

THE COLVILLE TRANSITIVE SYSTEM

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1. The basic transitive paradigm of Colville is marked by the suffix -nt added to a stem, and followed by suffixes that mark pronoun reference.¹ These transitives obligatorily include reference to two and only two persons, an actor and a primary goal:

- 1a. q̄ȳ-ənt-ín.² I write something.
2a. k̄w̄ú̄l-ənt-x̄w̄. You fix something.

Let us note at the outset that the -nt predicate

- 3a. x̄w̄íc̄-ənt-s-ə̄n.

which translates loosely 'I give it to you', with explicit reference in the translation to an actor (I) and two goals (it and you), is to be interpreted as containing reference only to an actor (I) and a primary goal (you), and translated more appropriately as 'I endow you', parallel to wík-ənt-s-ə̄n 'I see you'.

Person reference in the -nt paradigm is accomplished with an heterogeneous set of affixes and particles. While all actor (subject) persons, singular and plural, are represented by pronominal suffixes, third person singular goal (object) is unmarked, third person plural is optionally marked by a suffix, first person singular and plural goal is marked by proclitics, and second person singular and plural goal are marked by suffixes. Schematically the set is represented thus:

Cons	-nt paradigm				
	1sp	2s	3s	2p	3p obj
1s		-nt-s-(í)n	-(nt-í)n	-i(ú)l)m-ə̄n	-(nt-í)n-ə̄lx
2s	k̄w̄u -nt-(í)x̄w̄		-nt-(í)x̄w̄		-nt-(í)x̄w̄-ə̄lx
3s	k̄w̄u -(nt-í)s	-nt-s-(í)s	-(nt-í)s	-i(ú)l)m-s	-(nt-í)s-ə̄lx
1p		-nt-s-(í)t	-nt-(í)m	-i(ú)l)m-t	-nt-(í)m-ə̄lx
2p	k̄w̄u -nt-(í)p		-nt-(í)p		-nt-(í)p-ə̄lx
3p	k̄w̄u -(nt-í)s-ə̄lx	-nt-s-(í)s-ə̄lx	-(nt-í)s-ə̄lx	-i(ú)l)m-s-ə̄lx	-(nt-í)s-ə̄lx
Idf			-nt-(í)m		-nt-(í)m-ə̄lx

A second transitive paradigm, marked by -st added to the stem, followed by pronoun suffixes, also includes reference to an actor and a primary goal, but in addition implies reference to a third person, a secondary goal coterminous with the actor:

- 1b. q̄ȳ-əst-ín. I write it (for myself).
2b. k̄w̄ú̄l-əst-p. You pl fix it (for yourselves).

Similarly to -nt, person reference in the -st paradigm is expressed with an heterogeneous set of affixes and particles, represented thus:

subj	-st paradigm			
	1sp	2sp	3s	3p obj
1s		-st-(ú)m-ə̄n	-st-(í)n	-st-(í)n-ə̄lx
2s	k̄w̄u -st-(í)x̄w̄		-st-(í)x̄w̄	-st-(í)x̄w̄-ə̄lx
3s	k̄w̄u -st-(í)s	-st-(ú)m-s	-st-(í)s	-st-(í)s-ə̄lx
1p		-st-(ú)m-t	-st-(í)m	-st-(í)m-ə̄lx
2p	k̄w̄u -st-(í)p		-st-(í)p	-st-(í)s-ə̄lx
3p	k̄w̄u -st-(í)s-ə̄lx	-st-(ú)m-s-ə̄lx	-st-(í)s-ə̄lx	-st-(í)s-ə̄lx
Idf			-st-(í)m	-st-(í)m-ə̄lx

The difference between -nt and -st transitives is the one of reference just alluded to.³ Even though spontaneous English translations seldom show well this contrast, the -st predicates always imply either purposeful or customary involvement on the part of the actor--and this is why I have characterized them as transitives with coterminous actor and secondary goal. However, context often reveals the nature of this contrast, especially if the predicate is expanded by complements:

