THE ROLE OF LEXICALIZATION IN SHAPING ASPECTUAL SYSTEMS:
CENTRAL POMO

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Although aspectual distinctions appear more frequently among the languages of the world than tense, they are often more subtle and complex. This is due in part to the intimate relationships that exist between aspect and verbal meaning. A change in aspect can significantly alter the nature of the activity predicated (Bybee 1985). In fact, events differing chiefly in aspect are often considered so different conceptually that they are designated by different lexical items: compare English speak and chatter. By contrast, events differing only in tense are seldom represented by different verbs, since their fundamental nature is little affected by their particular time of occurrence: whether one was chattering or is chattering, the nature of the activity is essentially the same.

The close semantic relationship between aspect and verbal meaning frequently results in the lexicalization of combinations of verbal roots plus aspectual markers. The combination is stored as a single lexical item that represents a unitary concept. This phenomenon of lexicalization can in turn affect the development of grammatical aspect marking. Lexicalization appears to have played an especially strong role in shaping the development of the aspectual system of Central Pomo.

In what follows, the Central Pomo aspect system will be described with examples drawn from spontaneously occurring connected speech, both narrative and conversation. The material was generously contributed by the following speakers: Alice Elliott and Frances Jack of the Hopland rancheria; Salome Alcantra, Florence Paoli, and Clara Williams, of the Yokaya rancheria; and Jesse Frank, Winifred Leal, and Rileen Oropeza of the Point Arena rancheria. All material was transcribed and translated with the help of Frances Jack.

Aspectual distinctions appear in almost every portion of the Central Pomo verbal morphology and beyond. Morphemes affecting aspect will be described below in their order of occurrence within the verb.

1. The Basic Root

Verb roots can carry aspectual distinctions in themselves. Aspect may be altered by means of reduplication.

1.1. Inherent Aspect

Many verb roots imply aspectual features as part of their meaning. Some roots can occur only with a perfective suffix, like the root q’ô- ‘drink’. Others occur only with the imperfective suffix, like the verb ybô- ‘do’. A number of verbs can appear with either, such as čanô-: with the perfective
suffix, čanó- means 'sing' or 'make noise', as a person or bird singing, a coyote howling, etc. With the imperfective suffix, it means 'talk'.

(1) PERFECTIVE (P)¹ IMPERFECTIVE (IP)

q'ó-w drink-P
(xhó-w) do-P
čanó-w sing-P

*xq'ó-n drink-IP
yhé-n do-IP
čanó-n talk-IP

The Central Pomo perfective portrays events or states without specification of any internal temporal structure. It is the unmarked category semantically, and is usually supplied as the citation form of verbs if possible. The imperfective indicates some internal temporal structure: duration, repetition, recurrence, etc.

In many languages, perfective/imperfective contrasts distinguish temporal boundedness: events that are predicated as temporally complete wholes are classified as perfective, while those whose starting and/or endpoint are not included in the predication are classified as imperfective. Thus 'he ate it' would be perfective, while 'he was eating' would be imperfective. In Central Pomo, perfective events may be temporally unbounded. Thus to say 'she lives over there', one typically uses the simple perfective verb ?chá-w 'live, sit'.

Of course the perfective/imperfective distinction is not a simple mirror of objective reality. Speakers can choose whether to portray the internal temporal structure of most events or not.

1.2. Reduplication: Iterative Action

Reduplication can alter the internal temporal texture of predication. Verb stems predicking actions, usually a root plus instrumental prefix, may be reduplicated to indicate iterative action. Stress appears on the first occurrence of the stem. The new complex stem may then be followed by an aspect marker, either perfective or imperfective.

(2) dalidaliw 'wave hand' ?hó?bo.n 'trot'
mačmačew 'sniff at' ?t'á?t'aww 'pet (a dog)'
škšškaw 'pant' lbilbiw 'glitter'

The reduplicated stem is usually a lexical item in its own right. In many cases, no simplex form of the verb even exists, at least at this point in the development of the language. There is no verb ˆškšškaw related to škšškaw 'pant', for example, nor is there a verb ˆlbiw related to lbilbiw 'glitter'.
2. Derivational Suffixes

A number of derivational suffixes can alter the aspect of the verbs.

