

# Finals in Mi'gmaq

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## What is a final?

- Suffix to verb root in Algonquian languages, including Mi'gmaq.\*
- Determines a verb's number and animacy of arguments.
- Often analyzed as little v (Brittain 2003, Mathieu 2008).

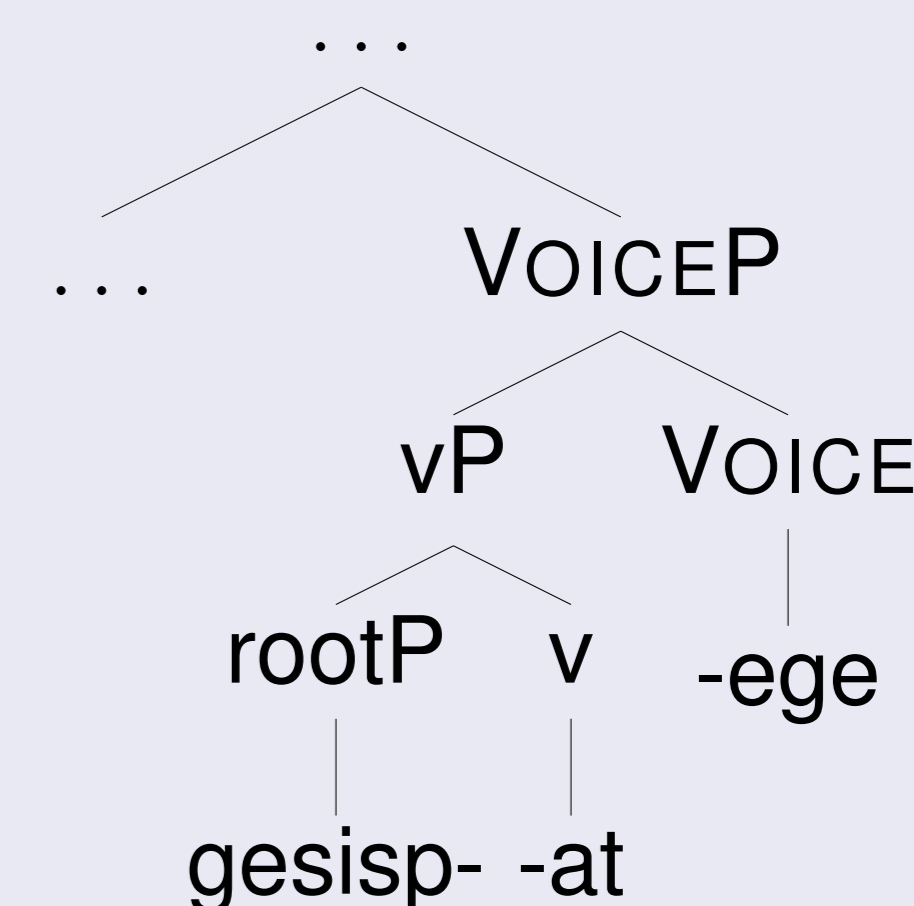
- (1) elugw-**e**-t  
do-**AI**-3  
s/he works
- (2) elugw-**al**-at-l  
do-**TA**-3>4-OBV  
s/he prepares an.

→ This poster only discusses what Algonquianists call 'abstract' finals.

## Multiple finals on a verb

- Several finals can appear on a verb, but certain finals are always closer to the root.

- (3) gesisp-**a't**-u  
wash-**TI**-1>0  
I'm washing it (e.g. the floor)
- (4) gesisp-a't-**ege**-i  
wash-**TI-ANTIP**-AI-1  
I'm washing (things)



## Proposal: some finals attach to root, others to complex stems

- I propose that the difference between Mi'gmaq finals that attach to root versus those that attach to root+final is similar to word formation from roots vs. words in Hebrew (Arad 2003).
- Mi'gmaq roots can have a variety of meanings (e.g. *elugw*- 'do, work, fix, prepare') depending on the first final that attaches to them.
- However, the second final can only change the valency of existing stem; it cannot alter the interpretation of the root.
- Based on Harley (2012), I propose that the first final is little v and the second final is VOICE.
- Note that I use Slavin's (2012) definition of 'root', which can be strong (Algonquianist 'initial') or weak (Algonquianist 'pre-final', 'concrete final').

