NAHUATL GRAMMAR

OF THE TOWNSHIPS OF MECAYAPAN AND TATAHUICAPAN DE JUÁREZ, VERACRUZ

Second Edition
(Electronic Version)

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Preface to the English Translation

I undertook this translation for my own purposes, imagining that turning the Spanish into English would help me internalize the grammar of this modern version of Nahuatl better (I thought that this exercise might prove useful to my knowledge of Classical Nahuatl). Once I had made some progress with the project, it occurred to me that while most people who are deeply involved in Nahuatl studies perforce have to be conversant with Spanish, an English translation might nonetheless prove useful to students of Nahuatl who are more at home in English than Spanish (for instance, linguists). I wrote to the Instituto Lingüístico de Verano, which has graciously allowed me to make my translation available under their copyright. I thank the institute for letting me bring the fruits of my labor to the general public.

For the most part, the translation is straightforward enough. I have converted references to the pronunciation and grammatical usage of Spanish to ones appropriate for an English-speaking audience. The most noticeable change that I have introduced has to do with the orthography. The original text utilized the adapted form of the Spanish alphabet that is used to record the language locally. Spanish orthography is the obvious choice under the circumstances (it is the main literary language in the area, and Spanish orthography has traditionally been used to record Nahuatl since the sixteenth century), but there are two disadvantages from the point of view of an English-speaking audience. First, some usages of Spanish, such as *hu* for *w*, are not natural for an English speaker. Second, some aspects of the Spanish system, such as using *qu* for the velar stop when it appears before a front vowel, and *e* when the same sound appears before a back vowel, may make some sense in Spanish in terms of the Latin etymology of the language, but have no historical justification for Nahuatl and serve only to obscure the basic phonology of the language. Hence, I have uniformly replaced the Spanish orthography with a more logical system based on linguistic principles. The section on accents has also been simplified by dispensing with certain peculiarities deriving from the Spanish system. This change in orthography is meant for pedagogical purposes only, and I am saying nothing about how natives should write their own language. Once the user of this book has grasped the phonological basis of the language, he or she should have no problem reading it in Spanish orthography (which is described here). Finally, I have added a few explanatory footnotes; these appear in square brackets and conclude with my initials in order to distinguish them clearly from the notes of the original.

Christopher S. Mackay
Edmonton, Alberta
October 21, 2007
Preface to the Second Edition of the Spanish Version of the Nahuatl Grammar

The first edition of this Nahuatl grammar, published in 1981, was entitled Gramática náhuatl del municipio de Mecayapan, Veracruz. In the subsequent years, this township was divided, and the township of Tatahuicapan de Juárez was made a separate political entity. For this reason, the present, newly published edition bears the title Gramática náhuatl (mela’táltol) de los municipios de Mecayapan y Tatahuicapan de Juárez, Veracruz.

The first edition contained a Spanish-Nahuatl dictionary that has not been included in the present edition because a new Diccionario náhuatl de los municipios de Mecayapan y Tatahuicapan de Juárez, Veracruz has recently been published as a separate volume.

This newly published edition contains essentially the same grammatical information as the first, with the addition of a significant number of literal translations placed interlinearly between the model sentences in Nahuatl and the free translation into Spanish when the syntactic characteristics of the two languages are compared.

The complete text of this grammar, together with the dictionary, is accessible via the internet on the website of the Instituto Lingüístico de Verano:

http://www.sil.org/mexico/nahuatl/familia-nahuatl.html

The author recognizes with gratitude the important assistance provided by the linguistic advisors Thomas Willet and David Tuggy, the assistance of Adriana Ulterras Ortiz in the editing of the Spanish, and the enthusiasm of Albert Bickford as director of the Department of Linguistics.
Acknowledgments of the Spanish Edition

Like every work, this one emerges into the light of day thanks to the interest and support of many people. Mention is made here of those who collaborated more closely on it.

The first chapters were started in 1972 with the assistance of Genaro González Cruz, a native speaker of the Nahuatl of Mecayapan. The project suffered a number of interruptions, but the interest that he always showed in seeing it finished and used as a manual of instruction were a motivation to persevere.

The disinterested and sagacious help of Gonzalo Lorenzo Revilla impelled the work to its conclusion. He reviewed the Spanish correspondences and added entries of linguistic and ethnographic interest. He also reviewed the grammatical material and made suggestions that made it possible to provide a more precise presentation of the information.

Dr. Doris Bartholomew, in her capacity as linguistic consultant, applied her experience to examining the first draft and discussing the material presented in it.

Dr. Yolanda Lastra was kind enough to read the manuscript and to give us very valuable suggestions in terms of certain items of nomenclature and to call our attention to certain deficiencies in the Spanish. Artemisa Echegoyen took care of various points relating to the editing of the book.

My wife, Marilyn Minter de Wolgemuth, set down roots with me in Mecayapan, learned to speak Nahuatl, supervised the compilation of the vocabulary, and typed innumerable pages of text, which expedited the analytical studies laid out here.

The study of this variant of Nahuatl was begun with the vocabulary archive supplied by Dr. Howard W. Law. He also provided my initial orientation in the language and customs of Mecayapan.
NAHUATL GRAMMAR

OF THE TOWNSHIPS OF MECAYAPAN AND TATAHUICAPAN DE JUÁREZ, VERACRUZ
Introduction

This Nahuatl Grammar of the Townships of Mecayapan and Tatahuicapan de Juárez, Veracruz is meant to provide, in terms that are not overly technical, an outline of the grammar of the everyday speech of the inhabitants of Mecayapan and Tatahuicapan in Veracruz. The Nahuatl of these towns is very similar to what is spoken in the neighboring township of Pajapan, which was described by Antonio García de León (1976). Both townships are located near the Gulf coast to the east and northeast of Coatzacoalcos.

In linguistic communities in which communication has been only oral until relatively recently, such as the townships mentioned above (about 15,000 inhabitants), the rule for the use of the speech is simply the form in which it is spoken. Consequently, this manual does not in any way claim to inform the speakers of the language of the “grammar” in the popular sense of instructing them in “how to speak correctly” given that they already have full command of their speech. When rules are given, the intention is to describe the actual usage of words and to call attention to the norms, the agreements and the contrasts inherent in the spoken language. These rules can be considered prescriptive only for people foreign to the community who don’t yet know the language but wish to speak it like the locals.

It is hoped that this simple work will be of interest to the population of the two townships as a popular description of their speech and that it will also provide them with a useful means of expressing in Spanish certain prominent aspects of the complexities of their language, so that they can explain them to their Spanish-speaking acquaintances, be it officials who are coming for a visit, traders, or others who seek to know something of their unique native cultural heritage.

Linguistic Relationships

The diagnostic word list of Swadesh shows that 86 percent of the words in the language of Pajapan and that of Mecayapan-Tatahuicapan are cognate, a divergence of at least five centuries.\(^1\) The tests for intelligibility carried out by the Instituto Lingüístico de Verano

\(^1\) [The calculation is based on the concept known as glottochronology. According to this theory, the most basic words of a language are least subject to change, and the replacement of such words takes place at a fixed rate across all languages. The number of deviations in a list of 200 (later reduced to 100) basic lexical items in two related languages can then be used to determine the length of time since those languages split and began to develop independently. The validity of this method is widely disputed. The figures here are based on the work of Mauricio Swadesh. —CSM]
indicate that people from Mecayapan-Tatahuicapan understood 76 percent of the text from Pajapan, while for their part people from Pajapan understood 83 percent of the text from Mecayapan-Tatahuicapan (Egland, 1978).

The group of dialects known as Isthmus Nahuatl, which includes the varieties of Mecayapan-Tatahuicapan and of Pajapan, is rather different from the Classical Nahuatl of the sixteenth century. The cognates between Mecayapan-Tatahuicapan and Classical Nahuatl amount to 75 percent; those between Pajapan and Classical Nahuatl amount to 74 percent, a divergence of at least twelve centuries.

**Historical Perspective**

Across the long history of the geographical area situated in what is known today as the south of Veracruz no cultural unity can be detected apart from a series of cultural influences created in distinct epochs by groups that detached themselves from migratory movements that passed through the area on a journey to other places and established themselves there. This region is described as the “Olmec area,” since the Olmecs are the first inhabitants of whose civilization any traces have been found to date. They created the so-called “mother culture,” which could have included a system of writing and the “long count” system to date historical events. Their influence made itself felt in all the later civilizations that occupied the area.

Already in the Early Classical Period, the influence of Teotihuacán began to be felt, as is revealed to us by archaeological evidence that dates from the centuries A.D. 300 to 500. Some scholars consider that sites like Matacapan confirm the supposition that the region had been a stopping or resting place during the journey of the Nahua-Pipil migrations that were heading for the colonization of the Guatemala highlands. The Nahua-Pipil colonization in Guatemala can be recognized in places like the ruins of Kaminaljuyú. The migratory route of these Teotihacanians (known later as the Pipiles) is obscure, but it could also have crossed over the south of Veracruz and left certain groups of people in its wake. There are those who think that just like their descendants, these groups setting out from Teotihuacán spoke the Nahuat language characterized by the use of t in positions in which the Late Classical Nahuatl that flourished after the conquest used tl.

After the burning of Teotihuacán (around A.D. 650), there was another Nahaut emigration consisting of people who later came to be known as Tajinized Teotihuacanian Pipiles or Nicaraq Pipiles. This migratory movement was greatly influenced by the culture of Tajin and also by the Maya cultures of the Gulf. It seems that they were more aggressive and warlike, and those who succeeded in reaching Guatemala put an end to the Classical culture previously created by their predecessors. It is also very likely that certain groups separated from this migration and united with the Nahuas already established around Cerro de las Mesas, Los Tuxtlas and the general area occupied by the groups who in the present day speak Isthmian Nahuatl. Some people associate these Nahua groups with the Classical culture of Veracruz characterized by yokes, hatchets and palms.
In the early epoch of the Postclassical period, around A.D. 900, there could have been a return migratory movement towards the north, starting out from the Nahua enclaves on the Gulf. It is obvious that the styles of pottery and other artifacts known in the south became popular in the new kingdom of Tula. Later, the real migratory movement that started out from Tula on account of dissension and wound up in Chichén Itzá, could have brought a new Nahua influence to the south of Veracruz. Therefore, it is possible to find in that region artifacts associated with the Toltec civilization that is manifested in the cultures of Tula and Cholula.
## Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dep.</td>
<td>dependent</td>
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<tr>
<td>indeter.</td>
<td>indeterminate</td>
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<td>indef.</td>
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<td>lit.</td>
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<td>part.</td>
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<td>perf.</td>
<td>perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pers.</td>
<td>person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pl.</td>
<td>plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poss.</td>
<td>possessive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pres.</td>
<td>present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pret.</td>
<td>preterite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>refl.</td>
<td>reflexive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sg.</td>
<td>singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subj.</td>
<td>subjunctive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trans.</td>
<td>transitory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Map of the region of Veracruz](image)
1. Phonology

The original version of this grammar represented Nahuatl via the Spanish alphabet, as is the normal practice for spelling texts in Mexico. In the present translation, it has been decided to replace this system with a more straightforward system. There are a number of reasons for this decision. In the first place, the sounds of Spanish do not correspond very well with those of Nahuatl. Second, Spanish orthography itself is subject to variations that have to do with the way that the spelling of Spanish sounds is affected by the etymological spelling of the Latin words that give rise to the basic vocabulary of Spanish (for example, the sound corresponding to English k, a voiceless velar stop, is spelled qu in front of front vowels and c in front of back vowels, a distinction that is meaningless in terms of Nahuatl phonology and obscures the phonological system of the language). Finally, the sounds given to certain letters in Spanish orthography are potentially confusing to non-Spanish audience for which this translation is intended. For example, the letter j may be taken to represent the sound of English judge or the more-linguistically minded may be tempted to interpret it as the sound that appears at the start of the English word yes, but the value of the initial sound of horse is unlikely to seem natural to someone who does not speak Spanish (and the Spanish sound represented by the letter j is actually noticeably different, as the original text is at pains to point out). Accordingly, the Nahuatl phonological system is first described in terms of a fixed orthography that will then be used to spell the Nahuatl that follows (Spanish borrowings, however, will be left in their original form). Next, the peculiarities of the Spanish-based orthography will be laid out in terms of how certain spellings deviate from the normal significations of the Latin alphabet.

The aim of the orthography used here is to come up with a single, readily recognizable graph for each sound without recourse to diacritics if feasible. That is, the use of two letters (a digraph) to represent a single sound is avoided. It is hoped that the system used is a reasonable compromise between the criteria just laid out and practical considerations.

Examples of the sounds of Nahuatl:

|a| ahko| above|
b| boboso| lung|
č| čakalin| shrimp|
d| dadapotíʔ| warty, many|
e| čʔal| tender ear of corn|
g| gakti| leather sandal|
i| ikpal| bench (made of a piece of timber)|
h| he:| yes|
k| kikisi| he whistles|
The letters f, k, ll, v, z are found in words of Castilian origin that have been adopted as part of spoken Nahuatl. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Castilian</th>
<th>Nahuatl</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>stove</td>
<td>fogo:n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tire</td>
<td>llanta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cow</td>
<td>zapato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kilometer</td>
<td>kilómetro</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.1 Vowels
The Nahuatl of Mecayapan and Tatahuicapan has four vowels, and these form the nucleus of the syllable: a, e, i, o. The o includes the elements of both the o and the u of standard American English and pronunciations intermediate between these two, all represented only by o.

1.1.1 Long and Short Vowels
An important factor when the vowels are pronounced is the length of the pronunciation. Each vowel appears in one of two manners: long and short. The following examples containing long and short vowels demonstrate the difference in meaning or tense that is established when one pronunciation or the other is used. Long vowels are indicated through the addition of a colon.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Long Vowel</th>
<th>Short Vowel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a — a:</td>
<td>e — e:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kipata</td>
<td>he changes it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kipa:ta</td>
<td>he softens it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kitanke:</td>
<td>they ended it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kita:nke:</td>
<td>they won it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 In Nahuatl, the accent in this word falls on the first syllable.
The length of the long vowel is equal to that of two short vowels, and for this reason its pronunciation influences the rhythm at the end of what is being said.

The contrast in length of the long vowel is neutralized when it is placed in front of another vowel. That is, when two vowels follow in a row, the first is always short even if it is long in other uses. Examples:

\[
\begin{array}{llll}
\text{a-ihti} & \text{in the area of the stream} \\
\text{[a- is a variant of a:-, the dependent root of a:\(\tilde{t}\)li water, gully; -ihti? in the area of]} \\
\text{a:sentapal} & \text{on that side of the stream} \\
\text{[a- is the dependent root of a:\(\tilde{t}\)i water, gully, -sentapal that side of]} \\
\text{ne-itakeh} & \text{they saw me} \\
\text{[ne- is a variant of ne:- me; -itakeh they saw]} \\
\text{ne:makakeh} & \text{they gave me} \\
\text{[ne:- me; -makakeh they gave]} \\
\end{array}
\]

### 1.1.2 Long Vowels and Double Vowels

In the orthographic system used in this study,\(^1\) long vowels are written with a following colon. In this way, double vowels are distinguished. Double vowels, that is, two identical

---

\(^1\) Despite there being homonyms that differ solely in the length of the vowel, it is not essential to represent this distinction in writing. The reader who is a native speaker of the language recognizes the correct pronunciation in the majority of the cases in which there can be confusion, just as the reader of Spanish can grasp the meaning of a text written in all capitals that lacks accents, because the context generally makes the homonyms clear. For this reason, it will be noted that in materials drawn up by native speakers not all the long vowels are marked.
vowels, one following after the other, are separated in pronunciation through a small cutting off of the voice, two vowels being formed in this way. A long vowel, on the other hand, is a single syllable, though it counts rhythmically as two beats.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Long vowels</th>
<th>Double vowels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a:</td>
<td>aa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mata:ki</td>
<td>mataaki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>may it bear fruit</td>
<td>may he put things away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e:</td>
<td>ee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ne:san</td>
<td>neehla:n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>around there</td>
<td>he remembered me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o:</td>
<td>oo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mo:hlí</td>
<td>moohwi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mole</td>
<td>your path</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The separation between two vowels can also be indicated through the use of a dash:

mata-aki ne-ehla:n mo-ohwi

1.2 Consonants

The following chart lays out the fifteen consonants (eighteen with voiced stops) of the Nahuatl of Mecayapan-Tatahuicapan as expressed in the symbols that are used in this translation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Consonants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Labial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop^1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affricate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nonetheless, it has been considered important to indicate this prosodic feature in a reference work such as the present one, so that it can provide with greater precision the real pronunciation of the words and the grammatical forms that relate to them.

^1 Nahuatl languages do not naturally have voiced stops, but under limited circumstances the Nahuatl of Mecayapan and Tatahuicapan does realize the voiceless stop in a voiced manner.
The following consonants have more or less the same value as in English and need no further discussion: p, t, k, g, s, l, y, w, m, n. A brief discussion will be given for each of the other sounds, which have their own peculiarities of either pronunciation or orthography.

1.2.1 ts
This sound is familiar enough from the two consonants ending its, but the Nahuatl usage has two aspects that are unusual from the English point of view. First, the two sounds are considered a single consonantal sound. This aspect is indicated by the writing of the s “release” as a superscript. Second, the sound appears only as the first consonant of a syllable, whereas in native English words the sound never appears in this position (though a Germanic pronunciation of the word zeitgeist begins with the sound ts).

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>tsapoʔ</th>
<th>banana</th>
<th>tsʰi:kaʔ</th>
<th>ant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tsʰahtʰi</td>
<td>shouts</td>
<td>tsʰope:liʔ</td>
<td>sweet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2.2 Č
This sound is represented in English by the digraph ch, as in chin.

1.2.3 X
This symbol is potentially very misleading. It is the traditional symbol used in Spanish orthography to represent the sh sound as in the English word ship. It is never used here in the regular Latin/English usage to represent the consonantal cluster ks. This Nahuatl usage is unusual even from the point of view of Spanish (it reflects an older pronunciation that has long since become obsolete), but it is well established in Nahuatl studies. Given this situation, this symbol was deemed preferable to the perhaps more logical š (which would correspond with č).

1.2.4 Kʷ
This symbol represents a single consonant that consists of two sounds articulated at the same time, namely k and w. This sound is represented by the English digraph qu, as in quick. This single consonant is represented with the symbol kʷ. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>kʷa</th>
<th>kʷalo</th>
<th>it hurts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kʷatampa</td>
<td></td>
<td>under the tree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>kʷe</th>
<th>kʷesiwʔ</th>
<th>he got mad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kʷetax</td>
<td></td>
<td>leather</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>kʷi</th>
<th>kʷi:xin</th>
<th>sparrow hawk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>okʷilin</td>
<td></td>
<td>worm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2.5 H and ?
These two sounds are to some extent variants of each other. The h is not in itself problematical, but it appears at the end of a syllable, a position in which it never appears in English. ? is the standard phonetic symbol for the sound known as the glottal stop.
This sound is produced through the closure of the glottis (the opening between the vocals chords). This “sound” appears at the juncture of the two elements in the English expressions *uh-oh* and (substandard) *a apple*. To an English speaker, this brief halt in the flow of speech is not actually perceived as a sound, but it operates as a consonant in Nahuatl, appearing only at the end of syllable. Examples:

| po:ʔyowi | get drunk |
| itoʔpiyo | shoot (of a plant) |
| itanaʔna? | his gum |

The glottal stop marks the preterite tense of certain verbs. Examples:

| asiʔ | he arrived |
| ásiʔya | he has already arrived |
| ki:sâʔ | he emerged |
| ki:sâʔya | already emerged |

The glottal stop appears as a preglottalization of *ti* at the end of certain substantives. Examples:

| tiʔti or tiʔ? | fire |
| aʔti or aʔ? | water |
| teʔti or teʔ? | stone |

The sound represented by *h* may appear at the start of a word, which is the only normal position for it in English:

| hekxowa | he sneezes |
| he:keh | yes indeed |
| hokox | warm |

More problematical for the English speaker is the appearance of the sound elsewhere in a word. The aspiration marked by *h* at the end of a syllable (which may also mark the end of a word) seems to be nothing more than a small hiatus in the word whereby a small puff of air is emitted. It is found in each syllable of the following sentence.

```
amehwaːn isahpa ihkóːn antahtohkeh.
[you early thus spoke]
You spoke like this early.
```

The pronunciation of *h* at the end of a word cited by itself is easy to miss because in that position the aspiration is heard just like the pronunciation of an open syllable in English. However, words that end with this aspiration contrast with the words that end in a simple vowel, because when a simple vowel appears at the end of an utterance, it is always

1 Although in almost all the examples of its use, the glottal stop comes at the end of the syllable, there exist some words in which it appears after a consonant when a vowel has been dropped through a derivational process, with the result that the glottal stop is left at the beginning of the syllable. Example:

| noyʔelamaj | my grandmother |
pronounced with a brief closure of the throat (less abrupt than the one produced by the glottal stop).  

The following examples demonstrate the difference in meaning that is produced when a verb ends in h, in a vowel, and in the glottal stop. The h indicates the plural and the glottal stop indicates preterite tense.  

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>h</strong></td>
<td>nemi nasih</td>
<td><em>we are arriving</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nemi ki:sah</td>
<td><em>they are emerging</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>vowel</strong>:</td>
<td>nemi nasi</td>
<td><em>I am arriving</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nemi ki:sa</td>
<td><em>he is emerging</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>glottal stop</strong>:</td>
<td>yegin nasiʔ</td>
<td><em>he arrived a while ago</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yegin ki:saʔ</td>
<td><em>he emerged a while ago</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.2.6 Semiconsonantal Realization of i

i functions as a semiconsonant (equivalent to y) when it forms part of the start of a syllable whose nucleus is the vowel that follows. Examples:

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ia</strong></td>
<td>miakeh</td>
<td><em>many</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>siawiʔ</td>
<td><em>he grew tired</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tiawaʔ</td>
<td><em>rain</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>io</strong></td>
<td>tio:pan</td>
<td><em>church (building)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tiokʷawiʔ</td>
<td><em>mahogany</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 [It is to be noted that all forms of Nahuatl have a tendency to devoice or lose final consonants, and the final h and ? reflect this process. Historically, the marker for the plural forms of the verb was a final t, and while this sound is represented with the glottal stop in Classical Nahuatl, it appears regularly as -h in the following pages (the -t is still attested in Pipil, a conservative Nahuatl dialect of El Salvador). The Nahuatl of Mecayapan and Tatahuicapan de Juárez continues this process of weakening a final consonant into the glottal stop, as in the verbal form onoʔ (see Section 18.3.3), which corresponds to the Classical Nahuatl onok, and verbs corresponding to Class 2 of Classical Nahuatl that end in a velar stop (see Section 18.2.6). A voiceless articulation of syllable-final consonants is known in Classical Nahuatl, for example the spelling uc is used in place of the syllable-initial form cu (equivalent to kʷ in this text), and our form of Nahuatl shows a similar process with other consonants. The word-final sound s weakens to h in the singular of preterite and future forms of Group 2 verbs reappears in the plural (e.g., takʷa:h vs. takʷa:skeh), and the last syllable of the nominal root kal- house is weakened to h before the absolute ending (i.e., kah-li) but reappears in the possessed form (no-kal my house). —CSM]

2 In an unaccented syllable at the end of a word, the h at times causes the vowel of this syllable to assume a voiceless pronunciation, and this absence of voicing may be the only manifestation of the phoneme h.
pioteksis  chicken egg

When \( i \) appears as the nucleus of a syllable and is placed in front of another vowel in the same word, the two vowels are separated in pronunciation by means of a small cutting off of the voice. This separation is represented in writing through the use of a dash.

Examples:

- ni-a:taneki  \( I \) am thirsty
- ni-o:memeh  we are two
- ati-esyoh  you are anemic

The use of the dash to indicate glottal separation between two contiguous vowels is also seen in the following examples:

- ta-ihtiʔ  inside
- xikča-oʔ  wait a moment
- no-i:xtah  in front of me
- to-aʔ  our water

1.3 Spanish Orthography

1.3.1 Spanish Orthography Used to Spell Nahuatl

The original text of this grammar used an orthography based on the way that the Latin alphabet is adapted to represent Spanish language. To assist the reader of this grammar in reading Nahuatl texts written according to this convention, the salient points of deviation are described under headings listed according to the usage of this version. For each sound an example of a word in the orthography used here is followed by the same word in Spanish orthography.

1.3.1.1 \( K \)

This sound has a twofold representation. In front of the front vowels \( e \) and \( i \), it appears as \( qu \). In front of the back vowels \( a \) and \( o \), it appears as \( c \).

- kika:wa  quicahu.a  he leaves it

1.3.1.2 \( T \)

This sound is represented with the digraph \( tz \).

- tʰi:kaʔ  tzɪca’  ant

1.3.1.3 \( Č \)

This sound is represented with the digraph \( ch \).

- čičiʔ  chichɨ’  bitter

1.3.1.4 \( W \)

This sound is represented with the digraph \( hu \).
1.3.1.5  $K^w$
This sound is represented with the diagraph cu.

\[ k^w:i:xin \quad cu:i:xin \quad sparrow\ hawk \]

1.3.1.6  ?
This sound is represented by an apostrophe (').

\[ mopata? \quad mopata' \quad he\ changed \]

1.3.1.7  $H$
This sound is represented by the letter j.

\[ mopatakeh \quad mopataquej \quad they\ changed \]

1.3.2  Spelling of Spanish Words in Nahuatl
Older borrowings of Spanish words have generally been adopted to the different phonological system of Nahuatl, and the new sound is represented according to the principals of Nahuatl orthography. More recent borrowings, however, have been incorporated into Nahuatl without phonetic modification and retain their Spanish spelling. Examples:

Older borrowings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nahuatl</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a:ko:xah</td>
<td>aguja (needle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kawa:yoh</td>
<td>caballo (horse)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kompa:leh</td>
<td>compadre (godfather of one's child)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mui:nah</td>
<td>mohina (displeasure)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More recent borrowings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Spanish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bien</td>
<td>(well)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diez</td>
<td>(ten)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fiado</td>
<td>(credit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>miércoles</td>
<td>(Wednesday)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viernes</td>
<td>(Friday)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bueno</td>
<td>(good)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dueño</td>
<td>(owner)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>luego</td>
<td>(then)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>puente</td>
<td>(bridge)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.4  Accentuation
The rules of accentuation are straightforward. Words of two syllable or more are assumed to be accented on the second syllable from the end (that is, that syllable is pronounced
with greater intensity).\(^1\) If the accent falls on a different syllable, this one is marked out with an acute accent (´). Monosyllables are not normally written with an accent.

Exceptions:

- With certain conjunctions that can be used as in either an interrogative or relative sense, the interrogative forms are given an accent to distinguish them (see Sections 16.1, 2; 17.1). This principle is applied regardless of the number of syllables in the word.
- The pronoun yéh is distinguished from the similar relative pronoun yeh by its accent (see Section 5.1.1).
- In certain other instances, the accent is used to distinguish two forms (see Section 17.3.5).
- All examples of words with the accent three or more syllables from the end bear one or more enclitic particles. An enclitic is a word that has no accent of its own and attaches itself to the end of a word that does have an accent (though such a word can have more than one enclitic). The position of the accent of the independent word to which one or more enclitic is attached does not change, and its place is always indicated by the orthographic accent.

