

#Island #Lexember 1st:
chae [caɛ̃] «eliciting love»

Pa jani a chae.
[pa ,ja.ni a 'caɛ̃]
«I love you.»

qa ja-ni a caj
2 1:GEN COP eliciting_love

Notes:

- The polarity of the predicate **chae** is inverted with respect to Indoeuropean expectations: The subject is the person causing the love, the object is the one experiencing it (hence the gloss «eliciting love»). Emotions and sensory experiences generally work that way in Island.
- The object is marked with the genitive rather than the accusative case for emotion predicates. This is due to the genitive's origin from the root **nei** «blood», which is considered the organ with which one feels emotions.
- Island employs a considerable amount of pro-drop (and other-things-drop) when it can get away with it. The above might be appropriate when professing one's love for someone for the first time, whereas couples might just say **a chae** to each other.

#Island #Lexember 2nd:
jume [ʃu.me] «grue»

Ke'ny a yume.
['ke ɲa 'ju.me]
«The sky is grue.»

keñ a jume
sky COP grue

Notes:

- Island does not distinguish between blue, green, and gray on the vocabulary level. Many languages do that, and apparently linguists like to call that meta-color «grue».
- When speaking of the sky, the word **jume** is reserved for the blue of a clear sky. A hazy or lightly overcast sky would be **sehuí** «ashen, pale», whereas rainclouds would be **uoko** «dark».
- Conversely, **jume keni** «sky grue» is a common expression for blue as opposed to green or gray.

#Island #Lexember 3rd:

lungisi [lu.'ŋi.si] «fair, acceptable»

E gira nong nang ko lungisi.

[e 'uŋi.ra non 'nan 'ko lu.'ŋi.si.]

«Clawing and biting are not acceptable.»

e gira non nan ko luŋ-isi
SUB clawing and biting NEG acceptable

Notes:

- The word **lungisi** is the regularly derived imminent aspect of the word **lung** «approving».
- While **a** is the default copula in Island, this sentence showcases two others: The subordinating copula **e** and the negative one **ko**.
- The first clause has no subject («that [someone] claws and bites»), but Island is very relaxed about such things.

#Island #Lexember 4th:

moela ['moɛ.la] «chief»

E iá moelā, poé!

[e ʔi'a moɛ.'la: po.,e]

«All hail the chief!»

e ia muj-la-d, poe
SUB hailing chief:ACC all

Notes:

- The word **moela** literally means «decision-maker», from **moe** «choosing» and the agent suffix **-la**.
- The subordinating copula **e** is used to form imperatives.

#Island #Lexember 5th:

lélao [le.'laŋ] «not enough»

A tongue twister! 😬

Lela lei loá a lalē lélao.

[le.la 'lej lo.'a ʔa la.'le: le.'laŋ]

«The singing woman artisan rests too little.»

lela	lej	loa	a	laled	lelal
artisan	woman	singing	COP	resting	not_enough

Notes:

- Several words here showcase the widespread practice of derivation by reduplication, which carries a frequentative or intensified meaning. **Lela** «artisan» is the reduplication of **la** «doing», **lalē** «relaxing» of **alē** «remaining», and **lélao** «too little» of **lao** «pit, depression; less».

#Island #Lexember 6th:

gichi [gi.ci] «scratching, notching, grooving»

Heika a gichi kaehā n'orang ōtetan ē poé.

[hej.ka ʔa 'uŋ.ci kaɛ.'ha: no.,raŋ o:.te.'tan e: po.'e]

«The warrior notches his war paddle after each kill.»

herka	a	gichi	karha-d	ne-or-an	od-tetan
warrior	COP	notching	war_paddle:ACC	after	act_of_killing

ed	poe
self	all

Notes:

- The word **n'orang** «after» is the locative of **orang** «downstream; past», which in turn is the perfect aspect applied to the word **oe** «freshwater». The idea is that when you stand at the riverside, the water upstream is yet to come to you whereas the water downstream has already gone past. The same logic is applied to the stream of time.
- The word **ē** «self» is placed after noun phrases to express singular number, whereas **poé** «all» does the same for collective number. Put together, **ē poé** means «every one; all individually».

