Anceun, or Caveman Language Part II: Electric Boogaloo

→ A Conlangs Final Project by Sami Amer

Q4 is answered on before last page, example (48)

Part 1, The Dictionary

● morpheme definition ● rule clarification

English	Anceaun
bite	ɑ m
blood	ɑ m u ŋ → This morpheme means "result"
die	ɑ m u ŋ ŋ → This repitition is a contraction of a repeating morpheme
egg	i k
chicken	i k u ŋ
feather	i k u g a ŋ → This morpheme means "covering" or "Surrounding"
green	ɛ ŋ
hot	o q
fire	o q
burn	o q u ŋ
cold	o q a k → This morpheme means "not" or is used as a negation
ice	o q a k
sun	o q q i k
moon	o q q a k ʔ i k
day	o q q i k ʔ u ŋ → This morpheme is a connector, mostly left over from Ancea
night	o q q a k ʔ i k ʔ u ŋ
tree	ɛ g a ŋ
leaf	ɛ g i k u g ʔ a ŋ
drink	ɛ m
eat	ɛ ŋ
plum	ɑ g
delicious	ɑ ŋ
sweet	i ŋ
think	i d
thought	i d u ŋ
go	u q
away	o ŋ
toward	ɛ k
talk	i d o ŋ
hear	i d ɛ k
leave	u q o ŋ
come	u q ɛ k
take	i q
steal	i q o ŋ
give	i q a k
see	ɛ q
saw	ɛ q u ŋ
high	ɑ d
low	o d
above	ɑ d o
below	o d o
age	ɛ g
old	ɛ g a d
young	ɛ g o d
smart	ɛ g g
smarter	ɛ g g u ŋ
size	u g
large	u g a d
small	u g o d
i	i
they	ɛ
that	o
and	u
person	i u ŋ
forgive	i k i
animal	ɑ q
dog	u k
cat	u q
safe	o g
box	u d
house	i u ŋ u d
book	ɛ g i k u g ʔ a ŋ ʔ u d
run	o m
dance	o b

/ is a high tone

\ is a low tone

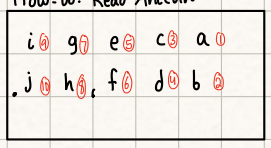
Words loaned from Robolanguage:

						● meaning / use	
formal greeting	o	o	ò	ó	ò	o i	slang greeting
"error! error!"	ɔ	ʕ	ɔ	ʕ		ɑ g	"Something is wrong"
"can't do that"	b	ʌ	m			d u m	"don't do that"
"success"	d	ɑ	d́	á		d a	"good job"

Part 2, The Writing System

- The language is written right-to-left and in vertical pairs
- Commas (,) represent word ends, while periods (.) are sentence ends
- Everything was chiseled, leading to harder edges

How-to: Read Anceun



Consonants

IPA	Anceun
d	◿
k	◺
g	◹
q	◸
ʔ	|
m	□
n	▨
ŋ	▩

Vowels

IPA	Anceun
i	>
u	⌴
a	^
ɛ	⊐
o	⊓
ɑ	v

Some notes

- Comma Separation became more popular once connectors started getting dropped (See Grammar, rule 1)
- Consonants are 'closed', vowels are 'open'
- Things were written in large fonts
- 'Rule breakers' are stranded in their own column, like (4) or (8)

Some examples

SEP = Separator RES = Result of NEG = Negation

(1)

o g

Safe

"safe"

(2)

ɑ d o

above

"above"

(3)

u q-o ŋ

g o - away

"leave"

(4)

ɑ m-u ŋ-ŋ

blood – result – result

"die"

(5)

o q-q-i k-ʔ-u ŋ

hot-hot-egg-SEP-RES

"day"

(6)

u k

dog

"dog"

(7)

o q-a k

hot-NEG

"ice" or "cold"

(8)

i k i

forgive

"forgive"

(9)

o q-q-a k-ʔ-i k-ʔ-u ŋ

hot-hot-NEG-SEP-egg-SEP-RES

"night"

(10)

ɛ g-i k-u g-ʔ-a ŋ

green-egg-RES-SEP-covering

"leaf"

Part 3, The Grammar

The Introduction

After a cataclysm level event (circa 2200AD, take your pick, there are many on the horizon), humanity as a species has to reinvent language (maybe this time, we can skip all the extra letters and get straight to business). This language is "The First Spoken Language Part II, Electric Boogaloo". Used by the coolest of the cool (those who did not perish in [redacted for brevity, and storyteller laziness]), this language consists of a series of grunts, huffs, howls, and when needed, some pointing.

