An Introduction to the Peoples and Languages of the Pacific Northwest

1. Outline

- General information on the Pacific Northwest (PNW) as a geographic, cultural and linguistic region.
- Major areal features of PNW languages (and areal sub-groupings of languages)
- Major areal features of PNW cultures
- Linguistic sketch of the languages and language families

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1 Image taken from David Beck’s website: http://www.ualberta.ca/~dbeck/NWCmap.html
2 Due to a lack of orthographic symbols on my computer, this handout often does not transcribe original data correctly. Always refer to the cited work for the correct transcription.
2. The Pacific Northwest: Some Simple Generalities

What do we mean by the ‘Pacific Northwest’ (‘Northwest Coast’)?

It’s a particular geographic, cultural and linguistic area of North America.

(1) Geographic Definition of ‘Pacific Northwest’

(a) Northern Boundary: Copper River delta in the Gulf of Alaska
(b) Southern Boundary: Winchuk River near Oregon/California border
(c) Western Boundary: Pacific Ocean (of course)
(d) Eastern Boundary: Cascade Mountains (OR, WA), Coast Mountains (BC), Chugach/Saint Elias Mountains (AK)

Natural Geographic Region:
- Temperate Rainforest (all the way to Yakutat, AK)
- Radically different in climate, flora and fauna from regions immediately beyond the eastern mountains.

Natural Linguistic and Cultural Region
- Peoples of the geographic region resemble one another culturally and linguistically to a far greater degree than they do peoples beyond the eastern boundary (though there is much more of a ‘cline’ at the northern and southern boundaries)

(2) Major Language Families of the Pacific Northwest

(a) Na-Dene (Tlingit, Haida, Eyak, the Athabaskan family)\(^3\) North
(b) Tsimshianic (Sm’algyax, Nisga’a, Gitksan, …)
(c) Wakashan (Kwakwala, Nuu-chah-nulth, Makah…)
(d) Salish / Salishan (St’át’imcets, Nuxalk, Halkomelem …)
(e) Chimakuan (Chimakum, …) South
(f) Penutian (Chinook, Coos, Klamath, Nez Perce…)

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\(^3\) The inclusion of Haida in the Na-Dene language family is a long-standing matter of controversy. Most specialists now consider it to be an isolate, unrelated to Tlingit-Eyak-Athabaskan. However, Enrico (2004) provides a strong argument, employing standard methods of comparative/historical linguistics, that Haida is a member of the Na-Dene family. To my knowledge, there has been no public refutation of this work, which has simply been ignored.
Some Important Caveats

(a) The seminar (as currently planned) will focus more on the ‘Central’ and ‘Northern’ PNW languages. *Thus, there is not at present any material prepared on the Chimakum or Penutian languages (hence the italics in (2)).*

(b) The ‘characteristic’ cultural and linguistic properties of the region do not perfectly coincide with the geographic region, nor with one another. *Thus, several of the interesting features of these languages do also appear in the languages of the immediately adjacent linguistic and cultural areas.*

(c) The ‘characteristic’ cultural and linguistic properties of the region are not perfectly universal within the region. *Thus, several of the interesting features of these languages are not found in all the languages.*

In general, linguistic and cultural groupings such as ‘the Pacific Northwest’ are *impressionistic.* The features taken to identify their members are neither necessary nor sufficient, but rather set up a network of distinct ‘family resemblances’.

3. Characteristic Features of Pacific Northwest Languages

As a linguistic area, the Pacific Northwest can be divided into a number of further sub-areas.

(4) The Structure of the Pacific Northwest Language Area

\[ \text{Pacific Northwest Languages} \]

\[ \text{Northern PNW Area} - \text{Nass-Columbian (Mosan) Area} \]

\[ \text{Northern N-C Area} - \text{Greater Salishan Area} - \text{Southern N-C Area} \]

In characterizing a given sub-area, I will list those linguistic features that distinguish it from its ‘sisters’ (i.e., sub-areas will be assumed to also display the properties listed for the areas it is a part of).