#Island #Lexember 7th:

simo ['si.mo] «beautiful»

E ra ngūsē simo e gembeng!

[e ,ra ŋu:.'se: 'si.mo e ŋem.,ben]

«Look at the beautiful salmon I caught!»

e da ŋub-seb simo e gembe-ŋ
SUB witness salmon beautiful SUB catching:PRF

Notes:

- The word **da** means «witness; perceiving» by itself. Placed before a Noun at the beginning of a sentence, it reads as «There is...». The subordinating copula turns it into an imperative («witness!»), and thus forms the mirative expression **e ra** «behold!».
- The word for salmon is a compound of **ngū** + **sē** and literally means «fatback».
- The relative clause at the end lacks a subject; it only says «that has been caught». The intention is clear from context, though. If needed, you could add the first person ergative pronoun **jate** at the end.

#Island #Lexember 8th:

tasoe [ta.'soe] «spring (season)»

Mpi mun cha a mopisi n'tasoe.

[m.'pi mun ,ca ʔa mo.'pi.si ŋ.ta.'soe]

«This batch of seeds is to be planted in spring.»

nqi mun ca a mopre-isi ne-tasuj
seed together this COP planting:IMM spring:LOC

Notes:

- The word **mun** «together» is used as an apposition to mark paucal number. As in this example, paucal doesn't necessarily mean «few» but rather «a well-delimited cohesive quantity».
- The word **mopye** «planting» is the applicative of **opye** «stabbing». You are stabbing the ground with the seed or sapling you are planting, after all. **Mopisi** is its irregular imminent aspect, since **mopyeisi** would just be weird.
- The word **tasoe** «spring» is derived from **tasu** «waking» with the old and no longer productive ending **-i** of uncertain origin.

#Island #Lexember 9th:

gavoa [ga.'voa] «lodestone»

Gavo'h a m'ma'y e waoro si.

[ga.'vo ha m.,ma je ,waɔ.ro 'si:]

«The lodestone is for navigating.»

gab-oh	a	ne-maj	e	waldo	sir
lodestone	COP	for	SUB	finding	heading

Notes:

- The word **gavoa** «lodestone» is built from **gā** «pebble» and **oa** «turning».
- The usual way to express «for» is with the benefactive case. Since that doesn't work when the argument is an entire clause, the circumfix **n-/mae** of the benefactive case is used as a free-standing conjunction, yielding **m'mae**. Literally, it means «in mouth», since the benefactive case originally derives from feeding a baby.
- It's not by accident that the word **baoro** «finding» is **waldo** in phonemic notation. 🧐

#Island #Lexember 10th:

ega ['e.ɥa] «digging, burrowing»

Batute opyanchi a megang n'eapo.

[ba.'tu.te o.'pjaŋ.ci a me.,ɥan 'neɔ.po]

«The worm has dug a little hole into the mud.»

batu-te	opranci	a	m-ega-ŋ	ne-ehqo
worm:ERG	puncture	COP	APP:digging:PRF	mud:LOC

Notes:

- The applicative prefix **mi-/m-** turns the intransitive **ega** «burrowing» into the transitive **mega** «excavating». The distinction is important due to the split ergativity: In the perfect aspect of a transitive predicate, the experiencer is promoted to the grammatical subject (in the direct case) whereas the agent needs to be marked with the ergative case.
- The word **opyanchi** «little hole, puncture» is derived from the perfect aspect of **opye** «stabbing» (cf. Lexember 8th) and the diminutive suffix **-chi**.

#Island #Lexember 11th:

kwā [kwa:] «pump»

É goma ya'w e tenā kwaho?

[e ʋo.ma ja we te.na: 'kwa.ho]

«Can you help me repair the pump?»

e goma jaw e tenad klah-o
SUB helping 1>2 SUB repairing pump:ACC

Notes:

- When the subordinating copula **e** is used to introduce a yes/no question, it receives stress and a notably raised pitch.
- Island offers the two contractions **jao** and **pae** for the commonly used combinations of subject and object pronouns **ja po** «I you» and **pa eo** «you me».
- The antipassive prefix **te-** turns **nā** «good» into **tenā** «making good, repairing». The prefix is derived from the ergative case suffix **-(a)te**, which in turn comes from the root **hate** «hand». The antipassive essentially promotes an oblique ergative argument to the subject: **jate kwa'h a nā** «by my hand, the pump is good» becomes **ja kwaho a tenā** «I repair the pump».

