

## LESSON 5 CONTENTS DESCRIBING NOUNS

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## VERB ROOTS

<b>káto</b>	to play
<b>mé:</b>	to grab
<b>c'e</b>	to see
<b>?etitin</b>	(it) is green

## NOUN ROOTS

<b>týtyk</b>	grove
<b>?ákc'olma</b>	turtle
<b>?o:</b>	rock
<b>séwi</b>	river
<b>býsa:</b>	cane
<b>kóle:</b>	boy

## DESCRIBING WORDS

<b>hél, hélpe</b>	big
<b>jábe:</b>	young
<b>?étiti</b>	green
<b>?ékylkyl</b>	bluish
<b>sí?ypè</b>	playful
<b>wýkte</b>	one
<b>péne</b>	two

## NOUN SUFFIXES

<b>-m</b>	shows that the word describes the “star” noun
<b>-kan</b>	with

## DEMONSTRATIVES

<b>?áma</b>	that
<b>myje</b>	that

distinctions between these two "thats" will be described in Lesson 6

## PART 1 COMPOUNDING SUFFIX

Dr. Ultan's dissertation on Konkow talks about a "compounding suffix." The Mountain Maidu grammar book, by Karen Anderson, who we are grateful to for sharing this concept, talks about it this way:

In [a previous lesson], we talked about the **-m** subject marker on nouns. There is another type of **-m** that is used to tie all describing and specifying words together in a phrase. Instead of just saying "coyote," you might want to say "that coyote," or "that big, bad coyote." Or instead of just saying "a woman," you might want to say "those three other hungry women." Think of the noun as the star of the phrase. "Coyote" is the star of the phrase "The big bad coyote". All the other words are just saying what kind of coyote it is. In Maidu, all the describing words leading up to the noun (the star of the phrase) have to be linked together with **-m** suffixes, even if the noun is not the subject of the sentence.

Here are some examples from *Coyote and the Turtle Girls*: What they say about Mountain Maidu also holds true for Konkow. So the words that lead up to the "star" of the phrase can be called "describing words". We've been calling the suffix the "relational" suffix because it relates the describing words to the star noun.

**pé:nem jábe:m jý:pyc'ok'om kátosam, ?o:di.**

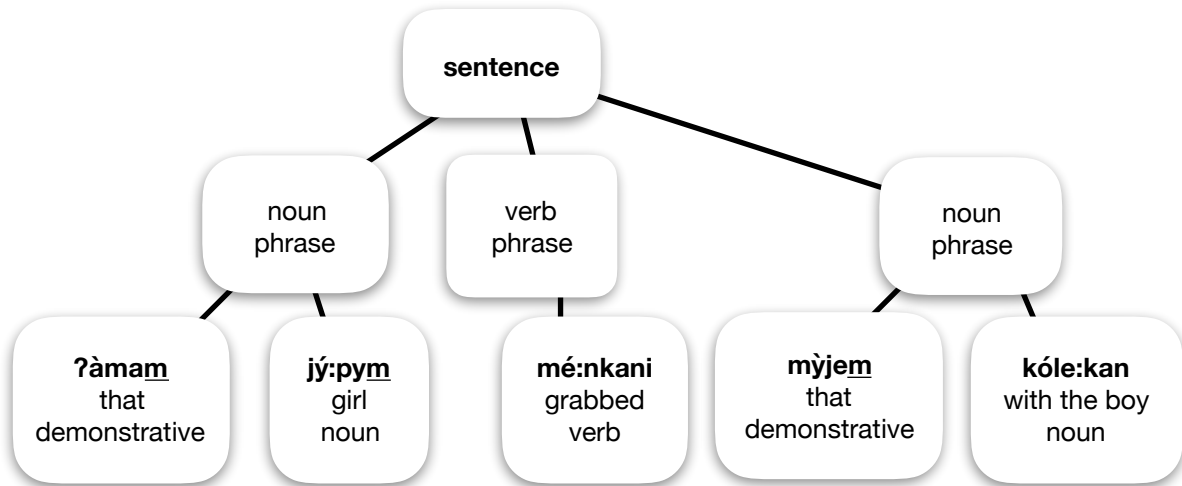
<b>pé:ne-m</b>	<b>jábe:-m</b>	<b>jý:pyc'ok'-om káto-sa-m</b>	<b>?o:-di</b>
two-relational	young-relational	girl-subject play-dual-pl.perf	rock-on

two young girls were playing on the rock.

**?àmamjý:pym mé:nkani, mýjemkóle:kan**

<b>?àmam-jý:py-m</b>	<b>mé:-n-kani,</b>	<b>mýjem-kóle:-kan</b>
that-girl-subject	grab-neutral-and.then	that-boy-with

That girl grabbed that boy (coyote).



This sentence has two noun phrases – the first one is the subject so “girl” is marked with the **-m** subject marker. The second noun phrase is the object, so “boy” does not have an **-m**. But in both cases, the words for “that” have the **-m** that ties it to the noun.

NOTE: if either the describing word or the “star” noun ends in a consonant, add **-im** instead of **-m**. The **-m** on the describing words acts the same way as the subject marker.

