

# Instrumental prefixes in Umó<sup>n</sup>ho<sup>n</sup> (Omaha)

Julie Marsault

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Experimental and computational approaches to morphology and  
the lexicon

## 1 Introduction

- The Umó<sup>n</sup>ho<sup>n</sup> language
- Presentation of the instrumental prefixes
- Research questions

## 2 Analysis

- The causative function of instrumental prefixes
- Prediction of the causative function
- Semantic analysis of the instrumental verbs

# The Umó<sup>n</sup>ho<sup>n</sup> language

Siouan languages



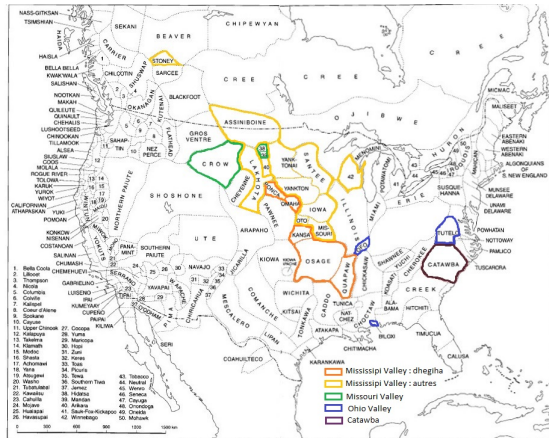
Mississippi Valley



Dhegiha



Umó'ho<sup>n</sup>



MAP 1b: OVERVIEW OF LANGUAGE LOCATIONS: DETAIL, SHOWING LANGUAGES SPOKEN FROM HUDSON BAY SOUTHWARD.

The Siouan languages (adapted from Mithun 1999)

# Umó<sup>n</sup>ho<sup>n</sup> documentation

- Highly endangered language (speakers over 70)
- Language thoroughly documented by James DORSEY in the late 19th Century. (Dorsey 1890, 1891, no date)
  - Glossed and translated texts (+800pp)
  - Manuscript dictionary (around 18000 entries)
  - Manuscript grammar
- Contemporary documentation:
  - recordings and transcriptions by Catherine Rudin in the 1990s (Rudin et al. 1989-1993);
  - lexicons and textbooks (e.g. Saunsoci & Eschengeberg 2016; ULCC & UNL 2018);
  - my recordings

Abbreviations for sources from Dorsey: DD, DT, D92

Abbreviations for 20th & 21st Century sources: UNL, RT, RE, UNPS, ...

# Typological features of Umó<sup>n</sup>ho<sup>n</sup>

- SOV, postpositions, determiner follows the noun
- Head marking, with the following characteristics:
  - 2 arguments encoded on the verb
  - 3SG persons are generally not encoded

(1) Ø-Ø-no<sup>n</sup>ó<sup>n</sup>

P3SG-A3SG-hear

“She hears him” (Saunsoci & Eschenberg 2016:117)

- many valency-changing prefixes on the verb
  - possession mainly encoded on the verb
  - very limited nominal inflection, few postpositions
- many conjugational paradigms (136 different paradigms presented in ULCC 2015)
- a set of 11 definite articles which act as determiners, relativizers, copulas, evidential markers

# Morphological alignment: split intransitivity

## (2) Intransitive active verbs (Agentive grammatical role)

<i>a-bó<sup>n</sup></i>	<i>tha-gthí<sup>n</sup></i>	<i>a-ó<sup>n</sup>he</i>	<i>a-t'é</i>
A1SG-call	A2-sit	A1SG-flee	A1SG-die
I give a call	you sit	I fled	I die

## (3) Intransitive stative verbs (Patientive grammatical role)

<i>o<sup>n</sup>-shí<sup>n</sup></i>	<i>o<sup>n</sup>-wo<sup>n</sup>k<sup>h</sup>ega</i>	<i>ó<sup>n</sup>-baniuski</i>	<i>u-thí-xpathe</i>
P1SG-fat	P1SG-sick	P1SG-hiccup	(1)-P2-fall(2)
I am fat	I am sick	I hiccupped	you fell

## (4) Transitive verbs

<i>a-sithe</i>	<i>o<sup>n</sup>-sitha</i>	<i>o<sup>n</sup>-thá-sithe</i>
A1SG-remember	P1SG-remember	P1SG-A2-remember
I remember him/her	S/he remembers me	You remember me