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4 Though we will almost certainly discuss work by Amy Rose on Nez Perce.
5 The names for the linguistic sub-areas in (4) are a mixture of Thompson & Kinkade (1990), Beck (2000), and my own idiosyncratic nomenclature. There are not, to my knowledge, any standard terms for the sub-areas.
General Features of the ‘Pacific Northwest’ Language Area

a. **Phonological**
   (i) comparatively large consonantal inventories (typically approx. 44)
   (ii) comparatively small vocalic inventories (typically approx. 4)
   (iii) glottalized consonants (contrasting with non-glottalized)
   (iv) well-developed post-velar series
   (v) little-to-no labial stops, fricatives or nasals
   (vi) multiple laterals (particularly fricatives and affricates)
   (vii) ‘voice’ is not a distinctive feature

b. **Morphological**
   (i) reduplication rather widespread (though rarer in the north)
   (ii) well-developed aspectual systems, but no tense morphology
   (iii) passive / inverse marking
   (iv) marking of plurality is optional, and usually marks a contrast between collective and distributive
   (v) a variety of shared/similar words for local flora and fauna
      (many of which come from Chinook Jargon, a trade pigeon widely used throughout the area until the early 20\textsuperscript{th} Century)

Comments:
- The features that truly unite and distinguish the PNW as a whole are entirely phonological and morphological. There aren’t any clear syntactic properties that hold across the area (unlike what you find in other *Sprachbunde*, like the Balkans).
  *(Though it’s true that the vast majority of these languages are *V*-initial, this doesn’t at all hold for the Northern PNW languages, which are *V*-final).*
- Moreover, it could be said that the **phonological** features listed above principally distinguish these languages from their Algonquian neighbors in the North (rather than languages of the Southwest, or languages of Central/South America)
- The **morphological** features, also, are by no means unusual in North America as a whole.
  (and the only one that is – reduplication – is comparatively common in the Pacific).
3.1 The Northern Pacific Northwest

Northern Pacific Northwest Area

Nass-Columbia (Mosan) Area
General Features of the ‘Northern Pacific Northwest’ Language Sub-Area

a. **Languages**  
*Contains only one language family*: Na-Dene (Haida, Tlingit, Eyak, Athabaskan)  
(thus, more details will appear when we discuss that family later on)

b. **Phonological**  
Contrast plain, aspirated and glottalized stops/affricates/(fricatives) at every point of articulation (*interdental*, *lateral*, *alveolar*, *palatal*, *velar*, *uvular*)

c. **Morphological**  
Largely prefixal, templatic morphology (except for Haida)

### Prefixal Templatic Morphology of Tlingit

```
Yei ikwasateen.
yei i-ga-u-ga-xa-sa-teen
CONJ 2sO-FUT-IRR-MOD-1sS-CL-see
I’ll see you.
```

### Suffixal Morphology of Haida

```
gam 'la qats'i-ranggangaaagan
gam 'la qats'i-rang-gang-aa-gan
NEG 3S come.in-NEG-FREQ-EVID-PAST
He never used to come in. (Enrico 2003; p. 68)
```

### Syntactic

(i) Partly ergative (remnants of ergativity)  
(ii) V-Final (Head-Final)

### Remnants of Ergativity in Tlingit

a. **Optional Ergative Marking**  
Wé shaawát(-ch) xat wusiteen.  
that woman(-ERG) 1sO saw  
*That woman saw me.*

b. **‘Active Agreement System’**  
Xat wudixwétl  
1sO tired  
*I am tired.*

c. **Verbal Roots Classify Properties of S/O (Absolutive)**  
*ya-nook*: intransitive; X (a live creature) sits  
*si-nook*: transitive; X carries Y (a live creature)
3.2 The Nass-Columbian (Mosan) Area

a. Languages

Tsimshianic, Wakashan, Salishan families

b. Phonological Characteristics

(i) Glottalized resonants (glides, liquids and nasals)

(ii) Highly complex consonant clusters
(Nuxalk and Heiltsuk allowing V-less roots)

(9) Complex Clusters and V-less Roots in Nuxalk (Bella Coola)

sp’-is ti7imlktx tinus7uułxtx x-tistntx.
hit-3s the.man the.thief with-a.stick
The man struck the thief with a stick. (Beck 2000; p. 172)

c. Morphological Characteristics

(i) Largely suffixal morphology (prefixes are rare and phonetically simple)

(10) Complex Suffixal Morphology in Lushootseed

heli-tu-b-u7xw-dxelh-cexw 7e kwi sqwutab.
live-CAUSE-MIDDLE-STILL-EVID-2s P DET disease
So you are still alive in spite of the sickness. (Beck 2000; p. 164)

(ii) Visible / invisible (present / absent) distinction in the determiner system

(11) Determiners in St’át’imcets Distinguish Between ‘Present’ and ‘Absent’

a. sécsec [ ti kel7áqsten-s-a ti United-States-a ]

foul PRESENT.DET chief-3sgPoss-DET DET U.S.-DET
The president of the United States is a fool.

* The president of the United States was a fool.

b. sécsec [ ni kel7áqsten-s-a ti United-States-a ]

foul ABSENT.DET chief-3sgPoss-DET DET U.S.-DET
The president of the United States was a fool.

