

# Chapter 9

## Negation in Mohawk

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The patterns of negation in individual languages are often not unrelated to other structural characteristics. Mohawk, an Iroquoian language of northeastern North America, is polysynthetic, with a high proportion of verbs in spontaneous speech. This trait has implications for its inventory of negative constructions. Most of the kinds of non-verbal clauses mentioned in the *Questionnaire for Describing the Negation System of a Language* by Miestamo (2025 [this volume]) are expressed in verbal predications in Mohawk, and are accordingly negated like other verbal clauses, with a construction that has evolved via a Jespersen cycle. There are no non-finite clauses, so most dependent clauses are negated in the same way as main clauses. There is no nominal case, so negation does not affect case marking, and negation has no effect on determiners. There is no negative nominal derivation. The language does offer features of interest in the interplay between negation and tense, aspect, and modality.

**Keywords:** aspect, modality, Mohawk, polysynthesis, tense.

### 1 The language

Mohawk (ISO: moh, Glottocode: moha1258) is an Iroquoian language indigenous to northeastern North America. It is currently spoken mainly in six communities in modern Canada and the United States, in Quebec, New York State, and Ontario. The number of first-language speakers is estimated at around 900, but there are more highly competent second-language speakers, and their numbers continue to grow. Dialectal variation across the six communities is minor: primarily the pronunciation of an affricate and a liquid, and certain lexicalizations. Morphological and syntactic structure are essentially the same in all. Just three



lexical categories are distinguished in terms of their morphological structures: verbs, nouns, and particles.

Verbs can be relatively complex. All contain specification of the core arguments in a pronominal prefix, and apart from imperatives, an aspect suffix. They may also contain additional prefixes, suffixes, and/or an incorporated noun stem. Examples are in (1–4).<sup>1</sup>

- (1) *Wahaté:ko’*.  
wa-ha-ate-ko-’  
FACT-M.SG.AGT-MID-escape-PFV  
‘He escaped.’
- (2) *Iostáthen*.  
io-astath-en  
N.PAT-be.dry-STAT  
‘It is dry.’
- (3) *Wahshakotiianerónhkwen’*.  
wa-hshakoti-ianeron-hkw-en-’  
FACT-M.SG>3PL-feel.spooked-CAUS-BEN.APPL-PFV  
‘He spooked them.’
- (4) *Ia’tesa’kharakè:tote’*.  
ia’-te-sa-’khar-a-ke’tot-e-’  
TRL-DV-2SG.PAT-slip-LNK-peek-EP-STAT  
‘Your slip is showing.’

Most of the morphological structure is templatic. The verb template is in Table 1.

Table 1: Basic verb template

pre-pronominal	pronominal	reflexive, middle	noun	verb	derivational	aspect	tense, aspect
prefixes			stem		suffixes		

Several of these slots have multiple slots within them. The prepronominal prefix slots are detailed in Table 2.

<sup>1</sup>Examples are given here in the community orthography. Most symbols are close to their IPA counterparts. Nasalized vowels are represented with digraphs <en> [ɛ̃] and <on> [ɔ̃], the palatal glide [j] with <i>, and glottal stop with an apostrophe <’> [ʔ]. Stress with high or rising tone is indicated with an acute accent <á>, and stress with falling tone with a grave accent <à>. Vowel length is indicated with a colon <:> after the vowel: <a: >, <en: >, etc.

Table 2: Prepronominal prefixes

Partitive	Translocative	Factual	Duplicative	Future	Repetitive
Coincident				Irrealis	Cislocative
Contrastive				Negative	

There are nearly 60 pronominal prefixes: one paradigm for grammatical agents like the masculine singular *-ha-* ‘he’ in (1) ‘he escaped’, one for grammatical patients like the neuter *io-* ‘it’ in (2) ‘it is dry’, and one for transitive combinations, like the masculine singular acting on multiple third persons *-hshakoti-* ‘he>them’ in (3) ‘he spooked them’. Paradigm choice is semantically based but lexicalized with each verb stem. Verb stems fall into two categories: 1) event verbs, which have imperative, habitual, perfective, and stative forms, and 2) stative-only verbs, which have only stative forms. In the imperative, habitual, and perfective aspect forms of event verbs, grammatical agents are generally in control, and grammatical patients are not in control but significantly affected. In the stative aspect forms of these verbs, which often function as perfects, single participants of intransitives are identified with grammatical patient prefixes. In stative-only verbs, the pronominal paradigm often reflects a distinction between inherent and resultant states.

Multiple derivational suffixes can co-occur. These include reversives, inchoatives, causatives, instrumental, benefactive, and directional applicatives, a facilitative, an ambulative, a purposive, and distributives. Final post-aspectual verb suffixes can further distinguish progressives, remote pasts, and continuatives.

Morphological verbs can function as in other languages as predicates. They can also serve as clauses in themselves. All are finite. Ideas conveyed in non-finite clauses in many other languages are expressed in finite clauses in Mohawk, as illustrated in (5). In what follows, examples drawn from spontaneous speech are identified by the speakers and the communities from which they come: Kahnawà:ke Kw, Kanehsatà:ke Ks, Wáhta’ W, Ahkwesáhsne A, Ohswé:ken’ O, and Tyendinaga T. (Examples were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed by the author. Separate intonation units are represented on separate lines.)

(5) Finite clauses

*Tahiatáhsawen’*

ta-hi-at-ahsawen-’

CIS.FACT-M.DU.AGT-MID-start-PFV

‘They started for home,’

*tontahiaateristíta'*,  
 t-onta-hi-ate-rist-ita'  
 DV-CIS.FACT-M.DU.AGT-MID-metal-follow.PFV  
 'following the railroad tracks,'  
*tehotisterihenhatie'*.  
 te-hoti-sterih-en-hatie'  
 DV-M.DPL.PAT-be.hurrying-STAT-PROG  
 'hurrying along.' (Rita Konwatsi'tsaién:ni Phillips, Kw)

Morphological verbs can also function as referring expressions without further marking. Such constructions are lexicalized to varying degrees. The term for 'bell' in (6) is a morphological verb but is fully lexicalized as a referring expression.

- (6) Verb as referring expression  
*iehwista'ékstha'*  
 ie-hwist-a-'ek-st-ha'  
 FI.AGT-metal-LNK-strike-INS.APPL-HAB  
 'one strikes metal with it' = 'bell'

Verbs far outnumber nouns in spontaneous speech, in part because they are often used to refer, in part because of the density of noun incorporation, as in (7), and in part because many ideas are simply conveyed with verbs that might be conveyed with nouns in some other languages, as in (8).

- (7) Verb in use  
*Na'tkanien'kwatasehon'*.  
 n-a'-t-ka-nien'kw-atase-hon-'  
 PAR-FACT-DV-N.AGT-snow-twirl-DISTR-PFV  
 'There was a blizzard.' (Josephine Kaieríthon Horne, Kw)

- (8) Verbs in use  
*Teiotenonhianihton*                      *tsi ni: tsi wahonteri:io'*.  
 te-io-ate-nonhiani-ht-on              tsi ni: tsi wa-hon-ate-riio-'  
 DV-N-MID-frightened-CAUS-STAT as so as FACT-M.PL.AGT-REFL-fight-PFV  
 it has caused fear                      as so as they fought each other  
 'A fierce battle took place.' (Josephine Kaieríthon Horne, Kw)

The internal structure of morphological nouns is less complex. Basic nouns contain a gender prefix or a possessive prefix, a noun stem, and a noun suffix, which adds no information beyond marking the word as a noun. Some examples are in (9) and (10).

- (9) *o'tá:ra'*  
 o-'tar-a'  
 N-clay-NS  
 'clay, chimney, clan'
- (10) *akhwá:tsire'*  
 ak-hwatsir-e-'  
 1SG.AL.POSS-family-EP-NS  
 'my family'

Noun stems may be simple roots, as in (9) and (10) above, or formal nominalizations, as in (11).

- (11) *kahiatónhsera'*  
 ka-hiaton-hser-a'  
 N-write-NMLZ-NS  
 'book'

Morphological nouns are used only as referring expressions. Various enclitics may be added to words functioning as nominals, such as diminutives, distributives, and decessives (used when referring to deceased persons).

Particles are by definition monomorphemic, though they may be compounded. They serve a variety of syntactic and discourse functions. Some examples are in (12).