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- (2) Intransitive active verbs (Agentive grammatical role)

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- (5) Accusative person marker: *wa-* O3PL for animate objects

<i>a-wá-gi-sithe</i>	<i>no<sup>n</sup>péhi<sup>n</sup>=i</i>
A1SG-O3PL-POSS-remember	be.hungry = PL
I remember them	they are hungry

# Presentation of the instrumental prefixes

# The instrumental prefixes

Prefixes with a lexical content: they refer to movements, body parts, natural forces, instruments

*ba-* by pushing

*bi-* by pressing, by blowing

*ga-* by striking, with sudden force, by wind/water (sudden)

*no<sup>n</sup>-* with the feet (walking, running, dancing, kicking, patting...)

*tha-* with the mouth (talking, singing, eating, drinking, biting...)

*thi-* with hands, by pulling → neutral

*má-* by cutting with a knife

*mú-* by shooting, by wind

*ná-* by heat, by fire

# The instrumental prefixes: areal feature

Prefixes with a lexical content: they refer to **movements**, **body parts**, **natural forces**, **instruments** (Mithun 2015)

*ba-* by pushing

*bi-* by pressing, by blowing

*ga-* by striking, with sudden force, by wind/water  
(sudden)

*no<sup>n</sup>-* with the feet (walking, running, dancing, kicking, patting...)

*tha-* with the mouth (talking, singing, eating, drinking, biting...)

*thi-* with hands, by pulling → neutral

*má-* by cutting with a knife

*mú-* by shooting, by wind/water

*ná-* by heat, by fire

# Instrumental affixes as an areal feature



“Means/manner/instrumental affixes” (Mithun 2015)

# Instrumental verbs in $xó^n$

From  $xó^n$  'to be broken'

- *thi-xó^n* 'to break sth (with the hands)'  
e.g. to break sticks with one's hands (in Dorsey, 1890)
- *bi-xó^n* 'to break sth by pressing it'  
e.g. to break a stick by leaning on it (in Dorsey, 1890)
- *ga-xó^n* 'to break sth by striking or violent/sudden action'  
e.g. to break a phone by throwing it away (in Saunsoci & Eschenberg, 2016)
- *má-xo^n* 'to cut sth with a knife'  
e.g. to cut meat in several parts with a knife (in Dorsey, 1890)
- *mú-xo^n* 'to break sth by shooting'  
e.g. to shoot at an elk and break his leg (in Dorsey, 1890)

# Diachronic origin & productivity

Prefixes reconstructed to Proto-Siouan (Sieber 1945; Rankin n.d.)

Originally verbs and nouns

Three “outer” instrumental prefixes *má-* ‘with a knife’, *mú-* ‘by shooting’ and *ná-* ‘by extreme temperature’ are newer (other slot in prefixal template), there is evidence that they originated as incorporated nouns or nominalized verb stems (Rankin n.d.: 1)

Synchronically, no link with the corresponding nouns or verbs: *tha-* ‘with the mouth’  $\neq$

- *í* ‘mouth’
- *tha-t<sup>h</sup>é* ‘to eat {x}’
- *tha-tó<sup>n</sup>* ‘to drink {x}’
- *wa’ó<sup>n</sup>* ‘to sing’

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Productive over a long period of time

- (6) *ga-ná-kade*  
INS:force-INS:temp-?  
‘to heat an ob. by hammering it’ (DD)

# Why prefixes and not stems or bound roots?

- Non-autonomous (not attested as stems, nor roots)  
exception: *ná-zhi* (INS:temp-NEG) '{fire}' to be extinguished'
- No link with corresponding nouns or verbs
- Umó'ho' is a prefixing language, with complex morphophonological rules affecting the sequences of inflectional and derivational prefixes, including instrumental verbs

Comparison with non-autonomous root *ó'si* 'jumping (?)'

