composite character. Double-sound characters include composite characters whose components share similar sounds to the composite character. For example, one base may rhyme with the composite character, and another may start with the same consonant.

The majority of composite characters are *sound-meaning* characters. As a matter of fact, this subgroup exceeds all the other kinds of characters combined. One base character gives a semantic clue about the composite character, and the other base character gives a phonetic clue. Stereotypically, the first base character on the right side places the composite character into a semantic domain, and the second character, on the left side, is a base character that rhymes with the composite character. However, other organizations are possible, including characters whose beginnings sound alike, or characters for which the semantic component is spurious, because it has been changed to represent a different-sounding word, or for which the semantic component is spurious, because it has been adopted to write a similar-sounding word with a different meaning.

Perhaps one of the most striking characteristics of Mwentepat is the organization of lines and the direction of writing. Starting at the bottom left corner of a page or stela, writing is done bottom-to-top, then left-to right. Thus text is arranged in vertical columns.

Punctuation

Tiptumic languages had periods to mark the end of sentences, but no question or exclamation marks. This may be due to the fact that all such languages had explicit interrogative and exclamatory particles, which made special punctuation marks for them redundant. The usual ending punctuation is a large open circle.[3]

[3] Some texts have used simply a blank space to divide sentences.

History of the Writing System

The earliest examples of Tepatic writing date from the Nyow dynasty, with some glyphs having seeming continuity with symbols found on Pre-Tepatic monuments. However, it is unsure whether the Pre-Tepat had an actual writing system or not. During the period of division, the writing system underwent a spurt in evolution. As writing began to move from stone inscriptions to papyrus or parchment copies of philosophical theses and statecraft manuals, the characters began to change shape. Character segments were connected and became flowier, forming curves and loops instead of the disconnected straight segments of old characters. These stylistic changes appeared all over the kingdom, and were shaped by the possibilities of new writing instruments and media, as well as conditioned by an emergent principle of making it so that each character could be written with as few separate strokes as possible - ideally, only one.

While these changes occurred everywhere, it was actually a case of parallel, convergent evolution. Because of the political instability, different city-states developed different versions of the old script. Although the above-stated influences meant that in each case the ultimate aesthetic effect was the same - all of the states developed curvier glyphs with few strokes - a particular character may not resemble its equivalent in another region.

This was corrected in one of the first major legislative acts of the Kwan dynasty. The Great Script Standardization aimed to replace all the variant characters with exactly one. The minister's dictionary is especially helpful to scholars of early Tepat. Originally designed to facilitate implementation of the standardization, it contains an entry for every known variant character, referencing them to their standard equivalent. It is the first known dictionary produced in Tepat.

At the same time that this new script was produced, another variant appeared, known as the "Barcode script," because its rows of tightly-packed parallel straight lines resembled a barcode, and also because its use was somewhat similar to a barcode. It was an exaggeration of the oldest script's tendency toward straight line segments. It included exclusively horizontal and vertical straight line segments. The process of magical reading worked much easier with these regularized forms, so it became standardized among wizards and academics.

Later reforms also occurred. The Second Great Script Reform built on the standard script to bring every single character in line with the ideal of one radical - one stroke. Another reform altered the layout of characters, fitting them all into standard-sized blocks. Finally, much later, the Character Simplification Act sought to make characters more accessible by simplifying the more complicated ones even further - in the process often removing any visual cue to the semantics. In many of these reforms, additional characters were created and introduced. (Perhaps more accurately, these characters had been idiosyncratically formed, and were only approved at the time of the script reforms.)

The final stage of character evolution, ironically, comes all the way back to the beginning, as members of the new Tepat nationalist state began to revive some traditional shapes for symbolic or even merely nostalgic decorative purposes.

Parts of Speech

Although traditional Yuktepat grammar barely recognizes word classes, and words shift classes easily without overt changes in form, several word classes can be recognized:

1. Content words
    a. Nouns
    b. Quantifiers
    c. Classifiers
    d. Verbs
        - Auxiliary verbs
        - Experiencer verbs
        - Manner verbs
        - Path verbs
        - Result verbs
        - Stative verbs
2. Particles
    a. Adverbials
    b. Complementizers / Relationals
    c. Conjunctions
    d. Determiners
    e. Limiters / Delimiters
    f.Predicators
    g. Relativizers / Complementizers

Nouns:

- Can be the subject of a sentence
- Can form a predicate following the copula *siw*
- Do not follow tense / predicate proclitics

Verbs:

- Form predicates with a preceding tense proclitic

Stative verbs:

- Can be preceded by a degree modifier such as *njet*, “very”
- Cannot be preceded by the imperative *haj*

Dynamic verbs:

- Cannot be preceded by a degree modifier such as *njet*, “very”
- Can be preceded by *haj*

As you will see, many words can be argued to belong to more than one class. This kind of fluidity, along with the importance of word order, is the major reason that traditional grammarians downplayed classification of words in favor of their linear order. Yuktepat is an SVO language – the order of constituents in a sentence is subject, then verb, then object. This is the typical order of sentences with transitive verbs.

Verbs have either one or two arguments, never three, so there are no ditransitive sentences. Indirect objects in English correspond to subordinate verb phrases in traditional Yuktepat.[4] Verbs in a complementary or subordinate relationship follow each other with no inflection and generally no intervening particle. When the verb is intransitive, its subject may come after the verb if it is indefinite, like a transitive verb's patient.

As an analytical language with no grammatical cases, naturally Yuktepat relies primarily on word order to distinguish subjects and and objects, and convey other syntactic relationships. But it's not *just* syntactic relationships. There is a truly impressive range of linguistic meanings and subtleties that can be conveyed merely by changing word order. The Tepat loved to stuff as much information as possible into word order. Among the things that can be, or must be, expressed through word order are:

- Definiteness
  "The man walked in." "A man walked in."

- Location v. Direction
  "The boy jumped onto the table." "The boy was jumping on top of the table."
  "The student wrote at the desk." "The student wrote on the desk." (i.e., he vandalized the desk)

- Scope of determiners (delimiters have scope over all words that follow, and none of the words that precede them):

  "All men do not have long hair." = "No men have long hair."
  "Not all men have long hair." = "Some men have long hair."

  "Only the governor can tell us what to do."
  "The governor can merely tell us what to do." (i.e., he can't actually make us do it)

- Ordinal v. Cardinal numbers

  "Ten months" v. "The tenth month (October)"

- The point in time that an event occurred v. the duration of time in which an activity occurred.

  "I went for a walk at three o'clock." "I walked for three hours."

- Other:
  "I like melons very much." "I like big melons."

- Temporal Sequence:
  I ran into the room and screamed.
  I screamed and ran into the room.

[4] Or prepositional phrases in Modern Yuktepat. Classical Yuktepat has no distinctive class of prepositions.

Not all of these things have to be expressed exclusively through word order – for example, the definite / indefinite distinction is only weakly correlated with it – but it still plays an important role, and some things heavily depend on it. For example, temporal sequence usually must be expressed through careful ordering of clauses. (In fact, you will soon see that the Tepat view some other things, such as location and direction, in terms of temporal sequence too.)

Yuktepat was not a pro-drop language, at least as far as subjects were concerned. Because of this, and because of the obligatory nature of predicators before verbs, the minimal grammatical sentence of Yuktepat had three elements:

Subject + Predicator + Verb

Nouns

A noun phrase is built around a noun and may also contain classifier phrases (preceding the noun) and the article or relative clauses (following the noun).

Correlative + Quantifier + Classifier + NOUN + Article + Possessive + Relativizer + Relativized Phrase

njal	*tam*	*sut*	*map*	*=i*	*nat*	*=i*	*siknjak*	*tepat*	*=i*
	klɯnet	*hyok*							
all	three	CLASS	copy	=of	he	=of	history	Tepat	=of
	Klînet	write							

"all three of his copies of Klînet's *The History of Tepat*"

tsʰĩl	*hôt*	*maj*	*klam*	*=i*	*mjam*	*slɯt*
this	eight	CLASS	mirror	=of	guard	pass

"these eight mirrors which guard the passes"

The definite article is /ə/, which is enclitic with the preceding word. All nouns and such words end in consonants, canonically, so they divide up neatly into syllables, and the /ə/ forms a CV syllable with the last consonant of the preceding word.[5] The article refers specifically to an aforementioned noun. It never refers to something of which there exists only one, such as the sun. It also usually does not occur when the noun phrase contains demonstratives or relative clauses that would identify the noun uniquely.

Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns did not behave differently form nouns in any significant way. Personal pronouns were generally obligatory.

- *wok* I
- *wat* we (sometimes I)

[5] Originally this clitic may have been a syllabic /n/.

- *kim* you
- *nat* he, she, they (members of the Tepatic League)
- *kal* he, she, they (barbarians)
- *koq* it, they

Standard Classical Tepat made attempts to "rationalize" the pronominal paradigm, either by making plural prounouns with the prefix *lan-*, replacing *wat* with *lanwok*, or by replacing *wat* with a compound form *wokkim* or *woknat*. They didn't catch on and *wat* stayed put.

To form a personal possessive construction, personal pronouns were combined with classifiers, or followed the noun after the particle *i*.

Reduplication

Nouns are often fully repeated, with the resulting double noun usually indicating plurality.[6] Sometimes they have special connotations beyond mere plurality.

kow	country, nation
kow kow	the international community, the world

klep	bread
klep klep	bread and stuff, baked goods

Quantifiers

Quantifiers are words that can occur within a noun phrase before a head noun (with or without a classifier, but usually with one), as well in some expressions with adverbial function ("twice, thrice"). Quantifiers include both numerals and words which refer to amounts that are not exact, such as some, few, several, many, etc. Quantifiers include cardinal, ordinal, collective, deictic, and adverbial quantifiers.

Cardinal Numerals

The Yuktepat basic numerals are shown below. Note that Yuktepat follows the duodecimal system, not the decimal system.[7]

[6] Dialectally, sometimes only the first CV sequence of the noun is reduplicated, and placed in front of the full noun. Sometimes, the vowel in the CV sequence is also reduced, as if it was a particle.

[7] Tradition has it that originally Yuktepat followed a decimal system with a little bit of duodecimality thrown in, much like the Germanic languages, which have suppletive words for "eleven" and "twelve." Then the semi-legendary King Samaw decided that a duodecimal system was more useful, because 12 could be divided by 3, 4, and 6, and rehauled the numerical system in conjunction with his standardization of weights and measures.

Digits

0	lwem
1	hûq
2	niw
3	tam
4	they
5	wong
6	luq
7	set
8	hət
9	qəw
10	tyap
11	twat

Powers

12	nip
144	hyok
1728	mûn
20736	

Compound Numerals

24	niw nip
36	tam nip
48	they nip

Old texts also preserve some other numerals that do not fit in the base 12 system.

