

# Achumawi Database

## Summary of work during June 2024

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/>

This month I submitted a year-end report as mandated by NSF, and I have begun preparing an abstract for SSILA in January. The SSILA meeting will be entirely by Zoom, due to the difficult funding arrangements for a joint meeting with the LSA. I have begun analyzing the story ‘Father Finds the Deer’, but not as far as I wished. A two-week hiatus for a family gathering in South Dakota presented some interruptions.

The sections in this report are

1. Syntactic Triage
2. Paul and Lisa’s report on language learning and on the Atsugewi database

# 1 Syntactic triage

The syntactic triage is in a new sheet in the spreadsheet file [+Adjuncts.ods](#). (The + at the beginning of the file name forces it to the top of an alphabetical sort by name in a Details view in the File Explorer window.) There are several sheets in the file. Each text has its own sheet. The first column of an analysis sheet contains the text. Each sentence appears in the first cell of one row. If the sentence contains conjunctions, each conjunction is on a separate line in that cell. (This includes comma intonation, a conjunction symbolized graphically by comma punctuation.) The other column heads are currently as follows:

C	Meta	Interj	S	N-adjunct	S-adjunct	V-adjunct	A-adjunct	D-adjunct	Vs	Vsn	Vsnn
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- C Conjunction
- Meta Metalanguage, mostly cross-referential pro-forms like *q<sup>h</sup>á* and *ánca*.
- Interj Interjections, like *wé* and *yá*.
- S The core sentence of the sentence or conjunct, stripped of adjuncts.
- N-adjunct Noun adjunct.
- S-adjunct Sentence adjunct.
- V-Adjunct Verb adjunct.
- A-Adjunct Adjective adjunct (i.e., adjunct on N-adjunct).
- D-Adjunct Adverb adjunct (i.e. adjunct on S-adjunct or V-adjunct).
- Vs Verb with a sentence as its argument.
- Vsn Verb with a sentence and noun in its argument.
- Vsnn Verb with a sentence and two nouns in its argument.

These are subject to revision as the analysis proceeds. Vs, Vsn, and Vsnn obviously are not adjunction-grammatical terms and could have been treated as S-adjunct, so I am anticipating operator grammar even in this triage stage.

The first sheet is the Terms sheet. The current list of form classes enumerated in the Terms sheet are defined in the table to the right:

-!	imperative
A	adjective
c	c 'do'
D	adverb
N	noun
Nm	name
Nq	quantifier
pro	pro-form
S	sentence
V	verb
w	-uw- copula/stative
ÿ	-ÿ- copula/stative
As	adjective reduced from S
Ds	adverb reduced from S
Ns	noun reduced from S

There are too many columns, and the table is too wide for entire rows to be copied here, but I can provide edited screenshots of an excerpt for illustration. Below is row 69 of the Father-Deer sheet in +Adjuncts.ods. Several columns with empty cells on this row have been edited out of the screenshot so that the Vsn column can be included.

1		C	Meta	Interj	S	N-adjunct	Vsn
69	<i>má áncia we qa húumééwaka,</i> <i>hamísiiká húumé,</i> <i>qa táqsááya tíísí,</i> <i>qa tííqaati ithim upté,</i> <i>wálaamúúsá wíc yééwa,</i> <i>ílaamúscumí,</i> <i>amq<sup>h</sup>á waat<sup>h</sup>imyíni.</i>	<i>má</i> * * * * <i>am</i>	<i>ánca</i>     <i>q<sup>h</sup>á</i>	<i>we</i>	N V	As As As As As	<i>táq tíísí</i>

The conjuncts in this sentence are unusually short and many.