#Island #Lexember 12th:

ini [i.ni] «autumn»

Bué yani a chowī keate chie n'ini cha.

[bu.'e ja.ni a co.'wi: 'keʌ.te ,ciɛ ,ni.ni ,ca]

«My child has been ill seven times this autumn.»

bue ja-ni a cowid kehte cig ne-ini ca
child 1:GEN COP ill seven times autumn:LOC this

Notes:

- I'm afraid the statement is entirely true. 😞
- The word **keate** «seven» is related to the root **kea-** «other; complement» and **hate** «hand», since the hand gestures for numbers range from zero to six, so seven is the first number that requires the second hand.
- The word **chie** «times» literally means «step».
- Yes, that's a lame easter egg in the phonemic rendition of **chowī**, but I couldn't resist...

#Island #Lexember 13th:

rō [ro:] «fire»

Nangang manemae chu a ure nenaō rōni.

[na.'ŋam ma.ne.'maɛ cu a 'ʔu.re ne.,naŋ 'ro:.ni]

«Being bitten by that ant hurts as if by fire.»

naŋ-aŋ	mane-maj	cu	a	ure	nenał	rob-ni
biting:PRF	ant:FAT	that	COP	hurting	like	fire:GEN

Notes:

- More precisely, the beginning translates as «One bitten by a spider...». It's a good example of the fact that all content words in Island behave as nouns when not used as a predicate.
- The agent of a word in the perfect aspect would normally be supplied in the ergative case (etymologically based on «hand»). Here, we find two exceptions: The ant is in the fative case (based on «mouth») because that's what you use to bite. The fire has neither hands nor a mouth, but uses its essence to attack, so it's in the genitive case (based on «blood») instead.
- The word **nenaō** «similar, like» is a reduced reduplication of **nalo** «being seen; seeming», which in turn is from the locative **n'alo** «in the eye».

#Island #Lexember 14th:

m'mū siseli [m.'mu: si.'se.li] «surreptitious; sneaky»

Or «hingerbiggelig», as Franz Hohler would say.

N'twarae pa a n'ngū ya m'mū siseli?

[ŋ.twa.'raɛ pa ʔa ŋ.'ŋu: ja m.'mu: si.'se.li]

«What are you sneaking around behind my back for?»

ne-tlar-aj	qa	a	ne-ŋub	ja	ne-mul	siseli
what:BEN	2	COP	back:LOC	1	sole:LOC	snake

Notes:

- The expression **m'mū siseli** literally means «on snake soles». Snakes don't generally carry negative connotation in Island; in fact, the word **siseli** doubles as the predicate «moving about swiftly; gliding». They are pretty stealthy, though, and the fact that snakes don't actually have soles brings in the element of duplicity.
- The word **n'twarae** «what for?» is simply the benefactive case of the word **twae** «what?».

#Island #Lexember 15th:

tehate [te.'ha.te] «signaling, gesturing; symbol, representation»

Moweang m'peki a tehate loeni.

[mo.we.'am m.'pe.ki a te.'ha.te 'loɛ.ni]

«The painting on the rock represents a face.»

m-owe-aŋ	ne-qeki	a	tehate	loj-ni
APP:painting:PRF	rock:LOC	COP	representation	face:GEN

Notes:

- The word **owe** «stroking» doubles as «painting (a surface)». If you want to express «painting something (onto a surface)», you need to add the applicative prefix **m-/im-**. With the perfect aspect, **moweang** then means «that which has been painted (onto a surface)».
- The word **tehate** looks like a use of the antipassive **te-**, but it's actually the reduplication of the frequentative derivation applied to the word **hate** «hand». Thus, originally, it meant «waving about with a hand; gesturing» and later picked up the meaning «representation» from the practice of using gestures to describe the shape of something. In the latter use, the genitive is expected for the thing being represented.

