

Achumawi Database: Annual report for 2020–2021

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The central intellectual purpose of this grant is to develop the morphological analysis of the Achumawi language, and a major aspect of its social significance is the use of the Achumawi database to support tribal language activists in creating pedagogical materials and activities with the help of the PI. Productive cooperation with language activists in the Pit River tribe, a vital aspect of the broader impacts of this work, has been ongoing; the grant enables more disciplined focus of time and energies.

At the end of each month I post a report of results for the preceding month, a current backup of the database, and an update to the web-based dictionary (‘webonary’) at webonary.org/odissi/. This is effected by updating links at a fixed download site zelligharris.org/achumawi-db.html and sending an email notification of this to tribe members and linguistic researchers. For this, I have established two google groups: o-issi for tribal language activists and achumawi-db which includes tribe members and interested researchers. (The participle *ó issíʔ* means “talking, speaking”.) All the monthly reports are collected on line and may be downloaded by links reached from the above achumawi-db.html page.

Because these monthly reports provide a record of decisions made and their justifications, they are an important resource for several reasons. First, because forms drawn from archival sources have been rectified and normalized it is critically important to have an ‘audit trail’ and a basis upon which those decisions can be validated and perhaps reconsidered. The original transcription of an item is preserved in a note field associated with that item in the database. Rectification is on a principled basis, and when those principles are revised the justification is preserved in these reports. Secondly, insights sometimes emerge in a fragmented way and a review of these notes aids in their integration.

Finally, after a consistent statement of the morphology has been firmed up, a record of the actual path by which it was reached will have intrinsic merit. Charles Sanders Peirce observed how mathematicians, logicians, and scientists present their findings in tidy pyramidal form, in which conclusions necessarily follow from previously stated premises, and he proposed that it might be well and would certainly be illuminating and more instructive were they to disclose the paths they actually followed to arrive at those conclusions, including blind alleys, concurrent lines of investigation converging (or not), and substitution of better premises in place of false assumptions. Linguistics is no exception.

The great majority of changes in the database are not enumerated in detail in my reports—the analyses of individual words and improved consistency of entries for the same word (always preserving the original record). Driving this, when there are no external requests, is the process of cleaning up the automatically generated lexicon, analyzing complex words that belong there only as examples of their constituent morphemes. When a new morpheme is found, a hunt begins with the concordance to find all of its occurrences. In the context of some of these occurrences may be other morphemes that require work, or further insight into morphemes already identified. For these diverse reasons, working systematically through the lexicon is a slow and much interrupted process.

1. Beginning status

An important change two months prior to the start of this first grant year was the conversion of the Achumawi database to an orthographic standard using doubled letters rather than a raised dot to indicate consonantal and vocalic length. This makes word-shapes more easily recognized, an important consideration for the language revitalization uses of the database. A cost is use of the raised dot *·* as a syllable boundary in a few occurrences of the homorganic cluster *tʔ* where the first *t* is nominally (though not always) released, as in *patʔti* “wild plumbs”. Homorganic clusters with plain *p*, *c*, *k*, or *q*, do not occur in the database.

2. Roots and complex verb stems

At the outset of this grant year it became clear that a great many verb stems can be described by the placement of monosyllabic roots in the ‘slots’ of a template of the form

< by doing x > < do y > < while doing z >

Only the central *< do y >* slot is obligatory. CV roots in the first *< by doing x >* slot had hitherto been called ‘instrumental prefixes’ but members of that class may alternatively occur in the central slot and even as the sole root of a stem, and many have been found after a CVC root in the optional *< while doing z >* slot. CVC roots (the most numerous class) may be reduced to CC by aphaeresis, with sometimes an epenthetic vowel before or after the resulting CC cluster. These relationships will be best understood within the more general patterning of prosody (syllabication, pitch, stress, and length) at a future stage of research. Examples: *yááqááti* “she approaches it”, *ticaamáqti* “touch” (*ca* use fingers, *ma* see, sense, *q̣t* approach, press against).

