

**Speech errors in nominalized clauses:
A clitic to affix shift in Thompson River Salish morphology**

1. Introduction:

This paper shows that subject agreement morphology in Thompson River Salish (TRS) is shifting from clitic status to affix status. The study presents new fieldwork data from this critically endangered language, including the first ever systematic analysis of speech errors in a Native American language. This clitic-to-affix shift is occurring in nominalized clauses, and indicates that nominalization agreement morphology is changing syntactic position (Wiltschko 2008). The data thus offer a synchronous view of morphological changes that have previously only been considered from a historical-comparative perspective (eg. Newman 1979, 1980, Davis 1999), and reveal insights into how agreement morphology is processed at the interface between phonology and morpho-syntax.

2. The Basic Data:

The Salish languages of the Pacific Northwest of North America are well known for their rich clausal agreement morphology (Kroeber 1999, Davis 2000). There are full subject agreement paradigms for indicative, subjunctive and nominalized clauses. In transitive clauses, subject agreement is marked with a suffix encoding the person and number of the subject; as well as an expletive clitic encoding clause type (always 3rd person). Clitics (eg. the 3rd person possessive =s in 1) are generated high in the clause (i.e. in CP), and always follow the first prosodic word (the future auxiliary *x^wúy* in 1). Affixes (eg. -ne in 1) are generated low in the clause (i.e. in vP), and are always affixed to the verb (*x^wi?* ‘look for’ in 1). The nominalizer *s=* is itself a proclitic to the first prosodic word (1). (1) is the expected pattern, and has also been reconstructed for Proto-Salish (Davis 1999).

3. The Problem:

In nominalized clauses lacking an auxiliary, the expletive possessive clitic =s never surfaces (2). This suggests that it has been re-analyzed as an affix: since the transitive verb (eg. *wiktne* in 2) already carries indicative suffix agreement (-ne), it cannot bear a possessive agreement suffix (-s) as well. Thus, nominalization morphology is processed as a clitic (CP agreement) in the presence of an auxiliary, but as an affix (vP agreement) otherwise. In nominalized clauses containing a gap (eg. the relative clause in 3), the nominalizer *s-* itself often surfaces as a prefix to the verb (*n-* ‘give’ in 3) rather than as a proclitic to a preceding auxiliary (progressive *?ex* in 3). Again, this indicates that nominalization morphology is undergoing a shift from clitic to affix status.

The contrast between (1), (2) and (3) is unexpected. We would expect such a situation to be unstable: indeed, speech errors show that the two parts of the nominalization system (the nominalizer *s=* and the possessive agreement clitic =s) are sometimes produced in different syntactic domains, one in little vP (affixed to the verb) and one in CP (cliticized to the initial auxiliary) (4). Sometimes, possessive agreement is doubled, appearing once in the CP and once in the vP domain (5). Comparable speech errors are never made in the indicative or subjunctive paradigms, again suggesting that a reanalysis is underway in the nominalization paradigm.

However, the contrast between (1) and (2) has been robust for at least 130 years (see (6), from *The Morning and the Evening Prayer* 1878). This suggests that the processing of the same agreement morphology in two different syntactic positions can be a stable part of the synchronous grammar.

[note: '=' = clitic, '-' = affix]

- (1) Possessive clitic (=s) surfaces after first prosodic word (future auxiliary):
 ... ?e s=x^wúy=s x^wí?-Ø-Ø-ne.
 ... and NOM=FUT=3POSS look.for-TRANS-3OBJ-1SG.SUBJECT
 '... and I'm gonna' try and find it.'
- (2) Possessive clitic does not surface after transitive verbs in absence of auxiliary:
 ... ?e s=wík-t-Ø-ne(*=s).
 ... and NOM=see-TRANS-3OBJ-1SG.SUBJECT(*=3POSS)
 '... and then I saw her.'
- (3) Nominalizer s- sometimes surfaces as prefix to verb, not proclitic to aux (PROG):
 ... † nkətínímtn † ?ex s-n-t-Ø-és † Máry.
 ... DET fishing.rod that PROG NOM-give-TRANS-3O-3SUBJECT DET Mary
 '... the fishing rod that he gave Mary.'
- (4) Speech error: possessive agreement as clitic (=kt), nominalizer as prefix (s-):
 ... te x^wúy=kt s-k^wúk^w
 ... that FUT=1PL.POSS NOM-cook
 '... that we're going to cook.'
- (5) Speech error: possessive agreement surfaces twice (clitic =c and affix -s):
 ... ?e s=nés=c x^wəst-s
 ... and NOM=go=3POSS return.home[INTRANS]-3POSS
 '... and then he went home.'
- (6) Possessive clitic does not surface after transitive verbs: 1878 example
 ... te s=cu-t-Ø-és(*=c) n † xé? ?e† n-?éye.
 ... OBL NOM-do-TR-3O-3TS(*=3POSS) in DET heaven and LOC-here
 "... maker of Heaven and Earth."

[from *The Apostles' Creed in The Morning Prayer and the Evening Prayer* 1878:20]

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