

# **Tentative Observations of Morphophonemic Changes in the Verbs and the Possessed Nouns of Suruí**

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\* This paper is essentially the same as the 1974 version made available as No. 089 of the Arquivo Linguístico (Summer Institute of Linguistics, Brasília, DF); only the page size and numbering have been changed, and a few minor typographical errors corrected.

## 0. Introduction

The following rules are an attempt to describe the morphophonemic changes in the verb stems and noun stems of Suruí.<sup>1</sup> Both verbs and possessed nouns seem to follow the same pattern of changes. Unless otherwise specified, the changes are made at the same point of articulation. The changes shown for the 2nd person plural are the same for the 1st person plural exclusive, which is not mentioned in the rules. The 1st person plural referred to in the rules is the 1st person plural inclusive.

In all the rules the description left of the arrow refers to the 1st person singular form.

### 1. Rules:

1. vl. stop  $\longrightarrow$  vd. nasal in 1st pers. pl.<sup>2</sup>

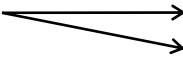
Examples:<sup>3</sup>

o'kaa	$\longrightarrow$	pa'ŋaa
'I go.'		'We go.'
o'kɛɾɛ	$\longrightarrow$	pa'ŋɛɾɛ
'I sleep.'		'We sleep.'
o'pake	$\longrightarrow$	pa'make
'I wake up.'		'We wake up.'
o'pi	$\longrightarrow$	pa'mi
'I am afraid.'		'We are afraid.'

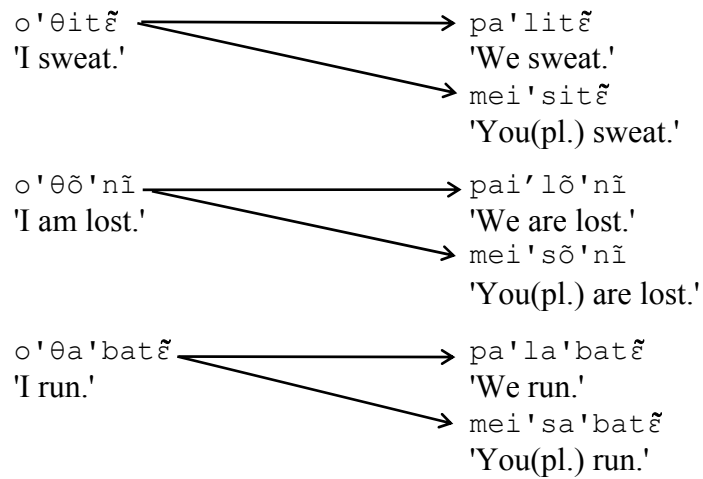
2. vl. dental stop  $\begin{matrix} \longrightarrow & \text{vd. nasal in 1st pers. pl.} \\ \searrow & \text{vl. alveo-palatal affricate in 2nd pl.} \end{matrix}$


Examples:

o'tagō	$\begin{matrix} \longrightarrow & \text{pa'nagō} \\ \searrow & \text{mai'čagō} \end{matrix}$	$\begin{matrix} \text{'We are tired.'} \\ \text{'You(pl.) are tired.'} \end{matrix}$
o'tārā	$\begin{matrix} \longrightarrow & \text{pa'nārā} \\ \searrow & \text{mei'čārā} \end{matrix}$	$\begin{matrix} \text{'We are angry.'} \\ \text{'You(pl.) are angry.'} \end{matrix}$
o'tawaa	$\begin{matrix} \longrightarrow & \text{pa'nawaa} \\ \searrow & \text{mei'čawaa} \end{matrix}$	$\begin{matrix} \text{'We are getting well.'} \\ \text{'You(pl.) are getting well.'} \end{matrix}$

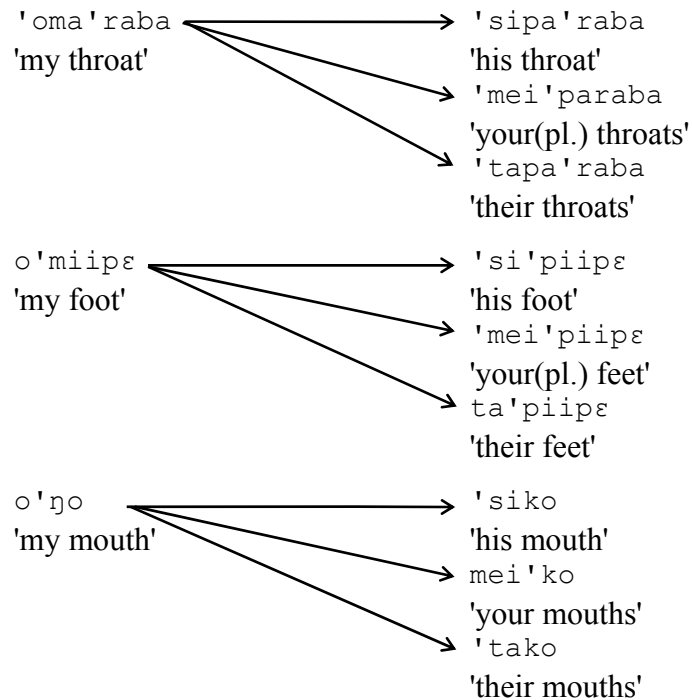
3. vl. fricative  vd. lateral in 1st pers. pl.  
 vl. grooved fricative in 2nd pl.

