**About Khuzdul and "Quasi-Khuzdul"**

**Table of Contents:**

1. [Quasi-Kuzdul Phonology](#Phonology)
	1. [Consonants](#Consonants)
	2. [Vowels](#Vowels)
	3. [Syllables](#Syllables)
	4. [Stress](#Stress)
	5. [Sound Changes](#Sound_Changes)
2. [Analysis and Rational](#Analysis_Rationale)
	1. [Kuzdul Overview](#Overview_of_Khuzdul)
	2. [Consonants](#Consonants_of_Khuzdul)
	3. [Vowels](#View_on_Vowels)
	4. [Other Phonology Features](#Other_Phonology_Features)
	5. [Nouns & Adjectives](#Noun_Adjective_Inflections)
		1. [Example Decienions](#Analysis_of_Existing_Words)
	6. [Verbs](#Verbs)
	7. [Analysis of Existing Words](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)
	8. [Other Words](#Other_Words_Related_to_Khuzdul)
3. [Resources](#Resources)
	1. [References](#References)
	2. [Glossary](#Glossary)

Hail, and well met!

Khuzdul is the language of the Dwarves in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* and other books set in Middle-earth.  There are very few Khuzdul words; only about 50 are known to exist in works that have been published so far, depending on how you count them.  Tolkien's main focus were his Elvish languages, Quenya and Sindarin, and so far more is known about them.  Despite that, it seems that many people are fascinated by Khuzdul and the Dwarvish culture that lies behind it.  Perhaps it is exactly because so little is known that their curiosity is piqued!

My own interest in Khuzdul started from my interest in Tolkien's works and as a gamer.  In 1998, I was following the development of Middle-earth Online by Sierra Studios, which was eventually cancelled.  I became interested in Dwarves, discovered Khuzdul, and wondered what the words meant and how the language worked.  Eventually, I found the Ardalambion website and its article on Khuzdul.  The information there made my curiosity grow, and from that led me to the Elfling email list as well as discussions with Magnus Åberg, who wrote an article comparing Khuzdul with the Hebrew language.  For the next 10+ years, I studied and thought about the language, and learned more about linguistics in general.

The goal was always clear for me: create an expansion of the existing Khuzdul lexicon into a fully usable language.  I wanted something that was as fleshed out as Tolkien's Elvish languages, but that captured the flavor and intentions behind Khuzdul as accurately as possible.

Quasi-Khuzdul is the result.  I call it "Quasi-" because no one besides J.R.R. Tolkien can truly create, or even recreate, an actual Khuzdul language.  Instead, it could be compared to one of the many visual artists who paint vivid imagery of Middle-earth.  None of them can portray exactly what Tolkien saw in his mind's eye.  Their works are an interpretation, based on their impressions of the original prose put to pen by the professor.  Despite being derivative in nature, they still have value in helping us imagine the vistas that Tolkien created.  That's really what I hope to create here: a language that makes the reader think "Ah, so that's what the language of the Dwarves was like!"  In pursuit of that goal, I work not in the coaxing of forms and colors from vivid descriptions, but in analyzing scraps of info and detailing a framework that incorporates that information in the most consistent, plausible manner I can.  If the system I describe is not consistent with everything known about the language, then surely it will fail in providing a impression of what the language might have truly been.  I hope that readers will view the section on Analysis and Rationale, for it is there that I show why the Quasi-Khuzdul framework looks like it does.

Hopefully, the end result will be that readers will feel like they have finally found an archive of lore from antiquity that, at last, sheds light on the few tantalizing hints of what this language and culture must have been at the height of its glory in Khazad-dûm.

May your beards grow ever longer!

**Phonology**
This section covers the phonology of Quasi-Khuzdul: the sounds, rules for syllables, stress, etc.  The section consists of the following topics:

* [Consonants](#Consonants)
* [Sound Changes](#Sound_Changes)
* [Stress](#Stress)
* [Syllables](#Syllables)
* [Vowels](#Vowels)

[Return to Table of Contents](#Table_of_Contents)

**Consonants**

Khuzdul has a total of 28 consonants.  The following chart shows all of the consonants in English orthography as Tolkien presented them.  They are arranged according to their place and manner of articulation. **Consonant Phonemes in English Orthography:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Labial** | **Alveolar** | **Post-Alveolar** | **Palatal** | **Velar / Uvular** | **Glottal** |
| **Stop** |  b , pph | d , tth |   |   | g , kkh  | ' |
| **Affricate** |   |  | j , cch |   |  |   |
| **Fricative** |  v , f |  z , s | zh , sh |  hy |  | h  |
| **Trill** |  |  |  |  | r |  |
| **Approximant** |   | l |   | y |  |  w |
| **Nasal** |  m |  n |   |   |   |  |

For those that have some understanding of linguistics, the table below shows the IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet) representations of Khuzdul's consonants (or at least the main pronunciation for each).

**Consonants in IPA:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Labial** | **Alveolar** | **Post-Alveolar** | **Palatal** | **Velar / Uvular** | **Glottal** |
| **Stop** |  b , pph | d , tth |   |   | g , kkh | ʔ |
| **Affricate** |   |  | dʒ , tʃtʃh |   |  |   |
| **Fricative** |  v , f |  z , s | ʒ , ʃ |  ç |  | h  |
| **Trill** |  |  |  |  | ʀ |  |
| **Approximant** |   | l |   | j |  |  w |
| **Nasal** |  m |  n |   |   |   |  |

**Pronunciation:**

For those who are unfamiliar with linquistics and phonology, and especially for native English speakers who only speak one language, a special note should be made about "aspirated consonants".  Aspirated consonants ( [ ph th ch kh ] ) are pronounced with a puff of air being produced with the sound.   If (most) native English speaker say "past", "talk", "chant", or "can" while holding a hand in front of their mouth, they will feel that puff of air.  Non-aspirated stops at the beginning of a word can be difficult for native English speakers to pronounce, because we naturally aspirate them.  Unlike English, Khuzdul treats aspirated consonants and non-aspirated consonants as being completely different sounds.

In Appendix E, Tolkien noted that "th" and "kh" can be pronounced "more or less as in *backhand, outhouse*".  This absolutely should not be taken that the "t" and "h" or "k" and "h" sounds are separate.  They are not.  As Tolkien states, they are aspirates, and are thus both single sounds.  Because native English speakers naturally aspirate many of our stops, referring to compound words like "backhand" or "outhouse" is just a useful exercise to help us start to be aware of aspiration.

**Stops and Affricates**

**b** - pronounced as " b " in "battle"

**p** - pronounced as " p " in "span"

* never aspirated

**ph** - pronounced as " p " in "past"

* always aspirated, and usually heavy aspiration
* single sound: the "p" and "h" are not pronounced separately

**d** - pronounced as " d " in "dog"

**t** - pronounced as " t " in "stand"

* never aspirated

**th** - pronounced as " t " in "torn"

* always aspirated, and usually heavy aspiration
* single sound: the "t" and "h" are not pronounced separately

**j** - pronounced as " j " in "jazz"

**c** - pronounced similar to " ch " in "church"

* never aspirated

**ch** - pronounced as " ch " in "church"

* always aspirated, and usually heavy aspiration

**g** - pronounced as " g " in "garden"

**k** - pronounced as " k " in "skate"

* never aspirated

**kh** - pronounced as " k " in "king"

* always aspirated, and usually heavy aspiration
* single sound: the "k" and "h" are not pronounced separately

**'** - has no direct correlation to an English sound

* known as the "glottal stop"
* for some speakers, pronounced as " t " in "bat"
	+ " t " is pronounced at the back of the throat by constriction
		- makes the " t " almost silent
	+ similar to a "British Cockney " t " in "battle"
		- think something like "ba'le"
		- the " t "s are "swallowed"
* doesn't show up much in the middle of Khuzdul words, so can mostly be ignored

**Fricatives**

**v** - pronounced as " v " in "victory"

**f** - pronounced as " f " in "far"

**z** - pronounced as " z " in "zeal"

**s** - pronounced as " s " in "sun"

**zh** - pronounced as " s " in "measure"

**sh** - pronounced similar to " sh " in "shovel"

**hy** - for some speakers, pronounced similar to " h " in "huge"

* " ch " in German "ich"
* think of pronouncing "sh", but at the location you would pronounce " y " in "yellow"

**h** - pronounced as " h " in "hand"

 **Trills, Approximants, and Nasals**

**r** - pronunciation varies by Kindred

* Eastern Dwarf Kindreds (Blacklocks, Stonefoots, Ironfists, Stiffbeards)
	+ pronounced similar to " r " in "ram"
		- uvula vibrates to produce a trilled sound
		- think of a "French 'R' "
		- IPA: [ ʀ ]
	+ probably the sound found originally in Khuzdul
* Western Dwarf Kindreds (Longbeards or "Durin's Folk", Broadbeams, Firebeards)
	+ pronounced similar to " r " in "ram"
		- tongue flutters to produce a trilled sound
		- think of a "Scottish 'R' "
		- IPA: [ r ]
	+ probably different from Eastern Kindreds due to the influence of contact with the Elves

**l** - pronounced as " l " in "lamp"

**y** - pronounced as " y " in "yellow"

**w** - pronounced as " w " in "water"

**m** - pronounced as " m " in "moon"

**n** - pronounced as " n " in "number"

[Return to Phonology Menu](#Phonology)

**Vowels**

There are twelve vowels in Khuzdul.  Ten of them are grouped five pairs, with each pair having one short vowel and one long vowel.  The other two are considered as "reduced" vowels, and mostly occur as a result of morphological and phonological processes.  The list of vowels is as follows:

**Vowels in English Orthography:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Front** | **Central** | **Back** |
| **Close** |  i    î |   |  u    û |
| **Mid-close** |  e    ê |   |  o    ô |
| **Mid** |   |  ë  (e) |   |
| **Mid-open** |   |   |  ä  (a) |
| **Open** |   |  a    â |   |

    **( )** - indicates this vowel can be written without diaseris over the letter

**Vowels in IPA:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Front** | **Central** | **Back** |
| **Close** |  i    iː |   |  u    uː |
| **Mid-close** |  e    eː |   |  o    oː |
| **Mid** |   |  ə |   |
| **Mid-open** |   |   |  ʌ |
| **Open** |   |  a    aː |   |

**Pronunciation and Allophones**

< **i**>  and  < **î**>

* both pronounced as " i " in "machine"
* < î > is vocalized for a longer time than < i >

< **e**>  and  < **ê**>

* < ê > pronounced as " e " in "mesa"
* < e > pronounced as " e " in "mesa" when stressed
* < e > pronounced as " e " in "bet" when unstressed
* < ê > is vocalized for a longer time than < e >

< **a**>  and  < **â**>

* both pronounced as " a " in "father"
* < a > pronounced as " a " in "father" when stressed
* < a > pronounced as " u " in "butter" when unstressed
* < â > is vocalized for a longer time than < a >

< **u**>  and  < **û**>

* both pronounced as " oo " in "moon"
* < û > is vocalized for a longer time than < u >

< **o**>  and  < **ô**>

* both pronounced as " o " in "note"
* < ô > is vocalized for a longer time than < o >

< **ë**>  - pronounced as " e " in "butter"

* this sound occurs in English, but not as a unique vowel
* pronunciation can drift towards [ ɛ ]
	+ pronounced as " e " in "bet"
	+ easier for native English speakers to think of this vowel as a "short e"
* very short pronunciation

< **ä**>  -  pronounced as " u " in "butter"

* very short pronunciation

**Diphthongs**

Diphthongs do not occur naturally, in that they are not separate, free-standing entities.  Instead, they are the result of a syllable ending in < y > or < w >.  When this happens, the coda consonant is changed to < i > or < o >  respectively, resulting in a vowel cluster.

< **ai**>

* pronounced as " igh " in "high"

< **au**>

* pronounced as " ou " in "loud"

[Return to Phonology Menu](#Phonology)

**Syllables**

Indentification of syllables is fairly simply in Khuzdul.  Syllables must all start with a consonant, followed by a vowel.  Syllables can optionally end (close) with a single consonant.  At the end of a word, the final syllable can close with two consonants.  Because of this, wherever there is a single consonant in the middle of a word, the consonant starts a new syllable.  In places where there are two consonants in the middle of a word, the second consonant starts a new syllable.  The only challenge comes in identifying unique consonants when at least one is is a digraph, which is a single sound represented by two letter.  In Khuzdul, this would be < ph th ch kh zh sh hy gh >.  As you can see, all of those have < h > in them, so the trick is to know when you are dealing with one of these versus a simple < h > or one of the sounds that doesn't have < h >, with those being < p t c k z s y g >.  Generally, the only way to know is to have an idea of what the consonantal root of the word is.  A good way to see this is to look at the declension chart for the given word, which is usually necessary in order to use Quasi-Khuzdul.  However, the times where there may be some confusion should not be too often, so it's not a large concern.

The rules for syllabification in Khuzdul can be summed up as follows:

* Every syllable must start with one and only one consonant.  Note that some Khuzdul consonants are represented by English digraphs, and so to some may look like two English consonants.
* Every syllable must follow the initial consonant with a vowel or diphthong.
* All syllables may end with any single consonant, although it's not required.  Syllables that end in a vowel are called "open", while those that end with a consonant are "closed"
* The final syllable in a word may end with either one or two consonants, although it's not required.  There are only certain combinations of consonants that are allowed to end a syllable in pairs (a consonant "cluster").  See the chart below for details.

The valid syllable structures for Khuzdul may be defined in the following manner:

CV(C)(C)

Where:

* C = any consonant - required
* V = any vowel - required
* (C) = any consonant - optional and only in allowed code clusters at the end of a word

**Allowable Coda Consonant Clusters**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Stop/Affricate** | **Fricative** | **Trill** | **Approximant** | **Nasal** |
| **Stop/Affricate** | -bd, -pt, -pth-bj, -pc, -pch-bg, -pk, -pkh-jd, -ct, -cth-gd, -kt, -kth  | -bz, -ps, -phs-bzh, -psh, -phsh-dv, -tf, -thf-dz, -ts, -ths-dzh, -tsh, -thsh-gv, -kf, -khf-gz, -ks, -khs-gzh, -ksh, -khsh  |   |   |   |
| **Fricative** | -vd, -ft, -fth-vj, -fc, -fch-vg, -fk, -fkh -zb, -sp, -sph-zd, -st, -sth-zj, -sc, -sch-zg, -sk, -skh-zhb, -shp, -shph-zhd, -sht, -shth-zhg, -shk, -shkh |  -vz, -fs-vzh, -fsh-zv, -sf-zhv, -shf |   |   |   |
| **Trill** |  -rb, -rp, -rph-rd, -rt, -rth-rj, -rc, -rch-rg, -rk, -rkh |  -rv, -rf-rz, -rs-rzh, -rsh-rhy-rh |   |   | -rm, -rn  |
| **Approximant** | -l + all-y + all\*-w + all\* | -l + all-y + all\*-w + all\* |   |   | -lm, -ln  |
| **Nasal** |  -mb, -nd, -nj, -ng |  -mv, -nz, -nzh |   |   |   |

\*  -  Clusters that include <y> or <w> end up forming a diphthong + the final consonant, rather than a "standard" consonant cluster.

[Return to Phonology Menu](#Phonology)

**Stress**

Primary stress defaults to the final syllable (ultima) in a word.  There are times when the stress can move back to the syllable before the final (the penult) or even to the syllable before that (the antepenult).  Having stress on the antepenult is rare, and stress never falls farther back than that.

The stress position is determined by the weight of the syllables involved.  The weight in turn is a factor of whether the syllable has a long or short vowel and whether it is open or closed.  There are three weights that result from the combinations.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Weight** | **Features** | **Examples** |
|  Light |  short vowel + open syllable |  ta |
|  Moderate |  long vowel + open syllable short vowel + closed syllable diphthong vowel |  tâ tan or tand tai or taid |
|  Heavy |  long vowel + closed syllable |  tân |

The position of stress can be determined by the following process:

* Stress starts on the final syllable
* If the syllable immediately previous is of equal or greater weight, the stress moves back by one syllable
* If the vowels of the two syllables are identical (in both quality and length), the previous syllable counts as being one weight heavier
* Stress will move from the penult to the antepenult only if there are four or more syllables in the word

Here are some example words, showing their stress.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Example Word** | **Stress** | **Explanation** |
|  zirak |  zi-RAK |  moderate ultima  >  light penult |
|  kheled |  KHE-led |  light penult has same vowel as moderate ultima, so equal |
|  zâram |  ZÂ-ram |  moderate penult  =  moderate ultima |
|  khazâd | kha-ZÂD |  heavy ultima  >  light penult |
|  mazarbul |  ma-ZAR-bul |  moderate penult  =  moderate ultima |
|  Tumunzahar |  tu-MUN-za-har |  light penult has same vowel as moderate ultima, so equal moderate antepenult  >  light penult, with 3+ syllables |

Stressed syllables are pronounced with higher pitch and volume that others.

[Return to Phonology Menu](#Phonology)

**Sound Changes**

**Consonant Assimilation**
When consonants come into contact, either between two syllables in a word or between two words, they may undergo certain sound changes (assimilation), depending on the consonants involved.  Generally speaking, these are spoken sound changes only and do not show up in writing.  Once place they do show up is in some noun inflections or verb conjugations, especially where aspirated consonants are geminated (doubled).  These will be noted in the section on morphology.  Another instance where assimilation is in the writing is in compound words, especially those that are very well known, such as Khazad-dûm.  Even here, though, the writing is sometimes inconsistent, as can be seen in the case of Felak-gundu vs. Felag-gundu.  Indicating assimilation in writing then is not a major concern.

The following list shows the conditions and sound changes that occur with consonant assimilation.  All consonants are shown in English orthography.

1)  Unvoiced, plain consonants become voiced when next to their voiced counter parts.

Example:  d-t → d-d  :  Khazad-tûm → Khazad-dûm

-pb-  →  -bb-
-bp-  →  -bb-

-td-  →  -dd-
-dt-  →  -dd-

-cj-  →  -jj-
-jc-  →  -jj-

-kg-  →  -gg-
-gk-  →  -gg-

-fv-  →  -vv-
-vf-  →  -vv-

-sz-  →  -zz-
-zs-  →  -zz-

-shzh-  →  -zhzh-
-zhsh-  →  -zhzh-

-hygh-  →  -ghgh-
-ghhy-  →  -ghgh-

2)  Unvoiced <s> and <sh> become voiced next to voiced alveolar and post-alveolar fricatives.

-szh-  →  -zzh-
-zhs-  →  -zhz-

-shz-  →  -zhz-
-zsh-  →  -zzh-

3)  When next to palatal and velar stops and fricatives, the gottal stop < ' > is assimilated.

Example:  ' → k  :  Nulu'-khizdîn  →  Nuluk-khizdîn

-'k-  →  -kk-
-k'-  →  -kk-

-'g-  →  -gg-
-g'-  →  -gg-

-'hy-  →  -hyhy-
-hy'-  →  -hyhy-

-'gh-  →  -ghgh-
-gh'-  →  -ghgh-

4)  Aspirated stops followed by voiced stops become unaspirated and also devoice and aspirate the (previously) voiced stop.

-phb-  →  -pph-
-phd-  →  -pth-
-phj-  →  -pch-
-phg-  →  -pkh-

-thb-  →  -tph-
-thd-  →  -tth-
-thj-  →  -tch-
-thg-  →  -tkh-

-chb-  →  -cph-
-chd-  →  -cth-
-chj-  →  -cch-
-chg-  →  -ckh-

-khb-  →  -kph-
-khd-  →  -kth-
-khj-  →  -kch-
-khg-  →  -kkh-

5)  Aspirated stops followed by another aspirated stop become unaspirated.  This occurs when aspirated consonants are geminated (doubled) as part of an inflection or conjugation.  When this is the case, the sound change is usually reflected in the writing, not just in speech.

-phph-  →  -pph-
-phth-  →  -pth-
-phch-  →  -pch-
-phkh-  →  -pkh-

-thph-  →  -tph-
-thth-  →  -tth-
-thch-  →  -tch-
-thkh-  →  -tkh-

-chph-  →  -cph-
-chth-  →  -cth-
-chch-  →  -cch-
-chkh-  →  -ckh-

-khph-  →  -kph-
-khth-  →  -kth-
-khch-  →  -kch-
-khkh-  →  -kkh-

6)  Unvoiced, plain stops that follow a nasal become voiced.  Also, <n> before <b> becomes labial.

-mp-  →  -mb-
-mt-  →  -md-
-mc-  →  -mj-
-mk-  →  -mg-

-np-  →  -mb-
-nt-  →  -nd-
-nc-  →  -nj-
-nk-  →  -ng-

7)  Voices fricatives that follow an aspirated stop become unvoiced.

-phv-  →  -phf-
-phz-  →  -phs-
-phzh-  →  -phsh-
-phgh-  →  -phhy-

-thv-  →  -thf-
-thz-  →  -ths-
-thzh-  →  -thsh-
-thgh-  →  -thhy-

-chv-  →  -chf-
-chz-  →  -chs-
-chzh-  →  -chsh-
-chgh-  →  -chhy-

-khv-  →  -khf-
-khz-  →  -khs-
-khzh-  →  -khsh-
-khgh-  →  -khhy-

**Substitutions for Weak Consonants**

-ayi-  →  -ai-
-iyi-  →  -î-
-eyi-  →  -ê-
-uyi-  →  -î-
-oyi-  →  -ai-

-âyi-  →  -ai-
-îyi-  →  -î-
-êyi-  →  -ê-
-ûyi-  →  -û-
-ôyi-  →  -ô-

-ëyi-  →  -e-
-üyi-  →  -ai-

-awu-  →  -au-
-iwu-  →  -u-
-ewu-  →  -o-
-uwu-  →  -û-
-owu-  →  -au-

-âwu-  →  -au-
-îwu-  →  -î-
-êwu-  →  -ô-
-ûwu-  →  -û-
-ôwu-  →  -ao-

-ëwu-  →  -u-
-üwu-  →  -au-

[Return to Phonology Menu](#Phonology)

**Analysis & Rationale**

This section goes over my reasoning for why Quasi-Khuzdul has the features it does.  It includes an analysis of the existing Khuzdul corpus.  Hopefully, this will show that Quasi-Khuzdul is a faithful interpretation of what Khuzdul might really have been like, rather than a random and arbitrary list of words and assumptions.

* [Existing\_Khuzdul\_Words](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)
* [Consonants](#Consonants_of_Khuzdul)
* [Khuzdul Overview](#Overview_of_Khuzdul)
* [Nouns & Adjectives](#Noun_Adjective_Inflections)
	+ [Declensions of Existing Khuzdul](#Analysis_of_Existing_Words)
* [Other Phonology Features](#Other_Phonology_Features)
* [Other Words](#Other_Words_Related_to_Khuzdul)
* [Verbs](#Verbs)
* [Vowels](#View_on_Vowels)

[Return to the Table of Contents](#Table_of_Contents)

**An Overview of Khuzdul**

In *The Lord of the Rings*, we actually learn very little about Khuzdul as a whole.  There are some example words which are mostly place-names.  There are a few details about phonology and writing, but little else.  All else we find out is that the Dwarves "used their own strange tongue, changed little by the years; for it had become a tongue of lore rather than a cradle-speech, and they tended it and guarded it as a treasure of the past."  *The Lord of the Rings, Appendix F.*

To get a broad view of Khuzdul, we have to turn to several sources.  These include *The Silmarillio*n, various volumes of *The History of Middle-earth* Series, *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*, and others.  The following is a list of quotes describing Khuzdul.

* "They could understand no word of the tongue of the Naugrim, which to their ears was cumbrous and unlovely; and few ever of the Eldar have achieved the mastery of it." *Silmarillon, ch 10, pg 92*
* "Dwarvish was both complicated and cacophonous. Even early elvish philologists avoided it, and the dwarves were obliged to use other languages, except for entirely private conversations."  *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien, pg 31*
* "The father-tongue of the Dwarves Aulë himself devised for them, and their languages have thus no kinship with those of the Quendi.  The Dwarves do not gladly teach their tongue to those of alien race; and in use they have made it harsh and intricate, so that of those few whom they have received in full friendship fewer still have learned it well."  *The War of the Jewels, pg 205*
* "This Khuzdul (as they called it), partly because of their native secretiveness, and partly because of its inherent difficulty, was seldom learned by those of other race."  *The Peoples of Middle-earth, pg 297*
* "Structurally and grammatically it differed widely from all other languages of the West at that time; though it had some features in common with Adûnaic, the ancient 'native' language of Númenor.  This gave rise to the theory (a probable one) that in the unrecorded past some of the languages of Men - including the language of the dominant element in the Atani from which Adûnaic was derived - had been influenced by Khuzdul."  *The Peoples of Middle-earth, pg 317*
* "I have received a good many echoes of a curious tongue, also connected with what we should call the West of the Old World, that is associated with the name Khazad.  Now this resembles Adunaic phonetically, and it seems also in some points of vocabulary and structure; but it is precisely at the points where Adunaic most differs from Avallonian that it approaches nearest to Khazadian."  *Sauron Defeated, pg 414*
* "The language of the Dwarves is only seen in some geographical names and in the battle-cries at Helm's Deep.  It is Semitic in cast, leaning phonetically to Hebrew (as suits the Dwarvish character), but it evidentally has some 'broken' plural, more in Arabic style: baruk being theh plural of bark 'axe', and Khazâd of Khuzdul."  *Parma Eldalamberon XVII, pg 85*

The first five references describe Khuzdul as being a tongue that had a harsh sound to it; one which the Elves found unappealing.  Additionally, it was intricate and complicated, and thus difficult to learn.

