

9. WORD STRUCTURE

9.1 Morphology

The morphology of Yurok can best be analyzed by setting up word stems to serve as a basis for the description of the various morphological formations. In some cases the stem will have the same shape as the word itself in some grammatical form; in others it will be an abstraction from the various grammatical forms of the word. The forms of most words can be analyzed by reference to a single stem form, but in a few cases separate forms of the stem have to be set up. These are indicated in the relevant sections.

The morphological processes³ employed in Yurok grammar comprise Prefixation, Infixation, Inflection,⁴ Vowel Harmony, and Internal Vocalic Alternation.

Prefixation and infixation operate in both nominals and verbals, as well as with some words of other classes. Infixation and, to a lesser extent, vocalic alternation operate principally with verbals, playing a restricted part elsewhere in the grammar. Vowel harmony operates in certain words of both nominal and verbal classes.

The prefixes comprise the Pronominal Prefixes (11.35, 13.141.4). There is one infix, -eg- and its variants (13.151), used generally with verbals and also with a few nouns and adverbs and with one preverbal particle, so. The inflectional elements are numerous and of very frequent employment, principally with verbals.

Vowel harmony applies to certain prefixes, infixes, and inflections, according to the vocalic and consonantal structure of the word stem. In the prefixes and inflections to which it is applicable, vowel harmony is in general a facultative, not an obligatory, process; where applicable to infixes

²Cf. 9. 21.

³The use of the term "Process," and of other words that often have connotations of temporal occurrence and historical priority, is made for convenience only. Certain forms and stems are taken as basic and the structure of other forms is described by reference to them, as this makes for the simplest method of statement. No suggestion of changes or processes in time should be read into the use of such words.

⁴"Inflection" is used throughout to refer to formations postfixed to stems or involving the final part of stems.

is obligatory. The vowels affected are a, e, o, and ɪ, the two close vowels, i and u, playing no part in vowel harmony.

Internal vocalic alternation involves three alternating pairs, e/i,⁵ e/iʔi,⁵ and e/u.⁶ (13.152).

9.2 Stem Structure

In addition to the morphological processes just mentioned, Vocalic and Consonantal Alternation, Reduplication, and Alternation of the consonants r and l operate in the stem structure of certain pairs of comparable words of related or similar meanings.

A number of words may be regarded as having Compound stems.

9.21 Vocalic and Consonantal Alternation

The pairs of words concerned may have dissimilar syllabic structures and reveal no general patterns except that the vocalic alternation often takes the form of the alternation of one or more of the vowels of the stem with ɪ.

kelomen-	to turn (trans.)	kɪlɪmɪw	to turn inside out ⁶
megesik	mink	mɛgɪsɪk	weasel
moyk-	to die	mɔyɪkɪ	to wither
muniponi	sharp	munɪpɪni	thistle
piʔih	mussel	pɪʔɪk	dried mussel
pontet	ashes	pɔnɪɪk	dust ⁷
srekʷepi-t	diaper	srekʷahpi-t	breechcloth
tenpewɛɪ-	to rain	tonpewɛɪ-	to be showery
wencokʷs	woman	wentokʷs	female (animal)
weʔyon	girl	wɪʔyɪs	girl
weyonah	female (animal)		
wohpey-	to cross	wɪhpɪyɪks-	to cross by a bridge
		wohpɛc-	to cross by boat
woʷmeɪ	acorn	wɔʷomeɪ	shelled acorn

9.22 Reduplication

A number of verb stems and a few nouns have reduplicated forms, often with an added meaning of repetition, plurality, or the like. Most words of this group have both reduplicated and nonreduplicated forms, but there are some that are apparently only found in the reduplicated form. Reduplication is effected by the repetition, sometimes with alterations, of the first syllable, and in some words part of the second syllable also, of the nonreduplicated form.

Nonreduplicated form

Reduplicated form

Verbs

kelomen-	to turn (trans.)	kekelomen-	to turn several things
keʔul-	there is a lake	keʔkeʔul-	there is a series of lakes
kneweʔlon-	to be long	kokoneweʔlon-	to be long (of tufted things)

⁵e/iʔi is a contextually determined variant process and may be conveniently categorized as vocalic alternation, despite the presence of ʔ.

⁶Cf. kɪlɪmɪkɪɪ, pistol (revolver).

⁷Cf. pɪnɪɪh, to be gray (of deer).

10. BASIC SYNTACTICAL STRUCTURES

10.1 General

The basic syntactical structures of Yurok sentences are listed and outlined below, in order that the examples in the later sections of the grammar may be more easily interpreted. These outlines will be filled in by the more detailed statements of syntactical constructions in the subsequent sections.

