

Achumawi Database

Summary of December 2023 & January 2024 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/>

The sections in this report are

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1. End of a grant, beginning of another

I have submitted the final reports for NSF Award 1951923 (06/01/2020 – 11/30/2023). Beginning in December 2023, the project is supported under NSF Award 2301936, titled “Pit River languages linguistic database project: Achumawi (acv) and Atsugewi (atw)”. Narrative portions of the awarded proposal are the [Abstract](#), [Summary](#), and [Description](#).

2. Travel

I went to NYC for the LSA/SSILA meetings 4-7 January. Unfortunately, as soon as I left the Island on the ferry my computer no longer communicated with the Internet. Work involving Dropbox, Google Drive, etc. had to be deferred. I don’t usually use my phone for email, browsing, etc.

[My presentation](#) was well received. A high point was hanging out a bit with [Marianne Mithun](#) and [James Sarmiento \(Shasta\)](#), working for [Shingle Springs Miwok](#), with of course a lot of the [same concerns](#) we have). We had dinner in a Thai restaurant. To get there and back it became necessary to demonstrate the semantics of *winílláátiwí*. James is hoping to get funding to transcribe Shirley Silver’s Shasta notes.

Then I took the train back to Boston, spent the night in a hotel with Sarah, and we flew to Kansas City, MO for a family gathering around the funeral of her sister’s husband. Just before our return, I figured out how to get my PC communicating again. I left on the 4th and we returned on the 14th.

I have a trip to Berkeley scheduled for March 22-29 to coincide with the term break at UC Davis so Connor can join Paul and Lisa coming down to Berkeley so that they and Leonard Talmy can meet in person. Paul has started transcribing Len's Atsugewi material into an Atsugewi database, one of the goals of the new grant.

3. Tenses: present, Remote past *ck-*, 'Past' *íni*, Perfective 'oy or *w'oy*

Following up conversations that we had at SSILA in NY, Marianne Mithun sent email asking "What are the tense categories/distinctions in Achumawi?" My email reply was brief and without examples.

'Present'

Socalled 'present tense' includes present and recent past, thus *yápti* 'he went, he's going away'. To stand up and say *sápti* 'I'm going away' (i.e. 'goodbye') even refers to something imminent in the future. In some examples it seems that a way to emphasize present time is to add a stative (copula): *sápti tsiyí* 'I'm going, I am'. This can express Coyote's braggadocio: 'I'm the one who's going!'.

English 'present tense' is really atemporal, for example 'she writes books'.

Remote past *ck-*

Initial *ck* plus a 3rd-person pronoun (usually *w*) is a remote past tense used in stories: *ckwapsíwci* 'he thought/imagined/tried'; *ckyáásá* 'he sang'. I'm not sure what's going on when the *w* or *y* is missing: *ckiší* 'he said', *ckápti* 'he went'. A short epenthetic vowel separates *c* and *k*, but the automatic aspiration of *c* before consonant or word boundary is still in effect.

'Past' *íni*

Putting *íni* on the end makes a less recent past. This looks like a bare-stem gerund with the *n* 'go; change state' root, but it is unclear whether or not this makes sense semantically or etymologically.

Perfective 'oy, *w'oy*

De Ángulo says that *-o'oy*, *-óó'oy* is a 'recent past tense', but it is some kind of perfective. This can more clearly be understood to be an auxiliary verb. First some examples.

In this example, the reference is to living in a former world on the moon which was destroyed, and then this world was created and populated, so scarcely a 'recent' past.

q^hééwáté ís tiikááco 'oyí twiyí qá itt^hú íssilóo. My ancestors used to live there.

Harrington has many place names like this:

tiniíwíwco 'oy Where they raced.

The pitch of the initial *o* is usually opposite that of the preceding stem vowel. These examples have *-o'oy*.

qá cuucé tikusqááto 'oy púk ckwammíici The comb that she had set up plop fell down.

ćé suwí tímacqáti itt^hú taatíwco 'oy I didn't know about my having fought.
ćé suwí tímacqáti itt^hú taatíwci I didn't know about my fighting.

These examples have *-óó'oy*.

ckyápté qa timmáák^húúti tucóó 'oywáté He went to where he had burned a cut ring (around a tree).
qá kac^húni ćíkko^h tuptóó 'oy ckwanimci Where their feet had gone was on the ground.

There are exceptions that call for a better statement of that generalization. The high pitch in *-óó'oy* may reflect a volitional morpheme, as in *ćé tuccóo*.

amq^há lhámmóó 'oy qa yályú We men would have eaten that (just mentioned).