The last two references are more interesting.  The quote from *Sauron Defeated* references "Khazadian", which is actually Khuzdul, and "Avallonian", which refers to Quenya.  Because it says Adunaic resembles Khuzdul most where it is different from Quenya, that means that we can compare Adunaic and Quenya, find where they differ, and thus have at least some suggestion that those features may be similar or identical in Khuzdul.  There is a good amount of information about Adunaic to be found in *Sauron Defeated*, so this provides a chance at learning about Khuzdul in an indirect manner.

Lastly, Tolkien himself tells us that Khuzdul's phonology resembles Hebrew, and the noun inflections have at least some comparison to Arabic.  What varieties of Hebrew and Arabic he meant, it's impossible to say, but it may just be a general similarity.  Modern Hebrew and Modern Standard Arabic were present in Tolkien's lifetime, so we can look at those, as well as older languages like Biblical Hebrew and Classical or Koranic Arabic for comparison.  It's worth noting that these are the only real-world languages to which Tolkien refers when speaking of Khuzdul, so these should serve as primary sources for inspiration in expanding Khuzdul.

Interestingly, a language that resembles Hebrew phonology and Arabic noun inflection would match up well with the other information about Khuzdul.  Hebrew and other Semitic languages are heavy on "gutterals", which are consonants pronounced in the back of the mouth or in the throat.  This could be interpreted as "harsh" or "unlovely" sounds, depending on the listener's perspective.  Arabic is widely known as being difficult to learn, largely as a result of it's "broken plurals" and syntax.  The verbal system found in Hebrew is also regarded as being difficult.  Add those together and, truly, you have a language that is "intricate" and "complicated"!  Sounds perfect for an expanded Khuzdul.

[Return to Anaysis & Rational Menu](#Analysis_Rationale)

**Finding the Consonants of Khuzdul**

To determine Khuzdul's consonant inventory, I started by taking the existing corpus of Khuzdul words and listing all of the consonants that could be identified in isolation.  This was a fairly straightforward process, and yielded the following chart (listed in IPA for comparison to other languages).

**Attested Khuzdul Consonants in IPA:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Labial** | **Alveolar** | **Post-Alveolar** | **Palatal** | **Velar / Uvular** | **Glottal** |
| **Stop** |  b | d , tth |   |   | g , kkh | ʔ |
| **Fricative** |  f |  z , s | ʃ |   |  | h  |
| **Trill** |  |  |  |  | ʀ |  |
| **Approximant** |   | l |   | j |  |   |
| **Nasal** |  m |  n |   |   |   |  |

Next, I decided to look at the consonants found in the related languages: Adunaic, Biblical Hebrew, Modern Hebrew, and Classical/Quranic Arabic.  The comparison to Adunaic and Hebrew would probably be more important.  Adunaic is the closest language to Khuzdul found in Middle-earth, and Tolkien stated that Khuzdul resembled Hebrew in its phonology.  The charts shown are from *The Treason of Isengard* (for Adunaic) and Wikipedia (for Hebrew and Arabic).  For Hebrew and Arabic, I also referenced the books I have, and for the sake of a rough comparison, the charts from Wikipedia are close enough.

**Adunaic Consonants in IPA:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Labial** | **Alveolar** | **Post-Alveolar** | **Palatal** | **Velar / Uvular** | **Glottal** |
| **Stop / Affricate** |  b , pph | d , tth | dʒ , tʃtʃh |   | g , kkh | ʔ |
| **Fricative** |   |  z , s |  |  ç | ɣ  x | h  |
| **Trill** |  | r (?) |  |  |  |  |
| **Approximant** | w  | l |   | j |  |   |
| **Nasal** |  m |  n |   |   |   |  |

**Biblical Hebrew Consonants in IPA:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Labial** | **Inter-Dental** | **Alveolar** | **Post-Alveolar** | **Palatal** | **Velar / Uvular** | **Pharyngeal** | **Glottal** |
| **Stop** | b  p |   | d  ttʕ |  |  | g  kkʕ |   | ʔ |
| **Fricative** | v  f | ð  θ | z  ssʕ | ʃ |  | ɣ  x |   ʕ  ħ | h |
| **Tap / Trill** |  |   | r |  |  |  |   |  |
| **Approximant** |  |   | l |  | j | w |   |  |
| **Nasal** | m |   | n |  |  |  |   |  |

**Modern Hebrew Consonants in IPA:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Labial** | **Alveolar** | **Post-Alveolar** | **Palatal** | **Velar** | **Uvular** | **Pharyngeal** | **Glottal** |
| **Stop** | b  p | d  t |  |  | g  k |   |   | ʔ |
| **Affricate** |   | t͡s  | dʒ   tʃ  |   |   |   |   |   |
| **Fricative** | v  f | z  s | ʒ   ʃ |  |  | χ  |   ʕ  ħ | h |
| **Tap / Trill** |  |  |  |  |  |   |   |  |
| **Approximant** |  | l |  | j | w |  ʁ̞ |   |  |
| **Nasal** | m | n |  |  |  |   |   |  |

**Classical/Quranic Arabic Consonants in IPA:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Labial** | **Inter-Dental** | **Dental / Alveolar** | **Lateral** | **Palatal** | **Velar / Uvular** | **Pharyngeal** | **Glottal** |
| **Stop** | b |   | t  dtʕ |  | ɟ | kkʕ |   | ʔ |
| **Fricative** | v | θ  ððʕ | s  zsʕ | ɮ | ɕ | χʕ  ʁʕ |   ħ  ʕ | h |
| **Tap / Trill** |  |   | ɾʕ |  |  |  |   |  |
| **Approximant** |  |   |  | l | j | w |   |  |
| **Nasal** | m |   | n |  |  |  |   |  |

After doing this side by side comparison, some interesting things pop up:

1) The existing examples of Khuzdul end up with the same set of labials as Arabic. Often, LotR fans wonder if or assume that Khuzdul will have / p /, but this shows that it is equally likely that it does not.

2) The two aspirated consonants that Tolkien mentions in the books rergarding Khuzdul are / th kh /. There is no mention of / ph /. It's noteworthy that these parallel the emphatics of both Hebrew & Arabic, which are the velarized or pharyngealized consonants / tʕ kʕ / or / tʕ qʕ /.

Generally, though, you can tell from the comparison that Khuzdul is within the ballpark of Adunaic and Semitic languages.

Adunaic, Hebrew, and Arabic all had more consonants than what is evidenced in Khuzdul. The question was where to look and see if Khuzdul might have more. I decided that the logical place to look was at their writing system, the Angerthas (runes).

I went to the table of the Angerthas runes in Appendix E of LotR to find potential sounds and select which of those may or may not be found in Khuzdul. . I figured that since the Dwarves wrote with those letters, if they didn't have a rune for a given sound, it probably didn't exist in Khuzdul. Sorting through all of the information surrounding the Angerthas was a bit tricky though, since it was used differently by the different races and for several different languages. However, I combed through that information, which is mostly from LotR Appendix E, Treason of Isengard, and Sauron Defeated. By comparing the sounds listed in the Angerthas with the consonant inventories of Adunaic, Hebrew, and Arabic, I was able to arrive at a list for Khuzdul that seems to make a lot of sense.

For reference, here's the consonant inventory I decided on for Quasi-Khuzdul, which also found on the [Phonology - Consonants page](https://sites.google.com/site/quasikhuzdul/qk-phonology/consonants).

**Consonant Phonemes in Tolkien's Orthography:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Labial** | **Alveolar** | **Post-Alveolar** | **Palatal** | **Velar / Uvular** | **Glottal** |
| **Stop** |  b , pph | d , tth |   |   | g , kkh  | ' |
| **Affricate** |   |  | j , cch |   |  |   |
| **Fricative** |  v , f |  z , s | zh , sh |  hy |  | h |
| **Trill** |  |  |  |  | r |  |
| **Approximant** |   | l |   | y |  | w |
| **Nasal** |  m |  n |   |   |   |  |

**Consonants in IPA:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Labial** | **Alveolar** | **Post-Alveolar** | **Palatal** | **Velar / Uvular** | **Glottal** |
| **Stop** |  b , pph | d , tth |   |   | g , kkh | ʔ |
| **Affricate** |   |  | dʒ , tʃtʃh |   |  |   |
| **Fricative** |  v , f |  z , s | ʒ , ʃ |  ç |  | h |
| **Trill** |  |  |  |  | ʀ |  |
| **Approximant** |   | l |   | j |  | w |
| **Nasal** |  m |  n |   |   |   |  |

The sounds in **bold blue** are the sounds that I added to the inventory based on the evidence.

**Rationale for Added Consonants**
Here are the reasons why I added each consonant to the inventory (using orthography):

**p, ph**: I was a bit hesitant to add these. The attested consonants of Khuzdul ended up matching its labial stops & fricatives with Arabic, which I though was pretty nifty.  However, Hebrew, several other Semitic languages, and Yiddish all have <p>, and Tolkien said that Khuzdul's phonetics resembled those of Hebrew. I was even more hesitant to add <ph> since even Biblical Hebrew doesn't have an "emphatic [p]", which would be velarized or pharyngealized.  This would match the attested aspirates in Khuzdul. However, Adunaic does have both <p> and <ph>. Also, Appendix E in LotR says that aspirates were "common" in Khuzdul, so it would seem odd to only have 2 in <th> and <kh>. The Dwarves of the Lonely Mountain (Erebor) eventually added runes for the consonant combinations <ps ts ks>, which were common in Quenya (and maybe Sindarin?). Khuzdul already has <khs> (which is <kh> + <s>). I figured if both Khuzdul and surrounding Mannish languages of the Northmen had these, then it would have made even more sense for the Dwarves to add them since their use of Quenya would have been fairly limited as far as I can tell.

**v**: Since I added <p> on the basis that Hebrew and Adunaic had it, I went ahead and added this sound as well.

**w**: Again, Hebrew and Adunaic have this sound, and so does Arabic. It also adds another "weak consonant" (in addition to < ' y h >) that will make for some irregular word forms. Khuzdul was noted as complex, so this will add so that.

**c j ch**: This combination might be controversial for those who have read about Khuzdul a bit. In Appendix E, Tolkien states that "ch is only used to represent the sound heard in *bach* (in German and Welsh), not that in English *church*." However, when he says that, he is only referring to the orthography used in the narratives; that is, in the stories. The <ch> found on the table of Angerthas values actually represents [ tʃ ] in English*church*. The Angerthas use a different transliteration scheme, which is intended more to represent different sounds somewhat accurately, as opposed to the start of Appendix E which is how those sounds are presented to readers in the stories. I have started to call this difference "Tolkien's Narrative Orthography" vs. "Tolkien's Phonetic Orthography".

Adunaic had a "C-series" of consonants, which was apparently post-alveolar, palatal, or both. Like the other series, it had a voiced, unvoiced, and unvoiced-aspirated trio of stops. In Sauron's Defeat, they are described as "front or palatal consonants orginally; that is roughly consonants of the K-series in the extreme forward or *y*-position." It's hard to tell exactly what that means, but it sounds like they may have been palatalized [ kjgj kjh] or just palatal [c ɟ ch ]. I suspect the former, because Tolkien adopted the notation < c j ch > "because their later development was to simple consonants". To my understanding, [c ɟ] are often realized more as affricates. Tolkien also uses the orthography <j>, which leads me to believe that his "simple consonants" may actually be more in the line of [ç ʝ çh ], [ tɕ dʑ tɕh ], or [ tʃ dʒ tʃh ]. He often describes alveolars as "dental", which makes it seem like he broke front-to-back locations into roughly front (dental/alveolar), middle (post-alv. to palatal), and back (velar to glottal). There is nothing I can find in the source material that describes a "hard palatal C" [c], as opposed to an affricate.

Another thing that leads me to include <c j ch> is that both Biblical Hebrew and Classical Arabic have [ s z sʕ ] (according to my sources). It may be debatable whether [ sʕ ] is actually pharyngealized. The point is that they have an "emphatic [s]". I didn't like that there was no good way for Khuzdul to have an emphatic <s>, since the Khuzdul "emphatics" are apparently aspirates. I did note that some scholars believe Biblical Hebrew's [ s z sʕ ] may have actually been [ts dz tsʕ]. That is just a step away from [ tʃ dʒ tʃʕ ]! So, because of that and that Adunaic has the series, I felt comfortable adding them.

The Dwarves modified the cirth (rune) for <j> not once, but twice. One of those instances was by the Dwarves of Moria when they were still there. This is just one more indicator that the <j> sound may have been in Khuzdul, as well as other languages with which they were in contact.

One final note: adding this sound allows the name Telchar to be a Khuzdul word, rather than a very stretched attempt to explain it via Sindarin. This works well, because the two other Dwarves of the 1st Age that are named also have apparently Khuzdul names: Azaghâl and Gamil Zirak. The assumption is that Dwarves didn't give out their inner, Khuzdul names. To me, it seems obvious that these names are probably outer names. In the 1st Age, there wouldn't have been as much contact with Men yet, so the Dwarves may have used Khuzdul words as outer names. Also, Khuzdul somehow influenced the languages of Men (Adunaic), and I doubt that would have only been through a few place-names. Instead, it seems far more likely that the Dwarves had outer Khuzdul names that provided more samples to loan to Men.

**zh**: Like <j> above, this cirth for this sound was modified twice by the Dwarves. It doesn't appear in Biblical Hebrew, Arabic, or Adunaic, but does show up in Modern Hebrew and Yiddish. However, Biblical Hebrew and Classical Arabic may have had the laterals [ ɬ ] and [ ɮ ] respectively. Since Middle-earth is a sort of prehistoric Earth, I could see Khuzdul's <zh> shifting into those slots. This sound actually doesn't appear in any of the languages of Middle-earth as they are described, so Khuzdul may well have had it. The cirth for this sound was added by the Elves of Eregion to represent sounds not found in Sindarin, so Khuzdul seems like the likely candidate since there are no others.

**hy**: This was added by the Dwarves of Moria, and it is also found in Adunaic. Arabic and Hebrew have a bunch of fricatives in the velar to glottal range. Having this sound strengthens Khuzdul's inventory in that area, or at least right next door.  See the comments below about <kh> and <gh>.

About the sounds that I have ***not***included:

**hw, lh, rh**: These are voiceless <w l r>. Hw appears in Westron, and I think maybe the Elvish languages as well. The others were used by the Elves. Hebrew, Arabic, and Adunaic do not have them, so it seems likely that they come from the Elves, not Khuzdul.

**mb, nj, ng, nd**: These are all a result of "nasal infixion", which is a process that occurs in Quenya and Adunaic. In Sauron Defeated, Lowdham's Report says that Khazadian (Khuzdul) does not have this feature at all. Therefore, I have left them out as phonemes. That said, the Dwarves apparently did use them to write simple consonant clusters, even though they would probably cross syllable boundaries (given Semitic syllable structures).

**th, dh, kh**: These are the sounds "th" in "thin", dh as "th" in "there", and "kh" is the same as German's "ach-laut" found in "bach".  Tolkien says in Appendix E that Khuzdul does not have these sounds.  It's a bit surprising that Khuzdul doesn't have this <kh> sound (note that this <kh> is different than the <kh> seen in Khuzdul, which is an aspirated stop).  Adunaic and Biblical Hebrew both have it, and Modern Hebrew and Arabic have the voiceless uvular fricative instead.  The uvular fricatives don't show up in the Angerthas chart, so Khuzdul probably doesn't have that.  My guess is that Tolkien was concerned with orthography (he seems to have been quite particular about how words look on the printed page) as he was already using <kh> for an aspirated stop.  Using <ch> might have been an alternate route, just like in Sindarin, but as I mention above that is probably used for the aspirated post-alveolar affricate <ch> in English "church".  This leaves Khuzdul empty in a range where all related languages have one or more sounds.  I think this is where <hy> enters the picture (German's "ich-laut").  Like uvulars, palatals are right next to velars, and its presence in German may have reminded Tolkien of the Jews he was familiar with.  They probably would have been Yiddish speakers, but even Yiddish doesn't have the <hy> sound; it has a voiceless uvular fricative like Modern Hebrew and Arabic.  Still, they would have also commonly spoken German, so that may have made Tolkien feel comfortable in adding it.

**gh**: This is the voiced fricative paired with <kh> above.  There is one Khuzdul name, Azaghâl, where this sound potentially shows up.  However, in Appendix E, Tolkien notes that this sound is seen in Orcish and Black Speech, but there is no mention of Khuzdul, Westron, or Adunaic.  I think that is telling.  Also, I have found no vocalization in Hebrew or Arabic similar to Azaghâl, where a glottal stop is prefixed with a vowel and the first radical has a vowel as well.   You can find 'aCCâC commonly in Arabic, but nothing like 'aCaCâC.  The -âl could conceivably be the same as the adjectival suffix -ul seen elsewhere in Khuzdul, but Tolkien used a <u> or <û> everywhere else.  Although Adunaic and Biblical Hebrew have this sound, Modern Hebrew and Yiddish do not.  They only have a voiceless fricative in this range with no paired voiced fricative.  From all of this, I can see Tolkien leaving this sound out of Khuzdul.  It's not a clear call, but I lean in this direction.

**kw, gw, khw, ghw, ngw, nw**: These are labialized consonants, and for the most part are found as either phonemes in Quenya or consonant clusters in Sindarin.  Hebrew, Arabic, and Adunaic do not have them at all. I can't picture Khuzdul having them at all, either.

**ps, ts, x (ks)**: These are said to be common consonant clusters in Quenya and I think Sindarin. Even there they are not phonemes. The Dwarves added these runes, and I suspect they were found in Khuzdul, Adunaic, and other languages of Men in addition to Quenya and Sindarin. Since the Dwarves used the "nasal infixion" runes (above) for simple consonant clusters, they probably found it useful to add these since they were common. They were NOT added by the Dwarves of Moria, so I doubt they are considered phonemes. They are consonant combinations, not affricates.

**ŋ**: Hebrew, Arabic, and Adunaic all lack this sound, unless it's an allophone of <n> when before a velar consonant. Sindarin and Quenya have it, and it was said that where Adunaic differed from Quenya was where it most resembled Khuzdul. Hence, Khuzdul doesn't get this sound.

**bh, dh, gh ("aspirated" voiced stops)**: One of the common assumptions by linguistic novices (and myself at one point!) is that because there are aspirated voiceless stops <th kh> there must be voiced ones as well. Adunaic did not have these at all. Biblical Hebrew and Arabic have the voiceless - voiced - "emphatic" voiceless trio of stop. Like Adunaic, Khuzdul's "emphatics" are apparently aspirated consonants, which gives it a 3-way distinction of voiceless - voiced - aspirated voiceless, which is common in the world's languages. Also, Tolkien routinely uses <gh> to represent [ɣ], a fricative, so that takes away the orthography for an "aspirated <g>".  The only place that even hints at "aspirated voiced stops" (which would actually be "breathy voiced") is the word *sharbhund*. However, I decided to deal with this example by breaking it into the syllables *sharb + hund*.

[Return to Anaysis & Rational Menu](#Analysis_Rationale)

**A View on Vowels in Khuzdul**

To find the vowels of Khuzdul, we have to mostly work backwards, from the orthography towards the phones. That's because there is so little information about Khuzdul vowels (much like everything about the language). The orthographic vowels that show up in the primary sources are < i î e ê a â o u û >. This only lacks < ô >, but that shows up in a note Tolkien wrote about the etymology of the word "Lhûn", where he postulated a Khuzdul word "salôn". This shows that < ô > is probably included, or at the very least that he considered it.

There are many variations on vowel pronunciation in Hebrew's history, and most of those show vowel length as being phonemic. Adunaic had short, long, and "over-long" vowels of <i a u>, similar to Arabic's 3 vowel qualities. Nothing is said about the exact pronunciation of Adunaic's vowels, so I think length is probably contrastive for Adunaic as well. As a result, I'm guessing this is also probably true for Khuzdul.

In Appendix E, Tolkien writes that the vowels should be "approximately" pronounced as "*i, e, a, o, u* in English *machine, were, father, for, brute*".  This was mostly as a guide for Sindarin, since that is most of the names in LotR.  I have to admit that I'm exactly sure what sound the "e" in English "were" is supposed to be, but I would guess / e /.  Quenya apparently has / e /, so that seems to be the most probable.  That matches Hebrew as well, so Khuzdul probably has this sound.  Putting these sounds in a chart, we get the following so far:

**Vowels in English Orthography:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Front** | **Central** | **Back** |
| **Close** |  i    î |   |  u    û |
| **Mid-close** |  e    ê |   |  o    ô |
| **Mid(-open)** |   |   |   |
| **Open** |   |  a    â |   |

**Vowels in IPA:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Front** | **Central** | **Back** |
| **Close** |  i    iː |   |  u    uː |
| **Mid-close** |  e    eː |   |  o    oː |
| **Mid(-open)** |   |   |   |
| **Open** |   |  a    aː |   |

There were also two vowel symbols added by the Dwarves of Moria to the Angerthas, #55 and #56. At the end of appendix E, Tolkien says these were "used for vowels like those heard in English "butter", which were frequent in Dwarvish and in the Westron."  There are runes on the title page of LotR which uses #55 in the English word "the", for which the "e" sound is most commonly the schwa, /ə/.  Additionally, in the tomb inscription of Balin, #56 is used in the English word "son", such that #56 is /ʌ/.  The Angerthas letters #55 and #56 "were in origin a halved form of #46".  This sounds very much like "reduced" or "schwa" vowels that are commonly found in Hebrew, and the actual sounds are in line with Hebrew's reduced vowels as well.

In Hebrew, these sounds are represented by different letters than non-reduced vowels, which is apparently the case with the Angerthas runes.  The big question is how these two sounds are represented in English orthography.  Again, as above, Tolkien says that they are "frequent in Dwarvish and in the Westron."  However, we don't see any English characters in Khuzdul samples other than the ones shown above.  We also don't see Angerthas #55 and #56 anywhere other than in English words.  So, if they are so frequent, why don't we see any evidence of them?

The most likely solution I can determine is that, in some situations, the existing vowels seen in the Khuzdul corpus represent the sounds of English "butter".  In that light, the only systematic method I can find in languages that may have influenced Khuzdul is seen in Yiddish.  There, we find the vowel phoneme /ɛ/, which is like "e" in "bet".  However, in unstressed syllables it is realized as /ə/.  Modern Hebrew also has /ə/ which tends to be realized as /ɛ/.  In the Tiberian Hebrew vocalization of Biblical Hebrew (which eventually became something of a standard), there were three reduced vowels, once of which was /ɛ̆/.  Khuzdul could conceivably follow the model of Yiddish here, such that the sound written as [e] be pronounced as /e/, like "e" in "mesa", when stressed, and then as either /ɛ/ or /ə/ when unstressed.  Alternatively, it might be /ɛ/ when stressed and /ə/ when unstressed.

Angerthas #56 is represented by "u" in English "butter".  However, the sound /ʌ/ is phonetically closest to /a/, not /u/.  The other two reduced vowels in Tiberian vocalizations, /ă/ and /ɔ̆/, are right on either side of /ʌ/.  I could see this sound being written as either [a] or [o].  Because /ʌ/ is unrounded, like /ă/ and unlike /ɔ̆/, I think the best choice is to write it as [a].

The information regarding vowel vocalization throughout Hebrew's history is extremely complex.  From what I can gather, it seems that certain vowels, when reduced to an unstressed "schwa" sound, become a specific reduced vowel.  If Khuzdul does follow the Yiddish model of certain short vowels having different pronunciations when stressed or unstressed, then the most likely pairings that I can see are that [i î e ê] become [e] when reduced and [u û o ô a â] become [a] when reduced.  Generally speaking, if Khuzdul follows the Biblical Hebrew model, it would usually be the long vowels that are reduced to schwas in the course of inflection.

Based on this analysis, I would present Khuzdul's vowels as seen in the charts below.

To represent /ə ʌ/, I decided to use < ë ä >. Using <ĕ ă> might be better, but I hate to use non-ASCII characters. As it turns out, the IPA symbol for a [centralized vowel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Relative_articulation) is the dierisis.  This is actually a good description or approximation of schwa sounds.  Additionally, Tolkien was exacting on how words looked, and used minimal special symbols, but he did use *ë* in some places.  So, it seems that using <ë ä> is a pretty good fit.

With that said, <ë ä> would only be used when one is absolutely sure that a given vowel is a schwa sound.  Since we can't be sure, that results in "pretty much never".  In any event, Tolkien didn't use these letters in any Khuzdul example.  If one follows the analysis above, the sounds /ə ʌ/ can be written as <e a> in all circumstances.  This ends up making the English transcription of Khuzdul words follow very close to the Yiddish model.  To indicate this in the chart below, I have added (e) and (a) in blue to note that in general practice, these sounds can be written and (mostly) thought of as allophones of /e a/.

**Vowels in English Orthography:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Front** | **Central** | **Back** |
| **Close** |  i    î |   |  u    û |
| **Mid-close** |  e    ê |   |  o    ô |
| **Mid** |   |  ë  (e) |   |
| **Mid-open** |   |   |  ä  (a) |
| **Open** |   |  a    â |   |

**Vowels in IPA:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Front** | **Central** | **Back** |
| **Close** |  i    iː |   |  u    uː |
| **Mid-close** |  e    eː |   |  o    oː |
| **Mid** |   |  ə |   |
| **Mid-open** |   |   |  ʌ |
| **Open** |   |  a    aː |   |

[Return to Anaysis & Rational Menu](#Analysis_Rationale)

**Other Phonology Features**

**Syllables**
In *Vinyar Tengwar, Volume 5b, Issue 48, pg 24*, it is stated that "Khuzdûl, the tongue of the Dwarves, did not, however, tolerate two initial consonants."  At the same time, *Appendix*F in *The Return of the King* describes the addition of Angerthas #35 as being " ' (the clear or glottal beginning of a word with an initial vowel that appeared in Khuzdul)".  Both of these describe rules for syllable formation that are common, if not ubiquitous, in Semitic languages.  Almost or all of them require syllables to start with a consonant.  For words that seem, to native English speakers, to start with a vowel actually are beginning with a glottal stop.  Many Semitic languages also require only one consonant to start a syllable, and those that appear to allow consonant clusters to start a syllable can sometimes be analyzed as having a very short schwa sound between them.