* The president of the United States is a fool. (Demirdache 1998)
(iii) Reduplication (for Plurality and Pluractionality)

(12) Reduplication in Sm’algyax (Tsimshianic)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>t’ax</td>
<td>‘lake’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>t’et’ax</td>
<td>‘lakes’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>ts’ep</td>
<td>‘bone’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ts’ets’ep</td>
<td>‘bones’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>gaat</td>
<td>‘people’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gigaat</td>
<td>‘peoples’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Boas 1910; p. 375)

(13) Reduplication in St’át’imcets (Salish)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>metscál</td>
<td>‘to write’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>metsmetscál</td>
<td>‘to write a lot’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>tsi7ig’w</td>
<td>‘to bleed’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tsi7ts7ig’w</td>
<td>‘to bleed all over’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>seqcál</td>
<td>‘to split wood’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>seqseqcál</td>
<td>‘to keep on splitting wood’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Matthewson 2000)

d. Syntactic Characteristic

VERB-INITIAL (Head-Initial)
3.2.1 The Northern Nass-Columbian Area
General Features of the ‘Northern Nass-Columbian’ Language Sub-Area

a. **Languages**
   Tsimshianic, Wakashan (Northern Wakashan), Salishan (Nuxalk)
   (overlaps the ‘Greater Salishan’ Sub-Area)

b. **Phonological**
   Virtually unlimited C-clustering; V-less roots (*see ex. (9) above*)

c. **Morphological**
   Determiners precede NPs, but are enclitics onto preceding phrases

(14) **Enclitic Determiners in Kwakwala**

Kwixid-[dp _ida] begwanema-[dp x-a q’asa]-[pp s-is] t’elwagwayu
clubbed-the man-ACC-the otter-INST-his club
*The man clubbed the sea otter with his club.*

(Anderson 1984; p. 24)

d. **Syntactic**
   *Rigid VSO Order*

3.2.2 The Greater Salishan (Mosan) Area

a. **Languages**
   Wakashan, Salishan, (Chimakuan)

b. **Morphological**
   (i) Second position clitics
   (i) ‘Lexical suffixes’ (incorporated Ns / incorporating Vs) that do not
   resemble free-standing words

(15) **Contrast Between ‘Free Standing’ and ‘Suffixal’ Roots in Nuu-chah-nulth**

a. *maht’ii-*7AAP-mit-7is cakup
   house-*buy*-PAST-3S man
   *A man bought a house.*

b. *makuk*-mit-7is cakup maht’ii
   *buy*-PAST-3S man house
   *A man bought a house.*

(Wojdak 2003; p. 276 – 277)
c. **Syntactic**

(i) **Predicate / Argument Flexibility (‘No N/V Distinction’)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(16) Predicate/Argument Flexibility in St’át’imcets (Salish)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. <strong>t’ak</strong> ti=nk’yáp=a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go.along DET=coyote=EXIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The/a coyote goes along.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. <strong>n’kyap</strong> ti=t’ák=a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coyote DET=go.along=EXIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The one going along is a coyote.</em> (Davis &amp; Matthewson 1999)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(ii) **Greater Word-Order Flexibility (Though Still V-Initial)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(17) Word Order Freedom in St’át’imcets (Salish)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. t’iq takúkwpi7a b. takúkwpi7a t’iq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrive the.chief arrived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The chief arrived.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. ts’aw’ánas-ha tisnúkwa7swa tikáohswa?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wash-Q your.friend your.car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Did your friend wash your car?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. ts’aw’ánas-ha tikáohswa tisnúkwa7swa?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wash-Q your.car your.friend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Did your friend wash your car?</em> (Davis 2005; p. 35-36)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2.3 The Southern Nass-Columbia Area

General Features of the ‘Southern Nass-Columbia’ Language Sub-Area

a. Languages:
   Wakashan, Salishan

b. Phonological
   No nasals (*nasals historically replaced with voiced stops; /m/ \rightarrow /b/ ; /n/ \rightarrow /d/)*
4. Characteristic Features of Pacific Northwest Cultures

Some Important Caveats:
- As with the linguistic generalizations made above, the generalizations made below regarding the traditional cultures of the region are not perfect.
  -- some ‘characteristic features’ of PNW cultures do not hold of all such cultures
  -- some such features also hold of cultures outside the region.
- As we saw for the languages, it is possible to further identify different ‘areal sub-groupings’ of PNW cultures, ones whose boundaries are perhaps clearer than the PNW as a whole (but since cultures are not our focus here, we’ll leave the finer groupings aside)

4.1 Artwork, Architecture and Textiles

Perhaps the most well-known and widely-recognized feature of the First Nations of the PNW is their distinctive artwork, architecture and textiles.

