

Applicative prefixes in Umoⁿhoⁿ (Omaha, Siouan)

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- 2 The applicative prefixes
- 3 Specificities of Umoⁿhoⁿ applicative constructions

Umoⁿhoⁿ documentation

- Highly endangered language (speakers over 60)
- Language thoroughly documented by Rev. James O. DORSEY in the late 19th Century.
 - Glossed and translated texts translated (+800pp)
 - Manuscript dictionary (around 18000 entries)
- Recordings and transcriptions made by Dr. Rudin in the 1990s
- Revitalization efforts in progress (lexicons, manuals)

Main features of Umoⁿhoⁿ grammar

- Head-marker language ; no flagging. Flexible SOV order.
- Split intransitivity (A : “agent-like” ; P : “patient-like”)
- No indexation of 3rd persons on the verb (except 3rd person plural object)

noⁿ’óⁿ
he/she/they heard him/her/it

- Ergative lability
- Polysynthetic features
 - Indexation of up to 2 arguments (3 in specific cases)
 - Templatic morphology with numerous derivational prefixes
 - Many morphological changes among prefixes : merging into opaque surface forms
 - Nominal incorporation (though infrequent)

The applicative prefixes

Applicative constructions

Mithun, 2001 : “derivational processes within the verbal morphology that add a participant to the set of core arguments.”

noⁿzhíⁿ “to stand” vs *unóⁿzhiⁿ* “to stand in”

Xthíazhi noⁿzhíⁿ-i-ga.

quiet stand-PX-IMP.M

Stand ye still (Dorsey 1890:23.19)

tizhébe etá t^he u-nóⁿzhiⁿ égoⁿ

Door POSS.3 the APPL:IN-stand as

As he stood in his door, ... (Dorsey 1890:23.19)

Umoⁿhoⁿ has morphologically distinct applicative construction markers, but some of them are polysemous.

Applicatives in Umoⁿhoⁿ

“benefactive” ; “dative”

gí- benefactive (+ malefactive, affectee...)

ígi- benefactive-possessive

“locatives” ; “adverbials” ; “preverbs” (Helmbrecht 2006)

u- locative “into” (APPL:IN) ; “about”

á- locative “on” (APPL:SUP)

í- locative “against/by” (APPL:AD) ; “with” (APPL:SOC)
instrumental (APPL:INST) ; cause (APPL:CAUSE)

→ *ithá-* (< **í-á-*)

→ *uthú-* (< **í-u-*)

Applicative prefix *u-*

Basic locative meaning : “in”

Locative “in” ; “inside”

Xthíazhi *noⁿzhiⁿ-i-ga.*

quiet *stand*-PX-IMP.M

Stand ye still (Dorsey 1890:23.19)

tizhébe *etá* *t^he* *u-noⁿzhiⁿ* *égoⁿ*

Door POSS.3 the APPL:IN-stand as

As he stood **in his door**, ... (Dorsey 1890:23.19)

ubáaze “to scare off [x] to [y]” (allative)

ubét^hoⁿ “to wrap [x] inside [y]”

ugthíⁿ “to sit in [x]”

utí “to camp in [x]”

Applicative prefix *u-* as nominalizer

The prefix *u-* also has a nominalizing function, a feature shared with other Siouan languages (Helmbrecht 2006).

Nominalizing function

Noun

ugthíⁿ “seat”
unéthe “firing place”
uk^hí “home”
udóⁿbe “appearance”

Verb

gthíⁿ “to sit”
néthe “to start a fire”
k^hí “to arrive back there”
dóⁿbe “to look at ; to see”

Applicative prefix *á-*

locative meaning : “on”

shóⁿge amá nóⁿge agí-i.
horse the.MOV run come.back-PX

“His horse was coming back running to the camp.” (Dorsey 1890:464.9)

ki zhoⁿthínoⁿge-’óⁿsagi mazhóⁿ thoⁿ á-noⁿga-i.
and wagon-swift land the.RND APPL:SUP-run-PL

And the swift wagons run on the land (Dorsey 1891:103.01 ; my translation)

