**The ALIVE - DEAD – DIE - KILL Questionnaire**

Dear colleagues,

can you give me the translations of the following set of notions (left-hand columns), here rendered by English words (in caps), into "your" language(s)? Perhaps with word class and morphological annotations if matters would otherwise be opaque. Take my (standard) New High German answers as a model. (The German part was elaborated on later -- FP.)

**language: (standard) High German**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>state</th>
<th>ALIVE</th>
<th>lebend(ig)</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>leb-end(-ig)</th>
<th>active participle of V intrans 'to live' (from which N Leben neut ‘life’ is zero-derived), optionally plus adjectival suffix -ig</th>
<th>(the difference between lebend and lebendig is subtle; lebendig is ‘lively’ as well as ‘alive’)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>state</td>
<td>DEAD</td>
<td>tot</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>related to N Tod 'death'</td>
<td>vulgar: hin deictic Adv ‘away’ (from here), only predicative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>change of state</td>
<td>DIE</td>
<td>sterben</td>
<td>V intrans, strong</td>
<td>(cf. Engl starve 'to die from hunger')</td>
<td>plants: ein-gehen V intrans, strong; from gehen ‘go’, prefix ein- lit. ‘in’:</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>animals: ver-enden, ver-recken V intrans, weak; from N Ende ‘end’, V recken ‘stretch’, prefix er-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INCH, CAUS, PERF/COMPL

vulgar: ab-kratzen V intrans, weak; from V kratzen ‘scratch, scrape’, prefix ab- lit. ‘off’

formal: ver-scheiden V intrans, strong; V scheiden ‘part, take leave’, prefix ver- PERF, COMPL

ab-leben V intrans, weak, V leben ‘to live’, separative/cessative prefix ab- ‘off’

various euphemisms: dahin-gehen ‘to go there’, das Zeitliche segnen ‘to depart this life’, ...

caued change of state KILL töten V trans weak
tot-en zero-derived (plus Umlaut) from A tot 'dead'

other KILLING verbs are:
er-morden ‘murder’, derived from N Mord (or N from V?), einen Mord begehen ‘to commit murder’;

um-bringen ‘kill, murder’, derived from V bringen ‘bring’, prefix um- ‘around’;

specific ways of killing: er-stechen/tot-stechen ‘stab to death’ (basic verb stechen), er-schlagen, tot-
schlagen ‘beat to death’ (basic verb schlagen), etc. (prefix er- PERFECTIVE, COMPLETIVE or such)

Additional questions concerning ALIVE and DEAD:

(i) Can you **morphologically** negate the ALIVE word, the DEAD word, neither, or both?

German *un-tot* 'NEG-dead' (essentially only in noun die Untoten, those which are neither really dead nor really alive (part-timers in both departments, life and death), vampires;

*un-lebendig* 'NEG-alive'
(ii) a. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of STATE adjectives?

   DEAD or ALIVE

   *(Ich will ihn,) tot oder lebendig*

b. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of the corresponding nouns?

   LIFE and DEATH

   *Leben und Tod (von Boris Grushenko).*

Thank you for your cooperation.

Frans Plank

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**Manipuri**, Tibeto-Burman, Sino-Tibetan

source: Tikaram Poudel

- **ALIVE**
  - state: `a-hing-baa` (ATTRIBUTIVE-live-NOMINALIZER)
  - change of state: `si-` to die
  - caused change of state: `haat-` to kill

- **DEAD**
  - state: `a-si-baa` (ATTRIBUTIVE-die-NOMINALIZER)
  - change of state: `si-` to die
  - caused change of state: `haat-` to kill

**Additional questions concerning ALIVE and DEAD:**

(i) Can you morphologically negate the ALIVE word, the DEAD word, neither, or both?
- `hing-da-` ‘live-NEG-’ (not alive)
- `si-da-` ‘die-NEG-’ (not dead)
- `haat-ta-` ‘kill-NEG-’ (not killed)

(ii) a. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of STATE adjectives?
- Alive or dead (Reverse for deadly animals like snakes)

b. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of the corresponding nouns?
- Life and death
Nepali, Indo-Aryan, Indo-European

state

ALIVE  jiûdo  alive
  baâc-eko  live-PARTICIPLE

state

DEAD  mar-eko  die-PARTICIPLE

change of state

DIE  mar-  to die

cause change of state

KILL  maar-  to kill

Additional questions concerning ALIVE and DEAD:
(i) Can you morphologically negate the ALIVE word, the DEAD word, neither, or both?