Artwork:
- Ornate decoration (carving / painting) of all household goods
- Highly stylized (‘geometrized’) representational art
Architecture
Wooden Plank Homes
‘Totem Poles’ (display of clan crests on large carved poles)

Famous, oft-reprinted photo of Haida village of Skidegate

Large, Ocean-Going Canoes
Textiles
Woven Baskets (could hold water) (no pottery)
Woolen/Vegetable-Fiber Tunics

Woven Hats
Chilkat Blankets (in the North)

Louis Shotridge
Tlingit ethnographer and linguist
Famous and often-reprinted photograph of the Whale House in the Tlingit village of Klukwan
4.2 Life Cycle and Social Organization

One of the key features underlying the traditional life-cycle and social organization of the First Nations of the PNW is the great natural, biological wealth of the region.

(it’s said that ‘it’s impossible to starve in Lingít Aaní’)

Western anthropologists often claim that this great abundance of food and natural resources is what ‘accounts’ for a number of features of traditional PNW societies that are otherwise very rare in non-agrarian cultures:

(18) Features of PNW Societies that are Largely Typical of Agrarian Societies

• High population density (several hundred thousand – one million)
• Relatively high material wealth / technology
• Relatively complex social stratification (with hereditary slavery)

These features of the culture (particularly the first two) were ‘financed’ via an especially productive year-long ‘life-cycle’, whereby:

(i) summer / spring months were spent collecting and preserving food (largely fish)
(ii) fall / winter months were spent in elaborate cultural/artistic activities/ceremonies

Finally, despite the features in (18), First Nations of PNW by-and-large did not have any formal ‘political’ organization (i.e., no single individual or group held official/formal political power over any others)

SIDENOTE: Matrilineal organization for clan membership and inheritance in the North

5. Linguistic Sketch of the Languages and Language Families

Opening Caveats

• As always, the generalizations made here for language families are not perfect. Not every member of a given family has all the properties claimed to be ‘characteristic’ of that family.

• To get a real sense of the geographic distribution of each individual family and language, please refer to the packet of maps provided with this handout.

(the map below is just my own poor attempt)
Na-Dene Languages

Tsimshianic Languages

Wakashan Languages

Salish Languages
5.1 The Salishan Language Family

5.1.1 The Languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SALISH</th>
<th>NORTH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nuxalk (Bella Coola)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**COAST SALISH**
- Comox
- Pentlach
- Sechelt
- Squamish
- HALKOMELEM [Musqueam, Cowichan, Upriver...]
- Nooksack
- STRAITS [Lummi, Samish,...]
- Lushootseed
- Twana

**INTERIOR SALISH**

**NORTHERN INTERIOR SALISH**
- St'at'imcets (Lillooet)
- Nlhe7kepmcts (Thompson River Salish)
- Secwepmcts (Shuswap)

**SOUTHERN INTERIOR SALISH**
- Colville-Okanagan
- Spokane-Kalispel-Flathead
- Coeur d'Alene
- Nxa'amicin (Moses-Columbiaan)

**TSAMOSAN**

**INLAND TSAMOSAN**
- Upper Chehalis
- Cowlitz

**MARITIME TSAMOSAN**
- Lower Chehalis
- Quinault

Tillamook

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Throughout the remainder of this handout, I will follow these conventions when diagramming the members of a language family:

(i) Names in parentheses are former (no longer preferred) names for languages/peoples
(ii) Names in brackets are sub-dialects of a dialect continuum
(iii) Names in parentheses are considered outside the scope of this seminar (due to their location)
5.1.2 Characteristic Grammatical Phenomena of the Salish Languages

Flexible Predicate-Initial Order
(see ex. (17) on p.11)

Predicate / Argument Flexibility (a.k.a ‘Lack of a N/V Distinction’)
(see ex. (16) on p. 11)

Roots are all Unaccusative

(19) Transitive / Intransitive Alternation in St’át’imcets (Salish)

   a. zuqw       to die 
   b. zuqw-s     to kill
   c. qam’t      to get hit (by throwing) 
   d. qam’t-s    to hit s.o/s.t (by throwing)
   e. 7ats’x     to get seen 
   f. 7ats’x-en  to see s.o./s.t.

   (Davis 2005)

Transitive Markers Categorize Degree of Agentivity (‘Control’)
(cf. contrast between (19f) and (19b,d)

(20) Marking of Agentivity in Transitive Markers of Lushootseed

   a. 7ulhici-d ced
       I cut it (on purpose).

   b. 7ulhic-dxw ced
       I cut it (accidentally).