24	chat
100	tyan
120	nyut
1000	pum

Some quantifiers that did not refer to exact numbers are:

- *way* "a few"
- *tem* "several, a few"
- *tûŋ* "each in turn"

Japanese:
ichinichi (ni) yonkai → nichiyon
isshūkan (ni) yonkai → shūyon
ikkagetsu (ni) yonkai → tsukiyon
ichinenkan (ni) yonkai → nen'yon

Ordinal Numerals

Ordinal numerals are formed by adding the prefix *ti=* to cardinal numbers. E.g., "third" would be:

ti=tam	*sut*	*siknyak-tepat*.
ORD-three	CLASS	history-Tepat

"the third volume of *The History of Tepat*"

Collective numerals

Collective numerals, with meanings like "all three," "three together," "doubly," "as a group," often served the function of joining noun phrases that conjunctions like "and" do in English. Collective numerals are formed by adding *-îl* to the end of the number, although with many irregularities in the paradigm.

Digit	Yuktepat name	Collective numerals
0	leum	lumîl

1	hûq	qacîl
2	nuj, niw	nyul
3	tam	tamîl
4	sej	sil
5	wo ˙	wongîl
6	luq	luxy̑l
7	set	setîl
8	hət	hotîl
9	qəw	qul
10	tjap	tyapîl, tiwîl, tul
12	nip	nipîl
144	hyok	hyokîl
1728	mûn	mûnîl

As you can see, “three,” “five,” “seven,” and “eight” form their collectives completely regularly. With “six,” the final stop changes to a fricative in the collective form, and with “zero,” the main vowel changes. “Two,” “four,” “nine,” and optionally “ten” involve a contraction into a single syllable. The collective of “one,” meaning “alone,” is formed from a completely different root altogether.

In writing, these numbers, except for “one,” are all completely regular, formed by adding the same character after the numeral, representing the *-îl* or *-l*. However, evidence from poetry and songs, which require strict syllable counts, indicate that even in the classical period, the monosyllabic contractions were in use.

These numerals follow the noun phrases which they join. If they join subject noun phrases, they occur in front of the verb phrase. If they join object noun phrases, they come at the end of the sentence. These numerals can also co-occur with other joining expressions, such as the particle “even” and the pluralizing prefix.

Fractions

Fractions are formed by placing the number representing the numerator first, followed by the particle *i*, then the number of the denominator, and optionally the classifier *xet*, meaning “piece” or “part.”[8]

hûq i niw (xet) one half *hûq xeth i niw*

[8] However, aside from these, there are some (now very archaic) unique expressions for fractions which go evenly into twelve:

X one half
X one third
X one quarter
X one sixth

In the classical language under discussion, these had evolved into units of measurement and names of particular kinds of containers or bundles.

hûq i tam (xet)	one third
niw i tam (xet)	two thirds
tam i tyap (xet)	three tenths

Reduplicated Numerals

Numerals can be reduplicated like so:[9]

hûq hûq	one by one
niw niw	by twos, two by two
tam tam	by threes, three by three

Numerical Deictics

Yuktepat has a large number of demonstratives. Unlike demonstratives in most languages though, they are not assigned on the basis location or gender, but relative to the flow of a narrative. Thus, the first word to require a demonstrative is given *A*, the second one *B*, the third *C*, and so on. Demonstratives are assigned working through a demonstrative list in order, and when they are used up, the list is repeated. In this they are somewhat like mathematical terms: when stating an equation, the first unknown value is represented by *a*, the second by *b*, and so on for however many values we need to find. The term *a* is a placeholder, which occurs in a particular sequence; it does not represent closeness to the speaker or masculine.

nahat "this, this one, the first one"	*qat*	> *=əq*	*qa-*
niwət this$_2$	*nat*	> *=ə(n)*	*na-*
tamət this$_3$	*tat*	> *=ət*	*ta-*
theyət this$_4$	*thet*	> *=ət*	*ti-*

(and eventually, *hûqət*)

(the demonstrative power eventually shifted to the numeral, and "this" became merely an affix marking the numeral in its demonstrative function).

sequencers
"the first one"

These can also be added:
next
previous
sooner
later
in the past
in the future
finally
the next but one
the previous but one

---

[9] Mandarin reduplicates measure words to indicate the sense of "each." Should Yuktepat? Or perhaps the numeral *hûq* "one" can be reduplicated in front of the classifier to indicate each.

the next odd/even

and n^{th} ly…
the n^{th} one
n^{th}
by *n*'s
one n^{th}
the n^{th} value
the n^{th} time

There is a supplementary pair of locative deictics, derived from the verbs "come" and "go." At the end of a string of verbs, "come" means "here" and "go" means "there." These senses were later extended to use with nouns. Thus when immediately following a noun (without a predicator in front), "come" means "this" and "go" means "that."

Classifiers[10]

In most cases quantifiers had to be followed by a classifier. Which classifier was appropriate was usually determined by the properties of the thing counted. For example, the classifier *lop* was used to count long, thin, flexible objects. In some cases the usage is idiomatic. Together the quantifier and classifier formed a classifier phrase, which followed the noun which was being counted. Classifiers themselves overlapped with nouns, and many could be used alone as nouns, and serve as classifiers for themselves. There are in fact also several classifiers coterminous with verbs – particularly the verbs of handling. Commonly used classifiers include:

hon	long stiff objects
khal	individual people[11]
lep	things with handles (tools, weapons, etc.)
lop	long, thin, flexible objects
may	hard, flat objects; surfaces
myuk	crowds, groups
nem	handfuls
pey	cup, bottle, indefinite measure of liquid
phot	plants, fungi
qay	thin, flat, flexible objects; sheets
sûq	animals (furniture, four-legged animals)
sut	volumes, member of a series
toy	machines
wap	animals (furniture, four-legged animals)
wem	people (polite)

The general-purpose classifier is *kôl*, which generally means "piece." It can be used for all things that have no classifier of their own, and many things that *do* have their own classifiers, whenever

[10] In some dialects classifiers could also be used with personal pronouns to form a sort of possessive construction.
[11] Originally meaning 'a head.' It has also been used, instead of *sûq* and *wap*, for mammals, or other fairly large animals which have a typical 'animal' shape, with four limbs and a head. Became Swi *ukkal*, "one head," Phs *ökkal*.

the classifier is unknown.

Some classifiers were added to numbers to perform adverbial functions.

tow	times, number of repetitions
mat	times, repetitions, magnification

Some classifiers referred to specific units of measurement.

suy	year (referring to the age of something)
tik	year (cycle of the sun)
sik	season, one-quarter division of the year
kit	month (cycle of the moon)
lûy	day
wol	period of two hours
phon	10 minutes
tsok	50 seconds
nan	about 4.2 seconds
myek	about 0.3 seconds

woŋ	*kʰĩl*	*hûq*	*wol*
five	*kʰĩl*	one	*wol*

“five *khil* per *wol*”

While classifiers are used for counting objects, they can also elucidate the specific meaning of a word that usually has a broad meaning. For example, *muk* can mean variously “tree,” “wood,” “stick,” or “branch.” It is essentially “wood,” the substance of which all these things consist. Its use with different classifiers clarifies which of the more specific meanings is intended.

hûqphot muk	one tree
hûqhon muk	one stick, one (wooden) rod
hûqkôl muk	one piece of wood

For another example, take *nwong*, “land, earth.”

hûqmay nwong	a plot of land
hûqnem nwong	a handful of dirt

Classifiers are sometimes encountered which are used anaphorically, e.g.,

Quantifying and Negating Actions

Quantifying actions, and verbal negation are closely related. In fact, it may be simplest to view negation as a special case of quantification. Verbs may be counted in several ways:

(Maybe there is a special verb ‘be/have,’ or a special auxiliar/predicator, which must be used with numbers (i.e., negating or quantifying)?)

Predicator + number + verb

Wat ôl tam qhwot.
I have killed three (times).

Predicator + number + *tow* (a classifier) + verb

Wat ôl tam tow qhwot.
I have three times killed.

Predicator + verb + number

Wat ôl qhwot tam.
I have killed three [times].

Predicator + verb + number + classifier

Wat ôl qhwot tam tow.

Predicator + verb + number + classifier + noun

Although *tow*, 'times, repetitions' is a good default choice for counting verbs and may be used with any verb, it is also possible, idiomatically, for other verbs to take certain other classifiers, more or less idiomatically. Path verbs may take the same classifier as roads. Positional verbs, such as sit, stand, or lie, may take the classifiers, respectively, for round compact objects, tall erect objects, and long, horizontal, extended objects.

Coincidentally, the same distribution of patterns is found with negation. We could say that each time we say, "I haven't killed anybody," it is the same as saying, "I have killed zero (times/persons)."

Wat ôl lum qhwot.
Wat ôl lum tow qhwot.
Wat ôl qhwot lum.
Wat ôl qhwot lum tow.
Wat ôl qhwot lum khal.
Wat ôl qhwot lum khal yan.
I have not killed.

Colloquially, it is possible, and usual, to say,

Wat ôl qhwot lum.
I have not killed.

Sometimes, another, older form of negation is found, which is still typical in Notoq. This is based on the negative verb *mwoy* ‘have not, lack, need,’ and reduced forms of it like *mi-*, *mik*, *mil*, and *mit*. (Or, *lum*, *kôm*, *kim*, *tum*, and so on.)

Doing Mathematics in Yuktepat

2 leaves 5 becomes 3
2 joins 3 becomes 5
6 breaks down into 2 becomes 3

Question Words, Demonstratives, Correlatives

Yuktepat correlatives were formed by the compounding of two elements, the first indicating one variable (interrogative, demonstrative, etc.) and the second one the other variable (thing, person, place, quality, etc.).

	Interrogative	Demonstrative		Indefinite	Universal	Negative
		Proximal	Distal			
Thing	*nal*	*tsʰɪ̈l*		*hwal*	*njel*	*mul*
Person	*na-*	*tsʰɪ̈-*		*hwa-*	*nje-*	*mu-*
Location	*na-*	*tsʰɪ̈-*		*hwa-*	*nje-*	*mu-*
Time	*na-*	*tsʰɪ̈-*		*hwa-*	*nje-*	*mu-*

Things like negation, inclusiveness, exlusiveness, and so on, are expressed by determiner elements which may occur in various places, plus the interrogative pronouns.

Nat *mi* *kô* *qhot* *nal*.
he no PRES kill what
“He does not kill anything.” “He kills nothing.”

he UNIV PRES kill what
“He kills everything.”

