

# Sketch of Lakhotá, a Siouan Language, Pt. I

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# 1. Phonology

Table 1 gives the consonant phonemes of Sioux, and table 2, the vowels. The discussion that follows specifies the significant variants of these phonemes for the Teton dialect. Although the transcription is phonemic, it uses and adapts some conventions and diacritics from earlier practical orthographies and uses capitalization and punctuation in accordance with written English norms.

Table 1. Lakhota Consonants							
		Labial	Dental	Palatal	Velar	Post Velar	Glottal
<b>Obstruents</b>							
stops	voiceless plain	<i>p</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>č</i>	<i>k</i>		ʔ
	voiceless aspirated	<i>ph</i>	<i>th</i>	<i>čh</i>	<i>kh</i>		
	voiceless glottalized	<i>pʔ</i>	<i>tʔ</i>	<i>čʔ</i>	<i>kʔ</i>		
	voiced	<i>b</i>			<i>g</i>		
fricatives	voiceless plain		<i>s</i>	<i>š</i>		<i>ħ</i>	
	voiced		<i>z</i>	<i>ž</i>		<i>ǵ</i>	
<b>Resonants</b>							
nasals		<i>m</i>	<i>n</i>		<i>ŋ</i>		
lateral			<i>l</i>				
<b>Glides</b>		<i>w</i>		<i>y</i>			<i>h</i>

Table 2. Lakhota Vowels				
		Front	Central	Back
high	oral	<i>i</i>		<i>u</i>
	nasal	<i>iŋ</i>		<i>uŋ</i>
mid		<i>e</i>		<i>o</i>
low	nasal		<i>a</i>	
	oral		<i>aŋ</i>	

### Stress and Pitch

' relative loudness, high pitch

### Diacritics used in phonetic transcriptions

` - less loud than vowels stressed

^ - fading loudness, high fall

˘ - increasing loudness, high rising pitch

AD    ə

O, ON    ɔ ɔ̃

ae, aeN    æ æ̃

## 1.0. Consonants

There are either 26 or 28 consonant phonemes in Lakhota, depending on how [b] and [g] are counted ([1.1.3.](#)).

### 1.1. Stops

/p, t, k, ʔ/ are plain oral stops articulated at labial, dental, velar, and glottal positions. /č/ is a palatal affricate, but it patterns with the stops. The sounds represented by *p*, *t*, *k* can be compared with the English sounds represented by the letters *p*, *t*, and *c* in the words *spar*, *star*, and *scar*. English has no exact equivalent for the sound represented by Lakhota č, but the reader can easily create the sound by inventing an English word such as *schar*, pronounced to rhyme with *spar*, *star*, and *scar*: *ch* is here pronounced like Lakhota č. Lakhota words that contain these sounds are:

*sa'pa* 'black'  
*yu'ta* 'to eat'  
*sa'ka* 'to dry'  
*heča'* 'buzzard'.

/ʔ/ represents a soundless hiatus between other sounds: the hiatus occurs when the air stream is interrupted by tight closure of the glottis. The characteristic "sound" of this consonant is the sharp interruption of the air stream that occurs when the glottis is abruptly closed or an audible pop when the closure is released. An English example is the interjection *oh oh!* [oʔo] uttered by English speakers when they are confronted by something unexpected. Lakhota examples are:

*aʔu'* 'to bring here'  
*aʔi'* 'to take there'.

#### 1.1.1. Aspirated Stops

The aspirated stops of Lakhota consist of a stop closure followed by a release accompanied by either glottal or velar friction. When the release has glottal friction, the sound is very much like the English aspirated stops found before stressed vowels as in the following English words: *pick*, *tick*, *chick*, and *kick*. Release with glottal friction occurs in Lakhota with *čh* and with the other aspirated stops before the vowels /i u iŋ/. Glottal friction is also sometimes heard before the vowel /uŋ/. Lakhota words in which the aspirated stops have glottal friction are the following:

*phi'* 'liver'  
*thi'* 'to live'  
*čha* 'so'  
*khi'* 'to reach home there'  
*phu'* 'rotten (wood)'  
*nuphiŋ'* 'both'  
*phute'* 'upper lip'.

Before other vowels except /e/ the aspiration is velar in release, rather than glottal. There are no English equivalents to the sound of the aspirated stops of this kind; they can be compared with the sound of the Navajo aspirated stops if these are known to the reader. Examples of velar release are the following:

**[pxa']** 'head'  
**[txa'pa]** 'ball'  
**[kxa'ta]** 'hot'  
**[txo']** 'blue, green'  
**[kxa']** 'to signify'  
**[txezi']** 'stomach'  
**[otxuŋ'wahe]** 'village'.

The distribution of the two kinds of release described above is not absolute: both kinds of release occur before the vowel /e/, and before this vowel, the distinction is phonemic in particular dialects. It should be noted that all speakers agree on the nature of aspiration except before the vowel /e/ and that in these cases there is no variation: a speaker pronounces a given word with either one or the other kind of release quite consistently. The distinction is thus more lexical than phonological. Examples of this kind are:

**[pheži', pxeži']** 'grass'  
**[phehiŋ', pxehiŋ']** 'hair of the head'.

Some speakers pronounce these words with glottal friction, others with velar friction, as indicated. Because the distinction between [h] and [x] is so nearly predictable and because speakers disagree about those places where it is not predictable, all aspirated stops are presented here as consonant plus [h]: *pha'* 'head', *tha'pa* 'ball', *kha'ta* 'hot', etc.

(Velar friction regularly occurs before the vowel /e/ and even before /iŋ/ whenever these are a result of a vowel change at the end of a word (4.3.2.6). For example, the word *kha'* [kxa'] 'to mean' keeps its velar friction if changed into *khe'* or *khiŋ'*. *Jan Ullrich*.)

### 1.1.2. Glottalized Stops

The glottalized stops of Lakhota are ejectives; these sounds are not found in English or in any Western European languages. Ejective sounds are formed by the near simultaneous release of two closures, one in the mouth at the position of the stop, the other in the larynx at the glottis. Some compression of the air in the mouth occurs due to the double closure, and it is the release of this compressed air that gives the characteristic ‘crack’ when the ejective is released. Lakhota words containing ejective stops are:

*pʰo'* ‘fog’  
*tʰa'* ‘dead’  
*ičʰij'* ‘harness’  
*kʰu'* ‘to give’.

### 1.1.3. Voiced Stops

The phonemes [b] and [g] represent the same sounds as in English *bet* and *get*. They have a very restricted distribution in Lakhota, occurring only before sonorant consonants (**l m n**), the voiced glides (**w y**), and in various kinds of vowel-dropping situations ([Section 4.3.1.2.](#)) and reduplication ([4.3.2.8.](#)). Since /p/ and /k/ never occur in these positions, /b/ and /g/ are actually positional variants of the plain voiceless stops. There is nevertheless an extremely small number of words where the /b/ is not predictable, so it seems best to consider that sound marginally phonemic. Moreover, there is a long tradition of writing both *b* and *g* when they occur, despite their theoretical status, and that tradition is followed here.

When followed by a sonorant, the stop closure is released before the articulation of the sonorant is begun, giving a voiced, vowel-like transition to the sonorant.

The first two of these examples sound very much like the English words *below* and (the first part of) *galore*:

*blo'* ‘potato’  
*glo'* ‘to grunt’  
*to'b* ‘four’  
*sabsa'pa* ‘severally black’  
*sabya'* ‘to blacken’  
*patha'g* ‘stopping, halting abruptly’  
*sagsa'ka* ‘dry’  
*nagwa'ka* ‘to kick out the foot’.

## 1.2. Fricatives

Lakhota has a more extensive fricative system than does English, so some of the Lakhota fricatives have no English counterpart.

### 1.2.1. Sibilants

Lakhota /s z š ž/ are postdental and palatal in articulation: these sounds can be compared with the highly similar English sounds found in the words *seal*, *zeal*, *rasher*, and *azure*. Lakhota words that contain these sounds are:

*Ha'sapa* 'Black person'  
*ma'za* 'metal'  
*maši'* 'he ordered me'  
*pheži'* 'grass'.

### 1.2.2. Velar Fricatives

The Lakhota velar fricatives /ħ ģ/ [x gamma ] have no English equivalents, but they can be compared with sounds found in close relatives of English such as German and Spanish. /ħ/ represents the final sound in the German word *Bach* or the initial sound Spanish *jota*. Lakhota examples of this phoneme are:

*ħe'* 'mountain'  
*iħa'* 'to laugh'  
*iħ<sup>2</sup>e'* 'rock'.

The phoneme /ģ/ has two positional variants, one an uvular tap, the other, a midvelar voiced fricative. The former sound occurs in Lakhota before the vowel /i/; an example is the word

*ģi'* 'yellow, brown'.

Compare this to the sound represented by *r* in French word *Henri* when this name is pronounced very quickly. Examples of the other variant of /ģ/ are the Lakhota words

*ģu'* 'burned'  
*ka'ģa* 'to make'.

This sound is identical to Spanish *g* between vowels as in the word *pagar* 'to pay'.

A lengthened form of the voiced fricatives is found when these are initial before a stressed vowel. Examples of this lengthened fricative sound are:

*si'* 'foot'  
*ša'* 'red'  
*ħo'ta* 'gray'.

## 1.3. Sonorants

Lakhota /**m n g**/ are respectively labial, dental, and velar in articulation. All have ready English equivalents: *him*, *sin*, and *sing*. A Lakhota example containing all three sounds is:

*šungma'nitu* 'coyote'.

For most speakers, Lakhota /**l**/ has a "clear" rather than a "dark" timbre. It is most like the "clear" *l* of Spanish or Italian *ala* 'wing' or French *elle* 'she'. It never sounds like English "dark" *l* after a vowel, e.g. *ball*, *well*. However, there are reports that some speakers have the same distribution of "clear" and "dark" *l* in Lakhota that they do in English. Lakhota examples of /**l**/ are:

*le'l* 'here'  
*thalo'* 'meat'  
*Lakho'ta* 'Indian'.

## 1.4. Glides

The glides /**w y h**/ have more conditioned variants than any of the other consonant phonemes of Lakhota, This is probably due to the fact that their status as semivowels makes them highly sensitive to the vocalic environments in which they occur. /**w y**/ are voiced: /**h**/ is voiceless.

### 1.4.1. /w y h/ at the Beginning of a Word

/**w y h**/ are most clearly pronounced at the beginning of a word. Lakhota examples are:

*wa'* 'snow'  
*ya'* 'to go'  
*ha'* 'skin'.

Compare these with equivalent English sounds in the same position, as in the words *wet*, *yet*, and *hot*.

### 1.4.2. Glides between Vowels

When the glides come between vowels they are pronounced weakly, if at all. This is particularly the case with /**w**/ and /**y**/ . Examples are the Lakhota words:

*waya'wa* 'he reads'  
*iya'pi* 'they say'  
*othuŋ'wahe* 'town'  
*yuwa'ste* 'to make good'  
*haŋhe'pi* 'night'  
*čhaŋhaŋ'pi* 'sugar'.



### 1.4.3. Before and between Nasalized Vowels

Before and between nasalized vowels all three Lakhota glides are pronounced with heavy nasalization. English equivalents for the nasalized glides are rare, although the sounds are easy to produce if the velic is open and air passes out of the nasal cavity during their articulation. Examples of nasalized /h/ do occur in English in the informal affirmative and negative particles *uh-huh* [ADhAD'] 'yes' and *uh-uh* [(h)AD'<sup>2</sup>AD] 'no'. Lakhota examples are:

*wiŋ'yaŋ* 'woman'  
*čhaŋhaŋ'pi* 'sugar'.

## 2. Vowels

The vowel system of Lakhota has five oral vowels and three nasal vowels. They are typically rather short in duration. However, lengthened versions of all the vowels may occur lengthened due to contraction of identical vowels, and two additional long vowels having no short analogues result from the contraction of unlike vowels. Vowel contraction is described in [sections 2.3. and 4.3.](#)

### 2.1. Oral Vowels

The five oral vowels are very comparable in their typical value to the five "cardinal" vowels, for example, as these are realized in Spanish. All are "pure"; that is, there is no shift in articulators or articulatory position during their articulation. Pure cardinal vowels are difficult for English speakers to produce because precisely these vowels begin in English with a "pure" vowel and end with a glide pronounced in the same general area. This English glide is usually written with the midvowels /e/ and /o/ but not otherwise. Compare the following:

Lakhota	English
<i>si'</i> 'foot'	<i>see</i> (si+y-glide)
<i>su'</i> 'seed'	<i>sue</i> (su w-glide)
<i>ble'</i> 'lake'	<i>play</i> (ple +y-glide)
<i>blo'</i> 'potato'	<i>below</i> (belo +w-glide).

The vowels /i/ and /u/ are front unrounded and back rounded, respectively. Compare their sounds to the same vowels in Spanish or Italian. Lakhota examples of these vowels are:

*hi'* 'tooth'  
*hu'* 'leg'.

The vowels /e/ and /o/ are lower-mid; /e/ is front unrounded; /o/ is back rounded. There are no good phonetic analogues for these Lakhota vowels in English or other Western European

languages. The sounds of these vowels are somewhat more open than the accepted pronunciation of the cardinal vowels *e* and *o*. Lakhota examples of these vowels are:

*he'* 'horn'  
*ho'* 'voice'.

The vowel /**a**/ is low and central, pronounced in Lakhota with its cardinal value: that is, it is pronounced with close to maximum opening. An adequate English analogue is the vowel in the first syllable of the word *father*. A Lakhota example is:

*ha'* 'skin'.

All Lakhota oral vowels are partially devoiced when they are stressed and in utterance-final position. This devoicing makes it sound like a final *h* follows the vowel. This is especially noticeable when words are pronounced very carefully, as in citation.

## 2.2. Nasalized Vowels

Nasalized counterparts exist for the two highest and the single lowest vowel: /**iŋ**, **uŋ**, **aŋ**/. The nasalized vowels are phonetically lax. The sounds of these vowels are comparable to, but not identical with, certain English vowels followed in the same syllable by a nasal consonant. The sound of /**iŋ**/ and /**aŋ**/ may be compared with the vowels in *sin* and *nun*. (Note that the comparison is to the sound of the vowel only, without the following nasal consonant.) American English has no equivalent for /**uŋ**/. Here are Lakhota examples of the nasalized vowels:

*hiŋ'* 'hair'  
*haŋ'* 'yes'  
*huŋ'ku* 'his mother'.

While most Lakhota speakers agree as to which vowels are pronounced with nasalization, there are some vowels that are nasalized by some speakers, but not by others. Such cases no doubt represent doublets: both pronunciations are correct. (Compare this with a word such as *which* in English, where some speakers preaspirate and devoice the /**w**/. while others pronounce voiced /**w**/ alone.) Lakhota examples of such doublets are

*ki*, *kiŋ* 'the'  
*na'ži*, *na'žiŋ* 'to stand'.

### 2.2.1. Nasalized vowels after Nasal Consonants

The vowels /**i**, **u**, **a**/ are always pronounced with some nasalization when they follow a nasal consonant. However, some speakers have a phonemic contrast between nasalized and nonnasalized vowels following nasal consonants. For these speakers, strong nasalization

indicates that the vowel is phonemically nasalized while weak nasalization indicates that the vowel is phonemically oral.

Speakers who have phonemic contrast after nasal consonants probably continue an earlier pattern in the language whereby there was full phonemic contrast in oral and nasal vowels after nasal consonants. That this is not an idiosyncratic feature of some persons' speech is shown by their agreement with speakers of other Sioux dialects such as Nakoda, where full contrast is found after nasal consonants. Some examples of contrasting nasality after nasalized consonants are:

*maŋka'* 'I sit'                      versus *maka'* 'skunk'  
*gmuŋ'za* 'slimy'                      versus *gmu'za* 'closed, as the fist'  
*ninyaŋ'* 'cause to live' versus *niya'* 'to breathe'

At an abstract level, Patterson (1991) argues for three kinds of vowel nasalization in Lakota: some vowels are [+nasal], some are [-nasal], and some are unmarked for this feature.

This chapter represents speech in which vowel nasalization is neutralized after nasal consonants, which appears to be the usage of the majority of Lakota speakers. In this environment only oral vowels are written.

### 2.3. Diphthongs and Contracted Vowels

There is only one diphthong in Lakota, the sequence /**au**/. This occurs in a single Lakota word, one of whose functions is as a greeting to a man:

*Ha'u!* 'greeting to an adult male'

The pronunciation of this word is identical to that of the English word *how*. This word may be a loan from a non-Siouan language.

While the case of diphthongs is quite simple in Lakota, that of contracted vowels is not. Contracted vowels result from the conflation of syllables through the collapse of a syllable boundary or from the vocalization of consonantal elements followed by conflation with a preceding vowel. Contraction happens most often in rapid, colloquial speech, although there are a few examples where the contraction has become the standard form. A prominent example of this is the word [**a':ta:**] 'entirely', which must have an underlying form with normal short vowels. However, contemporary speakers cannot supply an underlying form for this word, which is unusual. Long contracted vowels of this sort are phonemic; and written double: /**a'ataa**/.

In almost all cases, the collapse of a syllable or word boundary results from the disappearance of a glide between vowels ([section 1.4.2.](#)). After the loss of the glide, the vowels in hiatus contract. The contracted vowel is nasalized if either of the uncontracted vowels was nasalized.

When the original vowels were of the same height, or if assimilation occurs before contraction, a simple long vowel results. Here are examples of this kind of contraction, with pitch marked as explained in [section 5.2.](#):

[ha<sup>v</sup>:pi] ‘clothing’, < *haya’pi*

[mi<sup>^</sup>:hakab] ‘immediately after me’ < *mi’ ihakab*

[ke<sup>^</sup>:] ‘he said that’ < *ke’ye*

[u<sup>^</sup>:kte] ‘they will come’ < *u’ pi kte*

[o<sup>^</sup>:’na] ‘they wounded him and’ < *o’ pi na*

[čhAD<sup>v</sup>:pi] ‘sugar’ < *čhanhan’pi* (‘tree juice’).

When the uncontracted vowels were of different heights or when feature contrasts exist between the vowels and the glide, the contracted vowel is qualitatively different from the uncontracted sequence. Here are Lakhota examples of the two vowels that result from this kind of contraction:

[iyae<sup>^</sup>:] < *iya’ye* ‘he left for there’

[wakhæ<sup>^</sup>:žā] < *wakhan’yeža* or *wakhan’heža* ‘child’

[mithO<sup>^</sup>:] < *mitha’wa* ‘it is mine’

[uŋyOG:kte] < *uŋyan’ pi kte* ‘we will be going’

### 3. Stress and Pitch

Vowels in all languages are pronounced with some kind of accompanying melody (loudness, pitch). The word is the domain of stress in Lakhota. In Lakhota words the first (or only) stressed vowel has higher pitch and greater loudness than all other vowels in that word. Most of the time the stressed vowel is the second one in the word, but this is not always so. It is therefore necessary to write stress on every word. Compare the following Lakhota words from the same verbal paradigm:

*iya’ye* ‘he set out to go there’

*e’yaye* ‘they set out as a group to go there’.

A rare example with stress on other than the first or second syllable is *tuktена’* ‘which ones?’.

#### 3.1. Secondary Stress

There is usually only one stressed vowel in each word. Exceptions to this are compound words, which usually retain the stressed vowels of the originally separate words. In a compound word, therefore, there can be two or more stressed vowels: in such cases, the first stressed vowel has higher pitch and greater loudness than any subsequent stressed vowel. These two stress levels are referred to as primary and secondary stress, and when it is desirable to distinguish them the acute accent (´) can be used for primary stress and the grave accent (`) for secondary stress. Examples are:

*ma'zaska`* 'money' (lit. 'white metal, silver')  
*šun'kawakhaŋ`* 'horse' (lit. 'mystery dog').

Ordinarily this distinction is not marked, and the acute accent is used for both types of stress.

### 3.2. Pitch on Long Vowels

Lakota long vowels, which always result from vowel contraction, may be pronounced with rising or falling pitch, depending on the stress pattern of the original, uncontracted vowels. If the first uncontracted vowel had stress, the contracted sequence has higher pitch and greater loudness at the beginning of the contracted sequence, with a fall in pitch and loudness as the sequence continues. If the uncontracted sequence had stress on the second vowel, then the contracted sequence shows a rise in pitch and loudness toward the end of the sequence. Compare the following examples, where a circumflex (^) marks a contracted vowel with the high point toward the beginning, and a wedge (˘) marks a contracted vowel with the high point toward the end of the sequence:

[u<sup>^</sup>:kte] 'they will be coming'

[o<sup>˘</sup>:phe] 'I hit him'.

In phonemic writing, long vowels are written as geminates, with the appropriate one stressed. For example, [i<sup>^</sup>:] is /i'i/ and [u<sup>˘</sup>:] is /uu'/.

## 4. The Phonemic Structure of Words

Lakota phonemes are combined into words according to very regular rules, as is true of all languages. Some consonant and vowel sequences are exceedingly frequent, others are rare, and some theoretically possible combinations never occur.

### 4.1. Segmental Sequences

Lakota words in their basic form almost always end in a vowel. Of the consonants, only /l/ is at all frequent as the final sound in a word. Also occasionally found in word-final position are /b/, /g/, /m/, /n/, /s/, /ʃ/, and /h̃/. Of these, /n/ is most frequent.

Lakhota words begin, as a rule, with one or two consonants. Words written with an initial vowel are usually pronounced with a preceding [ʔ], although this sound may be omitted. Any vowel can follow any consonant except that nasalized vowels never follow /l/. In some dialects an /l/ following a nasalized vowel in the same syllable is replaced by /n/: *hehaŋ'l* in these dialects is pronounced *hehaŋ'n*. There are a number of restrictions on the makeup of consonant clusters; for example, there are no clusters with one fricative directly adjacent to another.

Within words, vowels and consonants almost always alternate, with each vowel separated by one, two, or (very rarely) three consonants.

There are nevertheless a few words in the language where vocalic prefixes are added to vowel-initial stems with no intervening consonant or consonantal element. Examples are:

*nai'čʔikeğa* ‘to scratch oneself with the foot’  
*mi'oglasʔij* ‘mirror’  
*kai'žu* ‘to pay off one’s debts’  
*pao'skiča* ‘to cram things into something’,  
 (e.g., too many clothes into a washing machine)  
*pao'tkuğa* ‘push, close, and lock with a motion,  
 as a door with an automatic lock’  
*yuo'tkuğa* ‘pull, close, and lock’ (as above)

A similar phenomenon is more difficult to deal with, and speakers disagree about some of these examples. Vowels that are the same and that have no intervening consonant, especially /ii/, are frequently pronounced as a series of rearticulated vowels. Where one of the clustered vowels has stress, there is a rising (or falling) pitch on the phonetically lengthened vowel. Examples are:

*lowaŋ'* ‘to sing’  
*i'lowaŋ* ‘to sing about something’  
*i'ičʔilowaŋ* ‘to sing about oneself’  
*i'iičʔilowaŋ* ‘to sing about one’s impending death’  
*sabmi'čʔiye* ‘I blackened myself, made myself black’  
*sabmi'ičʔiye* ‘I blackened myself because of some obligations or for some ceremonial purpose’.

Usually native speakers do not pronounce any of these vowel sequences with intervening glides or [ʔ], and they reject the insertion of such elements. It is unclear to what extent there may have been glide neutralization in such cases ([see 4.3.1.3.](#)) or whether a phonemic element was ever present between these vowels.

Refer to the sample vocabulary for examples of consonant and vowel sequences.

## 4.2. Syllabification

The number of syllables per word is determined by the number of vowels present in the word: there is one syllable for each vowel. Taylor and Rood disagree about the accuracy of this statement for the identical adjacent vowels described just above: Taylor hears a simple long vowel in these contexts, while Rood believes that the vowels are separately rearticulated and thus constitute separate syllables. It is likely that speakers differ in the phonetic realization of these sequences.

The only other exception to this rule is the word *ha'u*, which includes the only diphthong known in the language. This word is a monosyllable.

Most syllables begin with one or two consonants and end, wherever possible, with a vowel:

[wa-ya'-wa] 'he reads'  
[la-kxo'-ta] 'Indian'  
[spa-yo'-la] 'Mexican'  
[o-i'-yo-ki-phi] 'be happy'  
[le'l] 'here'  
[nuŋ'm] 'two'

The syllable always ends in a vowel or a single consonant, but when two or more consonants come between vowels, it is not always easy to know whether the syllable boundary will come before all or between the first two.

If the consonants belong to the same morpheme (meaningful sequence of sounds), the syllable break comes before the consonants:

[šiča'-mna] 'it stinks' (cf. *mna* 'to stink')  
[yu-ptəŋ'-ptəŋ] 'to rock back and forth with the hand'  
(cf. *-ptəŋ-* 'unsteady, rocking').

But if the two consonants belong to different morphemes, the syllable boundary comes between the two:

[nuŋ'm-nuŋ-pa] 'two by two' (cf. *nu'pa* 'two')  
[to'b-to-pa] 'four by four' (cf. *to'pa* 'four').

Except before /m, n, l/, /b/ and /g/ occur only in morpheme-final position. Hence there will always be a syllable boundary after these sounds if any other consonant follows.

When three consonants are found between vowels within utterances, the consonant cluster is always divided by the syllable boundary, since such sequences are found only in compound words:

[šunŋ-blo'-ka] ‘male horse or dog’.

### 4.3. Phonological Changes in the Basic Form of Words

Pronunciation of isolated words is often different from the pronunciation of the same words in phonological contexts of larger size such as word compounds, phrases, or sentences. In some cases also the change of the grammatical form of a word can cause phonological changes in the word itself. In other words, the form of a word, or the forms of related words, are often affected by the presence of other linguistic elements.

#### 4.3.1. Phonological Changes that Result from Speaking Style

In all languages, rapid, colloquial speech often differs markedly from slow, careful speech. As a rule, rapid speech is a reduced form of slow speech. English examples of this are *pose* for ‘suppose’, *gotcha* for ‘I’ve got you’, and *gonna* for ‘going to’.

There are many changes of this kind in colloquial Lakhota, and Lakhota speakers are themselves aware of the difference. Precise (unchanged) speech is called *yat' iŋ'sya wo'glakapi* ‘firm or clear speech’, while rapid, slurred speech is called *ikče'ya-wo'glakapi* ‘ordinary or normal speech’.

##### 4.3.1.1. *pi* in Rapid Speech

One of the most striking differences between precise and rapid speech is the replacement of the enclitic (suffixlike word: [see 10.0.](#)) *pi* in rapid speech by a vowel before the enclitics *kte*, *kiŋ*, *kšto'*, *na*, and possibly others. The vowel that replaces *pi* is determined by the height of the vowel that immediately precedes *pi*. If the vowel is high (*/i/*, */iŋ/*, */u/*, */uŋ/*), *pi* is replaced by */u/*. If the vowel is mid or low (*/e/*, */o/*, */a/*, */aŋ/*), *pi* is replaced by */o/*. The replacing vowel is nasalized if the preceding vowel is nasalized. Here are some examples of this change:

<i>Slow speech</i>	<i>Fast speech</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<i>Hi' pi kte.</i>	[hi' u kte]	‘They will arrive here.’
<i>U' pi kte.</i>	[u^: kte]	‘They will come.’
<i>Čhiŋ' pi kte.</i>	[čhiŋ' uŋ kte]	‘They will want.’
<i>Ole' pi na</i>	[ole' o na]	‘They looked for him and...’
<i>Yatkan' pi na</i>	[yatkan' oN na]	‘They drank it and...’
<i>Oyu'spa pi kšto'.</i>	[oyu'spa o kšto']	‘They caught him.’

##### 4.3.1.2. Vowel apocope

Also characteristic of rapid speech is the dropping of unstressed, word-final vowels. For example, in the enclitic *pi* */i/* is frequently lost when other enclitics follow. If a nasalized vowel precedes, and a fricative follows, */p/* is then changed to */m/*:

<i>Slow speech</i>	<i>Fast speech</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
--------------------	--------------------	----------------







This inserted /ʔ/ can of course be dropped if it follows a vowel ([4.3.1.3.](#)).

#### 4.3.2.3. Nasalization Spread

Still a third phonological change associated with verb conjugation is a phenomenon that can be called nasalization spread. When a nasalized and an oral vowel are separated by a glide it is quite usual for both of the vowels and the glide to be pronounced with nasalization; this does not happen if the spread is from left to right across the /y/ of a prefix (cf. Patterson 1991):

*iye*<sup>ʔ</sup>*uŋyaŋ* *pi* ‘we found it’,  
compare *iye*<sup>ʔ</sup>*ya* *pi* ‘they found it’

*wuŋyaŋ*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'ke* ‘he saw it’,  
compare *waŋbla*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'ke* ‘I saw it’

*waŋwaŋ*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'yaŋke* ‘he saw something’,  
compare *wa*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'o*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'naŋ*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'uŋ* ‘he heard something’

*o*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'maki**yiyi* *kte* ‘it will help me’,  
compare *o*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'makiye* ‘it helped me’.

Compare these examples where there is no spread; here *-ya-* is a prefix:

*uŋya*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'htaka* *pi* ‘we bit him’

*uŋya*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'ka*ŋa *pi* ‘you made us’.

There seems to be some complex ordering between the nasal spread rule and the insertion of inflectional affixes, since the secondary nasalization of *-yaŋ-* in ‘to see’ also occurs in *waŋye*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'čhiyaŋka* *pi* ‘you saw each other’, but not in the simple *waŋla*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'ke* ‘you saw him’.

#### 4.3.2.4. Change of /k/ to /č/

When grammatical processes place /i/ (sometimes /e/) before *k* (whether plain, glottalized, or aspirated) plus a vowel (*khV*, *k<sup>ʔ</sup>V*, or *kV*), the *k* frequently becomes /č/, but not always. Compare *ma**k*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'u* ‘he gave it to me’, *č**hi**č*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'u* ‘I gave it to you’, *ku*<sup>ʔ</sup> ‘he is coming home’, *gli**č*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'u* ‘he reached home here’, *o*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'makiye* ‘he helped me’, *o*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'ni**č**'iya* *he?* ‘did he help you?’ *ka*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'khiya* ‘over yonder’, and *he*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'č**'iya* ‘over there’.

Exceptions to this rule are stative verbs, such as *okha*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'yaka* ‘to have things (such as leaves, burrs) stuck on’ (*oni*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'khayake* ‘you have things stuck on you’); adverbs; dependent verbs (verbs that require another verb in the same sentence) such as *kapiŋ*<sup>ʔ</sup> ‘be reluctant to’; and a few exceptional transitive verbs (cf. Boas and Deloria 1941:14). When a derivational prefix is added to a root and the resulting verb is stative (*ka*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'a*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'A* ‘to fall down by accident’, from *t<sup>ʔ</sup>A* ‘be dead’), the *k* does not change (*nika*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'t<sup>ʔ</sup>a*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'a* ‘you fell down by accident’). But if the new verb is transitive, *k* changes to *č* providing that the pronominal prefix precedes the derivational one (*ka*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'a*<sup>ʔ</sup>*'a* can also mean

‘to knock someone out’, and ‘she knocked you out’ *\*is niča't'at'a*). If the pronoun precedes the root, *k* still does not change, even if the verb is transitive. Note *nikij'za* ‘you squeaked’ and *nani'kiŋza* ‘he made you squeak by stepping on you’.

\*In this sketch, Lakhota third-person singular pronouns referring to people are translated at random as either ‘he’ (‘him’, ‘his’) or ‘she’ (‘her’) when there is no determining context; either translation is correct.

#### 4.3.2.5. The Affix *ma-*

The affix (prefix or infix; [see 9.3.1.](#)) *ma-* ‘I, me’ loses its vowel when it is added to a stem that begins with /i/. Compare *mawa'ste* ‘I am good’, *mak'u* ‘he gave it to me’ with *mitha'wa* ‘it is mine’ *miglu'kse* ‘I cut myself’, *miha'kab* ‘behind me.’ Some verbal stems that have initial /i/ drop the /i/ when no affix precedes. ‘It is his’, for example, is *tha'wa*. (Note that the position of stress on the old second syllable is evidence for the original presence of the initial /i/.)

#### 4.3.2.6. Final Vowels in A-words

The final vowel of a large group of Lakhota verbs is subject to regular changes, depending on what follows the verb. A small number of enclitics also share this feature. For convenience of reference words with these vowel alternations are called “A-words,” and such words are cited with a written final A or AD. The form of words with these alternations is correct in each instance with a particular one of the alternating vowels. The vowels that alternate are /a/ or /aŋ/, /e/, and /iŋ/ (for some speakers also /i/). When no element follows, /e/ is always found. When the enclitics *ktA* and *na* follow, the vowel is almost always /iŋ/, but some speakers use /i/ before *na*, at least sometimes. Otherwise, either /a/ (/aŋ/) or /e/ is found, with each context calling for one or the other. Examples are *yatke'* ‘he drank it’ and *t'e'* ‘he is dead’; *yatkiŋ' kte* ‘he will drink it’ and *t'iŋ' kte* ‘he will die’; *yatkaŋ' he* ‘did he drink it?’ and *t'a' he* ‘is he dead?’

Speakers do not always agree on which verbs show this kind of alternation, particularly when the verb in question is somewhat rare. For example, the verb *olu'luta* ‘be sweltering hot’ is treated as nonalternating by some speakers but as alternating by others. The same thing is true for speakers of the other Dakota dialects. It appears that any verb that ends in *-a* in its basic form may be regarded by some as an alternating verb. Because of this, verb-final vowel alternation will probably become more widespread in the future and may possibly result eventually in a state where all historically *-a* verbs will become *-A* verbs.

The terminal vowel is lost entirely when verbs of this kind are reduplicated ([4.3.2.8.](#)) or incorporated as any but final member into a word compound. The consonant immediately before the dropped vowel may also change ([4.3.2.7.](#)). Examples are *sabsa'pA* ‘black’ (*sa'pA* ‘to be black’). *yulphi'čA* ‘edible’ (*yu'tA* ‘to eat’), *čhebyA'* ‘to fatten’ (*čhe'pA* ‘to be fat’), and *kaŋkhi'yA* ‘to cause someone to make something’ (*ka'ğA* ‘to make’).

A number of nouns also lose their final vowel in the same kinds of constructions (though reduplicated nouns are rare): *nabko'zA* ‘to beckon’ (*nape'* ‘hand’), *čheŋ'i'khaŋ* ‘bucket handle’ (*čhe'ğa* ‘kettle’), *čhašthuŋ'* ‘to make a name for oneself’ (*čhaže'* ‘name’).

Another kind of vowel loss is frequently seen in compounds also. When one member ending in a vowel stands before another that begins with a vowel, the first of the two vowels is ordinarily dropped. Examples are exceedingly numerous: *nab<sup>2</sup>a'gle* 'to lay hands on' (*nape* 'hand', *agle* 'to place on'), *iti'pakhiŋte* 'face towel' (*ite* 'face', *ipa'khiŋta* 'to wipe with'; note that /t/ is not replaced by /l/ - [4.3.2.7.](#)), *makho'ħloka* 'cave' (*makha* 'earth', *oħlo'ka* 'hole'). *ke'yA* 'to say that' (*ka* 'that'; *eyA* 'to say'), and *wiglo'čhethi* 'gas stove' (*wi'gli* 'oil', *oče'thi* 'stove').

#### 4.3.2.7. Change of /p t č k/ to /b l l g/

When vowel dropping (of any origin except possibly the fast speech phenomena illustrated in section [4.3.1.2.](#)) places /p t c k/ in word-final position or at an internal boundary between linguistic elements, these become [b], [l], [l], [g], respectively. When a nasalized vowel precedes these sounds, they may further shift to a nasal consonant: [m], [n], [n], or [g], respectively. Note that these shifts do not occur before vowels unless [ʔ] is inserted to mark the boundary. Compare the examples in the preceding paragraph of *iti'pakhiŋte* versus *nab<sup>2</sup>a'gle*. Examples of such consonant changes have already been seen. Further examples are *to'ḅ* 'four' (shortened from *to'pa*) and *nu'm* 'two' (shortened from *nu'pa*); *khaḷyA* 'to heat' (cf. *kha'tA* 'to be hot') and *čhaŋgma'siče* 'I am sad' (shortened from *čhaŋte'-maši'če*); *psi'psil* 'skipping' (shortened from *psi'psičA*); *patha'g* 'stopping short' (shortened from *patha'ka*) and *šunḡwiŋ'yela* 'mare, bitch' (cf. *šun'ka* 'dog').

