

Singular vs. Plural Roots in Salish

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1. A minor characteristic of some Salishan languages is the occurrence of paired roots translated as singular vs. plural. For example, several languages use one root for 'a single person sits' and an entirely different one for 'several persons sit'. At first glance, these would appear to be suppletive pairs for marking plurality (which is usually indicated by reduplication or affixation), but as will be shown below this is not the case; rather, these roots indicate action or state of a single entity as opposed to action or state of a group. The latter notion is not unknown in English (although these English verbs are not paired with singular counterparts), where 'gather', 'collect', 'distribute', etc. can only apply where more than one agent or patient is involved. In the Salishan instances, these roots have or imply a plural subject when intransitive, but a plural object when transitive. This again is paralleled in English: 'they gather' vs. 'he gathers them', but not '*they gather him'.

The number of these pairs is limited in those Salishan languages where they occur, ranging up to two dozen or more in Coeur d'Alene. Furthermore, the concepts represented by these pairs are largely the same in the different languages, the most usual being 'sit', 'stand', 'lie', 'put (objects of various shapes)', 'take', 'die', 'kill', and often 'walk', 'enter', 'fall', 'drop', 'throw', 'run', 'cry', 'small', and others. This paper will deal primarily with those number-paired roots in Moses-Columbian (nxaʔamxciŋ), but will also refer to what can be determined from the literature (or other field notes) about other languages.

2. There are about twenty number-paired roots in Moses-Columbian,¹ although it could be argued that one pair is not properly so classified ('arrive'), and two roots occur opposing two others each ('die' and 'kill', 'stand' and 'tree'). In addition, two pairs of words occur for 'drop into water', but both are complex, and not all the roots can be identified as exclusively either singular or plural. The pairs are the following:²

sg.	pl.	English gloss
1. qʷtún-t	písʰaʔ-t	big
2. táʰtúmaʔ	ccómaʔ-t	little, small
3. tuxʷuxʷ	ʰəxʷ-p	die, dead
4. xólq-n	ʰəxʷ-n	kill, murder (I-him)
5. wəw-lx	ʰəxʷ-m	talk
6. laxʷ-cn	tətkʷmt	cry
7. nuxʷ-t	iwá-m	go, walk, go away
8. n(ə)-qín-m	na-nəp-t	go in
9. kíc-x	(c-)yáʰ-p	arrive ³
10. wáikʷ-p	təqʷiy-lx	go down a hill
11. nəw-lx	yələ-m	run
12. ʰəq-lx	yər-ix	sit, get up
13. ʰəl-ix, ʰəl-út	cík-	stand, be upright
14. ʔəç-βəʰ	ʔas-ʰəlʰəl	tree
15. kʷan-n	kəʰ-n	carry, take (I-it)
16. c-ʔanín-n	c-ʔúkʷ-n	bring (I-it)
17. túc-n	lix-n	lay-down round obj. (I-it)
18. ʰəç-n	βən-n	put down long obj. (i-it)
19. ck-mín-n	ʔiskʷl-n	throw (i-it)
20. ʰəwq-n	xʷúkʷ-n	pull out
21. n-ham-p-átkʷ-n	n-ʔaskʷl-átkʷ-n	drop into water (delib.)
22. n-kʷʰ-p-akst-átkʷ-n	n-hapiy-átkʷ-n	drop into water (accid.)