- 4a. k^wu ʔác-əcqaʔ, ixiʔ məi i-ʔük^w-ənt-s-ən kəl an-təmx^w-úłax^w. Let's get out and then I'll take you back to your place.
 4b. na^wəm cniic iaʔ k-s-c-qa^y uⁱ c-ʔük^w-st-s. He's the one who writes (the letters) and delivers them.
 5a. lut k^wu tō k-s-xáq^ə-ənt-p. You don't have to pay me.
 5b. lut tō c-xáq^ə-əst-s iʔ c-x^wəl-x^wílt-s. He never paid his debts.
 6a. way t anwíʔ mi ʔúm-ənt-x^w iʔ k-s-k^wán-iq-tət. Name what you think we should plant.
 6b. tōx^w axaʔ c-p^əax^w, stím mət iaʔ c-ʔúm-st-s-əlx, táymənt-rin. That's the kind that shines, they have a name for it, diamond ring.⁴

A third and a fourth paradigm, marked by -it and -x(í)t respectively, are ditransitive and include explicit reference to an actor, a primary goal (the recipient), and a third person secondary goal (the direct object). Person reference in these paradigms parallels that of the transitives. Except for 2p objects, -it ditransitives use the same suffixes and particles as -nt transitives; -x(í)t ditransitives use the same suffixes and particles as -st transitives. Schematically,

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		-it paradigm			
subj	lsp	2sp	3s	3p	obj
1s		-it-s-(í)n	-it-(í)n	-it-(í)n	-əlx
2s	k ^w u	-it-(í)x ^w		-it-(í)x ^w	-it-(í)x ^w -əlx
3s	k ^w u	-it-(í)s	-it-s-(í)s	-it-(í)s	-it-(í)s-əlx
1p		-it-s-(í)t	-it-(í)m	-it-(í)m	-əlx
2p	k ^w u	-it-(í)p		-it-(í)p	-it-(í)p-əlx
3p	k ^w u	-it-(í)s-əlx	-it-s-(í)s-əlx	-it-(í)s	-it-(í)s-əlx
Idf			-it-(í)m	-it-(í)m	-əlx

		-x(í)t paradigm			
subj	lsp	2sp	3s	3p	obj
1s		-x(í)t-m-ən	-x(í)t-ən	-x(í)t-n	-əlx
2s	k ^w u	-x(í)t-x ^w		-x(í)t-x ^w	-x(í)t-x ^w -əlx
3s	k ^w u	-x(í)t-s	-x(í)t-əm-s	-x(í)t-s	-x(í)t-s-əlx
1p		-x(í)t-əm-t	-x(í)t-əm	-x(í)t-m	-əlx
2p	k ^w u	-x(í)t-p		-x(í)t-p	-x(í)t-p-əlx
3p	k ^w u	-x(í)t-s-əlx	-x(í)t-əm-s-əlx	-x(í)t-s-əlx	-x(í)t-s-əlx
Idf			-x(í)t-əm	-x(í)t-m	-əlx

Corresponding to the simple transitive 3a. x^wíc^ə-ənt-s-ən 'I endow you', the ditransitives 3b. x^wíc^ə-ənt-m-ən and 3c. x^wíc^ə-ənt-s-ən, both translated 'I give you something, I endow you with something', add reference to a third person secondary goal. The difference between -x(í)t and -it ditransitives is one of focus: -x(í)t ditransitives mean 'X does Y for Z', and -it ditransitives mean 'X does Y for Z'. This difference is marked formally in the secondary goal complement which, unless the object is clearly understood in context, is expressed and follows the predicate:

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-x(i)t ditransitives require that the secondary goal complement be marked by the proclitic t, and -it ditransitives never do:

- 2c. k'ul'-əxt-x' i? t ki-cítx'-s. You make a house for him.
2d. k'ul'-əit-x' i? s-on-ki-ca?-sqáxa?. You fix a horse for him.⁵
3b. x'ic'-əxt-x' i? t k-s-qláw'-s. You give him some money.
3c. x'ic'-əit-x' i? s-qláw'. You give him some money.

The "focus" on the primary goal implied by the -x(i)t predicates is manifested in the morphology of the secondary goal complement. The complements of 2c and 3b are possessives coreferential with the direct goal, in the unrealized aspect. The more accurate literal translations

- 2c. You make for him what will be his house.
3b. You give him what will be his money.

show how -x(i)t ditransitives focus on the primary goal in contrast with the focus on the secondary goal of -it ditransitives:

- 2d. You prepare (saddle ...) a horse for him.
3c. You give him some money.

If no secondary goal complement follows a ditransitive predicate, it is because context makes it clearly understood:

- 3d. axa? in-cq-ílon, i? k'u x'ic'-əxt-x'. This is my arrow, the one you gave me.
3e. way xàs-t a-s-ql-íps, way k'u η-q'əñ-mì-nt k'u x'ic'-əit. Your scarf is beautiful, be nice and give it to me.

