Achumawi Database

Summary of November 2022 work

You can download the current backup from

- http://zelligharris.org/Achumawi/achumawi-db.html

I have updated the webonary at

- https://www.webonary.org/odissi/

Nobel Laureate Tim Hunt is far from the first scientist to point out that most of the day to day work of doing science is boring, working repetitively over the data. In this short video clip from a talk he explains very clearly in few words why we do it anyway. Surprises emerge.

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9mBU_gTGsuw

The sections of this report are:

1. More on waci and Rp
2. Words about speaking
3. Utter, hear, obey

1. More on waci and Rp. I have far to go to work through occurrences of those stative roots in the Rp class. The Rp roots (p for ‘peripheral’) are CV roots that occur in the periphery of the verb stem, before or after the central template. Rcv roots normally occur in slot 1 or slot 3, but can also stand alone as the main root, e.g. ticááci. This may also be true of the Rp subset.

I am still cleaning up occurrences of waci and its various combined forms such as wacóó, waaci, wacicka, wacumá, etc. For the present I am just peeling these off into the ‘auxiliary verb’ grammatical category in the lexicon. The grammatical category appears on the Lex. Gram. Info line in the Analysis view.

While doing that, I saw many instances of uc as the underlying form of c ‘do’ in the Lex. Entries line in the Analysis view. Back before I recognized the verb stem template and the CV and CVC shapes of roots in it, I assumed that tuci and uci showed uc as the base from which other variants are derived. Now I recognize c as the auxiliary-verb Rc root that occurs in waci, etc., and in many other places. The u may be a w prefix (as in e.g. titčéwi, sóóṭčéwi “hear, obey”), possibly the stative w that is a longer-range quarry as I beat through the brush re-analyzing waci. I have changed all occurrences of lexical entry uc and ucc to c and cc, and returned to waci and its siblings.

After that, I’ll move on to wate, wa, way(mi), waka(m), walmi, wal, wam at the ends of words. At the beginnings of words are things like the difference between remote past ckw- (in contrast to ck-) and the initial stem vowel o alternating with awa (in contrast with stem vowel i or a). Is there a consistent semantic difference associated with this, perhaps the ‘stative, durative’ meaning of the Rp root w? To find out will require inspecting large sets of examples.

The similar alternation of e.g. tépti ‘go back (home)’, siyápti ‘I went back’ suggests a y prefix or Rp root y ‘manifest, attaining, situated’. Rcv roots normally occur in slot 1 or slot 3, but can also be the main root of a very simple verb stem. If w and y are in the Rp subset, it appears that they also occur as the two forms of copula, uw ‘be’ and iy ‘be’. The uw forms are used with adjectives and other stative or durative words used attributively, and iy is used with animate nouns. (I’ll turn to inanimate nouns in a bit. Rather than animate/inanimate, it might be more accurate to think in terms of volition.)

—1—
This immediately links in the distinction between the two 3rd-person pronominal prefixes; ý- is used before uw (allu ýuwí ‘he’s hungry’) and w- is used before ýw (páříw waíyí ‘he’s here’, iapíími twiyí ‘he’s Wintu’). For ‘inanimate’ nouns (referring to things without volition and locomotion) the ‘iterative/intensive’ n- intervenes between the y 3rd person and the uw root, as though to emphasize its stasis in place, for example: as týánwuwí ‘it is water’. The initial t- is for things that are manifestly so, cp. si ýánwuwí ‘there aren’t any’. (The si is in the lexicon as s₂, ‘indefinite, unmanifest, be unable’.)

2. Words about speaking. In the course of this, I had some trouble analyzing these two words:

\[ \text{tćwāwćawc} \] ‘be a spokesman’

\[ \text{kćwāwćac kććcw qá mimíu ó tisí sísí} \] ‘help us with our words’

Separating the auxiliary verbs wćawc and wćac (‘do continuously, habitually, or as a characteristic’) and the prefixes ti- and kći- leaves the stem cwap, which I find also in

\[ \text{tićwāplālāwí} \] ‘fancy (polite) talk’

\[ \text{tićwāplālāwí,} \] ‘fancy talk; alter one’s speech; to say it differently; tongue twister’

\[ \text{wćwāplālāwí} \] ‘he talks in a fancy way’

\[ \text{tićwāplālālāwí} \] ‘speak in a broken way’ [Said of Sissun Jim, the Wintu doctor.]

\[ \text{icwāplālāwákě́} \] ‘punching, poking at someone(?).’ [Ritual insult?]

I had assumed that these were analyzed as čwá ‘bite, use teeth’ and plá ‘tongue, use mouth’ plus stative w, some kind of semantically indirect idiom about chewing your words or the like.

However, plá does not occur in the two ‘spokesman’ words above, and if we take čwá and plá out of consideration in there is nothing left to connect the ‘special way of speaking’ words with speech.

Inconsistency as to glottalization (whether the first part of the stem is čwá or cwá or cwap) and the need for a root having something to do with speech, suggest that we may be looking at the glottalized š ‘speak, say’ root. At the time I was recording these words in writing (no audio record, unfortunately), I had not yet recognized glottalized š in places where it is more obvious, such as siší “I said”, so it was not an option for me to consider.