ágashoⁿ to spill [x] on [y]
ágthiⁿ to sit on [x] ; to mount [a horse]
ánoⁿzhiⁿ to rain on [x]

Applicative prefix *í-*

Productive function : instrumental applicative

ki *wíⁿ* *'ú-i* *t^{he}*
and one wound-PX EVID

“And he wounded one slightly” (Dorsey 1890:189.9)

Moⁿ *nóⁿba* *í-'u-biamá* *Moⁿch^hú.*

arrow two APPL:INST-wound-PX.EVID Grizzly.Bear

He wounded the Grizzly Bear with **two arrows** (Dorsey 1890:46.8)

íbibthaska to press flat [x] with [y]

íthizé to take (=catch) [x] with [y]

íhitha to bathe by means of [x]

Applicative prefix *í-*

Locative function “by” ; “against”

wakóⁿdagi *pa-péthoⁿba* *ak^há* *shkóⁿ-hnoⁿ-i* *thóⁿdi*
water.monster head-seven the.SG move-HAB-PX whenever
And whenever the Water-monster with seven heads moved, ...
(Dorsey 1890:111.10)

Sni <*thi*> *t'e!* *Péde* *í-shkoⁿ-ga!*
<P2>cold fire APPL:AD-move-IMP.M
You are cold! Draw near the fire! (Dorsey's manuscript dictionary)

ígthiⁿ to sit by/near [x]
ínoⁿzhiⁿ to stand at [x]
íbista to press [x] against [y]

Link between instrumental and locative “against” senses

The locative/instrumental syncretism : some pivot constructions

Moⁿthíⁿk *iⁿdé* *thoⁿ* *í-biká-bi-amá* *ké-toⁿga* *ak^há.*
soil face the.RND APPL:AD-rub-PX-EVID turtle-big the.SG

[The Big Turtle] rubbed earth on his face. (Dorsey 1890:257.01)

síⁿde *k^he* *noⁿbé* *t^he* *í-wi- k^hoⁿtóⁿ*
tail the.HOR hand the.VERT APPL:AD-A1SG/P2- tie
te *há*
IRR DECL.M

I will tie your hands to his [colt] tail (Dorsey 1890:96.4-5)

The sociative meaning “together with”

[*Tanúkagaxthíxthí*] [*waníde*] *i-páxe* *támiⁿk^he.*
hamburger gravy APPL:SOC-A1SG.make 1SG.IRR

I will make gravy with hamburger. (Swetland 2006:2.1)

Applicative prefix *í-*

Introducing a cause / a reason

Niníba háshi t^{hi} t^{hó}ⁿ é í-noⁿshtóⁿ-bi-amá.
pipe later arrive the.STAND that APPL:CAUSE-stop-PX-EVID

They stopped, owing to the act of him who came afterwards with the pipe. (Dorsey 1890:400.06)

oⁿwóⁿxpani égoⁿ, tháthuha ith-á- t'e.
P1SG.poor as almost APPL:CAUSE-A1SG- die
As I am poor, I have almost died from that cause. (Dorsey 1890:504.11)

Applicatives *ithá* and *uthú-*

Regular combination of productive applicatives

<i>badóⁿ</i> to push [x]	<i>ubádoⁿ</i> to push [x] into [y]	<i>uthúbadoⁿ</i> to push [x] into [y] with [z]
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Available definitions for *uthúbadoⁿ* :

- “use [it] to push [her/him] into [him/it]” (ULCC 2005)
- “to push in [a ball or bullet] with [a ramrod – the name of the instrument preceding the verb]” (Dorsey’s manuscript dictionary)

Applicatives *ithá* and *uthú-*

Regular applicative *í-* on a *u-* verb

Núgthe *úhoⁿ-bi-amá,*
turnip cook-PX-EVID

shi *te-níxa* *égoⁿ* *uth-úhoⁿ-bi-amá.*
and buffalo-pouch like APPL:INST-cook-PX-EVID

He cooked turnips, and he cooked a buffalo-paunch with them (Dorsey 1890:256.14)

Regular applicative *í-* on a *á-* verb

Tha-héchi *ki,* *í* *t^{he}* *ágaxada-ga!*
A2-sneeze when mouth the.VERT cover-IMP.M

'Cover your mouth when you sneeze!' (Saunsoci & Eschenberg 2006:180)

Wahí *ge* *waiíⁿ* *ith-ágaxade* *ihétha-bi-amá.*
bone the.SCT robe APPL:INST-cover lay.down-PX-EVID

He laid her bones down, and covered them with a robe. (Dorsey 1890:279.6)

ithá- and *uthú-* as independant derivational prefixes?