10.2 Simple Sentences

10.21 Nominal + Verbal Sentences

The commonest basic sentence type in Yurok is **Nominal + Verbal**. Most complex sentences can be treated analytically as **expansions** of this basic type.

Examples of such simple sentences are:

nek helomeyék' I am (was) dancing
 pu·k ro?op' the deer is (was) running
 ke?l ho?opes build a fire!¹¹

10.22 Equational Sentences

Besides the **Nominal + Verbal** type, sentences of the **Equational** type are formed of two nominals or nominal groups.

wok nelet that is my sister
 wo?o·t ku tmi·gomin he is the hunter
 kic mewimor nečíš my dog is now an old fellow
 nek k^welek^w wiš ?upa· well, I am his brother

10.23 Verbals and Verbal Groups

Verbals and verbal groups can occur alone, without a **subject nominal**, as complete sentences.

tmo·lok' I am shooting
 ko?l nepek' I am eating something
 ho?opes build a fire!
 tenpewe?ł it is raining
 telogumek' nerpeł my tooth aches (lit., I am in pain in my tooth)
 kiti ?e?gah they are going to have a meal

10.24 Nominals and Nominal Groups

Similarly nominals and nominal groups can occur alone as complete sentences of the equational type.

k^wesi twegoh and it was the coon
 nek ho ?nenah it was mine
 neki? netektoh it is my log
 mos nek nečíš it is not my dog

¹¹The convention is adopted throughout of marking imperative sentences in English by a final exclamation mark.

10.25 Independent Subjects

A type of sentence is found in which a nominal or nominal group stands as a kind of independent subject to the sentence as a whole, apart from any specific subject of the verbal.

- yo? teno? wecege?l she has a lot of seaweed (lit., as for her, her seaweed is a lot)
 nek k^Welek^W wek new this is my name
 nekah k^Welek^W ho pelep' we were in a fight (lit., as for us, there was fighting)
 nekah kic no·t wi? segonki? as far as we are concerned, it has been done for a long time
 ke?l k^Welek^W ?ok^W kek^Wol you have your own fishing rock (lit., as for you, there is your fishing rock)

10.3 Complex Sentences

Complex sentences may be analyzed as belonging to the basic types listed above, with either the nominal element or the verbal element expanded, or both. Such expansion is achieved by means of one or more words linked as subordinate members of an endocentric construction with the nominal or verbal as head, by coördinate nominal or verbal groups with or without a coördinator, or by exocentric constructions acting as nominal substitutes. Endocentric constructions may be discontiguous.

10.31 Nominal Groups

10.311 Expanded nominal element

- mewah hu·k male child, son
 ni?i? peg·k two men
 wek ki ?o?le? this house (lit., this the house)
 ku peg·k me? weik^Wew the man from Weik^Wew
 ku ma·gin ku nepuy the rest of the salmon
 ne? no?oh w·y? he ate two eggs
 nek newo·k ku peg·k wo?o? I saw the man's house
 ke?l ?ok^W skuyeni ke?yoc you have a good boat

10.312 Coördinate nominal groups

With a coördinator:

- peg·k ?emsi wencok^Ws helomeye?m men and women were dancing

Without a coördinator:

- peg·k wencok^Ws hu·ksoh kem tene?m there were lots of men, women, and children

10.32 Verbal Groups

10.321 Expanded verbal element

- ku peg·k no?pe?n mewi? the man chased an elk
 cmeya·n ku peg·k no?pe?n mewi? or ku peg·k no?pe?n mewi? cmeya·n
 the man chased an elk yesterday

mecik ʔok^w haʔa:g there is a stone in the fire
 skuʔy soninepek I feel good
 nekah ki kem newohpew pek^wsu numi cpa· we will see each other again
 soon
 koʔl nepek ʔoikumi ciweyek I am eating something because I am hungry
 nek kaʔar wi ki yoh I will make it a pet
 keʔl co nahciseʔm k^wew ku ʔnu·k give your name to my child!