Then going from *tinúúsaayi* to *tinúúsaayo 'oy* would be unexceptional:

tóólol ckyámmicwá qa lóqmim tinúúsaayo 'oy. He ate up all that he had dug in the morning.

At a guess, then, it might be possible to say

ckwapsíwci qa kac^hú tinúúsaayóó 'oy. He thought about what he would have dug.

For some years, I wrote this as *owóy*, etc. When I recognized other forms with intervocalic glottal stop, or a rearticulated vowel, and because the glide is hard to discern, I rectified it to *o'oy*, etc. Now that a family of auxiliary verbs is more clearly evident in the right periphery (such as *waci* 'do continuously/habitually') I may revert to *wóyi*, etc. It seems to occur clearly as such in this example:

q^hááwa áliihúk^hwací wóoyi qa is, qa t^hús^{yí} tit^héésáámo 'oyamé', amq^há cwat^háák^hééni má cwatíicini.

Some people who had been bad, without listening to the good ones, those cried out and wept.

Almost always, the prefix is *t-*, which marks the 'word' as argument of a higher operator (also called a matrix verb). When this context is understood as implicit, it appears as a nominalization or the like, or as an impersonal 'one does X'. However, it can occur with personal pronouns, as in *amq^há lhámmóó 'oy qa yályú*, above, and in this:

te sicó 'oy, tsicó 'oy ckwapsíwci Thus was I doing, evidently I was doing, she thought.
 (That's what I was doing, obviously that's what I was doing!)

Future/Potential *ku*

A *ku* glossed future/potential may be derived from the root *ku* 'press (esp. with hands)'. Its construction with the stem is awkward.

- Phonologically, when it occurs after what otherwise would be the final stem vowel, that vowel is lengthened even as it automatically is at word boundary.
- It can have the appearance of a particle: *tammi kú suwá* 'I am going to eat'; *allu tuci kú suwá* 'I will be hungry'.

- It can appear to be part of the stem when it carries the plural morphology which otherwise comes at the end of the sentential word: *lhámmí* ‘we (nonsingular inclusive) eat/ate’, *lhámmíumá* ‘we pl. eat/ate’, *lháámi kícumá* ‘we pl. are going to eat’.
- In a nominalization it has a ‘potential’ sense: *támmi kú* ‘food’ (*t^hús^yi qa támmi* ‘[that’s] good eating/to eat!’).

It can mark a conditional subordinate clause:

çé kuccí támmi, *tít^hum kú* *má má áncá kámmi*
 You shouldn’t eat, when you get home then you should eat

qa wátwat yuut^hum ku ma kícíwááci. When the rabbits come, then shout

táq^ha síini kú ma tóólol tímíçwí kú lhcóówááticka If I come again then I’ll eat all of you.

té ticci kú ma lhuwáticka I’m going to do this to you.

[Without *-[t]icka* ‘2nd psn patient’, *lh-* is 1st person nonsingular.]

túúsááya kissi kícóo, má kúúsay kú, tétwí kú suwá qa sat wiçíilúúyí

if he tells you to go ahead and dig, and you dig, I’m going to kill that Pumice-stone man

yúúni kú má stacállúçéçica kissi kícó, kuskímçí má t^hús kátúúmuuwáýí.

If he comes back and he says "clean roots and feed me", you sit down and get in a position where you can push him off (trip) him easily.

kuskístum kícóo má áncá íl ahtúúké’ kikuusuçí.

When he sits down, you should push a handful in his mouth.

[*k-* is usually glossed 2nd person interrogative, but in the last two examples is the ‘polite imperative’.

The interrogatives are in that mushy ‘irrealis’ domain, e.g. *m-* ‘is it’ and ‘it might be’]

A possible solution is to treat *ku* as an ‘auxiliary verb’ (like *waci*, etc.), except that unlike the others it has no pronominal prefix. In fact, there may be others of this sort.

4. Stem vowel

I have begun to sort out variations in the initial stem vowel. This is a very preliminary statement.

The stem vowel appears after the pronominal prefixes and (usually) before the first root of the stem. It is usually short; conditions for vowel length must be determined. It may be any of the five vowels, but *i* is the most common, followed by *a*.

De Angulo and those following him treated it as an integral part of the unanalyzed verb stem. Given our present understanding it would be difficult to describe the initial stem vowel as an integral part of the CV and CVC roots that can occur immediately after it, but which occur elsewhere without that vowel, and with many roots the initial stem vowel varies.