When the voiced fricatives /z ž g/ come to stand at a boundary they are replaced by /s š ħ/ respectively. Examples are *ko'skoza* 'waving' (cf. *ko'zA* 'to wave'), *khušyA* 'to make nauseous' (cf. *khu'žA* 'to be nauseous'), and *piḡyA* 'to boil' (cf. *pi'ğA* 'to be boiling').

#### 4.3.2.8. Reduplication

One of the most productive grammatical processes in Lakhota is reduplication, the repetition of a portion of a word. The repetition creates a new word whose basic meaning is similar to the unreduplicated form but whose grammatical meaning is different. The meaning of reduplication is variously plurality, repetition, distribution through space ("here and there"), or intensity. Although most words have just one correctly reduplicated form, the part to be repeated can be anywhere in the word. An example of full reduplication is *zizi* 'yellow' (cf. *zi* 'yellow'); an example with initial reduplication is *ħolħo'ta* 'gray' (cf. *ħo'ta* 'gray'); with final reduplication *wašte* 'good' (inanimate plural; cf. *wašte* 'good'); with medial reduplication, *napčič'yuŋgyuŋka* 'nine by nine' (cf. *napčič'yuŋka* 'nine'). Note that consonant changes of the kind mentioned in [4.3.2.7.](#) are very frequent in reduplication.

The part of a given word that is reduplicated can generally be predicted if enough is known about the etymology of the word: it is usually the last full syllable of the root. But this is nevertheless one of the more difficult parts of the grammar of Lakhota, even for native speakers. Refer to Carter (1974), Shaw (1980), and Patterson (1990:89-99) for details; Patterson reviews several other theoretical studies of Lakhota reduplication.

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# Grammar

Lakhota sentences can be described as consisting of a series of optional and obligatory slots, each slot filled by a particular type of word or phrase. The maximum structure is

(interjection) (conjunction) (adverb(s))  
(nominal) (nominal)(nominal)  
(adverb(s)) verb (enclitic(s)) (conjunction)

(Parentheses imply optionality; (s) means there is no theoretical limit to the number of like elements that can occur in this position.)

Note that the only obligatory slot is that of the verb; every other position is optional.

Discussion of Lakhota grammar from the point of view of formal linguistic theory can be found in Van Valin (1985, 1987) and references there. Van Valin argues that a careful and accurate account of even the simplest Lakhota sentences requires major revisions in the Chomskyan models that dominated linguistic theory from the 1960s through the 1980s.

Discussion of Lakhota grammar will be organized around the sentence slots enumerated above; each 7 slot, and its possible fillers, will be discussed in turn. Given first however, is a brief definition of the terms:

interjection: exclamation expressing surprise, hesitation, disgust, etc.

conjunction: connector, such as 'and,' 'but,' 'however,' 'furthermore.'

adverb: expression of time, place, manner (including instrument), or cause.

postposition: a word that relates a nominal to a verb; compare English prepositions. In Lakhota the relating word follows the element it governs.

nominal: a naming word or phrase: noun, pronoun, modified noun, or another element used as a noun.

verb: core word, predicator, word that says something about a nominal.

enclitic: almost a suffix, but actually a separate word; expresses tense, mood, aspect, and other similar grammatical notions.

The first two categories (interjections and conjunctions) are functionally distinct, but it is sometimes difficult to decide whether a particular "sentence launching word" belongs to one category rather than the other. Some of the words cited as examples in [5.0](#) or [6.0](#) might therefore be switched to the other category upon further investigation. However, it is certain that all words in either category will precede either adverbs or nominals.

## 5. Interjections

Some examples of interjections include:

*Ma li'la olu'luta.* ‘Gee, it’s hot (and humid).’ (spoken by a woman)

*Wan le' anpe'tu kiŋ li'la kha'te!* ‘Boy but it’s hot (and dry) today!’ (spoken by a man)

*ID'ska / Eya'* ‘Well...’; often used as a pause filler.

*E'yaš* ‘Well, but’

In the case of *iŋ'ska*, the first vowel may be lengthened quite extensively for added effect:

*iŋ'iŋiŋiŋiŋiŋiŋska* ‘Weeeeeell’

There are no interjections equivalent to English profane or curse words.

See Buechel (1939: 126-127 and 266-267) for a list of interjections in use in the early twentieth century.

## 6. Conjunctions

Conjunctions connect two sentences, often showing something about the relationship between the sentences as well. They occur in two possible positions: in the second slot from the beginning or in the last slot in the sentence. The more common position is last in the sentence.

Several different Lakota words translate the English word ‘and’; but these words do not all mean the same thing in Lakota. Examples are *na* or *naŋ* ‘and also’; *ča*, *čaŋkhe* ‘and so’, *yuŋ'khaŋ* ‘and then (rather unexpectedly)’. Other conjunctions include *e'yaš* ‘but’, *na' iŋ'š* ‘or’, and *ho* (or *hona*) ‘furthermore’.

*Ta'kunitokhuŋ'k' uŋpi šni e'yaš uŋko'yuspa pi.*  
nothingwe.did pl.notbut they.arrest.uspl.  
‘We didn’t do anything, but they arrested us.’

Of course, conjunctions such as *na* or *na' iŋ'š* can join two of the parts of a sentence, such as nominals or verbs. In this case, they occur in the sentence position appropriate to the major part:

*Či'k'ala na' iŋ'š thaŋ'ka čha yačhiŋ' he?*  
little or big a you.want question  
‘Do you want a little one or a big one?’

Some words that are conjunctions in English do not occur as such in Lakota. The conjunction pair ‘if...then’, for example, is expressed in hypothetical sentences by simply nominalizing (see [8.5.](#)) the *if* sentence and adding the then sentence:

*Ma'za-skaunyu'ha pi kiŋ.iye'čhiŋkiŋyaŋkewaŋži'ophe'<sup>2</sup>uŋthuŋpi kte.*  
money we.havepl.the car a we.buy pl.Pot.  
 ‘If we had money, (then) we would buy a car.’

## 7. Adverbs

Adverbs may occur either before or after the nominals of the sentence. In theory, there is no limit to their number, nor is there any preferred sequence or position for the various types: any number of adverbs may occur in any order in either place in the sentence.

Formally, adverbial expressions are of three possible types: words, phrases, or sentences.

### 7.1. Single-word Adverbs

Examples of single word adverbs:

*ħeya'ta* ‘out in the country’  
*hiŋ'haŋni* ‘this (past) morning’  
*ħta'lehaŋ* ‘yesterday’  
*a'ataa* ‘all; completely’  
*ini'la* ‘quietly’  
*oħ<sup>2</sup>aŋ'khoya* ‘quickly, without wasting time’  
*e'na* ‘right there’  
*taŋyaŋ'* ‘well’.

Deictic adverbs are formed by adding a demonstrative ([8.3.2.](#)) to an adverb or a postposition ([7.2.](#)):

*he'na* ‘right there’ (*he'*, *e'na*). *le'tu* ‘here’ (*le'*, *e'tu*). *kataŋ'* ‘from yonder’ (*ka'*, *etaŋ'haŋ*), *he'l* ‘there’ (*he'*, *e'l*).

Interrogative adverbs are also single words for the most part (note that all Lakota interrogative words begin with *t-*):

*to'haŋ* ‘when?’ (referring to a realized event)  
*tohaŋ'l* ‘when?’ (referring to an unrealized event)  
*tukte'l* ‘where?’  
*tukte' e'l* ‘at which place,’ ‘whereabouts?’  
*to'khiya* ‘where (in or to what region)?’



*ta'kuwe* 'why?'  
*to'kheškhe* 'how?'  
(*to'škhe*)

In some cases, one-word adverbs are words whose principal use is as some other part of speech. For example, *hiŋ'haŋni* is a noun or verb meaning 'morning' or 'be morning'; *a'ataa* is a pronoun meaning 'all (of something)'; and *taŋyaŋ'* is a verb meaning 'to be well'.

Adverbs may be marked as intensive or repetitive by reduplication (4.3.2.8.) or by the addition of suffixlike particles such as *ħča/ħči* and *šna*:

<i>He'ktaktakiya wači'.</i>	'She kept dancing <u>backward</u> .'
<i>E'nagna hiye'ye.</i>	'They [inanimate] are lying <u>here and there</u> .'
<i>Taŋye' ħči ečhuŋ'.</i>	'He did it <u>very well</u> .'
<i>E'na šna yaŋke'.</i>	'He is <u>always there</u> .'
<i>Haŋhe'pi iyo'hila e'l thiwa'hepi kiŋ ob thima' šna hiyu' pi.</i>	'Every night they would come <u>in</u> with their families.'

## 7.2. Adverbial Phrases

Adverbial phrases generally contain a nominal (8.0.), sometimes accompanied by a postposition. Other adverbs may also participate in addition to the nominal.

### 7.2.1. Adverbial Phrases of Time

In adverbial phrases of time, nominals are usually accompanied by the articles (8.3.1.) *kiŋ* and *k<sup>2</sup>uŋ*. *kiŋ* in such phrases marks the phrase as referring to 'hypothetical' (unrealized) time, while *k<sup>2</sup>uŋ* marks 'actual' (realized) time.

When the nominal expression does not include a postposition, its use is absolute (not grammatically marked):

*Le' aŋpe'tu kiŋ maħpi'yaya.* 'It is cloudy today.'

*Haŋhe'pi mağa'žu.* 'It rained last night.'

English analogs of these are seen in the sentences 'He came this morning', and 'It rained last night.'

Other examples of this kind are *hiŋ'haŋni kiŋ* 'tomorrow', *haŋhe'pi kiŋ* 'this evening'.

Nominals used absolutely as adverbs are often followed by a true adverb:

*Oko' nu'pak<sup>2</sup>uŋ* *he'haŋ*

weektwo the.pastthen  
'two weeks ago'  
*Wi'hina'phe šni haṇni'*  
suncome.outnotnot.then  
'just before sunrise'

Examples of postpositional phrases with temporal meaning are:

*ħta' i'yokpaza o'hakab*  
darkness after  
'after dark'

*aṇpe'tu kiṇ he' e'l*  
day the that at  
'on that day'

*aṇpe'tu-wakhaṇ' nu'pa oko'*  
day-holy two between  
'between two Sundays'.

### 7.2.2. Adverbial Phrases of Place

Numerous postpositions are also used in adverbial phrases of place.

*Mas'o'phiye e'l ači'phiṇ kte*  
Store at I.await.you potential  
'I'll wait for you at the store.'

*Wači'pi ekta' la' pi kta he?*  
Dance to you.go pl. potential question  
'Are you (pl.) going to go to the dance?'

*Othuṇ'wahe etaṇ'haṇ wahi'*  
town from I.arrive  
'I arrive from town.'

*Thi'pi kiṇ o'kšaṇ e'nažiṇ*  
house the around they.stand  
'They (collective) stood around the house.'

The line between adverbs and postpositions is sometimes difficult to draw, chiefly because the same words are often used both ways. English adverbs and prepositions show the same kind of interchangeability. 'Come on out from down in under there!' has six adverb/prepositions in this kind of ambiguous function. A Lakhota example is:

*Owo'te-thi'pi*      *kiŋ wi'gli-o<sup>2</sup>i'nažiŋ*    *kiŋ he'l*    *isa'khib he'*.  
 eating.place-house the oil-stopping.place the there beside stand  
 'The cafe is there beside the gas station.'

In this example the adverb *isa'khib* functions nearly as a postposition.

Very often, a noun will combine with a postposition to form a compound; the result is the conversion of a phrase into a single word adverb:

*thima'hel*            'in the house'  
**thi'-mahe'l**        'house'-'inside'  
*čhaŋ<sup>2</sup>a'khotanhaŋ*    'across the woods'  
**čhaŋ'-<sup>2</sup>akho'tanhaŋ** 'tree'-'across'  
*thila'zata*            'behind the house'  
**thi'-laza'ta**         'house'-'behind'

Most specific locational adverb/postpositions of place begin with *i*:

*ila'zata*    'behind'  
*isa'khib*    'beside'  
*ihu'khuta* 'below'  
*iha'kab*    'after'  
*itho'kab*    'in front of'

For some of these there is a corresponding word without the *i*, which is only used as a postposition. For all of the *i*- adverbs there is an alternative form with stressed *i*, which marks the location as very close to or against the object:

*i'lazata*    'right close behind'  
*i'sakhib*    'right next to'  
*i'hukhuta* 'just below'  
*i'hakab*    'right after (also refers to time)'  
*i'thokab*    'right before (also refers to time)'

Both these sets of forms take personal object inflections ([see 9.3.2.](#)) when the object is an animate pronoun:

*mila'zata*      'behind me'  
*wičhi'thokab* 'in front of them'

The stressed *i*' appears as *i'i* in inflected forms:

*ni'isakhib* 'very close to you'  
*uŋki'ihukhuta* 'right below us'

### 7.2.3. Adverbs of Manner

Adverbs of manner are often single words formed from other classes of words. A frequently used formative of such adverbs is the suffix *-ya*:

*waši'čuŋya* 'in English' (*waši'ču*, *waši'čuŋ* 'White man')  
*šiča'ya* 'badly' (*ši'čA* 'be bad')  
*wakhaŋ'yaŋ* 'mysteriously' (*wakhaŋ'* 'wondrous, awesome').

Other suffixes are also used.

*le'čhel* 'thus, in this way' (*le'* 'this')  
*naħma'la* 'secretly' (*naħma'* 'to hide')  
*ma'nikhel* 'on foot' (*ma'ni* 'to walk')

There are also postpositional phrases that express manner:

*Wasna'snaheča čhiŋča'la s'e ipa'hlala yaŋka' pi*  
kingbird offspring like in.a.row sit pl.  
'They are sitting in a row like young kingbirds.'

*Čhiŋča' pi ob hi'*  
offspring pl. with come  
'He came with their children.'

*Čhanpa'gmiyaŋpi oŋna' iya'ye*  
wagon in go  
'He went in a wagon.'

### 7.2.4. Instrumentality

Instrument is sometimes expressed in the verbal prefix ([see 9.2.1.](#)). When a more specific instrumentality needs to be indicated, the postposition *uŋ'* is used with an appropriate noun:

*Iye'čhiŋkiŋyaŋke uŋ' nat?'e'*  
car with die.by.foot.action  
'He was run over and killed by a car.'

*Aĝu'yapi kiŋ eče'la uŋ' wiča'sa kiŋ ni' pi šni*

bread    the alone with man    the live pl. not  
'Men do not live by bread alone.'

### 7.3. Adverbial Clauses

Sentences used as adverbs (adverbial clauses) are first nominalized; they are then the equivalent of a noun in absolute (see 7.2.1.) use. Following this nominal comes a time adverb or a postposition. (Compare this with the similar construction and use of phrases described in 7.2.)

Sentential time adverb:

*Ĥ'okha' kiŋ hi' pi k'uŋ he'haŋ, wačhi'pi kiŋ iya'ye.*  
Singers the arrive pl. the.past then dance the start  
'When the singers came, the dance began.'

Sentential place adverb:

*He' wa'uŋ'yaŋka pi oki'hi šni waŋ e'l iya'ye.*  
He he.see.us pl. he.be.able not a to he.go  
'He went to (a place) where he could not see us.'

Sentential manner adverb:

*Ta'ku iye'ya oki'hi kiŋ he' uŋ' čhaŋ' kiŋ kaks'a'ksa.*  
What he.find he.be.able the that with wood the he.chop  
'He chopped the wood with whatever he could find.'

Buechel (1939 passim) contains a more complete description of adverbs than is presented here. Note that many of the words he calls 'adverbs' are called 'enclitics' in this sketch.

## 8. Nominals

There are from zero to three nominal expressions (apart from verbal affixes) in every Lakhota sentence. The three slots provided in the original sentence diagram serve three possible roles: subject, indirect object, direct object. If more than one nominal occurs in a sentence, the order will ordinarily be subject first, then either of the objects. For some speakers, there is no required order between direct and indirect objects; thus 'the men gave the boy to the bear' and 'the men gave the bear to the boy' are identical: *Wičha'ša kiŋ hokši'la kiŋ matho' kiŋ k'u' pi* or *Wičha'ša kiŋ matho' kiŋ hokši'la kiŋ k'u' pi*. Very rarely, however, does this cause any misunderstanding, since in most such sentences potential ambiguities are resolved by the meanings of the particular words. Other speakers insist that the order is subject-indirect object-direct object; for them, the two sentences above are not synonymous.

The presence of an indirect object is marked in the verb except for a handful of special verbs such as *k'u* 'give', *la* 'ask for' or *iyuŋ'ǵA* 'to ask someone something' (see 9.1.6. and 9.3.8.).

The grammatical roles of subject, object, or indirect object may be indicated by verbal affixes (prefixes or infixes; see 9.3.) instead of by overt nominals. If there are separate nominal expressions, they may be any of four types: pronouns, nouns, modified nouns, and sentences.

## 8.1. Pronouns

Independent pronouns are rarely used in ordinary Lakhota but are available for emphatic expressions or to serve as the objects of postpositions such as *kičhi* 'together with'. There are two sets. The first is simply emphatic: the second is used to contrast one referent with others.

Set 1:

*miye* 'I'  
*uŋki'ye* 'we'  
*niye* 'you'  
*iyē* 'he, she, it, they'

Set 2:

*mi's* 'I'  
*uŋkiŋ's* 'we'  
*ni's* 'you'  
*iŋ's* 'he, she, it, they'

Examples of pronouns used as nominals:

Subject

*Miye*, *wačhiŋ' šni*. 'Me, I don't want to.'  
*Mi's ta'ku ophe'wathuŋ kta he?* 'And what shall I buy (now that the others have decided)?'

Object

*Hena' uŋki'ye wa'uŋ'yaŋka pi šni*. 'As for us, they didn't see us.'

Postpositional Object

*Tuwa' niye' kičhi' wačhi' pi he?* 'Who danced with you?'

The two sets can be used together, for example, in the expression *mi's-miye' kiŋ* 'as for me; in my opinion; for my part'. Compare the expression *Ni's ehaŋ'* 'your turn', using the postposition *ehaŋ'* 'at a time' with a contrastive pronoun.

## 8.2. Nouns

Lakota nouns are either simple or derived; derived nouns may be either compounds or affixed forms. Examples of simple nouns include *čhaŋ'* 'wood, tree'; *nata'* 'head'; *šun'ka* 'dog', and *mahpi'ya* 'cloud, sky'.

### 8.2.1. Compound nouns

Compound nouns consist of two (or more) nouns, or of a noun plus a verb. (De Reuse 1994 discusses the degree of "tightness" in noun-verb compounds.) The elements that enter into the compound may exist as independent words, or they may be compounding forms (essentially roots) that never appear in that form outside of compounds. Where all compounded elements occur alone as words, the compound is written with a hyphen between the elements. Where one or more of the compounded elements is in root form, the compound is written without separation of the constituent elements. Stresses after the first in any word should be read as secondary ([see 3.1.](#)).

In noun-noun compounds, the earlier element usually modifies the later. When non-nominal elements are present in the compound, these usually follow the nominal elements and modify them, but they precede in some cases.

Noun-noun compounds

#### 1. Modifier-modified

<i>wi'gli-o'i'nažiŋ</i>	'gas station'
<i>wi'gli</i>	'grease'
<i>o'i'nažiŋ</i>	'stopping place'
<i>čhaŋ-haŋ'pi</i>	'sugar'
<i>čhaŋ'</i>	'tree'
<i>haŋ'pi</i>	'juice'
<i>Khaŋgi'-wičha'sa</i>	'Crow Indian'
<i>khaŋgi'</i>	'crow'
<i>wičha'sa</i>	'man'
<i>mas'o'phiye</i>	'store' (originally 'cash register')
<i>ma'za</i>	'metal'

*ophi'ye* 'box, storage place'

## 2. Modified-modifier

*šun̄gma'nit̄u* 'coyote'

*šun̄'ka* 'dog'

*mani'tu* 'wilderness, wild place'

## Noun-verb compounds

*pte-yu'ha* 'rancher'

*pte'* 'buffalo'

*yuha'* 'to have'

*Mni'-šoše* 'Missouri River'

*mni'* 'water'

*šoše'* 'be turbid'

*šun̄gkhi'yuħa* 'stud, stallion'

*šun̄'ka* 'dog, horse'

*khiyu'ħa* 'to breed'

*ma'za-ska'* 'money'

*ma'za* 'metal'

*ska'* 'be white'

*šun̄'ka-wakhaŋ'* 'horse'

*šun̄'ka* 'dog'

*wakhaŋ'* 'be awesome, be marvelous'

*haŋm<sup>2</sup>i'kčeka* 'moccasin'

*haŋ'pa* 'shoe'

*ikče'ka* 'be common'

## Verb-noun compounds

*tun̄we'ya-wičha'ša* 'scout'

*tun̄we'yA* 'to look around'

*wičha'ša* 'man'

*waya'wa-thi'pi* 'school'

*waya'wa* 'count things; read things'

*thi'pi* 'house'



Compounds of the verb-noun type may in reality be examples of noun + noun, if the first element is actually a nominalized verb (cf. *waya'wa way* 'a student'). There are no known reliable criteria that can distinguish these possibilities.

Compounds that consist of more than two included elements also exist. These compounds have an internal hierarchy indicated by underlining in the examples:

*Mni-lu'zahe-othuŋ'wahe*  
water-run.swiftly-town, rapids town  
'Rapid City, South Dakota'

*šunġ'a'kaŋ-yaŋka'pi*  
horse/dog.on-sit, horseback sit  
'to ride horseback'

*nata'-yazaŋ'pi-phežu'ta*  
head-ache-medicine  
'aspirin'

*šunġ-si'-maza*  
dog/horse-foot-iron  
'horseshoe'

*ma'za-ska'-zi'*  
iron.be.white-be.yellow, silver-be.yellow  
'gold'

### 8.2.2. Derived nouns

Nouns derived by affixation may have either prefixes or suffixes. Elements used as suffixes are usually identical to enclitics (10.). Prefixes tend to have fairly specific meanings, while (lie meanings of the suffixes are more general, though related to the meaning of the same element used as a verbal enclitic.

Some prefix examples:

*o-* 'place where'

*o'<sup>2</sup>inažij* 'station' (cf. *ina'žij* 'to stop')

*oyaŋ'ke* 'sitting place; agency' (cf. *yaŋka'* 'to sit')

*othi'* 'den' (cf. *thi'* 'to dwell')

*ogna'ke* 'container' (cf. *gna'ka* 'to put away')

*i-* 'instrument for'

*wa<sup>2</sup>i'yatke, wi'yatke* 'cup' (cf. *waya'tkAD* 'to drink things')  
*wa<sup>2</sup>i'khalye, wi'khalye* 'coffee pot' (cf. *wakha'lyA* 'to heat things')  
*ič<sup>2</sup>ij'* 'harness' (cf. *k<sup>2</sup>ij'* 'to pack on the back')

Some suffix examples:

*thi'pi* 'house' (cf. *thi'* 'to dwell')  
*wakha'lyapi* 'coffee' (cf. *wakha'lyA* 'to heat')  
*yazaŋ'pi* 'pain' (cf. *yazaŋ'* 'to hurt or ache')  
*wa<sup>2</sup>e'čhuŋčhuŋka* 'jack-of-all-trade' (cf. *wa<sup>2</sup>e'čhuŋ* 'to do things')  
*wama'nus<sup>2</sup>a* 'thief' (cf. *wama'nu* 'to steal things')

### 8.3. Determiners

Determiners are a class of words that terminate nominal expressions. There are three kinds: articles, demonstratives, and quantifiers. Determiners occur in the order:

(quantifier) (article) (demonstrative) (quantifier).

Nominals may also appear without a determiner.

#### 8.3.1. Articles

Words that function as articles include *kiŋ, k<sup>2</sup>uŋ, waŋ, waŋži', waŋži'ni, eya', etaŋ', etaŋ'ni, ta'kuni, tuwe'ni, čha.*

The choice of the article depends on various features of the noun and of the sentence in which it occurs. The noun may be generic, that is, may refer to all or any of a class of objects, such as 'dogs', in 'dogs bark' or 'coffee' in 'coffee is brown.' Such nouns generally have no article in Lakhota no matter what the rest of the sentence may be. In addition, countable nouns used generically always take a plural verb:

*He' wičha'sa kiŋ iye'čhiŋkiŋyaŋke ophe'thuŋ.*

than man the car buy

'That man buys cars.'

*Igmu'la siŋte' yukhaŋ' pi.*

cat tail have pl.

'Cats have tails.'

*Hokši'la thaŋkthaŋ'ka čhe'ya pi šni.*

boy big cry pl. not

'Big boys don't cry.'

*Wakha'lyapi wačhiŋ'.*

coffee I.want

'I want coffee.'

A determiner is used in a generic construction when the construction could otherwise be understood as a word or phrase rather than as a sentence:

*Lakho'ta kiŋ wačhi' pi.* 'Indians dance.'

cf. *Lakho'ta-wačhi'pi* '(an) Indian dance'

*Thaspaŋ' kiŋ šaša'.* 'Apples are red.'

cf. *thaspaŋ' šaša'* 'red apples'

If a noun is not generic, it must be either definite or indefinite.

If the noun is definite, the article is either *kiŋ* or *k'ʉŋ*; 'the' is the English equivalent of both of these. The difference between *kiŋ* and *k'ʉŋ* seems to be that *k'ʉŋ* marks more emphatically definite nouns. Often, therefore, *k'ʉŋ* can be translated as 'the aforementioned', although this is usually abbreviated 'the.past' in glossing the examples:

*Šuŋ'ka kiŋ he'l yuŋke'.*

(dog the there lie)

'The dog is lying there.'

*Šuŋ'ka k'ʉŋ thalo' kiŋ thebye'.*

(dog the.past meat the eat.up)

'The aforementioned dog ate up the meat.'

This example is from a traditional tale.

Recall that nominals in adverbial functions are nominalized by *kiŋ* if the reference is to hypothetical time, but by *k'ʉŋ* if the reference is to real time. Sentences containing *k'ʉŋ* are always translated with the English past tense. This is evidently an attempt by Lakhota speakers to render the hyperreality of the Lakhota sentences with *k'ʉŋ*. In fact, at present *kiŋ* is used regularly in real as well as hypothetical sentences. The difference between *kiŋ* and *k'ʉŋ* may have been sharper at an earlier time, since different forms of the indefinite article are used in sentences with real versus hypothetical meaning.

All the other words listed above are indefinite articles. The choice of indefinite article is made on the basis of a number of covert classes to which nouns belong (table 3). These include mass form (that is, whether the object named by the noun can be counted. like houses, or not, like soup), human, and non-human. Moreover, there are different forms depending on whether the sentence in which they appear is negative or affirmative; and, if it is affirmative, whether it refers to real or to hypothetical things.

Table 3. Indefinite Articles					
		Real	Hypothetical	Negative	
Singular		<i>waŋ</i> 'a, an'	<i>waŋži</i> 'a, an'	<i>waŋži'ni</i> 'not...a, no, not any'	
Plural	Animate	Human	<i>eya</i> 'some'	<i>etaŋ</i> 'some, any'	<i>tuwe'ni</i> 'no one, not...any'
		Nonhuman	<i>eya</i> 'some'	<i>etaŋ</i> 'some, any'	<i>ta'kuni</i> 'no, not...any'
	Inanimate		<i>eya</i> 'some'	<i>etaŋ</i> 'some, any'	<i>ta'kuni</i> 'no, not...any'
	Noncountable		<i>eya</i> 'some'	<i>etaŋ</i> 'some, any'	<i>etaŋ'ni</i> 'no, not...any'

Note: An older form of *eya*' in all its uses is *k'eya*'. Some speakers still use this word.

The following examples illustrate the use of the indefinite articles. Note that although nonhuman and inanimate plurals are marked in the same way, sentences with nouns from these categories differ because all animate (human and nonhuman) plural objects require *-wičha-* in the verb, and animate plural subjects require *pi*, while inanimates never occur with *-wičha-* or *pi* (see [9.3.2.-9.3.4.](#)). In the examples below, then, the verbs used with 'houses' differ from those used with 'birds', even though the articles are the same:

*Iye'čhiŋkiŋyaŋke waŋ ophe'wathuŋ.* 'I bought a car.'

*Iye'čhiŋkiŋyaŋke waŋži' ophe'wathuŋ kte.* 'I'm going to buy a car.'

*Iye'čhiŋkiŋyaŋke waŋži'ni ophe'wathuŋ šni.* 'I didn't buy a car.'

*Lakho'ta eya' hi' pi.* 'Some Indians have come.'

*Lakho'ta etaŋ' hi' pi he?* 'Have any Indians come?'

*Lakho'ta tuwe'ni hi' pi šni.* 'No Indians have come.'

*Wakhaŋ'yeža eya' waŋwi'čhablake.* 'I saw some children.'

*Ziŋtka'la eya' waŋwi'čhablake.* 'I saw some birds.'

*Čhaŋ'-thipi eya' waŋbla'ke.* 'I saw some houses.'

*Wakhaŋ'yeža etaŋ' waŋwi'čhalaka he?* 'Did you see some/any children?'

*Ziŋtka'la etaŋ' waŋwi'čhalaka he?* 'Did you see some/any birds?'

*Čhaŋ'-thipi etaŋ' waŋla'ka he?* 'Did you see some/any houses?'

*Wakhaŋ'yeža tuwe'ni waŋwi'čhablake šni.* 'I didn't see some/any children.'

*Ziŋtka'la ta'kuni waŋwi'čhablake šni.* 'I didn't see some/any birds.'

*Čhaŋ'-thipi ta'kuni waŋla'ke šni.* 'Didn't you see any houses?'

*Wahaŋ'pi eya' oče'thi akaŋ'l he'.* 'There's some soup on the stove.'

*Wahaŋ'pi etaŋ' yačhiŋ' he?* 'Do you want some/any soup?'

*Wahaŋ'pi etaŋ'ni yatke' šni.* 'He didn't eat (drink) any soup.'

A special construction exists to make a nominal emphatic (whether or not to call it "topicalized" depends on future studies of Lakota discourse structure). This is often translated into English as 'It was a/the NOUN who/which VERB'. Emphatic nominals of this kind are marked by the article *čha*; if the noun is indefinite, no further determiner is used:

*Hokši'la čha šuŋ'ka-wakhaŋ' kiŋ iwi'čhaču pi.*  
'It was some boys who took the horses.'

If the emphatic nominal is also definite, the verb *e'* 'be a certain one' precedes *čha*:

*Hokši'la kiŋ e' pi čha šuŋ'ka-wakhaŋ' kiŋ iwi'čhaču pi.*  
'It was the boys who took the horses.'

This use of *čha* is probably very closely related to the relative clause marker *čha* (8.4.2.3).

### 8.3.2. Demonstratives

Lakota has three demonstrative roots: *le'* 'this,' *he'* 'that.,' *ka'* 'yonder.' Each of these can function in numerous ways: alone as a singular pronoun or as a noun modifier; with the suffix *-na* as a plural pronoun or modifier (*lena'* 'these', *hena'* 'those', *kana'* 'the ones yonder'); or with the suffixes *-na* and *-<sup>2</sup>uŋs* (some speakers use *-yos*) as dual pronouns or modifiers (*hena'<sup>2</sup>uŋs*, *hena'yos* 'those two'). Various adverbials are formed from demonstratives (7.1.)

Semantically, *he'* is the most neutral. Once a noun has been located, either by pointing or by description, in space or in the listener's mind, *he'* can then be used. Before that, *le'* or *ka'* is usually used to demonstrate exactly what is meant, although *he'* may also be used while pointing.

*Ka'*                    *šuŋ'ka-wakhaŋ' kiŋ waŋla'ka he?*            *He' tuwa' tha'wa*            *he?*  
that.(yonder) horse                    the you.see    question that who    it.belongs.to question  
'Do you see that horse? Who does he belong to?'

When demonstratives are used as nominal markers, they are usually accompanied by an article. They indicate the number (singular, dual, or plural) of the noun: *he' wiŋ'yaŋ kiŋ* 'that woman', *hena'<sup>2</sup>uŋs wiŋ'yaŋ kiŋ* 'those two women', *hena' wiŋ'yaŋ kiŋ* 'those women'. The demonstrative may either precede the noun or follow the article. If the demonstrative precedes the noun, an

article must occur after the noun: if the demonstrative follows, the article may be omitted. By far the most common article used is *kiŋ*. but expression such as *hena' wiŋ'yaŋ eya'* 'these (indefinite) women' may be used, usually in relative clauses ([see 8.4.3.](#)).

The difference between singular and plural is always indicated when demonstratives are used with countable nouns. This differs from the use of *pi* and *wičha* to mark plural with verbs, since these verbal elements refer only to animate nouns ([see 9.3.1.](#)).

### 8.3.3. Quantifiers

This class of words includes the numbers ('one' -is the same as the singular indefinite article; table 3) *nu'pa* 'two', *ya'mni* 'three', *to'pa* 'four', etc., a handful of indefinite numerals, such as *o'ta* 'many', *huŋ'h* 'some' (note: this is not the same 'some' as those translated by *eya'* or *etaŋ'*, [see 8.3.1.](#) and [8.3.4.](#)). *čo'nala* 'few', *iyu'ha* 'all of a group' (distributive), *oya's'ij* 'all of a group' (collective), and *a'ataa* 'all of a mass', and the interrogative words *to'na*, *to'nakeča*, and *tohaŋ'yaŋ* 'how much? how many?'

Many quantifiers may also function as stative verbs. Observe these examples:

*Wičha'sa kiŋ o'ta t'a' pi.*

man the many die pl.

'Many of the men-died.'

*Wičha'sa kiŋ o'ta pi.*

man the many pl

'There are many men.'

*Wičha'sa kiŋ ya'mni iye'wičhaya pi.*

man the three find.them pl.

'They found three of the men.'

*Wičha'sa kiŋ ya'mni pi.*

man the three pl.

'There are three men; the men are three.'

Quantifiers may occur with or without articles or demonstratives, and either before or after them, but the meanings differ depending on order:

*wičha'sa o'ta* 'many men'

*wičha'sa hena' o'ta* 'many of those men'

*wičha'sa o'ta hena'* 'those many men'

*wičha'sa šako'wiŋ* 'seven men'

*wičha'sa kiŋ ya'mni* 'three of the men'

*wičha'sa to'pa kiŋ* 'the four men'.

### 8.3.4. Partitive Markers

As can be seen from the examples, when used alone or before an article or a demonstrative, the quantifiers specify the size of the group. Used after the determiner, they indicate that the predicate refers to a specified part of the subject. The notion of partitive touched on here has complexities that call for further comment.

‘Some’ (= part of) is expressed in several different ways in Lakhota, depending on several factors: the nature of the whole, the nature of the part, and whether the part is positive, negative, or interrogative.

The whole may consist of separate, identifiable individuals (such as persons in a group), a single individual (for example, a watermelon), or an undifferentiated mass (flour). The whole may be either generic or specific. The part may be individuals, a portion of a single individual, or a portion of a mass.

Given these parameters, the choice of partitive marker is as given in table 4.

	<i>Affirmative</i>	<i>Negative(4)</i>	<i>Interrogative</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
1.	<i>huŋ'ǎ</i>	<i>waŋži'ni</i>	<i>to'na</i> or <i>to'nakeča</i>	Some individuals from a group or individuals
2.	<i>haŋke'</i>	<i>haŋke'ni</i>	<i>tohaŋ'yaŋ</i>	Some of a single individual
3.	<i>huŋ'ǎ</i> or <i>etaŋ'</i>	<i>etaŋ'ni</i>	<i>tohaŋ'yaŋ</i> or <i>to'nakeča</i>	Some of an undifferentiated mass

(4) The notions generic and negative are incompatible. The negative partitive can thus be used only with specific reference.

Examples

1.

*Oya'te huŋ'ǎ wiča'siče.* ‘Some people are evil.’