Beyond that, we know that Khuzdul can have two consonants at the end of a syllable, as seen in *Khuzd*and *Sharbhund*.  That, apparently, is only at the end of a word, for in all other places where two consonant sounds occur, there would probably be a syllable division between them.  This is due to the requirement of starting a syllable with one consonant.  I highly doubt that there would be any more than two consonants to end a syllable, as I know of no Semitic languages that tolerate such, and it doesn't appear in Khuzdul at all.

Regarding what consonants may appear in cluster, it's hard to say what rules Khuzdul has.  Some clues may be taken from what clusters do exist, the Angerthas, and assimilation rules in Adunaic.  See the section below on Sound Changes for more information.

**Stress**
Not much can be said of assigning primary stress.  Semitic language vary quite a bit, and Adunaic says nothing on the matter.  The one thing we can say is that, for two-syllable words that have a short vowel in the first syllable and a long vowel in the second, stress probably falls on the second.  This is because Tolkien envisioned a word *salôn*or *sulûn*"to descend, fall quickly" which would be borrowed into Sindarin and lose the first vowel to become *slôn*or *slûn*respectively. *Vinyar Tengwar, Volume 5b, Issue 48, pg 24*  It's more likely that the first syllable's vowel would be lost if it is unaccented.  At least some varieties of Arabic also tend to favor syllables with long vowels for primary stress.

**Sound Changes**

[Return to Anaysis & Rational Menu](#Analysis_Rationale)

**Noun & Adjective Inflections**

The existing corpus of Khuzdul is almost entirely nouns and a few adjectives, with absolutely no verbal inflection shown.  The purpose of this section is to look at what inflections exist in Khuzdul nouns and adjectives, and/or which ones are probably.  In the pages following this one where I analyze each Khuzdul example individually, the information here should provide an understanding of why I interpret the words in the way that I do.  This is highly important, because without a solid analysis of the attested lexicon, an extension of Khuzdul will have almost no hope of capturing the language's aesthetic.

**Nouns and Adjectives are the Same Part of Speech**

Before listing out word forms for nouns and adjectives, it should be understood that they are, in all probability, the same parts of speech.  In Arabic and other Semitic languages, there are several different classes of words, as there are in English.  However, they are organized differently.  A noun or adjective in Arabic is called an "ism".  Some words that would be considered adjectives in English are actually considered as verbs in Arabic (and other Semitic languages).

The main reason this matters here is that, as a result, nouns and adjectives share the same inflections, which are listed below.

**Number**

**Singular** - As should be expected, Khuzdul has a singular number.  Tolkien says that several Khuzdul words are singular, notably *khuzd*"Dwarf".  The singular, as is familiar to most people, represents a single unit of something.  It is also considered the "least marked" form; that is, the basic form a noun or adjective will appear in.  This is the form that will appear in the dictionary.  Hebrew, Arabic, other Semitic langauges, and Adunaic all have a singular number, so it's not surprising that Khuzdul does as well.  As in Arabic, the singular consists of "templates" of vowel patterns for the consonantal roots that is paired with another template for the plural number. As previously noted, Tolkien said that Khuzdul resembles Arabic in its broken plurals, so I will follow Arabic's example of the singular here as well.  Without it, the plural form wouldn't be "broken".

**Plural** - Tolkien states for a number of Khuzdul words that they are plurals.  Again, the main examples would be *Khazâd* "Dwarves" and *baruk*"axes".  The plural will be mostly "broken" in Arabic style, following the above statement.  The plural is more than one unit of something: anywhere from two to infinity.

**Collective** - Tolkien wrote that the word *dûm*is "either a true plural or a collective singular".  Arabic makes use of a collective number.  A collective is identical in form to the singular, which is described above.  Like the singular, words that make use of the collective number will show the collective form in the dictionary because it is the least marked.  However, unlike the singular, the collective represents more than one unit of something, just like the plural.  Think of the word "fish" in English as an example.  Because Tolkien mentions that dûm is either plural or collective, Khuzdul seems to mimic Arabic's noun formations, and Arabic makes extensive use of a collective, it's easy to see the collective being used in Khuzdul.  It becomes even more likely when you start to analyze words in light of the other numbers that go with the collective.  Note that nouns that have a collective form do not have a singular or plural form.  Instead, they have a "singulative" and "plurative" form described below.

**Singulative** - Languages that have a collective number, including Arabic, generally have a form which identifies a single unit of a given collective.  This form, called the "singulative", is more marked than the collective, usually through some kind of affix.  A good example is "djinn" (more than 1) vs. "djinni" (only 1), where the single djinni is more marked than the collective using the *-i* suffix.  In Arabic, nouns in the singulative number are called "nouns of unity".  Khuzdul's singulative marker will usually be *-ûn*, but other forms such as *-ân* or *-în* will occur.   Evidence for this is in found in Tumunzahar, Buzundush, Tharkûn, Nargûn, Gabilân, and Nuluk-khizdîn.  See those individual descriptions to see why I believe Khuzdul has collective and singulative numbers, along with the singulative affix *-ûn*.

**Plurative** - Languages that make use of collectives and singulatives often also have a plurative number.  The plurative would take the same form as the plural above, but will essentially be a "plural of paucity".  This means it is used for more than one unit of something, but it is limited to a small number.  In Arabic, the plurative is used for entities numbering only up to 10 or so.  For more units that (approximately) ten, the collective number should be used.

**Dual** - Hebrew, Arabic, and Adunaic all have a dual number.  Adunaic apparently gets its dual from Quenya since they both have a dual number formed by a *-t* suffix.  Also, both Adunaic and Quenya use the dual in much the same way as many Semitic languages, which is mostly for objects that occur naturally in pairs, like hands.  Because Khuzdul was said to be most similar to Adunaic where Adunaic differed from Quenya, I'm going to leave out a dual form.  It doesn't seem to add that much complexity to the system anyway, most of which comes from simply having broken plurals.

**State**

**Definite** - Khuzdul shows no evidence for a definite article, which in English is "the". Vowel changes could potentially indicate definiteness (*khazâd*vs. *khazad*), but Tolkien refers to this as "composition form". Almost all of the corpus is names, and the only phrases we have can be interpreted as not requiring a definite article. I have a hard time picturing Khuzdul as a Semitic style language without a definite article, so I'm  including it in Quasi-Khuzdul. Adunaic apparently doesn't have one, or Tolkien doesn't write about it at all, so I may be bucking the trend a bit here of making Khuzdul similar to Adunaic where it differs from Quenya (which has a definite article).

**Indefinite** - Khuzdul definite shows no evidence of an indefinite article, either (English "a" or "an").  However, this is not at all surprising because Hebrew & Arabic only have a definite article.  The result is that the same will be true for Quasi-Khuzdul.  The indefinite will be considered the basic state since it is unmarked.

**Composition** - Tolkien mentions this in reference to the difference between *Khazâd*"dwarves" and *Khazad-dûm* "Dwarf-mansion".  Note the difference in a long vs. short *A*.  The composition form seems to be pretty much the same thing as the Semitic construct state or "bound form". There, the bound form is used in the formation of genitive expressions (as in "X of Y"). Khuzdul's composition form also seems to obey similar formation to the Hebrew bound form in that it comes from vowel reduction.  Biblical Hebrew especially uses the bound form to indicate genitive relations such as ownership, and therefore does not have a "genitive case".  Khuzdul also shows no evidence of a genitive case, per se.  Look at the phrase *Baruk Khazâd* "Axes of the Dwarves".  The second word, *Khazâd*, doesn't have an extra suffix compared to other places we see it.  Tolkien does describes a suffix *-ul*, found in the word *Fundinul*from Balin's tomb inscription, as a "genitive ending of patronymics".  That suffix can be viewed more as an "adjectival" suffix, which is similar.  They have slightly different uses, though.  Khuzdul then seems to use the composition (bound) form and apposition to indicate genitives. It appears to be more similar to Hebrew than Arabic in this respect.

**Case**

**Nominative** - The nominative case is used for the subject noun of a sentence, be it transitive or intransitive.  In English think of "I" vs. "me", where "I" is nominative.  Hebrew & Arabic both have a nominative case, and it is the unmarked form. Adunaic is different in that is marks the nominative (through suffixes and/or vowel changes) and calls it the "subjective".  Tolkien stated that *mênu*is "plural, accusative 'you' ".  The vast majority of languages that have an "accusative" case have a "nominative" case as well, so we can safely say that Khuzdul has this.

**Accusative** - As just mentioned, Tolkien refers to *mênu*as "plural, accusative 'you' ", so Khuzdul obviously has an accusative case. Hebrew & Arabic have it, so Khuzdul follows suit.  The accusative is used as the object of a verb.  From the previous examples "I" and "me", it would be "me" that is the accusative.  For Khuzdul's accusative case, the form will be a *-u* suffix or infix. This comes from what is found in Adunaic's "objective genitive". Khuzdul seems to have the same construction, seen in "Felak-gundu", where *gundu*"cave" receives the action of the *felak*"hewer".  Another example is *Uzbad Khazad-dûmu* "Lord of Moria", where the radicals *Z-B-D* apparently signify a verb meaning "to rule, reign over", and *uzbad*would then be "ruler, lord".  Khazad-dûm then receives the action of the lord, which is "ruling".  Note that, here, *Khazad-dûmu*has the extra *-u* suffix compared to other places we see the name.  That *-u* suffix appears in *gundu*and *mênu*, and also is the same in Adunaic.  That can't be coincidence!  If the form were simply *Uzbad Khazad-dûm*, without the *-u*, then the meaning would probably change to something more like "a lord from Moria".  That is, one who is simply associated with Moria in someway, but doesn't act upon Moria in any significant manner, at least that is indicated in its root meaning.  Also noteworthy is that apparently the *-u*accusative ending doesn't cause a shortening of vowels in the root word, unlike what most suffixes would.  Perhaps that is because this suffix isn't changing the basic meaning of the word to which it is attached.

**Gender**

There is no direct evidence that Khuzdul has gender, but that doesn't necessarily mean it isn't there. Quenya and Sindarin have no gender, while Adunaic has some gender that is limited to natural, "semantic" gender.  Hebrew and Arabic both have gender systems, with "grammatical" gender being especially prevalent in Hebrew.  Including gender that had grammatical, morphological, and semantic aspects to it would make nouns and adjectives much more complex, and Khuzdul was said to be very difficult.

Khuzdul shows a hint of possible gender in *Nargûn*, *Tharkûn*, *Gabilân*, and *Nuluk-khizdîn*.  The difference is found in the vowels that make up the "suffix of specificity", which is *-ûn* / *-ân* / *-în*.  To some extent, affixes in Semitic languages can be found with different vowels for the same affix.  It could be viewed that the consonant is the "true" affix, and the vowel is added after as a necessary vocalization.  On the other hand, because the suffix seems to make the root indicate a single entity, it could be seen as evidence of a gender system.  Viewed this way, it's interesting that there are three different vowels.  Is this three genders then?   Hebrew and Arabic only have masculine and feminine, but Adunaic has the "neuter" gender as well, even though Adunaic's system is limited.  Yiddish, though, does have three genders - masculine, feminine, and neuter - which is grammatical, morphological, and semantic in nature.  Such a system could appear in Khuzdul simply due to the small body of Khuzdul examples.  If *-ûn* / *-ân* / *-în* are viewed as indications of gender, then a Yiddish-style system would fit there and also explain the three genders that show up in Adunaic.

Looking closer, Adunaic uses -*i(-)*, -*î(-),* and -*ê(-)* as feminine affixes.  In Arabic, the names of towns, cities, and countries are usually feminine.  Nuluk-khizdîn fits into that category, and it has the -în suffix.  Adunaic apparently uses feminine forms for countries as well, as seen in *Anadûnê*"Westernesse", as opposed to the adjective *anadûni* "western".  Similarly, the affixes -*u(-)*, -*û(-)*, and -*ô(-)* are used for masculine nouns in Adunaic.  The dwarves referred to Gandalf as *Tharkûn*, which should therefore be masculine.  The name for Mordor, *Nargûn*, also shows the same vowel, and seems to contradict the use of a feminine form for countries.  However, it may be that *Nargûn* was the dwarves' name for Sauron, and Mordor was so closely associated with him that the two were used as synonyms.  That leaves *Gabilân*, which would have a neuter gender since it has a different vowel in the suffix *-ân*, and the other vowels seem to be used for masculine and feminine.  Again, this lines up with Adunaic, which uses the affixes -*a(-)* or -*â(-)* for its "common" gender, which is a combination of both masculine and feminine.  Any vowel may represent the neuter in Adunaic, so again the *-ân* in *Gabilân*makes sense there.

The other words that might have the singulative suffix (or "suffix of specificity") are *Tumunzahar*and *Buzundush*.  It's very easy to suppose that the stem words *tûm* and *buz*(or *bûz*) are grammatically masculine, and therefore take the masculine *-ûn* suffix.  Words that are grammatically neuter or feminine would then take the *-ân* and *-în* suffixes to form the singulative number respectively.

Finally, the word *aglâb*may have a suffix *-âb.*  This might be a neuter form since it uses <â> just like *-ân*, and its easy to view "language" as a neuter.  There could very well be masculine *-ûb* and feminine *-îb* forms of the suffix.  Alternatively, *-âb* could be invariable and used to form collectives as well as derive feminine nouns.

[Return to Anaysis & Rational Menu](#Analysis_Rationale)

**Some *Tentative* Example Declensions of Existing Khuzdul Words**

**Declension 1:  *CuCC* → *CaCâC***
 **Includes:** *Khuzd*"Dwarf", *Rukhs*"Orc", *gund*"hall", *turg*"beard", *bund*"head", *dush*"darkness", *uzn*"shadow", *hund*"hill" ***Khuzd*"Dwarf**"

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **NominativeSingular** | **NominativePlural** |  | **AccusativeSingular** | **AccusativePlural** |
| **Free** | khuzd  | khazâd  |   |  khuzdu | khazâdu  |
| **Composition** | khuzd | khazad |   |  khuzdu | khazud |

**Declension 2:  *CaCC* → *CaCuC***
 **Includes:** *bark*"axe", *sharb*"???" ***bark*"axe**"

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **NominativeSingular** | **NominativePlural** |  | **AccusativeSingular** | **AccusativePlural** |
| **Free** | bark | baruk |   |  barku | baruku |
| **Composition** | bark | baruk |   |  barku | baruku |

**Declension 3:  *CâCaC* → *CuCûC***
 **Includes:** *zâram*"lake", *nâla*"waterway" ***bark*"axe**"

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **NominativeSingular** | **NominativePlural** |  | **AccusativeSingular** | **AccusativePlural** |
| **Free** | zâram | zurûm |   |  zârum | zurûmu |
| **Composition** | zaram | zurum |   |  zarum | zurumu |

**Declension 4:  *CûC* → *CuCûn*→ *CaCâC*  (geminate root, collective)

Includes:** *tûm*"mansions", *bûz*"roots" ***tûm*"mansions**"

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **NominativeCollective** | **NominativeSingulative** | **NominativePlurative** |  | **AccusativeCollective** | **AccusativeSingulative** | **AccusativePlurative** |
| **Free** | tûm | tumûn  | tamâm |   |  tûmu |  tumûnu | tamâmu |
| **Composition** | tum | tumun | tamam |   |  tumu |  tumunu | tamamu |

**Declension 5:  *maCaCC*→ *maCaCCûn*→ *maCaCuC*  (passive participle, collective)

Includes:** mazarb "records" ***mazarb*"records**"

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **NominativeCollective** | **NominativeSingulative** | **NominativePlurative** |  | **AccusativeCollective** | **AccusativeSingulative** | **AccusativePlurative** |
| **Free** | mazarb | mazarbûn  | mazarub |   |  mazarbu |  mazarbûnu | mazarubu |
| **Composition** | mazarb | mazarbun | mazarub |   |  mazarbu |  mazarbunu | mazarubu |

[Return to Anaysis & Rational Menu](#Analysis_Rationale)

**Verbs**

It's difficult to say much about Khuzdul verbs with any certainty.  The only examples we have are the stems *felek*"to hew", *gunud* "to tunnel, excavate", and *salôn*/ *sulûn*"to fall, decend swiftly".  We are also told that *felak*"hewer" can also be used as a verb meaning "to use a hewer".  Because Tolkien made mention of Khuzdul's Semitic structure on several occasions, we can maybe infer that the verbal system resembles that of Hebrew or Arabic.  It would certainly make it much different than the other languages in Middle-earth.   If so, we can view several other roots as being verbal in nature: *'-G-L* "to speak", *G-B-L* "to be great, mighty", *G-M-L* "to be/grow old, to age", *Z-R-B* "to record", *Sh-R-B* "to be/become bald", *S-G-N* "to be long", *L-Ch-R* "to smith", *Z-B-D* "to rule", and *Z-H-R* "to be hollow".  Note that a number of these are very hypothetical, so refer to the pages of the various words that contain them to see why I assign these meanings.

When viewed in total, these roots can be analyzed as being very similar to Arabic's verbal system.  Doing so actually makes them seem like a coherent whole.  There are several features that lead me to this conclusion.

* The roots *G-B-L* "to be great, mighty", *G-M-L* "to be/grow old, to age", *Sh-R-B* "to be/become bald", *S-G-N* "to be long", and *Z-H-R* "to be hollow" can all be viewed as "stative verbs", which indicate a state the subject is in as opposed to an action being performed.
* The words *gabil*"great" and *gamil* "old" are especially similar to the forms of verbal adjectives of stative verbs in Arabic.  The template for these words in Arabic is *CaCîC*, which we can easily view as being reduced to a *CaCiC*composition form in Khuzdul.
* The words *felak*"hewer" and *uzbad*"ruler" can be viewed as active participles, even though they differ in vocalization from the standard template for active participles in Arabic, which is *CâCiC*.  Arabic participles often become lexicalized, which would be the case here.  We could view these words as the "hewing" and "ruling".  Felak especially fits the view of an active participle since it is a tool, but doesn't have a template used for tools in Arabic: *miCCaC*.  This too fits Arabic, as the use of the *miCCaC*pattern isn't a universal for implements.  Sometimes the active participle is employed.  This is an example of where the active participle becomes lexicalized.
* *Mazarb*can easily be seen as a passive participle.  The passive participle in Arabic typically takes the template *maCCûC*, which is a bit different than *mazarb*.  Still, we see the *ma-* prefix here, which is seen in other Semitic languages, so *mazarb*fits well as a passive participle.
* The only way I was able to interpret *iglishmêk*was to view *'igl* as a gerund (or "verbal noun").   The pattern *CiCC* is used in Arabic for the gerund (called a "masdar") of a verb.  Hebrew and Yiddish use infinitives and participles, and those structures just didn't fit the evidence in Khuzdul quite as well as the Arabic participles and gerund.  A gerund similar to Arabic also provides an explanation for why we see the pattern *CaCC*in *Sharbhund*as opposed to *CaCaC*or *CaCiC*.

If we accept that many Khuzdul words can be viewed as fitting a structure similar to Arabic and perhaps incorporating elements of other related languages (Yiddish, Hebrew, and perhaps other Semitic languages), then there are a couple of major features that we can probably expect to see.

* Both Arabic and Hebrew verbs, especially in ancient times, have two prime conjugation forms: the perfect and the imperfect.  The perfect is primarily formed with suffixes, while the imperfect is formed with prefixes.  As the base conjugations, they also make these languages primarily aspect driven rather than tense driven.  This is a very different paradigm than Indo-European languages.  (It should be noted that the claim of being primarily aspect-based rather than tense is debated by scholars.)  If Khuzdul follows this structure, then it would also be much different from the other languages found in Middle-earth, and would add to the view by non-native speakers of it being a complex language.
* Arabic verbs have ten to fifteen "forms" or "structures" which modify the meaning of the verb in some way.  Form I is generally the most basic form and meaning of a root, and other forms will take on various interpretations, such as the causative or reflexive.  Hebrew has a similar concept, which is the seven "binyanim", or again "structures".  In Hebrew, the meanings of each binyam seem to be more standardized than the Arabic forms.  On the other hand, each Arabic form is more standardized in its template or vocalization than in Hebrew.  Still, the concepts are somewhat similar and both provide the language with a way to derive various verbal meanings from the same root.

There are other features of Hebrew and Arabic that are similar and could very possibly show up in Khuzdul, but the perfect/imperfect aspects and the forms/binyanim are so central to Semitic languages that it's difficult to see Khuzdul without them and still be called "Semitic" in nature.

There is one manner in which Khuzdul verbs are apparently distinct from Hebrew and Arabic.  The vowel patterns seen in Khuzdul verbs seem to vary quite a bit.  As above, we have the examples *felek*, *gunud*, *salôn/sulûn*, and *felak*.  Each of these would probably be, or be similar to, the most basic forms of the verbs.  By contrast, the basic forms in Hebrew and Arabic are relatively set into a single form by the "Pa'al" and Form I conjugations respectively.  If Khuzdul verbs take on many different base forms and still have a binyanim/form architecture on top of those forms, it could make Khuzdul incredibly complex.

[Return to Anaysis & Rational Menu](#Analysis_Rationale)

**Existing Khuzdul Words**

There are very few Khuzdul words created by Tolkien, and there is no comprehensive set of notes on the grammar, at least that is published at the current time.  In order to create a believable exapnsion of Khuzdul, a grammatical framework needs to be constructed that explains the forms of the words that do exist.  I think Quasi-Khuzdul provides that framework, and this section explains the thinking behind it, word by word.

* [Aglâb](#Aglâb)
* [Azaghâl](#Azaghâl)
* [Barazinbar](#Barazinbar)
* [Baruk Khazâd!](#Baruk_Khazâd)
* [Bundushathûr](#Bundushathûr)
* [Buzundush](#Buzundush)
* [Duban Azanulbizar](#Duban_Azanulbizar)
* [Felak-gundu](#Felakgundu_Felaggundu)
* [Fundinul](#Fundinul)
* [Gabil-gathol](#Gabilgathol)
* [Gabilân](#Gabilân)
* [Gamil Zirak](#Gamil_Zirak)
* [Gundabad](#Gundabad)
* [Iglishmêk](#Iglishmêk)
* [Khazad-dûm](#Kazaddûm)
* [Khazâd ai-mênu!](#Khazâd_aimênu)
* [Kheled-zâram](#Kheledzâram)
* [Khuzd](#Khuzd)
* [Khuzdul](#Khuzdul)
* [Kibil-nâla](#Kibilnâla)
* [Mahal](#Mahal)
* [Mazarbul](#Mazarbul)
* [Narag-zâram & Narâg](#Naragzâram)
* [Nargûn](#Nargûn)
* [Nuluk-khizdîn](#Nulukkhizdîn)
* [Rukhs / Rakhâs](#Rukhs_Rakhâs)
* [Salôn / Sulûn](#Salôn_Sulûn)
* [Sharbhund](#Sharbhund)
* [Sigin-tarâg](#Sigintarâg)
* [Telchar](#Telchar)
* [Tharkûn](#Tharkûn)
* [Tumunzahar](#Tumunzahar)
* [Uzbad Khazad-dûmu](#Uzbad_Khazaddûmu)
* [Zirak-zigil](#Zirakzigil)

**Aglâb**

The only thing Tolkien tells about *aglâb*is that it is equivalent to the Elvish *lambe*, which is a "spoken language" or "tongue".  It doesn't mean "language" in general; rather, it is a specific language.  So, Khuzdul is an *aglâb*/ *lambe*, Sindarin is an *aglâb*/ *lambe*, Quenya is an *aglâb*/*lambe*, etc.  Tolkien also says that it might be better to translate as "dialect".

The Elvish word *lambe*is related to their words for "tongue", which is why *lambe*refers to a spoken language.  However, that's probably not the case for *aglâb*.  The reason is that it apparently shares the radicals *'-G-L* with *iglishmêk*, which according to Tolkien is a "gesture language".  We could think of it as sign-language", perhaps similar to the signs used to communicate by baseball teams, or maybe even as developed as American Sign Language.  *Iglishmêk*probably has nothing to do with the physical tongue, and so we need to look elsewhere to find a possible meaning for the radicals *'-G-L*.

The best explanation I have found is that *'-G-L* is related to "speaking".  Arabic has a number of roots related to "speech" which may include words for "to speak", "word", "utterance", "phrase", "language", etc.  The root that seems most similar to *aglâb*and *iglishmêk*is *L-Gh-W*, from which the words *laghâ*"to speak" and *lughât* "word" are created.  It's interesting to note that the sounds used in the Arabic root *L-Gh-W* is similar to the (hypothetical) Khuzdul root *'-G-L*.  This circumstantial evidence may lend some extra weight to the idea.

In Arabic, the suffix *-at* has been used to form the feminine gender of nouns and also abstract or collective meanings.  This may be why the suffix also shows up in some Arabic plural patterns.  The collective derivation should not be confused with the collective number.  Instead, it forms a new word from a grouping of the stem word.  This may be the case with *-âb* in Khuzdul.  If there is a hypothetical word *agal* or *âgal*that means "word, utterance, or phrase", the composition form would be *agal*.  When the suffix *-âb* is added, the second /a/ is dropped due to being unstressed.   A collection of words, utterances, or phrases could very well be taken to mean a "spoken language".   It's possible that there is a singular form *ugl*"word, utterance, or phrase", and the plural form is *agâl*.  The composition form would again be *agal*, to which to the suffix *-âb*would be added.

*Aglâb*is then "language, tongue, dialect" and is ***singular, nominative, composition***.

*The War of the Jewels, pg 395*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Azaghâl**

Azaghâl was the Lord of Gabil-gathol (Belegost) in the First Age.  He led the dwarves into the Battle of Unnumbered Tears, where he was slain by the dragon Glaurung.  However, he managed to wound Glaurung to such a degree that the beast had to retreat from the battle field.  Azaghâl's dwarven subjects then carried his body away while singing a dirge, and no one dared to stop them.

