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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

THE MORPHOSYNTAX OF MEKENS (TUPI)

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE HUMANITIES

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS

BY

ANA VILACY GALUCIO

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

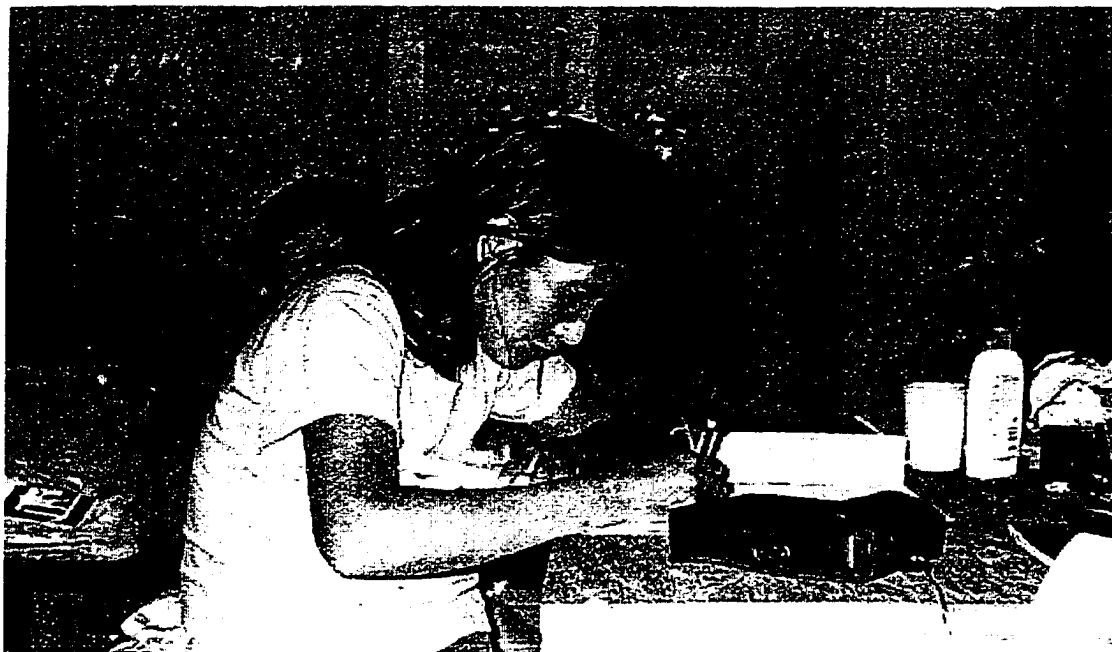JUNE 2001

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Rosalina Guaratira - Área Indígena Rio Mequens (RO)

For the Sakirabiat (Mekens) people

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ABBREVIATIONS

1pEx	First person plural exclusive
1pIn	First person plural inclusive
1s	First person singular
2p	Second person plural
2s	Second person singular
3c	Third person coreferential
3p	Third person plural
3pc	Third person plural coreferential
3s	Third person singular
Abl	Ablative
Adj	Adjective
Adjzr	Adjectivizer
AdvP	Adverb phrase
Af	Affix
Assoc	Associative
Aux	Auxiliary
caus	Causative
col	Collective
com	Comitative causative
Dat	Dative
Dem	Demonstrative
Desid	Desiderative
Emph	Emphatic
excl	Exclusive
foc	Focus
fut	Future
Fut.1/2	First and second person future
Fut.3	Third person future
Im.fut	Immediate future
Intrvzr	Intransitivizer
Loc	Locative
N	Noun
Nassert	Non-assertive
Neg	Negation

Nomlzr	Nominalizer
Obl	Oblique marker
OFC	Object focus construction
OM	Object marker
pl	Plural
pl.action	Plural action
pl.su	Plural Subject
PP	Postpositional phrase
Predzr	Predicatizer
Pro	Pronoun
RC	Relative clause
Rel	Relational
RemPast	Remote past
res	Resumptive
sg	Singular
Sim	Simultaneous
Them	Thematic vowel
Tr	Transitivizer
Tr.pl.act	Transitivizer+plural action
TSC	Temporal subordinate clause
Txt	Text example
Verblzr	Verbalizer
VinSt	Intransitive verb stem
VP	Verb phrase
Vtr	Transitive verb
VtrSt	Transitive verb stem

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is concerned with the morphosyntax of Mekens, a Brazilian Amazonian language. Mekens is an endangered language that has never been thoroughly studied. It is one of the five surviving languages of the Tupari (Tupi) linguistic family, spoken in the state of Rondonia in the northwest of Brazil by approximately 25 people. This dissertation serves two main purposes. First, it makes available primary data colleted in the *Area Indigena Rio Mequens* of a language on which little material is available, thus serving as the first major source of documentation and reference on Mekens. Second, it addresses several topics that are of considerable interest to theoretical and typological linguistic research, including the system of multiple verb phrases per clause that is distinct from serial verb constructions, the reference tracking system that marks co-/disjoint reference between subjects, but is distinct from canonical switch–reference systems, and the distinction between subject and object verbal markers in terms of grammatical agreement versus anaphoric agreement.

Chapter one provides historical, ethnographic and sociolinguistic information about the Mekens people, the linguistic affiliation and the basic phonological features of their language. Chapter two introduces the principal features of Mekens morphology and its main typological characteristics. The person pronominal system of Mekens is parallel to that of other Tupian languages, consisting of a series of free pronouns and a series of

corresponding bound prefixes. Chapters three and four investigate the syntax of Mekens. In chapter three, four phrasal categories are proposed: noun, verb, postpositional, and adverb phrases. In addition to the ergative distributional pattern of verbal prefixes, there is a contrast between subject markers on intransitive verbs and object markers on transitive verbs. The former are analyzed as grammatical agreement markers, and the latter as anaphoric agreement markers. Chapter four presents the utterance types: declarative, imperative, and interrogative. Mekens also syntactically encodes a frustrative declarative, a permissive, and an hortative. Non—verbal predicate clauses and complex sentences are also discussed. The chapter closes with the use of the general oblique marker in antipassive constructions without clear antipassive morphology, the object focus constructions, and the reference—tracking system.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The present dissertation is concerned with the morphosyntax of Mekens, a Brazilian Amazonian language of the Tupi family. The principal goal of this dissertation is to provide a coherent description of the morphological and syntactic structures of the language. Mekens is an endangered language that has never been thoroughly studied, and for which very little published and unpublished material is available. Except for a phonemic description (Hanke *et al.* 1958), the only available sources of information on Mekens are the result of the author's preliminary study of the language (e.g. Galucio 1994, 1996a, b, c). Thereby, this work will also serve as a documentation and reference source for primary data of Mekens.

This introductory chapter gives background information on the Mekens people and their language (section 1.1), a brief overview of the basic phonological features of the language (section 1.2), and the structural organization of the following chapters (section 1.3).

1

1.1 "MEKENS" LANGUAGE AND PEOPLE

"Mekens" is one of the five surviving languages of the Tupari linguistic branch of the Tupi family, spoken by about 25 people in the Area Indigena Rio Mequens. The majority of people known as Mekens live in the Area Indigena Rio Mequens, a federal indigenous reservation in the state of Rondônia, in the Northwest of Brazil. Their reservation is located within the borders of the town of Cerejeira in the proximities of the Mequens river, a tributary of the Guapore river. There are also some families living in nearby towns, but no information exists about their number and exact location. The state of Rondônia is highlighted in Map 1 below.
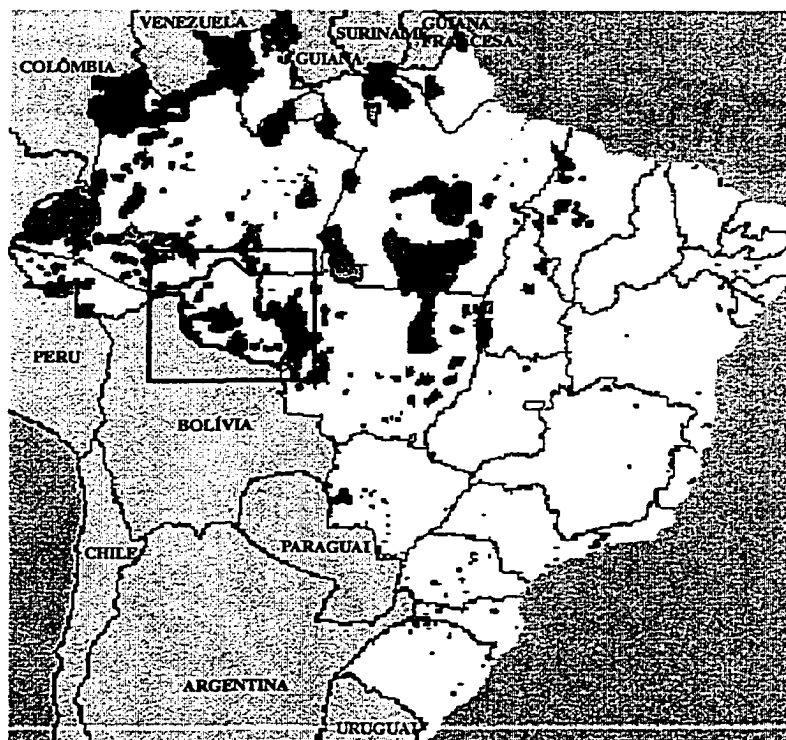
MAP OF BRAZIL WITH THE STATE OF RONDONIA IN EVIDENCE,
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(WWW.SOCIOAMBIENTAL.ORG)

Nowadays the people in the Area Indigena Rio Mequens refer to themselves and to their language as Sakurabiat (Sakïrabiat), which literally means the 'Spider-Monkey' group and is a complex name composed of the noun Sakïrap 'Spider-monkey' and the collective clitic 'iat'. Sakïrabiat was initially the name of one of the dialect groups and has now been generalized for the entire group after the drastic reduction of the population in the XX century. The term "Mekens", which receives numerous different spellings (e.g. Mequens, Moquen, Mequen, Mequens, Michens, Mequenes, Mekens, and Meque) [1], is a general denomination given to the people of different groups who lived in the area of the Mequens river.

The archaeologist Eurico Miller (1983), based on historical information and on archaeological data he gathered on the region of the Upper-middle Guaporé, concluded that the people referred to as "Mequens" in the XVIII century were in fact the Amniapé (Amniapä) and the Guarategaja people. The same denomination "Mequens" is later used referring to the Koaratira and Sakïrap (Sakïrabiat) people (Maldi 1991), who have traditionally lived in the headwaters of the Mequens river. As we will see below the Amniapé and Guarategaja people were linguistically and culturally related to the people now living in the A. I. Rio Mequens. For a matter of convenience, we will continue to use the name Mekens in reference to the people living in the A. I. Rio Mequens and to their language.

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1. The name Mekens (Mequens) is probably derived through corruption of the word "moquem", which in turn is etymologically derived from Tupi 'mocaém' (cf. da Cunha 1978) and enters the Brazilian Portuguese lexicon as 'an indigenous technique to roast meat using a type of grill made with wooden sticks'.

1.1.1 THE PROBLEM OF DEFINING LINGUISTIC AFFILIATION

Due to the very limited nature of information about indigenous groups in Brazil in general, a situation that extends to the people living in the Area Indigena Rio Mekens, the correct classification of their language has been a matter of much confusion until recently. While on the one hand it has always been clear that they speak a language of the Tupi family, on the other hand the internal classification within the family was not always clear and much confusion involved different names of groups and different spellings for the same name. Thus, in an article from the 50s by Hanke, Swadesh and Rodrigues (1958) Mekens was mistakenly called Kanoe, a mistake later identified by those authors. That same confusion is also reflected in Rodrigues' (1964) earlier classification of the Tupi family in which he correctly gives Guarategaya as a language of the Tupari branch, but lists Koaratira, Guaratira, Amaniapé, Mekén, and Kanoé as possible distinct subgroups. (Emphasis ours.)

Loukotka (1968) recognizes a Macurap group including basically the same subgroups Rodrigues (*ibid.*) had classified as members of the Tupari family. Loukotka's Macurap group comprises the languages Macurap, **Kanu:a (or Canoê) or Koaratira, Amniapé, Guarategaja or Mequen**, Kabishiana, Wayoró or Wyaru, Apichum, and Tupari or Wakaraü. (Emphasis ours.)

Contrary to his earlier classification, Rodrigues (1986) mistakenly lists Mekem as a language of the Monde (Tupi) family; a mistake that is repeated in the Ethnologue (1996 SIL) which erroneously lists *Mekem* (Mekens) as belonging to the **Monde family** of the Tupi macro family and lists *Sakirabia (Sakirap)* as an **unclassified** language.

(Our emphasis.) As we show at the end of this section, Mekens belongs to the Tupari family, together with the other four members, Tupari, Makurap, Ayuru, Akunsu, and the now extinct Kepikiriwat.

Maldi (1991) adopts Rodrigues' (1964, 1970) earlier classification of Mekens as belonging to the Tupari branch of the Tupi family, and correctly, in our view, takes the denomination "Mekens" to include the following groups: Amniapé, Guarategaja, Koaratira, and Sakirap (Sakirabiat). One piece of information that supports the hypothesis that the above four groups, which have being referred to as Mekens (Mequens) throughout the literature since the XVIII century, were culturally and linguistically related, perhaps even subgroups of a larger society is found in Levi-Strauss (1948:378-9). He reports that the Amniapé and Guarategaja attributed the creation of the world to **Arikuagnon**, who was the husband of **Pananmäkoza** and the father of the cultural hero, **Arikapoa** (our emphasis). As it happens, in the mythological tales still alive among the people in the A. I. Rio Mequens (Sakirabiat, Guaratira, Guarategayat and Siwkweriat), the creator of the world and responsible for its maintenance is **Arikwayõ**, who is married to **Pananikosa** and is the father of **Arikapoa**, the major cultural hero. The linguistic and cultural similarities are evident in the above notes.

Except for the inclusion of Kanoe as a member of the Tupari family, the languages composing that family are basically as presented in Rodrigues (1964, 1970). In later works Rodrigues (1993) lists 'Mekém' and 'Sakirabiap' as two different groups/languages, but correctly identifies them as belonging to the Tupari family. The

classification below draws directly from Rodrigues (ibid.) and Moore and Galucio (1993) and shows the Tupari family as known today. Names marked with an asterisk (*) represent extinct members of the family. The Akunsu group recently contacted near the Omerê river was identified as the fifth living member of the Tupari family (Gabas 1995), and its principal shared characteristics with other members of the Tupari family are given in (Moore 1997). The names listed to the right of Mekens refer to subgroups and speech varieties, as described in section 1.1.5 below, while the names listed with Ayuru refer simply to different spelling found in the literature.

Tupari Family:
1. Tupari
2. Mekens (Sakirabiat, Guaratira, Siwkweriat, Guarategayat, *Amniapé)
3. Ayuru (Wayoró, Ajuru)
4. Makurap
5. Akunsu
6. *Kepikiriwát

The reconstruction of Proto-Tupari consonants and vowels proposed by Moore and Galucio (1993) provides evidence for the classification of the Tupari family as presented here, specifically for the four languages discussed in their paper: Tupari, Mekens, Ayuru, and Makurap. Nonetheless, they found no evidence on their data for an internal classification within the family in terms of which languages were closer to each other. The vocalic phonemes in the Tupari family are shown to have been remarkably stable over time. The phonemic vowel inventory in the above four modern languages is basically identical. The phonemic inventory of consonants differs from one language to the other, but they are very similar.

Furthermore, in spite of the fact that the languages are not mutually intelligible the sound correspondences between the four languages are highly regular, thus leaving no doubt about their genetic relationship. The principal processes recognized by Moore and Galucio (1993:133) were denasalization of nasal sonorants before oral vowels, devoicing of obstruents especially in Mekens and Tupari, desonorantization of *r, and attrition of the original labiovelars by either loss, delabialization, or loss of the velar part of the segment. The examples in table 1 below illustrate some of the correspondences involved in the identification of the last process stated above. Although the series of labiovelar consonants is not present in Makurap, there are clear cognates showing a correspondence between labiovelars in Ayuru and Mekens, and labial fricatives in Makurap and Tupari. For illustrative purposes some cognate examples and reconstructed forms for Proto–Tupari from (Moore and Galucio 1993) are shown in table 1 below. Following methodological practice, the reconstructed form is marked with an asterisk.

Gloss	Proto-Tupari	Ayuru	Makurap	Mekens	Tupari
Alligator	*gwayto	gwayco	βatɔ	kwato	βa.o
Assai (palm)	*gwit+ʔi	gwiri	βirica	kwiri	βit+ʔi
Foot	*mbi	mbi	mbi	pi	pi
Macaw	*pet+ʔa	pera	pera	pera	pet+ʔa
Stone	*ŋwa+ʔi	ŋgwai	βa.i	kwa.i	βa+ʔi
Sweet Potato	*gwagwo	gwago	βaβɔ	kwako	βa.oʔ

Table 1: Cognate forms for four languages of the Tupari family along with the corresponding reconstructed forms for Proto-Tupari (Moore and Galucio 1993).

1.1.2 TRADITIONAL LOCATION OF THE MEKENS GROUP

All the historical accounts (e.g. Southey 1862, as cited in Moreira Neto 1985) refer to the Mekens always in the region of the Guapore river and its proximities. In the XX century the groups referred to as "Mequens" – the Amniapé and the Guarategaja – were located in the headwaters of the Mequens river (cf. Snethlage 1937, Lévi-Strauss 1948). Snethlage (1937), located the Guarategaja (also called Koaratira) and Amniapé in the headwaters of the Mequens river, and calculated that the two groups together totaled 500 people.

In Loukotka (1963) the Amniapé are reported on the Mequens river and the Guarategaja in the Verde and Mequens rivers. After comparing various historical sources (e.g. Snethlage 1937, 1939, Lévi-Strauss 1948, Metraux 1948, Loukotka 1963), Maldi (1991:217) gives the Guaporé basin as the historical localization of the people from the linguistic family she called the Tupi-Tupari family. The recently contacted group of the Tupari branch – the Akunsu – also lives near a small tributary of Guaporé river, the Omerê stream (Gabas 1995, Valadão 1996). Caspar (1975) reports that the Tupari people referred to the presence of Wakotsõn (Akunsu) people living to the far East and Northeast of their territory.

According to reports made by remnants of the Guaratira (Koaratira) people, the first contacts with outsiders were with Bolivian settlers from Europe that reached their villages going upstream in the Mequens river (Maldi, *ibid.*) in the early 30s. That location coincides with the location given in Caspar (1975). He lists the headwaters of

the Mequens, Ipiranga, and São João rivers as inhabited by Guaratira people.

Map 2 below shows the location of the Area Indigena Rio Mequens, where we did field work.

INDIGENOUS RESERVATIONS IN THE STATE OF RONDONIA
(ÁREA INDIGENA RIO MEQUENS (MEKENS) SHOWN).
ADAPTED FROM *INSTITUTO SOCIOAMBIENTAL* HOME PAGE
(WWW.SOCIOAMBIENTAL.ORG).

The Sakirabiat living today in the Area Indigena Rio Mequens give the headwaters of the Verde river, a tributary of the Colorado and Guaporé rivers, as the location where the rubber gatherers reached them. They also cite a village occupied by rubber gatherers in the proximity of São João river as the place to which they moved trying to escape the effects of influenza.

1.1.3 *HISTORY OF CONTACT*

The first notes about the contact of the indigenous societies occupying the right bank of the Guapore river (West Guapore) with the Western society date back to the XVII century. Two groups amply cited in Portuguese documents from that period are the Guajaratas (Pauserna, Tupi cf. Metraux 1948) and the "Mequens". Moreira Neto (1985, after Coelho 1872) reports the existence of a Jesuit Mission among the Mequens and Guajarata in the proximity of the Mequens river in the XVIII century. During that century occupation of southern Amazonia, where the state of Rondonia is located, was very intense by Portuguese and Spanish alike, who were disputing the borders of their respective colonies.

However by the end of the XVIII with the movements for independence within the colonies and the consequent decline of interest in keeping the colonial limits, the region was suddenly abandoned (cf. Maldi 1991:211-14). It was only in the second half of the XIX century with the demand for rubber that the region starts to be intensively occupied by outsiders again. The indigenous societies that inhabited the right bank of the Guaporé river were mainly isolated from contact with outsiders and lived in areas of difficult access, many of them in the headwaters of the west tributaries of the Guaporé River. The 'isolation' of these people is probably what assured their survival, although they suffered many losses.

There is almost no information about the period ranging from the end of the XVIII century to the second half of the XIX century.

The contact between the indigenous population and the colonizers was further intensified in the late 30s and early 40s, when World War II increased the demand for rubber. The exploitation of rubber and *cautchouc* brought many *seringueiros* (rubber tappers) to the area, who occupied the tributaries of the Guaporé river, and entered into conflicts with the indigenous groups living there. By that time the various Tupian groups that lived near the tributaries of the Medio Guapore River, especially in the headwaters of the Mequens, Colorado, São Simão, Branco and São Miguel Rivers were strongly affected. Their tribal lands were invaded and they suffered various epidemic diseases. They were forced to leave their territories and most ended up living in the large *barracões*[2], where they worked in the rubber-tapping industry.

Remnants of the four groups living in the Area Indigena Rio Mequens (Guaratira, Sakirabiat, Guarategayat, and Siwkweriat) report that the *Kwerep*, as they call the non-indians, arrived in their region in the 1930s. These groups were drastically depopulated after a Bolivian man called Magipo installed himself in the region of the Mequens river to exploit the extraction of rubber. They suffered from various epidemic illnesses, such as measles and "grippe" (influenza) that reduced the group from thousands in the early 30s and 40s (cf. reports that we collected from the elders in the community) to the 64 people we encountered in our first trip to the village in 1994.

All the elders with whom we had the privilege of talking during our time of field work recall their numerous villages, each sheltering from 40 to two hundred people,

---

2. Large houses built in the forest that served as basis for the *seringueiros* and *seringalistas* (putative 'owners' of the rubber plantations).

which they systematically abandoned as people were dying from *kwerep*

illnesses. After their drastic demographic loss, they moved to a region near the small

Osório river, a tributary of the Mequens river, where the survivors of at least the four

groups mentioned above live today. That is the area where I have done field work since

1994.

In the late forties there was some attempt from the *Serviço de Proteção ao*

Indio[3] (SPI) to bring the indigenous groups in the large area of the Guaporé,

Corumbiara, Colorado, and Mekens rivers to *Postos Indigenas de Atração (PIA)*,

especially the PIA Ministro Pedro de Toledo and PIA Ricardo Franco, which were to

function as secluded reservations where the indigenous population would be 'protected'

from the threatening presence of gold seekers, rubber tappers and other adventurers in

their traditional habitat. Nevertheless, the PIAs never worked as idealized and were far

from being the land of utopia for the indigenous people, who in their great majority

preferred to stay in their own territories despite the constant threatening from

seringueiros, gold seekers and the like. By 1949 the total inefficacy of the PIA Ministro

Pedro de Toledo is acknowledged even by authorities in the SPI, and the Mekens and

other indigenous people in that geographical area are left to dwell with the invaders of

their territories without supervision and or orientation from the government, as related

by Leonel Jr. (1985b) and confirmed by the elders today.

---

3. Serviço de Proteção ao Indio (Service of protection for the Indians) was a Brazilian governmental department for indigenous matters that existed from 1910 to 1966, and was later replaced by FUNAI.

In 1982 employees from *Fundação Nacional do Indio*, FUNAI (the Brazilian Bureau for Indigenous Affairs) visited the area now officially identified as *Area Indigena Rio Mequens*, where survivors of the Makurap and Mekens people were living in difficult conditions, but no attempts were taken in the direction of providing any type of assistance for that population. Only in 1983, after an attack of influenza killed about 30 people, reliable contact with FUNAI was reestablished, although exploration by non-natives continued to take place in the area against the will of the indigenous population.

Proof for the continuing exploitation of the Mekens people and their material resources is found in the report addressed to FUNAI by the interministerial working team sent to the area in 1985 to investigate the real conditions of the people living there and their rights to the land as native people and historical inhabitants of that area. They report that in the year in question five large corporate groups, including lumbering companies and farmers, were illegally exploiting the commerce of lumber inside the Area Indigena Rio Mekens and trying to appropriate the land belonging to the indigenous reservation (Leonel Jr 1985a). Based on historical information, ethnographical notes, and governmental documentation, they highly recommended the immediate demarcation of the indigenous reservation. However only in the second half of 1996 was the reservation finally demarcated, although with a spatial area much smaller than that originally required by the Mekens people.

In our first trip to the Area Indigena Rio Mequens in January of 1994

the group had been reduced to 68 people living in the federal reserve, who were

distributed in the following way:

- 35 adults (members of the Guaratira, Sakirabiat, Guarategayat, and Siwkweriat groups)
- 27 children
- 3 non-indians married to Mekens people
- 2 Makurap, a woman married to Manoel Sakirabiar and her son from another marriage.
- 1 family of Atikum indians formed by the father, the non-indian wife, and two sons.

From 1994 to 1999 that number remained basically stable, though one family

has left the reservation and moved to a nearby town. Despite the great difficulties they

have undergone, the group is striving not only to survive but to maintain what they have

managed to keep of their traditional culture and knowledge and to teach their children.

1.1.4 MATERIAL CULTURE

The best available records we have about the material culture and way of life of

the indigenous people inhabiting the upper Guaporé river are the ethnological notes of

Claude Levi-Strauss (1948), which also incorporate the works of Snethlage (1937,

1939). Peanuts and maize are cited as staple foods, while manioc is of secondary

importance. Among the cultivated crops were peppers, papaws, gourds, urucum, cotton,

and tobacco. The Guarategaja were also said to cultivate black beans.

The Mekens group now living in the A. I. Rio Mequens depend heavily on

manioc as a source for food. They use sweet manioc (yuca) for eating and prepare

chicha (a fermented drink of major importance in their society); while bitter manioc is

used for manioc flour. They also have three types of maize (white, yellow, and black)

that are mainly used for *chicha*. In addition to maize, sweet manioc, sweet potato, *cará roxo*, and banana are also used to make chicha.

Some families also cultivate rice and coffee on a small scale nowadays. Bananas, papayas, and sweet potato are found in the gardens of every family. Reportedly only two families nowadays still have the seeds for the large peanuts they used to grow in olden times.

Levi-Strauss (*ibid.*) reports the raising of grubs in the dregs of maize beer (*chicha*) kept in long bamboo containers as an exceptional feature of the Guaporé area. Given the depth of 'deculturation' among the people in the A. I. Mequens, it is worthy of note that they still adhere to this practice, which is done in exactly the same mode as described by Levi-Strauss.

The clearing and tilling of gardens are described (*ibid.*) as cooperative enterprises, in which the helpers were entertained with *chicha*, snuff, and dances. Nowadays it is still common especially for members of the extended family to help in the preparation of gardens, during which time the owner of the garden provides the helpers with *chicha* and food, though there is no more snuff and dances. In addition to the products from their gardens, the Mekens depend heavily on hunting and gathering of fruits from the forest for their maintenance. Hunting is now done with old-model rifles, instead of arrows. During the time we were there, we were able to see arrows with bone points and feather ornaments that had been made by a Guarategayat man. A small farm for raising cattle also is maintained by the community. It is the only communal

economic activity; the cattle were initially obtained as compensation from one of the farmers illegally exploring their resources.

In the dry season, they also fish in the large streams, mainly using fish lines and fishing poles nowadays. A traditional manner for fishing still practiced these days consists of walking the streams in the evening carrying flashlights and killing the fish with machetes or clubs. They no longer use the poison of *timbó* vines nor do they draina small area of the streams as fishing practices.

Basically every man in the community also works as a rubber tapper on an individual basis. However, due to the breakdown of the international rubber market in 1997, their production is almost nill these days. That may be what has led some of them to enter the illegal lumbering market.

The houses are occupied by nuclear families and follow the style of houses brought by the non-indians. Nonetheless, they are still built using traditional material such as the fronds of assai palm trees as roofing, and logs of a special wood arranged vertically as walls.

For ornaments they favor necklaces and bracelets made with monkey teeth and tucuma-nuts in small bead-shape. Tucuma-nut rings of various styles are also popular. Some of the elders still have the nasal septum pierced, but they no longer use the wooden pins they used to wear. They are also proud of their knowledge of manufacturing *maricos* of all sizes. *Marico* is a type of basket made with tucum fibers that are exclusive to the indigenous societies presently occupying the great area drained by the Mamoré and Guaporé Rivers and their tributaries. The use of *maricos* is one of

the features that led Maldi (1991) to postulate a cultural complex shared by the indigenous societies in the Guaporé basin, especially the Ajuru, Makurap, Jabuti, Aruá, Koaratira, Sakirap, and Tupari, though the last group does not have *maricos*.

The Mekens still talk about the elaborate patterns of body painting they used to do with genipapo juice, but this is a rare activity among them. During the time we were there, we were able to witness it only once, when a grandmother painted her grandchildren especially so that we could see how it was done.

1.1.5 THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC AND DIALECTAL SITUATION

Unfortunately, the sad history of contact with non-natives (cf. section 1.1.3 above), which resulted in the drastic reduction of the Mekens people, is also probably responsible for the loss of many of their cultural and spiritual knowledge and rituals. In that context, though they take pride in the maintenance of their language, it is not being taught to the children, and is thus threatened with disappearance.

In a survey we carried out in 1996, the Mekens people was comprised of 59 members, not counting the non–Indians living in the village, but not all of them spoke Mekens. Everyone in the village is fluent in Portuguese. The last monolingual Mekens speaker died in 1996. The most fluent population in Mekens, approximately 23 adult people, are those who grew up speaking the language and habitually use Mekens as their means of communication, including the six elders in the community. In addition to the adults, there are two now teenagers and one child who are learning Mekens simultaneously with Portuguese, by virtue of being raised in the same house with their grandmothers. There are about 7 semi-speakers in the sense of Dorian (1992) who can

understand the speech of the fluent speakers, but are not able to sustain a conversation in Mekens. The remainder of the group knows most of the every-day vocabulary, such as names of animals, plants and fruits, domestic utensils, and so on. However, although they might hear Mekens at home, they do not speak nor do they understand Mekens generally. Therefore, Mekens is among the most endangered Brazilian languages, as noted by Rodrigues (1993), having far fewer than 100 speakers and not being in general learned by the new generation.

Although the group now living in the Area Indigena Rio Mequens is greatly reduced in number, there are remainders of at least four distinct subgroups living together in the same village: Sakirabiat, Guarategayat, Guaratira, and Siwkweriat. As a result, there is some degree of linguistic variation in the speech of these groups. According to our data, although there are four self-identified groups, only three speech varieties are found. We found no differences in the speech of Sakirabiat and Guarategayat people, and in fact they consider themselves now as members of the same group and speakers of the 'same language', though they refer to a time when the two groups were separated.

The family self-identified as Guaratira makes a point of being a distinct group and emphasizes the differences between their speech and that of the other groups, especially the Sakirabiat's. There is only one member of the Siwkweriat group, and his speech is closer to the speech of the Guaratira than to that of the Sakirabiat. All three speech varieties are mutually intelligible. The differences between them are almost completely restricted to the vocabulary, and the members of each group are able to

pinpoint these differences on a regular basis. The three varieties will be referred in this work as Sakɨrabiat, Guaratira, and Siwkweriat speech varieties.

The phonemic inventory and the phonological and morphophonological rules are basically the same for the three speech varieties (cf. section 1.3). The only difference is the occurrence of the prenasalized voiced coronal stop [nd] in free variation with a nasalized flap [r] in the Siwkweriat where the other two varieties have only the nasalized flap /r/. There is also a single word where Siwkweriat has the prenasalized voiced coronal stop [nd] where the other varieties have a prenasalized voiceless coronal stop [nt], namely *sande* vs. *sante* 'something rotten'.

The majority of the vocabulary is also identical for the three varieties; nevertheless there are some systematic differences that deserve mention. Although all three dialects have fricative consonants in initial and medial position, there are some words in which a medial intervocalic fricative in Sakɨrabiat is missing in both Guaratira and Siwkweriat. For instance, the word for 'my foot' is *opiso* in Sakɨrabiat, but *opio* in the other two varieties. Another difference relates to a correspondence between voiceless stops and corresponding nasal consonants. Again, although all three dialects have the same inventory of consonants depicted in section 1.3 below, there is a contrast in some vocabulary items. In a number of words an initial nasal consonant in Sakɨrabiat corresponds to a voiceless stop in Guaratira and Siwkweriat. Thus, we find the following contrasts: *makɨyã* vs. *pakɨyã* 'agouti' and *ŋwaẽ* vs. *kwaẽ* 'pan'.

A few differences were also identified with respect to the syntax; however, more research is needed on this topic. The data and analysis discussed in this dissertation

applies to all three speech varieties. Nevertheless, when the investigation of a

specific phenomenon or set of data touches on the difference between the dialects,

explicit reference to the dialect in question will be made.

1.1.6 FIELD WORK AND DATA

We started our study of the Mekens language in January of 1994. From 1994 to

1999 we made six trips to the Area Indigena Rio Mequens. The duration of each visit to

the village varied from one and a half to two months. In 1999 one of our Sakïrabiat

consultants accompanied us to Belém for a period of one and a half months. The present

dissertation is based on primary data we collected during these visits.

Since our first visit to the Mekens village in January of 1994, some members of

the community had showed their desire to be able to write in their native language. The

elders in the community were always asking us to record their traditional stories and

write them down for their grandchildren. Thus, based on our study and understanding of

the language, we developed an alphabet for Mekens, which is presented and formally

justified in Galucio (1998). This alphabet has been discussed and approved by the

community and was systematically tested for errors and misrepresentations. Following

the elaboration of the alphabet, we taught 5 adult speakers of Mekens for a period of

one month in 1996[4]. At the end of that period, they passed a written exam testing their

ability to write and read Mekens. As a result of these initial classes, we prepared an

introductory book for beginners, which was used in the following year with another

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4. This project was funded as part of a larger educational project developed in cooperation between
the linguistic division of Museu Paraense Emilio Goeldi and the Norwegian Rainforest Foundation.

group of students. There are 7 adult speakers of Mekens currently literate in their language. The material produced during these classes was also used, by consent of the speakers, as data for this dissertation.

Our data consists of both elicited material and natural discourse data, including dialogues, mythological stories, modern narratives, and instruction texts. Examples in the dissertation are extracted from texts whenever possible; however, we also resort to elicited data when necessary, for instance, when an elicited sentence will make clearer the argument for the analysis of specific phenomena or when a paradigm list is necessary. We have collected and analyzed both elicited and natural speech data from all three speech varieties identified in section 1.1.5 above, and in doing so we had the chance of working more directly with 12 of the 23 active speakers of Mekens.

1.2 BASIC PHONOLOGICAL FEATURES OF MEKENS

The inventory of sounds that occur in Mekens is parallel to that of other Tupian languages, and includes consonants of the following series: voiced and voiceless stops, fricatives, liquids, nasals and glides. Of special interest to future comparative studies is the series of labiovelar consonants. Table 2 below lists the phonemic inventory of consonants in Mekens. For a detailed description and justification for the phonetic and phonemic analysis see Galucio (1994).

	labial	coronal	palatal	velar	labiovelar	glottal
voiced stops	p	t		k	kʷ	(ʔ)
voiceless stops	b	—		g	--	
fricatives		s				
liquids		ɾ				
nasals	m	n		ŋ	ŋʷ	
glides			y		w	

Table 2: PHONEMIC INVENTORY OF CONSONANTS

There are five phonemic vowels in Mekens, but there is also a contrast between

nasal versus oral vowels, and between short versus long vowels, as seen in table 3

below.

short oral V			long oral V			Short nasal V			long nasal V		
i	ɨ		iː	ɨː		ĩ	ɨ̃		ĩː	ɨ̃ː	
e		o	eː		oː	ẽ		õ	ẽː		õː
	a			aː			ã			ãː	

Table 3: PHONEMIC INVENTORY OF VOWELS

The examples in the body of the dissertation follow a phonemic transcription.

For ease of presentation, the labiovelar consonants are written as a sequence of

consonants, and long vowels are written as a sequence of identical vowels. Since there

is spread of nasalization, every vowel following a nasal consonant is nasalized, but

nasalization is not indicated in these cases.

Table 4 below shows the possible syllable patterns in the language, which may

be represented as $(C_1)(V)V(C_2)$. The only obligatory member of a Mekens syllable is a

vowel. Any consonant can occur in onset position, however /b/, /g/, and /ɾ/ never occur

word-initially, though they may occur morpheme–initially. Voiceless stops, nasals, and

glides occur in coda position. There are a few examples of Cr consonant cluster in onset

position which arise from two sources: (i) resyllabification of a coda

consonant with a following morpheme initial /r/, and (ii) as a variant of a CVrV form in

fast speech.

V	ɨ.a	Lagoon
C₁V	pe.ra	Macaw
VC₂	et	Sleep
C₁VC₂	kɨp.tit	Bush
VV	ao.se	Man, people
C₁VV	saa.kia	Broom
C₁VVC₂	piip	Nest

Table 4: SYLLABIC PATTERN

There is a general process of voice assimilation across morpheme boundaries in

Mekens. The voiceless stops /p/, /t/ and /k/ change to /b/, /r/ and /g/, respectively, when

followed by a vowel across morpheme boundary, as illustrated in examples 1a-c' below.

Note that the flap /r/ patterns with the voiced stops /b/ and /g/. As can be seen from

table 2 above, there is no /d/ in the language. That empty /d/ slot is filled by the flap /r/,

which patterns with the voiced stops in all the phonological rules in the language. A

similar distribution is reported for the related Tupian language Karo (Gabas 1999).

1. a.   kɨp   'club; log'
   a'. kɨb-ẽpo   'vine'
   b.   et   'to sleep'
   b'. o-er-at   'I slept'
   c.   ek   'house'
   c'. eg-ese   'in the house'

1.3   ORGANIZATION OF THIS WORK

Chapter 2 introduces the principal features of Mekens morphology. The main

typological characteristics of the language are presented (section 2.1). We will see that

Mekens occupies an intermediary position in a continuum between isolating and polysynthetic languages. Affixation is the main morphological process of stem alteration, with preference for suffixation. The chapter also gives the overall characterization and definitional criteria of the nine distinct lexical categories identified in the language (section 2.2), namely nouns, verbs, adjectives, pronouns, demonstratives, auxiliaries, postpositions, adverbs, and particles. Section 2.3 presents the properties of inflectional morphology, with special attention devoted to the person pronominal system. The person pronominal system of Mekens is parallel to that of other Tupian languages and consists of a series of free pronouns and a series of bound prefixes that is used extensively with four of the major lexical categories in Mekens. The chapter closes with a description of the principal processes of word formation.

Chapter 3 is devoted to the investigation of the phrasal categories that are justified for Mekens combining crosslinguistic criteria for constituency and language internal coherent criteria. On that basis, we propose the recognition of at least noun phrases, verb phrases, adpositional phrases, and adverb phrases. The relationship of the modal-like postverbal particles and the auxiliaries with respect to the verb phrases is discussed (sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.2). Following that discussion, the personal prefixes on the verbs are reintroduced and their status is defined in terms of anaphoric versus grammatical agreement (section 3.3.3). We will see that there is a contrast between the subject markers on intransitive verbs and the object markers on transitive verbs. While the former are analyzed as instances of grammatical agreement, the latter are considered to show anaphoric agreement, as defined in the framework of Lexical-Functional

Grammar. A special section is devoted to an analysis of multiple verb phrase constructions and their distinction from serial verb constructions in the traditional sense (section 3.3.4).

Chapter 4 continues the investigation of syntactic structures initiated in the previous chapter and starts with a discussion of the three major crosslinguistic speech act distinctions, declarative, imperative, and interrogative (section 4.1). We will see that within these three sentence types, Mekens also makes finer distinctions that are coded in the syntax. Non-verbal predicate clauses are introduced in section 4.2, and section 4.3 introduces the investigation of complex sentences, which are defined as any sentence consisting of more than one clause. The definitions of sentences and clauses as used in this dissertation are presented in section 4.0. Complex sentences in Mekens involve coordinate clauses, adverbial clauses, relative clauses, and complement clauses. The chapter closes with a description of three pragmatically marked sentence structures, the oblique marker *pe*=phrase, the object focus constructions, and the reference–tracking system. In discussing the oblique marker *pe*=phrase we will present an overview of the literature on antipassive, since the Mekens construction fits the definition of antipassive constructions, even tough there is no clear antipassive morphology, as shown in section 4.4.1. The object focus construction is interesting because it involves an inversion of the subject-object verbal agreement markers (section 4.4.2), and the reference–tracking system marks co– or disjoint reference between subjects in a manner similar to switch–reference systems, but is distinct from canonical switch–reference systems known to date (section 4.4.3).

CHAPTER II

MORPHOLOGY

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the general characteristics of Mekens morphology. It includes a complete description of word classes, presentation of the language's more salient morphological features and the means by which morphological processes are realized. It also provides an overall characterization of the language with respect to a cross-linguistic morphological typology, as discussed, for instance, in Comrie 1989, Croft 1990, Nichols 1986, and Payne 1997.

The content of this chapter is as follows. Section 2.1 is a brief overview of Mekens general typological characteristics. Section 2.2 provides a detailed description of the word classes. Section 2.3 presents Mekens inflectional morphology, with special consideration of the personal marking system. Section 2.4 describes the processes of word formation, including the small but productive set of derivational morphemes that are involved in such processes as causation, nominalization, and verbalization. We follow (Anderson 1994:71) in distinguishing inflectional from derivational processes in terms of their output; while the latter forms lexical items, the former converts these lexical items into surface inflected words.

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2.1 GENERAL TYPOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

Comrie (1989:43) proposes a classification of the world languages according to two indices—the index of synthesis and the index of fusion—which define a continuum of morphological complexity in a given language (cf. also Sapir 1921 and Greenberg 1954). The index of synthesis defines a continuum from isolating to polysynthetic languages based on the number of morphemes that may occur per word in the language. According to that index, Mekens would be placed somewhere in the middle of the continuum between isolating and polysynthetic languages. Verbs have a relatively high number of morphemes per word, to the extent that a whole sentence may be expressed by a single verb. On the other hand, nouns do not show a complex array of morphology. For the most part, grammatical relations are not morphologically marked: nouns are not marked for case, there is no agreement between the noun and its modifiers, there is no formal marking in either the possessor or the possessum in possessive constructions involving two nominals. Considering the index of fusion, Mekens would be among the dominantly agglutinative languages, in which the correlation between form and meaning in a grammatical category is generally a one-to-one correlation. However, there also shows cases of fusion, where a single morpheme embodies more than one meaning, such is the case with the coreferential marker, which marks third person agreement marker in intransitive verbs and identical reference between subjects of two clauses, (cf. sections 2.3.2.3 and 4.5.3 below). Given the overall absence of formal marking of grammatical relations, we could say that at the phrase level the dominant pattern in Mekens is the absence of either head or dependent marking. However, when it does mark one of them, as in the case of possessive constructions whose possessor is a

pronominal, the marked member will always be the head of the relation (cf. section 2.2.1). The same holds true at the clause level (cf.2.3.2.3).

Mekens employs affixation as the main morphological process of stem alteration, favoring suffixation over prefixation. The only prefixes in the language are the person inflectional markers (cf.2.3.21), and the derivational valence changing morphemes (causative, comitative, and intransitivizer). All other affixes in the language are suffixes and they mark number, tense-aspect-mood, and category change (nominalization, verbalization).

Besides affixation, two other processes of stem formation and/or alteration are found in Mekens: reduplication and compounding. The process of reduplication is productive with verbs (cf. section 2.4.2), but is also registered in noun formation. For instance, the noun *paak-paak* 'heron' is formed by reduplication of the adjective stem – *paak* 'white'. Compounding is found in the formation of verb and noun stems, and includes cases of noun incorporation.

2.2 LEXICAL CATEGORIES

There are nine distinct parts of speech in Mekens: Nouns, verbs, adjectives, pronouns, demonstratives, auxiliaries, postpositions, adverbs and particles. This chapter presents the basis on which each category was defined, as well as their overall characterization.

Four of the nine speech categories listed above make a distinction between words and word stems. They distinguish between noun and noun stem, adjective and adjective stem, verb and verb stem, and auxiliary and auxiliary stem. A word is a free form that can occur by itself without a prefix. Word stems, on the other hand, are

generally not free forms, in the sense that they do not occur by themselves. They are

bound forms that will always form a minimal phrase unit with a person prefix or a

preceding nominal expression.

2.2.1 NOUNS AND NOUN STEMS

Nouns constitute an open class in Mekens and can be specified for the

grammatical category of number. None of the other morphosyntactic properties that are

typically associated with nouns crosslinguistically occur in Mekens. Hence, there is no

case, class or gender morphologically marked in the nouns. Nouns do show, however, a

distinction of number: singular vs. plural. For nouns, singular, being the default case, is

unmarked. Plural is marked by the collective clitic /–iat/. This morpheme is used both as

a plural marker in the standard sense, that is, contrasting one to more than one entity of

the same category, and as a collective marker, classifying a number of similar or

different entities as forming a group. Any noun can potentially be marked for plural;

however, other principles of the grammar may override number marking in the

language. Thus, discourse principles such as relevance and recoverability may take

precedence over overt number marking. Plural marking in the noun may be omitted if it

can be recovered from other elements of the clause, such as the verb or the

demonstrative, or if number indication is not directly relevant to the proposition.

Examples (1a-d) illustrate the use of /-iat/ as a plural marker.
1. a. ameko
      jaguar/dog
      "a/the jaguar/dog"

   b. ameko=iat
      jaguar=col
      "jaguars/dogs"

c. i–mi–a–t¹ sete <u>ameko</u>=pe
   OM-kill/shoot-Them-Past he/she jaguar=Obl²
   "He killed the jaguar"

d. i–so–a–r=õt <u>ameko=iat</u>=pe
   OM-see-Them-Past=I jaguar=Col=Obl
   "I saw the jaguars"

The collective or plural marker occurs prototypically to the right of the noun

phrase and before other clitics, such as the generic oblique marker /pe/, and has scope

over the whole noun phrase, as seen in (1d) above. Nonetheless, according to elicited

data, when a noun is modified by one or more adjective stems, the collective marker

most commonly attaches to the right of the last adjective stem following the noun (2b-

c), but it may also attach to the right of the first adjective stem following the noun (2d)

or even directly to the noun and before the adjective stems (2e). In any case it has scope

over the whole noun phrase. Thus, all the following examples are grammatical forms in

Mekens³. It should be noted that this distribution was not found in texts. In all of the

textual examples identified in the corpus, the collective marker occurs at the end of the

noun phrase.

