ON THE GRAMMATICAL STATUS OF SHUSWAP /-əs/

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0   Introduction

In this paper we wish to present a set of observations that raise interesting questions about the status of the pronominal system in Shuswap[1]. There is a form /-əs/ in Shuswap that occurs in several common syntactic constructions. It behaves as a third person marker in the grammatical system, but also appears cliticized to /-w-/ and has developed a broader function triggered by aspectual and discourse factors. This development is shared only with the closely related Thompson language although Tillamook may have separately developed a similar system (Thompson 1976, Newman 1980).

Shuswap /-əs/ shows up as a 3rd person pronominal agreement marker in Wh-question, focus, and relative clause constructions.

(1)   swétẏ k-čntés[2]
       swétẏ k-čn-n-t-Ø-és
       who   irr-punch-fc-tr-3obj-3subj
       Whom did he punch?

(2)   swétẏ k-čntémas
       swétẏ k-čn-n-t-Ø-ém-əs
       who   irr-punch-fc-tr-3obj-intr-?
       Who punched him?

In (1), it is the Patient argument being questioned and the verbal morphology is identical to the corresponding independent clause (3). In (2), it is the Agent argument that is questioned. The notional verb is grammatically intransitive and is extended with /-əs/. It is similar, but not identical to the independent clause (4) which is an impersonal passive contruction.

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[2] The following abbreviations have been used: caus (causative), compl (completive), deic (deictic), det (determiner), emph (emphatic pronoun), exp (expectational), fc (full control), hab (habitual), incompl (incompletive), intr (intransitive), irr (irrealis), inv (invisible), obj (object), Qu (question), [...] (reduplication), subj (subject), tr (transitive).

(3) čntés
čn-n-t-Ø-és
punch-fc-tr-3obj-3subj
He punched him.

(4) čntém
čn-n-t-Ø-ém
punch-fc-tr-3obj-intr
He was punched.

The form /čntém/ can also occur in Wh-constructions.

(5) swétų̇ k-čntém
swétų̇ k-čn-n-t-Ø-ém
who irr-punch-fc-tr-3obj-intr
He was punched.

Independent impersonal passive constructions can never be formed with /-əs/.

(6) *čntéməs

Focus constructions with a pronominal argument in preverbal position exhibit a similar distrubutional pattern of the form. These constructions are always emphatic.

(7) nwi?s mɛ? čntés
nwi?s mɛ? čn-n-t-Ø-és
3emph exp punch-fc-tr-3obj-3subj
He's the one whom he punched.

(8) nčéčwə? lu? čnčé[č]ms
nčéčwə? lu? čn-n-t-sé[č]m-s
1emph inv punch-fc-tr-1obj-3subj
I'm the one whom he punched.

(9) nwi?s čntéməs
nwi?s čn-n-t-Ø-ém-əs
3emph punch-fc-tr-3obj-intr-?
He's the one who punched him.

(10) nčéčwə? čntéməs
nčéčwə? čn-n-t-Ø-ém-əs
1emph punch-fc-tr-3obj-intr-?
I'm the one who punched him.

In (7-8) the preverbal emphatic pronoun corresponds to the Patient. There is a pronominal agreement suffix attached to the verb and the construction is identical to the corresponding independent clauses in (11):

(11) čntés   He punched him.
čnčé[č]ms   He punched me.

In (9-10) the preverbal emphatic pronoun corresponds to the Agent. There is no pronominal agreement suffix attached to the notional verb. Independent clauses are shown in (12).

(12) čntés   He punched him.
čnté[t]n   I punched him.

The third construction that displays the same distribution of the form is one that has properties resembling relative clauses.

(13) člx̣msté[t]n ɣ-sqéləmx lə-m-čntés
č-lx̣-m-s-t-Ø-n ɣ-sqéləmx lə-m-čn-n-t-Ø-és
hab-know-intr-caus-tr-3obj-1subj deic-man deic-compl-punch-fc-tr-3obj-3subj
I know the man whom he punched.