   (Mithun 1999; p.128)

‘Out-of-Control’ Morphology
Salish languages typically possess a derivational morpheme that (intriguingly) can be used to mean either ‘X happened accidentally’ or ‘X happened with great effort’ (and possibly more…)

(21) ‘Out-of-Control’ Morphology in St’át’imcets

   a. ka-kwis-ts-kan-a
      OOC-fall-CAUSE-TRANS-1sS-OOC
      I accidentally dropped it.

      (Davis et al. 2008; p. 1)

   b. ka-gwél-s-kan-a
      OOC-burn-CAUSE-TRANS-1sS-OOC
      I managed to get it lit.

      (Davis et al. 2008; p. 5)
Lack of (Linguistically Encoded) Presuppositions

(22) **Lack of Linguistically Encoded Presuppositions in St’át’ímcets**

The following are acceptable in ‘out-of-the-blue’ contexts.

a. **Pronouns in St’át’ímcets (Davis 2008)**

\[
\text{[ ulhcw } \varnothing_1 \text{ nilh [ s=mítsa/q=s s=John }_1 \text{ ] enter pro and.then sat.down John} \\
\text{He}_1 \text{ entered and then John}_1 \text{ sat down.}
\]

b. **Clefts in St’át’ímcets (Davis et al. 2004)**

\[
\text{nets’écw=7i7 nilh [ kwse leplít ] [ kwse 7enét 7e te méllexelh ] once it DET priest DET come OBL DET Malahat} \\
\text{Once upon a time, it was a priest that came to Malahat.}
\]

c. **Discourse Particles in St’át’ímcets (Matthewson 2008)**

\[
wá7 t’it l-ti gélgela tsitcs k Lisa \\
is also in DET strong house DET Lisa \\
\text{Lisa is also in jail.}
\]

Lack of (Full) Principle C Effects

Some Salish languages do not show Principle C effects cross-clausally.

(23) **Licit Violations of Principle C in St’át’ímcets**

\[
tsút=\varnothing 7 [kw=s=cuz’ nas ts’úquaz’am s=Mary }_1 \text{ natcw ]} \\
say=PAST pro DET=NOM=going.to go fish NOM=Mary tomorrow \\
She}_1 \text{ said that Mary}_1 \text{ was going fishing tomorrow. (Davis 2008)}
\]

Tense Interpretation Affected by Deictic Elements

(24) **Determiners in St’át’ímcets Affect Tense Interpretation of the Clause**

a. **séccsec [ ti kel7áqsten-s-a ti United-States-a ]**

\[
\text{fool PRESENT.DET chief-3sgPoss-DET DET U.S.-DET}
\text{The president of the United States is a fool.} \\
* The president of the United States was a fool.
\]

b. **séccsec [ ni kel7áqsten-s-a ti United-States-a ]**

\[
\text{fool ABSENT.DET chief-3sgPoss-DET DET U.S.-DET}
\text{The president of the United States was a fool.} \\
* The president of the United States is a fool.
\]
Wh-words in Wh-Questions are Predicates

While it’s true that wh-words in Salish wh-questions must be clause-initial, this may simply be due to their being predicates (since these languages are Pred-initial).

Evidence that they are predicates includes the fact that they can take subject agreement.

(25) Wh-Words in Wh-Questions as Predicates in St’át’imcets

a. swát-kacw
   who-2sS
   *Who are you?*

b. ínwat-wit?
   say.what-3pS
   *What did they say?* (Davis 2008b; p. 29 – 30)

One Nominal Interpretation Rule

If a transitive verb in a Salish language is followed by a single NP, that NP must be interpreted as the object of the verb (even in cases where such an interpretation would be pragmatically anomalous).

(26) One Nominal Interpretation Rule in Halkomelem

# ni7 q’wel-et-es lhe slheni7.
AUX bake-TRANS-3sS DET woman
*He baked the woman.*
(cannot mean ‘the woman baked it’) (Gerdts & Hukari 2003; p. 14)

In order for such an NP to be interpreted as the theme, the verb must be passivized.