2. a. *ŋwãẽ=iat*   "the pans"
      pan=Col

   b. *ŋwãẽ   poor=iat*   "the old pans"
      pan   old=Col

---

1. According to the general process of voice assimilation described in section 1.2 above, the past suffix /-t/ is realized as /-r/ when followed by a vowel in the same phonological word.

2. The function of the oblique marker (Obl) is described in sections 3.4 and 4.4.1 below.

3. These are all elicited examples. Patterns (2d) and (2e) were not found in texts.

c. *ŋwãẽ poot no=iat*   "other old pans"
   pan   old   other=Col

d. *ŋwãẽ no=iat poot*   "other old pans"
   pan   other=Col old

e. *pebo=iat paak no*   "other white (bird) wings"
   wing=Col white other

Although it is possible to identify the plural marker /–iat/ in three of the pronouns (cf. table 5, section 2.2.3), this seems to be a frozen form, which is no longer synchronically analyzable as a plural marker.

Nouns can take adjectives and demonstratives as modifiers. Adjectives follow the noun they modify (3a-c), while demonstratives precede the noun (4a-b). Demonstrative pronouns can be the head of an NP, and thus they can also be modified by adjectives. Adjectives and demonstratives are further described in section (2.2.2) and (2.2.4), respectively.

3. a. kap   sĩit   tek   aso   teyẽ
       wasp   small house big   Dem.seated
       'There is a big house of a small wasp here'

    b. ameko   poot   ebõ
       dog/jaguar old   really
       'It is really an old dog'

    c. aose   same
       man/people   good/well
       'Handsome man'

4. a. sobekara õt   peyẽ   kwãẽ
       desire   I   Dem.seated   pan
       'I want that pan (sitting on X)'

    b. poke   te   ikão   kirit
       thief   foc   Dem   child
       'That child is a thief'

Noun stems are subdivided according to their possessability into [+possessible] and [-possessible]. Nouns denoting possessable entities are categorized as either alienable or inalienable. Inalienable noun stems do not have a corresponding noun. They are always possessed, either by a person prefix or by an immediately preceding NP. The relationship between possessor and possessum is one of inherent possession or part-whole relationship. Some of the noun stems included in this category are kinship terms, and body parts. The following are examples of inalienable noun stems.

5. a. *e-pisa*   "your (sg) liver"
        2s-liver

    b. *o-top*   "my father"
        1s-father

    c. *sakɨrap   okway*   "spider-monkey's tail"
        spider.monkey tail

Alienable noun stems, on the other hand, always have a corresponding noun (a free form used without a prefix), and, though they may be possessed, they do not need to be. In most of the cases the noun and the noun stem in this category are identical (6a-c), but in some cases the noun stem—the form that occurs with the prefix or a preceding nominal—has an initial /t-/, as in (6d-f). The subclass of noun stems that have an initial /t-/ when they are possessed is lexically based. That is, it is not predictable phonologically or morphologically which stems will show an initial /t-/, it has to be learned.

6. a. *etɨ*   "basket"
    b. *o-etɨ*   "my basket"
    c. *o-tak etɨ*   "my daughter's basket"
    d. *ek*   "house"

e.	*o–tek*		"my house"
f.	o–top[4] tek		"my father's house"

Still other nouns may not be possessed in either of these morphologically regular

ways. Instead, they may only occur in a genitive relation if a generic inalienable noun

stem is used specifying the type of noun that is being possessed. The inalienable stem

which is possessed in these constructions functions as a type of classifier stem, and they

are restricted to a few types of nouns, such as pets, and food. For instance, in order to

say 'my dog', one has to say something like 'my pet dog'. The examples in (7) below

illustrate that pattern. As (7e) shows, the noun stem *–ŋo* 'pet' can be used as a generic

term for pets and can also have a specific reading, given the right context. Thus, (7e) is a

perfect good answer for a question like 'whose dog is this'? Examples (7e–g) illustrate

the same pattern for 'banana'.

7.	a.	*ameko*		'dog'
	b.	**o–ameko*		('my dog')
	c.	*o–ŋo ameko*		'my dog' (Lit. 'My pet dog')
		1s-pet dog		
	d.	o–ŋo (te)		'(It is) my dog/pet'
		1s–pet foc		
	e.	apara		'banana'
	f.	*o–apara		('my banana')
	g.	o–iko	apara	'my banana' (Lit. 'My food, banana')
		1s–food	banana	

Syntactically, nouns can function as head of NPs (8a–f), as argument of

intransitive (8b), transitive (8c) and uninflectible verbs (8d), as modifiers of other nouns

(8e), and as predicates of nominal clauses (8f).

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4. There are two words for father that are used by a male person: *abi* and *–top*. *Abi* is only used in the first person singular, and bears no prefix, while *–top* is used with the whole series of prefixes and other nouns, and belongs to the category of inalienable noun stems.

8. a. iko   pisiik ka=õt
    food   cold   ingest=I
    'I ate cold food'

b. popoba   se–erek–kwa naat   yẽ
    owl   3c-speak-pl.action ?   Aux.sitting
    'The owl was singing'. (Txt)

c. ameko   aose   sogo-a-t   se-kwat
    dog/jaguar man   bite-Them-Past   3c-leave
    'The dog bit the man and went away'

d. sete   arikwayõ iririt
    he/she Arikwayõ go.pl.S
    ' Then, they went, he and Arikwayõ'

e. otat ãkãy
    fire burning.coal
    'burning coal'

f. e-top   kwamoa ne   noat
    2s-father shaman   Predzr Neg
    'Your father is not a shaman'

Case marking is realized syntactically in Mekens. There is a class of postpositions which serve to mark all the oblique functions in a clause, thus functioning like case markers. Postpositions will be further discussed in section 2.2.7. Some examples are given in (9a–b) below.

9. a. kipe   õ-a-r=õt   aose   same=bõ
    machete   give-Them-past=I man/people beautiful=Dat[5]
    'I gave the machete to the handsome man'

b. se-kwar-a-r-iat   te o-top mapi=bõ
    3c-go.hunting-Them-Rel-RemPast foc 1s-father arrow=Dat
    'My father used to hunt with arrows'

---

5. The postposition glossed as 'Dative' is a generic oblique case marker in Mekens, which subsumes the instrumental, the dative, and the locative case (cf. section 2.2.7).

2.2.2 ADJECTIVES

Like nouns, adjectives constitute an open class in Mekens, but unlike most nouns they are always word stems, as opposed to words. That is, they do not have free forms, since they never occur by themselves forming a phrasal unit. They always follow the head of the NP in which they occur, which could be either a personal prefix or a noun (see section 3.2 below for the semantic definition of noun phrase as used in this work). For instance, when asked in isolation, an adjective stem will generally be given preceded by a third person prefix, as in (10a-b) below.

10. a. *i⁶-paak*
         3s-white
         "white"

    b. *s–akop*
        3s-hot
        "hot"
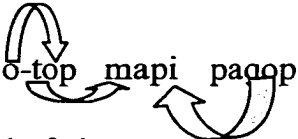
In this sense, they are similar to the inalienable noun stems that do not have a corresponding noun as an independent form either. Nonetheless, they differ in the nature and position of the relation established between the corresponding stem and the preceding material. While an inalienable noun stem stands in a genitive relation with the preceding prefix or noun, an adjective stem stands in a modification relation. Thus, while a complete gloss of examples (10a-b) above is "someone or something white" and "someone or something hot", the constructions in (11a-b) below are examples of genitive phrases involving a personal prefix and an inalienable noun stem:

11. a. *i-piso*
         3s-foot
         " His/her foot" / "(someone's) foot"

---

6. Third person prefix has two allomorphs: /i-/ before consonant initial stems and /s-/ before vowel initial stems (cf. table 12, section 2.3.1).

b. *s-anip*
3s-head
"His/her head" / "(someone's) head"

Furthermore, the direction of the modification inside the NP is reversed. It applies leftwards in the case of a noun or prefix plus an adjective stem, but rightwards in the case of a noun or prefix plus an inalienable noun stem. Note that in (10) above the adjective stem modifies the head prefix, whereas in (11) the modification is in the inverse direction with the prefix possessing the head noun stem. The following example (12a) further illustrates that distribution. The arrows indicate the direction of modification.

12. a.   o-tóp mapi paŋóp
1s-father arrow new
'My father's new arrow

Adjective stems share with nouns the possibility of occurring in a modification relation with a demonstrative, as shown in (13a) below, where the adjective modifies the demonstrative. Despite that, they differ from nouns in never being the nuclei of NPs.

13. a. teyẽ   poot
Dem.seated   old
"This old one (sitting there)"

Adjective stems differ from verb stems in two ways. They do not take tense-aspect affixes or the valence changing derivational affixes—simple causative and comitative causative. Examples in (14) below illustrate that difference. (14a) is a predicative clause formed by two NP's—an adjective stem modified by a personal prefix, and a subject pronoun. (14b) shows that the adjective stem does not occur with

either the theme vowel /-a/ or the past tense suffix /-t/. On the other hand, (14c) is an

example of a minimal clause with an intransitive verb as predicate. Note that it has both

the theme vowel and the past tense suffix.

14. a. o-akob=õt
      1s-hot=I
      "I am hot"

   b. *o-akob-a-r=õt
      1s-hot-Them-Past=I
      (I was hot)

   c. e-kwe-a-r=ẽt
      2s-climb-Them-Past-you
      "You climbed"

Adjective stems also differ from auxiliaries and transitive and intransitive verb

stems in not taking the co-referential prefix /se-/. They may occur with all the other

personal prefixes, with which they stand in a predicative relation. The NP formed by a

personal prefix and an adjective stem is headed by the prefix (cf. section 3.2 below).

15. a. *se-akop

Adjective stems share with nouns and verbs the possibility of being negated with

the negative suffix /–ap/. This is illustrated by (16) below. Note that the scope of

negation in (16a) is the adjective stem, and not the NP as a whole. Adverbs and

uninflectible verbs are not negated in this way.

16. a. ameko   sĩr–ãp
      dog/jaguar small-Neg
      "Big dog" [Lit. 'A dog not small']

2.2.3 PRONOUNS

There are two series of pronouns in Mekens: personal pronouns, and reflexive pronouns. The distribution of personal pronouns is similar to that of nouns; however, nouns and pronouns are easily distinguishable from each other since only nouns can occur with a personal prefix or constitute a phrasal unit with a preceding nominal. Furthermore, pronouns cannot be modified by a demonstrative, whereas nouns can. The series of personal pronouns is set out in table 5 below:

PERSON	PRONOUNS
1s	õt
2s	ẽt
3s	te
3c	sete
1pIn	kise
1pEx	ose
2p	eyat
3p	teyat
3pc	seteyat

Table 5 Mekens Personal Pronouns

Morphophonologically, the third person co–referential pronoun and all the plural person pronouns are complex forms. Third person co–referential pronoun is formed by the co–referential third person prefix /se–/ plus the third person singular pronoun *te*. The two first person plural (inclusive and exclusive) pronouns combine the prefixes for first person plural inclusive and first person singular, /ki–/ and /o—/ respectively, with the morpheme /–se/. On the other hand, second person plural combines second person singular prefix with the collective clitic –*iat*, and third person and third person co–referential plural combine third person singular and third person co–referential pronouns with the collective clitic. (For a comparison of personal pronouns and personal prefixes, see table 12 in section 2.3.1 below).

The syntactic functions of personal pronouns in Mekens is to mark the subject

(A argument)[7]. of transitive and uninflectible verbs (17a-b), to optionally cross-

reference the S argument of an intransitive verb (17c), to mark the argument of auxiliary

in the construction involving the particle *naat* and an auxiliary stem (17d), and to

function as object of postpositions (17e).

17. a. o–iko   na   e–ko   pa õt
     1s–food   Verbzlr   2s–ingest fut I
     'You will be my food, I will eat you' (Txt)

    b. poret sete   piip te   se–eit   te kwaõt
       now   he/she/it burst foc 3c–belly foc fox
       'Then it burst, the fox's belly' (Txt)

    c. õt o–ser–a
       I 1s–leave-Them
       'I will leave'

    d. o–ser–a   ka   naat   kop   õt
       1s–leave–Them go/come ?   Aux.mov I
       'I am leaving'

    e. ãsi   kwe   yẽra ar–a–t   te=eri
       my.mother game.animal meat get–THEM–past 3s=Abl
       'My mother got meat from him'

Reflexive pronouns are formed by juxtaposition of the personal pronouns plus

the enclitic formative -ẽp 'really; indeed'. Table 6 below presents the full series of

reflexive pronouns in Mekens.

---

7. S, O, and A are used here in the sense of Dixon (1994). S is the subject of an intransitive verb, and A is the subject of a transitive verb, and O is the object of a transitive verb.

PERSON	PRONOUNS
1s	õrẽp
2s	ẽrẽp
3s	teẽp
3c	seteẽp
1pIn	kiseẽp
1pEx	oseẽp
2pl	eyarẽp
3pl	teyarẽp
3plc	seteyarẽp

Table 6 Mekens Reflexive Pronouns

Reflexive pronouns function as emphatic forms, and co-occur with the verb

arguments they refer to, as shown in (18a-d). In (18a-c) we have transitive clauses in

which both arguments of the transitive verb are identical, first person pronominal in

(18a), second person pronominal in (18b), and third person pronominal in (18c). In all

three clauses the personal prefix that marks the object (O argument) is coreferential with

the personal pronoun marking subject (A argument). Example (18c) also illustrates the

fact that subject third person pronouns are regularly omitted (cf. section 2.3.2.3). The

reflexive pronoun functions as a nominal adjunct, emphasizing the arguments. Thus, it

is possible to have a transitive clause with reflexive object marked solely by means of

the object prefix; the reflexive pronoun, being an adjunct, may be omitted (18d). In

(18e) neither argument of the transitive verb is pronominal, nor are they identical, here

the reflexive pronoun can only be anaphorically linked to the subject of the verb, namely

ãsí 'my mother'.

18. a. õr=ẽp o-mi-a   õt
         I=really 1s-shoot/kill-Them I
         'I shot myself'

b. ẽr=ẽp   ẽt   kẽra   e-mi-a
you=really you   Nassert   2s-shoot/kill-Them
'Was it you that shot yourself?'

c. se-sereka-t   sete=ẽp
3c-cut.Them-Past   he/she=really
'He cut himself'

d. e-mi-a   ẽt
2s-shoot/kill-Them you
'You shot yourself'

e. ãsi   se-anɨp tap sereka naat   kop   sete=ẽp
mother 3c-head hair cut   ?   Aux.mov   he/she=really
'My mother is cutting her own hair, herself'

2.2.3.1   THE CLITIC-LIKE BEHAVIOR OF FIRST AND SECOND PERSON PRONOUNS

The unmarked order of constituents in Mekens is SOV (Galucio 1996).

Therefore, the prototypical occurrence of pronouns is at the beginning of the clause

when marking the A argument of a transitive or uninflectible verb or cross-referencing

the S argument of an intransitive verb. However, there is a subset of the pronouns whose

occurrence varies between the prototypical initial position, and a final position,

immediately following the verb. These are the first and second person singular, and first

person plural exclusive, *õt, ẽt,* and *ose,* respectively. Galucio (1996) suggests that this

variation is a result of a process of cliticization currently under development in the

language.

The behavior of such pronouns in two phonological processes—nasalization

spreading and sonorization of obstruents in morpheme boundaries—confirms the

hypothesis that they have been reanalyzed as clitics and lost their status as free

phonological words. Nasalization spreading occurs in Mekens at two different levels,

intramorphemically and across morpheme boundaries. At the morphophonemic level, the spreading is optional and may apply either rightwards or leftwards. However, it is restricted to the word level, and does not extend to the phrase level. When the second morpheme is an independent phonological word, the spreading does not take place. Examples in 19, repeated from Galucio (1996), show that when there is only a morpheme boundary (19a-b) nasalization spreading may take place, but when there is a word boundary (19c-d) it may not.

19. Nasalization spreading at the morphophonemic level

a. /kɨp + –ẽpo/   [kɨbẽmpo]   or   [kɨmẽmpo]
   tree/club ??   'tropical creeper'

b. /o–anẽp + –asi/   [oanẽbasi]   or   [oanẽmãsi]
   1s-head-hurt/pain   'I have a headache'   [Lit. My head hurts]

c. /o–poep ǂ ãkãy/   [opoebãkãy]   but not   *[opoemãkãy]
   1s-possession burning.coal 'my burning coal'

d. /ŋwẽrẽp ǂ ɨkɨ/   [ŋwẽrẽbɨkɨ]   but not   *[ŋwẽrẽmɨkɨ]
   finish water   'finish the water'

When the pronouns *õt, ẽt,* and *ose* occur as the second element of a potential environment for nasalization spreading, the spreading may always apply, as shown in (20a-b) below. In light of the examples shown above, the transparency of these pronouns for the process of nasalization corroborates their analysis as clitics, and as no longer being independent phonological words. The oscillation attested between initial and final (postverbal) positions attest to an intermediary stage in the development from free to clitic pronouns.

20. a. /o–ebasirẽp = õt/   [oebasirẽbõt] or [oebasirẽmõt]
    1s-alive=I
    'I am alive'

b. /o-akop=õt/   [oakobõt]   or [oakomõt]
    1s-hot=I
    'I am hot'

2.2.4 DEMONSTRATIVES

Demonstratives form a closed set in Mekens. Besides their use for deictic reference, they also carry special semantic information about the positional posture of the entity being referred to. Eight demonstratives have been identified: yẽ, ita, ʔẽ, (o)op, ʔe, eke, eme, and ikão. The more widespread demonstrative forms and their respective meanings are set out in Table 7 below. Note that some of the demonstrative stems are formally and semantically related to the auxiliary stems (cf. section 2.6).

DEM	te '3s'+ DEM	GLOSS
yẽ	teyẽ or peyẽ[8]	Dem.seated
ita	teita	Dem.vertical
ʔẽ	teʔẽ	Dem.vertical.near
op	teop	Dem.lying
ʔe	teʔe	Dem.suspended
eke	teke or peke	Dem.default[9]

Table 7: Mekens Demonstratives

8. The forms teyẽ - peyẽ, and teke - peke are in free variation. We tested for contrasts, such as animated versus inanimate, determiner versus NP, human versus non human, and found no difference of usage. Speakers would use them interchangeably, and when asked they responded that they 'were just the same'.

9. The demonstrative *eke* is the default stem, and has three uses: (i) general reference to inanimate, (ii) unknown position, such as when the referred entity is known to exist in a certain location but is not actually seen, and (iii) reference to an animate which is involved in an activity that involves movement.

DEM	te '3s'+ DEM	GLOSS
ikão	n/a	Dem.generic.far[10]
eme	teme	Dem.plural
yẽrõ	n/a	Dem.seated.far
tarõ	n/a	Dem.vertical.far
ekerõ	n/a	Dem.default.far
ʔerõ	teerõ	Dem.suspended.far

Table 7 (Cont.): Mekens Demonstratives

Although demonstratives may occur by themselves (21a), they generally combine with the third person singular pronoun *te* (21b). The positional distinction is neutralized in the plural. There is only one demonstrative for plural deictic reference regardless of positional posture of the referents.

21. a. yẽ   te   te kaat
       Dem.seated really foc QUOT
       'That one said (it)' (Txt)

    b. teyẽ   ikwaay   ka-t
        3s-Dem.seated   tapir   ingest.Them-past
        'That one ate tapir'

In addition to the positional posture distinction, demonstratives make a two-way spatial distinction based on proximity to the speech participants: (i) unmarked for proximity, and (ii) distant from speaker/hearer. However, this spatial distinction is not elaborated in all the positional distinctions, and it is more elaborated in others. The demonstratives that refer to entities distant from the speech act participants are based in the unmarked forms plus a suffix /–rõ/, as shown in (22a-b) below.

22. a. te=se   i–taat   peke   apaak
        he/she/it=Loc 3s-Aux.standing   Dem.default   old.person
        'This old man was there' (Txt)

---

10. *ikão* is glossed as a generic demonstrative for distant reference because it is unmarked as to the positional posture of the referent.

b. s-aape te   pe=ekerõ   kɨpkɨba
    3s-path foc   Obl=Dem.default.far tree
    'That is the path of that tree there'

In the vertical position, a three-way spatial distinction is found. In addition to

the two distinctions mentioned above, there is also teʔẽ ' vertical position near the

speaker'. The three-way spatial distinction in the demonstrative for vertical position is

shown in (23a-c) below.

23. a. teita   kɨpkɨba
        Dem.vertical   tree
        'It's this standing tree (here)'

    b. peyarõ pogab–ek-pit te teʔẽ   ek
        first   door–house–part foc Dem.vertical.near   house
        'First they opened this house' (Txt)

    c. arob=ẽp   teerõ
        wh-exactly 3s-Dem.vertical.far
        'What is that?/ Who is that?' [said when there is something standing at a
        distance and you cannot identify]

Further examples illustrating the positional contrast in the demonstrative

category are given in (24a-e) below.

24. a. te=sẽp peyẽ
        3s-Com Dem.seated
        '(Going) together with this one here?' (Txt)

    b. kõm-ap poret õep   ib–a–t   poot te teop   i-no
        sad-Neg then already   return-Them-past old   foc 3s-Dem.lying 3s-other
        'It is no longer lonely here, that one (lying there) is back' (Txt)

    c. arob   a=ẽp   tee
        WH   fruit=really;indeed Dem.suspended
        'What fruit is that?' [pointing to a fruit that is hanging from the tree branch]

    d. teeme campo naat   oosoe
        3s-Dem.pl field   ?   Aux.spread
        'Those fields spread over there'. (Txt)

e. ameko   aso ikão
   dog/jaguar big Dem.generic.far
   'That big dog over there'

Demonstratives do not share any of the affix taking properties of the other lexical categories. They do not inflect for person/number as nouns, adjectives and verbs do, nor do they inflect for tense/aspect as do the verbs. They cannot be negated, nominalized or verbalized morphologically.

As shown in (23a-b) above, demonstrative adjectives precede the noun they modify. A demonstrative adjective may, in fact, occur preceding a noun, a noun stem, an adjective stem or a full NP. A peculiarity of the demonstrative ikão 'that (one) over there' is that it may precede or follow its referent. Demonstratives may also occur by themselves as argument of a verb or object of postpositions, in which case they are NPs functioning as anaphoric pronouns (see section 3.2.1 below for a detailed description of NP constituents).

Syntactically, demonstratives in Mekens have characteristics of both nouns and pronouns, but they are clearly distinguished from both. Demonstratives differ from nouns by their ability of modifying a whole noun phrase. Whereas both demonstratives and nouns can modify noun stems, only demonstratives can modify nouns. For instance, note that while (25a-b) are both well formed constructions— (25a) has a genitive reading, and (25b) has a modification reading—only (26a) is a well formed sentence, (26b) with the modification reading is not. Note that the forms -tek 'house' and ek 'house' are noun stem and noun, respectively (cf. definition of word stem in 2.2)

25. Dem – Noun modification
a. teyẽ   tek
   Dem.seated house
   'This one's house'

b. teke   ek   topserap
   Dem.default house dirty
   'This dirty house'

26. Noun – Noun modification
a. o–top   tek
   1s-father house
   'My father's house'

b. * o–top ek

Demonstratives are also distinguished from pronouns in a similar way. Whereas both sets can constitute a minimal nominal phrase by themselves, and function as verb subjects or object of postpositions (cf. 27a-b), only demonstratives can modify a following NP, pronouns cannot. Sentence (28) is an extract of a conversation, and shows a demonstrative modifying the noun phrase *teyat pikat* 'their car'.

27. a. tabisarã   kïpe   õ–a   te=bõ
       chief   machete give-Them he/she=Dat
       'The chief gave the machete to him'

   b. tabisarã   kïpe   õ-a   yẽ=bõ
       chief   machete give-Them Dem.seated-Dat
       'The chief gave the machete to that one sitting there'

28. a. o–set noat te=bõ ʔẽ   teyat-pikat
       1s-go Neg 3s=Dat   Dem.vertical.near 3p-car
       'I will not go in that car of theirs' (Txt)

Besides their function as deictic elements, three demonstratives are used as local forms – eke 'here' (near speaker), yẽ 'there' (distant from speaker), and yẽrõ 'there' (distant from speaker and hearer). In such function, they may be used by themselves

(29a), repeated from (3a), or with the postpositions for allative, locative, and ablative, as shown in (29b-d).

29. a. kap   sĩit   tek   aso   teyẽ
       wasp   small   house big   here (Dem.seated)
       'There is a big house of a small wasp here'

    b. apo se   te kẽra   ke   kakwa eke=ri   ikão
       who real 3s Nassert QUOT habitual here=Abl that.time
       'Who from here does this kind of thing?, (I said) at that time' (Lit. Who is the one from here always like that?) (Txt)

    c. arob=ẽp   te i-pawat   norã-a eke=ese
       Wh=really foc om-row   help-Them here=Loc
       'Who helped row until here?'

    d. yẽrõ-mo ka-ra
       there-Dat go/come-rep
       '(I will) go there again' (Txt)

It was said above that demonstratives can not be negated morphologically with the negative suffix /-ap/. However, the deictic local forms take morphological negation, as shown in (30).

30. a. (Q) te olimpio
           foc Olimpio
           'Where is Olimpio?'

    b. (A) eke-ap te
           here-neg foc
           'He is not here'

The generic demonstrative ikão 'that (one) over there' also has extended use beyond deictic reference. When it is not modifying a noun or adjective, it functions as an anaphoric temporal clause adverb, meaning 'at that time' (31a-b). It shows the characteristic behavior of adverbs in a clause when it has temporal anaphoric reference,

that is, it normally appears at the end of the clause, but can also occur in different

positions, it is not restricted in the way demonstratives are. Hence it is being analyzed in

such constructions as an adverb (cf. section 2.2.8). In (31a), *ikão* occurs before the

vocative *abaso* 'grandpa', and refers to a time previously set in the discourse, where the

mythological hero *Pasiare* had been complaining against his present interlocutor.

31. a. arẽp sete erek "o-erek-kwa naat yẽ-apo=õt ikão abaso"-e
then he speak 1s-speak-Tr.pl.act ? Aux.seated-neg=I that.time grandpa-?
'Then he said: 'I was not saying anything at that time, grandpa' (Txt)

   b. i-ka ẽt ikão, i-so-a õt
OM-ingest-Them you that.time OM-see-Them I
'You ate at that time, I saw it'

2.2.5 VERBS AND VERB STEMS

Mekens verbs have a relatively rich morphology. Their internal structure

differentiates them from the other word categories, even though they share some of their

affix taking properties with some of those categories. For instance, the same series of

personal prefixes occurs with verb, noun, adjective, and auxiliary stems. However, see

section 2.3.2 for specific uses of the prefixes with the different categories.

Verb and auxiliary stems are the only categories that inflect for tense-aspect.

However, verbs are distinguished from auxiliaries, since only verbs take valence change

affixes, such as causative and comitative. Inflectional and derivational affixes are

discussed in sections 2.3 and 2.4 below. Furthermore, verbs can occur sentence initially

given the right circumstances, but auxiliaries cannot.

There are three subclasses of lexical verbs in Mekens: transitive, intransitive,

and uninflectible or particle verbs. While the first two classes are verb stems, the

members of the latter class are verbs (cf. the definition of words and word stems given on section 2.2 above). Transitive verb stems subcategorize for two arguments, while intransitive verb stems subcategorize for only one argument. Besides that semantic distinction, there are also some morphologically based criteria that differentiate them. First, only intransitive stems can occur with the simple causative and comitative causative morphemes /mo-/ and /ese-/ as in (32a-b), transitive stems cannot.

32. a. epokiso   maora,   oyõkoyẽ.
       e–pokiso   mo–aot–a   o–yõkoyẽ
       2s-soil.dust Caus-get.out-Them   1s-brother.in.law
       'Get your dust out, my brother-in-law. (Txt)

    b. pagop-taip ese–kwar–a–t   i–er–a   i–to–a.
       young.boy   Com-leave-Them-Past   3-sleep-Them   3-Aux.lying-Sim
       'It carried the young boy when he was sleeping'. (Txt)

Secondly, while both transitive and intransitive verb stems take personal prefixes, the prefixes have different functions with each subcategory. The prefixes mark the S argument of intransitive verb stems, but the O argument of transitive verb stems. The first person singular prefix /o-/ is the subject of *set* 'to leave' in (33a) below, but the object of *ka* 'to ingest' in (33b). The relevant verb is underlined in each sentence. Furthermore, the coreferential third person prefix /se-/ is the default prefix with intransitive stems, but occurs only with reflexive objects in transitive stems. The complete distribution of personal prefixes with verbs is given in section 2.3.23.

33. a. <u>o–ser–a–ra</u>   kot=ke   o–si   o–tak   kaat   soob–ra
       1s-leave-them-res Desid   1s-mother 1s-daughter   conj   see-res
       'I want to leave in order to see my mother and my daughter again' (Txt)

    b. <u>o–ka</u>   kot kaabese i–ko   pa ẽt te pe=ia   perek ki   sete
       1s-ingest Fut if/when   om-ingest fut you foc Obl=lagoon   long   water he/she
       'You can eat me if you drink all the water of this long lagoon', she (said). (Txt)

The third class of verbs is the uninflectible or particle verbs. Semantically, this

class can be organized into three subgroups. The first is verbs that express activity, and

includes concepts that are generally expressed by onomatopoeic expressions, but it is

not limited to those. Sentence (34a), extracted from a mythological text, shows two

examples of uninflectible verbs as onomatopoeic expressions; it describes the deer

diving (into the water) and quickly surfacing back. (34b) shows that non onomatopoetic

concepts are also expressed by uninflectible verbs. The reference to the sentence subject

is only understood by context.

34. a. arop i̶s̶i̶i̶ koboy koboy ebapita kwep
     then deer dive dive look.up go.up
     'Then the deer dove and came up' (Txt)

  b. poret i̶r̶i̶r̶i̶t̶ neara
     now go.pl.subj again
     'Then (we) went again' (Txt)

The second subgroup includes utterance verbs, such as *kaat* 'say', which signal

direct speech in the discourse, and pro-sentence verbs. The term pro-sentence is

employed here in the sense of Schachter (1985) to define a word that is used in the place

of a whole sentence, and is understood as equivalent to the sentence to which it is

referring. Schachter (1985:32) cites the English words *yes* and *no* used as answers to

yes/no questions as a case of pro-sentence words. For instance, in answer to the question

'Is it raining?', Yes is equivalent to 'It's raining', while No is equivalent to 'It isn't

raining', in illocutionary force in context. Mekens has a series of pro-sentence words.

The more common are the pro-uninflectible verb *ke* and the pro-noun *kaap*. They are

both used as anaphoric devices referring to previous discourse information. Their

function is broader than English yes/no answers, in the sense that they can replace not

only a sentence, but also a clause, a verb or a verb phrase, that is any syntactic unit

containing a predicate. In that sense, the use of pro–forms in Mekens has a much wider

scope than in Indo–European languages. This type of device is known to exist in other

languages. For instance, Mandarin Chinese has a series of words—lai 'do it', *tzemme*

'do this', and *nemme* 'do that'—that function as pro-verbs and can replace verbs and

verb phrases in a sentence (cf. Chao 1968, and Chan 1980). The use of Mekens pro-

sentence verbs is illustrated in the following text excerpt (35). Note that the reference to

ke 'burn fire-wood inside a ceramic pan, and then put your kids inside it' is given in the

first sentence, and it is not mentioned again, but it is replaced by *ke* in all the sentences

that follow. For ease of clarification, the sentences are separated in three dialogue

tokens.

35. a. arẽp   erek   same–ka   kot   aabese   koeka   te pe=otat   pi=ise
       then   speak   beautiful-Tr im.fut when/if burn   focObl=fire.wood inside=Loc

   te=pe apoot   kaat oẽp   ma pe=e–mepir=iat
   3=Obl ceramic.pan then already put Obl=2s-offspring=Col
   'Then (the duck) replied 'if (you) want to make beautiful, burn fire-wood inside
   a ceramic pan, and then put your kids inside'

   b. sete   same–ka   paat   te ke   paat   ema ẽt   kekot kaabese.
      he/she beautiful-Tr   fut   foc like.that fut   evid you   Desid when/if
      'They will be beautiful. You do it, if you want to make them beautiful.'

   ke õrõt, o–kɨpi
   like.that I-Emph 1s-younger.cousin
   ' That is what I did, my cousin'.

   c. ke ẽt kẽra. ke pa õt
      like.that you Nassert like.that fut.1s I
      'Did you do that? I will do that (too)'.

The third subgroup is formed by a closed set of stance verbs, such as standing, sitting, and lying, as seen in (36a-b).

36. a. arob=ẽp e-i-mot-kwa   soyẽ
      wh-really 2s-om-make.pl.action seat
      'What are you doing seated there?

   b. arob=ẽp e-i-ŋwa   sogop
      wh-really 2s-om-gather bend
      'What are you gathering bent there?

Uninflectible verbs differ from the other two classes of verbs in not showing either person-number or tense-aspect inflection. They may have one or two conceptual arguments, but these are never formally expressed in the verb. Uninflectible verbs typically occur in narrative texts, and have the discourse function of highlighting the activity expressed by the verb, specially those of the first type. The focus being in the activity, the verb argument is normally omitted in the actual clause, having already been given in the text, or is given in an oblique phrase. Sentence (37a) extracted from the alligator myth describes the moment in which the kids follow their mother's instructions and trap the disguised alligator into opening its mouth to receive baked potato, but it is hot stone instead that they give to him (uninflectible verbs are italicized). The concepts expressed by uninflectible verbs may normally be expressed using regular transitive and intransitive verb stems.

37. a. sete   pea poret   *bɨp*   pe=kwai akop   s–iyẽ   pi=bõ   *ka*
         he/she open then   throw Obl=stone hot 3s-mouth inside=Dat go

pe=kwe   tõp.   poret kati   te kwe *emoka emoka oroy oroy oroy* te
Obl=beast ?   then poor.thing foc beast whirl-redup trail-redup trail   foc

se–ip=pe *oroy oroy toboy*   neara iki=bõ   *ka.*
3c-tail=Obl trail trail get.into.water again   water=Dat go

'She opened, and (they) threw the hot stone into her mouth, the beast's. And, what a pity! The beast whirled around trailing its tail behind, and, *splash*, went back to the river'. (Txt)

The distribution of uninflectible verbs in the clause is the same as any other verbs. They are not restricted to a single position inside or outside the clause. As the above examples show, they can be focalized with the particle *te* like the other verbs. They can be the only predicate in a clause. They can occur with auxiliaries, and with future and question particles. Thus, on the basis of such distributional properties, they are being analyzed formally as a subclass of verbs rather than as ideophones.

Another noteworthy property of verbs is that they may be specified for the number of one of their arguments. On the other hand, plurality may be left unmarked in the nouns (cf. section 2.2.1). Plurality may be marked in the verb in two ways, via a plural suffix *–kwa* or via stem alternation. Sentence (38a) means that a single animal was killed/shot at, while (38b) refers to the killing/shooting of more than one person. Plurality specification in the Mekens verb may refer to either the S or O arguments, but not to A. Dixon (1994) cites number-based stem-suppletion as one of the properties which tend to group S and O together across languages, thus, as one of the bases for languages to show an ergative-absolutive pattern. In a comparative study, Durie (1986)

shows that if a language has different forms for some verbs depending on the number of

one of the arguments, the relevant argument will normally be S or O, not A. That

observation holds true for Mekens. As illustrated by (38) some verbs take the suffix /–

kwa/ when their S or O argument is plural, but have no alternate form depending on the

number of the A argument.

38. a. ameko   mi-a   õt
  dog/jaguar kill-Them   I
  'I killed the jaguar' (Txt)

 b. se-no   mi-kwa   pããt
  3c-other   kill-pl   like
  'He likes to kill others'

 c. ameko   mi-a   ose
  dog/jaguar kill-Them   we (excl)
  'We killed the jaguar'

Examples of number based stem suppletion are given in (39) below. One verb is

used for a singular argument, and a different verb is used for a plural argument. That

feature is more common among the subclass of uninflectible verbs, but it also occurs

with a few transitive and intransitive verb stems.

39. a. õt kɨy   pe=kɨpe   set tekwaemo
  I   grab   Obl=machete   go also
  'I grabbed the machete, and went too'. (Txt)

 a'. kɨ–ora i–pẽt–ka   soga   te   irɨrɨt
  1pin-leave om-extract-Tr hort   foc go.pl.subj
  'Let's go cut it, (he said), and (we) went'. (Txt)

 b. o-teg=õ   ka   o-seesoe
  1s-house=Dat go/come   1s-Aux.in.motion
  'I am going home'

b'. seteyat-set   se-teg-õ   kwa   i-et
      3pl-go   3c-house-Dat   go/come.pl.Subj   3-Aux.in.motion.pl
      'They left, they are going home/to their own house' (Txt)

2.2.6 AUXILIARY

Auxiliaries are a fixed class that shows tense/aspect and person (subject) inflection (cf. the definition of Aux given in Steele et al. 1981), but that generally co-occur with a main verb. Similarly to other Tupian languages (Gabas 1999), however, auxiliaries in Mekens may also occur without a lexical verb.

Auxiliaries in Mekens carry information about the normative shape-figure and mode of locatability of the subject of the sentence. Nonetheless the actual posture of the subject does not seem to be part of what is being predicated. They occur with lexical verbs in the progressive aspect of present and past tense clauses. In the past progressive, they signal simultaneity between two clauses. The auxiliary clause sets the temporal reference point for the other clause in the time scale. It says that a certain event happened simultaneously with another event. In present progressive sentences (40a) there is not a necessary correlation between the clause that contains the auxiliary and another clause. On the other hand, in past progressive sentences (40b), there needs to be another clause in relation to which the auxiliary is set. Reference to the simultaneous clause may occur in the same sentence or have been previously set in the discourse flow. Simultaneity between an auxiliary and another clause may also be set for a future reference in relation to the time of utterance (40c).

40. a.   o-er-a   o-toop
       1s-sleep-Them   1s-aux.lying.pres
       'I am sleeping'

b. o–er–a   o–to–a   e–epibor–a
    1s-sleep-Them 1s-aux.lying-Sim 2s- Intrvzr-arrive-Them
    'I was sleeping when you arrived'

c. o–er–a   o–to–a   kirit so   pa ět
    1s-sleep-Them 1s-aux.lying-Sim child watch fut you
    'When I sleep, you take care of the child'

There are nine auxiliary stems in Mekens. The choice of auxiliary depends on

the lexical verb, since the posture of the sentence subject (either S or A) is defined

according to the type of action/event described by the lexical verb. Thus, for instance,

the verb 'to sleep' requires the auxiliary stem *-toop* 'aux+lying', since the default case

for someone who sleeps is to be lying in a resting position. The verb 'to row' requires

the auxiliary stem *-yě* 'aux+sitting', since someone who rows is normally sitting. The

distribution of auxiliary with different lexical verbs does not follow a classificatory

systems, in which each main lexical would occur with an specified stem. There are

prototypical positions, as the ones cited above, but it is also possible, for instance, for

someone to be sitting sleeping or even standing sleeping, and in such case the

corresponding auxiliary stem is used. The use of auxiliaries is not restricted to verbs of

motion either, it applies to any verb in the progressive aspect. Table 8 gives an

annotated gloss of the nine auxiliary stems, and their usage. The choice of auxiliary

stem is determined by the semantics of the main verb, and the restrictions that the type

of event imposes on the shape-figure of the subject. The complete paradigm of person

inflection in the auxiliary is given in section 2.3.2.4.

The auxiliary stems are clearly lexically related to the demonstratives (cf. section

2.2.4) and to a subgroup of uninflectible verbs (cf. section 2.2.5). Even though the

information about the posture of the auxiliary argument is lexically given as part of the

stem, it is no longer part of the predication. A grammaticization process is in

development in the language, in which lexical items are taking over a purely

grammatical function. There is at least one case where the speaker is consistently using

the more general auxiliary stem -*kop* 'aux.moving' indistinctly. Hale (1991) describes a

similar case for the progressive aspect in Ulwa (Misumalpan). He says that stance verbs,

like sitting and standing, function as aspectual auxiliaries in Ulwa in the progressive

aspect. According to his description, the stance of the actors found in the stance verbs

remains in the background, but is not part of the predication of the sentence. Those

stance verbs function as grammaticalized forms of auxiliaries.

Pres Progr	Past Progr	Annotated Gloss
top	toa	lying – used with verbs whose semantics implies that the subject is lying.
yẽt	yã	sitting - used with verbs which imply that the subject is sitting.
tat	taa	standing - used with verbs which imply that the subject is in a upright position
kop	koa	generic.mov - used with verbs which imply that the subject is moving, not still. This is the default auxiliary stem, and it is used when none of the others apply
secsoc	secsoa	walk - used with verbs of motion (go, come, etc.)
ooʔsoa	ooʔsoc	grouped together.pl - used with plural subjects when the event described implies a grouping of the participants involved
ct	aa	in.motion.pl - used for plural subjects with verbs of motion
it	ia	generic.pl - it is the generic auxiliary for plural subjects, unmarked as for the subject stance
c		standing.non-human - used for non-human subjects

Table 8: Auxiliary stems with annotated gloss

Besides the auxiliary construction shown in the above examples, where the

auxiliary stem inflects for its sole argument, there is another auxiliary construction in

which the particle *naat* occurs before the auxiliary stem. The use of this particle has a

twofold implication. First, there is no person inflection on the auxiliary stem. *Naat* is in

complementary distribution with the person prefixes. Second, it requires an overt noun

phrase after the auxiliary, either a noun or a pronoun, to fulfill the auxiliary subject

requirement. Thus, sentences with pronominal subjects and the *naat*-auxiliary

construction always have the pronoun after the auxiliary. Similarly to the pattern found

with transitive verbs, third person subjects of this naat-auxiliary construction may also

be omitted. The use of the particle *naat* also affects the phonological form of two

auxiliary stems. The stems *-koop* 'aux.moving', and *-toop* 'aux.lying' are realized as -

kop and *-top*, after the particle *naat*. Examples in (41a-b) below illustrate this type of

construction.

41. a. o-erek-kwa   naat   yē-apõ   õt   ikão
        1s-speech-TR.pl   ?   Aux.sitting–neg I   that.time
        'I was not speaking at that time' (Txt)

   b. se-er-a   naat   top   (te)
        3c-sleep-Them ?   Aux.lying (he/she)
        'S/he is sleeping'

Furthermore, the distinction between auxiliary stems used exclusively with

singular subjects and auxiliary stems used exclusively with plural subjects is neutralized

in this *naat* construction. The plural subject auxiliary stems are still used for plural

subjects only, but the singular subject stems may have any subject, singular or plural,

marked by a pronoun. In clauses with plural subject, the use of the auxiliary

construction with *naat* is preferred, but we were not able to find any semantic or

pragmatic distinction between the two types of constructions.

Auxiliaries in Mekens are similar to the intransitive verb stems in requiring only

one argument to satisfy their subcategorization. They differ from lexical verbs in not

taking any of the derivational affixes that occur with transitive and intransitive verb

stems. On the other hand, they may mark polarity (affirmative/negative) of the verb with which they occur, as shown in (42a-b).

42. Polarity expressed in the Auxiliary:
a. ose–er–a   naat   tob–apo=ose
    1pex-sleep-Them ?   Aux.lying-neg=1pex
    'We are not sleeping'

b. ose–er–a   naat   top=ose
    1pex-sleep-Them ?   Aux.lying=1pex
    'We are sleeping'

Furthermore, in addition to the lexically given information contained within the stem about the number of the auxiliary argument, auxiliaries may occur with the clitic /-iat/ 'collective/plural' expressing plurality of their argument (43a-b). We showed in section (2.2.5) that some lexical verbs may express plurality of their S/O argument, but through a different process.

43. Plurality expressed in the Auxiliary:
a. teyar–er–a   naat   tob=iat
    3p- sleep-Them   ?   Aux.lying=col
    'They are already sleeping'

b. se–er–a   naat   tob=iat
    3c-sleep-Them ?   Aux.lying=col
    'They are already sleeping'

As it can be observed from (43a-b) above when there is no further indication of person after the Aux=pl word, a third person plural is implied. Zero marking for person in transitive verb stems is equivalent to third person (cf. section 2.3.2.3). The third person singular coreferential prefix takes a plural reference when there are other overt plural marker in the clause, as seen in (43b).

Consider also the examples in (44a-c) below. In (44a) there is no person marking in either the lexical verb or the auxiliary, the only indication of person/number of the A argument is given by the presence of the plural suffix in the auxiliary. Hence the sentence has a third person plural subject interpretation. (44b) has a first person plural subject following the Aux=pl word, and the result is a well formed sentence. On the other hand, sentence (44c), which has a 2pl subject prefix on the lexical verb and a plural clitic marker to the right of the auxiliary stem, is ungrammatical. The ungrammaticality is the result of a person clash in the sentence. It has a 2pl marking on the lexical verb, but a third person forced interpretation on the auxiliary stem due to the presence of the plural marking and absence of overt person indication following the auxiliary stem.

44. a. ti̵ero   ma   naat   kob=iat
       chicha make   ?   Aux.moving=col
       'They are making *chicha*'

    b. ti̵ero   ma   naat   kob=iar=ose
       chicha make   ?   Aux.moving=col=we.excl
       'We (excl) are making *chicha*'

    c. * eyar-er-a   naat   tob=iat
         2p- sleep-Them   ?   Aux.lying-col
         (You are already sleeping)

2.2.7 POSTPOSITIONS

Postpositions in Mekens form phrasal constituents with noun phrases. They function as role markers used to indicate the syntactic and/or semantic roles of noun phrases other than subject and object. They mark OBLIQUE and ADJUNCT grammatical functions, in the sense of Lexical Functional Grammar. That is, they mark

oblique arguments that are subcategorized by the verb, as well as those that are not. (For

a better definition of grammatical categories within the Lexical Functional Grammar

framework see Dahlstrom 1991 and references cited there).

Morphologically, postpositions differ from verbs by not taking inflectional or

derivational affixes typical of verbs in Mekens. They differ from nouns and adjectives

by not occurring with personal prefixes. They are also structurally different from

particles and adverbs since they require a noun (phrase) as argument.