Glaurung first emerged in the year First Age 260, during the Siege of Angband, and he was driven back by Fingon because he was not yet fully mature.  Sometime soon after this, the dwarf smith Telchar created what became known as the Dragon-helm of Dor-lómin.  The crest was shaped like the head of Glaurung.  The helm was wrought for Azaghâl, and he wore it until he gave it to Maedhros as a reward for having saved Azaghâl's life.  It was because of that that Azaghâl did not have the Dragon-helm when he finally faced Glaurung in the Battle of Unnumbered Tears, and it is perhaps because of this that Azaghâl was slain.

Nowhere are we told what the name *Azaghâl*means.  Because Azaghâl was a dwarf and the letters in it are found elsewhere in Khuzdul, it is generally assumed to be Khuzdul in origin.  However, the Dwarves had secret, "inner" names that they didn't reveal to anyone.  "Not even on their tombs did they inscribe them."  Why then does a Khuzdul name appear for Azaghâl?

If we look at Arabic names as an example, one part of the name is called the *laqab*, which is a descriptor of the person.  For example, as part of their full name a person might be called *al-Râshid*, which is "the Righteous".  Not everyone will necessarily have a *laqab*as part of their name.  We actually see this exact sort of naming convention with the Dwarves, as with Thorin *Oakenshield* and Dain *Ironfoot*.  The comparison to Arabic continues with the use of patronymics, where Dwarves often introduce themselves in the manner of "Gimli son of Gloin", or as seen on Balin's tomb inscription: *Balin****Fundinul***.  Sometimes Arabs will use multiple patronymics in their name, as does "Thorin son of Thrain son of Thror".  The secret, "inner" names used by the Dwarves are what Arabic would consider to be the *ism*portion of a name: the "personal" name, as we would call it in English.  The use of a descriptive title or name (a *laqab*) may have grown out of the Dwarves' very secrecy about using their personal names (*ism*) with those of other races.  My guess then is that the names we see of the First Age Dwarves of the Ered Luin, *Azaghâl*, *Telchar*, and *Gamil Zirak*, are each a descriptor, or "*laqab*".  The Dwarves of Khazad-dûm eventually developed the custom of taking an outer personal name from the surrounding Mannish cultures as well as using a descriptive name.  This additional practice would explain why we see only Khuzdul names from the Dwarves of Gabil-gathol and Tumunzahar, while all of the names of Durin's Folk were represented by names from Scandinavian myth.

A common assumption has been that *Azaghâl*is perhaps - or probably - related to the Adunaic word *azgarâ*"to wage war".  This is based on the observation that both have a <z> and <g>, and also start with an <a> (or starts with the glottal stop <'> if you prefer).  Following this idea, it is suggested that *-âl* may be an agentive suffix, such that *azagh-* might mean "to war" and *Azaghâl* would be "warrior".  There is an apparently related Adunaic word, *zagar*, which could mean either "warrior" or "sword".  It is found in the name of the Numenorean king *Ar-Belzagar*.  His name in Quenya is *Tar-Calmacil*, which means "King Light-sword".  Because the names of the Numenorean kings were usually a direct translation between Quenya and Adunaic, it's very possible that *zagar*is then "sword".  The verb *azgarâ*would perhaps mean "to raise or use swords against", and thus lead to the translation "to wage war".  It is possible that *zagar*is simply "warrior", though, given the probable relation to*azgarâ*.

Either way, I think it's improbable that *Azaghâl* shares a similar meaning.  If *-âl* is a suffix, then the root is *'-Z-Gh*, which differs from the Adunaic root *Z-G-R* to a fair degree.  I am also not aware of suffixes in Semitic languages that tend to be used as agentive or professional markers.  In Arabic, for example, an active participle will generally take on an agentive meaning, and I've seen a *t-* prefix used to derive words that have a social or professional meaning.

Another issue is whether <gh> is a phoneme in Khuzdul at all.  As I explain in the phonology section, there are most certainly not "voiced aspirates" in Khuzdul.  Biblical Hebrew, Arabic, and Adunaic all have the voiced velar fricative /ɣ/, which Tolkien generally writes as <gh>.  However, Modern Hebrew and Yiddish do not have it.  Both of those languages have an unvoiced fricative, the velar /x/ for Modern Hebrew and uvular /χ/ for Yiddish.  Both also have a rhotic /r/ which can be realized as a uvular trill /ʀ/.  This is also true for Khuzdul, which can have the uvular trill and has an unvoiced palatal fricative /[ç](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voiceless_palatal_fricative)/, which is written <hy>, instead of the velar or uvular fricative.  In The Lord of the Rings Appendix E, Tolkien writes that <gh> is a voiced fricative in Black Speech and Orcish, but no mention is made of Khuzdul.  The name *Azaghâl*is the only example we have were <gh> shows up in Khuzdul.  Since the *-âl* doesn't recall any Semitic agentive suffixes, and there is no vocalization pattern in Arabic similar to *aCaCâC* that we see in *Azaghâl*, it seems less likely that <gh> is indeed a phoneme in Khuzdul.  If Khuzdul also lacks the voiced velar fricative <gh>, it would make the language quite similar to Modern Hebrew and Yiddish, at least in this range of consonants.  In my view, it seems very likely that Tolkien would have been familiar with the Ashkenazi Jews of Germany, heard their language, and wanted Khuzdul to mimic that to some extent.

All of this points to the possibility that *Azaghâl*could be split into two elements: *azag*and *hâl*.  This immediately looks more like other example Khuzdul words and also mimics Arabic morphology more closely.  The question then is, what would these two words mean?

Going back to the idea of the Arabic *laqab*and what we know about Azaghâl, the best I can propose is that *azag*is "dragon" and *hâl* is "helm".  It seems that the Dragon-helm of Dor-lómin may have been something of a status symbol for Azaghâl, given that Telchar wrought it, "on it were graven runes of victory", and it had a power "that guarded any who wore it from wound or death".  It was thus worthy as a payment to Maedhros for saving his life.  With the image of Glaurung on the helm's crest, it would be quite recognizable, and so Azaghâl could quite easily have come to be closely associated with the helm, and it with him.  For those reasons, it seems fitting that Azaghâl would have come to be known as "Dragon-helm", similar to how Thorin was "Oakenshield".

Because the helm "struck fear into the hearts of all beholders", I strongly considered the possibility that *Azaghâl*might mean "Dread-helm".  However, Turin was eventually known by that name when he came to wear the helm, and it seems more likely that Azaghâl's name would mean something different.  "Dragon-helm" also seems, to me, to be a more "glorious" name, more fitting for a dwarf-lord.  *Azaghâl*could quite easily have any number of meanings other than "Dragon-helm".  However, it is at least logical and fits what little circumstantial evidence there is.  In lieu of any further information, it's my best guess.

*Azag*is then "dragon" and is ***singular, nominative, composition***.

*Hâl*is "helm" and is ***singular, nominative, indefinite***.

*The Silmarillion, ch 20, pg 193*

*The Unfinished Tales, Narn i Chîn Húrin, pg 80*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Barazinbar**
 *Barazinbar*is the Redhorn mountain, or *Caradhras*as it is known in Sindarin.  It is one of the three mountains of Moria, being the northernmost and tallest.  The Dwarves referred to it simply as "Baraz" for short.  Karen Wynn Fonstad notes in *The Atlas of Middle-earth* that *Barazinbar*may have had mineral deposits that differed from the surrounding foothills and mountains which gave it a reddish hue.

In each source of this name, Tolkien says that *baraz*is "probably red or ruddy".  That would make this word an adjective.  Because it shows up as the first element in the compound, it is also most likely in the composition form, parallel to *Khazad-dûm*.  However, the normal, indefinite state is probably not *barâz*like you would see for *Khazâd*, seeing as how that is a plural.   If the indefinite were *bâraz*, then in the composition form the long *Â* vowel would reduce to a schwa, either *ë* or *ü*following the orthography I have determined for this site.  That is, the composition form would be *bëraz*or *büraz*.  It's possible that the first *A* in *baraz*is actually a schwa sound.  However, the *CaCaC* pattern is found elsewhere in*Tumunzahar*, where it would not be in composition form, and in *Narag-zâram*.   The word *narag*apparently gets further reduced to *narg-* in*Nargûn*, which to me indicates that the first syllable is probably stressed, rather than the second.  If that's the case, then it's less likely that the first*A* in *baraz*is unstressed, and therefore gets reduced in composition.  Following that, the easiest interpretation here and with the other examples is that *CaCaC*is a valid pattern in Khuzdul, and is commonly applied to adjectives.

In my opinion then *baraz*is "red, ruddy" and ***singular, nominative, composition***.

Also in the glosses of *Barazinbar*, Tolkien gives a translation for *inbar*of "a horn".  He explains by saying that *Barazinbar*"seems to have been a great mountain tapering upwards (like the Matterhorn)...".  It is interesting that in *The Treason of Isengard, pg 174*, the radicals for *inbar*'s root are given as *M-B-R*.  In Arabic, /n/ is assimilated to /m/ when next to a /b/.  Additionally, Tolkien usually has /n/ assimilating to /b/ in most of his languages, including Adunaic.  The Angerthas even has #7 as a value of MB, showing its commonality.  It would be odd for the radicals to be *M-B-R* and then see a dissimilation from *imbar*to *inbar*.  However, it is noted in *Parma Eldalamberon XVII, pg 35*, that "the base for *inbar*was given incorrectly as *MBR*."  We can probably say that the root is indeed *N-B-R*, and the *N* probably assimilates to *M* in spoken Khuzdul (as though it were *imbar*) but isn't reflected in the writing.

Another noteworthy feature of *inbar*is its vowel patter *iCCaC*.  In *Appendix F* of The *Return of the King*, Tolkien says that Angerthas #35 is " ' (the clear or glottal beginning of a word with an initial vowel that appeared in Khuzdul)", which we know matches with Semitic syllable structures.  The glottal stop, ' , is considered a unique consonant in Semitic languages.  In Arabic, it is not uncommon for word templates to use a pattern that starts with a glottal stop and then includes the root consonants afterwards.  As an example, a common plural pattern there is*'aCCâC*.  When writing *inbar*by itself, we should technically write it as *'inbar*.  However, Tolkien himself seems to have never done this at all, so I don't think we need to stress about it.  In any event, it can be noted that when inserted into a compound word, the glottal stop is removed, so we get *Barazinbar*instead of *Baraz'inbar*.

Tolkien never refers to *inbar*as anything but "horn", and since it refers to a mountain, it is quite surely singular in number.  Also, since it is the second element, it should be in the indefinite state, not composition.

*Inbar*then should be "horn" and ***singular, nominative, indefinite***.

*Barazinbar*is thus a ***compound*** word, showing an ***adjective-noun*** word order.

*The Lord of the Rings, The Fellowship of the Ring, Book II, ch 3
The Lord of the Rings: A Reader's Companion, pg 267
The Treason of Isengard, pg 174, 432*
*Parma Eldalamberon XVII: Words, Phrases and Passages, pg 35*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Baruk Khazâd!**

This is the famous battle cry "Axes of the Dwarves!"  Tolkien states in *Appendix F* that the Dwarves had used it "on many a field since the world was young."  Gimli used it at the Battle of Helm's Deep as well, along with the other half *Khazâd ai-mênu*!

We know from several places that *Khazâd*is the Dwarves' name for their own race.  This would then be a proper noun.  Arabic treats proper nouns as syntactically and semantically definite (as in ***the****Dwarves*).  This is even when the word doesn't have a definite article in front of it.  We see no such thing here, even though the translation is "the Dwarves".  I would suggest that the word "the" in the translation is simply due to English.  If we were to say "Axes of Dwarves!", the question would be "Which Dwarves?"  Instead, in English when we talk about an entire, specific group like this, we add "the".  If Khuzdul follows Arabic's example and treats proper nouns as definite, regardless of the presence of a definite article, then indeed Khuzdul could get away with not showing the definite article here and still having the English translation be "the Dwarves".  I considered that the definite state may have been indicated by vowel changes, such that we would have *khazad*"Dwarves" and*Khazâd*"the Dwarves".  However, Tolkien says that *khazad*is actually the "composition form", and this fits better with what we know of Hebrew and Arabic.  *Khazâd*is probably used for both the definite and indefinite, and which state will be determined by context from the speaker.  The definite article, assuming it exists in Khuzdul, might actually be used when speaking of a specific subset of Dwarves, as in "the Dwarves who ransacked Menegroth".

In *Parma Eldalamberon XVII, pg 35*, we find "the dwarf-name for themselves was *KhZD* with various vocalizations: apparently sg. *Khuzd-*, pl.*Khazâd*, form in composition *khăzăd*."  (Here, the *ă* denotes a short vowel.)  We know then that *Khazâd*is plural, and that here is is *not*in composition form.  Because it is the second element in the phrase, which is most probably an example of a Semitic-style construct phrase, it makes sense that it would not appear in composition form (see more below on this point).  We also see the exact same form in the companion phrase *Khazâd ai-mênu*, which shows that in both places it is in nominative form.

Khazâd is then analyzed as "(the) Dwarves" and ***plural, nominative, and definite*** (as a proper noun) or ***indefinite***(depending on context).

The first word, *baruk*, is translated by Tolkien at one point simple as "axes", without any additional information.  In *Parma Eldalamberon XVII, pg 85*, he says "...*baruk*being the plural of *bark*'axe', ...".  We can see that it's plural, but again there's no hint of case or state.  Given that the translation of the phrase is "Axes of the Dwarves!", this looks to be similar to the construct state in Semitic languages.  In Biblical Hebrew, in particular, the first word of a pairing is placed in the construct state (or "bound form") in order to indicate a genitival relationship, as in "X of Y".  It's conceivable that the pattern *CaCuC*is a construct or genitive form of *CaCâC*from *Khazâd*.  However, the singular *bark*has the vocalization*CaCC*, different from *CuCC*of *Khuzd*.  That, and because Tolkien doesn't provide additional information, indicates to me that *baruk*is a different template from *Khuzd / Khazâd*.

It's more likely that Khuzdul follows the Hebrew formation of the construct state, which is to reduce the vowels.  That vowel reduction is due to a loss of stress because the two words *almost*become like a compound word.  Indeed, the two elements of a construct pair in Semitic languages cannot be separated by any other word, adjectives included.  Based on this line of thinking, it's very possible that the indefinite is *barûk*, similar to*shathûr*from *Bundushathûr*.  Ssince Tolkien doesn't say anything about *baruk*being the composition form, I think it's most likely *baruk*is the normal, indefinite state for "axes".  Based on this form and looking to Hebrew's rules for vowel reduction, the composition form would also be*baruk*.  With the two states being identical in form, it makes it more likely that Tolkien would not have offered further clarification on the "axes" translation.  As in (Biblical) Hebrew, the construct phrase may, in some instances, be indicated merely by apposition of nouns (placed side by side) with no further apparent changes.  The stress in pronunciation may still change slightly during speech.

As a side note, *shathûr*"clouds" and the vocalization pattern *CaCûC*may not be a true plural anyway.  See *Bundushathûr*for more information.

I will say *baruk*is "axes" and is ***plural, nominative, composition***, and also has the same form as when ***plural, nominative, indefinite***.

The whole phrase "*Baruk Khazâd!*" can thus be interpreted as a ***construct phrase*** similar to that found in Biblical Hebrew, used to indicate genitive relations, as in "X of Y", such as ownership, as is the case here.

*The Lord of the Rings, The Return of the King, Appendix F
The War of the Ring, pg 20
Parma Eldalamberon XVII: Words, Phrases and Passages, pg 85*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Bundushathûr**

Another one of the three mountains of Moria, *Bundushathûr*translates as “Cloudyhead”. Tolkien gives a more literal translation, found on *Parma Eldalamberon XVII, pg 36*.  It says there:

Since the basic D. name is *Shathûr*this element probably refers to cloud: it is prob. a plural = "clouds".  *Bund(u)* must therefore mean 'head' or something similar.  Possibly *bund*(BND) *-u-shathûr* "head in/of clouds".

Starting from that basis, *bund(u)* means "head".  The form *bundu*is similar to that of *gundu*in *Felak-gundu*, which is probably an "objective genitive", similar to what is seen in Adunaic.  If so, then *bundu* would be an accusative case form, and in composition state since it is the first element of the compound.  To an extent, this makes sense.  The radicals *Sh-Th-R* could be a verbal root meaning "to cloud, veil, or obscure".  The word *shathûr*"clouds" would then literally be "a thing that clouds/veils/obscures something", in this instance that being the head of the mountain.  However, it doesn't seem that an objective genitive would yield any different translation here from a standard genitive.  "Head in/of clouds" isn't much, if at all, different from "Head affected (veiled/obscured) by clouds".   The word order is different from the other objective genitives we see in Khuzdul: *Felak-gundu* "Hewer of Cave(s)" and *Uzbad Khazad-dûmu*"Lord of/to Moria".  I don't think then that this is the formal glossing, although it's an interesting coincidence.

The real question is where the -u- comes from.  On Ardalambion, Helge Fauskanger says:

...given that **u**is clearly a Dwarvish element meaning "of" (**Bund-u-shathûr**"Head in/of Clouds", TI:174), is it incorporated in**baruk**...

He goes on to suggest that this might be how the genitive/construct is formed for the declension of *Khuzd*and *Khazâd*.  I think I have shown in the portion about *Baruk Khazâd!* that this is probably not the case.  In Helge's defense, the information about *bark*being singular "axe", found in*Parma Eldalamberon XVII*was not available when he wrote this (around 1999 or 2000).  Still, I have seen Ardalambion's Khuzdul article cited by enthusiastic Dwarf fans as near gospel, which is not surprising given Helge's rather thorough survey of Tolkien's languages and lack of much else.  Many people assume then that *-u-* is indeed an element meaning "of", especially when they see it tacked on the end of words in *Khazad-dûmu* and *Felak-gundu*.  If *-u* is indeed affixed to *bund, gund, and Khazad-dûm*, it would contradict the similarities of those examples to the Adunaic genitive and also with the *-u* ending found in *mênu*.  I think, then, that this is not a correct interpretation.

Tolkien gave the gloss "possibly *bund*(BND) *-u-shathûr* 'head in/of clouds' ".  I have not seen anywhere where he suggests that *-u-* is either a genitive affix in *bundu*or a prefixed preposition in *u-shathûr*.  Instead, there is a much simpler explanation.  As a construct phrase, *bund shathûr*would mean "head in/of clouds".  In the construct of Semitic language, sometimes the English translation can be a little hazy.  Using the prepositions "of", "in", "at", "to", or "for" are not unusual.  When the words are conjoined into a compound, note that there would be a consonant cluster *-ndsh-* in the middle, which Khuzdul probably does not permit (or many other Semitic langauges).  That cluster has to be broken up, so the vowel *-u-* is inserted in between them, which is known as an "epenthetic vowel".  A *-u-* might be inserted simply because that was the previous vowel.

Given all this, *bund*is most probably "head" and ***singular, nominative, composition***.

*Shathûr*then is "clouds". As I noted in the section on *Baruk Khazâd!*, if this follows the same declension as *baruk*, the singular would be *shathr*. I don't think it that's true, again because of final consonant cluster of *-thr* and that *baruk*is the indefinite form, not *barûk*.  Looking for some other explanation, *CaCûC*is a template vocalization seen in Arabic singulars, but the translation from Khuzdul is "clouds". I can easily see "clouds" as being a collective since they are usually found in multiples.  As it turns out, the word(s) for "cloud(s)" in Arabic uses a collective/singulative structure, so it's not out of line for Khuzdul to do so.  If *CaCûC*is a singular and/or collective pattern for Khuzdul, that would distinguish it a bit from the *CaCuC*pattern seen in *baruk*.  It's not something required, as both *CaCûC*and *CaCuC*are singular patterns in Arabic.  However, so far Khuzdul's templates seem to be slightly different from Arabic.  In Khuzdul, *CaCuC*is apparently a plural pattern instead of singular like it is in Arabic.  So, I will go out on a bit of a limb and suggest that *shathûr*is actually a collective, which wouldn't change the translation, but isn't stated by Tolkien either.  It is, however, the second element of the compound and very likely to be nominative and indefinite.

I thus view *shathûr*as "clouds" and ***collective, nominative, indefinite***.

*Bundushathûr*is therefore a ***construct compound*** word, with a ***noun-noun*** word order.  The *-u-* between *bund*and *shathûr*is an epenthetic vowel and probably a schwa, so we could write the word as *Bundüshathûr*.

*The Lord of the Rings, The Fellowship of the Ring, Book II, ch 3
The Treason of Isengard, pg 174, 432
Parma Eldalamberon XVII: Words, Phrases and Passages, pg 35, 36*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Buzundush**
 *Buzundush*was the original Khuzdul name for the Silverlode River, called *Celebrant*in Sindarin.  At first, I hadn't intended to include it here because Tolkien discarded the name and replaced it with *Zigil-nâd*.  That also was discarded and changed to *Kibil-nâla*.  *Buzundush*was said to mean "Blackroot", and corresponded to the Sindarin name *Morthond*, which was "dark root".  Eventually, the name was kept, but applied to an entirely different river: the one which flowed from the Paths of the Dead, through central Gondor.  The Khuzdul name *Buzundush*is not mentioned at all in connection with the river once it was applied to the Morthond of Gondor.  Even though Tolkien never "officially" provided a Khuzdul name for the Morthond River in Gondor, the fact that the same translation could apply and doesn't contradict any of our other information on Khuzdul means that we can go ahead and use these words.

*Dush*probably means "dark" or "darkness", especially if the root was imported into the Black Speech or Orkish in the compound word *Dushgoi*"Minas Morgul".  The radicals would be *D-Sh-'*, and follow the same or similar template as *khuzd, khazâd*.  A geminated root (*D-Sh-Sh*) or a root with a weak middle radical (*D-Y-Sh* or *D-W-Sh*) would more likely yield a final form of *dûsh*.  It's the second element of the compound, so is most likely to be nominative and indefinite.

I will say *dush*is "dark, darkness" and is ***singular, nominative, indefinite***.

*Buzun*then would be "root".  If a "root" corresponds to the roots of trees, then it would be easy to see this as a collective noun, since roots will almost always be found in bunches.  The form is the same seen in *Tumunzahar*, notably ending in *-un.*  To my knowledge, nowhere does Tolkien state that the root of *buzun*(pardon the pun...) is *B-Z-N*.  Therefore, we can then see the same suffix of specificity seen in Tumunzahar.  The root would be *B-Z-', B-Z-Z, B-Y-Z,* or *B-W-Z*, providing us with the collective noun *buz* or *bûz* "roots".  From there, both of those would have a composition form *buz*.  Apply the *-ûn* suffix and we get the singulative form *buzûn*"root".  That, in composition, is then also reduced to *buzun*.

My guess then is that *buzun*is "root" and is ***singulative, nominative, compositio****n*.

*Buzundush* would thus be a ***construct compound*** meaning "root of darkness" and have a ***noun-noun*** (or ***noun-adjective***) word order.
I should state for the record that the translations of the two elements could very well be reversed, leading to a different gloss.  That said,*Tumunzahar*appears to follow a similar derivation that seems far more likely than not.  Assuming that is true, my interpretation of *Buzundush*lines up well with that, and is perhaps slightly more likely due to the comparison with *Dushgoi*.

See the write-up on *Tumunzahar*for more information.
 *The Treason of Isengard, pg 166-167, 241*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Duban Azanulbizar**

Azanulbizar is the name given in The Lord of the Rings to the valley that lies amid the mountains of Moria: Zirak-Zigil, Barazinbar, and Bundushathûr.  It is here that Durin I saw the crown of seven stars above his daytime reflection in Kheled-zâram, the Mirrormere lake.  The final battle in the War of Dwarves and Orcs was fought here.  The East Gate of Moria opens onto Azanulbizar, and it saw the Fellowship flee from Moria after Gandalf's battle with the Balrog and thence into Lothlorien.

In *The Treason of Isengard* and *Parma Eldalamberon XVII*, we read the gloss that Tolkien wrote in his *Words, Phrases and Passages*. That is:

**Azanul-bizar**, uncertain, but probably 'ZN = *dark, dim* and *ûl* = streams?  *bizar*, a dale or valley.

That is, according to this view, *Azanulbizar*consists of *azan*"dim", *ul* or *ûl* "rills, streams", and *bizar*"dale, vale, valley".  To go along with this, Tolkien also proposed a form *Azanûl*, which would apparently be "Dim Streams" and be a shortened name for the valley, similar to what we see for *Zirak-Zigil, Barazinbar,*and *Bundushathûr*.  This appears to have subsequently discarded.

However, Tolkien also wrote another analysis of the word, which is found in his manuscript entitled *Nomenclature*.  This can be found in *A Tolkien Compass*, and now in an updated form in *The Lord of the Rings: A Reader's Companion*.  As near as I've been able to tell, *Words, Phrases and Passages* was being written circa 1958-1960, and was a result of fans desiring translations and Rayner Unwin requesting information for an index to *The Lord of the Rings*.  *Nomenclature*was Tolkien's effort to guide other writers' efforts in translating *The Hobbit*and *The Lord of the Rings*, for he was disappointed with the first such effort to translate them into Dutch.  In 1967, Tolkien wrote a letter saying that he had almost completed work on the *Nomenclature*manuscript, which places it at a later date than *Words, Phrases and Passages*.  From this, it appears to me that the explanation found in *Nomenclature*represents an update in Tolkien's thoughts on the matter.  Also, the explanation given here syncs much better with the rest of the corpus than the etymology found in *Words, Phrases and Passages*.  The result is that I will work with this explanation, which uses the phrase *Duban Azanulbizar*, rather than trying to cram the entirety of "Valley of the Dim Rills" into only*Azanulbizar*.