*Lakho'ta to'na waŋwi'čhalaka he?* ‘How many Indians do you see?’

*ǂ'okha' kiŋ huŋ'ǎ hi' pi.* ‘Some of the singers have come.’

*ǂ'okha' kiŋ to'na hi' pi he?.* ‘How many of the singers have come?’

*ǂ'okha' kiŋ waŋži'ni hi' (pi) šni.* ‘None of the singers has come.’

2.

*Špaŋ'-šni-yu'tapi haŋke' uŋyu'ta pi s'a.* ‘We (habitually) eat some watermelon.’

Špaŋ'-šni-yu'tapi tohaŋ'yaŋ ya'ta pi s' a he? 'How much watermelon do you eat (habitually)?'  
 Ağu'yapi-sku'yela kiŋ haŋke' uŋyu'ta pi. 'We ate some of the cake.'  
 Ağu'yapi-sku'yela kiŋ haŋke'ni uŋyu'ta pi. 'We didn't eat any of the cake.'  
 Ağu'yapi-sku'yela kiŋ tohaŋ'yaŋ ya'ta pi he? 'How much of the cake did you eat?'

3.

Phežu'ta huŋ'h pha'. 'Some medicine is bitter.'  
 Phežu'ta tohaŋ'yaŋ nič' u' he? 'How much medicine did he give you?'  
 Ağu'yapi-blu' kiŋ etaŋ' uŋ' we. 'Use some of the flour.'  
 Ağu'yapi-blu' kiŋ etaŋ'ni uŋ' šni. 'She didn't use any of the flour.'  
 Ağu'yapi-blu' kiŋ tohaŋ'yaŋ nu' he? 'How much of the flour did you use?'

### 8.3.5. Summary of determiners

To summarize the discussion of determiners: the complete set of possible slots in the nominal composed of a noun and its determiners is as follows:

(demonstrative) noun (quantifier) (article) (demonstrative)  
 (quantifier).

## 8.4. Modified Nouns

### 8.4.1. Possession

Possession is marked in one of three ways: by special affixes in the verb, by an appropriate modifying form of the stative verb *itha'wa* 'belong to, own', or by special prefixes on the noun. Moreover, many (perhaps most) nouns, including some body parts such as *a'* 'armpit' and *ablo'hu* 'shoulder blade' cannot be formally marked for a possessor anywhere in the sentence. At present it appears impossible to predict whether a noun will be possessable or not, so this information must be part of each noun's dictionary entry. The marking of possession in the verb is discussed in [9.3.8.](#); the other expressions of possession will be described here.

If a noun can be possessed, the form of the possessive prefix differs depending on whether the noun is alienably or inalienably possessed. Alienably possessed nouns are things that can be acquired or given away; inalienably possessed nouns are understood as an inherent part of the owner's person; they include body parts, many relatives, and (formerly, at least) some essentially personal things such as tools, clothing, and pets. The prefixes are:

alienably possessed nouns		inalienably possessed nouns
<i>mitha'</i> -	'my'	<i>ma-/mi-</i>



<i>uŋki'tha-</i>	‘our’	<i>uŋki’-</i>
<i>nitha’-</i>	‘your’	<i>ni-</i>
<i>tha-</i>	‘his, hers’	<i>0.</i>

If the possessor is plural, *pi* follows the prefixed noun. It is also possible to analyze the alienable prefixes as complex, consisting of a stem-derivational element *itha*, prefixed to the noun, to which stative verb affixes are then prefixed.

Because possessed nouns are always definite, a definite article almost always occurs with them. The only exceptions are in partitive usage, for example, *mitha’šun̄ka waŋži’* ‘one of my dogs’, where a quantifier replaces the article. The choice between *ma-* and *mi-* is semantically determined in Oglala speech: *ma-* is used of concrete visible possessions, *mi-* of intangibles: *mana’ği kiŋ* ‘my shadow’, *mina’ği kiŋ* ‘my spirit’. Speakers from other Lakhota-speaking groups differ as to their use of *ma-* and *mi-*.

Prefixation to show possession is not used with some possessable nouns. These are generally nouns that are not normally possessed, such as rocks or trees. For such nouns, the possessive construction uses the stative verb *itha’wa*. *Itha’wa* is nearly unique among stative verbs for two reasons. First, it carries possible double affixation ([see 9.1.3.](#)). Second, it occurs as a noun modifier in its inflected as well as uninflected forms.

The possessive construction with *itha’wa* has the following structure:

noun + *itha’wa* form + *kiŋ*.

The *itha’wa* form depends only on the possessor:

<i>mitha’wa uŋki’thawa</i>	<i>uŋki’thawa pi</i>
‘my’ ‘belonging to you and me’	‘our’
<i>nitha’wa</i>	<i>nitha’wa pi</i>
‘your’	‘your(pl.)’
<i>tha’wa</i>	<i>tha’wa pi</i>
‘his, her’	‘their’

Examples:

*Šun̄ka-wakhaŋ’ tha’wa pi kiŋ iye’waye.*  
horse            poss. pl. the I.find.it  
‘I found their horse.’

*Phežu’ta nitha’wa kiŋ li’la waš’a’ke.*  
medicine your.sg..poss. the very be.strong  
‘Your medicine is very strong.’

The criteria for choosing between the *itha'wa* construction and the prefixed forms are not well understood.

Kinship terms generally follow a separate paradigm. They are inalienably possessed, but they often take a suffix *-ku* when the possessor is a third person; moreover, many of the forms have separate roots for the various forms. Here, as samples, are paradigms for 'father' and 'mother':

<i>ate'</i> , <i>ate'waye</i>	'my father'	<i>ina'</i> , <i>ina'waye</i>	'my mother'
<i>niya'te</i>	'your father'	<i>nihun'</i>	'your mother'
<i>atku'ku</i>	'his, her father'	<i>hun'ku</i>	'his, her mother'
<i>ate''unyan pi</i>	'our father'	<i>ina''unyan pi</i>	'our mother'
<i>niya'te pi</i>	'your father'	<i>nihun' pi</i>	'your mother'
<i>atku'ku pi</i>	'their father'	<i>hun'ku pi</i>	'their mother'

Buechel (1939:101-107) has extensive lists of paradigmatic forms for kin terms.

#### 8.4.2. Other Modified Nouns

There are no words in Lakhota strictly equivalent to English adjectives; nevertheless, Lakhota nouns can be modified. The modifiers are usually stative verbs (like *itha'wa*), but the constructions used for modification differ for definite and indefinite noun phrases.

##### 8.4.2.1. Definite Modified Noun Phrases

If a modified noun is definite (marked by *kiŋ* or *k'un*), it is usually possible to form a phrase with this structure:

noun + modifier + *kiŋ*.

Examples are:

*wičha'sa thaŋ'ka kiŋ* (man + big + *kiŋ*) 'the big man'

*wakhaŋ'yeža čik'ala kiŋ* (child + small + *kiŋ*) 'the little child'

*iħ'e' ska' kiŋ* (rock + white + *kiŋ*) 'the white rock'

If the noun is plural, the modifier is reduplicated ([4.3.2.8.](#)):

*wakhaŋ'yeža čigčik'ala kiŋ* (child + small + *kiŋ*) 'the little children'.

Phrases of this kind have a special intonation: only the noun receives primary stress; the modifier receives secondary stress ([3.1.](#)).

If the collocation of noun and modifier is very common, Lakhota speakers usually form a compound of the two, rather than use the phrasal construction. Thus *šunḡwa'ste kiḡ* 'the good horse' is preferred over the possible, but unusual *šun'ka-wakhaḡ wa'ste' kiḡ*.

#### 8.4.2.2. Indefinite Noun Phrases with Modifiers

There are two constructions for modifying indefinite nouns. The choice between the two is chiefly idiomatic.

The less frequent construction is exactly like the construction used for modified definite nouns: noun + modifier - article (*waḡ, eya'*, etc.) This construction is used only when the modifier states an inherent quality that is expectable for the given noun: 'a warm blanket' or 'a tall tree' are examples of expectable inherent qualities. Lakhota examples are:

*thi'pi thaḡ'ka waḡ* 'a large house'  
*mni' sni' eya'* 'some cold water'.

Such phrases are often replaced by compound nouns: *mni-sni' eya'*, *šunḡwa'ste waḡ* 'a good horse'.

If the modifier attributes to the noun a meaning that is unusual or unexpected, another construction is used instead:

noun + indefinite article + modifier + *čha*.

*Čha* is sometimes omitted. The position of the indefinite article immediately following the noun nevertheless contrasts the present construction with the one last described. Examples:

<i>Šun'ka-wakhaḡ</i>	<i>waḡ</i>	<i>hu'ste' (čha)</i>	<i>waḡbla'ke.</i>
horse	a	limp	I-saw

'I saw a lame horse.' (Compare *Šunḡhu'ste waḡ waḡbla'ke.* 'I saw a crippled horse.')

*Ziḡtka'la eya' tho'tho' (čha) waḡwi'čhablake.*

bird some blue/green I-saw

'I saw some blue birds.'

*Wiḡ'yaḡ waḡ li'la thaḡ'ka (čha) ama'phe.*

woman a very big hit-me

'A very big woman hit me.'

*Mni-pi'ḡa etaḡ' ši'ča (čha) uḡya'tkaḡ pi.*

beer indef.-art bad we-drink pl.

'We drank some bad beer.'

The construction with *čha* may actually be used correctly for any indefinite modified noun, including collocations that are semantically expectable combinations.

Modified generic nouns follow the indefinite pattern with *čha*, but without articles, of course:

*Thalo' aḡu'yapi čha waḥte'wala šni.*

meat burned            I dislike

‘I don't like burned meat.’

This leads naturally to a discussion of nouns that are modified by more than a stative verb, that is, nouns modified by a whole sentence. Sentence modifiers are called relative clauses.

### 8.4.2.3. Relative Clauses

A relative clause is a sentence that modifies a noun. The noun being modified must also occur as part of the modifying sentence. An English example would be ‘They arrested the man who hit me.’ In this sentence ‘who hit me’ modifies *man*. If this sentence were not acting as a modifier, it could not have *who* as its subject. Instead, it would have to be ‘A man hit me.’ The original sentence, then, contains two sentences, one included in the other: *They arrested the man [a man hit me]*. English grammar requires that the modifying sentence follow the noun it modifies, and furthermore that the noun in the modifying sentence be replaced by a relative pronoun, in this case *who*. (*Which* and *that* are also relative pronouns.)

In Lakhota relative clauses, the modifying sentence comes before the noun it modifies; the noun in the main sentence is then dropped, but the rest of the sentence remains. To construct the Lakhota for the English example above, begin with the modifying sentence (in which the shared noun is always indefinite):

*wičha'ša waṅ ama'phe*

man    a    hit.me

‘a man hit me’

Then add the main sentence:

*wičha'ša kiṅ oyu'spa    pi*

man    the arrest.him pl.

‘They arrested the man.’

The result is:

*Wičha'ša waṅ ama'phe wičha'ša kiṅ oyu'spa pi.*

Now drop the second *wičha'ša*, but keep its article:

*Wičha'ša waŋ ama'phe kiŋ oyu'spa pi.* 'They arrested the man who hit me.'

Even if the noun in the modifying sentence is the object of its sentence, it must come first in the complex sentence. Hence *Wičha'ša waŋ hokši'la kiŋ waŋyaŋ'ke kiŋ* can mean either 'the man who saw the boy' or 'the man whom the boy saw'.

If the article in the second sentence is indefinite, it changes to *čha*:

*Wičha'ša waŋ ama'pha čha oyu'spa pi.* 'They arrested a man who hit me.'

The similarity between indefinite modified nouns and nouns modified by relative clauses should now be obvious:

*Wičha'ša waŋ li'la thaŋ'ka čha oyu'spa pi.* 'They arrested a very big man.'

*Wičha'ša waŋ ama'pha čha oyu'spa pi.* 'They arrested a man who hit me.'

Moreover, this construction is also reminiscent of the emphatic construction (8.3.1.):

*Hokši'la čha owi'čhayuspa pi.* 'It was boys whom they arrested.'

*Hokši'la kiŋ e' pi čha owi'čhayuspa pi.* 'It was the boys whom they arrested.'

A relative clause always comes first in a sentence, whether it modifies the subject or object; the resulting ambiguities are rarely a problem, since contexts or probabilities will clarify nearly anything.

Here are some more complex examples of relative clause constructions:

*Hokši'la eya' šuŋ'ka-wakhaŋ' iwi'čhaču pi kiŋ*  
boy      some horse                  take.them pl. the  
*čhaŋksa'-yuha'      kiŋ owi'čhayuspa      pi.*  
police                  the arrest.them                  pl.  
'The police arrested the boys who took the horses.'

*Šuŋ'ka-wakhaŋ' eya' hokši'la kiŋ iwi'čhaču pi kiŋ*  
horse                  some boy      the take.them pl the  
*wičha'ša      kiŋ iye'wičhaya      pi.*  
man                  the find.them                  pl.  
'The men found the horses the boys took.'

The two improbable sentences 'The boys who took the horses arrested the policemen' and 'The horses the boys took found the men' would be exactly like those two examples, but their improbable meanings would keep them from being understood in that way without elaborate explanatory context.

To summarize modified nominals, including those with relative clause modifiers:

(a) definite nominals: noun + modifier + {  $\begin{matrix} ki\eta \\ k^2u\eta \end{matrix}$  }

(b) indefinite nominals

1) semantically expectable collocations:

noun + modifier + article

modifying word

$ki\eta$

2) others:

noun+article+ modifying sentence

+  $k^2u\eta$

$\check{c}ha$

For a different approach to this and many other subordinate clause constructions, see Simons (1989).

## 8.5. Sentences as Nominals

Many verbs permit whole sentences to serve as their subjects or objects. English sentences used as nominals are marked in one of three ways: with *for...to*; with *that*; with *'s...-ing*. Secondly, *for*, *that*, *'s*, and *to* are sometimes omitted. Observe these examples:

It's time for him to take his medicine.

I told him to come.

She helped me (to) find the right page.

I said (that) he should call me.

The cat(?s) scratching (of) the couch annoys mother.

In Lakota, too, sentences can serve as the subjects or objects of verbs. These sentences may be marked by  $ki\eta$ ,  $k^2u\eta$ . or by no article at all. If  $ki\eta$  or  $k^2u\eta$  is used, a demonstrative ([see 8.3.2.](#)) may also be used. Usually the need for  $ki\eta$  or  $k^2u\eta$  is determined by which main verb is used.

### 8.5.1. Marked Nominalized Sentences

The following verbs require a determiner on their complements: *slolyA'* 'know', *iyokiphi* 'be happy that', *ši'čA* 'be bad that', *šiča'ya* 'be too bad that', *wašte'* 'be good that', *wašte'lakA* 'like (it) that', *wašte'la šni* 'dislike (it) that', *wanyañ'kA* 'see that', *yawa'* 'read that', *nañ'uj'* 'hear (something)' (note: not 'hear that') and *he'čha* 'be necessary that ...right away'. Examples include:

*Wañčhiñ'yañke kiñ le' wašte'.*

I.see.you          the this good  
'It's good to see you.'

*Kičhi'womayaglaka pi kiñ iyo'makiphi.*

you.discuss.with.me pl. the I.am.glad  
'I'm glad you (pl.) discussed it with me.'

*Mas<sup>2</sup>o'phiye ekta' the'hañ uj' pi šni kiñ wašte'.*

store          at    long    stay pl. not the good  
'They better not stay at the store long.'

*Agnes mni-pi'ğa yatke' kiñ wašte'wala šni.*

Agnes beer          drink the I.like          not  
'I don't like (for) Agnes to drink beer.'

The word *k<sup>2</sup>uj'* can substitute for *kiñ* under certain circumstances. *K<sup>2</sup>uj'* identifies a strongly asserted factual statement: it can only be used if the assertion is known to the speaker to have been an accomplished fact when the action described by the main verb began. Consequently it is never used with verbs expressing question, doubt, or value judgments.

### 8.5.2. Unmarked Nominalized Sentences

Verbs that require their complement sentence to be unmarked include *čhiñ'* 'want', *eyA' (ke'yA)* 'say', *oki'hi* 'be able to', *iyu'kčañ* 'to think, plan, expect', *ona'h<sup>2</sup>uj'* 'to hear about', *ke'ya nañ<sup>2</sup>uj'* 'to hear that...' and *oki'yakA* 'to tell someone (that)'. Here are some examples:

*Šuñ'ka-wakhañ' wañži' ophe'yathuñ yačhiñ' he?*

horse          one    you.buy    you.want question  
'Do you want to buy a horse?'

*Šuñ'ka-wakhañ' wañži' ophe'thuñ ona'yañ<sup>2</sup>uj' he?*

horse          one    he.buy    you.hear.about question  
'Did you hear about his buying a horse?'

*Wana' wačhi'pi ekta' uñki'yaya pi uñko'kihi pi.*

now    dance    to    we.leave pl. we.can    pl.  
'We can leave for the dance now.'

*Ožan'žanlepi wanži' bluğan' yačhiŋ' he?*  
window a I.open you.want question  
'Do you want me to open a window?'

### 8.5.3. Other Nominalized Sentences

A few verbs permit sentential complements that are like infinitive or participle constructions in English. An example of such an English sentence is *He told me to come*, in which the infinitive construction *me to come* represents a reduced sentence that is seen more clearly in '*He said that I should come.*'

In Lakhota constructions of this kind, the complement verb precedes the principal verb. If the complement verb is transitive it may have object affixes ([9.3.2.](#)), but otherwise it has no affixes. The principal verb has the expectable affixes (i.e.. subject and/or object affixes). The close relationship between verbs in this construction may be shown in ways other than the unusual distribution of personal affixes. Stress patterns typical of compound words and phonological changes of the kind described in [4.3.2.6.](#) and [4.3.2.7.](#) are two such ways.

Examples of this kind of construction are as follows:

*Wo'wapi kiŋ yawa' maši'.*  
book the read me.he.commanded  
'He told me to read the book.'

*Owi'čhale o'mayakiya wačhiŋ'.*  
look.for.them you.help.me I.want  
'I want you to help me to look for them.'

(This sentence contains two subordinate verbs, but only the first is of the type described here; cf. [8.5.2.](#) for *čhiŋ'*.)

*Nahaŋ'hči škali yu'staŋ pi šni he?*  
yet play finish pl. not question  
'Haven't they finished playing yet?'

(Note that *škali yu'staŋ* is stressed like a compound.)

Two other uses for such reduced sentences are for purpose clauses with verbs of motion and for loosely joining sentences expressing sequential events, usually in stories. Here are examples:

*Thalo' ophe'thuŋ mni' kte.*  
meat buy I.go potential



‘I’ll go buy meat.’

*Wičha'sa etaŋ' waŋni'yaŋg u' pi kte.*

man some see.you come pl. potential

‘Some men will come to see you.’

*Ta'kuni isaŋ'm to'khuŋ šni, uŋgli'yaču pi.*

nothing more do not we.come.home pl.

‘Doing nothing more, we came home.’

In very colloquial speech, some verbal constructions of this kind may be reduced even further by completely omitting affixes from the first verb, and indicating all grammatical relations in the principal verb. If the principal verb is ordinarily intransitive, it nevertheless appears here with transitive affixes. Thus *Wičha'sa waŋ waŋni'yaŋg hi'* ‘A man came to see you’ may become *Wičha'sa waŋ waŋyaŋ'g nihi'*.

## 9. Verbs

Because it is the only obligatory element in the sentence, the verb is the most important kind of word in Lakhota. It is also the most complex. Analyzing verbs requires taking into account three different kinds of information: in what kinds of sentences a given verb may occur, what affixes or other markings a given verb may have, and how a verb may be expanded or changed in its basic meaning.

### 9.1. Sentence and Affix Types

Part of the meaning of every Lakhota verb is a specification of the number of “participants” (the technical term is “arguments”), or things to which nominals or pronominal affixes can refer, in the event the verb describes. Simple sentences can, depending on the verbal category, imply zero, one, two, or three participants.

Verbs that imply one participant are in turn divided into two groups, depending somewhat on what they mean. If the verb describes an activity over which its participant has control, or which the participant can carry out willfully, it will select an affix from the set that marks the subject (technically, “agent”) of a two-participant sentence. But if the situation described by the verb involves no will or control on the part of its participant, then that participant will be marked as if it were the object (technically: “patient”) of a two-argument verb. These semantic definitions are not perfectly reliable, and occasionally a verb takes affixes that seem to belong logically to the other category. For example, *ni'* ‘to be alive, not dead’ takes agent forms, while *kiŋ'za* ‘squeak, as a mouse does’ takes patient forms. See Legendre and Rood (1992) for a detailed discussion of these two classes.

Verbs thus fall into several classes according to their participant types: impersonal (no participants), stative (one objectlike participant), active intransitive (one subjectlike participant), transitive (two participants), and ditransitive (three participants). There is also a sixth class with

very few members that ‘takes two objectlike participants: this class is called “stative transitive.” These verbs are so rare that “stative” will be used consistently for the one-participant statives in what follows, and “transitive” for “active transitive.”

### 9.1.1. Impersonal Verbs

Impersonal verbs do not take any personal affixes. Most of them are limited semantically to expressions of natural states such as the weather or the time of day. Examples include:

*Alɔpe'tu kiŋ le' osni'.* ‘It’s cold today.’

*Mahe'l o'i'yokpaze.* ‘It was very dark inside.’

*Iča'mna hče šni.* ‘It’s not snowing much.’

*Haŋhe'pi.* ‘It is night.’

There is also a small number of impersonal verbal expressions that refer to speaker-perceived states such as obligations, necessity, apparentness, and the like. Here are examples with the verbs *phi'ča*, *iyē'čheča*, *s'ele'čheča*, and *he'čha*:

*Ečhuŋ' phi'ča šni.*  
do feasible not  
‘It can not be done, it is not feasible.’

*Wičhiŋ'čala kiŋ khu'ža iyē'čheča.*  
little.girl the sick seem  
‘It seems that the dog has eaten the meat.’

*Šuŋ'ka kiŋ thalo' kiŋ yu'te s'ele'čheča.*  
dog the meat the eat seem  
‘It seems that the dog has eaten the meat.’

*Phežu'ta etaŋ' iya'ču kte he'čha.*  
medicine some you.take potential be.necessary  
‘You must take some medicine’.

These verbs can all be used with stative personal affixes, but with somewhat different meanings. For example, with personal affixes *he'čha* means ‘to be such a one’ and *phi'ča* means ‘to be glad’.

### 9.1.2. Stative Verbs

Stative verbs ordinarily describe states or conditions. They are most reliably identified not by their meaning, but by the personal affixes they take. ‘I’ and ‘you’ with stative verbs are always expressed by *ma* and *ni* respectively. (Further details of affixation are given in [9.3](#).)

Examples of stative verbs are *khu'žA* 'nauseated' (*makhu'že* 'I am nauseated'), *i'-puza* 'thirsty' (*i'-mapu'za* 'I am thirsty'), *wašte'* 'good' (*niwa'šte* 'you are good'), and *zi'* 'yellow; pale' (*nizi'* 'you are pale').

Almost all nouns can also be used as stative verbs identifying the noun, although the verb *he'čha* 'to be such a one' can also provide this meaning:

*Wima'čhaša.* 'I am a man.'  
*Wičha'ša hema'čha.*  
*Nila'khota he?* 'Are you an Indian?'  
*Lakho'ta heni'čha he?*  
*He' čhaŋ'.* 'That is a tree.'  
*Hena' šuŋ'ka pi.* 'Those are dogs.'

### 9.1.3. Stative transitive Verbs

Some transitive verbs ([see 9.1.](#)) permit two patients in their semantics. Most common among of them is *itha'wa* 'own' ([see 8.4.1.](#)), with which one can say *Nimi'thawa* 'you are mine'. Other examples are *iyenimačheča* 'you look like me' and *iyonimakiphi* 'I find you congenial'. Additional examples are given in Boas and Deloria (1941:77).

### 9.1.4. Active intransitive Verbs

Active intransitive verbs are, like stative verbs, restricted to sentences with one participant; but these verbs take the affixes *wa* 'I' and *ya* 'you' (or variants thereof, see [9.3.](#)), instead of *ma* and *ni*. Semantically, most of these verbs describe actions that the subject can perform. Examples include *hi'* 'arrive' (*wahi'* 'I have arrived'), *wačhi'* 'dance' (*wawa'čhi* 'I dance'), *oki'hi* 'be able' (*oya'kihi* 'you can'), and *na'žij* 'stand' (*naya'žij* 'you stand').

### 9.1.5. Active transitive Verbs

Active transitive verbs require two participants in their sentences, an agent (subject) and a patient (object). Consequently they also permit two affixes to occur with them (inflectional details are given in [9.3.](#)). Examples include *wanŋyaŋ'ka* 'see', *aphA'* 'hit', *slolyA'* 'know', *iyeyA* 'find', and *kte'* 'kill'.

Many Lakota transitive verbs correspond to English verbs that are optionally transitive. For example, in English people say 'we are eating now' or 'we are eating meat'; the first sentence uses 'eat' intransitively, the second uses it transitively. Very few Lakota verbs have this option. Two that do are *ška'tA* 'play' or 'play a game' and *hanble'* 'dream' or 'dream about'. A Lakota transitive verb that is used as an intransitive verb ordinarily requires the prefix *wa-*, which attributes an indefinite or implied object to the verb: *naḥ'uy'* 'to hear', *wana'h'uy'* 'to listen; to obey'; *manu'* 'to steal an object', *wama'nu* 'to steal things'. In some cases this *wa-* is concealed by sound changes: *yu'tA* 'to eat', but *wo'tA* 'to eat a meal'; *iwanŋyaŋka* 'to examine, look at'; *wi'wanŋyaŋka* 'to examine things; to make a judgment.'

### 9.1.6. Verbs Requiring Three Complements

Finally, there are a few Lakota verbs that require three participants in their sentences. Verbs of this kind are *k<sup>2</sup>u'* 'to give something to someone' and *la'* 'to ask someone for something'.

Actually, most transitive and active and some stative verbs permit an indirect object (8.) in their sentence, but in this case the form of the verb itself is changed to show that a third participant has been added (9.3.8.).

## 9.2. Verbal Derivation

### 9.2.1. Complex Stem Formation

Lakota speakers freely form compound verb stems for special meanings. Usually this is accomplished by prefixing a noun, an adverb, or another verb to the basic root. Thus from *waya'wa* 'to read; to attend school' and *gli'* 'to arrive home, coming' is derived *waya'wa-gli'* 'to have come home from school'; with *iglu'stAD* 'to finish for oneself' is formed *waya'wa-iglu'stAD* 'to have finished school', and so on. Some other examples include:

*šunŋ<sup>2</sup>a'kaŋyaŋkA* (*šun'ka* 'horse', *akaŋ'* 'on', *yaŋkA'* 'sit') 'to ride horseback'

*ločhiŋ'* (*lo* 'food', not used as a free form today, and *čhiŋ'* 'want') 'to be hungry'

*wakši'yužaža* (*wakši'ča* 'dishes', *yuža'ža* 'to wash') 'to wash dishes'

*i'-puza* (*i'* 'mouth', *pu'za* 'be dry') 'to be thirsty'

In addition to these more or less obvious compounds, complex stems are often formed with prefixes. The first set of these prefixes sometimes, but not always, has adverbial meanings: *i-* 'with, instrumental', *o-* 'inside', *a-* 'on the surface of: because of', *khi-* 'at the middle'.

Examples of these prefixes are:

*iya'tkAD* (*yatkAD'* 'to drink') 'to drink with, to use for drinking'

*otho'* (*tho'* 'to be blue or green') 'to be bruised'

*ona'phA* (*naphA'* 'to run away, to flee') 'to flee into'

*apa'hpa* (*pa'hpa'* 'to push over') 'to push over onto'

*ale'žA* (*le'žA* 'to urinate') 'to urinate on'

*ačhaŋ'tešičA* 'to be sad because of' (*čhaŋte'sičA* 'to be sad')

*khiča'ksA* (*kaksA'* 'sever by striking') 'to break in the middle by striking'

*khiwa'psakA* (*wapsa'kA* 'to sever a string') 'to cut a string in two'

The meaning that has been added by the prefix is not always easy to specify. Compare, for example, *oma'ni* 'to travel' and *ma'ni* 'to walk': *ayu'stAD* 'to leave alone' and *yu'stAD* 'to finish'.

In a few cases, verbs exist only with the prefix; an equivalent form without the prefix cannot be found. An example of this is *ali* 'to climb on, to step on'.

Another set of prefixes has clear instrumental meaning. Seven of these are used very frequently; an eighth appears rarely. The instrumental prefixes often appear together with one of the adverbial prefixes just discussed.

In some cases the prefixes are added to verbs that are also used without the instrumental prefixes. In other cases (probably in most), an equivalent verb without the prefix is not used. The prefixes, with examples, are given beginning with the rather rare prefix *pu-*:

*pu-* 'by generalized pressure'

*puspA* 'to glue, to seal'

*opu'gi* 'to stuff soft material into an opening'

*ka-* 'by means of a blow'

*kačhe'yA* 'to cause to cry by striking'

*kable'čA* 'to shatter by hitting'

*kaňlo'kA* 'to chop a hole in something'

*ka* is also used in verbs that refer to action of wind, or other more or less spontaneous actions:

*kažo* 'to fart'

*kağaŋ* 'to blow open'.

*na-* 'by foot action'

*nat<sup>?</sup>A* 'to kill by stepping on'

*nable'čA* 'to shatter something with the foot'

*naňlo'kA* 'to kick a hole in something'.

*na-* is used in verbs that refer to action accomplished by heat. It is also used when the action occurs by spontaneous inner force:

*našli* 'to ooze out'

*nagmu* 'to curl up, to twist (drying material)'

*naša* 'to blush'.

*pa-* 'by pushing or by pressure with the hands or the body'

*pa'i'le* 'to ignite by pushing, as a flashlight'

*pable'čA* 'to shatter by sitting on'

*paħlo'kA* 'to pierce the ears'

*wa-* 'by cutting with a blade'

*waža'ža* 'to notch, to make forked by cutting or sawing'

*wable'čA* 'to shatter by attempting to cut'

*waħlo'kA* 'to make a miscut while skinning'

*wo-* 'by piercing with a pointed object'

*woħla'* 'to make something sound (ring) by shooting it'

*woble'čA* 'to break into pieces by striking with a pestle or by shooting'

*wo-* is also used in verbs that refer to action by blowing:

*wo'i'le* 'to make a fire blaze by blowing on it'.

*ya-* 'by means of the mouth or the teeth; by speaking'

*yaħta'kA* 'to bite'

*yable'čA* 'to shatter by biting'

*yaħlo'kA* 'to gnaw a hole'

*yaši'čA* 'to malign' ('bad mouth')

*yu-* 'by means of the hands'

*yuğaŋ'* 'to open up' (as a door or window)

*yuble'čA* 'to shatter with the hand'

*yuħlo'kA* 'to make a hole with the hand'

*yu-* is also used in verbs that have a general causative meaning ([9.2.2.1](#)).

## 9.2.2. Class-changing Processes

The verbs that fit into the categories in [9.1](#) may either belong there inherently or be brought into that category by a derivational process. Thus, for instance, stative and intransitive verbs may be made transitive ('be sick' changes to 'make sick' or 'sing' changes to 'cause to sing' or 'let sing'). The indefinite object prefix *wa* ([9.1.4](#)) could be listed here, too, as a device-for changing transitive verbs into active intransitives.

### 9.2.2.1. Causatives

Lakhota stative and intransitive verbs are made transitive by means of a causative construction. Transitive verbs may also be made causative, in which case they become ditransitive verbs. There are three causative constructions:

1) Stative verbs that describe size or shape (so that the change being caused is one of degree, not of kind) and verbs of value judgment are made causative with the instrumental prefix *yu* (9.2.1.):

*či'k'ala* 'small' *yuči'k'ala* 'reduce in size'  
*haŋ'ska* 'long' *yuhaŋ'ska* 'lengthen'  
*tanyaŋ* 'well' *yutanyaŋ* 'make right, fix up'  
*wašte* 'good' *yuwašte* 'improve, correct'.

2a) Stative verbs that refer to other kinds of conditions are made causative by using the suffixed auxiliary *-yA*; *-yA* is an active verb. Examples:

*ǰu* 'be burned' *ǰuyA* 'to scorch'  
*sa'pA* 'to be black' *sabyA* 'to blacken'.

An interesting illustration of the meaning differences between (1) and (2a) is the root *ska* 'be white', which accepts both causatives: *yuska* means 'to clean; to make whiter', while *skayA* means 'to paint white; to whiten'.

Many of the verbs that take *-yA* for the general causative also take instrumental prefixes for special kinds of causative meaning; in these cases *-yA* is not used. Thus, from *khu'žA* 'to be nauseated' can be derived *yukhu'žA* 'to harass someone until he becomes sick' and *yakhu'žA* 'to talk someone into being sick'.

2b) Active and transitive verbs may also be made causative with *-yA* if the causation was accidental or unintentional or indirect:

*čhiŋ* 'want', *čhiŋyA* 'to cause to want' (for example, to cause someone to want food by eating in front of him)

*maǰa'žu* 'to rain', *maǰa'žuyA* 'to cause to rain' (for example, by doing something unusual; a lazy person suddenly beginning to work hard is said to make it rain)

*yuha* 'to have', *yuha'yA* 'to cause someone to have (perhaps by leaving it behind at his house)'

*če'yA* 'to cry', *če'yeyA* 'to cause to cry (by telling a sad story, perhaps)'.

Some verbs with the causative auxiliary *-yA* have no currently used non-causative. Such are *slolyA* 'to know' and *iye'yA* 'to find'.

3) When the causation is intentional, or when there is no desire to stop the action, active verbs are made causative by use of the active auxiliary verb *-khiyA*. English translations are more often 'let' than 'make':

*če'yekhiyA* 'to let cry (without trying to stop)'

*yuha'khiyA* ‘to let have (carry); to have carry’

*o'kiyekhiyA* ‘to let help’.

If a transitive verb is used with *-khiyA*, the main verb as well as the auxiliary may take affixes (the main verb takes object affixes only):

*o'makiyečhi'čhiyɨŋkte*

help.me.I.let.you potential

‘I will let you help me’.

*o'ničiyewakhi'ye*

help.you.I.let.you

‘I let him help you’.

### 9.2.2.2. Inceptives

Moving into the state designated by a stative verb is indicated in two different ways. Either *ki-* is prefixed to the verb, or the auxiliary verb *a'yA* is used. Probably *a'yA* is the verb ‘to bring’, since other verbs of bringing and taking also occasionally mean ‘begin to’, but in this construction it functions like a stative verb. In fact although the meaning shift for this construction seems to be from stative to active intransitive, the formal affixation pattern for both the derived and underived constructions remains that of stative verbs. Examples are:

*kisku'yA* ‘to become sweet’

*čhe'pa a'yA* ‘to get fat’.

In some cases a verb can be used with both, but with different meanings:

*kithaŋ'ka* ‘to grow old’

*thaŋ'ka a'yA* ‘to get big’.

In most instances, *ki-* imparts a meaning of inevitable change into the state mentioned by the verb, change over which the referent has no control.

### 9.2.2.3. Deactivization or Stativization

There is no obvious formal process whereby active verbs may be shifted to the stative category. (In English this is done by the use of passive participles: *break*->*be broken*, *find*->*be found*, etc.) Such notions are expressed in Lakota by using the third-person plural subject form (marked by *pi* after the verb) of an active transitive verb: ‘they broke it’, ‘they found him’, etc.

However, there is some syntactic evidence that *pi* in this construction is genuinely a passive marker rather than the subject pluralizer. With verbs like ‘seem’, most linguists agree that the subject of ‘seem’ and the subject of its complement have to be the same. Thus in ‘She seemed to



hit him' and 'She seemed to have been hit', "she" is the subject of both verbs in both sentences even when, logically, "she" is the recipient or patient of the second one. If this is so, then in the Lakhota sentence *ama'pha pi s'ele'mačheča* 'I seem to have been hit', *ma* rather than *pi* must represent the subject of *ama'pha pi*. Obviously, this analysis relies on a very specific notion of "subject." This notion has not yet been well explored for Lakhota.