Semantically, postpositions are used to mark the following semantic roles:

instrumental, source, goal, (spatial and temporal) location, recipient, and association.

Mekens postpositions are set out in Table 9[11], and exemplified in (45a-d) below.

Locative	–ese, –se
Ablative	–eri, –Vri
Dative	–õ, –bõ
Comitative	–esẽp, –sẽp

Table 9. Postpositions

45. a. arẽp   sete   poret kopkop sɨk   ek   akwaar=ese   kiribororo
        then   he/she/it   now   chirp   perch house   back=Loc   bird.chirping
        'Then it came, perched on the top of the house, and stayed there singing
        kiribororo' (Txt)

    b. arikwayõ asisi   aa?pi ar–a   se–ko–a   kõtkõra   teg=eri
        arikwayõ com   seed   get–Them   3c–Aux.mov–Sim cicada house=Abl
        'Arikwayõ got corn seeds from kõtkõra's (cicada's) house' (Txt)

    c. paroray   at paat   õt kɨrẽp masopi=bõ
        armadillo   get fut   I   today night=Dat
        'I will hunt armadillo tonight'

---

11. The first allomorph occurs after consonant-final words and the second, after vowel-final words. The ablative allomorph following a final vowel stem (-Vri) lengthens the preceding vowel.

d. peɨt   tapaya   i–koop   o–mẽt   õr=esẽp
   grass   take.out 3s-aux.mov   1s-husband   I=Assoc
   'My husband and I are cutting the grass'.(Lit. My husband is cutting the grass
   with me)

Mekens postpositions are also used with information (WH) questions and

discourse pronouns (cf. sections 4.2.3.3 and 4.4.2.3 below). The postpositions *erɨ*

'ablative' and *bõ* 'dative' combine with the question word *arop* 'what, who' when the

focus of the question is the reason (46a) and/or location or direction (46b) of an event.

Sentence (46c) shows a postposition used with the discourse pronoun *kaap* 'then; that'.

46. a. arob=eri te   kẽra   tebekwa   noat   ke   sete
       what=Abl he/she   Nassert hug   neg   QUOT he/she
       'Why doesn't he like me? He said' (Txt)

    b. arẽp poot ẽsopega "arob=õ   e–seesoe"
       then old   ask   what=Dat 2s–Aux.motion
       'Then the old man asked: where are you going?' (Txt)

    c. kaab=eri eba õt aose   na   eteet o–ɨkɨ   õ–a   ke   te
       that=Abl evid I person Verblzr   could 1s–water give–Them QUOT truly
       'That is why I said at that time that if it were a person it should give me water.'
       (Txt)

2.2.8 ADVERBS

Adverbs constitute a small class of words that are the opposite of the adjectives,

in that they do not have corresponding adverb stems. Some structural and distributional

properties distinguish adverbs from other word categories in Mekens. Prototypically,

adverbs occur either at the beginning or the end of the clause. However they are not

restricted to these positions, but are freely ordered within the clause to the extent that

they do not intervene between a verb and its object, a verbal complex and the co-

occurring auxiliary[12] or a verb stem and the verbal particles associated with it. That property also serves to distinguish adverbs from particles. Whilst both categories are inflectionless, they differ in terms of their position in clauses. Particles have a fixed order in relation to some other constituent in the clause, whereas adverbs are not restricted in that way. The distribution of adverbs within the clause is shown in (47) below.

47. a. sete   se–kwat   noat   p̃ip
         he/she 3c-walk   Neg   yesterday
         'He did not go hunting yesterday'

    b. p̃ip sete se–kwat noat

    c. sete p̃ip se–kwat noat

    d. *sete se–kwat p̃ip noat

As can be seen in (47) above, all the permutations of adverb order inside the clause are possible, except the one where it intervenes between the verb and the negative particle (47d). All the good examples in (47) have the same meaning with no focus or other pragmatic difference.

Examples in (48) illustrated the distribution of adverbs in transitive clauses. In (48c) we can see that the adverb may not occur between the verb and its object, (48f) illustrates the restriction on the adverb breaking up the verb + verb particle sequence, and (48g) shows that the adverb can not occur between the verb and the auxiliary.

48. a. kirẽp   õt o–pe   paaga o–koop
         today;now I   1s-clothes dry   1s-Aux.mov
         'I am drying my clothes today'

---

12. There is one elicited example where the consultant accepted an adverb between the lexical verb and the auxiliary. However, that was never found in texts, and generally dubbed ungrammatical in elicitation, except for that one example: õt ope paaga kirẽp okoop 'I'm drying my clothes now'.

b. õt <u>kirẽp</u> ope paaga okoop

c. * õt ope <u>kirẽp</u> paaga okoop

d. õt ope paaga okoop <u>kirẽp</u>

e. roque <u>kirẽp</u>   makiyã   mi–a   kot ke
    roque today;now agouti   kill-Them Fut–Desid
    'Roque want to hunt agouti today'

f. * roque makiyã mia <u>kirẽp</u> kot ke

g. *tiero ma <u>kirẽp</u> otoop

Adverbs in Mekens do not occur with inflectional affixes, such as person and number or tense/aspect markers. When functioning as predicates, they can be negated, but the negation is made periphrastically (49a), not morphologically. There is only one attested example in a text where the word kirẽp 'today, now' is used with the negative suffix /-ap/, meaning 'not recently'; this example is given in (49b).

49. a. kïrẽp   ne   noat
         today;now Predzr Neg
         'It was not now'

    b. kwate kwak sete kirem-ap se-kwak   etobeka
        music sound he/she today-neg 3c-sound loose
        'The music, he lost his music quite a while ago' (Txt)

Adverbs do not occur with any derivational affixes. Hence, they do not serve as bases for derived lexical items. This is one of the criteria that distinguish adverbs from uninflectible verbs in Mekens. Contrary to adverbs, uninflectible verbs may be the bases to which the derivational affixes /–ka/, /-kwa/ and /e-/ combine to form derived transitive and intransitive verb stems. Adverbs are also different from verbs in general since they do not take arguments of any kind, nor do they occur as the only predicate in

a clause that has a noun phrase as subject, as shown in (50), but see section 4.3 for non-verbal predicate clauses.

50. a. * ameko <u>kirep</u>

Adverbs are also different from verbs with respect to the process of reduplication. It is typical of verbs in Mekens to show reduplication of the entire root as a way of expressing iterative meaning. Thus, potentially any verb can be reduplicated in that way. For instance, the stem *ko* 'to ingest' may be reduplicated as in *ko ko ko* 'eat a lot or rapidly', the stem *set* 'to go' may be reduplicated as in *set set* '(he/she) walked and walked'. However, adverbs may not reduplicate in such a way.

The prototypical function of adverbs in Mekens is that of verb (phrase) and sentence modifiers. However, adverbs may also be the predicate in time clauses with unspecified subject, although in this case they are always immediately followed by the particle *ne*. Adverbs are used in Mekens to indicate time. A list of the time adverbs is given in Table 10 below.

Time adverbs	Gloss
kirẽp	'today; now'
pĩp	'yesterday; some time ago'
erapc	'tomorrow'
erapc no	'day after tomorrow'
āparẽpkwa	'morning'
ebarcpika	'afternoon'
naariat	'in ancient times'
ikão	'at that time'
āpat	'early'
oẽp	'already'

Table 10: Time adverbs

Direction/location concepts, such as above, inside, under, and related ones, which are generally expressed by adverbs in European languages, correspond to nouns

in Mekens. Manner and degree concepts that are also prototypically expressed by adverbs in European languages are found in Mekens in periphrastic constructions, involving noun and verb phrases.

On the other hand, several notions that are generally express by manner adverbs in Indo-European languages are expressed in Mekens by reduplication in the verb stem. For instance the notion of rapidity can be expressed by reduplicating the verb stem, as in is *kokoko* 'eat rapidly'. The exact definition of what is being expressed by reduplication depends on context. In (51) below, for instance, it is not rapidity that reduplication of the stem *mi* 'shoot/kill' marks, but rather repetition of the action being described.

51. a. poret i-si   kwat mi mi mi mi
        then   3s-mother leave shoot–redup shoot –redup
        'Then the mother left, and (they) shot repeatedly' (Txt)

Still other notions that are generally expressed by adverbs may be acquired in Mekens by using adjective stems adverbially. It can be considered a case of zero derivation or identity operation (cf. Matthews 1974), since it involves no change in the adjective stem proper. It is rather the distribution of the adjective stem that changes. When adjective stems follow a verb, the adjective carries no prefix and takes an adverbial function. The examples (52a-c) illustrate this type of construction. The relevant verb modifying words are italicized.

52. a. so-a   *pase*   pe=kwama pap erek
        see-Them   all/well Obl=nambu dead speak
        '(He) looked well at the dead *nambu* (type of bird) and said' (Txt)

    b. set set *sĩit* tẽet
        go–redup   small only
        'He walked just a little' (Txt)

c. poret oẽp ib-a-t *poot* te teop i-no
then already return-Them-past old foc Dem.lying 3s-other
'(She) has already returned, that other one.' (lit. She is old back, that other one)
(Txt)

2.2.9 PARTICLES

The category of particles in Mekens comprises a closed number of free forms

that for the most part do not have a clear semantic content, but serve to perform various

grammatical functions in the language. Particles do not participate in any morphological

process that occurs in the language: they do not take inflectional or derivational affixes,

they do not reduplicate, nor do they require an argument. Particles may be distinguished

from adverbs in two respects. Firstly, while adverbs have unrestricted word order within

the clause (but see section 2.2.8 for specifics), particles have fixed word order inside the

phrase where they occur, and their overall distribution in the clause depends on their

subclassification. Secondly, whereas adverbs may constitute minimal phrase by

themselves, as, in short answers to questions, particles, may not be minimal phrases.

I have listed 29 particles in Mekens, but there may still be others. The particles

that have been identified so far are organized in subgroups according to their function.

There are evidential/epistemic particles, modal-like postverbal particles, negative

particles, subordinator particles, and discourse particles. Table 11 lists the particles with

their subgroups and respective glosses.

Evidential/epistemic	Gloss
kẽra	'non-assertive; maybe'
cbõ	'really'
cba	'be.seen; truly'
ẽp	'really; indeed'
te	'truly'
toẽt	'guess'

Table 11: Mekens Particles

TAM Postverbal particles	Gloss
etect	'could;would'
pek	'future'
pegat	'irrealis future'
pa	'future.1+2person'
paat	'future.3person'
kot	'immediate future'
kot ke	'desiderative.1+2person'
kot kaat	'desiderative.3person'
iret	'again'
saat	'still'
soga	'hortative'
kakwat	'habitual'
Subordinator	**Gloss**
kaabese or aabese[13]	'if; when'
kana ~ kanapõrã	'for that reason'
Other particles	**Gloss**
te	'focus'
etaop	'frustrative'
tẽẽt	'only'
neara	'again'
nop	'no; not'
noat	'not'
tekwaemo	'also'
sete	'also
neŋat	'similative'
poret	'then; now'

Table 11(Cont.): Mekens Particles

2.2.9.1 EVIDENTIAL/EPISTEMIC PARTICLES

Evidential/epistemic particles are forms that attest to the source of information given in the clause, and, to a certain extent, to the reliability of this information according to the speaker view of the state/event. Evidential/epistemic particles are clausal particles in the sense that they have scope over the whole proposition. An analysis of the discourse structure of the language is necessary in order to gather a better

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13. *kaabese* is the form used in the Sakirabiat and Siwkweriat dialects, and *aabese* is the Guaratira dialect form (cf. section 1.1.5 above).

understanding of this evidential system, however such an analysis is beyond the scope of

the present work. Examples (53a-d) below illustrate the use of evidential/epistemic

particles.

53. a. iki=bõ   ka   pɨbot te=bõ ɨkɨ   se-aso-a   se-koa   <u>kẽra</u>
water=Dat go/come arrive 3=Dat water 3c-bathe-Them 3c-Aux.mov NonAssert
' He went to the small river, got there, at the river, and apparently he bathed'

b. oẽp   ekagɨka   <u>toẽt</u>   te ek   poot
already fall   guess foc house old
'Perhaps it has fallen down by now, that old house' (Txt)

c. arẽp sete   soa   naat   top   <u>ebõ</u>
then he/she see-them ?   Aux.lying really
'But he IS watching' (Txt)

d. kãra   ar–a   <u>eba</u> kise   set
brazil.nuts get-Them truly we(inc) go
'We had gone to get brazil–nuts' (Txt)

2.2.9.2   TAM POSTVERBAL PARTICLES

The subgroup of 'tense-aspect-modal-like' postverbal particles occurs

immediately after the verb stem and function as tense, aspect and mode markers in the

language. They are similar to the class of preverbs found in Algonquian languages,

which include modal-like elements, aspect markers, directionals, and manner adverbs

(Appelbaum 1996, Dahlstrom 1996, and references cited there). In Mekens, the subclass

of particles occurring after the verb includes modal-like, tense, and aspect markers.

They are always contiguous to the verb, forming a complex with it. Examples in (54)

illustrate some of the postverbal particles. Postverbal particles are mutually exclusive,

except for the modal particle *eteet* 'could;would', which always occurs following a

tense marker postverbal particle, and *saat* 'still', which may precede a tense marker

postverbal particles.

54. a. arop   te   kēra   o-i-may   <u>pek</u>.
         wh   Foc   NonAssert   1s–OM–tell   fut
         'What will I tell?' (Txt)

     b. o-si   kora-a   <u>kot</u>   set
         1s-mother look.for-Them   im.fut   go
         'I am going to look for my mother. (he) left' (Txt)

     c. kwara-a   <u>kot=ke</u>   ose (ose)
         walk.in.the.woods/leave-Them   im.fut=Desid   we(excl)
         'We are going hunting'/ 'We want to go hunting'

     e. kirir=eri=ēp   ka-t   te   te se-poetop eat   <u>pegat eteet</u>
         child=Abl=really go/come-past   truly   foc 3c-knowledge acquire irr.fut would
         'If it had been really since childhood, then I would have learned' (Txt)

2.2.9.3   SUBORDINATOR PARTICLES

Only two cases of subordinator particle has been identified: *kaabese* (or *aabese*)

'if; when', and *kana* (or *kanapōrā*) 'for that reason'. The difference between *kaabese*

and *aabese* depends on speech variety. The first form is registered with speakers of

Sakirabiat and Siwkweriat dialects and the second one is used by speakers of Guaratira

dialect (the three dialects were defined in section 1.1.5 above). We have not being able

to determine what is the difference, if any, between the forms *kana* and *kanapōrā*.

The temporal-conditional particle introduces simultaneous temporal clauses and

if-clauses in the language, as shown in examples (55a-b) below. The syntactic

distribution of this particle will be further discussed in section 4.4.2 below when

adverbial clauses are presented.

55. a. se-kara   kaabese   o-aso   pa õt   asoab=õ
         3c-fall/rain   if/when   1s-bathe   Fut I   rain=Dat
         'If it rains, I will bathe in the rain'

b. o-ka kot, kaabese i-ko pa ĕt te pe=ia perek ki
1s-ingest+Them im.fut if/when OM-ingest fut you foc Obl=lagoon long water
'You can eat me if you drink all the water of this long lagoon'. (Txt)

The particle kana (kanapõrã) is used to introduce reason/purpose adverbial clauses, as

seen in (56a). This particle is further discussed in section 4.2 below.

56. a. o-taka maŋa sete kana õt o-epirik
1s-turn tell/order he/she for.that I 1s-fall
'He told me to turn, that's why I fell down'

2.2.9.4   OTHER PARTICLES

This subgroup includes the other nine particles that were identified in Mekens.

While they do not share a coherent semantic meaning, they do not fit in any of the other

groups either. It includes the restrictive particle *tĕĕt*, the frustrative particle *etaop*, the

repetitive particle *neara*, the focus particle *te*, the discourse particle *poret*, the additive

particles *tekwaemo* and sete, and the similative particle *neŋat*, and the negative

particles *noat* and *nop*. Some of these particles are illustrate in (57a-g) below. The

relevant particles are italicized.

57. a. tiit *tĕĕt* sigika se-ko–a
honey.scraps only throw.down 3c-Aux.mov.sim
'He kept throwing down only the scraps of honey'(Txt)

b. isii o-so–a kwat. õt i-taka *etaop*
deer 1s-see-Them leave I OM-follow frustr
'The deer saw me and run away, I run after it, but couldn't get it' (Txt)

c. sete kiiy *neara* sete
he/she push again he/she
'Then he pushed away again' (Txt)

d.. i-may-a *te* kirit ikaabit
OM-tell-Them foc child young.female
'Then she told it, the young girl' (Txt)

e. *poret*   sete   kerep kẽra   sete
    then/now he/she enter Nassert he/she
    'Then he entered, or so it seems, he did' (Txt)
f. õt kiy pe=kipe   set *tekwaemo*
    I   grab Obl=machete go also
    'Then I grabbed the machete, and went too'. (Txt)

g. nop,   se-aso   paat (te)
    no   3c-bathe   fut.3 (he/she)
    'No, (he is not going to do that), he is going to bathe'

2.3 INFLECTIONAL MORPHOLOGY

The Mekens system personal inflection interacts with three major word

classes—nouns, adjectives, and verbs—placing inflectional morphology in the center of

the language. Its functions range from genitive to verb agreement markers, and include a

complex distinction between coreferential and non-coreferential third person. The

overall organization of this system is given is this section.

2.3.1 PRONOMINAL SYSTEM

The Mekens personal pronominal system consists of a series of free pronouns

and a series of bound prefixes. Nonetheless, a subset of the pronouns presents an

oscillation between a free and a cliticized form (cf. section 2.2.3.1). In this section we

will present the inflectional paradigm of personal marking and its relation to the three

word classes mentioned above. Table 12 below shows the personal pronouns and

prefixes.

PERSON	PRONOUNS	PREFIXES
1s	ŏt	o-
2s	ĕt	e-
3s	te	i-, s-[14]
3c	sete	se-
1pIn	kise	ki-
1pEx	ose	ose-
2p	eyat	eyat-
3p	teyat	teyat-
3pc	setevat	se-

Table 12. Personal Pronominal System

Examples (58a-g) illustrate the three distinct uses of the prefixes. When used

with a noun, the personal prefix functions as the possessor of a genitive construction

(58a-b); it is the constituent modified by the adjective, when preceding an adjective

stem (58c-d); and marks subject and object arguments and/or agreement when linked to

verbs (58e-g).

58. Distribution of personal prefixes with different classes of words.

a. o-pe   (prefix-noun)
   1s-clothe
   'my clothing'

b. i-pe   (prefix-noun)
   3s-clothe
   'his clothing'

c. ŋʷãẽ   akop   (noun adjective)
   pan   hot
   'hot pan'

d. s-akop   (prefix-adjective)
   3s-hot
   'hot'/ 'something hot'

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14.   The first allomorph, /i-/, occurs with consonant initial stems, and the second one, /s-/, with vowel initial stems. However, there are some vowel initial stems take the /i-/ prefix; this happens when the use of the phonologically based allomorph would result in homophony with another form in the language.

e. roque <u>se-er-a-t</u>   (prefix-intr. verb)
   Roque 3c-sleep-Them-past
   'Roque slept'

f. aose   <u>i-so-a-t</u>(prefix-trans. verb)
   man   3s-see- Them-past
   'The man saw him'

g. ek   obaat   mot-kwa   <u>o-koop</u>   (prefix-aux)
   house   many   make-pl.Act.   1s-aux.mov.pres
   'I am building many houses'

The occurrence of a single series of personal marking with different word classes is characteristic of other Tupian languages as well, and this fact has not gone unnoticed by the researchers studying those languages.

2.3.2 THE INFLECTIONAL PARADIGM

The last section showed examples of the personal prefixes occurring with nouns, adjectives, and verbs (intransitive, transitive and auxiliary). Their distribution with each of these word classes is not completely homogenous, however. There are differences in the use and function of the prefixes depending on the class of the word stem to which they affix.

2.3.2.1 PERSONAL INFLECTION WITH NOUN

Nouns take personal prefixes in genitive constructions, where the prefix functions as the possessor. Every noun belonging to the subclass of those nouns that may be possessed can occur with a personal prefix as its possessor. The full series of nine prefixes occurs with nouns and noun stems, including the coreferential third person prefix (noun and noun stems are defined in section 2.2.1 above). Note on the noun paradigm in (59a-i) below that the third person and third person coreferential prefixes

are used contrastively with nouns. On the other hand, pronouns and nouns are not

concurrent, that is, they are in complementary distribution.

59. Personal inflection with nouns

a. o-tek
   1s-house   'my house'
b. e-tek
   2s-house   'your house'
c. i-tek
   3s-house   'his house'
d. se-tek
   3c-house   'his (own) house'/ 'their (own) house'
e. ki-tek
   1pIn-house   'our house'
f. ose-tek
   1pEx-house   'our house'
g. eyat-tek
   2p-house   'your house'
h. teyat-tek
   3p-house   'their house'
i. seteyat-tek
   3pc-house   'their (own) house'

2.3.2.2 PERSONAL INFLECTION WITH ADJECTIVE STEM

Adjectives never occur as bare stems, they are always preceded either by a noun,

a demonstrative or a person prefix (60a-b). A prefix modified by an adjective stem

constitutes a noun phrase (NP) headed by the prefix. From the series of prefixes given in

table 12 above, only the co-referential prefix does not occur with adjective stems. On

the other hand, only the third person prefix appears with an attributive adjective stem

(60b). With all other personal prefixes, adjective stems are used predicatively (60c-e).

However, a prefix plus an adjective stem does not constitute a minimal predicative

sentence in Mekens (60f-g). A predicative adjective first forms a NP with a personal

prefix, then it is juxtaposed to the NP (nominal or pronoun) from which it is predicating.

A bare adjective stem does not occur with pronouns either.

60. Personal inflection with adjective stems

a. **iki akop**
   water hot   'hot water'
b. **s-akop**
   3s-hot   'hot'/ 'something or someone hot'
c. **o-akop õt**
   1s-hot   I   'I am hot'
d. **e-akop ẽt**
   2s-hot you   'You are hot'/ 'Are you hot?'
e. **s-akop te**
   3s-hot he/she/it   'He is hot/warm'
f. ***o-akop**   (I hot)
g. ***e-akop**   (You hot)

2.3.2.3 PERSONAL INFLECTION WITH VERBS AND VERB STEMS

The distribution of the personal pronominal system with main verbs results in an ergative pattern that has pronominal bound prefixes marking the S and O arguments, and the free pronouns marking the A argument of the verb.

One-argument (intransitive) verbs always take a personal prefix cross-referencing the person and number of its sole argument. Contrary to the adjective stems that do not take the co-referential third person prefix, the intransitive verbs always take the co-referential prefix, not the regular third person singular in simple clauses. For an account of the occurrence of non-coreferential third person prefix with intransitive verbs see section 4.5.3 below. Plural subjects can be marked either by the co-referential or the non-coreferential prefix or even by the co-referential singular third person prefix.

61. Personal inflection with one-argument verbs:

a. o-er-a-t   (ōt)
    1s-sleep-them-past (I)   'I slept'
b. e-er-a-t   (ēt)
    2s-sleep- them-past (you)   'you slept'
c. (sete) se-er-a-t
    he   3c-sleep- them-past   'he slept'
d. (kise) ki-er-a-t
    we   1pIn-sleep- them-past   'we (inc) slept'
e. ose-er-a-t   ose
    1pEx-sleep- them-past we   'we (ex.) slept'
f. (eyat) eyar-er-a-t
    you   2p-sleep- them-past   'you (pl.) slept'
g. seteyar-er-a-t/teyar-er-a-t
    3pc-sleep- them-past /3p-sleep- them-past   'they slept'
h. (seteyat/teyat) se-er-a-t
    they (c)/they   3c-sleep- them-past   'they slept'
i. kirit se-er-a-t
    child 3c-sleep- them-past   'The child slept'

As shown in (61) above, a personal prefix and an intransitive verb may constitute a minimal predicative sentence in itself. The parentheses indicate that a free pronoun or a nominal (61i), for that matter, may always co-occur with the person prefix cross-referencing the S argument. In such cases, the pronoun may be omitted, but the prefix may not.

Two-argument (transitive) verbs inflect also for only one of their arguments in simple declarative clauses. Nonetheless, they differ from one-argument verbs in four ways with respect to their personal pronominal inflection. First, with transitive verbs there is a contrast between the two third person prefixes, indicating a reflexive object (62c) or a non-reflexive object (62d), while with intransitive verbs there is no contrast

possible in simple clauses, and the prefix used for crossreferencing a third person

subject is the coreferential prefix.

62. Personal inflection with two-argument verbs:
a. (sete) o-so-at   'He saw me'
b. (sete) e-so-at   'He saw you'
c. (sete) se-so-at   'He saw himself'
d. (sete) i-so-at   'He saw him'
e. (sete) ki-so-at   'He saw us (inc.)'
f. (sete) ose-so-at   'He saw us (exc.)
g. (sete) eyat-so-at   'He saw you (pl.)
h. (sete) teyat-so-at   'He saw them'

    Secondly, the prefix does not co-occur with an object NP (either nominal or

pronominal). Thus, (63a) below is grammatical, but (63b) is not.

63. a. isɨɨ so-a-t   õt
    deer see-Them-past I
    'I saw the deer'

  b. *isɨɨ i-so-a-t   õt
    deer   3s-see- Them-past I
    (I saw the deer)

    However, observe example (64b) where the notional object occurs in an oblique

phrase and the object argument position is fulfilled with an object prefix marker.

Example (64a) is a regular transitive clause with third singular person subject (zero

marking) and an NP object preceding the verb. In (64b) the notional object NP appears

in an adjunct position and is no longer the formal object.

64. a. poret ira ar-a-t
    then   fire.ant get-them-past
    'Then she got some fire ants' (Txt)

  b. poret i-ar-a-t   pe-ira
    then   OM-get- Them-past   Obl=fire.ant
    'Then she got some fire ants' (Txt)

The object prefix is a formal object marker, not an agreement marker, since it does not need to agree in person and number with the notional object of the clause. The object prefix in such cases is an invariable object marker that is homophonous with the third person non-coreferential prefix. Sentence (65a) is an example of a notional first person object in an oblique phrase, and the invariable object marker /i-/. The verb remains transitive, as can be seen from the prefix choice. If the verb were formally intransitive, we would expect the co-referential prefix to occur there, but it never does. A fuller account of this oblique construction will be given in section 4.5.1 below.

65. a. arẽp sete i-so-a pase pe=ōt (...)
  then he/she OM-see-THEM all/well OBL=I
  Then she looked well at me (at every one) (...)' (Txt)

Thirdly, the subject (A argument) of a transitive verb is realized as a full NP (noun or pronoun), but whereas with intransitive verbs the subject pronouns may always be omitted, the transitive verbs show a different pattern. There is a person hierarchy in which first and second persons outrank third person (1,2 > 3) with respect to non-deletability. When the subject of a transitive verb is either first or second person, the subject pronoun must be present; when it is third person it is optionally omitted. The parentheses in (62) above indicate the option of not marking a singular third person subject. Thus, zero person subject marking in a transitive verb is interpreted as third person singular, except in the progressive aspect, where the subject is marked in the auxiliary only. This ranking regarding the possibility of omission of subject marking is only functional in the singular; third person plural subject pronouns may not be omitted.

66. Pronominal subjects of two-argument verbs:

a. õt i-so-a-t   'I saw it'
b. ẽt i-so-a-t   'You saw it'
c. (sete) i-soa-a-t   'He saw it'
d. kise i-so-a-t   'We (incl.) saw it'
e. ose i-so-a-t   'We (excl.) saw it'
f. eyat i-so-a-t   'You (pl.) saw it'
g. teyat i-so-a-t   'They saw it'
h. seteyat i-so-a-t   'They saw it'

Fourthly, the prefix of a transitive verb marks the O, rather than the A argument,
as seen in (62) and (66) above. However, there is one construction in which there is a
prefix in a transitive verb marking subject in addition to the object marker. In the
inverse agreement constructions discussed in section 4.5.2 below, transitive verbs show
a two-place inflection, that is, there are both a subject and an object marker prefixed to
the verb stem. Examples of such construction are given in (67a-d) below. In these
clauses, the object NP is in focus position outside the VP, the verb appears in its short
form, without tense inflection, and there is both an object and a subject marker prefixed
to the verb.

67. a. isii   neŋat   ikãõ   o-i-mi kaat
        deer   similative that.time   1s-OM-kill QUOT
        'It looks like it is a deer that I shot that time', he said' (Txt)

    b. arob=ẽp   te   te   e-i-mi
        what=really truly foc   2s-OM-kill
        'What did you kill?'

    c. isii ebõẽp te   o-i-mi   te   i-nõ
        deer really foc 1s-OM-kill foc 3s-other
        'It is really a deer that I killed, (said) the other one' (Txt)

    d. kiypit ko   pa õt e-i-at
        fish   ingest fut I   2s-OM-get
        'I will eat the fish that you caught'

Although in those constructions the verb shows a two-place inflection, the two

prefixes do not constitute an example of double agreement in the strict sense. The object

marker, the inner prefix, does not agree in person and number with the thematic object,

as seen in (68) below. It is rather the same invariable object marker /i-/ found in the

oblique pe-phrase construction discussed in the previous section. The inner prefix in this

object focus construction is a grammaticized form of object marker that fulfills the

syntactic object position (cf. section 3.3. below). It is important to note here that in these

focus type constructions, the verb remains transitive, but the agreement pattern is

reversed. For a complete analysis of the object focus construction see sections 4.5.1 and

4.5.2 below.

68. a. ẽt te o-i-sop   ikãõ
    you foc 1sf-OM-see   that (time)
    'You were what I saw at that time'/ 'It was you that I saw that time'

There are a few three-argument (ditransitive) verbs. They have the same personal

inflection paradigm of transitive verbs for subject and direct object arguments. The

indirect object is realized in an oblique postpositional phrase headed by one of the

postpositions presented in section 2.2.7 above. When the object of a postposition is

pronominal, it is realized as a full pronoun, not a prefix (69).

69. a. o-top   kipe   õ-a–t   õr=õ
    1s-father   machete give-Them–past I=Dat
    'My father gave me the big knife'

There is also a class of uninflectible verbs that do not inflect for their arguments,

nor for tense/aspect[15] (cf. section 2.2.5). This class is largely characterized by

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15. A similar pattern is found in the related language Gavião (Moore 1984). Moore divides the Gavião verb phrases in three classes: transitive VPs, co-referencing VPs (corresponding to intransitive VPs in Mekens), and VPs consisting of a verb, the last one including those that are not inflected for their argument.

onomatopoeic verbs, but includes lexical verbs as well. Uninflectible verbs may be one-

argument or two-argument verbs, however none of them occur with the personal

prefixes. When they have pronominal arguments, the subject is realized as full

pronouns (70a-b), and in the rare cases where they have an explicit object, it is also

realized by a noun or a pronoun in an oblique pe=phrase (cf. section 4.4.1 below), never

by a prefix (70c-d).

70. a. arẽp   sete   <u>kwerẽẽt</u>   kɨp   <u>ka-t</u>   osi=bõ   ka
        then   he/she hide.oneself   tree   go/come-Them-past   under=dat go/come
        'Then he hid himself under the tree'
    b. õt <u>kerep</u>
        I enter
        'I entered'

    c. <u>kerep</u> <u>kɨy</u>
        enter   get
        '(he) entered and got (it)'

    d. pɨp   pe=i-pap
        throw Obl=3s-dead
        '(they) threw away the dead (animal)'

2.3.2.4 PERSONAL INFLECTION WITH AUXILIARY STEMS

Auxiliary stems inflect for person and number (cf. section 2.2.6). Comparing the

paradigm of personal inflection of the auxiliary to that of transitive and intransitive

verbs, we verify that it is distinct from both. Whereas personal inflection on the lexical

(transitive and intransitive) verbs follows an ergative-absolutive pattern, on the auxiliary

it follows a nominative one. That is, in the lexical verbs personal inflection marks the

subject of an intransitive verb (S) and the object of a transitive verb (O), but in the

auxiliary it always marks subjects (S/A) regardless of the lexical verb's valence. This

split is not driven by the semantic nature of the NPs or by any potential conceptual

distinction realized on tense/aspect/mood. It relates to the internal structure of the

auxiliary as a one-argument verb. Hence, the default case with the auxiliary is to mark

its sole argument with the series of person prefixes, which gives rise to a nominative

pattern, marking S and A, according to the lexical verb's valence. Sentences (71a-c)

illustrated that pattern. In simple sentences, third person singular is marked by the

regular, non-coreferential third person prefix on the auxiliary, whereas on one-argument

lexical verbs the default case is to mark it by the coreferential prefix. Sentence (71c)

shows that pronominal inflection on the auxiliary is the only reference to the sentence's

subject in transitive clauses.

71. a. ameko se-er-a   i-toop
      dog   3c-sleep-Them   3s-Aux.lying.pres
      'The dog is sleeping'/ 'The dog is lying asleep'

    b. o-apitaka   o-yɛ̃t
      1s-think   1s-Aux.sitting.pres
      'I am thinking'/ 'I am sitting thinking'

    c. kwamoa   tek   mot-kwa   o-koop
      shaman   house   make-pl.Action   1s-Aux.moving.pres
      'I am building the shaman's house'/I am doing the building of the shaman's house'

As is the case with intransitive verb stems, even though the person prefixes mark

the auxiliary argument, a pronoun may also optionally follow the auxiliary, right

dislocation at the end of the clause, as shown in (72) below.

72. a. tiero mot-kwa   o-koop   ayɛ̃=mo   e-koop   ɛ̃t
      chicha make-pl.act 1s-aux.mov.pres where=Dat 2s-aux.mov.pres you
      'I am making *chicha*. What is your whereabouts?'

Examples of the full paradigm of personal inflection with auxiliary verb stems are set out in (73) and (74) below. Reference to the positional posture of the clause's subject is partially neutralized in the plural. Thus, from the nine auxiliary stems, only the stem *–tat* 'standing' occurs with both singular and plural person prefixes. Sentences with any of the other stems were all judged ungrammatical and were not found in texts either. In clauses that have an auxiliary and plural subject, the auxiliary stem will be *–it* 'aux+pl' unspecified as for the posture of the clause's subject. Note that in example (73h) the use of the plural auxiliary stem *–it* forces an interpretation of plural subject, even though the prefix crossreferencing the subject in the lexical verb is the singular form ot the coreferential prefix /se-/.

73. Pronominal inflection with auxiliary stems and one-argument lexical verb:
a. o-er-a   o-toop
    1s-sleep-Them 1s-aux.lying.pres
    'I am sleeping'

b. e-er-a   e-toop
    2s-sleep-Them 2s-aux.lying.pres
    'You are sleeping (?)'

c. se-er-a   i-toop
    3c-sleep-Them 3s-aux.lying.pres
    'He/she/it is sleeping'

d. ki-er-a   ki-it[16]
    1pin-sleep-Them 1pin-aux.pl
    'We (in.) are sleeping'

e. ose-er-a   ose-it
    1pex-sleep-Them 1pex-aux.pl
    'We (ex.) are sleeping'

---

16. All the plural forms with the auxiliary stem –top were judged ungrammatical. The auxiliary stem for plural subjects is used in this case.

f. eyar-er-a   eyar-it
    2pl-sleep-Them   2p-aux.pl
    'You (pl.) are sleeping'

g. seteyar-er-a   i-it
    3plc-sleep-Them   3s-aux.pl
    'They are sleeping'

h. se-er-a   i-it
    3c-sleep-Them 3s-aux.pl
    'They are sleeping'

74. Pronominal inflection with auxiliary stems and two-arguments lexical verb
a. tïero   ma   o-koop
    chicha make   1s-aux.mov.n-pst
    'I am making *chicha*'

b. tïero   ma   e-koop
    chicha make   2s-aux.mov.pres
    'You are making *chicha*'

c. tïero   ma   i-koop
    chicha make   3s-aux.mov.pres
    'He/she is making *chicha*'

d. tïero   ma   ki-it
    chicha make   1pin-aux.pl
    'We (in.) are making *chicha*'

e. tïero   ma   ose-it
    chicha make   1pex-aux.pl
    'We (ex.) are making *chicha*'

f. tïero ma eyar-it
    chicha make 2p-aux.pl
    'You (pl.) are making *chicha*'

g. tïero   ma   i-it
    chicha make   3s-aux.pl
    'They are making *chicha*'

In addition to the auxiliary construction shown in (73-74) in which the auxiliary stem inflects for person and number, there is also the type 2 auxiliary construction with the particle *naat* before an inflectionless auxiliary stem (cf. section 2.2.6). Type 2 auxiliary constructions have the clause subject overtly marked by a noun or pronoun after the auxiliary, as shown in (75). Third person singular may be zero zero.

75. Pronominal marking with type 2 auxiliary construction

a. o-er-a   *naat* top   õt
   1s-sleep-Them Aux.lying.pres I
   'I am sleeping'

b. e-er-a   *naat* top   ēt
   2s-sleep-Them Aux.lying.pres you
   'Are you sleeping?'/ 'you are sleeping'

c. se-epirear-a *naat* kop
   3c-play-Them Aux.moving.pres
   'He is playing'

d. tiero   ma *naat* kob-iat   kie
   chicha make Aux.moving.pres-col we(inc)
   'We are making beer'

e. ose-epirear-a *naat* kop   ose
   1pex-play-Them aux.moving.pres we(ex)
   'We are playing'

f. eti niŋa *naat* ooʔoe ebõ eyat
   basket weave Aux.sitting.pl really you
   'You are basket weavers'/ 'you are weaving baskets'

g. teyar-er-a *naat* tob-iat   (teyat)
   3p-sleep-Them Aux.lying-col they
   'They are sleeping'

h. se-er-a *naat* tob-iat   (teyat)
   3c-sleep-Them Aux.lying-col they
   'They are sleeping'

i. teyar-er-a *naar*-i
3p-sleep-Them Aux.pl
'They are sleeping'

j. se-er-a *naar*-i
3c-sleep-Them Aux.pl
'They are sleeping'

2.3.3 OTHER INFLECTIONAL AFFIXES

The personal pronominal markers presented above are the only inflectional

prefixes in Mekens. All other inflectional markers in this language are suffixes. Some of

the inflectional suffixes occur only with verbs. These include the theme vowel /-a/, the

past suffix /-t/, the simultaneous /-a/, the resumptive /-ra/, and the negation /-bõ/. Others

are cross-categorial in the sense that they occur with more than one lexical class, just

like the personal affixes. The negation suffix /-ap/ and its allomorph /-p/, for instance,

occur with nouns, adjectives, and lexical and auxiliary verbs. In addition to these, the

other inflectional morphemes are the collective /-iat/, and the homophone remote past

suffix /-iat/. In this section I present a description of their functions and distribution.

2.3.3.1 THE THEME VOWEL /-a/

The theme suffix /-a/ occurs with all basic transitive and intransitive verb roots.

This suffix functions as a stem formative in that it prepares the verbal root to receive

other inflectional affixes or to occur as a fully inflected stem in itself. The term 'basic'

is used here to refer to those verb roots that start off in the lexicon as transitive or

intransitive verb roots, as opposed to those that start off as uninflectible verbs. Further

details on that distinction were given in section 2.2.5 above.

The theme suffix is mainly employed in matrix clauses in declarative,

imperative, and interrogative sentences. The only other use of this suffix is in temporal

clauses. It does not occur in any of the other types of embedded clauses in the

language[17]. Sentences (76a-d) illustrate the use of this suffix. When the verb root ends in

/a/, the final root vowel tends to fuse with the theme vowel suffix /-a/.

76. a. pera   mi-a̱   kot   (õt)
      macaw kill-THEM im.fut   I
      'I will kill a macaw'

   b. o-kwe-a̱=õt   kɨpkɨba=bõ
      1s-climb-THEM=I tree=dat
      'I climbed on the tree'

   c. i-so-a̱=õt   pe=kwe   e-i-mi
      OM-see-THEM=I   Obl=animal 2s-OM-kill
      'I saw the game animal that you killed'

   d. pera   tẽet mi-a̱=õt   otat   ar-a̱   o-ko-a
      macaw only kill-THEM =I   fire.wood get-THEM 1s-aux.moving-Sim
      'I killed a macaw when I was getting fire wood'

Besides its use in declarative clauses, this theme suffix is also used in imperative

affirmative clauses, as shown in (77a-b).

77. a. e-aso-a
      2s-bathe-THEM
      'Bathe!'

   b. i-so-a
      OM-see-THEM
      'look!'

As may be noted in the preceding examples, while future tense requires an overt

marking, past tense does not. In the same way that plurality is optionally marked in the

nouns, being defined by context most of the time, past tense may or may not be overtly

---

17.   Despite the identical form, the theme suffix of Mekens is distinct from the suffix /-a/ found in
other Tupian languages marking a dependent, not fully inflected form of the verb. The theme suffix /–a/ in
Mekens occurs with independent fully inflected main verbs.

marked in the verb. Note, for instance, that sentence (78a), repeated from (76b), and

sentence (78b) below have the same meaning, the only difference between them is that

the latter is overtly marked for past tense, while the former is not.

78. a. o-kwe-a=õt   kɨpkɨba=bõ
     1s-climb-THEM=I tree=dat
     'I climbed on the tree'

  b. o-kwe-a-r=õt   kɨpkɨba=bõ
     1s-climb-THEM-PAST=I   tree=dat
     'I climbed on the tree'

2.3.3.2   SIMULTANEOUS /-a/

The simultaneous (SIM) suffix is a portmanteau affix employed with auxiliary

stems in the past progressive. In addition to marking the auxiliary as being in the past, it

also indicates that during the realization of the state of things described by the predicate

of the auxiliary clause another event has taken place, as seen in (79a-b). Thus, the past

progressive clause is generally associated with another clause with identical time of

reference. Note that the presence of an explicit temporal marker linking the events in the

two clauses is not obligatory; the simultaneity of the events is given by the use of the

simultaneous marker on the auxiliary verb. Despite the similarity in form with the theme

suffix (cf. section 2.3.3.1 above), the simultaneous suffix is functionally distinct.

79. a. so=bõ   o-erea-ra   o-ko-a   aabese
     hill=Dat   1s-climb-Res 1s-Aux.mov-Sim when/if

     ameko pi–kwak   kwakso-a=õt
     aguar inside-sound listen-Them=I
     'When I was climbing the hill, I heard the growl of a jaguar'

  b. o-ekwe-a   o-ko-a   isɨɨ o-so-a   se-kwar-a
     1s-run-Them 1s-Aux.mov-Sim deer 1s-see-Them 3c-leave-Them
     'When I was running, the deer saw me and ran away'

2.3.3.3   PAST /-t/ ~ /-r/

The past (PST) suffix is employed with transitive and intransitive verb stems, exclusively in matrix clauses. However, as has been already mentioned, its use is not strictly necessary in all examples of past tense clauses. A past time reference may be inferred from the context or may be given by other words in the clause, such as time adverbs, for instance.

The two allomorphs of the past suffix are phonologically conditioned: /-t/ is realized as /-r/ when followed by a vowel in the same phonological word, as seen in (80a-b) below.

80. a. o-kwe-a-r=õt   kɨpkɨba=bõ
         1s-climb-THEM-PAST=I   tree=dat
         'I climbed on the tree'

   b. i-so-a-t   sete
        3s-see- THEM-PAST   he/she/it
        'He/she/it saw him/her/it'

2.3.3.4 RESUMPTIVE /-ra/

The resumptive suffix /-ra/ attaches to lexical verb stems, adding to their meaning the information that the event being described either (i.) has taken place before (81a), (ii.) is done in a repetitive manner (82b), (iii.) brings to being a state of affairs previously found (81c), or (iv.) is something that occurs habitually (81d-e).

81. a. kaar-ẽp   sete   etaop   paya-ra
        then-really   he/she frust   take.out.the.grass-Res
        'Then he started to clear the garden again' (Txt)

   b. sik ar-a-ra   komaaka   se-ko-a   pɨrõt
        sap get-Them-Res smoke   3c-be.moving-Sim   finish
        'Then we went to get the rubber tree sap, he smoked (it) until he finished'. (Txt)

c. asoab=eri õt o-ib-<u>ra</u>
rain=Ablat I 1s-return-Res
'Because of the rain, I came back'

d. o-aso-a-<u>ra</u>   kot
1s-bathe-Them-Res   Im.Fut
'I will bathe (again)'

e. se-aso-a-<u>ra</u>
3c-bathe-Them-Res
'He bathed'

2.3.3.5 NEGATION /-ap/ and /-bõ/

There are two negative suffixes in Mekens, /-ap/ and /-bõ/. Although they are

functionally similar, they are formally and distributionally different. Both suffixes have

two allomorphs each, but they differ on the criterion for allomorph assignment. The

former suffix is realized as /-ap/ when it is word final, and as /-apo/ when followed by a

morpheme in the same phonological word. Since this suffix is ordered after all other

suffixes, this rule amounts to saying that the suffix will be /-apo/ when it is followed by

a clitic in the same word, as is the case with first and second person pronouns. This

could be formally represented by the following rule.

82. the negative suffix /-apo/ → /-ap/ ___ #

The /-ap/ suffix has a broader distribution in the language. It can occur with

nouns (83a), adjectives (83b), repeated from (16a), and lexical and auxiliary verbs (83c-

e).

83. a. e-top   kwamoa-<u>ap</u>
2s-father   shaman-Neg
'Your father is not a shaman'

b. ameko   sĩir–ãp
dog/jaguar small-Neg
"Big dog" [Lit. 'A dog not small']

.

c. ameko   mi-a-r-ap   pedro
   dog/jaguar kill-Them-Past-Neg Pedro
   'Pedro did not kill the jaguar'

d. o-kwar-a-apo=õt   kɨr̃ep
   1s-walk.in.the.bush-Them-Neg=I today/now
   'I did not go hunting today'

e. o-kwar-a   naat kob-apo=õt
   1s- walk.in.the.bush-Them ?   Aux.mov-Neg=I
   'I am not hunting' (given as an answer to a question)

The second suffix /-bõ/ has a more restricted distribution. It was only found with lexical verbs in the imperative negative mode (84a-b), and in the derivation of the lexicalized noun *arobõ* 'nothing' from its affirmative counterpart *arop* 'something', as seen in (84c). It also has two allomorphs /-bõ/ and /-õ/, and they are defined according to the phonological form of the root to which they attach: /-bõ/ occurs after vowel-final roots, and /-õ/ after consonant-final roots.