(14) člx̣msté[t]n ɣ-sqéləmx lə-m-čntéx
č-lx̣-m-s-t-Ø-n ɣ-sqéləmx lə-m-čn-n-t-Ø-éx
hab-know-intr-caus-tr-3obj-1subj deic-man deic-compl-punch-fc-tr-3obj-2subj
I know the man whom you punched.

(15) člx̣msté[t]n ɣ-sqéləmx lə-m-čnčís
č-lx̣-m-s-t-Ø-n ɣ-sqéləmx lə-m-čn-n-t-sí-s
hab-know-intr-caus-tr-3obj-1subj deic-man deic-compl-punch-fc-tr-2obj-3subj
I know the man who punched you.

(16) člx̣msté[t]n ɣ-sqéləmx lə-m-čntéməs
č-lx̣-m-s-t-Ø-n ɣ-sqéləmx lə-m-čn-n-t-Ø-ém-əs
hab-know-intr-caus-tr-3obj-1subj deic-man deic-compl-punch-fc-tr-3obj-intr-?
I know the man who punched him.

The relative clauses (13-14) are headed by a nominal that corresponds to the Patient internal to the clause. All of the persons are marked on the predicate of the relative.

In (15-16) the relative clause is headed by a nominal that corresponds to the internal Agent. There is a pronomical agreement suffix corresponding to the nominal head on the predicate in (15) but in (16) the predicate is made intransitive with /-ém/ and the /-əs/ form is added.

These constructions can also occur without nominal heads.

<div style="margin-left:2em">

(17) člxmsté[t]n lə-m-čntés
č-lx-m-s-t-Ø-n lə-m-čn-n-t-Ø-és
hab-know-intr-caus-tr-3obj-1subj   deic-compl-punch-fc-tr-3obj-3subj
I know whom he punched.

(18) člxmsté[t]n lə-m-čntéməs
č-lx-m-s-t-Ø-n lə-m-čn-n-t-Ø-ém-əs
hab-know-intr-caus-tr-3obj-1subj   deic-compl-punch-fc-tr-3obj-intr-?
I know who punched him.

</div>

The pattern of person marking in relative clauses parallels that of Wh-questions and focus constructions.

1.0 Properties of Wh-Constructions

In this section we examine the syntactic properties of Wh-constructions. An analysis of focus constructions and relative clauses will follow from this treatment. Active and impersonal passive constructions are repeated in (19-20).

<div style="margin-left:2em">

(19) swétỷ k-čntés
swétỷ k-čn-n-t-Ø-és
who irr-punch-fc-tr-3obj-3subj
Whom did he punch?

(20) swétỷ k-čntém
swétỷ k-čn-n-t-Ø-ém
who irr-punch-fc-tr-3obj-intr-3subj
Who was punched?

</div>

Both of these constructions are Patient-centered.[3]   The Wh-construction in (21) is Agent-centered.

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[3]The terms Agent-centered and Patient-centered are used in Kuipers (1974).

<div style="margin-left:2em">

(21) swétỷ k-čntémməs
swétỷ k-čn-n-t-Ø-ém-əs
who irr-punch-fc-tr-3obj-intr-?
Who punched him?

</div>

Together these constructions constitute a set that represents the range of possible voices that derive of a typically transitive relationship. All of the constructions occur with the transitive marker /-t-/. In (19) both the Agent and Patient are morphologically present whereas in (20-21), one of the arguments is not and the clause is marked intransitive with /-ém/. In (20) the Agent is not overt and the construction is an impersonal passive. In (21) it is the form /-əs/ which represents the Agent.

In the Wh-question construction /swétỷ/ occurs in initial position, the position where predicates typically occur. In (22) Patient-centered Wh-constructions are compared with independent clauses. The person markings for both sets are identical.

<div style="margin-left:2em">

(22) swétỷ k-čnté[t]n   Whom did I punch?
     swétỷ k-čntéx   Whom did you punch?
     swétỷ k-čntés   Whom did he punch?
     swétỷ k-čntém   Who was punched?