**Words with regular accent:**

- ima: his/her hand
- timo:yo?: spark
- očpanwa:s broom
- ayoh gourd
- italax his belly
- okič male, man
- itśonkal his/her hair
- wi:pi:l clothing
- lama:r the sea

**Words distinguished by accent:**

- ka:n where (relative)
- ká:n where (interrogative)
- ke:man when (relative)
- ké:man when (interrogative)
- iwá:n and

---

\(^1\) [The original text followed the principles of the accentuation of Spanish by assuming that forms ending in l or r have the prosodic accent on the last syllable unless otherwise noted with an orthographic accent. This convention has no relevance to Nahuatl (that is, there is no reason to expect such forms should be accented any differently from other forms), and so has been ignored here. Hence, whereas in the original text a form like tō:nal takes the accent to indicate that it is not accented on the last syllable, here it is written to:nal on the assumption that all two-syllable nouns are accented on the next-to-last syllable. —CSM]
íwa:n with him

**Words accented on the last syllable**
- awél he cannot
- ihkí:n in this way
- ihkó:n in that way
- nikpiá I have it
- nikpiáh we have it
- sehsé: sehsé: one by one

Words that have the accent on the last syllable as a result of contraction include:
- kité? he cut it
- kimá? he gave it

**Words Accented before the Next-to-Last Syllable**
- nikítaʔya I have seen it already
- séligoʔ newborn
- pánisan shallow
- né:sikiʔ it resembles
- á:ma:xti underwear
- fue:ráhapa outwards
- ásiʔyawaʔ truly he has now arrived
- yáhkiyakiʔ they say that he has left
- ompigapaya now towards there

In addition, observe the difference in meaning between the following two words:

Penultimate accent: iyi:xko on top

Antepenultimate accent: iyi:xko in his eye
2. The Verb

The verb is the most variable element in Nahuatl speech, and it can express action or inaction, state, change of state, characteristics, relationships and a person’s inner processes. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>action</td>
<td>motalowa</td>
<td>he runs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kahkok\textsuperscript{i}</td>
<td>he lifts it up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inaction</td>
<td>ka:wi</td>
<td>it is left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mose:wiá</td>
<td>he is resting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>state</td>
<td>kawa:ni</td>
<td>he has a fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>maya:na</td>
<td>he is hungry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>change of state</td>
<td>ali:mpatiá</td>
<td>it gets small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>miki</td>
<td>he dies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>characteristics/</td>
<td>xo:ta</td>
<td>it shines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qualities</td>
<td>tamati</td>
<td>he is wise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationships</td>
<td>kipiá</td>
<td>he has it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>itatki-ihya</td>
<td>he becomes owner of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inner processes</td>
<td>tama:lita</td>
<td>he hates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kimači:liá</td>
<td>he feels it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The verb consists of a verbal root to which are attached prefixes of person and mood, endings indicating tense, aspect, number and derivation, as well as sense-bearing reduplicated syllables. There are endings that specify movement that accompanies the primary action, and there is one that marks out an action as being one of a subordinate character that explains the main topic. The diversity of verbal markers is so great that a single root may give rise to more than a thousand variations.

2.1 The Elements of the Verb

In the following synopsis of verb forms, the element in the middle, which is marked out in boldface, is the root, which is the basic part of the verb. In this synopsis, all the words are formed from the same root, which means to emerge. It is the first and the last elements that vary.

Singular
In general, the root of the verb can be realized in speech only with the addition of at least one ending.

The first element, the personal prefix, indicates something about the person who carries out the action, that is, the subject of the verb, and it varies according to the grammatical person.

The final element varies according to the grammatical number. When the subject is a single person, the verb is in the singular form (unless it bears a plural object). When there are two or more people who carry out the action, the verb bears a plural ending. A more detailed discussion of verbs that bear plural objects is given in Section 9.1.

In summary, the primary verb in Nahuatl consists of three elements: the prefix, the root and the ending.

The elements of the verb anki:sah you (pl.) emerge are:

\[
\text{an-} \quad \text{-ki:s-} \quad \text{-ah} \\
\text{[pref. root ending]}
\]

It is noted that when the subject of the verb corresponds to the third person, it bears no overt prefix:

\[
\text{ø} \quad \text{-ki:s-} \quad \text{-ah} \\
\text{[pref. root ending]}
\]

ki:sah they emerge

The lack of a prefix is in fact significant, because its absence indicates the third person. To reflect the fact that the absence of any overt prefix serves as the marker of the third person, this “non”-prefix is indicated with the “null set” symbol ø.

A fuller presentation of the subject prefixes and the independent pronouns will be given in the appropriate place. Nonetheless, let us pay attention to the endings of the verb forms.
2.2 Tense Endings
The ending of the verb, which is called the \textit{tense ending}, conveys an idea of when the action takes place. Note the variation between the endings of the verbal forms in the following list.

\begin{tabular}{ll}
  mopata & \textit{it changes} \\
  mopatas & \textit{it will change} \\
  mopataya & \textit{it would change, used to change} \\
  mopataʔ & \textit{it changed} \\
  mopataka & \textit{it changed (but did not stay changed)} \\
\end{tabular}

All the words in this list are in the third person singular, but the endings vary by the tense of the action.

There are other variations in tense among the plural endings.

\begin{tabular}{ll}
  mopatah & \textit{they change} \\
  mopataskeh & \textit{they changed} \\
  mopatayah & \textit{they would change, used to change} \\
  mopatakah & \textit{they changed} \\
  mopatakah & \textit{they changed (but did not remain changed)} \\
\end{tabular}

2.3 The Thematic Vowel
Now that we have looked at the differences among certain tense endings, it is necessary for us to pay attention to the first vowel of the ending and note that in the preceding examples, this vowel does not change despite the changes in tense. This is called the \textit{thematic vowel}. We will emphasize the concept of the thematic vowel because of its utility in the classification of verbs, which we will have occasion to examine below.

2.4 The Tenses of the Verb
Although there are many different tenses and aspects of the verb in Nahuatl, let us begin with five basic tenses: the present, future, imperfect, preterite, and transitory preterite. In the following chart the words laid out above are shown in the third person, and on the left are placed the terms by which each tense is named. The basic root means \textit{to change}.

\begin{tabular}{c|ll}
  & \textbf{Singular} & \textbf{Plural} \\
  Present & mopata & mopatah \\
  Future & mopatas & mopataskeh \\
  Imperfect & mopataya & mopatayah \\
  Preterite & mopataʔ & mopatakah \\
  Transitory Preterite & mopataka & mopatakah \\
\end{tabular}

\textbf{Conjugation:}
Now compare the tense endings of two synopses of verbs in the singular:
Both sets of endings vary by the thematic vowel and by the distinction that there is in the marker of the imperfect.

Because of these variations we say that there are distinct verbal **conjugations**.

We call the synopsis of tense endings that are taken by the verb **isa** the first conjugation, and we call those taken by the verb **tisi** the second conjugation.

There are five verbal conjugations, which are classified by the tense endings that constitute them, and now an analysis of each will be given.
3. The Conjugations, Group 1

The five conjugations are presented in two groups. Group 1 consists of the first and second, which share certain traits in common that distinguish them from the other conjugations. A comparison of the two synopses given in Section 2.4 reveals the following characteristics shared by the two conjugations in Group 1:

- The ending of the present singular is the thematic vowel and nothing else.
- The thematic vowel is not lengthened in any of the endings.
- The future singular ends in s.
- The preterite singular ends in the glottal stop (ʔ).

Here we are dealing with the regular conjugations; there are differences between these and the irregular conjugations, which are presented in Section 18.0.

3.1 The First Conjugation

Verbs that take the same pattern of endings belong to the same conjugation. For example, from the observation that the verb mopata he changes and the verb isa he wakes up take the same tense endings it is known that they belong to the same conjugation.

3.1.1 How to Recognize a Verb of the First Conjugation

The verbs that end in -a in the present singular of the indicative mood and in -as in the future singular of the indicative belong to the first conjugation. (An explanation will be given below of the meaning of the term indicative mood.)

Pay attention to the following list of verbs. They all belong to the first conjugation, and they all end -a, which is the thematic vowel.

- isa he wakes up
- ki:sa he emerges
- tacowa he buys
- moket’a he stands up
- mopata he changes
- mo-ita he sees himself
- tena he moans

Note that the same verbs end in -as in the future singular:

- isas he will wake up
- ki:sas he will emerge
- tacowas he will buy
moket‘as  he will stand up
mopatas  he will change
mo-itas  he will see himself
tenas  he will moan

All these verbs are understood to belong to the first conjugation because they have the ending -as in the future tense. Any verb that does not end in -as in the future does not belong to the first conjugation, even if it takes -a in the present.

Rule:

ALL VERBS THAT END IN -a IN THE PRESENT SINGULAR OF THE INDICATIVE MOOD AND ALSO END IN -as IN THE FUTURE SINGULAR OF THE INDICATIVE BELONG TO THE FIRST CONJUGATION.

The following are the endings that are used to form the basic tenses for all the persons of the regular verbs of the first conjugation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>-ah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>-as</td>
<td>-askeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>-aya</td>
<td>-ayah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>-aʔ</td>
<td>-akeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>-aka</td>
<td>-akah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We now present a verb to serve as a model for the endings of the first conjugation. We call it a paradigm because it is presented as a model for all the regular verbs that take the same endings.

3.1.2 Paradigm for the First Conjugation
The verb that serves as the model for the first conjugation is mopata he changes. In this section it is enough to present it in the third person because the endings do not vary by person. Note that they take the endings already laid out in Section 3.1.1.

Paradigm in the Third Person
for the First Conjugation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>mopata  he changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>mopatas  he will change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>mopataya  he would change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>mopataʔ  he changed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>mopataka  he changed (but did not remain changed)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. The Conjugations, Group 1

3.2 The Second Conjugation

3.2.1 How to Recognize a Verb of the Second Conjugation

All the verbs in the following list belong to the second conjugation. Note that they all end in -i, which is the thematic vowel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tisi</td>
<td>he grinds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ne:si</td>
<td>he appears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>te:mi</td>
<td>it becomes full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t'op'i</td>
<td>it gets finished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kik'wi</td>
<td>he seize (by the hand)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kawa:ni</td>
<td>he has a fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mahmawi</td>
<td>he is afraid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Look at the endings of the same verbs in the future:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tisis</td>
<td>he will grind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ne:sis</td>
<td>he will appear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>te:mis</td>
<td>he will become full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t'opis</td>
<td>he will become finished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kik'wis</td>
<td>he will seize (by the hand)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kawa:nis</td>
<td>he will have a fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mahmawis</td>
<td>he will be afraid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They all end in -is in the future.

Rule:

_all verbs that end in -i in the present singular of the indicative mood and also end in -is in the future singular of the indicative belong to the second conjugation._

The verbs of the second conjugation take the following basic tense endings in the indicative.
3.2.2 Paradigm for the Second Conjugation

The verb *tisi* *he grinds* serves as the model for the tense endings that are used in the second conjugation. Note that they take the endings already laid out in the preceding chart.

### Paradigm in the Third Person
for the Second Conjugation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>tisi</td>
<td>tisih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>tisis</td>
<td>tisiskeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>tisia:ya</td>
<td>tisia:yah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>tisiʔ</td>
<td>tisikeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>tisika</td>
<td>tisikah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Variant forms of the imperfect**

In verbs of the second conjugation, the endings of the imperfect tense can be pronounced in a contracted manner. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>asia:ya or asiá</td>
<td>asia:yah or asiáh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tisia:ya or tisiá</td>
<td>tisia:yah or tisiáh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. The Conjugations, Group 2

Group 2 consists of the third, fourth and fifth conjugations. The three synopses of endings that are presented next share the following characteristics.

- The preterite singular ends in \(h\), and this is not dropped in the plural or in the transitory preterite.
- The ending of the future admits two possible pronunciations: one that ends in \(h\) and another that ends in \(s\). The \(h\) ending is used more frequently.
- The thematic vowel is long in the future tense.

Within Group 2 there is a subgroup that consists of the third and fourth conjugation. The trait that they share in common is that they attach to the present a specific ending in addition to the thematic vowel, while the fifth conjugation lacks this ending.

4.1 The Third Conjugation

4.1.1 How to Recognize a Verb of the Third Conjugation

All the verbs in the following list belong to the third conjugation. Note that they all end in \(-\text{iá}\). The thematic vowel is \(i\).

- ma:ltiá  \(\) he bathes
- mooniá  \(\) it is drunk
- mo-ilpiá  \(\) he is bound
- mota:liá  \(\) he sits down
- mose:wiá  \(\) he rests
- mihto:tiá  \(\) he dances
- mona:miktíá  \(\) he gets married

Look at the endings of these same verbs in the future tense:

- ma:lti:h  \(\) he will bathe
- mooni:h  \(\) it will be drunk
- mo-ilpi:h  \(\) he will be bound
- mota:li:h  \(\) he will sit down
- mose:wi:h  \(\) he will rest
- mihto:ti:h  \(\) he will dance
- mona:miktí:h  \(\) he will get married

They all end in \(-\text{i:h}\) in the future singular.
Rule:

**ALL VERBS THAT END IN -iá IN THE PRESENT SINGULAR OF THE INDICATIVE MOOD AND ALSO END IN -i:h IN THE FUTURE SINGULAR OF THE INDICATIVE BELONG TO THE THIRD CONJUGATION.**

A not very common variant of the future singular is -i:s. One can, for example, say **ma:lti:h** or **ma:lti:s**, but the second form is rare. The ending **-i:h** of the third conjugation is distinct from the **-is** of the second.

Any verb that does not end in **-i:h** or **-i:s** in the future does not belong to the third conjugation, even though it ends in **-iá** in the present. For example, the verb **kipiá** *he holds it*, even though it ends in **-iá**, belongs not to the third conjugation, but to the first, because its form in the future is **kipiás** and not **kipi:h**.

The following basic temporal endings are used to conjugate the verbs of the third conjugation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Present</strong></td>
<td>-iá</td>
<td>-iáh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Future</strong></td>
<td>-i:h</td>
<td>-i:skeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imperfect</strong></td>
<td>-iá:ya</td>
<td>-iá:yah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preterite</strong></td>
<td>-ih</td>
<td>-ihkeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trans. Pret.</strong></td>
<td>-ihka</td>
<td>-ihkah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are the endings that are used to form the basic tenses of the indicative for all the persons of regular verbs in the third conjugation.

**4.1.2 Paradigm for the Third Conjugation**

The verb **ma:ltiá** *he bathes* serves as the model for the basic tense endings that are used in the third conjugation. In this section it is enough to present it in the third person because the endings do not vary by person. Note that they take the same endings as appear in the preceding chart.

**Paradigm in the Third Person for the Third Conjugation**

- **Present**: ma:ltiá  *he bathes*
- **Future**: ma:lti:h  *he will bathe*
- **Imperfect**: ma:ltia:ya  *he would bathe*
- **Preterite**: ma:lti:h  *he bathed*
- **Trans. Pret.**: ma:lti:ha  *he bathed (with only temporary effect)*

**Plural**

- **Present**: ma:ltiáh  *they bathe*
4.2 The Fourth Conjugation

4.2.1 How to Recognize a Verb of the Fourth Conjugation

All the verbs in the following list belong to the fourth conjugation. Note that they all end in -owa. The thematic vowel is o.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>temowa</td>
<td>he descends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hekxowa</td>
<td>he sneezes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moskowa</td>
<td>it warms up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tahtowa</td>
<td>he speaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motalowa</td>
<td>he runs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tekipanowa</td>
<td>he works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mototočowa</td>
<td>he bows</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Look at the endings of these same verbs in the future:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>temo:h</td>
<td>he will descend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hekxo:h</td>
<td>he will sneeze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mosko:h</td>
<td>it will warm up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tahto:h</td>
<td>he will speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motalo:h</td>
<td>he will run</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tekipano:h</td>
<td>he will work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mototočo:h</td>
<td>he will bow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They all end in -o:h in the future singular.

Rule:

**ALL VERBS THAT END IN -OWA IN THE PRESENT SINGULAR OF THE INDICATIVE MOOD AND ALSO END IN -O:H IN THE FUTURE SINGULAR OF THE INDICATIVE BELONG TO THE FOURTH CONJUGATION.**

A not very common variant of the future singular is -o:s. It is correct to say, for example, tahto:h or tahto:s, but the second form is rare.

Any verb that does not end in -o:h or -o:s in the future does not belong to the fourth conjugation, even though it ends in -owa in the present. For example, the verb takowa he buys, even though it ends in -owa, belongs not to the fourth conjugation, but to the first, because its form in the future is takowas and not tako:h.

The verbs of the fourth conjugation take the following endings in the basic tenses of the indicative:
These are the endings that are used to form the basic tenses of the indicative for all the persons of regular verbs in the fourth conjugation.

4.2.2 Paradigm for the Fourth Conjugation
The verb tahtowa he speaks serves as the model for the use of the basic tense endings in the fourth conjugation.

Paradigm in the Third Person for the Fourth Conjugation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>-owa</td>
<td>-owah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>-o:h</td>
<td>-o:skeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>-owa:ya</td>
<td>-owa:yah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>-oh</td>
<td>-ohkeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>-ohka</td>
<td>-ohkah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3 The Fifth Conjugation
4.3.1 How to Recognize a Verb of the Fifth Conjugation
The following verbs belong to the fifth conjugation. Note that they all end in -a, which is the thematic vowel.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>takʷa</td>
<td>he eats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tatankʷa</td>
<td>he bites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kinawa</td>
<td>he embraces her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kima:ma</td>
<td>he carries it (on his back)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kima:ma</td>
<td>he catches it (by hunting or fishing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Look at the endings of these same verbs in the future tense:
They all end in -a:h in the future singular.

**Rule:**

All verbs that end in -a in the present singular of the indicative mood and also end in -a:h in the future singular of the indicative belong to the fifth conjugation.

The verbs of the fifth conjugation take the following endings in the basic tenses of the indicative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>-ah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>-a:h</td>
<td>-a:skeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>-a:ya</td>
<td>-a:yah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>-ah</td>
<td>-ahkeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>-ahka</td>
<td>-ahkah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**4.3.2 Paradigm for the Fifth Conjugation**

The verb takw’a he eats serves as the model for the use of the basic tense endings in the fifth conjugation.

**Paradigm in the Third Person for the Fifth Conjugation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>tak’w’a</td>
<td><em>he eats</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>tak’w’a:h</td>
<td><em>he will eat</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>tak’w’a:ya</td>
<td><em>he would eat</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>tak’w’ah</td>
<td><em>he ate</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>tak’w’ahka</td>
<td><em>he ate (but later vomited)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>tak’w’ah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>tak’w’a:skeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>tak’w’a:yah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>tak’w’ahkeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>tak’w’ahkah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This conjugation includes fewer verbs than the others.
### 4.4 Comparison of the Tense Endings

Compare the basic tense endings for all the conjugations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Singular</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>-as</td>
<td>-is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>-aya</td>
<td>-ia:ya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>-aʔ</td>
<td>-iʔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Preterite</td>
<td>-aka</td>
<td>-ika</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|               |         |         |
| **Plural**    |         |         |
| Present       | -ah     | -ih     | -i:ah | -owah | -ah |
| Future        | -askeh  | -iskeh  | -i:skeh | -o:skeh | -a:skeh |
| Imperfect     | -ayah   | -ia:ya  | -ia:ya | -owayah | -a:yah |
| Preterite     | -akeh   | -ikeh   | -ihkeh | -ohkeh | -ahkeh |
| Trans. Preterite | -akah | -ikah   | -ihkah | -ohkah | -ahkah |

### 4.5 An Alternative Classification of the Conjugations

Because of the obvious similarities that they display, the conjugations of Group 1 can be considered a single conjugation. If the rules for the formation of the preterite are applied and the thematic vowel is omitted as a part of the root, the following synopsis of the endings would result:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Singular</strong></th>
<th><strong>Plural</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>-h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>-s</td>
<td>-skeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>-ya/-a:ya</td>
<td>-yah/-a:yah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>-ʔ</td>
<td>-keh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>-ka</td>
<td>-kah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly, the conjugations of Group 2 would be reduced to a single one by applying the rules for the formation of the present and the imperfect. The following synopsis would be the result:
For the imperfect singular, the ending laid out here would necessarily be placed after the ending of the present singular. Note that the colon (:) signifies the lengthening of the preceding vowel.\textsuperscript{1}

Nonetheless, the choice was made to present them as five conjugations because in this way it is easier to show in a concrete way the interaction of the ending with the thematic vowel, including vowel lengthening that takes place in the future and imperfect tenses, as well as in the directionals (see Chapter 11) and in the imperative plural of the verbs of Group 2. I consider that the distribution of the verbs into five conjugations is in full agreement with the level of concreteness seen in the traditional treatment of Spanish verbs, which could also be reduced to fewer conjugations through the application of morphophonemic rules.

\textsuperscript{1} [It is to be noted that the alternative analysis corresponds to the now standard division of the verbs of Classical Nahuatl into four classes on the basis of the preterite stem, a system first introduced by J. Richard Andrews and popularized by James Lockhart (the former using capital letters to designate the classes and the latter using numbers). The first and second conjugations here correspond to Class 1 (or A), the third and fourth to Class 1 (or B), and the fifth to Class 4 (or D). Class 2 (or B) corresponds to the category described here as apocopated (or morphophonemically irregular) verbs (see Section 18.2). —CSM]
5. The Pronominal Forms

5.1 Independent Personal Pronouns

5.1.1 Basic Forms of the Personal Pronouns

The independent personal pronouns are:

- neh  
  - I
- teh  
  - you (sg.)
- yēh  
  - he, she
- nehame:n  
  - we (excl.)
- tehame:n  
  - we (incl.)
- amehwa:n  
  - you (pl.)
- yehame:n  
  - they

Observe that:

1. Unlike the case with English, there is a clear distinction between the singular and plural in the second person.
2. There is no marking of gender in the personal pronouns: yēh can signify either he/him or she/her.
3. The personal pronoun yēh is accented in order to distinguish it from the relative pronoun yeh.
4. There are two ways of saying we depending on whether or not the person being addressed, that is, the listener, is meant to be included. Nehame:n and tehame:n are the two forms for saying we/us, but they do not mean the same thing. We use nehame:n when we wish to say we and not you. That is, nehame:n excludes those with whom we are speaking. For this reason, nehame:n is called the exclusive form. Tehame:n is used when we wish to include those being addressed in saying we. This form is called inclusive.¹

For example, if my family and I are thinking of going somewhere, and I am telling you that we are leaving tomorrow, I would use the word nehame:n to say we because you are not coming with us. If, on the other hand, I say directly to my

¹ [It is to be noted that calling this form the inclusive first person plural is to interpret it from the perspective of Spanish and English as a form of the first person. Clearly, the exclusive plural is the pluralized form of the first person singular, while the inclusive form is the pluralized form of the second person singular. That is, in origin the so-called inclusive first person plural actually signifies “you (sg.) and others,” the others being understood in context as the speaker (with or without further people). —CSM]
wife, “We are leaving tomorrow,” I would use the form "tehame:n" because she is included among those of us who will be going.

The distinction can be expressed by means of the following formula:

- **nehame:n** (1st pers. excl.) first person plural excluding the person being addressed
- **tehame:n** (1st pers. incl.) first person plural including the person being addressed

### 5.1.2 Variations in the Personal Pronouns

The personal pronouns admit stylistic changes or differences in pronunciation according to the taste of the speaker. The variants for each one are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronoun</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>neh, nehwa</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teh, tehwa</td>
<td>you (sg.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yéh, yehwa</td>
<td>he/she/it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronoun</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nehame:n, neheme:n, nehameh, nehemeh</td>
<td>we (excl.)</td>
<td>1st pers. excl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tehame:n, teheme:n, tehameh, tehemeh</td>
<td>we (incl.)</td>
<td>1st pers. incl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amehwa:n, amehame:n, amehemeh</td>
<td>you (pl.)</td>
<td>2nd pers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amehameh, amehemeh</td>
<td>they</td>
<td>3rd pers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The plural pronouns also have contracted variants\(^1\) that are used very often:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronoun</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nehám, nehém</td>
<td>we (excl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tehám, tehém</td>
<td>we (incl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amehám, amehém</td>
<td>you (pl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yehám, yehém</td>
<td>they</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Section 18.2.6, in which apocopeation and the contraction are described.

### 5.2 Pronominal Prefixes

The personal pronouns already presented in this section are those called *independent pronouns*. There are other forms that are called *pronominal prefixes*. These have the function of the personal pronouns of English, but they are not words in themselves. Instead, they appear in front of the root of the verb. They form a variable element in the

---

\(^1\) These reduced forms are derived from the ones that end in -meh. The `m` is always bilabial, and in addition, because of the dropping of the final -h, it has a voiceless pronunciation. In the orthography, no distinction has been made between voiceless and voiced nasals, but such a difference does exist in daily speech.
verb, and indicate the person or persons who carry out the action, and the person or persons who are the object of the verb (see Section 9.6).

5.2.1 Subject Prefixes
The following forms show the personal pronouns and the corresponding subject prefixes, which indicate the person who is carrying out the action.

Note that the third person is marked by the lack of a subject prefix, and this significant absence is marked in the grammatical analysis with the “null group” sign ø, which does not of course appear in actual writing.

### Singular

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st person</th>
<th>2nd person</th>
<th>3rd person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>neh</td>
<td>teh</td>
<td>yěh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>you (sg.)</td>
<td>he/she/it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nikoči</td>
<td>tkoči</td>
<td>okoči</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I sleep</td>
<td>you (sg.) sleep</td>
<td>he sleeps</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Plural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st pers. excl.</th>
<th>1st pers. incl.</th>
<th>2nd person</th>
<th>3rd person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nehame:n</td>
<td>tehame:n</td>
<td>amehwa:n</td>
<td>yehame:n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>you (pl.)</td>
<td>they</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nikočih</td>
<td>tikočih</td>
<td>ankočih</td>
<td>okočih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we sleep</td>
<td>we sleep</td>
<td>you (pl.) sleep</td>
<td>they sleep</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Variant Forms of the Subject Prefixes

The following examples show the variant forms of the subject prefixes that are used when the root of the verb begins with a vowel:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st person</th>
<th>2nd person</th>
<th>3rd person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nasi</td>
<td>tasii</td>
<td>oasii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I arrive</td>
<td>you (sg.) arrive</td>
<td>he arrives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nasih</td>
<td>amasih</td>
<td>oasih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we (excl.) arrive</td>
<td>you (pl.) arrive</td>
<td>they arrive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tkočih</td>
<td>ankočih</td>
<td>okočih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we sleep</td>
<td>you (pl.) sleep</td>
<td>they sleep</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here is the paradigm of the subject prefixes. The plural forms of the verb always bear some ending specific to the plural, which is indicated between the parentheses and will be explained next.

