



1974

Mikasuki verb prefixes

David West
SIL-UND

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.und.edu/sil-work-papers>

Recommended Citation

West, David (1974) "Mikasuki verb prefixes," *Work Papers of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, University of North Dakota Session*: Vol. 18 , Article 16.

DOI: 10.31356/silwp.vol18.16

Available at: <https://commons.und.edu/sil-work-papers/vol18/iss1/16>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by UND Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Work Papers of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, University of North Dakota Session by an authorized editor of UND Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact zeineb.yousif@library.und.edu.

MIKASUKI VERB PREFIXES

David West

0. Introduction

This paper will discuss the Mikasuki verb prefixes, their occurrence and function.

Mikasuki is spoken by about 1,000 of the Indian people in south Florida who are generally referred to as Seminoles. The remaining 500 to 600 speak the Seminole dialect of Creek or only English. The people refer to their own language as i:laponki.

In the language examples below, the letters a b f h i k l ð m n o p t w y have their usual values: c = c; s = s; : indicates vowel length; v: indicates long, nazalised vowels. Tone is not pertinent to these examples and therefore is not indicated. Hyphens separate morphemes. Parentheses in the glosses mark items not signalled in the Mikasuki data. * marks thirs person direct object and subject, which are signalled by the absence of any other direct object or subject morpheme, respectively.

A list of root and suffix morphs found in the examples is appended.

1. The Verb Prefixes.

Six optional orders of verb prefixes occur in Mikasuki. Beginning at the stem and proceding outward they indicate respectively place, direct object, indirect object, instrument, direction and destination. The first four of these orders are cross-referenced to other words, phrases or included clauses optionally present within the clause.

A list of the prefix positions, the morphemes which may occur in each, and examples of verbs containing them follow.

a. Place.

Place prefixes indicate the place of an action and also have, in some cases, non-spatial, extended meanings. In the place position one of the following prefixes may occur:

a-	"beside, connected to"	
	a-yofih-l-om	"*he tied *it to it"
	a-hica-:c-om	"*he took care of *him"
acak-	"with, accompanying"	
	acak-a l -iy-om	"*he went with *him"

68.

(o)ka:-	"down into (usually water), in water"	
ka:-ayy-om		"*he went about in (the)water"
on- <u>om</u> - <u>o</u> :-	"on"	
on-coko"-l-om		"*he sat on it"
om-apofti-:c-om		"*he thought about it"
ta:-	"down, on the ground"	
ta:-pi b -om		"*he threw *it down"

b. Direct Object

Direct object prefixes indicate the person (and in first person, number) of the object. In the direct object position one of the following prefixes may occur:

ca- <u>ac</u> -	first person singular,	"me"
ca-hi:c-om		"*he saw me"
ci- <u>ic</u> -	second person "you"	
ci-hi:c-om		"*he saw you"
i- <u>o</u> -	third person "him, her, it, them"	
hi:c-om		"*he saw *it"
i-ba:n-om		"he wants it" lit. "*it wants him"
po- <u>ip</u> -	first person plural "us"	
po-hi:co-om		"*he saw us"
ti- <u>it</u> -	reciprocal "each other"	
ti-hi:c-om		"*they saw each other"
il(i)-	reflexive "myself, yourself, himself, ourselves, etc."	
il-hi:c-om		"*he saw himself" e.g. in a mirror

c. Indirect Object.

Indirect object prefixes indicate the person (and in first person, the number) of the benefactive or of the deprivée (depending

on the meaning of the verb), the one to whom an action is done, or the one away from whom the action is proceeding. In the direct object position one of the following prefixes may occur:

an-~am-~a:-	first person singular	"to me, for me, from me"
am-i:k-om		"*he gave *it to me:
cin-~cim-~ci:-	second person	"to you, for you, from you"
cim-omm-om		"*he made *it for you"
in-~im-~i:-	third person	"to him, for him, from him, etc."
im-omm-om		"*he made *it for him"
pon-~pom-~po:-	first person plural	"to us, for us, from us"
pon-nokt-om		"*he borrowed *it from us"
tin-~tim-~ti:-	reciprocal	"to each other, for each other, etc."
tim-aca:m-ip-om		"they were friends to each other"
ilin-~ilim-~ili:-	reflexive	"to myself, for yourself, etc."
ilin-ia:m-o:s-om		"*he was all by himself, alone" lit. "he was really one to himself"

d. Instrument.

The instrument prefix indicates the means by which an action is accomplished. In the instrument position the following prefix may occur:

(i)s-	instrumental	"by means of, with"
s-ayy-om		"*he goes about by means of it" i.e. "he rides/drives"

e. Direction.