In addition to the secondary goal complement expansions of ditransitives just discussed, it is possible to add primary goal and actor complements. A primary goal complement (placed before or after the predicate)

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must be coreferential with the object pronoun suffix. It is expressed less commonly with the participant persons (first and second persons)

8. axa? i? k-s-cox'-xít-əm-t, l'íw: ... This is what we're going to tell you, father: ...

than in non-participant (third) person

- 3f. x'ic'-əxt-s i? s-q'si?-s t k-s-qláw'-s. He gave him some money.
3g. i? s-x'im-i-wisxən x'ic'-əit-əm s-əmxíkən. He gave the longest (arrow) to Grizzly.

An actor complement must be coreferential with the subject pronoun suffix, and must be marked by the agentive proclitic t. When the actor is expanded by a complement, the predicate remains in one of the participant (I, you, we) definite persons:

- 3h. t incà? mi x'ic'-əit-n-əlx. I myself will give it to them.

When the predicate is in the non-participant third person and the actor is expanded in a complement, then the predicate may either remain in the third person definite subject -(i)s

9. kən mi-p-nwíən, t swít k'u máya?-it-s, ui way mət nínwi? mi-p-nú-n. I'll learn it, if anybody shows it to me, then I'll learn it.

or be changed to the indefinite third person -(i)m. Actual occurrences of indefinite third person predicates with expressed actor complements are by far more common than their definite third person counterparts:

- 3i. x'ic'-əit-əm i? t s-x'ít-x. The oldest one gave it to him.

This use of the predicate in the indefinite person (and complementized

actor) is not restricted to ditransitives, but extends to all transitives:

10. cù-nt-òm t s-qəlt-mix^w: ... The man said to her: ...

11. c-ʔam-st-ìm-əlx t n̄cìcon. Wolf feeds them.

2. I have been careful to give so far examples of (di)transitive suffixes added directly to a root. All roots that allow the direct affixation of (di)transitive suffixes are transitive roots. Other roots, inferred intransitive, must add the transitive suffix -m(í)- to form transitive stems which in turn attach the proper transitive suffixes. For example, the root paʔs 'feel (bad)', typically occurring in intransitive forms such as

12a. kən paʔ-paʔs-ínk. I feel sad.

12b. k^w paʔ-paʔs-íl^x. You'll be feeling bad.

12c. k̄wí-paʔs-əncút. She'll get wise.

is transitive with -m(í)-, then participates fully in both -nt and -st transitive formations:

12d. paʔs-mì-s iʔ k̄n̄p-qín-kst-(t)ŋ-s. She wishes back her ring. (Wishing refers to a psychic effort following which the ring magically returns.)

12e. lut t̄ c-paʔs-mì-st-x^w ý an-k̄íaw-mən. You never remembered (to say) your prayers. (St Peter's reproach to a rejected suppliant at Heaven's gate.)

Likewise, the root nixəl 'hear', intransitive in forms such as

13a. mət k^w nixəl iʔ təl an-áx-əx-áxá-p. Have you heard from your parents?

13b. nixəl iʔ t s-qíl^x. The people heard.

is transitive by -m(í)- and occurs with either -nt or -st, according to sense:

13c. cəm ʔayxàxaʔ təl a-k-s-x^wáq^w-əlqs-əm mi c-k̄wí-nixəl-m-ənt-x^w iʔ pə-ptwínax^w. Shortly after you start snoring (i.e. pretending to be asleep), you will hear the old lady (come up the stairs).

13d. way^w c-mi-st-ix^w way^w c-n̄ixl-əm-st-m-ən. You know I always listen to (i.e. obey) you.

And in parallel fashion, the root q̄wíit 'capable', occurring in forms like

14a. nixnaʔ q̄wásqiʔ q̄wíi-q̄wəit ɿ s-ir-íwa-xən. Goodness, Blue Jay is good on snow shoes.

14b. t̄əx^w way^w anwiʔ k^w s-q̄wíi-q̄wəit-x. You can sure do wonders.

is transitive by -m(í)- in such forms:

14c. cəm k^w ʔáyx^w-t, way^w ɿi xàs-t ɿ q̄wíit-m-ənt-s-ən. You must be tired, it's best I pack you.