2.1. Directional Suffixes

Central Pomo, like the other Pomoan languages, contains a set of directional suffixes that contribute such meanings as 'over', 'down', 'across', 'around', etc. In many cases, these suffixes can shift the aspect of the verb. Compare, for example, two directional suffixes with somewhat similar meanings: -mli- and -?w- are both translated 'around'. The suffix -mli-, which derives perfective verbs, indicates motion around an object, such as driving around to the other side of a mountain, or the beginning of a motion. The suffix -?w-, which indicates motion here and there, derives imperfective verbs. Compare their effect on the verb root mó- 'crawl'. This root is typically used of four-legged animals, of babies, and respectfully of older people.

(3) mó-?w 'crawl'
    mó-mli-?w- 'old person, animal start to move around'
    mó-?w-an 'old person, animal moving around here and there'

Visitors were traditionally greeted with the expression in (4).

(4) Bé=?ka ma mó-?w-an!
    here-[INF] 2 crawl-AROUND-IP
    'Oh, you're here!'

2.2. The Multiple Event Suffix -t(a)-

The suffix -t(a)- indicates a multiplicity of events, involving either a single individual acting repeatedly or multiple participants. It may follow either perfective or imperfective stems and may itself be followed by either a perfective or an imperfective suffix.

An example of one of the semantic effects of this suffix can be seen in (5). If a child sat on a bank and threw a single rock into a pond, (5)a would be used. If the same child sat on the bank with a pile of rocks and threw them into the water one at a time, (5)b would be appropriate.

(5) a ?-né-?a-w
    FINGERS-set-DOWN-P
    'throw a rock down, as into a pool'

b ?-né-t-a·læ-w
    FINGERS-set-MULTIPLE.EVENT-DOWN-P
    'sit with bunch of rocks, throwing in one at a time'
2.3. The Semelfactive —č(i)—

The semelfactive suffix —č(i)— indicates either the single occurrence of an event or its inception. It is suffixed to both perfective and imperfective stems, but always yields a perfective stem. Its meaning can be seen in (6). (The perfective suffix is —w only after vowels. Final obstruents are automatically followed by glottalization.)

(6)a  qʰó—w
    drink—P
    'drink'

    qʰó—č'
    drink—SEMELFACTIVE
    'take a drink'

b  yhó—n
    do—P
    'do'

    yhó—č'
    do—SEMELFACTIVE
    'happen'

c  čanó—n
    talk—IP
    'talk'

    čanó—č'
    talk—SEMELFACTIVE
    'make a remark'

2.4. The Plural Action Suffix —a·q—

The suffix —a·q can follow perfective verbs, often those already containing a multiple event suffix, to indicate plural action.

(7)a  mi—w
    say—P
    '(one) says'

    mi—č—q'
    say—ME-PLURAL.ACTION
    '(they) say'

b  pʰ—di—w
    SWINGING—take—P
    '(one) jumped'

    pʰ—di—č—q'
    SWINGING—take—ME-PLURAL.ACTION
    '(several) jumped'

3. The Aspect Suffixes

One pair of closely related verbal suffixes plays a major role in specifying a complex array of aspecual distinctions in Central Pomo. Much of the complexity of the aspecual system arises from the fact that these markers appear to have been applied repeatedly over the course of the development of the language, often to verbs that already contained them. A single verb can thus exhibit multiple occurrences of what appears to be basically the same marker. The process was presumably facilitated by a certain amount of lexicalization following each cycle of suffixation, whereby the resulting form was stored as a lexical unit. The various layers will be described here in their order of appearance, beginning with those occurring closest to the verb root.
3.1. The First Imperfective: -a·du-

A suffix -a·du- was apparently added to verbs at an early stage. It precedes the reflexive suffix. The initial vowel a combines with a preceding vowel, but whether or not the vowel length appears depends on regular prosodic processes across the word. The final u remains before the imperative singular. According to regular phonological rule, the alveolar stop d is nasalized to n syllable-finally. The allomorphs of the suffix, here glossed IP, are thus -a·du, -'du-, -an, and -'n.

The suffix can add a durative dimension, as in (8).

(8) ṭé· čh·-ţél-č'i-w.
hair FLOWING-summon-RFL-P
'He combed his hair.'

(8) ṭé· čh·-ţél-an·č'i-w.
hair FLOWING-summon-IP-RFL-P
'He combed his hair, taking his time.'

