Inflection structures in Lower Tsimshianic
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This paper is an attempt to characterize the simpler inflection structures common to large numbers of Lower Tsimshianic monotransitive sentences. The term Lower Tsimshianic refers to Coast Tsimshian (Sim'álgiaX) and Southern Tsimshian (SgüüXs), which together comprise a major subdivision within the Tsimshianic group in Northern British Columbia and Southeastern Alaska. The characterization of inflection undertaken here presumes, for the sake of argument, that Lower Tsimshianic syntax is configurational and that recent advances in the characterization of Inflection Phrase structures (government-binding theory) have made possible a more insightful syntactic description of the inflection configurations of Lower Tsimshianic.

1. Lower Tsimshianic. Outward and coastward within the Tsimshianic community people use two indigenous terms to refer to language. These terms are Sim'álgiaX (The True Language) and SgüüXs (The Language Beside). There is general agreement among the Tsimshian people that Sim'álgiaX is the language of, among others, Kitkatla, the two Metlakatlas, and Hartley Bay, and that SgüüXs is the language of Klemtu and the former language of Hartley Bay. These two varieties exhibit very high cognate sharing, well over 90% of their total vocabularies. At the same time they are divergent in terms of phonetic structure. Even so the phonetic correspondences are quite regular. The Lower Tsimshianic community apparently has a long history of close social interaction between groups that have maintained strict autonomy insofar as local identities are concerned. As a result they have formed a sociolinguistic moeity.

2. Theoretical Model. This paper uses a model for sentence structure that has developed since Chomsky 1986 and that is appropriate for English and similarly constructed languages (See e.g., Aoun and Li 1989, Baker 1988,1989, Diesing 1990, Larson 1988, Pollock 1989):
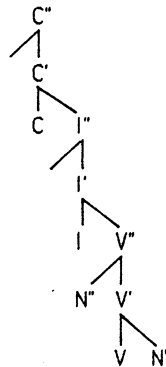
The subject is the specifier to the V; the direct object is its complement. The verb is inflected by incorporation into I:
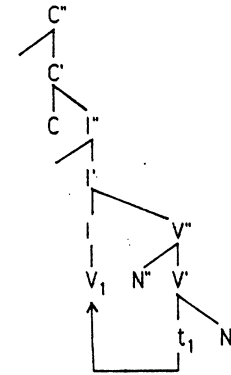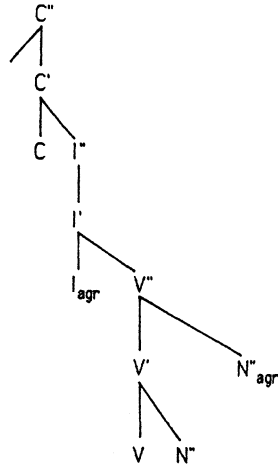


The subject coindexes I (for purposes of agreement):
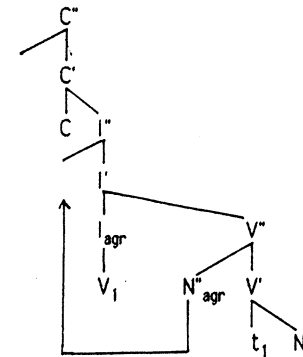


In English the subject N" then moves to the specifier of I position in order to receive nominative case from I.

3. The Lower Tsimshianic basic sentence parameter. The structure of the common monotransitive sentence in Lower Tsimshianic differs from the English parameter in a number of significant ways: (1) word order, (2) case-marking, (3) theta-role marking of grammatical functions, (4) the verb inflection does not indicate tense, but only the number of the subject, (5) the use of coindexing pronominal clitics for both subject and object grammatical functions, (6) pro-drop phenomena.