*na-jiûdo  *NEG-alive
*na-baâc-eko  *NEG-alive

na-mar-eko  ‘NEG-die-PARTICIPLE’ (In the sense not dead, still alive)

*na-mar  ‘NEG-die’  (In the sense of Imperative only)
na-maar  ‘NEG-kill’

haat-ta-  ‘kill-NEG-’ (Not killed)

(ii) a. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of STATE adjectives?

   Alive or dead
b. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of the corresponding nouns?
   life and death
**Bengali, Indo-Aryan, Indo-European**

**source:** Aditi Lahiri

**state**

ALIVE

very difficult

(ami) be~c-e achi
(I) live-PERFECT be

This is sort of a complex predicate construction, using the perfect marker.

DEAD

mrito for ‘dead body’

dead

I don’t think it is complex – related to mrittu ‘death’

But ‘he is dead’

o-r mrittu ho=ech-e

his death occurred [occur-PAST PERFECT-3SG]

**change of state**

DIE

mor-e jaoa

die-PERFECT go

**caused change of state**

KILL

mar-a

die-VERBAL NOUN

Additional questions concerning ALIVE and DEAD:

(i) Can you morphologically negate the ALIVE word, the DEAD word, neither, or both?

The word for ‘immortal’ is *Omor* [open O like my name]
(ii) a. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of STATE adjectives?  
   DEAD or ALIVE
   *moRa na ba~ca*  
   better

b. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of the corresponding nouns?  
   LIFE and DEATH
Latvian, Baltic, Indo-European

state

ALIVE  
  DZIVS, DZIV-S  
  A, related to N DZIVE ‘life’

state

DEAD  
  MIR-IS (masculine), MIR-USI (feminine)  
  Active past participle of V MIRT ‘to die’

change of state

DIE  
  MIRT  
  V intrans

caused change of state

KILL  
  NO-GAL-INA-T  
  V trans, causative, 
  derived from N GALS ‘the end’ plus perfect prefix NO- and causative suffix -INA-

Additional questions concerning ALIVE and DEAD:

(i) Can you morphologically negate the ALIVE word, the DEAD word, neither, or both?

   NE-DZIVS (NEG-alive) is possible in Latvian, *NE-MIRIS (NEG-dead) is not.

(ii) a. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of STATE adjectives?

   DZIVS vai MIRIS: ALIVE or DEAD is O.K. in Latvian

   b. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of the corresponding nouns?  
      LIFE and DEATH
**Byelorussian, Slavonic, Indo-European**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Alive</th>
<th>zhyvy</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>Related to V zhyce’ ‘live’ or to N zhyce’o ‘life’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Dead</td>
<td>mjortvy</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>related to N smerc’ ‘death’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change of State</td>
<td>Die</td>
<td>pamirac’</td>
<td>V intr. (imperfective)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>pamerci</td>
<td>V intr. (perfective)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caused change of State</td>
<td>Kill</td>
<td>zabivac’</td>
<td>V trans. (imperfective)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>zabic’</td>
<td>V trans. (perfective)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Derived from V bic’ ‘to beat’</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Additional questions concerning ALIVE and DEAD:

(i) Can you **morphologically** negate the ALIVE word, the DEAD word, neither, or both?

