

Two pluractional constructions in Mi'kmaw

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Research question

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- Mi'kmaw has at least two pluractional (cf. Newman 2012) constructions.
- This is in contrast to some other Algonquian languages where repeated actions are encoded by reduplication (Junker 1994, Dahlstrom 1997, Conathan 2005).
- We ask, what are the syntactic and semantic differences between the two forms?

- Two pluractional constructions
- *-o'*-*t-u* multiple actions of the same type on multiple internal arguments
- *-o'*-*t-m* multiple different actions on one internal argument
- *-o'* (little *v*) is pluractional aspect
- *-u* and *-m* (Voice) together with *-o'* produce different types of pluractionals and illustrate a dependency between the two categories
- This dependency occurs despite an intervening animacy agreement morpheme

ke 's-o'-t-u-∅

put.in.fire-*v*-AGRan-Voice-1s

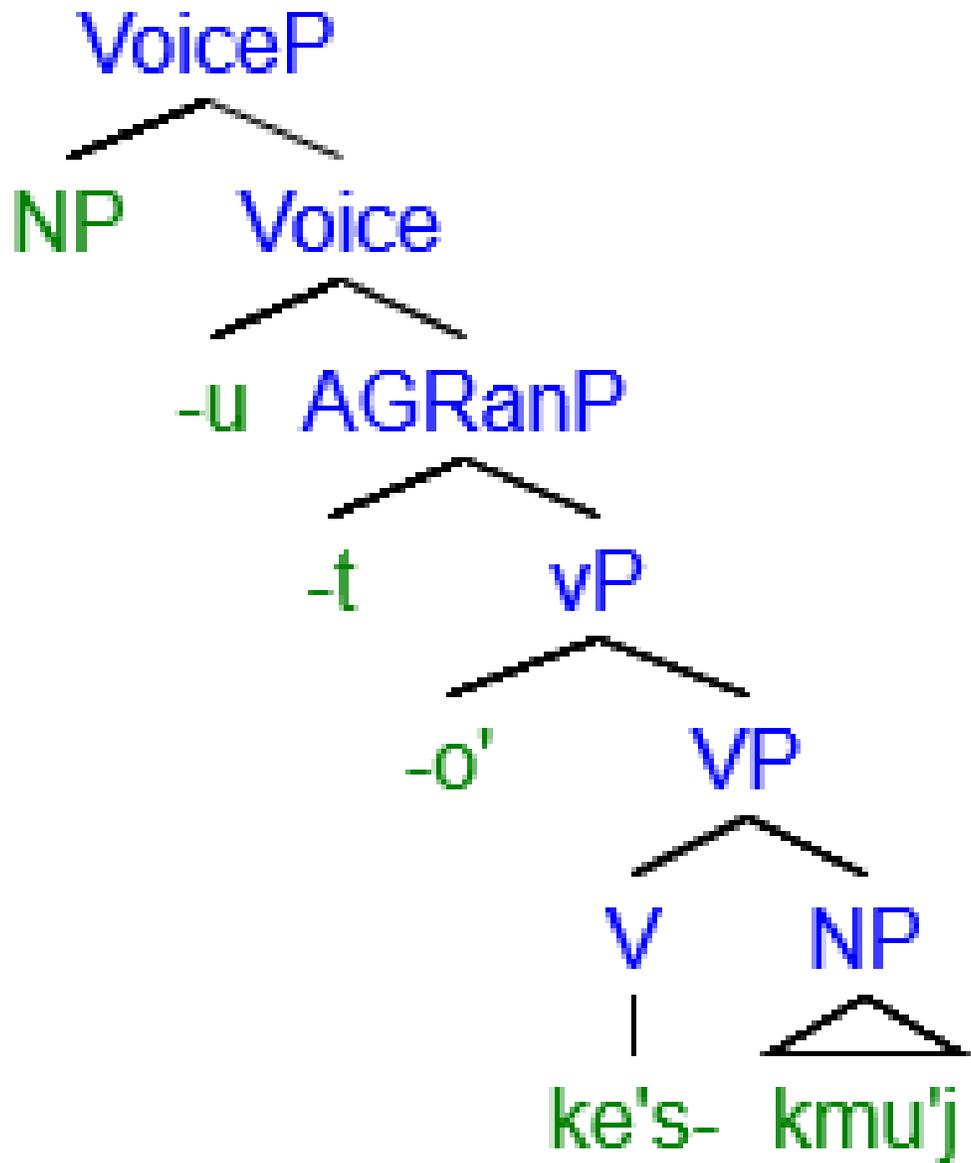
'I am putting wood into the fire.'