→ *ga-ó'si* 'to bounce' (ST)

→ *thi-ó'si* 'to make a horse jump or prence (once) by pulling on the bridle' (DD)

→ *u-ó'si* 'to jump (in {x})', → *á-o'si* 'to jump over {x}' (DT)

# Derivation with instrumental prefixes

Input: the “base”

- Morphologically simple / not attested alone *ʔó<sup>n</sup>si* ‘jumping (?)’
- Morphologically simple / lexical unit *xó<sup>n</sup>* ‘to be broken’
- Morphologically complex / not attested alone *ʔá<sub>-</sub>de*  
(in *á-tha-de* ‘to read {x}’)
- Morphologically complex / lexical unit *uxpáthe* ‘to fall’

Output: instrumental verbs

# Research questions

The syntactic and semantic effects of the instrumental derivation are very diverse:

- From the stative verb *xó<sup>n</sup>* 'to be broken'  
→ *ga-xó<sup>n</sup>* 'to break {x} by throwing it'
- From the active verb *t'é* 'to die'  
→ *mú-t'e* 'to kill {x} by shooting' (DD)  
→ *ná-t'e* 'to die from the heat' (DT)
- From the noun *ó<sup>n</sup>ba* 'day'  
→ *no<sup>n</sup>-ó<sup>n</sup>ba* 'to walk until daybreak' (Dorsey 1890:439.6-7)
- From the stative verb *hégazhi* 'to be a lot'  
→ *tha-hégazhi* 'to make great noise (with the mouth)' (DT)
- From the bound root *°shtó<sup>n</sup>* 'stopping, letting go' (DD)  
→ *tha-shtó<sup>n</sup>* 'to stop talking, singing, eating, drinking...'
- From the onomatopoeic bound root *táxi*  
→ *ga-táxi* 'to make the sound heard when a tree is struck with an ax in cold weather' (DD)

# Research questions

- To what extent are these prefixes causative? (how frequently?)
  - In terms of lexicography
  - In terms of token in the corpora
- To what extent is the causative function predictable? (And the instrumental verb semantics and valency in general?)
  - depending on the meaning of the prefix
  - depending on the meaning of the base

# The causative function of instrumental prefixes

# Instrumental verbs in $xó^n$

From  $xó^n$  'to be broken'

- *thi-xó<sup>n</sup>* 'to break {x} (with the hands)'  
e.g. to break sticks with one's hands (in Dorsey, 1890)
- *bi-xó<sup>n</sup>* 'to break {x} by pressing it'  
e.g. to break a stick by leaning on it (in Dorsey, 1890)
- *ga-xó<sup>n</sup>* 'to break {x} by striking or violent/sudden action'  
e.g. to break a phone by throwing it away (in Saunsoci & Eschenberg, 2016)
- *má-xo<sup>n</sup>* 'to cut {x} with a knife'  
e.g. to cut meat in several parts with a knife (in Dorsey, 1890)
- *mú-xo<sup>n</sup>* 'to break {x} by shooting'  
e.g. to shoot at an elk and break his leg (in Dorsey, 1890)

## Bases (input) of causative derivation

Causative derivation: Addition to a verb of an argument in the subject position, the original subject becoming an object (valency increase, semantic transitivity increase)

- Intransitive stative verbs denoting states: *búta* 'to be round', ...  
*bí-buta* 'to make {x} round' (applied to bread dough in ULCDP 2002)
- Intransitive stative verbs denoting events: *uxpáthe* 'to fall'  
*u-bá-xpathe* 'to make {x} fall by pushing' (applied to dead cattle from a train in Dorsey 1891)
- Intransitive active verbs denoting an event: *xagé* 'to cry'  
*no<sup>n</sup>-xáge* 'to make {x} cry by kicking him/her' (applied to a human in Dorsey 1890)

→ Semantic criterion: direct manipulation of the causee which has no control nor volition

# Semantically causative derivation

## Causative derivation from non-verbal bases

- Nouns: *u'úde* 'hole'  
→ *u-má-'ude* 'to cut a hole in {x}' (applied to tent-skin in Dorsey 1890)
- Sound-denoting bound roots (bound onomatopoeia?): *°p<sup>h</sup>úki*  
→ *ga-p<sup>h</sup>úki* 'to make {x} produce the sound p<sup>h</sup>úki' (applied to tent-skin in Dorsey 1890)
- Other bound roots, denoting states: *°shpé* 'to be taken off'  
→ *tha-shpé* 'to bite {x} off'

Creation of a transitive verb with direct manipulation, and the object having no control nor volition

# Prediction of the causative function

# Meaning of the prefix

One prefix is never causative: *ná-* 'by extreme temperature'

- (7) *Tanúka shé-tho<sup>n</sup> ná-sage a? Ná-tube a? ...*  
 meat that-RND INS:temp-hard Q INS:temp-into.pieces Q  
 Is that meat hardened by heat? [I]s it cooked tender?  
 (OLIT-UNL 2018:563)

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Is that meat hardened by heat? [I]s it cooked tender?