You can use a negative prefix *ne-* to negate ALIVE: *nezhyvy*

But normally you cannot negate DEAD: *njamjertvy*
(ii) a. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of STATE adjectives?  
ALIVE or DEAD:  *zhivy ci mjortvy*

b. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of the corresponding nouns?  
   LIFE and DEATH
**Italian, Romance, Indo-European**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Alive</th>
<th>Dead</th>
<th>Cause of Death</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALIVE</td>
<td><em>vivo</em></td>
<td><em>morto</em></td>
<td><em>uccidere</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>vivente</em></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>ammazzare</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Alive**: present participle of V *vivere* 'to live'.
  - *vivente* only used in fixed contexts:
    - in biographical information (*XYZ, 1953-vivente / *vivo*), in the biblical phrase *il Dio vivente*,
    - in the collocation *esseri viventi* 'living beings' (i.e., animal and vegetable kingdom)

  A common mistranslation of *he lives (on)*, or *er lebt*, is *vive*; this is grammatical but unnatural.

  Natural is instead the copular construction with the adjective: *è vivo*.

- **Dead**: past participle of *morire* 'to die'
  - Note present participle *morente* 'dying' (but not dead; only animate, *lingua moribonda / *morente*)

- **Die**: V intrans (with internal obj: *morire una morte onorevole*),
  - but either auxiliary is unnatural in that structure, at least for me

- **Kill**: V trans
  - *uccidere* (V trans)
  - *ammazzare* (V trans (stylistically marked as non-respectful; derived from Lat. *mactare* 'to slaughter')

  (but note *morire* as transitive causative, aux. *avere*, in Old Tuscan and other Italeromance dialects;
  specifically *figlio, chi me t'ha morto?* in a lauda by Jacopone da Todi, 13th century)

Source: Paolo Acquaviva
Additional questions concerning ALIVE and DEAD:

(i) Can you morphologically negate the ALIVE word, the DEAD word, neither, or both?

No. *unvivo, *non-vivo, *unvivente, *non-vivente (OK with neg. as free morpheme), *unmorto; note non-morto, only nominalized, in literature referring to zombies or vampires - ie neither living nor dead. Un non-morto, but *è non-morto.

(ii) a. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of STATE adjectives? ALIVE or DEAD vivo o morto (also in the Italian transl. of the Nycean creed: i vivi e i morti)

b. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of the corresponding nouns? LIFE and DEATH vita e morte (more usually, vita, morte e miracoli ...)
**Italian**, Romance, Indo-European

state 
ALIVE  
vivo  
A

state 
DEAD  
morto  
A

change of state 
DIE  
morire  
V

caused change of state 
KILL  
uccidere  
V

Additional questions concerning ALIVE and DEAD:

(i) Can you morphologically negate the ALIVE word, the DEAD word, neither, or both?

   No, I cannot negate them!

(ii) a. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of STATE adjectives?

   *Vivo o morto!*

   b. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of the corresponding nouns?  
   LIFE and DEATH
**Norwegian (Bokmål), Germanic, Indo-European**

**state**

- **ALIVE**  *levende*  A
  *lev-ende*  active participle of V *leve* 'to live',
  (life is in Norsk: *liv*)

- **DEAD**  *død*  A
  related to N *død* 'death'

**change of state**

- **DIE**  *dø*  V intrans, weak

- **KILL**  *drepe*  V trans weak
  *død-ning*  from A *død* 'dead' plus the nominalizing suffix -(n)ing

**Additional questions concerning ALIVE and DEAD:**

(i) Can you **morphologically** negate the ALIVE word, the DEAD word, neither, or both?
Leve: No (only: *u-leve-lig* = un-liveable)
Død: No (only: *u-død-elig* = im-mortal (un-sterb-lich))

(ii) a. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of STATE adjectives?  **DEAD or ALIVE**  (*død eller levende*)
   b. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of the corresponding nouns?  **DEATH and LIFE** / **LIFE and DEATH**
Dutch, Germanic, Indo-European

state ALIVE levend A ('alive', 'living')