### 9.3. Verb Inflection

Lakhota verbs may be inflected to indicate the person and number of subjects, direct objects, indirect objects, and possessors of objects. Inflection involves the addition of affixes to the verb. Note that "affix" is used here as a cover term for prefix, suffix, and infix; an infix is an element inserted into a stem. Many of the inflectional morphemes in Lakhota are either prefixed or infixed, depending on the verb. Sometimes the infixing is only apparent, as when the inflection follows a derivational prefix such as *na-* 'by means of the foot'. Thus a sequence like *na-wa'-t'e* 'I killed it with my foot' (from *nat'e* 'to die or kill by means of foot action') technically consists of two prefixes and a root. However, there are many cases where the inflectional morpheme is inserted into an otherwise (synchronically) unanalyzable stem, such as *ma'ni* 'to walk' (*mawa'ni* 'I walk'), or *ophe'thuŋ* 'to buy' (*ophe'wathuŋ* 'I buy/bought it'), or *wičha'ša* 'man' (*wima'čhaša* 'I am a man'). In accord with Lakhota grammatical tradition and (most) native-speaker intuition, all the inserted inflectional elements are here called "infixes," and both these infixes and all the prefixes are called "affixes."

In addition to affixes, all verbal paradigms make use of the enclitic *pi* to mark a plural argument. An enclitic is like a suffix, except that it is a separate word.

The discussion of verb inflection can be divided into 10 subtopics: [stative affixes](#), [object affixes](#), [active subject affixes](#), [two-affix constructions](#), [irregular paradigms](#), [reflexives](#), [reciprocal constructions](#), [reflexive possessive](#), [dative constructions](#), and [benefactive constructions](#).

#### 9.3.1. Stative Affixes

The basic paradigm has positions for three persons and three numbers, although the dual is available only for the first-person inclusive subject ('you and I', but not 'he and I'). It is tempting to analyze the *uŋ(k)* without *pi* (the dual) as "inclusive singular" and thus make *pi* a consistent marker of the plural. This analysis must be rejected because *pi* is added to all objects (not stative subjects), both dual and plural, and *pi* neutralizes the inclusive/exclusive distinction.

In the third person, plural is marked for animate nouns only; inanimate plurals are marked by reduplication of the verb stem ([see 4.3.2.8.](#)). When the plural refers to human beings there is yet another distinction: distributive versus collective. "Distributive plurals" focus on plurality as a collection of separate individuals, while "collective plurals" focus on persons whose identities are fused into a group. An English noun with just these kinds of meanings is the word "family." When the verb used with family is singular (My family is waiting for me), the noun is collective in meaning. When the verb is plural (My family are all living in California now), the meaning is distributive. Many Lakhota verbs do not have collective forms; when such forms do not exist, the distributive plural forms are used instead. The collective sense is not necessarily lost in such

cases, since a noun with collective meaning (or a quantifier such as *oya's<sup>2</sup>ij* ‘all of a collective human group’) may also be present in the sentence.

Here are the personal affixes used in the inflection of stative verbs.

Singular Dual Plural

1. *ma-* *uŋ(k)-uŋ(k)-...pi*
2. *ni-* *ni-...pi*
3. *0-* *0-...pi* distributive  
*wičha-* collective

*0* means that there is no affix for that person.

*uŋ(k)* is written in this way to indicate that *uŋ* is used if any consonant but /<sup>2</sup>/ follows the affix, while *uŋk* appears if a vowel or /<sup>2</sup>/ follows.

There are three patterns for the placement of these affixes in the verb: all affixes are prefixed: all affixes are infixes: *uŋk* is prefixed and the others are infixes. Here are sample paradigms of each type:

<i>haŋ'ska</i> ‘be long or tall’ (prefix type)		
Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>mahaŋ'ske</i> ‘I am tall’	<i>uŋhaŋ'ske</i> ‘you and I are tall’	<i>uŋhaŋ'ska pi</i> ‘we are tall’
2. <i>nahaŋ'ske</i> ‘you are tall’		<i>nahaŋ'ska pi</i> ‘you are tall’
3. <i>haŋ'ske</i> ‘he is tall’		<i>haŋ'ska pi</i> ‘they are tall’ (distributive) <i>wičha'haŋ'ske</i> ‘they are tall’ (collective)

<i>i'-puza</i> ‘be thirsty’ (infix type)		
Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>i'-mapu'za</i> ‘I am thirsty’	<i>i'-<sup>2</sup>uŋpu'za</i> ‘you and I are thirsty’	<i>i'-<sup>2</sup>uŋpu'za pi</i> ‘we are thirsty’
2. <i>i'-nipu'za</i> ‘you are thirsty’		<i>i'-nipu'za pi</i> ‘you are thirsty’
3. <i>i'puza</i> ‘he is thirsty’		<i>i'puza pi</i> ‘they are thirsty’

<i>uŋspe'</i> ‘to know how to’ (mixed type)		
Singular	Dual	Plural

- |                    |                       |                     |
|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. <i>uŋma'spe</i> | <i>uŋkuŋ'spe</i>      | <i>uŋkuŋ'spe pi</i> |
| ‘I know how to’    | ‘you and know how to’ | ‘we know how to’    |
| 2. <i>uŋni'spe</i> |                       | <i>uŋni'spe pi</i>  |
| ‘you know how to’  |                       | ‘you know how to’   |
| 3. <i>uŋspe'</i>   |                       | <i>uŋspe' pi</i>    |
| ‘he knows how to’  |                       | ‘they know how to’  |

The stative paradigm is completely regular: there are no further subtypes within this conjugation. In particular, verbs such as *yaŋka'* ‘to sit,’ of which the first-person form is *maŋke'*, are not stative. See the description of active nasal stems in [9.3.3.](#), and note that when an object affix appears on this verb in the construction described at the end of [8.5.3.](#), the form is *mayəŋ'ke*.

One further remark about the use of the stative verb inflection is in order. Stative verb affixes are regularly used to identify the possessor of an inalienably possessed noun ([8.4.1.](#)) that is the subject of a stative verb:

*Nata' (kiŋ) maya'zaŋ*

head the I.hurt

‘My head hurts.’

*Nape' (kiŋ) mašpaŋ'*

hand the I.burn

‘I burned my hand.’

*Phehiŋ' (kiŋ) ni'sa'bsapa*

hair the you.black

‘You have black hair.’

### 9.3.2. Object Affixes

The paradigm for transitive objects (assuming a third-person singular subject) is almost like that for stative verb subjects, but there are two differences: first, there is no collective versus distributive distinction: the collective affix of the stative paradigm is used for all animate plural objects. Second, there is no separate form for the dual; *pi* is used with *uŋ(k)* whenever it marks the object. Here are the object affixes:

Singular	Plural
1. <i>ma</i>	<i>uŋ(k)...pi</i>
2. <i>ni</i>	<i>ni...pi</i>
3. <i>0</i>	<i>wičha</i>

The placement of these affixes follows the same three patterns observed with the stative verbs: *uŋ(k)* may be prefixed while the others are infixes, or all may follow the same pattern. Here are three paradigms:

*khi'za* ‘to attack; begin a fight with’

(prefix type)

Singular	Plural
1. <i>makhi'ze</i>	<i>uŋkhi'za pi</i>
'he attacked me'	'he attacked us'
2. <i>ničhi'ze</i>	<i>ničhi'za pi</i>
'he attacked you'	'he attacked you'
3. <i>khi'ze</i>	<i>wičha'khize</i>
'he attacked him	'he attacked them'

*slolyA'* (infix type)

Singular	Plural
1. <i>slolma'ye</i>	<i>slol<sup>2</sup>uŋ'yaŋ pi</i>
'he knows me'	'he knows us'
2. <i>slolni'ye</i>	<i>slolni'yaŋ pi</i>
'he knows you'	'he knows you'
3. <i>slolye'</i>	<i>slolwi'čhaye</i>
'he knows him	'he knows them'

*aphA'* 'to hit' (mixed type)

Singular	Plural
1. <i>ama'phe</i>	<i>uŋka'pha pi</i>
'he hit me'	'he hit us'
2. <i>ani'phe</i>	<i>ani'pha pi</i>
'he hit you'	'he hit you'
3. <i>aphe'</i>	<i>awi'čhaphe</i>
'he hit him'	'he hit them'

### 9.3.3. Active Subject Affixes

The active subject affixes come in three slightly different paradigms, all of which have the same positional arrangements (prefix, infix, mixed). The three paradigms differ only in the form of the affixes used for 'I' and 'you'. The remainder of the subject affixes are as in the stative paradigm except that motion verbs have *a* rather than *wičha'* as the affix of the collective plural. Note that *uŋ(k)* may mark either subject or object; its correct meaning has to be read from another affix or from the context. In *y*-stems, the *y*- changes to *l* after first-person singular *b*- and disappears after *l*- in the second person. Actually, both *y*-stem and nasal-stem affixes are probably to be derived from the *wa*- and *ya*- of regular verbs by a series of phonological rules involving loss of the vowel of the affix and subsequent consonant assimilations. For detailed discussion, see Carter (1974:130-154) and Koontz (1983).

Here is a chart of the three sets of active subject affixes:

	1. Regular	2. Y-stem	3. Nasal Stem
Singular	1. <i>wa</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>m</i>
	2. <i>ya</i>	<i>l</i>	<i>n</i>
	3. <i>o</i>	<i>o</i>	<i>o</i>

Dual	1. <i>uŋ(k)</i>	<i>uŋ(k)</i>	<i>uŋ(k)</i>
Plural	1. <i>uŋ(k)...pi</i>	<i>uŋ(k)...pi</i>	<i>uŋ(k)...pi</i>
	2. <i>ya...pi</i>	<i>ya...pi</i>	<i>ya...pi</i>
Distributive	3. <i>0...pi</i>	<i>0...pi</i>	<i>0...pi</i>
Collective	<i>a / wičha</i>	<i>a / wičha</i>	<i>a / wičha</i>

The inflectional paradigm that is used for each active verb is partially predictable. For example, the affixes of paradigm 2 (y-stem) are used most often with verbs that have /y/ followed by an oral vowel at the point where the affix is added: the affixes of paradigm 3 (nasal stem) are used most often with verbs that have /y/ or /<sup>2</sup>/, followed by a nasalized vowel at the point where the affix is added. There are a few exceptions to these general rules.

Given below are paradigms of verbs with active affixes. No attempt is made to illustrate the prefix-infix-mixed types, since the variations are exactly the same as for the stative or object affix paradigm types.

*Examples of Paradigm I (regular)*

	<i>hi'</i> 'arrive coming'	
Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>wahi'</i>	<i>uŋhi'</i>	<i>uŋhi' pi</i>
'I came'	'you and I came'	'we came'
2. <i>yahi'</i>		<i>yahi' pi</i>
'you came'		'you came'
		<i>hi' pi</i>
3. <i>hi'</i>		'they came' (distributive)
'he came'		<i>ahi'</i>
		'they came' (collective)

*slolyA'* 'know' (looks like y-stem, inflected regularly)

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>slolwa'ye</i>	<i>slol<sup>2</sup>uŋ'ye</i>	<i>slol<sup>2</sup>uŋ'yaŋ pi</i>
'I know'	'you and I know him'	'we know him'
2. <i>slolya'ye</i>		<i>slolya'ya pi</i>
'you know him'		'you know him'
3. <i>slolye'</i>		<i>slolya' pi</i>
'he knows him'		'they know him'

<sup>2</sup>*uŋ'* 'be (exist); stay'  
(looks like nasal stem; inflected regularly)

Singular	Dual	Plural
----------	------	--------

1. <i>wa' uŋ'</i>	<i>uŋk' uŋ'</i>	<i>uŋk' uŋ' pi</i>
'I am'	'you and I are'	'we are'
2. <i>ya' uŋ'</i>		<i>ya' uŋ' pi</i>
'you are'		'you are'
3. <i>uŋ'</i>		<i>uŋ' pi</i>
'he is'		'they are'

*Examples of Paradigm 2 (y-stem)*

	<i>yuha'</i> 'have'	
Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>bluha'</i>	<i>uŋyu'ha</i>	<i>uŋyu'ha pi</i>
'I have it'	'you and I have it'	'we have it'
2. <i>luha'</i>		<i>luha' pi</i>
'you have it'		'you have it'
3. <i>yuha'</i>		<i>yuha' pi</i>
'he has it'		'they have it'

	<i>wanŋaŋ'ka</i> 'to see'	
	(looks like nasal stem; inflected like a y-stem)	
Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>wanbla'ke</i>	<i>wan' uŋ'yaŋke</i>	<i>wan' uŋ'yaŋka pi</i>
'I have it'	'you and I have it'	'we have it'
2. <i>wanla'ke</i>		<i>wanla'ka pi</i>
'you have it'		'you have it'
3. <i>wanŋaŋ'ke</i>		<i>wanŋaŋ'ka pi</i>
'he has it'		'they have it'

Note that /aŋ/ is changed to /a/ following /l/ in the 'I' and 'you' forms.

*Examples of Paradigm 3 (nasal stem)*

	<i>uŋ'</i> 'to use; to wear'	
Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>mu'</i>	<i>uŋk' uŋ'</i>	<i>uŋk' uŋ' pi</i>
'I used it'	'you and I used it'	'we used it'
2. <i>nu'</i>		<i>nu' pi</i>
'you used it'		'you used it'
3. <i>uŋ'</i>		<i>uŋ' pi</i>
'he used it'		'they used it'

Note that some of the forms of this verb are identical to some forms of *uŋ'* 'exist'.

*ečha'²uŋ* 'to do'

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>ečha'mu</i> 'I did it'	<i>ečhuŋ'k²uŋ</i> 'you and I did it'	<i>ečhuŋ'k²uŋ pi</i> 'we did it'
2. <i>ečha'nu</i> 'you did it'		<i>ečha'nu pi</i> 'you did it'
3. <i>ečhuŋ'</i> 'he did it'		<i>ečhuŋ' pi</i> 'they did it'

Note that most forms of this verb have the loss of /a²/ described in [4.3.1.3](#).

*yaŋka'* 'to be seated'

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>make'</i> 'I am seated'	<i>uŋyaŋ'ke</i> 'you and I are seated'	<i>uŋyaŋ'ka pi</i> 'we are seated'
2. <i>nake'</i> 'you are seated'		<i>naka' pi</i> 'you are seated'
3. <i>yaŋke'</i> 'he is seated'		<i>yaŋka' pi</i> 'they are seated' (distributive) <i>wičha'yaŋke</i> 'they are seated' (collective)

Verbs of motion utilize a collective prefix a different from that of other intransitive verbs. If the verb begins with *i*, the prefix *a* coalesces with the initial *i* of the stem to yield *e'*:

*a'ye* 'they went (collective)'; compare *ya' pi* 'they went (distributive)'

*e'yaye* 'they (collective) started out, going'; compare *iya'ya pi* (distributive) compare *iya'ya pi* (distributive)

*e'nažin* 'they (collective) went and stood'; compare *ina'žin pi* (distributive)

### 9.3.4. Two-affix Combinations

Transitive verbs take two affixes whenever the subject and object are grammatical persons marked by affixes. The same is true of stative transitive verbs ([9.1.3](#)). When two affixes are present, the usual order is first the object affix, then the subject affix. Another description of the order of sequence in the affixes would be (third person) (second person) (first person). This would eliminate rule 3 below, but not rule 1 in all cases. Similarly, describing the order as (third) (first) (second) would eliminate rule 1. but not rule 3. The object-subject description seems better, since there are other ways in which *uŋ(k)* is exceptional (e.g., prefixing to verbs where other affixes infix).

The combinations of affixes that appear are usually as given in the object and subject paradigms outlined in [9.3.2](#), and [9.3.3](#), but there are some additional complexities that cannot be predicted

from a simple blending of the two sets. The complexities involve the affixes, some verb stems, and the enclitic pluralizer *pi*.

With respect to the affix combinations, the following rules apply:

1) *uŋ(k)* precedes all affixes but *wičha*

2) The combination of ‘I’ subject and ‘you’ object is represented in transitive verbs by a single affix: *čhi*.

3) In the stative transitive verbs, *ni* always precedes *ma*, regardless of the grammatical functions of the affixes. The meaning of verbal forms of this kind is therefore ambiguous.

4) y-stem or nasal stem transitive verbs with ‘you’ subject and ‘me’ or ‘us’ object have *yal* or *yan*, respectively, for ‘you’.

Verbs that require *uŋ(k)* prefixed, but the others inserted, present a problem, since *uŋ(k)* must follow *wičha*, and inserted affix. In the speech of some persons this apparent contradiction is resolved by inserting both in the proper order, but repeating the entire verb stem after *uŋ(k)*. An example can be given using the verb *oyu'spA* ‘to arrest’: *owi'čhuŋkoyuspa pi* ‘we arrested them’. Note that *wičha* is inserted after *o*, as required for this verb, and at the same time *uŋ(k)* precedes *o* as is also required by this particular verb. However, many persons simply insert both affixes, ignoring the apparent contradiction of not having *uŋ(k)* before *o*. In the speech of these persons, the correct form is *owi'čhuŋyuspa pi*.

Pluralization can appear only once in each verbal form. Hence, either affix, or both simultaneously, may be pluralized by *pi*. Many verbal forms containing *pi* and affixes that may be either singular or plural are thus ambiguous, and only the context can indicate which participants are actually plural. For example *uŋko'yuspa pi* can mean ‘we arrested him’, ‘he arrested us’, or ‘they arrested us’. *ieye' uŋyan pi kte* can mean either ‘you (sing.) will find us’ or ‘you (pl.) will find us’.

The combinations of affixes that occur in transitive verbs are shown in table 5

Subject	Object					
	me	you sg.	him, her, it, them (inanimate)	us	you pl.	them (animate)
I	—	<i>čhi</i>	<i>0-wa</i> <i>0-b</i> <i>0-m</i>	—	<i>čhi...pi</i>	<i>wičha-wa</i> <i>wičha-b</i> <i>wičha-m</i>
you sg.	<i>ma-ya</i> <i>ma-yal</i> <i>ma-yan</i>	—	<i>0-ya</i> <i>0-l</i> <i>0-n</i>	<i>uŋ-ya...pi</i> <i>uŋ-yal...pi</i> <i>uŋyan...pi</i>	—	<i>wičha-ya</i> <i>wičha-l</i> <i>wičha-n</i>
he, she, it	<i>ma-0</i>	<i>ni-0</i>	<i>0-0</i>	<i>uŋ(k)-0...pi</i>	<i>ni-0...pi</i>	<i>wičha-0</i>



we two	—	—	<i>uŋ(k)</i>	—	—	<i>wičha-<sup>ʔ</sup>uŋ(k)...pi</i>
we pl..	—	<i>uŋ-ni- ...pi</i>	<i>uŋ(k)...pi</i>	—	<i>uŋ- ni...pi</i>	<i>wičha<sup>ʔ</sup>uŋ(k)...pi</i>
you pl..	<i>ma-ya...pi</i> <i>ma- yal...pi</i> <i>ma- yan...pi</i>		<i>0-ya...pi</i> <i>0-l...pi</i> <i>0-n ...pi</i>	<i>uŋ-ya...pi</i> <i>uŋ-yal...pi</i> <i>uŋ-yan...pi</i>		<i>wičha-ya...pi</i> <i>wičha-l...pi</i> <i>wičha-n...pi</i>
they animate	<i>ma-0...pi</i>	<i>ni-0...pi</i>	<i>0-0...pi</i>	<i>uŋ(k)- 0...pi</i>	<i>ni-0...pi</i>	<i>wičha-0...pi</i>

NOTE: First-person *b-* and *m-* and second-person (*ya*)*l-* and (*ya*)*n-* occur with y-stem and nasal-stem verbs, respectively. See [9.3.](#) for further explanation.

### 9.3.5. Irregular Verbs

There are some verbs that have irregularities of one or another kind in their inflection. Among the most frequent are the verbs *eyA'* ‘to say’ and its derivatives, the verb *yu'tA* ‘to eat’, and various motion verbs, especially *yA'* and verbs based on it.

The transitive verb *eyA'* ‘to say’ is conjugated as follows: note the stress shift in the third-person singular:

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>ephe'</i>	<i>uŋke'ye</i>	<i>uŋke'ya pi</i>
2. <i>ehe'</i>		<i>eha' pi</i>
3. <i>e'ye</i>		<i>eya' pi</i>

A derivative of *eyA'*, *eya'yalaka* ‘to tell lies’, is inflected doubly, with the same irregularities in both places: *epha'phalaka*, etc.

The transitive verb *yu'tA* ‘to eat’ has these forms:

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>wa'te</i>	<i>uŋyu'te</i>	<i>uŋyu'ta pi</i>
2. <i>ya'te</i>		<i>ya'ta pi</i>
3. <i>yu'te</i>		<i>yu'ta pi</i>

The verb *yA'* ‘to be going’ normally conjugates according to active Paradigm 2 ([9.3.3.](#)): *ble'*, *le'*, *ye'*, *uŋye'*, *uŋyan' pi*, *la' pi*, *ya' pi*. However, whenever the syntax of the sentence demands that the final vowel be *iŋ* (see [4.3.2.6.](#)), the personal affixes are nasalized. Observe the difference between the second-person singular and plural forms of the potential paradigm: in the singular the vowel is *iŋ*, but in the plural it is *a*:

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>mni' kte</i>	<i>uŋyiy' kte</i>	<i>uŋyaŋ' pi kte</i>
2. <i>ni' kte</i>		<i>la' pi kte</i>
3. <i>yiy' kte</i>		<i>ya' pi kte</i>

The verb *iya'yA* ‘to set out’ has two sets of subject affixes in the ‘I’ and ‘you’ forms: *ibla'ble*, *ila'le*, *iya'ye*, *uŋki'yaye*, *uŋki'yaya pi*, *ila'la pi*, *iya'ya pi*. When this verb is potential, the first affix is as just given, but the second is as in the potential inflection of *yA'* alone: *ibla'mni kte*, *ila'ni kte*, but *ila'la pi kte*. Many Oglalas in the 1990s prefer *ibla'bliŋ kte*, *ila'liŋ kte*, even though this introduces an unexpected (and unparalleled) // before a nasal vowel.

Another verb that has double inflection is <sup>2</sup>*iŋ'yaŋka* ‘to run’:

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>wa<sup>2</sup>iŋ'mnake</i>	<i>uŋk<sup>2</sup>iŋ'yaŋke</i>	<i>uŋk<sup>2</sup>iŋ'yaŋka pi</i>
‘I ran’	‘you and I ran’	‘we ran’
2. <i>ya<sup>2</sup>iŋ'nake</i>		<i>ya<sup>2</sup>iŋ'naka pi</i>
‘you ran’		‘you all ran’
3. <i>iŋ'yaŋke</i>		<i>iŋ'yaŋka pi</i>
‘he ran’		‘they ran’

Two other motion verbs have two different stem forms, one used when there is no personal affix, the other when there is a personal affix. The two are *khigLA'* ‘to set out to go home’ and *gličU'* ‘to set out to come home’. This is the stem form for the third-person forms; the other stems are respectively *-khiyaGLA* and *-gliyačU* (some speakers say *-gliyaku*). Compare the following:

<i>Khigle'</i>	‘He set out to go home.’
<i>Wakhi'yagle.</i>	‘I set out to go home.’
<i>GličU' pi.</i>	‘They (distributive) set out to come home.’
<i>Agli'yačU.</i>	‘They (collective) set out to come home.’

### 9.3.6. Reflexive Verbs

Reflexive verbs are those in which the subject and the object refer to the same person: I cut myself is an English example.

Lakhota reflexive verbs have the affix *ič<sup>2</sup>i* added to the transitive verb: *ič<sup>2</sup>i'kte* ‘to kill oneself’ (cf. *kte* ‘to kill’), *o<sup>2</sup>ič<sup>2</sup>ičiyA* ‘to help oneself’ (cf. *o'kiyA* ‘to help’).

The personal affixes are those of the stative paradigm (9.3.1.). There are no collective plural reflexive forms. See Legendre and Rood (1992) for discussion of the abstract syntax of these forms.

Whenever *ič'ʹi* precedes the instrumental prefixes *ya*, *yu*, *ka*, or *pa* (9.2.1.), the reflexive and instrumental affixes fuse to *igla*, *iglu*, *igla*, and *ikpa* respectively.

Here are sample paradigms of *ič'ʹi'kte* ‘to kill oneself’ and *iglu'žaza* ‘to wash oneself’:

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>mič'ʹi'kte</i>	<i>uŋki'č'ʹikte</i>	<i>uŋki'č'ʹikte pi</i>
‘I ran’	‘you and I ran’	‘we ran’
2. <i>nič'ʹi'kte</i>		<i>nič'ʹi'kte pi</i>
‘you ran’		‘you all ran’
3. <i>ič'ʹi'kte</i>		<i>ič'ʹi'kte pi</i>
‘he ran’		‘they ran’
1. <i>miglu'žaza</i>	<i>uŋki'glužaza</i>	<i>uŋki'glužaza pi</i>
‘I washed myself’	‘you and I ran’	‘we washed ourselves’
2. <i>niglu'žaza</i>		<i>niglu'žaza pi</i>
‘you washed yourself’		‘you washed yourselves’
3. <i>iglu'žaza</i>		<i>iglu'žaza pi</i>
‘he washed himself’		‘they washed themselves’

There is a second reflexive paradigm (not well studied) in which the initial *i-* of the affix is doubled, without an inserted [ʹ]. Its meaning is approximately that the action was not completely under the control of the subject. Compare: *nami'č'ʹiħtake* ‘I kicked myself’ with *nami'ič'ʹiħtake* ‘I could have kicked myself (for something I did)’, or *sabmi'č'ʹiye* ‘I blackened myself’ with *sabmi'ič'ʹiye* ‘I blackened myself for a reason such as mourning.’

### 9.3.7. Reciprocal Verbs

The concept ‘each other’ is expressed by the affix *-kičhi-* (or a variant of this affix) added to transitive verbs. Only dual and plural forms are used, of course. The reciprocal paradigm has these forms:

Dual	Plural
1. <i>uŋki'čhi uŋki'čhi...pi</i>	
2. <i>ye'čhi...pi</i>	
3. <i>kičhi'...pi</i>	

Whenever these are attached to a stem beginning with *ki* or *khi*, that syllable of the verb stem is dropped. Examples of reciprocal verb forms are:

<i>Wašte'ʹuŋkičhilake.</i>	‘You and I love each other’ ( <i>wašte'lakA</i> )
<i>UDki'čhiza pi</i>	‘We fought with each other’. ( <i>khi'zA</i> )
<i>Wanye'čhiyanġka pi he?</i>	‘Did you see each other?’

*O'kičhiya pi.* (waŋyaŋ'kA)  
'They helped each other.'  
(o'kiyA)

See [4.3.2.3](#) for a comment on the nasalization of *-yaŋ-* 'see'.

### 9.3.8. Reflexive Possessive, Dative, and Benefactive Verbs

The next three sections of this sketch deal with very complex and highly idiosyncratic features of Lakhota verb inflection. It should be noted that this area of Lakhota grammar is not nearly so well explored as some other areas. Both the morphology and semantics of the paradigms to be discussed are unpredictable and often irregular, and they often vary from community to community and even from speaker to speaker within a community. It is very possible that many unexpected phenomena remain to be discovered here.

The semantic concepts expressed are: reflexive possession (the object of the verb belongs to the subject of the verb), dative (an indirect object, a person other than the subject and object of the verb is affected by the verbal action), and benefactive (one person performs the verbal action for another's benefit or in his place).

The morphological representations of these three are intertwined and often very confusing. The difficulty comes from two facts: the morphemes representing all three concepts have the basic form *ki*; and some instances of *ki* lose the /k/ or the /i/ in certain contexts, and some cause a following /k/ to change to /č/ while others do not. Part of the unpredictability appears to result from homonym avoidance: when words from two of the paradigms could be expected to be alike in form, one is often different through some kind of irregularity.

Carter (1974) is able to explain much, but not all, of this complexity by positing in some forms another morpheme with the shape *i*. This does not explain everything, and it is too abstract an argument for the description here.

When the /i/ of *ki* is lost before /y/, /k/, or /p/, the resulting clusters are, in the first two cases, /gl/, or in the third, /kp/; the specific places where this happens will be discussed below. When the /k/ is lost, the personal affixes coalesce with the remaining /i/ to give *we* 'I', *ye* 'you (agent)', *mi* 'me', *ni* 'you (patient)', and *čhi* 'I to/for you'. These coalesced affixes always take the stress when they are the first element in the word.

#### 9.3.8.1. Reflexive Possessive

The fact that the object of the verb is possessed by the subject is shown in Lakhota by adding *ki* after the subject affix.

*ki* is reduced to /k/ alone before a y-stem verb ([9.3.3](#)), and *ky* becomes /gl/. *ki* is also lost from *ki* before verbs beginning with /p/. When *ki* is used before the instrumental prefix *ka* ([9.2.1](#)), the reflexive possessive affix and the instrumental prefix fuse to /gla/.

In the illustrative paradigms that follow, only the singular and dual forms are given. The corresponding plural words can be formed by adding *pi* to the second and third singular and the dual.

*iyeyA* ‘to find’

This verb illustrates the behavior of the causative auxiliary (9.2.2.) *-yA*; before it the possessive *ki* loses neither *k* nor *i*.

Singular	Dual
1. <i>iyewakiye</i> ‘I found mine’	<i>iyey<sup>2</sup>uŋkiye</i> ‘you and I found ours’
2. <i>iyeyakiye</i> ‘you found yours’	
3. <i>iyekiye</i> ‘he found his own’	

*kte* ‘to kill’

This verb follows the most regular rules: *ki* loses *k* after personal affixes.

Singular	Dual
1. <i>wekte</i> ‘I killed mine’	<i>uŋki'kte</i> ‘you and I killed ours’
2. <i>ye'kte</i> ‘you killed yours’	
3. <i>kikte</i> ‘he killed his own’	

*yuha* ‘to have’

In this verb, *ki* is reduced to *k*, which fuses with *y* to form *gl*.

Singular	Dual
1. <i>waglu'ha</i> ‘I have mine’	<i>uŋglu'ha</i> ‘you and I have ours’
2. <i>yaglu'ha</i> ‘you have yours’	
3. <i>gluha</i> ‘he has his own’	

*kable'ča* ‘to shatter’

This verb works like *yuha'* but illustrates the *ka-* prefix.

Singular	Dual
1. <i>wagla'bleča</i> 'I shattered mine'	<i>uŋgla'bleča</i> 'you and I shattered ours'
2. <i>yagla'bleča</i> 'you shattered yours'	
3. <i>glable'ča</i> 'he shattered his own'	

*pazo'* 'show; point'

This verb is a verb with initial /p/.

Singular	Dual
1. <i>wakpa'zo</i> 'I showed mine'	<i>uŋkpa'zo</i> 'you and I showed ours'
2. <i>yakpa'zo</i> 'you showed yours'	
3. <i>kpa'zo</i> 'he showed his own'	

*iču'* 'take'.

This verb requires an extra *k* after the regular *ki*.

Singular	Dual
1. <i>iwe'kču</i> 'I took mine'	<i>uŋki'kikču</i> 'you and I took ours'
2. <i>iye'kču</i> 'you took yours'	
3. <i>iki'kču</i> 'he took his own'	

*a'yA* 'to take along'

This verb illustrates the verbs of bringing and taking, which prefix *glo-* to form possessives; regular active affixes are then used:

Singular	Dual
1. <i>waglo'<sup>2</sup>aye</i> 'I am taking mine along'	<i>uŋglo'<sup>2</sup>aye</i> 'you and I are taking ours along'
2. <i>yaglo'<sup>2</sup>aye</i>	

‘you are taking yours along’

3. *glo<sup>2</sup>a'ye*

‘he is taking his along’

There are other irregularities in the reflexive possessive that have not been illustrated. Some of these are described by Boas and Deloria (1941:86-102), but note that some of the details they give are not valid for Brule and Oglala speakers in the 1990s.

### 9.3.8.2. Dative

The dative has one form but, from an English speaker’s point of view, two meanings: the form can mean that the action was done to an object possessed by someone else (‘I took his’, ‘he ate mine’) or that it was done to or for someone else by accident or without his knowledge or permission. This second meaning is sometimes expressed by ‘on’ in colloquial English (‘He ate it up on me’: or ‘His wife emptied the bank account on him.’). Boas and Deloria (1941) and Carter (1974) refer to this as the ‘first dative.’

The regular affix for these forms is again *ki*, but this *ki* never loses either the *k* or the *i*, nor does it cause a following *k* of the verb root to change to *č*, although *ks* in other prefixes do change.

In verbs of bringing and taking, *ka* is used instead of *ki*, and a *ki* (but an irregular one!) can then also be prefixed (see examples below). Before the causative *-yA*, *khi* is used instead of *ki*. In the sample paradigms that follow, only singular and dual forms are given. As usual, the plural forms differ only by the presence of *pi*.

#### *iču* ‘take’

This verb is regular; the affixes are inserted between *i* and *č*.

	mine	yours	his	ours	theirs
	it on me	it on you	it on him	it on us	it on them
I	--	<i>ičhi'čiču</i>	<i>iwa'kiču</i>	--	<i>iwi'čhawakiču</i>
you	<i>ima'yakiču</i> --		<i>iya'kiču</i>	<i>uŋki'yakiču</i>	<i>pi iwi'čhayakiču</i>
he	<i>ima'kiču</i>	<i>ini'čiču</i>	<i>iki'ču</i>	<i>uŋki'kiču</i>	<i>pi iwi'čhakiču</i>
we	--	<i>uŋki'ničiču</i>	<i>uŋki'čiču</i>	--	<i>iwi'čhuŋkiču</i>

#### *pazo* ‘show’

This verb is also regular; compare with the possessive paradigm above.

	mine	yours	his	ours	theirs
	it on me	it on you	it on him	it on us	it on them
I	--	<i>čhiči'pazo</i>	<i>waki'pazo</i>	--	<i>wičha'waki'pazo</i>
you	<i>maya'kipazo</i> --		<i>yaki'pazo</i>	<i>uŋya'kipazo</i>	<i>pi wičha'yaki'pazo</i>
he	<i>maki'pazo</i>	<i>niči'pazo</i>	<i>kipa'zo</i>	<i>uŋki'pazo</i>	<i>pi wičha'kipazo</i>
we	--	<i>uŋni'čipazo</i>	<i>uŋki'pazo</i>	--	<i>wičhuŋ'kipazo</i>

#### *ahi* ‘to arrive bringing’

This verb illustrated the pattern common to all ‘bring’ and ‘take’ verbs.

	mine	yours	his	ours	theirs
	it on me	it on you	it on him	it on us	it on them
I	--	<i>čhič'a'hi</i>	<i>waka'hi</i>	--	<i>wičha'wakahi</i>
you	<i>maya'kahi</i>	--	<i>yaka'hi</i>	<i>uŋya'kahi pi</i>	<i>wičha'yakahi</i>
he	<i>maka'hi</i>	<i>nič'a'hi</i>	<i>kahi'</i>	<i>uŋka'hi pi</i>	<i>wičha'kahi</i>
we	--	<i>uŋni'čahi</i>	<i>uŋka'hi</i>	--	<i>wičhuŋ'kahi</i>

*ahi'* ‘to arrive, bringing’

This illustrates the alternate paradigm with *ki + ka*

	mine	yours	his	ours	theirs
	it on me	it on you	it on him	it on us	it on them
I	--	<i>čhi'č'a'ahi</i>	<i>we'č'a'ahi</i>	--	<i>wičha'weč'a'ahi</i>
you	<i>mi'č'a'ahi--</i>	--	<i>ye'č'a'ahi</i>	--	<i>wičha'yeč'a'ahi</i>
he	<i>maka'hi</i>	<i>ni'č'a'ahi</i>	<i>ki'č'a'ahi</i>	<i>uŋki'č'a'ahi pi</i>	<i>wičha'kič'a'ahi</i>
we	--	<i>uŋni'č'a'ahi</i>	<i>uŋki'č'a'ahi--</i>	--	<i>wičhuŋ'kič'a'ahi</i>

*iyeyA* ‘to find’

This verb illustrates the dative of the causative; compare the possessive causative paradigm given above with the third-person object forms here.

	mine	yours	his	ours	theirs
	it on me	it on you	it on him	it on us	it on them
I	--	<i>iyey'čhičhiye</i>	<i>iyey'wakhiye</i>	--	<i>iyey'wičhawakhiye</i>
you	<i>iyey'mayakhiye</i>	--	<i>iyey'yakhiye</i>	<i>iyey'<sup>2</sup>uŋyakhiya pi</i>	<i>iyey'wičhayakhiye</i>
he	<i>iyey'makhiye</i>	<i>iyey'ničhiye</i>	<i>iyey'khiye</i>	<i>iyey'<sup>2</sup>uŋkhiya pi</i>	<i>iyey'wičhakhhiye</i>
we	--	<i>iyey'<sup>2</sup>uŋničhiye</i>	<i>iyey'<sup>2</sup>uŋkhiye</i>	--	<i>iyey'wičhuŋkhiye</i>

### 9.3.8.3. Benefactive

Benefactive verbal forms imply that the action was undertaken for someone purposefully and with his knowledge and permission. Boas and Deloria (1941) call this the ‘second dative.’ The regular benefactive has *ki* twice: the first behaves like the reflexive possessive (especially in that *k* is lost after ‘I’ and ‘you’ affixes), the second like the dative, except that when the first *ki* is actually present as the first syllable of the word, it is stressed. For example, note *ki'čikte* ‘He killed it for her’.