As may be expected, the meaning range of a root shifts somewhat according as it falls in one or another of these positions. For example:

iiçiiqíisi breaking with foot (*çi* using foot + *qis* breaking)

taçíípááqá I bounce (stone) on (rock), *sánaapáqcumí* I throw (stone) across (river) thither
yáçüimí it falls (*çi* falling on -*m* down to surface)

túlúpçicí (*çul*) sunset (*lu* as though pulled + *pa* fall, drop + *çi* upon, atop)

cýééwa slkicóóçíica in what way could you best me? (*çi* + *c* do + -*a* volitional)

sácaatéhçíci I tore the top off (cp. *sácaatéhí* I tore it, *ca* grasp + *teh* tear)

Our unavoidable use of English translations can give the impression that each complex Achumawi word has a rather narrow, specialized meaning. A simple example: *watammi* (with *ta* make a line + -*m* thither) can be either “flies there” or “makes a fence,” among other imaginable translations, depending on the context. The glosses in field records and texts can be very misleading because they intersect just part of the range of meaning in Achumawi, and the ways that the meanings of English words in the gloss are open to context are different from the ways that the meanings of Achumawi morphemes and words are open to context. It is a challenge to understand the compositional semantics of Achumawi on its own terms, and to distinguish productive word derivation from unproductive etymology, which nevertheless is still vital for morphophonemics and for historical reconstruction. Irrespective of such niceties of linguistic research, this word-forming process must serve as an active process to generate currently useful vocabulary for language revitalization.

CV roots include: *ca* grasp, use hand and fingers; *ca* air moves, move through air; *ce* view, perceive esp. visually; *ci* flop, use limp material; *çi* use foot, be upon, fall upon, move upward; *cu* thrust, cross over; *çu* rise, lift, carry along; *hi* head toward, lead (*lah* head); *hu* wind blows, run; *ka* act collectively, live a life; *ku* press, esp. with hands; *la* make a line, move linearly; *li* reach, use tool as extension of hand/arm (*il* hand); *lu* pull (incl. gravity), as though pulled, enter into; *ma* heat, use fire; *pa* fall, drop, lose; *p^hu* puff; *qi* step; *sa* push, propel; *si* jump, go quickly; *su* feel, sense, perceive; *ta* make a line, use a linear object; *te* broad, move laterally; *ti* use inspecific body part (e.g. buttocks), move bodily, move toward; *tu* be upon; *tu* taste; *tú* use fist. A few roots that pattern like these have a CCV shape and a relationship to body-part nouns. Two clear examples: *çwa* bite, use teeth/mouth (*iiçá* teeth); *p^la* use tongue/mouth (*iplí* tongue). It is possible the vowel is epenthetic as above.

CVC roots are a larger and presumably more open-ended set. They include: *çay* stretch; *cay* mix, mingle; *ç^hip* tattoo; *ç^hoq* paint; *çil* seep, be damp; *kap* shut fast; *kat* taper off; *leq* flat, make flat; *lul* roll, round; *meq* smash structure; *m^eq* bend, crumple, wrinkle; *pal* overturn; *pa^l* float, foam, flood; *p^{il}* braid, curl, tangle; *qac* close, lock, secure; *qat* approach, compress; *qay* scratch, itch; *qus* back up, use back (*iqqús* back); *sun* feel (emotion, feelings); *sup* hurry; *tis* shoot, project; *toq* lean, append; *tas* stretch; *teh* tear; *teq* pile flat objects, stick on surface; *teq* lean against; *tul* foam, suds; *way* move

around, stir; *yaq* stick onto, add onto; *yas* fragile; *yoq* slip; *yuť* ~ *yup* squishy. Several members of this class are more complex syllables, with consonant clusters, e.g. *cpah* crack; *hca* tangle; *qhot* crush, crumble; *staq* icky. More remain to be identified. As may be seen, onomatopoeia and sound symbolism are prominent.

When the following CVC roots are found in the third template slot (and sometimes elsewhere) they are reduced by aphaeresis to CC plus a preceding (or, rarely, following) epenthetic vowel: *cah* into liquid; *haw* breath, whisper, light weight, agile; *k^hay* up from below; *kil* crooked, sharp; *laq* turn backward; *pah* sweep, brush, knock off; *pas* affect eyes or face (*áásá* eye, face); *pic* (CC form = *ps*) pinch; *qat* approach, compress; *qay* scratch, itch (CC form = *qy*). Example: *iteqyíciwí* “scraping (the pot) out”, which comprises *te* move laterally + *qay* scratch + *c d* + *-iw* reciprocal, round about (with the default vowel *i* at the margins of the stem).