Basic Lower Tsimshianic word order is VOS:

```
        C"
       /|
        C'
       /|
      C  I"
         |
         I'
        / \
    I      V"
     agr  / \
        V'    N"
       / \      agr
      V   N"
```
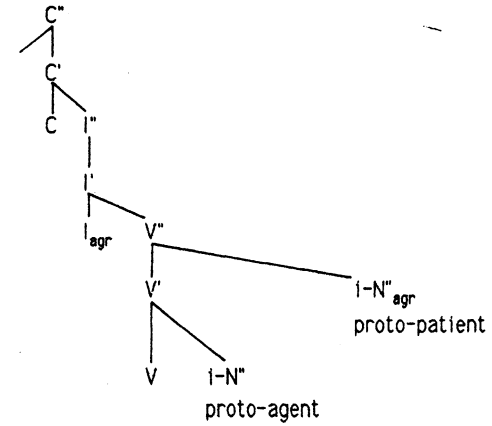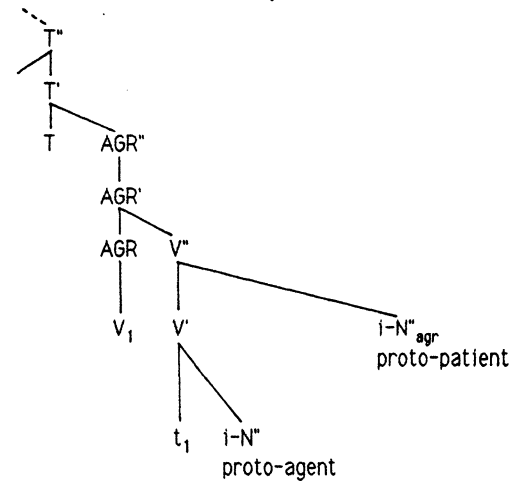
Both the subject and object have the same case mark, i- in SgüüXs and a- [ə-] in Sim'álgiaX. This indicates that movement of the subject into the specifier for I position does not occur. The verb case-marks both subject and object. There is another case-mark, it'ei- in SgüüXs and da- in Sim'álgiaX. This paper does not deal with the latter case-mark, but see #5.4 below for an example.

```
        C"
       /|
        C'
       /|
      C  I"
         |
         I'
        / \
    I      V"
     agr  / \
        V'    i-N"
       / \      agr
      V   i-N"
```

3
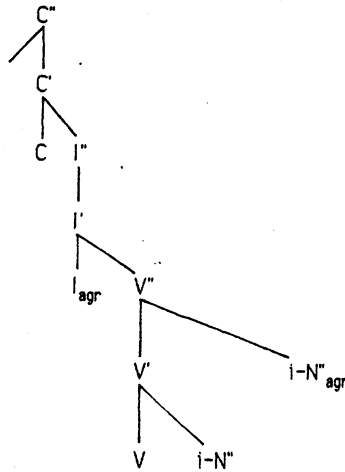
Lower Tsimshianic, having an ergative syntax, assigns proto-patient role to the subject and proto-agent role to the object (See Dowty 1987).

```
        C"
       /|
        C'
       /|
      C  I"
         |
         I'
        / \
    I      V"
     agr  / \
        V'    i-N"
       / \      agr
      V   i-N"  proto-patient

       proto-agent
```

Tense is a lexical category in Lower Tsimshianic. It inflects (receives by incorporation) the subject-indexing pronominal clitic. The verb inflects to show the number of the subject; it also receives by incorporation the object-indexing pronomincal clitic. Because the tense and verb are both lexical categories inflecting for discrete information, it is most useful to analyze the IP component as two separate phrases (See, e.g., Pollock 1989): one for T(ense) and another for the verb-AGR(eement) complex (V$_{agr}$):

```
         T"
        /|
         T'
        / \
      T    AGR"
            |
            AGR'
           / \
        AGR   V"
         |   / \
        V₁  V'    i-N"
           / \      agr
          t₁  i-N"  proto-patient

            proto-agent
```