(OLIT-UNL 2018:563)

- (8) *káshi-xti Wakó<sup>n</sup>dagi ná-tube-wá-the.*

a.while-INTENS Water.Monster INS:temp-into.pieces-O3PL-CAUS

[V]ery long ago he cooked the Water-monsters till the  
meat fell to pieces[.] (Dorsey 1890: 232.19 / Páthi<sup>n</sup>-no<sup>n</sup>pázhi)

# Meaning of the prefix

The case of one polysemous prefix: *ga-*

- ① “Agentive meaning”: by striking, throwing, hitting... (violent and sudden action)
- ② “Non-agentive meaning”: by falling, by force of the wind, by effect of movement

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*wak<sup>h</sup>éga* ‘to be sick’

→ *ga-wák<sup>h</sup>éga* ‘to make {x} sick by striking’ (DD), ‘to make one sick from riding in a wagon that jolts or goes over rough ground’ (DD), ‘nauseous from environment: seasick, carsick, rollercoaster’ (UNL)

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*’btháze* ‘ripped open, torn open’ (DD)

→ *ga-btháze* ‘to burst open, as a sack, from falling’ (DD); ‘to gash {a person’s flesh} by striking’ (DD); ‘to bust by falling (...)’ (UNL)

# The meaning of the base

- The base is a verb modifier: *k<sup>h</sup>úthe* 'quickly' (DD)
  - *ga-k<sup>h</sup>úk<sup>h</sup>uthe* 'to beat (something) rapidly' (DT)
  - *mú-k<sup>h</sup>uk<sup>h</sup>uthe* 'to shoot more rapidly than before' (DD)

Also works for *hégazhi* '(to be) a lot', *°pí* 'well'

- The base is a noun of time: *ó<sup>n</sup>ba* 'day'
  - *tha-ó<sup>n</sup>ba* 'to talk all night' (UNL) (= to talk until day)
  - *no<sup>n</sup>-ó<sup>n</sup>ba* 'to walk until daylight' (DT)

Also works for *hó<sup>n</sup>* 'night' and *míthumo<sup>n</sup>shi* 'noon'

# The meaning of the base

- The base is an onomatopoeic bound root:

- (9) *xthabé thé-xchi thó<sup>n</sup>di zhó<sup>n</sup> gá-sa-i, ga- táxi, aí.*  
tree this-INTENS there wood INS:force-cut-PL INS:force- taxi say-PL

“At this very place they cut wood, for they make the sound ‘Taxi’, said he.” (Dorsey 1890:456.2-3)

- (10) *égithe te-néxe thi<sup>n</sup>k<sup>h</sup>é thi-btháza = biamá,*  
at.length buffalo-bladder the INS:hand-open = PP.REPORT  
*thi- xú’e-gó<sup>n</sup> = ma.*  
INS:hand- xu’e-like = EVID

At length the Buffalo-bladder was torn open, making the sound “xu’e.”  
(Dorsey 1890: 259.11)

- (11) *Wat<sup>h</sup>ó<sup>n</sup>zi tha-shpí that<sup>h</sup>á = i ki, tha- sáthu = i*  
corn INS:mouth-taken.off eat = PL when INS:mouth- rattle = PL  
*ha.*  
DECL.M

- The base expresses an event that typically combines with another: *°shto<sup>n</sup>* 'stopping, letting go'
  - *ga-shto<sup>n</sup>* 'to stop striking'
  - *tha-shto<sup>n</sup>* 'to stop talking; singing; eating...'
  - *ba-shto<sup>n</sup>* 'to stop writing, pushing, or punching' (DD)

# Difficulties of analysis

## Intransitive active or transitive?

- (12) *Hó<sup>n</sup> t<sup>he</sup> snéde-go<sup>n</sup>, shó<sup>n</sup>-xti* *ga-ó<sup>n</sup>ba = i.*  
night VERT long-as continually-INTENS *INS:force-day* = PL  
As the night was long, they beat the rattles even till day.  
(Dorsey 1890: 439.6-7 / Páthi<sup>n</sup>-no<sup>n</sup>pázhi)

Methodological question:

Since 3rd persons inanimate or singular objects are not encoded on verbs, when an antecedant is available in the context, how do we know if a verb is transitive or intransitive?

