A complex verb complex: templatic morphology and affix order in Aiwoo

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13/06/2019

APLL 11, Leiden

The Aiwoo verb complex

- Aiwoo: Oceanic language (Ross & Næss 2007); Solomon Islands, Temotu Province, Reef Islands; data collected by Ashild Næss (see e.g. Næss 2015a,b and ref.s therein)
- Potentially fairly complex verb forms, where the affixes' positions do not clearly correlate to their function/category

PM	Asp	PM	Stem									PM			A	Q	Post-verbal clitics				
-3	-2	-1	0									1			2	3	4	5	6	7	8
			[a	a'	b	c]	[b'	c']	[b''	c'']	[...]	d	a	b	c							

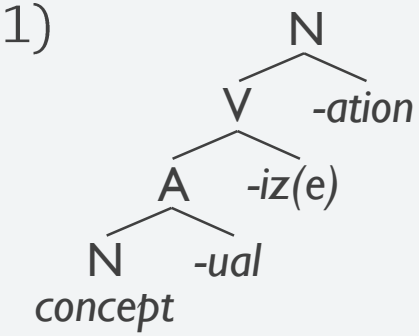
- How do we explain this? How much of it can we account for?
- Spoiler: almost all slots can be accounted for, apart from slot 7

How to build words: layered morphology and templatic morphology

- Simpson & Withgott (1986): two systems, layered vs templatic morphology

- **Layered:** morphemes are added one at a time, generating (headed) hierarchical structures

(1)



- **Templatic:** rigid linear string of «slots», into which (groups of) morphemes are inserted (in paradigmatic alternation)

(2) Ahtna (Athapaskan; Good 2016: 13 (Kari 1989):

naghiziłniige

10A	4A	3D	3D	2	1	ROOT	VSF 1	VSF2
na	*gh*	*i*	*z*	*i*	*ł*	*niik*	*ø*	*e*

THM-QUAL-IPFV.NEG1-S-2SG-CLF-feel-IPFV.NEG2-IPFV.NEG3

«You have not yet found a fabric-like object»

Discontinuous dependencies in templatic morphology

- Importantly: templatic systems allow for **discontinuous dependencies**: morphemes can depend on each other from a distance
- E.g. Swahili (Stump 1997: 221–222):

(3) a. *tu-m-pig**e***

1PL.SUBJ-3SG.OBJ-beat.SBJV

«That we may beat him»

b. *tu-**si**-m-pig**e***

1PL.SUBJ-NEG-3SG.OBJ-beat.SBJV

«That we may not beat him»

c. ***ha**-tu-m-pig**i***

NEG-1PL.SUBJ-3SG.OBJ-beat.IND

«We don't beat him»

«Templatic morphology» is not a good explanation?

- **Layered Morphology**: the distribution and behaviour of affixes is predictable based on other factors, such as syntax or semantics (e.g. Baker 1985, Bybee 1985)

- **Templatic Morphology**: the distribution and behaviour of affixes are unpredictable/ unexpected, and we must stipulate an arbitrary linear template
  - *Not a satisfying explanation*; more a restatement of the problem
  - Many studies have tried to argue that a given language is *not* templatic, e.g. Rice (2000) on Athapaskan, Korotkova & Lander (2010) about Adyghe

Roadmap

- **My goal:** push a layered-morphology analysis of the Aiwoo verb as far as possible

- **Overview:**
  - **Stem:** clearly hierarchical
  - **Person marking system**: maybe not clearly hierarchical, but it does not need arbitrary stipulations
  - **Slot 7**, the circumstantial voice marker *=Cä*: cannot be accounted for

The stem of the Aiwoo verb (1)

- Nuclear-layer verb serialization: the first stem determines voice/valence, the following ones modify it

(4) *ku-lu-**[[po]-[to]-[du]]**=kaa*

IPFV-3AUG-**go-go.in-finish**=FUT

«They will all go in»

The stem of the Aiwoo verb (2)

- If the first stem is in undergoer voice (UV), the following ones have to *agree in UV*, with the suffix *-i/-nyii*:

(5) a. *inâ* *lâ* *ki-**[[âwââ]-[mana]]**=kâ*
3MIN DIST IPFV-**pull.AV-very**=DIST
«He catches a lot (of fish)»

b. *ki-**[[ââ]-[mana-i]]**-mu=kâ*
IPFV-**pull.UV-very-UV.AGR**=DIST
«You catch a lot (of fish)»