84. a. s-ese-pɨbor-ǫ̃=ẽt   o-kip
       3s-Com-arive-Neg=you   1s-young.brother
       'Do not get there carrying these things, my brother' (Txt)

    b. i-ka   sẽraa kwirik ke pa ẽt   s-õ-sob-ǫ̃   ẽt   ki-tob=õ
       OM-ingest all   clean   that Fut you OM-Caus-see-Neg you 1pin-father=Dat
       'You should eat it all, do not show it to our father' (Txt)

    c. arob=ǫ̃   ki-iko   ke   te   te ose
       thing-Neg 1pin-food that   truly foc we
       'There is no food, that's how we are'(lit. Nothing is our food, we are like that)
       (Txt)

Another difference between the two suffixes shows up in the way they attach to lexical verbs. Whereas *-ap/* attaches to a verb stem, that is, it follows the Theme vowel

/-a/ and the Past tense marker when this is present, /-bõ/ attaches directly to the verb

root. Sentences (85a-b) below show that distinction.

85. a. se-aso-a-r-ap
    3c-bath-Them-Pst-Neg
    'He did not bathe'

    b. e-aso-bõ   ẽt
       2s-bath-Neg   You
       'Do not bathe'

2.3.3.6   COLLECTIVE /-iat/

This morpheme has two functions in the language. It can either be used as a

plural marker contrasting one entity to more than one, such as in (86a-b), or it can be

used as a collective marker, defining a group of certain entities (86c). This second use is

the more widespread in the language, since the formal category of number (plural vs.

singular) is not a general distinction in Mekens. Similarly to the category of past tense in

the lexical verbs, plurality in the noun is also optional in the sense it may be left out in

so far as it can be recovered from other elements of the clause, it was already marked in

previous clauses of the text, or it is not considered directly relevant to what is being

said.

86. a. korakora aso
       chicken   big
       'a big chicken'

    b. korakora aso-iat
       chicken big-Col
       'big chickens'

    c. arop cacete sayẽ   arop boni   taabiat   iporẽ kɨga   kaat
       Dem Cacete that,there Dem Boni   relative-Col   live   recent.past QUOT
       'There, in that Cacete where Boni's family is said to have lived (until) sometime
       ago.' (Txt)

Another particularity of the collective morpheme is that it is freer than the

affixes in the language, in the sense that it can have scope over more than a single word.

It is, thus, more appropriate to analyze it as a Noun Phrase modifier, like the

postposition clitics in the language. A good example of this morpheme taking scope

over the whole noun phrase is given in (87) below. There its first occurrence refers to

the group of non-indian young boys, as opposed to young boys, and its second

occurrence, at the end of the sentence, refers to the non-indian black guys, not just to

black (guys).

87. a. arẽp pagop-taip [kwerep   pagop-taib=iat]   se-poroka t   õet   te
       then youn-male   non.indian young-male=Col   3c-die.Them   guess foc

    s-ike   arop   firmino piik [kwerep   piig=iat]
    3s-older.brother   that   Firmino black non.indian black=Col
    'Then, he was a young guy, one of the non-indian young guys, I don't know
    whether he died or not, his brother, Firmino, one of those non-indian black
    guys.' (Txt)

2.4   WORD FORMATION PROCESSES

The most productive process of word formation employed in Mekens is

affixation. As it is typical among Tupian languages, we find derivative morphemes,

such as causative and verbalizers, that are applied to specific word categories and form

new lexical items. Other processes of word formation found in the language are

reduplication and compounding, including cases of noun incorporation. Nonetheless,

the bulk of derived words are the result of affixation. Neither reduplication nor

compounding have a central role in the language. The major derivational affixes are

described in section 2.4.1, section 2.4.2 shows some examples of compounds, and

section 2.4.3 presents the reduplication processes.

2.4.1 AFFIXATION

There are seven derivational affixes operating in Mekens. Two are the valence changing prefixes /mo-/ simple causative (CAU), and /sese-/ comitative causative (COM) that occur with intransitive verbs. In addition to these, there are five word class changing morphemes: /-ka/ and /-kwa/ transitivizer (TR), /-ap/ and /-pit/ deverbals (DEV), and /e-/ intransitivizers (Intrvzr). In the following subsections I provide their description and examples of their occurrence.

2.4.1.1 SIMPLE CAUSATIVE – /mo-/ ~ /õ-/

The simple causative prefix occurs with intransitive verbs. The two allomorphs of the this morpheme are defined according to the phonological form of the verb stem to which they attach: /mo-/ occurs with vowel initial stems and /õ-/ with consonant initial stems. When the verb stem starts on an unstressed vowel, the vowel of the prefix fuses with the initial vowel of the verb. In examples (88a-c) below the causative morpheme is added to a vowel initial verb stem.

Semantically, the use of the causative morpheme means that a participant on the discourse acts upon another participant causing the latter to perform the action/event described by the predicate. In the structural level, it adds another argument to the verb, thus deriving transitive from intransitive verbs. The new argument added by the causative morpheme is the CAUSER of the derived transitive verb, and is realized as A (the subject of transitives) in the output verb.

88. a. se-er-a-t
        3c-sleep-THEM-past
        'He slept'

b. kirit mo-er-a-t
child CAU-sleep-THEM-past
'He made the child sleep'

c. i-mo-er-a-t
3s- CAU-sleep-THEM-past
'He made him sleep'

Evidence for the formal transitivity of the causative verb comes from its

argument marking. It was shown in section 2.1 above that the bound prefixes mark the

O argument of transitive verbs, with the third person non-coreferential prefix i- marking

non-reflexive third person singular objects. Furthermore, due to the person hierarchy

found on transitive constructions, a zero subject marking on transitive verbs means third

person singular subject. As can be observed in the examples in (88a-b) above and (89b)

below, the causative verb construction follows exactly this pattern. The added argument

is marked as A, and the 'old' subject of the input verb is realized as the object of the

derived causative verb. Thus, it falls under the class of transitive verbs in Mekens.

89. a. se-kwe-a-t
3c-climb-THEM-past
'He climbed'

b. s-õ-kwe-a-t
3s-CAU-climb-THEM-past
'He made him climb'

It is worth noting that there are a few lexicalized occurrences of the simple

causative (CAU) morpheme with transitive verb stems. These are all cases of verbs of

perception with inverse transitive valence, a common crosslinguistic feature. In these

instances, a third argument is added to the verb. That new argument added by the

causative is the Causer, and it is realized as A too. Since the 'old' object argument

remains the object of the causative verb, the 'old' subject is now realized as an oblique

in the causative The examples in (90a-b) show the use of the causative morpheme with transitive verbs as input. Note that the derived meaning of the verb is not 'to cause me to see', but rather 'to cause me to be seen'/'to show me'. (90c), repeated from (84b) is a text example showing the same lexical verb.

90. a. o-so-a-t
         1s-see-THEM-past
         'He saw me'

    b. o-õ-so-a-t
        1s-CAU-see-THEM-past
        'He showed me (to someone)' (Txt)

    c. s-õ-sob-o̲   ẽt   ki-tob=õ
        OM-Caus-see-Neg you   1pin-father=Dat
        'You should eat it all, do not show it to our father' (Txt)

2.4.1.2 COMITATIVE-CAUSATIVE – /ese-/

Similarly to the simple causative morpheme, the causative comitative (COM) also derives transitive from intransitive verb stems by adding one argument to the verb's valence. Semantically, it differs from the simple causative in that the first participant (causer) not only causes the second participant to perform the notion described by the predicate, but it also performs it at the same time as the causee. For instance, someone bringing something to an X location, it is both causing the thing to come, and is also coming.

91. a. s-ese-pibor-a-ra   õt
         3s-COM-arrive-THEM-Resum I
         'I arrived again bringing it'/ 'I arrived again with it' (Txt)

    b. pagop-taip   ese-kwar-a-t   i-er-a   i-to-a
        young-male   COM-leave-THEM-past 3s-sleep-THEM 3s-aux.lying-SIM
        'It carried the young boy away when he was sleeping' (lit. 'It left with the young boy, when he was sleeping') (Txt)

It is worth of note here that the causative comitative morpheme is distinct from simple comitative, referred here as associative (ASSOC) for ease of exposition. Whereas the former is a derivational affix that applies to verb stems, the latter is a postpositional clitic that takes a noun phrase as its object. The associative or simple comitative was described in section 2.2.7 on postpositions, but we will provide an example here (92) just to show the distinction between it and the causative comitative.

92. a. severino se-taib=esẽp   se-i-a
         severino 3c-male.son=ASSOC   3c-come-THEM
         'Severino came along with his son'

2.4.1.3 TRANSITIVIZERS – /-ka/ and /-kwa/

The transitivizer (TR) suffix /-ka/ applies to adjective and uninflectible verb stems, and derives transitive verb stems. The semantics of the derived transitive verbs is defined according to their input category. When added to an X adjective stem, the derived meaning is 'make Y have the property of X', where Y corresponds to the O argument of the derived transitive. The following four sentences illustrate the use of the transitivizer suffix with adjective stems (93a-d).

93. a. kobo perop
         beans cooked
         'cooked beans'

    b. kobo   perop-ka-t
         beans   cooked-TR –past
         'he/she cooked the beans'

    c. s-akop
         3-hot
         'hot/someone or something hot'

d. ŋwãe akop-ka õt
pan hot-TR I
'I heated the pan'

On the other hand, when used with uninflectible verbs, the transitivizer suffix

does not add to its semantic value. In this case, it functions as a (sub)category changing

morpheme, which gives as lexical output a formal transitive verb stem. The derived

transitive stem may then inflect in the same way basic transitive verbs do. They require

an OM and tense/aspect inflection. That second use of the transitivizer suffix is shown

in (94a-f) below. Note that the uninflectible verbs are normally used when the object

and/or subject is unspecified or have its reference already clear from context.

94. a. pɨp
throw
'he/she/it threw (it)'

b. *i-pɨp
OM-throw
('he/she/it threw it')

c. i-pɨp-ka-t
OM-throw-TR-past
'He/she/it throw it'

d. koboy soboy
dive splash
'(he) dove and splashed'

e. i-soboy-ka
OM-splash-TR
'splash it'

f. ɨkɨ soboy-ka-t i-piso=bõ
water splash-TR-past 3s-foot=DAT
'He/she/it splashed water with his/her/its feet'

The second transitivizer suffix /-kwa/ is very similar to /-ka/ in that it also derives transitive verb stems from adjective and uninflectible verb stems. The semantic value of the new formed transitive verb stem is similar to the transitive verb stems formed with /-ka/, except that the /-kwa/ stems have a plurality of action feature added to them which is not necessarily found on /-ka/ stems. /-kwa/ also derives transitive verb stems from nouns.

95. a. ŋwãẽ   pɨɨk
        pan   black
        'black pan'

    b. o-pɨɨk-kwa-ra
        1s-black-TR+pl-Rep
        ' (He/she) completely painted me black again'

    c. kɨrɨy
        grab/take
        '(he/she) took it'

    d. *i-kɨrɨy

    e. i-kɨrɨy-kwa
        OM-grab/take-TR+pl
        'Take it all'

2.4.1.4   NOMINALIZER /-ap/ ~ /-p/

Most transitive and intransitive verb stems may be nominalized by means of the deverbal suffix /-ap/. The derived nouns are semantically instruments when their lexical input is a transitive verb, and locationals when their input is an intransitive verb, as seen in (96a-d0 below.

96. a. otat   poka-ap
        fire   burn/light-Nmlzr
        'match or lighter' (lit. 'an instrument that lights the fire')

b. mi-ap
kill- Nmlzr
'arrow or gun' (lit. 'an instrument that kills')

c. o-to-ap
1s-lie- Nmlzr
'My hammock'   (lit. my place to sleep or the place where I sleep)

d. iki ekwe-ap
water run- Nmlzr
'River rapids' (lit. 'place where the water flows/runs (more intensively)')

2.4.1.5   ADJECTIVIZER /-pit/

Another way of deriving deverbal stems in Mekens is by means of the suffix /–pit/. This suffix attaches to all three types of lexical verbs (transitive, intransitive, and uninflectible), and gives as output an adjective stem. Semantically, these deverbal adjective stems correspond to the resultative state of their input verb stem. Thus, for instance, from the intransitive verb 'to grow up', we get the deverbal adjective 'grown up', and from the transitive verb 'to see', we get the deverbal adjective 'seen'. The deverbal adjective stems formed with /-pit/ parallel the structural behavior of the lexical adjective stems in the language. In (97a) the deverbal adjective derived with /-pit/ modifies the complex noun *otat-pokaap* 'lighter; fire lighter', and in (97b) the deverbal adjective modifies the prefix /s-/, forming an NP with it (cf. section 3.2 below).

97. a. s-e-pagoptaip-kwa-pit   so-a ke
3s-Intrvzr-young.boy-TR+pl-Adjzr   see-Them Desid.1/2
'I want to see him grow up'(lit. I want to see him a grown up boy) (Txt)

b. o-ike   otat   poka-ap   oetobeka-pit   ar-a-t
1s-brother fire   burn-Nmlzr   lose-Adjzr   get-them-past
'My brother found the lost lighter'

2.4.1.6 INTRANSITIVIZER /e-/

The intransitivizer morpheme /e-/ takes transitive verb stems as input and

derives formally intransitive verb stems, as seen in (98). One piece of evidence for the

formal status of the derived intransitive verb is the possibility of morphological

causativization. It was shown in section (2.4.1.1) above that the causative morpheme

/mo-/ applies to intransitive verb stems to derive a transitive one by adding another

argument to the verb. Sentence (98c-c') shows morphological causativization applied to

an intransitive stem formed with the intransitivizer prefix /e-/.

98. a. apara saro
        banana yellow
        'Ripe banana'

    a'. se-e-saro-ka   te apara
         3c-Intrvzr-yellow-TR foc banana
         'The bananas are getting ripe'

    b. ŋwãyã
        spin_{Vnf}
        'to spin'

    b'. o-anɨp e-ŋwãyã-ka   õt
         1s-head Intrvzr-spin-TR   I
         'My head is spinning'

    c. arẽp naar-iat antonio raimundo   e-tabisarã-kwa
        then ?-RemPast Antonio Raimundo   Intrvzr-chief-TR
        'Then in those old days, Antonio Raimundo became the chief'(Txt)

    c'. ose   i-mo-e-tabisarã-kwa
         1pexc 3-Caus-Intrvzr-chief-TR
         'We made him chief.' (Txt)

All the examples in (98) above show words with multiple levels of word

structure. The word *i-mo-e-tabisarã-kwa* 'make him chief' contains several layers,

which reflect the stages of the complex process of derivation that apply in forming the

word. Figure 1, based on the structure of English words given in O'Grady, Dobrovolsky,

and Aronoff (1997:f30), show the multiple levels of internal structure that are present in

imoetabisarã.

```
              Vtr
              / \
             /  VtsSt
            /   / \
           /   /  VinSt
          /   /   / \
         /   /   /  VtsSt
        /   /   /   / \
       Af  Af  Af   N   Af
       i-mo-e-tabisarã-kwa
```
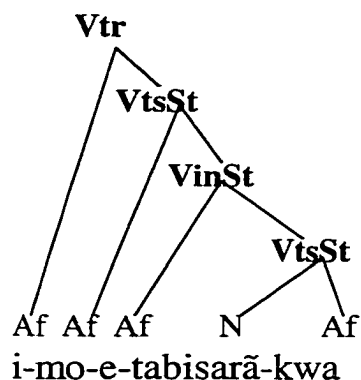
Figure 1. Word with multiple layers of internal structure.

2.4.2 REDUPLICATION

Reduplication is a somewhat productive process in the category of verbs.

Potentially, any verb stem can be reduplicated to indicate iterative meaning (99a),

manner in which the event is performed (99b), and simple repetition (99c). The full verb

stem reduplicates in Mekens. It should be noted that the verb stems can actually be

tripled under reduplication, as seen in (99a-b).

99. a. sigi sigi sigi   te pe=kimakãy
        raise-redup   foc Obl=soil
        'He started to raise up soil dust' (Txt)

    b. poret   kokoko   te pe=o-iko
        then;now eat+redup foc Obl=1s-food
        'Then I ate quickly'(Txt)

c. ia   sɨk sɨk   pay
    lagoon stick-redup leave (tr)
    'It stuck (the sticks) in the lagoon, and left (them) there' (Txt)

There is one clear example of reduplication outside the verb category. It is a derived noun formed by reduplication of the adjective stem *–paak* 'white'. *paak-paak* 'heron' names a bird of the Ornithorhynchus species that has white plumage. Hence, it resembles the iterative meaning found in verb reduplication.

2.4.3   COMPOUNDING

Compounding is traditionally defined as "consisting in the combination of (two or more) existing words into a new word" (Anderson 1994:292). Complex or composite words in Mekens may involve the combination of up to three lexical stems. The complex words formed in such a way function as non-complex lexical items of the same lexical category. Thus, for instance, a complex noun shares all the morphological and syntactic properties of a non-complex noun. The following combination of words were found in the formation of complex nouns in Mekens: N+N, N+ N+Adj, N+Adj+Adj, N+N+Part, Adj+N.

Although it is not always easy to distinguish between a complex word and a phrase, some properties are specific of complex words. Complex words have idiosyncratic meaning, that is, the lexical meaning of a complex word can not always be derived from the meaning of its parts, as in (100a-c). Also the order of constituents inside a complex word may be different from the regular order inside a phrase. The complex noun in (100d) is formed by an Adjective followed by a Noun, while in a noun phrase the adjective always follows the noun it modifies. Contrary to (100d), the

example in (100e) is an NP, thus the adjective *pagop* 'new' follows the head now *otek* 'my house'.

100. a. kwato-pe-tẽẽt
          alligator-skin-only
          'river dolphin'(Iniidae sp.)

      b. sakɨrab-eʔɨt-poot
          black.monkey-belly-old
          'woolly monkey' (genus Lagothrix)

      c. kɨmakãy-yẽẽt
          soil ashes
          'dust'

      d. pagop-taɨp   sĩɨt   na   o-koa
          young-son   small   Verblzr 1s-Aux.mov
          'When I was a little boy/young man' (Txt)

      e. o-tek   pagop
          1s-house   new
          'My new house'

CHAPTER III

SYNTAX – PHRASAL CATEGORIES

3.0   INTRODUCTION

This chapter starts the investigation of the syntax of Mekens. Syntax here is

understood, following McCawley (1988:2), as "the combination of [principles] that

determine what combinations of words into larger units, especially into sentences, the

language allows." The chapter is primarily devoted to determining the principles that

govern the concatenation of the various strings of Mekens words into larger syntactic

units, the phrasal categories. Section 3.1 presents the constituency tests that were used

in determining whether a sequence of words in Mekens constitutes a phrase. The

following sections describe each of the phrasal categories defined for the language:

noun phrase (3.2), verb phrase (3.3), adpositional phrase (3.4), and adverb phrase (3.5).

3.1   PHRASAL CATEGORIES

It is generally assumed that sentences are not just formed by strings of words,

but that these words, the sentence minimal elements, are organized into larger units or

phrases (cf. Borsley 1991, Lyons 1981, McCawley 1988, etc). In this chapter the

syntactic structure of Mekens phrases, and clauses will be described in detail, taking

into consideration constituency relations among words; that is, how they relate and are

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grouped into larger units, linear order relations between the units, and the categories

to which the units belong. In addition to these structural properties, notions of

argument-structure relations, grammatical relations, and anaphoric relations will also be

taken into account.

Some tests have been widely used cross-linguistically and have proved useful in

determining the constituency structures of phrasal categories. Four of those tests were

found especially relevant in the study of Mekens, the movement test, the replacement

test, the separability test, and the coordination test. The definitions of these four tests

will be repeated here.

3.1.1 TESTS FORS CONSTITUENCY OF PHRASAL CATEGORIES

Movement: 'A sequence of categories is a constituent if it can appear in some other

[syntactic] position in a related sentence' (Borsley 1991:23). The same test is stated by

Fabb (1994:142) in the following manner 'if a sequence of words can be moved as a

group, they may form a phrase.'

Replacement: 'If a sequence of words can be replaced by a single word, they may form

a phrase' (Fabb 1994:142).

Separability: if a sequence of words is not separable (or if it is separable only with a

dramatic change in meaning), they may form a phrase (Meira 1999:495).

Coordination: a sequence of categories is a constituent if it can be coordinated with

another similar sequence (Borsley 1991:26). This test is based on the assumption that

only constituents of the same category can be coordinated (Borsley 1991:26). Though

there have been arguments that different categories can be coordinated (cf. Radford

1988), but see McCawley (1988) for arguments that the apparent cases of coordination of different categories may involve some other phenomena.

3.2 NOUN PHRASE

According to the functions they assume, there are two types of NPs: argument NPs and predicate NPs. Argument NPs may be defined, using McCawley's semantic definition of NP (McCawley 1988:187), as "[those] constituents that correspond to logical arguments of predicates." Hence, argument NPs in Mekens are all those units that are not affixes and can occur as argument of transitive and intransitive verbs, and as argument of postpositions. Predicate NPs are those expressions that have the form of expressions that occur as argument of predicates, but which occur in configurations in which they are themselves the predicates, as is the case of the second NP in a Mekens nominal predicate clause (cf. section 4.3.1).

Using this semantic definition of NPs allows us to extend the category to include expressions that do not have a noun as head, but which may function as arguments of predicates, such as demonstratives, pronouns, and the pref+adjective constructions, while excluding things such as adverbs and particles. Given the above definition, we can now say that Noun phrases in Mekens are units that occur in any of the following configurations:

[s __ VP]
[vp __ V]
[pp __ P]
[s __ NP]

In addition to the semantic criterion, and the constituency tests enumerated above, there are two other properties that help identify NPs in Mekens. One is that NPs

and only NPs can be verbalized using the particle *na*. The other is the scope of

certain particles, e.g., the restrictive particle *tẽẽt* 'only'. This particle is a constituent

modifier; that is, it takes a constituent to its left as focus. Sentences (1a-b) below show

the use of *tẽẽt*, and serve also as examples of the replacement test[1] for NPs. Note that in

(1a) the focus of *tẽẽt* is a noun (minimal NP), while in (1b) it is the complex possessive

NP. (1b) shows that the complex possessive construction can occur in the same place

where a noun can occur. The NPs are underlined.

1. a. <u>tiit</u>   tẽẽt sigika   se-ko-a
        bran   only throw.down   3c-aux.mov-Sim
        'He kept throwing only the bran' (Txt)

    b. <u>i-kɨp   ããpi   sĩit</u>   tẽẽt sete   ese-ib-ra   neara
        3-leg   tip   small   only he/she   Com-come-res again
        'Only the little tip of the leg remained, and he returned with it again' (Txt)

3.2.1 NP CONSTITUENTS

A noun phrase in Mekens may be headed by a noun, a pronoun, or

demonstrative pronoun as its head. Thus, a minimal noun phrase can be composed of

just a noun (2a), a pronoun (2b) or a demonstrative pronoun (2c). It is also the case that

a personal prefix may occur in place of a head noun in a construction composed of a

prefix and an adjective stem, as we will see in the discussion involving examples in (9)

below. Nouns can be optionally preceded by a demonstrative modifier and/or followed

by one or more adjective stems. Demonstrative pronouns may also be followed by

adjective stems, but personal pronouns may not be. In NPs headed by nouns and

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1. A caveat is in order here. The use of terms like 'replacement', 'movement', and the like in this work has a merely expository purpose. They are used here simply in order to describe the equivalence between the examples with generally understood terminology.

pronouns, but not those headed by demonstrative pronouns, the collective enclitic

{iat}may also occur. Any NP type may occur with the emphatic, the evidential, or the

similative particles. Hence, the following constituents may occur inside an NP in

Mekens:

- demonstrative (modifier and pronoun)
- noun
- pronoun
- adjective*
- collective clitic {iat}
- the particles (ebõ, eba, tẽẽt, and neŋat)

2. a. <u>popoba</u> se-erek-kwa   naat yẽ
      owl   3c-speak-pl.action   ?   Aux.be.seated
      'The owl was singing' (Txt)

   b. poret <u>sete</u>   kerep kẽra   sete
      then   he/she enter   Nassert   he/she
      'Then he entered, it seems' (Txt)

   c. sexta kẽra   <u>teyẽ</u>   eke=bõ   ka-ra
      Friday Nassert dem.seated   here=Dat   come/go-res
      'On Friday this one will return here, it is said' (Txt)

Example (2c) above shows that demonstratives can function as nominals in

Mekens. Hence, they can be the nucleus and only constituent of a minimal NP.

Demonstratives also function as noun determiners (cf. section 2.2.4 above). An NP can

be composed of a demonstrative determiner, a noun, and one or more adjective stems,

in that order. Example (3a-c) show that a phrase composed of a demonstrative, a noun,

and an adjective stem is consistent with both the replacement and the movement test for

constituency. In (3a), the phrase *yẽ kwaʔe pagop* 'that new pan' functions as the O

argument of the transitive verb *sobekat* 'desire'. In (3b) that phrase is replaced by a

noun, and in (3c) a similar phrase occurs in a different position in the clause. The

relevant NP in each clause is italicized.

3. a. *yẽ*   *kwaʔẽ pagop* sobekar-a   õt
     dem.seated   pan   new   desire-Them   I
     'I want that new pan'

   b. *o-iko*   sobekar-a   õt
      1s-food   desire-Them   I
      'I want to eat' (Lit. 'I want my food')

   c. sobekar-a õt *yẽ*   *ŋwãẽ same*
      desire-Them I dem.seated   pan   beautiful
      'I want that beautiful pan'

An NP can also be formed by a demonstrative pronoun and an adjective stem, as

in *teyẽ perek* 'this tall/long (one)'. Although this is a well-formed construction, it is not

very frequent in the language, except in short answers to questions like 'who is X'. It

can, however, occur in any position where an NP occurs. As shown in (4a), it can be the

argument of predicates.

4. a. teoop   pɨɨk se-pakwa naat top
     Dem.lying.down   black 3c-tumble   ?   Aux.lying.down
     'That black one is very drunk' (Lit. 'That black one is tumbling')

Demonstrative pronouns can be the possessor in genitive constructions, in which

case they are followed by the possessed noun stem. Examples (5a-b) repeated from

section 2.2.4 show the contrast between a demonstrative modifier and a demonstrative

pronoun. They can both appear as the first constituent inside an NP, but the former

precedes a noun and functions as its determiner, whereas the latter precedes a noun stem

and functions as its possessor.

5. a. teyẽ   tek
     dem.seated   house
     'this one's house'

b. teke   ek topserap
  dem.default house dirty
  'this dirty house'

Further examples of NPs consisting of nouns modified by adjective stems are given in (6) and (7) below. Examples (6a-c) simply show that it is possible to have more than one adjective stem modifying a noun. We found text examples of three adjective stems modifying a noun (6c). However, examples with more than three adjectives ranged between pretty good and pretty bad if we were to use the McCawley scale (McCawley 1988); that is, even though they were not judged ungrammatical, they were found to be odd by the speakers.

6. a. karo eba same
   bead bright beautiful
   'beautiful and bright beads'

 b. kɨpkɨba aso obaat
   tree big many
   'many large trees'

 c. ōkɨra anɨp kop same   sīit kaat
   bird head red beautiful/good small QUOT
   'That bird with a small beautiful red head' (Tx)

Examples (7a-d) below show that a sequence of noun plus adjective stem passes both the replacement and the movement tests, and qualifies as a noun phrase. The phrase *ek same* 'beautiful house' which is the O argument of the transitive ver *so* 'see' in (7a) can be replaced by a single noun in the same position in a related clause (7b). Sentences (7c-e) further illustrate the replacement test for nouns modified by one or more adjective stems.

7. a. <u>ek   same_{NP}</u>   so-a-r=õt
        house beautiful see-Them-past=I
        'I saw a/the beautiful house'

    b. <u>aose_{NP}</u>   so-a-r=õt   pike i-to-a
        man/person   see-Them-past=I   lying 3s-Aux.lying-Sim
        'I saw a/the man when he was lying there'

    c. <u>o-toap aso no</u>   ãp   i-poot
        1s-hammock big other   rope   3-old
        'The rope of my other large hammock is old'

    d. <u>o-toap   aso</u> ãp   i-toroot
        1s-hammock big rope   3-large
        'The rope of my big hammock is large'

    e. <u>o-toap</u>   ãp   i-toroot
        1s-hammock rope   3-large
        'My hammock's rope is big'

Still other tests serve to identify a sequence of noun plus adjective stem as a noun phrase in Mekens. A phrase consisting of a noun and an adjective stem can be the scope of the verbalizer particle *na*, which only applies to NPs. In (8a) the particle *na* applies to the minimal noun phrase *aose* 'man' giving the phrase 'to be a man'. In (8b) the phrase *pagop-taip sĩĩt* 'little young boy' is the scope of the verbalizer particle. A sequence of noun plus adjective stem can also be the focus of particles that take a phrase as their focus, such as *tẽẽt* 'only' or *ebõ* 'really'. An example with one such focus particles is given in (8c).

8. a. <u>aose</u>   na   eteet eke
        man/person   Verblzr could Dem
        'Ah! If only he were human, that one!'

    b. <u>pagop–taip   sĩĩt</u> na   o-ko-a
        young-boy   small Verblzr 1s-Aux.mov.Sim
        'When I was a little young boy'

c. <u>ameko</u>   <u>poot</u>   ebõ
   dog/jaguar   old   really
   'It's really an old dog'

In the above examples of noun phrases containing adjective stems, the adjective modifies a noun or a demonstrative. Nonetheless, a noun phrase can also be formed of a personal prefix and adjective stem. Adjective stems are grammatically bound forms; they need to be preceded by the nominal they modify. Whenever the modified nominal is not overtly present, in the form of either a noun or a demonstrative, a personal prefix occupies that position. In such cases, the prefix that occurs in place of the head noun is modified by the adjective stem(s) that follow(s) (cf. section 2.2.2 above). An NP formed in that manner behaves like any other NP in the language. It can function as an argument of transitive (9a) or intransitive verbs (9b), and it can occur in predicative adjective clauses as either one of the two NPs that occur in such clauses (9c) repeated from (7d) above[2].

9. a. <u>s-obaat</u>   piriga-r=õt
   3-many   throw.down-past=I
   'I threw down many (things)'

  b. i-perek   se-kwar-a-t
     3-long   3c-leave-Them-past
     'The tall one left'

  c. o-toap   aso   ãp   i-toroot
     1s-hammock big rope 3-large
     'The rope of my large hammock is big'

3.3. VERB PHRASES

Some pieces of evidence for the relevance of a verb phrase constituent as a syntactic unit in Mekens are presented in Galucio (1996b). There are three types of verb

---

2. We were not able to find this type of NP functioning as object of postpositions, but that may be due to limitation of the corpus.

phrases in Mekens, defined according to their internal structure: transitive verb phrases, intransitive verb phrases, and uninflectible verb phrases. Transitive verb phrases consist of a noun phrase or a personal prefix and a transitive verb stem. Intransitive verb phrases consist of a personal prefix and an intransitive verb stem, and uninflectible verb phrases consist of just an uninflectible verb. All three types of verb phrases can be modified by postverbal particles, such as the tense and negation markers. Postverbal particles are VP constituents, as shown in section 3.3.1 below, while postpositional phrases are not.

The most compelling arguments for the existence of a verb phrase in Mekens come from transitive sentences and concern the syntactic behavior of object NP and verb. The impossibility of breaking up a sequence of words with intervening material has been used crosslinguistically as an argument that this sequence constitutes a phrase: the separability test. The separability test is also relevant for the identification of verb phrases in Mekens. The language places two constraints on the relation between the object argument and the transitive verb. The first is that the object should immediately precede the verb, and the second is that any transitive verb should have its object position filled either by a nominal or a personal prefix, but not both. These requirements are always observed in a basic sentence to the extent that nothing may intervene between a transitive verb and its object argument. It can be observed in examples (10a-c) below that the evidential particle *eba*, which is generally freely ordered within a sentence, may not occur between a verb and its object. That same restriction holds for adverbs and postpositional phrases in general (cf. section 2.2.9 above).

10. a. eba   e-iape   seisa-t   õt
        evid   2s-beverage   bring-past   I
        'See, I brought your drink'

   b. e-iape seisa-t õt eba

   c. *e-iape eba   seisa-t õt[3]

Further evidence that the object NP forms a constituent with the transitive verb is found in clauses where it does not occur in its usual position, preceding the verb. The basic order of constituents in Mekens sentences is S(ubject), O(bject), and V(erb), as presented in Galucio (1996b). Hence, when the object does not immediately precede the verb, a prefix occurs to the left of the verb stem occupying the object position (for an analysis of this prefix as a formal object marker, and not a regular person prefix see sections 3.3.3 and 4.4 below). This structural description is met in question-word questions asking about the object, cleft clauses, and other type of clauses that place the focus on the object. Examples are given in (11). In (11a) the constituents occur in their unmarked SOV order, and there is no marking on the verb. (11b), on the other hand, is a question-word question that focuses on the object. Hence, the object does not appear in front of the verb, and the object marker prefix fills in that position. Similarly, in (11c) the unmarked order is found, whereas in (11d), a cleft type clause, the object is focused at the beginning of the clause, and the object marker prefix occurs on the verb.

11. a. ameko   aose   sogo-a-t
        dog/jaguar   man   bite-Them-past
        'The dog bit the man'

   b. arob=ẽp   te ameko   i-sogo
        what=really foc dog/jaguar OM-bite
        'Who did the dog bite?'

---

3. I am fairly sure that it is also possible to have 'e-iape seisat eba õt' but I have not come upon such an example in the data that have been analyzed so far.

c. ãsi   ŋwaẽ õ-a   o-arop na
   mother pan give-Them 1s-thing Verblzr
   'My mother gave a pan to me' (Lit: My mother gave a pan to be my possession)

d. ŋwaẽ te ãsi   i-õ-p   o-arop na
   pan foc mother OM-give-?   1s-thing Verblzr
   'It is a pan that my mother gave to me' (Lit. It is a pan that my mother gave to
   be my possession')

Examples in (12a–b) show that the subject argument of a transitive verb is not

linked to the verb in the same way that the object argument is. There is no special

marking on the verb when it is its subject argument that occurs in focus position.

12. a. ameko   aose sogo-a-t
       dog/jaguar   man bite-Them-past
       'The dog bit the man'

b. ameko   te   te aose sogo-a-t
   dog/jaguar   really foc man bite-Them-past
   'It is really the dog that bit the man'

The object NP plus the transitive verb also passes the movement test for

constituency, as described in section 3.1 above. Given the right context, the object NP

plus the transitive verb may be fronted together to the left of the subject and of the

auxiliary, when present. Example (13b) below shows the transitive verb phrase in initial

position in the sentence, preceding the subject. In (13a) the basic order is found,

whereas in (13b) the verb phrase as a unit is the focus of the sentence, as indicated by

the use of the focus particle *te*. Only constituents can occupy the focus position of a

given sentence in Mekens.

13. a. tabisarã   kɨpe   sĩit õ-a-t   te=bõ
       chief   machete small give-Them-past 3=Dat.
       'The chief gave a knife to him'

In intransitive verb phrases the subject NP does not form a constituent with the verb. The subject of an intransitive verb aligns with the subject of a transitive verb, and occurs outside the verb phrase. The example in (16) below shows that the only argument of an intransitive verb may occur focused at the beginning of the clause without any change on the verb.

16. a. roque te   se–e–pibor–a   ikão
         roque foc 3c–Intrvzr–arrive–them   that.time
         'It was Roque who arrived at that time'

Recall that when the inner argument of a transitive VP is focused, there is an obligatory OM on the verb, but no extra marker appears when the outer argument is focused. Another difference between transitive and intransitive VPs is found in the grammatical status of the personal prefix. Whereas the personal prefix on the transitive verb always functions as the O argument of the verb, the prefix on an intransitive verb refers to the verb's S argument and has a double function. It agrees with the nominal or pronominal argument when there is one, but functions as the actual argument when there is no nominal available to fulfill that position (cf. section 3.3.3 below).

The third type of VP consists minimally of just an uninflectible verb. As shown in section 2.2.5 above, uninflectible verbs are full grammatical and phonological words by themselves, occurring without any inflectional affix. Hence, they carry no information on the person and number of any of their arguments. Examples of uninflectible verb phrases are given in (17a–b) below; the relevant verbs are underlined.

17. a. poret   sete   sorok   neara
         then/now   he/she get.down   again
         'Then he came down again'(Txt)

b. eyat–pooriat   tagerot sik   pii
   2p–older.relative   turn   stop   shoot
   'Then your uncle turned around, stopped and shot' (Txt)

The default rule for this type of VP is to have one or both of their notional arguments omitted under identity with previously mentioned NPs. Nonetheless, when the notional O argument of an uninflectible verb is not omitted it is realized in an oblique phrase, marked with the clitic 'pe', as shown in (18). For further examples of this construction see section 4.4.1 below.

18. a. sigi sigi sigi   te   pe=kimakãy
      raise–redup   Foc   Obl=soil/ground
      'He started to raise up the soil' (Txt)

3.2.1 MODAL–LIKE POSTVERBAL PARTICLES

There are a number of particles that fulfill certain grammatical functions inside the verb phrase in Mekens. The modal-like postverbal particles presented in section 2.2.9 above function as modal-like elements and tense and negation markers. Modal-like postverbal particles are VP constituents, which form a syntactic unit with the preceding elements in the phrase, as can be seen by the fact that they can occur together with the VP in a focus construction (movement test). In (19b) the VP in the matrix clause is focused, and the future and modal particles are fronted with the verb complex.

19. a. ãsi   se-iarap-kwa pegat eteet pera   so-a   i-mi-a   abese
      mother 3c-happy-Tr irr.fut could macaw see-Them   OM-kill-Them
      when/if
      'My mother would be happy if I saw and killed a macaw'

   b. pera   so-a   i-mi-a   abese   se-iarap-kwa pegat eteet te ãsi
      macaw see-Them OM-kill-Them when/if 3c-happy-Tr irr.fut could foc mother
      'If I see and kill a macaw, she would be happy, my mother'

Two other facts confirm the analysis of postverbal particles as VP

constituents. The first is the impossibility of adding any intervening material between

the verb and the postverbal particles, as shown in (20a-b).

20. a. ameko   ikwaay õpa-a kot-kaat   kĩrẽp
        dog/jaguar tapir   kill-Them fut-Desid.3   today/now
        'The jaguar will/ want to kill the tapir today'

   b. * ameko ikwaay õpa-a kĩrẽp kot-kaat

The second is the fact that the whole VP complex may be nominalized with the

clitic *ap*. In (21a) the entire verb phrase *kwe mia nc kakwa* 'habitually kill game

animals' is nominalized, as can be seen from the scope of the derived nominalization.

The subject of the utterance verb *'kaat'* appears in an oblique phrase at the end of the

clause, as in a kind of afterthought added to the sentence.

21. a. kwe   mi-a   nekakwa-ap   kaat õt=pe
        game.animal shoot/kill-Them habitual=Nmlzr   QUOT I=Obl
        'In the place where I always kill game animals' (text fragment)

Modal–like postverbal particles occur in matrix and subordinate clauses, as seen

in (22) where the future+desiderative.3 particle kot-kaat occurs inside the if-clause.

22. a. se-aso pegat eteet ikão   se-aso-a   kot-kaat   aabese
        3c-bathe irr.fut could that.time 3c-bathe-Them   fut-Desid.3   if/when
        'He could have bathed at that time, if he wanted to bathe'

The particles occur once per each VP and/or predicate in a clause, as illustrated

by (23a-b). Example (23c) shows that the particle does not have sentential scope, but it

is restricted only to the second VP.

23. a. se-aso-a   kot-kaat   se-er-a   kot-kaat
        3c-bathe-Them fut–Desid.3 3c-sleep-Them fut-Desid.3
        'He wants to bathe, and he wants to sleep too'

b. pesãt   ne   pa   eyat kwe   ne   pa   eyat
    quatipuru   Predzr fut.1/2 you.pl animal Predzr fut.1/2 you.pl
    'You (pl.) will become *quatipuru*, you (pl.) will become animals' (Txt)

c. se-aso-a   se-er-a   kot-kaat
    3c-bathe-Them 3c-sleep-Them fut-Desid.3
    'He is going to bathe, and wants to go to sleep'

Two constructions can be used when a modal-like postverbal particle has scope over two or more VPs in a clause. The given particle can either be repeated after each VP, as seen in (23a-b) above. Alternatively the particle can occur in a third VP headed by the uninflectible verb *ke*. This uninflectible verb functions as a resumptive verb subsuming the other verb phrases, as shown in (24) below.

24. a. i-ka-a   pe=se-iko   se-iape   kwat   neara. ke kakwa
        OM-ingest-Them   Obl=3c-food 3c-beverage   leave again   that habitual
        '(He) ate, drank, and left again. It is always like that' (Txt)

Given the above pieces of evidence, it is clear that the modal–like postverbal particles are VP constituents as opposed to S constituents, but exactly how they fit in the VP, that is, whether they are sisters or daughters of the VP, is a question that remains to be answered once we have access to more data on the language.

3.2.2 AUXILIARY

The occurrence of an auxiliary syntactic unit is a common feature among Tupian languages (Moore 1984, Gabas 1999). The definition and distribution of such a unit may vary significantly from language to language. Mekens auxiliary stems have a very specific use, which is distinct from the use found in other languages of the Tupian family. Auxiliary stems and their inflectional paradigm were described in section 2.3.2.4 above. They occur mainly in matrix clauses, but are also found in one type of embedded clause, namely temporal subordinate clauses expressing simultaneous events.

Auxiliaries are used in the progressive aspect, both in present and past tense clauses.

Even though that is the only use of auxiliary stems found in elicited data, there is

another use that was attested in texts. There are some text examples of auxiliaries used

to mark an inchoative aspect of the action/event being described. This use was only

found in past tense clauses. Table 13 below reveals an existing correlation between the

aspectual function of auxiliaries, and the clause type and tense.

	Present	Past	Narrative present
Matrix clause	progressive (ongoing action or event)	durative; inchoative	progressive
Embedded clause	----	durative/simultaneity	progressive/simultaneity

Table 13: Auxiliary: Aspect and tense frame correlation

Two properties of the auxiliary suggest that it may be a structural part of the

verb phrase, in the same way that the modal–like postverbal particles discussed in

section 3.3.1 above are. First, the regular position for the auxiliary is immediately

following the VP (25a–b). Secondly, the auxiliary cannot be separated from the VP by

adverbs (25c); however, modal–like postverbal particles do occur between the verb and

the auxiliary (25d). The VP in each example in (25) is underlined.

25. a. poret   sete <u>set–set</u> i-seesoa   ek   pi=bõ ẽp
        then/now he/she go–redup 3-aux.walk   house inside=Dat really
        'Then he was really walking into the house' (Txt)

    b. <u>se-er-a</u>   naat top   kirẽp
        3c–sleep–Them ? Aux.lying.donw today/now
        'He/she is sleeping today'

    c. * <u>se-era</u> kirẽp naat top

d. <u>o-erek-kwa</u>   <u>kot-ke</u> o-sesoe-r=õt   etaop i–ot   sese
   1s-speech-Tr.pl.action fut-desid.1/2   1s-Aux.motion.pres-rel=I frust 3s-full many
   'I want to talk there, but it is very crowded' (Txt)

Notwithstanding the fact that the regular position for the auxiliary is following

the VP and that it is not generally possible to have intervening materials between the

VP and the auxiliary, the auxiliary is being analyzed here as not an internal constituent

of the VP. We propose that the auxiliary is an independent constituent, one that is sister

to the VP and has sentential scope. Thus, only one auxiliary occurs per clause. Hence,

the presence of an auxiliary is sufficient evidence for a clause boundary in Mekens,

though it is not necessary evidence, since its use is restricted to particular aspects. The

examples in (26a-b) are instances of multiple clauses, not of multiple VPs in a single

clause (clause boundary is indicated by brackets). (26c), on the other hand, is a single

clause with two conjoined VPs, since there is only one occurrence of the auxiliary.

26. a. [asisi perop-ka o-koop]   [eti niŋa o-yẽ]
      corn   cooked-Tr 1s-Aux.mov.pres basket weave 1s-Aux.sitting.pres
      'I am cooking corn and I am weaving a basket'

   b. [tiero ma   o-koop]   [ikwaay perop-ka   o-koop]
      chicha make 1s-Aux-mov.pres   tapir   cooked-TR 1s-Aux.mov.pres
      'I am making *chicha*, and I am preparing tapir meat'

   c. tiero   mot-kwa   ikwaay mot-kwa   o-koop
      chicha make-pl.action tapir   make.pl.action 1s-Aux.mov.pres
      'I am making *chicha*, and preparing tapir meat'

Although the auxiliary commonly occurs following the VP, examples in (27)

show that it can also occur as the second constituent of a sentence, following sentence

initial adverbial phrases—both postposition (27a) and adverb phrases (27b)—in non-

verbal predicate clauses (cf. section 4.3 below). In (27a'-b') we see that even in verbal

clauses, the auxiliary may occur following sentence initial adverbial phrases. In such

sentences the adverbial phrase receives a focus interpretation , in virtue of its position associated with the auxiliary[4]. Note that in sentences (27a'-b') the remainder of the sentence following the auxiliary is a VP.

Therefore there are two possible analyses for these sentences. The adverbial phrase and auxiliary are focused together; thus forming a constituent, since only constituents may be focused in Mekens. Alternatively the VP is moved to the right and the elements preceding the VP need not necessarily form a constituent. If the former analysis were correct, we predict that the focus particle 'te' could occur following the auxiliary in sentences like (27a'-b'). However examples bearing on this question remain to be investigated. We will favor the first analysis on the basis that a construction consisting of an adverbial phrase and auxiliary occur as minimal clauses in the language, and the implication that a sequence of AdvP and Aux in initial position receives focus interpretation. Notwithstanding the need to explain what the structure in sentences like (27a'-b') is, the occurrence of the auxiliary with other type of phrases, vis-a-vis postposition and adverb phrases, if nothing else, shows that the auxiliary is not exclusively used with verb phrases. Hence, such examples are at least consistent with the analysis of the auxiliary as a separate constituent occurring outside of the VP.