## Intransitive passive or transitive?

- (13) ... *waníta weági-údo<sup>n</sup> Wakó<sup>n</sup>da thi<sup>n</sup>k<sup>h</sup>é we-gáxa = i*  
animal B1PL-good W. OBV.SIT D1PL-make = PX  
*thó<sup>n</sup>zha, bthúga-xti mú-thi<sup>n</sup>ga = í.*  
though all-INTENS INS:shoot-lack = PL

*Literally:* Although Wakó<sup>n</sup>da has created animals for our advantage, they are all exterminated/they have been shot.  
(Dorsey 1890: 628.6 / unknown speaker)

Methodological question:

On what criteria do we distinguish valency of the verb as a lexeme from its use in special syntactic constructions (i.e., an impersonal construction)?

# Difficulties of analysis

## Intransitive active or transitive?

- ga-ó<sup>n</sup>ba* 1. 'to beat something until day' (intransitive)  
2. 'to beat {x} until day' (transitive)

→ Considered intransitive on the basis of other instrumental verbs built with *ó<sup>n</sup>ba* 'day' or with *hó<sup>n</sup>* 'night'. For instance: *mú-ho<sup>n</sup>* 'to shoot all day until nightfall'; *thi-hó<sup>n</sup>* 'to work until night'

## Intransitive passive or transitive?

- mú-thi<sup>n</sup>ge* 1. 'to be exterminated by shooting' (intransitive)  
2. 'to exterminate {x} by shooting' (transitive)

→ Considered transitive on the bases of other instrumental verbs built with *thi<sup>n</sup>ge* 'to be without {x}'. For instance: *thi-thi<sup>n</sup>ge* 'to demolish {x}' (UNL); 'to pull {all the fruits, corn,} leaving none' (DD); *no<sup>n</sup>-thi<sup>n</sup>ge* 'to destroy {x} by tremping'

# Semantic analysis of the instrumental verbs

Reminder Research question:

To what extent is the causative function predictable? (And the instrumental verb semantics and valency in general?)

→ Classification of the instrumental verbs into categories depending on the semantic contribution of the prefix and the base, and the presence or not of a causative function of the prefix

During my dissertation, I identified four main categories, that sometimes include subcategories. This is not an exhaustive classification.

# 1. Ins manner, CAUS + base result

## (14) Ins manner, CAUS + base result

a. *búta* 'to be round'

→ *thi-búta* 'to crumple up {a sheet of paper}'

→ *bi-búta* 'to press {x} round'

b. *túbe* 'to be ground, broken up'

→ *má-tube* 'to cut {meat, tobacco} tolerably fine' (DD)

→ *bi-túbe* 'to rub {x} to powder'

c. *uxpáthe* 'to fall'

→ *u-bá-xpathe* 'to make {x} fall by pushing'

→ *u-bí-xpathe* 'to make {x} fall by pressing, rubbing'

d. *xagé* 'to cry'

→ *no<sup>n</sup>-xagé* 'to make {x} cry by kicking them'

→ *tha-xáxage* 'to make {x} cry repeatedly by biting them'

## 2. **Ins** natural force, cause + **base** result

- (15) **Ins** force, cause + **base** caused event/state/noise
- a. *béni* '(to be) bent forward'  
→ *ga-béni* 'to bend by effect of the wind'
  - b. *skó<sup>n</sup>* 'to be melted, thawed'  
→ *ná-sko<sup>n</sup>* 'to melt or thaw (because of the heat)'
  - c. *t'é* 'to die', 'to be badly hurt'  
→ *no<sup>n</sup>-t'é* 'to be killed / badly hurt by a machine'  
→ *ná-t'e* 'to die from the heat'  
→ *ga-t'é* 'to die from a fall'
  - d. *táxi* (onomatopoeic)  
→ *ga-táxi* 'to make a tapping sound by falling'

## 2. **Ins** natural force, cause + **base** result

From nouns:

- (16) **ga-** force, cause + **base** created result

*uk<sup>h</sup>íba* 'a crack or open space bounded by two parallel lines' (DD)