3. Standalone roots

Roots that (appear so far to) occur uncompounded with other roots include: *ap* throw, put, drop, lose; *aw* give; *am* eat; *etw* kill; *is* speak; *na* go, travel, move; *ohy* make fire; *os/w-as* hunt; *tm* make, craft, weave, sew; *c* do; *upt* depart (the *t* may be *ti* “move in a direction toward”, but *up* is not independently attested); *oq* defecate (or *uq*, the vowel contrast is neutralized adjacent to uvular stop or epiglottal spirant). The discussion below includes the roots *iy* be (animate stative), make, do; *uw* be (inanimate stative).

4. Stative semantics

With certain morphemes present a verb may indicate the state, condition, or characteristic nature of the subject of the verb. Allomorphs occur at different locations within the verb. The semantics of status or characteristic nature is reflected in an idiom of ‘Indian English’, where one is said to be “that kind” who behaves thus and so.

4.1 Auxiliary verbs

The root *c* “do” has been familiar in free-standing verbs glossed “do”, as in *lus lus ucí t^hániyí* “it seems to be wobbly” (lit. “wobble-wobble doing it-evidently-is”, contrast *lus lus yuwí* “it’s weak, wobbly”). My presentation to SSILA in 2017 (paper: “Achumawi -*cí*”) essayed a first appraisal of its role in a large class of verb stems in which it appears as a final or near-final element. Not having yet recognized the construction of roots into verb stems, I described it as a suffix at that time.

What is new here is a clearer understanding that the continuative/habitual *wac* is an enclitic auxiliary verb with the pronominal prefix *w-* (third person habitual/characteristic/impersonal) and the *c* root. This explains de Angulo’s gloss as a habituative suffix. It’s separate verb status is especially clear in examples like *tilíyuumi waci* “make (the baby) smile”, cp. *wilíyuumi* he laughs

We also find the same auxiliary *c* with the *y-* third person prefix, e.g. in *wacwááyací* “(a dog) is gnawing (a bone)” (*cwá* bite, use teeth [*iicá* teeth] + *yaci*); *yantucpúúyaci* “is erect, straight up” (*n-* iterative/intensive + *tu* upon + *cpu* straight, true + *yaci*); *waléésúúyaci* “has a smiley face” (analysis as yet unclear, *su* have feelings; cp. *wilíyuumi* above).

4.2 Stative *w* and *y* in verb stems

The two stative roots *iỵ* and *uw* are translated as animate and inanimate copula. As in English and many other languages, the copula is a carrier for verb morphology which cannot be affixed directly to the stative operators (adjectives, adverbs, classifier nouns, relationship nouns). Thus, one cannot say **sallu*, **shalluwíumá* and the like, but rather *allu suwí* “I’m hungry”, *allu shuwí* “we two (excluding you) are hungry”.

There is emerging evidence that these two roots can have stative import within a complex verb stem. For example, the iterative/intensive *n-* plus the animate stative *ỵ* yields the stem *-iníỵ-* fix, repair, reproduce.

When a verb stem has a mid vowel I suspect that it is the trace of a *y-* or *w-* root. Examples include: *ep* hit by throwing, related to *ap* throw; *es* sing, related to *is* speak; *is* ~ *os* drink. Some of the other examples with *e* or ~ *awa* in the lists above and in the database are not (yet) paired with verbs lacking the mid vowel. Example: *síwapté* I go back, *tepté* Go back! Go home!

There are many examples of verb stems ending with *ayki* and *aymi* which clearly have the directional suffix *-k* “hither” or *-m* “thither”. In these, the *ay* appears to be an allomorph of *ỵ* “stative”, indicating the condition, result, or product of the verbal expression; for example, a separately articulated *ayki* is added to *winímma-* (as in *winímmááci* “she sees, finds”) yielding *winímma'aykí* “she resembles an ancestor”. *Wamáqyaami* “he tracked to the end” has CVC root *maq* travel, traverse + *ỵa* stative + *-m* thither; cp. *wamáqcuumí* he tracked it closely (*cu* rise, lift, go along with), *wínmaqmíci* he followed tracks on the ground (*-mi* down to surface/ground, *c* do). *Wicaamáqyi* “judge, he makes judgements” appears to say a judge uses his fingers (in legal documents) to track a matter to its conclusion. (However, *ticaamáqti* touch, palpate = *ca* use fingers + *ma* see, sense, find + *qat* approach, press against.)