### 5.2.2 Object Prefixes

Another variable element of the verb is the object prefix. Every transitive verb takes an object prefix—whether for the direct or the indirect object—which varies by the
grammatical person of the object. The use of the object prefixes is shown in the following chart of forms whose subject is in the third person singular.¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular object</th>
<th>Prefix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ne:kaki</td>
<td>he hears me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mitʾkaki</td>
<td>he hears you (sg.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kikaki</td>
<td>he hears him</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plural object**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Prefix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ne:kakih</td>
<td>he hears us (excl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>te:kaki²</td>
<td>he hears us (incl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mitʾkakih</td>
<td>he hears you (pl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kikakih</td>
<td>he hears them</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Variant Forms for the Object Prefixes**

The following examples show the variant forms for the object prefixes that are used when the root of the verb begins with a vowel:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>neasi</td>
<td>neasih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mitʾasi</td>
<td>mitʾasih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kasi</td>
<td>kasih</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compare the independent pronouns with the corresponding prefixes. The possessive prefixes, which will be explained in Section 6.4, are also included.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Independent Pronoun</th>
<th>Verbal Subject Prefix</th>
<th>Verbal Object Prefix</th>
<th>Nominal Possessive Prefix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>neh</td>
<td>ni-/n-</td>
<td>ne:-/ne-</td>
<td>no-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>teh</td>
<td>ti/-t-</td>
<td>mitʾ-</td>
<td>mo-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>yéh</td>
<td>ø-</td>
<td>k(i)</td>
<td>i-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ When the examples require an indication of gender in English, this is given in the masculine, even though in Nahuatl the gender is not specified.

² Note that te:kaki is the only example of a plural object prefix that does not have a plural ending. See Section 9.1.
### 5. The Pronominal Forms

#### 5.3 Other Independent Pronouns

##### 5.3.1 Demonstrative Pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>1st exclusive</th>
<th>1st inclusive</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st exclusive</td>
<td>nehame:n</td>
<td>ni-/n-</td>
<td>ne:-/ne-</td>
<td>no-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st inclusive</td>
<td>tehame:n</td>
<td>ti-/t-</td>
<td>te:-/te-</td>
<td>to-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>amehwa:n</td>
<td>an-/am-</td>
<td>mit'-</td>
<td>amo-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>yehame:n</td>
<td>ø-</td>
<td>k(i)</td>
<td>i-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

##### 5.3.2 Possessive Pronouns

The possessive pronouns are formed from the root -tatki, which is an indicator of possession, preceded by a possessive prefix (see Section 6.4).

- notatki | mine | notatkimeh | ours (excl.)
- totatkimeh | ours (incl.)
- motatki | yours (sg.) | amotatki | yours (pl.)
- itatki | his | itatkimeh | theirs

##### 5.3.3 Relative Pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relative</th>
<th>5.3.3 Relative Pronouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yeh</td>
<td>who, that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ke</td>
<td>who, that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ke:ʔ</td>
<td>how much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>te:</td>
<td>which, what</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

##### 5.3.4 Indefinite Pronouns

- agah | someone, anyone |
- ayagah | no one |

Anca agah kikahteh. 
Perhaps someone left it.

Miya:nato ka:n ayagah asi.
He left to hide where no one goes.

san a:? whoever Kirrecibi:rowa san a:? ne:sis.
He receives whoever presents himself.

tehté: something Anca tikmantoya tehté:
Perhaps you were cooking something.

até: nothing Até: kik"a.
He eats nothing.

nité nothing Anikasi? nité.
I found nothing.

5.3.5 Interrogative Pronouns

té:, té what Té in tikči:wa?
What are you doing?

katiá which Inó:n, katiá gobernio kipertenese:rowa?
Which government does that belong to?

ké:ski, ke:č how many Ké:ski mopilowa:n tikpiá?
How many children do you have?

Ké?: mopilowa:n tikpiá?
How many children do you have?

a:? yēh who Nikmátiya a:? yēh in mit'keť'altih.
I already know who detained you.

5.3.6 Indefinite Number Pronouns
The adverbial root nočí all is converted into an indefinite number pronoun through the addition of possessive prefixes (see Section 6.4) and the ending -n, along with the lengthening of the vowel i.

nonočí:n all of us (excl.)
tonočí:n all of us (incl.)
amonočí:n all of you (pl.)
inočí:n all of them

5.3.7 Definite Number Pronouns
There are three groups of definite number pronouns. One group is derived from the dependent root -se:l- sole, only plus the possessive prefixes and the ending -ti.
5. The Pronominal Forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular Form</th>
<th>Plural Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nose:lti</td>
<td>I alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mose:lti</td>
<td>you (sg.) alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ise:lti</td>
<td>he alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nose:ltimeh</td>
<td>we (excl.) alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tose:lti or tose:ltimeh</td>
<td>we (incl.) alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amose:lti or amose:ltimeh</td>
<td>you (pl.) alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ise:ltimeh</td>
<td>they alone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another group of definite number pronouns is derived from the number two and higher. These are presented in two subgroups. It is impossible to distinguish the difference in meaning between the two sorts of derivation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no:me:n or no:memeh</td>
<td>the two of us (excl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to:me:n or to:memeh</td>
<td>the two of us (incl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amo:me:n or amo:memeh</td>
<td>the two of you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o:me:n or o:memeh</td>
<td>the two of them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ne:yi:n or ne:yimeh</td>
<td>the three of us (excl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>te:yi:n or te:yimeh</td>
<td>the three of us (incl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ame:yi:n or ame:yimeh</td>
<td>the three of you (pl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e:yi:n or e:yimeh</td>
<td>the three of them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nina:wi:n or nina:wimeh</td>
<td>the four of us (excl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tina:wi:n or tina:wimeh</td>
<td>the four of us (incl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anna:wi:n or anna:wimeh</td>
<td>the four of you (pl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>na:wi:n or na:wimeh</td>
<td>the four of them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nisi:nkohmeh</td>
<td>the five of us (excl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tisi:nkohmeh</td>
<td>the five of us (incl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ansi:nkohmeh</td>
<td>the five of you (pl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>si:nkohmeh</td>
<td>the five of them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>niseyismeh</td>
<td>the six of us (excl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following group is limited to the numbers from two to four.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no:mexti:n</td>
<td>the two of us (excl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to:mexti:n</td>
<td>the two of us (incl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amo:mexti:n</td>
<td>the two of you (pl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o:mexti:n</td>
<td>the two of them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ne:yixti:n</td>
<td>the three of us (excl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>te:yixti:n</td>
<td>the three of us (incl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ame:yixti:n</td>
<td>the three of you (pl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e:yixti:n</td>
<td>the three of them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nahuatl</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nina:wixti:n</td>
<td>the four of us (excl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tina:wixti:n</td>
<td>the four of us (incl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anna:wixti:n</td>
<td>the four of you (pl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>na:wixti:n</td>
<td>the four of them</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. The Substantive

6.1 The Nature of the Substantive
The substantive is one of the variable elements in speech, and beings, things, feelings and abstract ideas are named with it. It is also called a substantive noun or simply noun. Its function in the sentence is to form part of the subject and the object of the verb, and in many instances it is accompanied by other words and particles that modify it.

The Nahuatl substantive varies with respect to the grammatical categories of number, diminutive endings, and other derivational forms. Note the following characteristics:

1. It does not vary according to the grammatical category of gender.
2. It is modified by markers of possession (both prefixes and suffixes).
3. It takes markers of predication, including prefixes of person and negation and adverbial clitics.

Note the substantives in the following narrative. A more or less literal translation is given for each word in the Nahuatl text. The substantives are printed in boldface. Also note that one of them (tatayil) is translated as a verbal phrase, which shows that there is not an exact correspondence between the one language and the other.

Kén iga moto:ca aha:yo:?  
How are beans sowed?

Ahayo?: moto:ka ipan el mes de septiembre.  
[beans are sowed in-it the month of September]
Beans are sowed in the month of September.

Iwá:n moto:ka ipan mihi ca:n aya moposteki sinti.  
[and is sown in-it the field where not yet doubles itself the corn]
It is sown in a field in which the corn has not been doubled over.

[corn-within it-is-sown it-is-dug-going along hole]
It is sown among the cornstalks. Holes get dug one after another,

iwa:n se: kixi:ntiá aha:yo:?  
[and one goes-along-dropping-them the beans]
and someone goes along droppings the beans.
Támisan inó:n kito:ka, se? lugar yawi kito:kati.
[as soon as he ends that he-sows-it another place he-goes he-goes-to-sow-it]
As soon as he finishes sowing there, he goes to another place.

Si ka:n aya tatayil, ačto yawi.
[If where not-yet what-has-been-tilled first he-goes]
If it is a place where there has not yet been tilling, first

kitayiti iga wel mamoto:ka aha:yo:?.
[he-goes-to-till-it so-that it-can that-they-are-sown the beans]
he will have to go till it, so that it is possible for the beans to be sown.

—Hipólito Hernández Hernández

The substantives found in the preceding narrative are:

- aha:yo:? beans
- mes month
- septiembre September
- mi:hli field
- sinti corn
- sin- corn (dependent root)
- xapo? hole
- lugar place
- tatayil what has been weeded/tilled

6.2 Substantives Functioning as Predicates

A substantive can serve as a grammatical phrase. The idea of person is inherent in the Nahuatl substantive, and the result of this is that a substantive cited by itself can be specified as a predicate. It is taken for granted that it is in the third person if it does not bear any other personal prefix.¹ Examples:

- ta:ga? man Ta:ga?. It is a man.
- kahli house Kahlí. It is a house.

The following examples bear personal prefixes and other markers of predication.

- Tita:ga?. You are a man. Atita:ga?. You are not a man.

6.3 Formation of the Plural

The majority of substantives take the ending -meh in the plural. Examples:

---

¹ [I.e., the subject is the “null set” symbol ø; see Section 2.1. —CSM]
### 6. The Substantive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kahli</td>
<td>house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tepe:yoh</td>
<td>mountainous area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aha:wil</td>
<td>toy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xi:kama</td>
<td>jicama (edible root)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the singular ends in the glottal stop (ʔ) or in -ʔti, this final element is dropped with the plural is formed in -meh.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a:ma?</td>
<td>paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a:?ti</td>
<td>water, stream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>te:?ti</td>
<td>stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xo:či?</td>
<td>flower</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are three substantives whose plural is formed in such a way that the final element changes to -t and -keh is added to this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>we:weh</td>
<td>old man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ilamah</td>
<td>old woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>siwa:ʔ</td>
<td>woman</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some nouns form the plural by varying the word by means of reduplication, that is, by repeating one part of the word. There are three forms of reduplication.

#### 6.3.1 Reduplication in -h

In this category of reduplication, the vowel of the syllable placed in front is always short, and in addition -h- is added to it. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ta:ga?</td>
<td>man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>noyi:x</td>
<td>my eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moma:</td>
<td>your hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inakas</td>
<td>their ear</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1 The plural of **we:weh** can also be **we:wehmeh**.

2 The substantive **tahta:ga? men** is the only one whose plural is formed in this way in the absolute (i.e., non-possessed) form. The plural can also be formed with the ending -meh: **tahta:gameh** or **ta:gameh**.

3 In the case of **nohnóyi:x my eyes**, the reduplication includes the possessive prefix.
6.3.2 Reduplication with Vowel Lengthening
In this category of reduplication, the vowel of the syllable placed in front is long and without aspiration (-h). Only one substantive that forms its plural in this way is attested.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>cone:ʔ</td>
<td>child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>co:cone?</td>
<td>children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.3.3 Reduplication with Vowel Shortening
Substantives with the diminutive ending -tʰiːn form the plural by reduplicating the ending. The vowel of the syllable put in front is short and without aspiration (-h).

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aːltepeːtʰiːn</td>
<td>small town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xoːcitʰiːn</td>
<td>small flower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aːltepeːtʰiːn</td>
<td>small towns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xoːcitʰiːn</td>
<td>small flowers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A fuller explanation of diminutive substantives will be given below in Section 7.2.

6.4 Possession in Substantives
6.4.1 Definite Possessive Prefixes
The possession of a substantive is indicated by adding a possessive prefix. The possessive prefixes can be specified as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Possessive Singular</th>
<th>Possessive Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Person</td>
<td>no-</td>
<td>no- (excl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to- (incl.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Person</td>
<td>mo-</td>
<td>amo-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Person</td>
<td>i-</td>
<td>i-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Like the independent pronouns, the possessive prefixes do not reflect the gender of the substantive. The following chart shows the use of the definite possessive prefixes. Note that the prefixes no- and i- are used in both the singular and plural, and that when the possessor to whom the possessive refers is plural, the possessive obligatorily includes the plural marker -meh as the plural of the possessor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possessive Singular</th>
<th>Possessive Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nokal</td>
<td>nokalmeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tokal</td>
<td>our (excl.) house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mokal</td>
<td>amokal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tokal</td>
<td>our (incl.) house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ikal</td>
<td>ikalmeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>their house</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.4.2 Further Observations on the Plural in the Possession of the Substantive
In general, the ending -meh with substantives that are possessed marks the plurality of the possessor, and the plural number of the possessed substantive is not marked. Nonetheless, there are certain formats to indicate the plural of the possessed.

a. In the case of a substantive with the prefix of the second person singular mo-, because of the fact that this form is clearly singular, the plural -meh indicates the plurality of the possessed and not the possessor. Example: mokalmeh your (sg.) houses.

b. When the substantive has a diminutive suffix, this is reduplicated to express the plurality of the possessed. Examples with a:maʔ paper and the diminutive -t'i:n:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular Possessor</th>
<th>Plural Possessor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sg.</td>
<td>noa:mat'i:n</td>
<td>noa:mat'i:nmeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>my little paper</td>
<td>our little paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plg.</td>
<td>noa:mat'i:t'i:n</td>
<td>noa:mat'i:t'i:nmeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>my little papers</td>
<td>our little papers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c. In the case of substantives whose plural is formed by reduplicating the root, the reduplication indicates the plurality of the possessed. Examples with koneʔ: child and the reduplicated plural ko:koneʔ: children:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular Possessor</th>
<th>Plural Possessor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sg.</td>
<td>nokoneʔ:</td>
<td>nokone:meh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>my child</td>
<td>our child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plg.</td>
<td>noko:koneʔ:</td>
<td>noko:kone:meh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>my children</td>
<td>our children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

d. The plural of certain substantives of familial relationship are normally indicated with the ending -wa:n. Examples:

noko:ko  
my elder brother  
noko:komeh  
our elder brother

noco:cowa:n  
my elder brothers  
noko:kowa:nmeh  
our elder brothers

6.4.3 The Indefinite Possessive Prefix te:-
Some substantives of familial relationships obligatorily bear a possessive prefix. When one wishes to use such words without specifying the possessor, the prefix te:- is used.

te:tah  the father

te:ye:?  the mother
te:pilti:n    the child
            te:co:co    the elder brother

The prefix te-, a variant form of te:-, appears in an idiomatic expression:

    te-ihikni:n    good people (lit. everyone’s brother)
                   [-ih- reduplicated syllable; -ikni:n brother]

6.4.4 Dependent Roots
Many substantives lose an element of their ending when they are combined with a possessive prefix.¹

For example, in the following substantives, the last syllable is dropped to get the dependent root.

| čikiwi?    | basket      | nočiki  | my basket |
| ko:ská?    | necklace    | noko:s  | my necklace |

In the following substantives, the last syllable, which begins with m, is reduced to n to form the dependent root.

| atimi?     | louse/lice  | noatin  | my louse/lice |
| tekoma?    | tecomate    | notekon | my tecomate   |

In substantives ending in -hli, the ending is reduced to -l.

| kahli      | house       | nokal   | my house     |
| xa:hli     | sand        | noxa:l  | my sand      |

In the following examples, the last syllable is reduced to the glottal stop.

| metaʔ      | metate      | nomeʔ   | my metate    |
| petaʔ      | sleeping mat| nopeʔ   | my sleeping mat |
| kʷeːyi     | skirt       | nokʷeʔ  | my skirt     |

In other substantives, the glottal stop or final -ʔti is dropped.

| a:maʔ      | paper       | noa:ma  | my paper     |
| teʔti      | stone       | note    | my stone     |

¹ [In Classical Nahuatl, the non-possessed noun is said to be in the absolute form, which is analyzed as consisting of an absolute ending that is added to the stem of the noun. The analysis here takes the absolute ending to be an element of the substantive itself, considering that this element is dropped in the possessed form. It is worth noting that the ending -ti is the most common form of the absolute ending. —CSM]
Here is the word ohti path, in which the ending -ti is exchanged for -wi in its possessed form.

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
ohti & path \\
noohwi & my path
\end{array}
\]

To form the dependent root, however, the entire ending is dropped:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
oht\text{'i}:n & little path, trail
\end{array}
\]

Note that the same form of the root, oh-, appears as part of a verb.

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
neohmaga? & he showed me the way \\
[ne- variant form of ne:- me; -maga? gave]
\end{array}
\]
7. Special Forms of the Substantive

7.1 Vocative Forms of the Substantive
The vocative forms are the ones used to mark out the person to whom the word is directed. There are three forms: two that are used to call from afar and one that used in conversation. The first serves to call to a person of any status, the second is used by males to call to someone of the same or lesser status, and the third is used in conversations with people of any status.

7.1.1 General Vocative
-w is added to a substantive and the last syllable is accented.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocative form</th>
<th>Original form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notáw! (My) father!</td>
<td>[notah my father]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nopíw! (My) child!</td>
<td>[nopilt:i:n my child]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nópí:píw! (My) aunt! (My) elder sister!</td>
<td>[nopih my aunt or elder sister]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konéw! Child!</td>
<td>[kone:? child]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pe:drów! Peter!</td>
<td>[Pedro Peter]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariyáw! Mary!</td>
<td>[Maria Mary]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.1.2 Male Vocative
-éi is added to the name of a person.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vocative form</th>
<th>Original form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pe:droéi! Peter!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pa:bloéi! Paul!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juani:yohéi! Little John!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jo:liohéi! Julius!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.1.3 Conversational Vocative
The voice is raised and the last syllable of the name is accented. Also, -h is added if the word does not have it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conversational vocative form</th>
<th>Original form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pe:dróh! Peter</td>
<td>Pe:dro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pa:blóh! Paul</td>
<td>Pa:blo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jo:lióh Julius</td>
<td>Jo:lioh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariyáh Mary</td>
<td>Mariyah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kén, Pe:droh? How are you, Peter?
Vi:tóh, nemi mit:no:t'ah. Victor, they’re calling you.
7.2 Diminutive Forms of the Substantive

7.2.1 Variant of the Diminutive -t'i:n

With the ending -t'i:n are formed derivative diminutive substantives, and these designate persons, animals or things that are smaller than those named by the original substantives. With the addition of -t'i:n, a final glottal stop or -tʔ is lost.

\[
\begin{array}{lll}
\text{tet}^\circ t'i:n & \text{little stone} & [\text{te}t\text{ʔ st}o\text{n}e] \\
\text{a:t}t'i:n & \text{little stream} & [\text{a}t\text{ʔ w}a\text{t}er, \text{s}trea\text{m}] \\
\text{to:to:t}t'i:n & \text{little bird} & [\text{to:to:? b}i\text{rd}]
\end{array}
\]

Sometimes the diminutive indicates affection.

\[
\begin{array}{lll}
\text{we:weh}t'i:n & \text{little old man} & [\text{we:weh o}l\text{d m}a\text{n}] \\
\text{notahwe:weh}t'i:n & \text{my little grandfather} & [\text{note}h\text{we:weh my g}ra\text{n}dfa\text{t}he\text{r}] \\
\text{ilamaht'i:n} & \text{little old woman} & [\text{il amat' h o}l\text{d w}o\text{man}] \\
\text{noy?elamaht'i:n} & \text{my little grandmother} & [\text{noy?el amah my ga}\text{n}dmo\text{the}r]
\end{array}
\]

There are words that do not appear in the singular without the diminutive ending.

\[
\begin{array}{lll}
\text{nopilt'i:n} & \text{my child} & \\
\text{čokot'i:n} & \text{a young man} & \\
\text{takot'i:n} & \text{a young woman} &
\end{array}
\]

The first of the preceding words takes an irregular plural.

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{nopilowa:n} & \text{my children} \\
\end{array}
\]

In addition, the diminutive plural is formed by adding -t'i:n to the plural ending -wa:n.

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{nopilowa:nt'i:n} & \text{my little children} \\
\end{array}
\]

The plurals of čocot'i:n and tacot'i:n are regular.

\[
\begin{array}{lll}
\text{čokomeh} & \text{young men} & \text{čoko}t'i:n & \text{young boys} \\
\text{takomeh} & \text{young women} & \text{tako}t'i:n & \text{young girls} \\
\end{array}
\]

7.2.2 Variants of the diminutive, -č:n and -li:n

The following words exhibit the characteristics of diminutives in terms of their meaning and the manner of forming their plural, and they can perhaps be considered as variants of the diminutive ending.

\[
\begin{array}{lll}
\text{taoč:n} & \text{little girl} & \text{taočči:n} & \text{little girls} \\
\text{taoli:n} & \text{little girl} & \text{taolili:n} & \text{little girls} \\
\text{čooč:n} & \text{little boy} & \text{čoočči:n} & \text{little boys} \\
\text{čooli:n} & \text{little boy} & \text{čoolili:n} & \text{little boys}
\end{array}
\]
Nonetheless, those that end in -li:n can still take the diminutive -ti:n.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{taoli:nt}^\text{ti}:n & \quad \text{little girl} \\
\text{čooli:nt}^\text{ti}:n & \quad \text{little boy}
\end{align*}
\]

The word čakali:n shrimp admits two variants in the diminutive plural. Note that the -l of the root is not dropped even when it is followed by another l.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{čakali:n} & \quad \text{shrimp} \\
\text{čakalt}^\text{ti}:n & \quad \text{little shrimp}
\end{align*}
\]

7.3 Possessive Forms in -yo, the Suffix of Intrinsic Belonging

When added to the possessed substantive, the ending -yo\(^1\) generally indicates that the substantive forms an intrinsic part of the possessed noun or is in physical contact with it, or that this substantive is something directly identified with it and not merely a possession.

7.3.1 As a Part of the Body

By means of the ending -yo a distinction is made between that which forms part of one’s own body and that which counts as a possession. Examples:

\[
\begin{align*}
naka? & \quad \text{flesh} \\
\text{Possession} & \quad \text{nonaka my meat (distinct from my body)} \\
\text{Part of the body} & \quad \text{nonakayo my flesh (part of my body)}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{omi?} & \quad \text{bone} \\
\text{Possession} & \quad \text{noomi my bone (distinct from my body)} \\
\text{Part of the body} & \quad \text{noomiyo my bone (part of my body)}
\end{align*}
\]

Note that the majority of the parts of the body do not take -yo. It is only added to those that could have a double meaning: either a part of the body or a possession distinct from the body. Examples that do not take -yo:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{not}^\text{ontekon} & \quad \text{my head} \\
\text{noxa:ya?} & \quad \text{my face} \\
\text{nokeč} & \quad \text{my neck} \\
\text{noma:} & \quad \text{my arms, my hands} \\
\text{nokxi} & \quad \text{my legs, my feet}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^1\) The suffix -yo is the substantival possessive form of a group of endings of inherent belonging that includes the absolute substantive form -yoʔ, the adjectival form -yoh (see Section 8.3.1), and the verbal forms -yowi and -yotiá (see Sections 9.10 and 9.11).
7.3.2 As an Integral Part of Some Object
With the ending -yo a distinction is also made between things possessed by someone and things that form a part of something. Examples:

kwawi? timber, stick
  ikwa his timber (someone’s possession)
  ikwayo its handle (part of a tool made of wood)

tohmi? cover
  itohmi his cover (someone’s possession)
  itohmiyo its fur

7.3.3 As a Product
Be means of the ending -yo a distinction is made between what is possessed by someone and what is produced by something. Examples:

nexti lime, ash
  inex his lime (someone’s possession)
  inexyo its ash (product of something like shells)

tomijn money
  itomijn his money (someone’s possession)
  itomijnyo its money (product of something that is sold)

7.3.4 As an Identity
Another interesting usage of -yo relates to the identity of persons or things. While it is impossible to come up with a literal translation, the grammatical mechanism suggests that the identity of the person or thing is considered to be something possessed. Examples:

Things:
  Té ixočiyo i:n? What type of flower is this?
  [Té variant of té: what?; i- possessive pref.; xoči-dependent form of flower; i:n this]

  Té itapoypo i:n? What sort of banana is this?
  [Téapo-dependent form of téapo? banana]

Persons:
  Té i-Pedroyo? Which Peter? (What is his name?)
  Té ikoronelyo? Which colonel? (What is he called?)

7.3.5 Other Uses of -yo
Other uses of -yo are:

soki? mud
  isokiyo his griminess (something that covers the body)
7. SPECIAL FORMS OF THE SUBSTANTIVE

7.4 Forms with the Ending -yo:?
The ending -yo:, the absolute suffix of intrinsic belonging, generally appears in words that are not possessed, just as -yo (without either lengthening of the vowel or the glottal stop) is used with words that are possessed. Nonetheless, there are few words ending in -yo: whose derivation is clear and obvious.

- **ahko** tall
- **ahkoyo:**
- **iya:yo kahli**

- **owa?** cane
- **owaa:yo:**
- **iya:yo owa?**

There are other examples whose derivation remains obscure:

- **ihiyo:**
- **pakiyo:**

7.5 Forms in -yoh Describing Places
The suffix -yoh is used to form substantives describing places. When added to a substantival root, -yoh signifies an area characterized by an abundance of the thing indicated by the root.

- **a:wayoh** stand of oak trees [a:wa? oak]
- **ah:yo:yoh** bean patch [aha:yo:? beans]
- **sakayoh** hay field, grassland [saka? hay, grass]
- **teyoh** stony terrain [te?ti stone]
- **tepe:yoh** mountainous area [tepe:? mountain]

The plural is formed with -meh.
teyohmeh  stony areas
tepé:yohmeh  mountainous areas

The substantival character of this class of words ending in -yoh\(^1\) is evident in the following examples:

**as object of a preposition**

ipan a:wayoh  in the stand of oak trees

**as nucleus of a compound with a postposition**

k’ayohihti?  inside the forest

**as nucleus of a phrase with a demonstrative adjectival**

inó:n tepe:yoh  that mountainous area over there

### 7.6 Substantives Derived from Verbs

#### 7.6.1 The Substantivalizing Ending -lis

Constructions with the ending -lis refer for the most part to the occasion on which the action represented by the verbal root is carried out. The enclitic substantive ending -ti is optionally added to it.\(^2\) Examples:

- tak’w alis or tak’wálísti  a meal, a banquet
  
  [tak’wa he eats]

- tatalis or tatálísti  fire, burning
  
  [tata it burns]

- tapixkalis or tapixkálísti  harvest (of corn)
  
  [tapixka harvest corn]

- owatekílis or owatekílisti  cane cutting
  
  [owa? sugarcane; quiteki he cuts it]

- čó:kalis or čó:kálísti  weeping
  
  [čó:ka weep]

- ta:tapowalis or ta:tapowálísti  conversation, chat
  
  [ta:tapowa he converses, chats]

In certain cases, the occasion referred to is an extended period of time.