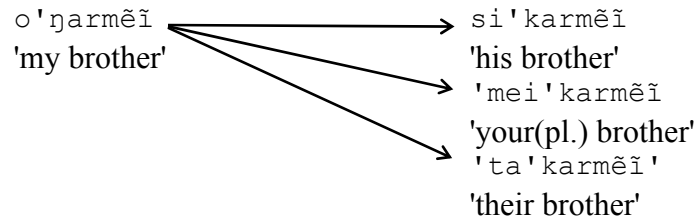
Examples:



4. vd. bilabial or velar nasal  vl. stop in 3rd sing., 2nd pl., 3rd pl.

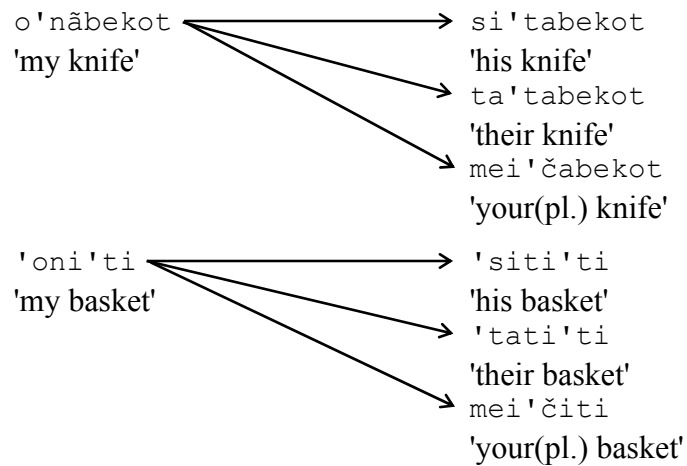
Examples:





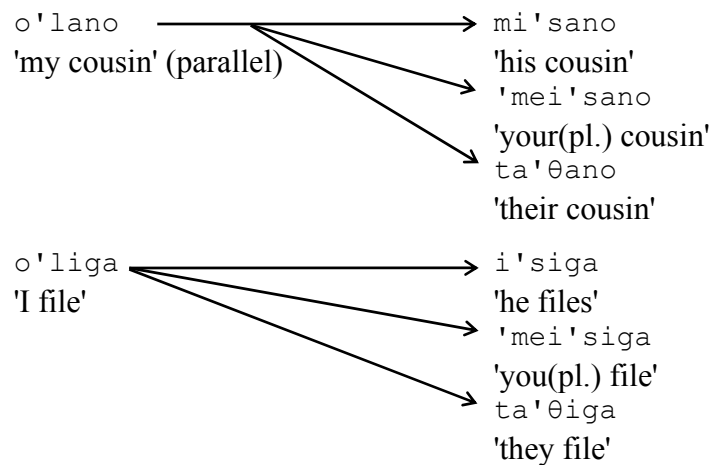
5. vd. dental nasal → vl. stop in 3rd sing., 3rd pl.  
 → vl. alveo-palatal affricate in 2nd pl.

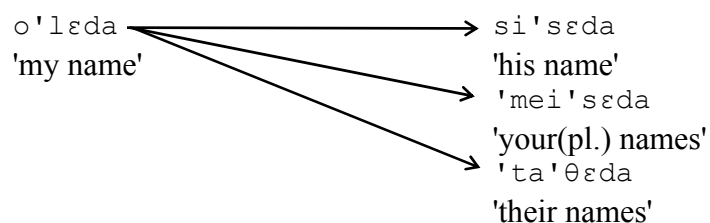
Examples:



6. vd. lateral → vl. grooved fricative in 3rd sing., 2nd pl.  
 → vl. dental fricative in 3rd pl.

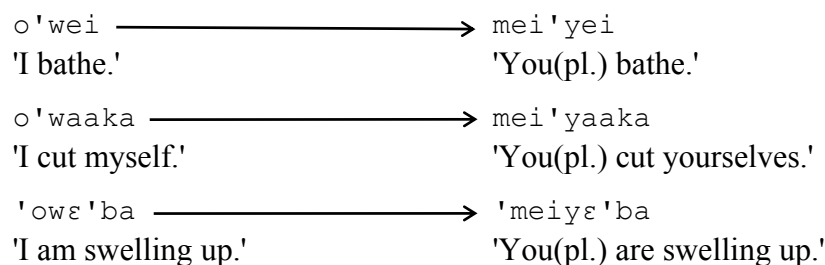
Examples:





7. labial semi-vowel → palatal semi-vowel in 2nd pl.