4.3 Third person *w* and *y*

There are two third-person pronominal prefixes. The *y*- prefix is an ordinary third person pronoun. The *w*- prefix sometimes seems to intrude upon this basic function, but usually it imparts a sense that the meaning is habitual or characteristic, or is a force of nature — in other words, a state or condition. For example: *yááhuumí* he ran/runs, *iipác wahuumí twiyí* he runs fast, *waahuumí* wind blows; *yanílláati* he moved camp, *winílláatiwí* white man, lit. (one who) moves camp around from place to place. (Ike Leaf of Alturas used *hinílláatiwi* (Bauman’s *hineilaadu*) to mean “we play”, perhaps referring to kids running around.) The verb *wanúúci* one (that) does things, doer (*n*- iterative / intensive, *c* do) occurs in *issi wanúúci*, middle finger; *cókca wanúúci*, ring finger;¹ *ithe wanúúci p^húúlip*, lower lip (*ithe* under, *p^húúlip* lip); *atu wanúúci*, Hat Creek people (with their “doings” *atu* off to the side on creeks tributary to the Pit River).

Another semantic parameter that has been becoming more clear is the unmanifest-manifest axis, so essential to gambling, ‘luck’, questing, omens, doctoring, and magic. In the ‘unmanifest’ mode, perhaps a change of state is considered: *Iwááhuumí qa míttaç* at the time when he runs, *Iwááhuumí* if he runs. (This *Iw*- is one of many pronominal affix combinations not recognized in de Angulo’s grammar.)

Metalanguage terms imported from traditional grammatical descriptions of Indo-European languages may impose some undue presuppositions here. What is asserted is a kind of impersonal generalization, on the order of “it is the case that”, and the actual subject is often indicated suppletively with what I have called the animate copula *y*. The subject may be first or second person in apparent contradiction to the supposed third person significance of the *w*- prefix: *lúpwíisé wa wáási tsiyí* “I hunt with a bow” (lit. perh. “One hunts with a bow, (this) I am” or more fluently “I am one who hunts with a bow”); *C^hú wímmaçci tkiyí téési?* Do you know how to sing?

A noun may be formed from a verb beginning with *w*- by eliding the final syllable: *waac^híp* tattooer, *wináy* weaver / maker, *wásáqcam* dreamer; to which a nominal suffix or postposition may be appended: *waaqúlcan* gambler. Alternatively, what appears to be a verb may function as a noun: *winílláatiwí* white person (see above), *wínt^halúúwuma* worker,² *watamma qa lééçiita wataacáátumí* a magpie flew to power pole (*ta* make a line + *ça* stand upright + *tu* upon + *-m* down to ground). A verb with *w*- may function syntactically like a participle as an adjective: *lúmmé wiyáací* old maid.

1 The other fingers and thumb are named for their size (*cókca tuci* little finger, *wawá tuci* thumb) or their prominent function (*tiliskáámí*, *tiliskáámé* pointer finger, *iliskáami* pointing at, *li* extend hand / arm, *ská* delineate, *-m* thither).

2 The syllables *lúúwuma* are realized phonetically as a somewhat longer *u* vowel with falling pitch extending into a geminate nasal.

This might alternatively be described as a noun in apposition, and in some cases, perhaps all this appearance is an artifact of translation: *wíníphááci ís* fat person, person (who) is fat, vs. *wíníphááci (twiyí) qa ís* the person is fat.

Two such nouns are formed from a verb with the *y-* third person, but they also have a *w* morpheme at the beginning of the verb stem. The word for “hunter” has two forms, *yawás* and the bare stem *awás*. The present participle “hunting” is *óósiʔ* and not **awáásiʔ*. The word for “singer” is *yawas*, with the participle-like form *tuwáási* as an alternative. The ordinary participles are *téési* “song, to sing” and *áásiʔ* “singing”.