14d. k^w k-s-tk̄m-íl^x mi k^wu ɿəi-c-q̄wíit-əm-st-x^w? You are the woman and you want to pack me?

To the observation just made that intransitive roots can be transitive, I must now explicitly add that transitive -m(í)- stems never participate in ditransitive (-it and -x(í)t) constructions, even in those cases where the English translation suggests a ditransitive meaning.

3. Another observation to be made refers to cases of ditransitive stems where a suffix, and sometimes more than one suffix, intervenes between the root and (a) (-m(í)-{-nt} or (b) {-it} / {-x(í)t}). Such cases typically include roots plus -t 'stative', -p 'non-control', lexical suffixes, reflexive suffixes, and a few others.⁶ For example, the intransitive root xas

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'good', which occurs in intransitive forms such as

- 18a. k^w n-xos-k^wist. You have a pretty name.
18b. kən n-xos-t-wilx. I get well.
18c. xās-t i? s-ən-ki-ča?-sqáxa?. It's a beautiful horse.

can be part of transitive stems such as the following:

- 18d. ninwi? lut n-xos-t-mí-nt-x^w. It won't do you any good.
18e. c-xos-t-mí-st-ən. I enjoyed it.
18f. n-xa?s-ína?-m-ənt-x^w. You enjoy hearing it.

wnix^w 'true' is an intransitive root participating in constructions such as:

- 19a. way unix^w. That's true.
19b. way s-unix^w-əx^w. He's telling the truth.
19c. n-unx^w-ína?. He believed.

Its occurrence in transitive -m(í)- stems is normal:

- 19d. way ui sic n-unx^w-ína?-m-ənt-əm. Finally they believed him.
19e. lut swit tə c-n-unx^w-ína?-m-st-s. Nobody believes in it.

Similarly relevant cases involve longer (transitive) stems at the heart of which lies a transitive root. For example, the root siw 'ask' is transitive, and normally receives the transitive suffixes:

- 20a. síw-ən. I asked it.
20b. k^wu kəi-síw-s. He inquired about me.

Notwithstanding the transitivity of siw, some stems based on that root require the suffixation of -m(í)-:

- 20c. síw-cən-m-ənt-s-ən. I called you.
20d. k-s-ən-su-cən-mí-st-s-əlx. They proposed to him (for something).

4. I have insufficient data to determine with certainty the function or meaning of another suffix, here represented -úit, transitive, or possibly ditransitive. Its cognates in other languages have been given attention in the published literature,⁷ and it may be opportune for me to give it here as full a treatment as I now can. I have found about twenty occurrences of it in connected discourse, with nine different stems. When -úit is present the predicate takes on the fairly clear connotation that the logical agent is in charge of the situation over the logical patient (X intends Y to ...). However, in the morphology of the -úit predicate the logical agent is sometimes the subject and sometimes the object pronoun. Thus in the following two examples the goal (marked with a single underscore) is also the logical patient, and the actor (marked with a double underscore) the logical agent:

21. axa? i? k^wo-k^wri-t i? tkim-íl^w, ixi? k^wu k-s-k^wəlst-úit-x^w. This is the Golden Woman, the one you sent me after.
17c. k^wu k-s-k^wən-tùit-s i? cq-ílən. He wants me to lend him the arrow.

while the opposite case obtains in the next two examples:

22. k^wu n-lə^w-úit-x^w, n-lə^w-ús-ənt-x^w. (You) do exactly as I tell you, do it.
23. k^wu n-qlut-úit-x^w. (You) follow me.

Therefore it remains to be proved how it is that the underlying agent sometimes surfaces as subject, other times as object.

The (underlying) form of the suffix also remains to be correctly induced from its several allomorphs (and attendant morphophonemic changes): -úit in 22 and

24. lut t̥ k-s-mi'n-úit-s-əl̥x. She won't be able to instruct them (differently).

-(t)úit (-úit or -túit) in 21, 23 and

25. ŋ-q̥ʷ-kst-úit-əm axa? məlqnúps. He put that (arrow) in Eagle's hand.

-túit in

26. čq̥ʷos-túit-əm. She pointed to it (for him). (Cf čáq̥ʷs-ont-əm. She pointed to it.)