Note that in the forms for ‘I—you’ (*čhi*) and ‘he—you’ (*ni*) the difference between the dative and the benefactive is expressed solely by the stress position: *čhič'ikte* ‘I killed yours, I killed it on you’ but *čhi'čikte* ‘I killed it for you’.

The benefactive affixes also occur regularly with intransitive and stative verbs. Observe *omi'čimani* ‘He travels for me’ from *oma'ni* ‘to travel’, and *mi'čiskuye* ‘mine is sweet; it’s too sweet for me’ from *sku'yA* ‘to be sweet’.



Before -yA (the causative auxiliary) *kiči* becomes *kičiči*, and the first *k* disappears after ‘I’ and ‘you’ affixes. ‘Bringing’ and ‘taking’ verbs affix *kiči* to *ka* to give the meaning ‘bring/take for someone with his permission’.

These forms are very regular (compared, at least, to the reflexive possessives and datives), so only three paradigms are given: a normal one, a ‘bring’ verb, and a causative.

					<i>yuštaŋ</i> ‘to finish’				
		for me	for you	for him	for us	for them			
I	--		<i>či'čiyuštaŋ</i>	<i>we'čiyuštaŋ</i>	--	<i>wičha'wečiyuštaŋ</i>			
you	<i>miye'čiluštaŋ</i> --			<i>ye'čiyuštaŋ</i>	<i>uŋye'čiluštaŋ</i>	<i>pi wičha'yečiyuštaŋ</i>			
he	<i>mi'čiyuštaŋ</i>	<i>ni'čiyuštaŋ</i>		<i>ki'čiyuštaŋ</i>	<i>uŋki'čiyuštaŋ</i>	<i>pi wičha'kičiyuštaŋ</i>			
we	--		<i>uŋni'čiyuštaŋ</i>	<i>uŋki'čiyuštaŋ</i>	--	<i>wičhuŋ'kičiyuštaŋ</i>			

					<i>agli</i> ‘to arrive home, bringing’				
		for me	for you	for him	for us				
I	--		<i>ači'čičagli</i>	<i>awe'čičagli</i>	--	<i>awi'čawečičagli</i>			
you	<i>ami'yečičagli</i> --			<i>aye'čičagli</i>	<i>uŋka'yečiluštaŋ</i>	<i>pi awi'čayečičagli</i>			
he	<i>ami'čičagli</i>	<i>ani'čičagli</i>		<i>aki'čičagli</i>	<i>uŋka'kičičagli</i>	<i>pi awi'čakičičagli</i>			
we	--		<i>uŋka'ničičagli</i>	<i>uŋa'kičičagli</i>	--	<i>awi'čuŋkičičagli</i>			

					<i>iyeyA</i> ‘to find’				
		for me	for you	for him	for us	for them			
I	--		<i>iyē'čhičičhiye</i>	<i>iyē'wečičhiye</i>	--	<i>iyē'wičhawakhiye</i>			
you	<i>iyē'miyečičhiye</i> --			<i>iyē'yečičhiye</i>	<i>iyē<sup>2</sup>uŋyečičhiya</i>	<i>pi iyē'wičhayakhiye</i>			
he	<i>iyē'mičičhiye</i>	<i>iyē'ničičhiye</i>		<i>iyē'kičičhiye</i>	<i>iyē<sup>2</sup>uŋkičičhiya</i>	<i>pi iyē'wičhakhiye</i>			
we	--		<i>iyē<sup>2</sup>uŋničičhiye</i>	<i>iyē<sup>2</sup>uŋkičičhiye</i>	<i>iyē<sup>2</sup>uŋkičičhiye</i>	<i>iyē'wičhuŋkhiye</i>			

Some speakers can use a few verbs with both the benefactive and the possessive together, but in this case it is the beneficiary, not the object, that is owned. Thus *imi'čigluha* ‘she is keeping it for me and I belong to her (i.e., I am her relative)’; however, most verbs do not follow this pattern.

There are no reciprocal benefactives, but the reflexive can occur with the benefactives. For verbs that do not lose the *i* of *ki* when they form the possessive, and for some others, there is no difference between the reflexive direct object form and the reflexive benefactive. Thus from *ole* ‘to look for’ comes *omi'č<sup>2</sup>ile* ‘I’m looking for myself’ or ‘I’m looking for it for myself’. But in most verbs where the *ki* of the possessive loses the *i*, the reflexive benefactive is formed by adding the reflexive (*ič<sup>2</sup>i*, etc.) morpheme to the possessive verb form: *mi'č<sup>2</sup>igluha* ‘I am keeping it for myself’, or *uŋki<sup>2</sup>ič<sup>2</sup>ikču he'či* ‘let’s take it for ourselves (dual)’; but *iglu'štaŋ pi* ‘they finished it for themselves’ has no benefactive morpheme at all.

Some speakers can inflect verbs for both direct and benefactive objects, but others reject these forms as meaningless. (Neither Buechel 1939 nor Boas and Deloria 1941 mention these paradigms.) The more complex pattern seems to begin with the benefactive form, into which are

inserted the transitive affixes appropriate to the nonbenefactive verb. Thus, ‘I’m looking for them for you’ (verb stem *ole*’) goes from *oči’čile* to *owi’čhawačhičile*. Other speakers use a paraphrase: *owi’čhale maya’si čha oči’čile* ‘you told me to look for them so I’m looking for it for you’.

## 10. Enclitics

Except in those instances when a conjunction stands last in the sentence ([section 6](#)), postverbal elements belong to the class here called enclitics. These words express aspect, tense, modality, and, in one case, number.

In other descriptions of Lakhota, enclitics have been variously treated as suffixes, adverbs, or auxiliaries, and indeed the decision to treat the most common of them as enclitics rather than suffixes is based on semantics and on native-speaker intuition rather than on phonological criteria. Speakers recognize these words as independent, isolable, and as meaningful. But one-syllable enclitics are frequently not stressed, so they do sound as if they are suffixed to the verb.

There are several dozen of these words (Taylor 1974). Recall that vowel ablaut, in those elements that have final vowel ablaut, is determined by the following enclitic ([4.2.6](#)).

There is a strict order in which enclitics occur, but the 12 position classes defined by this order have few definable semantic correlations. Table 6 includes the enclitics defined and discussed here; others would appear in position 12 on the chart and would have similar kinds of meanings. Determination of the exact meanings of the enclitics is difficult in some cases, particularly those that express speaker attitude. While their general meaning is clear, individual meanings may vary from speaker to speaker and from situation to situation.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
											<i>he</i>	<i>yewan’</i>
											<i>huŋwo’</i>	<i>yeman’</i>
											<i>so, se</i>	<i>ħčA</i>
											<i>se’l</i>	<i>iŋčhe’ye</i>
											<i>s’ele’l</i>	<i>huŋše’</i>
				<i>yo, ye</i>							<i>yelakha’</i>	<i>čhe’</i>
<i>haŋpi</i>	<i>la</i>	<i>ka</i>	<i>ktA</i>	<i>šni</i>	<i>s’a</i>	<i>yetho’,</i>	<i>nitho’,</i>	<i>se’čA</i>	<i>ke’yA</i>	<i>laħ</i>	<i>yelakha’</i>	<i>čhe’</i>
				<i>iŋtho’,</i>			<i>načhe’čA</i>	<i>ke’yapi</i>	<i>la’ħčA</i>	<i>he’či</i>	<i>ni’</i>	
				<i>ye, na</i>					<i>la’ħčakA</i>	<i>kiŋ</i>	<i>šni’</i>	
										<i>ye’</i>	<i>kiŋlo’</i>	
										<i>yelo’</i>	<i>ka</i>	
										<i>kšt</i>	<i>kačha’</i>	
										<i>kšto’</i>	<i>škhA’</i>	
										<i>k’uŋ</i>	<i>tkha’</i>	

The enclitics are defined and discussed according to the position classes in table 6. Vowel ablaut specifications refer to the effect that the particular enclitic has on a preceding A-final element ([4.2.6](#)).

Some of the words described here are clearly a compound of two or more simple enclitics, but such compounds will be regarded as units in the discussion.

**1. *hAD***; a-ablaut. Judging from other Siouan languages and Sioux dialects, this is likely the stative verb ‘be erect, be upright’, but this verb is rare in Lakhota, and in any event semantically distant from the element here described as an enclitic. *hAD* indicates that the verbal action or state was continuous at the time under consideration. Compare the following two sentences:

*Ta'ku to'khanu haŋ he?* ‘What were you doing?’

*Ta'ku to'khanu he?* ‘What did you do?’

**2. *pi***; a-ablaut. *pi* marks animate plural subjects (9.3.) and pluralizes non-third-person objects (9.3.2.). Numerous examples have already been given.

**3. *la***; e-ablaut. *la* denotes the speaker's affection or feeling of endearment with respect to other persons affected by the verbal action or state. The example of *la* is from a folktale:

*Misuŋ', he' wo'skatela kiŋ uŋspe'makhiya pi la ye! Mi's-eya' waška'te la kte!*

‘Little brothers, won't you please teach me that little game: I do so want to play it too!’

**4. *kA***; a-ablaut. *kA* attenuates the verbal meaning, ‘rather’ or ‘somewhat’ are good English translations of this enclitic:

*He' pte-blo'ka kiŋ očhiŋ'siča ke.*

‘That bull is acting kind of mad.’

*kA* can also be used ironically:

*He' wašte' ke yelo'.*

‘He certainly is a nice guy!’ (Meaning: ‘He is certainly not a nice person.’)

**5. *ktA***; *iŋ*-ablaut. *ktA* marks a statement as not yet true at the time under discussion. It corresponds to the English future, subjunctive, or, in a sentence about the past, to the future anterior. *ktA* is never used in sentences that are commands.

*Mni' kte.* ‘I will go.’

*Yiŋ' kta ehaŋ'taŋhaŋš ši'čij kte.* ‘It will be bad if he goes.’

*Yiŋ' kta ke'ye.* ‘He said he would go.’

**6. *šni***; e-ablaut. *šni* negates the verb with which it occurs.

*Oya'te kiŋ mni' kiŋ yatkaŋ' pi oki'hi pi šni.* 'The people could not drink the water.'

**7.** *s'a*; e-ablaut. *s'a* marks an oft-repeated action; it is frequently accompanied by the adverb *o'hiniyaŋ* 'always'.

*Lakho'ta kiŋ ehaŋ'ni zuya'ya pi s'a.* 'The Indians often used to go on war parties.'

**8.** All these enclitics mark commands of various kinds. Several are used by only one sex and not by the other; this explains their rather large number.

Neutral commands are expressed by *yo* (men) and *ye* (women). (These become *wo* and *we* respectively when the immediately preceding word ends in /**u**/, /**uŋ**/, or /**o**/.) *yo* and *ye* have a-ablaut.

*Na' khaŋ'ta eya', waŋži' iču' wo!* 'Here are some plums, take one!'

*Yetho'* (men) and *nitho'* or *iŋtho'* (women) indicate a familiar request: there is a connotation that the requested action will be of short duration and easy to accomplish. These enclitics call for *iŋ*-ablaut.

*Tho'hinyanŋkiŋ yetho'.* 'Just wait a minute!'

The enclitics *ye* (men and women) and *na* (women) express a combined command-request, *ye* has *iŋ*-ablaut, *na* has a-ablaut:

*O'makiyiŋ ye, wanu'ni ye.* 'Please help me. I'm lost'.

*Mni' huŋ'h mak'u' na!* 'Please give me some water.'

Besides these command enclitics, some of the enclitics in position 12 are used in sentences that have the nature of both statements (or questions) and commands. These will be described together with the other enclitics in position 12.

**9.** *se'čA*, e-ablaut; *načhe'čA*, a-ablaut. These enclitics indicate that the statement is a conjecture by the speaker. Lakhota speakers translating into English sentences containing these enclitics ordinarily include expressions such as *probably*, *I guess*, *I suppose*, and the like.

*Ekta'wapha kiŋ mağa'žu kte se'če.*  
'It will probably rain later on today.'

*Iyu'ha owi'čhayuspa pi kta načhe'če.*  
'I suppose they'll catch them all.'

**10.** *ke'yA* and *ke'ya pi* are the third-person singular and plural respectively of the verb *ke'yA* 'to say that'. Preceding A-words show a-ablaut. When used as enclitics, these words indicate that the speaker is quoting someone else. Such sentences always refer to events or states about which

the speaker has no direct, personal knowledge. Hence, *ke'yA* and *ke'ya pi* appear very frequently in historical narratives. The absence of *ke'ye* or *ke'ya pi* implies that the speaker has personal knowledge about the event or state he is reporting, unless the context is clearly one of reported information.

*Čhaŋkhe' thiblo'ku kiŋ waŋla'ka ke'ye.*  
'And then she beheld her elder brother, it is said.'

**11.** Enclitics in this position all indicate that the speaker is not emotionally neutral to what he is reporting. Feelings indicated include mild yearning, mild discomfort, amusement, and probably others as well. *lah̃* is a sentence closing form, whereas *la'ňčA* and *la'ňčakA* can be followed by enclitics in position 12. Preceding A-words show e-ablaut.

*Mni-pi'ğa waŋži' wačhiŋ' lah̃!* 'Gee, I sure would like a beer!'

*Waŋ li'la olu'luta lah̃!* 'Gosh it sure is sultry!'

*Iya'yekiya pi la'ňčake!* 'Boy, did they ever take off!'

**12.** Several enclitics mark various kinds of questions. *he*; *huŋwo'*; a-ablaut. *he* marks a direct question. Although both men and women use *he*, men use *huŋwo'* (pronounced [hNwNo] in rapid speech) in relatively formal situations. Most questions, even those containing an interrogative word end in *he* or *huŋwo'*.

*Tohaŋ'l ya'u' kta he?* 'When will you come?'

*Waši'ču kiŋ Paha'-sa'pa kiŋ iču' pi šni huŋwo'?*  
'Did not the White man take the Black Hills?'

*so*, *se*; e-ablaut. *So* (men) and *se* (women) mark a dubitative question. There is no presupposition that the person questioned knows the answer:

*To'škhe waši'čuya he' eya' pi so?* 'I wonder how you say that in English?'

*se'l*; a-ablaut. *se'l* also marks a dubitative question, but it presupposes an affirmative reply:

*Be'bela kiŋ wana' yuha' pi se'l?*

'I guess they've had their baby by now, huh?'

*s'ele'l*; a-ablaut. *s'ele'l* marks a tag question.

*Nahaŋ'ňči waš'a'ke šni s'ele'l?*  
'He isn't very strong yet, is he?'

*yelakha'*; e-ablaut.

*yelakha'* marks a sarcastic rhetorical question:

*Čhiŋča' kiŋ he waka'stake yelakha'.*

'Oh, so I'm the one who made the kid cry!'

Two enclitics from position class 12 are used to make deferential suggestions. They share the properties of a rhetorical question and a command.

*he'či*: a-ablaut. *he'či* is used when the speaker induces himself as a participant in the proposed action:

*Wana' uŋyaŋ' pi he'či.*

'Let's go now!' 'Should we go now?'

*Thalo' etaŋ' awa'<sup>2</sup>u he'či.*

'Should I bring some meat?' 'How would it be if I brought some meat?'

*kiŋ*; e-ablaut. *kiŋ* is used when the speaker does not include himself:

*Ogna' blo' etaŋ' aya'<sup>2</sup>u kiŋ.*

'Maybe you could bring some potatoes.' 'Would you like to bring some potatoes?'

Several enclitics in position 12 are used to mark sentences that are assertions rather than simple statements. Sentences containing these enclitics often correspond to emphatic statements in English, but many Lakhota examples do not seem to be particularly emphatic. The assertion may be a (generally recognized) fact, or it may be a personal opinion.

*ye*; e-ablaut. *ye* marks the mild assertion of a generally recognized fact:

*Osni' ye, thima' gla' pi yo!*

'It's cold, go back inside!'

*yelo'* (men), *yele'* (obsolescent, women) (*yelo'* becomes *welo'* when the immediately preceding vowel is /u/, /uŋ/ or /o/) and *kšt* (men), *kišto'* (women; *kišto'* is usually pronounced *kšto'* in rapid speech) are comparable. *kšt* is stronger than *yelo'*, *kišto'* alone is used by most women to correspond to both *yelo'* and *kšt* used by men. All require e-ablaut of a preceding A-word.

*Haŋ' hena'?uŋs čhebčhe'pa pi yelo'.*

‘Yes, each of the two is fat.’

*Aǵu'yapi-blu' etaŋ' wačhiŋ' kte kišto'.*

‘I’ll need some flour.’

*Hi...ya', he misuŋ'kala kšt.*

‘No - he is too my younger brother!’

*k'ʉŋ*: e-ablaut. *k'ʉŋ* marks a strongly asserted fact; it is often used to make it clear that the reference is to past time or completed action, *k'ʉŋ* is pronounced [uŋ] in rapid speech.

*Li'la hu'-masta'ka čha he'čhamu wačhiŋ' šni k'ʉŋ.*

‘I’m very tired and I do not want to do that!’

*Hokši'la kiŋ iye'ya pi k'ʉŋ.*

‘The boys did leave.’

*kiŋ*; e-ablaut. *kiŋ* is also used to mark a strong assertion. It can have scolding or sarcastic overtones.

*To'kša, eča'mu kte kiŋ.* ‘Just a minute. I’ll do it!’

*kšt* and *kišto'* are probably built on this *kiŋ*.

Asserted opinions are marked by several enclitics that vary from mild to very strong, *waŋ* (men) and *ma* (women) mark a mild opinion; *yewaŋ'* and *yema'* are stronger, *waŋ* and *ma* require a-ablaut, *yewaŋ'* and *yema'* require e-ablaut.

*Waŋ, he' heye' k'ʉŋ he'čhetu se'ča waŋ.*

‘Hey, what he said there seems to be right, by gosh!’

*Ši'yi, ka'ičhišniyaŋ e'gnake yema'!*

‘Mercy me, he went and put it wrong!’

*ħčA*; e-ablaut. *ħčA* is widely used in Lakota to strengthen the force of an accompanying word. It is thus much more free than most enclitics in terms of its sequential relations with other words. As a sentence-final enclitic, *ħčA* marks an emphatic statement.

Compare these examples of the two related uses of *hčA* (word emphasizer versus sentence emphasizer):

*Osni' hče šni.* 'It is not very cold.'

*Osni' šni hče.* 'Heh! It's not really cold!'

*ijče'ye*; e-ablaut. *ijče'ye* asserts an opinion but presupposes that the interlocutor will agree:

*Wino'na šuŋ'ka kiŋ wo'k'u šni ijče'ye.*

'Winona didn't feed the dog, right?'

Two (possibly archaic) enclitics mark assertions that the speaker believes to be true, but for which formal proof is lacking. These are *huŋše'* and *če'*; both require a-ablaut. The examples are from Buechel (1939).

*Ehaŋ'k'uŋ maŋpi'yata Wakhaŋ'-Thaŋ'ka-thi' kiŋ le' thiyo'pa huŋše'.*

'Verily this is no other than the house of God and the gate of heaven!'

*Ta'ku wo'wahtani wani'l taŋye'hči wo'?ečhuŋ ihuŋ'nikiya pi kta če', eya'pi če'.*

'I believe that they will finish everything blamelessly and well, as they say they will.'

*ni'*; a-ablaut. A strong wish that something might come-about is expressed by *ni'*:

*Hu-maka'weže šni ni'.*

'I hope I don't break my leg!'

*Wakhaŋ'-Thaŋ'ka uŋ'šimala ni'!*

'May God have mercy on me!'

Probably based on this *ni'* is *šni'* (note the stress), which expresses a similar strong desire, *šni'* requires e-ablaut.

*He' šuŋ'ka kiŋ he' kte' šni'.*

'I wish he would kill that dog!' 'He really ought to kill that dog!'

*kiŋlo'*; e-ablaut. a strong warning is expressed by *kiŋlo'*:

*Niya'htake kiŋlo'! 'Hey, watch out, he'll bite you!'*



Two enclitics are used to mark emphatic negative sentences. These are *ka* and *kačha'*. Both require e-ablaut of preceding A-words.

*Tase' he'čhamu wačhiŋ' ka!*

‘Of course I do not want to do that!’

*Wo'waši-ečhuŋ' kačha'*

‘He certainly does not work!’

*kačha'* usually has sarcastic or deprecating connotations. A better translation for the last example would be ‘Don’t tell me he works!’

*škha'*; a-ablaut. *škha'* is used to indicate that the statement is received knowledge, something about which the speaker has no direct, personal knowledge. As such, it appears frequently in historical and especially mythological narratives. Its meaning is ‘purportedly, supposedly, allegedly’.

*Ikto'mi ka'kkena tokhe' ečha'čha oma'ni-ya' haŋ škhe'.*

‘Iktomi (Trickster) was walking around aimlessly over there (they say).’

*tkha'*; a-ablaut. *tkha'* is frequently shortened to *kha'*. The enclitic appears to have several somewhat similar meanings, but the principal use is in conditional statements.

*Ma'za-ska' etaŋ' awa'<sup>2</sup> u kta tkha'.*

‘I should have brought some money.’

*Čhaŋ' waŋ bluha' k'<sup>2</sup> e'š siŋte'-hla kiŋ waka't'a tkha'.*

‘If I had (had had) a stick I would kill (would have killed) the rattle snake.’

*Lehaŋ'yela mat'a' tkha'.*

‘I almost died.’ (‘I would have died if...’)

*Wičha'hčala kiŋ he išna'la thi' he tkha'.*

‘That old man was living alone until recently.’

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## 11. Selected Vocabulary

The symbols *A* and *AD* at the ends of verbs in this list represent a vowel that changes, depending on grammatical context ([4.3.2.6](#)).

airplane *kiŋye'khiyapi* ‘they make them fly (in them)’

alive *ni'*

animal *wama'khaškaŋškaŋ* ‘those moving about on the earth’

ankle *iška'hu*

ant *thažu'sška*

antelope *thatho'kala* ‘antelope; domestic goat’

anus *uŋze'* ‘anus; buttock’

apple *thaspaŋ'*

Arapaho *Maŋpi'yatho'* ‘Blue-sky (Indian)’ (This is apparently a reference to tattoos.)

Arikara *Phala'ni* ‘Arikara, Ree’

arm *isto'*

arrow *wahiŋ'kpe*

artichoke *phaŋgi'* (Jerusalem artichoke; domestic turnip)

ash tree *pse'htiŋ*

ashes *čaŋho'ta*

Assiniboine *Ho'he*

aunt *thuŋwiŋ'* ‘father’s sister’ (The mother’s sister is called ‘[mother](#)’.)

aurora borealis *wana'giwači'pi* ‘spirit dance’

automobile *iye'chiŋkiŋyaŋke* ‘runs by itself’

awl See [needle](#)

axe *nazuŋ'spe; iča'kse* ‘instrument for chopping’

baby *hokši'čala*

*be'belá* (this is probably a loanword from French *be'be'*)

back *hiŋye'te* 'upper back'

*čhuwi'* 'back below shoulder blades'

bacon *wašij'* 'bacon; animal fat'

bad *ši'čA*

badger *ňoka'*

ball *tha'pa*

bathe *nuwAĎ'* 'to swim, to bathe'

be *e'* 'be a particular one (of animate things only)';

*haŋ'* 'be upright (of inanimate things only)';

*he'čha* 'be such a one, be of such a kind';

*hiye'yA* 'be located here and there (of inanimate things only)';

*uŋ'* 'be, exist (of animate things only); be located somewhere (of all things)';

*yukhAĎ'* 'have, be (of intimate possessions only)';

*ni'čA* 'not to have, not to be (of intimate possessions only)'

beads *pšitho'*

beadwork *wakšu'pi* 'decoration'

beans *omni'ča*

bear *matho'*

beautiful See [good](#)

beaver *čha'pa*

bed *oyuŋ'ke*

bee *theňmuŋ'ğazizi'la* 'little yellow banded fly'

beer *mnipi'ğa*

bell *ňla'ňla*

belly *thezi'*

bent *ško'pA*

big *thaŋ'ka*

bighorn sheep See [mountain sheep](#)

bird *ziŋtka'la*

bite *yaħta'kA*

bitter *pha'*

black *sa'pA*

blackbird *wa'ħpathaŋ'ka*

Blackfeet Sioux *Siha'sapa*

Black person *Ha'sapa* 'black skin'

blood *we'*

blue *tho'* 'blue; green'

boil *pi'ğA* 'to be boiling'; *piħyA'* 'to cause to boil'

bone *hohu'* ,

book *wo'wapi* 'book; letter; flag'

bow *ita'zipa*

boy *hokši'la*

brain *nasu'la*

brave *ohi'tika*

bread *ağu'yapi*

break *kawe'ğA*

breast *aze'* 'female breast'

breechcloth *čhegna'ke* 'penis cover'

bring *ahi'* 'to bring here'; *a'u'* 'to be bringing here'; *ahi'yu* 'to leave to bring here'; *agli'* 'to bring home here'; *aku'* 'to be bringing home here'; *agli'yaču* 'to leave to bring home here'

brother *čhiye'* 'older brother of a man'; *thiblo'* 'older brother of a woman'; *suŋka'la* 'younger brother of man or woman'

brown *ği'*

Brule Sioux *Sičhaŋ'ğu'* 'burned thigh'

buffalo cow *pte'*

buffalo berry *maštiŋ'čaphute'* 'rabbit lip'

buffalo bull *thathaŋ'ka*

bug *wablu'ska*

burn *ile'* bum, blaze up; *špaŋ'* 'be burned, to be cooked (food), to be ripe (fruit)'

bush *hu'*

butcher *pha'tA*

butterfly *kimi'mila*

buttock See [anus](#)

buy *ophe'thuŋ*

buzzard *heča'*

cactus *uŋkče'la*

cafe *owo'tethi'pi* 'eating house'

calf of leg *hučho'ğiŋ*

carry on back *k<sup>2</sup>iŋ'* 'carry; pack'

cat *igmu'la*

catch *oyu'spA*

chair *čhaŋ'a'kaŋyaŋka'pi* 'wood to sit on'

cherry See [chokecherry](#)

chest *makhu'*

Cheyenne *Šahi'yela*

chicken *khokhe'yaḥ'ʔanla; khokho'yaḥ'ʔanla* 'chicken, rooster'

chief *ithaŋ'čhaŋ*

child *wakhaŋ'yeža*

Chippewa see [Ojibwa](#)

chokecherry *čhaŋpha'*

church *owa'čhekiye* 'prayer places'; *thi'piwakhaŋ'* 'holy house'

claw *šake'* 'claw (of animal or bird); fingernail (of human)'

cloth *mniḥu'ha*

cloud See [sky](#)

coat See [shirt](#)

coffee *wakha'lyapi*

cold *čhuwi'ta* 'to feel cold (internal sensation; used of animate things only)';  
*sni'* 'to feel cold (external sensation; used of inanimate things only)';  
*osni'* (used of atmosphere and weather)

come *gli'* 'arrive at home here'; *gliču'* 'leave for home here'; *hi'* 'arrive here'; *hiyu'* 'leave for here'; *ku'* 'be on the way home here'; *u'* 'be on the way here'

converse *wo'glakA* 'converse, talk'

cook *špaŋyAD'* 'to cause to be burned; be cooked'; see [burn](#)

corn *wagmi'za*

cottonwood *wa'ğáčhaŋ'* 'brittle wood'

count See [read](#)

cow *ptegle'ška, pteble'ška* 'spotted buffalo'; *ptewa'niyaŋpi* 'pet buffalo'

cowbird *wa'hpaño'ta*

coyote *šungma'nitu* 'wilderness dog'; *maya'sleča*

cradleboard *iyo'k'ijpa*

crane *phehan'*

crazy *witko'*

Cree *Šahi'ya*

creek *wakpa'la*

cricket *psipsi'čala* 'little hopper'

crippled *hušte'*

crow *khaŋgi'*

Crow *Khaŋgi'wičha'ša* 'Crow person'; *Psa'loka* (borrowed from Crow)

cry *če'yA*

cup *wi'yatke* 'instrument for drinking'

cut *waksa'ksA*

dance *wačhi'* 'to dance'; *wačhi'pi* 'a dance'

day *aŋpe'tu*

daughter *čhuŋkši'*

deer *tha'hča*

die *t'A'* 'be dead'

digging stick *wi'wopta* 'instrument for digging'

dish *wakši'ča*

do *eča'²uŋ*, *ečhuŋ'*

dog *šuŋ'ka*

donkey *suŋ'suŋla* 'donkey; mule'  
door *thiyo'pa*  
dragonfly *thuswe'ča*  
dream *ihaŋ'blA*  
dress *čhuwi'gnaka* 'back cover'  
dried meat *pa'pa*  
drink *yatkAD'*  
drum *čhaŋ'čeğa* 'wooden kettle'  
dry *sa'ka*  
duck *mağa', mağa'ksiča*  
eagle *waŋbli'*  
ear *nu'že* 'human ear'; *nakpa'* 'animal ear'  
earring *owiŋ'*  
earth *makha'* 'earth, di rt'  
east *wiyo'hijyanpata* 'where the sun comes up'  
eat *yu'tA*  
eat up *thebyA'*  
egg *wi'tka* 'egg; testicle'  
eight *šaglo'ğaŋ*  
elk *heňa'ka* 'branched horns'  
elm *p<sup>?</sup>e'čhaŋ*  
enemy *tho'ka*  
fall (season) *ptaŋye'tu*



fall down *hiŋħpa'yA*

fat *čhe'pA* 'to be fat'; see also [bacon](#)

father *ate'* (term of address); *ate'waye kiŋ* 'the one I have for father'

feather *wi'yaka*

female *wiŋ'yela*

field See [garden](#)

finger nail See [claw](#)

fire *phe'ta*

firefly *uŋze'blinkblink* 'blinking arse' (jocose)

fish *hoğaŋ'*

five *za'ptaŋ*

flag *wo'wapi*

flea *psiča'la; ha'la*

flower *wana'ħča*

fly *theħmu'ğa, thoħmu'ğa, thaħmuğa* 'housefly; horsefly'; *kiŋyaŋ'* 'to fly'

fog *p<sup>2</sup>o'*

food *wo'yute*

foot *si'*

forehead *ithu'hu*

four *to'pa, to'b*

fox *thokha'la, šuŋği'la*

frog *gnaška'*

gall bladder *phizi'*

garden *wo'župi* 'garden, field'

gasoline See [grease](#)

gas station *wi'gli'oi'nažij* 'gasoline stopping place'

girl *wičhiŋ'čala*; See also [woman](#)

give *k'u'*

give back *kičhu'*

go *yA'*; be on the way there; *glA'* be on the way home there; *i'* arrive there; *khi'* arrive at home there; *iya'yA* leave for there; *khiglA'* leave for home there

goat *tha'hča šuŋ'kala* 'dog deer'

good *wašte'* 'good; beautiful'

goose *mağa'šapa* 'dirty duck'

government (U.S.) *thuŋka'šila* 'grandfather'

grandchild *thako'ža*

grandfather *thuŋka'šila*

grandmother *uŋči'* (maternal), *khuŋ'si* (paternal)

grape *čuŋwi'yapehe* '(it) wraps around a tree"

grass *pheži'*

grasshopper *gnugnu'ska*; *pheži'hophop* 'grasshopper' (jocose) (note that /p/ is not replaced by /b/)

gray *ħo'ta*

grease *wi'gli* 'grease; gasoline, oil'

green See [blue](#)

grind *yukpaŋ'*

Gros Ventre See [Hidatsa](#)

guts *šupe'*

hail *wasu'*

hair *phehiŋ'* 'head hair'

hairpipe breastplate *wawo'slatawana'p<sup>2</sup>iŋ* 'hairpipe necklace'

hand *nape'*

hard *suta'*

hat *wapho'štaŋ*

have *yuha'* (used only of alienable things); see also [be](#)

hawk *čhetan'*

head *nata', pha'*

hear *naħ<sup>?</sup>uŋ'*

heart *čhaŋte'*

heavy *tke'*

heron *hokha'*

Hidatsa *Ĥewa'ktokta* 'Hidatsa, Gros Ventre'

high *waŋka'tuya*

hill *paha'*

hit *aphA'*

horns *he'*

horse *šun'kawakhaŋ'* 'wonderful dog'

draft horse *šunḡwo'waši* 'working horse'

mare *šunḡwiŋ'yela* 'female horse'

saddle horse *šunḡk<sup>?</sup>a'kaŋyaŋkapi* 'horse they sit on'

stallion *šunḡkhi'yuhā* 'breeding horse'

hospital *okhu'žethi'pi* 'sick house'

hot *kha'tA*

house *čhaŋ'thipi* 'wooden lodge'

Hunkpapa Sioux *Huŋ'kpapha* 'Hunkpapa, Standing Rock Sioux'

husband *hiŋna'*

ice *ča'ğa*

Indian *Lakho'ta* 'Sioux Indian; American Indian'

iron see [metal](#)

jail *oka'skethi'pi* 'detention house'

jerkey *waka'blapi* 'what has been pounded flat'

jump *psi'čA*

June berry *wi'pazuŋtka. wi'pazuŋtkaŋ, wi'pazukha*

kettle *če'ğa*

kick *nahta'ka*

kidney *ažuŋ'tka*

kill *kte'*

knee *čhaŋkpe'*

knife *mi'la*

know *slolyA'*

lake *ble'*

land *makho'čhe*

laugh *iha'* 'laugh; smile'

leaf *waŋpe'*

leather *theŋpi'*

left-handed *čhatka'*

leg *hu'*

legging *huŋska'*

lie (recline) *yunka'*

lie down *ħpa'yA*

light in weight *kap'o'žA*

lightning *wakiŋ'yantunwan'pi* 'The Thunderers are blinking'

like *wašte'lakA* 'to like'; *s'e* 'like. as, as though'

lip, lower *iha'*  
upper *phute'*

little *či'k<sup>2</sup>ala, či'stila, či'sčila*

live *thi'*

liver *phi'*

lizard *agle'ska*

lodge *thi'pi*

lodge cover *a'kaħpe*

lodge pole *thušu'*

look for *ole'*

louse *heya'*

love *theħi'la*

Lower Brule Sioux *Khulwi'čhaša* 'Lower person'

lung *čaħu'*

magpie *halha'ta; unkče'kiħa* 'buries his dung'

make *ka'ğA*

male *bloka'*

man *wičha'ša*

young man *khoška'laka*

old man *wičha'hčala*

Mandan *Miwa'tani*

mare See [horse](#)

meadowlark *thaši'yagnupa'*

meat *thalo'*

medicine *phežu'ta* 'herbal roots'

metal (iron) *ma'za*

Mexican *spayo'la* (This is probably a loanword from French *espagnol*)

milk *asaṅ'pi*

Milky Way *wana'githačhaṅ'ku* 'ghost road'

mink *i'khusaṅ*

Minneconjou Sioux *Mnikho'wožu* 'those who plant by water', *Mnikho'waṅžu*

mirror *mi'yoglas'ij*

moccasin *haṅm'i'kčeka* 'ordinary shoe'

money *ma'zaska'* 'silver' 'white metal'

moon *wi'* 'luminary'; *haṅhe'piwi'* 'night luminary'

mosquito *čhaphuṅ'ka*

mother *ina'* (term of address); *ina'waye kiṅ* 'the one I have for mother'

mountain *hče'*

mountain lion *igmu'thaṅ'ka* 'big cat'

mountain sheep *he'čhiṅškayapi* 'they make spoons from their horns'

mouse *ithuŋ'kala*

mouth *i'*

movie *wo'wapiškaŋškaŋ* 'moving picture'

mule See [donkey](#)

muskrat *siŋkphe'*, *siŋkphe'la*

mustache *phutiŋ'hiŋ* 'upper lip hair'

narrow *oči'k'a*

navel *čhekpa'*

necklace *wana'p'iŋ*

needle *thahiŋ'špa* 'needle, awl'

new (young) *the'ča* 'new; young'

night *haŋhe'pi*

nine *napčiŋ'yunka*

north *wazi'yata*

northern lights See [aurora borealis](#)

nose *phasu'*

nostril *phaħla'te*

Oglala Sioux *Ogla'la* 'Oglala Sioux, Pine Ridge Sioux'

oil See [grease](#)