Many verbs with *ithá-* and *uthú-* prefixes have minimal pairs but are semantically opaque :

<i>ápe</i>	to ask [x] to accompany one	<i>ithápe</i>	to wait for [x]
<i>ubét^hoⁿ</i>	to wrap [x] into [y]	<i>ithábet^hoⁿ</i>	to wrap [x] around [y]
<i>dóⁿbe</i>	to look at [x]	<i>uthúdoⁿbe</i>	to examine/consider [x]
<i>unóⁿzhiⁿ</i>	to stand in [x]	<i>uthúnoⁿzhiⁿ</i>	to depend on [x]

Some verbs starting with the *uthú-* prefix have no minimal pairs :

- *uthúk^hoⁿpi* : be beautiful ; [x] be becoming to [y]
- *uthúk^hi* : to side with [x] ; to be an ally of [x]

Specificities of Umoⁿhoⁿ applicative constructions

- Applicatives introducing whole clauses
- Alternative constructions
- Lexicalization and morphological restrictions

í- introducing whole clauses

In some instances *í-kuhe* means “to fear that ...”, introducing a clause with argument rising.

Complement clause with argument rising

ki Pó^oka-ta né í-wi- kuhé.

and Ponka-ALL A2.go APPL:CAUSE-A1SG/P2- fear

I am apprehensive about your going to the Ponkas. (Dorsey 1890:651.6)

ó^o-gi-nó^oge ith-á- kuhé go^o

APPL:SUP.P1SG-POSS-run APPL:CAUSE-A1SG- fear as

a-ó^ohe ha

A1SG-flee DECL.M

I fled as I feared that he would run over me. (Dorsey 1890:64.2)

ki Iho^okto^owí^o tíí tho^o-tá shné wí-ko^obtha.

and Yankton village the.RND-ALL A2.go A1SG/P2-want

I wish you to go to the Yankton village. (Dorsey 1890:737.4)

í- introducing whole clauses

Summary of possible constructions with í- introducing a cause :

- 1 Introducing NP : “to be fearful on account of ...”
“They were afraid on account of **the Beggar.**”
- 2 Introducing clause (+NP) : “to be fearful because...”
“**He came later with a pipe,** they stopped because of **that.**”
“I am afraid because **I have difficulties in driving it.**”
- 3 Introducing clause : “to fear that...”
“I feared that **he would run over me.**”

Alternative constructions

Prototypical applicative constructions have alternative syntactic constructions where the additional argument is peripheral.

Some of the Umoⁿhoⁿ applicative constructions have alternative constructions:

- Applicative *í-* because of
- Locative applicatives *u-* inessive (inside) ; *á-* superessive (on top) ; *í-* sociative (by/beside)

Alternatives to the applicative locative constructions :

gthíⁿ “to sit” vs *u-gthíⁿ* “to sit in [x]”

gthíⁿ-bi-amá *Wahóⁿthishíge* *ak^há* *uthóⁿda* *thóⁿ-di.*
sit-PX-EVID Orphan the.PX middle the.ROUND-in

the Orphan sat in the very middle (surrounded by the people).
(Dorsey, 1890:601.16)

ki *Kíxaxájoⁿ* *ak^há* *Xithá* *áhiⁿ* *k^higthé* *hiⁿ*
and Wren the.PX Eagle wing beneath feather
shkúbe *thoⁿ* *u-gthíⁿ-bi-amá.*
deep the.ROUND APPL:IN-sit-PX-EVID