*Duban*is "valley", according to Tolkien's *Nomenclature*, with root *D-B-N*.  As the first element of the phrase, which is apparently a construct phrase, it should be in composition form.  Tolkien doesn't state it explicitly, but *duban*is apparently also singular, and I would say nominative.  It's interesting that it shows up, for its form *CuCaC*has the same relationship to the vocalization of uzbad, *uCCaC*, as does zirak *CiCaC*to inbar*iCCaC*.

*Duban*is thus "valley" and most likely ***singular, nominative, composition***.

In *Nomenclature*, *Azanul*is *azan*"shadows" plus *-ul*, which Tolkien calls a "genitive ending of patrynomics...". This is the same ending seen in*Fundinul*.  He says *azan*is a plural of *uzn*"dimness, shadow", so the indefinite plural is probably *azân*, with composition form *azan*, parallel to*Khuzd*, *Khazâd*.

The *-ul* seems to be more of an adjectival meaning than true genitive.  In *Khuzdul*"Dwarvish" it corresponds to the English suffix *-ish*, whereas in *Azanul*it seems to correlate with English *-y* or *-ed*, such that "shadows" becomes "*shadowy*".  Arabic has a direct parallel, the nisba, which is formed with the suffix *-iyy*, or *-iyyât* in the feminine.  The nisba is used to form adjectives from nouns, just like we see here.  Due to the structure of Arabic, the resulting adjective can also be used as a noun, which is what we see with the word *Khuzdul*.  It seems pretty safe to assume that -ul is Khuzdul's "nisba".  It's meaning would be "a thing associated with or related to the root word".

*Azanul*then should be "shadowy, shadowed" or and ***adjectival, plural, nominative, composition***.

*Bizar*is "rills, streams". Sometimes Tolkien wrote this as *bizâr*, as he did in the *Nomenclature*gloss.  *CiCâC*is a plural form found in Arabic, and here also Tolkien suggests that it is "probably a plural of a stem *B-Z-R*."  Perhaps then *bizâr*is technically the plural, but sometimes the *-â-*gets shortened to *-a-*, so the pattern is *CiCaC*, which is a singular pattern also seen in both Arabic and Khuzdul.   As such, it could almost be like a collective.  In either instance, it would be nominative and indefinite as the second element of the compound.

I'm going to say *bizâr*is "rills, streams" and is ***plural, nominative, indefinite***, while *bizar*is (informally) ***collective, nominative, indefinite***.

The full compound *Azanulbizar*is "dim rills" or "shadowy streams", and is itself a ***compound*** word of ***adjective-noun*** word order.  As a compound, it is ***nominative***and ***indefinite***since it is the second element in the full phrase.

The whole phrase *Duban Azanulbizar* is then a ***construct phrase***, with a ***noun***as the first element and an ***adjective-noun compound*** as the second.

*The Lord of the Rings, The Fellowship of the Ring, Book II, ch 4
The Lord of the Rings: A Reader's Companion, pg 269
The Return of the Shadow, pg 465-466
Parma Eldalamberon XVII: Words, Phrases and Passages, pg 37*
*A Tolkien Compass, pg 182*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Felak-gundu (Felag-gundu)**

Finrod, the eldest son of Finarfin, brother of Galadriel, and founder of Nargothrond, earned this name from the Dwarves. When he discovered the caves of Nuluk-khizdîn, he decided to create a kingdom similar to that of Menegroth. Nuluk-khizdîn was first inhabited by the Petty-Dwarves, who had expanded and widened the natural caves for their own use. Finrod did the same thing, but to a much greater extent, and for this process the Dwarves named him “Felak-gundu”, the “Hewer of Caves”. Finrod used the name thereafter, and modified it slightly to suit the speech of Elves it became “Felagund”. This is one of the very few examples of Khuzdul to have been borrowed and used in the Elven languages.

*Felak*is "hewer", and Tolkien describes it as "a tool like a broad-bladed chisel, or a small axe-head without half, for cutting stone."  It sounds like a smaller tool held with one hand, perhaps driven into stone using a hammer on the butt-end.  *Felak*is derived from the verb *felek*"to hew rock".  Tools or agentive nouns then may, at least in some cases like here, be derived from verbs just through a change in the vowel pattern.  For comparison Arabic has *katab*"to write" vs. *kâtib*"writer".  *Felak*can also be used as a verb meaning "to use a hewer".

Because *felak*is the first word of the compound, it should be in the composition form.  There is a chance that the indefinite may be something other than *felak*, like maybe *fêlak*or *felâk*, but because Tolkien gives this form with the translation "hewer" and no further comment, I think it's best to be conservative and assume this as the indefinite form as well.  It is probably also singular and nominative.

*Felak*then is "hewer" and is ***singular, nominative, composition***.

*Gundu*is translated as "cave" or "underground hall".  Like *felak*, it is derived from a verb, which is *gunud*"to delve underground, excavate, tunnel".  This implies, along with the manner of how Nargothrond was formed by manually enlarging whatever caverns were already there, that these words are not referring to natural caves.  Instead, they are at the core of how Dwarves seem to fashion most of their homes, which is to tunnel underground.  The same element is apparently seen in *Gundabad*, which would be the underground hall from whence Durin I awoke.  There it appears without the *-u* ending.  Looking for an explanation, we find one readily available in Adunaic, which is the objective genitive.  This is two nouns placed in a compound word, where one of them is derived from a verbal root and thus has an associated action (such as "hewing"), and the other is in the "objective" case to indicate that it is the object of that action (here, the "cave" is being hewn).  The objective case in Adunaic is also formed by a *-u* suffix (sometimes infixed), just like we see here and also in *Uzbad Khazad-dûmu* and *mênu* (which is in the accusative case).  Thus, *Felak-gundu* is probably "hewer of caves", where the cave is being hewn, compared to *Felak-gund*: "a hewer at or in a cave", “a hewer that comes from a cave”, or “a hewer that belongs to a cave”.  Another interpretation for the standard construct would be "X made of Y", but saying “a hewer made of caves”, in this case, obviously makes no sense.  For another pair of words, it could.

Based on this, I conclude that *gundu*is "underground, excavated hall" and is ***singular, accusative, indefinite***.

I see *Felak-gundu*, as a whole, to be an ***objective construct compound word*** consisting of ***noun-noun*** word order.

Additionally, Tolkien provides the form Felag-gundu.  This shows that unvoiced stops, when place next to their voiced counterparts, probably become voiced as well.  This may or may not be indicated in the orthography.  Assuming *dûm* and *tumun* are indeed from the same root, then we would have *Khazad-tûm* assimilating to *Khazad-dûm*.  This shows that the voicing assimilation occurs both forwards and backwards.

*The Silmarillion, index, pg 330
The Peoples of Middle-earth, pg 352*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Fundinul**
This is seen in the inscription on Balin's Tomb in the Chamber of Mazarbul, which is:

|  |
| --- |
| *Balin**Fundinul**Uzbad Khazad-dûmu* |

Gandalf read this to the Fellowship and translated *Fundinul*as "Son of Fundin".  This is usually the English translation used, and even Tolkien employs it.  However, it should be noted that this isn't a word-for-word translation.  Tolkien also provides an explanation of the *-ul*suffix, saying it "is apparently an adj. or genitive ending here used as a patronymic."  So, *-ul* does not literally mean "son".  Instead, it turns the name *Fundin*into an adjective to use as a descriptor for Balin.  A more literal translation might actually be something like "Balin Fundinish", using the *-ish* suffix of English.  To strike a middle ground, I would offer the translation as "Balin Fundinson".  That would actually match well with patronymics found in Nordic countries, which are the source of the Dwarvish "outer names".

For those unfamiliar with patronymics, they are part of a person's full name.  There are cultures where they were used extensively in the past or still are.  In some cultures, current "last names" or "family names" are derived originally from a patronymic.  Just look at *Wilson*in English.  Semitic cultures commonly employ patronymics, which makes their use in Khuzdul more expected.  Examples there would be names that include *ben-* or*bat-* in Hebrew and *ibn*, *bin*, or *bint*in Arabic.  There are cultures that use adjectival forms of a parent's name as a patronymmic, as is apparently the case in Khuzdul.

As mentioned in the section on *Duban Azanulbizar*, the *-ul* suffix seems to be more of a derivational, adjectival morpheme than a genitive noun case.  It matches the Arabic "nisba" suffix *-iyy*, which is used to form adjectives from nouns and can also be seen in Arabic names.  The line between "genitive" and "adjectival" can be a bit hazy.  However, as stated, words that use this suffix seem to be able to be used in isolation - with the suffix - such as in *Khuzdul*or *Mazarbul*.  If this were a true, genitive case ending it would be paired with another noun which would be the object being modified.  As we saw in *Baruk Khazâd!*, that construction mimics the Semitic construct state quite closely, so that should be considered the workhorse for genitive "X of Y" constructions.  There are probably some different morphological rules in place for a construct phrase like *Baruk Khazâd!* versus one that uses a word ending in *-ul*.  Since *-ul* is probably an adjectival ending, there are most likely requirements for the adjective to match the head noun (the noun being described) in terms of number, definiteness, case, etc.  That would not be true for a construct phrase.

On a final note, the name *Fundin*is actually somewhat absurd here.  It is not a Khuzdul word or name, and actually is not even a true "outer name" used by Dwarves, since Tolkien used names found in Scandinavian myths to represent the actual names from those cultures.  It was a decision made so as to not overwhelm readers with culturally accurate names, which he feared would make readers less able to relate to the stories.  That said, it would have also been odd for Tolkien to have rendered the actual name, since it would be the only place it was seen, as*Fundin*would be used elsewhere.

*Fundinul*is then an adjectival patronym of Balin, roughly meaning "son of Fundin" or "Fundinson" and is ***singular, nominative, definite (proper noun)***.

*The Lord of the Rings: A Reader's Companion, pg 269
The Treason of Isengard, pg 186, 457
Parma Eldalamberon XVII: Words, Phrases and Passages, pg 47*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Gabilân**
 *Gabilân*is the Dwarves' name for a portion of the river Gelion (in eastern Beleriand) that was south of the junction with the Asgar river.  It was after that point that it became increasingly large and swift due to several more tributaries.  The only translation given is "great river".

The word can be broken into *gabil*+ *-ân*.  Compare *Gabilân*with *Gabil-gathol* "Great Fortress" (below).  Both have the concept of "great", and the common element between them is *gabil*.  The root *G-B-L* might actually be verbal in nature, rather than noun/adjectival.  Arabic, Hebrew, and other Semitic languages have "stative verbs".  In a sentence where these verbs are in the perfect or imperfect form (the two primary aspects for most Semitic languages), they can express that the subject has been in that state or is becoming that state.  What makes this more likely is that Arabic stative verbs then have an adjectival form, usually CaCîC, which says that the subject is currently in that state when used as a predicate.  Here, the verbal adjective "great" should be in composition form since it has a derivational suffix -ân attached.  Note that the stem has not been reduced to a CVCC form here, unlike Nargûn and Tharkûn.  That may show that the vowel of the second syllable is stressed, making it less likely to be reduced, and the long vowel makes this even more probable.

The second element, *-ân*, is a bit more tricky.  It could mean "river" if directly taken from the translation.  The root would be something like *'-N-N*and use the same vocalization as *bark*"axe", giving us *'ann*, and from there shifting to *'ân*.  Roots with geminate radicals that use a vowel pattern like *CVCC*often drop the final consonant and lengthen the vowel to compensate.

I think, however, that there is another explanation.  That is, *-ân* may be a suffix, and if so, it looks much like the *-ûn* of *Nargûn*and *Tharkûn*, plus the *-în* of *Nuluk-khizdîn*.  Tolkien originally wrote *Nuluk-khizdîn* as *Nuluk-khizidûn*.  Notice the *-ûn*.  I think it shows that the vocalization was changed, but the meaning was probably held intact.  There may be a morphological or phonological reason for it.  Does the *CiCiC* pattern of*khizid-* influence the ending somehow?  I doubt it, since /d/ is not a weak consonant.  I could also see it being related to gender, number, the type of root (noun, adjective, or verb), or other factors.  However, any of those are difficult to analyze, much less prove. *Nargûn* and *Tharkûn*, for example, are a geographic place (Mordor) and a personal name (Gandalf), but they both have the *-ûn* ending.  It's more probable, in my view, that Tolkien simply liked the look and sound of *khizdîn*better, which seems to be the manner in which he often worked.  Decide on a word form, and then figure out what the etymology was.  Fortunately, with Khuzdul this similar to how Semitic languages work, in that two words may use slightly different vocalizations, but the basic morphological structure is still intact.  I see this as being a sort of "suffix of specificity or unity", the same as in *Nargûn*, *Tharkûn*, and *Nuluk-khizdîn*, with the vowel simply being variable.  Probably the best translation for this suffix is either "one" or whatever type of entity it is; in this case either "Great One" or "Great River".

*Gabilân*is probably "Great (One)" and ***singular, nominative, definite (proper noun)***.

*The War of the Jewels, pg 336*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Gabil-gathol**

This is one of the two Dwarf cities of the Ered Luin in the First Age.  In Sindarin it was called *Belegost*, and known in the language of Men as*Mickleburg*.  It is translated as "Great Fortress", which is the same as both *Belegost*and *Mickleburg*.  *Mickle*decends from Old English, meaning "great, abundant", and *Burg*is "castle" in Germanic languages.

*Gabil*is the element "great", as seen above in the explanation of *Gabilân*.  As noted there, it is most likely a verbal root meaning "great, large, mighty in size".  Here, it is in composition form as the first word in the compound, and is probably nominative and singular.  The indefinite is probably also *gabil*, as we see the same pattern *CaCiC*in *Gamil Zirak*.  That could be a construct phrase, so the possibility stills exists that it could be something like *gabîl*.  For the most part, in the Hebrew construct state, only /â/ is reduced in a final syllable, but there is some hypothetical evidence that might not be true in Khuzdul.  *Tumunzahar*and *Buzundush*may be reduced from *Tumûn*+ *zahar*and *Buzûn*+*dush*.  The first element of *Azanulbizar*was initially *Azanûl*, although we don't know if Tolkien still considered that a "valid" word form.  *Khuzdul*is inconsistently spelled *Khuzdûl*, but *Fundinul*is always written with the short /u/.  We can theorize that all long vowels in a final syllable are reduced in the composition from, and that the *-ûl* can also optionally be *-ul* or it just gets reduced in the composition form and when used as an attributive modifier to another word.

In any event, we will say *gabil*is "great, large, mighty in size" and a ***verbal adjective, singular, nominative, composition***.

*Gathol*is pretty straightforward.  It means "fortress", and should be ***singular, nominative, indefinite***.

The full compound *Gabil-gathol* is thus "Great Fortress" and has ***adjective-noun word order***.

*The Silmarillion, ch 10
The War of the Jewels, pg 201, 209*
*The Lost Road, pg 274*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Gamil Zirak**
 *Gamil Zirak* was the master of *Telchar*of Nogrod, one of the greatest of all Dwarf-smiths.  We can presume that *Gamil*was also a master smith in his day, and passed on all of his knowledge to *Telchar*, who perhaps was then able to push the craft even further.  The only reference is in *The Unfinished Tales*, where he is called "Gamil Zirak the old".

For some years now, the presumption has been that *Gamil*translates as "old".  This is based on the reference "Gamil Zirak the old", and that*Zirak*shows up in *Zirak-zigil*.  At the time Tolkien wrote about *Gamil Zirak*, he may have still interpreted *zirak*as "silver", before he changed*zigil*to "silver, the color" and thus *zirak*to "tine, spike, point".  Because of that change, we will assume that here *Zirak*means the same.

In the past, I have resisted the idea that *Gamil*translated as "old".  Now, I think it is likely to at least be something similar since, as I noted in the section on Azaghâl, names of Dwarves have similarities to names in Semitic languages like Arabic, including the *laqab*.  If the Dwarf names of the First Age are descriptors like "Oakenshield" is for Thorin, then I can see the possibility of gamil being "old".

Working with this assumption that *gamil*translates to something related to "old", we can observe that the vocalization *CaCiC*is the same seen in*gabil*.  Both then may be from verbal roots, so *G-M-L* would be "to age, to grow old".  *Gamil* (or possibly *gamîl*) would then be a verbal adjective meaning "old, aged".  Combined with zirak, the two could be a type of construct phrase known in Arabic as the "construct of qualification".  Essentially, this is where an adjective is placed in construct with a noun that follows it which qualifies the adjective.  An example would be "pure of heart".  That is probably the case here, and so *gamil* is in the composition form, singular, and nominative.  If so, it would translate "old/aged of the tine/spike".  A better way of translating into English might be "peak age".  This would perhaps indicate how old *Gamil Zirak* was in relation to other Dwarves; he was at the very tine of the mountain in terms of age, so to speak.  He may have already been quite mature when he began mentoring Telchar, and eventually reached an age that few Dwarves ever attain.  He was indeed Gamil Zirak the old!

*Gamil*then is probably "aging, old" from a verbal root *G-M-L* "to age, grow old" and is ***singular, nominative, composition***.

*Zirak*is "tine, spike" and is ***singular, nominative, indefinite***. See the entry on *Zirak-zigil* for more information.

*The Unfinished Tales, pg 80 (or 76, depending on version)*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Gundabad**

Gundabad is a mountain in the northern Misty Mountains in the vicinity of where they connect to the Grey Mountains.  It was here that Durin I awoke from where the Vala Aulë placed him to await the advent of the Elves in Cuiviénen.  During the early ages of the world, the Dwarves of all seven kindreds held regular assemblies of delegates.  For these reasons, the Dwarves held the site in reverence.  At some point, Orcs overran Gundabad and turned it into a stronghold for their own use.  This defilement was a prime factor in why the Dwarves carried such hatred for the Orcs.  They cleared Gundabad of Orcs at least once, during the War of the Dwarves and Orcs, but couldn't not maintain it for a long period of time.

No translation is given for Gundabad, but the first element, gund, can be seen from Felak-gundu.  Here it appears without the -u ending, so it appears to be in the singular, nominative form rather than accusative.  This is the same template as Khuzd: *CuCC*.  It means an "excavated tunnel", probably of an artificial nature as noted in the section on Felak-gundu.  It could be that Aulë created such a delving, but since much of his other work seems to be more natural (he created the Dwarves, after all!), it seems probable that Durin awoke in a natural cave.  The Dwarves may then have expanded the caverns in the same manner that they Petty-Dwarves did at Nuluk-khizdîn (although one might assume it was done with more skill than the Petty-Dwarves).

*Gund*is "underground, excavated hall", the same as *Felak-gundu*, but here it is ***singular, nominative, composition***.

The meaning of *abad*is completely unknown . I could see it meaning something like "birth" or "awakening", but only Durin awoke here, and I'm not sure he would have named it right away. However, because this is where the Dwarven tribes held their summits, I think a more likely interpretation is "meeting". Also, this is where the Misty Mountains and the Grey Mountains attach, so it makes sense in that view as well. The only thing that gives me a little pause is that the *CaCaC*pattern, which is attested more for adjectives in *narag*"black" and *zahar* "hollow".  *'-B-D*would be a verbal root "to meet", and gerunds seem to have a common pattern of *CaCiC*from *gabil*"great, mighty, large" and *gamil*"aging, oldness".  However, none of that exludes the possibility that *CaCaC*could be used as a gerund pattern, or it could be some kind of infinitive.  I don't think it's a huge problem though, and we can stick with the interpretation.  It is, in any event, a hypothetical guess.

*Abad*could then be, speculatively, "meeting" and ***singular, nominative, indefinite***.

*Gundabad*would be a construct compound word, "Hall of Meeting", and have a ***noun-noun*** or ***noun-verb*** word order.

*The Peoples of Middle-earth, pg 301*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Iglishmêk**

*Iglishmêk*is essentially a sign language, perhaps much like American Sign Language or the signals used to communicate in professional baseball.  The Dwarves had many different varieties, which were quite elaborate.  *Iglishmêk*was used "for secrecy and the exclusion of strangers", so it's likely the Dwarves would use this system of communication at the same time they were speaking.  One could envision a scenario where there were two conversations taking place concurrently: one where the Dwarves spoke with other races, and one where the Dwarves signed among themselves to discuss the spoken dialogue.

In *The War of the Jewels*,*iglishmêk* is referred to several times as 'gesture-language' or 'gesture-code', and "gestures" are mentioned often to describe it.  It therefore seem natural to start at that point to determine an analysis of the word.  Also, the word *aglâb*is discussed in the same section, and means "a spoken language".  Since both words start with apparent roots of *'-G-L*.  The initial reaction would be to assume that *'-G-L*refers to "language".  However, it is then difficult to account for the difference in vowels: *'agl-* versus *'igl-*.  Looking at the words for "language" or "dialect" in Arabic, one finds that they are derived from roots that relate to either "the physical tongue" or "to speak".  Since *iglishmêk*isn't associated with the tongue, we can probably rule that out.  The roots for "to speak", of which there are several in Arabic, all produce words for "speaking, speech", "word", "utterance", "saying", etc.  This becomes interesting because "word, utterance, etc." can lead to a derivation for*aglâb*, as described there, and we can use "speaking, speech" in *iglishmêk* instead of "language" or "code".

We can then approach *iglishmêk*from the view that it means "speech of gestures", which seems quite appropriate.  "Speech" would be an example of what Arabic calls a "masdar", which is a gerund or verbal noun.  As an example, the English verb "to run" would have a gerund "running", which is a noun meaning "the act of running".  Looking at the forms that Arabic masdars can take, it turns out that *CiCC*is one of them, which we see in *'igl*.  Unfortunately, Arabic gerunds are formed irregularly from their base verb, so we can't use that to guess about the verbal stem for "to speak".  Following the other examples we have, I could see *'igil*, *'ugul*, or *'egel*.  Another possibility is *'agal*, but that seems less likely as a verbal form since we probably have *'agl*, *'agal*, or *'âgal* meaning "word, utterance".

I looked extensively to see if there was any way that the *-ish-* was perhaps some kind of suffix for *'igl*.   I thought it might be a sort of pronominal suffix used to form the construct to pair it with *mêk*, which would then mean either "gesture" or perhaps "hand".  Another possibility is that it is a suffix that marks the gerund (verbal noun).  Also, I considered that *'igil* was "speech" and *shimêk*was "gestures" or "hands", and that some kind of metathesis was occurring as a result of placing the words into a compound.  However, I have found absolutely no basis for any of these possibilities in Hebrew or Arabic.  As such, my best guess is that *ishmêk* is "gestures", following the references in *The War of the Jewels*.  Arabic has plurals that have a pattern of *'VCCVC*, where the root is prefixed with a glottal stop, and we can see such words with *uzbad*and*inbar* from Khuzdul.  They occur in Adunaic as well.

My opinion is that *'igl* is a gerund (verbal noun) meaning "speaking, speech" and is ***singular, nominative, composition***.

*Ishmêk*is then probably "gestures" and ***plural, nominative, indefinite***.

*The War of the Jewels, pg 395, 402*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Khazâd ai-mênu!**

This is the second half of the Dwarvish battle cry *Baruk Khazâd! Khazâd ai-mênu!*  It translates as "The Dwarves are upon you!", and is the only example we have of a complete sentence in Khuzdul.  It doesn't have a verb, but since it has a subject (*Khazâd*"The Dwarves") in apposition to a prepositional phrase (*ai-mênu* "upon you) it matches the syntax requirements of a typical non-verbal or "equational" sentence in Semitic languages.  It shows that the (probably standard) word order for verbless sentences in Khuzdul is subject-predicate, which is the same as in Hebrew and Arabic.

We are told in quite a few places that Khazâd is "Dwarves" or "The Dwarves".  It is the Dwarves' own name for their race, so it could be considered a proper noun.  As such, Arabic would consider it semantically and syntactically definite.  Translating with the word "the" may be simply a requirement of English, not Khuzdul.  This is why we don't see anything we could interpret as a definite article in the sentence.  If the speaker is talking about a specific sub-group of Dwarves, I could see the possibility of adding the definite article to distinguish from talking about the entire race in general.

*Khazâd*is "Dwarves" or "the Dwarves" and is ***plural, nominative, definite (proper noun)*** or sometimes ***indefinite***depending on context.

*Ai* is the preposition "upon", and is a reduced form of *aya*. It's common in Semitic languages for prepositions to take reduced forms and attach to their objects when the object is a pronoun, which we have here. The final /a/ apparently gets removed, which is similar what we see when *-ûn* is added to *narag*to produce *Nargûn*.  This occurs in Adunaic as well. The /y/ then changes to an /i/, which is fairly typical when a /y/ appears in a coda position by itself or immediately before another consonant as part of a coda cluster.

*Mênu*is "accusative pl. 'you' " according to Tolkien. Comparing with *Felak-gundu*, *Uzbad Khazad-dûmu*, and Adunaic's objective genitive, it looks like the *-u* is the accusative marker.  For *Khazad-dûm*, the final /u/ doesn't get reduced when the accusative *-u* affix is added, so *mên*may be the nominative form of *mênu*.  The object of a preposition apparently is placed in the accusative case.  This is actually a little different from Hebrew and Arabic.  Arabic prepositions make their object take the genitive case, which Khuzdul doesn't seem to have.  Hebrew doesn't have a genitive or accusative case per se, so its prepositional objects are in the same form as subjects.

*Khazâd ai-mênu!* is thus "The Dwarves are upon you!" and is a ***verbless sentence with a prepositional predicate***.