Here’s what the analysis with š ‘speak, say’ looks like, taking one example from each group:

\[ \text{ti- ś wap šwa -i} \] ‘be a spokesman’

\[ \text{ti- ś wa laalá w -i} \] ‘fancy (polite) talk’

There is no wap root; it may be the stative wa followed by p ‘put, place’. The laalá may be onomatopoeic, as in English ‘glossolallia’.¹

Speaking for someone or ‘helping with words’ was evidently an important role, not only to articulate clearly, perhaps speak loudly, but also to put the parts of verbs together in a way that everyone could understand. A special example is the ‘interpreter’ for a doctor, especially when the doctor is singing. In any kind of singing, pitch and length are changed to suit the rhythm and tune, and a doctor singing and perhaps dancing while in a trance or trance-like state might not articulate clearly. I had previously analysed the stem in qa wínastúumaka kićí ‘the one who would interpret’ with š plus tůu ‘hear, obey’, and ma ‘look, see, find, know how’.² This š tůu ma analysis provides some indirect confirmation of the š wa p analysis above.

Another such word is tistůweći ‘answer back, retort’, where the i of iw ‘reciprocally, together’ supersedes the default a vowel of th ‘hear, obey, utter’.³

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1  Its occurrence in the onomatopoeic láaláq ‘Canada geese’ (cp. Yana laalagl) is suggestive but likely coincidental.
2  Bauman has wástomage, probably from Ike Leaf; de Angulo lists stems -ástúmág-, -iwástúmág-, -óstúmág-.
3  The tʰe, and tʰu forms appear to be from the combination of tʰa with the w and y discussed above.
3. Utter, hear, obey. I’ve assembled the examples of verbs with tʰa, tʰe, tʰu, and will look for consistent semantic differences between them that could be due to w or y.

There is one expression, téh téh yááwaaci ‘he's talking loud’, which suggests that the aspirated tʰ originated from loss of a vowel resulting in a th consonant cluster. I know that this is a plain t and a plain h, because immediately before it I recorded tʰéh’éhhi ‘very light, faint, faded’.

The verbs with tʰa are about uttering or producing sounds. The simplest form, with only the ‘do’ auxiliary c, is téh táci ‘pounding acorn’, referring evidently to the qʰum qʰum qʰum ‘utterances’ of mortar and pestle.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>titʰákyi</td>
<td>pray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tisti tuwaatʰákyi</td>
<td>pray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tātʰááci</td>
<td>shout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>titʰam; tóórʰam núci</td>
<td>call, call on telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wintʰaméhéceqí</td>
<td>hiccup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wátiči’ wic wítʰanuwi</td>
<td>sounds like someone crying</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With h̓w ‘breath, whisper; light’, the sound cannot be heard: wítʰahwí ‘deaf’, sínᵗʰáhwa ‘I don’t hear/understand’. In acpú titʰam yi ‘believe’ (with acpú ‘straight, true’) the last part may be y̓ ‘manifest, attaining, situated’ which also serves as the ‘animate’ copula. The n may be the intensive/iterative prefix, though placing the root before it is anomalous.

The verbs with tʰe have ‘listen, obey’ meanings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>titʰééwi</td>
<td>hear, mind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mhitʰécpí yáwá míńú ’ó tiśší</td>
<td>I'll mind your words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>titʰécpumí</td>
<td>hear well, understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>titʰécpíyá</td>
<td>Behave! Be obedient!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>titʰécpíyí tucci</td>
<td>have no experience of (cursing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>titʰéplasíwaci</td>
<td>listen closely (cp. ticéplasíwaci ‘watch’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>titʰéctiíki</td>
<td>be frightened by sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>titʰéelá’áyi</td>
<td>sound good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of titʰésqápaqáti ‘feel defeated’ with familiar morphemes is not as straightforward.

Several stems with ‘listen’ meanings were recorded with tʰa, but may actually have the tʰe root. Two of these each have a brief schwa in the second syllable, which could as easily be reduced from e as from a:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>titʰanááyi</td>
<td>listen hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>titʰalúwumi</td>
<td>work (something like ‘pulled to obey’, following instructions?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A third example, one of the few words that I got from Gladys O’Neil, it was recorded on the fly in conversation. An e vowel is lowered toward æ before q or h (cp. tehtəc ‘acorn’), here before the ɹ of qát ‘approach, compress’:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>titʰaqaqátyúmi</td>
<td>listen to everyone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, titʰanti ‘pay attention’ clearly has an a vowel in the audio record (7:30 of LA49.014), and an obvious parallel to titʰanááyi ‘listen hard’, above. At this point, I only raise the question, pending good analyses.
The *tʰu* root occurs in the ‘interpret’ verbs alluded to earlier, and one other:

- *wasʰtíúumaake* interpreter
- *tinašᵗʰtíúmaaki* interpret
- *wisuntʰótkè* one who understands

**Two verbs have** *tʰ* **followed by the vowel of another morpheme.**

- *tínááluutʰi* pay close attention, care about
- *tínááluutʰáámé’ yályú* heedless man (i.e. a brave man, heedless of danger)

In *tínááluutʰi* the stem vowel *i* follows, and in *tínááluutʰáámé’* the initial *a* of *áámé’* ‘lacking, without’. The *lu* root apparently says one’s attention is ‘pulled’ or attracted, but whether it is drawn to a sound is quite unclear.

**Apparently unrelated** are the words of arriving, reaching a destination (*yááá'tʰuuki* it's arriving here, *yááá'tʰuumí* it's arriving there), and *yááá'tʰááki* ‘it's coming out’.