4.4 Other stative *w* and *y* morphemes

A number of other morphemes may be part of this set, but their analysis is presently insufficiently clear to establish their status. Some are currently categorized as affixes. Examples:

Nominalizing *-wi* of affiliation or characteristic

<i>acúmmááwi</i>	‘belonging to’ the river; Fall River people, Pit River people
<i>acúmmááwi álisti</i>	river rock
<i>puwwááwi</i>	animal with horns (<i>puwwá</i>); cow, cattle
<i>páwwi</i>	elk-hide armor (<i>páw</i> “elk”)

The majority of kinship terms begin with *w-* and many end with *-wi*, but they have not yet been analyzed as derived from verb stems. These are elided in the shortened, familiar forms of these terms, e.g. *q^hún* vs. *waq^huuwí* mother’s father, daughter’s child.

Stem-initial *áwa-* alternating with *óó-*

There is a *wa-* alternating with *o-* at the beginning of some verb stems, for example:

<i>tóósáqcami</i>	“dream”
<i>sáwaasáqcami</i>	“I dream”

This prefix is omitted when the third-person *w-* is present:

<i>waasáqcami</i>	“he dreams”
<i>waasáqcam</i>	“dreamer”

This suggests that the semantic burden of *wa-* in the first pair is carried by the apparently pronominal *w-* in the second pair.³

3 The similar word *síśáqyuyí* “I don’t have any __, I lack __” = *sa* indefinite + *qay* scratch (in CC form) + *uy* the benefactive “doing for __”.

There may be a homophonous root *wa*, so far poorly attested: *tawaaqíisi* break with a stick, *tawaapáqçúci* hit a ball upward with a stick (cp. *taapáqçúci* hit a ball upward, *tikuupáqçúci* hit a ball upward with hand).

Causative *yam, yak*

The semantics here seems to be to put one in the state or condition of doing thus and so, hence, “cause” them to do it. Examples: *yááçiiimí* it falls (-*m* down to surface), *yááçiiimíyámí* he causes tfall; *waacá* he bites; *yiiçááyámá* he causes him to bite; *sínsúúyaki* I feel sorry (*n*- iterative/intensive, *su* feeling, -*k* hither);

Agentive *wáka, ka*

This morpheme affirms agency of a preceding noun. It can be included here if the semantics of the root *ka* includes a generalized agency. The gloss in the list of CV roots above is “collective action” because of verbs for herding cattle, driving rabbits, etc., but it occurs importantly in verbs for having a life, living one’s life, conducting oneself properly, and the like. The *wa*- then would be the stative 3rd person, and *wáka* would be an auxiliary verb in its full form after word-final consonant, and with *wa*- reduced to high pitch on a preceding word-final vowel. (The phrasal question *ki’ wáka* “who?” would be an exception as originally recorded: **ki wáka*.)

It is used to disambiguate roles in a transitive situation. It may be used to assert agency of something inanimate: *as wáka waak^háátí wéétát* “water cuts the riverbank”. It is used for what is translated as a relative clause (*ilípçuukí ka* “the ones who were sent here”), an indefinite agent (*ilípçuukí ka caaní p^híríwa* “someone sent Johnny here”), and other subordinate clauses, e.g. after the “-ing” participle where a finite verb follows with the same agent (*q^hé itaskáumí ka ...* “having finished that, ...”). On a declarative verb, it makes a dependent clause. Example de A – Uldall 1.13:

yámmacwí ka táq^há tslhuptéumá máhhí ka.

Having finished eating, we traveled all night, then we arrived.