-(n)túit (-túit or -ntúit) in 17c and

27a. čq̥mɔn-túit-s.⁸ He threw it at him.

and -ntúit in

28. com səl-mi-n axa? in-kənp-qín-kst-(t)ŋ, uɪ axa? k-təlm-əntúit-s-ən.
I might lose my ring, I'll have you keep it. (Cf lut kʷu t̥ k-s-ka?k̥ic-it-s-əl̥x i-k-s-tílom. They won't find for me what I'm giving them to keep.)

NOTES

¹

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²

All citations are surface forms and reflect broad phonetic reality except where a stop precedes its homorganic spirant or a glottal stop at morpheme boundary, and the coalescence of the two sounds into an affricate or a glottalized stop, respectively, is ignored to preserve the segmentation of morphemes.

³

The data, including all the examples given here, indicate that all Colville roots potentially participate in both the -nt and -st paradigms, and my argument is that the -nt paradigm is basic and the other secondary. In fact I have found some roots occurring only in one or the other paradigm, but not in both. These cases can be either exceptional, and/or possibly due to semantic incompatibility of the root with one of the two suffixes, or accidental. In the latter case more data are expected to turn up roots in both paradigms. A calculation based on a concordance of about 20,000 words of running text shows that out of approximately 1,000 roots 117 participate in transitive constructions each at least five times.

Of these, 97 roots occur with -nt and 48 with -st; 31 occur with both -nt and -st; 66 occur with -nt but not -st; 17 occur with -st but not -nt.

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Although I do not expect a morphological class to match perfectly regularly a given semantic notion, I think nevertheless it is important to try to describe and characterize productive functions as accurately as possible. It might be of interest, therefore, to note that Reichard analyzes the cognate Coeur d'Alene forms as 'customary': "The customary transitive is formed as follows: customary prefix (ʔts-)-stem-customary suffix (-stm)-object pronoun-subject pronoun." (Gladys A. Reichard, Coeur d'Alene. HAIL 3, 517-707, 1938, p. 582.) In Colville -st transitives nearly always occur with c- 'actual', but the term customary seems too restrictive and would not apply to such examples as

7a. ʔəl-p-st-ʔs-ʔlx axa? i? təm-təmmi?. They stopped (kicking) the corpse.

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Whatever complex of semantico-syntactic features differentiates 'House' from 'Horse' (e.g. "completable"), it does not govern the use of the proclitic t. Cf the next pair of examples.

6

An important (di)transitive stem formative is -nú-. -nú- stems carry the implication that the activity referred to is accomplished either accidentally or after a struggle. -nú- is attached to a root directly, or after the reduplicative suffix -(V)C₂ 'developmental', or after -p 'non-control', and can be followed in turn by any of the (di)transitive suffixes:

7b. ʔl-ʔl-nú-nt-s. She'll kill you.

7c. ʔəl-p-nú-nt-əm. We can stop her.

15a. kʷən-nú-n. I managed to get it.

15b. lut i? t s-qilxʷ kʷu tə c-kʷən-nú-st-s. Nobody can catch me.

15c. kʷən-nú-it-ən. I managed to take it from her.

I have found one example of -nú- following -m (-m(i)-?):

16. lut tə c-k-cah-h-m-nú-st-ən. I can't get them to match.

-xix, cognates of which are mentioned in the literature as transitivizers, works differently in that it can be followed by -m 'middle', and -m(i)-st:

17a. kʷu cu-s lut i-k-s-kʷiən-xix-əm. He told me not to lend it out.

17b. lut kʷu tə cu-s: "niŋwi? c-kʷiən-xix-əm-st-xʷ." He didn't tell me: "You can lend it out."

⁷Reichard glosses Coeur d'Alene -túi 'for, in reference to' (op. cit., p. 626). Kinkade groups Columbian -túi with other 'redirectives' (M. Dale Kinkade, Columbian Salish -xí, -i, -túi. Forthcoming, IJAL).

⁸A root cq̣ seems to mean 'something moves with force from one point to another' and occurs in intransitive constructions such as cq̣-ílon 'arrow', kən cqa-m 'I hit'. Other constructions that apparently involve this root are not easily analyzed. Whereas, for example, in the sentence

27b. ŋ-cq̣-àqs-ənt-əm axa? i? tkim-ílxʷ. (The stench) hit the woman's nose.

ŋ-cq̣-aqs functions as a transitive stem, the root of which is cq̣, in the sentence

27c. kʷu c-k-cq̣-mən-kn-ílxʷ-s. He threw me out of the house.

k-cq̣-mən-kn-ílxʷ functions as the transitive stem, the root of which is cq̣mn.