Ojibwa *Ĥaħa'thuŋwaŋ* 'those who live at the falls'

old *kaŋ'* 'old, worn out'

one *waŋ'či* (used in counting); *waŋži'* (used in specifying an amount)

onion *pšiŋ'*

otter *ptaŋ'*

owl *hiŋhaŋ'*

pack *wak<sup>2</sup>iŋ'* 'backpack'

paint See [write](#)

pants See [trousers](#)

parfleche bag *wo'kpaŋ*

pemmican *wasna'*

penis *čhe'*; *susu'* 'testicle(s); male genitals'

people *oya'te* 'people; tribe'

pepper *yamnu'mnuḡapi*, *yamnu'mnužapi* (This term originally referred to the berries of the hackberry tree.)

picture *ito'wapi*

pig *khukhu'še*

pigeon *wakiŋ'yela*

pine *wazi'*

Pine Ridge Sioux See [Oglala Sioux](#)

pipe *čhaŋnu'pa*

pipestem *čhaŋnu'pasiŋte'* 'pipe tail'

play *ška'tA*

plum *khaŋ'ta*

porcupine *phahiŋ'* 'sharp hair'

potato *blo'*

prairie chicken *šiyo'*

prairie dog *pispi'za* 'squeaking, barking'



puppy *šunǰpa'la*

quillwork *wo'ska*

quill *owiŋ'ža*

rabbit *maštiŋ'ča, maštiŋ'čala*

raccoon *wičhi'tegleğa* 'striped face'

rain *mağa'žu*

rainbow *wi'gmuŋke* 'snare, trap'

rattle *wagmu'ha*

rattlesnake *siŋte'ħla* 'rattle tail'

rawhide *thaha'lo*

read *yawa'* 'read; count'

red *ša'*

relative *ota'kuye*

rib *thuču'hu*

rice *pšij'*

rifle *ma'zawakhaŋ'* 'wonderful metal'

ripe See [cook](#)

river *wakpa'*

root *hu'ta*

rope *wi'khaŋ*

Rosebud Sioux See [Brule Sioux](#)

run *iŋ'yaŋka*

sack *wo'žuha*

saddle *čhaŋ'wak'ij* 'wooden back rack'

salt *mnisku'ya* 'sweet water'

Sans Arc Sioux *Ita'zibčho* 'those without bows'

Santee Sioux *Isaŋ'yethi*

say *eyA'*

school *owa'yawa* 'reading place'

see *waŋyaŋ'kA*

seven *šako'wiŋ*

sew *kaye'ğA*

sharp (edge) *phe'*

sharp (point) *phe'stola*

shawl *šina'*

sheep *he'čhiŋškayapi* 'they make spoons from their horns' 'bighorn sheep, mountain sheep';  
*ptiŋ'čala* 'domestic sheep'

shield *waha'čhaŋka*

shin *hublo'*

shirt (coat) *o'gle*

shoe *haŋ'pa*

shoot *khute'*

short *pte'čela*

Shoshone *Su'suni*

shoulder *ablo'*

sick *khu'žA* 'to be nauseous'; *yazaŋ'* 'to hurt'

sinew *khaŋ'*

sing *lowaŋ'*

sister *thaŋke'* 'older sister of a man'; *čhuwe'* 'older sister of a woman'; *thaŋkši'* 'younger sister of a man'; *thaŋka'* 'younger sister of a woman'

sit *yaŋkA'*

sit down *i'yotakA*

six *ša'kpe*

skinny *thama'heča*

skunk *maka'*

sky *maŋpi'ya* 'sky; cloud'

sleep *ištiŋ'mA* 'to be asleep'

sleepy *ħwa'*

smoke *šo'ta; uŋ'pA* 'to smoke tobacco'

snake *zuze'ča*

snow *wa'* 'fallen snow'; *iča'mna* 'falling snow'

socks *huŋya'khuŋ*

soda pop *kapho'papi* 'bursting, popping'

soft *phaŋšphaŋ'ža*

son *čhiŋkši'*

soup *wahaŋ'pi*

south *ito'kağata*

speak *iyA'*

spear *wahu'kheza*

spider *iŋkto'; iŋkto'mi*

spoon *čhiŋška'*

spring (season) *we'tu*

spring of water *wiwi'la*

squash *wagmu'* ‘squash; gourd’

squirrel *ziča'*

stand *ogna'ke* ‘stand, chest’; *na'žin* ‘be standing’

stand up *ina'žin*

Standing Rock Sioux See [Hunkpapa Sioux](#)

star *wičha'hpi*

stone *in'yan*; *iħ'e'*

store *mas'o'phiye* ‘cashbox’

stove *oče'thi*

sugar *čhanhan'pi* ‘tree juice’

summer *bloke'tu*

sun *wi'* ‘luminary’; *an'pawi'* ‘day luminary’

sunflower *waħča'zi'* ‘yellow flower’

swallow *išta'ničathan'ka* ‘cliff or barn swallow’; *napčA'* ‘to swallow; to internalize knowledge’

sweet *sku'yA*

swim See [bathe](#)

table *wa'glotapi*

tail *sin'te'*

talk See [converse](#)

take *a'i'* ‘to take or convey there’; *akhi'* ‘to take or convey home there’; *a'yA* ‘to be taking or conveying there’; *aglA'* ‘to be taking or conveying home there’; *e'yayA* ‘to leave to take or convey there’; *akhi'yaglA* ‘to leave to take or convey home there’

take *iču'* 'take, get'

tall *haŋ'skA* 'tall; long'

tea *waḥpe'* 'leaves'; *waḥpe'khalya'pi* 'leaf beverage'

telephone *mas<sup>?</sup>a'pha*

ten *wikče'mna*

teepee See [lodge](#)

testicle *itka'*; see also [egg](#)

Teton Sioux *Thi'thuŋwaŋ*

thick *šo'kA*

thigh (side) *sičhaŋ'*  
(front) *šu'te*

thin *zizi'pa*

three *ya'mni*

throat *lote'*

thunder *wakiŋ'yaŋhothuŋpi* 'The Thunderers are calling'

tired *watu'kha, hu'stakA*

tobacco *čhaŋli'*

tomato See [wildrose](#)

tongue *čeži'*

tooth *hi'*

travois *čhuwi'č<sup>?</sup>iŋpa*

tree *čhaŋ'* 'tree; wood'

tribe See [people](#)

trousers *uŋzo'giŋ*

turkey *wagle'kšan*

turnip *thiŋ'psila* 'wild turnip'; see also [artichoke](#)

turtle *khe'ya*

two *nu'pa, nu'm*

Two-Kettle Sioux *O<sup>2</sup>o'henupa* 'those who boil meat twice'

uncle *lekši'* 'mother's brother' (The father's brother is called 'father'.)

use *uŋ'* 'use; wear'

vegetation *wo'hě* 'weeds'

vulva *šan'*

wagon *čhaŋpa'gmiyaŋpi* 'wood that is made to roll along'

walk *ma'ni*

warbonnet *wapha'ha*

warclub *iŋ'yaŋkape'mnipi* 'stone club'

wash *yuža'ža*

water *mni'*

watermelon *špaŋ'šniyuta'pi* 'they eat it raw';  
*wagmu'špaŋšni* 'uncooked squash'

wear See [use](#)

weasel *ithuŋ'kasaŋ', ithuŋ'kasaŋ'la*

weed See [vegetation](#)

west *wiyo'hěyata* 'where the sun goes down'

wet *spa'yA*

whiskey *mni'wakhaŋ'* 'wonderful water'

white *saŋ'* 'dull white'; *ska'* 'clear white'

White man *Waši'čuŋ, Waši'ču*

wide *o'pta*

wife *thawi'ču*

wildrose *uŋžij'žijtkā* 'rose hip; tomato'

willow *čhaŋša'sa* 'red stem dogwood'; *čhaŋwi'wila* 'common willow'

wind *thate'*

window *ožan'žanglepi* 'frame to admit light'

wing *hupa'hu*

winter *wani'yetu*

woman *wiŋ'yaŋ* 'woman'; *wikho'skalaka* 'young woman'; *winu'hčala* 'old woman'

wolf *šunġma'nituthaŋ'ka* 'big coyote'

wood See [tree](#)

write *owa'* 'write; paint'

Yankton Sioux *Ihaŋ'gthuŋwaŋ* 'those dwelling at the end'

yellow *zi'*

young See [new](#)

# Sketch of Lakhotá, a Siouan Language. Pt.II

DAVID S. ROOD AND ALLAN R. TAYLOR

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## 9. Verbs



Because it is the only obligatory element in the sentence, the verb is the most important kind of word in Lakshota. It is also the most complex. Analyzing verbs requires taking into account three different kinds of information: in what kinds of sentences a given verb may occur, what affixes or other markings a given verb may have, and how a verb may be expanded or changed in its basic meaning.

## 9.1. Sentence and Affix Types

Part of the meaning of every Lakshota verb is a specification of the number of “participants” (the technical term is “arguments”), or things to which nominals or pronominal affixes can refer, in the event the verb describes. Simple sentences can, depending on the verbal category, imply zero, one, two, or three participants.

Verbs that imply one participant are in turn divided into two groups, depending somewhat on what they mean. If the verb describes an activity over which its participant has control, or which the participant can carry out willfully, it will select an affix from the set that marks the subject (technically, “agent”) of a two-participant sentence. But if the situation described by the verb involves no will or control on the part of its participant, then that participant will be marked as if it were the object (technically: “patient”) of a two-argument verb. These semantic definitions are not perfectly reliable, and occasionally a verb takes affixes that seem to belong logically to the other category. For example, *ni* ‘to be alive, not dead’ takes agent forms, while *kiŋ’za* ‘squeak, as a mouse does’ takes patient forms. See Legendre and Rood (1992) for a detailed discussion of these two classes.

Verbs thus fall into several classes according to their participant types: impersonal (no participants), stative (one objectlike participant), active intransitive (one subjectlike participant), transitive (two participants), and ditransitive (three participants). There is also a sixth class with very few members that ‘takes two objectlike participants: this class is called “stative transitive.” These verbs are so rare that “stative” will be used consistently for the one-participant statives in what follows, and “transitive” for “active transitive.”

### 9.1.1. Impersonal Verbs

Impersonal verbs do not take any personal affixes. Most of them are limited semantically to expressions of natural states such as the weather or the time of day. Examples include:

*Aŋpe'tu kiŋ le' osni.* ‘It’s cold today.’

*Mahe'l o<sup>2</sup>i'yokpaze.* ‘It was very dark inside.’

*Iča'mna hče šni.* ‘It’s not snowing much.’

*Haŋhe'pi.* ‘It is night.’

There is also a small number of impersonal verbal expressions that refer to speaker-perceived states such as obligations, necessity, apparentness, and the like. Here are examples with the verbs *phi'ča*, *iye'čheča*, *s'ele'čheča*, and *he'ča*:

*Ečhuŋ'*      *phi'ča*      *šni.*  
do            feasible      not  
‘It can not be done, it is not feasible.’

*Wičhiŋ'čala*    *kiŋ khu'ža*    *iye'čeča.*  
little.girl      the sick      seem  
‘It seems that the dog has eaten the meat.’

*Šuŋ'ka*    *kiŋ thalo'*    *kiŋ yu'te*    *s'ele'čeča.*  
dog      the meat    the eat      seem  
‘It seems that the dog has eaten the meat.’

*Phežu'ta etaŋ'*    *iya'ču*    *kte*      *he'ča.*  
medicine some you.take potential be.necessary  
‘You must take some medicine’.

These verbs can all be used with stative personal affixes, but with somewhat different meanings. For example, with personal affixes *he'ča* means ‘to be such a one’ and *phi'ča* means ‘to be glad’.

### 9.1.2. Stative Verbs

Stative verbs ordinarily describe states or conditions. They are most reliably identified not by their meaning, but by the personal affixes they take. ‘I’ and ‘you’ with stative verbs are always expressed by *ma* and *ni* respectively. (Further details of affixation are given in [9.3.](#))

Examples of stative verbs are *khu'žA* ‘nauseated’ (*makhu'že* ‘I am nauseated’), *i'-puza* ‘thirsty’ (*i'-mapu'za* ‘I am thirsty’), *wašte'* ‘good’ (*niwa'šte* ‘you are good’), and *zi'* ‘yellow; pale’ (*nizi'* ‘you are pale’).

Almost all nouns can also be used as stative verbs identifying the noun, although the verb *he'ča* ‘to be such a one’ can also provide this meaning:

*Wima'čaša.*            ‘I am a man.’  
*Wičha'ša hema'ča.*

*Nila'khota he?*      ‘Are you an Indian?’  
*Lakho'ta heni'ča he?*

*He' čhaŋ'.*            ‘That is a tree.’  
*Hena' šuŋ'ka pi.*      ‘Those are dogs.’

### 9.1.3. Stative transitive Verbs

Some transitive verbs ([see 9.1.](#)) permit two patients in their semantics. Most common among of them is *itha'wa* ‘own’ ([see 8.4.1.](#)), with which one can say *Nimi'thawa* ‘you are mine’. Other examples are *iye'nimačeča* ‘you look like me’ and *iyo'nimakiphi* ‘I find you congenial’. Additional examples are given in Boas and Deloria (1941:77).

#### 9.1.4. Active intransitive Verbs

Active intransitive verbs are, like stative verbs, restricted to sentences with one participant; but these verbs take the affixes *wa* ‘I’ and *ya* ‘you’ (or variants thereof, see [9.3.](#)), instead of *ma* and *ni*. Semantically, most of these verbs describe actions that the subject can perform. Examples include *hi* ‘arrive’ (*wahi* ‘I have arrived’), *wačhi* ‘dance’ (*wawačhi* ‘I dance’), *oki’hi* ‘be able’ (*oya’kihi* ‘you can’), and *na’žij* ‘stand’ (*naya’žij* ‘you stand’).

#### 9.1.5. Active transitive Verbs

Active transitive verbs require two participants in their sentences, an agent (subject) and a patient (object). Consequently they also permit two affixes to occur with them (inflectional details are given in [9.3.](#)). Examples include *wan̄yan̄ka* ‘see’, *aphA* ‘hit’, *slolyA* ‘know’, *iyeyA* ‘find’, and *kte* ‘kill’.

Many Lakota transitive verbs correspond to English verbs that are optionally transitive. For example, in English people say ‘we are eating now’ or ‘we are eating meat’; the first sentence uses ‘eat’ intransitively, the second uses it transitively. Very few Lakota verbs have this option. Two that do are *ška’tA* ‘play’ or ‘play a game’ and *han̄ble* ‘dream’ or ‘dream about’. A Lakota transitive verb that is used as an intransitive verb ordinarily requires the prefix *wa-*, which attributes an indefinite or implied object to the verb: *nah̄’uŋ* ‘to hear’, *wana’h̄’uŋ* ‘to listen; to obey’; *manu* ‘to steal an object’, *wama’nu* ‘to steal things’. In some cases this *wa-* is concealed by sound changes: *yu’tA* ‘to eat’, but *wo’tA* ‘to eat a meal’; *iwan̄yan̄ka* ‘to examine, look at’; *wi’wan̄yan̄ka* ‘to examine things; to make a judgment.’

#### 9.1.6. Verbs Requiring Three Complements

Finally, there are a few Lakota verbs that require three participants in their sentences. Verbs of this kind are *k’u* ‘to give something to someone’ and *la* ‘to ask someone for something’.

Actually, most transitive and active and some stative verbs permit an indirect object ([8.](#)) in their sentence, but in this case the form of the verb itself is changed to show that a third participant has been added ([9.3.8.](#)).

### 9.2. Verbal Derivation

#### 9.2.1. Complex Stem Formation

Lakota speakers freely form compound verb stems for special meanings. Usually this is accomplished by prefixing a noun, an adverb, or another verb to the basic root. Thus from *waya’wa* ‘to read; to attend school’ and *gli* ‘to arrive home, coming’ is derived *waya’wa-gli* ‘to have come home from school’; with *iglu’štAḶ* ‘to finish for oneself’ is formed *waya’wa-iglu’štAḶ* ‘to have finished school’, and so on. Some other examples include:

*šun̄n̄<sup>2</sup>a’kan̄yan̄ka* (*šun̄ka* ‘horse’, *akan̄* ‘on’, *yan̄ka* ‘sit’) ‘to ride horseback’

*ločhiŋ'* (*lo* 'food', not used as a free form today, and *čhiŋ'* 'want') 'to be hungry'

*wakši'yužaža* (*wakši'ča* 'dishes', *yuža'ža* 'to wash') 'to wash dishes'

*i'-puza* (*i'* 'mouth', *pu'za* 'be dry') 'to be thirsty'

In addition to these more or less obvious compounds, complex stems are often formed with prefixes. The first set of these prefixes sometimes, but not always, has adverbial meanings: *i-* 'with, instrumental', *o-* 'inside', *a-* 'on the surface of: because of', *khi-* 'at the middle'.

Examples of these prefixes are:

*iya'tkAD* (*yatkAD*' 'to drink') 'to drink with, to use for drinking'

*otho'* (*tho'* 'to be blue or green') 'to be bruised'

*ona'phA* (*naphA*' 'to run away, to flee') 'to flee into'

*apa'hpa* (*paħpa'* 'to push over') 'to push over onto'

*ale'žA* (*le'žA* 'to urinate') 'to urinate on'

*ačhaŋ'tešiča* 'to be sad because of' (*čhaŋte'sičA* 'to be sad')

*khiča'ksA* {*kaksA*' 'sever by striking'} 'to break in the middle by striking'

*khiwa'psakA* (*wapsa'ka* 'to sever a string') 'to cut a string in two'

The meaning that has been added by the prefix is not always easy to specify. Compare, for example, *oma'ni* 'to travel' and *ma'ni* 'to walk': *ayu'stAD* 'to leave alone' and *yuštAD*' 'to finish'.

In a few cases, verbs exist only with the prefix; an equivalent form without the prefix cannot be found. An example of this is *ali'* 'to climb on, to step on'.

Another set of prefixes has clear instrumental meaning. Seven of these are used very frequently; an eighth appears rarely. The instrumental prefixes often appear together with one of the adverbial prefixes just discussed.

In some cases the prefixes are added to verbs that are also used without the instrumental prefixes. In other cases (probably in most), an equivalent verb without the prefix is not used. The prefixes, with examples, are given beginning with the rather rare prefix *pu-*:

*pu-* 'by generalized pressure'

*puspA*' 'to glue, to seal'

*opu'gi* 'to stuff soft material into an opening'

*ka-* 'by means of a blow'

*kače'yA* 'to cause to cry by striking'

*kable'čA* 'to shatter by hitting'

*kaħlo'kA* 'to chop a hole in something'

*ka* is also used in verbs that refer to action of wind, or other more or less spontaneous actions:

*kažo'* 'to fart'

*kağarj'* 'to blow open'.

*na-* 'by foot action'

*nat<sup>2</sup>A'* 'to kill by stepping on'

*nable'čA* 'to shatter something with the foot'

*naħlo'kA* 'to kick a hole in something'.

*na-* is used in verbs that refer to action accomplished by heat. It is also used when the action occurs by spontaneous inner force:

*našli'* 'to ooze out'

*nagmu'* 'to curl up, to twist (drying material)'

*naša'* 'to blush'.

*pa-* 'by pushing or by pressure with the hands or the body'

*pa<sup>2</sup>i'le* 'to ignite by pushing, as a flashlight'

*pable'čA* 'to shatter by sitting on'

*paħlo'kA* 'to pierce the ears'

*wa-* 'by cutting with a blade'

*waža'ža* 'to notch, to make forked by cutting or sawing'

*wable'čA* 'to shatter by attempting to cut'

*waħlo'kA* 'to make a miscut while skinning'

*wo-* 'by piercing with a pointed object'

*woħla'* 'to make something sound (ring) by shooting it'

*woble'čA* 'to break into pieces by striking with a pestle or by shooting'

*wo-* is also used in verbs that refer to action by blowing:

*wo<sup>2</sup>i'le* 'to make a fire blaze by blowing on it'.

*ya-* 'by means of the mouth or the teeth; by speaking'

*yahta'kA* 'to bite'

*yable'čA* 'to shatter by biting'

*yaħlo'kA* 'to gnaw a hole'

*yaši'čA* 'to malign' ('bad mouth')

*yu-* 'by means of the hands'

*yuğaŋ'* 'to open up' (as a door or window)

*yuble'čA* 'to shatter with the hand'

*yuħlo'kA* 'to make a hole with the hand'

*yu-* is also used in verbs that have a general causative meaning ([9.2.2.1](#)).

## 9.2.2. Class-changing Processes

The verbs that fit into the categories in [9.1](#) may either belong there inherently or be brought into that category by a derivational process. Thus, for instance, stative and intransitive verbs may be made transitive ('be sick' changes to 'make sick' or 'sing' changes to 'cause to sing' or 'let sing'). The indefinite object prefix *wa* ([9.1.4](#)) could be listed here, too, as a device-for changing transitive verbs into active intransitives.

### 9.2.2.1. Causatives

Lakhota stative and intransitive verbs are made transitive by means of a causative construction. Transitive verbs may also be made causative, in which case they become ditransitive verbs. There are three causative constructions:

1) Stative verbs that describe size or shape (so that the change being caused is one of degree, not of kind) and verbs of value judgment are made causative with the instrumental prefix *yu* ([9.2.1](#)):

*či'k'ala* 'small' *yuči'k'ala* 'reduce in size'

*haŋ'ska* 'long' *yuhaŋ'ska* 'lengthen'

*taŋyaŋ'* 'well' *yutaŋ'yaŋ'* 'make right, fix up'

*wašte'* 'good' *yuwa'ste* 'improve, correct'.

2a) Stative verbs that refer to other kinds of conditions are made causative by using the suffixed auxiliary *-yA*; *-yA* is an active verb. Examples:

*ğu'* 'be burned' *ğuyA'* 'to scorch'

*sa'pA* 'to be black' *sabyA'* 'to blacken'.

An interesting illustration of the meaning differences between (1) and (2a) is the root *ska'* 'be white', which accepts both causatives: *yuska'* means 'to clean; to make whiter', while *skayA'* means 'to paint white; to whiten'.

Many of the verbs that take *-yA'* for the general causative also take instrumental prefixes for special kinds of causative meaning; in these cases *-yA* is not used. Thus, from *khu'žA* 'to be nauseated' can be derived *yukhu'žA* 'to harass someone until he becomes sick' and *yakhu'žA* 'to talk someone into being sick'.

2b) Active and transitive verbs may also be made causative with *-yA* if the causation was accidental or unintentional or indirect:

*čhiŋ'* 'want', *čhiŋyA'* 'to cause to want' (for example, to cause someone to want food by eating in front of him)

*mağa'žu* 'to rain', *mağa'žuyA* 'to cause to rain' (for example, by doing something unusual; a lazy person suddenly beginning to work hard is said to make it rain)

*yuha'* 'to have', *yuha'yA* 'to cause someone to have (perhaps by leaving it behind at his house)'

*če'yA* 'to cry', *če'yeyA* 'to cause to cry (by telling a sad story, perhaps)'.

Some verbs with the causative auxiliary *-yA* have no currently used non-causative. Such are *slolyA'* 'to know' and *iyeyA'* 'to find'.

3) When the causation is intentional, or when there is no desire to stop the action, active verbs are made causative by use of the active auxiliary verb *-khiyA*. English translations are more often 'let' than 'make':

*če'yekhiyA* 'to let cry (without trying to stop)'

*yuha'khiyA* 'to let have (carry); to have carry'

*o'kiyekhiyA* 'to let help'.

If a transitive verb is used with *-khiyA*, the main verb as well as the auxiliary may take affixes (the main verb takes object affixes only):

*o'makiyeči'čhiyiŋkte*  
help.me.I.let.you potential  
'I will let you help me'.

*o'ničiyewakhi'ye*  
help.you.I.let.you  
'I let him help you'.

### 9.2.2.2. Inceptives

Moving into the state designated by a stative verb is indicated in two different ways. Either *ki-* is prefixed to the verb, or the auxiliary verb *a'yA* is used. Probably *a'yA* is the verb 'to bring', since

other verbs of bringing and taking also occasionally mean ‘begin to’, but in this construction it functions like a stative verb. In fact although the meaning shift for this construction seems to be from stative to active intransitive, the formal affixation pattern for both the derived and underived constructions remains that of stative verbs. Examples are:

*kisku'yA* ‘to become sweet’  
*čhe'pa a'yA* ‘to get fat’.

In some cases a verb can be used with both, but with different meanings:

*kithaŋ'ka* ‘to grow old’  
*thaŋ'ka a'yA* ‘to get big’.

In most instances, *ki-* imparts a meaning of inevitable change into the state mentioned by the verb, change over which the referent has no control.

### 9.2.2.3. Deactivization or Stativization

There is no obvious formal process whereby active verbs may be shifted to the stative category. (In English this is done by the use of passive participles: break->be broken, find->be found, etc.) Such notions are expressed in Lakhota by using the third-person plural subject form (marked by *pi* after the verb) of an active transitive verb: ‘they broke it’, ‘they found him’, etc.

However, there is some syntactic evidence that *pi* in this construction is genuinely a passive marker rather than the subject pluralizer. With verbs like ‘seem’, most linguists agree that the subject of ‘seem’ and the subject of its complement have to be the same. Thus in ‘She seemed to hit him’ and ‘She seemed to have been hit’, “she” is the subject of both verbs in both sentences even when, logically, “she” is the recipient or patient of the second one. If this is so, then in the Lakhota sentence *ama'pha pi s'ele'mačheča* ‘I seem to have been hit’, *ma* rather than *pi* must represent the subject of *ama'pha pi*. Obviously, this analysis relies on a very specific notion of “subject.” This notion has not yet been well explored for Lakhota.

## 9.3. Verb Inflection

Lakhota verbs may be inflected to indicate the person and number of subjects, direct objects, indirect objects, and possessors of objects. Inflection involves the addition of affixes to the verb. Note that “affix” is used here as a cover term for prefix, suffix, and infix; an infix is an element inserted into a stem. Many of the inflectional morphemes in Lakhota are either prefixed or infixed, depending on the verb. Sometimes the infixing is only apparent, as when the inflection follows a derivational prefix such as *na-* ‘by means of the foot’. Thus a sequence like *na-wa'-t'e* ‘I killed it with my foot’ (from *nat'e* ‘to die or kill by means of foot action’) technically consists of two prefixes and a root. However, there are many cases where the inflectional morpheme is inserted into an otherwise (synchronically) unanalyzable stem, such as *ma'ni* ‘to walk’ (*mawa'ni* ‘I walk’), or *ophe'thuŋ* ‘to buy’ (*ophe'wathuŋ* ‘I buy/bought it’), or *wičha'ša* ‘man’ (*wima'čhaša* ‘I am a man’). In accord with Lakhota grammatical tradition and (most) native-speaker intuition,



all the inserted inflectional elements are here called “infixes,” and both these infixes and all the prefixes are called “affixes.”

In addition to affixes, all verbal paradigms make use of the enclitic *pi* to mark a plural argument. An enclitic is like a suffix, except that it is a separate word.

The discussion of verb inflection can be divided into 10 subtopics: [stative affixes](#), [object affixes](#), [active subject affixes](#), [two-affix constructions](#), [irregular paradigms](#), [reflexives](#), [reciprocal constructions](#), [reflexive possessive](#), [dative constructions](#), and [benefactive constructions](#).

### 9.3.1. Stative Affixes

The basic paradigm has positions for three persons and three numbers, although the dual is available only for the first-person inclusive subject (‘you and I’, but not ‘he and I’). It is tempting to analyze the *uŋ(k)* without *pi* (the dual) as “inclusive singular” and thus make *pi* a consistent marker of the plural. This analysis must be rejected because *pi* is added to all objects (not stative subjects), both dual and plural, and *pi* neutralizes the inclusive/exclusive distinction.

In the third person, plural is marked for animate nouns only; inanimate plurals are marked by reduplication of the verb stem ([see 4.3.2.8.](#)). When the plural refers to human beings there is yet another distinction: distributive versus collective. “Distributive plurals” focus on plurality as a collection of separate individuals, while “collective plurals” focus on persons whose identities are fused into a group. An English noun with just these kinds of meanings is the word “family.” When the verb used with family is singular (My family is waiting for me), the noun is collective in meaning. When the verb is plural (My family are all living in California now), the meaning is distributive. Many Lakhota verbs do not have collective forms; when such forms do not exist, the distributive plural forms are used instead. The collective sense is not necessarily lost in such cases, since a noun with collective meaning (or a quantifier such as *oya's<sup>2</sup>iŋ* ‘all of a collective human group’) may also be present in the sentence.

Here are the personal affixes used in the inflection of stative verbs.

Singular Dual Plural

1. *ma-* *uŋ(k)-uŋ(k)-...pi*
2. *ni-* *ni-...pi*
3. *0-* *0-...pi* distributive  
*wičha-* collective

*0* means that there is no affix for that person.

*uŋ(k)* is written in this way to indicate that *uŋ* is used if any consonant but /<sup>2</sup>/ follows the affix, while *uŋk* appears if a vowel or /<sup>2</sup>/ follows.

There are three patterns for the placement of these affixes in the verb: all affixes are prefixed: all affixes are infixes: *uŋk* is prefixed and the others are infixes. Here are sample paradigms of each type:

*haŋ'skA* 'be long or tall' (prefix type)

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>mahaŋ'ske</i> 'I am tall'	<i>uŋhaŋ'ske</i> 'you and I are tall'	<i>uŋhaŋ'ska pi</i> 'we are tall'
2. <i>nahaŋ'ske</i> 'you are tall'		<i>nahaŋ'ska pi</i> 'you are tall'
3. <i>haŋ'ske</i> 'he is tall'		<i>haŋ'ska pi</i> 'they are tall' (distributive) <i>wičha'haŋske</i> 'they are tall' (collective)

*i'-puza* 'be thirsty' (infix type)

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>i'-mapu'za</i> 'I am thirsty'	<i>i'-<sup>2</sup>uŋpu'za</i> 'you and I are thirsty'	<i>i'-<sup>2</sup>uŋpu'za pi</i> 'we are thirsty'
2. <i>i'-nipu'za</i> 'you are thirsty'		<i>i'-nipu'za pi</i> 'you are thirsty'
3. <i>i'puza</i> 'he is thirsty'		<i>i'-puza pi</i> 'they are thirsty'

*uŋspe'* 'to know how to' (mixed type)

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>uŋma'spe</i> 'I know how to'	<i>uŋkuŋ'spe</i> 'you and know how to'	<i>uŋkuŋ'spe pi</i> 'we know how to'
2. <i>uŋni'spe</i> 'you know how to'		<i>uŋni'spe pi</i> 'you know how to'
3. <i>uŋspe'</i> 'he knows how to'		<i>uŋspe' pi</i> 'they know how to'

The stative paradigm is completely regular: there are no further subtypes within this conjugation. In particular, verbs such as *yaŋkA'* 'to sit,' of which the first-person form is *maŋke'*, are not stative. See the description of active nasal stems in [9.3.3.](#), and note that when an object affix appears on this verb in the construction described at the end of [8.5.3.](#), the form is *mayan'ke*.

One further remark about the use of the stative verb inflection is in order. Stative verb affixes are regularly used to identify the possessor of an inalienably possessed noun ([8.4.1.](#)) that is the subject of a stative verb:

*Nata' (kiŋ) maya'zaŋ*

head the I.hurt

'My head hurts.'

*Nape' (kiŋ) mašpaŋ'*

hand the I.burn

'I burned my hand.'

*Phehiŋ' (kiŋ) nisa'bsapa*

hair the you.black

'You have black hair.'

### 9.3.2. Object Affixes

The paradigm for transitive objects (assuming a third-person singular subject) is almost like that for stative verb subjects, but there are two differences: first, there is no collective versus distributive distinction: the collective affix of the stative paradigm is used for all animate plural objects. Second, there is no separate form for the dual; *pi* is used with *uŋ(k)* whenever it marks the object. Here are the object affixes:

Singular	Plural
1. <i>ma</i>	<i>uŋ(k)...pi</i>
2. <i>ni</i>	<i>ni...pi</i>
3. <i>0</i>	<i>wičha</i>

The placement of these affixes follows the same three patterns observed with the stative verbs: *uŋ(k)* may be prefixed while the others are infixes, or all may follow the same pattern. Here are three paradigms:

*khi'zA* 'to attack; begin a fight with'  
(prefix type)

Singular	Plural
1. <i>makhi'ze</i> 'he attacked me'	<i>uŋkhi'za pi</i> 'he attacked us'
2. <i>ničhi'ze</i> 'he attacked you'	<i>ničhi'za pi</i> 'he attacked you'
3. <i>khi'ze</i> 'he attacked him'	<i>wičha'khize</i> 'he attacked them'

*slolyA'* (infix type)

Singular	Plural
1. <i>slolma'ye</i> 'he knows me'	<i>slol' uŋ'yaŋ pi</i> 'he knows us'
2. <i>slolni'ye</i> 'he knows you'	<i>slolni'yaŋ pi</i> 'he knows you'
3. <i>slolye'</i> 'he knows him'	<i>slolwi'čhaye</i> 'he knows them'

*aphA'* 'to hit' (mixed type)

Singular	Plural
1. <i>ama'phe</i>	<i>uŋka'pha pi</i>

‘he hit me’	‘he hit us’
2. <i>ani'phe</i>	<i>ani'pha pi</i>
‘he hit you’	‘he hit you’
3. <i>aphe'</i>	<i>awi'čhaphe</i>
‘he hit him’	‘he hit them’

### 9.3.3. Active Subject Affixes

The active subject affixes come in three slightly different paradigms, all of which have the same positional arrangements (prefix, infix, mixed). The three paradigms differ only in the form of the affixes used for ‘I’ and ‘you’. The remainder of the subject affixes are as in the stative paradigm except that motion verbs have *a* rather than *wičha'* as the affix of the collective plural. Note that *uŋ(k)* may mark either subject or object; its correct meaning has to be read from another affix or from the context. In *y*-stems, the *y*- changes to *l* after first-person singular *b*- and disappears after *l*- in the second person. Actually, both *y*-stem and nasal-stem affixes are probably to be derived from the *wa*- and *ya*- of regular verbs by a series of phonological rules involving loss of the vowel of the affix and subsequent consonant assimilations. For detailed discussion, see Carter (1974:130-154) and Koontz (1983).