My Protolanguage will be called "Ancea", or "I clearly grunted Oat Milk how dare you pour me Whole you know I can't have that" or "The first ever fatal disagreement"

NOTE: for a reason historians have yet to figure out, a lot of the jokes surrounding this language seem to only be funny to one young adult male who happened to reside in what was at the time (lesser) known as Cambridge. In the year 2800AD this became one of the Millennium Problems. In the year 2825AD a famed linguist is said to have exclaimed "Trying to understand this idiot's sense of humor has got to be as hard as nuclear cold fusion". This linguist was widely mocked when, in 2826AD, cold fusion was solved.

The Phonetic Inventory

Vowels: i u a ɛ o ɑ

Consonants: d k g q ʔ m n ŋ

The Nuclei of words

A quick note on the writings below: Due to internal conflict (inside the empty dresser drawer doctors have chosen to call my head), I chose to make nuclei just vowels, while words are the vowel-consonant pairings. I then explain how this fits into the definition of a word we normally use. As a quick clarification here: it would be more accurate to say that the nuclei are these pairs, which are then joined by the connectors. I have left the writing as is because I feel like it gives an important insight into how I, and the speakers, constructed this language.

Regarding the proto-langauge:

Since this is literally the caveman's cave man langauge, the only possible word nuclei will be vowels, with no exceptions in the proto language. These nuclei (vowels) are followed, but never preceded, by a single consonant (of any kind within the phonetic inventory). This is the extent of the base of a word in Ancea. Now, looking at my word charts, this is verifiably false, but I can explain. What we define as a word in linguistics and what I define as a word in my (proto) language differ, if ever so slightly. This is because a two letter/sound restriction on a language is not feasible (or fun to do). In Ancea, we can create more descriptive words by joining them with a connector, which is always a glottal stop. This leads to very long words, which break down to be simply a connected sequence of the two letter/sound words. This is why I consider all words in Ancea to be of that length, which will further help distinguish it from its resulting language.

Regarding the language:

Anceaun, while still being a caveman's language, is considerably more 'advanced' than its proto language, by which we mean it allows for more leeway when expressing oneself. (A quick side note, you will realize that the name of the proto language, pronounced (Anseu) , has sounds that cannot be produced in Ancea – this is due to the language being named later by those who spoke Anceaun, and not the original Ancea speakers.)

Anceaun follows much of the same structure as its predecessor, but allows for some fricatives, as well as contracting larger two-letter word combinations into a single word (for instance, the word for "night" would no longer be able to ride the rides at disneyland). This is possible due to the more lax rules with the constructions of words, specifically allowing up to 6 letters in a row without a connector, as well as allowing a consonant to come before a vowel at the start of the word (but very rarely, this will be reserved for loaner words as those who use Anceaun travel more extensively)

The Evolution of the protolanguage

1.) The first two glottal stops are dropped see (9)

↳ the stops 'slip' away from the more common morphemes

2.) Recurring words are subsituted for double the consanant see (4)

↳ this may apply a second time if a word is repeated as a morpheme

3.) Post-Alveolar nasals becomes velar See (11)

4.) Starting open vowels slide further back See (12)

5.) Velar nasals become velar plosives, but only blw vowels see (13)

These apply in the order: 3, 4, 5, 1, 2

(11)

a m – u ŋ

< a m – ʔ – u n

bite – SEP – result

"blood"

(12)

d m

< a m

bite

"bite"

(13)

ɛ g a ŋ

< ɛ ŋ ʔ a n

green – SEP – surround

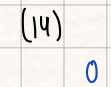
"tree"

The Borrowed Words

Anceaun borrowed a couple words from a different language that was also being developed at the time, but in a different part of the world. This language was spoken by a group of people who, prior to the cataclysm event, were enslaved by machines, and as such their new langauge is heavily "machine-based", with beeps, high pitched and long sounds, and inference (this will not be shown in the borrowed words, as it is a more complex concept and was never properly understood by the people who spoke anceaun.