<i>má áncia we qa húumééwaka,</i>	‘And then a little snake,	<i>wáka</i> ‘diminutive’
<i>hamísiiká húumé,</i>	little one snake,	<i>iiká</i> ‘diminutive’ (another allomorph)
<i>qa táqsááya tíísí,</i>	the whasis-called,	<i>sá</i> ‘indefinite’ <i>ya</i> an intensifier of some kind, maybe the same as the interjection <i>ya</i> .
<i>qa tííqaati ithim upté,</i>	the under earth going,	<i>ithe</i> ‘under’; <i>m</i> in a number of places (e.g. <i>má, mám; ká, kám; wáté, wátém</i> ) may be related to <i>m</i> ‘thither; down’; cp. <i>kac<sup>h</sup>úm</i> ‘his place’, <i>Céémul um</i> ‘Coyote’s place’, etc.
<i>wálaamúúsá wíc yééwa,</i>	mole-like,	For <i>wíc</i> , cp. <i>wiccóy</i> ‘resembles’ with stative <i>y</i> . Auxiliary <i>yééwa</i> with stative <i>w</i> is similar in meaning to <i>waci</i> , with limited distribution that this analysis will help trace.
<i>ílaamúscumí,</i>	burrowing,	Gerund.
<i>amq<sup>h</sup>á waat<sup>h</sup>imyíni.</i>	that one he engaged/hired.’	Metalanguage referential to all of the above, as the proximal subject of the verb.

This sentence is unusual because she couldn’t recall the name of this small burrowing snake, and kept describing or defining it in different ways until without naming it properly she moved on with the story.

The several conjuncts, except the first and last, are endocentric constructions<sup>1</sup> classified broadly here as adjectives which are reduced from sentences (As). The spreadsheet file includes separate As, Ds, and Ns sheets for more detailed analysis of such constructions. The next screenshot shows an excerpt from the As sheet. So that it would fit legibly on the page, I have removed several columns from the image which were empty.

1 The combination of an adjunct with its head or center is an exocentric construction. Word dependencies within an adjunct or core sentence constitute an endocentric construction.

The present simplistic treatment is likely to be supplanted after I gather more data. For now, it serves as a placeholder. I represent each As here as a comma-conjoined sentence with the verb *waat<sup>h</sup>imyíni* ‘he hired/engaged it’ (*waat<sup>h</sup>imyi* with past tense *ín* ‘past’ before the final *i* stem vowel). The square braces of [V] represents that repeated occurrences of the (anticipated) verb are zeroed, except for the last.

By	C	Meta	Interj	S	N-adjunct	V-adjunct	Vsn
<i>taacámcamé</i>	<i>ám</i>			<i>t-V</i>		<i>iy</i>	
<i>tuskíncamé</i>	<i>ám</i>			<i>t-V</i>		<i>iy</i>	
<i>má áncá we qa húumééwaka,</i> <i>hamísiiká húumé</i> <i>qa táqsáaya tíisi,</i> <i>qa tíiqaati ithim upté,</i> <i>wálaamúúsá wíc yééwa,</i> <i>ílaamúscumí,</i> <i>amq<sup>h</sup>á waat<sup>h</sup>imyíni.</i>	<i>má</i> , , , , , <i>am</i>	<i>ánca</i>     <i>q<sup>h</sup>á</i>	<i>we</i>  <i>ya</i>   	N [V] N [V] [Nm N w] -V- [w] N c -V- [w] V	Nq <i>iiká</i> <i>sá</i>	   Ds <i>yééwa</i>	      <i>táq tíisi</i>

undoing the (proposed) zeroing, we restore this series of conjuncts:

<i>má áncá we qa húumééwaka</i> [ <i>waat<sup>h</sup>imyíni</i> ],	And then a little snake [he hired],
<i>hamísiiká</i> [ <i>húumé waat<sup>h</sup>imyíni</i> ],	one little [snake he hired],
<i>qa táqsáaya tíisi</i> [ <i>húumé waat<sup>h</sup>imyíni</i> ],	the whasis-called [snake he hired],
<i>qa tíiqaati ithim upté</i> [ <i>húumé waat<sup>h</sup>imyíni</i> ],	the under earth going [snake he hired],
[ <i>qa</i> ] <i>wálaamúúsá wíc yééwa</i> [ <i>húumé waat<sup>h</sup>imyíni</i> ],	[the/a] mole-like [snake he hired],
[ <i>qa</i> ] <i>ílaamúscumí</i> [ <i>húumé waat<sup>h</sup>imyíni</i> ],	[the/a] burrowing [snake he hired],
<i>amq<sup>h</sup>á</i> [ <i>qa húumé</i> ] <i>waat<sup>h</sup>imyíni.</i>	that snake he engaged/hired.