4

Each N" has a specifier clitic (CL). These clitics indicate the person and number of their respective N"s. In inflection they incorporate themselves into the T(ense) and AGR(eement) components (See Borer 1986, Osvaldo 1986, Pulleybank 1986). The clitic specifier for the proto-patient subject inflects $V_{agr}$; the clitic specifier for the proto-agent object inflects T(ense).
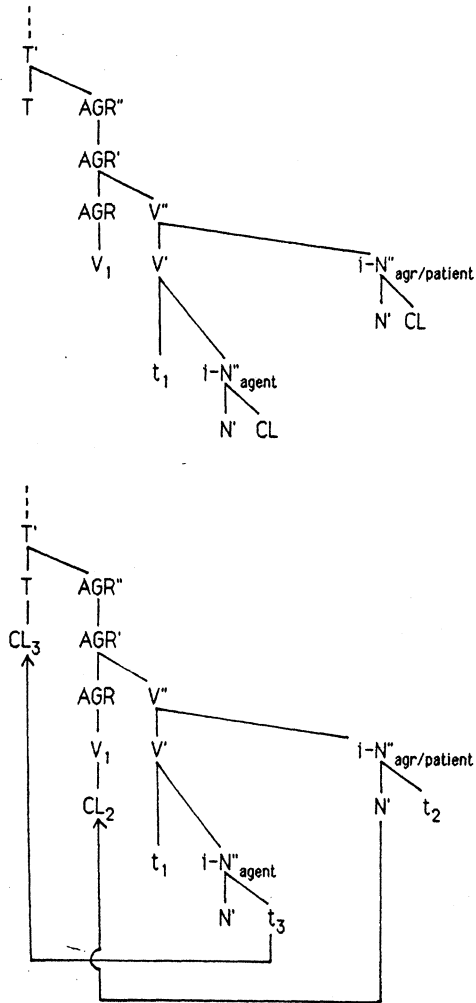
First and second person subject and object arguments usually manifest themselves by these clitics coindexed to *pro* constructions. Third person subject and object arguments are also usually expressed as *pro+clitic* anytime pragmatics constraints allow the pro drop.
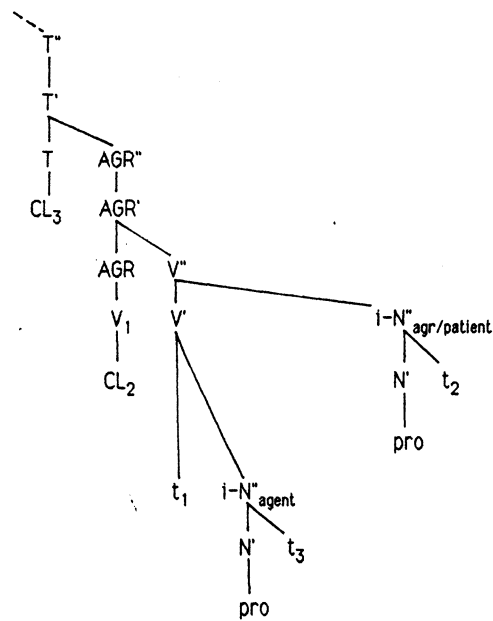
4. Examples from Sgüüx̱s provided by Violet Neasloss of Klemtu, British Columbia.

4.1 Hla welit guhpdi ha'tsiyaani hoan.
　　Maggots are eating the fish.
　　d-structure: [$_T$hla wila SNG [$_V$-guhp ha'tsiyaan 3RDPLU hoan 3RDSNG]]
　　　　　　　　　tense　　　eat　maggots　　　fish
　　case-marking: hla wila SNG guhp i-ha'tsiyaan 3RDPLU i-hoan 3RDSNG
　　verb-incorporation: hla wila ø-guhp$_1$ $t_1$ i-ha'tsiyaan 3RDPLU i-hoan 3RDSNG
　　subject clitic incorporation: hla wila ø-guhp$_1$d$_2$ $t_1$ i-ha'tsiyaan 3RDPLU i-hoan $t_2$
　　object clitic incorporation: hla weli-t$_3$ ø-guhp$_1$d$_2$ $t_1$ i-ha'tsiyaan $t_3$ i-hoan $t_2$

5　　　　　　　　　　　　　　6

4.2 Hla yagwit si'ki niisdi oli hoan.
The bear is staring at the fish.

d-structure: [$_T$ hla yagwa PLU [$_V$-si'ki nii  ol 3RDSNG  hoan 3RDPLU]]
       tense         stare-at  bear      fish

case-marking: hla yagwa  PLU si'ki nii i-ol 3RDSNG i-hoan 3RDPLU

verb-incorporation: hla yagwa si'ki nii$_1$-s $t_1$ i-ol 3RDSNG i-hoan 3RDPLU

subject clitic incorporation: hla yagwa si'ki nii$_1$-s-d$_2$ $t_1$ i-ol 3RDSNG i-hoan $t_2$

object clitic incorporation: hla yagwi-t$_3$ ø-si'ki nii$_1$-s-d$_2$ $t_1$ i-ol $t_3$ i-hoan $t_2$