I can think of two possible derivations:
1. verbal stem lev- + suffix -end as you seem to suggest, but I do not think that -end is actually a suffix in Dutch. Besides, the meaning 'the state of being alive' actually suggests another derivation, namely:
2. deverbal noun leven ‘life’ + adjectival suffix -d --> levend ‘alive', 'living';
   een levend dier 'a living animal' (i.e. an animal that is not dead); alle levende wezens 'all creatures alive';
   hij was levend begraven 'he was buried alive'.

levend-ig A ('lively')

Derivation:
3. adjectival stem levend + adjectival suffix -ig --> levendig 'lively';
   een levendig gesprek 'a lively conversation'

Note: I think that you may say er ist lebendig in German (meaning 'not dead'), but the corresponding phrase *hij is levendig is NOT possible in Dutch (hij leeft = both 'he lives' and 'he is alive'). Also er ist heute sehr lebendig cannot be translated into Dutch as *hij is vandaag zeer levendig (=hij is vandaag zeer onrustig)

state DEAD dood A, related to N dood 'death'

Hij is dood 'he is dead', een dood konijn 'a dead rabbit'
change of state   DIE   sterven   V intrans strong
   Hij sterft 'he is dying'; hij stierf in 1584 'he died in 1584; hij is aan een ziekte gestorven 'he died of an illness'

caused change of state   KILL   doden   V trans weak
   Hij dooft hem 'he kills him', hij doodde hem 'he killed him'; hij heeft hem gedood 'he has killed him'.

Additional questions concerning ALIVE and DEAD:

(i) Can you morphologically negate the ALIVE word, the DEAD word, neither, or both?
   No, but you can be onsterfelijk 'unsterblich'

(ii) a. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of STATE adjectives?   ALIVE or DEAD
   levend of dood
   de levenden en de doden ‘the living and the dead’

   b. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of the corresponding nouns?   LIFE and DEATH
Schwiizertüütsch, Germanic, Indo-European

source: Astrid Krachenmann

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>ALIVE</th>
<th>DEAD</th>
<th>DIE</th>
<th>KILL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lebig</td>
<td>leb-ig</td>
<td>tot</td>
<td>sterben</td>
<td>tőde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'alive'</td>
<td>N stem 'life'</td>
<td>related to N Tod 'death'</td>
<td>V trans weak</td>
<td>zero-der. (Uml) from N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lebendig</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>like German lebendig</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change of State</th>
<th>DIE</th>
<th>KILL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sterben</td>
<td>tőde</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional questions concerning ALIVE and DEAD:

(i) Can you **morphologically** negate the ALIVE word, the DEAD word, neither, or both?
   - neither

(ii) a. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of STATE adjectives? DEAD or ALIVE / ALIVE or DEAD
   - b. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of the corresponding nouns? DEATH and LIFE / LIFE and DEATH
**Maltese, Semitic, Afroasiatic**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>ALIVE</th>
<th>DEAD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALIVE</td>
<td>haj</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>unrelated to V ghex ‘to live’; cf. ghajjex ‘to keep alive, vivify’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>related to N hajja ‘life’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEAD</td>
<td>mejjet</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>active participle of V ‘to die’</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change of State</th>
<th>DIE</th>
<th>KILL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DIE</td>
<td>miet</td>
<td>V trans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>V intrans, weak; root MWT; cf. mewwet ‘to dishearten, bring to a standstill, lessen pain’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional questions concerning ALIVE and DEAD:

(i) Can you morphologically negate the ALIVE word, the DEAD word, neither, or both?
   neither

(ii) a. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of STATE adjectives?
   ALIVE or DEAD: haj jew mejjet
   (compound mejjet haj dead-alive ‘half-dead’)
b. What is the better order in a freeze/irreversible binomial of the corresponding nouns? LIFE and DEATH

*Qieghed bejn hajja u mewt*

‘He is between life and death’

*kwistjoni ta’ hajja jew mewt*

‘a question of life or death’