The direction prefixes indicate the direction of motion with reference to the speaker or other center of focus. In the direction position one of the following prefixes may occur:

70.

lok- "toward"

lok-cika:y-om

"*he entered toward it"

sap- / op- "away from" (The choice appears to vary from speaker to speaker.)

sap-cika:y-om

"*he entered away from it"

Destination.

Destination.

Destination prefixes indicate the place at which an action terminates, or the place where the subject arrives before the action takes place. (These prefixes are derived from verb roots, but the root-final vowel never occurs as it may when these morphemes occur in root position. Also, as prefixes these morphemes are never marked for number as they are when occurring as roots.) In the destination position one of the following prefixes may occur:

i:l- "arrive here"

i:l-o:ʒa-wa

"*he arrived here and then arrived there" i.e. he made round trips beginning there.

i:l-coko:-l-om

"*he arrived here and sat down"

o:ʒ- oh- "arrive there"

oh-coko:-l-om

"*he arrived there and sat down."

o:ʒ-i:l-om

"*he arrived there then here"
i.e. he made a round trip beginning here

2. Cross-Reference in the clause.

As was stated earlier, four of the six prefix orders are cross-referenced to clause-level words, phrases or included clauses. When a place, object or instrument expression occurs, the corresponding verb prefix is obligatory. But when one of these verb prefixes occurs, the corresponding clause-level expression is optional. Indeed, a clause-level referent rarely occurs with first- or second-person object prefixes.

Nouns and noun phrases which are cross-referenced to the verbal prefixes usually end in the case marker -on. Verbal elements so cross-referenced end in -n. (Nouns and noun phrases functioning as subject end in -ot, while included clauses functioning as subject end in -t.)

Some examples which include the cross-referencing prefixes and clause-level expressions follow. Two of the six orders of prefixes sometimes occur simultaneously and three co-occur occasionally. But I have not found four co-occurring. Underlining in these examples indicates corresponding prefixes and referents.

<u>ah</u> -on <u>a</u> -yofih-l-om	"*he tied *it to (the) <u>tree</u> "
to:p-on <u>on</u> -coko:-l-om	"*he sat on (the) <u>chair</u> "
<u>yakn</u> -on <u>ca</u> - <u>ta</u> :-piib-om	"*he threw <u>me</u> down on (the) <u>ground</u> "
<u>i:f</u> -on hi:c-om	"*he saw (the) <u>dog</u> "
<u>cihn</u> -on <u>ci</u> -hi:c- om	"*he saw <u>you</u> (emphasis)"
<u>ok</u> -on <u>s</u> - <u>il</u> -okсах-l-om	"*h _e washed <u>himself</u> with <u>water</u> "
<u>nakn</u> -on <u>im</u> -a-hak-l-om	"*he listened to (the) <u>man</u> "
<u>naknon</u> o:l-s- <u>im</u> -omm-om	"*he arrived there and made *it for (the) <u>man</u> by means of it"
<u>i:f</u> -on <u>nakn</u> on lok-s- <u>im</u> -i:l-om	"*he brought, arrived with, (the) <u>dog</u> toward (the) <u>man</u> "
<u>ha:l</u> -on <u>ok</u> -on <u>s</u> - <u>am</u> -i:k-om	"*he gave <u>water</u> to <u>me</u> by means of (the) <u>cup</u> "
to:p-on <u>ac</u> -on -coko-li-:c-om	"*he sat <u>me</u> on (the) <u>chair</u> "
<u>nakn-i</u> i:la-n hi:c-omi-li	"I saw (the) <u>man</u> <u>arriving</u> "
<u>ok-i</u> <u>fayhn</u> -o:si-ka-n ka:-cipi:-k-om	"*he dived into (the) <u>flowing water</u> "
<u>i:f</u> -co:ba-ka-t <u>nakn</u> -on hi:c-om	"(the) big dog saw (the) <u>man</u> "

3. Verb Sub-classes

Verbs may be divided into sub-classes on the basis of the occurrence of subject suffixes, object prefixes, and other prefixes. Referential verbs are those with which cross-referencing prefixes occur. Subjectival verbs potentially have an overt subject suffix. (Third person is unmarkd. Non-subjectival verbs never have an overt subject suffix, and they are considered to have a third-person subject. The sub-classes may be outlined as follows:

Subjectival	Non-subjectival
Referential	Referential
Direct transitive	Direct stative
Indirect transitive	Indirect stative
Intransitive	
Non-referential	Non-referential
Equational	Impersonal
Descriptive	

A. Direct Transitive.

A direct object prefix is obligatory (considered to be present even when the \emptyset allomorph of third person occurs). Indirect object prefix is optional.

lok-ca-hi:c-om	"*he looked at me"
hi:c-om	"*he saw *it"
i:f-on hi:c-om	"*he saw (the) dog"
i:f-on hi:c-omi-li	"I saw (the) dog"
to:p-on omm-om	"*he made (the) chair"
to:p-on cim-omm-omi-li	"I made (the) chair for you"

b. Indirect Transitive.