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4 . Note that the focus interpretation for the adverbial phrase given in (27a'-b') above results from the combination of fronted position followed by the auxiliary. When the adverbial phrase occurs by itself in initial position, the focus interpretation does not obtain, cf. (1a-b) below.

la. õt o–pe paaga o–koop kĩrẽp
   I 1s-clothing dry 1s-Aux.mov now/today
   'I'm drying my clothes now'

b. kĩrẽp õt o–pe paaga o–koop
   now/today I 1s-clothing dry 1s-Aux.mov
   'I'm drying my clothes now'

27. a.   omato   pi=ise   i-toa

         smoke.house inside=Loc   3s-Aux.lying.dur

         'It was inside the smoke house' (Txt)

   a'.   o-si   teg=ese   o-toop⁵   tiero ma

         1s-mother   house=Loc   1s-Aux.mov.lying.pres chicha make

         'It is at my mother's house that I am making chicha'

   b.   kĩrẽp   ose-it

         today/now   1p.ex-Aux.pl.pres

         'We are here now' (this sentence is said when people have just arrived in a location)

   b'.   kĩrẽp   o-toop   o-er-a

         now/today   1s-Aux.lying.pres 1s-sleep-Them

         'Now I am sleeping'

Subordinate clauses provide the stronger argument for the analysis of the auxiliary as a sentential constituent, occurring independently of the VP. Recall that the auxiliary occurs in temporal subordinate clauses (TSC). TSCs are clauses that set a particular action/event frame in relation to which the action/event described in the matrix clause is said to have taken place. The use of a TSC says that the action/event described in the matrix clause happened at the same time that the TSC was happening. The presence of an auxiliary with the simultaneous suffix /–a/ marks the clause as a TSC, even in the absence of an overt subordinator marker. An example of a TSC with auxiliary is given in (28) below.

28. a.   ose-ser-a   ose-i-a   kwaksop   pe=ameko   pi–kwak

         1pex-go-Them 1pex-Aux.pl-Sim   hear   Obl=jaguar/dog   inside–sound

         'When we were going, we heard the growl of a jaguar'

It follows that a TSC with more than one VP and a single occurrence of an auxiliary that had scope over both VPs in the subordinate clause would be a clear case

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5. The occurrence of the auxiliary stem –top 'be.lying' with lexical verbs of movement is an idiosyncratic characteristic found in the idiolect of a single speaker.

of an auxiliary with sentential scope, and therefore evidence for the current analysis.

In fact this type of clause is frequently found in texts, as seen in (29) below. Both VPs

in (29) are necessarily inside the scope of the TSC, which sets the temporal frame

during which the action described in the matrix clause takes place.

29. a. [ose-teg=eri   kwa ose-ia   ose-a-a]$_S$·   asikep   o-pia   te
       [1pex-house=Abl   go/come.pl.S 1pex-come 1pex-Aux.pl.sim] tucandeira 1s-bite truly
       'When we were returning, coming from our house, *tucandeira* bit me'

   b. [kẽrãy ese-aor-a   kot-kaat   naat seesoa]$_S$·   pɨ̃   te   eyat-pooriat
       [bite   Com-leave-Them fut-Desid.3   ?   Aux.in.motion] shoot Foc 2p-oldrelative
       'When it was leaving having caught it with the mouth, he shot, your uncle'

One test that has proved very useful in determining whether or not a given string

of words constitutes a phrase in Mekens is the possibility of movement together, as in

focus constructions, for instance. Thus, according to the arguments developed so far in

the present work, if it were possible to have the VP plus auxiliary focused together at

the beginning of the clause, and excluding the subject, we could use that as an argument

for placing the auxiliary inside the VP, and against the analysis developed here. Such

constructions have not been observed in texts, and were not attested in our elicited data

either. The only attested examples where a sequence of VP plus auxiliary occurs in the

scope of the focus particle 'te' in clause initial position are cases that have no bearing

on the question of whether the whole clause or just the sequence VP plus auxiliary is the

focus, since the subject is realized only as prefixes on the verb. Two examples are given

in (30a-b) below. On the basis of the arguments presented so far and the lack of

counterexamples, we maintain the analysis presented at the start of this section that the

auxiliary constitutes an independent phrase with sentential scope, and is outside of the

VP.

30. a. o-kwar-a   o-ko-a   te   ïkwaay so-a   õt
        1s-leave-Them 1s-Aux-mov.sim   Foc   tapir   see-Them   I
        'When I was hunting/walking in the forest, I saw a tapir'

    b. otat   ar-a   o-ko-a   te   ameko   so-a   õt
        fire.wood get-Them 1s-Aux.mov.sim Foc jaguar/dog   see-Them I
        'When I was gathering fire wood, I saw a jaguar'

3.3.3 PERSONAL PREFIXES ON THE VERBS: ANAPHORIC VERSUS GRAMMATICAL AGREEMENT

A recurrent issue in recent theories of syntactic analysis is the distinction between languages in which personal markings on the verb solely indicate agreement with an explicit argument of the verb (cross–reference markers), and those languages in which they function as the actual arguments of the verb (cf. Jelinek 1984, 1989, Bresnan and Mchombo 1987). In Lexical Functional Grammar terminology, the former system is referred to as an 'anaphoric agreement system', and the latter as a 'grammatical agreement system' (Bresnan, 2001).

Bresnan and Mchombo (1987) argue for an analysis of Chichewa (Bantu) in which there is a combination of the above two systems of agreement. The subject marker is an anaphoric agreement marker. It redundantly indicates in the verb stem the person, number, and generic class of the overt noun phrase verbal argument when there is one, and functions as the true argument of the verb in the absence of an overt nominal that could function as subject. The object marker, on the other hand, always functions as an incorporated pronominal argument of the verb, and, thus, never co-occurs with a NP in the same syntactic position.

The available data of Mekens has revealed a system of verb pronominal marking which is similar to that proposed for Chichewa in many aspects (Galucio 1996b).

Pronominal marking on main verbs in Mekens reveals an ergative pattern of cross-reference marking. There is only one slot in a basic sentence for a person marker in the verb. That slot is filled by a person prefix which always marks the absolutive argument (S/O); the ergative argument (A) is marked by an element from the series of free pronouns. Free pronouns may optionally co-occur with the personal prefixes marking the absolutive argument in intransitive clauses (cf. section 2.3.23 above). The distribution of prefixes on transitive and intransitive verbs is exemplified in (31) below. In (31a) the second person prefix e- marks the S argument of the intransitive verb, which is redundantly marked by the optional pronoun ẽt 'you', whereas in (31b) the same prefix marks the O argument of the transitive verb. The A argument is marked by the pronoun õt 'I', which in this case is not optional. The same pattern is repeated in examples (31c-d), with the persons reversed.

31. a. e-er-a-t   (ẽt)
       2s-sleep-Them-past (you)
       'You slept'

    b. *e-so-a-t*   õt
       2s-see-Them-past   I
       'I saw you'

    c. *o-er-a*   *(õt)*   *pĩ͂p*
       1s-sleep-Them I   yesterday
       'I slept yesterday'

    d. *o-so-a-t*   ẽt
       1s-see-Them-past   you
       'You saw me'

   Example (32a) shows the third person coreferential prefix crossreferencing on the verb the person and number of the nominal subject. Nonetheless, when there is no

available nominal in the clause that could function as the subject, the coreferential

prefix on the verb takes on that function, as in (32b).

32. a. aose   se-er-a-t
      man   3c-sleep-Them-past
      'The man slept'

   b. se-e-pibor-a   se-er-a-t
      3c-Intrv-arrive-Them 3c-sleep-Them-past
      'He arrived and slept'

Hence, in the analysis that is being proposed here, the intransitive subject

marker functions as anaphoric agreement in the presence of an overt nominal or

pronominal argument, but as the grammatical argument of the verb when there is no

other argument available in the clause. A different situation is found with transitive

verbs, however. The pronominal prefix on a transitive verb always has the status of an

argument (incorporated pronominal inflection) as opposed to anaphoric agreement, and,

as such, it does not co-occur with a nominal argument in the same structural position

(Galucio 1996b).

3.3.4 MULTIPLE VERB PHRASES

One characteristic of Tupian languages in general is the possibility of having

more than one VP per clause (Moore 1994). In his survey of a few aspects of Tupi

syntax, Moore (1994) presents the general characteristics of such multiple verb phrase

constructions and their distribution in some Tupian languages. The allowable patterns

vary from language to language: for instance, in Karo only one fully inflected verb or

auxiliary is permitted per clause (Gabas 1999). In other languages all VPs in the clause

have the same status. According to Moore (1994), this second type of constructions,

where all VPs have the same status, is more common among languages of the Tupi

family. As an example of multiple VPs per clause, consider (33), a clause in

Guajajara, a Tupian language of the Tupi-Guarani family (extracted from Moore

1994:162), where the relevant VPs are underlined.

33. Guajajara Multiple VPs

a. <u>u-munik</u>   t-azir   <u>i-petim</u>   <u>Ø-heraha</u>   i-zupe a?e
   3-lit   3-daughter   3-tobaco   3-take   3-to   3
   'His daughter lit and took his cigar to him'

Clauses that have a structure similar to the above Guajajara sentence constitute a

recurrent pattern in Mekens syntax, as illustrated in examples (34a–d) below. Verb

phrases are underlined. The class of uninflectible verbs is very frequent in multiple VP

constructions. As was shown in section 2. 3.2.3 above, uninflectible verbs in Mekens

do not take personal prefixes nor do they have the same constraints regarding

constituent order and fulfillment of object argument position as do the transitive verb

stems. In the examples below, (34a-b) denote sequential related events, and (34c-d)

purposive clauses.

34. a.   arẽp poret <u>anoa eigakwa</u> te kirit sara <u>se-ser-a-t</u>   <u>se-ko-a</u>   <u>pibot</u>
         then now   heart soften   foc child poor 3c-go–them–past 3c-aux-past arrive
         'Then, the poor boy surrendered, went and arrived (there)' (Txt)

   b. arẽp   sete   <u>kiriy</u>   <u>i-at</u>   <u>paaka se-yã</u>
      then   he/she grab   OM–get   smoke 3c-aux.sitting.past
      'Then he grabbed (it), took it and stayed there smoking' (Txt)

   c. *poret   seteyat <u>se-rit</u>   <u>posa-a</u>*
       then   they   3c-go.pl.subj fell-Them
       'Then they went to fell (trees)' (Txt)

   d. *arẽp   sete   <u>ki-ora</u>   <u>poa</u>   <u>mi-a,</u>   <u>o-maykit</u>*
      then   he/she 1pin-hortative substitute   kill–Them   1s-nephew
      'Then he (said) let's go kill another one to replace it, my nephew' (Txt)

Researchers working on Tupian languages have analyzed constructions such as the ones shown in (33-34) above and other similar ones discussed in Moore (1994), as instances of serial verb constructions (cf. Jensen 1990). Nonetheless, it has been pointed out (Moore ibid.) that they do not behave like the better known cases of serial verbs frequently cited in the literature, as described in Baker (1989), Givon (1995), Hansel (1993), Lefebvre (1991), Noonan (1994).

There are both syntactic and semantic arguments against analyzing the type of verb sequencing constructions discussed here as serial verb constructions. The first one involves the lexical conceptual structure of the verbs. The multiple VP constructions do not show the reduction of lexical conceptual structure generally associated with serial verbs. Multiple VPs in Mekens do not form a composite event; they may describe related but autonomous independent events.

Furthermore, in serial verb constructions there is normally one argument that is shared by the two or more verbs, but only realized in the categorial frame of one of the verbs. In the multiple VP constructions of Tupian languages, on the other hand, there a sequence of verbs each maintaining its possibility of having its own object both semantically and syntactically distinct from the others (Harrison 1986, Moore 1994). These two characteristics of multiple VPs in Tupian languages distinguish them from serial verb constructions, since two important characteristics of serial verbs in general are event cohesion, which means that a serial verb construction refers to a single event, and obligatory argument sharing, which says that arguments shared by two or more verbs in a serial verb construction are realized only once in the clause. These two

properties of serial verbs led to analyses of such constructions in terms off a doubly

or multiply headed VP (cf. Baker 1989, and Lefebvre 1991).

The Mekens sentence in (35a) is composed of a sequence of verb phrases

describing multiple autonomous events, and each verb has its full lexical structure as

part of the predication, even though a single object is shared by the verbs . In (26c),

repeated here as (35b), each verb in the clause has its own object argument overtly

expressed. As was seen in section 3.3.2 above, (35b) has to be a single clause, since

there is only one instantiation of the auxiliary, and both VPs are inside its scope.

35. a. arop   kwarõ   ẽp   tapaya õ-kwep   sĩt   i-ỹãp   naat ỹẽ
         then   porcupine really peel   Caus-climb leave 3s-bench ? Aux.sitting.pres
         'Then (they) peeled the porcupine itself, made (it) climb and left him sitting on
         the bench' (Txt)

    b. tiero   mot-kwa   ikwaay   mot-kwa   o-koop
        chicha make-pl.action tapir   make.pl.action 1s-Aux.mov.pres
        'I am making chicha, and preparing tapir meat'

Furthermore, the multiple VPs in Mekens and other Tupian languages can

involve any verb selected from an open class of verbs, contrary to the general case in

serialization structures, where the verbs that can appear in a particular serial verb

construction are lexically restricted (cf. Lefebvre 1991:37ff). Each VP in a sequence of

multiple VPs in a Mekens clause is formed by a lexically autonomous verb. Among the

arguments cited by Moore (1994) against an analysis in terms of serial verb

constructions figure the lexical autonomy of the VPs, the scope of adverbial phrases,

and the possibility of alternative linear order among the VPs. Whereas the respective

order of verbs is fixed in serial verb constructions, the respective order of verbs in

Mekens multiple VP clauses is susceptible to change given right circumstances (cf 37).

Examples of multiple VP constructions, where an adverbial phrase at the end of the clause modifies only one of the verbs, not the entire sequence of VPs, is found in Mekens (cf. example (36) below), and in other Tupian languages as well (cf. Moore 1994). In (36) the word *naariat* 'in those days' functions as an adverbial phrase, though it is not an adverb, and has scope over the two underlined VPs.

36. a. eke   ameko kõõp   maŋap   apaak   aape=bõ ka   te naar=iat
        that   dog   silence proceed old.man route=Dat go.come foc ? =rem.past
        'That dog silenced, passed beyond (the river), and went by the old man's route; that's how it happened in those days'. (Txt)

Further arguments that confirm the analysis of the multiple VPs in a single clause as not being instances of serial verb constructions are found in the syntax of Mekens. For instance, example (34a), repeated as (37) here, shows that one of the VPs in the sequence can be focused independently at the beginning of the clause, with the focus particle *te*. As a consequence, the subject *kirit sara* 'poor boy' occurs after the focused VP *anoa-eigakwa* 'soften heart,' and before the other VP(s).

37. a. arẽp poret   anoa eigakwa te   kirit sara se-ser-a-t se-koa   pibot
        then now   heart soften   foc child poor 3c-go   3c-aux-past arrive
        'Then, the poor boy surrendered, went and arrived (there)' (Txt)

Having ruled out the possibility of taking Mekens (and Tupian) multiple VPs to be cases of serialization, there is still the question of whether they are really cases of single clauses with multiple VPs or multiple clauses formed of minimal VPs only. Given the structure of Mekens verb phrases , it is possible to have a single verb and/or VP forming a minimal clause in the language. Transitive verb phrases consist of an object argument (NP or prefix) plus the verb stem. Since third person pronominal subjects of transitive verbs may be unmarked (zero morpheme), a transitive VP may be a minimal clause. The same is true for intransitive and uninflectible VPs. The former

carries subject agreement, and may stand by itself as a clause, while the latter has no agreement and/or subcategorized arguments and may also stand for a clause in the right contexts. Hence, theoretically any of the VPs shown in the previous examples could be a minimal clause, in which case they would not be multiple VP constructions in a single clause, but perhaps multiple clauses in a clause chaining or covert coordination construction.

There are, however, some arguments favoring the analysis developed here, in terms of single clauses with multiple VPs. It was argued in section 3.3.2 that auxiliaries have sentential scope, and that a single auxiliary in a clause can have scope over more than one VP in that clause. Temporal subordinate clauses (TSC) with more than one VP in which an auxiliary at the end of the clause has scope over both VPs are conclusive cases that both VPs occur inside the single TSC clause. Hence, while it is not possible to say of each given token whether or not a sequence of VPs always instantiated the multiple VP construction, it is arguably possible to maintain that a well-formed single clause in Mekens may have two or more independent VPs as constituents. Sentence (38), repeated from (29a), is a well defined case of a multiple VP construction in a single clause. In this sentence, the two VPs occur inside a TSC clause modified by an auxiliary that has scope over both VPs.

38. a. [ose-teg=eri   kwa   ose-ia   ose-aa]ₛ·   asikep   o-pia te
      [1pex-house=Abl   go/come.pl.Su 1pex-come 1pex-Aux.pl.sim]tucandeira 1s-bite truly
      'When we were returning, coming from our house, *tucandeira* bit me'

3.4   ADPOSITIONAL PHRASES

Adpositional phrases (AdpP) in Mekens are phrases composed of a noun phrase and a postposition, which have an adverbial function. The general term adpositional

phrase is used here instead of the more specific prepositional and/or postpositional

phrases because both preposition and postpositions can constitute the nucleous of the

phrase, as we shall see below. Even though the properties of specific adpositional

phrases in Mekens call for subdivision, their general syntactic behavior warrants

grouping them together in a single category. Adpositional phrases are composed of a

noun phrase plus either a preposition or a postposition, depending on the specific type

of phrase. Any type of noun phrase may occur as the object of an adposition, as shown

in (39a-d) below.

39. ADPOSITIONAL PHRASES TYPE ONE:
a. sete   kimakãy=eri   i-mot-kwa (...)
    he/she   ground/soil=Abl   OM-make-pl.action
    'Then from the ground he made that' (Txt)

b. ãsi se-e-erek-kwa   naat kop   kirit apĩi=bõ
    mother 3c-Intrv-speech-Tr.pl.action ?   Aux.mov   child stubborn=Dat
    'My mother is talking to the stubborn child'

c. i-same   te õr=ese
    3-beautiful/good foc I=Loc
    'It looks beautiful on me' (Txt)

d. tabisarã   kipe   õ-a   eme=mo
    chief   machete give-Them   Dem.pl=Dat
    'The chief gave a machete to those (men).'

There are two types of adpositional phrases in the language. The first type is the

case marker postpositional phrases (PP). They add an oblique argument to the clause,

and are formed with one of the four postpositions described in section 2.2.7 above. All

the examples in (39a-e) above illustrate this first type of PP. The second type of

adpositional phrase marks as oblique a NP that is a notional argument of a verb or of

another NP, but occurs outside of its syntactic argument position. This second type of

phrase is formed with the oblique marker *pe*. It differs from the first type of

adpositional phrases in a number of ways. First, while case marker Ps have semantic

content, the 'oblique' marker Ps are semantically empty. The postpositions used in the

former type of PPs express a two-place relation between an action/event and the object[6]

of the postposition. For instance, in *osi tiero motkwa setegese* 'My mother made

chicha at her house' the locative postposition *ese* expresses a two-place relation

between the event of my mother's making *chicha* and the location where that event

takes place 'her own house', which is the object of the postposition. All four case

marker postpositions of the first type of PP have semantic content that expresses a

predicate relation, but the oblique marker *pe* does not. It simply marks the NP as

oblique. Nonetheless, I follow McCawley (1988:191) in assuming that 'semantically

empty instances of a category take on the same syntactic relations as do semantically

contentful members of the category,' since Mekens adpositional phrases do show

similar syntactic behavior. The specifics of constructions involving adpositional phrases

formed with *pe* will be further discussed in section 4.5.1 below, and examples are given

in (40a-b).

40. ADPOSITIONAL PHRASES TYPE TWO:
a. (...) i-top   arikwayõ   s-inoŋ-a   te   pe=ekwirisa
        3s-father Arikwayõ   OM-place-Them foc Obl=type.of.bee
        'And his father, Arikwayõ, put the honey bee' (Txt)

b. poret   s-anip=ese   tai   te   pe=pasiare
   then   3s-head=Loc break foc   Obl=Pasiare
   'Then he broke (it) in his head, Pasiare's (head)' (Txt)

---

6. The term object is used here in the sense of McCawley (1988) to include the kind of relationships that take place between the logical categories of predicate and argument.

In addition to the differences in function and semantic content between the first and second type of adpositional phrases, there is still another difference among them. Whereas case marker adpositional phrases are always postpositional phrases, that is, the head of the phrase always follows its NP object, the 'oblique marker' adpositional phrase allows for variation, being either prepositional or postpositional. The oblique marker *pe* may occur preceding or following its NP object[7]. Even though there is a tendency in texts for it to be postpositional, many examples of prepositional cases were found and no difference in function or meaning was attested. The following examples (41a-b) illustrate the possible variation of 'pe' between preposition and postposition. The two clauses have exactly the same meaning[8].

41. a. ãsi   i-mot-kwa   tïero=pe   kĩrẽp-se
         mother OM-make-pl.action   *chicha*=Obl   today/now–true
         'My mother is making *chicha* right now'

    b. ãsi   i-mot-kwa   pe=tïero   kĩrẽp-se
         mother OM-make-pl.action   Obl=*chicha*   today/now–true
         'My mother is making *chicha* right now'

The same constituency tests that were used in defining string of words as forming NPs and VPs are also applicable to the definition of AdpPs. The first of these tests was the movement test. One of the characteristics of AdpPs is that they are freely

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7. That specific property of the oblique marker pe resembles the distribution found in German for the preposition *nach* 'according to, to, after'. It normally precedes its object, but it may also follow. The example that is generally cited in the literature is *nach meiner Meinung/ meiner Meinung nach* 'in my opinion' (Hosford 1982). I also thank Sergio Meira for first providing me with that example.

8. At one of the elicitation sessions, the author asked her consultant if there was not even a slight difference between the two clause types. The consultant replied asking if she knew a Brazilian pop song that goes *um pra eu, um pra tu; um pra tu, um pra eu* 'one for me, one for you; one for you, one for me', and said it was exactly the same thing in Mekens, regarding these clauses, meaning that one could change the order as one is pleased, with no difference in meaning involved.

ordered within the clause. Hence, examples where there are strings of words

containing a noun phrase plus a preposition or postposition pass the movement test for

constituency. They can occur together in any position within the clause, given that they

observe higher constraints, such as the linearity and adjacency constraint for elements

inside the transitive verb phrases (cf. section 3.3 above).

A sequence of noun phrase plus a preposition or a postposition may be the focus

of tẽẽt 'only'. We saw in section 3.1 that tẽẽt 'only' takes a constituent as its focus. In

(42a) below the focus of tẽẽt is only the postpositional phrase 'to my brother's house'.

An AdP can also be the focus of periphrastic negation, as shown in (42b-b'). Note that

the predication about 'our clothes' is the same in both (42b) and (42b'), namely, that

they dried. These two clauses are different only with respect to the location where the

event of drying took place.

42. a. o-set   pa   okwa teg=ese   tẽẽt
       1s-go fut.1/2 brother house=Loc   only
       'I am going only up to my brother's house'

    b. ki-pe   i-paak ki-akob=ese
       1pin-clothes 3s-dry 1pin-hot/heat=Loc
       'Our clothes dried in the sun'

    b'. ki-pe   i-paak ki-akob=ese   ne   noat
        1pin-clothes 3s-dry 1pin-hot/heat=Loc Predzr Neg
        'Our clothes did not dry in the sun' (Lit. Our clothes dried, (it was) not in the
        sun)

Even though we have not found any examples of the pe-oblique phrase

occurring as the focus of either 'only' or periphrastic negation, we propose as a

hypothesis to be tested in future work that given the right context it may occur in any of

such positions. In example (42b') above, we note that there is a word 'ne' glossed as

'predicatizer' between the PP and the negative particle. This predicatizer 'ne' occurs

with PPs, AdvPs, and NPs when they are functioning as predicates (cf. section 4.2), and,

marks them as being able to co-occur with any of the postverbal particles discussed in

sections 2.2.9.2 and 3.3.1 above. Thus, sentence (43a) below is exactly parallel to (42b')

above in that it has an AdpP followed by the predicatizer 'ne' and a postverbal particle.

43. a. i-timot   pa   ĕt   pe=i-sakĕrãy ne   sasa
      OM-cut.down fut.1/2 you   Obl=3-roof.timber   Predzr firstly
      'First you cut down the roof timbers' (lit. You cut it, the roof timbers are first)

Case marker adpositional phrases can occur with an auxiliary as the only

constituents of a minimal clause, as in (44a). Note that auxiliaries can also occur as

main verbs in certain types of clauses. They also occur together with an auxiliary at the

beginning of a transitive or intransitive clause, in which case they bear a focus

interpretation, as in (44b), repeated from 22a'. There are no attested examples in the

corpus of the oblique pe-adpositional phrase in a construction with the auxiliary,

parallel to the ones shown in (44a-b). That gap is a direct consequence of the

idiosyncratic function of this AdpP as a semantically empty prepositional phrase that

simply marks an NP as oblique when it is not in its expected structural position in the

clause.

44. a. eni=ese   ose-it
      hammock=Loc 1p.ex-Aux.pl.pres
      'We are in the hammock'

   b. o-si teg=ese   o-toop   tiero ma
      1s-mother house=Loc 1s-Aux.lying.pres   *chicha* make
      'It is at my mother's house that I am making *chicha*'

3.5 ADVERB PHRASES

The lexical category of adverbs constitutes a small class in Mekens, composed mainly of temporal adverbs (cf. section 2.8 above). Given the limited number of adverbs in the language, and the fact that adverbs do not have objects, as is commonly the case crosslinguistically, determining whether or not adverbs project into a phrasal unit of the same category is not a simple task. Based mainly on comparison of the syntactic properties of adverbs with the postpositional phrases described in section 3.4 above, we will tentatively postulate a phrasal category Adverb Phrase (AdvP) that has an adverb as its head. AdvPs have a special status in relation to the other phrasal units in the language, since as a general rule they are phrases composed of a single word[9], except for the occurrence of a few epistemic/evidential particles. While it is also possible to have single nouns and verbs counting as a phrase of their respective category, that is not the default case for NPs and VPs, but it is for AdvPs.

There are two types of adverbs in Mekens (cf. section 2.8 above): temporal adverbs that are VP and S modifiers as in (45a), and manner/degree adverbs that are V modifiers as in (45b, repeated from section 2.2.8). The arguments developed in this section for the recognition of an adverb phrase are relevant for the former adverb type. For the latter is very restricted in its syntactic properties, due to the nature of its function and former morphological membership. Verb modifier adverbs are derived from adjective stems, and restricted to the position immediately following the verb they modify.

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9. Some adverbs, like *erape–ao* 'day after tomorrow' and *kirẽp–se* 'right now' which seem to be compositional are, in fact, lexicalized cases of compound forms (a complex word).

45. a. o-tek   okwa-r=ōt   ãparẽpkwa,   o-pe   okwa-r=ōt ebarepɨka
       1s-house   wash-past=I   morning   1s-clothes wash-past=I afternoon
       'I washed my house in the morning, and washed my clothes in the afternoon'

   b. poret oẽp   ib-a-t   poot te   teop   i-no
      then   already return-Them-past   old   foc   Dem.lying   3s-other
      '(She) has already returned, that other one' (lit. She is old back, that other one)
      (Txt)

The main property of adverbs that leads us to postulate an adverb phrase in

Mekens is their mobility inside the clause. Though the typical position of adverbs is

clause final, they may occur in different positions in the clause, provided that they do

not intervene between the members of another phrase. The various positions where

adverbs can occur are illustrated in (46a-d) for intransitive clauses and in (47a-e) for

transitive clauses. Adverbs are underlined. With respect to the possibility of movement,

adverbs show a syntactic behavior similar to the postpositional phrases (cf. section 3.4

above). Hence, we can still use that slightly different version of the movement test as

argument for the definition of adverb phrases. We will define adverbial phrases in

Mekens as syntactic units that have no fixed order in the clause, but can occur in a

series of different positions. They include adpositional phrases (AdpP) and adverb

phrases (AdvP).

46. ADVERB POSITIONS IN INTRANSITIVE CLAUSES
a. sete   se-kwat noat pɨ̃p
   he/she   3c-leave neg yesterday
   'He did not go hunting yesterday'

b. pɨ̃p   sete   se-kwat noat
   yesterday   he/she 3c-leave neg
   'Yesterday he did not go hunting.'

c. sete   pɨ̃p   se-kwat noat
   he/she   yesterday 3c-leave neg
   'He did not go hunting yesterday'

d. * sete se-kwat p̃ip noat
  he/she 3c-leave yesterday neg
  ('He did not go hunting yesterday')

47. ADVERB POSITIONS IN TRANSITIVE CLAUSES
a. o-pe okwa kot-ke õt k̃irẽp
  1s-clothes wash fut-desid.1/2 I today/now
  'I will/want to wash my clothes today'

b. k̃irẽp o-pe   okwa kot-ke õt
  today/now 1s-clothes wash fut-desid.1/2 I
  'Today I will/want to wash my clothes'

c. * o-pe k̃irẽp   okwa kot-ke õt
  1s-clothes today/now wash fut-desid.1/2 I
  ('I will/want to wash my clothes today')

d. ?* o-pe   okwa kot-ke   k̃irẽp õt
  1s-clothes wash fut-desid.1/2 today/now I
  'I will/want to wash my clothes today'

e. * mak̃iyã mi-a   k̃irẽp kot-ke õt
  agouti kill/shoot-Them today fut-desid.1/2 I
  ('I will/want to hunt agouti today')

The possibility of focusing elements with the focus particle *te* is another relevant test in determining phrasal status. We have seen that what appears in the scope of focus at the beginning of a clause has to be a constituent. Questions that focus on the time of occurrence of an event can have answers in which the temporal adverb is focused at the beginning of the clause, as seen in (48a-a'). Adverbs can also be focused with the focus particle *te* when they are the contrastive/new information in a clause, as in (48b-c). The fact that adverbs can be focused independently at the beginning of a clause provides an argument that they form a syntactic independent unit (phrase) and are separated from the VP.

48. a. ãtka   i-ko-a   ẽp   te   o-kip   piboot
      how   3s-Aux.mov.sim   really foc 1s-cousin/brother arrive
      'When did my cousin arrive?'

a'. pɨɨmo   ẽp   te   piboot
      yesterday   really foc   arrive
      'Yesterday, he arrived.'/ 'It was yesterday that he arrived.'

b. kɨrẽp   te olimpio sakɨrap   mi
     today/now   foc Olimpio spider.monkey kill/shoot
     'TODAY Olimpio killed a spider monkey.'/ 'It was today that Olimpio killed a spider monkey.'

c. kɨrẽp-se   te olimpio se-toop
     today/now-true foc Olimpio 3c-lie.down
     'Olimpio has just gone to bed now.'

The occurrence of adverbs in syntactic constructions with an auxiliary also provides an argument for an AdvP independent of the VP. Adverb phrases parallel the syntactic behavior of postpositional phrases (cf. section 3.4 above). An adverb plus auxiliary can be the only constituents of a minimal clause (49a, repeated from 22b), and also occur with a focus interpretation at the beginning of a verbal clause (49b'). The focus interpretation of (49b') results from the combination of AdvP and auxiliary occurring in sentence initial position, as can be seen from comparison with (49b) where no element receives a focus reading. For further discussion about the syntactic constructions in sentences like (49b') see section 3.3.2 above, where the structure of VPs and auxiliaries are discussed.

49. a. kɨrẽp   ose-it
     today/now   1p.ex-Aux.pl.pres
     'We are (here) now'

b. tɨero   ma   o-koop   kɨrẽp
     chicha make 1s-Aux.mov.pres   today/now
     'I am making *chicha* now'

b'. kɨrẽp   o-koop   tɨero ma
  today/now 1s-Aux.mov.pres *chicha* make
  'It is now that I am making *chicha*.'

Adverb phrases can also be used as predicates, in the same way that adpositional

phrases can. When followed by the predicatizer 'ne', adverbs can be the focus of

periphrastic negation (50a) and of postverbal particles (50b). Since that position is

normally occupied by phrasal units, the fact that adverbs can occur there corroborates

the analysis developed here that adverbs project into AdvPs.

50. a. pɨ̃p   ne noat (te)
   yesterday Predtzr neg (he/she/it)
   'It was not yesterday'

  b. kɨrẽp   ne paat abi   ameko mi-a
    today/now Predtzr fut.3 my.father jaguar/dog kill/shoot-Them
    'It will be today that my father kills the jaguar'

A final property of AdvPs that is worth mentioning is that it is possible to have

one AdvP modifying more than one VP in a clause, as seen in (51a-b) below,

confirming that they may have sentential scope as well. Note that in (51a) the thematic

object of the verb 'wash' occurs in as the object of an adposition, and the object marker

prefix appears on the verb (cf. section 4.4. for further discussion of this and similar

constructions).

51. a. o-tek   okwa �õt o-pe=bõ   s-okwa-a-r=�õt   kɨrẽp
   1s-house wash I 1s-clothes=Dat OM-wash-Them-past=I today/now
   'I washed my house, and washed my clothes today too'

  b. o-set noat õt tabɨr=õ   ka   kɨrẽp
    1s-go neg I swidden.garden=Dat go/come today/now
    'I did not go to the house garden today'

CHAPTER IV

THE STRUCTURE OF SENTENCES

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter continues the presentation of Mekens syntax. In chapter 3, we described and defined the syntactic categories that are motivated by the grammar of Mekens. In this chapter we shall introduce the different patterns in which the phrasal units described in chapter 3 are organized into larger meaningful units, namely clauses and sentences; thereby providing arguments for the structural and functional classification of sentence types in Mekens (4.2). Section 4.3 presents the non–verbal predicate clauses in the language. In section 4.4 we introduce the discussion of complex sentences, and in 4.4 three pragmatically marked sentence structures are described.

Before proceeding with the analysis of sentence structure, we need to state explicitly the definitions of clause and sentence that have been implicitly used throughout this work. Even though clause and sentence are two of the concepts

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frequently employed in the linguistic literature, it is not generally possible to find a unified definition for them[1].

For Lyons (1981:59) sentences are 'well-formed combination of forms in a given language-system'. That definition aims to interrelate the notions of grammaticality and meaningfulness. A Mekens sentence is thus defined as a well–formed unit combining forms and structure that can stand as a meaningful unit of discourse in the language system.

Sentences may be classified according to their function, form, and structure or compositional patterns. The sentence types presented in section 4.1 combine the function and formal structure found in Mekens sentences. In terms of compositional patterns, we will make a distinction between simple and complex sentences: that is, sentences containing a single predication and sentences containing more than one predication. In other words, sentences consisting of a single clause, and sentences consisting of more than one clause, where clause is defined as any syntactic constituent containing a single subject-predicate unit. The examples in (1) illustrate the distinction made here between clauses and sentences, (1a) is a simple sentence consisting of a single clause, whereas (1b) is a complex sentence consisting of a matrix and a subordinate clause, and (1c) is a complex sentence consisting of two coordinate clauses.

1. a. o-kwe-a   õt   kɨpkɨba=bõ
        1s-climb-Them I   tree=Dat
        'I climbed on the tree'

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1. In defining the terms sentence and clause as they are used in this work, we found very useful the definitions and related discussion in Lyons (1981), Crystal (1992), Sadock and Zwicky (1985), and McCawley (1988).

b. taose-piik   kĕrĕ   so-a   aabese o-kwe-a   õt kɨpkɨba=bõ
    peccary   angry   see-Them   if/when 1s-climb-Them I tree=Dat
    'When I saw the furious peccary, I climbed up the tree'

c. e-teg=õ   ka   õt   e-so-a-r-apõ   õt
    2s-house=Dat go/come I   2s-see-Them-past-Neg I
    'I went to your house, but/and didn't see you'

4.1 MAJOR SPEECH ACT DISTINCTIONS: Sentence Types

In this section we present the principal speech act distinctions that are coded in

the syntax of Mekens. For speech acts coded in the syntax we mean the communicative

tasks and/or uses that are grammaticalized, that is, coded by specific grammatical

devices in the language. For instance, Sadock and Zwicky (1985:155) define sentence

type as a 'coincidence of particular grammatical structure and conventional

conversational use.' In defining the grammaticalized speech act distinctions in Mekens,

we are using the above sentence type definition and the criteria of identification

suggested in Sadock and Zwicky (ibid.). The sentence types of a language form a

system in the sense that: (i) they are mutually exclusive; (ii) in a given language there

are sets of sentences that differ only in belonging to different sentence types; and (iii)

they show certain crosslinguistic formal characteristics.

The major types of modalities that are formally distinguished in Mekens are

declarative, imperative and interrogative. For each of these types, there are at least two

formally distinct subtypes. Thus, there are unmarked and frustrative declaratives,

regular imperatives and hortative, and information and yes-no questions. The group of

sentences in (2) and (3) below are illustrative of the major sentence types in the

language. The formal characterization of each of these types and their subclassification

are presented in sections 4.1.1–4.1.3 below.

2. Speech Act Distinctions with Intransitive Verbs

a.	e-er-a (ět)	'You slept'
b.	e–er-a–apo ět	'You didn't sleep'
c.	e-er-a	'Sleep!'/ 'Go to sleep!'
d.	e–er–ŏ ět	'Do not sleep'
e.	ki-er-a	'Let's sleep'
f.	e-er-a ět kěra	'Did you sleep?'
g.	arob=ěp se-er-a-t	'Who slept?'

3. Speech Act Distinctions with Transitive Verbs

a.	i-ka ŏt	'I ate (it)'
b.	o-iko ka-r-apo ŏt	'I didn't eat'/ 'I didn't eat my food'
c.	i-ka-a	'Eat!'
d.	i-ko-bŏ ět	'Do not eat (it)'
e.	ko soga	'You may eat'/ 'Go ahead, eat!'
f.	ki-iko ka	'Let's eat!'
g.	e-iko ka ět kěra	'Have you eaten? / 'Did you eat?
h.	arop te te e-i-ko	'What did you eat?'

4.1.1 DECLARATIVE

Declarative sentences are typically the sentence type used for making statements about the truth or falsehood of an event, and it is prototypically the unmarked or most basic sentence type crosslinguistically. There are two types of declarative sentences in Mekens: unmarked and frustrative or adversative declaratives. The intonation contour in both types can be defined as neutral in contrast to the rising final intonation associated with yes–no questions (cf. section 4.1.3).

4.1.1.1 UNMARKED DECLARATIVES

Unmarked declaratives conform to the prototypical characterization of declarative sentences. They have no special feature marking them as being declaratives. As with all the other sentence types in the language, they can be either affirmative or

negative. The examples in (4a-c) illustrate this sentence type with different tense-aspect

markers.

4. a. o-er-a   o-koop
        1s-sleep-Them 1s-Aux.pres
        'I am sleeping'

    b. o-er-a-t
        1s-sleep-Them-past
        'I slept'

    c. o-er-a   kot
        1s-sleep-Them im.fut
        'I will sleep'

4.1.1.2 FRUSTRATIVE DECLARATIVES

Frustrative or adversative sentences are declarative sentences expressing that the

expected result of a given event is not met[2]. Like the unmarked declarative sentences,

frustrative sentences express a statement, albeit one with adversative results. They differ

from the unmarked declaratives in having a specific use that is combined with a formal

marker. They are marked with the frustrative particle *'etaop'*. Cases of this frustrative

particle in interrogative and imperative sentences were not attested, thus justifying its

inclusion among the set of sentence types in the language. Sentences (5a–c) illustrate

different nuances of meaning expressed by frustrative sentences.

5. a. isii   o-so-a   kwat õt   i-taka   etaop
        deer   1s-see-Them   leave I   OM-follow   frust
        'The deer saw me and ran away, I ran after him, but couldn't get him' (Txt)

    b. o-ser-a   kot-ke   õt etaop
        1s-go-Them   fut-desid.1/2 I frust
        'I want to go, but I won't'/ 'I would like to go, but...'

---

2. Rodrigues (1953) describes a 'frustrative aspect' marked in the verb in Tupi that is similar in
function to Mekens frustrative sentence type. That is the first reference that I am aware of to this
combination of form and use in a language of the Tupi family.

c. põi-pïik   sobekar-a   sete   etaop
entrails-black desire-Them he/she frust
'S/he wants (to drink) coffee, but there isn't any'
'S/he wants (to drink) coffee, but cannot'

4.1.2 IMPERATIVE

Imperative sentences may express requests, orders, commands, instructions and the like (Sadock and Zwicky 1985). Like the prototypical imperatives, Mekens imperatives are limited to second person subjects, both singular and plural, and have a negative marker different from the one used in other sentence types. Although Mekens has an ergative pattern for marking the verbal arguments (cf. section 2.3.2.3) and different forms for transitive and intransitive imperatives, imperatives in the language follow the crosslinguistic pattern where it is always subjects that are addressees for imperatives, independent of the verb type.

Mekens distinguishes between transitive vs. intransitive, and affirmative vs. negative imperatives. The formal distinction between each of these subtypes is a result of the following features combination: presence or absence of the theme suffix /–a/, subject agreement marker on the verb, subject pronoun, tense markers, and the negative suffix /–bõ/. The distribution of these formal features in the four imperative subtypes is set out in table 14 below.

IMPERATIVE DISTINCTIONS	THEME SUFFIX /–a/	SUBJECT MARKER	SUBJECT PRONOUN	TENSE MARKER	NEGATIVE MORPHEME /–bõ/
TRANSITIVE AFFIRMATIVE	X				
INTRANSITIVE AFFIRMATIVE	X	X			
TRANSITIVE NEGATIVE			X		X
INTRANSITIVE NEGATIVE		X	X		X

TABLE 14: The form of imperative sentences

As we can see in table 14 above, transitive affirmative imperative verbs are marked with the theme suffix /–a/, and have no indication of subject, either by verbal agreement marker or by an overt noun or pronoun in the clause. Moreover they do not appear with any of the tense markers that occur in the language. An example is given in (6a) below, the relevant imperative construction is italicized.

6. a. *o-iko   ar-a*   apara-ari
      1s-food get-Them   banana-Abl
      'Bring my banana' (Lit. Bring my food, banana)

Absence of subject marker may at times be the only difference between the imperative and an affirmative unmarked declarative sentence in the past, since the past tense marker may be freely omitted (cf. section 2.3.3.3). For contrastive purposes, (7a–b) show a transitive affirmative imperative and a corresponding unmarked affirmative declarative, respectively.

7. a. kɨpkɨba   posa-a
      tree   fell-Them
      'Cut down the tree!'

   b. kɨpkɨba   posa-a   ĕt
      tree   fell-Them   you
      'You cut down the tree'

Intransitive affirmative imperatives differ from transitive imperative only in having a subject agreement marker on the verb, as shown in (8a-b). Intransitive imperatives are distinct from intransitive declarative sentences, since contrary to intransitive declaratives (cf. (2a) above) imperatives do not allow for an overt noun or pronoun cross-referencing the subject marker.

8. a. e-er-a
      2s-sleep-Them
      'Sleep!'

b. e-ia
    2s-come.Them
    'Come!'

Negative imperative verbs do not have the theme suffix and are marked with the negative suffix /–bõ/, which attaches directly to the verb root. On the other hand, they have an obligatory subject marker. Subjects of transitive negative imperatives are marked by the enclitic second person pronouns following the negative marker, as seen in (9a). On the other hand subjects of intransitive negative imperatives are doubly marked by the agreement marker on the verb and the enclitic pronoun after the negative suffix, as in (9b). As was said at the beginning of this section, the negative suffix used in imperatives is distinct from the one used in negative declaratives (cf. also section 2.3.3.5).

9. a. i-ko=bõ   ẽt
        OM-ingest=Neg you
        'Do not eat!'

    b. e-er=õ   ẽt
        2s-sleep=Neg you
        'Do not sleep!'

When we compare the formal features of imperative sentences, we note that there is very little coincidence of features between affirmative and negative imperatives. In fact, only in intransitive imperatives is there one feature shared by both affirmative and negative sentences, namely the presence of an obligatory second person subject marker on the verb. The distribution of features shown in table 14 above and the occurrence of the special negative marker /–bõ/ suggest that Mekens has grammaticalized a sentence subtype to express negative sentences with imperative (general prohibitions): the prohibitive sentence (sub)type.

Two syntactic constructions deserve mention in this section on imperative sentences. The first relates to the crosslinguistic association of imperatives with irrealis mode. One frequently cited example is the use of the second person future verb form in Modern Hebrew to also express imperative meaning (cf. Sadock and Zwicky 1985:176–77, and Payne 1997:304). While Modern Hebrew does have a specific verb form for the imperative, the future verb form may also be understood as imperative. Thus, the verb form *tešev* means either 'sit down!' or 'you will sit down.' Sadock and Zwicky (*ibid.*) note that even though this overlapping is only complete in affirmative sentences, prohibitive constructions are also formed with the future verb form plus a special negative marker to express prohibitive constructions. Thus, while the verb form *lo' tešev* has only the future meaning 'you will not sit down,' the prohibitive verb is based on the future form, though with a different negative marker, as in *al tešev* 'do not sit down!'

A similar construction occurs in Mekens involving the future particle '*paat/pa³*.' Future tense in Mekens is marked by a set of particles (cf. section 2.2.9). The particle '*paat*' has a regular future meaning in sentences with non–second person subjects (10a-b), but an imperative meaning, expressing commands, with second person subjects (10c–d).

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3 . The two forms of this particle are in complementary distribution: '*paat*' is used for third person and 'pa' for first and second person subjects. However, there are a few examples of the form '*paat*' used with second person subjects. The examples in (a-b) below suggest that '*pa*' is used when the sentence has only a future meaning, and 'paat' when it has both a future and an imperative meaning, as discussed in the body of text. We will refer to this future particle in the text by its third person form '*paat*,' but this variation remains to be further investigated.

| a) | pe tira pa ẽt kẽra | 'Will you skin it off ?' |
| b) | nop, ẽt te pe tira paat | 'No, it is you who will skin it off!' |

10. a. õr=ẽp ka   pa   õrõt
       I=self go/come   fut.1/2   I-emph
       'I will go by myself'

    b. se-aso   paat   te
       3c-bathe   fut.3   truly
       'He WILL bathe'

    c. pɨke   pa   ẽrẽt   e-same-apõ   ẽrẽt
       lie   fut.1/2 you-Emph   2s-good/well-neg   you-Emph.
       'You will lie (in bed), you aren't well'/ 'Lie (in bed)! You aren't well'

    d. s-okwa   paat   ẽr=ẽt
       OM-wash   fut.3   you-Emph.
       'YOU will wash it'/ 'Wash it!'