→ *u-gá-k<sup>h</sup>íba* 'to crack by effect of the wind'; '{wind}' to make a crack' (DD)

### 3. **Ins** predicate + **base** adverb/circumstantial

(17) **Ins** predicate + **base** adverb / modifier

- a. *k<sup>h</sup>úthe* 'quickly' (DD)  
→ *mú-k<sup>h</sup>uk<sup>h</sup>uthe* 'to shoot more rapidly than before (DD)'
- b. *hégazhi* 'a lot' (also *hégabazhi*)  
→ *mú-hegazhi* 'to make a lot of noise while shooting'  
→ *tha-hégazhi* 'to make a great noise (with the mouth)'
- c. *\*pí* 'good' (DD, who adds: "not used as a separate word")  
→ *no<sup>n</sup>-pí* 'to dance well'  
→ *thi-pí* 'to be good at {VP}'

### 3. **Ins** predicate + **base** adverb / circumstantial

- (18) **Ins** predicate + **base** time circumstantial (limit of time)
- a. *ó<sup>n</sup>ba* 'day'  
→ *ná-o<sup>n</sup>ba* 'to burn until day'
  - b. *hó<sup>n</sup>* 'night'  
→ *shó<sup>n</sup> thi-hó<sup>n</sup>* 'to work until night without stopping'  
→ *mú-ho<sup>n</sup>* 'to shoot all day until nightfall' (UNL)
  - c. *míthumo<sup>n</sup>shi* 'noon'  
→ *no<sup>n</sup>-míthumo<sup>n</sup>shi* 'to walk until noon'

## 4. **Ins** predicate + **base** predicate

### (19) **Ins** predicate + **base** predicate

- a. \**shnó<sup>n</sup>* 'to miss (the objective)'
  - *ba-shnó<sup>n</sup>* 'to miss {x} while pushing' (DT)
  - *mú-shno<sup>n</sup>* 'to miss ({x}?) while shooting' (DT, SE, UNL)
  - *thi-shnó<sup>n</sup>* 'to drop {x}' (DT)
- b. \*'*á* 'to fail'
  - *tha-á* 'to fail to drink / eat {x}'
  - *ná-a* 'to fail, for want of time, in burning or freezing' (DD) → *ga-á* 'to fail (in finishing) to chop wood/strike ({x}?)' (DD, UNL)

# Conclusion

- ① **Ins** manner, CAUS + **base** result
  - Types of bases: intransitive stative verbs; intransitive active verbs; nouns
  - Example: *mú-xo*<sup>n</sup> 'to break {x} by shooting'
- ② **Ins** natural force, cause + **base** result
  - Types of bases: intransitive stative verbs; nouns
  - Example: *ná-t'e* 'to die from the heat'
- ③ **Ins** predicate + **base** adverb / circumstantial
  - Types of bases: manner adverbs; nouns denoting time; stative verbs
  - Example: *tha-ó*<sup>n</sup>*ba* 'to talk until the day'
- ④ **Ins** predicate + **base** predicate
  - Types of bases: bound roots expressing events
  - Example: *ba-shtó*<sup>n</sup> 'to stop writing, pushing, or punching'

# Conclusion

- ① **Ins** manner, CAUS + **base** result
  - Types of bases: intransitive stative verbs; intransitive active verbs; nouns
  - Example: *mú-xo*<sup>n</sup> 'to break {x} by shooting'
  - Example 2: *bi-búta* 'to press {x} round'
- ② **Ins** natural force, cause + **base** result
  - Types of bases: intransitive stative verbs; nouns
  - Example: *ná-t'e* 'to die from the heat'
- ③ **Ins** predicate + **base** adverb / circumstantial
  - Types of bases: manner adverbs; nouns denoting time; stative verbs
  - Example: *tha-ó*<sup>n</sup>*ba* 'to talk until the day'
- ④ **Ins** predicate + **base** predicate
  - Types of bases: bound roots expressing events
  - Example: *ba-shtó*<sup>n</sup> 'to stop writing, pushing, or punching'