#Island #Lexember 16th:

molleang pire [mol.le.,am 'pi.re] «history»

E! Hive pa masu a molleang chuke.

[e | 'hi.ve pa 'ma.su a mol.le.,aŋ 'cu.ke]

«Hah! Your winning streak is history!»

e!	hibe	qa	m-asu	a	monle-aŋ	cuke
SUB	braid	2	winning	COP	remembering:PRF	obsolete

Notes:

- The word **pire** means «old» in a venerable sense, hence the idiomatic expression **molleang pire** «ancient remembered things» for «history». The speaker here uses **chuke** instead, which comes with negative connotations («worn, derelict, obsolete»), which gives it an ironic twist along the lines of «the bad old times».
- The word **hive** meant «braid» originally and acquired the extra meanings «rope; story; sequence». Its frequentative form **hehive** means «cloth; tradition; myth».
- The word **masu** «defeating, winning against» is the applicative of **asu** «standing upright». The winner in the fight is the one still standing at the end.

#Island #Lexember 17th:

tulla ['tul.la] «farmer»

Dentwa mun chu a tirechulang tullā venge.

['den.twa mun ,cu a ti.re.cu.'lan tul.'la: ,vɛŋ.ge]

«That band of robbers has been harrassing farmers.»

dentla	mun	cu	aq	te-te-cul-aŋ	tumla-d	benge
bandit	together	that	COP	ATP:harrassing:PRF	farmer:ACC	some

Notes:

- The antipassive prefix **te-** has been applied twice to the word **chū** «worried» here: Once to turn it transitive (**techū** «making worried = harrassing») and another time to reverse the passivization in its perfect aspect (**techulang** «harrassed», **tirechulang** «having harrassed»). The two instances of **te-** dissimulate to **tire-** (phonemically **tide-**).
- **Dentwa** and **tulla** are slightly contracted products of the profession suffix **-la** as applied to **dente** «stick» and **tumu** «cultivating» (antipassive of **umu** «growing»).
- **Mun** and **benge** are the optional quantifiers for the paucal and plural numbers.

#Island #Lexember 18th:

memuo [me.'muɔ] «going missing, being lost»

Mehi chuke a memuhang n'jate. Ā, kwelang, tenarang.

['me.hi 'cu.ke a me.mu.'haŋ.n.ja.te | a: kwe.'lan te.na.ra'ŋ]

«I lost my old hat. Oh well, good riddance.»

mehi	cuke	a	memuh-aŋ	ne-ja-te.	ah	klela-aŋ	tenad-aŋ
hat	old	COP	being_lost:PRF	1:DAT	ah	refusing:PRF	fixing:PRF

Notes:

- Losing something is considered something that happens to you rather than that you do in Island. Thus, the sentence literally says «the hat went lost to me». **Memuo** is the frequentative of **muo** «falling».
- The idiomatic expression **kwelang, tenarang** translates to «refused, (and thus) set right» and conveys the meaning «better off without».

#Island #Lexember 19th:

hū hoa [hu: 'hoə] «bad breath; miasma»

E onī huwante hoa pamae. A tenisi ōchowiro.

[e o.'ni: hu.,wan.te 'hoə pa.,maə | a te.'ni.si o:co.'wi.ro]

«Stay away with your bad breath. You will spread the disease.»

e onij huw-ante hog qa-maj. a te-nij-isi od-cowid-o.
SUB far breath:INS bad 2:FAT COP ATP:sowing:IMM STA:ill:ACC

Notes:

- The fative form of the second person pronoun is used instead of the genitive or dative to mark the possessor of the bad breath, since breath comes from the mouth.
- The predicate **tenisi** is the irregular imminent aspect **nisi** of the word **nī** «making», which doubles as «sowing», with the antipassive prefix **te-** to prevent passivization.
- The prefix **ō-** turns a predicate into the state of being the predicate, much like English -ness. It's from the same root /od/ **ō** «body» that also yields the accusative ending.

Someone spilled strawberry milk on my laptop, so I didn't have access to it for two days. Catching up a little now.