Another note: **kóle:kan** means “with (the) boy”.

**kole:-kan**  
boy-with

So if you use the *verb root* **mé:** which has been translated as “grab”, the *object* of grab has to have that *suffix* **-kan**. (Remember that in the exercises.) In the sentence above, the *object noun phrase* comes after the *verb*. Remember that in Chapter 2, we showed *objects* before the *verb*. So you see that it is fine to do it either way. Some *describing words* can be made into *verbs*, too. For example, **ʔetiti** “green” with the *verb final suffix* **-n** on it becomes **ʔetitin** “(It) is green.”

## EXERCISE 1

This is directly from the story of the Lost Swimmer. Ultan always puts the describing words together with the noun as a single word. We think it is easier to read if we write them separately. But as you study the texts, you will see them as Ultan wrote them; so this exercise is to help you learn how to pick the words apart.

**wỳktemhèlpem májdymà nìk jániton, "sòhnokì:n."**

A big (i.e. important) man told me, "(I) will let (you) go."

See if you can rewrite that noun phrase with the words separated, and put dashes between the *roots* and *suffixes*. You can label the parts of each word if you want to. In the text analyses we are calling the *suffix* a "*relational*," because it serves to relate the *descriptive words* to the star *noun*.

**wỳktemhèlpem májdymà**

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## ANSWERS EXERCISE 1

**wỳktemhèlpem májdymà**

<b>wỳk</b>	<b>-te</b>	<b>-m</b>	<b>-hèlpe-m</b>	<b>-májdy</b>	<b>-mà</b>
one	-contrastive	-relational	-big -relational	-man	-subject

## EXERCISE 2

Here are some describing words that you can use to make noun phrases. We are also adding the corrected words for “girl” and “girls.” Combine these with the vocabulary from Lesson 1 to do this exercise.

### DESCRIPTIVE WORDS

<b>hél, helpe</b>	big
<b>jábe:</b>	young
<b>?etiti</b>	green
<b>?ékylkyl</b>	bluish
<b>?áma</b>	that
<b>wýkte</b>	one
<b>péne</b>	two
<b>si?ympe</b>	playful

### NOUNS

<b>jý:py</b>	girl
<b>jý:pyc’ok’o</b>	girls (two)
<b>býsa:</b>	cane
<b>ákc’olma</b>	turtle
<b>?o:</b>	rock
<b>séwi</b>	river
<b>kóle</b>	boy

Translate these sentences into Konkow. Make sure that the subject of the sentence gets an **-m** *suffix*, and that all the describing words get an **-m** even if the *noun* is not the *subject*. (You don’t need to separate the *suffixes* with a dash when you write the sentence, but you can if you want to.)

The green turtle ate the big cane.

That young boy grabbed the big, bluish rock.

The two young girls looked at the green river.

## ANSWERS EXERCISE 2

Word order is variable. These answers each have one of the possible orders, but others are okay too.

**?etitim ákc'olmam hélim býsa: pen.**

**?etiti-m                      ákc'olma-m    hél-im                      býsa: pe-n**  
green-relational      turtle-subject big-relational cane    ate-verb.final

**?ámam jábe:m kóle:m mé:-n ?ekylkyli-m ?o.**

**?áma-m jábe:-m kóle:-m mé:-n ?ekylkyli-m ?o**  
that-relational young-relational boy-subject grab-verb.final bluish-relational rock

**pénem jý:pyc'ok'om c'en ?étitim séwi.**

**péne-m            jý:py-c'ok'-om            c'e-n                                      ?étiti-m                      séwi**  
two-relational girls-twin-subject    looked.at-verb.final    green-relational            river

## MATCHING GAME

Connect the Konkow to its English translation

<b>?etitim ákc'olmam</b>	the green turtle
<b>hélim býsa: pen.</b>	the two young girls
<b>?ámam jábe:m kóle:m</b>	that young boy
<b>mé:n ekylkylim ?o.</b>	looked at the green river.
<b>pénem jý:pyc</b>	ate the big cane
<b>c'en ?étitim séwi.</b>	grabbed the bluish rock.

## ANSWERS MATCHING GAME

<b>ʔetitim ákc'olmam</b>	the green turtle
<b>hélím býsa: pen.</b>	ate the big cane
<b>ʔámam jábe:m kóle:m</b>	that young boy
<b>mé:n ekylkylim ʔo.</b>	grabbed the bluish rock.
<b>pénem jý:pyc</b>	the two young girls
<b>c'en ʔéitim séwi.</b>	looked at the green river.

## SUMMARY

These are the concepts you should be familiar with from Lesson 4

1. *Describing words* describe something about the “*star*” *noun* of a *noun phrase*.
2. All the describing words before the star noun take an **-m/-im** suffix, which we call a “relational” because it relates the describing words to the nouns. Ultan calls this suffix the “compounding” suffix.
3. Like other *suffixes* we have discussed, if the *root* ends in a consonant, this *suffix* is **-im** after a consonant and **-m** after a vowel.
4. Ultan puts the *describing words* together with the *noun* without spaces between. For purposes of these lessons, we like to separate them for ease of reading.