- This suffix behaves recursively: every following stem will take it

(6) a. *bäli* *engeke* *i-**[[kää]-[päko-i]]**-no*
side this ASP-**know.UV-good-UV.AGR**-1MIN
«I know this topic well»

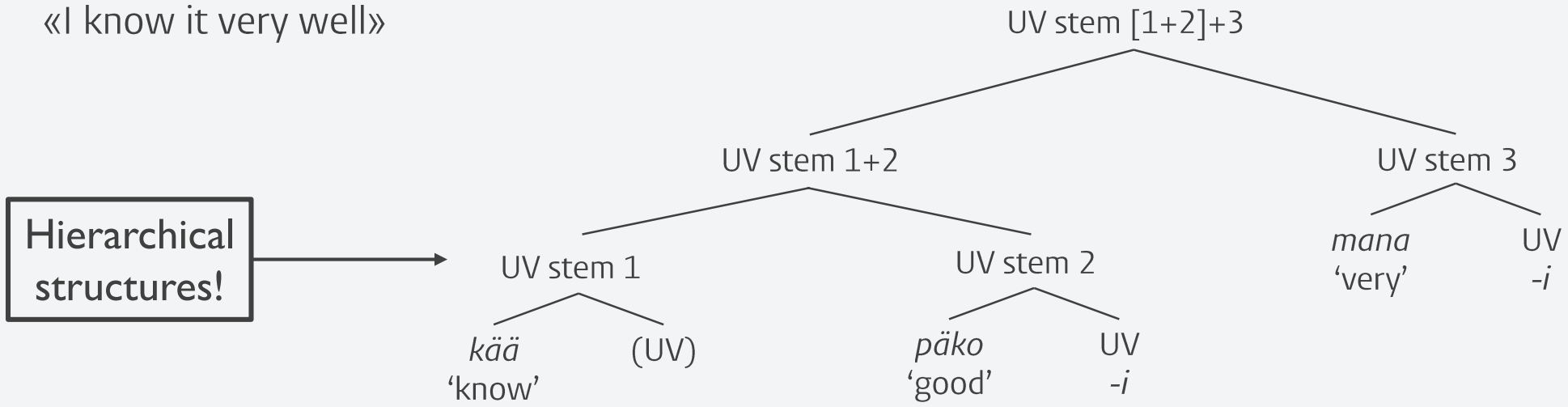
b. *i-**[[[kää]-[päko-i]]-[mana-i]]**-no*
ASP-**know.UV-good-UV.AGR-very-UV.AGR**-1MIN
«I know it very well»

The stem of the Aiwoo verb (3)

(6) b. *i-[[[kää]-[päko-**i**]]-[mana-**i**]]-no*

ASP-**know.**UV-**good-**UV.AGR-**very-**UV.AGR-1MIN

«I know it very well»



Person marking – prefixes: not all person markers are born alike

- **Prefixes** for AV/intransitives, **suffixes** for UV/CV
- All prefixes are before aspect; only 3AUG *li-* is after aspect

(7) *me-ki-vevaale-wâ=to=wâ*
1AUG-IPFV-wait-DIR2=now=DIST
«We wait»

(8) *dowâlili lâ ki-li-pevaale-mä=to=wâ*
child DIST IPFV-**3AUG**-wait-DIR1=now=DIST
«The children are waiting»

- Generalization: 1st/2nd person is before aspect, 3rd person is after aspect (3MIN is not marked anywhere)
- Typical split 1st/2nd vs 3rd person!
- The two different positions are explained if these markers are of *different nature*

The prefix system (2)

- Linear sequence: **1st/2nd – ASP – 3rd(AUG)** (– STEM)
- Exactly the same pattern as in Athapaskan languages (Rice 2000: 182–183; Slave, in (9), is head-final, so the surface order mirrors the Aiwoo one, i.e. 3rd – ASP – 1st/2nd):

(9) a. *ní-né-o-**h**-'į́* (1SG: *-h-*) b. *ní-**ke**-n-éo-'į́* (3PL/DU: *-k-*) ('hide', optative)

- Assumption: 3rd person is no «person», but it represents *the absence of person* (e.g. Benveniste 1971, Harley & Ritter 2002, etc.)
- Then: these «3PL» (3AUG) markers are in fact only *number markers* (PL/AUG), i.e. they mark agreement in number, but not in person
- Rice (2000) connects the asymmetry with respect to aspect to the different discourse status of 1st/2nd (inherently referential) to 3rd (has to get its reference from somewhere)

The suffix system: two constructions

- In UV (and CV), the A is always marked; for some combinations of A and O, the O is marked as well:

(10) a. *i-togulo-**i**=laa*
ASP-hit-**3AUG**=FUT
«They will hit him/her/it»

b. *i-togulo-**nee-mu**=waa*
ASP-hit-**1MIN-2MIN**=FUT
«I will hit you»

c. *i-togulo-**gu-ngopu**=waa*
ASP-hit-**3MIN-1AUG**=FUT
«(S)he/it will hit us»

- The construction in (10b,c) occurs whenever:
  - A = 1MIN, O = 2nd person (as in 10b); or
  - A = 3MIN, O = non-3MIN (as in 10c).