The glosses given here are, of course, oversimplified, and the "plural" forms are not merely two or more of the "singular"; yet the pairs are semantically connected, as will be shown below. The singular

23. ktpánaʔən / tɣapáwʰən 'cover'

form means that the word applies to an isolated entity, and the plural form to a group of two or more. But either form may be pluralized in the usual ways (reduplication for 'distributive' and/or the enclitic *lx* 'plural subject or object'). A pluralized "singular" form refers to more than one entity acting or existing independently, not as a group; a pluralized "plural" form refers to more than one group. Pluralized "singulars" are *ʔæqʔaʔlx lx* 'each has a position in which to sit (as in a game)' and *nuʔnāwʔlx* 'run around'; the pluralized "plural" *yəryərix* means 'people sitting and resting'. The root *čəl-* looks ambiguous as to number, apparently occurring as singular in *čəlix* and *čəlūt*, but as plural in *ʔasčəlcəl*. But *čəlix* and *čəlūt*, as well as all derivatives of these including the suffixes *-ix* and *-ūt*, are singular, e.g., *sčəlix* 'crescent', *kʔčəlix* 'stand under', *niʔčəlūt* 'standing in the bushes', *čəltəwʔis* 'stand around, walk around'. All other derivatives of *čəl-* (without these suffixes) are plural, e.g., *čəln* 'I stick poles in the ground', *sčəlālxm* 'stick-game', *sčəlcənātk* 'trees along the shoreline', *nčəlāičəʔtn* 'spokes', and even *ʔasčəl* 'two trees, a very few trees'. This last form contrasts with the usual plural, *ʔasčəlcəl*, which refers to a lot of trees or a forest, and with an apparently somewhat unusual "singular", *ʔəpəpəpə*, which refers to a few scattered trees (or other upright objects).

1.1. The "plural" roots, then, are not simply suppletive plurals of the "singular" roots. But there is a clear semantic relationship which is actively perceived. This is shown in a number of derivatives, where even introduced objects may be distinguished in number by having singulars and plurals based on different roots (in which case, these derived plural forms are suppletive). A good example of this is *kʔlxāʔsn* 'chair' and *(n)kyəʔxāʔsn* 'chairs' (*k-* 'on or against something vertical', *-āʔs* 'middle, center', *-n* 'implement'). Note that the *-lx/-ix* suffix remains in derivations. Sometimes stress-induced vowel deletions disguise underlying forms, but derivations are still parallel: in *ʔasiālx* 'sg. be at home' and *cirūt lx* 'pl. be at home' both begin

with the prefix *ʔac-* 'stative' (automatically *ʔas-* before *c c č* and optionally so before *t t n* and laterals; either variant is reduced to *c-* or *s-* if stress does not follow immediately), and the root of *yər-*, a weak-stress root, loses its vowel and then changes the *y* to *i* between consonants. A few other such derived pairs are: *nqʔtʔūs* 'big window', *nəpəʔāʔūs* 'big windows' (*-(u)s* 'eye, face'); *nčəlxāʔčəln* 'run a horse', *yəlməxāʔčəln* 'several riders run horses' (*-ə-* 'compound', *xāʔčəln* 'horse'); *cnakʔānkʔn* 'pick up one object from below the surface of water', *cnkəʔātkʔn* 'pick up several objects from below the surface of water' (*c-* 'cislocative', *n-* 'general locative', *-(at)kʔ* 'water', *-n* 'I'); *ʔackəč* 'a windfall or log', *ʔacpən* 'stacked or ricked wood or logs', *nčəwqʔuləxʔn* 'pull up a plant', *naxʔukʔləxʔn* 'pull up several plants' (*-(u)ləxʔ* 'ground'). Such parallel derivations need not, however, be closely related semantically, e.g., *snwəwʔlxtn* 'a language', *snəpəpəmtn* 'courthouse' (*-tn* 'implement').

2. Number-paired roots are not found only in Moses Columbian. They occur in all Interior Salishan languages, at least Upper Chehalis and Cowlitz in the Tsamosan branch, but only infrequently in other Salishan languages (and at least a few pairs are reported in several other Northwest languages: Eyak, Athapaskan, Tlingit, Coast Tsimshian and Nass-Gitksan, Chinookan languages, Kalapuyan, Alsea, and Coosan). A search of published materials available on Kalispel, Coeur d'Alene, and Shuswap,⁴ and my own field notes and those of Boas at the American Philosophical Society Library on Upper Chehalis turned up the following pairs (there are undoubtedly others).