*The Lord of the Rings, The Two Towers, Book III, ch 7
The Lord of the Rings, The Return of the King, Appendix F
The Silmarillion, index, pg 337
The War of the Ring, pg 20
The War of the Jewels, pg 209, 387*
*Parma Eldalamberon XVII: Words, Phrases and Passages, pg 85*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Khazad-dûm**

Of all the works of the Dwarves, none can rival *Khazad-dûm* in vastness, grandeur, or in later years horror.  It was initially settled by Durin's Folk, and the population later swelled when refugees from Gabil-gathol and Tumunzahar arrived after the destruction of their cities at the end of the First Age.  The realm continued its glorious ascent until the Third Age until the Dwarves dug too deep into the earth, looking for mithril, and released the Balrog.  *Khazad-dûm*, the "Dwarf-mansion", was abandoned and went from halls of light and slendour to a pit of darkness: Moria.

The first half of the name is *Khazad*and means "Dwarf, Dwarves". Tolkien says that *Khazâd*is "form in composition *khăzăd-*". Technically then*Khazad*is plural. This is the only word that actually shows the difference between the "normal" form, which Tolkien never specifically names, and the "composition form".  We can see that the <â> is shortened to <a>.  The composition form here matches how the construct state is formed in Hebrew. Here, in the compound, it is used in the plural form in an attributive manner, as opposed to the singular *khuzd*. This leads to the translation "Mansion of the Dwarves", since *Khazad-dûm* was home to an entire civilization.  If translated as an English compound, we would say "Dwarf-mansion", as in English saying "Dwarves-mansion" is awkward and doesn't sound right since we often use singulars in compounds.

Thus *Khazad*is "dwarves" and is ***plural, nominative, composition***.

Tolkien states that "*dûm*is probably a plural or collective = excavation(s), hall(s), mansion(s)' ".  Note the use of "(s)", indicating an optional plural interpretation.  If *dûm*is a collective, it would be a bit odd to translate into English since these words have only singular and plural forms, not a collective.  I would say it's likely that *dûm*is collective because the form fits into the pattern of singulars, as per *CuCC*in *Khuzd*.  The root of*dûm*would probably be either a geminated/doubled root, *D-M-M*, or some kind of weak root, *D-Y-M* or *D-W-M*.  If weak, I would lean towards guessing the latter.  In Khuzdul, <y> is apparently changed to <i> when at the end of a syllable, as per *aya* → *ai-* "upon".  It is then very possible that <w> changes to <u> in the same circumstances.  Arabic has mandatory phonetic changes when these consonants are between certain vowel combinations, leading to a collapse to a single vowel or diphthong.  Having <w> as the weak radical would make it more likely that the resulting vowel would be <û>.   Geminated/doubled roots, as *D-M-M*, regularly drop the final consonant and lengthen the vowel when placed in a vocalization that has a single vowel, as in *dumm → dûm*.

The contact between the two elements has <d-d>, which forces us to consider whether one is actually a <t>.  *Felak-gundu* is sometimes written as *Felag-gundu*, showing voicing assimilation, where the first consonant is assimilated to the second.  Arabic has the same process with *-dt-* → *-dd-*.  We see *Khazâd*in the battle cry *Baruk Khazâd! Khazâd ai-mênu!*  That <d> seems stable.  If the <d> in *dûm* is actually <t>, it might very well be assimilated to <d>, even though this would be the reverse direction from the examples from Khuzdul and Arabic.  If true, this would mean*dûm*is originally *tûm*before assimilation.  This actually leads to a very elegant explanation of both *dûm* (*tûm*) and *Tumunzahar*.  Here, I will end the discussion on *dûm*by saying that I believe the unassimilated form is *tûm*, and that it is simply a different inflection (in number) of *tumun-* in*Tumunzahar*.  See the entry on *Tumunzahar*for more information.

*Dûm*then is a voice-assimilated version of *tûm* meaning "excavation(s), hall(s), mansion(s)" and is ***collective, nominative, indefinite***.

*Khazad-dûm*, as a whole, can be translated as "Mansions of the Dwarves", "Dwarf-mansion", "Dwarf-delving", etc., and is a ***compound word***with ***noun-noun word order***.

*The Lord of the Rings, The Fellowship of the Ring, Book II, ch 3
The Silmarillion, index, pg 325, 337*
*Parma Eldalamberon XVII: Words, Phrases and Passages, pg 35*
*The Lost Road, pg 274*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Kheled-zâram**
 *Kheled-zâram* is the lake known as the "Mirrormere", found in the Dimrill Dale on the eastern side outside Khazad-dûm.  It was these waters in which Durin saw the crown of stars above his reflection, even though it was daytime.  From that sign, he took that he should found his kingdom at this site.  Tolkien translates *Kheled-zâram* as "probably 'glass-pool, lake' ".  This lines up with the name "Mirrormere".

In his notes, Tolkien says "*kheled*was certain a D. word for 'glass', and seems to be the origin of S *heleð* 'glass' ".  Here, *kheled*would be composition form as the first element of the compound, and almost certainly nominative.  Its hard to say what the number would be.  The only other place we see the template *CeCeC*is in *felek*, which is a verb.  The translation "glass" could be a singular or collective number in form, or perhaps it could be a separate form for mass or uncountable nouns such as materials.  Arabic has nouns that are considered "mass nouns", and these have singular and plural forms.  From this, I would say that *kheled*is probably a singular form but can be used to indicate an uncounted amount of glass.

*Kheled*then should be "glass" and ***singular, nominaive, composition***.

*Zâram*is translated as "lake, pool" without further comment.  As the second element of the compound, it is probably ***singular, nominative, indefinite***.

*Kheled-zâram* is "glass-pool, lake" and a ***compound word*** with ***noun-noun word order***.

*The Return of the Shadow, pg 466
Parma Eldalamberon XVII: Words, Phrases and Passages, pg 35, 37*
*A Tolkien Compass, pg 190*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Khuzd**

This is simply "Dwarf", the singular form of *Khazâd*"Dwarves".  Tolkien provides this singular/plural pairing as an example of Arabic-style broken plural patterns.

*Khuzd*would be "Dwarf" and ***singular, nominative, indefinite***.

*The Lord of the Rings: A Reader's Companion, pg 269*
*Parma Eldalamberon XVII: Words, Phrases and Passages, pg 35, 85*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Khuzdul / Khuzdûl**

The language of the Dwarves in Middle-earth is *Khuzdul*, which is sometimes spelled *Khuzdûl*.  It was given to them by Aulë, their maker, and they treasure it as a gift from him and a memento of their past, more glorious days.  It can be translated simply as "Dwarvish".

The element *khuzd-* can easily be recognized from this word, meaning "Dwarf".  Here it is ***singular, nominative, composition***.

That leaves *-ul* as a probable suffix.  It should correlate to the English suffix *-ish* in "Dwarvish", making it an adjectival marker.  It shows up in*Azanulbizar*as well as *Fundinul*, where in both Tolkien refers to *-ul* as a "genitive ending of patrynomics...".  As noted in the discussion on*Fundinul*, the -ul suffix looks very similar to the Arabic nisba, making it very probable that it is an adjectival suffix.

The only question is why the spelling Khuzdûl shows up.  There are only two places that it is seen, at least that we know of.  One is in the the essay Of Dwarves and Men, which we read in The Peoples of Middle-earth.  The other is in notes that attempt to explain the origin of the word Lhûn.  Both of these are late writings, being dated around 1968 or 1969.  The name Khuzdûl is used in discussion of other matters, but no explanation is given for the <û>.  The form Khuzdul is used everywhere else, including the published stories (*The Lord of the Rings* and *The Silmarilion*).  It's possible then that Tolkien had some reason for the change.  Perhaps the adjectival suffix -ul was a composition form, or only used when a word was used attributively to describe another noun.  The -ûl would then be the form seen as a subject or object noun.  However, we'll probably never know, unless there is some indication in yet unpublished works.  In any event, vowels are somewhat variable when it comes to derivation in Arabic (and perhaps other Semitic languages).  There isn't one, absolutely set vowel pattern used for a given function.  We can therefore simply view the form Khuzdûl for what it is: a variant form that most likely doesn't have many implications.

I will say that *Khuzdul* (or *Khuzdûl*) is ***singular, nominative, definite (proper noun)***, and means "Dwarvish".
 *The Peoples of Middle-earth, pg 297, 300, 316-317, 321-323, 358
The War of the Jewels, pg 205*
*Vinyar Tengwar, Volume 5B, issue 48, pg 24*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Kibil-nâla**

This is the name of the *Silverlode*river, called *Celebrant*in Sindarin.  The original name of the river was *Buzundush*"Darkroot", or *Morthond*in Sindarin.  Tolkien later changed this to *Zigil-nâd*, but then decided to separate the concept of the color silver from the metal.  He said that the Dwarves probably found silver in the river.  At that point, the river's name changed one more time to *Kibil-nâla*, the form that made it into *The Lord of the Rings*.

*Kibil*is "silver, the metal". The Elves most likely derived the root *celeb-* from this word.  Like *kheled*, it is probably singular in form, but can be used to denote silver as a material or uncountable noun.  Here it would be in composition as the first element of the compound.

*Nâla*is more interesting. Tolkien says that "the meaning is not known.  If it corresponds to *-rant* [in *Celebrant*] and *-lode*, it should mean 'path, course, river-course or bed' ".  In English, a lode can be "a veinlike deposit, usually metalliferous" or, in British English, a "waterway or channel".  This combination of definitions fits very well with the concept of this river.  Looking to Semitic languages, we find the Arabic word *wadi*.  It is described it as an intermittent stream or drainage course.  I've read that a Hebrew word *nahal*, and Sanskrit *nala*are terms that are used synonymously with wadi. I've also seen that *wadi*might show up in Sanskrit instead as *nad* or nadi, which is of course close to the older term Tolkein used: *Zigil-nâd*. Seasonal or intermittent streams & rivers are found in the mountains as well as the desert, so I'm not surprised to see Khuzdul have a parallel term to *wadi*. I can see it being applied to rivers that always have water and/or perhaps have deep channels. This, I think, is the case for the rivers *Narog*and *Ringwil*in Beleriand of the First Age, at the confluence of which was the underground city of Nargothrond. I think then, that the Petty Dwarves' word for these caves, *Nuluk-khizdîn*, shows a form of *nâla*, *nulu(k)*.  See the discussion on *Nuluk-khizdîn*for further comment.

*Nâla*is thus probably a "path, course, bed, or channel of water or intermittent water" and ***singular, nominative, indefinite***.

*Kibil-nâla* is "Silver Water-channel" (or similar) and is a ***compound word*** with ***noun-noun word order***.

*The Lord of the Rings, The Fellowship of the Ring, Book II, ch 3
The Treason of Isengard, pg 174-175
The Peoples of Middle-earth, pg 279, 286*
*Parma Eldalamberon XVII: Words, Phrases and Passages, pg 35, 36, 37*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Mahal**

This is the Dwarves' name for the Vala Aulë.  No translation is ever given for it, but the most common guess I've seen is "maker", due to the Dwarves' claim that Aulë created them.  This is a very reasonable idea, especially in light of the Dwarven usage of descriptive names.  The issue then is the etymology.

There are a number of way to break this name down.  The first is fairly straightforward.  The root for "to make, create" would be *M-H-L*, which would be placed in a singular vowel template *CaCaC*to form "a thing or person that makes, creates; a maker, creator".  This would be parallel to*F-L-K* "to hew" and *felak*"hewer".  Both would be seen as as active participles: the "making" and the "hewing".  The only issue I take with this view is that the vocalization *CaCaC*is not seen elsewhere for a noun.  The closest is *zâram*.  That doesn't negate the possibility, though, especially since at least some Semitic languages (Arabic) treat nouns and adjectives as being the same word class.  So, as we see *CaCaC*in several adjectives, like *narag*and *zahar*, it's very possible that the pattern is also used for words English speaker would normally think of as nouns as well.  We just don't see one in our limited corpus of Khuzdul words.

Another similar analysis is to theorize a root *M-H-'* "to make, create" and place that into a same template *CaCaC*to form a verb *maha*"make, create".  From there, an agentive suffix would be added, such as *-al* to become *Mahal*"maker".  Some would suggest that we see the same suffix in *Azaghâl*, with *'-Z-Gh* being a verbal root "to war".  *Azaghâl*would then mean "warrior".  I don't think that's the case.  In any event, an explanation would be needed for why the long vowel in *Azaghâl* but not *Mahal*.

The third explanation does have some circumstantial evidence, inside Khuzdul and out, to back it up.  *Mahal*could be divided into *ma-* + *hal'*. *H-L-'* would be a root, while *ma-* would be the passive participle marker seen in *Mazarbul*.  In fact, *Mahal*would then exactly match *mazarb*"a record" in structure.  As a verbal root, the best concept I can think of for *H-L-'* would be "to revere, worship".  Thus, *Mahal*would be "Revered".  This break down becomes even more interesting when you see that the root *H-L-'* can be viewed as very similar to the root(s) for*Allah*and *Elohim*.  That root is *'-L-H*, or something similar.   There are different theories about it, and some of those have those sound rearranged or reinterpreted.  Nonetheless, *H-L-'* is comparable.  One suggested meanings of the Semitic root(s) for *Allah*and *Elohim* is "to adore, worship".  That would line up exactly with the proposal of *Mahal*"Revered".

The gloss of "Revered" might be even more interesting if one of the other two suggestions are also true.  Picture a root *H-L-'* "to revere", with passive participle prefix *ma-* added becomes *Mahal*"Revered".  Also, the root *M-H-L* means "to make, create", and added to the template*CaCaC*becomes mahal "maker".  So, it could actually be seen as being both "Revered" and "Maker".

*The Silmarillion, ch 2*
*The War of the Jewels, pg 10*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Mazarbul**
 *Mazarbul*refers to the hallowed “Chamber of Records” in Khazad-dûm. It was here that the Dwarves kept their most treasured histories and documents. It was also the place where Balin set up his throne room, where he was buried, and the last survivors of his expedition to Moria died.  In his notes, Tolkien offers the following explanation:

**Mazarbul:** chamber of.  √ZRB, probably "write, inscribe": *mazarb*appears to mean "written documents, records"; *-ul* as above?

We then have the root *Z-R-B* "to write, inscribe".  It may also include the idea of "recording, creating a written record".  It seems pretty much synonomous with the Arabic root *K-T-B* "to write".  From here, *Z-R-B* is placed in the same singular template as *bark*"axe", yielding *zarb*.  It's not certain if this means anything by itself.  The prefix *ma-* is added, which seems to indicate a past participle, and gives us *mazarb*"the written, inscribed".  Like Arabic, this passive participle is probably adjectival in nature, but can be used substantively (as a noun).  Arabic participles that are often used in this manner can end up being further lexicalized.  I can see this being the case here, so "the written, inscribed" can be interpreted as "a (thing) recorded", which is "a record".

Or, should that be "records", since the name in English is the "Chamber of Records"?  *Zarb*matches the template of *bark*"axe", so it would seem to be singular.  Arabic participles have plural forms, so perhaps the plural here would be *mazarub*, parallel to *baruk*"axes".  If *mazarub*is the plural "records", then why do we see the form *Mazarbul*instead of a construct phrase similar to *Gund Mazarub*?  Going back to the nature of participles in Arabic, they are primarily adjectival.  Because of that, a phrase like *Gund Mazarub* could be interpreted as "the hall/chamber that is being recorded".  It may even be ungrammatical since *gund*or "chamber" would be singular and Khuzdul adjectives should agree in number with the noun they modify, at least if they follow the pattern of Semitic languages.

Enter the suffix *-ul* here.  In the quote above, when Tolkien says "*-ul* as above?" he is referring to *-ul* in *Fundinul*.  There, he writes "**-ul** is apparently an adj. or genitive ending".  Calling it adjectival seems to be an accurate statement, as I have described in *Duban Azanulbizar* and *Fundinul*by comparing -ul to the Arabic "nisba".  This makes the word take on the meaning "related to the root noun", and so it then describes the chamber/hall/room as being related to things that are recorded.  It's not a chamber that is owned by records, or one that is found in and described by records, or that constructed of records (obviously absurd), or one that is for the activity of recording.  Instead, it is a chamber that is related to records, characterized by their presence, and therefore simply contains them.  Because of the use of the adjectival *-ul*suffix, it makes use of a plural form unnecessary.

Because Tolkien wrote in the quote above that "*mazarb*appears to mean 'written documents, records' ", I think that's probably just a result of the English translation being "Chamber of Records" since we wouldn't say something like "the Recordish Chamber".

That same adjectival suffix seems to suggest that the word *Mazarbul*doesn't always appear alone.  Tolkien's notes don't indicate anything about the word "chamber" in the word *Mazarbul*.  Attempts have been made in the past to insert "chamber" into the gloss by pointing out that words starting with an *m-* prefix in Hebrew and Arabic are sometimes "nouns of place".   For instance, from *K-T-B* "to write" we get Arabic *maktab*"desk", or "a place for writing".  Again, though, Tolkien doesn't include it in his explanation, and it seems likely that it mirrors the name *Duban Azanulbizar* in that the first word, *duban* "valley" in that case, can just be left off and understood from context.  The word for "chamber" here is probably also not included.

*The Lord of the Rings, The Fellowship of the Ring, Book II, ch 5
The Return of the Shadow, pg 467
The Treason of Isengard, 191
Parma Eldalamberon XVII: Words, Phrases and Passages, pg 47*
*The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien, pg 186*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Narag-zâram**

This only appears once, in Tolkien's notes in the discussion of *Kheled-zâram*.  He mentions *Lake Hele(ð)vorn*, meaning "Black Glass" in Sindarin, and says that this is probably a translation of a Dwarf name such as *Narag-zâram*.  He goes on to say that the root *N-R-G* is "black", as evidenced by the Dwarves' name for Mordor: *Nargûn*.  The way the passage reads, it sounds as though *Narag-zâram*literally means "Black Glass", but this is clearly not the case, as he states several other places that Sindarin *heleð* "glass" is taken from Khuzdul *kheled*.  From that,*zâram*can't mean "glass", so the paragraph appears to be written in an odd manner or else *Narag-zâram* isn't a literal translation of "Black Glass".  (Or, quite possibly, this author is simply missing something!)

On *Parma Eldalamberon XVII: Words, Phrases and Passages, pg 37*, Tolkien gives a possible Dwarvish origin of the river *Narog's* name, which is *Narâg*.  The other places we see the template *CaCâC*are in plural nouns, such as *Khazâd*.  That could mean that the name refers to many layers of "blacknesses".  Semitic adjectives usually agree in number with the nouns they describe, so this could be another example of a shortened nick-name in Khuzdul.  The missing name might be something like "waters".  Another possibility is that adjectives simply use this vocalization as a singular form, unlike nouns.  This seems more likely, as we don't see any adjectives that have the template *CuCC*, as in *Khuzd*.  This would allow the full name of the Narog to simply be "Black River" in Khuzdul: perhaps something like *Narag-nâla*, but shortened to *Narâg*.

*Narâg*is probably "black" and ***singular, nominative, indefinite***.

*Narag*is "black" and is ***singular, nominative, composition***.

*Zâram*is "lake, pool" and ***singular, nominative, indefinite***, just like *Kheled-zâram* above.

*Narag-zâram* is "Black Lake" and is a ***compound word***with ***adjective-noun word order***.

*The Return of the Shadow, pg 466
Parma Eldalamberon XVII: Words, Phrases and Passages, pg 37*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Nargûn**
 *Nargûn*is the Dwarvish name for Mordor, and means roughly "Black Land". It shows the same suffix as *Tharkûn*, which is Gandalf. Apparently then, *-ûn* is used to refer to a specific entity characterized by the root meaning. Think of it as saying "The Black One".

In Arabic, the names of towns, cities, and countries are usually feminine in form.  Because *Tharkûn*is Gandalf and therefore male, and Adunaic also uses <û> as a masculine marker, it's a bit perplexing as to why *Nargûn*would use the same suffix.  However, Mordor would be very closely associated with Sauron.  The dwarves may have used the same name for both, or even considered them to be almost synonomous.  The association with Sauron could also have simply been enough reason for the dwarves to assign it a masculine name, and in this case perhaps they still used a different name for Sauron himself.  The use of names that are feminine in form for countries in Arabic is not an absolute, so it's not impossible that the connection of Sauron and Morder had nothing to do with the form of *Nargûn*

It's interesting here that "black" appears in the form *narg-*, rather than *narag*as seen in *Narag-zâram* above. The extra <a> could possibly be an epenthetic schwa, but the placement according to Hebrew phonotactics (from my understanding) would actually place it as something more like*Nargazâram*. On the other hand, Adunaic's dual inflection is *-at*, and Tolkien says that it tends to "show... suppression of the final vowel before the suffix". For example *zadan*→ *zadnat*. The same sort of thing may be happening here. I would speculate that perhaps the initial syllable in*narag*is accented, rather than the final one. So, that leaves the final syllable susceptible to change. This is different from what we see in *Gabilân*.  In *gabil*, the second syllable must be stressed, allowing it to retain the <i> in *Gabilân*, or there is some other reason that I can't determine.  Perhaps this simply shows that stress is different in words that have two of the same vowel in the template, as in *CaCaC*in *narag*.

*The Return of the Shadow, pg 466*
*Parma Eldalamberon XVII: Words, Phrases and Passages, pg 37*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Nuluk-khizdîn**
 *Nuluk-khizdîn*is the name the Petty-dwarves gave to the original caves of Nargothrond when it was their home.  At some point they lost it, and eventually Finrod Felagund claimed them and founded the realm of Nargothrond.  He expanded the caverns, gaining the Khuzdul moniker *Felak-gundu* in the process.  No translation is ever given for *Nuluk-khizdîn*.  The only clues we really have to it's meaning come from an old form that Tolkien discarded: *Nulukhizidûn*.

*Nuluk*then was originally *nulu*, as the final <k> was added later.  The radicals for *nulu*match that of *nâla*from *Kibil-nâla*, which we know to be "waterway, channel, path, course".  The root would be *N-L-'*, so we have to ask where the <k> enters.  That would apparently be due to the presence of <kh> at the start of *Khizdîn*.  The glottal stop < ' > isn't very far away from the velar stop <k>.  I could definitely see the glottal stop being assimilated to <k>.  This would be the only occasion we see this in Khuzdul, but in no other words do a < ' > and <k>, <kh>, or <g> come into contact.  I can especially see this occuring if the final syllable in *nulu(k)* was long and therefore stressed.  From this we can guess that*Khuzdul*has *nâla*"waterway", singular, and probably (?) *nulû*"waterways", plural.  This interpretation of *nulu(k)* makes a lot of sense.  One of the defining features of the caverns is that they are located where the rivers Narog and Ringwil meet.

*Nulu(k)* then is "waterway, channel, path, course" and is ***plural, nominative, composition***.

*Khizdîn*is a little more difficult to decipher.  It has a very similar structure to *Tharkûn*and *Nargûn*, but with a different vocalization.  The old version of the name, *Nulukhizidûn*, shows a *-ûn* suffix like *Tharkûn*and *Nargûn*, so it seems that *Khizdîn*most likely shares a similar etymology.  The suffix -în is probably also a "suffix of specificity", just like those other words.  With the *Kh-Z-D* root, *Khizdîn* would then mean "Dwarf one", or "Dwarf place", depending on the translation you prefer.  The *-în* ending isn't too puzzling, as we see different vowels in*Tharkûn*, *Nargûn*, and *Gabilân*.  In Arabic, different vowels sometimes show up in what is considered to be the same affix.  It could potentially be a difference of gender as well.  In Arabic, the names of towns, cities, and countries are usually feminine, and in Adunaic feminine names are formed with the suffixes s -*i(-)*, -*î(-),* and -*ê(-)*.  Thus *-în* may simply be the feminine form of the suffixes *-ûn* and *-ân*.

The next question to decipher is why the vocalization has *Khizd-* instead of *Khuzd*.  With *Tharkûn*, *Nargûn*, and *Gabilân*, all three can be viewed as coming from composition forms that we see elsewhere in the existing Khuzdul corpus.  *Khizd-*, however, is the only place we see this.  Had Tolkien decided on calling the place *Nuluk-kh****u****zdîn*, it would be case closed.  Because *Nuluk-khizdîn* is associated with the Petty-dwarves, the only thing I can think of is that there is a different word using the *Kh-Z-D* root that means "Petty-dwarf / -dwarves".  Arabic has a template for diminutives, *CuCayC*, that is very productive.  I don't see that exact pattern being in use here, but perhaps Khuzdul has a diminutive that results in the vowel change we see here.  A diminutive form of *Khuzd*"Dwarf" would certainly fit the concept of "Petty-dwarf" perfectly.  The Petty-dwarves are, if nothing else, a diminutive class of Dwarves, at least in spirit and attitude. They seem to be a sort of "untouchables" class of old Dwarven society.  Mîm the Petty-dwarf explained to Turin that his people were Petty-dwarves, so it seems that they may have indeed referred to themselves as such.  *Nuluk-khizdîn* was a home for the Petty-dwarves, so the *Khizd-* stem may be part of a plural form, in particular one that had a composition form of *CiCiC*that we see in the old form *Khizidûn*.  Perhaps the pattern *CiCiC*, by virtue of having two of the same vowel, would also have it's second vowel suppressed with the *-ûn/-ân/-în* suffix, just like *CaCaC*in *narag*→ *Nargûn*.

*Khizdîn*, from what evidence there is, appears to be "Petty-dwarves one/place", and would be ***singular, nominative, indefinite***.

*Nuluk-khizdîn* as a whole would be "Petty-dwarves-place of the Rivers" and is a ***compound word*** with ***noun-noun word order***.

*The Silmarillion, ch 22, pg 231*
*The Silmarillion, index, pg 344
The War of the Jewels, pg 180*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Rukhs / Rakhâs**

Quite simply, these are the Khuzdul words for "Orc", singular, and "Orcs", plural, respectively.  It was the first example of a Khuzdul singular and plural form released to the public, found in *The War of the Jewels*.

*Rukhs*is "orc" and ***singular, nominative, indefinite***.

*Rakhâs*is "orcs" and ***plural, nominative, indefinite***.

