

Modality and Lexical Suffixes in Nuuchahnulth¹

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Goals:

- Examine Johns' (2003) account of verbalizing lexical suffixes in Inuktitut.
- Illustrate some problems that Nuuchahnulth poses for her account.

1 Verbalizing Lexical Suffixes in Nuuchahnulth and Inuktitut

- A class of Nuuchahnulth lexical suffixes creates verbs from nouns (Rose's (1981) Governing Verbal Affixes that select NP bases).

- (1) a. suuḥaʔics
suuḥaa-ʔiɕ-s
"salmon-ingest-1SG
"I am eating salmon." (4 June 2003)
- b. čaamayĩʔs
čamas-ʔiɕ[L]-s
sweet-take-1SG
"I took something sweet." (17 May 2004)
- c. ḥačaaʔyákayĩʔiš Kim Sandy
ḥačaaʔyák-ayi-ʔiɕ Kim Sandy
book-give-3.IND Kim Sandy
"Kim gave Sandy a book." (30 July 2003)

- A similar class of suffixes exists in Inuktitut (Sadock, 1980).

- (2) a. tuktu-vinir-tur-tunga
caribou-former-consume-intr.part.1s²
"I'm eating caribou meat." (Mittimatalik (Johns 2003:12))

¹All Nuuchahnulth data is from Katie Fraser, who speaks the Ahousaht dialect.

²Inuktitut abbreviations: intr - intransitive, part - participial mood, indic - indicative mood, mod - modalis case.

- b. qukiuti-taar-tunga
rifle-get-intr.part.1s
“I got a rifle.” (Mittimatalik (Johns 2003:11))
- c. ulu-iruti-junga
ulu-lack-intr.part.1s.
“I’m out of ulu’s.” (Mittimatalik (Johns 2003:11))

2 Johns’ Observations

- Johns (2003) assumes the verbalizing suffixes are stems, not suffixes, and notes (following Mithun (1997, 1999)) that they have more general meanings than non-incorporating verbs. Both eating and drinking are represented by a single suffix, but they are represented by separate non-incorporating verbs (cf. *naq* “drink” and *haʔum* “eat” in Nuu-chah-nulth).

(3) Inuktitut

- a. tuttu-vini-tu-vunga
caribou-former-consume-intr.indic.1s
“I’m eating caribou meat.” (Labrador (Johns 2003:19))
- b. tii-tuq-tunga
tea-consume-intr.part.1s
“I’m drinking tea.” (Iqaluit (Johns 2003:19))

(4) Nuu-chah-nulth

- a. suuḥaʔics
suuḥaa-ʔic-s
salmon-ingest-1SG
“I am eating salmon.” (4 June 2003)
- b. tiʔiicʔiš Kim
ti-ʔic-ʔi-š Kim
tea-ingest-3.IND Kim
“Kim is having tea.” (23 February 2004)

- Johns observes that verbs which can incorporate must, and no other verbs can. There is no overlap between incorporating and non-incorporating verbs. Wojdak (2003) presents similar evidence for Nuu-chah-nulth.

(5) Labrador Inuttut (Johns 2003:7)

- a. pitsi-mik nigi-vunga
dried.fish-MOD eat-INTR.INDIC.1S
“I am eating dried fish.”
- b. *pitsi-nigi-vunga
dried.fish-eat-intr.indic.1s

- (6) a. pitsi-tu-vunga
 dried.fish-consume-intrans.indic.1s
 “I’m eating dried fish.”
 b. *pitsi-mik tu-vunga
 dried.fish-mod consume-intr.indic.1s

- Johns also notes that incorporating verbs do not include manner in their meanings nor are there change of state suffixes. We don’t find suffixes meaning “paint” or “break.”
- Johns poses three questions:
 1. Why is noun incorporation obligatory when it is possible?
 2. Why is it restricted to a certain set of verbs?
 3. Why is it restricted to these particular verbs and not others?
- Johns’ answer: incorporating verbs are light verbs, and all light verbs must incorporate in Inuktitut.

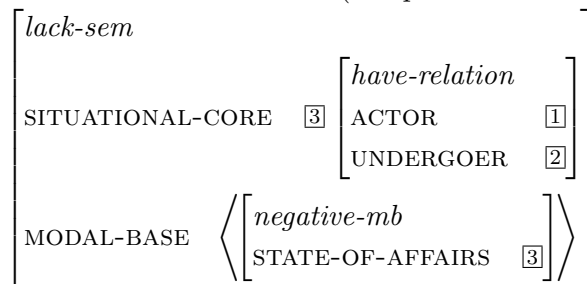
3 Sublexical Modality

- Koenig and Davis (2001) note that *have*, *receive*, *lose*, *lack* and *need* have entirely different entailments, but all deal with possession.
- Semantic structure of verbs contains two separate units:

Situational Core: contains semantic relations

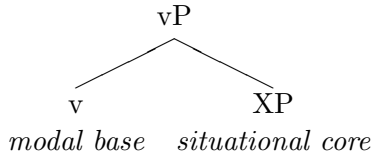
Modal Base: contains modal operators which act on the semantic relations in the situational core

- (7) Lexical semantics of *need* (Adapted from Koenig and Davis, 2001, 93)



- For Johns (2003), little *v* for is the modal base, and its complement is the situational core.
- The incorporated noun occupies the root and lends its semantics as the situational core. Johns assumes all nouns in Inuktitut are existential.