Nonetheless, in spite of the exclusive future translation given here for sentences like (10b) with third person subjects, we should note that speakers of Mekens have observed that these sentences do in fact contain an implied indirect command. That meaning is lost when translating into languages like English or Portuguese that do not have imperative forms for non–second person subjects. We tried to convey the implied command by stressing the future modal.

The future-imperative construction does not constitute an imperative type, according to the definition we are using here. It is not mutually exclusive with the other sentence types. For instance, it co-occurs with interrogative markers in the language, as shown in (11a) below. Note that only the future meaning remains.

11. a. ki-pe   okwa paat   ẽt   kẽra
       1pin-clothes   wash   fut.1/2 you   Nassert
       'Will you wash the clothes?'

The other construction of relevance to this section is the use of vocatives in imperative sentences. It was said above that in affirmative imperatives only the subjects of intransitives are overtly marked, and only by means of a verbal agreement marker.

Nonetheless it is always possible to overtly identify an imperative addressee by adding

his/her name to the end of the clause as a vocative, as seen in (12a) below.

12. a. erape   e-isa   o-mepit
       tomorrow   2s-come   1s-son
       'Come tomorrow, my son!'

In addition to the affirmative and prohibitive, there is another imperative

subtype in Mekens: the HORTATIVE, as described in the following section.

4.1.2.1 HORTATIVE – PERMISSIVE

Hortative sentences express desire for actions; they are used to 'urge or suggest

a course of action to be followed by the [speaker] and the addressee' (Sadock and

Zwicky 1985). Hortative sentences are normally treated as a subtype of imperative since

the addressee of these sentences is expected to perform some defined action. Mekens

has two hortative types: the first (Hortative) is restricted to first person plural subjects,

and differs formally from imperatives only in transitive constructions. The second type

of hortative (Permissive) is formally distinct from the imperative in transitive and

intransitive constructions and occurs with first and second person subjects.

Notwithstanding these differences, we shall see that there are sufficient similarities

between the hortative and imperative to allow us to group the two types together as

imperatives at large.

The hortative distinguishes between transitive and intransitive constructions.

The former resembles the first person hortative forms of languages like English and

Portuguese. It consists of a special hortative verb form –ot 'go; let's' marked with first

person plural subject agreement followed by the transitive verb (phrase). The hortative

verb is marked with the theme suffix /–a/, like the regular affirmative imperatives; while

the second verb may or may not be marked in this way. Sentences (13a–b) show

hortative constructions with a transitive verb.

13. a. ki-or-a   i-at
        1pin-go-them OM-get
        'Let's go get it!'

b. arẽp   ki-or-a   ororay posa-a
    then   1pin-go-them patoá fell-them
    'Let's go fell *patoá (a palm tree fruit)*!'

The hortative type with intransitive verbs. is formally identical to imperatives,

the only difference being that they have a first person plural subject, as shown in (14a)

below. The hortative verb is also used as a main intransitive verb. It can occur by itself

(14b) or in conjunction with the resumptive morpheme (14c).

14. a. ki-er-a
        1pin-sleep-them
        'Let's sleep!'

b. arẽp   ki-or-a
    then   1pin-go-them
    'Let's go!' (Txt)

b. ki-or-a-ra   ose-i-a   pibot
    1pin-go-them-Res   1pex-Aux.pl-sim   arrive
    'Let's go! We went and arrived (there)' (Txt)

There is one specialized use of the hortati ve construction with transitive verb

that is coded like imperatives. The sentence '*kiiko ka*' is formally ambiguous between

an imperative 'eat our food!' and a hortative meaning 'let's eat'. However, the hortative

meaning is the favored meaning in an unmarked context. The complete morpheme–by–

morpheme gloss is given in (15).

15. a. ki-iko   ka
        1pin-food   ingest
        'Let's eat!'/ 'Eat our food!'

The hortative–permissive construction on the other hand is marked with the hortative particle 'soga' (cf. section 2.2.9). The verb in a hortative sentence is not marked with the theme suffix /–a/, as (16a-d) shows. A special feature of permissive sentences is the possibility of omitting the subject marker in both transitive (16a-b) and intransitive verbs (16c–d).

16. a. o-toyākwa   soga
        1s-spank-pl.action   hort
        'Come beat me!'/ 'You may beat me!'

    b. o-toyākwa   soga   ĕt
        1s-spank-pl.action   hort   you
        'Come beat me!'/ 'You may beat me!'

    b. sct   soga,   o-maykit
        leave   hort   1s-nephew
        'Go ahead, my nephew'/ 'You may go, my nephew' (Txt)

    d. e–set   soga
        2s-leave hort
        'Go ahead!'/ 'You may go' (Txt)

As said above hortative–permissive sentences occur with first and second person subjects. In the former construction, the hortative particle occurs by itself with the meaning 'let's go.' In the latter, the hortative particle follows the verb, and thus cannot be clause initial. Examples (17a–b) show the contrast between first and second person hortative–permissive sentences.

17. a. poret   sete   soga–a   te   sirik   iriri   siit   tĕĕt
        now,then   he/she   hort–them   foc   leave.pl   walk.pl   small   only
        'Then, he (said) 'let's go', and they left, but walked just a little (...)' (Txt)

    b. e-toop soga,   o-sey
        2s-lie hort   1s-uncle
        'You may go to bed, uncle' (lit. you may lie down, uncle') (Txt)

Moreover, second person hortative–permissive sentences are also used as echo clauses, simply encouraging the addressee to proceed with the action that s/he has already decided to engage him/herself in. This use is illustrated in the following pair of sentences (18a-b).

18. a. o–ser–a–r=õt
1s–leave/go–Them–?=I
'I'm going' (lit. 'I leave')

b. e–set   soga   neara
2s–leave/go   Hort   again
'That's a good idea' or 'Yeah, go again'

4.1.3 *INTERROGATIVE*

Interrogative sentences are characteristically used to request information rather than make statements or assertions. Therefore, they generally 'elicit a verbal response from the addressee' (Sadock and Zwicky 1985). The major crosslinguistic types of interrogative sentences are yes–no (or nexus) questions, alternative questions, and information questions. Alternative questions are generally considered a subtype of yes-no questions.

Yes-no questions are used to gain information about the 'degree of truth of the questioned proposition,' (Sadock and Zwicky, *ibid.*) and generally expect as answer a simple affirmative or negative response, according to the answer system used in the language. Thus, in languages that use affirmative-negative polarity terms, a simple yes or no would suffice as an answer to yes-no questions.

In alternative questions the speaker asks the 'interlocutor which of two [or more] alternatives holds,' and 'a felicitous answer consists in indicating one of the

alternatives' (Comrie 1984:23) That is, the answer is expected to be drawn from the list

provided by the speaker (cf. Sadock and Zwicky 1985:179).

Information questions, on the other hand, are used when the speaker presupposes

that a proposition is true in order to seek to gain detailed information on one of its

elements. They are related to alternative questions in that they also specify the range of

answers.

In the following sections, we show that these three major distinctions among

interrogative sentences are also grammaticalized in the syntax of Mekens.

4.1.3.1 YES–NO QUESTIONS

Two formal features characterize yes–no questions in Mekens: a final rising

intonation contour and the particle 'kẽrã'[4]. Yes–no questions are used to perform a

series of conversational tasks. In addition to the conventional use of soliciting

information, they are also used for rhetorical effect, and for confirmation of information

that the speaker already possesses. However these two latter uses are not formally

distinct from general yes–no questions, thus they do not constitute a distinct sentence

type in the language.

The non–assertive particle 'kẽrã' occurs at the end of the clause in neutral yes–

no questions, that is, in questions asking about the degree of truth of the entire sentence,

as seen in (19a–b). Adverbial phrases may follow the non–assertive particle.

19. a. isĩ   mi-a   ẽt   kẽra
      deer kill/shoot-them you Nassert
      'Have you killed a deer? / Did you kill a deer?'

---

4 . The particle 'kẽrã' is labeled 'non–assertive', instead of interrogative because it may also express uncertainty about the truth of a proposition; for instance, it may be used to mark a statement that it is supposed to be true, but the speaker is not certain about it or does not want to commit him/herself to its veracity.

b. e-sera ĕt kĕra kirĕp
2s-leave-them you Nassert today/now
'Are you leaving today?'/ 'Do you leave today?'

However, yes–no questions may also focus on one element of the sentence. In this case, only the focused constituent is interrogated, the remainder of the proposition is presupposed. In such focused yes–no questions, the focused constituent occurs in focus position, sentence initially, marked with the focus particle 'te'. The non–assertive particle follows the focus marker[5]. This use of yes–no questions may still elicit a regular positive or negative response, but a contrastive answer is generally found in response to such questions. The examples in (20a–b) show a contrastive or focused yes–no questions. (20b'-b") illustrate the type of response that focused yes-no questions may elicit from the addressee.

20. a. ĕt te kĕra e-era e-toop
you foc Nassert 2s-sleep-them 2s-aux.lying.pres
'Is it you who is sleeping?'

b. isii te kĕra e-i-mi
deer foc Nassert 2s-OM-kill/shoot
'Is it a deer that you killed?'

b'. isii ebō=ĕp te o-i-mi
deer truly=really foc 1s-OM-kill/shoot
'It is really a deer what I killed'

b".isii te
deer foc
'It is a deer'

The non–assertive particle and the focus marker may sometimes be omitted; in which case the sentence looks like an unmarked declarative sentence (21a). In these

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5 . Sadock and Zwicky (1985:182) describe a similar system of neutral vs. focused yes–no questions in Latin.

cases only the intonation contour and contextual information distinguish the sentence as being a question. Thus, out of context sentence (21b) is potentially ambiguous between an interrogative and a non-interrogative meaning, while sentence (21b') with the non-assertive particle at the end of the clause is not ambiguous in that way.

21. a. e-ser-a   tekwaemo
        2s-leave-them also
        'Are you leaving too?'

    b. e-ser-a   ebõ   ẽt
        2s-leave-them truly   you
        'Are you really leaving?'/ 'You are really leaving.'

    b'. e-ser-a   ebõ   ẽt   kẽra
        2s-leave-them truly   you   Nassert
        'Are you really leaving?'

As was said above rhetorical questions are formally identical to regular yes-no questions. Sentence (22) below is an instance of a rhetorical question. That particular question was spoken in a situation where the speaker saw the addressee approaching, and went to meet him at the moment he was dismounting from his horse.

22. a. pibora   eyat   kẽra
        arrive-them   you.pl Nassert
        'Have you then arrived?'
        'Did you arrive?'

In fact rhetorical questions of this type are the usual way to greet someone that has arrived. The small dialogue reproduced in (23) below illustrates one of the conventional greetings.

23. a. o–ib–a
        1s–come–Them
        'I came'

    b. e–ib–a   ẽt   kẽra
        2s–come–Them you   Nassert
        'Have you come?'/ 'Did you come?'

a'. o–ib–a   e–so–a
    1s–come–Them   2s–see–Them
    'I came to see you'

b'. kaat   ebõ
    that   truly
    'Good!' (lit. 'It is truly that way')

Mekens employs two systems of expressing short answers to questions: the echo– system used for affirmative answers and the yes–no system used for negative short answers. The former simply repeats the verb of the question in an affirmative answer; while the latter uses a special negative particle '*nop*' or a combination of the negative particle plus the pronoun *õt* 'I', when the questioned addressee is directly involved in the proposition. One particularity of short answers to questions in Mekens is that the object of a transitive verb is frequently omitted, even though there is a strong requirement for the object to be overtly marked otherwise (cf. sections 3.3). The pairs of sentences below show the two systems of short answers. In (24a–a') there is a pair of question and affirmative answer, and in (24b–b'') a pair of question and negative answer. Examples (20b'-b'') above have already illustrated possible forms of answers to yes–no questions focusing on one element of the proposition.

24. a. e-iko   sobekar-a   ẽt   kẽra
         2s-food desire-them   you   Nassert
         'Are you hungry?' (lit. 'Do you want your food?')

    a'. sobekar-a   õt
          desire-them   I
          'Yes, I do' (lit. 'I want')

    b. ki-pe   okwa   paat   ẽt   kẽra
         1pin-clothes   wash   fut.3 you   Nassert
         'Will you wash the clothes?'

b'. nop,   ẽt   te
No   you   foc
'No, you will'/ 'No, you will do it'

b".nom=õt
no=I
'No, I won't' (lit. 'not me')

Sentence (25) below show the non–interrogative use of the particle 'kẽrã'. Note

that they are identical to the yes–no questions seen above. One difference however is

the lack of final rising intonation.

25. a.   ikɨ=bõ   ka   pɨbot te=bõ ikɨ   se-aso-a   se-ko-a   kẽrã
water=Dat   go/come   arrive 3=Dat   water 3c-bathe-Them   3c-Aux.mov   Nassert
'He went to the small river, got there, at the river, and bathed, or so it
seems'(Txt)

4.1.3.2 ALTERNATIVE QUESTIONS

Alternative questions are formally related to yes–no questions. They are also

formed with the non–assertive particle 'kẽrã.' The sentences in (26a–c) below illustrate

the different forms of alternative questions, depending on which constituent is

questioned and/or given as alternative. In (26a) two whole sentences are given as

alternatives, thus the question consists of two juxtaposed regular yes–no questions. The

two juxtaposed questions have the same intonation pattern of two independent yes–no

questions, that is, a final rising intonation contour. (26b) focuses on the object of the

dependent clause; the alternatives are listed in the focus sentence–initial position,

followed by the focus and the non–assertive particles. In (26c) on the other hand, the

focus of the question is on the subject. In this case, a regular subject focus information

question of the type 'who does X?' is followed by the two alternative choices, which are

themselves framed as simple yes–no questions. We should note that each of the

sentences in (26) could be framed in any of these three forms of alternative questions.

The only unattested example is of sentences like (26c) framed as (26b).

26. a. pe   okwa pa   õt kẽra   kɨrit tẽẽt so   pa   õt   kẽra
    clothes wash fut.1/2 I Nassert child only see fut.1/2 I   Nassert
    'Will I wash the clothes too or will I watch the kids only?'

    b. ameko   taose-pɨɨk   te   kẽra   o–sey   i–maay kaat õt
       jaguar/dog   *caititu*-black foc Nassert 1s-uncle   OM–tell QUOT I
       'Is it a jaguar or a peccary that my uncle is talking about?' I said'

    c. apo   te   se–set   pegat: ẽt   te   kẽra õt   te   kẽra
      who foc 3c–leave   fut   you foc Nassert I   foc Nassert
      'Who is going: you or me?' (lit. 'Who is going? Is it you or is it me?')

4.1.3.3 INFORMATION QUESTIONS

Information questions in Mekens are formed with a special set of interrogative words, which are independent of the non–assertive particle used in yes–no questions. Another difference between information and yes–no questions is that the former do not have the final rising intonation found in yes–no questions.

Question words occur sentence–initially, which is the typical focus position in Mekens. Moreover, question words are optionally followed by the focus particle '*te*', especially when the focus of the question is the object argument. All logical elements of a proposition in a sentence may be questioned, though different strategies may be used for more peripheral elements, as we will see below.

4.1.3.3.1 WHO/ WHAT – QUESTIONING THE CORE ARGUMENTS: SUBJECT AND OBJECT

As we saw in section 1.1.5 above, there are phonological as well as lexical differences among the dialects of Mekens. One of the lexical differences is found in the choice of question words used to question subject and objects. In the Guaratira dialect,

the question word *apo* 'who' is used to question subjects and human objects; and *arop*

'what' is used to question non–human objects; whereas in the Sakɨrabiat dialect, the

question word *arop* 'who/what' is used to perform both tasks. The contrast between

human and non–human interrogative words in the Guaratira dialect is seen in sentences

(27a–b) below[6].

27. a. apo=ẽp   te   e–i–sop
         who=really   foc   2s–OM–see
         'Who did you see?'

    b. arob=ẽp   te   e–i–mi
         what=really   foc   2s–OM–shoot/kill
         'What did you shoot/kill?'

The one obligatory feature that marks information questions focusing on

subjects and objects is the presence of the interrogative words *apo* 'who' and *arop*

'who/what' in sentence initial position. In addition, the interrogative word may be

followed by the enclitic particle *ẽp* 'really; truly' and/or the focus particle '*te*,' as seen

in the above examples.

There are also morphosyntactic features of the clause in Mekens that help

distinguish between subject and object focus questions. When the subject of the

sentence is questioned, the verb is marked with the theme suffix /–a/,[7] and is thus no

different from the verb in unmarked declarative sentences. Examples in (28) show

subject focus questions with transitive and intransitive verbs in both dialects. Sentences

(28a–a') are illustrative of the Guaratira dialect, and (24b-b') of the Sakɨrabiat dialect.

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6 . We should note that there is also a non–interrogative word '*arop*' meaning 'thing; possession'.

7 . As we saw in section 2.3.3.1, when the verb root ends in /a/, the final root vowel tends to fuse with the theme vowel suffix /-a/.

28. a. apo=ẽp   o-so-a-t   p͂ip
        who=really   1s-see-them-past   yesterday
        'Who saw me yesterday?'

   a'. apo   eke   pibor-a   te
        who   that   arrive-them   he/she
        'Who arrived? (lit: 'Who is that one that he arrived?')

   b.   arob=ẽp   ameko   mi-a-t
        who/what=really   jaguar/dog   kill/shoot-them-past
        'Who killed the jaguar?

   b'. arob=ẽp   se-er-a-t
        who/what=really   3c-sleep-them-past
        'Who slept?

On the other hand, when the information question focuses on the object, the verb appears in the inverse agreement form. The verb does not take the theme suffix or the past tense marker, when it is in the past. Moreover the verb in object focus questions has subject agreement and the grammaticalized object marker (OM). Object focus questions take the same form as object cleft constructions. Thus a more accurate translation of sentences like (29a) above would be *Who is it that you saw*? For a further description of the inverse agreement in object focus constructions see section 4.4.2 below. Sentences in (27a-b) above are illustrative of object focus questions in the Guaratira dialect, while sentences (29a-b) below illustrate object focus questions in the Sakirabiat dialect.

29. a. arob=ẽp   ameko   i-sõpo
        who/what=really   dog/jaguar   OM-kill
        'What did the dog kill?'

   b.   arop   te   kẽra   o-i-may   pek
        wh   foc   NonAssert   1s-OM-tell   fut
        'What perhaps am I going to tell?'

This distinction on the verb between subject and object focus questions is related to the word order of interrogative questions and the structural properties of verb phrases in Mekens. We saw in section 3.3 above that the object NP forms a constituent with the transitive verb, but that the subject NP does not. Therefore, questioning the object in sentence initial position violates the adjacency and linear order constraints of verb phrase constituents (cf. section 3.3.), whereas questioning the subject does not.

The use of the emphatic particle '*ẽp*' following subject and object interrogative words is so frequent that we were misled into analyzing it as part of the interrogative word (Galucio 1996). However, whether or not it occurs is determined by the speaker's wish to emphasize the questioned constituent; and it is really a choice that the speaker has at his/her disposal. The emphatic particle is quantitatively more frequent in subject than in object focus questions.

On the other hand the use of the focus particle '*te*' following the question word is more frequent in object focus questions. In fact, it is hard to find examples of object focus questions without the focus particle. This distribution is a direct result of the word order pattern in Mekens, in the same way that the verb form distinction between subject and object focus questions is. We have seen in previous sections of this work that the unmarked word order in simple sentences is SOV. In subject focus questions, the interrogative word occurs in the same position that the subject occurs in a declarative sentence. On the other hand, object focus questions will necessarily have a constituent order different from a corresponding declarative sentence: OSV vs. SOV. Thus, the use of a formal focus marker would be pragmatically and structurally more expected in object than in subject focus questions, while the emphatic particle would be expected to

occur more frequently in subject focus questions to emphasize the fact that it is being
questioned. Examples (30) and (31) below show different forms of subject and object
focus questions, respectively.

30. a. apo=ẽp   se-ia   pĩĩp
     who=really 3c-come-them yesterday
     'Who came yesterday?'

  b. apo te   se-ia   pĩĩp
     who foc 3c-come-them yesterday
     'Who came yesterday?'/ 'Who is it that came yesterday?'

31. a. arob=ẽp   te   o-top   i-mi
     what=really foc 1s-father   OM-kill/shoot
     'What did my father kill?'

  b. arop te   te   e-i-ko
     what truly foc 2s-OM-ingest
     'What did you eat?

In nominal interrogative sentences of the type 'who is X?' or 'what is X?' the
interrogative word occurs in initial position followed by any of the emphatic particles in
the language and/or the focus particle, as seen in (32a-d).

32. a. arob=ẽp   kwamoa
     who/what=really   shaman
     'Who is the/a shaman?'

  b. arop ebõ eke[8]
     what truly that
     'What is that?'/ 'What happened?'

  c. arob=ẽp   eke
     what=really that
     'What is that?'/ 'What happened?'

  d. arob eke
     what that
     'What is that?'/ 'What happened?'

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8. In fast speech, there is a relational morpheme /-r/ following the vowel final particle 'ebõ', e.g.,
'arobebõreke.'

4.1.3.3.2 THE FORM OF INFORMATION QUESTIONS INVOLVING NON-CORE ARGUMENTS

The general form of information questions that focus on non-core arguments is similar to subject and object focus questions in a number of ways, though there are also differences according to the specific element being questioned. They also have sentence initial interrogative words that specify the part of the proposition about which the speaker is inquiring. The verb in the interrogative constructions described in this section does not as a general rule occur with the theme suffix /-a/. Several of the interrogative constructions described below are based on the interrogative word *arop* 'who/what.'

4.1.3.3.21 WHICH – SPECIFIED OBJECT

In questions requiring additional information specifying the object, the interrogative word *ãtkaat* or ae 'which' (Guaratira dialect)[9] and *ãŋka* 'which' (Sakɨrabiat dialect) occurs sentence initially followed by the noun that is the focus of the question. The focus particle '*te*' and the emphatic particles '*ẽp*' or 'te' may also follow the interrogative phrase. The examples in (33a–b) illustrate this construction in both dialects, respectively.

33. a. ãtkaat kɨpkɨba te   te   e-i-sereka   pek
       which   tree   truly foc 2s-OM-cut.down fut
       'Which tree are you going to cut down?'

    b. ãŋka   korakora=ẽp   te   e-i-sõpo   pek
       which chicken=really foc 2s-OM-kill fut
       'Which chicken will you kill?'

---

9. Our hypothesis is that *ae* 'which' is the old form, and that *ãtkaat* is a more recent form, resulting from the more intensive contact with the other dialect.

In an alternative form the interrogative word occurs sentence initially followed by the emphatic and focus particles, and the noun about which additional information is required occurs right dislocated at the end of the clause, as seen in (34a–b).

34. a. ae=ẽp   e-i-pose   pek   kɨpkɨba
        which=really   2s-OM-fell   fut   tree
        'Which tree are you going to fell?'

    b. ãŋka–r=ẽp   te   e–i–sõpo   korakora
        which-rel=really   foc   2s-OM-kill   chicken
        'Which chicken did you kill?'

4.1.3.3.22   WHERE – PLACE

There are two forms for inquiring about places in Mekens. One form occurs with verbal clauses and the other with non–verbal predicate clauses. The former asks about the source or direction/goal of a given element or the location where the event described by the predicate takes place. In this type of question, the interrogative word *ayẽ* 'where' occurs at the beginning of the sentence followed by one of the case marker postpositions (postpositions are described in section 2.2.7) and the verb does not take the theme suffix   /-a/.[10] The case marker postpositions in the interrogative word vary depending on the thematic relations of the predicate, as seen in (35a–d) below. The interrogative word *ayẽ* consists of the local demonstrative *yẽ* 'there' prefixed with the bound morpheme /a–/. The only place where this prefix was identified is in the

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10. There is one example in our the data where the interrogative word *arop* 'what' followed by the dative postposition 'bõ' is used to inquire about the direction/goal of a person. Since only that one example has been identified, we decided not to include it in this presentation, until its use and formal structure is confirmed. The example with its corresponding answer are given in (a) and (b) below. Note that there is no verb in the interrogative sentence.

a) *arob=õ=ẽp pedro*   'Where is Pedro?/ 'Where did Pedro go?'
b) *tabɨr=õ ka te*   'He went to the swidden garden'

formation of interrogative words questioning place. It is also probably related to the old

interrogative ae 'which' in the Guaratira dialect.

35. a. ayẽ=eri   ka   ẽrẽt   e-ip
        where=Abl   go/come   you-Emph   2s-come
        'Where do you come from?'

    b. ayẽ=mo   ẽt   o-pe   õpoatka
        where=Dat   you   1s-clothes keep
        'Where did you keep my clothes?'

    c. ayẽ=ese   ẽt   e-akat
        where=Loc   you   2s-fall
        'Where did you fall?'

The second type of construction is used to ask about the spatial position of an

element and occurs in clauses with non–verbal predicates. This type has a further

subdivision in terms of formal features, however we have not been able to find a

semantic or functional difference corresponding to the formal difference. One form has

the interrogative words *aeke* 'where.sg' or *aeme* 'where.pl' sentence initially followed

by the focus particle '*te*' and the nominal element whose location is inquired after. The

interrogative words *aeke* and *aeme* consist of the demonstratives *eke* 'that.sg' and *eme*

'that.pl,' respectively, prefixed with the bound morpheme /a–/. As indicated in the

glosses, *aeke* is used with singular subjects and *aeme* with plural subjects, as seen in

(36a–b) below. There is one example in the data (36c) where the interrogative word and

the focus particle occur at the end of the clause, following a conjoined topic NP.

36. a. aeke   te   e-met
        where   foc   2s-husband
        'Where (sg) is your husband?'

    b. aeme   te   emepir=iat
        where.pl   foc   2s-son=col
        'Where are your kids?

c. e-si   e-top   kaat   aeme te
   2s-mother   2s-father   conj   where.pl foc
   'Where are your mother and your father?' (Lit. 'Your mother and your father, where are they?')

In the other construction the word '*te*' occurs at the beginning of the sentence followed by the nominal whose location is inquired, as seen in (37a–b). There are at least two possibilities of analysis: (i) 'te' is the focus particle; or (ii) 'te' is the third person singular pronoun. Although we have no formal grounds to decide between (i) and (ii), based on the similarity in form and function between sentences (36) and (37), we choose to analyze these forms as sentence fragments, in which the interrogative word *aeke* or *aeme* is omitted. Thus, the initial '*te*' in these sentences is the focus particle. (37b') is a possible short answer to the question in (37b).

37. a. te   o-iko   aira   apara
       foc   1s-food   piece   banana
       'Where is my piece of banana? (Lit. 'Where is my food, a piece of banana?')

     b. te   pedro
       foc   pedro
       'Where is Pedro?'

     b'. oẽp   i-top
       already   3-lying.down
       'He is already in bed' (Lit. 'He is lying down already')

4.1.3.3.23   WHY – REASON AND PURPOSE

Information questions that focus on the reason or purpose of a given proposition use the interrogative question *arop* 'what.'[11] Nonetheless, they involve two distinct constructions. When the question focuses on the reason of the proposition, the interrogative word *arop* is followed by the ablative postposition 'eri', resulting in the

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11. There is one example of a 'why–question' that is not based on the interrogative word 'arop.' It is also a composite form that seems to consist of a nominalized form of the manner interrogative word 'ãtkaat' plus the locative postposition 'ese.' The example is given in (a) below.
    a. ãtkaab–ese ẽt e–akat 'why did you fall?'

composite interrogative word *aroberi* 'what from.' On the other hand, when the focus is on the purpose of the proposition, the interrogative word *arop* is followed by the verbalizer particle *na*, resulting in the composite word *arob–na* 'to be what; what for,' which yields a predication of purposive implicature. Both forms may be followed by the emphatic particle *'ɛ̃p'*. Examples (38a–b) below illustrate both of these constructions. The examples in (38a'-b') show felicitous answers to the questions in (38a-b) respectively.

38. a. arob=eri   ɛ̃t   e-ip   nop   p̃ip
      what=from   you   2s-come no   yesterday
      'Why didn't you come yesterday?'

    a'   kwe   kora-a-t   p̃ip
        game.animal   look.for-them-past   yesterday
        'I went hunting yesterday' (lit. 'I looked for game animals yesterday')

    b.   arob   na=ɛ̃p   te   aose   i-poset
       what   Verblzr=really foc   man   OM-fell
       'Why did the man cut down (trees)?' (Lit. What was it for then that the man cut down (trees)?)

    b'.   i-tek   nea-ap   na
       3s-house   cover-Nmlzr   Verblzr
       'To make (be) the roof of his house'
       'It was for covering his house'

4.1.3.3.24   HOW – MANNER

Questions focusing on the manner of an action or event employ the interrogative word *ātka ~ āŋka* 'how; how many.' As the glosses indicate, that interrogative word has two meanings: it is used to inquire about the manner in which a certain event is done (39a–a'), and also the number of participants in a given event (39b–b'). Nonetheless, the two constructions are distinct since the emphatic particle *'ɛ̃p'* may occur only in the former. We should note, however, that this description is not conclusive. For, while the

emphatic particle does not occur in any of the examples where the interrogative word

'*ātka*' refers to the number of participants in an event, we did not have the chance to ask

whether it can or cannot occur there[12].

39. a. ātka=ẽp   te   pɨbot seteyat
     how=really foc   arrive they
     'How did they arrive?' (asking about the mode of locomotion used (car, boat))

   a'. ātka=ẽp   i-kɨat (pe=asisi)
      how=really   OM-thresh (Obl=corn)
      'How does one thresh corn?

   b. ãŋka   ẽrẽt   e–kwat kɨrẽp   kɨptir=õ   ka
     how.many   you-emph   2s-go   today/now bush=Dat   go/come
     'How many times did you go to the bushes today?'

   b'. ātka   eyat   pɨbot
      how.many you   arrive
      'How many of you arrived?'

4.1.3.3.25 WHEN – TIME

Questions focusing on the time of a given proposition differ in a more

accentuated manner from the types of information question presented so far. They are

based on the manner interrogative word *ātka*. A minimal clause consisting of the

interrogative word *ātka* and the auxiliary '*kop*' occurs sentence initially and is followed

by another clause containing the remainder of the proposition. The initial clause

translates 'how were you', and the whole sentence has the form 'how were you (when)

such–and–such happened.' The initial interrogative form consists of a clause and not a

compound lexical word since the auxiliary inflects for person and aspect. The examples

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12. The word 'ātka' is also used in a type of internal measure construction, where it indicates
proximate distance. For instance, in the sentence *ẽ mane tek ātka eke ka ose* 'we walked approximately
the distance between here and that house of Manoel's over there.' In this example 'ātka' indicates the
distance between the departing point 'here' and 'Manoel's house.'

in (40) are illustrative of this construction. Note that the subject marker in the auxiliary

agrees with the person and number of the sentence subject.

40. a. ãtka   e-ko—a   ẽt pɨbot
     how   2s-aux.mov—sim you arrive
     'When did you arrive?'

   b. ãtka   i-ko—a=ẽp   te   o—kip   pɨbot
     how   3s-aux.mov—sim=really foc 1s-younger.cousin/brother   arrive
     'When did my cousin arrive?

   b'. pɨ̃mo=ẽp   te   pɨbot
      yesterday=really   foc   arrive
      'Yesterday he arrived'/ 'It was yesterday that he arrived'

An alternative form, albeit a much less frequent one, for inquiring about the time

of an event is more similar to the other interrogative constructions. The manner

interrogative word '*ãtka*' occurs with the dative postposition '*bõ*' in sentence initial

position, and the predicate follows, as seen in (41) below. The interrogative phrase may

also be followed by the emphatic particle. The only example of this construction found

in the data has the verb 'be.born' as predicate, thus raising the question of whether that

specific construction is lexicalized, since the form with 'how were you when such-and-

such happened' is semantically odd with that verb. This question must remain open

until more relevant data is investigated.

41. a. ãtka=bõ=ẽp   e-esĩra
     how=Dat=really   2s-be.born
     'When were you born?'
     'At what (time) were you born?'

4.1.3.3.26   WHOSE – POSSESSOR

There is a special construction used to solicit information about the possessor of

a given object. This construction involves the interrogative word apo/arop 'who,'

according to the dialectal difference. This construction has also two possible forms. In one form the initial interrogative word is obligatorily followed by the emphatic particle 'ẽp.' The thus formed interrogative phrase may be followed by the focus particle. The noun about which information is required follows everything else. The pair of sentences in (42a-a') show a question and a complete form of answer. This form of the question is ambiguous between a possessive clause 'whose X is this' and a simple definition clause 'what is X?' We should note that this form has not been found in the dialect that distinguishes between human and non–human interrogative words (Guaratira dialect).

42. a. arob=ẽp   teop   kipɨba ape
        what/who=really   Dem.lying.down   tree bark
        'Whose tree bark is this?'

   a'. o–arop   te   teop   kipɨba ape
        1s–thing   foc   Dem.lying.down   tree   bark
        'It is mine, this tree bark'

In an alternative form the interrogative word is immediately followed by the object noun (the possessum) and the emphatic particle follows the whole noun phrase, as seen in (43a–b). This construction is also possibly ambiguous in the same way that the forms in (42) above are, as we see by comparing (43b) and (43c). Sentence (43a) is illustrative of the Guaratira dialect, whereas sentences (43b–c) illustrate the Sakɨrabiat dialect. On the other hand, the answers in (43a'–a") and (43b') are illustrative of short and complete answers in both dialects. There are no differences in the form of answers between the two dialects.

43. a. apo   toap=ẽp   teʔẽ
        who   hammock=really   Dem.suspended
        'Whose hammock is this?'

a'. o–si   toap
    1s–mother   hammock
    '(It is) my mother's hammock'

a". o–toap
    1s–hamock
    '(It is) my hammock'/ 'Mine'

b. arop   kwi=ẽp   te   teop
    who/what   ax=really   foc   Dem.lying.down
    'Whose ax is this?'

b'. o–arop   te   teop   kwi
    1s–thing   foc   Dem.lying.down   ax
    'It is mine this ax'

c. arop   kwe=ẽp   te   pɨka-a
    who/what   animal=really foc   lying.down-them
    'What (kind of) animal is that one lying there?'

There is also a related interrogative construction, which focuses on the recipient

of an element. In this construction the interrogative phrase 'for whom' consists of the

interrogative word *arop* 'who/what,' followed by the homophone word *arop* 'thing;

possession' and the verbalizer and emphatic particles, '*na*' and '*ẽp*,' in that order. Note

that it is the same purposive 'implicated' construction used for inquiring about the

reason of a proposition (cf. section 4.2.3.3.2.3). Sentences (44a–b) below show this

interrogative construction. A short answer to this type of question has the form seen in

(44b'). We should note that we do not have examples of this construction in the

Guaratira dialect, but that could be an idiosyncrasy due to the limitation of data.

44. a. arop arop na=ẽp lucia apara ese–ip
        who/what thing Verblzr=really lucia banana Com–come
        'For whom did Lucia bring banana?'

b. arop   arop   na=ẽp   teyẽ   ŋwaẽ
    who/what   thing   Verblzr=really Dem.sitting   pan
    'For whom is this pan?'

b'. o–tak   arop   na
1s–daughter   thing   Verblzr
'For my daughter' / 'It will be my daughter's possession'

A final interrogative construction that deserves note in this section is the form

arob=esẽp 'with whom,' which consists of the interrogative word arop 'who/what' and

the associative postposition '*esẽp*,' as seen in (45) below.

45. a.   arob=esẽp   se–pibot
      who/what=Assoc   3c–arrive
      'With whom he/she arrived?' (Txt)

4.1.3.4   DEPENDENT INTERROGATIVES

Dependent interrogatives are dependent clauses that take the form of questions.

They are common as complements of verbs such as ask, say, know, and think, but may

occur as complements of other types of verbs, as well.

There is no indirect discourse in Mekens. Therefore, complements of utterance

verbs, such as say, ask, and related verbs, are encoded by reported speech in the form of

direct discourse. As a consequence of this particular feature of the language, dependent

interrogatives occur in Mekens in the same form as in independent clauses. Two

examples are given in (46a–b) below. Sentence (46c) is a potential example of a

dependent interrogative with a non–utterance verb embedded in a yes-no question, but

the interrogative word in the dependent clause is omitted. (46d) has a yes-no question

of complement of the utterance verb 'say', but, as is frequently the case, the utterance

verb is omitted.

46. a.   i-saisi   porẽsopega   'aeme [me]   te   okwa   taab=iat'
      3s-wife   ask   where.pl   foc   1s-brother   relative=col
      'His wife asked: 'where are my brothers?' (Txt)

     b.   i-no   i–porẽsopega-t   'aro=bõ   erẽt   kabare pika-t
       3-other   OM-ask-past   what=Dat   you-emph   rifle   shoot-past
       'The other one asked: what did you shoot at?' (Txt)

c. o-tek   pogab-eg-a   so-a   eyat   kɛ̃ra
1s-house   door–house-them   see-them   you.pl Nassert
'Did you see (who) opened my house?' (Txt)

c. i–so-a   pase o-ŋõ sara   õpa   eyat   kɛ̃ra
OM–see-them   all   1s-pet poor/ugly   kill-them   you.pl Nassert
'She watched well and (said): 'Have you killed my poor little pet?' (Txt)

4.2 NON-VERBAL PREDICATE CLAUSES

Mekens clauses are classified according to the form of their predicate as verbal and non-verbal clauses. The former have been exhaustively illustrated in the last section. In this section we will present the structure of non–verbal predicate clauses.

These clauses include, but are not restricted to, nominal predication. The label non–verbal predicate subsumes all clauses in Mekens in which the semantic content of the predication is not embodied in the crosslinguistic prototypical predicate category, namely the verb. There are three types of non–verbal predicates in Mekens, classified according to the grammatical category that embodies the predication content: nominal predicates, adpositional predicates, and adverbial predicates. Adpositional and adverbial predicates are not entirely verbless clauses; they are formed with a member of the auxiliary category (cf. sections 3.4 and 3.5). The auxiliary provides a grammatical setting for expressing the predication, and adds predicational meaning to the phrase as a proposition. Nonetheless, the auxiliary is semantically empty in the sense that it contributes little or no lexical meaning to the predication.

4.2.1 NOMINAL PREDICATES

Nominal predicate clauses in Mekens conform generally to the crosslinguistic characterization of such clause types. They express the semantic notions of proper inclusion or membership in a class, as in the first translation of (47a), and equation or

referential identity, as in the second translation of (47a) and (47b). Clauses of type (47a)

assert that the referent of one nominal (the subject) belongs to the class of elements that

share the properties represented by the predicate nominal, while clauses of type (47b)

provide a principle of identity that equates the subject nominal with the element

specified in the predicate.

47. a. o–top   kwamoa
       1s–father   shaman
       'My father is a shaman'
       'My father is the shaman'

    b. tabisarã   o–kwa
       chief   1s–older.brother
       'The chief is my brother'

Nominal predicates also subsume the subclass of predicate adjective clauses.

Mekens does not distinguish between nominal and adjective predicates. That is, nominal

predicates also express the semantic notions that are generally ascribed to attributive

clauses (48a). This particular property of nominal predicates in Mekens follows directly

from the fact that adjectives are word stems, and not free grammatical words in the

language (cf. section 2.2.2). Thus, they cannot stand alone as a predication. In order for

an adjective stem to be used predicatively, it needs to occur in an NP headed by a

personal prefix coreferential with the subject nominal, as seen in (48a–b). Note that

(48a') is grammatical with an attributive reading, meaning 'the large tree', but not with

the predicative reading 'the tree is large'. Thus (48a') is only possible as the argument of

a predicate, not as the predicate in a nominal predicate clause.

48. a. kipkiba   i–toroot
       tree   3–large
       'The tree is large'

    a'. * kipkiba toroot

b. o–same   õt
   1s–good/well I
   'I am good'/ 'I am well'

As can be observed in (47) and (48), there is no verbal or other copula element

in the above nominal predicates. The two NPs are simply juxtaposed with no other

extra material required in the clause. That is the regular pattern in present tense nominal

predicate clauses. In all other tenses, the predicate nominal is followed by a copula

element[13]. Thus, with respect to presence or lack thereof of a copula element in nominal

predicate constructions, Mekens illustrates one of the most common crosslinguistic

systems: namely, that of not using a copula in simple present tense clauses, but to use

one in other more marked tenses, aspects or modes. The most famous example of this

system is Russian, which has a copula verb in all finite clauses, except in the simple

present tense.

The Mekens system is further elaborated, as seen in (49a–c) below. In simple

past tense nominal clauses, the nominal predicate is followed by the frustrative particle

'*etaop*'. The use of this particle implies that the set of properties expressed by the

predicate no longer applies to the nominal subject. The simple past tense is distinct from

the other marked tense/aspects in not requiring a copula between the nominal predicate

and the tense/aspect particle(s). The examples in (45a–c) show past, future, and

desiderative future nominal predicate clauses, respectively.

49. a. kwamoa   etaop e–top
         shaman   frust 2s–father
         'He was a/the shaman, your father, but he no longer is'

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13. The term 'copula element' is used here, after Payne (1997:114), meaning 'any morpheme (affix, particle, or verb) that joins, or 'couples, 'two nominal elements in a predicate nominal construction,' that is, in constructions that predicate class membership and/or referent identity.

b. e–top   kwamoa   ne paat
   2s–father   shaman   Predzr fut.3
   'Your father will be a/the shaman'

c. e–top   kwamoa na   kot–kaat
   2s–father   shaman Vrblzr fut–desid.3
   'Your father wants to be a/the shaman'
   'Your father is going to be a/the shaman'

The copula element in Mekens is not a copula verb, but rather an invariant particle that serves to mark a non–prototypical predicate as able to function as a predicate and occur with modal–like particles marking tense, aspect, and/or mode in the language. There are two particles in Mekens that serve this function: *ne* 'predicatizer (Predzr)[14]' and *na* 'verbalizer (Verblzr)'. The only difference we were able to find between these two particles concerns their distribution. The former is used with any non–prototypical predicate, such as noun phrases, adpositional phrases, and adverb phrases. The latter is used only with noun phrases. Thus, as we shall see in section 4.3.2 below, the predicatizer element 'ne' is found in other non–verbal predicate clauses. The difference between (49b) and (49c) is mainly one of lexical choice, since the particles 'ne' and 'na' could be switched in the two clauses, without any change in the meaning of the proposition.

Nominal predicates occur as affirmative (cf. all the above examples in this section) and negative (50a–b) declarative sentences. Negative nominal predicates can be formed either morphologically or periphrastically. The former is done by adding the

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[14]   The term predicatizer was suggested to me by Chris Corcoran (p.c.), who was proposing the term as a unifying description for the function of all the forms of the English copula. She used the term by an analogy to the therm argumentizer. While an argumentizer marks a syntactic structure which does not prototypically correspond to an argument in the semantic structure as being available to do so, a predicatizer marks a given syntactic structure as being available to function as a predicate.

negative suffix to the predicate nominal directly (50a), and the latter through the copula

construction plus the negative particle 'noat' (50b).

50. a. e–top   kwamoa–ap
        2s–father   shaman–neg
        'Your father is not a/the shaman'

   b. e–top   kwamoa   ne   noat
        2s–father   shaman   Predzr   Neg
        'Your father is not a/the shaman'

Nominal predicates also occur in the two major types of interrogative questions:

yes–no questions (51a) and information questions (51b). No example of imperative

nominal predicates were attested, in either natural discourse or elicited data.

51. a. e–top   te   kẽra   kwamoa
        2s–father   foc   Nassert   shaman
        'Is your father the shaman?

   b. arob=ẽp   kwamoa
        who=really   shaman
        'Who is the/a shaman?'

4.2.2 ADPOSITIONAL AND ADVERBIAL PREDICATES

As defined at the outset of this section, adpositional and adverbial predicates are

clauses in which the semantic content of the predication is embodied in an adpositional

and an adverb phrase, respectively. We opted for discussing these two types of non–

verbal predicates together because they have similar structural properties, as we shall

see below. In the following examples, (52a) is an adpositional predicate and (52b) an

adverbial predicate clause.

52. a. o–teg=ese   o–koop
        1s–house=Loc 1s–Aux.mov.pres
        'I am at home'

b. kɨrẽp   ose-it
today/now   1p.ex-Aux.pl.pres
'We are (here) now'

Like the nominal predicates, the two types of non–verbal predicates discussed in this section also have different structures according to the tense/aspect of the clause. Nonetheless, they distinguish between future and non–future clauses, not between present and non–present as nominal predicates do. Non–future clauses, including both simple present and past clauses, consist of the adpositional or adverbial predicate followed by one of the nine auxiliary stems (section 2.2.6). Present tense clauses were shown in (52a–b) above, and past tense clauses are shown in (53a–b) below.[15] As we can see, the clause structure in sentences (52) and (53) is exactly the same; the only difference between past and present tenses in these non–verbal predicate clauses is expressed in the auxiliary stem. Notwithstanding the fact that the auxiliary in such constructions may contribute to the meaning of the proposition the posture of the subject, it does not add to the lexical meaning of the predication. In this sense, the auxiliaries function like the English copula 'be' or the Romance languages copula *'ser/estar'*.

53. a. e–teg=ese   o–ko–a
2s–house=Loc 1s–Aux.mov–sim
'I was in your house'

b. karape=bõ   o–ko–a
stream=Dat   1s–Aux.mov–sim
'I was in the stream'

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15. Both clauses in (53) are examples of past adpositional predicate clauses. We have not being able to find examples of past adverbial predicate clauses, but we propose the same structure of sentences like (53a–b). This hypothesis remains to be tested when we gain access to more data in Mekens.

On the other hand, in future tense clauses the copula particle 'ne' occurs

between the adpositional or adverbial predicate and the relevant modal–like particle, as

seen in (54a).

54. a. Kĩrẽp   ne   paat   (te)
       today/now   Predzr fut.3   he/she/it
       'It will be today'

Adpositional and adverbial predicate clauses were only found in declarative

sentences, both affirmative (cf. examples above) and negative as in (55a–b). Contrary to

nominal predicates, adverbial and adpositional predicates cannot be negated

morphologically with the negative suffix /–ap/. They can only be negated

periphrastically and have the copula particle 'ne' preceding the negative particle.

55. a. ki-akob=ese   ne   noat
       1pin-hot/heat=Loc   Predzr Neg
       'It is/was not in the sun'

a'. * ki-akob=ese–ap
       1pin-hot=Loc–ap
     ('It is/was not in the sun')

b. pĩĩp   ne   noat   te
   yesterday   Predzr neg   (he/she/it)
   'It was not yesterday'
   'It is not the case that it was yesterday'

Other types of locational predicate clauses have the same form used for

adpositional and adverbial predicate clauses. (56a) below is a locational predicate clause

in which the predication is embodied in a demonstrative. Note that this clause is exactly

parallel to the ones in (52) and (53) above.