## First-order finals: little v

- Attach to an underspecified root.
- Determine number/animacy of argument(s).
- Create more idiomatic meaning.

## Second-order finals: VOICE

- Attach to stem that already has a (first-order) final.
- Change syntactic number of arguments but not semantic.
- Create more predictable meaning.

### Animate or inanimate intransitive AI/II -a, -e, -i

- May have additional stative aspectual meaning.

### Transitive animate or inanimate TA -al, -a'l; TI -at, -a't

	Animate	Inanimate
Intransitive	<b>sewisg-ie-t</b> break- <b>AI</b> -3 'it.an breaks up'	<b>sewisg-ia-q</b> break- <b>II</b> -0 'it.in breaks up'
Transitive	<b>sewisg-a'l-at-l</b> break- <b>TA</b> -3-OBV 's/he breaks him/her'	<b>sewisg-a't-oq</b> break- <b>TI</b> -3 's/he breaks it'

### Animate passive: TA → AI -u

- (5) a. elugw-**al-u**-t  
do-**TA-AN.PSV**-3  
s/he/it.an is fixed
- b. gesisp-**a'l-u**-t  
wash-**TA-AN.PSV**-3  
s/he/it.an is washed

### Antipassive: TI → AI -ege

- (6) a. elugw-**at-ege**-t  
do-**TI-ANTIP**-3  
s/he fixes (things)
- b. wissugw-**at-ege**-t  
cook-**TI-ANTIP**-3  
s/he cooks (things), is a cook

## One final, two positions? -a'si, -si, -as'

- Finals -a'si, -si, -as' traditionally analyzed all as reflexive (Inglis 1986): I show that they have distinct meanings, depending on where they attach.
- Lower -a'si attaches to roots and is aspectual; higher -si and -as' attach to stems with existing finals and affect the number of syntactic arguments.
- Question for future work: is there a consistent phonological difference between first- and second-order finals?

### First-order: -asi

#### Dynamic Aspect: root → AI -asi

Patterns like AI final -e and TA final -a'l:

- (7) a. mal-**a'si**-t  
poorly-**DYN**-3  
's/he's moving lazily, not doing well'
- b. mal-**ie**-t  
poorly-**AI**-3  
's/he is lazy, slacking off'
- (8) megw-**a'si**-t  
red-**DYN**-3  
it.an is becoming red
- (9) a. megw-**e'**-g  
red-**AI**-3  
it.an is red
- b. megw-**a'l**-at-l  
red-**TA**-3>4-OBV  
s/he makes it.an red

### Second-order: -si, -as'

#### Reflexive: TA → AI -si

Patterns like TA → AI final -u

- (10) a. elugw-**al-si**-t  
do-**TA-REFL**-3  
s/he fixes self up
- b. gesisp-**a'l-si**-t  
wash-**TA-REFL**-3  
s/he washes self

#### Inanimate Passive: TI → II -as'

Patterns like TI → AI final -ege

- (11) a. elugw-**at-as'**-g  
do-**TI-IN.PSV**-0  
it is fixed, is being fixed
- b. wissugw-**at-as'**-g  
cook-**TI-IN.PSV**-0  
it is cooked, is being cooked

## References

\*Also spelled Mi'kmaq, Mi'kmaw, or Micmac. This poster is based on the dialect of Mi'gmaq spoken in Listuguj, QC and uses the Listuguj orthography. Many thanks to Janine Metallic for her time and good humour in teaching me the language. A digital version of this poster is available on migmaq.org.

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