The *ka* just comes at the end of the dependent clause *yámmacwí*. Despite de Angulo’s and Uldall’s implicit assurance that they all ate, it is quite possible that the singular 3rd person might not mean an impersonal “one finished eating” but literally “when he finished eating we traveled all night”.

wáli kind, sort: *yaamáála wáli* nettle (based on *yaamáála* scorpion); *táq wáli*, *ki wáli* are elaborations of *táq* what?, *ki* who?, where *ki wáli tmiyí* “who are you” is considered more polite than *ki tmiyí*.

wál the kind that does __: *yas yas ucí* breakable, fragile, *yas yas ucí yuwá* it’s the breakable kind; *wísaniiqí* one narrates histories, *wísaniiqí yuwá* storyteller; *it^hákýí wálu* praying ones, preachers, Christian converts.

wal with (comitative nominal postposition): *it wal mi wal lhúpta* You and I, let's go!

wáwi collective: *tóólol qa itt^hú taqqám wáwi* All my relatives

waymi right here, just so

wam separating, going into

ó with “say, speak”. Some inflected forms of “say, speak” and “drink” are homophonous. The disambiguating *ó* that often precedes the “say, speak” verb may be merely an onomatopoeic exemplification of speech. It is possible that it is related to *wa*.

5. OSV word order

Pronominal prefixes refer to the subject or agent and (for transitive verbs) the object or patient. For example, *s-* says that I, the speaker, am involved, *k-* involves you, *sk-* says you are the agent and I the patient, e.g. *skituuíísi* “you shot me”. This implies an underlying OSV word order. Nouns explicitly identifying the arguments of the verb are very commonly omitted, and when they are included word order is subject to the expectable rhetorical interests of relative emphasis, etc.

qá wah yituuqáálumá, yituuqáálumá qá wah someone/something hit the bear

qá wah wáka yituuqáálumá, yituuqáálumá qá wah wáka something was hit by the bear

yituuqáálumá qa álisti something hit the rock, *yituuqáálumá qa álistí ka* the rock hit something.

The *um* “patient” morpheme is discussed in the next section.

6. Pronominal affixes

There is a great deal more complexity in the system of pronominal prefixes than de Angulo recognizes in his grammar. I have deferred marshaling all the data to make sense of it until lexical derivation and related aspects of syntax and semantics are on a stronger footing, and because of the prevalence of epenthesis in this part of the morphology, which in many cases also implicates the stem-initial vowel.

I do have an analysis of the prefix combination *mí-*. De Angulo shows this as *màl-* in his ‘volitional future’ paradigm, singular both for 1st person “I will” and for 3rd person “he/she/it will”. Some examples:

yuućimci kú má ánca mlúnná.

If it rains, I'll come.

uućimcí wátém mlúnná.

Even if it rains, I'll come.

<i>uućimcí wátém aawátca mlúnná.</i>	I'll come only when it rains.
<i>q^hé yuut^huukí mámm mlúpta.</i>	If he comes, I'll go.
<i>ćé yucci kú tuućimc mámm mlúnná.</i>	If it doesn't rain, I'll come.
<i>mlám</i>	I will eat!
<i>mil mlúw</i>	I will be confused/dizzy!
<i>c^hú sa aamá ó mlís</i>	Let her say whatever she wants
<i>mlám</i>	he should eat!
<i>mil mlúw</i>	let him be confused/dizzy!

The *ḷ*- prefix alone is 1st person volitional, as in *ḷúpta* “I’ll go!”; the *m*- prefix alone is 3rd person irrealis, or potential vs. manifest, as in *mápti kúćí* “he might go”, which with rising intonation is translated as a question “might he go? will he go?”. Their combination in *mḷ* is ambiguous, hence the twomeanings in the table above: e.g. for *mlám* either “it is my will that he might eat” or something like “it is my will that it may be that I eat”.

However, the relation of two important suffixes in this system has become clear. To set the stage for an account of the suffixes *-um* and *-icka*, consider first a couple of more ordinary prefixes. In a simple affirmation (de Angulo’s indicative mode) the 1st person nonsingular is *lh-* (*lháámá* “you and I ate”, *slháámá* “he and I ate”), and 2nd person nonsingular is *k-* + *c-* (*káámá* “you ate”, *kicámmá* “you two ate”).⁴ With transitive verbs, the *lh-* prefix says that I and one or more other people are involved, but is ambiguous as to number and as to which is the agent. The 1st person prefix *s-* in *slh-* asserts that the other person or persons indicated by *lh-* are on my side, not yours. Because the *s-* prefix identifies who is included, not who is excluded, the conventional ‘inclusive/exclusive’ label of anthropological tradition contradicts the indigenous semantics.