56. a. eke   i–ko–a
       Dem   3–Aux.mov.sim
       'He/she/it was here'

4.3 COMPLEX SENTENCES

In this section we will introduce the structure of complex sentences in Mekens. Complex sentences are defined as any sentence consisting of more than one clause (cf. section 4.0 above). Therefore this section presents the main strategies of clause combining in the language, including coordinated clauses (4.3.1), adverbial clauses (4.3.2), relative clauses (4.3.3) and complement clauses (4.3.4). We should note here that this section is not intended as an exhaustive coverage of the full array of clause combining in the language, but only as a general survey of the principal strategies used in complex sentence structures.

4.3.1 COORDINATION

Coordination is generally defined as the 'linking of linguistic units which are usually of equivalent syntactic status' (Crystal 1992:84), thus including both the linking of clauses and the linking of phrases. Clause coordination in this sense contrasts with subordination, in which one clause is grammatically dependent on the other on tense–aspect–mode (TAM), case marking, and/or subject/object reference. In section 4.3.1.1 we will consider the different strategies used for clause coordination in Mekens. Section 4.3.1.2 presents a brief overview of phrase coordination.

4.3.1.1 CLAUSE COORDINATION

Clause coordination is thus the linking of two or more clauses of equal grammatical status. It is generally assumed that coordinate clauses are independent of their clausal environment, in the sense that they do not depend on other clauses for TAM reference or subject/object agreement marking, for instance. Though, as Givon (1990:848) has noted, to the extent that clauses are integrated in coherent discourse, they can be independent of their clausal context only to a certain degree. As we shall

see, while coordinate clauses in Mekens are independent in the sense that they are 'fully

inflected and capable of being integrated into discourse on their own', their referential

status is also directly associated with the other members of the conjunct. Thus, they

would fit the definition of 'co–subordination' (cf. Foley and Van Valin 1986).

The major types of coordination generally found in languages are those

expressing the logical interpropositional relations of conjunction, disjunction, and

exclusion, although conjunction and exclusion are more frequently associated with

specific morphosyntactic devices than disjunction. The principal coordinating device

employed in Mekens is juxtaposition. Basically any logical-semantic relation can be

expressed in Mekens through juxtaposition, as seen in (57a–d). Nevertheless, it is also

possible to express conjunction and exclusion using specific coordinating particles,

namely *kaat* 'and' and *etaop* 'but', respectively, as we shall see below.

57. a. s–aisi   i–so–a   s–iyõkoyẽ   i–so–a
        3–wife OM–see–Them 3–brother–in–law   OM–see–Them
        'His wife saw it and his brother–in–law saw it' (Txt)

   b. eke   e–i–at   na   i–no   nop
       that   2s–OM–get   Verblzr   3–other   neg
       'This one is for you, the other one is not' (Lit. this one is what you get, the other one is not')

   c. pooriat mi–a   õt   se–pakwa–r=ap
       tapir   kill/shoot–Them I   3c–die–past=neg
       'I shot the tapir, but it didn't die'

   d. isii   mi-a-r=apõ   õt taose mi-a-r=apõ   õt
       deer   kill/shoot-Them-past=Neg I   caititu kill/shoot-Them-past=Neg   I
       'I didn't kill a deer and I didn't kill a *caititu* either'

Sentences in (57) above illustrate the general type of coordination in Mekens:

the juxtaposition of two or more thematically related events, showing the unmarked

coordination features, as defined in Payne (1985). There is also a specific device used to express the adversative feature, namely the use of the frustrative particle *'etaop'*. The adversative feature differs from unmarked coordination features in that it specifies a contrast between the conjuncts or between the implications of the conjuncts (Payne 1985:6). As was seen in section 4.1.1.2 above, that is the function associated with the frustrative particle, as seen in (58a-b) below.

58. a. pedro   makɨyā mi-a-t   etaop
         pedro   agouti kill/shoot-them-past frustrative
         'Pedro shot but didn't kill the agouti'

    b. o-po-ākā   kora   etaop
        1s-bracelet   search frustrative
        'He/she looked for my bracelet, but didn't find it'

While sentences (58a-b) above translate as coordinate clauses, they are single declarative frustrative clauses in Mekens (cf. section 4.1.1.2). Nevertheless, the same frustrative particle is also used in clause coordination, expressing both simple semantic opposition (59a) and contrastive denial of the second member of the conjunct (60a-b). The two clauses that are conjoined with the particle *'etaop'* are syntactically independent clauses. Examples (60a') and (60b'), without the frustrative particle, contrast with (60a) and (60b), respectively. Note that in the prime examples (60a'-b'), where the frustrative particle is omitted, the second clause is a regular negative clause.

59. a. e-teg=õ   ka   õt   etaop   e-so-a-r=apo   õt
         2s-house=Dat go/come I   frustrative 2s-see-them-past=neg I
         'I went to your house, but didn't see you'

60. a. e-teg=õ   ka   õt   e-so-a-r=apo   õt   etaop
         2s-house=Dat go/come I   2s-see-them-past=neg I   frustrative
         'I went to your house, and almost missed you'

    a'. e-teg=õ   ka   õt   e-so-a-r=apo   õt
        2s-house=Dat go/come I   2s-see-them-past=neg I

'I went to your house and didn't see you'

b. pooriat mi-a   ōt   se-pakwa-r=ap   etaop
    tapir kill/shoot-them I   3c-die-past=neg   frustrative
    'I shot the tapir, and it almost survived (but ended up dying)'

b'. pooriat mi-a   ōt   se-pakwa-r=ap
    tapir kill/shoot-them I   3c-die-past=neg
    'I shot the tapir, but it didn't die'

We should also note that there is one attested example in which the NP

coordinating conjunction *kaat* 'and' (cf. section 4.4.1.2 below) occurs linking two

clauses. This one example is given in (61a) below. Observe that the NP *'aramira'* is set

out as a fronted topic in the first clause. The non-coreferential prefix /i-/ thus occurs in

the second conjunct since the subjects of the two clauses are different (cf. section 4.4.3).

61. a. aramira, aose s-ōpo kaat   i-ser-a-t
        woman   man 3-beat conj   3-leave-them-past
        'The woman, the man beat her and she left'

The strategy of using the coreferential and non-coreferential prefixes to

distinguish between same subject (SS) and different subject (DS) clauses is more

extensively used in subordinate than in coordinate clauses (cf. section 4.4.3 below).

Examples like (61a) above are doubly rare. It is the only clear example of the

coordinating conjunction *'kaat'* linking clauses instead of phrases, and referential

discontinuity is marked in the second conjunct by using the non-coreferential prefix in

the intransitive verb. We have seen in several parts of this work (e.g. sections 2.2.5,

2.3.2.3) that subject agreement in an intransitive verb is normally marked with the

coreferential prefix /se-/. Example (62a) is illustrative of a coordinate clause with shared

subjects. Note that the subject of the second conjunct is marked by the coreferential

prefix /se-/.

62. a. aose   aramira   õpa-a-t   se-ser-a-t
    man   woman   beat-them-past 3c-leave-them-past
    'The man beat the woman and left'

Notwithstanding the ergative pattern of agreement marker shown in the verbs in Mekens (cf. section 2.3.2.3), clause combining in the language follows a nominative pattern. That is, both transitive and intransitive subjects function as the syntactic pivot for clause combining. The unmarked strategy for referential tracking in coordinate clauses is to omit the subject of the second conjunct under coreferentiality with the subject of the first conjunct. Different subjects are overtly expressed. This strategy obviates the need to use the coreferential and non-coreferential prefixes to distinguish between same and different subjects in coordinate clauses. Thus consider examples (63a-c) below. (63a) is a transitive clause with the subject NP *'margarete'* in focus position marked with *'te'*. (63b) is a simple intransitive clause. The complex coordinate sentence in (63c) combines (63a) and (63b). Note that the subject of the second conjunct is omitted and the clause can only mean that *'margarete'* is happy. The presence of the auxiliary in the second conjunct does not affect the relevant issues here.

63. a. margarete   te   olimpio fĩkwa-a-t
    Margarete   foc   Olimpio kiss-them-past
    'Margarete kissed Olimpio'

   b. margarete   se-e-yarap-kwa
    Margarete   3c- Intrvz-happy-TR
    'Margarete became happy'

   c. margarete te olimpio fĩkwa-a-t   se-e-yarap-kwa   naat kop
    Margarete foc Olimpio kiss-them-past 3c-Intrvzr-happy-TR ? Aux.mov.pres
    'Margarete kissed Olimpio and she is happy' (* Margarete kissed Olimpio and
    he is happy)

In order to obtain the meaning that is ruled out by (63c) above, while maintaining the same syntactic structure, the second subject needs to be overtly

expressed. Thereby, parallel to (63c) above we have (64a-b) below, where the subjects

of the two clauses are switched. Note that (64a) is potentially ambiguous since there is

no gender contrast on the pronouns, however the reading with switch subjects is

favored.

64. a. margarete   te   olimpio   fikwa-a-t   se-e-yarap-kwa   sete
      Margarete   foc   Olimpio   kiss-them-past 3c-Intrvzr-happy-TR he/she
      'Margarete kissed Olimpio and he is happy'

   b. olimpio   te   margarete   fikwa-a-t   se-e-yaraap-kwa   te margarete/sete
      Olimpio   foc   Margarete   kiss-them-past 3c-Intrvzr-happy-TR foc Margarete
      'Olimpio kissed Margarete and she is happy, Margarete'

The same strategy is used for conjoining clauses with uninflectible verbs. Recall

that uninflectible verbs are not inflected for either subject or object (cf. section 2.3.2.3).

Therefore there is no possible contrast between the coreferential and non-coreferential

subject prefixes. In conjoined clauses with uninflectible verbs, the subjects of the

second and later conjuncts are omitted under coreference with the subject of the first

conjunct. Different subjects are overtly marked, either by repeating the noun or using

the non-coreferential pronoun. Examples (65a-b) illustrate this distinction. The

discourse particle *arẽp* 'then' is used to emphasize the conjunctive link between the

parts in (65a), and by implicature the 'same subject' referents in the discourse. Example

(65c) is ambiguous between a coreferential and non-coreferential reading. Nonetheless,

the non-coreferential reading is favored, since the unmarked option is to omit a

coreferential subject.

65. a. ãsi   aose   so-a-t   (arẽp) kwat
     mother man   see-them-past (then) leave
     'My mother saw the man and (then) left'

b. ãsi   aose   so-a-t   te   (aose) kwat
    mother man see-them-past (he/she) man leave
    'My mother saw the man and he, the man, left'

c. ãsi   aose   so-a-t   sete   kwat
    mother man see-them-past he/she leave
    'My mother saw the man and he/she left'

4.3.1.2 PHRASE COORDINATION

The principal strategy for phrase coordination in Mekens is simple juxtaposition

of phrases. Examples (66a-b) below are illustrative of NP and VP coordination,

respectively; with coordinate phrases in italics. When the conjoined NPs are argument

of postpositions, the postposition heading the phrase follows the juxtaposed NPs (66c).

66. a. *i-met*   *s-aisi*   i-motkwa naar-i   pe=posõrõ
        3-husband   3-wife OM-make ?-Aux.pl.pres   Obl=bracelet
        'The husband and the wife are making bracelets'

    b. sete *set*   *neara pibot neara*
        he/she go.sg.su again arrive again
        'He went again and arrived (there)'

    c. olimpio   i-mi   *sakirap*   *kwako kwama*=pe
        Olimpio   OM-kill/shoot spider.monkey jacu   nambu=Obl
        'Olimpio killed a spider monkey, a *jacu* bird and a *nambu* bird'

For NP conjunction, in addition to juxtaposition, there are two other strategies.

The first consists in using the postposed conjunction *kaat* 'and' following the last

member of the conjunct, as shown in (67a-b) below. This strategy has also been attested

in clause coordination (cf. example (61) above).

67. a. mario chico kaat   ikwaay mi-a
        Mario Chico conj   tapir   kill/shoot-them
        'Both Mario and Chico killed a tapir'

b. (o-ser-a-ra   kot-ke)   *o-si*   *o-tak*   *kaat*   sob-ra
   1s-leave-them-Res   fut.desid.1/2 1s-mother 1s-daughter conj   see-Res
   '(I want to leave again) to see my mother and my daughter again'

The other strategy of NP conjunction is what Payne (1985:29) called the 'with

strategy,' namely the use of the comitative postposition with one of the members of the

conjunct. Examples (68a-b) show that strategy. Note that in (68a), where both NPs

precede the verb, the plural auxiliary stem is used expressing the NP conjunction in

subject position, as in (66a) above, whereas in (68b) there is a singular auxiliary stem

and the associative PP follows everything else in the clause.

68. a. o-met   o-kwa=sẽp   se-kwar-a   naar-i
      1s-husband   1s-older.brother=Assoc 3c-go/hunt-them   ?-Aux.pl.pres
      'My husband and my brother are hunting'/ 'My husband is hunting with my
      brother'

   b. o-mepit   se-pire naat kop   se-kip   sĩit=esẽp
      1s-son   3c-play ?   Aux.mov.pres 3c-brother   small=Assoc
      'My son is playing with his little brother'

It is a common property of Mekens that conjunct NPs can overlap referentially

in an appositive manner. Thus, the extensive use of juxtaposition for both conjunction

and apposition constructions renders these two constructions indistinct. In sentence

(69a) below there is a mix of apposition and conjunction. The NPs *aramira, saisi* and

Pasiare aisi all refer to the same entity 'Pasiare's wife'; while the NPs *pagop taĩp sĩit*

and *sokwa* both refer to 'Pasiare's brother'. These two referents together are the subject

of the verb *kwep* 'climb'. Heath (1986:391) describes similar facts for the Australian

language Nunggubuyu.

69. a. aramira s-aisi pasiare aisi pagop-taĩp sĩit s-okwa kwep paay   kĩba=bõ
      woman 3-wife Pasiare wife new-male small 3-brother climb palm.tree tree=Dat
      'The woman, his wife, Pasiare's wife and the young little boy, his brother
      climbed in the palm tree.' (Txt)

4.3.2 ADVERBIAL CLAUSES

Adverbial clauses are subordinate clauses that serve an adverbial function, modifying VPs or entire clauses (cf. Thompson and Longacre 1985). As such, adverbial clauses add information to the proposition, but are not an argument of the clause or VP they modify since they are not required by the thematic structure of the matrix verb. Adverbial clauses that have the structure of a full clause are used in Mekens to convey three types of information, namely time, conditional and reason; though reason is more commonly encoded using a derived nominal in a postpositional phrase (cf. 4.3.2.3). The information generally associated with adverbial purpose clauses are conveyed in Mekens by a derived verb phrase (cf. 4.3.2.4)

4.3.2.1 TEMPORAL CLAUSES

There are two types of clauses in Mekens used to convey the information that there is a time relationship between two clauses: simultaneity clauses and temporal sequence clauses. The former is used when the events in the main and embedded clauses overlap in time, while the latter is used when there is a temporal sequence between the events in the two clauses.

Simultaneity clauses are expressed using the past progressive auxiliary stem (cf. section 2.3.3.1). In this sense Mekens uses a crosslinguistic common strategy to indicate simultaneity between two clauses[16]. That is, the same suffix marking the past progressive (or durative) also signals time overlap between the events in the main and embedded clauses. As was seen in section 2.3.3.1 above, the simultaneous suffix /-a/

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16. According to Thompson and Longacre (1985:189), there are two common ways of marking a backgrounded clause as simultaneous with its main clause: either a marker explicitly signaling simultaneity or a continuative, durative, or imperfective aspect marker is used.

serves these two functions in Mekens. Simultaneity clauses can either precede or follow

the main clause, as illustrated in sentences (70a-b) below.

70. a. pagop-taɨp   ese-kwar-a-t   i-er-a   i-to-a
       new–boy   com–leave–them–past 3–sleep–them 3–Aux.lying–sim
       'He carried the young boy, while he was sleeping' (Txt)

   b. *o-er-a*   *o-to-a*   e-e-pɨbor-a
      1s–sleep–them 1s–Aux.lying–sim   2s–Intrvzr–arrive–them
      'While I was sleeping you arrived'

Temporal sequence clauses are marked by the subordinator particle

kaabese/abese[17] 'when' in second syntactic position. The temporal adverbial clause can

either precede or follow the main clause, as shown in (71a-b).

71. a. o-ib-ra   abese tabɨr=eri   ka   ki-po-e-motkwa
       1s–come–Res if/when swidden-garden=Abl go/come 1pin–hands–Intrvzr–make
       'When I come back from the house garden, we (will) work'

   b. ki-po-e-motkwa   *o-ib-ra*   *abese*   *tabɨr=eri*   *ka*
      1pin–hands–Intrvzr–make 1s–come–Res if/when swidden-garden=Abl go/come
      'We (will) work, when I come back from the house garden'

The subordinator particle *kaabese/abese* 'when' can also combine with the past

progressive auxiliary stem to express simultaneity, as seen in (72a-b) below. When the

adverbial clause precedes the main clause, the subordinator particle occurs following

the verbal phrase in the backgrounded clause, as in (72a). However when the main

clause comes first, the subordinator particle can precede the adverbial clause, as in

(72b).

72. a. so=bõ o-erea-ra   o-ko-a   aabese ameko pi–kwak   kwakso-a=õt
       hill=Dat 1s-climb-Res 1s-Aux.mov-Sim if/when jaguar inside-sound listen-them=I
       'When I was climbing the hill, I heard a jaguar's growl'

---

17. *kaabese* is used in the Guaratira and Sakɨrabiat dialects, whereas *abese* is used in the Siwkweriat dialect.

b. o-e–pɨbora   õt kaabese e-opap–para   e-ko–a
  1s–Intrvzr–arrive I if/when 2s–corn–pick   2s–Aux.mov–sim
  'I arrived when you were picking corn'

4.3.2.2   TIME/CONDITIONAL CLAUSES

Conditional clauses are expressed in Mekens by the same subordinator particle used in temporal sequence clauses. Thus, formally there is no distinction between 'if'-clauses and the backgrounded clause in a temporal relationship. The distribution of the subordinator particle is also the same. It normally follows the 'if'-clause (73a) but can also precede it when the main 'then'-clause comes first (73b).

73. a. o-ib-ra   abese   aparẽpkwa ki-po-e-motkwa
    1s–come–Res if/when early   1pin–hands–Intrvzr–make
    'If I come back when it is really early, we (will) work'

  b. o-ka   kot   kaabese i-ko   pa ẽt te pe=ɨa   perek kɨ sete
    1s–ingest im.fut if/when OM–ingest fut you foc Obl=lagoon long water he/she
    'You can eat me if/when you drink all the water of this long lagoon, she (replied) (Txt)

There are attested examples of reality conditional[18] clauses referring to habitual situations (74a–a'), and unreality conditionals referring to hypothetical (74b) and predictive (74c) situations.

74. a. o–kɨp asi   ne   kakwa õt   kwesog=õ   ka   abese
    1s–leg pain Predzr habitual I   distant=Dat go/come if/when
    'My leg always hurts if/when I go a distance'

  a'. tɨero obaat ka   abese o-ti–ora   õt   kwayõpi=bõ
    chicha many ingest if/when 1s–piss–go I   evening=Dat
    'If/When I drink a lot of *chicha*, I piss in the evening'

  b. *aĩkwat*   *sese* *o-itkwa*   *kaabese*   o-ser-a   par=õt
    mosquito   many 1s–sting   if/when   1s–leave–them fut=I
    'I'll leave if lots of mosquitoes sting me'

---

18 . The terms 'reality' and 'unreality' conditionals are used in Thompson and Longacre (1985:190), after Schachter (1971)

c. o-yarap-kwa pa õrõt kwe mi-a abese pe=ẽt
1s–happy–TR fut I–Emph animal kill/shoot–Them if/when Obl=you
'I'll get happy if/when you hunt a game animal'

4.3.2.3 REASON CLAUSES

Information about the reason of the event described in the main clause can be

coded in Mekens by three distinct strategies. The first is to use a reason adverbial clause

marked with one of the subordinator particles *kana/kanapõrã* 'because; for this reason'.

This strategy is illustrated in (75a-b) below. This type of adverbial clause is not

frequently attested either in natural discourse or elicited data.

75. a. o-taka maŋa sete *kana õt o-epirik*
1s–turn cause he/she because I 1s–fall
'He caused/told me to turn, that's why I fell down'

b. kiakop se-koype tapoka-a-t kɨbaapi=iri *kaanapõrã i-eikwa nop te i-top*
kiakop 3c–sister burn–them–past garden=Abl that.for oм–like Neg foc 3-father
'Kiakop burned his sister in the swidden garden, for this reason the father no longer likes him' (Txt)

The second more commonly used strategy employs a postpositional phrase

based on a nominalized form of the verb phrase that conveys the reason of the main

clause event. The nominalized verb phrase functions as the argument of either the

ablative 'eri' or the locative 'ese' postposition, as shown in sentences (76a-c) below.

For reference purposes we call this strategy the nominalization strategy.

76. a. aose se-ekɨbõ noat poret *asoap sese=eri*
man 3c-walk Neg now/then rain many=Abl
'People do not go out because it rains a lot' (Txt)

b. e-i-sõpo naar–iat o-toap mepkwa-ab=eri
2s-OM-beat/kill ?-rem.past 1s-hammock smear-Nmlzr=Abl
'You who killed it in those days because it had smeared my hammock (with excrement)' (Txt)

c. õt o-akara õt o-etayap-ka-ab=ese
I 1s-fall I 1s-slip-TR-Nmlzr=Loc
'I fell down because I slipped'

The third strategy is related to the nominalization strategy. It consists of

employing the pro-form *kaap*[19] 'that' as the argument of the postpositional phrase, in

place of the nominalized verb phrase. The pro-form *kaap* functions as a resumptive

pronoun substituting for the entire sentence that states the reason. An illustrative

example is given in (77a) below.

77. a. kẽra   sete   sĩt   kaat   'kaab=ese   okie   ki-asegaat'
       Nassert he/she small QUOT   that=Loc   we   1pin-increase
       'It seems that the little one said: 'That's why/ for that reason we increased in
       number again' (Txt)

4.3.2.4 PURPOSE CLAUSES

There are no purpose adverbial clauses corresponding to the temporal and

conditional clauses (cf. sections 4.3.2.1-2) or the reason adverbial clauses (cf. 4.3.2.3) in

Mekens. Rather, information generally associated with purpose adverbial clauses, that

is, information about the purpose of a proposition, is expressed in a derived verb phrase

formed with the verbalizer particle *na* 'to be as; in order to be; to become', which yield

a propositional 'implicated' construction, as found, for instance, in Dyirbal (Australia).

Sentences (78a-b) are illustrative of this sentence structure Mekens.

78. a. ãsi   asisi   peropka-a-t   tiero   motkwa-ap na
       mother corn   cook-them-past chicha   make-Nmlzr Verblzr
       'My mother cooked corn to make *chicha*' (Lit. My mother cooked corn for the
       making of *chicha*)

    b. sete   i-õp   se-kip   aisi na
       he/she OM-give 3c-young.brother   wife Verblzr
       'He gave her as his brother's wife'

The verb phrase expressing the purpose of the proposition is formally similar to

the nominalization strategy for expressing the reason of a proposition (cf. section

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19.   The use of pro-forms is described in section 2.2.5 above.

4.3.2.3 above). That is, since the particle *na* can only follow noun phrases, the *na*-derived verb phrase is based on a nominalized form of the VP stating the purpose of the proposition, as indicate by the gloss of the morphemes in (78a-b) above. On the other hand, in sentences (79a-b) below the na-derived verb phrase is based on underived noun phrases, as indicated in the second translation for each example.

79. a. o-etabɨt   motkwa-ra o-tak   o-si   kaat iko   na   neara
       1s-garden   make-Res 1s-daughter   1s-mother conj food Verblzr again
       'I will prepare my house garden again for my mother and daughter to eat'/ 'I'll
       prepare my house garden again as/to be food for my daughter and mother' (Txt)

    b. ameko   isɨɨ sɨ̃it ar-a   kot-kaat   naat kop   se-iko na
       jaguar/dog deer small get-them fut-Desid.3   ?   Aux.mov 3c-food Verblzr
       'The jaguar wants/is trying to catch the little deer for her to eat'/ 'The jaguar
       wants to catch the little deer as/to be her food' (Txt)

The verb phrase stating the purpose of the proposition is not analyzed as an adverbial clause because it does not have the structure of a clause. For instance, it cannot have an overt NP subject. Even when the subjects of the two events are understood as different, there is no overt subject in the purpose phrase, as in (80a) below. Reference for the subject of the derived purpose VP is only gathered from context. In the particular case of (80a) it is the mythological hero who is the central character of the story, and thus the topic of the sentence.

80. a. koikopit   se-top   i-maot   kakwa   *se-ekwe-ap*   na
       type.of.tree   3c-father   OM-transform   habitual 3c-climb-Nmlzr Verblzr
       'It is *koikopit* tree that his father used to transform for his climbing upon' (Txt)

In addition to the construction described above, there is another construction that conveys information about the purpose of another event and translates as a purpose adverbial clause, but similarly to the *na*-derived verb phrases does not have clausal structure. This second construction is restricted to verbs of motion, such as 'come' and 'go'. It consists of a verb of motion plus one or more verb phrases, where the other VPs

are understood as the purpose of the verb of motion. As shown in sentences (81a-b) the

verb of motion can either precede or follow the other VPs.

81. a. kãra   ar-a   eba   kise-set
       brazil.nuts get-them   evid   we–leave
       'We had gone to fetch/get Brazilian nuts' (Txt)

    b. o-ser-a-ra   kot-ke   o-si   o-tak   kaat sob-ra
       1s-leave-them fut-Desid.1/2   1s-mother   1s-daughter   conj see-Res
       'I want to leave in order to/to see my mother and my daughter again' (Txt)

This construction can only be used when all of the VPs have identical subject

reference. This purposive use of verbs of motion is an instance of serial verb

construction in the language. Although there is no formal distinction between a verb of

motion plus a VP stating the purpose and a list of sequentially ordered verb phrases.

Thus, sentences (82a-b) below are ambiguous between a purpose reading and a simple

sequence reading, as indicated.

82. a. o-si   iko   mi-a-ra   kot   o-ser-a-ra
       1s-mother   food   kill/shoot-them-Res   im.fut 1s-leave-them-Res
       'I will go hunt game animals again for my mother to eat'
       'I'll go again, I'll hunt my mother's food' (Txt)

    b. amio apït   na   i-ko-a
       head middle   Vblzer 3-Aux.mov-sim

       seteyat-ib-ra   se-iko   ka-ra   tïero   ka-a   se-aso-a
       they-come-Res 3c-food   ingest-Res   chicha ingest-them   3c-bathe-
       them
       'In the middle of the day, they come back to eat, drink chicha and bathe'
       'In the middle of the day, they come back, eat, drink chicha and bathe' (Txt)

When the subject of the sentence is second person, this construction may also

have an imperative reading, as seen in (83a-b) below.

83. a. e-ib-a   pa ẽt tïero   ka
       2s-come-them fut you chicha ingest
       'You will come again to drink chicha'/ 'Come again to drink chicha'

b. o-taɨp pega   e-ser-a
    1s-son call   2s-leave-them
    'Go call my son'/ 'You go call my son' (Txt)

4.3.3 RELATIVE CLAUSES

Relative clauses (RC) are generally defined as clauses that function as attributive noun modifiers (e.g. Keenan and Comrie 1977, Comrie 1981, Noonan 1985, Keenan 1985, Cole 1987, and references there cited). Such clauses thus typically involve a noun (Head$_{REL}$) whose referent is identified and/or restricted by the relative clause and the relative (restricting) clause itself (S$_{REL}$). Nonetheless, as Keenan (1985:142) observed, the presence of a restricting clause is the defining feature of RCs. Relative clauses in Mekens are structurally similar to cleft constructions and object focus questions, in that the verb has a subject agreement marker and does not carry tense-aspect inflection (cf. section 4.4.2 below). The verb in a relative clause occurs in its bare form; it is never marked with the theme suffix /-a/. Sentences (84a-c) below illustrate the contrast between a coordinate sentence and a semantically corresponding sentence containing a relative clause. In (84a) the two coordinate clauses are grammatically equivalent. They both contain transitive VPs following the general pattern of inflection in declarative sentences (cf. section 2.3.2.3). On the other hand (84b-c), which illustrate the principal relativizing strategy in Mekens, both consist of a main clause containing a transitive VP and an extraposed relative clause that modifies the object NP of the main clause. Relative clauses are italicized.

84. a. kɨypit ar-a   roque õt   i-ka-t
         fish   get-them   Roque I   OM-ingest.them-past
         'Roque caught fish and I ate it'

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b. kɨypit ka-t   õt   *Roque i-at*
   fish ingest.them-past I   Roque OM-fetch
   'I ate the fish that Roque caught'/ 'I ate the fish, the one (that) Roque caught'

c. kɨypit ka-t   õt   *o-i-at*
   fish ingest.them-past I   1s-OM-fetch
   'I ate the fish that I caught'/ 'I ate the fish, the one (that) I caught'

Mekens relative clauses are complete finite clauses in the sense that they contain a subject, an object and a verb. The object marker (OM) /i-/ is the grammatical argument of the verb and occurs when there is no overt NP object (cf. sections 4.4.1 and 4.4.2 below). Recall also that a thematic object NP and an object marker /i-/ co-occurring in the same sentence do not share the same grammatical function and moreover are not coreferential, since there is no necessary agreement of features between them. Therefore, following the general classification of RCs in terms of the position of the S$_{REL}$ with respect to the head noun, RCs such as those in (84b-c) above are headless relative clauses. That is, they are relative clauses which themselves refer to the noun they modify, as indicated in the second translation of each of the above examples. They have neither an external nor an internal Head$_{REL}$. For an additional example, consider also sentence (85a) below.

85. a. õkɨra sĩit   so-a   õt   chico i-mi
       bird   small see-them I   chico OM-kill/shoot
       'I saw the little bird that Chico killed'
       'I saw the little bird, the one that Chico killed'

Consistent with this analysis is the occurrence of examples where the RC occurs by itself, and there is no possible (external) head. As said before RCs are complete clauses. Thus, when taken in isolation a relative clause like *'chico i-mi'* can either mean '(that) what Chico shot/killed' or 'Chico (who) shot/killed it'. Thereby a RC can occur

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by itself as either the subject argument or the predicate in nominal predicative

constructions of equative meaning, as shown in (86a) below.

86. a.   e-i-sop   te   o-i-mi
         2s-OM-see   foc 1s-OM-kill/shoot
         'What you saw is what I killed'

Furthermore a RC can also occur by itself as the object argument of a transitive

verb, where there is no possible coreferential NP in the clause that could function as an

external/internal head, as seen in sentence (87a) below. In this example the RC *o-i-may*

'what I tell' is the object of the verb *piro* 'to have'.

87. a.   o-i-may   piro-apo=ōt
         1s-OM-tell   have-neg=I
         'I don't have anything to tell' (Lit. 'I don't have what to tell') (Txt)

Therefore, in sentences such as (88a-b) below, repeated from (84b-c), the

relative clause that appears to the right of the main clause is a headless RC, which itself

refers to the 'modified' noun. Thus, they are adjoined headless relative clauses. The

interpretation in which the RC modifies the object argument of the main verb is

acquired through a rule of construal, according to which the OM /i-/ in the RC may be

anaphorically linked to a NP occurring elsewhere in the same sentence; which NP is

linked in that way is contextually not syntactically defined.

88. a.   kɨypit ka-t   ōt   *Roque i-at*
         fish   ingest.them-past I   Roque OM-fetch
         'I ate the fish that Roque caught'
         'I ate the fish, the one (that) Roque caught'

    b.   kɨypit ka-t   ōt   *o-i-at*
         fish   ingest.them-past I   1s-OM-fetch
         'I ate the fish that I caught'
         'I ate the fish, the one (that) I caught'

In addition to the headless relative clauses seen in the above examples, it is also

possible for a relative clause to occur modifying an external head noun, as seen in (89a-

b) below. In these cases, they are postnominal externally headed relative clauses, since

the RC occurs to the right of the Head_{REL}. Since the Head_{REL} precedes the relative clause,

the object marker /i-/ occurs inside the RC and is anaphorically linked to the external

Head_{REL}.

89. a. kwe   te   p̃ĩp   o-i-mi   so-a   kot
       animal foc   yesterday 1s-OM-kill/shoot   see–Them   im.fut
       'I will look for the same animal that I shot yesterday' (Txt)

    b. p̃ĩp   te   kwe   o-i-sara-kwa   sop   saa   kot
       yesterday   foc   animal 1s-OM-bad-TR   see   yet   im.fut
       'I will first see the animal that I wounded yesterday' (Txt)

Given their syntactic function relative clauses distributed like noun phrases in

the clause, they can modify a noun and can also be the argument of a verb. Nevertheless

they are clauses as opposed to noun phrases, since they have clausal properties. They

consist of a subject, object and verb. Furthermore, an adverb phrase may occur inside

the relative clause, as seen in the two examples above (89a-b).

The analysis of relative clauses presented here has the advantage of capturing

the similarity between relative clauses and the inverse agreement constructions, the

object focus questions, and the oblique pe=phrase constructions (cf. sections 4.2.3

above, and 4.4.1 and 4.4.2 below). In all of these, the transitive verb agrees with the

subject, has a grammatical object marker, and occurs in its bare form, without the theme

suffix /–a/.

4.3.4 COMPLEMENT CLAUSES

A prototypical complement clause is a clause that functions as an argument

(subject or object) of some other clause (Noonan 1985:42). Sentential complementation

is not often used in Mekens. The language resorts to other strategies to encode

relationships that are frequently associated with sentential complements in languages

like English or Portuguese. Nevertheless a few examples of complement types are

found. They include complements of utterance, immediate perception, and desiderative

predicates. Another general property of Mekens is the absence of complementizers; that

is, there is no form in the language whose function is to identify an entity as being a

complement (cf. definition of complementizer in Noonan 1985:45-6)

The complement of verbs of utterance such as say, ask, and reply are expressed

as a direct quotation. Therefore, the complement clause is a complete finite clause and

involves no shift of the deictic categories (Jakobson 1957) of pronouns, locative

markers and tense markers. There is no indirect speech in Mekens. Illustrative examples

of direct quotes as complements of utterance verbs are given in (90a-b) below.

90. a. po-kãra   ese-ip   pa õt kaat   marly
        hand-beads   com-come   fut I QUOT   marly
        'Marly said that she would bring the bracelets' (lit. 'Marly said "I will bring the
        bracelets")

    b. koñpo õpa-a-t   tõẽt sete   kaat   Pedro
        snake kill-them-past doubt he/she QUOT   pedro
        'Pedro thought that he (someone else) had killed the snake' (lit. Pedro said "he
        killed the snake perhaps")

Complements of immediate perception verbs can be expressed as a sentence-like

complement clause as in (91a), as a derived participial-adjective based on a verb stem

(92b) or as two full clauses, one of which is generally a simultaneity adverbial clause

(cf. section 4.3.2 above), as in (91c). Only in the first case (91a) is the complement of

the verb 'to see' a complement clause as defined in the outset of this section. Neither

(91b) nor (91c) have clausal complements. In the former, the complement is a derived

NP (cf. section 2.4.1.4), whose lexical meaning expresses a clausal relation. The latter

sentence (91c) consists of a main transitive clause, whose object NP is coreferential

with the subject of the adverbial clause.

91. a. tabɨr=õ   o-ko-a   *e-e-pɨbor-a*   so-a-r-apõ   õt
       swidden-garden=Dat 1s-Aux-sim 2s-Intrvzr-arrive-Them see-Them-past-neg I
       'I didn't see that you arrived while I was in the house garden'.

   b. se-e-pagop-taɨp-kwa-pit   so-a ke
      3c-Intrvzr-young-male-TR-part   see-Them Desid.1/2
      'I want to see him become a boy'

   c. pedro mario so-a-t   koñpo õpa-a-t   i-ko-a
      pedro mario see-Them-past snake kill-Them-past 3-Aux-sim
      'Pedro saw Mario killing the snake'. (Lit. 'Pedro saw Mario when he was killing
      the snake')

As for desiderative verbs, there are two forms in Mekens. The first involves a

lexical desiderative verb and may take a complement clause as object argument, as seen

in (92a). The second form involves using desiderative particles in place of a lexical

desiderative verb, as in (92b). This latter form consists of a single clause and thus has

no complementation. Sentence (92c) shows that these two forms are equivalent to each

other and may even co-occur in the same sentence. (92c) is a coordinate sentence.

92. a. i-motkwa   sobekar-a   ebõ
       OM-make   desire-them really
       'He really wants to make it' (Txt)

   b. i-motkwa   kot-kaat   sete
      OM-make   fut-desid.3 he/she
      'He wants to make it'

   c. se-iko   ka   kot-kaat   se-er-a   sobekar-a
      3c-food ingest fut-desid.3 3c-sleep-them desire-them
      'He wants to eat and wants to sleep'

4.4 PRAGMATICALLY MARKED SENTENCE STRUCTURES

In this section we describe three sentence structures of Mekens that are pragmatically marked in the sense that they are used in semantically defined contexts: that is, the pragmatics of the proposition defines the formal structure of the sentence. These three sentence structures are the demoted object construction, the object focus construction, and the reference–tracking construction. In the first two constructions the thematic object is either demoted to oblique or focused; thus, it does not function as the O argument of the verb, and an indefinite prefix /i–/ attaches to the transitive verb. These are the only constructions in Mekens where we encounter both an NP referring to the thematic object of a transitive verb and a pronominal prefix on the verb. In Galucio (1996), these constructions were analyzed as a result of the language's requirement that any transitive clause needs a syntactic object. Thus the /i–/ prefix on the verb would be analogous to ambient it in English, in that it simply serves to fulfill the object argument position required by the syntax of Mekens. Therefore, there would be an /i–/ prefix on the verb whenever there is no object NP in the clause, or when the object is established previously in the discourse, or when the thematic object is not in the regular object position preceding the verb and is either obliquely marked or focused. That was the analysis assumed in section 2.3.2.3 above. In sections 4.4.1 and 4.4.2 the demoted object and the object focus constructions are described and two other possible analyses are entertained: the antipassive hypothesis and the incorporated pronominal hypothesis. In the former hypothesis, the verbal prefix /i–/ is analyzed as an antipassive marker. The latter hypothesis captures the analogy with the English ambient–it, and treats the prefix i– as a pronominal marker incorporated into the verb. Notwithstanding the fact that both he demoted object construction and the object focus construction (OFC) have the verb

prefixed with /i–/, they contrast in the that the verb in the former construction takes

tense–aspect markers, and no subject agreement markers, while in the second

construction the verb is marked for subject agreement, and takes no tense–aspect

markers. In section 4.4.2, we see that there are arguments for an analysis of the OFC in

terms of nominalization, thus, explaining the above mentioned contrast between these

two constructions. In section 4.4.3 we present the strategies for reference tracking

employed in Mekens discourse. One of the strategies used for disjoint reference

between subjects employs the same prefix i– used in the demoted object and the object

focus constructions.

4.4.1 OBJECT DEMOTION – ANTIPASSIVE CONSTRUCTION

The adposition 'pe' was introduced in section 3.4 above. It forms adpositional

phrases with NPs, and functions as a general or default oblique marker in the language.

That is, it occurs with an argument NP that is not in the syntactic position required by

the ordering and adjacency constraints of the language, and simply says of that NP that

it is functioning as an oblique or less central element. For instance, the object NP is

required to be immediately adjacent to the left of its subcategorizing transitive verb.

Thus, when due to other syntactic or pragmatic requirements the subcategorized object

NP appears in a different position, it is marked with the adposition 'pe' if the NP has

been demoted from its object function, and the newly formed adpositional phrase shows

oblique syntactic behavior.

While the syntactic function of the oblique pe-phrase is that of an oblique

adpositional phrase, semantically it can refer to any NP argument in the language. Thus,

notional objects as well as notional subjects of all three types of verbs (transitive,

intransitive, and uninflectible) may appear in an oblique pe- phrase, as may the

possessor NP of a possessive NP construction. In all of the cases, the NP marked with

the adposition 'pe' receives a more peripheral role in the situation being described.

When the *pe*-phrase refers to the thematic object of a transitive verb, the thematic object

NP seems to be de-emphasized, and prominence is given to the action/event being

described. When the *pe*–phrase refers to notional subjects and/or to possessor NPs, such

NPs are non-topic and/or added to the clause in an afterthought manner, and are

generally right-dislocated to end of the clause. A somewhat different situation arises

with uninflectible verbs. While they may be either transitive or intransitive from a

semantic point of view, in the syntax they never show either subject or object agreement

markers(cf. sections 2.3.2.3 and 3.3 above). The subject argument of uninflectible verbs

may be expressed by a noun or pronoun, but the only way to express a thematic object

argument of an uninflectible verb is through the *pe*-phrase construction. Examples of

different argument functions that may occur in an oblique *pe*-phrase are given in (93a-d)

below.

93. a. o-ka   kot   kaabese i-ko   pa   ẽt te pe=ia   perek kɨ
       1s-ingest Im.fut if/when   OM-ingest Fut.1/2 you foc Obl=lagoon long   water
       'You can eat me if you drink all the water of this long lagoon'. (Txt)

   b. o-kwar-ap   kwe   mi-a   ne–kakwa-ap kaat õt=pe kaat.
      1s-leave –Nmlzr   animal kill-them   ?–habit-Nmlzr that I=Obl that
      'When I hunt I always kill game animals in that place'
      (Lit. 'My hunting, the place where I always kill game animals') (Txt)

   c. arẽp eke tepare arikwayõ s-anɨp pãŋkaa=pe i-so-a-t   pe=pasiare
      then dem Tepare Arikwayõ 3s-head broken=Obl OM-see-them-past Obl-Pasiare
      'Then Tepare[20], Arikwayõ saw it, his broken head, Pasiare's (head)' (Txt)

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20. In this clause the names Tepare and Arikwayõ are in an appositive construction and refer to the same person.

d. sigɨ sigɨ sigɨ   te   pe=kɨmakãy
    raise raise raise   foc   Obl=soil
    'He started to raise the soil-dust'   (Txt)

In this section we will consider in detail the most prominent use of this *pe*-phrase construction in Mekens, namely the use of the oblique *pe*-phrase to mark the NP that refers to the thematic object of a transitive verb. *Pe*-phrase constructions involving the NP semantically associated with the O argument of a transitive verb are very frequent in the language. These constructions can be characterized in a threefold way: (i) the semantic object NP does not occur in its usual position immediately preceding the verb, (ii) rather, that NP appears as the object of the adposition 'pe', and (iii) an invariable prefix /i-/ appears on the verb. Note that sentences (94a) and (94b) below are semantically equivalent despite their different syntactic structures. The former is a regular transitive clause presented in the unmarked SOV order, while the latter shows the *pe*-phrase construction described above.

94. a.   ke   i-ko-a   te   i-taɨp   kwirisa asakwãira piriga
      that 3s-Aux.mov-sim foc   3s-son(Male.speech) bee   bee.hive throw.down
      'While he was in that way doing (it), his son threw the beehive down'

    b.   ke   i-ko-a   te   i–taɨp i–piriga   pe=kwirisa asakwãira
      that   3s-Aux.mov-sim foc   3s-son OM–throw.down Obl=bee   bee.hive
      ''While he was in that way doing (it), his son threw the beehive down'

The existence of such sentence doublets as (94a-b) above suggests an analysis in terms of voice alternation between active and antipassive voices. In such an analysis, active clauses like (94a) would have an antipassive equivalent clause (94b) in which the thematic object of the otherwise transitive verb appears as an oblique adpositional phrase marked with 'pe'; and the prefix /i-/ that appears on the verb would be the antipassive morpheme. In order to entertain this hypothesis, we will first consider some of the definitions of antipassive found in the literature.

The term antipassive[21] has been used since the early seventies to refer to a construction in which the thematic direct object of a transitive verb either appears as an oblique/adverbial phrase or is null, and a morpheme (the so-called antipassive morpheme) attaches to the verb (cf. Silverstein 1976, Dixon 1979). The A argument of a basic transitive verb in an antipassive construction is treated like the S argument of an intransitive verb in parallel constructions, by means of overt case-marking on the noun or inflection/agreement on the verb.

Whereas there are variations in the actual mechanisms involved in 'deriving' antipassive constructions according to the specifics of each framework, researchers working in different frameworks have taken the above definition of antipassive to mean that the verb in an antipassive construction is intransitive. However, as Silverstein (p.c.) has pointed out to me, to describe the antipassive verb simply as intransitive would be a misrepresentation. Rather, an antipassive construction shows a 2-place inverse relation that is generally translated in a Nom(inative)-Dat(ive) scheme. Therefore, the antipassive verb may behave like an intransitive (1-place) in inflection morphologically and syntactically, but is clearly a 2-place argument verb in semantics. This property of verbs in antipassive constructions has been captured by Mark Baker (1988), as discussed below.

In derivational frameworks antipassive is generally characterized as a grammatical function/relation changing process that has a detransitivizing effect on a clause. Dixon (1979, 1994) defines antipassive as a 'syntactic derivation that derives an intransitive sentence'; it 'places the deep A NP in surface S function' in order to meet

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21. Michael Silverstein was the first to use this term, in the late 1960's, to refer to the phenomenon that has been since then described as antipassive.

language specific syntactic and/or pragmatic requirements. Davies (1984), working within the Relational Grammar framework (cf. Perlmutter and Postal 1977, 1983), confirms the characterization of antipassive as a detransitivizing structure in which the subject of an initial transitive stratum is first demoted to direct object, and then advanced to subject in a following stratum (cf. Postal 1977). Grimshaw and Mester (1985), working in the framework of early Lexical Functional Grammar (cf. Bresnan 1982) define antipassive in terms of a lexical rule that maps the direct object of a basic lexical form onto an oblique argument. Thus, the lexical entry of an antipassive verb is formally intransitive.