- |      |                           |                      |
|------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| (12) | <i>ki'</i> 'in fact'      | <i>iaken</i> HEARSAY |
|      | <i>tsi</i> 'at, as, that' | <i>wáhi'</i> TAG     |
|      | <i>tho</i> 'there'        | <i>kí:ken</i> 'this' |

The language could be characterized as head marking, since arguments are identified pronominally in every verb and there is no nominal case. There is no unmarked, syntactically-defined basic constituent order. All orders are pragmatically significant: apart from various discourse particles, constituents appear essentially in decreasing order of newsworthiness.

The description of negation in Mohawk in this chapter is based on the questionnaire provided by the editors (Miestamo 2025 [this volume]) and mirrors its structure.

## 2 Clausal negation

### 2.1 Standard negation

Standard negation is expressed by a negative particle *iah* near the beginning of the clause and a prefix on the verb. There are two negative constructions. The first consists of the negative particle *iah* and the negative verb prefix *te*-. This is used if there are no prepronominal prefixes in the verb, or only a repetitive or cislocative. An assertion and its negative counterpart with this construction are in (13) and (14).

- (13) Assertion  
*Khe-nòn:we*’-s.  
1SG>3-like-HAB  
‘I like her.’
- (14) Standard negation  
***Iah te-khe-nòn:we***’-s.  
**not** NEG-1SG>3-like-HAB  
‘I **don**’t like her.’

The second negative construction consists of the negative particle and contrastive verb prefix *th*-, used if there are other prepronominal prefixes in the verb. An assertion and its negative counterpart with this second construction are in (15) and (16).

- (15) Assertion  
*Iesakwéhtha*’.  
ie-sa-akw-eh-t-ha’  
TRL-RPT-1EXCL.PL.AGT-stop.by-HAB  
‘We go back there.’
- (16) Standard negation  
***Iáh thiesakwéhtha***’.  
**iah th**-ie-s-akw-eh-t-ha’  
**not** CNTR-TRL-RPT-1EXCL.PL.AGT-stop.by-HAB  
‘We **don**’t go back there.’

Outside of negative contexts, the contrastive marks surprising information. Both the negative and contrastive prefixes occur in various context-conditioned phonological forms.

For the affirmative and negative pairs discussed so far, the verb forms are the same, apart from the negative or contrastive prefix. There are several contexts in which they are not perfect counterparts, however.

Perfective aspect verbs co-occur with one of three prefixes: the factual, the future, or the irrealis (often called the optative or indefinite tense in the literature). Factual perfectives are usually interpreted as past tense. Their negative counterparts are not formed simply with the negative particle plus a prefix on the factual perfective verb, however. Rather than saying that something did not happen with a factual perfective ('He did not see it'), speakers use a stative form of the verb, interpretable as a perfect ('He is/was in the state of not having seen it'). Past affirmative and negative counterparts are in (17) and (18).

- (17) Factual perfective

*Wahatkáhto'.*

wa-ha-atkahto-'

FACT-M.SG.AGT-see-PFV

'He saw it.'

- (18) Negative stative

*Iáh tehotkáhthon*

iah te-ho-atkahth-on

not NEG-M.SG.PAT-see-STAT

'He hasn't seen it.'

Future perfectives are used for future events. Their negative counterparts are also not formed simply with the negative particle plus a prefix on the future perfective verb. An irrealis perfective is used instead. Future affirmative and negative counterparts are in (19) and (20).

- (19) Future perfective

*Enhatkáhtho'.*

en-ha-tkáhtho-'

FUT-M.SG.AGT-see-PFV

'He will see it.'

- (20) Negative irrealis

*Iáh tha:hatkáhtho'.*

iah th-aa-ha-atkahtho-'

not CNTR-IRR-M.SG.AGT-see-PFV

'He won't see it.'

Future perfectives are also used for recurring events in the past. In these uses as well, negative counterparts are inflected as irrealis. Describing her childhood, one speaker noted that her family would never begin to eat before her father said grace. She used a future perfective verb for ‘before my father would pray’, but an irrealis perfective for the negative ‘you could not’ in (21).

- (21) Customary past events

<i>Iáh thaón:ton'</i>	<i>tahsatskà:kon'</i>
<i>iah th-aa-w-aton-'</i>	<i>t-aa-hs-at-ska'nhon-'</i>
<b>not CNTR-IRR-N.AGT-be.possible-PFV DV-IRR-2SG.AGT-MID-dine-PFV</b>	
‘You couldn’t eat’	
<i>tsik enhaterén:naién'</i>	<i>ne</i>
<i>tsi=ok en-ha-ate-renn-a-ien-'</i>	<i>ne</i>
<b>at=only FUT-M.SG.AGT-MID-song-LNK-lay-PFV ART</b>	
<i>rake'niha.</i>	
<i>rake-'ni=ha</i>	
<b>M.SG&gt;1SG-be.father.to=DIM</b>	
‘before my father prayed.’ (Kanatí:res Grace Franks, W)	

The factual and future prefixes never co-occur with negative prefixes.

Since irrealis perfectives are used for events with no specified time, they are somewhat less common in main clauses than factuais and futures, but they do occur, often translated ‘might, would, could, should’ etc. In (22) Mr. Deer was talking about a tornado.

- (22) Irrealis

<i>Aón:ton'</i>	
<i>aa-w-aton-'</i>	
<b>IRR-N.AGT-be.possible-PFV</b>	
‘It might be possible,’	
<i>a:ki:ron'</i>	<i>a:kanatarihsión:ko'.</i>
<i>aa-k-ihron-'</i>	<i>aa-ka-natar-ihsionko-'</i>
<b>IRR-1SG.AGT-say-PFV IRR-N.AGT-town-destroy-PFV</b>	
‘I’d say, that it could demolish the town.’ (Joe Awenhráthon Deer, Kw)	

In most contexts, irrealis perfectives are negated in the standard way, with the negative particle *iah* and a contrastive prefix, as in (23).

- (23) Negative irrealis

*Iah thaón:ton'**iah th-aa-w-aton-***not** CNTR-IRR-N.AGT-be.possible-PFV

'I couldn't'

*a:kì:ron'**teiona'tarákhen.**aa-k-ihron-**te-io-na'tar-akh-en*

IRR-1SG.AGT-say-PFV DV-N.PAT-bread-be.twins-STAT

'say the bread has two lumps.' (Margaret Kahentawákhon McDonald, A)

But when irrealis perfectives are used with a deontic sense to mean 'should', they are negated with a different particle *tóhsa'*, here glossed NEG, and no prefix on the verb, as in (24).

- (24) Negative Perfective

*Tówa' nòn:wa' tóhsa' aétewake'.**towa' nonhwa' tohsa' aa-etewa-k-e-*maybe now **NEG** IRR-1INCL.PL.AGT-eat-EP-PFV

'Maybe we shouldn't eat it.' (Sonny Edwards, A)

Further discussion of deontic uses of irrealis perfectives and their negation is in §2.4

This patterning is reminiscent of the A/Cat subtype of Miestamo's (2013) inventory of Asymmetric Standard Negation strategies, with structural differences between affirmative and negative counterparts based on verb categories such as tense, aspect, and modality.

## 2.2 Negation in non-declaratives

Prohibitives, that is, negative imperatives, are formed with the second negative marker *tóhsa'*. Like *iah*, this particle occurs at or near the beginning of the clause. There is no negative or contrastive prefix on the verb, as can be seen in (25) and (26).

- (25) Command

*Ia'tsiá:ken'n!**ia'-ts-iaken'n*

TRL-2SG.IMP-go.out

'Go out!'

(26) Basic prohibitive

*Tóhsa' ia'tsiá:ken'n.*

**tohsa'** ia'-ts-iaken'n

NEG TRL-2SG.IMP.AGT-go.out

'Don't go out!'

Basic imperatives differ from other verbs in lacking an aspect suffix, but they do contain a second person pronominal prefix that distinguishes singular, dual, and plural addressees. The form of the singular agent in indicatives is *-hs(e)-* with loss of the *h* word-initially or after a consonant. It thus most often appears as *s(e)-*. The indicative and imperative second person singular agent prefixes are descended from different forms, *\*(h)s-* and *\*-č-*. They have merged to *s(e)-* in most contexts, but the imperative never appears with an initial *h*, and before a high front vowel or glide it is still an affricate, spelled <ts>. In some dialects this is pronounced as an alveo-palatal [tʃ]; in others it is now pronounced as an alveolar affricate [ts], and a following glide has disappeared.

There is also a second prohibitive construction, with the future prefix *en-*. This is also formed with *tóhsa'*, as in (27).