*The War of the Jewels, pg 391*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Salôn / Sulûn**

Both forms are examples of Tolkien trying to decide on a derivation for the name of the river *Lhûn*(or *Lune*). He never seemed to fully settle on what the etymology was, so these words are not truly a part of the "official" Khuzdul corpus, if there is such a thing. However, we can probably go ahead and incorporate the root *S-L-N*"to fall, descend swiftly". Either word would probably be an active participle, used substantively, such that they mean "a thing that falls or descends swiftly".

It's tempting to see Sulûn as a verbal root *S-L-'* or *S-L-L*, and then the same *-ûn* suffix seen in *Nargûn*and *Tharkûn*.  The translation would then be the "Falling One".  However, since Tolkien here specifically indicates the root is *S-L-N*, and we have an example, *felak*, of a noun that performs an action without the *-ûn* suffix, I think we can discount this idea.

*Vinyar Tengwar, Volume 5B, issue 48, pg 24*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Sharbhund**
 *Sharbhund*is the name the Petty-dwarves gave to the hill *Amon Rûdh*, which translates as "Bald Hill" in Sindarin.  The top of the hill had a crown of exposed rock, which lead to the name.  For some time it was home to Mîm and his sons, and then Turin and his band as well.  A translation is not provided for the name, so most people guess that "Bald Hill" is probable.  It was common practice in Middle-earth to adopt names from other languages by either translating to words with the same meaning (such as *Gabil-gathol* → *Belegost*) or simply render at least some of the words directly into phonological structures appropriate to the language (as in *Khazad-dûm* → *Hadhodrond*).  Mîm was upset that "the Elves changed all the names", implying that the Petty-dwarves had probably inhabited the area before the Elves arrived.  The Elves originally hunted them down, but stopped once they had contact with the Dwarves of *Gabil-gathol* and *Tumunzahar*.  The original persecution seems to make it unlikely that they would have adopted the Khuzdul name of the hill into their language, but perhaps they didn't do so until well after they stopped attacking the Petty-dwarves.  Mîm's anger at the names being changed may have simply been his inability (or unwillingness) to understand that the Elves had simply translated the Khuzdul name, not actually changed it.  This does seem in accordance with the Petty-dwarves' view of the world.  To my knowledge, there's no other leads for translation, so I'll assume that "Bald Hill" is the correct interpretation.

The structure of the word *Sharbhund*is different from other Khuzdul words.  The middle cluster of consonants, <rbh>, makes it hard to decipher how to break it apart.  Going with <r> + <bh> doesn't seem likely, since Khuzdul doesn't tolerate initial consonant clusters, and it's highly doubtful that <bh> is an "aspirated" voiced bilabial stop.  Having such a phoneme would make Khuzdul's phonology much different than Adunaic, Arabic, or Hebrew.  A far more likely split is *sharb*+ *hund*, which are syllables seen elsewhere in our Khuzdul examples and thus can be analyzed better.

Assuming that *sharb*is "bald", then it would be our only instance of an adjective showing the pattern *CaCC*, as opposed to *CaCaC*.  In Arabic, the root of "bald" is a stative verb, and it seems likely that Khuzdul would have the same.  *Sharab*could hypothetically be that stative verb "to be/become bald", along with a verbal adjective *sharîb*"bald", similar to *gabil*and *gamil*.  However, if the verbal adjective is used in this compound, the <i> doesn't seem like it would reduce when attached to *hund*, similar to how the <i> is retained in *Gabilân*.  Instead, the verb may have a different vocalization, and *sharab*may be the verbal adjective form.   Still, that would require a phonological rule that would reduce the final <a> due to the presence of hund, and I'm not wild about that idea.

Instead, *sharb* may be the gerund (verbal noun) form.  *CaCC*is found in Arabic gerunds.  If so, then *sharb*would be a noun meaning "balding; the process of becoming bald".  In Arabic, gerunds often have a  concrete meaning as well as conveying the act or process of the verb.  Here, we may have *sharb*also meaning "a balding; a place that has become bald or clear; a clearing".  We might simply call it "a bald spot".  *Sharbhund*would then mean "the bald area/spot hill" or "the hill of the bald area/spot".  This makes a lot of sense, given the description of Amon Rûdh.  It had birch, rowan, and thorn-trees growing on it's lower slopes.  The upper slopes were extremely steep and bare rock, and the top was covered only in red *seregon* (similar to a plant known today as "stonecrop").  So, it wasn't the whole of the hill that was bald, only the upper slopes.  Interpreting *sharb*as the gerund allows for a verb form of *sharab*and verbal adjective *sharîb*.  If the verbal adjective was used, as in*Sharibhund*, perhaps that would imply that the hill was in the process of becoming bald, or that the entire hill was bald and/or barren, rather than simply having a patch on top that was clear.

If *sharb*is "bald", then *hund*is "hill".  This is the same template as *Khuzd*, *Khazâd*, and it makes sense that it is singular, nominative, and indefinite.  The question is still how we have the cluster of three consonants in the middle of the word.  We should see a form more like *Sharbahund*. However, there are several consonants that are generally considered "weak" in Hebrew and Arabic: <'>, <y>, <w>, and <h>. These often lead to special word forms, especially when they are the second radical in a verbal root. Khuzdul seems to almost completely elide the glottal stop <'> when in the middle of compounds, such as *Gundabad*.  My opinion is that the weak consonants <'>, <y>, <w>, and <h>may become evanescent when they start a syllable that follows a closed syllable, as they do here. They become almost completely silent, and so the consonant cluster of *-rbh-*is allowed to stand as is.  No epenthetic vowel or other alteration is made.  If this is the case, the word is almost pronounced *Shar-bund*.  The weak consonants may, at most, add a bit of a secondary articulation to the preceding consonant, such that <h> would hint at aspiration (or "breathy voice" for voiced consonants) and <w> would lean towards a labialized consonant.  These would not be phonemic, and could be dropped entirely.  However, in the writing, the original weak consonant is still retained, except for the glottal stop apparently.

If this idea is correct, then there is a little bit more (very!) circumstantial evidence to support it.  If the original meaning is "Bald Hill" and the pronunciation becomes close to *Shar-bund*, then it becomes something of a play on words, since *bund*is "head".  Speakers would, essentially, be called *Amon Rûdh* "Bald Head".  Perhaps this small bit of humor illustrates the fondness the Petty-dwarves had for the hill and why Mîm was so upset that the name changed at all, for this double-meaning is not present in the name Amon Rûdh.

*Sharb* is probably "balding, clearing" and/or "a bald/clear spot; a clearing" and ***singular, nominative, composition***.

*Hund*is "hill" and ***singular, nominative, indefinite***.

*Sharbhund*is thus "Bald-area Hill" and a ***compound word*** with ***adjective-noun word order***.

*The Unfinished Tales, pg 104*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Sigin-tarâg**

Durin's Folk are also known as the "Longbeards", which translates to *Sigin-tarâg* in Khuzdul.

Although we aren't given a gloss of the word, it makes sense that *tarâg*is "beards", seeing as how *CaCâC*is a well know plural pattern.  We can assume that it is ***plural, nominative***, and ***indefinite***as well.

*Sigin*is then "long", and probably ***singular, nominative, composition***. It may actually be a verbal root (a "stative verb") similar to *gabil*.  However, it's hard to explain the different vocalization compared to *gabil*.  The adjectival form of stative verbs in Arabic are mostly of the pattern*CaCîC*, but some have the form *CâCiC*found in active participles.  It may be significant that the basic form of dynamic verbs is almost always*CaCaCa*.  Khuzdul has the dynamic verbs *felek*and *gunud*, and *felak*can also be used as a verb.  That shows that Khuzdul verbs forms are not as regular as seen in Arabic, which probably includes stative verbs as well.  This shows that *sigin* may simply be the verbal adjective of a different verbal stem pattern than *gabil* and *gamil*.

*Sigin-tarâg* is "Longbeards" and a ***compound word*** with ***adjective-noun*** word order.

*The Peoples of Middle-earth, pg 321*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Telchar**

*Telchar*is the Dwarven smith of Tumunzahar (Nogrod) that created the sword Narsil, among other works. Most people see the <ch> in the name interpret this name as being Elven in origin. However, doing so is a real stretch, and I haven't seen a credible etymology for it yet. I explained in the page about the consonant inventory why <ch> is most probably a consonant in Khuzdul. The other names of Dwarves of the Ered Luin, *Azaghâl*and *Gamil Zirak*, are obviously Khuzdul, so seeing *Telchar*as Khuzdul also shouldn't be an issue.  In fact, the presence of the other two names being Khuzdul makes it more likely that *Telchar*is Khuzdul as well.

Tolkien never gave a translation of the name, or a gloss.  Assuming *Telchar*is a Khuzdul name, it might be viewed as odd that Tolkien gave no explanation of <ch> in Khuzdul in *Appendix E*.  He did say that Khuzdul "did not possess the sound represented above by th and ch (kh)", but that means that Khuzdul did not have the voiceless palatal fricative [x], which is represented by <ch> in Sindarin.  It could be that Telchar's name appears only once in The Lord of the Rings, so it was simply an oversight.  English speakers reading the name would tend to pronounce it close to correctly anyway without guidance.  On top of that, Dwarvish words starting with <kh> were "softened" to <h> when imported to Sindarin, and the mostly likely change for Khuzdul's <ch> ( IPA: [tʃh] ) in Sindarin is to become the voiceless velar fricative [x], which is also represented by <ch>!  With this being the case, it doesn't seem that you can say with any surety whether *Telchar*is one language or the other, simply by the presence of <ch>.

In *The Silmarillion, pg 94*, Telchar is referred to as "Telchar the smith".  Although this may be scanty evidence, we could follow the example of "Gamil Zirak the old" and say that *Telchar*is also a descriptive name (*laqab*) and means "smith".  As it happens, we can find some support for this in that Arabic uses a *t-*prefix for some verbal roots to indicate an agent, especially as a profession.  Taking this, we could see a root *L-Ch-R*"to smith, forge".  From there, a verb *lecher*"to smith, forge" might follow the pattern of *felek*.  After *felak*, a *lechar*would be a "thing that smiths, forges"; so basically, a "forge".  The profession would then use the *t-* prefix to form *telchar*"smith".  Surely, if any Dwarf in the history of Middle-earth deserves the descriptive name "smith", it would be Telchar!

*Telchar*then is, until more evidence comes along, "smith" and is ***singular, nominative, indefinite***.

*The Silmarillion, pg 94, 177*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Tharkûn**
 *Tharkûn*is Gandalf's Dwarvish name, meaning "Gray Man" or "Gray One". Originally, Tolkien translated this as "Staff Man", a reference to Gandalf's wizard staff. However, there were other wizards, and calling him "Grey One" would identify him more uniquely. Tolkien's writings that say "gray" are, as far as I can determine, later sources than those that say "staff". *Tharkûn*shows the exact same pattern as *Nargûn*, including being derived from an adjective.  Following the example of *Narâg*, *Narag-zâram*, and *Nargûn*, the indefinite, singular form is probably *tharâk*"gray".  It then takes composition form *tharak*and has the same *-ûn* "suffix of specificity" as *Nargûn*, causing the second vowel of the stem to be suppressed.

Because Gandalf is a male being (or at least takes on a male, corporeal form) and the *-ûn* suffix differs from the *-ân* and *-în* of *Gabilân*and*Nuluk-khizdîn*, it could be a specifically masculine suffix form.  This lines up with the Adunaic affixes -*u(-)*, -*û(-)*, and -*ô(-)*, which are used to derive masculine nouns.

*Tharkûn*is, most likely, "Gray One" and ***singular, nominative, definite (proper noun)***.

*The Lord of the Rings, The Two Towers, Book IV, ch 5
The Unfinished Tales, pg 353*
*Parma Eldalamberon XVII: Words, Phrases and Passages, pg 88*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Tumunzahar**

As the sister-city of *Gabil-gathol* in the Blue Mountains, *Tumunzahar*was south of Mount Dolmed.  The Elves called it *Nogrod*, and it is translated into English as "Hollowbold".  I've seen it typically analyzed as *tumun*"hollow" and *zahar*"bold", following the same word order as "Hollowbold".  However, once you really look at the word forms and understand Tolkien's interest in etymology, the reverse makes far more sense.

To understand how and why *tumun*is "bold", we have to know just what "bold" is! *Bold*is an Old English word roughly meaning "house". I've seen it explained as being a "building" or "dwelling", and especially of the large, prominent sort. It's associated with another Old English word,*byldan*, which was a verb "to build".  In the word *Khazad-dûm*, we have *dûm*which is "excavations, halls, mansions", and Tolkien also used "delvings".  A mansion is a "large, impressive, or stately residence" or a "large building with many apartments".  In archaic usage, it was simply "anabode or dwelling place." (Reference quotes from *The Random House Dictionary*)  From that standpoint, it's fairly easy to see that a "mansion" is comparable with a "bold".  Additionally, the idea of excavation and delving underground being a part of the definition of *dûm*is very similar to how *byldan*"to build" is related to *bold*.  In these words, we have the whole notion of Dwarves delving underground to construct dwellings running in perfect parallel with human notions of building.  To me, this is Tolkien's linguistic genius at its finest.
The next step is to see how we arrive at the given word forms.  *Tumun*and *dûm*start with different sounds, <t> and <d>.  As shown in the discussion on *Khazad-dûm*, *Felak-gundu* is sometimes written as *Felag-gundu*, showing voicing assimilation, so we know that Khuzdul does this in at least some circumstances.  Arabic has *-dt-* → *-dd-*.  If this is also the case in Khuzdul, then *dûm*would actually be *tûm*, with the <t> assimilated in voicing to become <d>.

Tolkien wrote that *dûm*(*tûm*) is "either a true plural or a collective".  The form can be seen as following the same template as *Khuzd*, *Khazâd*.  In Arabic, "geminate" or "doubled" roots, where the 2nd & 3rd radicals are the same, such as *T-M-M*, this form is a possible result.  The root *T-M-M* would take the template *CuCC*, giving *tumm*.   In those situations, Arabic contracts the form to *CûC*, or *tûm*in this case.  From this, we can view *tûm*as singular in form, so describing it as a collective makes sense.

Arabic makes use of collectives a fair amount.  For those nouns that are collective (that is, they are singular in form and plural in meaning), Arabic adds a suffix to the word to indicate a single item of that type.  A couple examples are *baqar*"cattle", *baqarah*"a cow" and *jund*"army", *jundi*"a soldier".  The words that indicate the single item are known in Arabic as "nouns of unity", and in grammar is called a "singulative number".  Looking at *tumun*, we still have to figure out where the final *-un* comes from, and the suffixes of *Nargûn*and *Tharkûn*are immediately comparable.  In those cases, *-ûn* seems to indicate a specific entity characterized by the root meaning.  A singulative suffix marks a single item, so the two seem very comparable.  Looking closer at this, we can see that *tûm*would have a likely composition form *tum*.  Add the suffix and we get *tumûn*.  Finally, put *tumûn*into the composition form, probably *tumun*, to combine it with *zahar*to form a compound word.  Voila!

From all this, we have *tumun*as "excavation, hall, mansion" and ***singulative, nominative, composition***.

On a side note, the concept of the root *G-N-D* (from *gund*) also seems to be somewhat similar to the concepts found in *Khazad-dûm* and*Tumunzahar*, which is of delving, excavating, and building.  *G-N-D* denotes concepts of the process of delving/excavation/tunneling, as seen by the verb *gunud*.  The result, a single underground hall, would be *gund*.  It could be seen as similar to how we think of one room in a house.  One or more *ganâd* (using the *Khuzd, Khazâd* template) that are designed for a single purpose and are considered part of a unified whole would be a*tumûn* "a bold, a mansion, a delving or excavation".  *Tumûn*would refer to the more general stucture, or the "house" to extend the "room vs. house" analogy.  Again, this fits in very well with the notion of a "mansion", and we can see exactly why Tolkien chose this term.  A whole series of these would be the collective *tûm* "mansions, delvings, excavations", and would be an entire underground town, city, or other settlement constructed by the Dwarves.

*Zahar*is then "hollow", following the adjective patterns of other words, although it could also have a verbal root (a "state" verb).  *Zahar*should be ***singular, nominative, indefinite***.

*Tumunzahar*then is "a mansion, delving, or excavation of hollowness", or "Hollowbold", and is a ***construct compound word*** of ***noun-adjective word order***.

*The Silmarillion, ch 10, pg 91*
*The War of the Jewels, pg 209, 389*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Uzbad Khazad-dûmu**

This is the epitaph written on Balin's tomb in the Chamber of Mazarbul in Khazad-dûm.  Gandalf translates it for the Fellowship as "Lord of Moria".

Tolkien provides a translation for *uzbad*as "lord" without any further comment.  Many would point out that Khuzdul words don't start with a vowel, like *uzbad*does, so there must be something going on here.  However, there are plenty that apparently do, such as *Azanulbizar*.  Adunaic has words like this as well, such as *inzil*"flower", as does Arabic.  So, I think it's perfectly plausible to see this in Khuzdul as well.  For those words that do look to start with a vowel, there is an assumed glottal stop at the beginning of the word, so Khuzdul would technically write *'uzbad*and *'Azanulbizar*, for example.  The glottal stop is a consonant seen in Semitic languages, and it allows Khuzdul words to look like they start with a vowel but actually have a consonant.

In his article "*An Analysis of Dwarvish*", Magnus Åberg makes the case that the *u-* here may be a conjunction (roughly meaning "and"), similar to the conjunction *w*ə*-*found in Hebrew and *wa-* in Arabic.  The main reason is that we don't see any other Khuzdul words that have the pattern*uCCaC*.  His position is that there could possibly be some morphological reason that words like *uzbad*and *inbar*have the form *VCCVC*rather than *CVCVC*.  However, I would argue that, based on other Khuzdul examples, it looks like these word forms are possible.  With the example of *Duban Azanulbizar* being published, we can see the template for *uzbad*, *uCCaC*, has the same relation to the template for *duban*, *CuCaC*, as does *inbar*(*iCCaC*) to *zirak*(*CiCaC*).  Adunaic also has words with similar forms to *uzbad*and *inbar*, such as *igmil* and *inzil*.  Arabic has words of similar shape, and it's not uncommon for a glottal stop <'> to be prefixed, allowing these words shapes to be formed without any change in meaning.  In other words, the added glottal stop at the beginning isn't counted as an extra consonant in the root.  I think we can say that *uzbad*at least has the potential to be a valid form in Khuzdul.

After much discussion, Magnus and I agree that there isn't a specific need for a conjunction meaning "and" here.  *Fundinul*is a patronymic, and thus part of Balin's name.  Thus, the inscription doesn't translate literally as "son of Fundin ***and*** Lord of Moria".  As I explain in the section on*Fundinul*, it would be better to translate this as "Balin Fundin-son", and then begin a new line or sentence: "Lord of Moria".  However, the conjunctions *w*ə*-/wa-* in Hebrew and Arabic don't always translate into English as the conjunction "and".  Sometimes, they can simply start a new sentence or be used for explanatory, parenthetical purposes.  The way Magnus describes this in his article is that the conjunction can be used like a "spoken comma", which is a good way to explain it.  What we have here then might be "Balin Fundin-son ***<spoken comma>*** Lord of Moria".  The phrase that follows the conjunction, "Lord of Moria" in this instance, clarifies or further describes the subjuct, which is Balin.  This, to me, seems very logical and plausible since Khuzdul was inspired by Semitic languages.

If the *u-* is indeed an "explanatory, parenthetical conjunction", then the actual form of "lord" might be, as an example, *zebad*, similar to *felak*.  If the initial syllable is unstressed, then it might be treated as a schwa/reduced vowel, and the *u-* prefix would cause the vowel to be dropped, resulting in *uzbad*.  As another possibility, "lord" might be *zâbad*, and the composition form *zäbad*(probably just written as *zabad*).  Again, the *u-*prefix would reduce the vowel, so *u-* + *zäbad*would become *uzbad*.

The question here is not whether this is a viable analysis of the phrase, but whether it's what Tolkien intended.  On *Parma Eldalamberon XVII: Words, Phrases and Passages, pg 47*, we are given the following, very brief entry:

**D  UZBAD**, lord.

There's nothing about conjunctions, case, number, etc.  Granted, there are many Khuzdul etymologies where Tolkien provides nothing but a one- or two-word English translation, so this doesn't prove anything.  However, Khuzdul doesn't seem to have been a major focus for Tolkien, and the particulars of Semitic conjunctions doesn't seem likely to have been a concern here.  As shown above, *uzbad*should be a valid word form in Khuzdul, and Tolkien provides nothing except a simple English translation.  The example *Uzbad Khazad-dûmu* shows up as a separate line of an epitaph, which simply lists his title.  So, while it's easy to see a conjunction being used here, not using one is a simpler explanation and fits the evidence.  As such I think it's much more likely to be true to what Tolkien was thinking in this example.

From this, I would say *uzbad*is "lord" and is ***singular, nominative, composition***.  There is, in my estimation, no conjunction here.

*Khazad-dûmu* is mostly the same as *Khazad-dûm* above, except that it shows the *-u* ending. This matches with *Felak-gundu*, *mênu*, and the objective genitive in Adunaic. We can then say that this is "Khazad-dûm" as ***singular, accusative, definite (proper noun)***.

*Uzbad Khazad-dûmu* is thus probably an ***objective construct phrase***, with ***noun-noun word order***.

*The Lord of the Rings, The Fellowship of the Ring, Book II, ch 4*
*Parma Eldalamberon XVII: Words, Phrases and Passages, pg 47*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

**Zirak-zigil**
 *Zirak-zigil* is the Silvertine mountain, called *Celebdil*in Sindarin.  Underneath it lies the majority of Khazad-dûm, including the path the Fellowship followed to get through Moria.  Tolkien translated it as "Silver Spike", with *zirak*"spike, tine, point" and *zigil*"silver, the color".  Originally, the translations of the two names was reversed.  At some point, Tolkien decided that they needed to switch. It may have been when he came up with the name *Zigil-nâd* for the Silverlode river, which later changed to *Kibil-nâla*.

*Zirak*is "spike, tine, point" and would be ***singular, nominative, composition***.

*Zigil*is "silver, the color" and ***singular, nominative, indefinite***.

*Zirak-zigil* is thus "Spike of Silver", a ***construct compound*** with ***noun-adjective word order***.

*The Lord of the Rings, The Fellowship of the Ring, Book II, ch 3
The Treason of Isengard, pg 174-175, 432
Sauron Defeated, pg  45
Parma Eldalamberon XVII: Words, Phrases and Passages, pg 35, 36*

[Return to Existing Words Menu](#Existing_Khuzdul_Words)

[Return to Anaysis & Rational Menu](#Analysis_Rationale)

**Other Words Related to Khuzdul**

There are a number of words found in Tolkien's works that are early and eventually discarded names, alternate spellings of existing Khuzdul words, or words that are often mistakenly interpreted as being Khuzdul.  This sections discusses each one, showing why it can be dismissed from consideration of Khuzdul as it eventually developed.

* [Azanûl](#Azanûl)
* [Carn Dûm](#Carn_dûm)
* [Forn](#Forn)
* [Ibun, Khîm, & Mîm](#Ibun_Khîm_Mîm)
* [Kazaddûm](#Kazaddûm)
* [Khuzûd](#Khuzûd)
* [Narak, Naruka, & Narkuthûn](#Narak_Naruka_Narukuthûn)
* [Nuluk-khizidûn & Nulukkizdîn](#Nuluk_khizidûn_Nulukkizdîn)
* [Udushinbar](#Udushinbar)
* [Uruktharbun](#Uruktharbun)
* [Zigil-nâd](#Zigil_nâd)
* [Zirakinbar](#Zirakinbar)

**Azanûl**

As a shortened version of *Azanulbizar*, this word only shows up in drafts of *The Lord of the Rings*.  This is at a point where Tolkien was, tentively, explaining *azan*as "dim" and *'ûl* as "streams".  This apparently is later changed when he interprets the *-ul-* of *Azanulbizar* as being an adjectival suffix to *azan*, and adding the word *duban*as "valley", rather than trying to fold the element "valley" into the word*Azanulbizar*.  Although this form might be compared to *Khuzdûl* as evidence of the adjectival suffix having a long <û>, it shouldn't be since it only exists where *'ûl* was "streams".  At this point, it looks like Tolkien abandoned his old interpretation of *Azanulbizar*and thus this word along with it.

[Return to Other Words Related to Kuzdul Menu](#Other_Words_Related_to_Khuzdul)

**Carn dûm**

Found at the most northwestern tip of the Misty Mountains, *Carn dûm* was the chief stronghold for the Witch-king of Angmar. Its name is something of a mystery. The *dûm*element is often pointed to as being Khuzdul, parallel to *Khazad-dûm*. Originally, this was the name of the Dimrill Dale (Kh. *Duban Azanulbizar*), along with a number of spelling variants such as *Carndoom*. Even so, it's unclear if this was supposed to be a Khuzdul word or not.

Regardless, we do know that the original meaning of the name, which we are told in T*he Return of the Shadow, pg. 433, note 13*:

"The name of the vale was first *Carndoom the Red Valley…*"

This starts to make sense if we look for an Elvish etymology.  Following that line, *carn*would most likely mean "red", from Quenya *carnë*and/or Sindarin *caran*. For *dûm*we can also find an explanation in an Elvish origin. From *The Lost Road, pg 374* we find the example *Tumladen*, which means “the Level Vale”. *Tum*means "deep valley, under or among hills”. In response to a question on this possibility Patrick Wynne commented:

The form *Carndoom* ("Red Valley") and its flock of variants may be found in *Return of the Shadow* (p. 433, note 13). *Doom* ("valley") is probably just a spelling variant for *dûm* in the usual orthography—Cf. *dúm* ("vale") in *Narodûm* ("Red Vale") (ibid.), in which the first element is *narw*, *naru* (N. "red") (Lost Road: 374). Tolkien apparently intended the form to recall English "doom." The noun without lenition of the initial consonant may be the same as *tum* "deep valley, under or among hills," seen also in *Tumladen* ("the Level Vale") (Lost Road: 394), though I cannot account for the difference in vowel length.