The *-um* suffix asserts that some additional 3rd person is involved as an agent. With intransitive verbs, or when no patient is asserted, adding *-um* to the nonsingular 1st or 2nd person makes it plural (*lhámmíumá* “We ate”, *kicámmíumá* “You pl. ate”).⁵ With a transitive verb, the additional 3rd person is the agent and the prefix identifies the patient (*witapp^hááci* “he’s teaching, he’s a teacher,” *yitapp^háácumá*, “he’s teaching him”; *sóóćá* “I bit it”, *síćíumá* “something bit me”). Less frequently, this agent may even be pleonastically indicated by a 3rd person prefix in OSV pronoun order (*syétwíumá* “he killed me”, *syituuíísumá* “he shot me”). These transitives cannot be construed as

4 The initial *l* is elided in upriver dialects, and in some registers downriver. Nonsingular may be distinguished as dual, but is sometimes used as plural. Present and recent past are not distinguished; the relevant distinction seems rather the manifest vs. unmanifest, but that theme is not yet ripe for presentation.

5 This creates a syllable with a falling tone. The *u* is assimilated so that phonetically the low tone is on the first mora of a geminate *m*.

plural, because the 3rd person plural ending is the reciprocal *-íw* + auxiliary *c*, and the 1st person nonsingular is *lh-*.

The *-icka* suffix makes the 2nd person the patient in two cases: a transitive verb with 1st-2nd person prefixes, and an intransitive verb with a 2nd person prefix relative to an implicit 3rd person agent.

The *lh-...icka* construction asserts that the participants are 1st and 2nd person, but is ambiguous as to which is plural. Because the *-icka* suffix places the 2nd person in the patient role, *lh-...icka* asserts the ‘exclusive we’ as agent (1st person + 3rd person) and *slh-* (the usual exclusive form) does not usually occur. However, in *it^húúléeéka slháwwicka* “we gave it to you two/plural” the *s-* may affirm that both the 1st and 2nd persons are plural, or it could also be the pleonastic emphasis that we saw in *syétwíumá*. That’s the only example of *slh-...icka* in the database, but considering e.g. *micist^húúléeéka skicááwá* “you plural gave it to me” I think the corresponding verb with roles reversed would be *micist^húúléeéka slháwwicka* “you plural gave it to me/us” and probably *itt^hú cò micist^húúléeéka slháwwicka* “you plural gave it to us”. Context usually resolves the ambiguity of these constructions, so that an independent pronoun like *itt^héeéka* “1st person agent” has or can have the effect of emphasis: “I’m the one who gave it to you.”

7. Modified Swadesh list

A self-described “illustrator and hobbyist linguist” named Brennon Ramsey contacted me in September 2020, announcing an interest in reconstituting and learning Yana. (He was following up on my 1970/1976 paper on Yana syntax from the first Hohan conference, at which Mary Haas drew me into working on Achumawi.) He asked me to look at a spreadsheet comparing words in the four Yana dialects, plus a column for ‘Yanan’, and with additional columns for neighboring languages, including Wintun languages, Karuk, Chimariko, Shasta, Atsugewi, and Achumawi. That spreadsheet at <https://brennonramsey.github.io/other/Yanan.html> is presently reduced to the five columns for Yana/Yahi. He said that the words comprise a modified Swadesh list. I corrected and expanded the Achumawi column in a separate spreadsheet for him. When the first half was done I copied it into a table in my monthly report for December 2020; the remainder was finished in February 2021 and copied into a table at the end of the report for that month. (All my monthly reports are available by links at <http://zelligharris.org/achumawi-db.html>.)

8. Implications for historical reconstruction

Previous linguistic publications have treated polysyllabic verb stems in Achumawi as unanalyzed morphemes with affixes, notably de Angulo’s 1930 grammar in *IJAL* (Freeland is indicated as co-author but is said to have disavowed responsibility) and Olmsted’s *Achumawi Dictionary* and his

various essays into historical reconstruction. For reasons that will be evident presently, this presumption about the morphology has been grossly misleading for comparativists attempting to reconstruct linguistic prehistory. I reported on this in the paper “Why Proto-Palaihnihan is neither” (on ResearchGate at <https://tinyurl.com/dsy9y5w5>) which is currently under revision.