- to:nalis or to:nálísti  dog days

\(^1\) The substantival ending -yoh described here is distinct from the adjectival ending -yoh (see Section 8.3.1).

\(^2\) [As noted before, -ti is the most common absolute ending for nouns. —CSM]
There are some examples of verbal substantives ending in -lis that have an abstract meaning. For the most part, these are possessive forms.

ima:lnemilis    his bad behavior
    [ma:lnemi he lives badly]

ita-ikne:lis    his compassion
    [ta-ikne:liá he loves, is compassionate]

7.6.2 Other Deverbal Substantives

Other examples of substantives derived from verbs are:

notapi:ʔ    my bundle    [kipi:ki he wraps it up]
notat’oyo:n    my fritters    [kit’oyo:na he fries it]
k’ahk’awil    firewood    [k’ahk’awi he cuts firewood]
tahto:l    word, statement    [tahtowa he speaks]
ite:nt’akka    its lid    [mote:nt’ak’w a it gets covered]
ink’aw:t’ak’aya    her veil    [mok’aw:t’ak’wa she veils herself]
8. The Adjective

The adjective is another variable part of the sentence. The adjectives qualify substantives or specify the extent to which their meaning is understood.

8.1 Determinative Adjectives

Determinative adjectives are normally classified into four groups: demonstrative, numerical (number adjectives), indefinite and possessive. In Nahuatl, the demonstratives, the number adjectives and the indefinites are independent words, while the possessives are inseparable prefixes.

8.1.1 Demonstrative Adjectives

The demonstrative adjectives are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ini:n</td>
<td>ini:meh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iní:n</td>
<td>iní:mehpa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ini:mpa</td>
<td>iní:mpa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inó:n</td>
<td>inó:meh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inó:mpa</td>
<td>inó:mehpa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ači:n</td>
<td>ahači:n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ači:mpa</td>
<td>ahačimpa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ačo:n</td>
<td>ahačo:n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ačo:mpa</td>
<td>ahačo:mpa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ine:pa</td>
<td>ine:pameh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iné:bapa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The demonstrative adjective\(^1\) is placed in front of the substantive.

\begin{align*}
\text{ini:n ilwi?} & = \text{this festival} \\
\text{ino:meh siwaːtkeh} & = \text{these women} \\
\text{ine:pa čokotʰi:n} & = \text{that child over there}
\end{align*}

\(^1\) When the demonstrative adjective replaces a substantive, it is called a demonstrative pronoun, which is presented in Section 5.3.1
8.1.2 Number Adjectives

The numbers are determinative adjectives that serve the purpose of counting. The numerical system of Spanish is mostly used, but there are four special numbers that are used very frequently:

- **se:** one
- **o:me** two
- **e:yi** three
- **na:wi** four

Both the meaning and the function of the number change when the first syllable is reduplicated.

- **sehsé:** by ones, one by one, one at a time
- **oho:me** by twos, two by two, two at a time
- **ehe:yi** by threes, three by three, three at a time
- **nahna:wi** by fours, four by four, four at a time

The number becomes a number pronoun when it replaces people. In the numbers from **two** to **four**, the vowel of the last syllable is lengthened and **-n** is added to it. Examples:

- **o:me:n** the two of them
- **e:yi:n** the three of them
- **na:wi:n** the four of them

For the numbers **five** and higher, which are borrowings from Spanish, a comparable mechanism is used to form the number pronouns. **-meh** or **-hmeh** is added, and the borrowing undergoes the same changes of pronunciation typical of such borrowings.

- **si:nkohmeh** five people
- **seyismeh** six people
- **die:hmeh** ten people

Like the other pronouns, the numbers can take a personal prefix (see Sections 5.3.6 and 5.3.7).

- **no:me:n** or **no:memeh** we are two (excl.)
- **ame:yi:n** or **ame:yimeh** you (pl.) are three

8.1.3 Indefinite Adjectives

The indefinite adjectives specify the substantive in a vague manner. They can be interpreted as masculine or feminine without the form of the adjective varying in Nahuatl.

- **alí:n** small amount
- **katiá** what
- **mia** much
- **ke:ski** so much
- **se?** other

- **amayi:n** many
- **inewi** all
- **nisé:** none
- **sewó:** other
- **te:** what

In addition, borrowings from Spanish are used: **varios, algún, ningún, todo**, etc.
The indefinite adjectives also act as interrogatives. Examples:

- té hora? what time?
- késki años how many years?
- katiá ohti? which way?

When the indefinite adjective replaces a substantive it becomes a pronoun (see Sections 5.3.3 and 5.3.5).

### 8.1.4 Possessive Adjectives

The possessive adjectives of Nahuatl are not independent words, but appear as particles bound to the substantive. They are called *possessive prefixes*, and always form a part of the compound substantive. The possessive prefixes are:

- no- my
- mo- your (sg.)
- i- his/her/its
- to- our (incl.)
- amo- your (pl.)
- i- their

These are explained more fully in Section 6.4.

### 8.2 Qualifying Adjectives

#### 8.2.1 Independent Qualifying Adjectives

The qualifying adjectives indicate what persons, animals and things are like. Like substantives, adjectives in Nahuatl lack indicators of gender, and for this reason all the translations are given in the masculine.

- etiːʔ heavy
- takʷaktiʔ hard
- seseːʔ cold
- weːliʔ tasty
- wehkapan tall
- weyaʔ long
- tʰopeːliʔ sweet
- čikáʔ ripe, mature

The plural is generally formed by reduplicating the first syllable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>čičiʔ</td>
<td>čihčičiʔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weyi</td>
<td>wehweyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xamočtiʔ</td>
<td>xahxamočtiʔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aliːmpa</td>
<td>ahaliːmpa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The independent qualifying adjective can function as a statement, taking personal prefixes and number markers. If it bears no personal prefix, it is understood to be in the third person (see Section 2.1).
Singular
Ničapatiʔ. I am chubby.
Tičapatiʔ. You (sg.) are chubby.
Čapatiʔ. He is chubby.

To form the plural of adjectives that end in -ʔiʔ, the glottal stop is dropped and -keh is added. It may or may not have reduplication.

Plural
Ničapatikeh. or We (excl.) are chubby.
Ničahčapatikeh.
Tičapatikeh. or We (incl.) are chubby.
Tičahčapatikeh.
Ančapatikeh. or You (pl.) are chubby.
Ančahčapatikeh.
Čapatikeh. or They are chubby.
Čahčapatikeh.

If the adjective ends in -ʔiʔ, the plural is formed by adding -meh, with the glottal stop becoming k in front of the -meh.

Singular netiʔ? I’m heavy
Plural neti:kmeh or neheti:kmeh We (excl.) are heavy

If the adjective ends in -n, this ending is dropped and -meh added.

Singular niwehkapan I’m tall
Plural niwehkapameh or niwehwehkapameh We (excl.) are tall

8.2.2 Inseparable Qualifying Adjectives
The inseparable adjective is placed in front of the substantive stem to form a compound substantive, like the English blackbird. Examples:

yama:nikta:l soft earth
[yama:nik- variant of yama:niʔ soft;
-ta:l dependent root of ta:hi earth]

seliʔto:to:tʰi:n tender little bird
[seliʔ- tender; -to:to:- dependent root of to:toʔ bird;
-tʰi:n diminutive]

pet’taxkal simple tortilla
[petʰ- dependent root of pet’tiʔ simple; -taxkal tortilla]
8. THE ADJECTIVE

8.3 Denominal Adjectives

8.3.1 The Ending -yoh Used Adjectivally

When attached to certain nouns, the suffix -yoh to be full of something or to have something turns them into adjectives.

okʷilyoh wormy
[okʷi- dependent root of okʷilin worm]

a:yoh juicy, watery
[a:- dependent root of aʔtí water]

tanyoh toothed, with teeth
[tan- dependent root of tanti tooth]

tahyoh having a father
[tah- dependent root of te:tah father]

The adjectival ending -yoh described here corresponds to the ending -yo of intrinsic belonging and to the derivative verbal endings -yowi and -yo:tiá, as can be seen in the following examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>original substantive</th>
<th>derived substantive</th>
<th>adjective</th>
<th>intransitive verb</th>
<th>transitive verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>naka? flesh</td>
<td>nonakayo my body, my muscles</td>
<td>nakayoh corpulent, muscular</td>
<td>nakayowi fatten up, have growing muscles</td>
<td>kinakayo:tiá fatten him, make his muscles grow</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is another ending -yoh that is of a substantival nature, and it is described in Section 7.5.

8.3.2 The Ending -tah Used Adjectivally

The ending -tah is used to form adjectives derived from nouns, and these are used to qualify the circumstance of time or place. They give the sense that there is an abundance of the thing signified by the substantive root. Their function is predicative, never substantival. Examples:

tetah rocky
[te- dependent root of teʔtí rock]

sokitah muddy
[soki- dependent root of sokiʔ mud]

ta:lpi:nółah dusty
[ta:l- dependent root of ta:hlí earth; píno:l dust]
tiawa:tah *rainy*

[tiawa:- dependent root of tiawa?: *rain*]

tekpintah *with fleas*

[tekpin *flea*]

When the circumstance is general or extensive in time, the adjective can take the prefix *ta-* *everywhere* without changing the sense of the word.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tasokitah</td>
<td><em>muddy everywhere</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tatiawa:tah</td>
<td><em>rainy everywhere</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 8.4 Contrast between Adjectival and Adverbial Forms

Compound words formed with -*tah* that are used adjectivally are distinguished from compounds with the same ending that are used as locative adverbs (see Section 17.3.1). To function locativally, the adjectives have to have the relative adverb *ka:n* placed in front of them. The adverbial words do not have this requirement. Examples:

#### Adjectival forms

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ninenkeh</td>
<td><em>ka:n tetah.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>we-went where it-is-rocky</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>We went to a place where there are many rocks.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ninenkeh</td>
<td><em>ka:n sokitah.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>we went where it-is-muddy</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>We went to a place where there is a lot of mud.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Adverbial forms

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ninenkeh</td>
<td><em>ilwitah.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>we walked to-the-festival</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>We walked to the festival.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ninenkeh</td>
<td><em>okotah</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>we walked to-the-pine-grove</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>We walked to the pine grove.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The prefix *ta-* is obligatory in the formation of the predicative adjective with the root *-mix-* *clouds*.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tamixtah</td>
<td><em>there are many clouds, it is cloudy</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compound adjectives in *-tah* that are derived from nouns are turned into verbs by having derivative verbal endings added to them (see Section 9.8.2).
9. Transitivity in the Verb

9.1 Differences between Transitive and Intransitive Verbs
Transitive verbs are those that appear with an object prefix and express an action that can pass from one person or thing to another. Examples:

- nimit'ita  
  *I see you (sg.)*  
  [-it(a) to see]*
- te-i:xmati  
  *he knows us*  
  [-i:xmat(i) to know]*
- kino:t'a  
  *she calls him*  
  [-no:t'(a) to call]*
- tine:tečowa  
  *you (sg.) meet me*  
  [-teč(o) to meet]*

Intransitive verbs are those that do not bear an object prefix and whose action does not happen to another person or object. Examples:

- panowa  
  *it passes*  
  [-pan(o) to pass]*
- tinemi  
  *you (sg.) go*  
  [-nem(i) to go]*
- xo:ta  
  *it is burning*  
  [-xo:t(a) to burn]*
- nisa  
  *I awake*  
  [-is(a) to wake up]*

Many verbal roots can be transitive or intransitive. In general, the transitive form (which take an object) bears separate endings from those of the intransitive verbs, that is, there is a change of conjugation. The more common differences between the endings of the intransitive verb and those of the corresponding transitive one are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intransitive</th>
<th>Transitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-i (first conjugation)</td>
<td>-a (second conjugation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-i (first conjugation)</td>
<td>-iá (third conjugation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ivi (first conjugation)</td>
<td>-owa (fourth conjugation)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note the correspondence between the intransitive and the transitive forms in the following examples:¹

---

¹ In terms of their meaning, all the intransitive forms laid out here deal with a change in state, and the corresponding transitive forms are in reality of a causative type; each one of the examples could be translated with the phrase *to make it...* For example, kika:wa *he leaves it or he makes it remain.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intransitive</th>
<th>Transitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ka:wi</td>
<td>kika:wa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it remains</td>
<td>he leaves it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xitomi</td>
<td>kixitoma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it unites</td>
<td>he unites it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t'o:pi</td>
<td>kit'o:pa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it ends</td>
<td>he ends it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pa:ti</td>
<td>kipa:ta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it dissolves</td>
<td>he dissolves it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intransitive</th>
<th>Transitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>te:mi</td>
<td>kite:miá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it fills up</td>
<td>he fills it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tami</td>
<td>kitamiá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it finishes</td>
<td>he finishes it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pahti</td>
<td>kipahtiá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it heals</td>
<td>he cures it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>se:wi</td>
<td>kise:wiá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it goes out (fire)</td>
<td>he extinguishes it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intransitive</th>
<th>Transitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>poliwi</td>
<td>kipolowa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it gets lost</td>
<td>he loses it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k*esiwi</td>
<td>kik*esowa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he is annoyed, angry</td>
<td>he annoys him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pačiwi</td>
<td>kipačowa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he calms down</td>
<td>he calms him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sosoliwi</td>
<td>kisosolowa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it comes apart</td>
<td>he takes it apart</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other Intransitive/Transitive Pairs**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>iá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tata</td>
<td>it burns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kitatiá</td>
<td>he burns it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>owa</td>
<td>owía</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>temowa</td>
<td>it comes down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kitemowiá</td>
<td>he lowers it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>owi</td>
<td>owa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tapowi</td>
<td>it opens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kitapowa</td>
<td>he opens it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rules for the formation of the plural of transitive verbs**
The use of the prefixes ne:-, mit^3-, and ki- in the plural requires a plural termination given that these prefixes do not themselves mark grammatical number, but can be used in both a singular and a plural sense. The general rules are:

a. The transitive verb takes a plural ending
   1. if the subject is plural
   2. if the object is plural (unless this is indicated with the prefix te:-)
   3. if the subject and the object are plural.

b. The transitive verbs that include te:- do not take a plural ending if the subject is singular.
The plural form of a verb with one of the endings ne:, mit^-, and ki- can have three meanings. Examples:

ne:kakih  
- he hears us (plural object)
- they hear us (plural subject and object)
- they hear me (plural subject)

In any event, the meaning is determined by the context in which the phrase appears. For example, the inclusion of an independent pronoun in the clause can serve to indicate which element is in the singular, thereby making it clear that the other is in the plural. Examples:

Neh ne:kakih  *They hear me.*
Yēh ne:kakih  *He hears us.*

9.2 Intransitive Verbs with the Prefix ta-
Another type of intransitive verb is derived from transitive verbs through the use of the generalizing prefix ta-, which replaces the object prefix. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intransitive</th>
<th>Transitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tahtowa</td>
<td>kihtowa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tama:lita</td>
<td>kima:lita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tak&quot;a</td>
<td>kik&quot;a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>takaki</td>
<td>kikaki</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The prefix ta- serves various functions, and one of these is to make transitive verbs intransitive. When it is used in this manner, the verb lacks direct objects. The meaning of an intransitive verb derived in this manner is always that of an action carried out by the subject, which performs the role of agent. On the other hand, the original meaning of the intransitive verb is commonly a change of state, something that happens to the subject or that the subject does to himself. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intransitive (original)</th>
<th>Transitive (causative)</th>
<th>Transitive (derivative of the causative)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>temowa</td>
<td>kitemowía</td>
<td>tatemowía</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he comes down</td>
<td>he lowers it (makes it comes down)</td>
<td>he brings a load down</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1 [It might be clearer to call ta- the indefinite object marker, which is the terminology used for Classical Nahuatl. That is, all transitive verbs in Nahuatl need to have an object marker, and ta- is used if the speaker has no particular object in mind. This usage differs from that of English, which can use a transitive verb without an expressed object, for example *he eats sloppily*. It would be better to describe such a usage as *absolute* rather than *intransitive* (after all, the verb *eat* does have an object but this is omitted as being unnecessary to the thought). —CSM]
Intransitive (original)  k\textsuperscript{w}esiwi  she gets annoyed  
Transitive (causative)  kik\textsuperscript{w}esowa  he bothers her  
Intransitive (derivative of the causative)  tak\textsuperscript{w}esowa  he is bothersome (causes annoyance)  

We make a distinction between the prefix ta- and the object prefixes for the following reasons:

1. When ta- replaces the direct object prefix, the verb becomes intransitive (as explained before).
2. The prefix ta- is one of the first rank, that is, other elements do not intervene between ta- and the root, while the object prefixes are not bound to the root so intimately. Example:

\begin{align*}
&\text{kipoxk\textsuperscript{w}a}\quad \text{he eats it too much}\quad \text{[kik\textsuperscript{w}a he eats it]}\\
&\text{poxtak\textsuperscript{w}a}\quad \text{he eats too much}\quad \text{[tak\textsuperscript{w}a he eats]}
\end{align*}

3. It is also possible to add to the verbs that take ta- an object prefix that reflects the indirect object in applicative constructions (see Section 14.1). (The Nahuatl verb cannot take more than one object prefix.)

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>With direct object</th>
<th>With indirect object</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kipa:ka  he washes it</td>
<td>kipa:kiliá  he washes it for her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With generalizing prefix</td>
<td>With indirect object and generalizing prefix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tapa:ka  he does the washing</td>
<td>kitapa:kiliá  he does the washing for her</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 9.3 Transitive or Intransitive Verbs without Change

Certain verbs can be transitive or intransitive without changing conjugation. The third-person object is formed by adding ki- to the root.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intransitive</th>
<th>Transitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>taksa  he steps</td>
<td>kitaksa  he steps on it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tayi  he weeds</td>
<td>kitayi  he weeds it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pixka  he harvests</td>
<td>kipixka  he harvests it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tisi  he grinds</td>
<td>kitisi  he grinds it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to:ka  he sows</td>
<td>kito:ka  he sows it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ta:wiá  it shines</td>
<td>kita:wiá  he lights it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asi  he arrives</td>
<td>kasi  he comes upon it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. Transitivity in the Verb

9.4 Reflexive Verbs
Reflexive verbs are those that take the object prefix mo-. The action of the verb is put into operation by the subject, and it happens to this same subject.

- **nimota:liá**  I seat myself
- **timota:liá**  you (sg.) seat yourself
- **motota:liá**  he seats himself
- **nimota:liáh**  we (excl.) seat ourselves
- **timota:liáh**  we (incl.) seat ourselves
- **annmotota:liáh**  you (pl.) seat yourselves
- **motota:liáh**  they seat themselves

When the context indicates, this type of construction can be interpreted in a reciprocal sense whereby two or more subjects carry out the action and do it to each other. Examples:

- **Momagakeh.**  They struck each other.
- **Timonekih**  You and I want each other.

9.5 Verbs with Inseparable Object
Certain substantive roots are combined with verbal roots to form compound verbs that contain an object.

9.5.1 Verbs with Inseparable Direct Object
When the verb is composed of a transitive verbal root and a substantive as direct object, the compound appears as an intransitive form since it does not admit an object prefix or an independent object. Examples:

- **mi:lči:wa**  he makes a field
  
  [mi:l- dependent root of mi:hli field; -čiwa to make]

- **tikwí**  it catches on fire
  
  [ti- dependent root of tiʔti fire; -kwí to catch]

- **kalakokwíh**  raise a house
  
  [kal- dependent root of kahli house; -ahkokwí to raise; -h plural]

9.5.2 Verbs with Inseparable Circumstantial Object
When the verb is composed of a substantive root as circumstantial complement and a transitive verbal root, the compound is transitive or reflexive. This usage is comparable to English verbs like to pistol-whip or spoon-feed someone. Examples:
kitaxkalkimilowa *he wraps it in a tortilla*
[ki- third-person object prefix; -taxkal tortilla; -kimilowa to wrap]

mokʷa:wi:teki *he hits himself in the head*
[mo- reflexive prefix; -kʷa- dependent root signifying head; -wi:teki to strike]

kikoːnkʷa *he eats it from a pot*
[ki- third-person object prefix; -koːn- dependent root of koːmiʔ pot; -kʷa to eat]

### 9.6 Combination of Subject Prefixes with Object Prefixes

Next is a presentation of all the possible combinations of subject and object prefixes, with the plural element indicated with -h. It is necessary to bear in mind that the tenses not presented here take other endings in the plural. The plural of the imperative-subjunctive mood ends in -caːn (see Section 12.2).

#### First-person subject

- nimitˢ…    I (do the action) to you (sg.)
- nik…       I to him¹
- nimitˢ… h  I to you (pl.)
  - we (excl.) to you (pl.)
  - we (incl.) to you (sg.)
- nik… h     I to them
  - we (excl.) to them
  - we (excl.) to him
- nimo…      I to myself
- nimo… h    we (excl.) to ourselves

#### First-person inclusive plural subject

- tic… h     we (incl.) to them
  - we (incl.) to him

¹ To simplify the presentation, when the examples require an indication of gender in English, only the masculine is given, even though the gender is not specified in the Nahuatl.
9. Transitivity in the Verb

Second-person subject

\[\text{timo... h} \quad \text{we (incl.) to ourselves}\]

\[\text{Second-person subject}\]

\[\text{tine:...} \quad \text{you (sg.) to me}\]

\[\text{tik...} \quad \text{you (sg.) to him}\]

\[\text{anne:... h} \quad \text{you (sg.) to us (excl.)}\]

\[\text{you (pl.) to me}\]

\[\text{you (pl.) to us (excl.)}\]

\[\text{anki... h} \quad \text{you (sg.) to them}\]

\[\text{you (pl.) to him}\]

\[\text{you (pl.) to them}\]

\[\text{timo...} \quad \text{you (sg.) to yourself}\]

\[\text{anmo... h} \quad \text{you (pl.) to yourselves}\]

Third-person subject

\[\text{ne:...} \quad \text{he to me}\]

\[\text{mit^*...} \quad \text{he to you (sg.)}\]

\[\text{ki...} \quad \text{he to him}\]

\[\text{ne:... h} \quad \text{he to us (excl.)}\]

\[\text{they to us (excl.)}\]

\[\text{they to me}\]

\[\text{te:...} \quad \text{he to us (incl.)}\]

\[\text{te:... h} \quad \text{they to us (incl.)}\]

\[\text{mit^*... h} \quad \text{they to you (sg.)}\]

\[\text{he to you (pl.)}\]

\[\text{they to you (pl.)}\]

---

\[\text{Note that the plurality of the object has led to the use of the second person plural subject marker for a singular subject, ti- being reserved for the inclusive first person plural. —CSM}\]
ki… h  
he to them  
they to them  
they to him

mo…  
he to himself

mo… h  
they to themselves

**Imperative forms**

xine:…  
you (sg.) to me

xine:… ka:n  
you (pl.) to me  
you (pl.) to us (excl.)  
you (sg.) to us (excl.)

xik…  
you (sg.) to him

xik… ka:n  
you (sg.) to them  
you (pl.) to him  
you (pl.) to them

ximo…  
you (sg.) to yourself

ximo… ka:n  
you (pl.) to yourselves

**9.7 Stylistic Use of te:- in Place of ne:-**

For reasons of preference and style, the object prefix te:- can replace ne:- in contexts in which the idea of the exclusive plural is taken for granted or the exclusive/inclusive contrast is of no importance. In this usage, the grammatical number of te:- is indeterminate.

**Combinations**

tite:…  
you (sg.) to me

ante:… h  
you (sg.) to us  
you (pl.) to me  
you (pl.) to us
Imperative forms

xite:… you to me
xite:… ka:n you (sg.) to us
you (pl.) to me
you (pl.) to us

Examples:

Ayá?: ante:wi:gayah no:? or Ayá?: anne:wi:gayah no:?
Wouldn’t you take me too? (by car)

Ači xite:pale:wi. or Ači xine:pale:wi.
Help me a little.

9.8 Intransitive Derivative Verbs in -tiá
When added to a substantival, adjectival or adverbial root, the derivational ending -tiá converts the root into a verb that expresses the idea that the subject is modified by taking on the character expressed by the root. Verbs derived in this way are always intransitive.

9.8.1 When the Original Form is a Simple Root

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Root</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>weyitiá</td>
<td>he is getting bigger</td>
<td>[weyi big]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tayowatiá</td>
<td>night comes on</td>
<td>[tayowa night]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ačitiá</td>
<td>he gets a bit better</td>
<td>[ači a little]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a:tiá</td>
<td>it becomes watery</td>
<td>[a:- dep. root of a:ʔti water]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o:metiá</td>
<td>it divides in two</td>
<td>[o:me two]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wehkapantiá</td>
<td>it becomes high</td>
<td>[wehkapan high]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xi:lo:tiá</td>
<td>it becomes green corn</td>
<td>[xi:lo:- dep. root of xi:lo:? green corn]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tense endings of intransitive verbs in -tiá are those of the first conjugation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Future</th>
<th>Imperfect</th>
<th>Preterite</th>
<th>Trans. Pret.</th>
<th>Subjunctive Mood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>weyitiá</td>
<td>weyitiás</td>
<td>weyitia:ya</td>
<td>weyitiá?</td>
<td>weyitiaka</td>
<td>maweyitiá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>it is getting bigger</td>
<td>it will be getting bigger</td>
<td>it used to get bigger</td>
<td>it got bigger</td>
<td>it had gotten bigger</td>
<td>may it get bigger</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Plural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>weyitiáh</td>
<td>they are getting bigger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>weyitiáskeh</td>
<td>they will getting bigger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>weyitia:yah</td>
<td>they used to getting bigger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>weyitiakeh</td>
<td>they got bigger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>weyitiakah</td>
<td>they had gotten bigger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjunctive Mood</td>
<td>maweyitiaka:n</td>
<td>may they get bigger</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.8.2 When the Original Form is a Compound Adjective in -tah

The compound adjectives in -tah, which are derived from substantives, are turned into verbs through the addition of the intransitive ending -tiá. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original form</th>
<th>Derivational verbal form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tamixtah</td>
<td>it is cloudy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamixtaťiá</td>
<td>it is clouding over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamixtaťiáš</td>
<td>it will cloud over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamixtaťiá:y</td>
<td>it would cloud over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamixtaťiáʔ</td>
<td>it clouded over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamixtaťiakaa</td>
<td>it had clouded over</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A stative form is derived by adding the ending -tōʔ or one of the markers that corresponds to it. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal form</th>
<th>Adjectival form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tamixtaťitōʔ</td>
<td>it is cloudy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamixtaťitos</td>
<td>it will be cloudy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamixtaťitōya</td>
<td>it used to be cloudy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.9 Intransitive Derivative Verbs in -yowi

When added to a substantival root, the derivational ending -yowi (second conjugation) converts the root into an intransitive verb that signifies that the subject undergoes a change by acquiring what is indicated by the root. This verbal ending corresponds to the adjectival ending -yoh, which was described in Section 8.3.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal form</th>
<th>Adjectival form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sokiyowi</td>
<td>it gets dirty, muddy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sokiyoh</td>
<td>it is dirty, muddy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>okʷilyowi</td>
<td>it gets wormy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>okʷilyoh</td>
<td>it has worms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>po:?yowi</td>
<td>it becomes smoked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>po:?yoh</td>
<td>it is smoked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ma:yowi</td>
<td>it becomes branched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ma:yoh</td>
<td>it has branches, arms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Original substantival form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbal form</th>
<th>Adjectival form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sokiʔ</td>
<td>mud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[dep. root: soki-]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>okʷilin</td>
<td>worm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[dep. root: okʷil-]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>po:kti</td>
<td>smoke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[dep. root: po:k- or po:?]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i)maʔ:(his) hand, arm, branch</td>
<td>[dep. root: -ma:-]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is conjugated with the tense endings of the second conjugation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>sokiyowi</td>
<td>sokiyowih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>sokiyowis</td>
<td>sokiyowiskeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>sokiyowia:ya</td>
<td>sokiyowia:yah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>sokiyowiiʔ</td>
<td>sokiyowikeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>sokiyowika</td>
<td>sokiyowikah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjunctive Mood</td>
<td>masokiyowíi</td>
<td>masokiyowíi:n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.10 Transitive Derivative Verbs in -yo:tiá

When added to a substantival root, the derivational ending -yo:tiá (third conjugation) converts the root into a transitive verb that signifies that the subject affects the object by adding to it what is indicated by the substantive root. The original substantive normally appears in the possessed form, with the ending of intrinsic belonging.

