The Southern Interior Salish Languages and the Problem of Origin of Nominals: Diachronic View

Olga Ikonnikova
Rostov Institute of Improving Teachers’ Qualification and Professional Retraining

Abstract: In the paper the author considers that the Interior Salish languages demonstrate the areal grammatical strategies relevant for reconstructing a diachronic process of the formation of nominals. Due to the material of the Interior Salish languages, one can trace that the nominals are former subordinate clauses attached to verbs. Interior Salish languages prove the fact that nominals are of verbal origin that could be characteristic of the ancient language.

Keywords: Southern Interior Salish languages, nominal, verbal root, nominalizer, subordinate clause

1 Introduction

The problem of diachrony of nominals is complicated. To this day, linguists have not been able to establish the relative chronology in the emergence of nominal and verbal categories with some degree of certainty, mainly because of the absence of sufficient diachronic evidence.

To throw light on solving this problem, it is reasonable to study the languages which do not have nominals in the part-of-speech system or where the distinction between verbs and nouns is fuzzy. We consider the Salish languages of the Southern Interior branch to be able to throw light on the pre-grammatical stage of the language since they offer the varieties of linguistic form that are crucial to any general understanding of the phenomenon of language in its diachronic and typological perspective.

The Salishists claim that all roots in Southern Interior Salish languages are intransitive and verb-like (Black 1996; Carlson 1972; A. Mattina 1973:73, N. Mattina 2006; Reichard 1938:527; Speck 1977:30). The proponents of the single-class hypothesis recognize a distinction between predicates and arguments in Salish, but they do not find independent evidence for the distinction between verbs and nouns (Czaykowska-Higgins & Kinkade 1998:35). The prefix s- (nominalizer) is singled out to derive nominal forms.

The aim of the research is a synchro-diachronic analysis of texts in Southern Interior Salish languages as far as the expressions of the nominals are concerned. The data presented in this paper come from the following sources: The Golden Woman: The Colville Narrative of Peter J. Seymour (A. Mattina 1985), Kalispel Texts by H. Vogt (Camp 2007), Margaret Sherwood’s Badger and Skunk. A Spokane Traditional Legend with Commentary (Egesdal 1991), 12 Upper Nicola Okanagan Texts (Lindley & Lyon 2013), and Gladys Reichard’s Coeur d’Alene Texts (Doak & Montler 2006).

2 Areal grammatical strategies of expressing nominals in the Southern Interior Salish languages in diachronic perspective

In the Spokane grammar, Carlson states that adjuncts are added to the predicates by the particle I ‘secondary in importance’ (1972:53), cf.:
Speculating on such examples as (1), Carlson (1972) and Black (1996) consider them as a result of reanalysis of biclausal sentences, whose second clauses were nominalized predicates, as monoclausal. Kroeber suggested the possibility of dating back the particle \(l\) to a clausal subordinator, having surveyed descriptive works on the Southern Interior language Okanagan as well as the Northern Interior languages Lillooet and Thompson that utilize a proclitic, particle, or determiner of the \(l\)-form to introduce certain types of complement clauses. He argues that the form of sentences which comprise a main clause and a nominalized subordinate clause closely resembles the form of many compounds. Then he confirms the fact that there is a compound marker \(l\) in Spokane that represents the relic of the clausal subordinator and goes back to Proto-Salish (Black 1996:110).

In Coeur d’Alene and Moses-Columbian, we also observe \(l\) as a connective in the formation of new words:

(2) Coeur d’Alene:

\[s-xil-l-y?ln\]
NOM-abandon-CONN-food
‘feast’ (lit. ‘throwing food away’) (Coeur d’Alene Language Online Resource Center 2009)

(3) Moses-Columbian:

\[s-n-xəl-xaq’-al-q*isp-tn\]
NOM-POSS-AUG-kill-CONN-cow-INST
‘slaughterhouse’
(Willet 2003:342)

There is an interesting fact that \(l\) positioned between the stems is lost in the event that the second member of the compound begins with \(s\)-, cf. examples (4) and(5):

(4) Coeur d’Alene:

a. \[s-xil-s-y?ln\]
NOM-give.away-NOM-food
‘potlatch’ (lit. ‘giving away food’)
(Coeur d’Alene Language Online Resource Center 2009)