kmu 'j

wood(IN)

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- **Little *v***: aspect (*-o'* pluractional)
- **AGRan**: animacy of the internal argument (*-t* inanimate internal argument)
- **Voice**: subject and object restrictions (*-u* non 3 prox subject, inanimate object)
- **AGRan+Voice**: work in combination; together they map semantic roles onto grammatical roles (*-t-u* active voice)
- **Inflection** (*-∅* 1s)



Three categories

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Little *v*: aspect

AGRan: animacy of the internal argument

Voice: subject and object restrictions

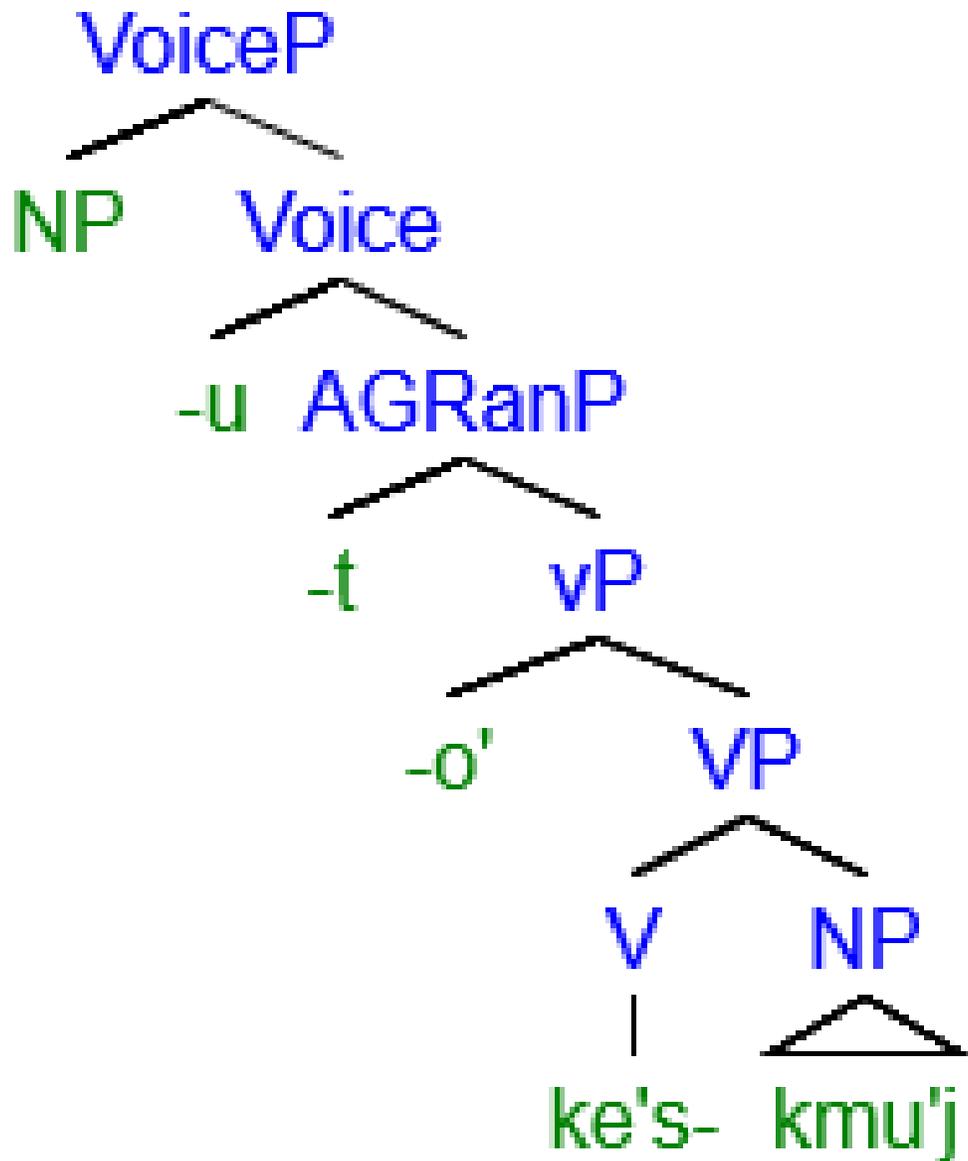
AGRan+Voice: work in combination; together they map semantic roles onto grammatical roles