     čnté[t]n   I punched him.
     čntéx   You punched him.
     čntés   He punched him.
     čntém   He was punched.

</div>

In (23) Agent-centered Wh-constructions are compared with independent clauses.

<div style="margin-left:2em">

(23) swétỷ k-čnčé[č]ms   Who punched me?
     swétỷ k-čnčís   Who punched you?
     swétỷ k-čntémməs   Who punched him?

     čnčé[č]ms   He punched me.
     čnčís   He punched you.
     *čntémməs/(čntés)   He punched him.
     čntém   He was punched.

</div>

In Agent-centered Wh-constructions (23) with first and second person Patients it is clear that there is a pronominal copy of the Agent manifested as a pronominal agreement suffix on the verb. The person marking is exactly the same as in independent clauses. In the third person Agent-centered construction the form /k-čntémməs/ is grammatically marked as an intransitive and is morphologically the same as the independent clause /čntém/. There is, in addition, the /-əs/ ending.

The situation is much clearer in the Coast Salish language Halkomelem (Gerdts 1988).

    (24) nəwə ni ləm-θ-əmə-ʔe.n?
          2emph aux look-tr-2obj-1subj
          It's you that I looked at.

    (25) ʔé.nʔθə ni qʼʷàqʷ-əθ-ám?š-əs
          1emph aux club-tr-1obj-3subj
          It's me who he clubbed.

    (26) ʔé.nʔθə ni qʼʷàqʷ-ət (*qʼʷàqʷ-ət-ʔé.n?)
          1emph aux club-tr
          I'm the one who clubbed it.

    (27) níɫ ɫə sɫɛ3niʔ ni qʼʷáqʷ-ət (*qʼʷáqʷ-ət-əs)
          3emph det woman aux club-tr
          It's the woman who clubbed it.

Objects (24-25) and obliques have pronominal copies whereas subjects (26-27) do not. There is no shift in transitive marking.

Jacaltec (Craig 1976) a Mayan language has a similar construction in which the subjects behave differently than objects. Transitive clause structure is shown in (28).

    (28) xil naj ix
          saw cl/he cl/her
          He saw her.

In (29-31) third person pronominal objects are referred to in question, cleft, and relative clause constructions and there is no mark on the verb.

    (29) mac xil naj
          Who saw cl/he
          Who did he see?

    (30) haʼ ix xil naj
          cleft cl/she saw cl/he
          It's her that he saw.

    (31) wohtaj ix xil naj
          I know cl/her saw cl/he
          I know the woman that he saw.

In (32), the reference to subjects requires additional marking on the verb /xʼil-ni/.

    (32) mac xʼil-ni ix
          Who saw-suffix cl/her
          Who saw her?

    (33) haʼ naj xʼil-ni ix
          cleft cl/he saw-suffix cl/her
          It's he who saw her.

    (34) wohtaj naj xʼil-ni ix
          I know cl/he saw-suffix cl/her
          I know the man who saw her.

In Lummi, another Coast Salish language (Jelinek 1987) the Patient-centered paradigm (35) is in all relevant respects the same as in Shuswap.[4]

    (35) cə-x̌či-t-ən   the one that I know
          det-know-tr-1subj
          cə-x̌či-t-əx   the one that you know
          det-know-tr-2subj
          cə-x̌či-t-s   the one that he knows
          det-know-tr-3subj

In (36) the Agent-centered paradigm is given.

    (36) cə-x̌či-t-oŋəs   the one that knows you/me
          det-know-tr-1/2obj
          cə-x̌či-t-∅   the one that knows him
          det-know-tr-3obj

Jelinek assumes that because there is no ergative argument in the Agent-centered construction that there is no absolutive argument in the Patient-centered construction.

In (37) the corresponding Shuswap forms with Patient-centered interpretations are given.

    (37) lə-č-1x̌m-s-t-∅-έ[t]n   the one I know
          lə-č-1x̌m-s-t-∅-έx   the one you know
          lə-č-1x̌m-s-t-∅-έs   the one he knows

In (38) forms with Agent-centered interpretations are given.