Proximate noun phrases are usually unmarked, while obviative noun phrases are usually marked.

Alternatively, the first noun phrase in a round of discourse is unmarked, but assumed to be proximate. The second noun phrase is assumed to be obviative, the third to be super-obviative, and so on, with no obvious marking necessary. However, if two noun phrases with two different references, referring to two different instances of the same thing (e.g., if the conversation is about two dogs that need to be distinguished), then an overt proximate or obviative marker will be added to the noun “dog” whenever it occurs.

Similarly, if later in the sentence, something like “foot” is mentioned, it is assumed to be referring

reflexively to whatever is the subject of the sentence, and but if it belongs to something else, it will be marked as proximate or obviative as necessary.

PROX broke leg	=	He broke his (own) leg
PROX broke leg OBV		He broke the obviative argument's leg

Similarly, verbal objects are often omitted when (a) they are some indefinite neuter thing ("it"), or (b) they refer reflexively to the subject, having the same proximacy or obviacy value.

Verbs

Reduplication

As with nouns, verbs can be fully reduplicated.[12] Reduplicating verbs can have different meanings, depending on the verb. With verbs of inherently punctual lexical aspect, reduplication means that the brief action is repeated over and over again. For nouns representing ongoing activities, it can indicate ongoing duration of the action. It can also, as with semelfactive verbs, indicate many repetitions of the verb, possibly as a habitual thing. Stative verbs when reduplicated usually just mean an especially intense degree of the state, possibly an absolute state.

He knocked on the door.
He was knocking at the gate.

He ran along the road.
He kept on running and running down the road.

She's beautiful.
She's absolutely gorgeous.

Polarity

Negation is expressed by the particle *mi*. It is placed directly in front of the tense proclitics, and contracts with them into a single form expressing both negation and tense.

- *mi* *əl* → *mil* "did not"
- *mi* *kə* → *mik* "does not"
- *mi* *tu* → *mit* "will not"

The particle plays a role in asking questions. One of the standard ways to ask questions is to offer two alternatives, one an affirmative statement and one the negation of the same affirmative statement.

kim *kə=* *jat* *mi* *jat* *ŋat* *ts^{h}ip*

[12] Again, as with nouns, colloquially the reduplicated element may be only a CV segment, instead of the entire verb.

you PRES=know not know place market
“Do you know where the market is?”

Voice and Valence

All verbs have a minimum of one obligatory argument and a maximum of two, thus they are all either intransitive or transtive. There are no ditransitive or avalent verbs. Additional syntactic roles, such as the indirect object in an English expression like “John gave Mary a *salvia officinalis* seedling” is expressed as the object of an additional verb which is included with the first verb in a complex predicate.

Neither transitive or intransitive verbs are formally marked. The same lexical items are used both transitively and intransitively, depending on context. For example, *kjaw* can mean both “change (oneself)” or “change (something else).” This is like many English verbs but unlike, say, Japanese 変える and 変わる. If a verb is to be interpreted transitively, there will be an argument both after and before it (ignoring the intervening tense particle). If the verb is to be interpreted intransitively, it will have a single argument (which may precede or follow it, depending on context and emphasis). Standard written Yuktepat is not pro-drop, so if an argument is not visible (or should I say audible?), it does not exist.

The Copula

Yuktepat has more than one word corresponding to our copula. A different verb meaning “call” is used when giving someone’s name. No copula is required at all when the predicate is a state or quality; here the term for the state or quality is treated as a verb itself, and attaches directly to the verbal proclitics. When the complement is a *noun*, there are two possible verbs, depending on whether the statement is one of identity or class membership.

- siw “to be; identity, =”
- mən “to be (one of, a member of), to be a . . .”
- xûŋ “to be (called, known as)”

The first of these, *siw*, is considered *the* copula, because its behavior is distinct from other verbs, including those equivalent to a copula in other languages. Unlike most verbs, *siw* does not need to be preceded by a tense proclitic. Rather than indicating tense through a proclitic, it has suppletive forms for each of the tenses.

- sol PAST
- siw PRESENT
- sôŋ FUTURE

The future tense form *sôŋ* was originally in Old Yuktepat a verb meaning “become.” Its function has been replaced by the serial verb construction *kjaw siw*, literally “change be,” or *kjaw mən*.

The copula also forms its own optional contractions with the negative marker.

- *mi sol* → *mjol* “was not”
- *mi siw* → *miw* “is not”
- *mi sôŋ* → *mjôŋ* “will not be’

One can say simply say, “I pick berries,” or “I hunt bears,” or “I farm pigs,” but, in Yuktepat it is also acceptable to begin the predicate with “to be,” as in:

"I am pick berry"
"I am hunt bear"
"I am farm pig"

because in such cases one is not simply talking about what one is doing at the moment, but about what one does habitually, and more specifically about one=s occupation. When describing one's occupation or identity, "to be" is often used. It conveys a stronger and more emphatic sense of identity, a suggestion that the activity is a matter of essence, and a strong identification with what one is doing, a sense of permanence. Imagine "one who" inserted after "to be."

"I am one who picks berries," "I am a berry picker"
"I am one who hunts bears," "I am a bear hunter"
"I am one who farms pigs,' "I am a pig farmer"

One could be more specific and say, 'I am *jaʔ* pick berry," but it is not necessary.

This can be used not only with words denoting activities, but also with words denoting states or conditions to suggest that the state or condition is an inherent or inborn one.

"I green." = "I am green."
"I be green." = "I am one who is green; I am not one who is some other color."

There is a difference in meaning depending on whether the copula or *mən* is used for "be" here. The copula implies uniqueness – that one is the sole person who picks berries or hunts bears, etc. The verb *mən* implies that while picking berries or such is an essential feature of you, you are merely a member of a group of such people whose identity consists in picking berries.

The Empty Verb

Mok is what is known as the "empty verb": it has no meaning of its own, only serving as a placeholder for another verb in the sentence. Its meaning may be described as "to do something." Thus "A mok B" means "A does something to B." It is used when the speaker does not wish to specify a particular action, or to pose a hypothetical situation in academic discourse, which could be generalized to just about any action.

Kim mok qhot qhun?
You do-what kill soldiers?
How do you kill soldiers? You, doing what, kill soldiers?

Despite being largely equivalent to English "how" in this usage, as you can see from the example below, it continued to take predicative particles, and so could be considered a verb.[13]

Kim kə-mok qhot qhun?

[13] Although, I suppose it could be supposed that the word directly after the predicator did not have to be a verb, if we suppose that other function words in the predicate could follow the predicator ahead of the verb. Or, we could just say that Yuktepat word classes are fluid, and sometimes *mok* is a verb and sometimes it isn't, and leave it at that.

In the old language, before interrogative particles became mandatory, *mok* could also function as an interrogative verb, and in fact most similar words, like or , could be interpreted as either interrogative or indefinite. It preserved this meaning in the later language, but the interpretation became more specific. As the interrogative particle flourished, *mok* came to represent an interrogative sense only when the interrogative clitic particle was attached.

Experiencer Verbs

Certain transitive verbs in Yuktepat have argument relations that are the opposite of English. These are verbs which do not refer to activities but to mental or sensory states. Here, the experiencer is the object of the Yuktepat verb but the subject of the English verb, and the stimulus is the object of the Yuktepat verb but the object of the English verb.

see
hear
taste
smell
feel
perceive
want
like / love
need
be able
know
discover
experience
must / be obligated
is valuable to…
be happy
be angry
be afraid
be bored
be sad
be proud
hate - *khyal*
shock
confuse
suffer
tolerate - *phel*
please
be cold
be hot
be painful
be useful
interest, be interesting to - *syon*

Auxiliary Verbs

Auxiliary verbs follow the tense proclitics.

I. *nûŋ*, “to be able (to do); can (do)’

wok	*kə=*	*nûŋ*	*yuk*	*tepat*
I	PRES=can		speak/language	Tepat

“I can speak Yuktepat.”

II. */qoq/ > /qoʔ/ > /qo/ > /qô/ = J. *-te oku*, “something done in preparation for a later event.”

wok	*kə=*	*qə*	*mot*	*pʰal*
I	PRES=prepare		save	money

“I am saving my money (for the future)”

III. *xep*, “to experience”

nat	*əl=*	*xep*	*kʰaŋ*	*sûj*	*tepat*
3sg.	PAST=	experience	go	city	Tepat

“She has been to Tepat City.”

IV. *yaw*, “to want”

wok	*kə=*	*jaw*	*kʰaŋ*	*tslok*	*=ə*
I	PRES=	want	go	store	=the

“I want to go to the store.”

wok	*kə=*	*jaw*	*kim*	*kʰaŋ*	*tslok*	*=ə*
I	PRES=	want	you	go	store/shop	=the

“I want you to go to the store.”

V. *syôw*, “to make, conceive, cause”

lan	*kal*	*əl=*	*syôw*	*wok*	*tsʰjul*	*sjuk*	*=ə*
PLUR.	3sg.	PAST=	cause	1sg.	go	building	=the

“They made me leave the building.”

VI. *sjum*, “to move forward, advance, progress: the action taken is one that represents an improvement, or a progression to a new state or the next step of a process”

nat	*kə=*	*sjum*	*haw*	*tsʰip*
3sg.	PRES=	advance	heat	food

“He cooks now (because he used to eat everything raw)”

VII. *mol*, “to move backward, regress: the action taken is one that represents a decline, a devolution to a prior state, a loss, or a failure”

lan	*kal*	*əl=*	*syôw*	*wok*	*tsʰjul*	*sjuk*	*=ə*
PLUR.	3sg.	PAST=	cause	1sg.	go	building	=the

“They made me leave the building.”

Temporal Verbs

“during the rainy season” • “when it rains”

Yuktepat has many words or affixes with meanings like first, last, ex-, “to be,” pre-, post-, mid-, etc.

to become spring
to become summer
to become autumn
to become winter
to become morning
to become noon
to become night

for the hour to become
to become a new day / for the day to become the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, so on
to become a new year
to become a new decade (12 years)
to become a new century (144 years)
to become a new millenium (1728 years)
for a second to elapse
for a minute to elapse

“On our third anniversay…”
“When it became an anniversary for us for the third time…”

“to become time to…”

Pivot Verbs

A pivot verb is a verb whose object is at the same time the subject of the following verb.[14]

Hap

Hap is a verb that originally and typically refers to some form of handling, but does not have an inherent “direction,” and so can be translated as “give,” “have,” or “take” in English.

wok	*êl-*	*hap*	*cak*	*qhôy*	*nat.*
I	PAST	take	stone	give	him.

I gave him the rock.