Thank you

Wíbthaho<sup>n</sup>

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# Additional slides

# Valency-modifying constructions

causative	<i>t'é-the</i> die-CAUS kill {x}	<i>bi-t'é</i> ins:press-die kill {x} by pressing	<i>snéde gáxe</i> long make make {x} long
applicative	<i>í-bat<sup>h</sup>e</i> INST-sew sew {x} with {y}	<i>gí-bat<sup>h</sup>e</i> BEN-sew sew {x} for {y}	<i>á-gthi<sup>n</sup></i> SUPER-sit sit on {x}
antipassive	<i>that<sup>h</sup>e</i> eat eat {x}	<i>wa-thát<sup>h</sup>e</i> ANTIP-eat eat	
incorp.	<i>gthó<sup>n</sup></i> marry marry to {x}	<i>mí<sup>n</sup>-gtho<sup>n</sup></i> woman-marry marry	
reflexive reciprocal	<i>u &lt;kí&gt;k<sup>h</sup>ie</i> <REFL>talk talk to oneself	<i>ki-páaze</i> RECIP-scare scare each other	

# Primary sources: Dorsey's texts

## MY FIRST BUFFALO HUNT.

BY FRANK LA FLECHER.

ǂábéi'a' pí há. Pahan'ga pí té' a'jin'ga, áda' té awákida-máji  
 Three times I was there I was when me small, therefore but I did not shoot at them  
 ǂa'is, ǂa'ge wa'in'kié wéǂéi'-hna'-ma' wanáse amá. Pahan'gaǂéi  
 though, here to cause him to carry loads I used to keep them for them the ones who surrounded the herd. At the very first  
 3 wanásai té'di, té awákide iáǂé. ǂa'ge da'ǂé ǂa'ǂa ǂǂai ǂi, té da'ǂé  
 surrounded them when, but I shoot at I spoke of I shot perhaps it threw you and when, but perhaps  
 ǂǂéhe táí, aí. Kí awáǂéte. I'dádi aká dáheǂta juan'ǂé ǂaí. I'-ma  
 gore you may, said he. And I was in a bad humor. My father the to the hill with me went. the buffaloes  
 wénaxǂai té a'wa'ǂa'be angéi'. Kí i'dádi aká a'wan'kie ǂéwa', uákia-  
 they attacked the we saw them we sat. And my father the talked to me notwithstanding I did not  
 6 máji-hna'-ma'. Éǂége te-núga wíw' ǂaǂǂaǂa'ǂi aǂé' agǂi nǂkaci'ga aká  
 talk to him at any time. At length buffalo bull one right towards the having was man the (sub.)  
 came back

## Dorsey's *The Dhegiha language* (1890)

- DORSEY, James. 1890. *The Dhegiha language*. Contributions to North American Ethnology, Vol. 6. Washington, D.C., U.S. Government. 820 pp.
- DORSEY, James. 1891. *Omaha and Ponca letters*. Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 11. 120 pp.
- RANKIN, Robert. 2008. *James Owen Dorsey's The Dhegiha language*.

title My first buffalo hunt

tháǂthi'ǂó pí ha. pahó'ga pí té. o'zhi'ga, áǂó' té awákida-mázi  
 Three times / I was there / . / Before / I was there / when / me small, / therefore / buffalo / I did not shoot at them /  
 P. 466, line 1.

thó'zha, shó'ge wa'ǂk'ithé wéǂthi'-hno'-mó' wanáse amá. pahó'gaxchi  
 though, / horse / to cause him to carry loads / I used to keep them for them / the ones who surrounded the herd. / At the very first /  
 P. 466, line 2.

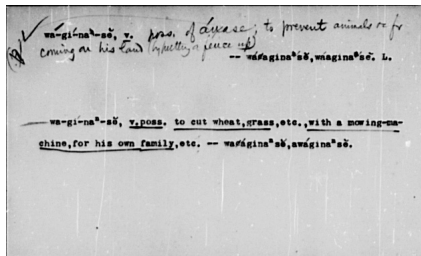
wanásai tédi, té awákide iáthe. shó'ge dó'shte thió'tha théthai ki, té dó'shte  
 they surrounded them / when, / buffalo / I shoot at them / I spoke of. / Horse / perhaps / it throws you suddenly / when, / buffalo / perhaps /  
 P. 466, line 3.

zháthihe táí, aí. kí awázhishte. i'dádi aká páheáta zhuó'gthe athái. té-ma  
 gore you / may, / said he. / And / I was in a bad humor. / My father / the (sub.) / to the hill / with me / went. / the buffaloes /  
 P. 466, line 4.