inf = Informal dir = directed

(14)



o i

hello.inf

close to "what's up"

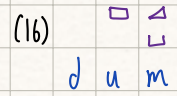
(15)

d g

wrong

"Something is wrong"

(16)



d u m

stop.dir

"stop doing that"

From Dictionary on page 1

Words loaned from Robolanguage:

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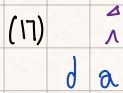
"error! error!"	ɔ	ɢ	ɔ	ɢ		d g	"Something is wrong"
"can't do that"	b	ʌ	m			d u m	"don't do that"
"success"	d	a	d́	á		d a	"good job"

/ is a high tone

\ is a low tone

(17)



d a

good.dir

"good job"

Example (14) : in the robo-language, this word was initially a complex greeting that described how one was doing (think of a dial-up tone).

Phonetically: This word was shortened and its tone stripped, both to better fit in with the rest of the language: we have no tone, and no base words last that long

Semantically: This was used formally at every meeting of the two languages. The people of anceun, not understanding tonality, took this to simply mean "hello". It was never adopted into formal speech due to its departure from the language (they had never heard dipthongs before), but was adopted into slang after the sharing of media.

Example (15) : in the robo-langauge, this was derived from a warning alarm, and was essentially one saying "error!" over and over again

Phonetically: This was once again shortened, with the ɔ sound being replaced with a q sound, which was close enough and a natural trade. The ɢ was more difficult to pronounce, and the g sound was only reached after many failed attempts at replicating it.

Semantically: This was used in displeasure, and thus the people of anceaun adopted it to mean "something is wrong". Once again, this was not used in formal writing.

Example (16) : in the robo-langauge, this derived from a computer's warning chime (think hitting enter when you aren't supposed to on a Mac). Due to differences in mindset, the people of anceaun took this word to mean a request to not do something, as opposed to a statement that something cannot be done.

Phonetically: There is no b in anceaun, but d was close enough that it was understood when conversing with people who spoke the robo langauge. The vowel was also switched in a manner that was still understood, and the final consonant remained the same. There was no way to shorten it, so the borrowed word just broke the traditional rules of the language.

Semantically: As explained above, this word was misunderstood from a statement to a request.

Example (17) : in robo-language, this was akin to a computers "success" chime, and was used in pleasure with a job well-done.

Phonetically: The tonality is stripped, as it does not exist in anceaun, and the word was shortened, as reptition had a specific meaning and it did not apply here (repition as also mostly changed when moving from ancea to anceaun

The Miscellaneous Rules

Pronouns are genderless, see (19)

There are no indefinite articles only definite and implied see (18)

The language is primitive, and as such very straightforward. In almost every sentence, the order is subject, verb, object; there will be a rare case or two in which this doesn't hold, but this will be restricted to more philosophical debates (and cavemen don't do much philosophy. at least mine don't)

Adjectives always come first, which is the reverse of how we build words i.e adjective phrases build by prefix, while words build by suffix (adding to beginning vs adding to end)

Anceun has prepositions, but they are extremely simple compared to english e.g. on top of, higher than, and above are all represented as 'above'

All complementizers are empty complementizers, but if we had to break down syntax, they would come before, like adjectives.

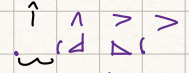
The Questions

'Wh-' questions are formed by simply omitting the thing being asked about. For instance, "Who ate the cake?" is "ate the cake", maintaining SVO order. To avoid confusion, the writing system either skips a writing block to imply something is missing, or uses an _ if the thing being asked about is at the start of a text. Verbally, this simply relies on context clues and tone (similar to the 'inquisitive' tone that English speakers have, but not quite) See (22)

Yes/No questions are a little more complex. Both verbally and in writing they are asked as the complete sentence i.e. if one was to ask "Did the tree fall?' it would simply be "tree fall". However, verbally the speaker cocks their head at about a 45 degree angle to signify they are awaiting a yes or no. The party on the other end of the question will then reply by either nodding or shaking their heads. In writing, the question is signified by an arrow that points 45 degrees to the top left corner of the writing block, taking up two writing block. The answers are also shown as arrows, with up and down arrows for yes and side to side for no, again both taking two writing blocks See (23)

Sadly, Anceaun does not have relative clauses. Things are just always repeated explicitly; even pronouns do not see much use.