(27) Future Prohibitive

*Tóhsa' ienhsíá:ken'n(e').*

**tohsa'** i-en-hs-iaken'n-e-'

NEG TRL-FUT-2SG.AGT-go.out-EP-PFV

'Don't go out.'

For some speakers, the future prohibitives lack an aspect suffix, like basic imperatives, but for others, they end in a perfective suffix, like future perfective statements. For all speakers, the form of the second person singular agent pronoun in this construction is that used with indicatives. Speakers find it difficult to articulate the precise difference in meaning and use between the basic and future prohibitives. Though a difference in time is often involved, speakers agree that forms with the future prefix are not simply delayed imperatives as might be expected, and they are not necessarily more polite.

Basic prohibitives are used for immediate situations, where there is no time for discussion. If a man is about to put a forkful of food into his mouth, but it is suddenly discovered that there might be something wrong with it, he might get the warning in (28).

- (28) Basic prohibitive

*Tóhsa' í:sek!*

tohsa' i-s-ek

NEG PROTH-2SG.IMP.AGT-eat

'Don't eat it!' (Á:nen Konwaroniá:wi Deer, Kw)

But if someone has made a cake for a bake sale, and the man comes in and spies it on the counter, he would be more likely to get the warning in (29).

- (29) Future prohibitive

*Tóhsa' énhsek(e')!*

tohsa' en-hs-ek-e-'

NEG FUT-2SG.AGT-eat-EP-PFV

'Don't eat it!' (Annette Kaia'titáhkhe' Jacobs, Kw)

Speakers note that these future forms are more likely to be used for longer-term prohibitions: 'Don't plan to ...'. Kanáhstatsi Nancy Howard suggests that the future prohibitive might imply a warning: 'You'd better not ...', as in (30).

- (30) Future prohibitive

*Tóhsa' wakerónhak ienhsia:ken'n(e').*

tohsa' wake-ron-hak i-en-hs-iaken'n-e-'

NEG 1SG.PAT-warn-CONT TRL-FUT-2SG.AGT-go.out-EP-PFV

'Don't you dare go out!' (Kanáhstatsi Nancy Howard, Ks)

Addressees might expect a consequence if they went ahead and acted, and would be likely to ask for a reason. The context in (31) is typical.

- (31) Future prohibitive

*Tóhsa' énhsek(e') tanon' ensanonhwákten!*

tohsa' en-hs-ek-e-' tanon' en-sa-nonhwakt-en-'

NEG FUT-2SG.AGT-eat-EP-PFV and FUT-2SG.PAT-sick-BEN.APPL-PFV

'Don't eat it or you'll get sick.' (Annette Kaia'titáhkhe' Jacobs, Kw)

The basic prohibitive construction thus falls into the second prohibitive type defined by van der Auwera & Lejeune (2013), with an imperative verb form but a different negative particle than that used in standard negation. The future prohibitive falls into their fourth type, with a future tense verb either with no aspect suffix like imperatives, or a perfective suffix like other future verbs, and the different negative particle.

Hortatives are formed like commands, with a first person inclusive dual or inclusive plural pronominal prefix and no aspect suffix, as in (32).

- (32) Basic hortative  
*Thó tetewá:ta'n.*  
 tho te-tewa-t-a'n  
 there DV-1INCL.PL.AGT-be.standing-INCH  
 'Let's stand there.'

Negative hortatives are formed in the same two ways as prohibitives. Basic negative hortatives consist of the second negative particle and a basic imperative verb, as in (33).

- (33) Basic negative hortative  
*Tóhsa' thó tetewá:ta'n.*  
 tohsa' tho te-tewa-t-a'n  
 NEG there DV-1INCL.PL.AGT-be.standing-INCH  
 'Let's not stand there.' (Annette Kaia'titáhkhe' Jacobs, Kw)

Future negative hortatives consist of the second negative particle and a future tense verb, with or without a perfective aspect suffix, depending on the speaker. As with commands, listeners may expect a reason, as in (34).

- (34) Negative future hortative  
*Tóhsa' thó tentewá:ta'n(e').*  
 tohsa' tho t-en-tewa-t-a'n-e-'  
 NEG there DV-FUT-1INCL.PL-stand-INCH-EP-PFV  
 'Let's not stand there.'
- Ratikwen'tsherárhohs.*  
 rati-kwen'tsher-a-rho-hs  
 M.PL.AGT-paint-LNK-coat-HAB  
 'They're painting.' (Annette Kaia'titáhkhe' Jacobs, Kw)

Negative questions and answers are formed with the standard negation construction. Polar questions begin with the questioned element, which is the constituent in focus, in initial position, followed by the question particle *ken*, as in (35).

- (35) Polar question  
*Iowísto ken?*  
 io-wisto ken  
 N.PAT-be.cold.STAT Q  
 'Is it cold?'

Their negative counterparts include the basic negative particle *iah* and a negative or contrastive prefix on the verb, as in (36).

- (36) Negative polar question  
*Iáh ken teiowísto?*  
 iah ken te-io-wisto  
 not Q NEG-N.PAT-be.cold.STAT  
 ‘Isn’t it cold?’

Negative questions convey a positive presupposition. Answers address the proposition, not the presupposition. The exchange in (37) was prompted when Mrs. Curotte noticed that her daughter was about to leave without a jacket.

- (37) Question and answer
- GOC: *Iáh ken teiowísto*                      *ne átste?*  
       *iáh ken te-io-wísto*                      *ne átste*  
       not Q NEG-N.PAT-be.cold.STAT ART outdoors  
       ‘Isn’t it cold outside?’ (Grace Ohsontí:io Curotte, Kw)
- AC: *Hén:, iowísto.*  
       yes it.is.cold  
       ‘Yes, it’s cold.’ (Audrey Curotte, Kw)

A negative question with a negative response is in (38).

- (38) Question and answer
- CKB: *Iáh ken tehsheienté:ri?*  
       *iah ken te-hshe-ienteri*  
       not Q NEG-2SG>FI-know.STAT  
       ‘Don’t you know her?’ (Charlotte Kaherákwas Bush, Kw)
- AKJ: *Iáh. Iáh tekheienté:ri.*  
       *iah iah te-khe-ienteri*  
       no not NEG-1SG>FI-know.STAT  
       ‘No. I don’t know her.’ (Annette Kaia’táhkhe’ Jacobs, Kw)

Answers to negative questions are discussed further in §3.1.

### 2.3 Negation in stative predications

There is no adjective category in Mohawk. Most meanings expressed by adjectives in other languages are expressed by verbs in Iroquoian languages. To a certain extent, stative verbs denoting permanent qualities occur with grammatical agent prefixes, and those denoting temporary situations occur with grammatical patient prefixes, but paradigm choice is lexicalized with each verb. The two are negated with the standard construction, consisting of the negative particle *iah* and either the negative *te'*- or the contrastive *th*- prefix on the verb. A description and its negative counterpart are in (39) and (40).

- (39) Description

*Wahétken.*  
w-ahetk-en  
N.AGT-be.bad-STAT  
'It was terrible.'

- (40) Negative description

*Iáh tewahétken.*  
**iah** te-w-ahetk-en  
**not** NEG-N.AGT-be.bad-STAT  
'It wasn't terrible.' (Kanatí:res Grace Franks, W)

There may or may not be an incorporated noun evoking the entity described. Examples (41) and (42) contain the incorporated noun stem *-hsenn-* 'name'.

- (41) Description with incorporated noun

*Kahsenní:io.*  
ka-hsenn-iio  
N-name-be.nice.STAT  
'It's a nice name.' (Dorris Montour, Kw)

- (42) Negative description

*Iáh tekahsenní:io.*  
**iah** te-ka-hsenn-iio  
**not** NEG-N-name-be.nice.STAT  
'It's **not** a nice name.'

Location is also predicated with verbs and negated like other verbs, as in (43) and (44).

- (43) Locative predication  
*Shé:kon tka-nónhsote’.*  
 shekon t-ka-nonhs-ot-e-’  
 still CIS-N.AGT-house-stand-EP-STAT  
 ‘The house is still there.’ (Joe Awenhráthon Deer, Kw)

- (44) Negative locative predication  
*Iah áro’k tekonti:teron’ ne kítkit.*  
 iah áro’k te-kont-i’teron-’ ne kitkit  
 not yet NEG-Z.PL.AGT-dwell-STAT ART chicken  
 ‘The chickens weren’t in there yet.’ (Ima Johnson, O)

Existence is similarly predicated with verbs and negated accordingly, as in (45) and (46).