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[4]We assume that /ə/ corresponds to /3/ in Jelinek's orthography.

(38) lə-č-lx̌m-s-t-sɛ́[č]ms the one who knows me
lə-č-lx̌m-s-t-sí-s the one who knows you
lə-č-lx̌m-s-t-Ø-ɛ́m-əs the one who knows him

In both the Patient-centered and Agent-centered paradigms, pronominal forms are fully represented. Notice that it is only in the third person system in (38) that there is any deviation from the pattern. We now turn to the pronominal system.

2.0 The Pronominal System

Person is referenced by sets of affixes and clitics that occur on the predicate. We first discuss first and second person.[5]

Intransitive clauses are referenced for person by pronominal clitics:

(39) x̌ʔɛ[ʔ]k-kn
go-1subj
I go/went.

(40) x̌ʔɛk-k
go-2subj
You go.

The clitic paradigm is shown in the following chart.

	Singular	Plural
1st	-kn	-kt
2nd	-k	-kp

Transitive clauses are referenced for person by pronominal suffixes. The predicate is suffixed with /-t/ and the pronominal subject follows the object marker.

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[5]The discussion is limited to singular pronominal forms. The plural system functions exactly the same in all respects relevant to the present topic. There are however other interesting properties of the plural system, notably the development of a first person plural inclusive/exclusive distinction.

(41) čn-n-t-sɛ́[č]m-x
hit-fc-tr-1obj-2subj
You punch me.

(42) čn-n-t-sí-n
hit-fc-tr-2obj-1subj
I punch you.

The pronominal subjects are shown in the following chart.

	Singular	Plural
1st	-(ɛ́)n	
2nd	-(ɛ́)x	-(ɛ́)p

The pronominal objects are given in the following chart.

	Singular	Plural
1st	-s(ɛ́)m-	-(ɛ́)l-
2nd	-s(í)-	-(ú)lm-

First and second person are marked according to a nominative/accusative system. In intransitive clauses first and second person is supplied by clitics. In transitive clauses the first and second person markers are suffixes.

The subject clitic paradigm behaves differently from the suffixal paradigms. Evidence that these are different paradigms comes from the question suffix /-n-/:

(43) m-x̌ʔɛ́k-n-k
compl-go-Qu-2subj
Did you go?

(44) čn-n-t-sí-s-n
hit-fc-tr-2obj-3subj-Qu
Did he hit you?

The question suffix /-n/ intervenes between the predicate stem and the subject clitic in intransitive clauses whereas it is suffixed after the pronominal objects and subjects in transitive clauses.

3.1 Third Person Marking

The behaviour of third person pronominals in intransitive clauses is shown in the following examples:

(45) x̌ʔɛk-Ø
go-3subj
He goes.

(46) wik-m-Ø
see-intr-3subj
He is looking.

(47) wik-t-Ø-m
see-tr-3subj-intr
He was seen.

Clauses (45-47) are intransitive and the third person marker is /-Ø/. The following clauses are transitive.

(48) wik-t-Ø-s
see-tr-3obj-3subj
He saw it.

(49) wik-t-Ø-s ɣ-səkʼlɛ́p
see-tr-3obj-3subj deic-coyote
He saw the coyote.

(50) wik-t-Ø-s ɣ-sqɛ́ləmx ɣ-səkʼlɛ́p
see-tr-3obj-3subj deic-man deic-coyote
The man saw the coyote.

Third person behaves according to an ergative/absolutive system. Subjects of transitive clauses in (48-50) are marked with /-ɛ́s,-s/, the ergative. Third person objects are marked with /-Ø-/, the absolutive, parallel to subjects of intransitive clauses (45-47).

Shuswap then has a split ergative system for person. First and second person are nominative/accusative and third person is ergative/absolutive. The common types of split systems recognized are on the basis of person marking, aspect and clausal type. We now turn to aspect.