(8)



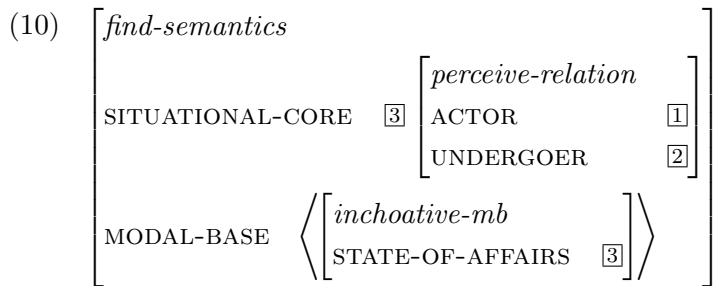
- Koenig and Davis posit five modal operators: negative, inchoative, inchoative-negative, and deontic and energetic irrealis. Johns posits three: identity (I), quantification (Q), and negation (\sim)
- Complex argument structure is not possible, since the incorporated noun can only be the complement of vP.

4 Nuuchahnulth

- Can Nuuchahnulth suffixes be reduced to modal operators? There are problems with this approach.

(9) **perception:** *-'inaku:h* “see”, *-na:h* “look for”, *-(y)u?a:t* “find”

- Nuuchahnulth has a set of perception suffixes which Inuktitut lacks.
- How do we get perception from modality? Koenig and Davis posit perception as a type of situational core parallel to possession. It is not clear how Johns would account for these.



(11) **consuming/making:** *-i:c* “eat/drink”, *-i:t* “make”,
-si:k “finish making”

- Johns notes that Inuktitut incremental theme verbs are problematic for her analysis. Her suggested combination of modal operators for “eat/drink” is the same as that for “become”. The same problem exists in Nuuchahnulth.
- The difference between *-i:t* “make” and *-si:k* “finish making” is one of aspect, but Koenig and Davis suggest that aspectual operators might be added to the modal base.

(12) **others:** *-simč* “pray for”, *-c̣hi* “marry”, *-tu:ta* “host (ceremony)”

- Some suffixes, as in (12) are too specific in their meaning for it to be built from modal operators. *-simč* “pray for” entails that the agent performs a ritual.

(13) **possession:** *-na:k* “have”, *-ʔa:ta* “need”, *-’a:p* “buy”, *-ʔiλ* “take”,
-ʔi:p “receive”, *-ayi:* “give”,
-pu:λ “receive (as payment for service/work)”

- *-ayi:* “give” creates ditransitive verbs. As Johns notes, ditransitives are not predicted by her analysis: internal arguments of incorporating verbs are the complement of little *v*, and there can be only one complement.

(14) *načaaʔyakayiʔiš* Kim Sandy
načaaʔyak-ayi-ʔiš Kim Sandy
book-give-3.IND Kim Sandy
“Kim gave Sandy a book.” (30 July 2003)

- Four suffixes relate to inchoative possession. *-ʔi:p* “receive”, *-’iλ[L]* “take”, *-’a:p* “buy”, *-pu:λ* “receive (as payment for service/work)”

(15) a. *ʔaλiips*
ʔaλa-ʔi:p-s
two-receive-1SG
“I got two.” (31 March 2004)

b. *ʔaaλiiλʔiš* John
ʔaλa-’iλ[L]-ʔiš John
two-take-3.IND John
“John took two.” (31 March 2004)

c. *maḥtiʔapʔiš* John
maḥti:-’a:p-’iš John
house-buy-3.IND John
“John bought a house.” (4 June 2003)

d. *ʔaλqimʔpuuλs*
ʔaλ-qimʔ-pu:λ-s
two-round-receive.as.payment-1SG
“I got paid two dollars.” (17 May 2004)

- Nuuchahnulth has both an incorporating and a non-incorporating verb that means “buy.”

- Since Johns claims that the reason some verbs incorporate and some do not is based on semantics, she predicts there will be no pairs of incorporating and a non-incorporating verbs with the same semantics.

- (16) a. maakukʔiš John maḥti
 ma:kuk -ʔi-š John maḥti:
 buy-3.IND John house
 “John bought a house.” (23 February 2004)
- b. maḥtiiʔapʔiš John
 maḥti:-ʔa-p-ʔi-š John
 house -buy
 “John bought a house.” (23 February 2004)

5 Concluding Remarks

- The similarity between Nuu-chah-nulth and Inuktitut verbalizing suffixes suggests a similar analysis.
- The problems that Nuu-chah-nulth presents suggest Johns’ analysis is not correct.
- The fact that differences in modal operators can account for many suffixes suggests that they do play some role, but not a central role.

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