This type of expansion is also applied to the predicative element of equational sentences.

yoʔ wiš tmenomeni ʔweike‡ part of the land is his (lit., as for him, it is partly his land)

10.322 Coördinate verbal groups

With a coördinator:

nekah ho helomeyeʔm ʔemsi ho rurowo·ʔmoh we were dancing and singing
 yoʔ ho gak^ws ʔemsi ho cwegin he laughed and talked
 kenimi wo koʔmoyok ʔemsi nimi wo newo·k I neither heard it nor saw it
 nek noʔpenek mewi‡ tuʔ tepo·no‡ ʔo roʔop I was chasing an elk but it ran into the forest

Without a coördinator:

teneʔm ʔo·‡ wi ʔo·leʔm a lot of people live here (lit., there are many people they live here)
 kit hegoʔomah coʔ nu·ʔme‡ they arrived just as we were making the fires (lit., [we] were just making the fires then they arrived)
 ni mok^w ho nepek I had nothing to eat (lit., there was nothing I ate)
 ni mok^w skewoksiʔm no one likes it
 kohcew kic ʔo co·moy‡ ʔo neskwecok^w after six days he returned (lit., six days passed then he returned)

Under this heading may be included the constructions corresponding to "indirect speech" in European languages. In Yurok reported speech, intention, and so on, in which the speaker makes a statement about himself, the verb referring to this may either be in the second or third person, agreeing with the verb of saying, or in the first person, in this case corresponding to a direct quotation.

nek so·kiti ten I think it will rain
 hasek ʔowo·k ki hegok I think I will go tomorrow
 yoʔ haʔm mos ki yegok^w he says he cannot go
 yoʔ kwelek^w ma haʔs ku kepoyurek he decided to go swimming (lit., he decided "I will go swimming")
 toʔ hes ʔi yeseʔm ki yegok do you still intend to go? (lit., do you still intend "I shall go"?)

10.323 Subordinate verbs or verbal groups

niki to·ʔm wenegi·ʔnowo‡ then they all looked for it (lit., then they were all together they looked for it)

nek skewok ki ?nesega?ageyek I want to be rich
 numi mep new kic ?ukye?w we were just in time to see it capsize

10.33 Exocentric Constructions Acting as Nominal Substitute Groups

ku sega?ageye?m kic so?to? the rich people have gone away
 ki wi ?o?le?moni wa?soyowo? those who live here are poor

10.4 Word Order

Expansions of the verbal element, other than preverbal particles (14), may in general precede or follow their head word (cf. the second example in 10.321, above).

Word order may be used to distinguish the categories of subject and object, as in English, and in such cases the order is Subject before Object.

ku peguk no?pe?n mewit the man chased an elk
 mewit no?pe?n ku peguk an elk chased the man
 nepe?wišneg nep nepuy an otter ate a salmon
 nek skewoksimek pa?ah I want some water
 yo? ?ohpu?m ku ceykeni she fed the child
 ti?now newo?m ku ke?l ke?sec who saw your father?
 ku ke?l ke?sec ti?now newo?m whom did your father see?

cf. ku peguk ku newomin mewah the man who saw the boy
 ku peguk ku mewah newomin the man whom the boy saw
 See 13.141.6I(2)e.

Where, however, the morphological form of one or more of the words, or their sense, makes the structure of the sentence unambiguous, this order is not necessarily adhered to.

nekac (objective form of first person singular pronoun) newohpe?n ku
 wencok^{Ws} the woman saw me
 ke?l nekah ki ni?go?m (plural verb) we will take you with us
 yo?ikoh ti?nišow wiš weskewok or ti?nišow wiš weskewok yo?ikoh
 what do they want?

In sentences of basic structure Subject + Verbal the order may be varied.

helome?y ku peguk or ku peguk helome?y the man is dancing
 ho?li? no?loh my basket is twisted
 no?re?w ke?poy your tattooing is pretty

The order Verb Subject is normal in the following subtypes of this sentence type.

1. Where the verb is ?ok^W. See 13.141.1F(6). ?ok^{Ws}, there is, or mo?ok^W(s), mo^kW(s), there is not.

?ok^{Ws} ?uke?pew her grandchild was there
 ni mo^kW no?o?? I have no house
 ni mo?ok^W mec there is no fire here

2. Where the third person attributive form of intransitive verbs (including adjectives) is used predicatively in place of the indicative. See 13.141.6I(1)

ploksin ne?yoc my boat is wide
 nimi skuyeni wi ?o·1 that man is no good

Pronominal subjects, on the other hand, generally precede the verbal.

yo? neskwecok^w he is coming back
 ke?l ho teget you were crying
 yo?1koh megelo1 they are coming too

But sentences of the following type are also found:

nimi sloy1ketoy ke?l you have not swept it
 kus no?o1 ki kem nu nu·?m yo?1koh when are they coming back?

The indefinite pronoun ko?l, something, someone, precedes the verb of which it is the object.

nek ko?l nepek I am eating something

THE YUROK LANGUAGE

GRAMMAR, TEXTS, LEXICON

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PUBLICATIONS IN LINGUISTICS
Volume 15

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS
BERKELEY AND LOS ANGELES
1958