It can render a telic verb atelic, as in (9).

(9) čh·-ţél-č'i-w=la.
FLOWING-clean-RFL-P=PRF
'I'm drying myself off.'

čh·-ţél-an·č'i-w=la.
FLOWING-clean-IP-RFL-P=PRF
'I'm wiping myself.'

It can add progressive meaning. The verb in (10) is based on the root di- 'take'. The vowel i of the root combines with the a of the suffix to yield é.

(10) Mú·ţu pʰ·-dá·n.
3.PAT VISUALLY-take-IP
'(He) was watching/taking care of her.'

This suffix shows no change in shape with plural verbs.

(11) Mú·l pʰ·-dá·n·č'i-w.
3 VISUALLY-take-IP-RFL-P
'She takes care of herself.'

Mú·ţuya pʰ·-dá·n·?-ma-w.
3.PL VISUALLY-take-IP-RFL-MULTIPLE.AGENT-P
'They take care of themselves.'
3.2. The Second Imperfectives: -du/-č'i-

The second imperfective suffix is similar to the first but it lacks the initial vowel and vowel length. With singular verbs it has the shape -du-. Unlike the first imperfective, it changes shape with plural verbs, taking the form -č'i-. The final vowels of the suffixes appear only before the singular imperative and the perfective. These second imperfectives also appear later in the verb than the first. They follow the semelfactive, the reflexive, and the perfective. They themselves are then followed by an additional perfective -w or imperiative suffix. They most often add a sense of duration.

The verb 'help' normally appears with the semelfactive -č-. The verbs on the left in (12) are used to ask for help, un coup de main. Those on the right are used if someone is already engaged in an activity with some helpers, and additional helpers are asked to join in. (Semelfactive -č- appears as h before a consonant.)

1.PAT help-SML-IPV  1.PAT help-SML-IP-IPV
'Help me!' 'Help me out!'

tó: ló-č-me?.  tó: ló-h-č'i-me?.
1.PAT help-SML-IPV.PL 'Help me everyone!' 1.PAT help-SML-IP-IPV.PL
'Help me out, everyone!'

The verb 'learn' in (13) contains the reflexive -č', which is reduced to glottal stop before a consonant.

(13) a- ba-yi-č'.  a- ba-yi-?-du-w.
1.AG ORALLY-teach-RFL 1.AG ORALLY-teach-RFL-IP-P
'I learned to talk.' 'I'm learning to talk.'

The perfective suffix -w is reduced to h before a following consonant. The perfective verb on the left in (14) is commonly used to say 'he saw' something or 'he sees' something. The verb on the right, with the additional imperfective suffix, means 'he sees something all the time, continually'.

(14) ph-wi-w.  ph-wi-h-du-w.
VISUALLY-see-P  VISUALLY-see-P-IP-P
'(He) sees (it).' '(He) sees (it) continually.'

3.3. The Third Imperfectives: -a-du/-a-č'i-

The third pair of imperfective suffixes differs slightly in form from the second: -a-du- with singular verbs and -a-č'i- with plurals. The initial a and vowel length of the suffixes follow the same patterns of alternation as those of the first imperfective suffix. The final vowels follow the same patterns as the first and second imperfectives.

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This set of suffixes is highly productive. Like the others, these supply no indication of tense, although English translations usually introduce tense.

(15) Mú·1 mašón.
3 ask
'He asked.'

Mú·1 mašón-an.
3 ask-IP
'He is asking.'

Mú·tu ya mašón-c’e.
3.PL ask-IP.PL
'They are asking.'

These, too, follow the semelfactive and reflexive suffixes.

(16) Hi-hé’i-n ...
say-SML-RFL-IP
'(She) claims (to be an expert)'

Hi-hé’i-c’e ...
say-SML-RFL-IP.PL
'(They) claim ...'

They cover a broad range of meanings, indicating any kind of internal temporal texture. This may be durative, progressive, habitual, etc.; past, present, or generic time, and realis or irrealis mode. Note the range of aspectual meanings covered by the imperfective verb ybé’n in (17) – (20).

(17) ?á· mi- shower ybé’n.
1.AG that=LOC do-IP
'I was taking a shower in there.'