Abbreviations used in the paper: ACT = actual, ADJ = adjunct, ART = article, AUG = augmentative, CAUS = causative, CISL = cislocative, COMP = complementizer, COND = conditional, CONJ = conjunction, CONN = connective, CONT = continuative, CUST = customary, DEM = demonstrative, DET = determiner, DIR = directional, DUR = durative, EMPF = emphatic, ERG = ergative, EXAG = exaggeration, FUT = future, GEN = genitive, IMP = imperative, INSTR = instrumental, INTR = intransitive, IRR = irrealis, LOC = locative/instrumental, LS = lexical suffix, MDL = middle, MUT = mutative, CONTR = control, NEG = negative, NOM = nominalizer, OBL = oblique, PASS = passive, PL = plural, POSS = possessive, PROX = proximal, RECP = reciprocal, REL = relational, RFLX = reflexive, RES = resultative, SEQ = sequential/translocative, SG = single, SPEC = specifier, STAT = stative/actual, TR = transitive, UNR = unrealized, C = consonant, V = vowel, 1 = first person, 2 = second person, 3 = third person.
b. *san-s-pax-cvc-t*
   holy-NOM-wise-AUG-STAT
   ‘Holy Ghost’  
   (Doak & Montler 2006)

(5) Moses-Columbian:

   \[\text{kn } \text{haw’}y \text{ a } \text{snccw’}\]
   1SG make CONN creek
   ‘I made a ditch.’  
   (Willet 2003:339)

In synchrony of Kalispel-Spokane-Flathead, the markers of the subordinate clauses are \(lu?\) and \(li?e\), which are also used as definite articles. Carlson (1972) analyzes \(li?e\) into several morphemes: \(l\) ‘secondary’, \(i\) (hi) ‘special’, \(e\) ‘this / these’. Similarly, he analyzes \(lu?\) into component morphemes: \(l\) ‘secondary’, \(u?\) ‘particular’.

(6) Kalispel-Spokane-Flathead:

   \[\text{kʷe} \text{m̓} \text{kʷ} \text{Ɂ} \text{e} \text{t} \text{u}? \text{kʷ} \text{Ɋ} \text{e} \text{c} \text{u}? \text{l} \text{e} \text{s-x}^\text{y}x^\text{uy-i} \text{u} \text{cn} \text{c̓}\text{šin}\]
   and.then ART get.dark ART LOC CONT-go.PL-CONT and 1SG.INTR follow
   ‘When the night fell, I joined all the people who were going.’  
   (Camp 2007:19)

In (6), the lexeme \(k^\text{kʷ}\text{Ɋ}\text{ec}\) ‘night’ (lit. ‘get dark’) is expressed by a reduplicated verbal root and introduced by the article \(lu?\).

(7) Kalispel-Spokane-Flathead:

   \[\text{hoy} \text{cn} \text{lemt} \text{u}? \text{wič-n-t-n} \text{li?e} \text{citxʷ} \text{wis-šn}\]
   then 1SG.INTR glad ART see-TR-1SG.TR this house high-foot
   ‘I was glad when I saw this long house.’  
   (Camp 2007:20)

(8) Kalispel-Spokane-Flathead:

   \[\text{kʷu} \text{sew-n-t-m} \text{lu}? \text{t} \text{hin-p̓xʷp̓xʷut}\]
   1SG.OBJ ask-TR-PASS ART OBL 1SG.POSS-parents
   ‘My parents asked me…’  
   (Camp 2007:24)

In (8), the lexeme \(p̓xʷp̓xʷut\) ‘parents’ (lit. ‘those who are old-old, wise-wise’) goes back to the reduplicated verbal root \(p̓xʷut\) ‘old, wise’ and is introduced by the article \(lu?\).