Here is a chart of the three sets or active subject affixes:

	1. Regular	2. Y-stem	3. Nasal Stem
Singular	1. <i>wa</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>m</i>
	2. <i>ya</i>	<i>l</i>	<i>n</i>
	3. <i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
Dual	1. <i>uŋ(k)</i>	<i>uŋ(k)</i>	<i>uŋ(k)</i>
Plural	1. <i>uŋ(k)...pi</i>	<i>uŋ(k)...pi</i>	<i>uŋ(k)...pi</i>
	2. <i>ya...pi</i>	<i>ya...pi</i>	<i>ya...pi</i>
Distributive	3. <i>0...pi</i>	<i>0...pi</i>	<i>0...pi</i>
Collective	<i>a / wičha</i>	<i>a / wičha</i>	<i>a / wičha</i>

The inflectional paradigm that is used for each active verb is partially predictable. For example, the affixes of paradigm 2 (*y*-stem) are used most often with verbs that have */y/* followed by an oral vowel at the point where the affix is added: the affixes of paradigm 3 (nasal stem) are used most often with verbs that have */y/* or */ʔ/*, followed by a nasalized vowel at the point where the affix is added. There are a few exceptions to these general rules.

Given below are paradigms of verbs with active affixes. No attempt is made to illustrate the prefix-infix-mixed types, since the variations are exactly the same as for the stative or object affix paradigm types.

#### *Examples of Paradigm I (regular)*

		<i>hi'</i> ‘arrive coming’
Singular	Dual	Plural

1. <i>wahi'</i>	<i>uŋhi'</i>	<i>uŋhi' pi</i>
'I came'	'you and I came'	'we came'
2. <i>yahi'</i>		<i>yahi' pi</i>
'you came'		'you came'
3. <i>hi'</i>		<i>hi' pi</i>
'he came'		'they came' (distributive)
		<i>ahi'</i>
		'they came' (collective)

*slolyA'* 'know' (looks like y-stem, inflected regularly)

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>slolwa'ye</i>	<i>slol<sup>2</sup>uŋ'ye</i>	<i>slol<sup>2</sup>uŋ'yaŋ pi</i>
'I know'	'you and I know him'	'we know him'
2. <i>slolya'ye</i>		<i>slolya'ya pi</i>
'you know him'		'you know him'
3. <i>slolye'</i>		<i>slolya' pi</i>
'he knows him'		'they know him'

<sup>2</sup>*uŋ'* 'be (exist); stay'

(looks like nasal stem; inflected regularly)

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>wa<sup>2</sup>uŋ'</i>	<i>uŋk<sup>2</sup>uŋ'</i>	<i>uŋk<sup>2</sup>uŋ' pi</i>
'I am'	'you and I are'	'we are'
2. <i>ya<sup>2</sup>uŋ'</i>		<i>ya<sup>2</sup>uŋ' pi</i>
'you are'		'you are'
3. <i>uŋ'</i>		<i>uŋ' pi</i>
'he is'		'they are'

*Examples of Paradigm 2 (y-stem)*

*yuha'* 'have'

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>bluha'</i>	<i>uŋyu'ha</i>	<i>uŋyu'ha pi</i>
'I have it'	'you and I have it'	'we have it'
2. <i>luha'</i>		<i>luha' pi</i>
'you have it'		'you have it'
3. <i>yuha'</i>		<i>yuha' pi</i>
'he has it'		'they have it'

*wanɣan'ka* 'to see'  
(looks like nasal stem; inflected like a y-stem)

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>wanɣla'ke</i> 'I have it'	<i>wanɣ<sup>2</sup>uŋ'yanke</i> 'you and I have it'	<i>wanɣ<sup>2</sup>uŋ'yanka pi</i> 'we have it'
2. <i>wanla'ke</i> 'you have it'		<i>wanla'ka pi</i> 'you have it'
3. <i>wanɣan'ke</i> 'he has it'		<i>wanɣan'ka pi</i> 'they have it'

Note that /aŋ/ is changed to /a/ following /l/ in the 'I' and 'you' forms.

*Examples of Paradigm 3 (nasal stem)*

<sup>2</sup>*uŋ* 'to use; to wear'

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>mu'</i> 'I used it'	<i>uŋk<sup>2</sup>uŋ'</i> 'you and I used it'	<i>uŋk<sup>2</sup>uŋ' pi</i> 'we used it'
2. <i>nu'</i> 'you used it'		<i>nu' pi</i> 'you used it'
3. <i>uŋ'</i> 'he used it'		<i>uŋ' pi</i> 'they used it'

Note that some of the forms of this verb are identical to some forms of <sup>2</sup>*uŋ* 'exist'.

*ečha'<sup>2</sup>uŋ* 'to do'

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>ečha'mu</i> 'I did it'	<i>ečuŋ'k<sup>2</sup>uŋ</i> 'you and I did it'	<i>ečuŋ'k<sup>2</sup>uŋ pi</i> 'we did it'
2. <i>ečha'nu</i> 'you did it'		<i>ečha'nu pi</i> 'you did it'
3. <i>ečuŋ'</i> 'he did it'		<i>ečuŋ' pi</i> 'they did it'

Note that most forms of this verb have the loss of /a<sup>2</sup>/ described in [4.3.1.3](#).

*yanɣa* 'to be seated'

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>make'</i> 'I am seated'	<i>uŋyan'ke</i> 'you and I are seated'	<i>uŋyan'ka pi</i> 'we are seated'
2. <i>nake'</i> 'you are seated'		<i>naka' pi</i> 'you are seated'
3. <i>yanke'</i> 'he is seated'		<i>yanka' pi</i> 'they are seated' (distributive)

*wičha'yanke*  
'they are seated' (collective)

Verbs of motion utilize a collective prefix a different from that of other intransitive verbs. If the verb begins with *i*, the prefix *a* coalesces with the initial *i* of the stem to yield *e'*:

*a'ye* 'they went (collective)'; compare *ya' pi* 'they went (distributive)'

*e'yaye* 'they (collective) started out, going'; compare *iya'ya pi* (distributive) compare *iya'ya pi* (distributive)

*e'nažij* 'they (collective) went and stood'; compare *ina'žij pi* (distributive)

#### 9.3.4. Two-affix Combinations

Transitive verbs take two affixes whenever the subject and object are grammatical persons marked by affixes. The same is true of stative transitive verbs (9.1.3.). When two affixes are present, the usual order is first the object affix, then the subject affix. Another description of the order of sequence in the affixes would be (third person) (second person) (first person). This would eliminate rule 3 below, but not rule 1 in all cases. Similarly, describing the order as (third) (first) (second) would eliminate rule 1. but not rule 3. The object-subject description seems better, since there are other ways in which *uŋ(k)* is exceptional (e.g., prefixing to verbs where other affixes infix).

The combinations of affixes that appear are usually as given in the object and subject paradigms outlined in 9.3.2. and 9.3.3., but there are some additional complexities that cannot be predicted from a simple blending of the two sets. The complexities involve the affixes, some verb stems, and the enclitic pluralizer *pi*.

With respect to the affix combinations, the following rules apply:

- 1) *uŋ(k)* precedes all affixes but *wičha*
- 2) The combination of 'I' subject and 'you' object is represented in transitive verbs by a single affix: *čhi*.
- 3) In the stative transitive verbs, *ni* always precedes *ma*, regardless of the grammatical functions of the affixes. The meaning of verbal forms of this kind is therefore ambiguous.
- 4) y-stem or nasal stem transitive verbs with 'you' subject and 'me' or 'us' object have *yal* or *yan*, respectively, for 'you'.

Verbs that require *uŋ(k)* prefixed, but the others inserted, present a problem, since *uŋ(k)* must follow *wičha*, and inserted affix. In the speech of some persons this apparent contradiction is resolved by inserting both in the proper order, but repeating the entire verb stem after *uŋ(k)*. An example can be given using the verb *oyu'spa* 'to arrest': *owi'čhuŋkoyuspa pi* 'we arrested them'.

Note that *wičha* is inserted after *o*, as required for this verb, and at the same time *uŋ(k)* precedes *o* as is also required by this particular verb. However, many persons simply insert both affixes, ignoring the apparent contradiction of not having *uŋ(k)* before *o*. In the speech of these persons, the correct form is *owi'čhuŋyuspa pi*.

Pluralization can appear only once in each verbal form. Hence, either affix, or both simultaneously, may be pluralized by *pi*. Many verbal forms containing *pi* and affixes that may be either singular or plural are thus ambiguous, and only the context can indicate which participants are actually plural. For example *uŋko'yuspa pi* can mean 'we arrested him', 'he arrested us', or 'they arrested us'. *iyē'<sup>2</sup>uŋyaŋ pi kte* can mean either 'you (sing.) will find us' or 'you (pl.) will find us'.

The combinations of affixes that occur in transitive verbs are shown in table 5

Subject	Object					
	me	you sg.	him, her, it, them (inanimate)	us	you pl.	them (animate)
I	—	<i>čhi</i>	<i>0-wa</i> <i>0-b</i> <i>0-m</i>	—	<i>čhi...pi</i>	<i>wičha-wa</i> <i>wičha-b</i> <i>wičha-m</i>
you sg.	<i>ma-ya</i> <i>ma-yal</i> <i>ma-yan</i>	—	<i>0-ya</i> <i>0-l</i> <i>0-n</i>	<i>uŋ-ya...pi</i> <i>uŋ-yal...pi</i> <i>uŋ-yan...pi</i>	—	<i>wičha-ya</i> <i>wičha-l</i> <i>wičha-n</i>
he, she, it	<i>ma-0</i>	<i>ni-0</i>	<i>0-0</i>	<i>uŋ(k)-0...pi</i>	<i>ni-0...pi</i>	<i>wičha-0</i>
we two	—	—	<i>uŋ(k)</i>	—	—	<i>wičha-<sup>?</sup>uŋ(k)...pi</i>
we pl..	—	<i>uŋ-ni...pi</i>	<i>uŋ(k)...pi</i>	—	<i>uŋ-ni...pi</i>	<i>wičha<sup>?</sup>uŋ(k)...pi</i>
you pl..	<i>ma-ya..pi</i> <i>ma-yal..pi</i> <i>ma-yan..pi</i>		<i>0-ya..pi</i> <i>0-l...pi</i> <i>0-n ...pi</i>	<i>uŋ-ya...pi</i> <i>uŋ-yal...pi</i> <i>uŋ-yan...pi</i>		<i>wičha-ya...pi</i> <i>wičha-l...pi</i> <i>wičha-n...pi</i>
they animate	<i>ma-0...pi</i>	<i>ni-0...pi</i>	<i>0-0...pi</i>	<i>uŋ(k)-0...pi</i>	<i>ni-0...pi</i>	<i>wičha-0...pi</i>

NOTE: First-person *b-* and *m-* and second-person *(ya)l-* and *(ya)n-* occur with y-stem and nasal-stem verbs, respectively. See [9.3](#) for further explanation.

### 9.3.5. Irregular Verbs



There are some verbs that have irregularities of one or another kind in their inflection. Among the most frequent are the verbs *eyA'* 'to say' and its derivatives, the verb *yu'tA* 'to eat', and various motion verbs, especially *yA'* and verbs based on it.

The transitive verb *eyA'* 'to say' is conjugated as follows: note the stress shift in the third-person singular:

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>ephe'</i>	<i>uŋke'ye</i>	<i>uŋke'ya pi</i>
2. <i>ehe'</i>		<i>eha' pi</i>
3. <i>e'ye</i>		<i>eya' pi</i>

A derivative of *eyA'*, *eya'yalaka* 'to tell lies', is inflected doubly, with the same irregularities in both places: *epha'phalaka*, etc.

The transitive verb *yu'tA* 'to eat' has these forms:

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>wa'te</i>	<i>uŋyu'te</i>	<i>uŋyu'ta pi</i>
2. <i>ya'te</i>		<i>ya'ta pi</i>
3. <i>yu'te</i>		<i>yu'ta pi</i>

The verb *yA'* 'to be going' normally conjugates according to active Paradigm 2 (9.3.3.): *ble'*, *le'*, *ye'*, *uŋye'*, *uŋyaŋ' pi*, *la' pi*, *ya' pi*. However, whenever the syntax of the sentence demands that the final vowel be *iŋ* (see 4.3.2.6.), the personal affixes are nasalized. Observe the difference between the second-person singular and plural forms of the potential paradigm: in the singular the vowel is *iŋ*, but in the plural it is *a*:

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>mni' kte</i>	<i>uŋyiŋ' kte</i>	<i>uŋyaŋ' pi kte</i>
2. <i>ni' kte</i>		<i>la' pi kte</i>
3. <i>yiŋ' kte</i>		<i>ya' pi kte</i>

The verb *iya'yA* 'to set out' has two sets of subject affixes in the 'I' and 'you' forms: *ibla'ble*, *ila'le*, *iya'ye*, *uŋki'yaye*, *uŋki'yaya pi*, *ila'la pi*, *iya'ya pi*. When this verb is potential, the first affix is as just given, but the second is as in the potential inflection of *yA'* alone: *ibla'mni kte*, *ila'ni kte*, but *ila'la pi kte*. Many Oglalas in the 1990s prefer *ibla'bliŋ kte*, *ila'liŋ kte*, even though this introduces an unexpected (and unparallelled) /l/ before a nasal vowel.

Another verb that has double inflection is <sup>2</sup>*iŋ'yaŋka* 'to run':

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>wa<sup>2</sup>iŋ'mnake</i>	<i>uŋk<sup>2</sup>iŋ'yaŋke</i>	<i>uŋk<sup>2</sup>iŋ'yaŋka pi</i>
'I ran'	'you and I ran'	'we ran'

2. <i>ya'ij'nake</i> 'you ran'	<i>ya'ij'naka pi</i> 'you all ran'
3. <i>ij'yanke</i> 'he ran'	<i>ij'yanka pi</i> 'they ran'

Two other motion verbs have two different stem forms, one used when there is no personal affix, the other when there is a personal affix. The two are *khigla'* 'to set out to go home' and *gliču'* 'to set out to come home'. This is the stem form for the third-person forms; the other stems are respectively *-khiyagla* and *-gliyaču* (some speakers say *-gliyaku*). Compare the following:

<i>Khigle'</i>	'He set out to go home.'
<i>Wakhi'yagle.</i>	'I set out to go home.'
<i>Gliču' pi.</i>	'They (distributive) set out to come home.'
<i>Agli'yaču.</i>	'They (collective) set out to come home.'

### 9.3.6. Reflexive Verbs

Reflexive verbs are those in which the subject and the object refer to the same person: I cut myself is an English example.

Lakhota reflexive verbs have the affix *ič'i* added to the transitive verb: *ič'i'kte* 'to kill oneself' (cf. *kte* 'to kill'), *o'ič'ičiyA* 'to help oneself' (cf. *o'kiyA* 'to help').

The personal affixes are those of the stative paradigm (9.3.1). There are no collective plural reflexive forms. See Legendre and Rood (1992) for discussion of the abstract syntax of these forms.

Whenever *ič'i* precedes the instrumental prefixes *ya*, *yu*, *ka*, or *pa* (9.2.1), the reflexive and instrumental affixes fuse to *igla*, *iglu*, *igla*, and *ikpa* respectively.

Here are sample paradigms of *ič'i'kte* 'to kill oneself' and *iglu'žaža* 'to wash oneself':

Singular	Dual	Plural
1. <i>mič'i'kte</i>	<i>uŋki'č'ikte</i>	<i>uŋki'č'ikte pi</i>
'I ran'	'you and I ran'	'we ran'
2. <i>nič'i'kte</i>		<i>nič'i'kte pi</i>
'you ran'		'you all ran'
3. <i>ič'i'kte</i>		<i>ič'i'kte pi</i>
'he ran'		'they ran'
1. <i>miglu'žaža</i>	<i>uŋki'glužaža</i>	<i>uŋki'glužaža pi</i>
'I washed myself'	'you and I ran'	'we washed ourselves'
2. <i>niglu'žaža</i>		<i>niglu'žaža pi</i>
'you washed yourself'		'you washed yourselves'
3. <i>iglu'žaža</i>		<i>iglu'žaža pi</i>

‘he washed himself’

‘they washed themselves’

There is a second reflexive paradigm (not well studied) in which the initial *i-* of the affix is doubled, without an inserted [ʔ]. Its meaning is approximately that the action was not completely under the control of the subject. Compare: *nami'č' ihtake* ‘I kicked myself’ with *nami'ič' ihtake* ‘I could have kicked myself (for something I did)’, or *sabmi'č' iye* ‘I blackened myself’ with *sabmi'ič' iye* ‘I blackened myself for a reason such as mourning.’

### 9.3.7. Reciprocal Verbs

The concept ‘each other’ is expressed by the affix *-kičhi-* (or a variant of this affix) added to transitive verbs. Only dual and plural forms are used, of course. The reciprocal paradigm has these forms:

Dual	Plural
1. <i>uŋki'čhi</i>	<i>uŋki'čhi...pi</i>
2. <i>ye'čhi</i>	<i>...pi</i>
3. <i>kičhi'</i>	<i>...pi</i>

Whenever these are attached to a stem beginning with *ki* or *khi*, that syllable of the verb stem is dropped. Examples of reciprocal verb forms are:

<i>Wašte'<sup>2</sup> uŋkičhilake.</i>	‘You and I love each other’ ( <i>wašte'lakA</i> )
<i>Uŋki'čhiza pi</i>	‘We fought with each other’. ( <i>khi'zA</i> )
<i>Wanye'čhiyaŋka pi he?</i>	‘Did you see each other?’ ( <i>wanyan'kA</i> )
<i>O'kičhiya pi.</i>	‘They helped each other.’ ( <i>o'kiyA</i> )

See [4.3.2.3](#) for a comment on the nasalization of *-yaŋ-* ‘see’.

### 9.3.8. Reflexive Possessive, Dative, and Benefactive Verbs

The next three sections of this sketch deal with very complex and highly idiosyncratic features of Lakhota verb inflection. It should be noted that this area of Lakhota grammar is not nearly so well explored as some other areas. Both the morphology and semantics of the paradigms to be discussed are unpredictable and often irregular, and they often vary from community to community and even from speaker to speaker within a community. It is very possible that many unexpected phenomena remain to be discovered here.

The semantic concepts expressed are: reflexive possession (the object of the verb belongs to the subject of the verb), dative (an indirect object, a person other than the subject and object of the

verb is affected by the verbal action), and benefactive (one person performs the verbal action for another's benefit or in his place).

The morphological representations of these three are intertwined and often very confusing. The difficulty comes from two facts: the morphemes representing all three concepts have the basic form *ki*; and some instances of *ki* lose the /k/ or the /i/ in certain contexts, and some cause a following /k/ to change to /č/ while others do not. Part of the unpredictability appears to result from homonym avoidance: when words from two of the paradigms could be expected to be alike in form, one is often different through some kind of irregularity.

Carter (1974) is able to explain much, but not all, of this complexity by positing in some forms another morpheme with the shape *i*. This does not explain everything, and it is too abstract an argument for the description here.

When the /i/ of *ki* is lost before /y/, /k/, or /p/, the resulting clusters are, in the first two cases, /gl/, or in the third, /kp/; the specific places where this happens will be discussed below. When the /k/ is lost, the personal affixes coalesce with the remaining /i/ to give *we* 'I', *ye* 'you (agent)', *mi* 'me', *ni* 'you (patient)', and *čhi* 'I to/for you'. These coalesced affixes always take the stress when they are the first element in the word.

### 9.3.8.1. Reflexive Possessive

The fact that the object of the verb is possessed by the subject is shown in Lakhota by adding *ki* after the subject affix.

*ki* is reduced to /k/ alone before a y-stem verb (9.3.3.), and *ky* becomes /gl/. *ki* is also lost from *ki* before verbs beginning with /p/. When *ki* is used before the instrumental prefix *ka* (9.2.1.), the reflexive possessive affix and the instrumental prefix fuse to /gla/.

In the illustrative paradigms that follow, only the singular and dual forms are given. The corresponding plural words can be formed by adding *pi* to the second and third singular and the dual.

*iyeyA* 'to find'

This verb illustrates the behavior of the causative auxiliary (9.2.2.) -yA; before it the possessive *ki* loses neither *k* nor *i*.

Singular	Dual
1. <i>iyewakiye</i> 'I found mine'	<i>iyey<sup>2</sup>uŋkiye</i> 'you and I found ours'
2. <i>iyeyakiye</i> 'you found yours'	
3. <i>iyekiye</i> 'he found his own'	

*kte* 'to kill'

This verb follows the most regular rules: *ki* loses *k* after personal affixes.

Singular	Dual
1. <i>we'kte</i> 'I killed mine'	<i>uŋki'kte</i> 'you and I killed ours'
2. <i>ye'kte</i> 'you killed yours'	
3. <i>kikte'</i> 'he killed his own'	

*yuha* 'to have'

In this verb, *ki* is reduced to *k*, which fuses with *y* to form *gl*.

Singular	Dual
1. <i>waglu'ha</i> 'I have mine'	<i>uŋglu'ha</i> 'you and I have ours'
2. <i>yaglu'ha</i> 'you have yours'	
3. <i>gluha'</i> 'he has his own'	

*kable'ča* 'to shatter'

This verb works like *yuha*' but illustrates the *ka-* prefix.

Singular	Dual
1. <i>wagla'bleča</i> 'I shattered mine'	<i>uŋgla'bleča</i> 'you and I shattered ours'
2. <i>yagla'bleča</i> 'you shattered yours'	
3. <i>glable'ča</i> 'he shattered his own'	

*pazo* 'show; point'

This verb is a verb with initial /p/.

Singular	Dual
1. <i>wakpa'zo</i> 'I showed mine'	<i>uŋkpa'zo</i> 'you and I showed ours'

2. *yakpa'zo*  
'you showed yours'

3. *kpazo'*  
'he showed his own'

*iču'* 'take'.

This verb requires an extra *k* after the regular *ki*.

Singular	Dual
1. <i>iwe'kču</i> 'I took mine'	<i>uŋki'kikču</i> 'you and I took ours'
2. <i>iye'kču</i> 'you took yours'	
3. <i>iki'kču</i> 'he took his own'	

*a'yA* 'to take along'

This verb illustrates the verbs of bringing and taking, which prefix *glo-* to form possessives; regular active affixes are then used:

Singular	Dual
1. <i>waglo'<sup>2</sup>aye</i> 'I am taking mine along'	<i>uŋglo'<sup>2</sup>aye</i> 'you and I are taking ours along'
2. <i>yaglo'<sup>2</sup>aye</i> 'you are taking yours along'	
3. <i>glo'<sup>2</sup>a'ye</i> 'he is taking his along'	

There are other irregularities in the reflexive possessive that have not been illustrated. Some of these are described by Boas and Deloria (1941:86-102), but note that some of the details they give are not valid for Brule and Oglala speakers in the 1990s.

### 9.3.8.2. Dative

The dative has one form but, from an English speaker's point of view, two meanings: the form can mean that the action was done to an object possessed by someone else ('I took his', 'he ate mine') or that it was done to or for someone else by accident or without his knowledge or permission. This second meaning is sometimes expressed by 'on' in colloquial English ('He ate it up on me': or 'His wife emptied the bank account on him.'). Boas and Deloria (1941) and Carter (1974) refer to this as the 'first dative.'

The regular affix for these forms is again *ki*, but this *ki* never loses either the *k* or the *i*, nor does it cause a following *k* of the verb root to change to *č*, although *ks* in other prefixes do change.

In verbs of bringing and taking, *ka* is used instead of *ki*, and a *ki* (but an irregular one!) can then also be prefixed (see examples below). Before the causative *-yA*, *khi* is used instead of *ki*. In the sample paradigms that follow, only singular and dual forms are given. As usual, the plural forms differ only by the presence of *pi*.

*iču* 'take'

This verb is regular; the affixes are inserted between *i* and *č*.

	mine	yours	his	ours	theirs
	it on me	it on you	it on him	it on us	it on them
I	--	<i>iči'čiču</i>	<i>iwa'kiču</i>	--	<i>iwi'čhawakiču</i>
you	<i>ima'yakiču</i> --		<i>iya'kiču</i>	<i>uŋki'yakiču</i>	<i>pi iwi'čhayakiču</i>
he	<i>ima'kiču</i>	<i>ini'čiču</i>	<i>iki'ču</i>	<i>uŋki'kiču</i>	<i>pi iwi'čhakiču</i>
we	--	<i>uŋki'ničiču</i>	<i>uŋki'čiču</i>	--	<i>iwi'čhuŋkiču</i>

*pazo* 'show'

This verb is also regular; compare with the possessive paradigm above.

	mine	yours	his	ours	theirs
	it on me	it on you	it on him	it on us	it on them
I	--	<i>čiči'pazo</i>	<i>waki'pazo</i>	--	<i>wičha'wakipazo</i>
you	<i>maya'kipazo</i> --		<i>yaki'pazo</i>	<i>uŋya'kipazo</i>	<i>pi wičha'yakipazo</i>
he	<i>maki'pazo</i>	<i>niči'pazo</i>	<i>kpa'zo</i>	<i>uŋki'pazo</i>	<i>pi wičha'kipazo</i>
we	--	<i>uŋni'čipazo</i>	<i>uŋki'pazo</i>	--	<i>wičhuŋ'kipazo</i>

*ahi* 'to arrive bringing'

This verb illustrated the pattern common to all 'bring' and 'take' verbs.

	mine	yours	his	ours	theirs
	it on me	it on you	it on him	it on us	it on them
I	--	<i>čiča'hi</i>	<i>waka'hi</i>	--	<i>wičha'wakahi</i>
you	<i>maya'kahi</i>	--	<i>yaka'hi</i>	<i>uŋya'kahi</i>	<i>pi wičha'yakahi</i>
he	<i>maka'hi</i>	<i>niča'hi</i>	<i>kahi'</i>	<i>uŋka'hi</i>	<i>pi wičha'kahi</i>
we	--	<i>uŋni'čahi</i>	<i>uŋka'hi</i>	--	<i>wičhuŋ'kahi</i>

*ahi* 'to arrive, bringing'

This illustrates the alternate paradigm with *ki* + *ka*

	mine	yours	his	ours	theirs
	it on me	it on you	it on him	it on us	it on them
I	--	<i>či'ča'ahi</i>	<i>we'ča'ahi</i>	--	<i>wičha'weča'ahi</i>
you	<i>mi'ča'ahi</i> --		<i>ye'ča'ahi</i>	--	<i>wičha'yeča'ahi</i>
he	<i>maka'hi</i>	<i>ni'ča'ahi</i>	<i>ki'ča'ahi</i>	<i>uŋki'ča'ahi</i>	<i>pi wičha'kiča'ahi</i>
we	--	<i>uŋni'ča'ahi</i>	<i>uŋki'ča'ahi</i>	--	<i>wičhuŋ'kiča'ahi</i>

*iyeyA* ‘to find’

This verb illustrates the dative of the causative; compare the possessive causative paradigm given above with the third-person object forms here.

	mine	yours	his	ours	theirs
	it on me	it on you	it on him	it on us	it on them
I	--	<i>iyechičhiye</i>	<i>iyewakhiye</i>	--	<i>iyewiçhawakhiye</i>
you	<i>iyemayakhiye</i>	--	<i>iyeyakhiye</i>	<i>iyey<sup>2</sup>uᅇyakhiya pi</i>	<i>iyewiçhayakhiye</i>
he	<i>iyemakhiye</i>	<i>iyeniçhiye</i>	<i>iyekhiye</i>	<i>iyey<sup>2</sup>uᅇkhiya pi</i>	<i>iyewiçhakhiye</i>
we	--	<i>iyey<sup>2</sup>uᅇniçhiye</i>	<i>iyey<sup>2</sup>uᅇkhiye</i>	--	<i>iyewiçhuᅇkhiye</i>

### 9.3.8.3. Benefactive

Benefactive verbal forms imply that the action was undertaken for someone purposefully and with his knowledge and permission. Boas and Deloria (1941) call this the ‘second dative.’ The regular benefactive has *ki* twice: the first behaves like the reflexive possessive (especially in that *k* is lost after ‘I’ and ‘you’ affixes), the second like the dative, except that when the first *ki* is actually present as the first syllable of the word, it is stressed. For example, note *kičikte* ‘He killed it for her’.

Note that in the forms for ‘I—you’ (*çhi*) and ‘he—you’ (*ni*) the difference between the dative and the benefactive is expressed solely by the stress position: *çhičikte* ‘I killed yours, I killed it on you’ but *çhičikte* ‘I killed it for you’.

The benefactive affixes also occur regularly with intransitive and stative verbs. Observe *omičimani* ‘He travels for me’ from *oma<sup>2</sup>ni* ‘to travel’, and *mičiskuye* ‘mine is sweet; it’s too sweet for me’ from *sku<sup>2</sup>yA* ‘to be sweet’.

Before *-yA* (the causative auxiliary) *kiçi* becomes *kiçičhi*, and the first *k* disappears after ‘I’ and ‘you’ affixes. ‘Bringing’ and ‘taking’ verbs affix *kiçi* to *ka* to give the meaning ‘bring/take for someone with his permission’.

These forms are very regular (compared, at least, to the reflexive possessives and datives), so only three paradigms are given: a normal one, a ‘bring’ verb, and a causative.

	<i>yuštaᅇ</i> ‘to finish’				
	for me	for you	for him	for us	for them
I	--	<i>çhičiyuštaᅇ</i>	<i>wečiyuštaᅇ</i>	--	<i>wiçha<sup>2</sup>wečiyuštaᅇ</i>
you	<i>miyechiluštaᅇ</i> --	--	<i>yečiyuštaᅇ</i>	<i>uᅇyechiluštaᅇ pi</i>	<i>wiçha<sup>2</sup>yečiyuštaᅇ</i>
he	<i>mičiyuštaᅇ</i>	<i>ničiyuštaᅇ</i>	<i>kičiyuštaᅇ</i>	<i>uᅇkičiyuštaᅇ pi</i>	<i>wiçha<sup>2</sup>kičiyuštaᅇ</i>
we	--	<i>uᅇničiyuštaᅇ</i>	<i>uᅇkičiyuštaᅇ</i> --	--	<i>wiçhuᅇkičiyuštaᅇ</i>

*agli* ‘to arrive home, bringing’

	for me	for you	for him	for us
--	--------	---------	---------	--------



I	--	<i>ači'čičagli</i>	<i>awe'čičagli</i>	--	<i>awi'čawečičagli</i>
you	<i>ami'yečičagli</i>	--	<i>aye'čičagli</i>	<i>uŋka'yečiluštaŋ pi</i>	<i>awi'čayečičagli</i>
he	<i>ami'čičagli</i>	<i>ani'čičagli</i>	<i>aki'čičagli</i>	<i>uŋka'kičičagli pi</i>	<i>awi'čakičičagli</i>
we	--	<i>uŋka'ničičagli</i>	<i>uŋa'kičičagli</i>	--	<i>awi'čuŋkičičagli</i>

			<i>iyeyA</i>	'to find'	
	for me	for you	for him	for us	for them
I	--	<i>iyechičičhiye</i>	<i>iyewečičhiye</i>	--	<i>iyewičhawakhiye</i>
you	<i>iyemiyečičhiye</i>	--	<i>iyeyečičhiye</i>	<i>iyey<sup>?</sup>uŋyečičhiya pi</i>	<i>iyewičhayakhiye</i>
he	<i>iyemičičhiye</i>	<i>iyeničičhiye</i>	<i>iyekičičhiye</i>	<i>iyey<sup>?</sup>uŋkičičhiya pi</i>	<i>iyewičhakhiye</i>
we	--	<i>iyey<sup>?</sup>uŋničičhiye</i>	<i>iyey<sup>?</sup>uŋkičičhiye</i>	<i>iyey<sup>?</sup>uŋkičičhiye</i>	<i>iyewičhuŋkhiye</i>

Some speakers can use a few verbs with both the benefactive and the possessive together, but in this case it is the beneficiary, not the object, that is owned. Thus *imi'čigluha* 'she is keeping it for me and I belong to her (i.e., I am her relative)'; however, most verbs do not follow this pattern.

There are no reciprocal benefactives, but the reflexive can occur with the benefactives. For verbs that do not lose the *i* of *ki* when they form the possessive, and for some others, there is no difference between the reflexive direct object form and the reflexive benefactive. Thus from *ole'* 'to look for' comes *omi'č<sup>?</sup>ile* 'I'm looking for myself' or 'I'm looking for it for myself'. But in most verbs where the *ki* of the possessive loses the *i*, the reflexive benefactive is formed by adding the reflexive (*ič<sup>?</sup>i*, etc.) morpheme to the possessive verb form: *mi'č<sup>?</sup>igluha* 'I am keeping it for myself', or *uŋki<sup>?</sup>ič<sup>?</sup>ikču he'či* 'let's take it for ourselves (dual)'; but *iglu'štaŋ pi* 'they finished it for themselves' has no benefactive morpheme at all.

Some speakers can inflect verbs for both direct and benefactive objects, but others reject these forms as meaningless. (Neither Buechel 1939 nor Boas and Deloria 1941 mention these paradigms.) The more complex pattern seems to begin with the benefactive form, into which are inserted the transitive affixes appropriate to the nonbenefactive verb. Thus, 'I'm looking for them for you' (verb stem *ole'*) goes from *oči'čile* to *owi'čhawačhičile*. Other speakers use a paraphrase: *owi'čhale maya'ši čha oči'čile* 'you told me to look for them so I'm looking for it for you'.

## 10. Enclitics

Except in those instances when a conjunction stands last in the sentence ([section 6](#)), postverbal elements belong to the class here called enclitics. These words express aspect, tense, modality, and, in one case, number.

In other descriptions of Lakota, enclitics have been variously treated as suffixes, adverbs, or auxiliaries, and indeed the decision to treat the most common of them as enclitics rather than suffixes is based on semantics and on native-speaker intuition rather than on phonological criteria. Speakers recognize these words as independent, isolable, and as meaningful. But one-syllable enclitics are frequently not stressed, so they do sound as if they are suffixed to the verb.

There are several dozen of these words (Taylor 1974). Recall that vowel ablaut, in those elements that have final vowel ablaut, is determined by the following enclitic (4.2.6.).

There is a strict order in which enclitics occur, but the 12 position classes defined by this order have few definable semantic correlations. Table 6 includes the enclitics defined and discussed here; others would appear in position 12 on the chart and would have similar kinds of meanings. Determination of the exact meanings of the enclitics is difficult in some cases, particularly those that express speaker attitude. While their general meaning is clear, individual meanings may vary from speaker to speaker and from situation to situation.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
											<i>he</i>	<i>yewaŋ'</i>
											<i>huŋwo'</i>	<i>yemaŋ'</i>
											<i>so, se</i>	<i>ħčA</i>
											<i>se'l</i>	<i>iŋčhe'ye</i>
											<i>s'ele'l</i>	<i>huŋše'</i>
					<i>yo, ye</i>							<i>yelakha'če'</i>
					<i>yetho', nitho', se'čA</i>			<i>ke'yA</i>	<i>laħ</i>			<i>he'či</i>
<i>haŋpi la kA ktA šni s'a</i>					<i>ijtho',</i>		<i>načhe'čA</i>	<i>ke'yapi</i>	<i>la'ħčA</i>			<i>ni'</i>
					<i>ye, na</i>				<i>la'ħčakA</i>	<i>kiŋ</i>		<i>šni'</i>
										<i>ye'</i>		<i>kiŋlo'</i>
										<i>yelo'</i>		<i>ka</i>
										<i>kšt</i>		<i>kačha'</i>
										<i>kšto'</i>		<i>škhA'</i>
										<i>k'uŋ</i>		<i>tkha'</i>

The enclitics are defined and discussed according to the position classes in table 6. Vowel ablaut specifications refer to the effect that the particular enclitic has on a preceding A-final element (4.2.6.).

Some of the words described here are clearly a compound of two or more simple enclitics, but such compounds will be regarded as units in the discussion.

**1. *hAD***; a-ablaut. Judging from other Siouan languages and Sioux dialects, this is likely the stative verb 'be erect, be upright', but this verb is rare in Lakhota, and in any event semantically distant from the element here described as an enclitic. *hAD* indicates that the verbal action or state was continuous at the time under consideration. Compare the following two sentences:

*Ta'ku to'khanu haŋ he?* 'What were you doing?'

*Ta'ku to'khanu he?* 'What did you do?'

**2. *pi***; a-ablaut. *pi* marks animate plural subjects (9.3.) and pluralizes non-third-person objects (9.3.2.). Numerous examples have already been given.