**Verbal form**

- kimekayo:tiá  
  *He adds a cord to it*
- ki-a:yotiá  
  *He fills it with liquid (gas in the tank)*
- kikw:ayotiá  
  *He adds a handle (of wood) to it*
- kitanyo:tiá  
  *He makes notches in it (in a trunk as steps)*

**Possessed substantival form**

- imekayo     *his cord, cable*
- i-a:yo      *its juice, liquid*
- ikw:ayo     *its handle*
- itanyo     *its notches*

**Original substantival form**

- mekaʔ  *cord, string* [dep. root: -meka-]
- aʔti  *water* [dep. root: -a:-]
- kwawiʔ  *wood, stake* [dep. root: -kwai-]
- tanti  *tooth* [dep. root: -tan-]

It is conjugated with the endings of the third conjugation.
### Singular

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>kimekayo:tiá</td>
<td>he adds a cord to it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>kimekayo:ti:h</td>
<td>he will add a cord to it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>kimekayo:ti:ya</td>
<td>he used to add a cord to it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>kimekayo:tih</td>
<td>he added a cord to it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>kimekayo:ti:hka</td>
<td>he had added a cord to it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjunctive Mood</td>
<td>makimekayo:ti</td>
<td>may he add a cord to it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Plural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>kimekayo:tiáh</td>
<td>they add a cord to it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>kimekayo:ti:skeh</td>
<td>they will add a cord to it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>kimekayo:ti:yah</td>
<td>they used to add a cord to it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>kimekayo:ti:jkeh</td>
<td>they added a cord to it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>kimekayo:ti:hkah</td>
<td>they had added a cord to it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjunctive Mood</td>
<td>makimekayo:ti:ka:n</td>
<td>may they add a cord to it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 9.11 Derivative Transitive Verbs in -wiá

When added to a substantival root, the derivational ending -wiá (third conjugation) converts the root into a transitive verb that signifies that the original substantive affects the object in some manner. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Derivative verbs</th>
<th>Original substantive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kito:nalwiá</td>
<td>he suns it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kito:nalwiá</td>
<td>[to:nal sunlight]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ki-chekawiá</td>
<td>he aired it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ki-chekawiá</td>
<td>[ehekaʔ wind]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ki-istawiá</td>
<td>he salts it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ki-istawiá</td>
<td>[istaʔ salt]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kinexwiá</td>
<td>he spreads lime on it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kinexwiá</td>
<td>[nexti lime]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kito:ka:wiá</td>
<td>he names, calls him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kito:ka:wiá</td>
<td>[ito:kaʔ his name]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It conjugates with the endings of the third conjugation.

### Singular

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>kito:nalwiá</td>
<td>he suns it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>kito:nalwi:h</td>
<td>he will sun it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>kito:nalwi:ya</td>
<td>he used to sun it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>kito:nalwi:ha</td>
<td>he sunned it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>kito:nalwi:ha</td>
<td>he had sunned it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjunctive Mood</td>
<td>makito:nalwi</td>
<td>may he sun it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Plural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>kito:nalwi:ha</td>
<td>they sun it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>kito:nalwi:skah</td>
<td>they will sun it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>kito:nalwi:yah</td>
<td>they used to sun it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>kito:nalwi:hkeh</td>
<td>they had sunned it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>kito:nalwi:hkeh</td>
<td>they had sunned it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9.12 Impersonal Forms of the Verb

The impersonal forms of the verb are special forms that are used when there is no need to specify the subject or the object and it is important to specify only that the activity takes place.

When added to the verbal root, the ending -lo make the verb impersonal. It is conjugated with special tense endings. Verbs of a transitive character appear with the generalizing prefix ta-, which makes them intransitive, or with the reflexive mo-. With the exception of mo-, the impersonal verb never takes a personal prefix. The impersonal forms can be translated into English with the phrase there is plus a substantive derived from the appropriate verb or with the subject one. Examples:

- kalakilo  
  there is entry, one enters  
  [kalaki he enters]
- čo:kalo  
  there is weeping, one weeps  
  [čo:ka he weeps]
- takwalo  
  there is eating, one eats  
  [takwa he eats]
- mikilo  
  there is dying, one dies  
  [miki he dies]
- momačti:lo  
  there is studying, one studies  
  [momačtiá he studies]

In the conjugation of the impersonal forms, the ending of the present is used when the tense is indeterminate, and the ending of the preterite is used as a present. The transitory preterite and the plural forms are lacking. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Impersonal Form</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indet. pres.</td>
<td>kalakilo</td>
<td>there is entry, one enters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pret. as pres.</td>
<td>kalakilo:ʔ</td>
<td>there is entry, one enters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>kalakilo:h</td>
<td>there will be entry, one will enter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>kalakilo:ya</td>
<td>there was entry, one would enter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjunctive Mood</td>
<td>makalakilo</td>
<td>may there be entry, may one enter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. Basic Tenses of the Verb

The basic tenses already laid out are: present, future, imperfect, preterite and transitory preterite. Examples of the use of each of these are presented below. Underneath most of the entire sentences, a literal translation of each word is given in square brackets.

10.1 Present Tense

The present in Nahuatl is used as in English to express truths of an indeterminate time and habitual acts. Examples:

[That bean(s) they-take-out, all they-will-place-it on sale]
They will take those beans out and place them all on sale.

Nigah yawi sinti bonito. Ayá:? či:čikotehkawi.
[Here it-goes (grows) corn good-looking. Not it-crooked-rise.]
Good-looking corn grows here. It doesn’t grow uneven.

Inó:n xi:lo?: kanah se: mano kita:liá.
[That green-corn somewhere one hand it-puts-it]
That green corn in places produces five.¹

Iní:n remedio nokta póxsanya iga mokowa.
[This medicine certainly much-part. of emphasis-now that it-buys-itself]
This medicine certainly gets bought a lot now.

[That-part. of explication-part. of hearsay it’s not a good thing that we-eat-it]
Reportedly, as for that thing, it is not good for us to eat it.

Tehame:n atimomakah de kʷenta² kén iga wet⁰i kiawa:?.
[We not-we-give-ourselves-account how that it-falls rain]
We don’t know how it is that the rain falls.

¹ [The Spanish borrowing mano (lit. hand) is used to signify a group of five (apparently ears of corn). —CSM]
² [The phrase timomakah de kʷenta is a calque of the Spanish idiom nos damos de cuenta. —CSM]
Neh yeh ihko:mpa pox ne:kʷehkʷesowa.
[I who thus-part. of explication much-he-annoys-me]
Anyone who acts like that annoys me a great deal.

10.2 Future Tense
The future is used in some cases like the future of English. Examples:

Kén nikihi:lhi:h? How will I tell him?
Tikmatis té iga mit’no:t’a. You will know why he is calling you.

In Nahuatl, the future is used more frequently and in a greater variety of contexts than in English. For example, the following sentence contains three futures, one translated into English with a future, one with a participle, and one with a present.

Iga ikʷá:? tamis nikpili:nas, kénya nikči:was?
[That when it-will-stop I-will-spin how-now I-will-make-it]
When I stop spinning, how will I do it then?

The future is used to describe something of which one imagines that it can happen. The following paragraph contains three verbs in the future.

Si ke:man tipohpoliwi: is ipan se: kʷayoh, entonces inó:n fruta,
[If some day you-will-lose-yourself on-it one forest, then that fruit]
If you get lost in a forest some time, then that fruit
[it-can you-will-split-it. Then at once you-will-pass on-it that mountain]
you’ll be able to split it. Then you will get out of that mountain quickly.

The future is often used in exhortations meant to keep someone from doing something by accident or through carelessness, although the translation does not always reflect this.

Amo tiwetís!
(Make sure you) don’t fall!

Teh iná:n timona:miktiá iwá:n notakotí:n.
[You (sg.) now you-will-marry with-her my daughter]

Pero amo tikmagas ke:man.
[But not you-will-hit-her some day.]

Today you are marrying my daughter. But (make sure you) don’t ever hit her!
10.3 Imperfect Tense
The imperfect tense in Nahuatl corresponds for the most part to the imperfect in Spanish. The use of this tense gives the verbal action the aspect of duration or habit (English was doing X, would do X or used to do X). The endings -aya and -a:ya indicate this tense.

Ya:ya mi:kočiti cada día.
[He-was-going he-going-to-sleep-in-field every day.]
He would go every day to sleep in (his) field.

Tayowaka:n ki:sayah ma:pačimeh.
[At night they-would-emerge the raccoons]
The raccoons would come out at night.

The imperfect can also indicate actions started but not finished or those that one desired to carry out but did not.

Nikowaya tʰapoʔ pero anikasiʔ.
[I-was-buying bananas but I-did-not-find-them]
I tried to buy bananas but I didn’t find any.

Nita:tapowaya mowa:n pero animitʰečoh.
[I-was-chatting with-you but not-I-reach-you]
I wanted to chat with you but I didn’t find you.

The imperfect is also used in a conditional sense.

Ma iga nikipiaya tomi:n, nikowaya.1
[If that I-had-it money, I-would-buy-it.]
If I had the money, I would buy it.

10.4 Preterite Tense
The preterite is the form for the past, expressing completed action.

[He-took-him his-home.]
He took him home.

[This cane that he-planted-it your-child it-is-going it-is-going-to-bloom.]
This cane that your child planted is going to bloom.

1 [On the last form, the object prefix -k- is apparently omitted for phonological reasons; see Section 12.2.2 with footnote. —CSM]
You (sg.)-gave-me-to-take water much-part.-now

You gave me a lot of water until the water came out of my ears.

Nobody said anything.

The character of the preterite is distinguished from the transitory preterite in terms of the effect or result of their respective actions. Unless the verb has an inherently transitory aspect, like kita? I saw it or nitakʷtːgaʔ I sang, the preterite signifies not only that the action was put into effect but that the result of this action endures until the present.

10.5 Transitory Preterite

The transitory preterite, on the other hand, signifies that the result of the action has been reversed in some way and that it did not endure until the present. This tense is used to express acts whose effect has turned out to be transitory. The ending -ka indicates the transitory preterite.¹

- He took it home. (Implication: but he no longer has it there.)

- The commission arrived. (Implication: but it has left.)

- I hung out the clothes. (Implication: but but took them back in)

- The water dried up. (Implication: but there is water again.)

The transitory preterite is normally translated into English with the pluperfect or the simple past, so that the preceding examples can be translated as follows.

¹ The use of the transitory preterite says nothing about how much time has elapsed since the action was put into effect. It may have happened a moment or a long time ago. Given this fact, we do not use the term remote preterite that has been given to it in various other dialects of Nahuatl.
He had taken it home.
The commission had arrived.
He had hung out the clothes.
The water had dried up.

The transitory preterite is also used to signify interrupted actions whose realization almost happened but was avoided. Examples:

Nimikika. *I almost died.* (Implication: *I was on the point of dying but got better.*)

Tiwet’ika.¹ *You almost fell.* (Implication: *You began to fall but caught yourself.*)

**Conditional uses**
The transitory preterite is also used in conditions.

ma iga ayá:? tikʷaligakah tonáyiloh, tipa:t’iwikah.
*[If that not we-had-it-brought our-raincoat, we-would-dampen-ourselves]*
*If we hadn’t brought our raincoats, we would have gotten wet.*

¹ The word *tiwet’ika you almost fell* is normally said as an immediate reaction when one sees a companion stumble.
11. Directional Tenses

11.1 Direction Towards or Away from the Speaker
There are two groups of endings that combine the idea of direction with that of tense, and they are used when the action of the verb implies that the subject changes location in relation to the speaker.

A distinction is made between two movements: (1) towards there (in that the subject departs from the speaker) and (2) towards here (in that the subject approaches the speaker). There are three tenses: (1) present-future, (2) preterite, and (3) transitory preterite; the meaning of these will be discussed in detail later. Examples:

**Direction towards there**
- takowati  \(\text{he goes or will go to make purchases}\)
- takowato  \(\text{he went to make purchases}\)
- takowato:ya  \(\text{he went and made purchases (and returned)}\)

**Direction towards here**
- takowaki  \(\text{he comes or will come to make purchases}\)
- takowako  \(\text{he came to make purchases}\)
- takowako:ya  \(\text{he came and made purchases (and returned)}\)

Verbs belonging to the conjugations of Group 2 lengthen the thematic vowel when they take the endings of the directional tense. It can be said that the directional tenses are formed with the same stem as the future is, if the thematic vowel is considered to be a part of the stem.

**Present (basic)**  \(\text{ma:l}t\text{i}\text{á} \quad \text{he bathes}\)
**Future (basic)**  \(\text{ma:l}t\text{i}\text{h} \quad \text{he will bathe}\)

**Directional tense towards there**
- Present and future  \(\text{ma:l}t\text{i}\text{t}i \quad \text{he goes to bathe}\)
- Preterite  \(\text{ma:l}t\text{i}\text{t}o \quad \text{he went to bathe}\)
- Transitory Pret.  \(\text{ma:l}t\text{i}\text{t}o:y\text{a} \quad \text{he went and bathed (and returned)}\)

**Directional tense towards here**
- Present and future  \(\text{ma:l}t\text{i}\text{k}i \quad \text{he comes to bathe}\)
- Preterite  \(\text{ma:l}t\text{i}\text{k}o \quad \text{he came to bathe}\)
- Transitory Pret.  \(\text{ma:l}t\text{i}\text{k}o:y\text{a} \quad \text{he came and bathed (and returned)}\)

To form the plurals of the directional tenses, -\(\text{h}\) is added to the ending.
### 11.2 Auxiliary Verbs of Movement

Verbs with the directional ending are normally accompanied by an independent auxiliary verb of movement, such as one of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ya:h</td>
<td>he will go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yaw</td>
<td>he goes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yahki</td>
<td>he went (and has not yet returned)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yahka</td>
<td>he went (and has already returned)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wi:?</td>
<td>he will come, is coming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wa:lah</td>
<td>he came (and is still here)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wa:lk</td>
<td>he came (and left again)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Together with the verb of movement, the construction is formed as follows:

**Singular**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ya:h takowati</td>
<td>he will go to make purchases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yaw takowati</td>
<td>he is going to make purchases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yahki takowato</td>
<td>he went to make purchases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yahka takowato:ya</td>
<td>he went and made purchases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wi:? takowaki</td>
<td>he will come or is coming to make purchases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wa:lah takowako</td>
<td>he came to make purchases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wa:lk takowako:ya</td>
<td>he came and made purchases</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plural**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ya:skeh takowati</td>
<td>they will go to make purchases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yawih takowatih</td>
<td>they is going to make purchases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yahkiih takowato</td>
<td>they went to make purchases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yahkah takowato:ya</td>
<td>they went and made purchases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wi:teh takowaki</td>
<td>they will come or is coming to make purchases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wa:leh takowako</td>
<td>they came to make purchases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wa:lkah takowako:ya</td>
<td>they came and made purchases</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11.3 The Values of the Directional Tenses

In the use of the endings of the directional tenses, the selection of the ending depends on the direction of the movement of the subject and the place in his path in which he is found, from the point of view of the speaker. Here is a summary of the values for each tense:

**Present and future**
- Action of the verb: future tense
- Impending or started movement

**Preterite**
- Action of the verb: time undefined
- Completed movement (in one direction)

**Transitory preterite**
- Action of the verb: past time
- Movement returned

The following charts illustrate the correlation among these values. The vertical line represents an imaginary division between *here* and *there*, and the arrows mark the path of the subject. The points where these cross over a line determine the changes in tense, which are indicated by the horizontal lines.

**Direction towards there**
- Dividing line between here and there

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Present and Future</th>
<th>Preterite</th>
<th>Transitory preterite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-ti</td>
<td>When he has not yet gone</td>
<td>Action Realized</td>
<td>When he has already returned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to</td>
<td>When he has already gone but not yet returned</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-to:ya</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chart illustrates the correlation among the directional tenses, showing the movement of the subject from *here* to *there* and the corresponding tenses used to describe the action.
Direction towards here

Dividing line between here and there

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-ki</th>
<th>Present and Future</th>
<th>THERE</th>
<th>HERE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-ko</td>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td></td>
<td>Action Realized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ko:ya</td>
<td>Transitory preterite</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here is a complete list of the endings that are used in the directional tenses, together with the thematic vowel for each conjugation.

### Singular

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present-fut.</td>
<td>-ati</td>
<td>-iti</td>
<td>-i:ti</td>
<td>-o:ti</td>
<td>-a:ti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>-ato</td>
<td>-ito</td>
<td>-i:to</td>
<td>-o:to</td>
<td>-a:to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Plural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present-fut.</td>
<td>-akih</td>
<td>-ikih</td>
<td>-i:kih</td>
<td>-o:kih</td>
<td>-a:kih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>-akoh</td>
<td>-ikoh</td>
<td>-i:koh</td>
<td>-o:koh</td>
<td>-a:koh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12. The Moods of the Verb

In the conjugation of the verb, there are certain variations that indicate whether the signification of the verb is expressed as a simple fact or is considered in a different manner, for instance, as an order. In Nahuatl, the verbs not only belong to one of the five conjugations, but each form can also be classified according to the mood in which it is found. There are three moods: indicative, imperative-subjunctive, and desiderative.

12.1 The Indicative Mood

The verbs that have been presented in the preceding pages are in the indicative mood, as in the following expressions:

- Kičihkeh ikalmeh. They built their houses.
- Akipiá tomi:n He has no money.
- Te:no:t'akoh seh. They came to call us again.

In these expressions, the verbal idea is expressed as a fact or the negation of a fact, and in this way we say that they belong to the indicative mood.

12.2 The Imperative-Subjunctive Mood

In the following expressions, the forms of the verb express a command, advice, request or authorization. They are in the imperative mood.

- Ximota:li! Sit (sg.)!
- Ximotalo! Run (sg.)!
- Xine:pa:le:wi! Help (sg.) me!
- Mania:ka:n! Let’s (excl.) go!
- Matia:ka:n! Let’s (incl.) go!
- Xah! Go (sg.)!

Ómpaya maka:wi. [There-now let-him-wait] Let him wait there now.

Atakaki ni que¹ xikihli buen razón. [not-he-pays-attention nor that you-tell-him good reason] He pays no attention even though you are giving him good reasoning.

¹ [Ni que: borrowed Spanish conjunction. —CSM]
Xik"wi:ga mo:sta noburro iga xisakatekiti.  
*Take-him tomorrow my-donkey that you-should-go-to-cut-hay.*
*Take my donkey tomorrow so that you can go cut hay.*

The prefixes of the imperative-subjunctive are:

- **ma-** first and third person (placed in front of the person prefix)
- **xi-** or **x-** second person (replaces the personal prefix)

In all the conjugations, unless the verb appears with a directional suffix, the singular forms in the imperative-subjunctive end with the thematic vowel, and the suffix **-ka:n** is added to the plural. Examples:

### 12.2.1 The Imperative-Subjunctive Mood: First Conjugation

- **-ita** to see, **kita** he sees him/her/it

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>manikita</td>
<td>may I see it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xikita</td>
<td>see (sg.) it, may you see it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>makita</td>
<td>may he see it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manikitaka:n</td>
<td>may we (excl.) see it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>matikitaka:n</td>
<td>may we (incl.) see it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xikitaka:n</td>
<td>see (pl.) it, may you see it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>makitaka:n</td>
<td>may they see it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 12.2.2 The Imperative-Subjunctive Mood: Second Conjugation

- **-k"wi** to seize, **kik"wi** he seizes it

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>manik&quot;wi</td>
<td>may I seize it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xik&quot;wi</td>
<td>seize (sg.) him, may you seize it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>makik&quot;wi</td>
<td>may he seize it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manik&quot;wika:n</td>
<td>may we (excl.) seize it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>matik&quot;wika:n</td>
<td>may we (incl.) seize it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xik&quot;wika:n</td>
<td>seize (pl.) it, may you seize it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>makik&quot;wika:n</td>
<td>may they seize it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 [Actually, **x(i)**- is an alternative form of the second person singular subject prefix that is used only in the imperative-subjunctive mood. —CSM]

2 [In the conjugation of a stem beginning with **k**-, when the object prefix **-k**- appears after a subject prefix ending in a vowel (i.e., all persons apart from the third), the resulting double **-kk**- is simplified to a single **k** (i.e., the object prefix is omitted). —CSM]
12.2.3 The Imperative-Subjunctive Mood: Third Conjugation

-\text{ta}:\text{li} \text{ to set down, } \text{mota}:\text{li} \text{ he sits down (lit. sets himself down)}

\begin{align*}
\text{manimota}:\text{li} & \quad \text{may I sit down} \\
\text{ximota}:\text{li} & \quad \text{sit (sg.) down, may you sit down} \\
\text{mamota}:\text{li} & \quad \text{may he sit down} \\
\text{manimota}:\text{li}:\text{ka}:\text{n} & \quad \text{may we (excl.) sit down} \\
\text{matimota}:\text{li}:\text{ka}:\text{n} & \quad \text{may we (incl.) sit down} \\
\text{ximota}:\text{li}:\text{ka}:\text{n} & \quad \text{sit (pl.) down, may you sit down} \\
\text{mamota}:\text{li}:\text{ka}:\text{n} & \quad \text{may they sit down}
\end{align*}

12.2.4 The Imperative-Subjunctive Mood: Fourth Conjugation

-\text{temo} \text{ to lower, } \text{temowa} \text{ he descends}

\begin{align*}
\text{manitemo} & \quad \text{may I descend} \\
\text{xitemo} & \quad \text{descend (sg.), may you descend} \\
\text{matemo} & \quad \text{may he descend} \\
\text{manitemo}:\text{ka}:\text{n} & \quad \text{may we (excl.) descend} \\
\text{matitemo}:\text{ka}:\text{n} & \quad \text{may we (incl.) descend} \\
\text{xitemo}:\text{ka}:\text{n} & \quad \text{descend (pl.), may you descend} \\
\text{matemo}:\text{ka}:\text{n} & \quad \text{may they descend}
\end{align*}

12.2.5 The Imperative-Subjunctive Mood: Fifth Conjugation

-\text{ka}^\text{w} \text{a to eat, } \text{tak}^\text{w} \text{a he eats}

\begin{align*}
\text{manitak}^\text{w} \text{a} & \quad \text{may I eat} \\
\text{xitak}^\text{w} \text{a} & \quad \text{eat (sg.), may you eat} \\
\text{matak}^\text{w} \text{a} & \quad \text{may he eat} \\
\text{manitak}^\text{w} \text{a}:\text{ka}:\text{n} & \quad \text{may we (excl.) eat} \\
\text{matitak}^\text{w} \text{a}:\text{ka}:\text{n} & \quad \text{may we (incl.) eat} \\
\text{xitak}^\text{w} \text{a}:\text{ka}:\text{n} & \quad \text{eat (pl.), may you eat} \\
\text{matak}^\text{w} \text{a}:\text{ka}:\text{n} & \quad \text{may they eat}
\end{align*}

The verb in the imperative-subjunctive mood can take endings of the present directional. In the plural, the directional endings \text{-tih} and \text{-kih} replace the ending \text{-ka}:\text{n}. Examples:

\begin{align*}
\text{manikitati} & \quad \text{may I go to see it} \\
\text{xikitati} & \quad \text{go (sg.) to see it, may you go to see it} \\
\text{makitati} & \quad \text{may he go to see it} \\
\text{manikitatih} & \quad \text{may we (excl.) go to see it} \\
\text{matikitatih} & \quad \text{may we (incl.) go to see it} \\
\text{xikitatih} & \quad \text{go (pl.) to see it} \\
\text{makitatih} & \quad \text{may they go to see it}
\end{align*}
manikitaki  

come (sg.) to see it

makitaki  

may he come to see it

manikitakih  

may we (excl.) come to see it

matikitakih  

may we (incl.) come to see it

xikitakih  

come (pl.) to see it, may you come to see it

makitakih  

may they come to see it

12.3 The Desiderative Mood

In the following expressions, the idea is that the person wishes to do what is signified by the root of the verb. Examples:

Kiči:hnekih ikalmeh  They want to build their houses.
Kipiasnegiʔ tomi:n  He wanted to have money.
Te:no:t'asnekiáh  They wanted to call us.

Verbs in the desiderative mood consist of the future form of the singular of whatever verbal root plus -neki to want. The temporal endings of the second conjugation are used. The examples here appear in the third person to simplify the presentation.