The suffix system: a direct/inverse split

- The Aiwoo system is split along two interwoven hierarchies: a **person hierarchy** (2 > 1 > 3) and a **number hierarchy** (AUG > MIN)
- When the A is lower than the O, a special construction is used (the one with two suffixes) = **inverse construction**
  - A = 1MIN, O = 2nd person ⟸ 1 < 2, MIN ≤ {MIN, AUG}
  - A = 3MIN, O = non-3MIN ⟸ 3 ≤ {3, 1, 2}, MIN ≤ {MIN, AUG}
- Crucially: when the A is high on either hierarchy (2nd, AUG), the inverse construction is blocked altogether: A = 3AUG triggers the direct construction, even if 3rd person is low
- Direct/inverse splits are not known from Austronesian languages…
- Conclusion: the person marking system is complex, but it can be explained/accounted for
  - we do not need linear stipulations

The circumstantial voice marker *=Cä*

- Circumstantial voice: highlights a peripheral argument as the most prominent one of the clause (locative, instrumental, benefactive, etc.)
- This clitic can be added to both INTR, AV, UV (already strange: voice/valence morphology is usually stem-internal/close to the stem…)

(11) *ilâ dee ku-**nubo**-epu-i=**lä***

that this IPFV-**die**-also-3AUG=**CV** INTR

«They also die of this thing» (INTR)

(12) *nye-ki-**vei**-lâ-i=**lä** benuwää*

BN:way-IPFV-**weave.AV**-go.out-3AUG=**CV** kind.of.basket AV

«The way in which they weave the *benuwää*»

(13) *lâto ile ki-**vili**-wâ-no=**ngä***

then this IPFV-**weave.UV**-DIR2-1MIN=**CV** UV

«Now I weave with them»

=*Cä* and person marking

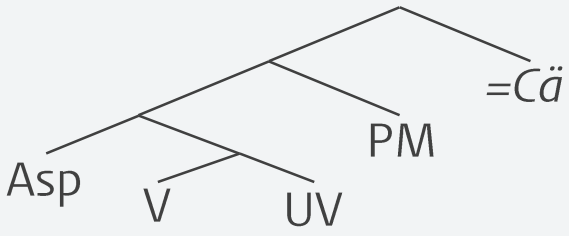
- =*Cä* influences the person marking system: INTR/AV normally take prefixes (12), but with =*Cä* they take suffixes (13)

(14) ***me***-*nä*-***vei***
1AUG-IRR-**weave.AV**
«We (want to) weave»

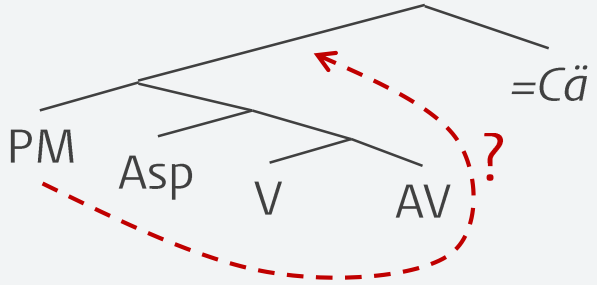
(15) *nye*-*ki*-***vei***-*lâ*-***i***=***lä*** *benuwää*
BN:way-IPFV-**weave.AV**-go.out-3AUG=CV kind.of.basket
«The way in which they weave the *benuwää*»

- Problematic! How can this be modelled in a layered fashion?

UV verbs: ✓



AV verbs: ✕



Summary and prospects

- Several of the morphemes occurring within the Aiwoo verb complex can be accounted for without making arbitrary linear stipulations
  - The stem shows recursive behaviour
  - The person marking system shows a 1st/2nd vs 3rd split in the prefix system, and a direct/inverse split in the suffix system
  - The circumstantial voice marker *=Cä* eschews explanations: it influences the person marking system «from the outside»

- How do the TAM-related morphemes interact with each other? How should we account for them?
- How should we solve the conundrum of *=Cä*?

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