In some other dialects, *qhôy* is placed before the direct object, instead of the indirect object, thus:

wok	*êl-*	*qhôy*	*nat*	*hap*	*cak.*
I	PAST	give	him	take	stone.

I gave him the rock.

To express the English notion of “give,” two verbs are necessary of course because Yuktepat only allows a particular verb to have two arguments, never three like English “give.”[15] Archaic Tepat was more flexible in this, and allowed a few verbs, including *qhôy*, to have two objects, so sentences like this were possible:

wok	*qhôy*	*nat*	*cak*.
I	give	him	stone.

---

[14] Halvor Eifring, *Clause Combination in Chinese*. 1995.
[15] Archaic Tepat was more flexible in this, and allowed a few verbs, including *qhôy*, to have two objects, so sentences like this were possible:

wok	*qhôy*	*nat*	*cak.*
I	give	him	stone.

I gave him the rock.

Note that the indirect object is in front of the direct object.

I gave him the rock.

That sentence would have sounded strange and old-fashioned to most people of Tepat, if it was ever in fact spoken. The same verb *qhôy* is translatable as “for” in other environments.

wok	*êl-*	*hyok*	*mwen*	*qhôy*	*nyon.*
I	PAST	write	letter	give	king.

I wrote a letter to the king.

In addition to expressing possession, handling, taking, and giving, *hap* is used to identify a direct object in many other cases where Yuktepat cannot permit multiple object for a single verb.

wok	*êl-*	*hyok*	*mwen*	*qhôy*	*nyon.*
I	PAST	write	letter	give	king.

I wrote a letter to the king.

wok	*êl-*	*qoq*	*mwen*	*qhôy*	*nyon.*
I	PAST	put	text	give	king.

I submitted a memorandum to the king.

Eventually it became a generalized marker of the direct object. Even in sentences where the direct object is the only object, it could be used to change emphasis by moving the direct object in front of the other verb.

This is equivalent to an English speaker saying that he “took something and Xed it.” However, while this is very colloquial in English, in Tepat this kind of construction appears in all levels of the language in both speaking and writing.

Colloquially, it was also used to mark instruments, even for things, like horses, that couldn’t normally be handled.

Wok	*əl-hap*	*slot*	*əl-khang*	*syûm*.
1sg	take	horse	go	city.

I went to the city by horse.

Syôw

Functioning similarly is the verb *syôw* CAUSE.

Wok	*əl-sôy*	*mwen*	*əl-khang*	*nyon*.
1sg	use	letter	go	king.

I sent a letter to the king.

The difference here, similar to the difference between English *send* and *give*, is that using *hap* implies that one personally visited the king and passed the letter from your own hand to his.

Syôw, moreover, is also sometimes found functioning as a conjunction. In this usage, it typically

does *not* follow a predicator. Its English equivalent would be something like ‘so, therefore, thus.’

Sôy

Sôy ‘use’ is another verb overlapping with both *hap* and *syôw*. It can be used similarly to *hap* to mark an object - or instrument - and move it in front of its verb.[16]

Wok	*əl-sôy*	*mwen*	*əl-qhôy*	*nyon*.
1sg	use	letter	give	king

I gave a letter to the king.

It can also replace *syôw* in front of the intermediate party in a causative construction.

Wok	*əl-sôy*	*slot*	*əl-khang*	*syûm*.
1sg	use	horse	go	city.

I went to the city by horse.

Several of these elements working together can produce even more complex sentences with multiple participants.

Wok	*əl-sôy*	*ti-slot*	*əl-khang*	*mwen*	*əl-qhôy*	*nyon*.
1sg	use	horseman	go	letter	give	king.

I sent a letter to the king by horsemen.

Yôw

Yôw, ‘be useful,’ is in many ways a passive counterpart to *syôw*.

Ti-slot	*kə-yôw*	*hap*	*mwen*.
Horsemen	useful	handle	letter

Horsemen are good for sending messages. / Horsemen are used to send messages.

Syow

Also, there is *syow*. You will be quite forgiven if you happen to confuse it with any of the preceding verbs, because in fact they ended up getting confused by native speakers of Yuktepat, although Tepat’s prescriptivist grammarians loved to scream about it.[17] *Syow* can be used in a sort of passive construction. *Syow*, as you may know, was the object relativizer of the old language. It was sometimes, though not often, used in the fairly marked construction, along the line of, “A is what B Xed.” Because this was fairly marked, it possessed strong emphasis. However, it became more common and the emphasis weakened, eventually becoming a mere passive along the lines of “A was Xed by B.”

---

[16] Pulleyblank, in *Outline of Classical Chinese Grammar*: “In English, one can, in general, replace an indirect object by a preposite phrase introduced by ‘to’ - ‘give a house to Mencius,’ etc. In Chinese it is more usual to replace the direct object by a phrase introduced by *yǐ* 以 ‘with, by means of.’ Compare this with English ‘to present someone with something.’

[17] Of course, it did get confused with *syôw* later in the language. They collapsed in many dialects as something like [ɕu]. The side effect of this was the collapse of causative and passive constructions. In these dialects [ɕu] came to be a particle meaning, essentially, “other-than-default valence.”

Despite the usefulness of passive expressions, they were restricted in formal discourse and writing, and inserting such phrases was considered bad writing. Classical writing preferred used the dummy subject ‘one,’ ‘someone,’ ‘something,’ and so on, which allowed the strict order of agent - verb - patient to be preserved (the passive, of course, inverted the order of agent and patient). For reasons of Tepatic theory of grammar, which held that subject - verb - object were in that order because agents had temporal priority over verbs, which had temporal priority over objects, it was considered illogical to put a logical patient before a logical agent. Not that they succeeded in stopping yokels from doing that.

Mwen	*THIS*	*əl-syow*	*wok*	*əl-syôw-khang*	*IT*	*əl-qhôy*	*nyon*.
letter	this	PASSIVE	1sg	CAUSE-go	it	give	king.

The letter was sent to the king by me.

Yeah, that’s pretty messed up. A bit simpler now, with an “agent of mystery” (ooooh):

Mwen	*THIS*	*əl-syow*	*khang*	*əl-qhôy*	*nyon*.
letter	this	PASSIVE	go	give	king.

The letter was sent to the king by me.

Notice that in the mystery-agent version, the causative verb and resumptive pronoun are comfortably dropped. Now for the grand finale:

Mwen	*DEM*	*əl-syow*	*wok*	*əl-sôy*	*ti-slot*	*əl-khang*	*3SG*	*əl-qhôy*	*nyon*.
letter	this	PASS.	1sg	cause	horseman	go	it	give	king.

The letter was sent by me to the king by horsemen.

Fortunately, I won’t be giving you many more sentences that are harder to parse than that.

Ngat

Passivization with *syow* is very useful, but still not always possible, so in some instances *ngat* is used. *Ngat*, like *syow*, began life as a relativizing particle but was extended to other functions as well. Its basic meaning is ‘(the place) where...’ *Syow* can usually only relativize direct objects or patients. In the case of certain kinds of verbs, like path verbs or experience verbs, the object is actually a ground or experiencer, not a patient. So in these cases *ngat* is used.[18]

Syûm	*ôl-ngat*	*nyon*	*ôl-khang*.
city	PASS	king	went

The king went to the city.

The sense can perhaps be better captured by ‘The city is where the king went,’ or even by the ludicrous *‘The city was gone to by the king.’ This phrasing is awkward and disliked in Tepat too,

[18] As *ngat* became more grammaticalized, and after initial *ng-* disappeared in some dialects, new fused tense-forms emerged: past tense *lat*, present tense *kat*, and future-tense *twat*.

but unlike the second English example, it *is* actually possible.

Predicators

The oldest Tepat language had optional, adverbial time markers. These developed into obligatory tense markers as time became of central importance to Tepatic thought and the ideology of progress took hold in society.[19] Old Yuktepat used particles to distinguish at minimum five tenses: present, past, immediate past, future, and immediate future. In addition, particles indicating the distant past and distant future are known but little used, and effectively unproductive, absent, in the common tongue. These markers were purely of time rather than of aspect, but the time expressed by them is rather flexible. Thus their usage has been stretched for expressive purposes or rhetorical effect, especially in poetry. For example, usual usage might deem the regular past tense appropriate for a ten-year-old event, and the immediate future appropriate for tomorrow, but usages such as the following have occurred:

- *nat* *X* *wop* *qôl* *lûy* *qôt* *wok* *thyam* *lap*
  she PAST under light sun with me dance dance
  "It was only ten years ago when she was still dancing with me in the sunshine..."
  (immediate past)

- *nat* *X* *X=* *yuk* *qhôy* *wok*
  3p tomorrow FUT+ speak give 1sg
  "He will speak to me tomorrow! I must wait until tomorrow!" (distant future)

In which case the immediate past emphasizes the vividness of the speaker=s recollections, and the regular future suggests that even tomorrow is too long her to wait.

Classical Yuktepat reduced the tense markers to only three in the standard language, for the present, past, and future – although the past and future markers may be expressively reduplicated to indicate remoteness in time. The Classical tense markers (which naturally varied from dialect to dialect) were:

- past *əl*
- present *kə* (may be related to the noun *ket*, "being, existence")
- future[20] *tu*

also:

---

[19] The growth of the so-called predicators was slow, characterized both by their reduction and their gradual appearance in more and more contexts. The earliest Yuktepat may have had inflectional tense. The present auxiliary *kə* derives from an old copula *[ket]. It was probably used as a progressive construction, such as "I am washing the clothes." The past tense *əl* is related to [lok]. In fact, they were written with the same character until The Great Script Reform. *Lok* is now also a prefix meaning "ex-." These auxiliaries at first appeared before verbs in conjunction with inflection, to strengthen the meaning, but then they took over that meaning. Originally temporal phrases displaced them. Then, they occurred even *with* temporal phrases. Also, originally they only appeared once in a sentence, before the first verb. Then they started to appear before every verb except those in relative clauses and those which were the second or *n*th verb in serial verb phrases. Finally, they even occurred in relative clauses.

[20] Alternative future tense: /ŋ̩=/. Negative contraction: /miŋ/

- historical *ci*

Beyond indicating the time some happened, the tense markers are the chief predicators of the language. They are used to indicate that what follows them *is*, in fact, the predicate, since there is no morphological difference between parts of speech. The hallmark of verbs is that follow one of these markers. But anything that directly follows them is to be interpreted as a verb. A verb can be derived from nearly any noun by simply placing one of the tense markers in front of the word. Thus the position of a word has more to do with its syntactic role than the verb itself.