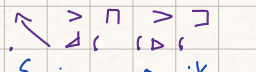
note the space

(22) 

i iqàk _____

i give what

"what do I give"

(23) 

ɛ iq o ik

They take that egg

"Did he take the egg?"

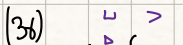
if answer is yes: 

no: 

possession vs description is dictated by pronoun location

↳ first seen in "I am a cat" vs "I have a cat"

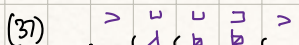
Examples:

(36) 

i uq

i cat

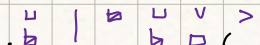
"I am a dog"

(37) 

i ɛŋ-uŋ uk i

i eat-result dog mine

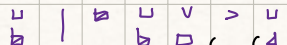
"I ate my dog"

(38) 

i ɖmuŋŋ-ʔuŋ

i die-result

"I am dead"

(39) 

uk i ɖmuŋŋ?-uŋ

dog mine die-result

"My dog died"

The Numbers

Numbers in Anceaun are very primitive. They resemble a tally system, but are base 4, based on squares both complete and incomplete. The building blocks are 1–8, 16, and 32. All other numbers are constructed from this. This seems limiting, but cavemen rarely see more than 32 of anything, and if they do its usually not worth counting. If it is though, then the system can go up to 100 with only 4 digits.

1 

2 

3 

4 

5 

7 

8 

16 

32 

14 

20 

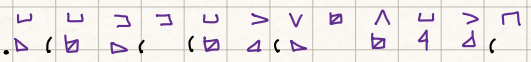
29 

40 

50 

AR = Article
PR = Pronoun

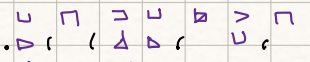
Part 4, The Translations

(18) 

O ikugaŋŋ-dq id-uŋ ɛ ɛq-uŋ uq

AR feather-feather-animal think-result PR see-result cat

"The bird thought he saw a cat"

(19) 

O iuŋ uq-ɛk O uq

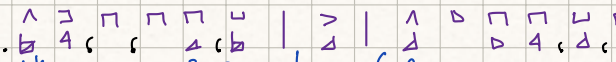
AR person go-toward AR cat

"The hunter chased the rabbit"

Notes: Cavemen are all hunter, hence 'person'

No distinction between cats and rabbits

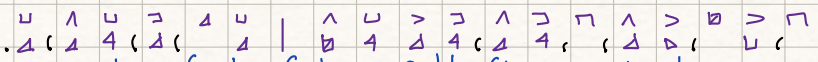
'come' if subject is 'i', else 'chase'

(20) 

O uk oq-oqq ak?ik-?uŋ odo O ɛq aŋ

AR dog safe-night-result below AR tree

The dog was sleeping under the ~~table~~ tree

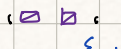
(21) 

O iuŋ iqak O ɛq-ad ɛqikugaŋ?udd ɛk uq-ad ud

AR person give AR high-age book-book toward high-size box

The girl put the old books in a large box

PR = Pronoun

(24) 

i ɛŋ-uŋ

PR eat-result

"I have eaten"

(25) 

O qqg

that plum-plum

"the plums"

(26)

O ɛk-un

that toward-result

"that were in"

(27)

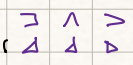
O oqak-?ud

that ice-box

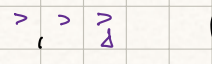
"the icebox"

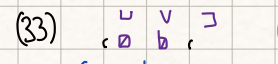
(28) 
u d g
and plums
"and which"
instead of which

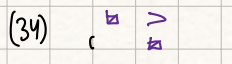
(29) 
ɛ
they
"you were probably"
replace hypotheticals

(30) 
iqak-ɛk
give-toward
saving

(31) 
oqqikʔuŋ-ʔɛŋ
day-eat
"for breakfast"