12.3.1 The Desiderative Mood with a Verbal Root of the First Conjugation

-ita-  to see

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>kitasneki</td>
<td>kitasnekih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>kitasnekiis</td>
<td>kitasnekiskeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>kitasnekiya</td>
<td>kitasnekiyakah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>kitasnegiʔ</td>
<td>kitasnegikeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>kitasnekiaka</td>
<td>kitasnekiakah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

he wants to see it
he will want to see it
he would want to see it
he wanted to see it
he had wanted to see it
they want to see it
they will want to see it
they would want to see it
they wanted to see it
they had wanted to see it

12.3.2 The Desiderative Mood with a Verbal Root of the Second Conjugation

-mati-  to know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>kimatisneki</td>
<td>kimatisneki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>kimatisnekiis</td>
<td>kimatisnekiis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>kimatisnekiya</td>
<td>kimatisnekiyakah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

he wants to know it
he will want to know it
he would want to know it
12. The Moods of the Verb

12.3.3 The Desiderative Mood with a Verbal Root of the Third Conjugation

-ilpi- to bind

Singular

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>kilpi:hneki</td>
<td>he wants to bind it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>kilpi:hneki</td>
<td>he will want to bind it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>kilpi:hneki:ya</td>
<td>he would want to bind it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>kilpi:hnegi?</td>
<td>he wanted to bind it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>kilpi:hnekika</td>
<td>he had wanted to bind it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Plural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>kilpi:hnekih</td>
<td>they want to bind it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>kilpi:hnekiskeh</td>
<td>they will want to bind it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>kilpi:hneki:yah</td>
<td>they would want to bind it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>kilpi:hnekikeh</td>
<td>they wanted to bind it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>kilpi:hnekiakah</td>
<td>they had wanted to bind it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12.3.4 The Desiderative Mood with a Verbal Root of the Fourth Conjugation

-ahto- to speak

Singular

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>tato:hneki</td>
<td>he wants to speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>tato:hneki</td>
<td>he will want to speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>tato:hneki:ya</td>
<td>he would want to speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>tato:hnegi?</td>
<td>he wanted to speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>tato:hnekika</td>
<td>he had wanted to speak</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Plural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>tato:hnekih</td>
<td>they want to speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>tato:hnekiskeh</td>
<td>they will want to speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>tato:hneki:yah</td>
<td>they would want to speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>tato:hnekikeh</td>
<td>they wanted to speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>tato:hnekiakah</td>
<td>they had wanted to speak</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12.3.5 The Desiderative Mood with a Verbal Root of the Fifth Conjugation

-kʷa- to eat

**Singular**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>takʷa:hneki</td>
<td>he wants to eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>takʷa:hneki:s</td>
<td>he will want to eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>takʷa:hneki:ya</td>
<td>he would want to eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>takʷa:hnegiʔ</td>
<td>he wanted to eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>takʷa:hnekika</td>
<td>he had wanted to eat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Plural**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>takʷa:hnekih</td>
<td>they want to eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>takʷa:hneki:keh</td>
<td>they will want to eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>takʷa:hneki:yah</td>
<td>they would want to eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>takʷa:hneki:keh</td>
<td>they wanted to eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>takʷa:hnekikah</td>
<td>they had wanted to eat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12.3.6 Figurative Use of the Desiderative Mood

The desiderative mood is also used in the sense of the imminent future, expressing what to all appearances is likely to happen. Examples:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Wiːʔneki} & \quad \text{tiawaːʔ} & \quad \text{Wetʰisneki} & \quad \text{nokal} \\
\text{[it-wants-to-come rain]} & \quad \text{[it-wants-to-fall my-house]} & \quad \text{It’s about to rain.} & \quad \text{My house is about to fall down.}
\end{align*}
\]

12.3.7 Interpretation of the Endings -skiaːya and -skiá

There are verbal endings, -skiaːya and -skiá, which have been interpreted as belonging to a postpreterite tense. I allow myself the liberty of proposing that these endings are a variety of the desiderative mood. According to my analysis of their meaning and the rules of apocope that are manifested in the Nahuatl speech of Mecayapan and Tatahuicapan, the verbs that take these endings have to be considered as apocopated and contracted forms of the imperfect tense of the desiderative.\(^1\) The following table shows the relationship between them. Note that the h that is placed in front of the n in examples 3-5 turns into s in front of k.

---

\(^1\) Although the verbs in the desiderative mood could be considered as special forms in the indicative mood, I have assigned them to their own mood because they are differentiated from the other types of complex verbs in two of their characteristics: 1) they include a unique mechanism of derivation on the basis of the future tense, and 2) they lack imperative-subjunctive forms.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complete forms</th>
<th>Apocopated forms</th>
<th>Contracted apocopated forms</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. kitasnekia:ya</td>
<td>kitaskia:ya</td>
<td>kitaskiá</td>
<td>he wanted to see him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. kimatisnekia:ya</td>
<td>kimatiskia:ya</td>
<td>kimatiskiá</td>
<td>he wanted to know it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. kilpi:hneka:ya</td>
<td>kilpi:skia:ya</td>
<td>kilpi:skiá</td>
<td>he wanted to bind him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. tahto:hneka:ya</td>
<td>tahto:skia:ya</td>
<td>tahto:skiá</td>
<td>he wanted to speak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. tak'w:a:hneka:ya</td>
<td>tak'w:a:skia:ya</td>
<td>tak'w:a:skiá</td>
<td>he wanted to eat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13. The Aspects of the Verb

The aspect of the verb indicates the manner in which the action is brought to an end, whether this action takes place suddenly, is now in progress, or is related to some other action. In English, such aspects are mostly expressed by means of compound expressions of two or more words. In Nahuatl, the aspects are expressed not only with phrases of two or more independent words but also with a compound verb consisting of two or more verbal roots.

13.1 Aspects Consisting of Complex Verbs

Complex aspectual verbs contain a nuclear root plus an aspectual root. In most cases, the nuclear root takes the form of the preterite of the plural without the ending -keh followed by -t or -ti plus some aspectual verbal root.\(^1\) The aspectual root consists of a variant of an independent verb, and this takes the endings of tense and number. Examples:

\[\text{isatoʔ} \quad \text{he is awoken (stative aspect)}
\]
\[\text{[isa to awaken; -oʔ variant of -ono to be}^2\text{]}\]

\[\text{ki:stiawih} \quad \text{they go emerging (progressive aspect)}
\]
\[\text{[ki:s dep. root of ki:sa to emerge; -iawi variant of –yawi to go]}\]

\[\text{asitiwiʔ} \quad \text{he comes arriving (progressive aspect of approach)}
\]
\[\text{[asi to arrive; -wiʔ to come]}\]

Other aspects without classification:

\[\text{ta:tahtohtinemi} \quad \text{he walks speaking}
\]
\[\text{[ta:- reduplicated syllable; tahtoh- form of the dep. root of tahtowa to speak; nemi to walk]}\]

\[\text{ilpitika:wiʔ} \quad \text{he stayed bound}
\]
\[\text{[-ilpi- dep. root of kilpiá to bind; ka:wi to remain]}\]

\(^1\) [The statement that the verbal nucleus consists of the preterite plural minus the ending -keh is really just a mechanical way of indicating that it is simply the preterite stem (which sometimes undergoes phonetic change at the end and is regularly preserved in its original form in front of the plural marker. —CSM]

\(^2\) [Etymologically, this verb (see Section 18.3.3) means to lie. In historical terms, the verb is a monosyllable, and Classical Nahuatl has a tendency to add the directional prefix on- to short verbs like this to give them greater substance. —CSM]
kilpitikahkeh  they left him bound
   [ki- him; -ilpi- dep. root of kilpiá to bind; -kahkeh they left]

ne:tačī:lihti:ki:sa?  they began to look at me
   [ne:- me; -tačī:liá to look at; ki:sa to emerge]

motalohtasi?  he arrived running
   [motalo- verbal root of motalowa to run; asi to arrive]

The compounds in -te:wa are translated in various senses (-te:wa does not appear as an independent form).

čolohte:wa?  he fled suddenly
   [čolo- dep. root of čolowa to flee]

mit'it'te:wa?  he saw you while passing by
   [mit'it' you; -it'- variant of the verbal root -ita- to see]

takʷahte:wa?  he ate and left
   [takʷa- to eat]

The preceding examples have been selected with an eye towards representing the variety of compounds that are formed in this way. Next, three of the aspectual forms used more frequently will be given in a more detailed presentation, since they bear irregular endings.

13.1.1 The Stative Aspect
The stative aspect is one of the aspects relating to continued action. Its meaning is to present the action as a situation or as a state in which the subject finds itself. The preterite is used as the present.

Nitakʷahto?.  I am eating. (My situation is to be eating.)

Nitačpa:nto?: I am sweeping. (My situation is to be sweeping.)

Nikit'to?: I am seeing him. (My situation is to be seeing him.)

The preceding words have an active sense, and are translated with the word be plus the present participle. They indicate that the subject is engaged in putting the action into effect.

It is necessary to distinguish another meaning that a verb in the stative aspect can have. This is the passive sense, when it signifies that the subject is in the state that results from the action or from the verbal idea. If the verb is transitive, this form is generally translated

1 [The verb e:wa to depart is well attested in Classical Nahuatl. —CSM]
in English with the verb *to be* plus the past participle.\(^1\) If the verb is intransitive, it may also appear in this form in English, although sometimes it is more idiomatic to translate it with the perfect tense. Note the following examples:

- Nikesito? I’m annoyed
- Niwet’soto? I’m lying (i.e., recumbent, on my side).
- Nisiatoto? I’m tired.

Here are some examples of the conjugation of the third person of the verb wet’i- in the stative aspect of the indicative mood. Note that while in the other forms, this verb signifies to 'fall', that is, move from a vertical to a horizontal position, in the stative it signifies the result of this action, that is to 'be lying (down)', for rest or sleep. Verbs in the stative aspect conjugate like the irregular verb ono *to be*.

**Indicative mood:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Suffix(s)</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indeterminate</td>
<td>wet’to</td>
<td>to be lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite as present</td>
<td>wet’toto</td>
<td>he is lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>wet’tos</td>
<td>he will be lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>wet’toya</td>
<td>he used to be lying</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**With direction towards there:**

- Present and Future: wet’toti he goes or will go to be lying
- Preterite: wet’toto he went to be lying
- Transitory Pret.: wet’toto:ya he went and was lying for a while

**With direction towards here:**

- Present and Future: wet’toki he comes to be lying
- Preterite: wet’tokoto he came to be lying
- Transitory Pret.: wet’toko:ya he came and was lying for a while

---

\(^1\) [In English, one must clearly distinguish between the use of the adjectival past participle with the verb *to be*, which indicates a state, on the one hand and the formally indistinguishable use of the past participle with the verb *to be* as the periphrastic passive on the other: i.e., *the door is open* meaning “it was opened up by someone in the past and is now standing open” vs. *the door is opened when necessary* meaning “it normally remains closed and it is opened up by someone when entry is required.” The first sentence refers to the passive state, the second to the periphrastic passive (i.e, it signifies the performance of the action rather than its result). —CSM]
Plural

Tense

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Plural Form</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indeterminate</td>
<td>wet’toh</td>
<td>to be lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite as present</td>
<td>wet’tokeh</td>
<td>they are lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>wet’toskeh</td>
<td>they will be lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>wet’toyah</td>
<td>they used to be lying</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With direction towards there:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Plural Form</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present and Future</td>
<td>wet’totih</td>
<td>they go or will go to be lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>wet’totoh</td>
<td>they went to be lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitory Pret.</td>
<td>wet’toto:yah</td>
<td>they went and were lying for a while</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With direction towards here:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Plural Form</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present and Future</td>
<td>wet’totih</td>
<td>they come to be lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>wet’tokoh</td>
<td>they came to be lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitory Pret.</td>
<td>wet’tokoh:yah</td>
<td>they came and were lying for a time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next, examples are presented of the conjugation of the same stative verb in the imperative-subjunctive mood:

**Imperative-subjunctive mood:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plural Form</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mawet’to</td>
<td>may he be lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiwet’to</td>
<td>may you (sg.) be lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mawet’toka:n</td>
<td>may they be lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiwet’toka:n</td>
<td>may you (pl.) be lying</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With direction towards there:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plural Form</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mawet’toti</td>
<td>may he go to be lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiwet’toti</td>
<td>may you (sg.) go to be lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mawet’totih</td>
<td>may they go to be lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiwet’totih</td>
<td>may you (pl.) go to be lying</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With direction towards here:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plural Form</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mawet’toki</td>
<td>may he come to be lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiwet’toki</td>
<td>may you (sg.) come to be lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mawet’tokih</td>
<td>may they come to be lying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiwet’tokih</td>
<td>may you (pl.) come to be lying</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13.1.2 The Progressive Aspect

The progressive aspect gives the idea that the action is effected progressively, as an ongoing process, a series of actions, or an action that takes place when the subject is headed in some direction. It is translated with the verb to go plus the present participle or, in certain cases, the past participles. Examples:

**Subject in motion:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plural Form</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kitapohtiawih ohti.</td>
<td>They go clearing the way.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13. The Aspects of the Verb

Verbs in the progressive aspect are compound words, and their last element is the irregular verb -ia- to go. They are conjugated with the regular endings of this root (see Section 18.3.1).

### Singular

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>takwii:ktiá</td>
<td>he goes (on) singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>takwii:ktiāh</td>
<td>he will go (on) singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>takwii:ktiāya</td>
<td>he would go (on) singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>takwii:ktiāhki</td>
<td>he went (on) singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitory Pret.</td>
<td>takwii:ktiāhka</td>
<td>he had gone (on) singing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Plural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>takwii:ktiawih</td>
<td>they go (on) singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>takwii:ktiāskeh</td>
<td>they will go (on) singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>takwii:ktiāyah</td>
<td>they would go (on) singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>takwii:ktiāhki</td>
<td>they went (on) singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitory Pret.</td>
<td>takwii:ktiāhkah</td>
<td>they had gone (on) singing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13.1.3 The Progressive Aspect of Approach

The progressive aspect of approach is normally used to specify that the verbal idea is put into effect when the subject advances towards here. In certain contexts, the sense refers to the advance of time towards the present moment.

**The subject in motion towards here:**

Kwesitiwi:ʔ. He comes annoyed.
Čipi:ntiwi:ʔ. He comes dripping.
Isi:ktiwi:ʔ. He comes panting/wheezing.

**The process ongoing towards the present moment:**

Kičhi:ntiwi:ʔ kahli. 
[he-comes-making-it house] 
He comes making houses (has been doing so for a while).

Iná:n nikita que takomeh mona:miti:ntiwi:ʔeh de doce años. 
[now I-see-it that girls they-come-marrying at twelve years.] 
I see now that the girls are getting married at the age of twelve.
Verbs in the progressive aspect of approach are composed of two or more verbal roots, the last of which is the irregular verb -wiʔ to come and conjugates in the manner appropriate to that verb (see Section 18.3.2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present or Future</td>
<td>takʷi:ktiwiʔs: i:ya:ya he comes singing</td>
<td>takʷi:ktiwa:lkah he had come singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>takʷi:ktiwi:t:ia:ya he would come singing</td>
<td>takʷi:ktiwa:lkah he had come singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>takʷi:ktiwa:lah he came singing</td>
<td>takʷi:ktiwa:lkah he had come singing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitory Pret.</td>
<td>takʷi:ktiwa:lkah he had come singing</td>
<td>takʷi:ktiwa:lkah he had come singing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13.2 Aspects with Independent Particles
13.2.1 The Particles nemi Used as Auxiliary Verb

Verbal constructions with the auxiliary particle nemi signify an action in progress in the present moment or at the same time as another action takes place. The auxiliary does not change while the principal verb takes the markers of person, tense and number.

Examples:

nemi nitakʷa I am eating
nemi titakʷa you (sg.) are eating
nemi takʷa he is eating

nemi nitakʷah we (excl.) are eating
nemi titakʷah we (incl.) are eating
nemi antakʷah you (pl.) are eating
nemi takʷah they are eating

It is also used in the imperfect.

nemi nitakʷa:ya I was eating
nemi titakʷa:ya you (sg.) were eating

In this sort of construction, the present or the imperfect can be used to refer to continuous actions that are correlated with other past acts. Example:

Yehame:n tikitakeh ka:n nemi tekipanowah.
[them we-saw-them where in-progress they-work]
or
Yehame:n tikitakeh ka:n nemi tekipanowa:yah.
[them we-saw-them where in-progress they-were-working]

Them we saw when they were working.
The constructions with nemi can have the meaning of the present or progressive perfect in English. Examples:

Anemi nikita.
[no-in-progress I-se-it]
I haven’t seen it.

Yawi:pta němiya tata a:ka:walyoh.
[for-days-now now-in-progress burns abandoned-land]
For days now the abandoned field has already been burning.

Note that the ending -ya on nemi corresponds to the temporal ya and not to the suffix -aya of the imperfect.

13.2.2 The Auxiliary Particle wel
The particle wel can and the negative form awel can’t are used as auxiliaries with conjugated verbs. The auxiliary does not change, while the principle verb takes the markers of person, tense and number.

The following example consists of the auxiliary with the verb -či:wa to do/make.

wel nikči:wa          I can do it
wel tikči:wa          you (sg.) can do it
wel kiči:wa           he can do it
wel nikči:wah         we (excl.) can do it
wel tikči:wah         we (incl.) can do it
wel ankiči:wah        you (pl.) can do it
wel kiči:wah          they can do it

It also appears in other tenses.

wel nikči:was          I will be able to do it
wel nikči:waya         I could do it
wel nikčih             I was able to do it
wel nikčihka           I could have done it
14. Applicative and Causative Verbs

14.1 Applicative Forms of the Verb
Applicative verbs are those that bear an ending formed with the applicative morpheme -li-, which indicates that the object prefix refers to a non-direct object to which the action of the verb is applied. When the primary meaning of the verb is transitive, the direct object is taken for granted, even though it is not marked within the verb, since the verb never bears two object prefixes.\(^1\)

Applicative verbs take endings of the third conjugation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>-liá</td>
<td>-liáh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>-li:h</td>
<td>-li:skeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>-lia:ya</td>
<td>-lia:yah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>-lih</td>
<td>-lihkeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitory Pret.</td>
<td>-lihka</td>
<td>-lihkah</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14.1.1 Rules for Forming Applicative Verbs

**Roots of the first conjugation.** To form the applicative verb, the thematic vowel changes to i, and -li- is added to this. Examples:

- ne:pa:kiliá  
  *he washes it for me*  
  [kipa:ka *he washes it*]
- ne:kowiliá  
  *he buys it for me*  
  [kikowa *he buys it*]
- ne:patiliá  
  *he changes it for me*  
  [kipata *he changes it*]
- ne-e:niliá  
  *he guards it for me*  
  [ke:na *he guards it*]

Exceptions: The thematic vowel does not change in the following verbs:

- ne-italiá  
  *he sees it for me*  
  [kita *he sees it*]
- ne:pialliá  
  *he holds it for me*  
  [kipiá *he holds it*]

**Roots of the second conjugation.** To form the applicative verb, -li- is added to the thematic vowel. Examples:

---

\(^1\) [That is, a verb can take only one object, and if the verb has the applicative ending, the object prefix is governed by that ending and the object of the verb itself is omitted as something that can be understood. —CSM]
Roots of the third conjugation. To form the applicative verb, -li- is added to the thematic vowel, with the -a of the present tense dropped. Examples:

ne:ta:liliá  he places it for me  [kita:liliá he places it]
ne:te:miliá  he fills it for me  [kite:miá he fills it]
ne:ki:t'kiliá  he seizes it for me  [kiki:t'kiliá he seizes it]
ne:ilpiiliá  he binds it for me  [kilpiá he binds it]

Roots of the fourth conjugation. To form the applicative verb, -wa changes into -wi, and -li- is added to this. Examples:

ne:tahtowiliá  he speaks on my behalf  [tahtowa he speaks]
ne:pačowiliá  he calms him for me  [kipačowa he calms him]
ne:kimilowiliá  he wraps it up for me  [kikimilowa he wraps it up]
ne:tapowiliá  he opens it for me  [kitapowa he opens it]

Roots of the fifth conjugation. To form the applicative verb, -li- is added to the thematic vowel, which is lengthened. Example:

ne:k"a:liá  he eats my portion  [kik"a he eats it]

14.1.2 Changes in the Root of Applicative Verbs
Some verbs undergo changes in their root, whether the dropping of a syllable, the lengthening of a vowel, or both. In one example, s turns into x. Examples:

ne:k"i:liá  he takes it from me  [kik"i he takes it]
ne-ihliá  he tells it to me  [kihtowa he says it]
ne:temo:liá  he lowers it for me  [kitemowiá he lowers it]
ne:tači:liá  he looks towards me  [tačá he looks]
neaxiliá  he reaches me  [asi he arrives]

14.2 Causative Forms of the Verb
When added to a verbal root, the causative ending -tiá or -ltiá (third conjugation) turns the root into a causative verb. The character of these verbs is always transitive, and it signifies that the subject of the verb causes or instigates the object to do what is indicated by the original verb. Note that in some cases there is a change in the root of the causative form compared to the original (including the dropping or lengthening of the thematic vowel). Examples:

nimit’mačtiá  I instruct you  [tikmati you know it]
mit"k"altiá  he gives you something to eat  [tik"a you eat it]
kikočtiá  he puts him to sleep  [koči he sleeps]
14. Applicative and Causative Verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Root + thematic vowel</th>
<th>Causative</th>
<th>Applicative</th>
<th>Aspectual</th>
<th>Temporal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tisi-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-iti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ki-</td>
<td>-tisi-</td>
<td>-l-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-iti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ki-</td>
<td>-tisi-</td>
<td>-lt-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-iti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ki-</td>
<td>-tisi-</td>
<td>-lti-</td>
<td>-l-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-iti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tisi-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-tinem-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-iti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tense endings of the causative verbs are those of the third conjugation. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>nimi:t'әмәтиә</td>
<td>I instruct you (sg.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>nimi:t'әмәтиә:h</td>
<td>I will instruct you (sg.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>nimi:t'әмәтиә:yә</td>
<td>I used to instruct you (sg.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>nimi:t'әмәтиh</td>
<td>I instructed you (sg.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>nimi:t'әмәтиh:кә</td>
<td>I had instructed you (sg.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjunctive Mood</td>
<td>mаниni:t'әмәти</td>
<td>may I instruct you (sg.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>nimi:t'әмәтиәh</td>
<td>we instruct you (sg. or pl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>nimi:t'әмәтиә:h:kә</td>
<td>we will instruct you (sg. or pl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>nimi:t'әмәтиә:yә:h</td>
<td>we used to instruct you (sg. or pl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preterite</td>
<td>nimi:t'әмәтиh:kә</td>
<td>we instructed you (sg. or pl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans. Pret.</td>
<td>nimi:t'әмәтиh:kә:h</td>
<td>we had instructed you (sg. or pl.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjunctive Mood</td>
<td>mаниni:t'әмәти:кә:n</td>
<td>may we instruct you (sg. or pl.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14.3 Order of the Verbal Endings

Here is a table that shows and illustrates the order in which the causative, applicative, aspectual and temporal endings are added to a verbal root in the indicative mood. In the fourth column a basic temporal ending or a directional one can appear. The following examples show the present-future directional away from the speaker for the verb tisi to grind.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ki-</th>
<th>-tisi-</th>
<th>-ltih-</th>
<th>-tinem-</th>
<th>-iti</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ki-</td>
<td>-tisi-</td>
<td>-lih-</td>
<td>-tinem-</td>
<td>-iti</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ki-</td>
<td>-tisi-</td>
<td>-liti-</td>
<td>-lih-</td>
<td>-tinem-</td>
<td>-iti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A  tisiti  *He is going to grind*
B  kitisili:ti  *He is going to grind it for him*
C  kitisilti:ti  *He is going to make him grind*
D  kitisiltili:ti  *He is going to make him grind it for him (someone else)*
E  tisitinemi:ti  *He is going to go (around) grinding*
F  kitisiltihtinemiti  *He is going to go (around) making him grind*
G  kitisilihtinemiti  *He is going to go (around) grinding it for him (someone else)*
H  kitisiltilihtinemiti  *He is going to go (around) making him grind it for him*
15. Particles of Conjunction

15.1 Nahuatl Conjunctions
Conjunctions are particles or compounds that serve to connect clauses and other elements of the sentence.

**iwá:n** and

*there-are many flies and mosquitos*
There are many flies and mosquitos

*here they-left and they-went Apechinapa*
They left here and went to Apechinapa.

**iga** that

*he-saw-it that now-in-progress is flowering the bean(s)*
He saw that the beans were now in flower.

Kihtowah iga mihto:tiáh.
*they-say-it that they-dance*
They say that they are dancing.

**iga** so that

Xikʷihkʷitih kʷahkʷawil iga makʷakʷalaka páyilah.
*go (pl.)-bringing-bringing firewood so that it-can-boil pot*
Go bring firewood so that the pot can boil.

Niktaːlilihkeh la mesa iga matakʷaːkaːn.
*we-set-it-for-them the table so that they-may-eat*
We set the table for them so that they could eat.
iga because

awel kiwi:ga iga eti:?.
[he-can’t he-carries-him because he-is-heavy]
He can’t carry him because he’s heavy.

iga when

Iga tasikoh, tayówaya.
[when they-arrived-here it-was-dark-now]
When they arrived, it was already night.

ikʷá? when

[when they-arrive-there within-water they-call-themselves women]
When they arrive at the stream, the women converse.

ma if

Ma iga nikpiaya tomi:n, nikowaya.¹
[if that I-had-it money, I-would-buy-it]
If I had the money, I would buy it.

maleh although

Maleh tiawa:tah, pero tokni:nwa:n yáwiho?
[though it-is-raining yet our-brothers they-still-go

tekipano:tih imi:lpameh.
they-go-to-work to-their fields]

Even though it is rainy, our brothers are still going to their fields to work.

no ve:h² because

Yéh iná:n kahli nemi kite:miá, no ve:h komati sinti kipiá.
[he now house in-progress he-fills-it because plenty corn he-has-it]
He is now filling the house because he has plenty of corn.

¹ [For the apparent absence of the object prefix on the last word, see Section 12.2.2 n. 2. —CSM]
² [A Nahuatl version of the Spanish phrase no ves. —CSM]
15. Articles of Conjunction

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kel  if

Kel iga tikta:ni:ki nigah sinti xikta:ni:ki.
[If that you-come-to-earn-it here corn come-earn-it]
If you’re coming here to work for corn, come work for it!

sil  if (see Section 15.2 si)

Sil tikwa:h,¹ xikpro:ba:ro.
[If you-eat-it try-it]
If you are going to eat it, try it.

siga² if (see Section 15.2 si)

Siga ankipolo:skeh, nih anyawih anka:withih.
[if you (pl.)-will-lose-it here you (pl.)-go you (pl.)-go-to-stay]
If you lose it, you’re going to stay here.

15.2 Borrowed Conjunctions

The following conjunctions taken from Spanish are also used:

y, o, pero, si, que, como, porque, ni

y  and

Tami kiči:williáh itakʷalmeh, y kita:lii:ha mesa.
[it-ends they-make-them-it their meal and they-set-it-for-them table]
They finish making their meal for them and then they set the table for them.

o  or

Atikmatih si tasiskeh o atasiskeh.
[not-we-know-it if we-will-arrive or not-we-will-arrive]
We don’t know if we’ll get there or not.

pero  but

Iní:n noche yawi wi:tʰeti la gran eheka? iga mitʰwetʰiltʰi:skeh
[this night it-goes goes-to-come the big wind so-that it-will-cause-to-fall-for-you

¹ [For the apparent absence of the object prefix on the last word, see Section 12.2.2 n. 2.
—CSM]
² [Si plus iga. —CSM]
Tonight, the big wind is going to come in order to make your house fall down on you, but it won’t fall.

Čokotśi:n iwá:n takotśi:n mi:xna:mikih iga takʷah, pero takotśi:n pi:ná:. 
[boy and girl they-face-themselves and they-eat, but girl is-embarrassed] 

The boy and girl face each other and eat, but the girl is ashamed.

si if (see Section 15.1 **sil, siga**)  
Neh anikmati si wa:lah.  
[I not-I-know-it if he-arrived]  
I don’t know if he arrived.