(27) Passivization as a Topic-Tracking Tool in Halkomelem

ni7 7ew’-xi7xhem’-et-em’ 7a tthe c’em’c’eyi.
AUX CON-watch-TRANS-PASS OBL DET ant
*The ants are watching him.*
(Literally ‘He is being watched by the ants’) (Gerdts & Hukari 2003; p. 16)
5.2 The Wakashan Language Family

5.2.1 The Languages

WAKASHAN

NORTHERN WAKASHAN
Haisla
Heiltsuk (Bella Bella)
Oowekyala
Kwakwala (Kwakiutl)

SOUTHERN WAKASHAN
Nuu-chah-nulth (Nootka)
Ditidaht (Nitinaht)
Makah

5.2.2 Characteristic Grammatical Phenomena of the Wakashan Languages

Rigid VSO Order
Wakashan languages do not generally allow anything to precede the predicate (not even particles or adverbials).
Wakashan languages also do not generally permit VOS order (though Os can sometimes permute with oblique phrases).

Predicate / Argument Flexibility (a.k.a ‘Lack of a N/V Distinction’)
As in the neighboring Salish languages, any root in a Wakashan language can freely inflect as either a predicate or an argument.

(28) Predicate Argument Flexibility in Nuu-chah-nulth

a. mamuuk-7is cakup-7i
   work-3sS man-DET
   The man is working.

b. hiixwathi-7is mamuuk-7i
   cranky-3sS working-DET
   The working one is cranky.

c. cakup-7is hiixwathi-7i
   man-3sS cranky-DET
   The cranky one is a man. (Wojdak 2001; p. 1-2)
Lack of (Linguistically Encoded) Presuppositions
Preliminary research suggests that, like their Salishan neighbors, (Southern) Wakashan languages do not possess linguistically encoded presuppositions.

(29) Lack of Linguistically Encoded Presuppositions in Nuu-chah-nulth

The following is reportedly acceptable in ‘out-of-the-blue’ contexts.

t’aaqyiclit’is, hayumhici7athl Mary waaw’it’asiti. she.stood.up she.forgot Mary what.she.would.say
She stood up, but Mary had already forgotten what she was going to say. (Davis et al. 2007; p. 200)

Lack of Principle C Effects
The Southern Wakashan language Nuu-chah-nulth appears to lack Condition C effects to an even greater degree than neighboring Salish languages.

(30) Lack of Classic Principle C Effects in Nuu-chah-nulth

k’wa7a7kwa-y’ap-ma ∅₁ [[ 7ushyums-uk Christine₁ ] kwaasac’us-uk ] break-CAUSE-3sS pro relative-POSS Christine chair-POSS
She broke Christine’s relative’s chair. (Davis et al. 2007; p. 1999)

Extensive Polysynthesis (Incorporation)
Wakashan languages exhibit polysynthesis (incorporation) to a degree that is otherwise uncharacteristic of the Pacific Northwest, and more akin to languages of the arctic (e.g. Inuit).

(32) Possible Polysynthetic Forms in Nuu-chah-nulth

a. Object Incorporation
   maht’ii-7amit7is cakup
   house-bought man
   A man bought a house. (Wojdak 2003)

b. Adjective Incorporation
   ha7um-7ic7is7alh 7aapinis tasty-eating apples
   They are eating tasty apples. (Wojdak 2003)

c. Quantifier Incorporation
   7ayi-is7is m’uks7i
   many-on.the.beach rocks
   There are many rocks on the beach. (Wojdak 2003)

d. Wh-word Incorporation
   waa-ya7mith Ray puk?
   which-buy Ray book
   Which book did Ray buy? (Davis & Sawai 2001)
Wh-Words in Wh-Questions are Obligatorily Incorporated

Wakashan languages require that wh-words be incorporated into the main predicate of the clause. (cf. the nature of wh-words as predicates in Salish languages).

(33) **Wh-Questions in Nuu-chah-nulth Require Incorporation**

a. 7aq7iiicith John?
what-ate John

What did John eat?

b. * 7u7iiicith John 7aqi ?
ate John what

c. * 7aqi 7u7iiicith John?
what ate John

(Davis & Sawai 2001)

Determiners precede NPs, but are enclitics onto preceding phrases

As discussed above, this is strictly a phenomenon in Northern Wakashan languages.

(34) **Enclitic Determiners in Kwakwala**

Kwixid-[dp ida] begwanema]-[dp x-a q’asa]-[pp s-is t’elwagwayu]
clubbed-the man-ACC-the otter-INST-his club

The man clubbed the sea otter with his club. (Anderson 1984; p. 24)

Typologically Unusual Possessor Raising

The Southern Wakashan language Nuu-chah-nulth has a process of ‘possessor raising’, whereby the main predicate of the clause comes to Agree with a possessor of one of its core arguments. While this in itself is not unusual, Nuu-chah-nulth permits possessor raising only from subjects, a pattern that is typologically unusual and analytically interesting.

