

Na'vi Stock Phrases

Omängum Fra'uti
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Some things have a common way to say them in a language that may not be the most obvious. In some cases it is even in the territory of idiomatic, such that you have to actually learn what to say in certain situations. So I am attempting to collect a series of common expressions and idioms here.

All of these are sourced directly from Frommer for the moment, as a community I do not believe we are quite at the point of developing our own idioms. If someone finds one I missed or learns of a new one (Again, for now only from Frommer directly or indirectly) feel free to pass it on, and I'll add it to the list.

1 What is your name? What are you called?

Of course when you first meet someone, you would like to know who you are talking to. You could literally ask what someone's name is, however like many language, Na'vi has an idiom which expresses the concept of being named something as what you are called.

- (1) Fyape fko syaw ngar?
path-INTER one call you-DAT?
"In what way does one call to you?"

2 My name is –, I am called – .

You can say the former in Na'vi using the word for name (Tstxo oeyä lu _____), however sticking with the idiom of being called by a name, as in the "I am called _____" example above, the common way to say this in Na'vi is:

- (2) Oeru syaw (fko) _____
I-DAT call (one) _____
"One calls to me (as) _____"

When responding to someone asking what you are called, the fko can be left off, as it is contextually understood.)

3 Hello/Greetings

When you see someone of course it is polite to say hello, and of course the Na'vi are no different. They have a word for hello like most languages, and it serves well for most situations. There is also another more idiomatic expression "I see you". There is some disagreement on exactly when this is appropriate, but to the Na'vi it seems to imply some level of familiarity, though not necessarily intimacy. Outside the fictional world of Pandora it seems to be thrown around a little more casually than that, often standing in as a more formal "hello".

- (3) Kaltxi
hello
"Hello" (Casual)
- (4) Oel ngati kameie
I-DAT you-ACC you-APPRO.
"I see you" (Familiar)
- (5) Kame ngat
see you-ACC
"See you" (Familiar/casual)

*Note: Oel ngati kameie is typically accompanied by a gesture from the forehead. In a casual response sometimes the gesture can be used without anything voiced. This of course would not work when not speaking in person.

4 Good bye, See you again soon

It's always good to express a good wish on the way out, and the Na'vi express this with the spiritual sense of seeing kame, so the idiom here is fairly close to the English (And many other language) idiomatic expressions for well wishing. The full expression would probably be Oel ngati kiyevame ye'rìn, where kame takes the future proximate subjunctive infix, expressing a wish that you will be seeing them soon. However, this is usually shortened to just one word.

- (6) Kiyevame
See-FUT-SUBJ
"(I will) see (you again) soon"

Of course the Na'vi are very spiritual people, seeing as how they have a real tangible entity they can commune with, which they call the great mother (nawma sa'nok) or Eywa. So you can also use something like "Eywa be with you". In full this would be "Eywa ngahu livu" however the livu is dropped. This is closer in meaning to Goodbye which is a contraction of God be with ye".

- (7) Eywa ngahu
Eywa you-with
"Eywa with you"

5 How are you, Are you well?

It is also of course polite or friendly to ask someone how they are doing. The Na'vi do this by asking if you have well being.

- (8) Ngaru lu fpom srak?
you-DAT be well.being question
"Do you have well-being/is well being to you?"

5.1 Response

Since this is a yes/no question (As indicated by srak) a simple srane or kehe will do, or you could respond with the same form of Oeru lu fpom.

6 And you?

(After responding to "What is your name?", "Are you well?" or any other question asking about you in the dative (ngaru))

Often when exchanging pleasantries, rather than repeating what was just asked of you, you just ask "And you?" Na'vi does this by using the continuation participle *tut*.

- (9) Ngaru tut?
you-DAT CONTINUATION.PARTICLE
"And to you?"

7 I love you

Of course everyone wants to express affection, no matter what language. So in Na'vi you can do it by expressing that someone is beloved to you.

- (10) Nga yawne lu oer.
you beloved us I-DAT
"You are beloved to me."

8 Forgive me

Asking for forgiveness in Na'vi is done by asking to receive it...

- (11) Oeru txoa livu
I-DAT forgiveness be-SUBJ
Lit. May I have forgiveness

9 I have –

Na'vi has no verb to have". Instead it uses a construction common to many languages of combining the dative case -ruänd the verb to be", creating a similar concept. This works both for physical possession of objects, as well as possession of states of being (Well being, sickness, etc) and abstract concepts (Words, news, message, friends, etc). Typically the verb comes first in such situations.

- (12) Lu oeru _____
be I-DAT _____
"I have _____"

10 Sample conversation

Kaltxi, oel ke tsole'a kea ngati... Fyape fko syaw ngar?
Hello, I have not seen you before... What are you called?

Kaltxi, oeru syaw Jake Sully. Ngaru tut?
Hello, I am Jake Sully. And you?

Oeru syaw Neytiri.
I am Neytiri.

Ngaru lu fpom srak ma Neytiri?

Are you well, Neytiri?

Oeru lu fpom, slä oel tspiyang ngati fa swizaw oeyä! Ngaru tut?

I am well, but I am about to kill you with my arrow. And you?

Kehe, lam futa oe tiyerkup... Nang tse'a! Atokirina'!

No, it seems that I am about to die... Oh look! A seed of the great tree!

Pak, oeru txoa livu, lam futa nga rerey. Kiyevame!

Bah, forgive me, it seems you live. See you again soon!

Eywa ngahu ma Neytiri.

Eywa be with you Neytiri!