The third conjunct is similar to the question *táq tíisi qá pi* ‘what is this called?’. Possibly, *sa* may be an indefinite noun argument rather than adjunct on *táq*. Cp. *táqsaaya tíiyí sóot<sup>h</sup>éewí* ‘what’s that I hear?’. In the Indo-European languages, the question words and relative pronouns are compounds of a labiovelar conjunction, *wh-* in English, plus an idiosyncratic pronoun (*wh-* plus *o*, etc.). Nothing like this is seen in Achumawi *ki* ‘who’, *táq* ‘what’, *c<sup>h</sup>á* ‘where’. (Some constructions with the conjunction *má* are translated ‘that’s why \_\_\_’, and some combinations of pronominal prefixes are translated as questions like ‘why did you’ and ‘why does he’.) Here, I treat *táq tíisi* (with its adjuncts) as Vsn ‘what does one call’ entering on a sentence of the form Nm N w (e.g. ‘name snake is’ in OSV order), not a strong proposal.

With the accumulation of these analyses, and finding consistencies across them, a later step will be identifying the recurrent sentence-forms and adjunct-forms. A sentence-form is a sequence of form-classes specifying a set of sentences that have the same form, and similarly an adjunct-form specifies a set of adjuncts that have the same form. I will then identify plausible paths of reductions from conjuncts to adjuncts. Or, in light of the morpheme dependencies within the sentential verb stem (and its derivatives by reductions), the data may disclose some different system of organization. For example, Chafe had some interesting suggestions for Iroquoian. But at present the power, flexibility, simplicity, and elegance of operator grammar continues to seem apt.

## **2 Paul & Lisa's report on language learning and on the Atsugewi database**

### **'Acwuké' database project**

Leonard Talmy's file PDF 002.003 has been completed for now. This was one of the larger files in the collection and took considerable time to complete. Now added to the previous Baseline bulk entries were the lexical entries, gloss and grammatical information setting the stage for morph breaks and any subsequent morphological analysis.

A sound file with L. Jenkins and L. Snooks singing an old-time handgame song has now been shared amongst the group for re-introduction purposes. Lisa and several youths have learned this song and sang it during last week's language class.

### **Acúmmá 'ó tišši classes**

Another useful tune that was presented was the birthday song. In setting up the birthday song we felt it necessary to have a birthday cake - for the song's justification of course. The lesson for Junes last class was, how to bake a cake. Everyone felt it useful that they could take back the domain of planning a birthday party in their tribal language. Connor has been extremely helpful during these hybrid classes, and we are so glad to have his assistance, especially this month when lost my glasses for two weeks.

### **NTEK**

June also saw us using our language to instruct several tribal youths from RISE as well as BLM and Job Corps. During a fieldtrip to several riparian zones along the Pit River we visited the Fall River valley area and Pit 1 canyon starting with íníhaalí wá where the salmon used to hit a waterfall, they were unable to get over. Visiting qàc yáté we learned the whole place where they now have a campground, and a hydroelectric plant was an ílmááwi village site of quite significance and of personal import to myself. A continuing relationship with BLM has allowed us all to learn to understand the river and its' riparian zones through the languages' perspective. Additionally, I would like to see added to the Acummawí DB all newly constructed words relative to the features in the network of riparian zones within the Pit River's watershed. This is a growing subject area

to watch and new constructs will be needed for educational purposes.

## **Outreach**

Finally concluding the month of June is Lisa's return from Minn, Minn. Where she and our students from RISE presented our Pit River languages' uses for the traditional tobacco we call "up". The 2024 National Tribal Tobacco Conference is the culmination of a pilot program led by USC with RISE to launch Vaping Endgame.

The conference was centered on the traditional uses of tobacco and the impact of commercial tobacco in American Indian and Alaska Native communities across the United States. The event underscored the significance of AI/AN individuals reestablishing a healthy relationship with tobacco, the imperative of fostering health equity, and facilitated opportunities for networking and collaboration.

During the conference, Lisa Craig, an advisor for Pit River youth, hosted a breakout session entitled "Vaping Endgame with TUPE Native Youth." This session featured the dissemination of information about a culturally based curriculum aimed at reducing vaping in schools. In addition to presenting information about the project, the session involved the sharing of Pit River language relevant to tobacco, including the term for sacred tobacco, as well as self-introductions in the language.