4.3 Hlat ama niisdi ha na'aGi ts'iks na'as.
The woman got the bracelets.

d-structure: [$_T$ hla PLU [$_V$-ama nii  ha na'aq 3RDSNG  ts'iks na'as 3RDPLU]]
           tense        get       woman         bracelets

case-marking: hla PLU ama nii i-ha na'aq 3RDSNG i-ts'iks na'as 3RDPLU

verb-incorporation: hla ama nii$_1$-s $t_1$ i-ha na'aq 3RDSNG i-ts'iks na'as 3RDPLU

subject clitic incorporation: hla ama nii$_1$-s-d$_2$ $t_1$ i-ha na'aq 3RDSNG i-ts'iks na'as $t_2$

object clitic incorporation: hla-t$_3$ ø-ama niis$_1$d$_2$ $t_1$ i-ha na'aq $t_3$ i-ts'iks na'as $t_2$

4.4 Nat luu niidza'nu hoan.
The fish was glaring at me.

d-structure: [$_T$ na SNG [$_V$-luu nii  hoan 3RDSNG  'naxü 1STSNG]]
           tense         glare-at fish      me

case-marking: na SNG luu nii i-hoan 3RDSNG i-'naxü 1STSNG

verb-incorporation: na luu nii$_1$-dz $t_1$ i-hoan 3RDSNG i-'naxü 1STSNG

subject clitic incorporation: na luu nii$_1$-dz-'nu$_2$ $t_1$ i-hoan 3RDSNG i-'naxü $t_2$

subject pro drop: na luu nii$_1$-dz-'nu$_2$ $t_1$ i-hoan 3RDSNG pro $t_2$

object clitic incorporation: na-t$_3$ luu nii$_1$-dz-'nu$_2$ $t_1$ i-hoan $t_3$ pro $t_2$

4.5 yagwina ba'ali lo'ap
I am feeling of the rock.

d-structure: [$_T$-yagwa SNG [$_V$-ba'al  'naxü 1STSNG  lo'ap 3RDSNG]]
          tense     feel-of I       rock

case-marking: yagwa SNG ba'al i-'naxü 1STSNG i-lo'ap 3RDSNG

verb-incorporation: yagwa ø-ba'al$_1$ $t_1$ i-'naxü 1STSNG i-lo'ap 3RDSNG

subject clitic incorporation: yagwa ø-ba'al$_1$-d$_2$ $t_1$ i-'naxü 1STSNG i-lo'ap $t_2$

     Note: Subject clitic incorporation did not occur in this example.

object clitic incorporation: yagwi-'nu$_3$ ø-ba'al$_1$-d$_2$ $t_1$ i-'naxü $t_3$ i-lo'ap $t_2$

object pro drop: yagwi-'nu$_3$ ø-ba'al$_1$-d$_2$ $t_1$ pro $t_3$ i-lo'ap $t_2$

5. Examples from Sim'algiaX provided by Dorothy Brown of Kitkatla, British Columbia.

5.1 Ada wilt gidi doaXda q'mksiwa dip gwa'a.
The white men took them captive.

d-structure: [$_T$-ada wil PLU [$_V$-gidi giaa    q'mksiwa 3RDPLU dip gwa'a 3RDPLU]]
       tense       take-captive  white men        them

case-marking: ada wil PLU gidi giaa a-q'mksiwa 3RDPLU a-dip gwa'a 3RDPL

verb-incorporation: ada wil gidi doaX$_1$ $t_1$ a-q'mksiwa 3RDPLU a-dip gwa'a 3RDPL

subject clitic incorporation: ada wil gidi doaX$_1$-d$_2$ $t_1$ a-q'mksiwa 3RDPLU a-dip gwa'a $t_2$

object clitic incorporation: ada wil-t$_3$ gidi doaX$_1$-d$_2$ $t_1$ a-q'mksiwa $t_3$ a-dip gwa'a $t_2$