It may be that *i* is the default. Below is a start at identifying sources for *o*, *u*, and *e* in place of *i*. I have not yet assembled examples differentiating *i* and *a* stems.

<i>o</i>	<i>óó</i> alternates with <i>awa-</i> (The stem vowel <i>a</i> plus the stative <i>w</i>). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>tóósáçcami</i> ‘dream’, <i>sáwaasáçcami</i> ‘I dreamt’
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>tóosiimi</i> ‘hunt thither’ (<i>tóosi</i> ‘deer’), <i>yáwaasiimi</i> ‘he hunts thither’
<i>u</i>	<p><i>u</i> alternates with <i>a</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>tuuwáama</i> ‘get into (container)!', <i>iiváamak</i> ‘autumn (going-in time)’, <i>tuuwáámé</i> ‘undershirt’, <i>yááwáámí</i> ‘he went in’ (<i>m</i> ‘thither, down, into’) • <i>tuukaacayki</i> ‘drive (animals) hither’, <i>luukaacayka</i> ‘I’ll drive hither, let me drive them hither!’, <i>sáakaacayki</i> ‘I drive/drove them hither’. • <i>tuucímci</i> ‘precipitate’ (‘fall down upon’), <i>yáácímci tí</i> ‘it’s snowing’, <i>yáácímci [as]</i> ‘it’s raining’. • <i>tuumáati</i> ‘sleep, <i>sáámaati</i> ‘I sleep’ • <i>tuutáami</i> ‘go out’, <i>tuutáamit</i> ‘toilet’, <i>sáatáami</i> ‘I went out’ • <i>tuuwi</i> ‘write, make symbols’, <i>sááwi</i>, <i>we lhuw!</i>; <i>tuuwímci</i> <p>The <i>u</i> stem vowel in a participle or volitional, but not retained otherwise after pronouns, may be a reduction of <i>w</i>- signifying a change of state or a purposeful, intended condition.</p> <p><i>kut^huumí</i> ‘you should arrive’, <i>káát^huumí</i> ‘did you arrive?’; <i>tyúút^huumi</i> ‘arrived (evidently)’, <i>yáát^huumi</i> ‘he arrived’</p>
	<p>But</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>tiúsaayi</i> ‘dig’, <i>yúúsaayíní</i>, <i>slhúúsaayíní</i>, <i>winuúsaayi</i> • <i>c^héyé tíuwi</i>, <i>c^hááwa tíuwi</i> ‘which way did they go? Where might they be?’ • <i>c^hú wistá tíuwi</i> ‘how many are there?’ • <i>tuut^huumi</i> ‘arrive, arrival’ • <i>tuuc^hícyaki</i>, <i>qá cúl uuc^hícyakiíwáté</i>
<i>e</i>	<p><i>e</i> alternates with <i>iwa</i>. This suggests a reduction of <i>iwa</i> to <i>e</i>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>tétwi</i> ‘kill him’, <i>siwatwá</i> ‘I killed him’, <i>létwi</i> ‘I’ll kill him’ • <i>téépa</i>, <i>siwáápá</i>; <i>lép</i> ‘hit by throwing’; <i>táppa</i>, <i>sáápá</i>, <i>láp</i> ‘throw’. • <i>’ó tišši</i> ‘speak, word’, <i>’ó siši</i> ‘I said’, <i>liš</i> ‘I’ll speak!’ • <i>téési</i> ‘sing’, <i>siwáásá</i> ‘I sang’, <i>lés</i> ‘I’ll sing!’; but <i>tináási</i> ‘sing love song, charm’ (<i>sl’és</i> ‘that I might sing’, <i>sl’ís</i> ‘that I might say’, <i>sl’is</i> ‘that I might drink’). <p>After <i>n</i> ‘go, traverse’ when it occurs in the left periphery (before the stem proper) with the sense of iteration, repetition, or intensification, analogous to ‘go on doing’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>e</i> can occur after <i>n</i>: <i>tinéeláatiwí</i> ‘play around’ <p>Elsewhere, <i>e</i> [and here</p>

I need to do more investigation of these alternations, as in these examples:

táápa ; sáápá ; láp ‘throw’

téépa ; siwáápá ; lép ‘hit’ (by throwing)

tupté Go!

tepté Go back! Go home!

tápte (?)

tuuk^hé climb up!
 tiik^hé climb back up!

5. A 'polite imperative' for instruction

This example is in
 LR: Father finds the deer.