Si iga₁ kihli:skëh iga kena, wel mona:miktih.  
[if that they-will-tell-him that yes he-can he-will-get-a-spouse-for-himself]  
If they say yes to him, he can get married.

que that  
Kihtowa que yéh akité?.  
[he-says-it that he not-he-cut-it]  
He says that he didn’t cut it.

como how, since  
Neh nikehe:lkah, como ayo? iʔ tikonta:rowah.²  
[I I-forgot-forgot-it how not-now ever we-tell-it]  
I’ve forgot them since we don’t tell them anymore (referring to folkstories).

Pues yéh kicuida:rowa, como weyi imi:l.  
[then he he-takes-note-of-it how big his field]  
He takes care of it since his field is big.

---

¹ [This is just an uncontracted version of **siga.** —CSM]  
² [For the apparent absence of the object prefix on the last word, see Section 12.2.2 n. 2. —CSM]
**15.3 The Particle in**

The particle in is difficult to classify with precision. Its use corresponds in part to that of the definite article and the demonstrative adjective and in part to that of a conjunction. It is placed in front of not only substantives but also verbs and other parts of speech. One of its functions can be to indicate the elements that are more intimately bound to the topic being treated. Perhaps it serves at times simply to make the rhythm of the spoken word more agreeable. The following examples, which are drawn from conversations and recorded stories, are presented so that people of linguistic aptitude can apply their own analysis.

In amehwa:n, kén ankihlía “sandía”?
[In you (pl.), how do you say “sandía”]
As for you, how do you say “sandía”?

Inón, ix té in ito:ka? in tágǎ??
[that one interrog.-part. what in his-name in the man]
That one, what’s that man’s name?

Ix té ó:ntahki? in poliwi??
[interrog. part. what that-part. of emphasis-part. of hearsay in it-got-lost]
What do they say that thing is that got lost?

[in-past he goes-taking-her-by-the-hand in boy who he-is-her-husband-now]
In the past, the boys who is now her husband would lead her by the hand.
Kel tikʷi:, xikʷi: in ko:ne?: ¹
[if you-take-it take (sg.)-it in baby]
If you want to take it, take it to the baby.

Kimaka itaxkal iga tayowaka:n makikʷa in isiwa?:
[He-gives-her-it her tortilla(s) so that at-night she-would-eat-it in his wife]
He gave his wife his tortillas, so that she could eat them at night.

Kikáʔ té in niktahantilih.
[he-heard what in I-asked-it-of-him]
He understood what it was that I asked of him.

Yawi:pta anka ayáʔ ankifirma:rokeh in isiwa:
[for-days perhaps not you (pl.)-sign-it in here]
For days now you have perhaps not signed here.

Ómpaya in te:servi:rowa, weh.
[there-now in serve-us little brother]
That's how it befits us now, little brother

[not-now go allow they-may-finish-it in raccoons in our field]
Don’t go now! Let the raccoons finish up our field.

A las tres de la mañana kiwi:gakeh in yegin.
[at three in the morning they-brought-it in a while ago]
A while ago, at about three in the morning, they brought it.

Iná:n in yéh, nemi kisasaka ači nokʷahkʷawiltʰi:n.
[now in he in-progress he-carts-it a-little my-little-firewood]
Now as for him, he is carting a little of my firewood.

¹ [For the apparent absence of the object prefix on the two verbs, see Section 12.2.2 n. 2. —CSM]
16. The Adverb

The adverb is a part of speech that is used to qualify the signification of a verb or an adjective, and at times that of another adverb. It can be interrogative, demonstrative, qualifying, relative or negative. There exist in Nahuatl a great number of compound words consisting of substantives and locative roots, and these serve as adverbs in the sentence. Some of these take possessive prefixes that serve to localize the action or to denote the relationship between two words.

These are grouped into the categories of adverbs of place, time, manner, quantity and order, with the corresponding interrogatives: where, when, how, and in which order. In addition, adverbs of affirmation, negation and doubt are recognized, as well as special adverbs of place (see Section 17.0).

16.1 Adverbs of time
16.1.1 Interrogative:  
  ké:man?  when?

16.1.2 Relatives:  
  ke:man  when  
  ik"wá:?  when  
  kwá:?  when

16.1.3 Negatives:  
  nike:man  never  
  ayí:?  never

16.1.4 Indefinite:  
  ke:man  at some time, ever

16.1.5 Other adverbs of time:  
  ik"a:?  then  
  a:man  today  
  á:mansan  at this very moment  
  ina:man  now  
  iná:n  now  
  a:n  now  
  naman  soon
seh¹ again
kehké:mansan from time to time
ya:lwa yesterday
mo:sta tomorrow
wi:pta in a few days
_yawi:pta a few days ago
i:ki:n a while ago
ikya a long time ago
ikyo:? or ʔikya:ʔ far in the future
ye:wa a few hours ago
yegin earlier today
yegimpa recently
-mêmeya right now
 nóktaya in a moment
noktaya a moment ago
nočipa all the time
 ya se: xiwi? a year ago
este se: xiwi? next year
isahpa early
tio:ta? late in the day
diso:rah² very late
tayowa late (at nightfall)
yowa:n last night
yowa:mpa in the night
senyowal all night
semilwi? all day

16.2 Adverbs of Manner
16.2.1 Interrogative:
ken? how?

16.2.2 Relative:
ken as

16.2.3 Indefinite:
nikén so-so

¹ seh is used not only to say again but also to indicate in the discourse a change in emphasis that needs to stand out, whether this is a new subject or a verb that introduces a problematical or unexpected idea. Examples:
Neh seh manikʷ[i]ga momóral. Pero seh anikʷahli:? tomi:n.
[I new-subject may-I-take your-bag. but problem not-I-have money]
Now it’s my turn to take your bag. But the thing is, I have no money.
² From the Spanish deshóra inopportune.
16.2.4 Demonstrative:

ihki:n thus, in this manner
ihkó:n thus, in that manner

16.2.5 Qualifying:

yo:li? slowly
isah quickly
imani:n quickly, swiftly
nokta absolutely

16.3 Quantifying Adverbs

ači somewhat
poxsan a lot, much
néma:nsan not so much, moderate
dia:lmah\(^1\) excessively

16.4 Adverbs of Order

ačto before, first
último last
después afterwards

16.5 Adverbs of Doubt

anka perhaps, maybe
a:n perhaps, maybe
ix possibly
ixkiʔ possibly

16.6 Adverbs of Affirmation

kena yes
kentah yes
he: yes
meláʔ certainly
no: also
no:snan also
noči also

There are also adverbial methods of affirmation like the following:

ayaʔtah yes
amelaʔtah certainly
yeh iga certainly
ísa:haʔa yes (woman speaking)
he:keh yes (woman speaking)

\(^1\) From the Spanish del alma of the soul.
16.7 Adverbs of Negation

**a-** prefix of negation

ni agah atahtoh.
[not someone not-spoke]
No one spoke.

**ayá?** not (indicative)

ni agah ayá? tahtoh.
[not someone not he-spoke]
No one spoke.

**amo** not (imperative and subjunctive)

Amo ximomahití.
[not be-scared]
Don’t be scared.

Amo tikosolohí.
[not you-will-break-it]
Don’t go and break it.

Ximota:li nigah. Amo to:naya:n.
[sit here not in-the-sun]
Sit here, not in the sunshine.

Nikye:kta:lih iga amo makalaki kiawa:?
[I-fixed-it so-that not it-may-enter rain]
I fixed it so that the rain wouldn’t enter.

**aya** not yet

Aya mona:miktía.
[not-yet he-gets-married]
He hasn’t gotten married yet.

Antes iga aya tane:si, teh némiya titačpa:na.
[before that not-yet dawn-arrived you (sg.) now-in-progress you (sg.)-sweep]
Before the crack of dawn, you are already sweeping.

The use of **ayo?** encompasses two senses: 1) the interruption of something that would normally happen and 2) the omission of something that was intended or was expected to happen. In the first case, the enclitic ending -**ya** is added in many instances. Examples:
**ayo?** not now

Áyo?ya wi:. [now-not-now he-comes]

He’s not coming now (he would normally come often).

Ayo? wi:. [not-now he-comes]

He’s not coming now (he was going to come).

**ayí?:** never

Ayí?: nikita ihko:mpa kowa:. [never I-see-it of-this-kind snake]

I’ve never seen a snake like this.

There are forms composed of two elements with the sense never:

- ayá?: i:?: never (equivalent to ayí:?)
- aya i:?: never before
- ayo? i:?: never now

Also note the following words which, even though they are not adverbs, are normally used as negative responses analogous to adverbs.

**pronouns**

- ayéh isn’t, that’s not him/her
- até: nothing
- ayagah no one

**verb**

- ateyi (there) isn’t any

### 16.8 The Special Adverb *katka*

**katka** previously, better, please, if only

Yéh iná:n welya mela?tahtowa, pero ayéh no: itahtol katka. [he now he-can-now speak-truly but isn’t also his-speech previously.]

---

1 [This is a fossilized vestige of the Classical Nahuatl verb meaning to be (in a transient position or state); the form is the imperfect (in meaning, though pluperfect in form). In the Classical language too, it is used as a tense marker (it specifies a tenseless equative sentence with a subject prefix attached to a noun as applying to the past). —CSM]
Yéh tahtowa:ya en popoluca.
he he-would-speak in popoluca]

Now he can speak properly (i.e., in Nahuatl), but this isn’t what his speech used to be. He used to speak in popoluca.\(^1\)

Aya katka xah. Mo:sto:? tia:h, porque iná:n tayówaya. [not-yet better go. tomorrow you (sg.)-will-go because now it-is-late]

It’s better for you not to go yet. You will go tomorrow because it’s late now.

Ma seh katka xine:wahligili. [if-only again please bring-it-to-me] If possible, please bring it to me.

Tia:ya katka ya:lwa. [you (sg.)-were-going better yesterday] It would have been better for you to have gone yesterday.

Porque si yéh katka kentende:rowa:ya, makihto, “xiwi:ki seh.” [because if he if-only he-was-expecting-it he-would-say come-here again] For if he had understood, he would have said, “come again.”

16.9 Inseparable Qualifying Adverbs
The majority of qualifying adverbs of manner are of the inseparable variety, combining with a verbal or adjectival root to form a compound stem. Some inseparable adverbial elements are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ye:?-</td>
<td>well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ma:l-</td>
<td>badly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mela?-</td>
<td>truly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tawel-</td>
<td>to the good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tawe:l-</td>
<td>unwillingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>na:mo:l-</td>
<td>crudely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>čiko-</td>
<td>crookedly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teki-</td>
<td>habitually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tahko-</td>
<td>in the middle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nehma?-</td>
<td>doubtfully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yoka-</td>
<td>intentionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sen-</td>
<td>together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nohma-</td>
<td>openly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nema:n</td>
<td>somewhat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ičtaka-</td>
<td>covertly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sepan-</td>
<td>reciprocally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ohp-</td>
<td>anew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pox-</td>
<td>a lot, much</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) [**Popoloca** is a Nahuatl term meaning *to speaking unintelligibly*. This was borrowed into Spanish as a term for various non-Nahuatl-speaking populations. Here it has been borrowed back in its Spanish form (governed by a Spanish preposition). —CSM]
16. The adverb

Examples:

Kiyokatati:to. *He went to burn it on purpose.*

[Ti- object prefix of the 3rd person; -yoka- on purpose; -tat- root of tata to burn; -i- reduced ending of causative -iá; -to perfect directional ending towards there]

Tisenwi:t'eh. *We will arrive together.*

Ne:nohma-ihlih. *He told me openly.*

Ači nema:nkoko:?. *It's a bit spicy.*

Iní:n poxtakwakti?:. *This is very hard.*

16.10 Enclitic Adverbial Endings

There is a group of monosyllabic adverbial particles (or endings) that are placed after verbs, adjectives, adverbs and also substantive words without causing a change in the position of the prosodic accent. That is, when an enclitic particle is added to a word, the prosodic accent remains on the same syllable. The result is that the penultimate accent on a word becomes antepenultimate through the addition of an enclitic particle, and the addition of two or more particles puts the accent before the antepenultimate syllable (see Section 1.5).

The following enclitic particles serve to specify the temporal relationship between the elements in the discourse.

-ya¹ now (enclitic ending of the third rank)

Wi?:ya pasaje. *The bus is now coming.*

Teh titága?ya. *You (sg.) are a man now.*

Wehwéyiya. *They are now grown up.*

-a [variant of -ya used after h]

Kinamakákeha. *Now they sold them.*

-o? still, yet, meanwhile, while
(enclitic of the third rank)

¹ The enclitic ending -ya in the spoken language is often reduced to -y after a vowel.

kitaya or kitay *I now see him*

iyi:xkoya or iyi:xkoy *now on top of*

támiya or tamiy *now it is ending*
In the meanwhile, let him stay until the next day.

He still wanted his son to come again.

That river runs slowly.

Wherever he went, I went too.

Other enclitic endings that serve to give emphasis or intensity to a word are:

- **-san** solely, only, emphatically, himself
  (enclitic ending of the second rank)

- **-wa?** (enclitic ending of the fourth rank)

---

1. In the verb *kinego?*, the *g* replaces the glottal stop that is borne by the original form *kine?* he asked him.
2. The *t* replaces the glottal stop that is part of the original form *xiclo?* green corn.
3. The complete form of the word is *manikihli:ti-o?*. The combination of a vowel plus *-o?* is often reduced to *-o?:?*. 
[-waʔč seldom used alternative form]

-keh (enclitic ending of the fifth rank)

-tah (enclitic ending of the fifth rank)

The enclitic ending -kiʔ indicates that what is being communicated is known to the speaker only through hearsay. It is added to the first word or the word that is the nucleus of the clause.

-kiʔ  they say, he said (enclitic ending of the sixth rank)

Ta:ltámpakiʔ onoʔ a:ltepeʔ.
Under the earth, they say, there is a town.

Ómpakiʔ nimota:lih. There, he said, I sat down.

When added to a word, the enclitic ending -pa signifies that the word is considered as explanatory information. That is, it is the way in which something is done, the direction in which one goes, or the class of persons or things being treated.

-pa (enclitic ending of the first rank)

Anka katka mamotísipa.
[perhaps better that-it-grinds-itself-pa]
Perhaps it would be better for it to be ground
(Implies: Grinding is the better method of preparing it.)

Wa:lkeh nihigapa Ocotal.
[they-came to-here-pa Ocotal]
They came here by way of Ocotal Texisapan.

Miákeha yeh teháme:mpa nemi momačtiäh.
[many-now who we-pa in-progress they-make-themselves-know]
Now many of our people are studying.

The ranking in which the adverbial particles appear in relation to the stem are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
<th>6th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-pa</td>
<td>-san</td>
<td>-(y)a</td>
<td>-waʔ</td>
<td>-keh</td>
<td>-kiʔ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-oʔ</td>
<td>-tah</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
17. Adverbs of Place

17.1 Independent Adverbs of Place
The independent adverbs of place broadly correspond to the adverbs of place in English.

17.1.1 Interrogative
ká:n where?

17.1.2 Relative
ka:n where

17.1.3 Indefinite
kanah somewhere

17.1.4 Negative
akanah nowhere

17.1.5 Demonstratives
17.1.5.1 Simple demonstratives
  no:ya:n everywhere
  nigah here
  ompa around there
  nepa there
  ne: there
  na:? near
  wehka in the distance, far
  tani low
  sentapal on the other side

17.1.5.2 Demonstratives Formed with -iga
Some of the simple adverbs are combined with the ending -iga or -ika.
  nihiga here (contraction: nihi)
  ompiga there (contraction: ompi)
  ne-iga towards there (contraction: ne-i)
  ahkopika uphill (see ahkopa directly below)

17.1.5.3 Demonstratives Formed with -pa
Adverbs that are formed with an adverb plus the ending -pa belong to two classes: 1) those accented on the penult and 2) those accented on the antepenult (see -pa in Section 16.10).
With accent on the penult:
- tanipa  
  \(downwards\)
- ahkopa  
  \(upwards\)

With accent on the antepenult:
- nígahpa  
  \(towards here \) (contraction: nihpa)
- nihígapa  
  \(towards here \) (contraction: nihpa)
- ómbapa  
  \(towards there \) (close by)
  
  \([\text{omba- dependent form of ompa}]\)
- ompígapa  
  \(towards here \) (contraction: ompipa)
- nédapa  
  \(towards there \)
  
  \([\text{neba- dependent form of nepa}]\)
- ne-ígapa  
  \(in that direction\)

17.2 Independent Adverbs Formed with a Possessive Prefix
Some of the independent adverbs of place laid out above can take a possessive prefix to indicate the relationship that exists between the person or object and the place noted. An adverb composed in this way is equivalent to a prepositional phrase.

- nonígah  
  \(on this part of my body\)
- moompa  
  \(on that part of your (sg.) body\)
- nono:ya:n  
  \(everywhere on my body\)
- noná:ʔ  
  \(close to me\)
- moná:ʔ  
  \(close to you (sg.)\)
- moká:n?  
  \(on what part of your (sg.) body?\)

There is another, distinct use of the adverb ompa there. With a possessive prefix and the enclitic ending -ya now it is turned into an adjective that qualifies something that remains good or is good for the person. Example:

- noómpaya  
  \(it’s my size, it’s good for me\)

When the possessor is in the plural, the ending -meh is added if the prefix does not specify the grammatical number.

- noná:ʔmeh  
  \(near us (excl.)\)
- toná:ʔ  
  \(near us (incl.)\)
- aмонá:ʔ  
  \(near you (pl.)\)
- iná:ʔmeh  
  \(near them\)

17.3 Dependent Adverbs of Place
Nahuatl makes use of a large number of dependent adverbial morphemes that form adverbs of place. These morphemes never appear without the possessive (or the generalizing prefix ta-) or the substantive nucleus on which it depends, and in many cases it takes both.
When the dependent adverb takes the generalizing prefix -ta, the resulting form corresponds to an adverb in English. Examples:

tatampa  
*downwards, below*

When it takes a possessive prefix, the adverb is translated into English with a prepositional phrase, and the prefix corresponds to the object of the preposition. Examples:

notampa  
*beneath me*

motampa  
*beneath you (sg.)*

itampa  
*beneath him*

When the prefix consists of a substantival nucleus, it corresponds to the object of the preposition in English. Examples:

tetampa  
*beneath the stone*

a:tampa  
*underwater*

kʷatampa  
*under the tree*

ta:ltampa  
*underground*

tiawa:tampa  
*under the rain*

Dependent adverbs with a possessive prefix can function in a manner analogous to that of prepositions in English, governing an independent noun. Phrases formed in this way are less frequent, but they have the same meaning as those composed with an entire substantival nucleus.

itampa teʔti.  
*beneath the stone*

itampa kʷawiʔ  
*beneath the tree*

itampa tiawaʔti  
*beneath the rain*

The combination of a possessive prefix with a possessed substantival nucleus corresponds to the possessed object of the preposition in English. Examples:

nokʷatampa  
*beneath my tree*

mokʷatampa  
*beneath your (sg.) tree*

ikʷatampa  
*beneath his tree*

Next, examples of other adverbial morphemes of place will be laid out.

---

1 [The point is that the third-person prefix refers to or anticipates the noun, which appears separately. Hence, itampa teʔti literally says its-underside the stone, that is, beneath it, (namely) the stone. Thus, there is no equivalence with the syntactic function of the preposition of an Indo-European language, and the formal similarity that both itampa and beneath stand before the noun is of no significance. —CSM]
17.3.1 -tah “where there is much of something or there is something of interest”
The ending -tah in its locatival use converts a substantive into an adverb of place. It can refer to a place where the thing indicated by the substantive exists or there is a lot of it, in order to indicate where an activity of interest is put into play. An adverb formed with -tah normally implies the sort of activities that take place there. Examples:

Nia tek’isihtah.  I’m going where there are many crabs.  
(Implication: I’m going to catch crabs)

Nia ma:ngohtah.  I’m going where there are many mangoes.
(Implication: I’m going to harvest mangoes)

Nia ilwitah.  I’m going to the festival.

Nia kawa:yohtah.  I’m going to where the horse is.
(Implication: the horse is tethered there)

Nia kaltah.  I’m going to where there is a house.
(Implication: the house is under construction)

Nia xo:lo:ta.  I’m going to where there is a baby.
(Implication: the baby is being born)

17.3.2 -i:xtah “in front of”
This adverb is composed of the root -i:x- eyes plus -tah.

no-i:xtah  in front of me, in my sight
mo-i:xtah  in front of you (sg.), in your sight
iyi:i:xtah  in front of him, in his sight
etc.

17.3.3 -tepot’ah “behind”
This adverb is composed of the root -tepot’- back plus -tah.

tatepot’ah  in back
notepot’ah  in back of/behind me
kaltepot’ah  behind the house
nokaltepot’ah  behind my house

17.3.4 -t’i:ntan “at the foot of, on the ground by, at the base of”
This adverb consists of the substantive root -t’i:in- bottom and the locatival element -tan. To this are added personal prefixes, substantival roots or the generalizing prefix ta-.

1 Only women say this.
it‘i:ntan  
**at his feet**

ta‘i:ntan  
**at the feet of something, at the base**

Mota:lih  
\[he-sat-himself at the foot of the tree\]

He sat down at the foot of the tree.

Nikahteh noaha:wil ne:  
mokalt‘i:ntan.  
\[[I-left-it my-toy there on-the-ground-by-your-house]\]

I left my toy on the ground by your house.

Se:  
zapatazo  
ikečti:ntan  
\[a kick at-the-base-of-the-nape he-threw-it-suddenly\]

He suddenly kicked him in the nape of the neck.

17.3.5  *-nakastan* **“at the side of”**
This adverb is composed of the root *-nakas-* ear and the locative element *-tan*.

Inakastan  
yawi  
seʔ  
pe:lo.  
\[at-his-side it-goes another dog\]

Another dog is going beside him.

Tahkoya:n  
akawi?  
in tiʔti,  
inahnakastan\(^1\)  
in tekomameh.  
\[in-the-middle he-stayed the-fire at-their-side the-gourds\]

The fire stayed in the middle, beside the gourds.

17.3.6  *-ikxitam* **“at the feet of”**
This adverb is composed of the root *-ikxi-* feet plus *-tan*.

Nepa  
wetsto?  
se:  
a:ko:xah mokxitan.\(^2\)  
\[there it-is-fallen one needle at-your-feet\]

A needle is lying there at your feet.

17.3.7  *-tampa* **“below”**
The locative adverb *-tampa* consists of the element *-tan* plus the ending *-pa* towards. To it are added possessive prefixes or the generalizing prefix *ta-*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tatampa</td>
<td>below</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>notampa</td>
<td>below me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motampa</td>
<td>below you (sg.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>itampa</td>
<td>below him</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

\(^1\) The locative adverb *inahnakastan* contains a reduplicated syllable that indicates the plurality of the substantive.

\(^2\) In the last word, the initial *i-* in *ikxitam* is dropped with the addition of the prefix *mo-*.
notampameh  
below us (excl.)
totampa or
totampameh  
below us (incl.)
amotampa or
amotampameh  
below you (pl.)
itampameh or
itahtampa\(^1\)  
below them

### 17.3.8 -ihti? “within, inside, in”
This locative element is derived from the substantival root -ihti stomach. In its locatival function, -ihti? always occurs with a substantive root placed in front of it or with the generalizing prefix.

\(\text{ta-ihti?}\\)
\(\text{Ta-ihti? wi?: a?:ti.}\\)
[\text{inside it-comes water}] 
The water is coming inside.

\(\text{Ahá?: yéh kahkeh ta-ihti?}??\\)
[\text{it-is who who stayed inside}] 
Who are those who remained inside?

\(\text{Wet'zo? kalihti?.}\\)
[\text{he-is-fallen within-the-house}] 
He’s fallen inside the house.

\(\text{Nisiáwiya iga nitekipanowa mi:lihti?}.\\)
[\text{I-tired myself now when I-work in-the-field}] 
I get tired when I work in the field.

In a very common use of the locative -ihti?, it signifies in or in the area of.

\(\text{Yahki a-ihti? kipa:kato iyayo:l.}\\)
[\text{he-went in-the-gully he-went-to-wash his-hulled-corn}] 
He went into the gully to wash his corn.

The following example takes a possessive prefix. (With the addition of the diminutive ending, the glottal stop turns into k.)

\(\text{Nia nimoča:nti:ti sentapal to-a-ihtikt'i:n.}\\)
[\text{I-go I-go-to-live on-the-other-side our-little-in-the-water}] 
I’m going to go live on the other side of our little stream.

\(^1\) The adverb itahtampa contains a reduplicated syllable that indicates the plurality of the substantive.
17.3.9 -ihtiko “inside”
The compound locative -ihtiko consists of the root -ihti stomach and the locative element -ko in. Possessive prefixes are added to it.

iyihtiko inside it

Ónoʔya iyihtiko campana serpiente.
[there-is inside-it bell snake]  
There’s a snake inside the bell.

Kaʔwiʔ nohtiko.  
It stayed in my stomach.

17.3.10 -tahko “in the middle, center of”
Mero itahko kalaʔ bala.  
[just in-its-middle entered ball]  
The ball reached right into the middle of it.

17.3.11 -t’a:la:n “among, in the middle of”
toʔ’a:la:n among us (incl.)
tehtet’a:la:n among the stones
ima:mekayot’a:la:n among the tendons of his hand  
[i- 3rd pers. poss. prefix; -ma:- hand; -meka- cord; -yo- suffix of intrinsic possession; -t’a:la:n among]

17.3.12 -pan “upon, in, over”
The locative element -pan can take possessive prefixes or substantival roots placed in front of it.

With possessive prefixes:
nopan over me
mopan over you (sg.)
ipan over him
nopameh over us (excl.)
topan over us (incl.)
amopan over you (pl.)
ipameh over them

1 In nohtiko the initial i- is dropped after the prefix no-.
2 tehte- is a reduplicated plural from teʔti.
3 In this form, and in the third-person plural, the final -n in pan apparently assimilates to the initial m- in the plural marker -meh, and the resultant double -mm- is then simplified.
With substantive roots:

Si nimiki nomi:lpan, neh manimiki.
[if I-die  in-my-field I  may-I-die]
If I die in my field, then let me die.

We:weht'i:n kočto? ahkopan.
[little-old-man he-is-sleeping in-upper-part]
The little old man is sleeping up on the loft.

Ómpaya tahko-ono? tixo:talpan.¹
[there-now it-is-in-the-middle in-the- fire-gleam]
Now it's there in middle, in the gleam of the fire.

Ta:tapohtiawih ipan ohti.
[they-go-chatting in-it road]
They go chatting on the road.