(18) Mí=· ba·?á ybé’n čhó-w ?e.
that=LOC food do-IP not-P COP
'I’m not cooking there anymore.'

(19) Mú·1 wéyya má·šk’e má· ybé’n ?i-n.
3 spiritual thing-ONLY thing do-IP be-AS
'Because all of the things she did were spiritual.'

(20) tawbal ybé-t-c’e dá·?é’i-w čhó-w ?e q’ó-?ki.
work do-ME-IP.PL want-IP.PL-P not-P COP what-even
'(People) don’t want to work at all.'

These third imperfectives appear in a wide range of constructions, before causatives, conditionals, futures, and subordinators such as -n ‘while’.

(21) ?á· ?wéni čh-má·-dú-n ...
1.AG yesterday SITTING-be.on-IP-AS
'As I was riding (the bus) home yesterday, ...'
3.4. The Fourth Imperfectives: The Habituals: -a·du/-a·č'i-

The same pair of imperfective suffixes, singular -a·du- and plural -a·č'i- can be added to imperfective or durative perfective verbs to signal further internal temporal structure. The resulting verbs are habituals.

The verb ba·ról 'call' is basically perfective. One imperfective suffix makes it generally imperfective, and an additional one renders it habitual.

(22) твор  барол-а·д-an.
1.PAT ORALLY-summon-IP-IP
'He doesn't call me.'

A plural habitual can be seen in (23), based on the plural verb lów-.

(23) 1.PL what-REVEN talk.PL-IP,PL-IP,PL not-P
Yá qó=tì lów-a·č'-a·č' chó-w.
'We don't even talk about it.'

Habituals are also formed from durative perfectives. A singular durative perfective habitual can be seen in (24), based on the verb čhó-č' 'die'.

(24) 1.AT-Q person absent-SML-IP-IP=WHRN
Bé-da-wa .. čá·č' .. čhó··h-du-w-an-da
'this person dies here,'

?é·y-wa ?-mu·l čá·č' ?i?bú-h-č'i-w-ač'?
where=Q COP=that person bury-P-IP,PL-IP,PL
where do they bury them?'

The plural durative perfective habitual in (25) is based on the plural verb root hlá '(several) go' with the directional -a·la- 'down'.

(25) 1.AT COP=that river go.PL-DOWN-P-IP,PL-IP,PL
P·ðá ʔ-mi·  hlá-la·h-č'i-w-ač'.
'(We) used to go down to the river.'

These forms carry no indication of tense, and are used as often for habitual activities that took place in the past as those that are current. It is possible to specify overtly that an activity or state is no longer in effect. This is done with the particle ḥdów 'used to'.

(26) COP=FAC 1.PAT things order-IP P.HAB COP
Mú·l ʔ-ma tör  ma· diy-an ḥdów ʔe.
3 She used to ask me to do things.'
The shape of the particle strongly resembles the sequence of suffixes that yields durative perfectives, although it bears independent stress of its own. It also differs from those in not changing form with plural subjects.

(27)  Mū·tu·ya ʔ=ma ʒó· ma· di=tä'  hdiw ʔe.
  3.PL COP=FAC 1.PAT things order-TP.PL  P.HAB COP
'They used to ask me to do things.'

3.5. The Fifth Imperfectives: Frequentatives -a·du-/a·č'i-

Finally, the same pair of suffixes, -a·du- and -a·č'i-, may be added to durative perfective habituals to introduce further internal temporal texture. The result are frequentative verbs that emphasize the frequency of a recurring event. Such verbs are translated variously 'a lot', 'all the time', 'keep ...'

(28)  Wē·min-wa ma ʔe-y=yo-h·du-w a·d-an?
  often-Q 2 AWAY-go-P-IP-P-IP-IP
'Do you go away a lot?'

(29)  Mū·tu ʔa· së·mi lō·mu·w·du·w a·d-an ʔe.
  3.PAT 1.AG long.ago talk.PL-COMIT-IP-P-IP-IP COP
'I used to talk to him all the time.'

(The basic comitative verb lō·muče 'talk to' in (29) is perfective, although no overt perfective suffix appears, since the verb ends in a consonant.)