Kalispel

	sg.	pl.	English gloss
1.	<i>ʔkʔkʔoyʔimeʔ</i> , <i>ioxt-əit</i>	<i>cim-</i>	little, small
2.	<i>ʔil-</i>	<i>qʔom-</i> (also 'kill')	dead
3.	<i>qʔel-</i>	<i>qamqam-</i>	talk, speak
4.	<i>oyincūt</i>	<i>xʔaʔxʔeʔei</i>	laugh
5.	<i>ʔiixʔ-</i>	<i>pilš-</i>	go in

6. qécilš	k'úkiš	run, run around
7. táloq'w	q'omép	run away
8. x'wíp	č-x'w'i?-cút ('attack')	run
9. ?emút	?aýé'ut	sit, be at home
10. tésilš	táp-	stand, rise
11. šit-	čil-	long obj. stands
12. tuk'w-	qam-	lie
13. tux'w-t	x'w'e?-	fly
14. k'wen-	q'um-	take
15. čič-	pin-	long obj. lies

Also listed by Vogt are če?- 'put down sg. round object' and peié?ut 'pl. lie'.

Coeur d'Alene (generally only roots are given)

1. xax'ixiy	pis-	large, big
2. čičeñ-e?	cicem-e?	small
3. táx'ux'w	t'ex'w	die
4. pulut	t'ex'w	kill
5. čú?um	t'ek'w	cry
6. x'wiy	dax	go
7. n?uix'w	népt	enter
8. ?em	pii	sit
9. tax'w	tép	stop, stand up
10. čel	tép	stand
11. caq	dar	solid obj. stands
12. šet	čel	long obj. projects
13. k'win	čem	take hold of
14. tek'w	mei	lie
15. šem	iec	flat obj. lies
16. čem	lax'w	round obj. lies
17. čet	pen	long obj. lies
18. dex'w	iaqi?	lower, fall, dismount, drop
19. ččnín	šig'w	throw
20. šar	g'ex'w	hang

21. ti?i	li?le?	fly
22. nič	dax	drive animal
23. tux'w-t	ci?x'w	wade
24. piw	iitk'w	move in jerks
25. čel-t	leč	be fierce
26. jař	šec	firm, solid, strong
27. u?čay	q'ec	enduring, solid, firm

Reichard specifies several other roots as singular or plural, but does not specify an opposite number for them: tux'w-ilš 'one jumps off', čem 'take hold of large obj.', iac 'one drop falls', čakq 'pull out solid obj.', x'wis-t 'one travels, goes about', pek'w 'lay pl. round objs.', maq'w 'pl. objs. lie, pile', tuč 'pl. sticklike objs. break', šilč 'turn round objs.', yař 'assemble, be many, gather, crowd', xep 'pile flat objs.', tiš 'bushy objs. sprawl'.

Shuswap

1. q'céq	x'eyt	die, dead
2. wílil-m	x'y-x'eye	laugh
3. (c-)q'acéc (?)	sx'up	leave, depart
4. yúx'w-	yéř-lx	descend
5. ?emút	ieq-lx	sit down
6. mít	c-yém	be sitting, be at home
7. c-ké?, k?-ém	mól-m	put down round obj., lie there

In addition, Kuipers specifies tn-t-és and cq-nt-és 'put down a long obj.' as singular.

Upper Chehalis

1. tix'w-, manít-	ióp-	kill
2. šə?um	čom-	cry
3. yəp- (?)	təyč-	travel, walk
4. wəq-	?ax'w-a-	run
5. yəlk'w-	səp-	fall
6. tawilš	lā?k'w- (or lak'w-a- ?)	sit
7. ?ucax'w-	čəlap	stand

8. cak ^v i-	q ^v ā ^v ā-	lie, put down
9. k ^v anā-	xīmi-	grab
10. βāi-	ʔəpx ^v -	drop
11. iāq-	ʔāx ^v a-	throw, throw away

In addition x^vuq^vi- 'gather' and k^viti- 'divide' are plural only. My Cowlitz data do not reveal these pairs directly, for the most part, but cognates occur for all these Upper Chehalis roots except t̄ayč-, yālk^v-, sōp-, lāʔk^v-, čalāp, ʔəpx^v-, and iāq-.