Tense markers are properly proclitics in that they don't attach to following *word* so much as the entire predicate. Because the tense is already marked for the entire predicate, no more tense marking need be applied within the predicate. The marker is assumed to apply to all following verbs as well, at least until a new tense marker is introduced. Since most Yuktepat sentences contain more than one verb, often in serial constructions, this saves many repetitions. However, these markers are nearly always required before the first verb of the predicate.

The imperative particle *hay* replaces tense markers. It usually implies a second person subject, but may be used with other persons to have an exhortative sense.

hay *qʰwot* *koq*
IMP kill it
"Kill it!"

wat *hay* *yoq*
we IMP swim
"Let's go swimming!"

The three most important tenses are the past, present, and future. Roughly speaking, these tenses are equivalent to the following English tenses or other verb forms:

Past: = Past simple, past continuous, present perfect, past perfect, past perfect continuous
Present: = Present simple (habitual activity), present continous, present perfect continuous
Future: = Present simple (eternal truths), future simple, future continuous, future perfect, future perfect continuous, conditional, imperative, exhortative, infinitive of purpose

All events in past time are covered by the past tense, without distinguishing between general and specific kinds of action, as is often done in English by contrasting the past simple and present perfect. To create the kind of emphasis on general experience that the English present perfect does, the past tense may be combined with the auxiliary verb *xep*.

The Future Clitic

In Yuktepat, the future tense is used much more widely than in English, for, among other purposes, these:

- Infinitive of purpose.
    - Objective: FUT increase two ten five percent production become next month
    - "Objective: to increase production by 25% within the next month"
- Imperative. (Sometimes with *hay*)
    - *Kim tu hap XXX tu qhôy wat*.

    - “Give me the pen.” (“You will give me the pen.”)
- Conditionals.
    - FUT become-tomorrow put-down rain therefore we NEG-FUT go picnic
    - “If it rains tomorrow, we won’t go to the picnic.”
- Sometimes, as a gnomic tense.
    - shape three side FUT have three side
    - “A triangle will have three sides.”
- Desires/wishes/intentions. (Sometimes with *hay*)
    - “Do you want to go to the movies?”
    - “Let’s go see a movie!”

Adverbials

Complementizers / Relationals

Conjunctions

These words exist primarily to specify the logical relationship between two sequential actions. All conjunctions are assumed to connect predicates. Yuktepat *suk* means “therefore, then, so,” linking two clauses or sentences and implying a causal link between between a prior event (in the first clause) and a later result (in the second clause). Its twin is *pôq*, “because,” which implies that a certain event (in the first clause) must necessarily have occurred to produce a later event (in the second clause). In either case, the chronologically prior event must be in the first clause, because Tepat grammarian-logicians made it a rule that all events in a sentence must be stated in strict chronological order.

Time Relationships

Succeeding

tha

Event B begins after Event A.

Immediately Succeeding

ngut

Event B begins at the same time that Event A finishes, with no intervening events.

Overlapping

Event B begins after Event A begins and before Event A finishes, but Event B finishes after Event A finishes.

Simultaneous
Event A and Event B occur at the same time.

Contained
Event B begins after Event A begins and it finishes before Event A finishes, such that Event A is going on the entire time that Event B is happening.

Aligned Beginning
Events A and B begin simultaneously but Event B continuous longer.

Aligned End
Event B begins after event A, but they end together

Alternative
Conjunction for when there isn't any actual temporal priority for either of them.

Correlative and Causal Relationships

Correlated
Event A and Event B are logically related in an undefined way. They may both have a common cause, an unnnamed third Event C.

Forward Conditional
Yuktepat *suk* means "therefore, then, so," linking two clauses or sentences and implying a causal link between between a prior event (in the first clause) and a later result (in the second clause).

"If this prior event A, therefore this later event B."
A *suk* B

Backward Conditional
Its twin is *pôq*, "because," which implies that a certain event (in the first clause) must necessarily have occurred to produce a later event (in the second clause).

"If this later event B, therefore this prior event A."
A *pôq* B

Biconditional
Event A occurs if and only if Event B occurs.

Causative

Counterfactual

In addition, the pivot verb *syôw* "cause" can function as a conjunction expressing causation.

tuq	*nal(?)*	*syôw*	*X*	*X*	*X*
rain	fall	cause	3pl	cancel	picnic

The rain caused the picnic to be cancelled.
The picnic was cancelled because of the rain.

Limiters / Determiners / Adverbs

Certain particles, combinations of particles, and combinations of particles with other sentence elements are used to express what English often does with various adverbs, or with indefinite pronouns.

- *chə* - optional emphatic particle. It is sometimes used to mark a topic when it is not also the subject of the sentence, or to mark the head of an internally-headed relative clause. It can indicate contrast, as with the English "but," although it is not by itself a conjunction.
- *il* / *li* - already (< *yal*)
- *lu* - Mongolian *l*; only (< *law*)
- *mi* - Interrogative, interrogation
- *ni* - Mongolian *ch*, Japanese *mo*
- *pəl* - each, every (< *phol*)
- *ki* - right, exactly, just, at this point; literally (< *ik* < *yak*)
-

A archaic suffix *-l* might possibly be the explanation for many of the Tepatic words with some sense of plurality or collectivity, including the collective numerals, and the particles *phul* and *cyûl*.

Phul (and its nearly innumerable variants *pul*, *pûl*, *phûl*, *pôl*, *phol*, *pol*, *plô*, *plû*) originally was a sort of adverbial modifier before the verb indicating totality. In addition to meaning "total," and indicating that the verb's action was accomplished to the utmost degree, it could also indicate the distribution of the action across the totality of the subject, or object.

Insofar as *phul* tended more toward an object function, its counterpart for the subject was *cyûl* (also encountered as *cil*). It meant the whole or totality of something. Unlike *phul*, which was originally placed before the verb (phrase), *cyûl* was placed in front of the noun of the subject noun phrase. Early in the Yuy Kow Qlep, the function of the two particles began to be confused, with either one of them appearing alternately in the subject *or* object.

When they emerged from the period, *cyûl* had become a bound form attached to nouns for people, indicating the entirety of a group or class. This use was immortalized by Qloy for his description of the division of society by occupational groups. Beyond this, it could be attached to *verbs* as well, nominalizing them, and referring collectively to those who habitually do something. *Cyûl* came to be used by itself as a noun, meaning something like "class," and thus competing with the noun *cat*. They became distinguished by social judgment: *Our* people are organized into *cyûl*, but other less enlightened, more oppressive nations keep their people tied down in rigid *cat*. Finally, *cyûl* was verbed, meaning "classify," "organize," and such.

Phul, meanwhile, came to be used generally in the sense of “all” or “each” in front of both subject and object noun phrases. It also continued to be used in front of the verb as an adverb meaning “totally.”

Mwoy became *mi*. Then *mi* became an interrogative particle by the following pathway. First, yes-no questions were phrased by repeating the main verb, but negated. Thus, “You do not do” meant “Do you?” Eventually the second repetition was omitted, leaving the negative stranded behind the main verb. It was reinterpreted as interrogative. Subsequently *mi* spread to become attached to interrogatives elsewhere. These interrogatives came to be interpreted as indefinites when they *weren’t* accompanied by an interrogative particle.

The prefix *kû-* seems to have much in common with the Chinese character 子 *zǐ*, “child,” although it probably did not have an independent existence of its own. It is seen most prominently in the word *kûtom*, “child,” perhaps originally “little one of the *tom* (house),” but it occurs elsewhere as a diminutive prefix. Slowly, it begins to attach itself to the names of many common objects (e.g., spoon), with the unprefixed morphemes specializing as verbs referring to the typical functions of those objects. Thus it became a kind of nominalizing prefix as well.

Several delimiters exist which are contractions of two words:

- *chik* < *chə* + *ik*, *chyak* < *chə* + *yak*: literally, exactly that
- already + various tenses
    - *lal* - already PAST
- only + various tenses
    - *lul* – had just
    - *luk* – just now
    - *lut* – just will
- even + various tenses
    -
- just = only + now
    -
- still = even + now
    -
- (not) yet = even + now + NEG
-

Relativizers

Relativizers are used to subordinate one word or phrase to another, covering the functions of the genitive case and relative pronouns and particles in some languages.

The all-purpose relativizing particle is *i*,[21] which indicates that the word or phrase which follows it is to be interpreted as attributing something to the word that immediately precedes it. It can precede nouns, noun phrases, adjectives, verbs, verb phrases, prepositional phrases, entire sentences – basically, any type of expression at all. The immediately preceding word, to which it

[21] Naturally, when immediately before or after a uvular sound, it becomes [ɯ], or possibly [ɯj].

attributes things, is a noun or a word which is to be interpreted as a noun. It was likely enclitic on this noun.

It can be omitted when it seems clear that a word or group of words is intended to be an attribute of the preceding word, most commonly when it is (or would be) followed by an adjective / stative verb. Naturally, it is frequently omitted in newspaper headlines, where space is precious. In main clauses pronouns were not omitted in standard speech, but they could be omitted sometimes in relative clauses. A noun within the relative clause could be omitted if it was the same as the head noun, more common when it was the subject though than the object. Similarly, tense markers were also frequently omitted within relative clauses. Observe the following:

slot	*=i*	*wok*	*əl=*	*nyet*	*koq*
horse	=REL	I	PAST=	ride	it
slot	*=i*	*wok*	*əl=*	*nyet*	
horse	=REL	I	PAST=	ride	
slot	*=i*	*wok*	*nyet*		
horse	=REL	I	ride		
slot	*wok*	*nyet*			
horse	I	ride			

“the horse that I rode”

The particle *i* is not the only relativizer. There are also other particles with more limited use. They often combine within themselves the function of being the head of the clause. These are most characteristic of Old Tepat, where they were used almost exclusively to relativize phrases. In the late classical language, they had largely become derivational prefixes.

- /sjow/
  object

syow	*wok*	*xat*
REL	I	eat

  “what I ate”
- /jaʔ jah/
  agent. Cf. Kəcə /eʔ/. By modern Yuktepat, has become a prefix denoting occupation.
  yaqsiknyak, “historian”
- /tsû/
  verbal complementizer
- /sûq/
  time (</siq/)

sûq	*kal*	*ts^{h}jul*	*tom*
REL	he	from	house

  “When he left the house”
- /・at/
  place, location (</・ac/). Cf. Kəcə /atʃ/

ngat	*lan-kal*	*swom*
REL	PL-he	live

  “the place where they live”
- /ngay/

way, manner, “like”; adverbializer and adjectivalizer of similarity. Cf. Kəcə /ɲi/, “way of doing.”

- /im/ (</i + mən)
  occasionally encountered indefinite article; considered a relativizer because it is a contraction of the relativizer *i* and the verb *mən*, meaning “that which is a (member of the class of).”