wénaxǂai the o'wó'dó'be o'gthi'i. kí i'dádi aká o'wó'kie shetwó',  
 uák'iamázi-hno'-mó'.  
 they attacked them / the / we saw them / we sat. / And / my father / the (sub.) / talked to me / notwithstanding, / I did not talk to him at any time. /

## Rankin's transcription of Dorsey's texts (2008)

# Primary sources: Dorsey's dictionary



Example of a dictionary slip file

Omaha Language Dictionary data

Lexemes

Page 1 of 303, showing 50 records out of 15132 total, starting on record 1, ending on 50

Actions	record #	Word	Macy	Part of Speech	Source Definition	Created date	Last modified	Last modified by	Dorsey slip	Actions
<a href="#">View</a>	2823	-ā	-ā	inf.	OI	2009-10-01	2013-11-22 22:05:56	Catherine Rudin	<a href="http://omahalanguage.unl.edu/dictionary_images/a7d1ga/opsd.01.047.09a.jpg">http://omahalanguage.unl.edu/dictionary_images/a7d1ga/opsd.01.047.09a.jpg</a>	<a href="#">View</a>
<a href="#">View</a>	540	-ā-cō-cō	-āthātha		NA	2009-06-02	2016-03-03 23:18:37	Michelle Lantier	<a href="http://omahalanguage.unl.edu/dictionary_images/a7a2a/opsd.01.008.03a.jpg">http://omahalanguage.unl.edu/dictionary_images/a7a2a/opsd.01.008.03a.jpg</a>	<a href="#">View</a>
<a href="#">View</a>	575	-ā-cō	-ātha		a particle used after verbal roots, denoting that an object has of its own accord produced such a...	2009-06-02	2016-03-03 23:41:08	Michelle Lantier	<a href="http://omahalanguage.unl.edu/dictionary_images/a7a2a/opsd.01.009.02a.jpg">http://omahalanguage.unl.edu/dictionary_images/a7a2a/opsd.01.009.02a.jpg</a>	<a href="#">View</a>
<a href="#">View</a>	1121	-ā-na-gē-l-cō-cō	-ānonge thātha	x phrase	To run very rapidly over.	2009-09-01	2016-08-09 19:24:41	Bryan James Gordon	<a href="http://omahalanguage.unl.edu/dictionary_images/anaNopsd.01.031.08a.jpg">http://omahalanguage.unl.edu/dictionary_images/anaNopsd.01.031.08a.jpg</a>	<a href="#">View</a>
<a href="#">View</a>	1262	-ā-lā	-āla	p.	at, to;	2009-09-02	2010-12-22 11:31:35	Catherine Rudin	<a href="http://omahalanguage.unl.edu/dictionary_images/at%28x%29a/opsd.01.035.10a.jpg">http://omahalanguage.unl.edu/dictionary_images/at%28x%29a/opsd.01.035.10a.jpg</a>	<a href="#">View</a>
<a href="#">View</a>	3147	-ā-wō	-āwa	pronoun	Us.	2009-10-08	2016-03-03 23:52:45	Michelle Lantier	<a href="http://omahalanguage.unl.edu/dictionary_images/awa/opsd.01.036.04a.jpg">http://omahalanguage.unl.edu/dictionary_images/awa/opsd.01.036.04a.jpg</a>	<a href="#">View</a>

The online dictionary

- *A Grammar and Dictionary of the Ponca Language by the Reverend J. Owen Dorsey*. Manuscript. 444 pp. + 15,000 word entries
- *Omaha Ponca Digital Dictionary Database View*.  
<http://omahaponcaadmin.unl.edu/>.

# Verb classes (morphosyntactic classification)

Defined by the number of arguments and their grammatical roles

14 verb classes at least (Marsault 2021)

Verb classes relevant today:

- Intransitive active verbs (A)
- Intransitive stative verbs (P)
- Transitive verbs (A/P)

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- Intransitive stative verbs (P)
- Transitive verbs (A/P)
- Bivalent stative verbs (P/NP): *thi<sup>n</sup>ge* 'to be without {NP}'
- Impersonal verbs (0 argument): *no<sup>n</sup>zhí<sup>n</sup>* 'to rain', *ho<sup>n</sup>* 'to be the night' (?)