- (45) Existential predication  
*Tóhka’s ki’ nikahéhtaien’ thí:ken.*  
 tohkara’=se’s ki’ ni-ka-heht-a-ien-’ thiken  
 several=formerly in.fact PAR-N.AGT-garden-LNK-lie-STAT that  
 ‘There were several gardens there.’ (Joe Awenhráthon Deer, Kw)

- (46) Negative existential predication  
*Iáh kwi’ ne’ lektic tekahahseró:tahkwe’ ne: thò:ne.*  
 iah ki’+wahi’ ne:’ lektic te-ka-hahser-ot-ahkwe’ ne: thohne  
 not in.fact+TAG that electric NEG-N-light-stand-PST that there  
 ‘There were no electric lights at that time.’ (Josie Jacobs Day, Kw)

Possession is also predicated with verbs and negated with the standard construction. The most common verb of possession is *-ien*, which is also the verb meaning ‘to be sitting or lying’. An example of basic predicative possession is in (47), and of negative predicative possession in (48).

- (47) Predicative possession: Margaret Kahentawákhon McDonald, A  
*Nia’té:kon rotí:ien’.*  
 n-ia’-te-k-on roti-ien-’  
 PAR-TRL-DV-N-amount.STAT M.DPL.PAT-have-STAT  
 ‘They have a lot of things.’

- (48) Negated predicative possession: John Maracle, O  
*Iáh tehó:ien-'* *ne tewatokwáhta'.*  
*iah te-hó:-ien-'* *ne te-w-atokw-áht-ha'*  
**not** NEG-M.SG.PAT-have-STAT ART DV-N.AGT-scattered-CAUS-HAB  
 'He **didn't** have a spreader.'

As noted earlier, many words used as referring expressions are morphological verbs. Most kinship terms originated as verbs, like that in (49). When they predicate a relationship, they are negated in the standard way, as in (50).

- (49) Predicating a relationship  
*Shakotere'okòn:'a* *nè:'e.*  
*shako-ater='okon'=a* *ne'e*  
 M.SG>3DPL-have.as.grandchild=DISTR=DIM it.is  
 'He has them as grandchildren' = 'He is their grandfather.'
- (50) Negation of a relationship  
*Iáh tehshakotere'okon:'a.*  
*iah te-hshako-ater='okon'=a*  
**not** NEG-M.SG>3DPL-have.as.grandchild=DISTR=DIM  
 'He is **not** their grandfather.' (He's just a friend.)

Nominal possessive constructions distinguish alienable and inalienable possession, but since these kinship terms are not morphological nouns, there is no comparable distinction. When such verbs function as predicates in equative constructions, a demonstrative is used as in (51), or the verb *í:ken'* 'it is' as in (52). In their negative counterparts, the verb 'be' is negated in the standard way: *iah tè:ken'* 'it is not', as in (53).

- (51) Equation  
*Shakotere'okòn:'a* *thí:.*  
*shako-ater='okon'=a* *thiken*  
 M.SG>3DPL-have.as.grandchild=DISTR=DIM that  
 'That is their grandfather.'
- (52) Equation  
*Shakotere'okòn:'a* *í:ken'.*  
*shako-ater='okon'=a* *i-ka-i-'*  
 M.SG>3DPL-have.as.grandchild=DISTR=DIM PROTH-N.AGT-be-STAT  
 'That is their grandfather.'

- (53) Negative equation

*Iáh shakotere'okòn:'a* *tè:ken'.*  
*iah* shako-ateré'=okon'=a *te'-ka-i'*  
**not** M.SG>3DPL-have.as.grandchild=DISTR=DIM **NEG-N.AGT-be-STAT**  
 'That's **not** their grandfather.' (The guy next to him is.)

The morphological verb *rató:rats* is literally 'he hunts', but it is also the term for 'hunter'. The word in (54) is a morphological verb, but it can be used either to predicate or to refer.

- (54)
- rató:rats*

ra-atorat-s  
 M.SG.AGT-hunt-HAB  
 'he hunts' = 'hunter'

When used to describe his activities, it is negated with the standard construction, as in (55).

- (55)
- Iáh teható:rats.*

*iah te*-ha-atorat-s  
**not** **NEG-M.SG.AGT-hunt-HAB**  
 'He **doesn't** hunt.'

For proper inclusion the negated verb 'be' is used, as in (56).

- (56) Proper inclusion

*Iáh rato:rat-s* *tè:ken.*  
*iah* ra-atorat-s *te'-ka-i*  
**not** M.SG.AGT-hunt-HAB **NEG-N-be.STAT**  
 'He is **not** a hunter.'

## 2.4 Negation in non-main clauses

All Mohawk verbs are finite. Most dependent clauses are negated in the same way as independent sentences, with the particle *iah* plus a negative or contrastive prefix on the predicate, as in (57).

- (57) Negative complement

*Wa'onkhró:ri'* [tsi *iáh tehonhrónkha'*].  
 wa'-onk-hrori-' tsi *iah te*-hon-aronk-ha'  
 FACT-FI>1SG-tell-PFV that **not** **NEG-M.PL.AGT-understand.a.language-HAB**  
 'They told me that they **don't** understand.' (Susie Lynch, T)

Irrealis verbs frequently occur in dependent clauses, as in (58).

- (58) Irrealis complement  
*Rotina'khwèn:'en,*  
 roti-na'khwen-'-en  
 M.PL.PAT-be.angry-INCH-STAT  
 'They were angry'  
*tsi iah tháon:ton',*  
 tsi iah th-aa-w-aton-'  
 that **not** CNTR-IRR-N.AGT-be.possible-PFV  
 'that they **could not**'  
*iahatiiá:ken'ne'.*  
 i-aa-hati-iaken'n-e-'  
 TRL-IRR-M.PL.AGT-go.out-EP-PFV  
 'go out.' (Annette Kaia'titáhkhe' Jacobs, Kw)

But as in main clauses, if there is a deontic sense, the second negative particle *tóhsa'* is used, with no prefix on the verb, as in (59).

- (59) Negative deontic irrealis  
*Ionkwaterièn:tare'*  
 ionkwa-ate-rien'tar-e-'  
 1PL.PAT-MID-know-EP-STAT  
 'We knew'  
*tóhsa' thó niaiákwe'.*  
*tóhsa' tho ni-aa-iakwa-e-'*  
**NEG** there PAR-IRR-1EXCL.PL.AGT-go-PFV  
 'that we were **not** supposed to go there.' (Watshenní:ne' Sawyer, Ks)

The same construction is used in negative purpose clauses 'so that not', 'in order that not', as in (60).

- (60) Negative purpose  
*Ê:ren kwi'                      à:rehte'                      kèn:tho ne*  
 eren ki'+wahi'    aa-hr-eh-t-e-'                      ken'tho ne  
 away in.fact+TAG IRR-M.SG.AGT-move-EP-PFV here    ART  
*Kahnawà:ke*  
 ka-hnaw-a'ke  
 N-rapids-place  
 'He **should** move away from here, Kahnawake,'

*tóhsa' iahshonkwakarón:ni'*

*tohsa' i-aa-hshonkwa-kar-onni-'*

NEG TRL-IRR-M.SG>1PL-story-make-PFV

'so that he doesn't cause us problems.' (Joe Awenhráthon Deer, Kw)

## 2.5 Negative lexicalizations

No negative lexicalizations have been found in the data so far.

## 3 Non-clausal negation

### 3.1 Negative replies

Positive and negative answers to polar questions were seen in §2.2. Simple negative particles are also used on their own: *Hén:*, *Én:*, or *Enhén:* 'Yes' and *Iáh* 'No' or *Iáhten* 'Absolutely not'. Examples can be seen in the exchanges in (61) and (62).

#### (61) Positive response

JJD: 'We had half an hour to play.' (Josie Jacobs Day, Kw)

AKJ: *Né: ken ne: kon'tátie'?*

it.is Q it.is day

'You mean in a day?' (Annette Kaia'titáhkhe' Jacobs, Kw)

JJD: *Én:, en:.*

'Yes, yes.' (Josie Jacobs Day, Kw)

#### (62) Negative response

'She asked me, "Is Terè:s coming?"'

*Wa'kì:ron' "Iáh".*

*wa'-k-ihron-' iáh*

FACT-2SG.AGT-say-PFV **no**

'I said, "No".' (Charlotte Kaherákwas Bush Provencher, Kw)

The material questioned is often repeated, as in (63) and (64).