3.2 Aspect

Split ergative systems frequently make a distinction based on aspect. Often in the completive aspect third person behaves as an ergative/absolutive whereas in the incompletive aspect third person behaves as a nominative/accusative. Clauses (51-53) are marked with the completive prefix /m-/.

(51) m-x̌ʔɛ[ʔ]k-kn
compl-go-1subj
I went.

(52) m-x̌ʔɛk-k
compl-go-2subj
You went.

(53) m-x̌ʔɛk-Ø
compl-go-3subj
He went.

The completives (51-53) are all independent clauses. First and second person are nominative and third person is absolutive. Incompletive constructions have the particle /wʔɛx/ in predicate initial position and the notional verb is a dependent clause.

(54) wʔɛx ɣ-x̌ʔɛ[ʔ]kʷ-ən
incompl deic-go-1subj
I am going.

(55) wʔɛx ɣ-x̌ʔɛ́kʷ-əx [uxʷ]
incompl deic-go-2subj
You are going.

(56) wʔɛx ɣ-x̌ʔɛkʷ-əs
incompl deic-go-3subj
He is going.

Notice that the pronominal markers are attached to /-w-/ in (54-56) parallel to being attached to /-k-/ in (51-53).[6] The incompletive pronominal paradigm is given in the following chart.

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[6]Phonological developments often obscure this grammatical process.

	Singular	Plural
1st	-w-ən	-w-ət
2nd	-w-əx	-w-əp
3rd	-w-əs	-w-əs

The behaviour of third person would follow from an account of split ergativity based on aspect. In (57) the third person of the completive clause is absolutive whereas in (58) the third person subject of the incompletive clause is nominative.

    (57) m-x̌ʔɛk-∅
            compl-go-3subj
            He went.

    (58) wʔɛx ɣ-x̌ʔɛk-ʷ-əs
            incompl deic-go-w-3subj
            He is going.

Incompletives have a strong active interpretation as shown by the derived nominals in (59-60). In (59) the predicate /k'úlməs/ is focussing on the action of 'making' and the nominal is an adjunct. In (60) it is the action that is questioned by the form /kɛnm/.

    (59) wʔɛx ɣ-k'úlm-əs tə-mímx̌[7]
            incompl deic-make-w-3subj deic-basket
            He is making a basket./He's a basket-maker.

    (60) ʔɛx k-kɛ́nm-ux
            incompl irr-do-w-2subj
            What are you doing?

It is not clear that an analysis of third person marking can be advanced on the basis of aspect given that incompletives are constructions that exhibit behaviour paralleling subordinate clauses. We now go on to look at the status of these clauses.

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[7]Evidence for positing the /-w-/ in (59) comes from the following:

    čnčɛ́[č]ms
    čn-n-t-sɛ́[č]m-əs
    hit-fc-tr-1acc-3erg
    He hit me.

In the absense of any material between [m] and [əs] the [ə] deletes.

3.3 Clausal Type

Split ergative phenomena often appear on the basis of clausal type. Third person marking behaves as an ergative/absolutive in independent clauses and as a nominative/accusative in subordinate clauses. Independent clauses are shown in (61-62).

    (61) x̌ʔɛk-∅
            go-3subj
            He goes.

    (62) wik-t-∅-s ɣ-sək'lɛ́p
            see-tr-3obj-3subj deic-coyote
            He saw the coyote.

Third person marking in independent clauses is ergative/absolutive. The subject of the intransitive clause (61) is /-∅/, the absolutive, parallel to the object of the transitive clause (62). On the other hand the third person subject of (62) is /-ɛs/, the ergative.

Subordinate clauses are underlined in (63-65).

    (63) mɛʔ kəxčín tə-spəqpɛ́q ɛ q^wənénux
            mɛʔ kəx-čí-n tə-spəqpɛ́q ɛ q^wənén-ux
            expect give-2obj-1subj deic-berries if want-2subj
            I'll give you some berries if you want.