*Carndoom* was originally the Elvish name of the Dimrill-dale. Its subsequent use as the name of the capital of the realm of Angmar makes sense—the first element in *Angmar* appears to be *ang* (S. "iron"), so *Carn Dûm* ("Red Vale") might be an appropriate name for a valley in a land rich in iron deposits. Note that if the second element is *mar* (Q. "home"), then this is another of those rare mixed forms.

So, we have an Elvish origin for the name and a translation that seems to make sense with what we know about Carn Dûm and Angmar.  Despite not being able to account for the "long u", I feel that it is pretty safe to say that, at the very least, *Carn Dûm* is probably not Dwarvish in origin

[Return to Other Words Related to Kuzdul Menu](#Other_Words_Related_to_Khuzdul)

**Forn**

This is the name the Dwarves used for Tom Bombadil.  However, it should not be taken as a Khuzdul word.  In fact, it is an Old Norse word meaning "ancient".  Because Tolkien used names found in Scandinavian myths to represent the outer names of Dwarves, I think we can safely say that this name follows the same vein.  It is probably an old Mannish name or word, or represents such.

*The Treason of Isengard, pg 125, 138*

[Return to Other Words Related to Kuzdul Menu](#Other_Words_Related_to_Khuzdul)

**Ibun, Khîm, & Mîm**

These are names of Petty-dwarves. They were from Amon Rudh, which in Khuzdul is called *Sharbhund*. Mîm was the decendant of the Petty Dwarves who first made their home at Amon Rudh. Ibun and Khîm were his sons. They are the only examples we have of the names of Petty-dwarves. Durin's Folk and the other kindreds employed "outer names" for use with folk of other races. In the 3rd Age, Durin's Folk took these from the languages of the neighboring cultures. Speculation has been made that the Petty-dwarves were in part reviled from the rest of Dwarven society because they used their true names among other races. Thus, "Ibun", "Khîm", & "Mîm" may also be true names used by other Dwarves.

[Return to Other Words Related to Kuzdul Menu](#Other_Words_Related_to_Khuzdul)

**Kazaddûm**

Sometimes this form is mentioned as an alternate spelling of *Khazad-dûm*. This can cause some confusion amongst people whose native language does not distinguish aspirated and unaspirated versions of a consonant as being separate phonemes. It has been pointed as a possible sign that the adding of <h> doesn't actually change the phoneme (and thus the actual meaning of the word). Rather, it is suggested, the "+h" simply "intensifies" or "fortifies" the base meaning. This is not the case. As discussed above in the Phonology section, there are many real languages that make the distinction between aspirated and unaspirated stops. Also, the actual appearance of *Kazad-dûm* is in a representation of a page from the book found by the Fellowship in Moria. The particular example is one in which the words are written in a version of the Angerthas that were for "representing English spelt phonetically" (*The Return of the Shadow, pg 467*). An example of this would be to render the word "sons" as it sounds: "sunz". As English is one of those languages that does not discriminate between aspirated and unaspirated consonants, this spelling is not really anything different from "Khazad-dûm". It is simply a different method of transcription.

[Return to Other Words Related to Kuzdul Menu](#Other_Words_Related_to_Khuzdul)

**Khuzûd**

This is a form of "Dwarves" which predates *Khazâd*. The *CuCûC*pattern does show up in Arabic for plurals.  Since Tolkien said that Khuzdul had broken plurals in "Arabic style", it's very possible that he used the template straight from Arabic.  At some point, he decided on another vocalization, and discarded this one.

[Return to Other Words Related to Kuzdul Menu](#Other_Words_Related_to_Khuzdul)

**Narak, Naruka, & Nar(u)kuthûn**

These three words showed up in *Parma Eldalamberon XVII: Words, Phrases and Passages, pg 47,* as part of the etymology of the Sindarin word *Narog*.  For clarity, here is the relevant passage:

S  *Narog*.  This was in origin a *Dwarvish* name (of Petty-dwarves?):  ? *naruka* > S *narog*.  **nargothrond**is Sindarinized from *nar(u)kuthûn*.

[ ... ... *Etym.* NÁRAK- 'tear, rend', *\*narāka* 'rushing, rapid, violent', ... ... ]

Apparently, this has been taken as saying that there is a Khuzdul word naruka from which was derived the Sindarin narog. Following that view, Nar(u)kuthûn is the Dwarvish name for Nargothrond (instead of Nuluk-khizdîn!) and incorporates the word naruka. Given the passage above and the similar appearance to other Khuzdul words, I can see where this view comes from.

However, if we look a little closer, we can see these are not Khuzdul words at all.  In *Vinyar Tengwar, Volume 5B, issue 45, pg 37*, there is an entry for a Quenya root NÁRAK-:

**NÁRAK-** [*after:*]  Q *naraka* harsh, rending, violent  [*add:*] (of [?sounds]) [*for:*]  Q *narki*  [*read:*]  Q *narka.*

On Ardalambion, Helge Fauskanger has a downloadable file of Quenya vocabulary, which lists words from the same root:

**naraca** ("k") adj. "harsh, rending, violent" (NÁRAK; according to VT45:37, Tolkien added a qualification that is not certainly legible: "of [?sounds]")

**narca-** ("k") vb. "to rend" (NÁRAK; the form "narki" in LR is a misreading for narka; see VT45:37)

At the top of the file, Helge explains why some of the words that have a <c> in them have ("k") in the entry:

The spelling used in the source is usually indicated; for instance, ("k") following a word indicates that the word is spelt with a *k* instead of a *c* in Tolkien's text.

So, the entries in his list *naraca* and *narca-* are given by Tolkien as *naraka* and *narka-*.

From all of this information, we can see *narak*, *naruka*, and *Nar(u)kuthûn* are not Khuzdul words. The note that starts the entry, "This was in origin a *Dwarvish* name...", is actually referring to ten pages earlier (pg 37) where Tolkien says:

The river-name *Narog* is probably of D. origin, *Narâg*.

If *narak*, *naruka*, and *Nar(u)kuthûn* were Khuzdul words, the entries would contradict each other.

[Return to Other Words Related to Kuzdul Menu](#Other_Words_Related_to_Khuzdul)

**Nuluk-khizidûn & Nulukkizdîn**

Both of these names are variations of *Nuluk-khizdîn*, the halls of the Petty-dwarves which later became Nargothrond. *Nulukhizidûn*is the early version. In the original manuscripts for*The Silmarillion*, it is scratched out, and the modified *Nulukkhizdîn*is written above. *Nuluk-kizdîn*, on the other hand, is simply a misspelling, as noted by Christopher Tolkien. Thus, both can be discarded.

[Return to Other Words Related to Kuzdul Menu](#Other_Words_Related_to_Khuzdul)

**Udushinbar**

This is an early name for the mountain *Fanuidhol*"Cloudyhead", which later became *Bundushathûr*in Khuzdul. It obviously shares *inbar*with *Barazinbar*. Early on, Tolkien had named the three mountains of Moria as *Barazinbar*, *Zirakinbar*, <and> *Udushinbar*. This is found on an isolated note, *The Treason of Isengard, pg 432*. He might have planned that they could have been thought of as something like "the three horns of Moria". This convention was later discarded in favor of giving each peak a different type of pinnacle; a horn, a tine, and a head. Perhaps this was to give more personality to each of them. *Caradhras*(Barazinbar) is described in *The Lord of the Rings* as almost having its own sentient identity. The different names would have helped to shape this.  Because it was completely replaced, we will ignore it for our uses.

[Return to Other Words Related to Kuzdul Menu](#Other_Words_Related_to_Khuzdul)

**Uruktharbun**

It is somewhat uncertain exactly what this word was intended for. In *The Return of the Shadow*, Christopher Tolkien discusses the appearance of the word. Depending on what what his father intended, it could either refer to Khazad-dûm or the Dimrill Dale. Again, because no translation is given and it was eventually replaced anyway, we can ignore it.

[Return to Other Words Related to Kuzdul Menu](#Other_Words_Related_to_Khuzdul)

**Zigil-nâd**

This was an intermediate name for the *Silverlode*between *Buzundush* and *Kibil-nâla*.  Tolkien eventually discarded it.

[Return to Other Words Related to Kuzdul Menu](#Other_Words_Related_to_Khuzdul)

**Zirakinbar**

Although it uses elements that we are familiar with, *Zirakinbar*is still an outdated form. It was eventually replaced by *Zirak-zigil*. *Zirakinbar*would have meant "silver horn" at the time it was used. Tolkien originally defined *zirak*as "silver", but later changed this to *zigil*. This, along with his decision to move away from naming all three mountains as "<something>-horn" rendered *Zirakinbar*obsolete. See the sections on *Zirak-zigil* and *Udushinbar*for more information.

[Return to Other Words Related to Kuzdul Menu](#Other_Words_Related_to_Khuzdul)

[Return to Anaysis & Rational Menu](#Analysis_Rationale)

**Resources**

**References**

Because there are so few words of Khuzdul, we largely have to turn to other languages for comparative analysis.  That includes languages in Middle-earth and in our own "Primary World", as Tolkien called it.  A number of people have paved the way in providing information and analysis of the other languages in Middle-earth.  To understand Semitic languages such as Hebrew and Arabic, to which Khuzdul is said to be similar, I turned to quite a few books and papers, online and hard-copy, as well as websites for general reference.  The following list are the resources that I found especially helpful in learning about all of these languages, both in Middle-earth and in the real world.

**Middle-earth Languages**

[**The Lord of the Rings**](http://www.amazon.com/s/ref%3Dnb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=the+lord+of+the+rings&x=0&y=0) - The original story itself.   I would be remiss if I did not include this in my list of references!   Appendix E, found at the end of "The Return of the King", was of particular value.

[**The Histories of Middle-earth (series)**](http://www.amazon.com/s/ref%3Dnb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=tolkien&x=0&y=0#/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=%22histories+of+middle-earth%22&rh=n%3A283155%2Ck%3A%22histories+of+middle-earth%22)- J.R.R. Tolkien's son, Christopher Tolkien, has published a series of books laying out much of the development of the stories of Middle-earth, as well as some of the writings about the languages and cultures.  It is invaluable to understanding the works of Tolkien and the processby which he made them.  I won't link every one here, but the volumes that were of particular use t me were "The Peoples of Middle-earth", "The War of the Jewels", "The Treason of Isengard", and "Sauron Defeated".

 [**The Silmarillion**](http://www.amazon.com/s/ref%3Dnb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=the+lord+of+the+rings&x=0&y=0#/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=silmarillion&rh=n%3A283155%2Ck%3Asilmarillion)- An account of the early ages of Middle-earth.  It contains, for this project, a small bit of useful linguistic information.

[**The Unfinished Tales**](http://www.amazon.com/s/ref%3Dnb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=the+lord+of+the+rings&x=0&y=0#/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Dstripbooks&field-keywords=unfinished+tales&rh=n%3A283155%2Ck%3Aunfinished+tales) - Additional information about the ages of Middle-earth, and a little information useful for Khuzdul.
[**The Lord of the Rings: A Reader's Companion**](http://www.amazon.com/Lord-Rings-Readers-Companion/dp/0618642676/ref%3Dsr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1314631762&sr=1-1) - Has information about the process of writing "The Lord of the Rings", and as part of that includes some information about Khuzdul as well.

[**Ardalambion**](http://folk.uib.no/hnohf/) - A well known website run by Helge Fauskanger, it contains a comprehensive overview of all the languages Tolkien created.  In particular, there are sections on Khudzul, Adunaic, and Quenya.  Helge provides a course on Quenya as well, and that was very helpful to quickly understand the similarities between Adunaic and Quenya, such that I could see where differences between Khuzdul and Adunaic might lie.  The article on Khuzdul was instrumental to helping me understand the language back when I first started on my journey in "Tolkienian linguistics".

 [**An Analysis of Dwarvish**](http://www.forodrim.org/daeron/md_khuzdul.pdf) - Magnus Åberg wrote the first (only?) article on Khuzdul that extensively compares it with Hebrew.  Magnus took a class in Biblical Hebrew at one point, and used "Introduction to Biblical Hebrew" by Thomas O. Lambdin.  It was from Magnus that I learned of the book, and proceeded to buy and use it myself.  I had extensive conversations with Magnus regarding Khuzdul, and several of the theories he presents came out of those conversations.  Our ideas are still not very far apart, even though I have updated a few of my thoughts.  Still, had it not been for my Swedish friend, this work would not be possible.

[**Elfling Email List**](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Elfling/) - This email list is for the discussion of Tolkien's languages.  This served as another point of contact to discuss ideas about Khuzdul and linguistics when I was first learning.  It's not as active these days, but the archives are availble for search and are worthwhile.

 [**Elvish Linguistics Fellowship**](http://www.elvish.org/) - Homepage of the group that publishes the papers of J.R.R. Tolkien.  It includes another email discussion list as well as the Parma Eldalamberon and Vinyar Tengwar publications, which provided at least some information about Khuzdul not found in the primary sources.  There may be additional notes on Khuzdul that have not been published yet.  If so, this will be the place to find them.

[**Lalaith's Guide to Adûnaic Grammar**](http://lalaith.vpsurf.de/Tolkien/Grammar.html) - This article presents Adunaic, in a fashion comparable to Ardalambion, but presents things slightly different and with a few alternate theories.  Very worthwhile in understanding the language.

**"Primary World" Languages**

[**Introduction to Biblical Hebrew**](http://www.amazon.com/Introduction-Biblical-Hebrew-Thomas-Lambdin/dp/0023672501/ref%3Dsr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1314636083&sr=8-1) - Written by Thomas O. Lambdin, Professor Emeritus of Semitic Languages at Harvard University, this book makes liberal use of English transliteration.  This is perfect for someone like me who wanted to understand the structures of Hebrew (to compare with Khuzdul), but didn't want or need to actually learn the Hebrew script.  Lambdin does a great job of thoroughly presenting the language.

[**An Introduction to Koranic and Classical Arabic**](http://www.amazon.com/Introduction-Koranic-Classical-Arabic-Elementary/dp/0936347406/ref%3Dsr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1314636598&sr=1-1) - The author is Wheeler M. Thackston, and like Lambdin, he uses English transliteration to present his grammar of the Classical Arabic language.  Again, this is invaluable when speaking and reading Arabic is not your ultimate goal.  His grammar is quite easy to understand, perhaps even more so than Lambdin's, so it might be a better place to start learning about Semitic languages.  You can also find a PDF version of the book [here](http://www.kalamullah.com/Books/Thackston_Arabic.pdf).

[**Arabic Online**](http://arabic.tripod.com/) - A well written, easy to follow grammar of the Arabic language.  It covers both Classical and Modern Standard Arabic.  In particular, I found the sections on the differences between active and stative verbs useful.  The explanations of the differences between using the perfect, imperfect, and active participle was also very helpful.

[**Wikipedia**](http://www.wikipedia.org/) - No, really!  The language and linguistics pages on Wikipedia are actually of decent quality.  They aren't perfect, but as general references for a project like this, Wikipedia can be quite helpful.  No, I wouldn't use it as a sole reference in a scholarly article, but for getting a general sense of linguistic information to help in a largely creative project like this, absolutely.  Where needed, I generally backed up what I found on Wikipedia with information from other sources as well.  Even if exacting precision wasn't needed, knowing that the articles were at least in the ballpark was helpful.  Here are the pages I referred to the most:

* [**Hebrew**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebrew_language) - Lots of information about the Hebrew language, including the Biblical and Modern versions.  There's quite a few additional links to pages on phonology, morphology, and one of the more interesting features, the waw consecutive.
* [**Arabic**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arabic) - Like the page on Hebrew, this has information on Arabic in general, with links to Modern Standard Arabic and Classical Arabic, not to mention phonology, etc.
* [**Broken Plural**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Broken_plural) - The broken plural is the primary method of forming plurals in Arabic, and Tolkien said that Khuzdul follows this.
* [**Construct State**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Construct_state) - A feature found in Semitic languages in general, the construct state replaces the English preposition "of".
* [**Triconsonantal Root**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Triliteral) - Triconsonantal roots are found in Khuzdul, and were one of the first features in Khuzdul noted to resemble Semitic languages.  At the bottom of the Wikipeidia page, note the link to Khuzdul as well!
* [**Singulative Number**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Singulative) - Singulatives are a sort of singular form, except that they are formed from collective nouns.  Understanding this and Arabic allowed me to formulate my ideas on several Khuzdul words, most notably Tumunzahar.
* [**Arabic Names**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arabic_nam) - A nice explanation of the various components of Arabic names.  There are some clear parallels to the Dwarves of Middle-earth.
* [**International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ipa)- I provided IPA symbols of all the different sounds found in Khuzdul.  This page explains those symbols.
* [**Consonants**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consonant) - Following from the page on IPA, this page focuses on consonant sounds.
* [**Vowels**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vowels) - Focuses on vowel sounds.

[**The Zompist Bulletin Board**](http://zbb.spinnwebe.com/) - This forum is dedicated to the hobby of constructed languages, or "conlanging" as it is known.  The feedback can sometimes be harsh due to brutal honesty, but I have found a great amount of linguistic knowledge here.  If you are willing to do some reading and learning, this is a great place to learn how to create a quality language or language family.  My knowledge of linguistics is far greater as a result of having been a member for several years.

**Glossary**

This section contains a list of words relating to linguistics which appear in this article. Definitions and explanations are giving to help those readers who are unfamiliar with linguistics. Hopefully this will render things more accessible to them.

**Absolute State** - In a pair of nouns which are in a construct relationship, this is the noun which has the "normal" form. The term "absolute" is used as it means "not mixed with or dependant on anything else". If a noun is found alone (when not in a construct pair), it might be said to be in the absolute state, but usually it is not discussed as such. It is only pointed out as being nominative, singular or plural, etc. See Construct Case, Genitive.

**Accusative** - The accusative case is used for a noun that is meant to be the direct object of a verb. Example: "ball" is the direct object in the sentence "Joe hit the ball".

**Adjective** - A class of words which directly modify or describe a noun. Example: "black" in "the black dog is running". Note that if you used "black" in the sentence "black is a great color to wear", it would be a noun.

**Adverb** - Similar to an adjective, an adverb will modify/describe adjectives or verbs rather than nouns. They express time, place, manner, degree, etc. Example: "quickly" in "the dog ate quickly".

**Affix** - A syllable or set of syllables which is attached to a word in order to alter its meaning or create a new word. An affix can be attached on the beginning, the end, or in the midle of a word. Example: "-ing" in "building". See Infix, Prefix, Suffix.

**Affixation** - The process of adding affixes to base words in order to alter their meaning.

**Agentive** - A word form which indicates the perpetrator of an action. The action would be the base word. Example: "painter" is a person who "paints".

**Aspiration** - The following of a consonant with a puff of breath. In English, "t", "k", and "p" are usually aspirated, even if it is not realized. This leads to difficulty in pronouncing languages which have variations of the same phonemes which are not aspirated.

**Assimilation** - A process in which a sound, influenced by a sound right next to it, tends to become pronounced like that neighboring sound. Example: "illiterate" actually comes from "inliterate". The "in-" prefix modifies the base word "literate" so that it means "not literate". The "n" ends up being assimilated to become "l".

**Broken Plural** - A plural form of the noun which does not resemble the original singular form due to internal changes. Example: "foot" vs. "feet". This type of plural form is very common in Arabic. Also called "irregular plurals".

**Case** - Various forms of words which indicate relationships between the forms. Examples; singular vs. plural, masculine vs. feminine, absolute vs. construct, etc. Different patterns and affixes are used to show what case a word is in.

**Circumflex** - One of several marks which go over letters in order to indicate a certain quality of that letter. A circumflex is shaped as " ^ ", resulting in "a" becoming "â". In Khuzdul, this is used to mark long vowels.

**Compound** - A word made up of two or more base words, which usually results in a change of meaning. A compound can be hyphenated or not. English distinguishes this from a phrase by reduced stress on one of the elements; compare "a grandfather" with "a grand father".

**Conjugation** - The methodical arrangement of the inflection of verbs, or the process of produincing that arrangement. In simpler terms, how verbs are modified to show various states, like number, gender, tense, etc.

**Conjunction** - An uninflected word which is used to join parts of a sentence. Examples: and, but, or.

**Consonant** - A sound made in speech where the speaker either fully stops and then releases the air (p, t, k, b, d, etc), stops it at one point while releasing it at another (l, m, r, etc), forces it through a loosely closed or very narrow passage (v, s, z, th, etc), or uses a combination of these methods (ch, j).

**Construct State** - A case for nouns that is used to show a relation to another noun right next to it in a sentence. This is most commonly used to indicate a genitive or possessive state. If a word "X" is in the construct state, while a word "Y" is in the absolute state (which is the "normal" form of the noun), then when the two are put together in a phrase "X Y", this is most often translated as "X of Y". Other translations would be "X with Y", "X in Y", or "X from Y". This depends on the context of the two nouns being put together and the sentence they are in.

**Corpus** - A complete or comprehensive collection. In this case, it refers to a full body of work (all the written examples of Khuzdul that we have).

**Declination** - A full set of inflections for a noun, pronoun, or adjective which shows the various forms for case, number, gender, etc.

**Fricative** - A consonant articulated by breath forced through a narrow slit formed at some point in the mouth, producing friction. Examples: f, v, th, & z.

**Geminate** - A class of nouns in Hebrew which have 3 radicals, and the 2nd and 3rd radicals are the same. These are also called "double verbs" in Arabic. Example: Radid (Arabic: "answer").

**Genitive** - A case expressing possession or source. In Hebrew and Arabic, this is generally done using the construct state. Example: "The axe of Durin".

**Infinitive** - The form of the verb that expresses existence or action without reference to person, number, or tense. In English this takes the form of adding the word "to" in front of the verb. Example: "to go", "to think".

**Infix** - An affix which is inserted into the middle of a word.

**Inflection** - The change in form in a word which indicates a grammatical relationship, such as number, case, gender, or tense.

**Irregular Plural** - See Broken Plural.

**Morpheme** - The smallest meaningful unit or form in language, which may be a base or an affix.

**Morphology** - A branch of linguistics which deals with the study of the internal structure and forms of words (the study of morphology).

**Nominative** - A case of the noun which indicates the subject of a verb or phrase. Example: "dog" in "the dog bit the man".

**Noun** - A class of words denoting a person, place, thing, action, quality, etc.

**Object** - A noun in a sentence which is the recipient of an action. Example: "man" in "the dog bit the man".

**Participle** - A set of verbal forms which perform a variety of functions. In English they are formed usually by the suffixes -ing, -ed, or -en. They can function as verbs ("running" in "the dog is running"), as adjectives ("laughing" in "the laughing boy is over there"), or as nouns ("running" in "running is a great sport"), etc. When used as nouns in this manner, they can be referred to as "gerunds".

**Phoneme** - A set of very similar, but slightly different sounds that are percieved by native speakers as being the same sound. They are also then written as the same sound. Example: "p" in "pin", "spin", and "tip".

**Phonology** - The study of the sounds and phonemes of a language, or also the full set of sounds and phonemes possessed by a language.

**Predicate** - The part of a phrase, usually a verbal phrase, which asserts something about the subject. Example: "is running quickly" in the phrase "the black dog is running quickly", or "is black" in "the dog is black".

**Prefix** - An affix which is added to the beginning of the base word. Example: "hypo-" in "hypothesis".

**Preposition** - A word showing function or relation of the word it is associated with to another part of the phrase. Examples: to, for, from, in, upon, under, with, by, etc. Also "upon" in "the Dwarves are upon you".

**Pronoun** - A class of words which function as nouns, but do not actually specify the identity of the subject. Examples: I, we, you, it, them, who, which, anybody, etc.

**Radical**- A consonant which is a part of a set of consonants that, in a Semitic style language, denote a particular meaning as a base for words.

**Root** - The fundamental element of a word, exclusive of all affixes and inflectional changes.

**Schwa** - The neutral, mid-central vowel sound of most unstressed vowels in English. This is the sound of "a" in "ago", "e" in "agent", and "i" in "sanity", etc. The schwa is sometimes called a "reduction vowel".

**Segholate** - A class of nouns in Hebrew which have 3 radicals, and the 2nd and 3rd radical are different. Example: sabal - "porter".

**Spirant** - A consonant articulated by passage of breath through a partially closed cavity. Also called a fricative. Example: sh, v.

**Status Absolutus** - The Latin term for the Absolute State.

**Status Constructus** - The Latin term for the Construct State.

**Stem** - The part of a word, including affixes, to which inflection is added. Thus, the root and affixes without inflection.

**Stop** - A consonant formed by the complete stopping of airflow. Examples: p, b, t, d, k.

**Subject** - The noun in a sentence which is the primary focus, and about which something is stated in the predicate. Example: "the black dog" in "the black dog is running quickly".

**Suffix** - An affix which is added to the end of the base word. Example: "-ing" in "talking".

**Syllable** - A part of a word which is pronounced with a single, uninterrupted sounding of the voice. The basic unit of pronunciation. Example: "syl", "la", and "ble" in "syllable".

**Tense** - An inflection of verbs that indicates the time of action or state of being that the verb expresses. Example: past tense "I was running" vs. present tense "I am running".

**Transliteration** - The process of mapping letters of one alphabet into another, usually for the purpose of writing a foreign language in an alphabet that the reader can understand. An example would be a book in Arabic being written with English letters rather than with Arabic script.

**Verb** - A class of words that express action, existence, or occurrence.

**Vowel** - Any voiced speech sound characterized by generalized friction of the air passing in a continuous stream through the pharynx and opened mouth, but with no constriction narrow enough to produce local friction. Vowels have the most prominence in syllables. Examples: a, e, i, o, u.