Direct object prefixes are absent and any one of the indirect object prefixes is optionally present.

hak-l-om	"*he heard"
nakn-on <u>i</u> :-hak-l-om	"*he heard (the)man"
nakn-on im-a-hak-l-omi-li	"I listened to the man"

Note: A few verbs have an obligatory indirect object prefix:

am-i:k-om	"*he gave *it to me"
-----------	----------------------

c. Intransitive.

Both direct object and indirect object prefixes are absent.

no:c-ip-a:-li	"I am going to sleep"
al-iy-om	"*he went"
okl-on al-iy-om	"*he went to town"

Note: okl-on is in the location position, since there is no cross-referencing.

d. Equational.

A noun or noun phrase is incorporated, and none of the verb

prefixes occur;

nakn-o:t-omi-li	"I am (a) man/male"
i:f-o:t-om	"*it is (a) dog"
i:f-o:t-om	"*it is (a) dog"
i:f-i co:b-o:t-om	"*it is a big dog"

e. Descriptive.

A modifier is incorporated, and none of the verb prefixes occur.

co: -o:t-om	"*it is big"
i:f-ot co:b-o:t-om	"(the) dog is big"

f. Direct Stative.

A direct object prefix is obligatory (considered to be present even when the \emptyset allomorph of third person occurs). The object is translated into English as the subject, and the structure is somewhat similar to that of such Spanish expressions as me gusta.

ca-ba:n-om	"I want it", lit "*it wants me"
ha:l-on i-ba:n-om	"he wants (a) cup"
ca-no:c-i:p-om	"I am sleepy" (compare with 3.c. example one.)
no:c-i:p-om	"*he is sleepy" (The intransitive form is identical.)
i:f-ho:ti-ka-t poko:li-n i-ba:n-om	"he wants ten big dogs"

g. Indirect Stative.

An indirect object prefix is obligatory. The indirect object is translated into English as the subject.

ha:l-ot cim-i:l-o	"do you have a cup?"
im-oca:f-om	"he is hungry" lit, "*it is hungry to him"

74.

h. Impersonal

Both direct object and indirect object prefixes are absent.

ok-o:b-om

"*it rained"

Morph List

Roots		Suffixes		
aca:m-	to be a friend	-a:	inceptive aspect	
ah-	tree/wood	:-c	causative voice	
ai-	to go	-i	neutral case ending	
apofti-	to think	-ip-	i:p completive aspect	
ayy-	to go/be about	-iy	meaning not clear: used with only a few motion verbs	
-ba:n-	to want/need	-k	neuter voice	
cihn-	you (free pronoun)	-ka	relative	
cika:y-	to enter	-l (i)	active voice	
cipi:-	to dive			
co:b (a)-	big (sg.)	-li 2	first person sg. subj.	
coko:-	coko-	to sit	-n	oblique case mkr. on included clauses
fayhn-	to flow	-o	interrogative mode	
hak-	to hear	-on	oblique case mkr.	
ha:l-	cup	-ot	nominative case marker (mkr.)	
hica-	hi:ca-	to see	-o:b	a derivational
ho:ti-	big (pl.)	-o:s	intensive aspect	
i:f-	dog	-om(i)	secondary root (Swanton)	
i:k-	to give		not translated	
i:l(a)-	to arrive here	-ot	nominative case marker	
-i:l-	to have			
la:m-	to be one	-t	nominative case marker on included clauses	
nokt-	to borrow	-wa	habitual mode	
no:c-	to sleep/be sleepy			
-oca:f-	to be hungry			
ok-	water			
okl-	town			
oksah-	to wash			
ommi-	to do/make			
o:i(a)-	to arrive there			
-o:t-	to be			
piib-	to throw away			
poko:li-	to be ten			
tani-	to be a space/opportunity			
to:p-	chair			
yakn-	ground/earth			
yofih-	to tie			

Notes

1. This paper is purely descriptive. No doubt insights from other models can be applied to advantage. However, the data are being submitted now in this form in order to share them, rather than waiting longer for the process of rewriting.
2. The paper was read at the 11th meeting of the Southeastern Conference on Linguistics, May 3, 1974. Part 4, references to other Muskogean languages, has been deleted here.
3. A concordance of about 9200 words of Mikasuki text was useful in preparing this paper. It was made possible by the National Science Foundation under Grant GS-270 and was processed on the IBM 1410 computer at the University of Oklahoma.