    (64) čpípq^wstn yəɣɛ́y luʔ w̓ʔɛ́x^wəs q^wiẙílx^wəs
            č-pípq^w-s-t-∅-n yəɣɛ́y luʔ w̓ʔɛ́x-ʷ-əs q^wiẙílx-ʷ-əs
            hab-watch-caus-tr-3obj-1subj that one part incompl-w-3subj
            dance-w-3subj
            I was watching him when he was dancing.

    (65) sq'lɛ́inəmstn luʔ yəɣɛ́y lə-sačínməs
            sq'lɛ́inəm-s-t-∅-n luʔ yəɣɛ́y lə-sačínm-w-əs
            listen-caus-tr-3obj-1subj part that one deic-sing-w-3subj
            I was listening to him when he was singing.

The subordinate clauses are marked in the same way as incompletives, taking a member of the clitic paradigm suffixed to /-w-/.

There is a distinction in Shuswap between subordinate clauses and dependent clauses. The dependent clauses (66-67) take ergative/absolutive marking.

(66) člxmstétn ɤ-sqélmx 1-m-qʷəčéč
č-1x̌-m-s-t-Ø-é[t]n ɤ-sqélmx 1-m-qʷəčéč-Ø
hab-know-intr-caus-tr-3obj-1subj deic-man deic-compl-leave-3subj
I know the man who left.

(67) člxmstétn ɤ-sqélmx 1-m-čntés
č-1x̌-m-s-t-Ø-é-[t]-n ɤ-sqélmx 1-m-čn-n-t-Ø-és
hab-know-intr-caus-tr-3obj-1subj deic-man deic-compl-punch-fc-tr-3obj-3subj
I know the man whom he punched.

A similar distribution of clausal type has been reported for Halkomelem with pronominals behaving as ergative/absolutives in dependent clauses and as nominative/accusatives in subordinate clauses (Gerdts 1988).

The following chart for third person displays the distribution of morphological case marking:

	Nom/Accus	Erg/Abs
Completive		+
Incompletive	+	
Independent		+
Dependent	(+)	+
Subordinate	+	

Notice that for third person in incompletives and subordinates (68-69) the nominative/accusative case marking system is clear. The predicates are marked as intransitives so that there is no evidence of a shift in transitivity.

(68) wʔɛx ɤ-k'úlm-əs tə-miṁx
incompl deic-make-w-3 deic-basket
He is making a basket./He's a basket-maker.

(69) sq'léinəmstn luʔ yəɤéy lə-səčínməs
sq'léinəm-s-t-Ø-n luʔ yəɤéy lə-səčínm-w-əs
listen-caus-tr-3abs-1nom part that one deic-sing-w-3nom
I was listening to him when he was singing.

There is a split within the third person constructions in transitive dependent clauses. The third person Patient construction (70) parallels completive and independent clauses and the third person Agent construction (71) parallels incompletives and subordinate clauses.

(70) člxmstétn ɤ-sqélmx 1-m-čntés
č-1x̌-m-s-t-Ø-é-[t]-n ɤ-sqélmx 1-m-čn-n-t-Ø-és
hab-know-intr-caus-tr-3obj-1subj deic-man deic-compl-punch-fc-tr-3obj-3subj
I know the man whom he punched.

(71) člxmstétn ɤ-sqélmx 1-m-čntéməs
č-1x̌-m-s-t-Ø-é-[t]-n ɤ-sqélmx 1-m-čn-n-t-Ø-ém-w-əs
hab-know-intr-caus-tr-3obj-1subj deic-man deic-compl-punch-fc-tr-3obj-intr-w-3subj
I know the man who punched him.

4.0 Conclusion

Although there is strong evidence of a grammatical split in the Shuswap pronominal system, the appearance of /-əs/ as a third person Agentive in dependent clauses still requires an explanation. One promising line of investigation would be to view this behaviour as reflecting an animacy hierarchy, certainly well recognized in being involved in split systems (Silverstein 1976). This line has been followed for the Coast Salish language Lummi (Jelinek and Demers 1983). The following hierarchy has been proposed.