#Island #Lexember 20th through 22nd:

solerie [so.le.'riɛ] «peppermint (lit. ice-leaf)»

nyang [ɲaŋ] «extract, essence, tea»

devī [de'vi:] «teaching»

É pa'y tindevirisi e nī nyang solerieni?

[e paɣ ,tin.de.vi.'ri.si e ,ni: 'ɲaŋ so.le.'riɛ.ni]

«Will you teach me how to make peppermint tea?»

e qaj te-im-debid-isi e nij ñaŋ solerig-ni
SUB 2>1 ATP:APP:teach:IMM SUB making tea peppermint:GEN

- The word **devī** «teaching (something)» takes the thing taught as direct object, so the applicative is required to target it at the student: **indevī** «teaching (someone)». The imminent aspect **indevirisi** «about to be taught» comes with passivization, so the antipassive **te-** is needed to preserve the sentence's intended direction: **tindevirisi** «about to teach (someone)».

Still catching up...

#Island #Lexember 23rd & 24th:

pao [paɔ] «lying, prone; line, border»

lāri ['la:.ri] «surf, wave action»

Pao mū yani n'hi'r a vohisi lārimae.

[,paɔ 'mu: ja.ni n̩.'hi ra vo.'hi.si la:.ri.'maɛ]

«The line of my footprints in the sand will be eaten by the surf.»

pal	mul	ja-ni	ne-hir	a	boh-isi	lagri-maj
line	footprint	1:GEN	LOC:sand	COP	eating:IMM	surf:FAT

- Again, a simple apposition in the direct case would have sufficed: **mū ya** «my footprints». The genitive is chosen to emphasize the first person's role as the origin/creator of the footprints.
- The surf doesn't have a mouth, but the predicate **boa** «eating» absolutely demands the fative case for its agents in ergative alignment.

#Island #Lexember 25th:

loe [loɛ] «face; facing; opposite; word form»

«Eng» a lo'y orang moute nei «ei».

['ʔeŋ ʔa lo jo.,raŋ 'mow.te nej 'ʔej]

«Eng is the irregular perfect form of *ei*.»

en	a	loj	oran	molte	nej	er
full	COP	face	downstream	deviant	of	filling

- Island generally allows speakers to insert the non-phonemic glottal stop for clarity, but this mostly only done before or after a copula. Here, glottal stops are used to separate individual words from the phonetic flow of the sentence to highlight them and keep them as recognizable as possible. Normally, the phrase **nej er** would be realized as **ne'y ei** [ne.'jej], but the glottal stop prevents the liaison.
- Since we want to keep the word **ei** pristine, we can't just inflect it for the genitive either. The preposition **nei** (a whittled-down form of **neí** «blood», whence also the genitive ending) offers a solution here. That's also how one would form the genitive of other indeclinable things, such as a clause.

#Island #Lexember 26th:

alomporu [a.lom.'po.ru] «unconscious»

Moute a muhang n'upi, a tiralomporuang kū.

[mow.te a mu.haŋ 'nu.pi | a ,ti.ra.lom.po.ru.'aŋ ku:]

«A branch fell on [his] head, knocked him unconscious.»

molte a muh-aŋ ne-upi noŋ te-te-alonpodu-aŋ kud
branch COP fall:PRF LOC:head and ATP:ATP:unconscious:PRF 3:ACC

- The expression **alomporu** is just a lexification of **alo m'poru** «eyes [turned] inside», which is how Islanders think of unconsciousness.
- The **tir-** in **tiralomporuang** is another example of the antipassive prefix **te-** applied twice (cf. Lexember 17th).

#Island #Lexember 27th:

hoe [hoɛ] «splitting, cleaving»

A n'keo hoe poho cha m'bevae.

[a ŋ.keo 'hoɛ 'po.ho ca m̩.be.'vae]

«One can split this bone for marrow.»

a ne-keɭ hor qoh-o ca ne-web-aŋ
COP can splitting bone:ACC this marrow:BEN

- Here, the predicate **n'keo** «can» (actually the locative of **keo** «power, ability») is used impersonally to express «one can, it is possible».
- The word **bē** «marrow» appears in the benefactive case even though the action is not strictly speaking beneficial for the marrow. It's understood as a shorthand for «for the sake of obtaining the marrow». (I'm also oddly pleased with my choice of **bē** as the word for marrow.)