Morphology

Since Yuktepat is a highly isolating language, this section doesn’t really need to be here.

Syntax

Serial Verbs

In Yuktepat several verbs may follow each other directly without any intervening particles or words or any morphological marking. They belong in the same predicate and share the same subject and tense proclitics, effectively forming compound verbs. Often one element supplies the result, goal, or direction of action of the preceding verb. Verbs of motion in particular are inclined to aggregate in this manner.

Result

In a complement of result the second verb in the series gives the result of the action of the first verb in the series.

wok	*əl=*	*kʰyen*	*cʰɨt*	*cʰɨl*	*sut*	*sotoy*
I	PAST=	look	understand	this	CLASS	book

"I read the book and understood it."

nat	*əl=*	*slat*	*naq*	*kʰow*
he	PAST=	hit	break	plate

"He dropped the plate and it broke."

The negator *mi* may be inserted between the two verbs, meaning that the result of the second verb failed to obtain from the action of the first verb.

wok	*əl=*	*kʰyen*	*mi*	*cʰɨt*	*cʰɨl*	*sut*	*sotoy*
I	PAST=	look	not	understand	this	CLASS	book

"I read this book but didn't/couldn't understand it."

Manner and Direction of Motion

Yuktepat was historically verb-framing, although in Modern Yuktepat it became satellite-framing through the grammaticalization of certain motion verbs. When talking or writing about motion, manner and direction are expressed in separate lexemes. Thus "walk," "run," "swim," etc., refer only to the manner of movement and not to any source or destination. These manner-of-motion verbs cannot occur with any noun referring to a location or destination without a path verb.

wok	*əl=*	*xam*	*nyul*	*qôjmuk*
1SG	PAST	walk	enter	forest

"I walked into the forest."

wok	*əl=*	*xam*	*nyul*	*qôjmuk*
1SG	PAST	walk	go-through	forest

"I walked through the forest."

wok	*əl=*	*xam*	*wul*	*qôjmuk*
1SG	PAST	walk	around	forest

"I walked around the forest (avoiding the forest)."

wok *əl=* *xam* *wam* *qôjmuk*
1SG PAST walk around forest
"I walked around the forest (within the forest)."

When they occur with an object, they have a causative meaning.

wok *əl=* *xam* *sopak*
1SG PAST walk dog
"I walked the dog."

wok *əl=* *xam* *sopak* *(əl=)* *kʰaŋ* *XX*
1SG PAST walk dog (PAST) go park
"I walked the dog to the park."

If you did say the following sentence, it would sound like you had the trees on a leash like a dog.

**wok* *əl=* *xam* *qôjmuk*
1SG PAST walk forest
"I walked the forest."

The causative auxiliary *syôw* may also be optionally used.

wok *əl=* *syôw* *xam* *sopak* *(əl=)* *kʰaŋ* *XX*
1SG PAST make walk dog (PAST) go park
"I walked the dog to the park."

wok *əl=* *syôw* *sopak* *(əl=)* *xam* *kʰaŋ* *XX*
1SG PAST make dog (PAST) walk go park
"I walked the dog to the park."

Position and posture verbs also function similarly to manner-of-motion verbs, in that they generally cannot take an object, and if they *do* take an object, it makes them causative.

I sat.

Wok ôl-XX slot.
I got on the horse.

Wok ôl-nyet XX slot.
I sat on the horse.

Wok ôl-nyet slot. / *Wok ôl-syôw nyet slot*. / *Wok ôl-syôw slot nyet*.
I made the horse sit.

For indicating direction, the two most common words are *kʰaŋ* and *tsʰjul*, which indicate the goal and the origin of motion, respectively, and may be translated as "(go) to" and "(come) from." There is also *wang*, which indicates a general direction but no particular destination and may be translated as "towards." They can also be used by themselves when it is only desired to indicate direction without indicating means.

Beyond the above mentioned directional indicators, there are also:[22]

- *cong*: from, out of
- *play*: before, in front of, precede, advance
- *hen*: behind, after, follow, return
- *cang*: over, above, up, to ascend
- *wop*: under, below
- *sek*: before, ahead
- *hat*: out of, off of

These can also describe motion. However, they do not describe motion necessarily. They may also indicate static location if they are not combined with any other verbs of motion.

Other Regular Verbs as Parts of Compounds

Some verbs acquire idiosyncratic extended meanings in compounds or combinations with other verbs:

wam - do aimlessly, with no purpose

Extent

The word *slang*, which in isolation means "extent," or "range," can be used to emphasis the extent of the action of a verb.

wok	*kê-khyan*	*slang*	*qhwot*	*min*
I	sad	extent	kill	self

"I'm so sad I could kill myself."

---

[22] Over time, prepositions developed out of some of these words. Most modern Yuktepat prepositions are phonologically reduced forms of verbs. In the phonological reduction of prepositions we see several trends. Final consonants are lost, and vowels are centralized. The high vowels /i/ and /u/ become /û/ and the lower vowels, /a/, /e/, and /o/, become /ɤ/. Diphthongs are simplified, so that diphthongs in /j/ become /i/ and those in /w/ become /u/. Aspiration on the initial consonant is lost. Occasionally, a stop may be lost before the lateral, or the lateral may be dropped instead.
khang > ka "to"
chyul > tsil, tli "from"
tsong > tsə "out of"
play > pli "ahead of"
hen > he "behind"
tsang > tsa "above"
wop > wo "below"

Comparison

The verb *cil*, which means "compare," is found in expressions of the comparison of two quantities or degrees.

Wok	*tu-cil*	*hyap*	*uk*	*nyang*
I	compare	apple	and	orange

"I will compare apples and oranges."

Syûm	*Tepat*	*kô-wey*	*cil*	*syûm*	*Luq-tal*.
city	Tepat	big	compare	city	six-side

"Tepat City is bigger than Hexagon City.

Noy	*kə-côq*	*cil*	*nap*.
woman	good	compare	man

"Women are better than men."

Subordination and Relativization[23]

There are three kinds of relative clauses in Yuktepat, two of which are in current use and one of which is considered archaic.

Relativization with "of"

The all-purpose relativizing particle is *i*, which indicates that the word or phrase which follows it is to be interpreted as attributing something to the word that immediately precedes it. It can precede nouns, noun phrases, adjectives, verbs, verb phrases, prepositional phrases, entire sentences – basically, any type of expression at all. The immediately preceding word, to which it attributes things, is a noun or a word which is to be interpreted as a noun. It was likely enclitic on this noun.

It can be omitted when it seems clear that a word or group of words is intended to be an attribute of the preceding word, most commonly when it is (or would be) followed by an adjective / stative verb. Naturally, it is frequently omitted in newspaper headlines, where space is precious. In main clauses pronouns were not omitted in standard speech, but they could be omitted sometimes in relative clauses. A noun within the relative clause could be omitted if it was the same as the head noun, more common when it was the subject though than the object. Similarly, tense markers were also frequently omitted within relative clauses. Observe the following:

slot	*=i*	*wok*	*əl=*	*njet*	*ko?*
horse	=REL	I	PAST=	ride	it
slot	*=i*	*wok*	*əl=*	*njet*	
horse	=REL	I	PAST=	ride	

[23] Dialectally, a new set of possessive pronouns has emerged from contractions of the particle *i* with following personal pronouns. In most cases, *i* has been incorporated into the pronoun, replacing the pronoun's native vowel.

yut, yot	my
kim	your (identical with the free-standing pronoun.
nit	his, her, its
kil	his, her, its

slot *=i* *wok* *njet*
horse =REL I ride
slot *wok* *njet*
horse I ride
“the horse that I rode”

The second-to-last, *Slot i wok njet*, is probably the most common form. The preceding forms would be used when more clarity is desired, such as in formal papers. The last form would be the one used in newspapers, especially headlines. In the following examples, *i* is omitted. In the first example, the phrase consists of a noun and a one-syllable stative verb that is commonly used to modify that noun – a frequent environment in which to delete relativizers. In the second example, the two elements are intimately associated, such that they really form a single name.

sjuk *kaw*
building tall
“a tall building”

syûm *tepat*
city Tepat
“Tepat city” (the capital of the league)

The particle *i* is usually not used when the modifying element is supposed to say exactly what the thing is. Or, when the two elements are coterminous. In a sequence N1 N2, if both are nouns and the relationship can be expressed as “N1 is N2” (or even “N1 is like N2”), then *i* is not used.

yôp chut “needle leaves” - The leaves are (like) needles

This distinguishes pairs such as the following insulting expressions:

ngyuq *i* *slot*
face of horse
ngyuq *XX*
face dick

It is grammatical, if not polite, to say that someone has the the “face OF a horse.” By contrast, it is not possible to say *ngyuq i XX*, “face of a dick,” because dicks do not have faces, even though yours may look like one.

Relative clauses with relativizing particles

The particle *i* is not the only relativizer. There are also other particles with more limited use. They often combine within themselves the function of being the head of the clause. These are most characteristic of Old Tepat, where they were used almost exclusively to relativize phrases. In the late classical language, they had largely become derivational prefixes, and the use of them simply to form relative clauses struck writers as archaic.

- /sjow/

object
syow *wok* *xat*
REL I eat
“what I ate”

- /jaʔ jah/
  agent. Cf. Kəcə /eʔ/. By modern Yuktepat, has become a prefix denoting occupation. *yaqsiknyak*, “historian”
- /tsû/
  verbal complementizer
- /sûq/
  time (</siq/)
  sûq *kal* *tsʰɲul* *tom*
  REL he from house
  “When he left the house”
- /・at/
  place, location (</・ac/). Cf. Kəcə /atʃ/
  ngat *lan-kal* *swom*
  REL PL-he live
  “the place where they live”
- /・ay/
  way, manner, “like”; adverbializer and adjectivalizer of similarity. Cf. Kəcə /ɲi/, “way of doing.”
- /im/ (</i + mən)
  occasionally encountered indefinite article; considered a relativizer because it is a contraction of the relativizer *i* and the verb *mən*, meaning “that which is a (member of the class of).”

Internally-headed relative clauses

Relative clauses may also be internally headed. They usually imply a more indefinite reference than externally-headed relative clauses. These relative clauses are formed by appending a particle[24] *after* the complete phrase, or by appending the phrase to the semantically null heads *mon* or *kot*.

Examples:

êl= *xap* *i* *wok*
PAST father REL 1sg
‘the one who was a father to me’ = ‘my late father’

êl= *xap* *wok* *=in*
PAST father 1sg REL
‘the one who was a father to me’ = ‘my late father’

êl= *xap* *wok* *=in* *êl=* *yût* *x̧at*

[24] Originally, this was a third-person possessive pronoun.

PAST father 1sg REL PAST doctor tooth
My [late] father was a dentist.