3.6. The Singular/Plural Distinction

Central Pomo nominal and pronominal case marking is based essentially on a distinction between agents and patients rather than subjects and objects. The distinction between the imperfective suffixes -a·du- and -a·či- is based, however, on the number of subjects involved, not agents. A verb ñyä·či 'fear', for example, appears with patient subjects. The imperfective suffix changes form according to the number of patient participants involved.

(30)  Mū·tu ñyä·ʔ=ma·nad·a.
  3.PAT fear-RFL-SYM-IP-IMM
'He is afraid.'

Mū·tu·ye 1 ñyä·ʔ=ma·nad·a.
3-PL-PAT fear-RFL-SYM-IP.PL-IMM
'They are afraid.'

The number distinctions of all imperfective suffixes in a word do not necessarily agree if the suffixes do not all pertain to the same referent. In the causative construction in (31), the first imperfective suffix, -a-,
applies to the single car, but the second, -ać to the plural drivers.

\[\text{Má-ya car q'dí čá-n-ka-w-ać}
\]
\[\text{2-PL good run-IP-CAUS-P-IP.PL}
\]
\[\text{'You people}
\]
\[\text{sá-t'a-r-ć i-w tì-n.}
\]
\[\text{knowledge-sense-RFL-IP.PL-P not-IP}
\]
\[\text{don't know how to drive a car right!'}
\]

4. The Alternatives and their Subtlety

The aspectual alternations indicated by means of the imperfective markers are thus the following.

(32) Basic imperfectives

a Imperfective
\[ča,nó-n
\]
\[\text{sing-IP}
\]

b Imperfective habitual
\[ča,nó-d-an
\]
\[\text{sing-IP-IP}
\]

(33) Basic perfectives

a Perfective
\[q'ó-w
\]
\[\text{drink-P}
\]

b Durative perfective
\[q'ó-h-du-w
\]
\[\text{drink-P-IP-P}
\]

c Durative perfective habitual
\[q'ó-h-du-w-an
\]
\[\text{drink-P-IP-IP-IP}
\]

d Frequentative
\[q'ó-h-du-w-a-d-an
\]
\[\text{drink-P-IP-IP-IP-IP}
\]

The distinctions among these forms can be subtle. In a given context, often several forms might be appropriate. This became especially clear as Mrs. Jack and I transcribed tapes together, and she would first hear one aspectual form of a verb, then realize that another had been used, and remark that both would be equally appropriate. Such interchanges were especially common between the forms illustrated in (32)a and b, those in (33)b and c, and (33)c and d. This is due in part to the fact that the perfective is an unmarked category semantically. Speakers may choose to specify internal temporal texture with an imperfective suffix, or leave it unspecified.

Differences in the usages of these aspects can be seen in the excerpts from conversations below. (34) illustrates an alternation between a basic
imperfective and an imperfective habitual.

(34) Basic imperfective ča·no- 'talk'

Darnell ŋika ča·nó-·n. imperfective
actually talk-IP
'Darnell talks [Indian].

Mú·1 ʔe ʔό· ča·nó-·d-an. habitual
3 COP 1.PAT talk-IP-IP
He's the one that talks to me.'

(35) and (36) illustrate alternations among verbs based on the perfective root q'ó- 'drink'.

(35) Basic perfective q'ó- 'drink'

EO: Ma kʰápe q'ó-w-wm? unmarked P
2 coffee drink-P-Q
'Do you drink coffee?'

FJ: ?á· met' q'ó-y. unmarked P
1.AG that.kind drink-P
'I drink that stuff.

Kʰápe q'ó-h-du-w-an COP 1.AG
coffee drink-P-IP-IP P
'I do drink coffee.

Sachá s-yó-w ʔa· mú·1 ʔa· ..
smoke SUCKING-quit-IP 1.AG that 1.AG
I quit smoking ..

bét' tʰó džú q'ó-h-du-w ŋi-n āt'ó mé:n-ši durative
that lots drink-P-IP-P not-IP now so BUT
now I don't drink so much of it but,

ʔó·ma=wi ʔa· q'ó-h-du-w-an coffee., durative
early.morning-AT 1.AG drink-P-IP-IP
in the morning early I drink coffee.' perfective

(36) was part of a separate conversation about a woman experiencing medical problems as a result of heavy drinking. The speaker had just pointed out that the woman's 'belly has become swollen, but she doesn't even care'.