**3. *la***; e-ablaut. *la* denotes the speakers affection or feeling of endearment with respect to other persons affected by the verbal action or state. The example of *la* is from a folktale:

*Misuŋ', he' wo'škatela kiŋ uŋspe'makhiya pi la ye! Mi'š-eya' waška'te la kte!*

‘Little brothers, won't you please teach me that little game: I do so want to play it too!’

**4. kA;** a-ablaut. *kA* attenuates the verbal meaning, ‘rather’ or ‘somewhat’ are good English translations of this enclitic:

*He' pte-blo'ka kiŋ očhiŋ'šiča ke.*

‘That bull is acting kind of mad.’

*kA* can also be used ironically:

*He' wašte' ke yelo'.*

‘He certainly is a nice guy!’ (Meaning: ‘He is certainly not a nice person.’)

**5. ktA;** *iŋ*-ablaut. *ktA* marks a statement as not yet true at the time under discussion. It corresponds to the English future, subjunctive, or, in a sentence about the past, to the future anterior. *ktA* is never used in sentences that are commands.

*Mni' kte.* ‘I will go.’

*Yiŋ' kta ehaŋ'taŋhaŋš ši'čičiŋ kte.* ‘It will be bad if he goes.’

*Yiŋ' kta ke'ye.* ‘He said he would go.’

**6. šni;** e-ablaut. *šni* negates the verb with which it occurs.

*Oya'te kiŋ mni' kiŋ yatkaŋ' pi oki'hi pi šni.* ‘The people could not drink the water.’

**7. s<sup>2</sup>a;** e-ablaut. *s<sup>2</sup>a* marks an oft-repeated action; it is frequently accompanied by the adverb *o'hiniyaŋ* ‘always’.

*Lakho'ta kiŋ ehaŋ'ni zuya'ya pi s<sup>2</sup>a.* ‘The Indians often used to go on war parties.’

**8.** All these enclitics mark commands of various kinds. Several are used by only one sex and not by the other; this explains their rather large number.

Neutral commands are expressed by *yo* (men) and *ye* (women). (These become *wo* and *we* respectively when the immediately preceding word ends in /u/, /uŋ/, or /o/.) *yo* and *ye* have a-ablaut.

*Na' khaŋ'ta eya', waŋži' iču' wo!* ‘Here are some plums, take one!’

*Yetho'* (men) and *nitho'* or *iṭho'* (women) indicate a familiar request: there is a connotation that the requested action will be of short duration and easy to accomplish. These enclitics call for *iṭ*-ablaut.

*Tho'hiṅyaṅkiṅ yetho'.* 'Just wait a minute!'

The enclitics *ye* (men and women) and *na* (women) express a combined command-request, *ye* has *iṭ*-ablaut, *na* has a-ablaut:

*O'makiyiy ye, wanu'ni ye.* 'Please help me. I'm lost.'

*Mni' huṅ'h mak'u' na!* 'Please give me some water.'

Besides these command enclitics, some of the enclitics in position 12 are used in sentences that have the nature of both statements (or questions) and commands. These will be described together with the other enclitics in position 12.

**9.** *se'čA*, e-ablaut; *načhe'čA*, a-ablaut. These enclitics indicate that the statement is a conjecture by the speaker. Lakhota speakers translating into English sentences containing these enclitics ordinarily include expressions such as *probably*, *I guess*, *I suppose*, and the like.

*Ekta'wapha kiṅ maḡa'žu kte se'če.*  
'It will probably rain later on today.'

*Iyu'ha owi'čhayuspa pi kta načhe'če.*  
'I suppose they'll catch them all.'

**10.** *ke'yA* and *ke'ya pi* are the third-person singular and plural respectively of the verb *ke'yA* 'to say that'. Preceding A-words show a-ablaut. When used as enclitics, these words indicate that the speaker is quoting someone else. Such sentences always refer to events or states about which the speaker has no direct, personal knowledge. Hence, *ke'yA* and *ke'ya pi* appear very frequently in historical narratives. The absence of *ke'ye* or *ke'ya pi* implies that the speaker has personal knowledge about the event or state he is reporting, unless the context is clearly one of reported information.

*Čhaṅkhe' thiblo'ku kiṅ waṅla'ka ke'ye.*  
'And then she beheld her elder brother, it is said.'

**11.** Enclitics in this position all indicate that the speaker is not emotionally neutral to what he is reporting. Feelings indicated include mild yearning, mild discomfort, amusement, and probably others as well. *laḥ* is a sentence closing form, whereas *la'hčA* and *la'hčakA* can be followed by enclitics in position 12. Preceding A-words show e-ablaut.

*Mni-pi'ḡa waṅži' wačhiṅ' laḥ!* 'Gee, I sure would like a beer!'

*Waṅ li'la olu'luta laḥ!* 'Gosh it sure is sultry!'

*Iya'yekiya pi la'hčake!* 'Boy, did they ever take off!'

**12.** Several enclitics mark various kinds of questions. *he*; *huŋwo'*; a-ablaut. *he* marks a direct question. Although both men and women use *he*, men use *huŋwo'* (pronounced [hNwNo] in rapid speech) in relatively formal situations. Most questions, even those containing an interrogative word end in *he* or *huŋwo'*.

*Tohaŋ'l ya'u' kta he?* 'When will you come?'

*Waši'ču kiŋ Paha'-sa'pa kiŋ iču' pi šni huŋwo'?*  
'Did not the White man take the Black Hills?'

*so*, *se*; e-ablaut. *So* (men) and *se* (women) mark a dubitative question. There is no presupposition that the person questioned knows the answer:

*To'škhe waši'čuya he' eya' pi so?* 'I wonder how you say that in English?'

*se'l*; a-ablaut. *se'l* also marks a dubitative question, but it presupposes an affirmative reply:

*Be'bela kiŋ wana' yuha' pi se'l?*

'I guess they've had their baby by now, huh?'

*s'ele'l*; a-ablaut. *s'ele'l* marks a tag question.

*Nahaŋ'hči waš'a'ke šni s'ele'l?*  
'He isn't very strong yet, is he?

*yelakha'*; e-ablaut.

*yelakha'* marks a sarcastic rhetorical question:

*Čhiŋča' kiŋ he waka'stake yelakha'.*

'Oh, so I'm the one who made the kid cry!'

Two enclitics from position class 12 are used to make deferential suggestions. They share the properties of a rhetorical question and a command.

*he'či*: a-ablaut. *he'či* is used when the speaker induces himself as a participant in the proposed action:

*Wana' unyaŋ' pi he'či.*

'Let's go now!' 'Should we go now?'

*Thalo' etaŋ' awa'<sup>2</sup>u he'č̣i.*

‘Should I bring some meat?’ ‘How would it be if I brought some meat?’

*kiŋ*; e-ablaut. *kiŋ* is used when the speaker does not include himself:

*Ogna' blo' etaŋ' aya'<sup>2</sup>u kiŋ.*

‘Maybe you could bring some potatoes.’ ‘Would you like to bring some potatoes?’

Several enclitics in position 12 are used to mark sentences that are assertions rather than simple statements. Sentences containing these enclitics often correspond to emphatic statements in English, but many Lakota examples do not seem to be particularly emphatic. The assertion may be a (generally recognized) fact, or it may be a personal opinion.

*ye*; e-ablaut. *ye* marks the mild assertion of a generally recognized fact:

*Osni' ye, thima' gla' pi yo!*

‘It’s cold, go back inside!’

*yelo'* (men), *yele'* (obsolescent, women) (*yelo'* becomes *welo'* when the immediately preceding vowel is /u/, /uŋ/ or /o/) and *kšt* (men), *kišto'* (women; *kišto'* is usually pronounced *kšt* in rapid speech) are comparable. *kšt* is stronger than *yelo'*, *kišto'* alone is used by most women to correspond to both *yelo'* and *kšt* used by men. All require e-ablaut of a preceding A-word.

*Haŋ' hena'?uŋs č̣hebč̣he'pa pi yelo'.*

‘Yes, each of the two is fat.’

*Ağu'yapi-blu' etaŋ' wač̣hiŋ' kte kišto'.*

‘I’ll need some flour.’

*Hi...ya', he misuŋ'kala kšt.*

‘No - he is too my younger brother!’

*k<sup>2</sup>uŋ*; e-ablaut. *k<sup>2</sup>uŋ* marks a strongly asserted fact; it is often used to make it clear that the reference is to past time or completed action, *k<sup>2</sup>uŋ* is pronounced [uŋ] in rapid speech.

*Li'la hu'-masta'ka č̣ha he'č̣hamu wač̣hiŋ' ṣ̌ni k<sup>2</sup>uŋ.*

‘I’m very tired and I do not want to do that!’

*Hokši'la kiŋ iye'ya pi k' uŋ.*

‘The boys did leave.’

*kiŋ*; e-ablaut. *kiŋ* is also used to mark a strong assertion. It can have scolding or sarcastic overtones.

*To'kša, eča'mu kte kiŋ.* ‘Just a minute. I'll do it!’

*kšt* and *kišto'* are probably built on this *kiŋ*.

Asserted opinions are marked by several enclitics that vary from mild to very strong, *waŋ* (men) and *ma* (women) mark a mild opinion; *yewaŋ'* and *yema'* are stronger, *waŋ* and *ma* require a-ablaut, *yewaŋ'* and *yema'* require e-ablaut.

*Waŋ, he' heye' k' uŋ he'čhetu se'ča waŋ.*

‘Hey, what he said there seems to be right, by gosh!’

*Ši'yi, ka' ičhišniyaŋ e'gnake yema'!*

‘Mercy me, he went and put it wrong!’

*ħčA*; e-ablaut. *ħčA* is widely used in Lakota to strengthen the force of an accompanying word. It is thus much more free than most enclitics in terms of its sequential relations with other words. As a sentence-final enclitic, *ħčA* marks an emphatic statement.

Compare these examples of the two related uses of *ħčA* (word emphasizer versus sentence emphasizer):

*Osni' ħče šni.* ‘It is not very cold.’

*Osni' šni ħče.* ‘Heh! It's not really cold!’

*iŋče'ye*; e-ablaut. *iŋče'ye* asserts an opinion but presupposes that the interlocutor will agree:

*Wino'na šuŋ'ka kiŋ wo'k' u šni iŋče'ye.*

‘Winona didn’t feed the dog, right?’

Two (possibly archaic) enclitics mark assertions that the speaker believes to be true, but for which formal proof is lacking. These are *huŋše'* and *če'*; both require a-ablaut. The examples are from Buechel (1939).

*Ehaŋ'k<sup>2</sup>uŋ maħpi'yata Wakhaŋ'-Thaŋ'ka-thi' kiŋ le' thiyo'pa huŋše'.*

‘Verily this is no other than the house of God and the gate of heaven!’

*Ta'ku wo'waħtani wani'l tanye'ħči wo'?ečhuŋ ihuŋ'nikiya pi kta čhe', eya'pi čhe'.*

‘I believe that they will finish everything blamelessly and well, as they say they will.’

*ni'*; a-ablaut. A strong wish that something might come-about is expressed by *ni'*:

*Hu-maka'weže šni ni'.*

‘I hope I don't break my leg!’

*Wakhaŋ'-Thaŋ'ka uŋ'šimala ni'!*

‘May God have mercy on me!’

Probably based on this *ni'* is *šni'* (note the stress), which expresses a similar strong desire, *šni'* requires e-ablaut.

*He' šuŋ'ka kiŋ he' kte' šni'.*

‘I wish he would kill that dog!’ ‘He really ought to kill that dog!’

*kiŋlo'*; e-ablaut. a strong warning is expressed by *kiŋlo'*:

*Niya'ħtake kiŋlo'!* ‘Hey, watch out, he'll bite you!’

Two enclitics are used to mark emphatic negative sentences. These are *ka* and *kačha'*. Both require e-ablaut of preceding A-words.

*Tase' he'čhamu wačhiŋ' ka!*

‘Of course I do not want to do that!’

*Wo'waši-ečhuŋ' kačha'*

‘He certainly does not work!’

*kačha'* usually has sarcastic or deprecating connotations. A better translation for the last example would be ‘Don't tell me he works!’

*škhA'*; a-ablaut. *škhA'* is used to indicate that the statement is received knowledge, something about which the speaker has no direct, personal knowledge. As such, it appears frequently in



historical and especially mythological narratives. Its meaning is ‘purportedly, supposedly, allegedly’.

*Ikto'mi ka'khena tokhe' ečha'čha oma'ni-ya' haŋ škhe'.*

‘Iktomi (Trickster) was walking around aimlessly over there (they say).’

*tkha'*; a-ablaut. *tkha'* is frequently shortened to *kha'*. The enclitic appears to have several somewhat similar meanings, but the principal use is in conditional statements.

*Ma'za-ska' etaŋ' awa'<sup>2</sup> u kta tkha'.*

‘I should have brought some money.’

*Čhaŋ' waŋ bluha' k<sup>2</sup>e'š siŋte'-ħla kiŋ waka't<sup>2</sup>a tkha'.*

‘If I had (had had) a stick I would kill (would have killed) the rattle snake.’

*Lehaŋ'yela mat'a' tkha'.*

‘I almost died.’ (‘I would have died if...’)

*Wičha'ħčala kiŋ he išna'la thi' he tkha'.*

‘That old man was living alone until recently.’

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## 11. Selected Vocabulary

The symbols *A* and *AN* at the ends of verbs in this list represent a vowel that changes, depending on grammatical context ([4.3.2.6.](#)).

airplane *kiŋye'khiyapi* ‘they make them fly (in them)’

alive *ni'*

animal *wama'khaškaŋškaŋ* ‘those moving about on the earth’

ankle *iška'hu*

ant *thažu'ška*

antelope *thatho'kala* ‘antelope; domestic goat’

anus *uŋze'* ‘anus; buttock’

apple *thaspaŋ'*

Arapaho *Maŋpi'yatho'* 'Blue-sky (Indian)' (This is apparently a reference to tattoos.)

Arikara *Phala'ni* 'Arikara, Ree'

arm *isto'*

arrow *wahiŋ'kpe*

artichoke *phaŋǧi'* (Jerusalem artichoke; domestic turnip)

ash tree *pse'htiŋ*

ashes *čaŋo'ta*

Assiniboine *Ho'he*

aunt *thuŋwiŋ'* 'father's sister' (The mother's sister is called '[mother](#)').)

aurora borealis *wana'ǧiwačhi'pi* 'spirit dance'

automobile *iye'čhiŋkiŋyaŋke* 'runs by itself'

awl See [needle](#)

axe *nazuŋ'spe; iča'kse* 'instrument for chopping'

baby *hokši'čala*

*be'bela* (this is probably a loanword from French *be'be*)

back *hiŋye'te* 'upper back'

*čhuwi'* 'back below shoulder blades'

bacon *wašiŋ'* 'bacon; animal fat'

bad *ši'čA*

badger *hoka'*

ball *tha'pa*

bathe *nuwAĐ'* 'to swim, to bathe'

be *e'* 'be a particular one (of animate things only)';

*haŋ'* 'be upright (of inanimate things only)';

*he'čha* 'be such a one, be of such a kind';  
*hiye'yA* 'be located here and there (of inanimate things only)';  
*uŋ'* 'be, exist (of animate things only); be located somewhere (of all things)';  
*yukhAŋ'* 'have, be (of intimate possessions only)';  
*ni'čA* 'not to have, not to be (of intimate possessions only)'

beads *pšitho'*

beadwork *wakšu'pi* 'decoration'

beans *omni'ča*

bear *matho'*

beautiful See [good](#)

beaver *čha'pa*

bed *oyuŋ'ke*

bee *theŋmuŋ'ğazizi'la* 'little yellow banded fly'

beer *mnipi'ğa*

bell *ħla'ħla*

belly *thezi'*

bent *ško'pA*

big *thaŋ'ka*

bighorn sheep See [mountain sheep](#)

bird *ziŋtka'la*

bite *yaħta'kA*

bitter *pha'*

black *sa'pA*

blackbird *wa'ħpathaŋ'ka*

Blackfeet Sioux *Siha'sapa*

Black person *Ha'sapa* 'black skin'

blood *we'*

blue *tho'* 'blue; green'

boil *pi'ǵA* 'to be boiling'; *piħyA'* 'to cause to boil'

bone *hohu'* ,

book *wo'wapi* 'book; letter; flag'

bow *ita'zipa*

boy *hokši'la*

brain *nasu'la*

brave *ohi'tika*

bread *aǵu'yapi*

break *kawe'ǵA*

breast *aze'* 'female breast'

breechcloth *čhegna'ke* 'penis cover'

bring *ahi'* 'to bring here'; *a'u'* 'to be bringing here'; *ahi'yu* 'to leave to bring here'; *agli'* 'to bring home here'; *aku'* 'to be bringing home here'; *agli'yaču* 'to leave to bring home here'

brother *čhiye'* 'older brother of a man'; *thiblo'* 'older brother of a woman'; *sunka'la* 'younger brother of man or woman'

brown *ǵi'*

Brule Sioux *Sičhan'ǵu'* 'burned thigh'

buffalo cow *pte'*

buffalo berry *maštiŋ'čaphute'* 'rabbit lip'

buffalo bull *thathan'ka*

bug *wablu'ska*

burn *ile' bum*, blaze up; *špaŋ'* 'be burned, to be cooked (food), to be ripe (fruit)'

bush *hu'*

butcher *pha'tA*

butterfly *kimi'mila*

buttock See [anus](#)

buy *ophe'thuŋ*

buzzard *heča'*

cactus *uŋkče'la*

cafe *owo'tethi'pi* 'eating house'

calf of leg *hučho'giŋ*

carry on back *k'ij'* 'carry; pack'

cat *igmu'la*

catch *oyu'spA*

chair *čhaŋ'a'kaŋyaŋka'pi* 'wood to sit on'

cherry See [chokecherry](#)

chest *makhu'*

Cheyenne *Šahi'yela*

chicken *khokhe'yaŋ'aŋla*; *khokho'yaŋ'aŋla* 'chicken, rooster'

chief *ithaŋ'čhaŋ*

child *wakhaŋ'yeža*

Chippewa see [Ojibwa](#)

chokecherry *čhaŋpha'*

church *owa'čhekiye* 'prayer places'; *thi'piwakhaŋ'* 'holy house'

claw *šake'* 'claw (of animal or bird); fingernail (of human)'

cloth *mniħu'ha*

cloud See [sky](#)

coat See [shirt](#)

coffee *wakha'lyapi*

cold *čhuwi'ta* 'to feel cold (internal sensation; used of animate things only)';

*sni'* 'to feel cold (external sensation; used of inanimate things only)';

*osni'* (used of atmosphere and weather)

come *gli'* 'arrive at home here'; *gliču'* 'leave for home here'; *hi'* 'arrive here'; *hiyu'* 'leave for here'; *ku'* 'be on the way home here'; *u'* 'be on the way here'

converse *wo'glakA* 'converse, talk'

cook *špaŋyAD'* 'to cause to be burned; be cooked'; see [burn](#)

corn *wagmi'za*

cottonwood *wa'ğáčhaŋ'* 'brittle wood'

count See [read](#)

cow *ptegle'ska*, *pteble'ska* 'spotted buffalo'; *ptewa'niyaŋpi* 'pet buffalo'

cowbird *wa'ħpaħo'ta*

coyote *šuyŋ^ma'nitu* 'wilderness dog'; *maya'sleča*

cradleboard *iyo'k' iŋpa*

crane *phehaŋ'*

crazy *witko'*

Cree *šahi'ya*

creek *wakpa'la*

cricket *psipsi'čala* 'little hopper'

crippled *hušte'*

crow *khaŋgi'*

Crow *Khaŋgi'wičha'sa* 'Crow person'; *Psa'loka* (borrowed from Crow)

cry *čhe'yA*

cup *wi'yatke* 'instrument for drinking'

cut *waksa'ksA*

dance *wačhi'* 'to dance'; *wačhi'pi* 'a dance'

day *aŋpe'tu*

daughter *čhuŋkši'*

deer *tha'hča*

die *t'A'* 'be dead'

digging stick *wi'wopta* 'instrument for digging'

dish *wakši'ča*

do *ečha'<sup>2</sup>uŋ*, *ečhuŋ'*

dog *šuŋ'ka*

donkey *šuŋ'suŋla* 'donkey; mule'

door *thiyo'pa*

dragonfly *thuswe'ča*

dream *ihaŋ'blA*

dress *čhuwi'gnaka* 'back cover'

dried meat *pa'pa*

drink *yatkAD'*

drum *čhaŋ'čheğa* 'wooden kettle'

dry *sa'ka*

duck *maġa'*, *maġa'ksiča*

eagle *waŋbli'*

ear *nu'ġe* 'human ear'; *nakpa'* 'animal ear'

earring *owiŋ'*

earth *makha'* 'earth, dirt'

east *wiyo'hiŋyaŋpata* 'where the sun comes up'

eat *yu'tA*

eat up *thebyA'*

egg *wi'tka* 'egg; testicle'

eight *šaglo'ġaŋ*

elk *heħa'ka* 'branched horns'

elm *p<sup>?</sup>e'čhaŋ*

enemy *tho'ka*

fall (season) *ptaŋye'tu*

fall down *hiŋħpa'yA*

fat *čhe'pA* 'to be fat'; see also [bacon](#)

father *ate'* (term of address); *ate'waye kiŋ* 'the one I have for father'

feather *wi'yaka*

female *wiŋ'yela*

field See [garden](#)

fingernail See [claw](#)

fire *phe'ta*

firefly *uŋze'blinkblink* 'blinking arse' (jocose)



fish *hožan'*

five *za'ptan*

flag *wo'wapi*

flea *psiča'la; ha'la*

flower *wana'hča*

fly *theħmu'ğa, thoħmu'ğa, thaħmuğa* 'housefly; horsefly'; *kiŋyan'* 'to fly'

fog *p'o'*

food *wo'yute*

foot *si'*

forehead *ithu'hu*

four *to'pa, to'b*

fox *thokha'la, šuŋgi'la*

frog *gnaška'*

gall bladder *phizi'*

garden *wo'župi* 'garden, field'

gasoline See [grease](#)

gas station *wi'gli<sup>2</sup>oi'nažin* 'gasoline stopping place'

girl *wičhiŋ'čala*; See also [woman](#)

give *k'u'*

give back *kičhu'*

go *yA'*; be on the way there; *glA'* be on the way home there; *i'* arrive there; *khi'* arrive at home there; *iya'yA* leave for there; *khiglA'* leave for home there

goat *tha'hča šuŋ'kala* 'dog deer'

good *wašte'* 'good; beautiful'

goose *maḡa'šapa* 'dirty duck'

government (U.S.) *thuŋka'šila* 'grandfather'

grandchild *thako'ža*

grandfather *thuŋka'šila*

grandmother *uŋči'* (maternal), *khun'ši* (paternal)

grape *čhuŋwi'yapehe* '(it) wraps around a tree'

grass *pheži'*

grasshopper *gnugnu'ška*; *pheži'hophop* 'grasshopper' (jocose) (note that /p/ is not replaced by /b/)

gray *ħo'ta*

grease *wi'gli* 'grease; gasoline, oil'

green See [blue](#)

grind *yukpaŋ'*

Gros Ventre See [Hidatsa](#)

guts *šupe'*

hail *wasu'*

hair *phehiŋ'* 'head hair'

hairpipe breastplate *wawo'slatawana'p<sup>2</sup>iŋ* 'hairpipe necklace'

hand *nape'*

hard *suta'*

hat *wapho'štaŋ*

have *yuha'* (used only of alienable things); see also [be](#)

hawk *čhetan'*

head *nata'*, *pha'*

hear *nañ<sup>2</sup>uj'*

heart *čhaŋte'*

heavy *tke'*

heron *hokha'*

Hidatsa *Ĥewa'ktokta* 'Hidatsa, Gros Ventre'

high *waŋka'tuya*

hill *paha'*

hit *aphA'*

horns *he'*

horse *šuj<sup>2</sup>kawakhaŋ'* 'wonderful dog'

draft horse *šujn<sup>2</sup>wo'waši* 'working horse'

mare *šujn<sup>2</sup>wiŋ'yela* 'female horse'

saddle horse *šujk<sup>2</sup>a'kaŋyaŋkapi* 'horse they sit on'

stallion *šujn<sup>2</sup>khi'yuhā* 'breeding horse'

hospital *okhu'žethi'pi* 'sick house'

hot *kha'tA*

house *čhaŋ'thipi* 'wooden lodge'

Hunkpapa Sioux *Huŋ'kpapha* 'Hunkpapa, Standing Rock Sioux'

husband *hiŋna'*

ice *ča'ğa*

Indian *Lakho'ta* 'Sioux Indian; American Indian'

iron see [metal](#)

jail *oka'škethi'pi* 'detention house'

jerkey *waka'blapi* 'what has been pounded flat'

jump *psi'čA*

June berry *wi'pazuŋtka. wi'pazuŋtkan, wi'pazukha*

kettle *čhe'ǵa*

kick *naħta'ka*

kidney *ažuŋ'tka*

kill *kte'*

knee *čhaŋkpe'*

knife *mi'la*

know *slolyA'*

lake *ble'*

land *makho'čhe*

laugh *iħa'* 'laugh; smile'

leaf *waħpe'*

leather *theħpi'*

left-handed *čhatka'*

leg *hu'*

legging *huŋska'*

lie (recline) *yuŋka'*

lie down *ħpa'yA*

light in weight *kap<sup>?</sup>o'žA*

lightning *wakiŋ'yaŋtuŋwan'pi* 'The Thunderers are blinking'

like *wašte'lakA* 'to like'; *s<sup>?</sup>e* 'like. as, as though'

lip, lower *iha'*  
upper *phute'*

little *či'k<sup>?</sup>ala, či'stila, či'sčila*

live *thi'*

liver *phi'*

lizard *agle'ska*

lodge *thi'pi*

lodge cover *a'kaḥpe*

lodge pole *thušu'*

look for *ole'*

louse *heya'*

love *theḥi'la*

Lower Brule Sioux *Khulwi'čhaša* 'Lower person'

lung *čhaḡu'*

magpie *halha'ta*; *uḡkče'kiḥa* 'buries his dung'

make *ka'ḡA*

male *bloka'*

man *wičha'sa*

young man *khoška'laka*

old man *wičha'hčala*

Mandan *Miwa'tani*

mare See [horse](#)

meadowlark *thaši'yagnupa'*

meat *thalo'*

medicine *phežu'ta* 'herbal roots'

metal (iron) *ma'za*

Mexican *spayo'la* (This is probably a loanword from. French *espagnol*)

milk *asaŋ'pi*

Milky Way *wana'ǧithačhaŋ'ku* ‘ghost road’

mink *i'khusaŋ*

Minneconjou Sioux *Mnikho'wožu* ‘those who plant by water’, *Mnikho'waŋžu*

mirror *mi'yoglas'ij*

moccasin *haŋm'i'kčeka* ‘ordinary shoe’

money *ma'zaska'* ‘silver’ ‘white metal’

moon *wi'* ‘luminary’; *haŋhe'piwi'* ‘night luminary’

mosquito *čhaphuŋ'ka*

mother *ina'* (term of address); *ina'waye kij* ‘the one I have for mother’

mountain *ħe'*

mountain lion *igmu'thaŋ'ka* ‘big cat’

mountain sheep *he'čhiŋškayapi* ‘they make spoons from their horns’

mouse *ithuŋ'kala*

mouth *i'*

movie *wo'wapiškaŋškaŋ* ‘moving picture’

mule See [donkey](#)

muskrat *siŋkphe'*, *siŋkphe'la*

mustache *phutiŋ'hiŋ* ‘upper lip hair’

narrow *oči'k'a*

navel *čhekpa'*

necklace *wana'p'ij*

needle *thahiŋ'špa* ‘needle, awl’

new (young) *the'ča* 'new; young'

night *haŋhe'pi*

nine *napčič'yuŋka*

north *wazi'yata*

northern lights See [aurora borealis](#)

nose *phasu'*

nostril *phaħla'te*

Oglala Sioux *Ogla'la* 'Oglala Sioux, Pine Ridge Sioux'

oil See [grease](#)

Ojibwa *Ĥaħa'thuŋwaŋ* 'those who live at the falls'

old *kaŋ'* 'old, worn out'

one *waŋ'či* (used in counting); *waŋži'* (used in specifying an amount)

onion *pšič'*

otter *ptaŋ'*

owl *hiŋhaŋ'*

pack *wak<sup>2</sup>iŋ'* 'backpack'

paint See [write](#)

pants See [trousers](#)

parfleche bag *wo'kpaŋ*

pemmican *wasna'*

penis *čhe'*; *susu'* 'testicle(s); male genitals'

people *oya'te* 'people; tribe'

pepper *yamnu'mnuğapi*, *yamnu'mnužapi* (This term originally referred to the berries of the hackberry tree.)

picture *ito'wapi*

pig *khukhu'se*

pigeon *wakiŋ'yela*

pine *wazi'*

Pine Ridge Sioux See [Oglala Sioux](#)

pipe *čhaŋnu'pa*

pipestem *čhaŋnu'pasiŋte'* 'pipe tail'

play *ška'tA*

plum *khaŋ'ta*

porcupine *phahiŋ'* 'sharp hair'

potato *blo'*

prairie chicken *šiyo'*

prairie dog *piŋpi'za* 'squeaking, barking'

puppy *šuŋhpa'la*

quillwork *wo'ska*

quill *owiŋ'ža*

rabbit *maštiŋ'ča, maštiŋ'čala*

raccoon *wičhi'tegleğa* 'striped face'

rain *mağa'žu*

rainbow *wi'gmuŋke* 'snare, trap'

rattle *wagmu'ha*

rattlesnake *siŋte'hla* 'rattle tail'

rawhide *thaha'lo*



read *yawa'* 'read; count'

red *ša'*

relative *ota'kuye*

rib *thuču'hu*

rice *pšij'*

rifle *ma'zawakhaŋ'* 'wonderful metal'

ripe See [cook](#)

river *wakpa'*

root *hu'ta*

rope *wi'khaŋ*

Rosebud Sioux See [Brule Sioux](#)

run *ij'yaŋka*

sack *wo'žuha*

saddle *čhaŋ'wak<sup>2</sup>ij* 'wooden back rack'

salt *mnisku'ya* 'sweet water'

Sans Arc Sioux *Ita'zibčo* 'those without bows'

Santee Sioux *Isaŋ'yethi*

say *eyA'*

school *owa'yawa* 'reading place'

see *wanŋyaŋ'ka*

seven *šako'wiŋ*

sew *kaye'ğA*

sharp (edge) *phe'*

sharp (point) *phe'stola*

shawl *šina'*

sheep *he'čhiṅškayapi* 'they make spoons from their horns' 'bighorn sheep, mountain sheep';  
*ptiṅ'čala* 'domestic sheep'

shield *waha'čhaṅka*

shin *hublo'*

shirt (coat) *o'gle*

shoe *haṅ'pa*

shoot *khute'*

short *pte'čela*

Shoshone *Su'suni*

shoulder *ablo'*

sick *khu'žA* 'to be nauseous'; *yazaṅ'* 'to hurt'

sinew *khaṅ'*

sing *lowaṅ'*

sister *thaṅke'* 'older sister of a man'; *čhuwe'* 'older sister of a woman'; *thaṅkši'* 'younger sister of a man'; *thaṅka'* 'younger sister of a woman'

sit *yaṅka'*

sit down *i'yotakA*

six *ša'kpe*

skinny *thama'heča*

skunk *maka'*

sky *maḥpi'ya* 'sky; cloud'

sleep *ištiṅ'mA* 'to be asleep'

sleepy *h̃wa'*

smoke *šo'ta; uŋ'pA* 'to smoke tobacco'

snake *zuze'ča*

snow *wa'* 'fallen snow'; *iča'mna* 'falling snow'

socks *huŋya'khuŋ*

soda pop *kapho'papi* 'bursting, popping'

soft *phaŋšphaŋ'ža*

son *čhiŋkši'*

soup *wahaŋ'pi*

south *ito'kağata*

speak *iyA'*

spear *wahu'kheza*

spider *iŋkto'; iŋkto'mi*

spoon *čhiŋška'*

spring (season) *we'tu*

spring of water *wiwi'la*

squash *wagmu'* 'squash; gourd'

squirrel *ziča'*

stand *ogna'ke* 'stand, chest'; *na'žiy* 'be standing'

stand up *ina'žiy*

Standing Rock Sioux See [Hunkpapa Sioux](#)

star *wičha'h̃pi*

stone *iŋ'yaŋ; ih̃'e'*

store *mas<sup>2</sup>o'phiye* 'cashbox'

stove *očhe'thi*

sugar *čanhan'pi* 'tree juice'

summer *bloke'tu*

sun *wi'* 'luminary'; *aŋ'pawi'* 'day luminary'

sunflower *waňča'zi'* 'yellow flower'

swallow *išta'ničathan'ka* 'cliff or barn swallow'; *napčA'* 'to swallow; to internalize knowledge'

sweet *sku'yA*

swim See [bathe](#)

table *wa'glotapi*

tail *siŋte'*

talk See [converse](#)

take *a<sup>2</sup>i'* 'to take or convey there'; *akhi'* 'to take or convey home there'; *a'yA* 'to be taking or conveying there'; *aglA'* 'to be taking or conveying home there'; *e'yayA* 'to leave to take or convey there'; *akhi'yaglA* 'to leave to take or convey home there'

take *iču'* 'take, get'

tall *han'skA* 'tall; long'

tea *waňpe'* 'leaves'; *waňpe'khalya'pi* 'leaf beverage'

telephone *mas<sup>2</sup>a'pha*

ten *wikče'mna*

tepee See [lodge](#)

testicle *itka'*; see also [egg](#)

Teton Sioux *Thi'thunwan*

thick *šo'kA*

thigh (side) *sičhaŋ'*  
(front) *šu'te*

thin *zizi'pa*

three *ya'mni*

throat *lote'*

thunder *wakiŋ'yaŋhothuŋpi* 'The Thunderers are calling'

tired *watu'kha, hu'staA*

tobacco *čhaŋli'*

tomato See [wildrose](#)

tongue *čheži'*

tooth *hi'*

travois *čhuwi'č' iŋpa*

tree *čhaŋ'* 'tree; wood'

tribe See [people](#)

trousers *uŋzo'giŋ*

turkey *wagle'kšaŋ*

turnip *thiŋ'psila* 'wild turnip'; see also [artichoke](#)

turtle *khe'ya*

two *nu'pa, nu'm*

Two-Kettle Sioux *O'o'henupa* 'those who boil meat twice'

uncle *lekši'* 'mother's brother' (The father's brother is called 'father'.)

use *uŋ'* 'use; wear'

vegetation *wo'he* 'weeds'

vulva *šaŋ'*

wagon *čhanpa'gmiyaŋpi* 'wood that is made to roll along'

walk *ma'ni*

warbonnet *wapha'ha*

warclub *ij'yaŋkape'mnipi* 'stone club'

wash *yuža'ža*

water *mni'*

watermelon *špaŋ'šniyuta'pi* 'they eat it raw';  
*wagmu'špaŋšni* 'uncooked squash'

wear See [use](#)

weasel *ithuŋ'kasaŋ', ithuŋ'kasaŋ'la*

weed See [vegetation](#)

west *wiyo'ħpeyata* 'where the sun goes down'

wet *spa'yA*

whiskey *mni'wakhaŋ'* 'wonderful water'

white *saŋ'* 'dull white'; *ska'* 'clear white'

White man *Waši'čuŋ, Waši'ču*

wide *o'pta*

wife *thawi'ču*

wildrose *uŋžij'žijtkā* 'rose hip; tomato'

willow *čhaŋša'sa* 'red stem dogwood'; *čhaŋwi'wila* 'common willow'

wind *thate'*

window *ožaŋ'žanglepi* 'frame to admit light'

wing *ħupa'hu*

winter *wani'yetu*

woman *wiŋ'yaŋ* 'woman'; *wikho'skalaka* 'young woman'; *winu'hčala* 'old woman'

wolf *šuŋn^ma'nituthaŋ'ka* 'big coyote'

wood See [tree](#)

write *owa'* 'write; paint'

Yankton Sioux *Ihaŋ'gthunwaŋ* 'those dwelling at the end'

yellow *zi'*

young See [new](#)