Compound Lexical Items

Early Yuktepat had only a small number of compound lexical items. However, in the very late stages of the language, compounds almost completely took over simple nouns and verbs. This is one of the most striking differences between the ancient and modern language, along with phonological simplification. In fact, the two trends drove each other. As many words began to be pronounced the same, the addition of other words to them helped clarify meaning in the spoken language. This permitted the components to be simplified even further, such that they would not have much meaning at all - or none at all - by themselves. They were now trapped in their compound states. Now the majority of nouns and verbs are disyllabic, bimorphemic entities, and only a few function words remain completely free and monosyllabic.

Classifier-Noun Compounds

After time, many pairs of classifiers and nouns became very conventionalized. Some of them became so conventionalized, that they would appear together all the time. Even in situations where there were no numerals, and thus we would not expect a classifier to be grammatically necessary, the classifier still appears. At this point, the two of them together have become a new, compound word. The words for many objects are composed thus, with first part indicating the object's shape, and the second part its substance or function, although often the new term itself is more than the mere sum of its parts.

lepnuq	knife	> *leʔnuq* , *lénuq*
lopmay	rope	> *loʔmay* , *lómay*
maynul	table	> *maŋyl*

Verb-Object Compounds

Verb-object compounds are one of the main types of compounding that had much lexical presence even in the old language. In classical times, many verb-object compounds had come to be used alternately as nouns.

take in…	…food
	…water
	…beer
	…air
	…smoke
	…penis
	…poison
ts^{h}iw…	…qakil / chip
	…joŋ
	…muq

…ts^{h}el
…kljem
…hon
…tjak

The above types of combinations of verbs (especially path verbs) with some type of noun form what are called verb-object compounds. These form not only predicates, but can be used as nouns denoting actions, e.g., *tsʰɨw-tsʰɨp*, “to eat;” *tsʰɨw-muq*, “to drink, to get drunk; drinking;” *tsʰɨw-tsʰel*, “inhalation;” *tsʰɨw-kljem*, “smoking;” *tsʰɨw-hon*, “fellatio (lit., taking in a stick-like object).

nay-muq: “love alcohol”: alcoholism, heavy drinking
jaʔ-nay-muq: “person love alcohol”: heavy drinker, alcoholic

write = mark + glyph
write = mark + written language
read = look at + glyph
read = look at + written language
read = look at + book
draw = mark + picture/image

Instrument-Verb Compounds

“Manner” or “instrumental” predicates: often just nouns that are placed behind a predicator and before a result or path verb. However, note that these nouns themselves often function also as verbs relating to the typical action of that noun. Remember?

haw	‘fire’	and	‘burn’
klam	‘mirror’	and	‘reflect’
laq	‘palm’	and	‘identify’
nuq	‘knife’	and	‘stab’
puk	‘eye’	and	‘look’
hep	‘ear’	and	‘listen’
thing	‘tongue’	and	‘lick’
saq	‘stream’	and	‘flow, pour’

CARD *laq* = ‘card palm, card that points, ID card’

This applies to words that are classifiers, as well as nouns.

cyuk	‘a slice’	‘to slice’

e.g.,
haw, “fire; to burn; to accomplish something by burning or application of heat

The soldiers burned off his foot.

jaʔ.puj əl=haw nup swot (i) nat
jaʔ.puj əl=haw swot (i) nat əl=hat

The thief burned the seal off the chest.
jaʔ.num əl=haw pjat əl=hat pʰak.qul
jaʔ.num əl=haw nup pjat əl=hat pʰak.qul

Notice that there are two ways to accomplish this. In one case, the path / result verb follows the manner predicate and precedes the object. In the other case, the path / result verb follows the object *and* another predicator. When there are multiple objects, such as in the case of the thief burning the *seal* off of the *chest*, only the second option is available.

Indicating Perception:

Verbs dealing with sensory experience are often followed by the verb XXX "to perceive," indicating that the sensory stimulus was successfully perceived.

kʰjen	to watch, look at	*kʰjen-X*	to see
won	to listen (to)	*won-X*	to hear
kej	to touch	*kej-X*	to feel (by touching)
x	to (try to) smell	X-X	to smell
x	to (try to) taste	X-X	to taste
x	to search for	X-X	to find

下水
上水
水下
水上

Japanese has appropriated the English preposition *up* in a series of innovative phrases where it means, basically, an improvement. Yuktepat should use the adverb (?) *forward* or *forth* in the same sense.

Wat êl-xam nat êl-khang clok-ê.
[wɑ.ɾl̩ xɑm na.ɾl̩.kʰɑŋ ʦ͡ʃɔ.kə]
I PAST walk he PAST go store
I walked him to the store.

The day has heat. There is heat in the day.
Yuktepat once had words meaning "one person" and "two people," which developed new meanings and were replaced by analytic constructions of "one" + "person" and "two" + "person." Perhaps the old word "one-person" acquired the meaning of individual. The plural of "person" – "persons / people" – acquired the more particular meaning of "*the* people, the masses."

Incorporated instruments

To the extent that an analytic language can be said to incorporate *anything*, Yuktepat allows the incorporation of nouns representing an instrument into the verbal complex. The incorporated noun appears directly in front of the verb, and directly after the predicator.

To be suitable for incorporation, a word must meet the following requirements:

1. it must be a noun
2. it must be monosyllabic
3. it must refer to some kind of thing that, within reason, is naturally associated with the action of a verb, or is habitually used in order to carry out the action of a verb.

That last point is especially important. Most of the nouns that are incorporatable refer to body parts or to common tools. In fact, they form a semi-closed class of nouns. Most of the verbs that incorporate instruments permit only a few out of the class of incorporable nouns to be incorporated. Some only incorporate body parts. Some only pick one or two apparently arbitrary nouns. In all aspects, this system is sort of idiomatic at this point. Certain combinations of nouns and verbs have acquired connotations of their own and are better treated as single lexical items.

mouth + take in	“take in by mouth”
hand + take in	“take in by hand”
knife + separate	“cut off”
knife + strike	“stab”

They are not like verbs because they cannot stand by themselves in this position; they must be followed by a proper verb.

Language and Culture

Obviously, culture and language are closely inter-twined and inter-dependent, like a pair of passionate lovers, or the mutualistic fungus and alga in lichens. Now that I've given this section an introductory paragraph, let's check out some specific areas of culture.

Names

Tepat proper names (*hyoq*) are mostly of the disyallabic, CVCVC type. Names became increasingly fossilized through history and eventually the well of possible names shrunk officially, to a mere 288 names deep. At this point, names are a separate kind of vocabulary, separate from common nouns, which do not have any particular meaning or refer to anything in everyday language. They are no longer meaningful words to most people, and in fact many of them have unknown etymologies.

In the ancient period, people also had surnames, which were also becoming increasingly fossilized even at that early period. The use of surnames was suppressed during the Kwan and early Lyup periods, in order to undermine traditional clan loyalties as an independent source of power from the state. Surnames were replaced with a combination of patronymic and matronymic.

Poetics and Stylistics

Early Tepat stylistics referred almost exclusively to the style of writing of histories and philosophical treatises. While the earliest pieces of writing were very compact, they became progressively wordier. While it was still admired to be able to say something in the most concise way possible, increasingly the supreme virtue came to be complete explicitness and lack of ambiguity, which tended to make sentences get longer and more repetitive to remove as much doubt as possible, much like modern American lawyer-speak.

Poetry was not very developed in Tepat, because official doctrine was that it was a waste of time and not 'real' or 'serious' literature ('real' or 'serious' literature referring to history, philosophy, and technical documents). In contrast to good old non-fiction, novels and dramas were perceived as faking the content of writing, while poetry faked the presentation (i.e., described things in certain ways by distorting objective descriptions). It was only much later, with the establishment of aesthetics as a legitimate subdiscipline of philosophy, that poetry got any slack. At this time, scholars finally began to analyze poetry and decide which poems and songs were 'good' and 'bad.' It perhaps had much to do with the dominant culture's privileging of the social-communicative function of language, over the private-expressive. And poetry was definitely considered private-expressive, like a diary that rhymed. Of course, the arousal of interest in poetry happened to come at a time when people were realizing that art had important public functions too.

While it was obvious to most people that metaphors were not *literal* but, well, *metaphorical*, it was still considered a bad practice. After all, repeating something enough can cause it to be ingrained into you even if you consciously and logically reject, so the use of metaphor was dubious at best. It could possibly undermine one's distinction between real and unreal. Since metaphors put users at risk for schizophrenia, both men of letters and doctors advised poets to limit themselves to mere simile, if they had to indulge in poetry at all.

In the meantime, people had been singing for centuries, and had certainly managed to develop their own Tepat way of songwriting. For the most part, this was rather simple in that it merely required all lines to have the same number of syllables, and for the final sounds of each pair of lines to rhyme. Anything more complicated was uncommonly attempted, rarely noticed, and even more rarely appreciated.

Overlapping terms in Yuktepat, like legalese, reflecting their society built on overlapping interest groups.

Humor

The deliberate misuse of classifiers, pairing words which have no semantic relationship to each other, is a staple of much Tepatic humor. A fairly common example is to refer to a human with a classifier normally used with animals. Other more bizarre examples, such as referring to someone with the classifier *qay*, usually used with sheets of paper, also exist.

Texts

The golden rule in Yuktepat (people argue over the primacy of the positive or negative formulation. The positive form has gained favor in Tepat, the negative form on the East Coast):

kim	*X=*	*X*	*X*	*X*	*sjow*	*jaw*	*X*	*X*	*kim*
you	should	benefit	other	do	OBJ-COMPL	want	other	benefit	you

self	should	benefit	not	self	do	OBJ-COMPL	want	not	self	benefit	self

you	want	other	benefit	you	therefore	you	should	benefit	other

you	not	should	do	OBJ-COMPL	you	not	want	other	harm	you

you	not	should	against	other	do	OBJ-COMPL	hurt	you

you	not	should	against	other	do	thing	COMPL	hurt/against	you

“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

Proverbs

Hyum hap.
“Hyum take” = “damn you, fuck you”

SAY hyum khyen.
“Say hyum appear” = “Speak of the devil and he appears”

Lwat nyet yet kon.
“Lwat riding a tortoise”

Lexicon

Interesting features of the Yuktepat lexicon:

- A very persistent, thorough-going, and complete distinction between words for people and animals. For example:

  xɯt ‘tooth’ v. fang
  nail v. claw
  hep ‘human ear’ v. ‘animal ear’
  bottom v. rump
  ‘human head’ v. ‘animal head’
  ‘classifier for people’ v. ‘classifier for animals (and furniture)’

In many cases, the animal-related term is more general, corresponding to several human-related words that make finer distinctions:

cin ‘hair,’ beard v. fur ; *woq* ‘whisker’
ngyuq ‘face,’ nose, *low* ‘mouth’ v. snout/muzzle
tey ‘hand,’ ‘arm,’ *noq* ‘leg,’ *swot* ‘foot’ v. *paw* ‘paw’

Some of the animal terms are very broad, extended even to plants:

lyat ‘skin’ v. *kil* ‘(animal) hide, (tree) bark, (fruit) peel’

Beyond body parts, the human / non-human distinction is made in a number of other words, including verbs.

food v. feed
eat v. feed
live v. live
tlup ‘corpse’ v. dead body
pass away v. die

In all instances, the vocabulary relating to human things is more finely divided. For example, there are multiple words for things such as bodies. There are many special words for things relating to humans. For example, although the common word for ‘bare, naked’ is *lak*, there is a special word, *tam*, for the naked human body as a whole.

naked body v. dead body

Among terms for animals, Yuktepat conflates many animals that are quite distinct to other cultures, e.g., ‘rat’ and ‘mouse.’ A similar conflation occurs in the plant and fungal kingdoms. In order to be more specific, various qualifiers may be required.