ke's-o'-t-u-Ø

kmu'j

put.in.fire-*v*-AGRan-Voice-1s wood(IN)

'I am putting wood into the fire.'



Two pluractionals

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-o'-t-u same type of action on multiple internal arguments

-o'-t-m many different actions on one internal argument

Little v-Voice combination influences type of pluractional in spite of intervening AGRan category

ke's-o'-t-u-Ø *kmu'j*
 put.in.fire-v-AGRan-Voice-1s wood(IN)
 'I am putting wood into the fire.'

Methodology

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- Research on verbs done in the context of developing curriculum for Mi'kmaw immersion program and Friesen's language learning
- We use the Indigenist research paradigm (Wilson 2007).
- We considered about 150 verb roots; eliciting different sentences using the same root.
- Entered 1200+ sentences in Excel. Used these as a base for discussions about the morphology and sentence structure.
- Investigated the functions of the morphemes in the verb.

-o'-t-u pluractional

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Same type of action on plural internal arguments

The clauses only differ in that the root contains *-o'* in (a) and *-a'* in (b).

(a) *kut-o'-t-u-∅* *p̄itewey* *kaps-iktuk*
pour-*v*-AGRan-Voice-1s tea(IN) mug-LOC
'I am pouring tea into the mugs.'

(b) *kut-a'-t-u-∅* *p̄itewey* *kaps-iktuk*
pour-*v*-AGRan-Voice-1s tea(IN) mug-LOC
'I am pouring tea into the mug.'

- *kut-* 'pour' with *-o'* expresses a pluractional event of pouring tea into many mugs (a)
- *kut-* with *-a'* expresses the single action of pouring tea into one mug (b)

kut-o'-t-u-∅

pour-v-AGRan-Voice-1s

p̄itewey

tea (IN)

kaps-iktuk

mug-LOC

'I am pouring tea into the mugs.'

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root

Little *v*

aspect

AGRan

animacy of the
internal argument

Voice

subject and object
restrictions

Inflection

AGRan+Voice work in combination; together they map semantic roles onto grammatical roles

kut-

*pour sth
into sth*

-o'

pluractional

-t

*inanimate internal
argument*

-u

*non-3 prox subject,
inanimate object*

-∅

1s

-t-u active voice

-o'-t-u pluractional

Same type of action on plural internal arguments

- (a) *ke s-o'-t-u-∅* *kmuj*
 put.in.fire-*v*-AGRan-Voice-1s wood(IN)
 'I am putting wood into the fire.' **pluractional**
- (b) *ke s-a'-t-u-∅* *kmuj*
 put.in.fire-*v*-AGRan-Voice-1s wood(IN)
 'I am going to put a stick into the fire.' **single action**

- The clauses are otherwise identical.
- Our corpus of over 150 verb roots in over 1200 clauses includes 20 roots of the same type.

-o' pluractional

-a' single activity

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tep-o'-t-u-Ø *mijipjewey* *n-utapaqn-k*
load-v-AGRan-Voice-1s food(IN) 1s-car-LOC
'I am putting groceries into my car.'

tep-a'-t-u-Ø *kutputi* *n-utapaqn-k*
load -v-AGRan-Voice- 1s chair(IN) 1s-car-LOC
'I am putting the chair into my car.'

tew-o'-t-u-Ø *puksuk*
out-v-AGRan-Voice-1s firewood(IN)
'I am taking out the firewood.'

tew-a'-t-u-Ø *kutputi*
out -v-AGRan-Voice- 1s chair(IN)
'I am taking out the chair.'