(72) 1&2 > 3 > N

First and second person often behave the same in the animacy hierarchy and are the highest on the scale of agentivity. Nominals tend to be the lowest on the scale of agentivity. It has been noted that languages with split systems pick out particular points to make the split. In Dyribal (Dixon 1979), an Australian Aboriginal language, 3rd person pronominals behave according to a nominative/accusative system whereas nominals behave ergatively. A possible statement of this behaviour would be that patients cannot outrank agents on the animacy hierarchy.

In Shuswap there is evidence of an animacy hierarchy with inclusive first person plural pronominal subjects. The Shuswap form for 'we saw him' occurs as a passive and has the alternate interpretation 'he was seen'.

(73) wikt-Ø-m
see-3abs-intr
He was seen./We saw him.

For Shuswap first person plural inclusives behave in the same way as nominals on the animacy hierarchy:

(74) 1/2 > 3 > N/1pl inclusive

With dependent clauses Shuswap has taken the option of interpreting third person agents as behaving as nominative/accusatives.

(75) 1/2 /3(agents)> 3(patients) > N/1pl inclusive

Evidence for an animacy hierarchy suggests that Shuswap may have behaviour parallel to direct/inverse person marking systems well recognized for the Athabaskan language family. Whistler (1985) has looked at direct/inverse marking in Nootkan suggesting that this person marking system typologically may be more widespread in the area. Jelinek and Demers have explored this possiblility for the Salish language Lummi (1983).

There are some intriguing similarities in the Navaho paradigms in (76-77) (Jelinek 1987) and the Shuswap paradigms in (78-79).

(76) yiztał	He kicked him.
yiztał-ę́e	the one who was kicked...
'ashkii yiztał	He kicked the boy.
'ashkii yiztał-ę́e	the one who kicked the boy...

(77) biztał	He got kicked by him (approx).
biztał-ę́e	the one who kicked him...
'ashkii biztał	He got kicked by the boy.
'ashkii biztał-ę́e	the one who got kicked by the boy...

(78) m-čntés	He punched him.
lə-m-čntém	the one who was punched...
m-čntés ɣ-sqélmx	He punched the man.
lə-m-čntéməs ɣ-sqélmx	the one who punched the man...

(79) m-čntém	He got punched.
lə-m-čntéməs	the one who punched him...
m-čntém ɣ-sqélmx	The man got punched.
m-čntém tə-sqélmx	He got punched by the man.
lə-m-čntéməs ɣ-sqélmx	the one who punched the man...
lə-m-čntém tə-sqélmx	the one who got punched by the man...

The two languages have several features in common: the predicate is fully marked for person, there is an animacy hierarchy banning certain Agent/Patient co-occurances, and nominals are not part of the argument structure of the predicate but are adjoined clausal elements.

Finally it should be pointed out that the behaviour of /-əs/ is not triggered strictly on grammatical grounds. It also occurs frequently in deixis.

(80) tl?énə mɛ́? kəx-čí-n-əs
from this expect give-2obj-1subj-3subj
I'll give you some from this.

(81) kɛnm k-sčlx̣mst-∅-éx pnhɛ́?n yəɣéy q"əčéč-əs
do irr-know-3obj-2subj when that one left-3subj
Do you know when that person left?

In (80) the predicate /kəx-čí-n/ is fully marked for its arguments and the /-w-əs/ is triggered by spatial deixis as it is with the temporal deixis in (81).

Kuipers (1974) has noted the frequent occurance of /-əs/ in texts and that the texts often have forms with and without the suffix. This is suggestive that /-əs/ may have diverse functions in discourse styles. A full treatment of the /-əs/ form in textual materials should provide some answers. Given that /-əs/ has such strong active readings it may be functioning as a reference tracking device in discourse, somewhat akin to switch-reference systems. The Shuswap form /-əs/ appears to be what Nichols and Woodbury (1985) call an emergent linguistic category, one with "tendencies in discourse which are almost, but not quite, rigid and grammaticalized".[8]

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[8]Nichols and Woodbury, pg.8.

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