But the Wren got under the thick feathers of the Eagle and sat there as the Eagle flew. (Dorsey 1890:581.1)

Various constructions with peripheral locatives :

“inside”

Wa'ú *dúba* *wat^hóⁿzi* *tóⁿde* *móⁿt^he* *xa-í,*
woman some corn ground inside bury-PL
tóⁿwoⁿ *thóⁿ-di.*
village the.RND-in

Some of the women had buried corn in the ground at the village.
(Dorsey 1890:452.4)

“on top”

Sadégthe *t^he* *ána-bi* *egóⁿ* *gahá* *zhóⁿ-bi-amá*
scaffold the.VERT climb-PX as on.top lie-PX-EVID
He climbed the scaffold and lay on it (Dorsey 1890:619.10)

Applicative constructions with NP expressed :

Without marking	157	84%
With <i>-di/-ta</i>	17	9%
With other markers	13	7%
Total	187	100%

Example of applicative locative argument marked

Ní *k^hé-ta* *ú-baazá-bi-amá.*

water the.HOR-ALL APPL:IN.P3PL-scarePX-EVID

They scared them into the water. (Dorsey 1890:412.5)

Argument marking and degree of lexicalization

Verbs with lexicalized *u-* prefix mark their locative arguments as peripheral.

thé-ge *bthúga* *ga-t^{he}* *édi* *úhoⁿ-i* *t^{he}*.
DEM-the.SCT all DEM-the.VERT there P3PL.cook-PL EVID
They **cooked** all the ribs and everything **in there**. (Rudin 1990:Two Ghosts Story)

égithe *tébia* *tú-xti* *amá* *wíⁿ* *ní* *xébe*
finally frog green-very the.PL one water shallow
kóⁿha *k^hé-di* *ugáha* *góⁿ* *gthíⁿ* *ak^háma*.
side the.HOR-in float thus sit EVID
At length a very green Frog was sitting, **floating by the edge of the shallow water**. (Dorsey 1890:282.03-4)

Facultative locative arguments

u^onsi “to jump / to jump in [x]” (from **óⁿsi*)

Ní *k^he* *u <á> oⁿsi.*

water the.HOR <A1SG>leap

I jumped into the water. (Dorsey 1890:422.6)

Mashchíⁿge *u^onsi* *áiátha-bi-ama.*

Rabbit leap leavePX-EVID

The Rabbit had gone with a leap. (Dorsey 1890:36.08)

ágazhade “to make a stride / to stride over [x]”

“*K^hé,* *óⁿ gazháda-ga! (...)* *á-bi-amá* *Wés’a* *ak^há.*

INTERJ P1SG. stride-IMP-M say-PX-EVID snake the.SG

“Come! Step **over me!** (...),” said the Snake. (Dorsey 1890:567.2)

ishtá *thip’íⁿze-doⁿ* *ágazhade* *athá-bi-amá.*

eye close-while stride go-PX-EVID

Having closed his eyes, he **made a stride** and departed. (Dorsey 1890:144.12)

Summary of the lexicalization process

Fonctional applicative
ugthiⁿ
“to sit in [x]”
(from *gthiⁿ* “to sit”)

⇒

Lexicalized verb
with appl. obj
upé
“to enter into [x]”

⇒

Lexicalized with
facultative appl. obj
uóⁿsi
“to jump (into [x])”

⇒

Lexicalized with no appl.
obj
uhóⁿ
“to cook [x]”
(the location can only be
expressed peripherally)

⇒

Lexicalized with
opaque meaning
unábthiⁿ
“to sweat”

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Abbreviations

A	Agent marker	INTERJ	interjection
AD	adessive (“by”)	IRR	irrealis
ALL	allative	M	masculine
APPL	applicative	MOV	moving
DAT	dative	RND	round
DECL	declarative	P	Patient marker
DEM	demonstrative	POSS	possessive
EVID	evidential	PX	proximate
F	feminine	SCT	scattered
HAB	habitual	SOC	sociative (“with”)
HOR	horizontal	STAND	standing
IN	inessive (“in”)	SUP	superessive (“on”)
INST	instrumental	VERT	vertical