In the framework of government/binding, Baker (1988) argues against analyses of antipassive in terms of a grammatical function changing process (GF) that changes the direct object argument into an indirect object. For, as Baker points out, even though the obliquely marked thematic object of an antipassive construction may generally be omitted, the theta role of direct object is still present. The general propositional interpretation of antipassive clauses in which the thematic object is 'suppressed' is not that of a semantically intransitive clause, but rather that of a semantically transitive clause, whose theme/patient is interpreted as 'indefinite, unknown or simply not specified.' For him, antipassive is a special case of noun incorporation (X^0 movement). The antipassive morpheme is generated in the direct object position at D-structure, where it is assigned the object theta role. The antipassive morpheme undergoes X^0 movement (incorporation, in Baker's terms) and adjoins to the governing verb. The antipassive verb, which includes the verb plus the antipassive morpheme, represents both the semantic predicate and its direct object argument. That is, the incorporated

antipassive morpheme is the actual grammatical argument of the verb. The oblique

(patient) phrase is never an argument under Baker's analysis. It is an adjunct phrase that

doubles the theta role of the antipassive morpheme, by virtue of being co-indexed with

it. He also notes that the antipassive morpheme always makes the incorporating verb

morphologically intransitive, showing case and agreement morphology of regular

intransitive clauses.

In more pragmatic oriented frameworks, antipassivization has been defined as a

mechanism that 'allows alternative choices for pragmatic pivot status' (cf. Foley and

Van Valin 1986:337-38). While they define the basic semantic function of antipassive

as being 'undergoer suppression,' they distinguish between 'foregrounding' and

'backgrounding' antipassives in terms of their primary function. The former 'serve to

permit non-undergoers to occur as pragmatic pivots, demoting the undergoer to

peripheral status', whereas the latter has as its primary function the demotion of the

undergoer to peripheral status. According to their definition, in both cases, the

antipassive clause is intransitive, since the undergoer has been demoted from the core.

That definition coincides with Givon's (1995:77) pragmatic definition of antipassive as

'a de-transitive voice in which the agent is more topical than the patient, and the patient

is extremely non-topical ('suppressed', 'demoted').' Givon notes that the pragmatic

demotion of the patient is generally reflected in the syntax. The pragmatically demoted

patient loses its grammatical-object status, which renders the clause 'syntactically

objectless', and, consequently, intransitive. While both Foley and Van Valin (1986) and

Givon (1995) focus on pragmatic and discourse consequences of antipassive

constructions, they highlight the fact that the antipassive clause is syntactically similar to intransitive clauses.

Turning back to the Mekens oblique *pe*-phrase construction presented in (93) and (94) above, we see that at a pragmatic level such a construction does function to de-emphasize the role of the thematic object, thus, fitting into the 'backgrounding' definition of antipassive (Folley and Van Valin 1986). However, the only syntactic and/or pragmatic constraint in the language that would require placing a coreferential NP in a specific configuration to allow it to be used as a 'syntactic pivot' is found in intransitive clauses with coreferential subjects. In this case, the subject NP in the second and/or subordinate clause is omitted. As we shall see in section 4.3.3 below, coreferential subjects of transitive clauses are only optionally omitted in the second conjunct. None of these coreferential NP positions is directly related to the use of the pe–phrase construction in Mekens, which focuses on the demotion of the object NP, but does not alter the syntactic status of the subject NP. The 'pivot-feeding' function of antipassive, as defined, for instance, in Dixon (1994) is not found in Mekens, which is consistent with the fact that Mekens does not have a canonical switch–reference system (cf. section 4.4.3 below), but that does not entirely preclude an analysis of the demoted object construction in terms of antipassivization. Nonetheless, the other general property of the antipassive construction, in the way it has been systematically documented in the literature, that of rendering the antipassive verb intransitive, does not obtain in the Mekens *pe*-phrase construction.

The main difference between the antipassive and the incorporated pronominal analyses of clauses like (94a-b), repeated here as (95a-b, would be the status of the

prefix /i–/ that attaches to the verb. In the incorporated pronominal analysis both clauses

in (95a-b) are formally active transitive clauses, even though in (95b) the thematic

object is pragmatically demoted. Hence, from a structural point of view, the

grammatical object argument position in (95b) is filled by the prefix /i-/ that appears on

the verb. That prefix is analyzed as an incorporated pronominal argument of the verb

functioning as a grammatical object marker (OM). The obliquely marked NP (the

pe=phrase) doubles the incorporated argument, but has a non-argument position; it

functions as an oblique adjunct. Antipassive constructions have also been analyzed in

terms of lexical incorporation (cf. Baker 1988). In the remainder of this section, we will

consider the full range of properties associated with the use of the pe-phrase

construction in Mekens, and how they relate to both analyses under investigation.

95. a. i-taɨp   kwirisa   asakwãira   piriga
    3s-son(male.speech) type.of.bee   bee.hive   throw.down
    'Then the son threw the beehive down'

    b. i-taɨp   i-piriga   pe=kwirisa   asakwãira
    3s-son(male.speech) OM–throw.down   Obl=type.of.bee bee.hive
    'He was there/doing that, then the son threw the beehive down' (Txt)

In order to justify the analysis of the /i-/ prefix in (95b) above as the actual

object argument of the verb, that is, as an incorporated pronominal marker, we need first

to argue for the transitive status of the verb, and, thus, for the active as opposed to the

antipassive analysis of clauses with the pe-phrase construction. We saw in sections

2.3.2.3 and 3.33 above that intransitive verbs in Mekens show obligatory grammatical

agreement with the person/number of their S arguments, and that the default prefix for

third person singular S is the coreferential prefix /se-/. Thus, if the verb in clauses like

(95b) were intransitive, we predict the presence of grammatical subject agreement on

the verb, but the verb in a pe–phrase construction does not show subject agreement..

The lack of subject agreement is evident in examples like (96a) below, in which an

intransitive verb *set* 'go; leave' is followed by an *i*-marked verb whose thematic object

appears in an oblique pe-phrase. We observe that only the verb *set* 'go; leave' shows

grammatical subject agreement, marked with the coreferential prefix /se-/. The *i*-marked

verb *–at* 'get' does not.

96. a. aramirã se-set i-ar-a te pe=eme kwai tïero na
woman 3c-go OM-get-them foc Obl=dem.pl stone beer Verblzr
'The woman went to get those stones to make beer out of them (Txt)

Furthermore, while the lack of verbal subject agreement indicates that the verbs

in (95b) and (96a) above are not intransitive, positive evidence for their transitive status

is found in clauses with pronominal subjects. Transitive verbs do not normally show

subject agreement, except in the object focus construction discussed in section 4.3.2

below. The A arguments of transitive verbs are marked by either a noun or a pronoun

(cf. section 2.3.2.3 above); third person singular pronominal subjects of transitive verbs

may be zero. Observe in examples (97a-c) that subject marking follows exactly the

pattern of transitive verbs described above. There is no verbal subject agreement,

pronominal subjects are marked by free pronouns, and third person singular subject is

zero.

97. a. koa i-ka-t o-iko aira=pe
parrot OM-ingest.Them-past 1s-food piece=Obl
'The parrot ate a piece of my banana'

b. õt tëët õt i-ko o–met i-ka-r-ap sïrap=pe
I only I OM-ingest 1s-husband OM-ingest.Them-past-neg mashed.manioc=Obl
'Only I ate mashed manioc, my husband didn't eat it' (Txt)

c. arẽp   seteiat i-mi-a   pe=kwe
   then   they   OM-kill/shoot-Them Obl=game.animal
   'Then they killed a game animal' (Txt)

Notwithstanding the presence of an oblique phrase referring to the thematic object of a semantically two-argument verb, we showed that the verb behaves like a transitive verb with respect to subject marking. Let us turn now to the analysis of the /i-/ prefix as the actual object argument and the *pe=*phrase as an oblique adjunct.

The core arguments (S, A, O) of a verb in Mekens are not overtly marked for case; nonetheless, they are readily identifiable in a clause by the word ordering and adjacency constraints discussed in section 3.3 above. The basic word order in a simple transitive clause is subject-object-verb (SOV). Changing the order of the NPs reverses the grammatical relations, as seen in (98a-b).

98. a. ɨkwaay ameko   õpa-a-t
       tapir   jaguar/dog   beat/kill.by clutching-Them-past
       'The tapir killed the jaguar'

    b. ameko   ɨkwaay   õpa-a-t
       jaguar/dog   tapir   beat/kill.by clutching-Them-past
       'The jaguar killed the tapir'

                                                                (Galucio 1996b)

The object argument of a transitive verb is syntactically defined as the NP immediately preceding the verb if the object is nominal or the agreement prefix on the verb, if it is pronominal. While, given the right context, the subject of a clause may occur in different positions without any change in the form of the verb, the object may not (cf. section 3.3).

However, when the prefix /i-/ appears on the verb and the thematic object is marked with the adposition 'pe' a number of otherwise unattested orders occur: V(S)O, SVO, and OSV. As was seen in section 3.4 above, the NP marked with 'pe' shows the

same syntactic distribution of other adpositional phrases in the language. Thus,

analyzing such *pe*-marked NPs as adpositional oblique adjuncts accounts for the

'irregular' word orders shown in (99a-c), while explaining their adverbial-like behavior,

that is, the fact like adverb phrases the obliquely marked pe–phrase can occur in any

position within the clause (cf. sections 3.4 and 3.5 above). That property of the

obliquely pe–marked NP is consistent with both the antipassive and the incorporated

pronominal analyses. In both cases, the presence of the /i–/ prefix on the verb frees the

constituency order for discourse purposes.

99. a. i-timot   pa   ẽt   pe=i-sakẽrãy
        OM-cut.down   fut.1/2 you   Obl=3s-roof.timber
        'You'll cut down the roof timbers' (Txt)

    b. i-taip   i-mo-e-poka-ra   pe=se-top
        3s-son   OM-Caus-Intrvzr-burn-Res   Obl=3c-father
        'The/His son burnt his own father' (Txt)

    c. arẽp eke tepare arikwayõ s-anip pãŋkaa=pe i-so-a-t   pe=pasiare
        then dem Tepare Arikwayõ 3s-head broken=Obl OM-see-Them-past Obl=Pasiare
        'Then Tepare, Arikwayõ saw his broken head, Pasiare's one' (Txt)

If the *pe*-phrases in (99) above are in fact oblique adjuncts we predict that they

could be deleted. That prediction is borne out by the data. Sentence (100a) below is

semantically similar and functionally equivalent to (99c) above, but the *pe*-phrase is

omitted. The object then gets a pronominal reading both in isolated clauses and in text

examples. We point out that in both the antipassive and the incorporated pronominal

analysis the demoted object is facultative since it has the syntactic status of an oblique

phrase (peripheral NP).

100. a. s-aisi   i-so-a-t   s-iyõkoyẽ   i-so-a-t
          3s-wife   OM-see-Them-past   3s-brother.in.law   OM-see-Them-past
          'His wife saw him, and his brother-in-law saw him' (Txt)

The person and number inflection in the Mekens verb provides an argument for the analysis of the /i-/ prefix as the actual object argument incorporated into the verb. Verbal pronominal marking shows an ergative pattern. Pronominal S and O are marked by the series of personal prefixes on the verb, whereas pronominal A is marked by free pronouns (cf. section 2.3.2.3 above), except in the object focus construction (OFC) discussed in the next section (4.3.2 below).

Nonetheless, there is an essential difference between S and O agreement markers. The subject prefixes (S) in intransitive verbs are obligatory and co-occur with an NP in subject position; while object prefixes (O) occur only with pronominal objects, and are in complementary distribution with an object NP. That pattern is illustrated by examples (101a-e) below. In (101a) the verb is intransitive and the subject NP argument is cross-referenced by the S prefix, while in (101b) there is no subject NP and the S prefix functions as the subject argument receiving a pronominal interpretation. The transitive verb in (101c) has an object NP argument, and no object prefix, whereas (101d-e) have pronominal object marked solely by means of the object marker.

101.　a.　　o-top　　　　se-er-a-t
　　　　　　　1s-father　　　3c-sleep-Them-past
　　　　　　　'My father slept'

　　　b.　　se-er-a-t
　　　　　　　3c-sleep-Them-past
　　　　　　　'He/she/it slept'

　　　c.　　ameko　　　　o-kip petka-t
　　　　　　　dog/jaguar　　1s-leg lick-past
　　　　　　　'The dog licked my leg'

　　　d.　　eyat-pooriat　i-mi-a
　　　　　　　2p.old.relative OM-kill/shoot-them
　　　　　　　'Your uncle shot it' (Txt)

e. ameko   o-ïka-a-t
   dog/jaguar 1s-smell-them-past
   'The dog smelled me'

This difference between subject and object markers is explained in terms of a

distinction between grammatical agreement and anaphoric agreement (cf. section 3.33

above), following works in the LFG framework (cf. Bresnan and Mchombo 1987, and

Bresnan 2001). Subject markers in Mekens are used for grammatical agreement cross-

referencing the person and number of a subject NP and for anaphoric agreement when

there is no subject NP in the clause. Object prefixes (O), on the other hand, are used for

anaphoric agreement only. That amounts to saying that object markers are not

grammatical agreement markers in the sense of LFG, as defined in section 3.3.3 above.

They are the actual object argument or incorporated object pronoun in LFG

terminology. Thus, it follows from the uniqueness condition[22] that the presence of an

object marker precludes the occurrence of a NP in object function in the same clause.

On the other hand, the completeness condition[23] assures that an object marker appears in

the verb, when there is no NP functioning as object.

Both of these conditions are satisfied in Mekens. We saw in (101c-e) above that

an object NP and object prefix marker are mutually exclusive, but one of them has to be

present for the clause to be well formed. Thus, any time the thematic object NP does not

function as the syntactic object argument of the verb—it is formally either oblique or

focus—the prefix /i-/ appears on the verb. In (102a) the thematic object occurs as focus,

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22. Functional Uniqueness requires that information about the same function has to be consistent and unique. Thus, a verb can have no more than one argument with a given grammatical relation. (cf. Bresnan 1982, Kaplan and Bresnan 1982, Grimshaw 1985).

23. The Completeness Condition requires that every argument that is lexically required must be present (cf. Bresnan 1982, and Bresnan and Mchombo 1987).

and the object argument is realized by the prefix /i-/. On the other hand, (102b) is

ungrammatical because the required syntactic object is not present, since the semantic

object NP *ameko* 'dog/jaguar' is expressed in an oblique phrase, while (102c) is

ungrammatical because there is both an NP in object function and the prefix on the

verb. The grammatical sentences (102d–e) further illustrate the complementary

distribution between an NP in object function and the verbal prefix /i–/. Given the

syntactic status of the pe–phrase NP as an oblique adpositional phrase, it may occur in

any place in a clause.

102. a. sɨrap   te   o-i-ka   õt   pɨɨp
          mashed.manioc foc   1s-OM-ingest.Them   I   yesterday
          'It was mashed manioc that I ate yesterday'

      b. * õt   mi-a-t   ameko=pe
          I   kill/shoot–Them–past dog/jaguar=Obl

      c. *õt ameko i–mi–a–t

      d. õt ameko   mi–a–t
          I dog/jaguar   kill/shoot–Them–past
          'I killed the jaguar'

      e. õt i-mi-a-t ameko=pe
          I OM-kill/shoot-Them-past jaguar/dog=Obl
          'I killed the jaguar'

The only cases of apparent co-occurrence of an object NP with an object prefix

in the verb are arguably all cases in which the prefix is the object argument incorporated

into the verb, and the NP has a non-argument function. Those include the clauses with

the oblique pe-phrase referring to the thematic object. Note the parallelism between

(102a) above and (103a) below. The thematic object NP functions as focus in the

former clause, and as adjunct in the latter.

103. a. o-met   i-ka-r-ap   sɨrap=pe
        1s-husband OM-ingest.Them-past-Neg   mashed.manioc=Obl
        'My husband didn't eat mashed manioc'

One property of the object marker that appears on the verb when the thematic

object NP occurs in a non-argument function is worthy of note here. That prefix is

invariably /i-/; it does not show (person/number) agreement with the thematic object

NP. For instance, there is no agreement between the OM and the oblique *pe*-marked NP

in (104a) below.

104. a. arẽp   sete   i-so-a   pase pe-õt (..)
        then   he/she OM-see-Them all   Obl-I
        'Then she looked well at me, at every one (..)'

While languages like Chichewa require that a topic NP occurring outside the VP

agree in person-number-gender with the incorporated pronoun object in the verb (cf.

Bresnan & Mchombo 1987), Mekens simply requires that the object argument be filled.

This property of Mekens demoted object construction favors the antipassive analysis,

since if the /i–/ prefix is an antipassive morpheme it obviates the requirement for

agreement. Nonetheless, despite the absence of formal agreement features between the

thematic object NP and the verbal prefix, there is an implied coreference between them.

That is true of the object focus construction as well, as seen in section 4.4.2 below. In

the incorporated pronominal analysis, the prefix /i-/ functions as a grammaticalized

object marker (OM), which fills the grammatical role of object to satisfy the language's

well-formedness conditions.

Another significant property of the demoted object construction and the pe–

phrase construction, in general, is that the pe–phrase construction applies not only to

thematic object NPs but also to subject, and possessor NPs, and may occur more than

once in a clause. In (99c) above, repeated as (105a) below, both the semantic object

pasiare aniɨp pãɲkaa 'Pasiare's broken head' and the possessor NP 'Pasiare' are marked

with the oblique marker 'pe', and while the thematic object still precedes the verb, the

possessor NP is extraposed to the end of the clause. Note that in both cases a prefix

occurs where the extraposed NP would have been. In the case of possessor extraposition

this prefix is clearly the third person prefix, /i–/ or /s–/ depending on the phonological

form of the host stem[24]. The same phonological alternation between i– and s– is found

in the verbal prefix that occurs when the syntactic object argument is demoted (pe–

phrase), focused, or omitted under identity with a previously introduced NP. Thus in

example (105b) below the verbal prefix is /s–/ since the verb stem starts with a vowel,

but it is /i–/ before the consonant initial stem in (105a). This parallel between

pronominal possessor marking, as in (105a) and the verbal marker in both (105a) and

(105b) favors the analysis of the verbal prefix as an incorporated pronominal marker. It

is not uncommon to see third person pronominal markers— either prefix or pronoun—

used as the default choice when syntactic or morphological properties of the language

require an overt pronominal marking, e.g., the case of ambient it in English. There are

examples like (96a) above in which the object NP is demoted to oblique and the vowel

initial verb stem is prefixed with /i–/, not the predicted /s–/, given the phonological

shape of the verb stem. However it was noted in section 2.2.2 that the phonological

constraint may be overridden by semantic constraints: for instance, when using the

phonologically determined form of the prefix would give rise to ambiguity with another

existing word, the opposite form is used. That could be the reason for having /i–/

instead of /s–/ on the verb in (105c) below, since there is a word *sara* meaning

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24. /i–/ occurs before consonant initial stems, and /s–/ before vowel initial stems.

'bad;badly' which can be used either as an adjective or an adverb in the language.

However, more investigation is needed to verify this hypothesis.

105.   a. arẽp ekc teparc arikwayõ s-anɨp pãŋkaa=pc   i-so-a-t   pc=pasiarc
       then dem Tepare Arikwayõ 3s-head broken=Obl oм-see-Them-past Obl=Pasiare
       'Then Tepare, Arikwayõ saw his broken head, Pasiare's one' (Txt)

   b. arikwayõ   s-inoŋã   te   pe= ekwirisa
      Arikwayõ   3s-place   foc   Obl=type.of.bee
      'Then Arikwayõ put the bees (honey)' (Txt)

   c. aramirã   se-set i-ar-a   te   pe=eme   kwai tiero na
      woman   3c-go   OM-get-them foc   Obl=dem.pl   stone beer Verblzr
      'The woman went to get those stones to make beer out of them (Txt)

In concluding this section, we would like to point out that the analysis of the

demoted object construction in Mekens in terms of incorporated pronominal marking

could be translated into Baker's incorporation analysis of antipassive (Baker 1988). In

both analyses, the verbal affix is incorporated into the verb and bears the grammatical

function of that verb's argument; while the obliquely marked NP is an adjunct doubling

the role of the verbal affix. However, the incorporating verb in Mekens remains a

transitive active verb. It does not show the morphological behavior of prefix–inflected

intransitive verbs in the language. Hence, the prefix /i-/ on the verb would bear the

grammatical role of direct object, not in virtue of being an antipassive morpheme, but

rather an incorporated pronominal argument [25]. In section 4.4.2 below, we will see that

the antipassive analysis makes the right prediction for the agreement pattern shown in

object focus constructions. However, a definitive answer to question of the status of the

prefix i– is still needed.

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25. For a different approach to these constructions in Mekens within the Binding theory, see Storto 1999.

4.4.2 INVERSE AGREEMENT IN OBJECT FOCUS CONSTRUCTIONS (OFC)

The object focus construction occurs when the object appears in a position of focus. The focused NP appears outside the VP, the verb is not inflected for tense, and presents an agreement pattern distinct from the general pattern found in the language (cf. section 2.3.2.3). The types of clauses that occur in object focus constructions are cleft sentences, questions focusing on the object, answers to object focus questions, and object headed relative clauses. Examples (106a-d), repeated from chapter 2, illustrate the OFC with each of these clause types.

106. a. isıi neŋat ikãõ   o-i-mi   kaat
   deer similar that.time 1s-OM-kill QUOT
   'It looks like it is a deer that I shot that time', he said'

  b. arob=ẽp te te e-i-mi
    what=really truly foc 2s-OM-kill
    'What really did you kill?'

  c. isıi ebõẽp te o-i-mi   te i-nõ
    deer really foc 1s-OM-kill foc 3s-other
    'It is really a deer that I killed, (said) the other one'

  d. kıypit ko pa õt e-i-at
    fish   ingest fut.1/2 I 2s-OM-get
    'I will eat the fish that you caught'

The verb in Mekens normally agrees with only one of its arguments, and agreement follows an ergative pattern. S and O are marked in the verb by the series of personal prefixes, while A is marked by the free pronouns. In object focus constructions the verbal agreement pattern is reversed in the sense that the verb has two 'agreement'

markers: the invariable prefix /i-/ [26], and a personal prefix marking the person and number of the subject.

As noted in sections 2.3.2.3 and 4.4.1, the verbal prefix does not agree with the focus NP. It is an invariable incorporated object pronominal marker, while the focused NP has the non-argument FOCUS function. That is, the focused NP is not part of the predicate–argument structure of the verb. Thus, syntactically it has also been demoted from the core argument object position. Observe sentence (107a), where the focused object is second person singular, but the object marker (OM) is /i-/, not the second person prefix /e-/. We saw in section 4.4.1 above that a similar construction occurs when the thematic NP is demoted to an oblique adjunct. Both in the oblique *pe*-phrase construction (section 4.4.1) and in object focus constructions, there is a prefix incorporated into the verb, which functions as the grammatical object argument.

107.   a. ĕt   te   o-i-sop   ikãõ
          you foc   1s-OM-see   that (time)
          'You were what I saw at that time'
          'It was you that I saw that time'

We observed at the outset of this section that the pattern of verbal agreement is reversed in an OFC, with the verb agreeing with the subject. Nonetheless that observation holds only to the extent that the verb in OFC remains transitive. Let consider the arguments that this is in fact the case.

The person pronominal marking on the verb also provides a means of differentiating between transitive and intransitive verbs. In non-focus constructions, verbal agreement distinguishes between transitive and intransitive verbs in two ways.

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26. Or s- depending on the phonological form of the verb. Consonant initial verbs take the i- prefix, while vowel initial verbs take the s- prefix.

First, intransitive verbs have subject agreement markers; transitive verbs have object

agreement markers. Secondly, in simple clauses intransitive verbs mark third person

singular arguments invariably with the coreferential prefix /se-/ [27], while transitive verbs

show a contrast between reflexive and non-reflexive third person singular agreement

markers. The coreferential prefix /se-/ is only used with reflexive objects, and the non-

coreferential prefix /i-/ is used with non-reflexive arguments. Examples (108a-d)

illustrate these contrasts.

108.   a. poret   se-itka-t   asi
            then/now 3c-cry-past   mother
            'Then the mother cried'(Txt)

    b. kaarapõrã i-eikwa nop   te   i-top
          therefore 3s-like   Neg foc   3s–father
          'For this reason, the father no longer likes him' (Txt)

    c. i-so-a-t
          3s-see-Them-past
          'He/she/ it saw him/her/it'

    d. se-so-a-t   espelho=ese
          3c-see-Them-past mirror=Loc
          'He/she saw himself/herself in the mirror'

Since in the OFC construction the verb agrees with the subject, two lines of

arguments may be developed: (i) the verb in the OFC, although it is a 2–place verb in

semantics, behaves morphologically as an intransitive verb in inflection, thus

conforming to the regular agreement pattern; or (ii) the verb is transitive, and the first

contrast in verbal agreement between transitive and intransitive verbs disappears. That

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27. Though there is a contrast with the non–coreferential third person prefix in coordinate and
subordinate sentences (cf. section 4.4.3 below).

is, contrary to the pattern found in non-focus constructions, the transitive verb in the

OFC marks subject agreement with the series of personal prefixes.

The second contrast between the two subclasses ·of verbs provides evidence that

the verb in the OFC remains transitive. Since transitive and intransitive verbs differ with

respect to the pronominal marking of third person singular arguments, the OFC verb can

be classified as transitive or intransitive on the basis of the prefix used for third person

singular subjects. If the verb were formally intransitive, ~we predict that third person

singular subject would be marked with the coreferential prefix /se-/ [28]. However, this

pattern is not attested. Rather, third singular pronominal subjects in the OFC verb are

expressed by the non-coreferential prefix /i-/. That is exactly what we predict for a

formally transitive verb. Sentences (109a-b) below show~ an OFC with pronominal third

person singular subject. Subject agreement is marked by the allomorph of the non-

coreferential prefix before vowels. Note that the thematic subject 'chico' appears in an

oblique *pe*-phrase, right dislocated at the end of the sentence, in (109b). Oblique *pe*-

phrase constructions are further discussed in sections 3.4 and 4.4.1 above.

109. a. kwe   ekerõ   s-i-mi   kwe   ekerõ   s-i-mi
       animal   Dem.far   3s-ᴏᴍ-kill/shoot   animal   Dem.far   3s-ᴏᴍ-kill/shoot
       'There's the animal that he killed' (Txt)

    b. kwama-ẽp tiri te   s-i-mi   pe=chico
       nambu-really   two foc 3s-OM-kill   Obl=chico
       'It was two *nambus* (species of bird) that he killed, Chico'
       'It was two *nambus* that Chico killed'

Clauses with nominal third person subjects confirm the transitive status of the

verb in the OFC. In sentence (110a) below the subject is a non-pronominal third person

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28. Note that due to the presence of the inner prefix /i–/ in the OFC the verb would not be identical to a reflexive transitive verb if it took the coreferential subject prefix /se–/.

and there is no subject marking on the verb. We saw in section 2.3.2.3 that due to the person hierarchy third person subjects are generally unmarked in transitive verbs. On the other hand, formally intransitive verbs always have a person prefix cross-referencing the person and number of the subject. Hence, the absence of verbal agreement in the verb in sentences like (110a) constitutes further evidence for the formal transitive status of the verb in OFCs.

110. a. isĩ ko   pa   õt   manoel   i-mi
         deer ingest fut   I   Manoel   3s-kill
         'I will eat the deer that Manoel killed'

Therefore, sentence(110a) above confirms the observation made at the outset of this section, namely that OFCs reverse the pattern of verbal agreement in Mekens. That is, in such constructions the transitive verb has an grammaticalized incorporated object marker and a subject , which is marked by the same series of absolutive prefixes that mark S and O in non-object focus constructions. It remains to be explained, however, why the verb in the OFC shows this inverse agreement pattern. Again there are two possible lines of reasoning which are not completely exclusive.

Firstly, if we assume the antipassive analysis discussed in section 4.4.1 above, the agreement pattern shown in the OFC verb is exactly what the theory predicts. Since the antipassive morpheme, in this case the prefix /i–/, incorporates into the verb in place of the thematic object, it makes the verb available for agreement with the absolutive argument, which is now the subject, since syntactically it has only one argument. However, by this same reasoning the verb in the demoted object (pe=phrase) construction discussed in section 4.4.1 above should also be able to take subject–absolutive agreement markers, but it never does.

On the other hand, the incorporated pronominal analysis accounts well for the demoted object construction, but does not explain the subject agreement pattern shown in the OFC. Nonetheless, this agreement pattern is related to the lack of tense–aspect marking in the OFC verb. As noted at the outset of this section, the verb in an OFC never takes the thematic suffix /–a/ or the past suffix /–t/. Therefore, a logical possibility is to analyze the OFC as a nominalization construction, in which the absolutive S prefix is formally a possessor of the nominalized verb, in a manner analogous to the possessor–ing (s–ing) construction of English. Recall that what is crucially different between the OFC and the demoted object construction is that the verb in the OFC does not show tense–aspect marking and has a subject marker, while the verb in the demoted object construction has tense–aspect marking and no subject marker. A piece of evidence in favor of the nominalization analysis of the OFC construction is that subject agreement in the OFC follows exactly the same pattern of possessive constructions. We saw in section 2.2.1 above that pronominal possessors are marked by personal prefixes, never by pronouns, and nominal possessors are marked by NPs only. This pattern is illustrated by examples in (111a–d) below.

111. a. o–tek   'my house
      a'. * õt tek   (my house)
      b. e–tek   'your house'
      b'. * ẽt tek   (your house)
      c. i–tek   'his/her/its house'
      c'. * sete tek   (his/her house)
      d. o–top tek   'my father's house'
      d'. *o–top i–tek   (my father's house)

Note that the same pattern is found in the OFC. Pronominal subjects can only be marked with the series of prefixes, while nominal subjects are marked only by the NP. It is not possible to have a pronoun marking the subject of a verb in an OFC, in the same way that it is not possible to have a pronoun marking the possessor of a possessive construction.

112. a. kɨypit   ko   pa   õt   ɔ-i-at
      fish   ingest fut   I   1s-om-get
      'I will eat the fish that I fished'

   b. isɨɨ ko   pa õt manoel i-mi
      deer ingest fut I   Manoel OM-kill/shoot
      'I will eat the deer that Manoel killed'

   c. kwama-ẽp   tɨrɨ te s-i-mi   pe=chico
      nambu-really   two foc 3s-OM-kill/shoot   Obl=chico
      'It was two *nambus* (species of bird) that he killed, Chico'
      'It was two *nambus* that Chico killed'

The nominalization analysis would also explain why we do not get the coreferential prefix in the verb stem in any of the examples with third person subject in (112) above, since it is contrastively used in possessive constructions. However, one prediction of this analysis is that we should get the coreferential prefix in sentences like (112a) which have identical subjects in the two clauses, when the subjects were both third person. This prediction needs to be checked against the data when the relevant information becomes available.

Another piece of evidence for the nominalization analysis is that OFC clauses can occur as part of the argument of a verb as, for instance, in postnominal externally headed relative clauses, as shown in (113a) below. They can also occur in either position in a nominal predicate clause, as in (113b). We saw in section 4.3.1 that

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The reference-tracking system of Mekens resembles the classical switch-reference systems that have been described for several world languages (Haiman and Munro 1983, Stirling 1993, and there cited references), in that it marks co-/disjoint reference between subjects. Nevertheless, in the canonical switch-reference systems (Cole 1983, Davies 1984, Longacre 1983) switch-reference marking is used independently of the person and number of the subject, even when their reference does not overlap. Furthermore, switch-reference marking is generally a parallel system of reference tracking, that functions independently of person agreement markers. However, the Mekens system of referential continuity tracking (SS vs. DS) is only relevant for third person subjects and is formally marked by the same series of person agreement markers. That is, there is not a lexically distinct and segmental switch-reference affix, but rather an extensive use of agreement markers to indicate whether or not there is referential continuity in a given token of discourse.

The general description of the Mekens reference tracking system can be outlined as follows. In coordinate clauses, referential continuity is marked in the second member of a conjunct in linear order, and in the dependent member of a complex subordinate sentence. Intransitive clauses mark coreference between subjects with the coreferential prefix /se-/ and disjoint reference with the regular non-coreferential prefix /i-/, as seen in (114a-b) below. Recall that in simple sentences subjects of intransitives are always marked with the coreferential prefix.

114. a. aose aramira õpa-a-t se-ser-a-t
          man woman beat-Them-past 3c-leave-Them-past
          'The man spanked the woman and left'

      b. aose ameko i-sogo i-ser-a-t
          man dog om-bite 3-leave-Them-past
          'As for the man$_j$, the dog$_i$ bit him$_j$ and he$_j$ left'

In transitive clauses coreferential subjects are optionally omitted and non-coreferential subject are overtly marked. The clauses in (115a) have coreferential subjects and the subject of the second conjunct is omitted. In (115b) the subjects of the two clauses are distinct and thus both overtly marked. *kwamoayat* 'shamans' is the subject of the first conjunct and *ipaeseyat* 'others' is the subject of the second conjunct.

115. a. masopi   seteyar-amoy-ã   tiero   ka-a
          night   they-dance-Them   chicha ingest-Them
          'In the evening they dance and drink chicha' (Txt)

      b. kwamoa=iat se-pitoa   ãĩpe   ka-a   i-paese=iat i-so-a
          shaman=col 3c-tobacco snuf   ingest-Them 3-all=col OM-see-Them
          'The shamans snuff their tobacco and all the others watch' (text fragment)

In clauses containing an auxiliary, the distinction between same versus different subjects is made on the auxiliary, not on the lexical verb. Thus, in both transitive and intransitive clauses, coreferentiality or lack thereof is indicated by using the coreferential or the non-coreferntial prefix, respectively, on the auxiliary. In transitive clauses there is no subject marker on the lexical, thus subject reference can only be tracked through the auxiliary, as seen in (116a-b). In (116a) the subjects have identical reference and the auxiliary is marked with the coreferential prefix. In (116b) the subjects are different and the auxiliary is marked with the non-coreferential prefix.

116. a. kwesog=õ ka   se-paese=iat so-a
          far=Dat   go/come 3c-all=col   see-Them

          paase ka eba se-seso-a
          jatobá ingest evid 3c-Aux.walk-sim
          'They go far away to visit their relatives, they go eating jatobá fruit' (Txt)

      b. o-si   se-e-pibor-a   tiero   mot-kwa   i-ko-a
          1s-mother 3c-Intrvzr-arrive-Them chicha make-pl.action 3-Aux.mov-sim
          'My motherᵢ arrived when s/heⱼ was making *chicha*'

In intransitive clauses containing an auxiliary, the distinction between same and

different subjects is neutralized in the intransitive verb. That is, the intransitive verbs in

the two clauses can be marked with the coreferential prefix whether or not there is

identity of reference between the subjects. The contrast is thus marked exclusively on

the auxiliary , as seen in (117a-b). In (117a) *ameko* 'the dog' is the subject in both

clauses, thus the intransitive verb and the auxiliary in the subordinate clauses are

marked with the coreferential prefix. While in (117b) *ameko* 'the dog' is the subject in

the main clause, but not in the subordinate clause, thus, the auxiliary in the subordinate

clause is marked with the non-coreferential signaling that its reference is not the same

as the subject of the main clause.

117. a. ameko   aose   sogo-a-t   se-aor-a-ra   se-seso-a
            dog/jaguar man   bite-Them-past 3c-leave-Them-res   3c-Aux.walk-sim
            'As the dog was leaving, he bit the man'
            'The dog$_i$ bit the man$_j$, when he$_i$ (the dog) was leaving'

     b. ameko   aose   sogo-a-t   se-aor-a-ra   i-seso-a
            dog/jaguar man   bite-Them-past 3c-leave-Them-Res 3-Aux.in.motion-sim
            'As the man was leaving, the dog bit him'
            'The dog$_i$ bit the man$_j$, when he$_j$ (the man) was leaving'

The same distinction is made in sentence (118a) below. In this sentence the

subject of the two clauses are overly marked by a noun: *aose* 'man' in the subordinate

clause, and *ameko* 'dog' in the main clause. The agreement marker in the auxiliary

further indicates that the subjects are distinct by employing the non-coreferential prefix.

118. a. aose se-aor-a-ra   i-seso-a   ameko   i-sogo-a-t
            man 3c-leave-Them-Res 3-Aux.walk-Them dog   OM-bite-Them-past
            'As the man was leaving, the dog bit him'

However, for emphatic purposes it is also possible to doubly mark both the

intransitive verb and the auxiliary in the second conjunct with the non-coreferential

prefix when they are different, as in (119a) below.

119. a. se-ia   te ikão
          3c-come foc that.time

          i-er-a   i-to-a   pe=o-met
          3-sleep–Them 3-Aux.lying.down-sim Obl=1s-husband
          'He came at that time when my husband was sleeping'

APPENDIX A
AN ANALYZED TEXT - POPOBA SĨIT

This narrative text Popoba sĩit 'little owl' presented in this appendix is a short

tale about a young man who was kidnapped by Popoba 'Owl' in ancient times, when

animals had human-like behavior. It was recorded in the Area Indigena Rio Mequens

(RO), in February of 1998. The first line of each interlinearized sentence is a phonemic

transcription, the second line gives the individual morphemes of each word in the

sentence, the third line provides a gloss of each morpheme, and line fourth gives a free

translation of the sentence.

popoba sĩit 001
popobaserekwa   naat yẽ.
popobase-e-erek-kwa   nããt yẽ
owl   3c-Intrvzr–speech-TR.pl.action   ? Aux.-sitting
The owl was singing.

popoba sĩit 002
kaarẽp   kwagatkwa   sete.
kaat =ẽp   kwagat-kwa   sete
that =really mimic-pl.action he/she
He (the young boy) started to mimick it.

popoba sĩit 003
kaarẽp   et.
kaat=ẽp   et
that=really sleep
Then he went to sleep.

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popoba sĩit 004

pagoptaipesekwarat iera itoa.
pagop-taip ese-kwat-a-t i-et-a i-top-a
young.boy Com-leave-Them-past 3-sleep 3-lying-Sim
As the young boy was sleeping, it carried him away.
(Lit. It carried the young boy while he was sleeping.)

popoba sĩit 005

ipoetop nekwa sasa eba sete.
i-poetop nekwa sasa eba sete
3-similar ? first truly he/she
He was imitating it at first./ He was being like it at first.

popoba sĩit 006

ātkareri serekkwagatkwa.
ātka-r=eri s-erek-kwagat-kwa
like.that -Abl 3c-speech-mimic-pl.action
He was imitating it very close.

popoba sĩit 007

ke te ke kwaariat te opooriat.
ke te ke kwaat-iat te o-pooriat
that foc that tell–Rem.past foc 1s-old.relative
Yeah, that's how my mother used to tell (me).

popoba sĩit 008

ātka eba te ikwak na
ātkat eba te i-kwak na
like.that evid foc 3-sound Verblzr
That's really how the story is.

popoba sĩit 009

serekkwagatkwa et eba.
s-erek-kwagat-kwa et eba
3-speech-mimic-pl.action sleep evid
(He) mimicked and then slept.

popoba sĩit 010

poret sete kerep kẽra sete.
poret sete kerep kẽra sete
then/now he/she enter N.Assert he/she
Then he entered (the house), or so it seems he (did).

popoba sīit 011

popoba	kiriy	esekwat	esekwat.
popoba	kiriy	ese-kwat	ese-kwat
owl	removed	Com-leave	Com-leave

The owl removed (the hammock) and carried (it) away.

popoba sīit 012

soopit	oãat
so-pit	oã-a-t
see-part	put.inside-Them-past

ebõ	kēra	te	peia	ia.
ebõ	kēra	te	pe=ia	ia
really	N.Assert	he/she/it	Obl=lagoon	lagoon

Having already seen (the lagoon), it seems that it really put him into the lagoon.

popoba sīit 013

ke	kwaap	te.
ke	kwaat	te
that	tell,say	foc

That's how it was

popoba sīit 014

ia	te.
ia	te
lagoon	foc

ke	kakwat	te	opooriat.
ke	kakwat	te	o-pooriat
that	habitual	foc	1s-old.relative

'It is really the lagoon'. That is what my mother used to say.

popoba sīit 015

ia	sik	sik	pay.
ia	sik	sik	pay
lagoon	stick	stick	leave(tr)

It stuck (the sticks) in the lagoon, and left (them) there.

popoba sĩit 016

etaop	pera–a	kẽra	etaop	soboy	soboy.

etaop	pera–a	kẽra	etaop	soboy	soboy.
Frustr	wake.up–Them	N.Assert	Frustr	plunge	plunge

Then he (the boy) woke up, he wanted to get up, but (it was all water around him, so when he put his feet outside the hammock) it just made 'splash, splash'.

popoba sĩit 017

ke	te	ke	kwaap	te.

ke	te	ke	kwaat	te
that	foc	that -	tell,say	foc

That's how it is said to have been.

popoba sĩit 018

era	ke	noãp nã	setoa.

et-a	ke	noãp na	se–top -a
sleep –Them	that	Neg Verblzr	3c- Aux.lying.down-sim

He remained lying there, but didn' t sleep

popoba sĩit 019

arobõ   kimakãy.

arop -õ	kimakãy
Wh -Dat	soil

Where is the rivershore?

popoba sĩit 020

ke	te	ke	kwaapte.

ke	te	ke	kwaat	te
that	foc	that	tell,say	foc

That's how it is said to have been.

popoba sĩit 021

arobõ   ãtka   paõt kẽrã.

arop=õ	ãtka	paõt	kẽra
Wh=Dat	like.that	Fut	1s	N.Assert

What am I going to do?

popoba sĩit 022

ke   setoa

ke	se–top-a
that	3c-Aux.lying -sim

He stayed there (thinking)

popoba s̄iit 023

seapitaka	poret	kẽra.
se–apitaka–a	poret	kẽra
3c-think–Them	then, now	N.Assert

Then it seems that he thought

popoba s̄iit 024

moãpĩraa	kẽra	pe=ɨra.
mo- ãpĩra -a	kẽra	pe=ɨra
Caus- save-Them	N.Assert	Obl=leaf.cutting.ant

I could perhaps get the leaf-cutting ant to save me

popoba s̄iit 025

ke	te	kẽra	ke	kakwa	õt.
ke	te	kẽra	ke	kakwat	õt
that	foc	N.Assert	that	Habitual	I

That is how it was. I keep thinking.

popoba s̄iit 026

kwep	ereyat		kete	isesebõ.
kwep	ereya-a–t		ke te	i- sese =bõ
climb	move,walk–Them–past	that	he/she/it	3-over =Dat

That one (the leaf.cutting ant) climbed and starting moving over him.

popoba s̄iit 027

ke	te	ke	kakwa	te	opooriat.
ke	te	ke	kakwa	te	o–pooriat
that	foc	that	Habitual	foc	1s-old.relative

That's how my mother used to tell (us).

popoba s̄iit 028

i–soa	sete	pe=ɨra
i–so-a	sete	pe=ɨra
OM–see-Them	he/she	Obl=leaf.cutting.ant

He saw the leaf.cutting ant

popoba s̄iit 029

pe=ɨra	isese=bõ	ka	sekwea.
pe=ɨra	i-sese=bõ	ka	se-kwe-a
Obl- leaf.cutting.ant	3-over =Dat	move.to.or.from	3c-climb-Them

The leaf.cutting ant climbed on him

popoba sĩit 030

sete	kɨy	soa	pasee	"ɨra	eke–e".
sete	kɨy	so-a	pasee	ira	eke–e
he/she	grab	see-Them	all	leaf.cutting.ant	that–?

He grabbed (it), observed well, and (threw it away, saying:) 'that's a leaf-cutting ant'

popoba sĩit 031

aose	na	eteet	eke–e.
aose	na	eteet	eke–e
person	Verblzr	could/would	that–?

Ah, if only that one were human!

popoba sĩit 032

epokɨso   maora.
e–pokɨso   mo-aot-a
2s-soil.dust Caus-leave-Them
'Get your soil-dust out'

popoba sĩit 033

kenoarerap.
ke   noat-er–ap
that Neg-??–Neg
That's how it really was.

popoba sĩit 034

epokɨso   maora   oyõkoyẽ.
e–pokɨso   mo-aot-a   o-yõkoyẽ
2s-soil.dust Caus-leave-Them 1s-brother.in.law
Get your dust out, my brother-in-law.

popoba sĩit 035

yõrõ	pɨp	ke	noat	setoobara.
yõrõ	pɨp	ke	noat	setoobara
crush	throw	that	Neg	????

He should had crushed and thrown it away, but he didn't crush (it).

popoba sĩit 036

pɨp
pɨp
throw
He threw.

popoba sĩit 037

sete	koboy	ka–a		neŋat	kẽra.
sete	koboy	ka-a		neŋat	kẽra
he/she	dive	move.to.or.from-Them	similative	N.Assert

It looks as if he had dived, but he didn't.

popoba sĩit 038

sigɨ sigɨ sigɨ te	pe=kɨmakãy.
sigɨ sigɨ sigɨ te	pe=kɨmakãy
raise raise raise foc	Obl=soil

He started to raise up the soil-dust

popoba sĩit 039

neŋat	asokaa
neŋat	a- so-ka-a
similative	???- heap-TR-Them

He made like a heap.

popoba sĩit 040

poret	ina	peeni.
poret	i-na	pe=eni
then, now	3-close	Obl=hammock

It (the heap) got close to the hammock

popoba sĩit 041

poret	kɨy	ɨyɨy	kɨy	ɨyɨy	te	peeni.
poret	kɨy	ɨyɨy	kɨy	ɨyɨy	te	pe=eni
then,now	grab	slide	grab	slide	foc	Obl- hammock

Then he started to slide through the hammock (lit. 'then he grabbed on the hammock and slid')

popoba sĩit 042

aroberi	ka		pɨp	sɨt	tɨk.
arop=eri	ka		pɨp	sɨt	tɨk
Wh=Ablat	move.to.or.from	jump	stand	?

Then he jumped from the hammock, and he got to his feet,

popoba sīit 043

poret   kwebereyat   neará.

poret   kwep - ereya-a-t   neará

then,now climb - move,walk–Them–past again

He climbed (to the seashore), and walked away again.

popoba sīit 044

ke   te

ke   te

that   foc

It is that way.

popoba sīit 045

ke   kwaap   te   popoba sesekwat.

ke   kwaap te   popoba s–ese-kwat

that   tell,say foc   owl   3s-Com- leave

That is how it is said that the owl carried him (the young boy) away.

popoba sīit 046

ke   te   te

ke   te   te

that truly   foc

kwaariat   te   opooriat.

kwaat-iat   te   o–pooriat

tell-RemPast foc 1s-old.relative

That's really how it is, how my mother used to tell (us).

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