The morphemic and semantic compositionality of all but the simplest Achumawi vocabulary shows the folly of searching for whole-word cognates for comparative reconstruction of Northern Hoka. It is necessary to show that cognate languages are morphologically complex in comparable ways, and to search for cognates among their individual morphemes. Relatively superficial facts, such as that pronouns in Yana verbs are suffixes rather than prefixes, suggest that a common ancestor language may have been of an isolating or agglutinating type with relatively free word order of largely monosyllabic words, becoming more constrained in different ways in the several daughter branches, of which the Achumawi verb template described above is one example.

9. Support for revitalization

I have worked extensively with Connor Yiamkis, Paul Cason, and Lisa Craig in devising, testing, and refining pedagogical materials, including the creation of new vocabulary for currently familiar domains such as tooth brushing. They can provide these pedagogical materials on request. I also assisted Connor in testing and refining a new keyboarding system using Keyman from Tavultelsoft, now acquired and supported by SIL. Related discussion and development of vocabulary is in my monthly reports. Their year-end summary reports are below.

Connor lives in the Redding area. Paul and Lisa are residents of the XL Reservation in Alturas, about 150 miles from Redding. Their activities span the territory between.

9.1 Paul Cason and Lisa Craig report:

June 2020

- Root Gathering w/BLM

July 2020

- Shot video with Connor at U of O
- Script for table lesson

August 2020

- Shot K^hópi (“coffee”) video with Connor at XL Reservation
- Started NILI virtual ANA training

September 2020

- Continued NILI virtual ANA training

- Contributed new word for BOOF PSA
- Video shooting at On Native Ground Productions site

October 2020

- Piloted domain-specific lessons for CIS

November 2020

- Added new phonics style animal cards
- Memory game

December 2020

- Continued animal domain for CIS
- Group Animal BINGO game
- Attend ILN zoom meetings
- Participated in constructing ANA SEDS proposal

January 2020

- Continued animal domain for CIS
- Q & A's with animal cards
- Continued ILN zoom meetings
- Discussion SEDS funding

February 2020

- Continue ILN zoom meetings
- SEDS Go
- Support LIFE center request (Local Indians for Education, Inc.)
- Continue animal domain for CIS
- New method style games created

March—April 2020

- Installed database with Connor on 12 new PCs at XL's new Tech Center
- Instructed all the youth here on XL in installing and using the database
- Family members lessons for CIS

May 2020

CIS yearly expiration

9.2 Connor Yiamkis, Community Liaison Consultant

This year has included several projects that utilized the database:

- Pit River Keyboard: Using the Keyman application I created a keyboard that is more efficient for typing in the Pit River orthography on PCs. This also includes a version for mobile devices enabling users to text and post on social media in the orthography.

- Filmed videos using vocabulary obtained from the database: I filmed a video on how to make breakfast and coffee in the language with two other language teachers, using vocabulary from the database.
- Reclaiming domains: Working with the Multi-Lingual Institute I have began creating curriculum for the reclaiming domains method in the Pit River language. This means that activities in a certain ‘domain’, a room in the house such as a bathroom for example, become a domain. In that domain your goal is to only speak the target language, which is Pit River in this case. To start out the learner self-narrates the activity, such as brushing teeth or flossing, adding another activity each week. Eventually this first domain becomes a language nest, where only the target language is spoken. After this the learner can move on to another domain, such as a room in the house like the kitchen or bedroom, etc. In addition to the language nest domains, there are conversation domains: greetings, departures, where did you go, who did you talk to, what did you eat/drink, etc. The conversations are designed to help learners speak to each other in the language in order to start a speech community. So far we have 10 domain activities and 7 conversations made, with more being developed.
- Indigenous Language Network: ILN is a non-profit started by community members in order to support Pit River and Wintu language and culture. ILN is currently working on acquiring a grant that would allow it to have staff and operate on a consistent basis in order to pursue language revitalization. This first grant would be focused on Pit River language as Pit River currently has more capacity for revitalizing the language. The database is key in this revitalization effort since it is synthesizing all of the previous written data on the language into one place with a standard orthography. This will allow ILN to support the language teachers and learning materials development with funding from the grants they are pursuing.