(35) **Nuu-chah-nulth Possessor Raising (Only From Subject)**

# naatsii-citl-uk-wit-sis Lucy c’apac
see-PERF-POSS-PAST-1sPOSS Lucy canoe

?? My canoe saw Lucy.

(cannot mean ‘Lucy saw my canoe’)

---

7 Because my computer lacks the orthographic symbols used by Davis & Sawai (2001), the transcription here is not entirely accurate. Please see Davis & Sawai (2001) for the true data.
5.3  The Tsimshianic Language Family

5.3.1  The Languages

TSIMSHIANIC

COAST TSIMSHIAN
   Sm’algyax (Tsimshian, Coast Tsimshian, Tsimshian Proper)
   Sgüüxs (Southern Tsimshian)

NASS-GITKSAN
   Nisga’a (Nass)
   Gitksan

5.3.2  Characteristic Grammatical Phenomena of the Tsimshianic Languages

Rigid VSO Order
Tsimshianic languages do not generally permit VOS order (though Os can sometimes permute with adverbs and oblique phrases).
But, unlike Wakashan, Tsimshianic languages do allow for certain material to precede the main predicate. (See ex. (37) below.)

No Predicate / Argument Flexibility
Unlike the Salish and Wakashan languages, roots in Tsimshianic languages clearly fall into either Nominal or Verbal categories.

Classic Principle C Effects
Unlike the Salish and Wakashan languages, Tsimshianic languages display all the classic Principle C effects. (Moreover, possessors seem to c-command out of possessed phrases.)

(36)  Condition C Effects in Gitksan

* lihmo: -e-s  nux-t₁  t-Mary₁
   help-TRANS-DET  mother-POSS  DET-Mary
   Her₁ mother helped Mary₁.
   (Hunt 1993; p. 106)

Wh-Words are Fronted
Wh-words in Tsimshianic languages must be fronted before the main predicate of the verb (they are neither predicates themselves, nor incorporated into the predicate.)

(37)  Fronting of Wh-Questions in Gitksan

Naa-hl  xhlii haks-e-s  Bruce  gaxxw?
who-CONN  scold.all.over-TRANS-DET  Bruce  last.night
Who did Bruce bawl out last night?  (Rigsby 1989; p. 252)
Determiners precede NPs, but are enclitics onto preceding phrases. This curious phenomenon occurs throughout the Tsimshianic family. (See the suffix /-s/ in examples (36) and (37) above.)

(38) **Enclitic Determiners in Sm’algyax**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Dm dzakda-[DP } & \text{sga}\text{ gibaw-[DP ga } \text{ haas-ga]} \\
\text{will.kill-ABSENT.ERG.DET} & \text{ wolf-ABSENT.ABS.DET} \quad \text{dog-DEM} \\
& \text{The wolf will kill the dog.}
\end{align*}
\]

**Ergativity**

There was for a period a debate over whether Tsimshianic languages are ‘deeply’ (syntactically) ergative. The consensus now seems to be that they are not. However, A’s (transitive subjects) do have a variety of interesting properties in the languages.

- Induce distinct agreement on the predicate (of course)
- Only A’s are phonologically unexpressed in imperatives
- Only A’s require a ‘topic’ marker when topicalized
- Only A’s require a special relative marker when relativized
  
  (note that the latter two follow a pattern whereby A’s are ‘difficult’ to extract)

**Contrast Between So-Called ‘Independent’ and ‘Dependent’ Orders**

When a verb in a Tsimshianic language is either (a) in a subordinate clause or (b) in a matrix clause but preceded by certain ‘special’ markers, it appears in a ‘special’ form: the so-called ‘dependent’ form. (There is some interesting discussion about the nature of this phenomenon, but nothing very penetrating.)

(39) **Contrasts Between ‘Independent’ and ‘Dependent’ Orders in Gitksan**

a. **Main clauses where verb is left-most take ‘independent order’**

\[
\begin{align*}
stil-e-s & \quad \text{t-John} \quad \text{t-Peter} \\
\text{accompany-TRANS-DET} & \quad \text{DET-John} \quad \text{DET-Peter} \\
\text{John accompanied Peter.} & \quad \text{(Hunt 1993; p. 136)}
\end{align*}
\]

b. **Negation requires that the verb appear in the ‘dependent order’**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{nee-ti-t} & \quad \text{stil-s} \quad \text{t-John} \quad \text{t-Peter} \\
\text{NEG-CONN-3ERG} & \quad \text{arrive-DET} \quad \text{DET-John} \quad \text{DET-Peter} \\
\text{John did not accompany Peter.} & \quad \text{(Hunt 1993; p. 136)}
\end{align*}
\]
5.4 The Na-Dene Language Family