(63) Positive response

CKB: *Sè:iahre'* *ken ní:se'?*  
s-ehiahr-e-' ken ne=ise'  
2SG.AGT-remember-EP-STAT Q ART=2  
'Do you remember?' (Charlotte Kaherákwas Bush, Kw)

DMM: *Hén:, kè:iahre'*  
*hen:* k-ehiahr-e-'  
*yes* 1SG.AGT-remember-EP-STAT  
'Yes, I remember.' (Charlotte Kaherákwas Bush, Dorris Montour, Kw)

(64) Negative response

CKB: *Iah ken tehsheienté:ri?*  
*iah ken te-hshe-ienteri*  
*not* Q NEG-2SG>F-know.STAT  
'Don't you know her?' (Charlotte Kaherákwas Bush, Kw)

AKJ: *Iáh. Iáh tekheienté:ri.*  
*iah iah te-khe-ienteri*  
*no not* NEG-1SG>F-know.STAT  
'No. I don't know her.' (Annette Kaia'titáhkhe' Jacobs, Kw)

As noted earlier, negative responses are the same with positive and negative questions. Examples of affirmative and negative responses are in (65).

(65) Negative response to positive question

KHN: *Satkáhthon* *ken ne ní:io?*  
sa-at-kahtō-on ken ne ni-io-ht  
2SG.PAT-MID-see-STAT Q ART PAR-N.PAT-be.SO  
'Have you seen anything like that?' (Kanerahthenhá:wi Hilda Nicholas, Ks)

SMP: *Né: ken ne: kaná:takon?*  
ne'e ken ne'e ka-nat-a-kon  
it.is Q it.is N-town-LNK-place.inside  
'You mean in the village?' (Sha'tekenhátié' Marion Patton Philips Kw)

KHN: Enhén:.

‘Yes.’ (Kanerahthenhá:wi Hilda Nicholas, Ks)

SMP: Iáhten.

‘No.’ (Sha’tekenhátie’ Marion Patton Philips Kw)

The same particles are used as responses to tag questions, as in (66) and (67).

(66) Positive response to tag

JTD: *Nè:’e tehonta’enhra né:ken*  
*ne’e te-hon-at-a’enh-r-a-nek-en*  
 it.is DV-M.PL.PAT-MID-fence-LNK-be.side.by.side-STAT  
*wáhe’.*  
*wahe’*  
 TAG  
 ‘They were neighbors, weren’t they.’ (Joe Tiorhakwén:te’  
 Dove, Kw)

DMM, JKH: Én:.

‘Yes.’ (Dorris Montour, Josie Horne, Kw)

(67) Negative response

AKJ: *É:so’ ki’ ní:se’ tehsahthénno’ks, wáhe’.*  
*eso’ ki’ ne=ise’ te-hs-ahthenno-’k-s wahe’*  
 much in.fact ART=2 DV-2SG.AGT-ball-hit-HAB TAG  
 ‘You play [golf] a lot, don’t you.’ (Annette Kaia’titáhkhe’ Jacobs,  
 Kw)

CKB: *Ia::*

*iah*

‘No.’ (Charlotte Kaherákwahs Bush, Kw)

AKJ: *A:, iáh ken?*

*a: no q*

‘Oh, no?’ (Annette Kaia’titáhkhe’ Jacobs, Kw)

CKB: *Ia: iáh ó:nen.*

*iah iah ó:nen*

*no NEG now*

‘No, not anymore.’ (Charlotte Kaherákwahs Bush, Kw)

### 3.2 Negative indefinites and quantifiers

Indefinite pronouns are negated with the standard construction, consisting of an initial negative particle, an indefinite word, and a negative or contrastive prefix on the predicate if the particle is *iah*, or no prefix if the particle is *tóhsa*. In most cases the indefinite word is the same as in non-negatives. The equivalent of ‘no one’ is ‘not anyone, not someone, not who’. The interrogative *ónhka* ‘who’ can be seen in (68), the indefinite *ónka* ‘k’ ‘someone, anyone’ in (69) and (70), and the negative *iah ónhka* ‘no one’, literally ‘not anyone’, in (70).

- (68) Indefinite ‘who’

*Ónhka*’ *thí:ken teionhsénthohs?*  
**onhka**’ thiken te-ie-ahsentho-hs  
**who** that DV-FL.AGT-CRY-HAB  
 ‘Who is that crying?’ (Josephine Kaieríthon Horne, Kw)

- (69) Indefinite ‘anyone’

*Ónhka*’k *ken, sheienté:ri* *ne kèn:’en?*  
**onhka**’=ok ken she-ienteri ne ken’en  
**anyone**=just Q 2SG.AGT>FI-know.STAT ART here  
 ‘Do you know **anybody** here?’ (Kanerahthenhá:wi Hilda Nicholas, Ks)

- (70) Indefinite ‘someone’ and ‘no one’

*Tóka*’ *ensathón:te’ne* *ónhka*’k  
 toka’ en-sa-at-honte’n-e-’ **onhka**’=ok  
 if FUT-2SG.PAT-MID-hear-EP-PFV **someone**=just  
*taieken’to’ókhon*  
 t-aa-ie-ken’to’ok-hon  
 DV-IRR-FL.AGT-knock-DISTR  
 ‘If you hear **someone** knocking,’  
*tánon’ íáh ónhka’ té:ien’s,*  
 tanon’ *iah onhka’ te’-ie-e-’s*  
 and **not anyone** NEG-FL.SG-go-STAT.DISTR  
 ‘and **no one** is there,’  
*né: kén:ton’ tsi ónhka*’k *eniaíheie’.*  
 ne’e ka-iton-’ tsi **onhka**’=ok en-ia-ihei-e-’  
 that N.AGT-mean-STAT that **someone**=just FUT-FI-die-EP-PFV  
 ‘**someone** will die.’ (Mary Wathahí:ne’ Nicholas, Ks)

The term for ‘nothing’ is based on an indefinite pronoun *othé:nen* ‘something’ or shorter form *thé:nen*, used in non-negative statements but not questions. The basic indefinite *othé:nen* ‘something’ is in (71) and its negative counterpart *iah thé:nen* ‘nothing’ in (72).

- (71) Indefinite ‘something, anything’  
*Wa’kawkwé:ni*                    **othé:nen**.  
 wa’-k-atkweni-                    **othenen**  
 FACT-1SG.AGT-win-PFV **something**  
 ‘I won **something**.’ (Vina Loft, O)
- (72) Negated indefinite ‘nothing’  
*Tóhsa’ thé:nen*    *enhsi:ron*.  
*tohsa’ othenen*    *en-hs-ihron*  
 NEG    **something** FUT-2SG.AGT-say  
 ‘Don’t say **anything**.’ (Watshenní:ne’ Sawyer, Kw)

Temporal indefinites show the same patterns, as in (73) and (74).

- (73) Temporal indefinite ‘ever’  
*Nowén:ton* *satkáhthon?*  
*nowenton*    *sa-at-kahtho-on*  
 ever                    2SG.PAT-MID-see-STAT  
 ‘Have you **ever** seen it?’ (Annette Kaia’titáhkhe’ Jacobs, Kw)
- (74) Negated indefinite ‘never’  
*Iáh nowén:ton*’ *teionkwahní:n*                    *kanà:taro*.  
*iah nowenton*’ *te-ionkwa-hninon-on*    *ka-na’tar-o-k*  
 not ever                    NEG-1PL.PAT-buy-STAT N-bread-be.in.water-CONT  
 ‘We **never** bought bread.’ (Watshenní:ne’ Sawyer, Kw)

Different forms are used for indefinite and negative locatives, however, as in (75–77).

- (75) Locative question ‘where’  
*Ka’ nón:we nontahsitsiénhawe’?*  
*ka’ nonwe*    *n-onta-hs-itsi-enhaw-e-’*  
 what place    PAR-CIS.FACT-2SG.AGT-fish-carry-EP-PFV  
 ‘Where did you get the fish?’ (Dorothy Karihwénhawe’ Lazore, A)

- (76) Indefinite locative ‘somewhere’

**Ka’ tsi nón:we** kí:ken Kanó:no karístatsi thotiió’té-hkwe’  
**ka’ tsi nonwe** kiken Kanono ka-ristatsi t-hoti-io’t-e-hkwe’  
**some at place** this NYC N-metal CIS-M.PL.PAT-work-HAB-PST  
 ‘They were working **somewhere** in New York City.’ (Rita  
 Konwatsi’tsaién:ni Phillips, Kw)

- (77) Negative indefinite ‘anywhere’

**Iáh káneka othé: te:.**  
**iah kaneka othenen te’-ka-i**  
**not anywhere anything** NEG-N.AGT-be.STAT  
 ‘There wasn’t anything **anywhere**.’ (Minnie Hill, O)

Multiple constituents may be negated within the clause, as in (77).