(9) Kalispel-Spokane-Flathead:

   \[\text{hoy} \text{lu}? \text{č̓luxʷ}\]
   then ART evening
   ‘When the evening came…’  
   (Camp 2007:25)

In (9), \(č̓luxʷ\) ‘evening’ (lit. ‘to disappear’) goes back to the verbal root and is introduced by the article \(lu?\).
(10) Kalispel-Spokane-Flathead:
\[ cu\text{-}nt\text{-}s \quad qe\text{?} \quad qs\text{-}x\text{?}uy \quad lu? \quad \acute{c} \quad esyapqi \text{n}\text{?}i \]
say\text{-}TR\text{-}3TR \quad IPL\text{.}INTR \quad FUT\text{.}go \quad ART \text{ to powpow} 
‘He said: We’ll go to the pow-wow.’ (Camp 2007:43)

In (10), the lexeme \( esyapqi \text{n}\text{?}i \) ‘pow-pow’ (lit. ‘gather heads’) goes back to the verbal root \( ya \) ‘gather’, with the continuative prefix \( es\text{-} \), the transitive suffix \( -p \), and the lexical suffix \( -qin \) ‘head’ attached to it.

(11) Kalispel-Spokane-Flathead:
\[ hoy \quad lu? \quad \acute{x}\text{alip} \quad u \quad \acute{k}\text{e}n\text{?}\text{c}\text{stmist} \]
then ART \text{ morning and get\text{.}ready} 
‘The next morning he got ready…’ (Camp 2007:28)

In (11), the lexeme \( \acute{x}\text{alip} \) ‘morning’ (lit. ‘be light’) goes back to the stative verb \( x\text{al} \) ‘be light, clear’ with the non-control affix \( -p \) attached to it.

It should be noted that the marker \( l \) is lost where there is a nominalizer \( s\text{-} \):

(12) Kalispel-Spokane-Flathead:
\[ cu\text{-}nt\text{-}m \quad x\text{?}\text{uy}\text{?}\text{s} \quad t \quad ql\text{-}sqe\text{?}em\text{-}s \]
say\text{-}TR\text{-}PASS \quad go\text{-}SG\text{.}INTR\text{.IMP} \quad OBL \text{ to.be\text{-}milk\text{.}POSS} 
‘She said to him: Go and get some milk for him’. (Camp 2007:88)

In (12), the lexeme \( sqe\text{?}em \) ‘milk’ (lit. ‘something that is sucked’) goes back to the verbal root \( qe\text{?}e \) ‘to suck’ with the nominalizer \( s\text{-} \) and the middle suffix \( -m \) attached to it.

(13) Kalispel-Spokane-Flathead:
\[ \acute{c}\text{c}\text{i}\text{t}\text{m}\text{i}\text{n}\text{-}nt\text{-}m \quad t \quad snqcu\text{l} \]
go\text{.near.to\text{-}TR\text{-}PASS \quad OBL \text{ lynx} 
‘The lynx had come quite close to him already.’ (Camp 2007:71)

In (13), the lexeme \( snqcu\text{l} \) ‘lynx’ (lit. ‘which shrinks something’) goes back to the verbal root \( qc \) ‘shrink’ with the lexical suffix \( -ul \) ‘to the extreme’, the nominalizer \( s\text{-} \), and the transitive prefix \( n\text{-} \) attached to it.

In Coeur d’Alene, there are articles or demonstratives with the initial \( l \) element: \( lu?e \) ‘that’, \( lu? \) ‘there far from speaker and second person or not near anyone’, and the definite article \( le \) ‘the there’.

(14) Coeur d’Alene:
\[ a. \quad hoy \quad \acute{c}\text{c}\text{i}\text{c}\text{-}x\text{?}\text{uy} \quad le \quad gix\text{?}\text{i}\text{s} \]
then CISL\text{.}come DET \text{ fish} 
‘When they came the fish’ (Doak & Montler 2006)

\[ b. \quad k\text{?}\text{um} \quad la \quad \text{?alqicen}\text{c} \quad lut \quad he \quad s\text{-}t\text{-}\text{c}\text{en}\text{-}m\text{s} \]
and DET snake NEG \text{ SPEC} \text{ NOM\text{-}LOC\text{-}hold\text{-}INTR} 
‘Then snake did not take hold.’ (Doak & Montler 2006)
c. \textit{kʷum la laʔxʷl laʔ a hŋ-g-gaw.us ciʔ-l ṭec-t-gʷexʷ}
and DET morrow DET OBL LOC-DIM-broken.face CISL-CONN CUST-LOC-PL.hang
‘And then morning on a stump’ (Doak & Montler 2006)

In (14b), the lexeme ‘snake’ goes back to \textit{q’ec} ‘braide, intervine, knit, weave’ with the lexical suffix \textit{-emč} ‘hollow, belly’ attached to it.