5.4.1 The Languages

NA-DENE

Haida <controversial>

Tlingit

EYAK-ATHABASKAN

Eyak

ATHABASKAN

Tanana
Tutchone
Tahltan
Tagish
Babine-Witsuwit’en
Dakelh
Chilcotin … (and many, many more)

5.4.2 Characteristic Grammatical Phenomena of the Na-Dene Languages

SOV Order
Position of O relative to S is ‘flexible’ in all languages.
Rigidity of V-finality varies across family (very rigid in Haida, fairly weak in Tlingit and some Athabaskan)

No Predicate / Argument Flexibility
Unlike the Salish and Wakashan languages, roots in Na-Dene languages clearly fall into either Nominal or Verbal categories.

Complex Templatic Verbal Prefix String
Aside from Haida, all Na-Dene languages are massively prefixing. (cf. ex. (6) above)
Since the position of a given prefix seems, at first glance, to be (largely) unpredictable, these languages are often referred to as having ‘templatic’ morphology.
Interwoven Derivational and Inflectional Morphology
One way in which the position of prefixes in Na-Dene languages seems ‘unpredictable’ is the way in which inflectional and derivational morphology are interspersed. In fact, this is taken to be one of the core analytic puzzles of these languages.

(40) **Interweaving of Inflectional and Derivational Morphology in Tlingit**

In the following examples, derivational morphology is boldfaced, while inflectional morphology is italicized.

a. Yóo iduwasáakw.
   *Yoo*-i-*du*-ya-SAA-kw
   *ITER*-2sO-IndefS-CL-name-ITER
   That is my name. (People call me thus.)

b. Ayakaawadán.
   *a*-ya-ka-wu-ya-DAAN
   *3O*-THM-THM-PERF-CL-(root)
   It’s snowing hard.

**Principle C Effects**
The existence of Principle C effects seems to vary across the family. While Tlingit fully exhibits classic Principle C effects (41a), Haida does not (41b).

(41) **Principle C Effects in Tlingit vs. Haida**

a. **Principle C Effects in Tlingit**
   * ∅₁ [ Bill₁ tláa ] asixán.
   * pro Bill mother loves
   * He₁ loves Bill₁’s mother.
   (speaker comment: ‘it has to be somebody else that loves Bill’s mom’)

b. **Apparent Lack of Principle C Effects in Haida**
   money Bill-to 2sS owe-PRES 3sS mention-INF INDEF say-PRES
   They say that he₁ mentioned that you owe Bill₁ money. (Enrico 2003; p. 317)
Split Intransitive (Active Agreement) System
All languages in the Na-Dene family exhibit an ‘active agreement’ system in their intransitives. In such a system, the form of subject agreement on an intransitive verb depends upon the ‘agentivity’ of the subject. Agentive intransitive subjects agree like transitive subjects, while patientive intransitive subjects inflect like transitive objects.

(42) **Active Agreement in Tlingit**

a. ɪxwsiteen. b. Xat yisiteen.
i-wu-xa-si-teen xat-wu-ee-si-teen
2sO-PERF-1sS-CL-see 1sO-PERF-2sS-CL-see
I saw you. You saw me.

c. Xagáax d. Xat yanéekw.
x-a-O-gáax xat-ya-néekw
1sS-CL-cry 1sO-CL-be.sick
I am crying. I am sick.

Verbal Roots Classify Properties of S/O (Absolutive)
Throughout all the Na-Dene languages, verbal roots often subcategorize for certain properties of their absolutive argument (O if transitive, S if intransitive). Often such properties include number, animacy and shape.

(43) **Some Classificatory Verbal Roots in Tlingit**

ya-goot: X (singular) goes by foot
ya-aat: X (plural) goes by foot

ya-nook: intransitive; X (a live creature) sits
si-nook: transitive; X carries Y (a live creature)

Typologically Unusual Possessor Raising
The Na-Dene languages Eyak and Haida exhibit a process of ‘possessor raising’, whereby the main predicate of the clause comes to Agree with a possessor of one of its core arguments. While this in itself is not unusual, these languages permit such raising to occur from any of the core arguments of the verb – and Haida permits such raising to even occur across clausal boundaries – a pattern that is rather unusual and analytically interesting.

(44) **Unbounded Possessor Raising in Haida**

[CP tsiin-ee ta-gee ]-da [ 7langa 7la gudang-7aaaw-aan ].
fish-DET eat-DET-P 3POSS 3sS want-PL-PAST
He wanted to eat their salmon. (Leer 1991; p. 179)
References