Degree terms and quantifiers typically appear at or near the beginning of the clause, as in (78).

- (78) Positive ‘too’

**Sótsi** tiótkon teionkwaweienharà:’on  
**so’tsi** tiótkon te-ionkwa-weienhara’-on  
**too** always DV-1PL.PAT-be.busy-STAT  
 ‘We’re always **too** busy.’ (Josephine Kaieríthon Horne, Kw)

They are negated in the same way as other constituents. A negative particle appears at or near the beginning of the clause, the degree term soon follows, and if the particle is *iah*, the verbal predicate carries a negative or contrastive prefix, as in (79).

- (79) Quantifier negation ‘not too’

**Iáh kwí: kwáh sótsi tewenhniserí:io’s.**  
**iah** ki’=wahi’ kwah **so’tsi** te-w-enhniser-iiio-’s  
**not in.fact-TAG** quite **too** NEG-N.SG.AGT-day-be.good-STAT.DISTR  
 ‘As you know, the weather wasn’t **too** good.’ (Joe Awenhráthen Deer, Kw)

If the particle is *tóhsa’* there is no prefix, as in (80).

- (80) Quantifier negation ‘not too’

‘The government said we should move so that’

*tóhsa' sò:tsi akentiohkowanénhake' ne Kanehsatà:ke.*  
*tohsa' so'tsi aa-ka-itiohkw-owan-en-hak-e' ne Kanehsatà:ke*  
 NEG too IRR-N-group-be.big-STAT-CONT-EP-PFV ART NAME  
 'there would **not be too** many people in Kanehsatà:ke.' (Kanatí:res Grace Franks, W)

The same construction is used for *é:so'* 'much, many, a lot', as can be seen in (81) and (82).

- (81) Positive 'much'

*É:so' ki, teionkwatstikáhwhén.*  
*eso' kiken te-ionkwa-at-stikawh-en*  
**much** this DV-1PL.PAT-MID-travel-STAT  
 'We traveled a lot.' (Sha'tekenhátie' Marion Phillips, Kw)

- (82) Negative 'not much'

*Iáh é:so' átste thie:ke's.*  
*iah eso' atste th-ie-k-e-'s*  
**not much** out CNTR-TRL-1SG.AGT-go-HAB  
 'I don't go out **much**.' (Susie Lynch, T)

And the same construction is also used for *akwé:kon* 'all', often shortened to *akwé:*, as in (83) and (84).

- (83) Positive 'all'

*Akwé:kon ráonha rohiá:ton.*  
*akwekon raonha ro-hiaton*  
**all** M.SG M.SG.PAT-write-STAT  
 'He had written **all** of it, everything.' (Lazarus Jacob, Ks)

- (84) Negative 'not all'

*Iáh akwé: tekheinte:ri.*  
*iah akwekon te-khe-ienteri*  
**not all** NEG-1SG>3PL-know-STAT  
 'I don't know them **all**.' (Susie Lynch, T)

As a focus of contrast, the quantifier may be highlighted prosodically. Pitch traces of the sentences in (85) and (86) can be seen in Figures 1 and 2.

(85) Quantifier negation ‘not all’

*Iah. Iáh akwé:kon tekerihwaiénté:ri.*

iah iah akwekon te-ke-rihw-a-ienteri

no not all NEG-1SG.AGT-matter-LNK-know.STAT

‘No. I don’t know everything that went on.’ (Joe Awenhráthen Deer, Kw)

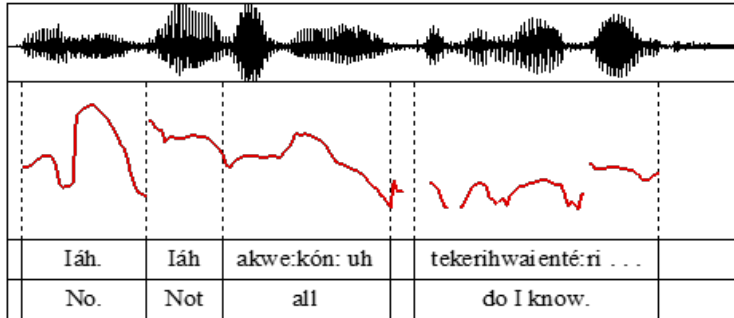


Figure 1: Quantifier negation

(86) Quantifier negation ‘not one’

*Kwah iáh ne skaià:ta*

kwah iah ne s-ka-ia’t-at

even not ART RPT-N-body-be.one

*teionkwentsiaientà:’on.*

te-ionkwa-itsi-a-ient-a’-on

NEG-1PL.PAT-fish-LNK-have-INCH-STAT

‘We didn’t even catch one fish.’ (Sonny Edwards, A)

Neutral sentences generally show a continuous decline in pitch.

### 3.3 Negative derivation and case marking

As noted earlier, there is no nominal case marking in Mohawk. There are also no particles or derivational affixes with meanings comparable to English *without* or *-less*. In many situations, ideas expressed with nominals in other languages are expressed with verbs. To say something comparable to English *You shouldn’t go out without a coat*, a Mohawk speaker would be likely to say something quite different, as in (87).

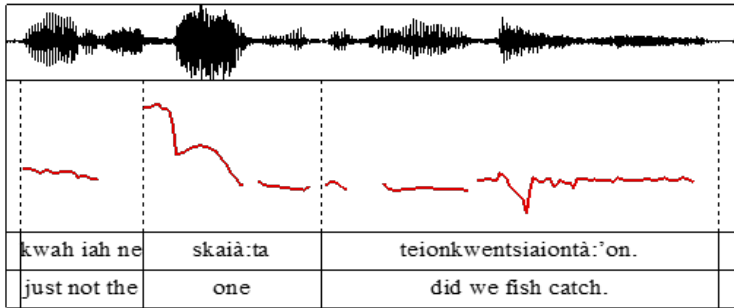


Figure 2: Quantifier negation

## (87) Absence

*láh thiahsia:ken'ne'*

iah th-i-aa-hs-iaken'n-e'

not CNTR-TRL-IRR-2SG.A-go.out-EP-PFV

not should you go out

'Don't go out'

*tóka' iáh thahsatià:tawi'te'!*

toka' iah th-aa-hs-at-ia't-a-wi-'t-e'

if not CNTR-IRR-2SG.AGT-MID-body-LNK-encircled-CAUS-EP-PFV

if not would you put your coat on

'if you don't put your coat on!' (Annette Kaia'titáhkhe' Jacobs, Kw)

## 3.4 Other negative constructions

Negation of sentence fragments, which lack a verbal predicate, is accomplished with just a negative particle, as in (88).

## (88) Negated fragment

a. *láh kwi' thaón:ton'*

iah ki' wahi' th-aa-w-aton'

not in.fact TAG CNTR-IRR-N-be.possible-PFV

*aiontà:ti' Tiorhèn:sha ne*

aa-io-atati-' t-io-rhen'-s-ha ne

IRR-FL.AGT-speak-PFV CIS-N-dawn-HAB-CHAR ART

*kanónhskon.*

ka-nonhs-kon

N-house-interior

'You couldn't speak English in the house.'

- b. *Iáh ni' ne O'seronni'kéha'.*

iah oni' ne o-a'ser-onni-'keha'

not also ART N-axe-make-CHAR

'Not French either.' (Grace Franks, W)

In (89) the speaker was describing how to make cornbread. (The entire discussion was in Mohawk.)

(89) Negated fragments

- a. *Enhsera' akehrà:ke,*  
en-hs-er-a' akehr-a'ke  
FUT-2SG.AGT-be.in-INCH.PFV dish-place

*othe:sera',*  
o-the'ser-a'  
N-flour-NS

'You'll put the flour into the bowl.'

- b. *Ó:nenste' othè:sera',*  
o-nenst-e' o-the'ser-a'  
corn flour  
'Cornmeal.'

- c. *Iáh onèn:'a.*  
iah o-nen'-a'  
not N-wheat-NS  
'Not wheat flour.'

- d. *Onekwénhtara' nikasahe'tò:ten*  
o-nekwenhtar-a' ni-ka-sahe't-o't-en  
N-red-NS PAR-N-bean-be.a.kind.of-STAT  
*ténhsieste'.*  
t-en-hs-iest-e'  
DV-FUT-2SG.AGT-mix-PFV  
'You'll add red beans.'

