Notes on *lipu pu*

Seven years have passed since the first official book was published. As Toki Pona is a living language, *Toki Pona: The Language of Good* must also be a living document. Let me share some clarifications, corrections and critiques.

p. 7

"This is the way I use Toki Pona." The first book serves as a snapshot and reference point of one key person's way of using Toki Pona at one key moment in time. This foundation is paired with the invitation on page 62. "Now the rest depends on you. Go enjoy yourself. Create, play, and be *pona*!"

p. 11

In light of a commitment to non-ableist language, the chicken example should be corrected to 'silly bird' *(waso nasa)*.

p. 17

In the book, words are taught using parts of speech and example translations that are familiar to English-speaking learners, e.g. nouns, adjectives, verbs. A deeper analysis of Toki Pona grammar reveals that a model with content words and particles (among others) may be more appropriate or

accurate. For one example, search for "Toki Pona Analysis: Parts of Speech" by u/pisceyo (kala kala) on Reddit.

p. 23

The word *mi* is introduced as meaning *I, me, we.* I would like to emphasize that singularity is not the default in Toki Pona.

p. 23

At this point, *meli* and *mije* have been taught. A third word, *tonsi*, has been created by the community of Toki Pona speakers in a grassroots project, and I support it. See the dictionary part of this book for definitions.

p. 25–27

While *kute* does also mean obey, other perception words like *lukin* can also be used for obeying, for example if the information was conveyed visually.

p. 28

Technically, the word *pu* describes the relationship and interaction between a person *(jan pu)* and the book *(lipu pu).* In informal usage, a number of people use *pu* as a name for the book itself or the variety of Toki Pona presented in it.

p. 31–33

A few people form a yes-or-no question using intonation alone, without adding *anu seme* or using the *ala* method. Although this can occur spontaneously in some situations, I

would not recommend it as the main way to form a yes-or-no question, especially in writing.

In addition to the verb repetition method to answer 'yes', it is also very common to hear 'lon' with the meaning of 'yes, that's true'.

In early years, *kepeken* served as both a preposition (without *e*) and as a transitive verb (with *e*). Later, an effort was made to consolidate *kepeken* as only a preposition, i.e. without *e*. Today, some people use *kepeken e*, although the majority use *kepeken* only as a preposition. There may be benefits to either style.

Preposition style:
   o kepeken ala ilo ike. or *o kepeken ilo ike ala.*
Transitive verb style:
   o kepeken ala e ilo ike. or *o kepeken e ilo ike ala.*

Many people also use prepositions as nouns. For example:
   mi sona ala e tan.   I don't know the reason.
   mi toki e lon.   I say the truth.

I personally use the preposition *lon* with a very wide meaning. The example *mi toki lon toki pona* could also be expressed as *mi toki kepeken toki pona*, and many Toki Pona

speakers prefer this way. I also personally use *lon* when talking 'about' something: *mi toki lon kili.* I'm talking about turnips.

p. 38

For 'Chinese lady' *(meli Sonko)*, many people find it clearer to say *meli pi ma Sonko* or *meli tan ma Sonko* or *meli pi kulupu Sonko.* This avoids misunderstanding it as 'a woman named Sonko', because the primary interpretation of '[noun] [Name]' is 'a [noun] named [Name]'.

p. 38

Correction: *jan Epawan Linkan li tan ma Mewika.*

p. 43–45

Although the particle *pi* is glossed as 'of', it is more accurate to say that *pi* regroups modifiers. As the examples in *lipu pu* show, it does not behave exactly the same way as the English word 'of'. It may be helpful to compare the function of *pi* to the hyphen in English. For example, compare:

<u>pali jan</u> wan	one personal project
pali pi <u>jan wan</u>	one-person project
<u>waso kule</u> tu	two colourful birds
waso pi <u>kule tu</u>	two-coloured bird

Also, a completely different way to use *pi* exists in the structure *A pi B en C.* This is a very old way to use *pi*, which

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continues to be used by some people; however, many people dislike using it. For example, *linja pi ma en sewi* is one way to say horizon, and *musi pi kiwen walo en kiwen pimeja* is one way to say chess.

p. 45

The proverbial scholar of Toki Pona also listens to the usage of the community.

p. 46–47

For those who yearn for a more sophisticated and robust number system, I personally endorse the *kijetesantakalu-*based system, innovated by soweli nata in alignment with the values system of Toki Pona. See near the end of this book.

p. 48–50

Other examples of pre-verbs in usage include *alasa*, *open*, *pini* and *tawa*:

o alasa lukin e lipu.	Try to read the document.
mi open seli e pan.	I started cooking rice.
sina pini moku e kili.	You finished eating the kumquat.
mi tawa moku e kala.	I'll go eat seafood.

p. 52

In my opinion, whether to use a comma before *la*, after *la*, or to not use a comma at all is a personal stylistic choice.

The *pu* book introduces an oddity with how *noka* has traditionally been used. It is much more common to use *noka* as 'leg, foot' and *anpa* as 'area below or under'.

In *pu* style, the particle *li* can introduce a new verb for a third person subject, but in the case of *mi* or *sina*, one starts a new sentence. This reflects *li*'s origins as a third person marker. Many people have expanded the use of *li* to introduce a new verb, even when the subject is *mi* or *sina*.

pu style:

jan li toki li moku.	The person speaks and eats.
mi toki. mi moku.	I speak and eat.

Expanded *li* style:

jan li toki li moku.	The person speaks and eats.
mi toki li moku.	I speak and eat.

jan Melani li kama tawa tomo mi.
We can also say:
jan Melani li kama lon tomo mi.

This page contains by far the most important message in *lipu pu*.

p. 65

Correction: *2. kulupu pi toki pona li pana e ijo mute.*

p. 73

Non-ableist language: A sage is a strange person.

p. 76

Non-ableist language: Women will make men impulsive. (Of course, not all men experience opposite-sex attraction in this way.)

p. 92–103

Signed Toki Pona *(toki pona luka)* was presented as a game to battle Lojbanists. A new and very *pona* project, *luka pona*, has since been designed by jan Olipija to be usable as a naturalistic sign language alongside Toki Pona. I recommend learning *luka pona*.

p. 104–111

The community has developed *sitelen pona* glyphs for many non-*pu* words. For example, two great font projects include *linja sike* by lipamanka and *linja suwi* by jan Ana.

An alternate and secular form of the *sewi* glyph also exists as an option. It matches the other spatial terms like *anpa*.
For example, search for "sitelen pona la sitelen ante mi pi nimi *sewi*" by u/neonpixii on Reddit.

p. 112–123

These were presented as suggestions and still serve as useful defaults to fall back on. If the community of Toki Pona speakers, especially those with a connection to the place or language in question, agree on a way they would prefer to be called in Toki Pona, please use that form. In Toki Pona, there is a preference for endonyms. Also there is an effort to re-use the same word for the country, the language and the ethnic group. See *nimi.tokipona.org*

p. 116

Is the example of *ma Sawusi* an error or an indication that Toki Pona phonotactics are less strict when transcribing foreign words?

p. 125–134

In an effort to minimize the vocabulary for learners, some words were presented as merged: *a* and *kin*, *sin* and *namako*, *lukin* and *oko*. In reality, the community of Toki Pona speakers, both before and after publication of the first book, uses these words with different meanings. See the dictionary part of this book for definitions.

akesi li suwi!

p. 125

Correction:

> *akesi*
> NOUN reptile, amphibian

p. 130

Non-ableist language:

> *nasa*
> ADJ unusual, strange; silly; drunk, intoxicated

p. 131

The examples given for *seli* are in fact nouns.