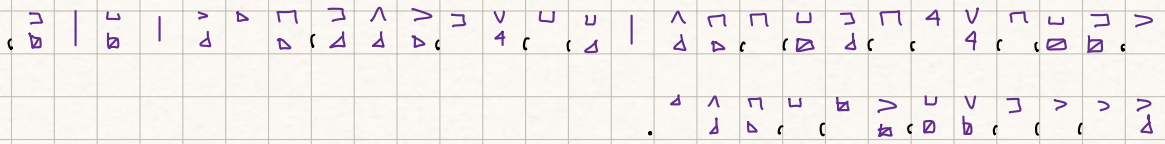
(32) 
iki i
forgive i
"Forgive me"

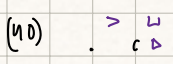
(33) 
ɛ dy-un
they delicious-result
"they were delicious"

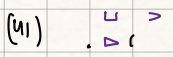
(34) 
iŋŋ
sweet-sweet
"So sweet"

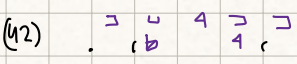
(35) 
u oqakk
and cold-cold
"and so cold"

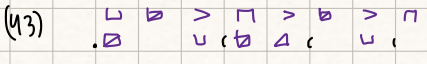
The full poem:

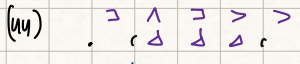


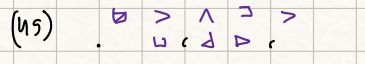
(40) 
uq i
cat mine
"I have a cat"

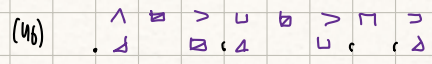
(41) 
i uq
I cat
"I am a cat"

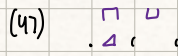
(42) 
ɛ ɛggun ɛ
They age-age-result They
"She is smarter than you"

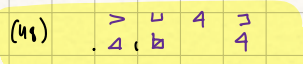
(43) 
o iuŋ id-oŋ iuŋ-un
That person think-away person-result
"That man is talking to himself"

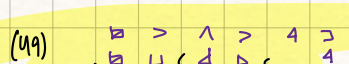
(44) 
i id-ɛk-ak ɛ
I think-toward-NEG they
"I can't hear you"

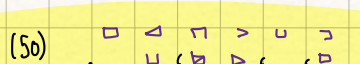
(45) 
i ɛq-ak iuŋ
I see-NEG person
"I don't see anybody"

(46) 
ɛk o iuŋ-ud iŋ-ak
toward that person-box person-NEG
"Nobody lives in that house"

(47) 
od u i
dance and i
"Dance with me"

(48) 
id ɛggun
think smarter
"Above all, excercise common sense"

(49) 
ɛgg iqak iuŋŋ
smart give person-person
"Share your knowledge and experience with other hackers"

(50) 
ɛm u iqoŋ dum
drink and steal (don't do that)
"Never drink and hack"
↳ from borrowed words

(51) 
iqoŋ dum
steal (don't do that)
"Do not steal anything"
↳ from new code

Part 5, The History

English	Ancea
bite	a m
blood	a m ʔ u n → this is the original version of "result"
die	a m ʔ u n ʔ u n
egg	i k
chicken	i k ʔ u n
feather	i k ʔ u n ʔ a n
green	ɛ ŋ
hot	o q
fire	o q
burn	o q ʔ u n
cold	o q ʔ a k
ice	o q ʔ a k
sun	o q ʔ o q ʔ i k
moon	o q ʔ o q ʔ a k ʔ i k
day	o q ʔ o q ʔ i k ʔ u ŋ
night	o q ʔ o q ʔ a k ʔ i k ʔ u n
tree	ɛ ŋ ʔ a n
leaf	ɛ ŋ ʔ i k ʔ u n ʔ a n
drink	ɛ m
eat	ɛ n
plum	a g
delicious	a n
sweet	i n
go	u q
away	o ŋ
toward	ɛ k
leave	u q ʔ o ŋ
come	u q ʔ ɛ k
take	i q
steal	i q ʔ o ŋ
give	i q ʔ a k
high	a d
low	o d
above	a d ʔ o
below	o d ʔ o
age	ɛ g
old	ɛ g ʔ a d
young	ɛ g ʔ o d
run	o m
safe	o g
box	u d
dog	u k

size	u g
large	u g ʔ a d
small	u g ʔ o d
i	i
they	ɛ
that	o
and	u
person	i ʔ u n
forgive	i k ʔ i