- *cyok* ‘bee, wasp’
- ‘crow, raven’
- ‘deer, moose’
- ‘seal, sea lion’
- ‘rabbit, hare’ - rabbit = long-eared mouse
- ‘monkey, ape’
- ‘raccoon, badger, skunk’
- *sisil* ‘camel, llama’
  sisil ti-lump = camel
- ‘mold, moss’
- *kling* ‘goat, sheep’
  straight sheep = goat, curly goat = sheep
- *kultul* ‘butterfly, moth’
- *khlût* ‘mouse, rat’
- *nyal* ‘coniferous tree or shrub’
  nyal i muq ‘beer pine = spruce’ *nyal i yôp XXX* ‘pine that sheds leaves = larch’
- XXX = slug
  SNAIL *lak* ‘naked snail’ = slug, SNAIL *lak* ‘shell slug’ = snail
- *slin* ‘eagle, falcon, hawk’
- *yet*, ‘lizard, reptile or amphibian in general’
  yet kon ‘shell lizard’ = turtle, *yet loy* (slimy lizard) = salamander, *yet loy mi swel* (tailless slimy lizard) = frog, *yet tluq* (dry lizard) = terrestrial four legged reptile - lizard, *yet tluq mi swel* (tailless dry lizard) = toad

city = walled (*ti*-WALL)

Like many complex societies, Yuktepat makes a plethora of color distinctions, including special terms for ‘light red (pink)’ and ‘light blue.’ Reflecting Tepat’s extreme anthropocentrism again, ‘tan’ or ‘flesh’ color, the color of human (or at least Tepatic) skin, is a basic color term in Yuktepat.

Swadesh’s 100-word list - Yuktepat

1. I - wok
2. thou - kim
3. we - wat
4. this
5. that
6. who? - nal
7. what?
8. not - mi-, lum
9. all - phul
10. many
11. one - hûq
12. two - niw
13. big - wey
14. long - tel
15. small - myôl
16. woman - noy
17. man - nap
18. person - yan
19. fish - lup
20. bird - thel
21. dog - sopak
22. louse -
23. tree - muk
24. seed - mit
25. leaf - yôp
26. root - lat
27. bark - kil
28. skin - lyat
29. flesh -
30. blood - sat/polut
31. bone -
32. grease -
33. egg - tham
34. horn - loq
35. tail - swel
36. feather -
37. hair - cin
38. head - khal
39. ear - hep

40. eye - puk
41. nose -
42. mouth - low
43. tooth - xa̱t
44. tongue - thing
45. fingernail
46. foot - swot
47. knee
48. hand - tey
49. belly
50. neck
51. breasts - xw̱it
52. heart - sôm
53. liver
54. drink - hûp
55. eat - xa̱t, chip, chiw
56. bite - xa̱t
57. see - khyen
58. hear - won
59. know - chit / yat
60. sleep - man
61. die - xw̱el
62. kill - qhwot
63. swim - yoq
64. fly - syal
65. walk - xam
66. come
67. lie - paq
68. sit -
69. stand
70. give - hap / qhôy
71. say -
72. sun - lûy
73. moon - kyut
74. star - sûy
75. water - yong
76. rain - tuq
77. stone - cak
78. sand -
79. earth - nwong
80. cloud - lung, yut
81. smoke - klyem
82. fire - haw
83. ash -
84. burn - haw, sap
85. path - khat
86. mountain - yam
87. red - yak
88. green - lyot
89. yellow - qhow
90. white - pok
91. black - xw̱ôt
92. night
93. hot - qhat
94. cold - sul
95. full
96. new - nik
97. good - côq
98. round
99. dry - tluq
100. name - hyoq

Detritus

tongzhi, “comrade”

kim	“you”
wem	honorific classifier for people
kimwem	“your honor,” nearly obsolete

Modern Yuktepat

ilwam
ikwam
itwam
imilwam
imikwam
imitwam

put-out until crazy water
I exude water to the point that it is unreasonable.
I’m sweating like crazy.

The metric system, which creates new units by putting numerical prefixes on the names of base units, would provide a good model for how Yuktepat deals with many things.

Nat	*êl=*	*X*	*nuq*	*êl=*	*nyul*	*Laura*
He	PAST	pick-up	knife	PAST	enter	Laura

He picked up the knife and inserted it into Laura
He stabbed Laura

If you don’t have any, the normal expression is, “We don’t have any.” If the question was, “How many do you have?” then normal answer is “We have zero.”

Is time like a grid which you can continually zoom in on? As each space gets continually larger, the lines are still one pixel wide.

- A particle that can function simultaneously as a marker of a clausal subject, a third-person object, and a third-person possessive adjective.

3sg PAST go Arkhangai X PRES surprise 1sg	I’m surprised that he came to Arkhangai.
3sg PAST kill X	He killed it.
fish X	His fish
3sg PAST give fish	He gave his (own) fish
3sg PAST break leg X	He broke his (someone else’s) leg

*wlet ʟʏt lwɛt
*wek ɥøk wɪk

Xunzi • Sɨt

	-iw	-ul	-ang	-at<*-ac					
n-	(niw?)	*nyul* ENTER	(nang?)	(nac?)					
n-		*nal* ONTO							
c-			cang up						
ch-	*chiw* TAKE.IN	*chyul* EXIT	(chang?)						
sl-			slang						
k-		kul							
kh-	*khiw* GO	(khyul?)	khang GO	khat					
ng-	(ngiw?)	(ngyul?)	(ngang?)	ngat					
w-			wang						

kh/ch/ng/n + iu/a + l/ng/c

tsang - up
now/nwiw/nuy/nul/

From the WordPerfect file about Yuktepat syllables

In Tepatyuk, there are three phonological patterns for words. Open monosyllables have the form CV, closed monosyllables are C(x)VC, and closed disyllables are of the form C(x)VC(x)VC. The x in these formulae refers to an optional glide, w or y. In addition another category may be said to consist of all more complex forms, longer than the closed disyllable. Overwhelmingly the phonological patterns correspond to major lexical categories, with function words being mostly open monosyllables and content words being one of the closed forms. The longer forms occur only among compound words derived from conjoined words of the closed monosyllable or disyllable type. A few words of foreign origin exhibit otherwise unknown forms, such as CVCV.

Initials x Glides x Vowels x Finals x Tones

Although all Tepatyuk obstruents are by default voiceless, inside a word obstruents are voiced in intervocalic position.

	Ø																					

Ø																							
p																							
ph																							
m																							
t																							
th																							
n																							
c																							
ch																							
s																							
k																							
kh																							
h																							
ng																							
q																							
qh																							
tl																							
l																							
lh																							
w																							
y																							

A labial consonant cannot be followed by w.

	i	e	a	o	u	ɤ	ɯ
—	i	e	a	o	u	ɤ	ɯ
w-	wi	we	wa	wo	u	wo	u
y-	i	ye	ya	yo	yu	ye	i

	i	e	a	o	u	ɤ	ɯ
-p	ip	ep	ap	op	up	-	-
-t	it	et	at	ot	ut	ɤt	ɯt
-k	-	-	ak	ok	uk	ɤk	ɯk
-q	-	-	aq	oq	uq	ɤq	ɯq
-l	il	el	al	ol	ul	ɤl	ɯl

lok “ex-, last, former, yester-” --> *ôl*
hypothetical possessive clitic and nominalizer *-n*
ôl + n --> *lôn* “that which is former --> the former” discourse deictic referring to something referring to before.

Qokal cupping by connoisseurs in Tepat, Hamtum, and Moqali.

kô-yôk > kyôk > kik, kôk

生于血死于血。
Xum ku sat xwel ku sat.
“Born from blood, die by blood.” / “What is born in blood will die in blood.”
血杀所血生（之）。
Sat qhwot syow sat xum.
“Blood kills what blood births.”
Even more succinctly...
血生血杀。
Sat xum sat qwhot.
“Blood births, blood kills.”
(= “Live by the sword, die by the sword.”)

There is a whole genre of four-character proverbs and idioms which the state tapped into by weaving four characters for their social ideals around the character *Tepat* in the state seal. This seal itself influenced a form of word-art made by choosing a small number of characters (from three to seven, but usually four) to convey a message and weaving them together in the same pattern, or otherwise integrating them into some design together.

VERB	OBJECT
stop / close +	breath / eye / mouth / door / bottle / hole / button (shirt) / lock, key / window / event / building

Chô yan wey kul ngik slang ni POV
“The great man follows righteousness even unto poverty.”

Yan chô myôl kul yôw slang ni WICK
“The lesser man follows profit even unto wickedness”

According to the summer class:
If you sing in bed, then your mother will die.
If someone steps on someone’s foot, then they will be enemies.
If you look in a mirror at night, you will get lost.
If you step on the threshold, you will get bad luck.
If you eat rice, then hail will hit you.
If you take a bowl into bed, you will get sick.

If you comb your hair at night, you will have bad luck.
If you sit on a table, you will owe money.
If you break a bowl, then you will be happy.
If a man has an earring, then he will have bad luck.
If you bite your nails, you will get sick.
If you throw milk in the river, then the river will dry up.

If a man wears two hats, then he will be married twice.

Freddy Krueger = brown hat, red and green striped sweater

The three mountains behind Tsetserleg, according to Dulguun:
Булган уул |төв|, Цогт уул |зүүн|, Арслан цохио |баруун|
I misheard ***цохио*** as ****зохой***, a word which doesn't exist.

кант, толт, цэл, алаг хээ