#Island #Lexember 28th:

uám [u.'am] «mushroom»

Uám kekong pamu'y a n'keo puvohang ā chie m'parang.

[u.'aŋ ke.kom pa.'mu ja ŋ.keŋ pu.vo.'haŋ 'a: ciŋ m.pa.'raŋ]

«Any kind of mushroom can be eaten at least once.»

uam	kekong	gamuj	a	ne-keŋ	qu-boh-aŋ	ah	cig	ne-padaŋ
mushroom	type	any	COP	can	ICP:eating:PRF	one	instance	at_least

- The word **kekong** «color» (itself the frequentative of **kong** «red, yellow, brown») doubles as «kind, species». If you want to be precise about your meaning you could add the apposition **n'alo** «in the eye» for the former and **neí** «blood» for the latter.
- The word **pamoe** «any» is short for **pa a moe** «you choose».
- The prefix **pu-/pum-** (from **pungu** «leaping; starting») is used to derive the inceptive form of a word (e.g., **kā** «riding», **pukā** «mounting»). When applied to a predicate in the perfect aspect, it restores the simple aspect but leaves the passivization in place: **boa** «eating», **bohang** «eaten», **puvohang** «being eaten». Effectively, **pu- -ang** is the circumfix for the simple passive.
- The word **m'parang** «at least, minimum» is the locative of **parang** «floor», itself the perfect aspect of **pā** «pounding». The counterpart **n'nā** «up to, maximum» is the locative of **nā** «palate; ceiling».
- The saying is used to express «Just because it's possible doesn't mean it's wise.»

#Island #Lexember 29th:

iéle [i.'e.le] «moon»

É nchavi pa e ra pepao n'iéle?

[e.ŋ.'ca.vi pa ʔe .ra pe'paŋ ni.e.le]

«Do you think there are inhabitants on the moon?»

e	ne-cabi	qa	e	da	pepal	ne-iele
SUB	thinking	2	SUB	there_is	dwelling	LOC:moon

- The word **nchavi** «thinking, musing» is the locative of **chavi** «forehead, brow», so literally «being in one's forehead».
- The word **pepao** «living, residing, dwelling» is the frequentative of **pao** «prone, lying flat; line» (cf. Lexember 23rd). Here it is used as a noun, and thus means «someone dwelling; inhabitant».

#Island #Lexember 30th:

rī keni [ri: 'ke.ni] «rainbow»

Ū palo, rī ke'ny a n'ngū kong n'ipwi pa.

[u: 'pa.lo | ri: 'ke.na ŋ.ŋu: kon 'ni.pwi pa]

«Looking at the sun, the rainbow is behind you and to the side.»

ul ga-lo | rij keñ a ne-ŋub koŋ ne-ipli qa
sun 2:PCP gem sky COP back:LOC and side:LOC 2

- The first phrase showcases the perceptive noun case: **ū palo** literally translates to «the sun in your sight».
- As the interlinear shows, **rī keni** literally means «sky gem».

#Island #Lexember 31th:

pepoe [pe'poɛ] «fizzy, bubbly»

hie [hiɛ] «foam, froth, scum; frothy»

Ōgae vuchi pepoe kong hi'g a tenisi tevanchā.

[o:ʋaɛ ,vu.ci pe'poɛ koŋ 'hi ʋa te.ni.si te.ʋaŋ.'ca:]

«Drinking fizzy and foamy juice will cause diarrhea.»

od-gar buci pepuj koŋ hig a te-nisi te-bañca-d
STA:drinking juice fizzy and frothy COP ATP:making:IMM diarrhea:ACC

- There are two words of imitative origin here: **buchi** «drop» has the secondary meanings «juice; sap», whereas **pepoe** «fizzy» is a reduced form of underlying **pujpuj**. Come to think of it, **gae** «drinking» (from underlying **gar**) might also be imitative, as in «gargle».
- The word **tevancha** «diarrhea» is the antipassive of **bancha** «empty», so it means «emptying; that which empties».