- e. *Iáh nohné:ka'* [...]
   
iah ne o-hnek-a'
   
not ART N-liquid-NS
   
'Not the liquid.' [...]
- f. *Teiohnekóntie's entisá:ti*
  
te-io-hnek-ontie'-s en-ti-s-ati-'
   
DV-N-liquid-throw-STAT.DISTR FUT-CIS-2SG.PAT-throw-PFV
   
*tenhsawénrie'*,
   
t-en-hs-awenrie-'
   
DV-FUT-2SG.AGT-mix-PFV
   
'You'll mix in boiling water,'
- g. *tóhsa' é:so' teiohnekóntie's*
  
tohsa' eso' te-io-hnek-ontie-'s
   
NEG much DV-N.PAT-liquid-throw-STAT.DISTR
   
'not too much boiling water.' (Watshenni:ne' Sawyer, Kw)

## 4 Other aspects of negation

### 4.1 The scope of negation

Issues of scope in the negation of indefinite and quantifier constituents were discussed in §3.2. Negation of other constituents is similar, with the constituent to be negated in initial focus position preceded by the negative particle *iáh* plus a negative prefix *te'*- or contrastive prefix *th-* on the predicate, or the particle *tóhsa'* without a prefix on the verb.

Negation of a demonstrative can be seen in (90).

- (90) Negated demonstrative
   
'They took the case to Europe.'
   
*Thanon' ne:' rakhsotkén,*
  
thanon' ne:' rak-hsot=kenha'
   
and that M.SG>1SG-be.grandparent.to=DEC
   
'But my grandfather,'
   
*iáh né:' thiehawé:non.*
  
iah ne:' th-ie-haw-e-n-on
   
not that.one CNTR-TRL-M.SG.PAT-go-DIR.APPL-STAT
   
'him, he didn't go.' (Lazarus Jacob, Ks)

The contrast is often heightened prosodically, as can be seen in Figure 3.

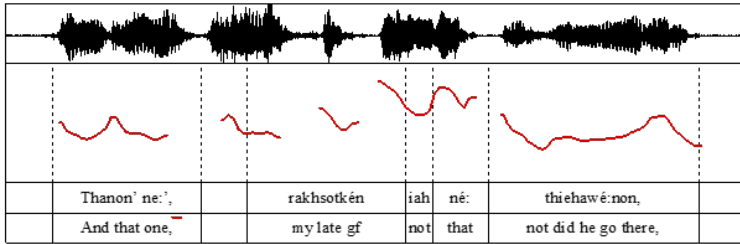


Figure 3: Constituent negation

Though all core participants are identified by pronominal prefixes in every verb, independent pronouns can be added for contrast. These can be negated in the same way, with the usual negative constructions, as in (91).

(91) Negated pronoun

*Tóka' ní:se' enhsaté:ko',*

*toka' ne=ise' en-hs-ateko-'*

maybe ART=2 FUT-2SG.AGT-escape-PFV

'Maybe you'll run away,'

*íáh ki' ní: tha:katé:ko'.*

*iah ki' ne=i'i th-aa-k-ateko-'*

not actually ART=1 CNTR-IRR-1SG.AGT-escape-PFV

'but I won't run away.' (Lazarus Jacob, Ks)

Adverbial particles can also be negated in the same ways, with the negated element appearing immediately after or soon after the negative particle, as in (92).

(92) Negated adverbial constituent

*Íáh ki' óksa'k teiakawenhé:ion.*

*iah ki' oksa'k te-iakaw-enhei-on*

not actually immediately NEG-F.SG.PAT-die-STAT

'She didn't actually die right away.' (Josie Jacobs Day, Kw)

It is clear that this speaker was negating the adverbial 'right away' in (92); the woman in question did die. Again the contrast was heightened prosodically, as can be seen in the pitch trace in Figure 4.

In (93) the adverbial 'once' is negated.

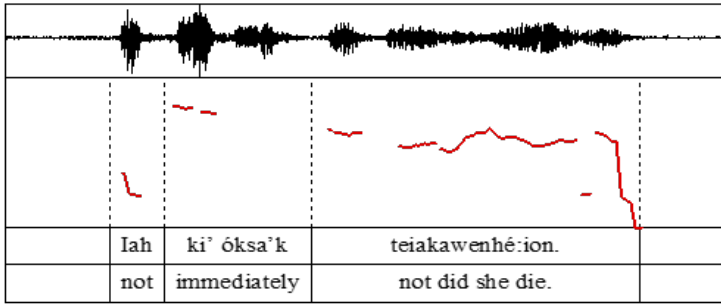


Figure 4: Constituent negation

- (93) Negated constituent 'not once'

*Iáh nen nénska tha'tetewaké:non.*

iah onen ne=enska tha'-te-te-wak-e-n-on

not then ART=one CNTR-DV-CIS-1SG.PAT-go-DIR.APPL-STAT

'Not once did I come back.'

*Iáh ni' ne énska tekhé:kén né:--*

iah ohni' ne enska te-khe-ken ne

not also ART one NEG-1SG&gt;3PL-see.STAT ART

'And not once did I see'

*akhwá:tsíre', thó nikari:wes.*

ak-hwatsir-e' tho ni-ka-rihw-es

1SG.AL.POSS-family-EP-NS there PAR-N.AGT-matter-be.long.STAT

'my family, that whole time.' (Sha'tenkenhatie' Phillips, Kw)

The heightened prosody on the negated constituents *énska* 'once' can be seen in the pitch trace in Figure 5.

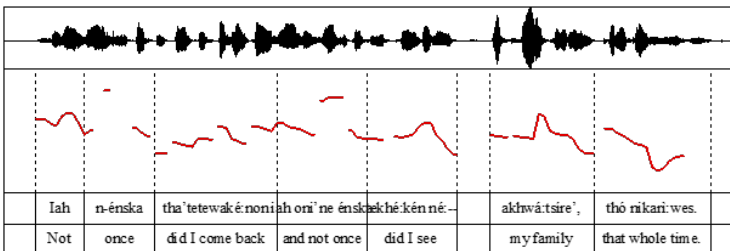


Figure 5: Constituent negation

## 4.2 Negative polarity

There are few negative polarity items. One is the particle *áre'kho*, which normally occurs in negative constructions to mean 'not yet'. It is sometimes pronounced *áro'khe* and is often shortened to *áro'k*. In fast speech, the negative particle *iah*, which occurs at or near the beginning of the clause, can be barely audible or even omitted.

Asked about the name of her baby, a mother responded with the answer in (94).

- (94) Negative polarity 'not yet'  
*Iah ki' áre'kho teiakohsén:naien'.*  
*iah ki' are'kho te-iako-hsenn-a-ien-'*  
 not actually yet NEG-F.SG.PAT-name-LNK-have-STAT  
 'She actually doesn't have a name yet.' (Lazarus Jacob, Ks)

The particle can co-occur with other negated items, as in (95).

- (95) Negative polarity 'not yet'  
*Iah ónhka' áro'k thieiakokwáthon*  
*iah onhka' aro'khe th-ie-iako-kwatho-on*  
 not who yet CNTR-TRL-FI.PAT-stop.by-STAT  
 'No one has stopped by there yet'  
*naiontken'sè:ra'.*  
*n-a-ie-at-ken'se-hra-'*  
 PAR-IRR-FI.AGT-MID-examine-PURP-PFV  
 'to check it out.' (Margaret Kahentawákhon McDonald, A)

## 4.3 Marking of NPs in the scope of negation

As noted earlier, there is no nominal case in Mohawk, and the article does not distinguish definiteness.

## 4.4 Reinforcing negation

Alongside the regular negative particle *iah* 'no, not' is a more emphatic *iáhthen*, which is used both as a simple answer 'absolutely not' and as a sentential negative, as in (96) and (97). The source of the element *ten* is unclear.

## (96) Emphatic negative

‘Would you like a ride?’

**Iáhten**, *tewaksterihénhsere’*.

**iahten** te-wak-sterihen-hser-e’

**no** DV-1SG.PAT-be.hurried-PURP-STAT

‘Certainly **not**, I’m in a hurry.’ (Dorothy Karihwénhawe’ Lazore, A)

## (97) Emphatic Negative

**Iahten thaón:ton’** *éh náhsiere’*.

**iahten** th-aa-w-aton-’ *eh n-aa-hs-ier-e-’*

**not** CNTR-IRR-N-be.possible-PFV that PAR-IRR-2SG.AGT-do-EP-PFV

‘You **absolutely** cannot do that.’ (Minnie Hill, O)

Negation can also be reinforced with the particle *thé:*, a short form of *othé:nen’* ‘anything’, as in (98).