The previous sentence is an example of the prepositional use similar to that of English. In this use, the word ipan is not accented. The word pan is regularly used as a preposition without the possessive prefix. Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Nahuatl</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in me</td>
<td>pan neh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in you (sg.)</td>
<td>pan teh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in him</td>
<td>pan yéh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in us (excl.)</td>
<td>pan nehame:n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in us (incl.)</td>
<td>pan tehame:n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in you (pl.)</td>
<td>pan amehwa:n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in them</td>
<td>pan yehame:n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17.3.13 -yakapan “over, on top of”

noyakapan  over me

Ikʷáʔ iga tiktʰehtʰelo:h        in mango, xine-ihli iga  amo
[when that you (sg.)-will-shake-it the mango tell-me so-that not

noyakapan wetʰis.
upon-me  it-will-fall]
When you shake the mango tree, let me know so that mangoes won’t fall on me.

Ne:tankʷah kowa:? no ve:s nitksaʔ iyakapan.
[it-bit-me  snake  because I-stepped upon-it]
The snake bit me because I stepped on it.

¹ ti- dependent root of tiʔti fire; -xo:tal- sparkle.
The little children are in the top of the tree.

17.3.14 -ko “inside, in”

- tiko  in the fire
- xapoko  in the hole

Ki-akih seh taxkal tiko.
[he-threw-it again tortilla in-fire]
He threw the tortilla into the fire again.

Yáhkiki? xapoko ka:n onokeh ipilowa:n
[he-went-they-say in-hole where they-were his-children]
They say he went into the hole where his children were.

In certain grammatical constructions, -ko assumes the characteristic of an enclitic. The word then takes the accent on the antepenult and not on the penult, as if the -ko were not part of the word. Examples:

- tó:nalko  in the heat
- íte:nko  in his mouth
- íyi:xko  in his eye (cf. íyi:xko on top of)

17.3.15 -wa:n “with, together with”

The comitative element -wa:n combines with possessive prefixes to form locative compounds of a comitative type that are translated in English by means of phrases or compounds containing the preposition with.

- nowa:n  with me
- mowa:n  with you (sg.)
- íwa:n (with accented í-)  with him
- nowa:meh  with us (excl.)
- towa:n or towa:meh  with us (incl.)
- amowa:n or amowa:meh  with you (pl.)
- iwa:meh  with them

It is necessary to distinguish between this locative compound íwa:n (with accented í-), which functions as an adverb, and the form iwá:n, which functions as a preposition and copulative conjunction. Examples:

1 [Again, referring to íwa:n as an adverb while calling iwá:n a preposition is to consider things from an Indo-European point of view (see Section 17.3 n. 1). In terms of Nahuatl syntax, the functions of these forms are the same ("with it" or "therewith"), but when the
The verb in Nahuatl normally takes the plural marker in sentences which have a compound (comitative) subject, even though the subject is in the singular in the translation. The number of the verb agrees with the number of participants. For example, in the preceding sentence, *he went with him*, it is considered that there is more than one participant, and thus the verb *yahkih* is in the plural.

### 17.3.16 General Locative Elements -kaːn and -yaːn
The elements -kaːn and -yaːn combine with certain non-substantive roots to form locative words.

- **iyaːkaːn** *on that side of*
- **sekaːn** *in a single place*
- **tayowakaːn** *in the dark, at night*
- **ohmaxalkaːn** *at the split in the road*
- **toːnayaːn** *in the sun*
- **tahkoyaːn** *in the middle, center*
- **itamiyaːn** *at the edge of*

### 17.3.17 -iːxko “on top of”
This adverb is composed of -iː- *eye, surface* and -ko *in.*

- **a-iːxko** *on top of the water*
  - In aːmaʔ onoʔ a-iːxko.
  - [*the-paper is on-top-of-water*]
18. Irregular Verbs

Those verbs are irregular that alternate their roots when conjugated or that take different endings from those of the paradigm verbs. The irregularities are of two types: 1) uniform changes that follow certain more or less fixed rules, which are called morphophonemic rules, and 2) variable changes that are special irregularities or specific irregularities. Let us first look at the verbs that undergo morphophonemic changes.

18.1 Irregularities in the Preterite

Certain verbs of Group 1 undergo morphophonemic changes in the preterite that make them deviate from the norm laid out in the paradigms.

18.1.1 Uniform Change of \( k \) to \( g \)

Verbs that end in -\( ka \) or -\( ki \) in the present singular turn \( k \) into \( g \) in the preterite singular if this is preceded by a vowel.\(^1\) Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present singular</th>
<th>Preterite singular</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kipa:ka</td>
<td>he washes it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tak(^w):ka</td>
<td>he sings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pa:ki</td>
<td>he rejoices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kikaki</td>
<td>he hears him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kipa:ga?</td>
<td>he washed it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tak(^w):ga?</td>
<td>he sang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pa:gi?</td>
<td>he rejoiced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kikagi?</td>
<td>he heard him</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exception (see the next section):

kalaki               he enters
kala?                he entered

18.2 Apocopated Forms of the Preterite

Many verbs of Group 1 drop the thematic vowel to form the preterite singular. The words that are reduced in conformity with a grammatical rule are called apocopated.\(^2\) Because of apocope there are verbs that end in -\( n \), -\( l \), -\( h \), or -\( ? \) in the preterite singular.

---

\(^1\) [The original text covered this material in two separate sections, one for verbs with the thematic vowel -\( a \), which change in Spanish orthography from “ca” to “ga,” and a second for verbs with the thematic vowel -\( i \), which change from “qui” to “gui.” The underlying phonology in each case is the same, and the distinction is based only on the vagaries of Spanish orthography. In these verbs, if the voiceless velar stop (\( k \)) begins the last syllable of the present stem and is intervocalic, it becomes voiced (\( g \)) in the preterite. These are Class 1 (A) verbs according to the classification of Classical Nahuatl. —CSM]

\(^2\) [This category corresponds to Class 2 (B) of Classical Nahuatl. —CSM]
18.2.1 Verbs of Group 1 Ending in -\textit{h} in the Preterite

A subclass of Group 1 verbs ending in -\textit{wa} in the present singular drop the last syllable and take -\textit{h} in the preterite singular.\footnote{[In Classical Nahuatl, verbs with a preterite stem ending in -\textit{w} devoice the consonant, which appears merely as aspiration in this dialect. —CSM]} Most of the verbs that belong to this subclass are transitive ones in which the vowel placed in front of the ending -\textit{wa} is long. Examples:

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{lll}
kika:wa & \textit{he leaves it} & kikah & \textit{he left it} 
kikope:wa & \textit{he unglues it} & kikopeh & \textit{he unglued it} 
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

There is one example of an intransitive verb that conjugates in this way.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{lll}
wehka:wa & \textit{he lingers} & wehkah & \textit{he lingered} 
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

There is a single other example of an intransitive verb ending in -\textit{wi}, which conjugates by dropping the last syllable and taking -\textit{h} in the preterite singular.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{lll}
tehkawi & \textit{he climbs} & tehkah & \textit{he climbed} 
tehkahkeh & & 
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

18.2.2 Verbs Ending in -\textit{l} in the Preterite

There is one verb that ends in -\textit{li} in the present singular and takes -\textit{l} in the preterite singular. Example:

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{lll}
kitahkali & \textit{he throws it away} & kitahkal & \textit{he threw it away} 
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

18.2.3 Verbs Ending in -\textit{n} in the Preterite

A subclass of verbs that end in -\textit{ma}, -\textit{na}, -\textit{mi} or -\textit{ni} in the present singular drop the thematic vowel in the preterite singular. The \textit{m} that would be at the end turns into \textit{n}. The majority of the verbs that constitute this subclass are transitive. Examples:

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{lll}
kitila:na & \textit{he pulls it} & kitila:n & \textit{he pulled it} 
 kitahtani & \textit{he asks for it} & kitahtan & \textit{he asked for it} 
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{lll}
kiht\textdagger:oma & \textit{he sews it} & kiht\textdagger:on & \textit{he sewed it} 
 kičihčimi & \textit{he feels it} & kičihčin & \textit{he felt it} 
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

An intransitive verb is apocopated in the same way.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{lll}
nehnemi & \textit{he travels} & nehnen & \textit{he travelled} 
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

Transitive verbs that have roots of less than three syllables (including the thematic vowel) are exceptions to the preceding rule. The preterite of these verbs is regular, as are the majority of the intransitive verbs. Examples:

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{lll}
\end{tabular}
\end{center}
ki-e:na  he stores it  ki-e:na?  he stored it
kimana  he boils it  kimana?  he boiled it
nimaya:na  I am hungry  nimaya:na?  I was hungry
pxoxo:ni  it bursts  pxoxo:ni?  it burst

The root -e:na among the preceding examples goes back to taking the n in the preterite singular when the word is expanded through reduplication and the use of the generalizing prefix ta-.

ta-ehe:na  he stores things  ta-ehe:n  he stored things

18.2.4 Verbs Ending in -a:miki
Certain verbs ending in -a:miki in the present singular lose two syllables and take -n in the preterite singular.¹ Examples:

nikehla:miki  I remember it  nikehla:n  I remembered it
niki:xna:miki  I encounter him  niki:xna:n  I encountered him

18.2.5 Apocopated Alternates Ending in the Glottal Stop
Certain verbs ending in -ka, ki or kʷi in the present singular take an apocopated alternate form for the preterite singular. The final syllable loses its initial consonant and the vowel and is reduced to -ʔ (glottal stop).² Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Preterite (full forms)</th>
<th>Preterite (apocopated forms)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>niktohtoka</td>
<td>I drive it off</td>
<td>niktohtoga?  I drove it off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nikneki</td>
<td>I want it</td>
<td>nikne?  I wanted it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nikahkokʷi</td>
<td>I raise it</td>
<td>nikahko?  I raised it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contracted Variants.** There are also other, alternate forms for the preceding verbs. These involve a sort of apocope that results in the words having the prosodic accent on the final syllable. To distinguish between the two types of apocope, we adopt the following definitions:

¹ [That is, the ending -iki is dropped and the now final m becomes n. —CSM]
² [Historically, it would be preferable to say that the thematic vowel is dropped (as in the preceding categories), and the now final velar stop is weakened into the glottal stop. —CSM]
We call those verbal forms *apocopated* in which the prosodic accent changes position due to the loss of a final element, with the result that the word retains the accent on the penultimate syllable, as is normal.

We call those variant forms *contracted* in which the last syllable is merely lost without the prosodic accent changing position, with the result that the final syllable remains accented.

Examples of apocopated and contracted variants are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Preterite</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Apocopated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kineki</td>
<td>kineʔ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>he wants it</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nikohtókak</td>
<td>nikohtoʔ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I drive it off</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18.3 Special Irregularities
There are three verbs that conjugate in a special way, and one that has its own peculiar irregularity in the preterite.

18.3.1 Conjugation of the Verb -*ia/-ya* “to go”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nia¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I go</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>niawih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiawih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anyawih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yawih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>you (sg.) go</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anyawih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yawih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yawi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>he goes</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yawih</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>niaːh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I will go</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>niaːskeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiaːskeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anyaːskeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yaːskeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiaːh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>you (sg.) will go</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anyaːskeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yaːskeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yaːh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>he will go</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yaːskeh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ [All varieties of Nahuatl have trouble distinguishing between the natural y-glide that appears between the vowels i and a on the one hand and the situation when a syllable beginning with ya is added to a syllable ending in i. Clearly, in the present situation nia stands for niya. Why this y at the start of a semantically significant root should not be noted in the orthography while the imperfect ending -ya always retains its initial y is not clear. —CSM]
### Alternative forms in the future singular

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nia:s</td>
<td>I will go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tia:s</td>
<td>you (sg.) will go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya:s</td>
<td>he will go</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Imperfect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nia:ya</td>
<td>I would go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tia:ya</td>
<td>you (sg.) would go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya:ya</td>
<td>he would go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nia:yah</td>
<td>we (excl.) would go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tia:yah</td>
<td>we (incl.) would go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anya:yah</td>
<td>you (pl.) would go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya:yah</td>
<td>they would go</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Preterite

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>niahki</td>
<td>I went</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiahki</td>
<td>you (sg.) went</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yahki</td>
<td>he went</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>niahkih</td>
<td>we (excl.) went</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiahkih</td>
<td>we (incl.) went</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anyahkih</td>
<td>you (pl.) went</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yahkih</td>
<td>they went</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Transitory Preterite

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>niahka</td>
<td>I went (and returned)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiahka</td>
<td>you (sg.) went (and returned)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yahka</td>
<td>he went (and returned)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>niahkah</td>
<td>we (excl.) went etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiahkah</td>
<td>we (incl.) went etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anyahkah</td>
<td>you (pl.) went etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yahkah</td>
<td>they went etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Periphrastic Future

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nia:ti</td>
<td>I’m going to go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tia:ti</td>
<td>you’re (sg.) going to go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya:ti</td>
<td>he’s going to go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nia:tih</td>
<td>we’re (excl.) going etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tia:tih</td>
<td>we’re (incl.) going etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anya:tih</td>
<td>you’re (pl.) going etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya:tih</td>
<td>they’re going to go</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Imperative-subjunctive mood

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>maniá</td>
<td>may I go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xah</td>
<td>go (sg.)!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mayawi</td>
<td>may he go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mania:ka:n</td>
<td>may we (excl.) go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>matia:ka:n</td>
<td>may we (incl.) go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xa:ka:n</td>
<td>go (pl.)!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maya:ka:n</td>
<td>may they go</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Desiderative mood

### Present

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nia:hneki</td>
<td>I want to go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tia:hneki</td>
<td>you (sg.) want to go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya:hneki</td>
<td>he wants to go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nia:hneki</td>
<td>we (excl.) want to go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tia:hneki</td>
<td>we (incl.) want to go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anya:hneki</td>
<td>you (pl.) want to go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya:hneki</td>
<td>they want to go</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
18.3.2 Conjugation of the Verb wi:/-wa:/- “to come”

**Future**
nia:hnekis  I’ll want to go  nia:hnekiskeh  we’ll (excl.) want etc.
tia:hnekis  you’ll (sg.) want to go  anya:hnekiskeh  you’ll (pl.) want etc.
 ya:hnekis  he’ll want to go  ya:hnekiskeh  they’ll want to go

**Imperfect**
nia:hnekia:ya  I wanted to go  nia:hnekia:yah  we (excl.) wanted etc.
tia:hnekia:ya  you (sg.) wanted to go  anya:hnekia:yah  you (pl.) wanted etc.
ya:hnekia:ya  he wanted to go  ya:hnekia:yah  they wanted to go

**Contracted forms for the imperfect**
nia:hnekiá  I wanted to go  nia:hnekiáh  we (excl.) wanted etc.
tia:hnekiá  you (sg.) wanted to go  anya:hnekiáh  you (pl.) wanted etc.
ya:hnekiá  he wanted to go  ya:hnekiáh  they wanted to go

**Preterite**
nia:hnegiʔ  I wanted to go  nia:hnekikeh  we (excl.) wanted etc.
tia:hnegiʔ  you (sg.) wanted to go  anya:hnekikeh  you (pl.) wanted etc.
ya:hnegiʔ  he wanted to go  ya:hnekikeh  they wanted to go

**Transitory preterite**
nia:hnekika  I wanted to go  nia:hnekikah  we (excl.) wanted etc.
tia:hnekika  you (sg.) wanted to go  anya:hnekikah  you (pl.) wanted etc.
ya:hnekika  he wanted to go  ya:hnekikah  they wanted to go

**Alternate forms of the present singular (less common)**
niwi:t$  I come  niwi:t‘eh  we (excl.) come
tiwi:t$  you (sg.) come  anwi:t‘eh  you (pl.) come
 wi:t$  he comes  wi:t‘eh  they come

---

1 All the forms in the desiderative mood that begin with nia:h-, tia:h-, ya:h- or anya:h-
can also be written nia:as, tia:s-, ya:s- or anya:s-, which represent less frequent alternate pronunciations.
### Future
(same as present)

#### Imperfect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Contracted Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>niwi:t'ia:ya</td>
<td>I would come</td>
<td>niwi:t'ia:ya</td>
<td>we (excl.) would come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiwi:t'ia:ya</td>
<td>you (sg.) would come</td>
<td>tiwi:t'ia:yah</td>
<td>we (incl.) would come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wi:t'ia:ya</td>
<td>he would come</td>
<td>wi:t'ia:yah</td>
<td>you (pl.) would come</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Contracted forms for the imperfect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Contracted Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>niwi:t'íá</td>
<td>I wanted to come</td>
<td>niwi:t'íáh</td>
<td>we (excl.) wanted etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiwi:t'íá</td>
<td>you (sg.) wanted to come</td>
<td>tiwi:t'íáh</td>
<td>we (incl.) wanted etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wi:t'íá</td>
<td>he wanted to come</td>
<td>tiwi:t'íáh</td>
<td>you (pl.) wanted etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Preterite

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Contracted Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>niwa:lah</td>
<td>I came</td>
<td>niwa:lkeh</td>
<td>we (excl.) came</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiwa:lah</td>
<td>you (sg.) came</td>
<td>tiwa:lkeh</td>
<td>we (incl.) came</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wa:lah</td>
<td>he came</td>
<td>wa:lkeh</td>
<td>you (pl.) came</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Transitory Preterite

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Contracted Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>niwa:lka</td>
<td>I came (didn’t stay)</td>
<td>niwa:lkah</td>
<td>we (excl.) came etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiwa:lka</td>
<td>you (sg.) came (didn’t stay)</td>
<td>tiwa:lkah</td>
<td>we (incl.) came etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wa:lka</td>
<td>he came (didn’t stay)</td>
<td>wa:lkah</td>
<td>you (pl.) came etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Periphrastic Future

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Contracted Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>niwi:t'eti</td>
<td>I’m going to come</td>
<td>niwi:t'etih</td>
<td>we’re (excl.) going etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tiwi:t'eti</td>
<td>you’re (sg.) going to come</td>
<td>tiwi:t'etih</td>
<td>we’re (incl.) going etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wi:t'eti</td>
<td>he’s going to come</td>
<td>wi:t'etih</td>
<td>you’re (pl.) going etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Imperative-subjunctive mood

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Contracted Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>maniwi:ki</td>
<td>may I come</td>
<td>maniwi:kika:n</td>
<td>may we (excl.) come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiiwi:ki</td>
<td>come (sg.)!</td>
<td>xiiwi:kika:n</td>
<td>may we (incl.) come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mawi:ki</td>
<td>may he come</td>
<td>mawi:kika:n</td>
<td>come (pl.)!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Alternate forms for the imperative-subjunctive plural

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Contracted Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>maniwi:tseka:n</td>
<td>may we (excl.) come</td>
<td>matiwi:tseka:n</td>
<td>may we (incl.) come</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xiiwi:tseka:n</td>
<td>come (pl.)!</td>
<td>xiwi:kika:n</td>
<td>may they come</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Desiderative mood (only third-person forms)

**Present**

- wi:?neki  he wants to come  
- wi:?nekih  they want to come

**Future**

- wi:?nekis  he will want to come  
- wi:?nekiiskeh  they will want to come

**Imperfect**

- wi:?neki:ya  he wanted to come  
- wi:?neki:yah  they wanted to come

**Contracted forms for the imperfect**

- wi:?nekiá  he wanted to come  
- wi:?nekiáh  they wanted to come

**Preterite**

- wi:?negi?  he wanted to come  
- wi:?nekikeh  they wanted to come

**Transitory Preterite**

- wi:?nekika  he had wanted to come  
- wi:?nekiakah  they had wanted to come

18.3.3 Conjugation of the Verb ono- “to be”

**Preterite used as present**

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nono?</td>
<td>I am</td>
<td>nonokeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tono?</td>
<td>you (sg.) are</td>
<td>amonokeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ono?</td>
<td>he is</td>
<td>onokeh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- we (excl.) are  
- we (incl.) are

There are forms of this verb that take the endings of the present. These are used when the tense is indeterminate or irrelevant.

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nono</td>
<td>I am</td>
<td>nonoh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tono</td>
<td>you (sg.) are</td>
<td>amonoh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ono</td>
<td>he is</td>
<td>onoh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- we (excl.) are  
- we (incl.) are

- you (pl.) are  
- they are

The following sentence illustrates a special use of the present-indeterminate (other examples can be found in Section 13.1.1).

Ônoya koneː?. *The baby is about to be born.*
18. IRREGULAR VERBS

**Future**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Future Tense</th>
<th>Imperfect Tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nonos</td>
<td><em>I will be</em></td>
<td><em>we (excl.) will be</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tonos</td>
<td><em>you (sg.) will be</em></td>
<td><em>we (incl.) will be</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>onos</td>
<td><em>he will be</em></td>
<td><em>you (pl.) will be</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperfect**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Imperfect Tense</th>
<th>Future Perfect Tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nonoyah</td>
<td><em>I would be</em></td>
<td><em>we (excl.) would be</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tonoyah</td>
<td><em>you (sg.) would be</em></td>
<td><em>we (incl.) would be</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>onoyah</td>
<td><em>he would be</em></td>
<td><em>you (pl.) would be</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(This verb does not appear in the simple transitory preterite.)

**Future periphrastic and present-future directional towards there**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Future Tense</th>
<th>Imperfect Tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nonoti</td>
<td><em>I’m going to be</em></td>
<td><em>we’re (excl.) going etc</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tonoti</td>
<td><em>you’re (sg.) going to be</em></td>
<td><em>we’re (incl.) going etc</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>onoti</td>
<td><em>he’s going to be</em></td>
<td><em>you’re (pl.) going etc.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of other directional tenses:

**Preterite towards there**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>onoto</td>
<td><em>he went to be</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Transitory preterite towards there**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>onoto:ya</td>
<td><em>he went and was (then returned)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Present and future towards here**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>onoki</td>
<td><em>he is coming to be</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Preterite towards here**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>onoko</td>
<td><em>he came to be</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Transitory preterite towards here**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>onoko:ya</td>
<td><em>he came and was (then went away)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Imperative-subjunctive mood**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Mood</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>manono</td>
<td><em>may I be</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xono</td>
<td><em>be (sg.)!</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maono</td>
<td><em>may he be</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Desiderative mood

**Present**
- nonosneki: I want to be
- tonosneki: you (sg.) want to be
- onosneki: he wants to be
- nonosnekih: we (excl.) want to be
- tonosnekih: we (incl.) want to be
- amonosnekih: you (pl.) want to be
- onosnekih: they want to be

The other tenses of the desiderative mood conjugate with the appropriate endings.

18.3.4 Conjugation of the Verb -wahliga “to bring”
The verb -wahliga (or -waliga) to bring includes an irregularity peculiar that consists in
the lengthening of the final vowel in the preterite singular, which belongs to the
apocopating variety. The other tenses agree with the regular endings of the first
conjugation.

**Present**
- nikwahliga: I bring it
- tikwahliga: you (sg.) bring it
- kiwahliga: he brings it
- nikwahligah: we (excl.) bring it
- ankwahligah: you (pl.) bring it
- kwahligah: they bring it

**Preterite**
- nikwahli: I brought it
- tikwahli: you (sg.) brought it
- kiwahli: he brought it
- nikwahligakeh: we (excl.) brought it
- ankwiwahligakeh: you (pl.) brought it
- kwahligakeh: they brought it

18.4 Dropping the Thematic Vowel in the Plural
The thematic vowel is dropped in the preterite plural of many verbs. For some verbs this
loss is obligatory, and others do not allow it, but the majority normally drop the vowel in
alternative forms.

18.4.1 Obligatory Loss
The thematic vowel is obligatorily dropped in the preterite of the verb -či:wa to do.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kiči:wa</td>
<td>he does it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kičih</td>
<td>he did it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kiči:wa</td>
<td>they do it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kičih</td>
<td>they did it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, compound verbs formed with -te:wa instantly, quickly obligatorily drop the
thematic vowel in the preterite plural. Examples in the third person:
### 18. Irregular Verbs

#### 18.4.2 Optional Loss

The thematic vowel is normally dropped as an alternate form in the preterite plural of the following verbs (examples in the third person):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kikahte:wa</td>
<td>kikahtehkeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kikahte</td>
<td>they abandoned it (instantly)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>isate:wa</td>
<td>isatehkeh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>isate:wa?</td>
<td>they awake (instantly)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>čo:ka</td>
<td>čo:kakah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>čo:ga?</td>
<td>čo:kakeh or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ke:na</td>
<td>ke:nah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ke:na?</td>
<td>ke:nakeh or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kino:t’a</td>
<td>kino:t’ah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kino:t’a?</td>
<td>kino:t’akeh or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kitisi</td>
<td>kitisih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kitisi?</td>
<td>kitisikeh or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>koči</td>
<td>kočih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>koči?</td>
<td>kočikeh or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mokʷepa</td>
<td>mokʷepakah or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mokʷepa?</td>
<td>mokʷepkeh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that m turns into n and w into h with the loss of the following vowel. Also, the long vowel that precedes the h becomes short.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nehnemi</td>
<td>nehnemih</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nehnen</td>
<td>nehnemikeh or</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1 The form kikahteh is the only verb composed of -te:wa that undergoes apocope in the preterite singular.
kixitoma  he unties it  kixitomah  they untie it
kixitoma? or  kixitomakeh or
kixiton  he untied it  kixinkeh  they untied it
takowa  he buys  takowah  they buy
takowa? he bought  takowakeh or
takohkeh  they bought
ka:wi  he remains  ka:wih  they remain
ka:wi? he remained  ka:wikheh or
kahkeh  they remained

18.4.3 Prohibited Loss
The thematic vowel is never dropped in the preterite plural of the following verbs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>isa?  he awoke</td>
<td>isakeh  they awoke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asi?  he arrived</td>
<td>asikeh  they arrived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kita?  he saw it</td>
<td>kitakeh  they saw it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kipata? he changed it</td>
<td>kipatakeh  they changed it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kimaga? he gave</td>
<td>kimakeh  they gave it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kimaga? he struck him</td>
<td>kimakeh  they struck him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tata?  it burned</td>
<td>tatakeh  they burned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>migi?  he died</td>
<td>mikikeh  they died</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kinamaga? he sold it</td>
<td>kinamakakeh  they sold it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18.5 Accentuation of the Thematic Vowel
In certain verbs of the first conjugation (Group 1), the ending is accentuated: -á.

- weyá  it grows
- tačá  he looks
- kipiá  he has it
- yama:niá  it softens
- ali:mpatiá  it gets smaller
- motehkʷiá  she wraps herself (in a blanket)
- tayowatiá  it is getting dark

The fact that they end in -ás in the future proves that they belong to the first conjugation:

- weyás  it will grow
- tačás  he will look
- kipiás  he will have it
- yama:niás  it will soften
- ali:mpatiás  it will get smaller
- motehkʷiás  she will wrap herself (in a blanket)
18.6 Defective Verbs

The following verbs only appear in the present, future and imperfect:

- ateyi: *is not, there is not*
- ateyis: *will not be, there will not be*
- ateyá: *was not, there was not*

- kwalo: *it hurts*
- kwalos: *it will hurt*
- kwalowa:ya: *it would hurt*

*Teyi* is not used in a positive sense. Nonetheless, it appears as an independent word accompanied by an independent negative particle. Personal subject prefixes can be added to it.

- aya teyi: *it is not yet, there isn’t yet*
- ayoʔ teyi: *it is not now, there isn’t now*
- aniteyá: *I was not*
- ayoʔ niteyá: *I was no longer*
Bibliography