Mën q'ó-h-du-w-a·d-an. frequentative
so drink-P-IP-IP-IP
'She just keeps drinking.'
5. Conclusion

At first glance, aspectual marking in Central Pomo might seem hopelessly complex and strangely inefficient. Once the place of lexicalization in the system is recognized, however, the motivation behind its development is more easily understood.

Because verbal meaning and aspectual distinctions are so closely integrated semantically, combinations of verb stems and aspect suffixes are especially prone to lexicalization. Note, for example, that the root ḋanó- is understood to mean 'sing' when perfective but 'talk' when imperfective. Such combinations as ḋanów 'sing' and ḋanó-n 'talk' are particularly likely to be learned, stored, and processed as lexical units, rather than as sequences of a root plus aspectual inflection. Additional aspectual markers have been suffixed to verbs as units, rather than added to other aspect markers.

Among the major ways in which dialects and related languages differ among themselves is in the particular combinations that they have lexicalized. Aspect is one of the subtle ways that even the closely related Central Pomo dialects differ from each other, and that the Pomoan languages differ among themselves. Speakers from the Point Arena rancheria on the Coast use the multiple event suffix -t(a)- to indicate habitual activity in ways that Inland speakers, from the Hope and Yokaya rancherias, do not.

(36) ḋa·ʔá=ʔel qa·âó qa·wá-t-an.
food=THE raw BITING-go-MULTIPLE.EVENT-IP
'I eat food raw.' (Point Arena)

(37) P’âó-âk’e qa·wá-t-ač’.
deer=ONLY BITING-go-MULTIPLE.EVENT-IP,PL
'They eat nothing but meat.' (Point Arena)

Inland speakers would use the habitual verbs qa·wá-d-an and qa·wá·č-ač' respectively, each with a sequence of two imperfective suffixes, instead of the multiple event suffix plus one imperfective. M.C. O'Connor (p.c.) reports that in Northern Pomo, the suffix cognate with the imperfective here never appears more than once within a verb.

The Central Pomo system is somewhat unusual in marking so many aspectual distinctions with the same suffixes. In fact, it provides an unusually good example of the power of lexicalization in molding a grammatical system.
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Reference

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PREFACE

The 1990 meeting was the twentieth anniversary of the First Hokan conference, which met at the University of California, San Diego. From time to time, the conference has met with other groups such as the Penutian conference and the Uto-Aztecan conference. It now regularly meets with the Penutian conference.

The conference is again indebted to Margaret Langdon and the Department of Linguistics at the University of California, San Diego, for hosting the conference. Our thanks are also due to the various graduate students who took care of the numerous details such as supplying the endless coffee.

The papers in this volume appear in the same order as they did on the program at the conference. Unfortunately, a few of the presenters were not able to send in a paper for publication. All of the papers in the volume except the last one were presented at the 1990 meeting.

In 1983, 1984, and 1985, very few of the presenters sent in their papers for publication. In 1986, a few papers from each of these years were assembled into a single volume. Werner Winter sent his 1983 paper in so early that the editor lost it in the files, and Winter's paper was omitted from the 1986 volume. It is now egg-on-the-face time for the editor. Winter's paper is included in this volume as the last paper. Mea culpa.

Arrangements have been made with Coyote Press, P.O.B. 3377, Salinas, CA 93912, 408-422-4912, to reprint the various Hokan and Hokan-Penutian conference volumes. Dr. Gary S. Brochin of Coyote Press has told me that he will try to keep all the volumes in print. I have just sent him part of the original manuscripts and will be sending him the rest of the manuscripts very shortly. Only a very few of the original publications are still available. Please see the list at the end of the volume for details on the few remaining original volumes. I do not know how long it will be until Coyote Press will begin issuing reprints of the backissues.

James E. Redden

Carbondale, December 1990

Historical Note: The proceedings of the First Hokan conference were edited by Margaret Langdon and published by Mouton. I have edited all the other volumes of proceedings except those of 1988 and 1989, when I was in Africa. The 1988 and 1989 volumes of proceedings were edited by Scott Delancey in the series published by the Department of Linguistics at the University of Oregon. Please do not request these two volumes from me. Please address orders for the 1988 and 1989 volumes to: Department of Linguistics, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403. I hope that Scott will be willing to publish the Hokan-Penutian volumes regularly, when I retire in a few years.

JER
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