## (98) Emphatic negative

**Iáh ki’** *ne: ónhte’* **thé:**

**iah ki’** *ne’e onhte’* **the:**

**not** actually it.is perhaps **anything**

*thaesewatkarón:ni’*.

**th-aa-esewa-at-kar-onni-’**

CNTR-IRR-2PL-MID-story-make-PFV

‘It wouldn’t be any loss **at all** to you.’ (Dorothy Karihwénhawe’ Lazore, A.)

## 4.5 Negation, coordination, and complex clauses

There are no special forms for ‘neither ... nor’. Contrastive and corrective negation can be accomplished by simply supplying the alternative, as in (99).

## (99) Contrast

AKJ: *Ahskwà:ke* *ken roió’tehkwe’* *thi:?*

ahskw-a’-ke ken ro-io’t-e-hkwe’ thiken

bridge-NS-place Q M.SG.PAT-work-HAB-PST this

‘Did he work on the bridge?’ (Annette Kaia’titáhkhe’ Jacobs, Kw)

JJD: *Iáh.*

‘No.’

*Iáhten, Tiohtià:ke thí:*  
 no Montreal that  
 ‘No, in Montreal.’ (Josie Jacobs Day, Kw)

Contrastive negation can also be expressed with the equational construction described in §2.3, consisting of a negative particle and the negative verb *tè:ken* ‘it is not’, as in (100).

- (100) Contrastive negation  
*Iáh okwáho tè:ken’, tsítsho í:ken’.*  
*iah o-kwaho te’-ka-i-’ tsitsho i-ka-i-’*  
 not N-wolf NEG-N.AGT-be-STAT fox PROTH-N.AGT-be-STAT  
 ‘It’s **not** a wolf, it’s a fox.’

The negative particle *tóhsa*’ described earlier, in combination with an irrealis perfective verb, is used for negative purpose: ‘in order that not’, ‘so that not’, as in (101).

- (101) Negative reason  
*Nek tsi ohén:ton ki: ne’ kà:niote’ ne:*  
*ne=ok tsi ohenton kiken ne’e ka-hniot-e-’ ne’e*  
*that=only as before this it.is N.AGT-stand-EP-STAT it.is*  
 ‘But something was standing in front [of the fireplace]’  
  
*tóhsa’ ki: sótsi taonré:ni’ kí:ken.*  
*tohsa’ kiken so’tsi t-aa-w-areni-’ kiken*  
 NEG this too.much DV-IRR-N.AGT-disperse-PFV this  
 ‘**so that** the embers wouldn’t spread too much.’ (Sadie Sesír Smoke Peters, A)

#### 4.6 Miscellaneous aspects of negation

Negative constructions within the Iroquoian family can be seen to have developed via Jespersen cycles (Mithun 1995, 2016), a not uncommon trajectory. The family consists of two main branches, Southern Iroquoian, now represented only by Cherokee, and Northern Iroquoian. Within the Northern branch, the first group to separate became the Tuscarora-Nottoway, followed by the Wendat (Huron)-Wyandot. The remaining Northern people, known as Iroquois, became the Seneca, Cayuga, Susquehannock, Onondaga, Oneida, and Mohawk.

The negative prefix *te’-* was apparently grammaticalized early in the development of Iroquois verb morphology, because it is one of the innermost prefixes,

occurring immediately before the cislocative, repetitive, or pronominal prefix, as can be seen in Table 2. It has cognates in all of the Iroquois languages. This early attachment is not surprising. Negation is extremely common in daily speech, and frequency can lead to the processing of a recurring sequence of words as a chunk, here a negative particle and a following verb, then fusion. But negation is also usually one of the most important parts of the message. Once fused with the verb, the negative prefix could no longer carry independent stress. And as more prefixes were added to the verb over time, the inner position of the negative prefix would have further reduced its salience.

Speakers of the various Iroquois languages remedied the mismatch between form and function in slightly different ways. For verbs with additional pre-pronominal prefixes, Seneca speakers reorganized the prefix order, moving the negative *te'*- outward to a position before newer prefixes. Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, and Mohawk speakers opted instead to exploit an existing outer prefix for this purpose in these situations, the Contrastive *th*-.

But even word-initial prefixes are less salient than separate words. They cannot be given emphatic stress, and they are usually small, in these languages often little more than a single syllable or less. Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, and Mohawk speakers began reinforcing their negative constructions with additional particles based on their words for 'no', the pattern still seen in the match between the *iah* of the Mohawk negative construction and the answer *iah* 'no'. The origin of this particle is no longer discernible. These reinforcements apparently occurred after the languages had separated, since they are not cognate across the languages.

## 5 Summary

In concert with the typological profile of Mohawk as polysynthetic and dependent marking, with a preponderance of verbs and no non-finite clauses, the same constructions are used for most negation. The standard negative construction consists of a negative particle *iah* at or near the beginning of the clause, plus a negative prefix *te'*- or contrastive prefix *th*- on the verbal predicate. This construction is used for declarative clauses, questions, answers, and descriptive, locative, existential, and possessive predications. Equation and proper inclusion are negated with the negative particle *iah* and the negated form of the verb 'be', with the negative prefix. They negate both independent and dependent clauses, as well as constituents, including indefinite pronouns and quantifiers.

There is, however, an interplay between the standard negation construction and tense, aspect, and modality. Event verbs are inflected for habitual, perfective,

or stative aspect, except for commands. Negative factual perfectives (usually interpreted as past) differ slightly from their positive counterparts. Negation of past events is accomplished with negative statives, interpreted as perfects. Negation of future events and recurring events in the past is accomplished with negative irrealis perfectives.

Commands, future imperatives, and hortatives are negated with a different marker *tóhsa'* and no prefix on the verb. Irrealis perfectives with a deontic obligation sense ('should, be supposed to') or purposive sense ('on order that') are negated with the same particle *tóhsa'* and no prefix on the verb.

Sentence fragments which lack a predicate are negated simply with a negative particle *iah* or *tóhsa'*.

Strategies for negation are summarized in the Table 3 below.

Table 3: Summary of negation strategies in Mohawk

Negation strategy	Functions
Clause-initial particle <i>iah</i> + verb prefix <i>te'-</i> or <i>th-</i> Negative of past perfective = negated past perfect Negative of future perfective = negated irrealis perfective	Standard negation
Prohibitive particle <i>tóhsa'</i> , no verb prefix	Prohibitive for commands, hortatives, deontic irrealis, purpose clauses
Negative particle <i>iah</i> or <i>tóhsa'</i> before focused element with verb prefix <i>te-</i> or <i>th-</i> No noun case effect	Negation of focused element
Simple particle <i>iah</i> 'no'	Negative reply, answers the proposition, not the presupposition
Indefinite pronouns, quantifiers in standard negation constructions	Negative indefinites and quantifiers
<i>are'kho</i> in standard negative construction	'not yet'
<i>iahten</i> 'absolutely not' <i>iah the:nen</i> 'not anything'	reinforcing negation

## Abbreviations

1	first person	INCH	inchoative
2	second person	INCL	inclusive
3	third person	INS	instrumental
AGT	grammatical agent	IRR	irrealis
AL	alienable	LNK	linker
APPL	applicative	M	masculine
ART	article	MID	middle
BEN	benefactive	N	neuter
CAUS	causative	NEG	negative
CHAR	characterizer	NMLZ	nominalizer
CONT	continuative	NS	noun suffix
CNTR	contrastive	PAR	partitive
CIS	cislocative	PAT	grammatical patient
DEC	decessive	PFV	perfective
DIM	diminutive	PL	plural
DIR	directional	POSS	possessive
DISTR	distributive	PROG	progressive
DPL	duoplural	PROTH	prothetic
DU	dual	PURP	purposive
DV	duplicative	Q	question marker
EP	epenthetic	REFL	reflexive
EXCL	exclusive	RPT	repetitive
F	feminine	SG	singular
FACT	factual	STAT	stative
FI	feminine-indefinite	TAG	tag question
FUT	future	TRL	translocative
HAB	habitual	Z	zoic
IMP	imperative		

Abbreviations for communities are: Kahnawà:ke Kw, Kanehsatà:ke Ks, Wáhta' W, Ahkwesáhsne A, Ohswé:ken' O, and Tyendinaga T.

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