3.30	Word	amq ^h á	q ^h ahé	t ^h ús	iyaliyaacóo	, má áncia
	Word Gloss	but	that one	good	examine closely!	and then
	Word Cat.	coordconn	deic	N	ptcp	coordconn

we	▼ 'iyihuusiptánóm	waasiini
then	▼ you pull it down, slipping it	he said
adv	▼ v	v

Free Look those bones over very carefully, and pull just that one down, he said.
Note Audio: ʔamq^há q^hahé t^húz ʔi:céska. máncia we: mq^ha ʔilus iptánóm wa:si.n^h.
Note : ʔi:céska "look them over well (in the distance)". The snake looks at these up close.
Note Is this a dual or plural imperative?
Note 20231204: iya- and iyi- are 3rd dual in form, but used for instruction, as in iyámmá 'you eat it (not right now, but as instruction)'. Above form (note 2) is iyicéska, then.

The example of iyámmá is in Miscellaneous.

This use of the 3rd person dual is analogous to use of the second person dual for respect between parent-in-law and child-in-law. It has the form of 3rd person dual, as though referring to the speaker and hearer as two 3rd-person agents.

It asserts that there are two 3rd person participants. They don't have to be doing the same thing in the situation.

Compare usage with the causative:

iyámmááyami 'he made him eat'

iyánsimmá 'they two jump'
 iyáásimmóoyama 'he made him jump'

This is also similar to how the 1st person nonsingular lh- asserts there are at least two participants one of whom may be marked as patient:

lháwwá 'we two give it'
 lháwwááticka 'I give it to you'

6. Using indefinite (a)s to make a verb metaphorical (a kind of irrealis)

In the following examples, s 'indefinite, unmanifest' makes the meaning of the root q^heq (or q^hiq) 'tear' metaphorical or figurative:

yááq^hééqi 'it tears'
 waluuq^hééqi 'he tears it by penetrating, puts through it and tears it'

103	Word	iyámmá
	Word Gloss	eat it
	Word Cat.	v

Free You eat it!
Note Not right now, but as instruction.
Note LR2.2:12

104	Word	támmá
	Word Gloss	eat it!
	Word Cat.	v

Free eat it!
Note Command, right now.
Note LR2.2:12

qá kac^hú síúíwá ckwacasq^héq^hícáké ‘she tore off her basket cap’

7. Atsugewi

Paul has been entering Atsugewi data into an Atsugewi database that I initiated. We share access to it, using the FLEx ‘Send/Receive’ function. There has been a bit of churn sorting out the transcription of Talmy's data as we learn what we are getting into.

Length. Talmy uses a raised dot to represent length. After starting in this form, we decided to conform to the orthographical convention that we have adopted for Achumawi, using doubled letters for length, so Paul edited all the entries he had made at that point. Then we realized this was not a good decision. While there are relatively few doubled letters that really do represent two consonants in Achumawi (e.g. *patti* ‘plums’), the number in Atsugewi is much larger and more diverse. And sticking close to his representation has obvious advantages for communicating with him simplifies verification. So Paul edited a now larger collection of entries from one of the PDF images of Talmy’s file cards to restore the raised dot for length.

Stress. Achumawi has contrastive tone, Atsugewi does not. Both languages have primary and secondary stress. Stress is not marked in my Achumawi notes. In Talmy's Atsugewi material, a syllable with an acute accent over the vowel has primary stress, and one with a grave accent over the vowel has secondary stress. When I created the [Pit River Keyboard](#) to accommodate both languages, I didn't include the grave accent. I put *ìèàòù* at the end of the [instructions for the keyboard](#) so that Paul can copy and paste as a workaround. I believe that the stresses will be predictable, so that folks interested in recovering Atsugewi in the community will not have to write them, but for now Paul needs to put them in the database to represent Talmy’s work and to provide the basis for verifying predictability.

Morphophonemes. At the beginning of some root morphemes, Talmy places a raised vowel *a* or *u*. In his description *i* at the end of a preceding morpheme is replaced by the indicated vowel, which otherwise never appears, and before other morphemes that morpheme-final *i* is unchanged. We need to decide how we will indicate this. It resembles the changes in the initial stem-vowel in Achumawi (Section 4, above), except that it is not stem-initial. Analogously to the Achumawi situation, it may turn out to be possible to describe these morphemes with a raised vowel as a compound of two morphemes, the first a short morpheme which is reduced to a (changed) vowel. This depends upon whether something like the remainder of the morpheme occurs without the raised-vowel effect, and has been treated as a different morpheme.