5.2 Wilt hi waada q'mksiwa git qXaahla.
The white men met the Kitkatlas (Kitkatla people).

d-structure: [$_T$  wil PLU [$_V$-waa    q'mksiwa 3RDPLU git qXaahla 3RDPLU]]
        tense       meet  white men       Kitkatlas

case-marking: wil PLU waa a-q'mksiwa 3RDPLU a-git qXaahla 3RDPL

verb-incorporation: wil hi-waa$_1$ $t_1$ a-q'mksiwa 3RDPLU a-git qXaahla 3RDPL

subject clitic incorporation: wil hi-waa$_1$-d$_2$ $t_1$ a-q'mksiwa 3RDPLU a-git qXaahla $t_2$

object clitic incorporation: wil-t$_3$ hi-waa$_1$-d$_2$ $t_1$ a-q'mksiwa $t_3$ a-git qXaahla $t_2$

5.3 Ada wilt si giahlgada k'oldini sgin si muut.
One of them took some of his earwax.

d-structure: [$_T$ ada wil SNG [$_V$-si giahlk  k'oldini 3RDSNG  sgin si muu-t 3RDSNG]]
             tense      take   one-of-them  earwax-his

case-marking: ada wil SNG si giahlk a-k'oldini 3RDSNG a-sgin si muu-t 3RDSNG

verb-incorporation: ada wil ø-si giahlk$_1$ $t_1$ a-k'oldini 3RDSNG a-sgin si muu-t 3RDSNG

subj. clitic incorporation: ada wil ø-si giahlk$_1$-d$_2$ $t_1$ a-k'oldini 3RDSNG a-sgin si muu-t $t_2$

obj. clitic incorporation: ada wil-t$_3$ ø-si giahlk$_1$-d$_2$ $t_1$ a-k'oldini $t_3$ a-sgin si muu-t $t_2$

5.4 Adat wil tXahl wa'alt aGan.
He put it on a match stick.

d-structure: [$_T$ ada wil [$_V$-tXahl [$_{AGR}$- SNG wa'al  'niit 3RDSNG  'niit 3RDSNG]  Gan]]
          tense        on       put  he       it       match stick

case-marking: ada wil tXahl SNG wa'al a-'niit 3RDSNG a-'niit 3RDSNG da-Gan

verb-incorporation: ada wil tXahl ø-wa'al$_1$ $t_1$ a-'niit 3RDSNG a-'niit 3RDSNG da-Gan

subject clitic incorporation: ada wil tXahl ø-wa'al$_1$-t$_2$ $t_1$ a-'niit 3RDSNG a-'niit $t_2$ da-Gan

subject pro drop: ada wil tXahl ø-wa'al$_1$-t$_2$ $t_1$ a-'niit 3RDSNG pro $t_2$ da-Gan

object clitic incorporation: ada-t$_3$ wil tXahl ø-wa'al$_1$-t$_2$ $t_1$ a-'niit $t_3$ pro $t_2$ da-Gan

object pro drop: ada-t$_3$ wil tXahl ø-wa'al$_1$-t$_2$ $t_1$ pro $t_3$ pro $t_2$ da-Gan

5.5 Adat wil wi liilt a an ont.
   He rubbed his hands together.
   d-structure: $[_T$ ada PLU $[_V$-wi liil    'niit 3RDSNG an on-t 3RDPLU]]
                      tense    rub together   he        hands-his

   case-marking: ada PLU wi liil a-'niit 3RDSNG a an on-t 3RDPLU
   verb-incorporation: ada wil-wi liil$_1$  $t_1$ a-'niit 3RDSNG a an on-t 3RDPLU
   subject clitic incorporation: ada wil-wi liil$_1$-t$_2$ $t_1$ a-'niit 3RDSNG a an on-t $t_2$
   object clitic incorporation: ada-t$_3$ wil-wi liil$_1$-t$_2$ $t_1$ a-'niit $t_3$ a an on-t $t_2$
   object pro drop: ada-t$_3$ wil-wi liil$_1$-t$_2$ $t_1$ pro $t_3$ a an on-t $t_2$

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