3. My guess is that this pairing of roots by number is not old in Salish, even though it occurs in two branches of the family. This guess is based on two facts. (1) Central Salish and Bella Coola have no more than two or three such pairs of roots. (2) The number of cognates for any of these roots is not large, and when cognates do occur, only one of a pair will match a member of a pair in another language, and not necessarily the same number; more often the cognate has a different, though related, meaning. Only one pair matches as a pair between Moses Columbian, Kalispel, and Coeur d'Alene ('long obj. lies'); two additional pairs match between Moses Columbian and Coeur d'Alene ('dig', 'carry'), and two more between Kalispel and Coeur d'Alene ('run', 'long obj. stands'). Other cognates among this group of languages corresponding to Moses Columbian roots are the following (as examples of the kinds of relationships found; no attempt will be made here to match all forms in all the preceding lists, although many cognates do occur). (1) q^vtunt 'sg. big': Ka k^vtun- 'big, great', Sh k^vtunt 'plentiful'. (2) p̄isāaʔt 'pl. big': Cr pis(t)- 'pl. big'. (3) ccōhaʔt 'pl. little': Cr cicemeʔ, Ka cim-, Sh cim- all 'pl. small'. (4) wāwix 'sg. talk': Ka wēʔ- 'holler' (?), Sh wēw-m 'call, holler to'. (5) t̄atk^vint 'pl. cry': Cr t̄ek^v 'cry out, whinny'. (6) nūx^vt 'sg. go, walk': Sh nux^v 'gallop, run'. (7) iwām 'pl. go, walk': Sh iwēl-n-s 'leave someone all alone' (?). (8) nanāpt 'pl. go in': Cr nept 'pl. enter'. (9) k̄icx 'sg. arrive': Cr čic 'arrive', Ka čic- 'arrive', Sh k̄icx 'reach, get somewhere, arrive'. (10) (c-)yāāp 'pl. arrive': Cr yaʔ 'assemble, gather', Ka ʔiʔāp 'arrive, get to', Sh c-yf-ēp

'arrive from far'. (11) wāik^vp 'sg. go down a hill': Ka uwēik^vup 'go downhill'. (12) nāwix 'sg. run': Sh x-nēw-lx 'follow a trail'. (13) yālān 'pl. run': Cr delīm 'gallop'. (14) iāqix 'sg. sit': Ka iāq- 'sit down', Sh iāq-lx 'pl. sit'. (15) yērīx 'pl. sit': Cr dar 'curved objs. stand'. (16) čalīx 'sg. stand': Cr čēliš 'stand, arise', Sh čl- 'stand (up)'. (17) čōl- 'pl. stand': Cr čel 'pl. long objs. project, stand up', Ka čil 'pl. long objs. stand', Ch čalāp 'pl. stand'. (18) k^vān- 'carry, take sg. obj.': Cr k^vin 'grasp, take sg. obj.', Ka k^ven- 'take sg. obj.', Sh k^ven- 'go and get, take', Ch k^vanā- 'grab sg. obj.'. (19) kēm- 'carry, take pl. objs.': Cr čem 'take pl. objs.'. (20) c-ʔanīn- 'bring sg. obj.': Cr ʔenīs 'depart, go away' (?), Ka ʔenēs 'be on one's way going someplace' (?). (21) c-ʔūk^v- 'bring pl. objs.': Cr ʔūk^velg^ves 'take objs. over there', Ka ʔuk^v- 'bring, take someplace', Sh (c-)ʔūx^v-m 'take, bring, carry, haul'. (22) ʔisk^vi- 'throw pl. objs.': Ka ʔisk^vo1 'throw away'. (23) čūwq- 'pull out sg. obj.': Cr čawq 'pull out solid obj.', Ka čōʔōq 'come off, break off' (?). (24) x^vūk^v- 'pull out pl. objs.': Ka x^vuq^v- 'pull out', Sh x^vūk^v-m 'pull something out of a pile'. (25) k^vāp- 'drop': Cr k^vet- 'take off', Ka k^viā- 'take out of a container'.