Examples:



## 2. Exceptions:

1. /m/ remains /m/
 

'ōmīā	'my nose'
'ōmo'ap	'my upper back'
o'mo'kār	'my neck' (back)
'oma'pɛ	'my forehead'
2. /n/ remains /n/
 

o'nara	'my head'
oo'notẽ	'I stand up.'
3. /m/ → /y/ in 2nd pl.
 

o'mait	mei'yait
'my daughter'	'your(pl.) daughter'
o'māicẽ	mei'yāicẽ
'I am pushed.'	'You(pl.) are pushed.'
o'māimatẽ	mei'yāimatẽ
'I urinate.'	'You(pl.) urinate.'
(women's speech)	
'omāā'pea	mai'yaa'pea
'my stomach'	'your(pl.) stomach'
4. /y/ → /s/ in 2nd pl.
 

oyo'kori	mei'so'kori
'I am tickled.'	'you(pl.) are tickled.'

- |    |  |  |  |
|----|--|--|--|
| 5. | /n/ → /ñ/ in 2nd pl.                     | o'neko'sāʔa<br>'my elbow'<br>'one'alapap<br>'my lover'<br>o'neɣpibe<br>'my ear'<br>o'nei'čayɨt<br>'my wife'<br>o'neɣpo<br>'my arm'<br>o'nōma<br>my breast' | mei'ñeko'sāʔa<br>'your(pl.) elbows'<br>'meiñe'alapap<br>'your(pl.) lover'<br>mei'ñeɣpibe<br>'your(pl.) ears'<br>'meiñei'čayɨt<br>'your(pl.) wives'<br>mei'ñeɣpo<br>'your(pl.) arms'<br>mei'ñōma<br>'your(pl.) breasts' |
| 6. | /n/ → /č/ in 3rd sing.                   | o'nir<br>'I am hot.'   | i'čir<br>'He is hot.'  |
| 7. | /y/ → /s/ in 3rd sing., 2nd pl., 3rd pl. | o'yigayeda<br>'my spouse'  | si'siga'yeda<br>'his spouse'<br>mei'siga'yeda<br>'your(pl.) spouses'<br>ta'siga'yeda<br>'their spouses'  |
| 8. | /l/ → /y/ in 3rd sing. only              | oo'lami'koyet<br>'my spouse'<br>'ola'kaba<br>'my eye'  | 'yami'koyet<br>'his/her spouse'<br>ya'kaba<br>'his eye'  |

This rule applies in all compound nouns in which the first morpheme is -la- 'eye'

'ola'pɛpo	ya'pɛpo
'my lower eyelid'	'his lower eyelid'

In compound verb forms this rule does not apply.

'ola'bɛɛ'tota	'ala'bɛɛ'tota
'I close my eyes'	'he closes his eyes'

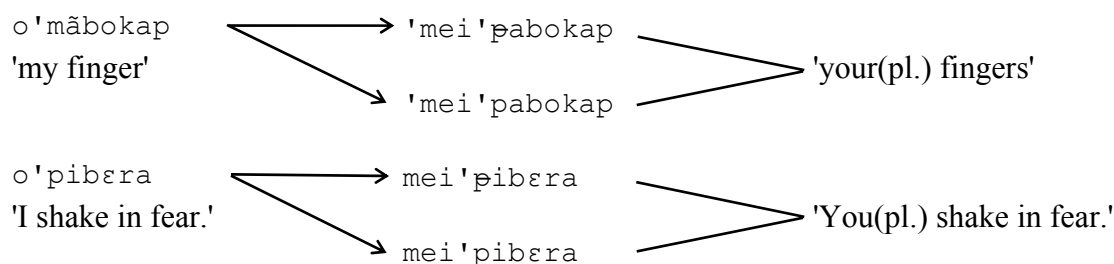
## FOOTNOTES

1. The data for this paper were collected from June to September 1973 on the FUNAI Post "7 de setembro", located in the southeastern part of the Territory of Rondônia, Brazil, 40 kilometers north from the Porto Velho-Cuiabá highway settlement Riozinho.

This paper is part of a long-term field project being carried out under contracts held between the Summer Institute of Linguistics, the Ministry of the Interior, the National Indian Foundation (FUNAI), and the National Museum. The main informant was Na'otera, a young man of about 22 years of age.

The Suruí Indians were first contacted in June of 1969 at which time they were referred to as the Cinta Larga. There was a minimum of 600 Suruí at the time of the first contact. Contagious diseases have reduced their number to less than 225. The orthography is based on a tentative phonemic analysis (April 1973), which is on file with SIL, FUNAI, and the Museu Nacional. The language has been classified as Tupí.

2. Two stems, at least, seem to fluctuate between allophones of /p/, which are [p] and [ɸ], in 2nd pers. pl. They are:



3. All examples are written phonemically except for those with [ɛ]. It seems likely that [ɛ] and [e] are allophones of /e/ but at this stage it is not a certainty.