

Tswana Tone

There are two morphological variants of verbs marked with the tense-aspect prefix -a-, the utterance-medial form used when there is a following focused object, and the utterance-final form used when there is no object, lacking that prefix. The subject marker for 1 singular has two phonological shapes as well. Every root in the language fits into one of two tone patterns, both of which are represented here. In writing rules which account for the tone alternations observed below, you may use the marker ## to represent ‘end of utterance’. It is traditionally said that the object marker and root have some kind of close attachment to each other: you may be able to think of an insightful theoretical concept that captures that notion.

Utterance Final		Utterance medial
keatswa	‘I am avoiding’	ketswa...
keatswela	‘I am avoiding for’	ketswela...
kealema	‘I am cultivating’	kelema...
kealebala	‘I forget’	kelebala...
keajá	‘I am eating’	kejá...
keajísá	‘I am making eat’	kejísá...
kearéká	‘I am buying’	keréká...
kearékísá	‘I am selling’	kerékísa...
keabérékela	‘I am working for’	kebérékela...
óatswá	‘she is avoiding’	ótswá...
óatswela	‘she is avoiding for’	ótswela...
óalema	‘she is cultivating’	óléma...
óalebala	‘she forgets’	ólebala...
óajá	‘she is eating’	ójá...
óaréká	‘she is buying’	óreká...
óarékísá	‘she is selling’	órekísa...
óabérékela	‘she is working for’	óberékela...
nkátswá	‘I can avoid’	nkátswá...
nkálémá	‘I can cultivate’	nkáléma...
nkálébala	‘I can forget’	nkálébala...
nkájá	‘I can eat’	nkájá...
nkáreká	‘I can buy’	nkáreká...
nkárekísá	‘I can sell’	nkárekísa...
ókatswá	‘she can avoid’	ókatswá...
ókalémá	‘she can cultivate’	ókaléma...

ókalébala	‘she can forget’	ókalébala...
ókájá	‘she can eat’	ókájá...
ókáreká	‘she can buy’	ókáreká...
ókárekísá	‘she can sell’	ókárekísá...
keadítswá	‘I am avoiding it’	kedítswá...
keadílémá	‘I am cultivating it’	kedíléma...
keadílémela	‘I am plowing for it’	kedílémela...
óadítswá	‘she is avoiding it’	óditswá...
óadílémá	‘she is cultivating it’	ódiléma...
óadílémela	‘she is plowing for it’	ódilémela...
keadíjá	‘I am eating it’	kedíjá...
keadíréká	‘I am buying it’	kedíréká...
keadírékísá	‘I am selling it’	kedírékísá...
óadíjá	‘she is eating it’	ódijá...
óadíréká	‘she is buying it’	ódiréká...
óadírékísá	‘she is selling it’	ódirékísá...
nkáditswá	‘I can avoid it’	nkáditswá...
nkádiléma	‘I can plow it’	nkádiléma...
nkádilémele	‘I can plow for it’	nkádilémele...
nkádijá	‘I can eat it’	nkádijá...
nkádiréká	‘I can buy it’	nkádiréká...
nkádirékísá	‘I can sell it’	nkádirékísá...
ókáditswá	‘she can avoid it’	ókáditswá...
ókádiléma	‘she can plow it’	ókádiléma...
ókádilémele	‘she can plow for it’	ókádilémele...
ókádijá	‘she can eat it’	ókádijá...
ókádiréká	‘she can buy it’	ókádiréká...
ókádirékísá	‘she can sell it’	ókádirékísá...