If this phenomenon were old in Salish, I would expect more pairs of forms to be cognate. Since they are not, the idea must have been borrowed (which makes the source difficult to detect, but Athapaskan languages have pairs of roots matched this way, although this would not adequately explain their presence in Tsamosan), and their numbers expanded to different pairs in different languages, especially Coeur d'Alene.

4. There are ʔō additional number-pairs in Moses Columbian and three in Coeur d'Alene that pattern like the preceding, but are based on a single root. These are all pairs in which the singular root has a reflex of *ō, and the plural has ī. This is a common pluralizing process in Thompson and Upper Chehalis, and is probably very old in Salish, with only fragments of the process left in other languages. The Moses Columbian pairs are wōck / wick 'fall over' and k-iāx^vp-n / k-iix^vp-n 'I hung it up'. The Coeur d'Alene pairs are iēt / iit 'jump',

Cm. sōq-m / sīq-m 'split a piece off'

ʔōxtp / ʔīx-p-t lx 'grow up'

pełč / pillč 'turn flat thing over' (cf. pilč 'turn round objs. '), and wēłč 'roll solid obj., sg. be thrown off a horse' / willč 'pl. be thrown off a horse, they walked around'. These pairs are of interest for the light they shed on a grammatical process in Proto-Salish.

NOTES

1. Material for this article was collected from 1960 onward under the auspices of the American Philosophical Society Library, Indiana University, and the National Science Foundation. I am particularly grateful to my Upper Chehalis informants, Silas Heck and Lillian Young, and to my Moses Columbian informants Jerome Miller, Emily Peone, and Margaret Gorr for their patience and willingness to spend time with me. Abbreviations used in section 3 below are Cr Coeur d'Alene, Ka Kalispel, Sh Shuswap, Ch Upper Chehalis.
2. Affixes used here are (glosses tentative): -t 'immediate', -p 'non-control', -n '1st sg. subject', -(i)lx 'activity', -m 'middle', -c(i)n 'mouth', n- 'general locative', na- 'in', -x ?, c- 'cislocative', -ix variant of -(i)lx after l or r, ?ac- 'stative aspect' (retracted before a retracted root, ?as- before c c ĉ), -m(i)n- 'relational', -(at)k^w 'water', -(a)kst 'hand, arm'. C₁-reduplication (with glottalization of resonants) indicates diminutive; C₁(V₁)C₂-reduplication indicates distributive; -(V₁)C₂-reduplication indicates 'limited control'. Both yor- and čal- may occur with either of the suffixes -ix and -ūt; the latter indicates stasis--'sitting, be at home', 'standing'--and the former motion--'sit down', 'stand up, stop'. wāwłx, nāwłx, and iāqlx do not change this way, however, and occur in all derivations with the -lx 'activity' suffix.
3. At least in some meanings. Most usages of these roots are not paired in this way, although yāč- forms are always plural.
4. Hans Vogt, *The Kalispel Language* (Oslo: Det Norske Videnskaps-Akademi, 1940); Gladys A. Reichard, *Stem-list of the Coeur d'Alene language*, IJAL 10:92-108 (1939); Lawrence G. Nicodemus, *Snchitsu'umshtsn: The Coeur*

d'Alene Language, 2 vols. (Spokane: University Press, 1975); Aert H. Kuipers, *The Shuswap Language* (The Hague: Mouton, 1974); A. H. Kuipers, *A Classified English-Shuswap Word-List* (Lisse: The Peter de Ridder Press, 1975).