-o'-t-m pluractional

Different actions on the same internal argument

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(a) *ank-o'-t-m-∅* *wasuek*
care-v-AGRo-Voice-1s flower(IN)
'I am taking care of the flower.'

(b) *nuj-o'-t-m-∅* *amakkaltimk* *wlo'nuk*
manage-v-AGRo-Voice-1s dance(IN) tonight
'I am going to look after the dance tonight.'

- Two different roots are illustrated.
- The subject in (a) puts the flower in an appropriate place, repeatedly waters it, takes off dead leaves – the overall event of caring for the flower.
- Likewise, the subject in (b) is in charge of the MC, the band, the caterers, and is chaperone at the event to make sure everything runs well.
- Our corpus includes eight roots with the same character.

Contrasting the two pluractionals

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-o'-t-u Same action on multiple internal arguments

Wiaq-o'-t-u-Ø *pe'kn powder, salawey, aqq sismoqn*
mix-v-AGRan-Voice-1s baking powder, salt, and sugar
'I am mixing in baking powder, salt and sugar.'

Amal-o'-t-u-an-n *kun'ta-l sam'qwan-iktuk*
various-v-AGRan-Voice-1s-p rock(IN)-p water-LOC
'I am tossing rocks in the water for fun.'

Pesk-o'-t-u-an-n *wapkwan-n*
pluck-v-AGRan-Voice-1s-p grey.hair(IN)-p
'I am plucking grey hairs.'

-o'-t-m Multiple actions on the same internal argument

Wel-o'-t-m-Ø *wasuek*
good-v-AGRan-Voice-1s flower(IN)
'I am taking good care of the flower.'

Kwes-o'-t-m-Ø *n-pitn*
favour-v-AGRan-Voice-1s 1sPOSS-hand(IN)
'I am favouring your hand.'

Tek-o'-t-m-Ø *alames*
participate-v-AGRan-Voice-1s mass(IN)
'I participate at mass.'

Summary: Syntactic and semantic differences

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<i>v</i> \Voice	<i>-u</i>	<i>-m</i>
<i>-a</i> '	<i>Single</i> action on <u><i>one</i></u> internal argument	*
<i>-o</i> '	<i>Same</i> action on <u><i>multiple</i></u> internal arguments	<i>Multiple different</i> actions on <u><i>one</i></u> internal argument

**wel-a'-t-m-Ø wasuek*

Intended: 'I did a good thing to the flower.'

The role of the root (for further study)

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- only one root in our corpus collocates with both *-o'-t-u* and *-o'-t-m*

tel-o'-t-u

tel-o'-t-m

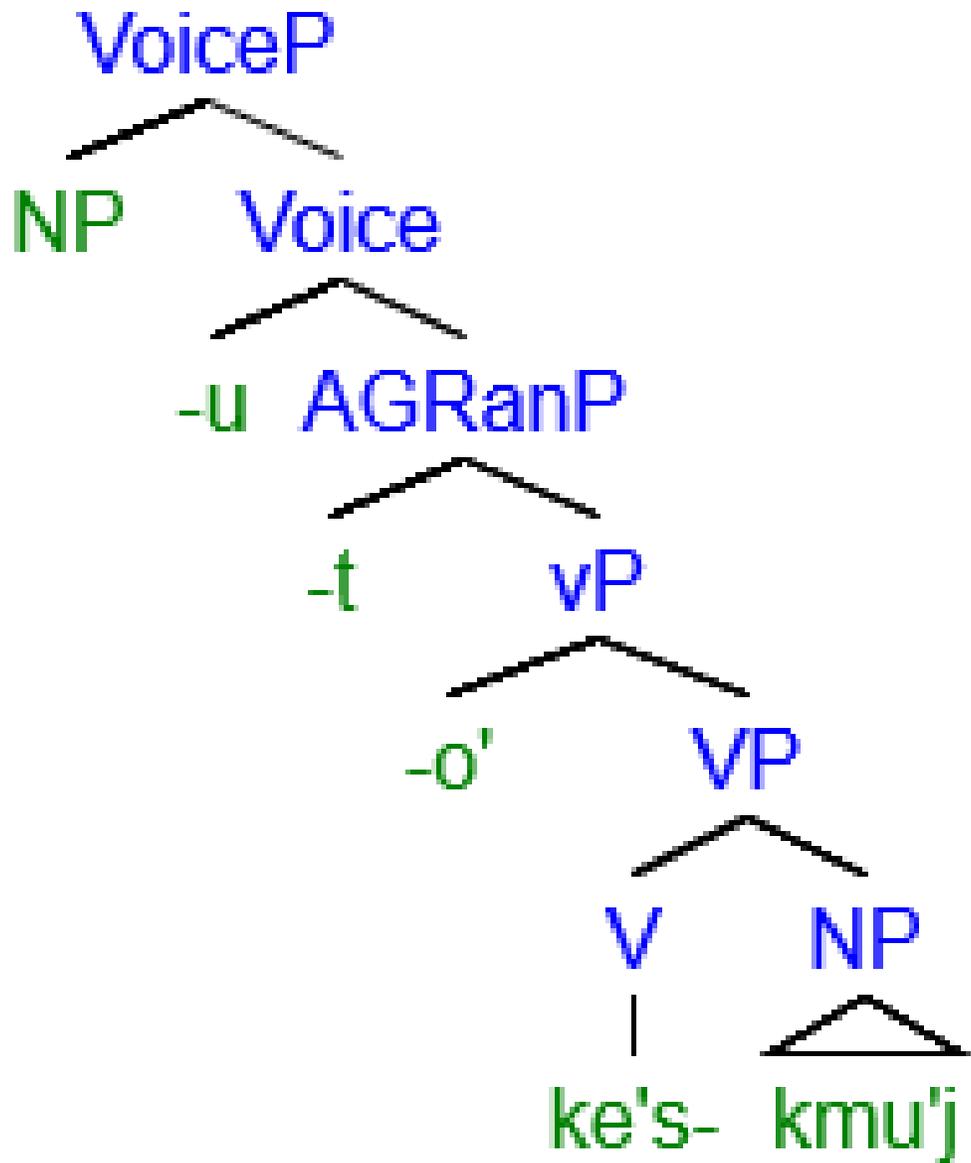
thus-*v*-AGRan-Voice-1s

thus-*v*-AGRan-Voice-1s

‘I do thus...’

‘I think thus...’

- suggests that features of the root correlate with Voice and pluractionality (cf. Armoskaite 2011, Piggott 1989).



Remaining questions

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- What is the nature of the dependency between *v* and Voice?
 - Together, they express the type of pluractional
 - The ungrammaticality of *-a'* plus *-m* indicates another type of dependency

ke's-o'-t-u-∅ *kmu'j*
 put.in.fire-*v*-AGRan-Voice-1s wood(IN)
 'I am putting wood into the fire.'

Wela'lioq

wel-a'-l-Ø-ioq

good-*v*-AGRan-Voice-2p>1s

‘You (p) are benefitting me (thank you).’

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The Indigenist research paradigm (Wilson 2007:195)

- Respect for all forms of life as being related and interconnected.
- Conduct all actions and interactions in a spirit of kindness and honesty; compassion.
- The reason for doing the research must be one that brings benefits to the Indigenous community.
- The foundation of the research question must lie within the reality of the Indigenous experience.
- Any theories developed or proposed must be grounded in an Indigenous epistemology and supported by the Elders and the community that live out this particular epistemology.
- The methods used will be process-oriented, and the researcher will be recognized and cognizant of his or her role as one part of the group in process.
- It will be recognized that transformation within every living entity participating in the research will be one of the outcomes of every project.
- It will be recognized that the researcher must assume a certain responsibility for the transformations and outcomes of the research project(s) which he or she brings into a community.
- It is advisable that a researcher work as part of a team of Indigenous scholars/thinkers and with the guidance of Elder(s) or knowledge-keepers.
- It is recognized that the integrity of any Indigenous people or community could never be undermined by Indigenous research because such research is grounded in that integrity.
- It is recognized that the languages and cultures of Indigenous peoples are living processes and that research and the discovery of knowledge is an ongoing function for the thinkers and scholars of every Indigenous group.