There is a marker/complementizer \textit{l}, \textit{laʔ} in Colville-Okanagan. A. Mattina (1973:114) describes it as a ‘sequential complement particle’. \textit{l} also functions as a clausal subordinator. Examples:

(15) Colville-Okanagan:

a. \textit{ul c-xʷy-selx ul alaʔ l tiłʷt ul ntkʷan-(n)t-iselx}
CONJ CISL-go-3PL.ERG CONJ DEM LOC lake CONJ place.in-DIR-3PL.ERG
\textit{iʔ l stɁám}
DET LOC canoe
‘And they brought him to a lake and placed him in a canoe.’
(Lindley & Lyon 2012:176)

b. \textit{ʔi kʷkʷiʔnaʔ laʔ c-qʷsiʔ-am iʔ sqilxʷ}
EMPH few COMP CUST-child-MDL DET people
‘They had a few children…’
(Lindley & Lyon 2012:187)

c. \textit{ʔľʔiʔ mi p ac-t-ʔx̌il-x laʔ c-ʔiʔlt laʔ ʔx̌aln̓x̌w}
DEM COMP.FUT 2PL.ABS CUST-TR-do.like-INTR COMP CUST-sick COMP time/moon
‘There’s a place over there for you all, when a person has got their time.’
(Lindley & Lyon 2012:186)

d. \textit{ul iʔiʔ kiʔ iliʔ n-xaʔʔxʔ-itkʷ ac-xʷylwis}
CONJ DEM COMP.OBL DEM n-monster-water CUST-travel
‘And that’s where the monsters travelled.’
(Lindley & Lyon 2012:233)

e. \textit{iʔiʔ iʔ s-captikʷl-c axaʔ alaʔ iʔ i̊kʷť}
DEM DET NOM-legend-3SG.POSS DEM DEM DET lake
‘That is the legend of the lake here.’
(Lindley & Lyon 2012:236)

f. \textit{lkʷilx-ʔx atlaʔ sqilxʷ-uləʔxʷ axaʔ}
leave-INTR DEM Indian-land DEM
‘Go away from here, this is Indian land here.’
(Lindley & Lyon 2012:240)

However, there are examples where we observe either the nominalizer \textit{s-} or the demonstrative \textit{luʔ}, which indicates the morphological process of formation of nominals, cf.:

(16) Kalispel-Spokane-Flathead
\textit{šeʔi luʔ i kʷillqs luʔ hin-gl-smʔem}
that ART PART red.shirt ART 1SG.POSS-to.be-woman
‘The one with the red shirt is going to be my wife.’
(Camp 2007:29)
In (16), the lexeme smʔem ‘wife’ (lit. ‘the one who feeds’) means ‘woman’ and goes back to the verbal root ʔem ‘feed’ with the nominalizers- and middle prefix m- attached to it.

(17) Kalispel-Spokane-Flathead:

\[k^e\text{em} \quad k^u\text{l}-\text{št-s} \quad t \quad ql-scʔiln-s \quad l\ddot{i}e \quad s\ddot{c}iccn-s\]

and then work-TR-3TR OBL to.be-food-3POSS this guest-3POSS

‘He prepared some food for his guest.’ (Camp 2007:93)

In (17), the nominal ‘guest’ goes back to the verbal root čic ‘arrive’ with a nominalizer s- and the article liʔe.

(18) Kalispel-Spokane-Flathead:

\[l\ddot{i}e \quad s\text{-}m^{‘e}m\text{’i?} \quad x^s\text{l’} \quad x^i\ddot{x}\text{”utšn} \quad u \quad x\text{xstey’e?}\]

ADJ NOM-story about badger and skunk

‘This story is about Badger and Skunk.’ (Egesdal 1991:100)

In (18), sm’em ‘iʔ story’ goes back to the verbal stem m’em ‘iʔ ‘talk’ with a nominalizer s-attached to it.

(19) Okanagan:

\[l\ddot{i}e \quad k^w \quad i-s-l’ax-t\]

ADJ 2SG.SBJ 1SG.POSS-NOM-friendly-DUR

‘…you my friend.’ (Egesdal 1991:106)

In (19), the lexeme s-l’ax ‘friend’ goes back to the verbal root ‘share’ with the nominalizer s-attached to it (cf. Okanagan s-l’ax-t – ‘partner’ (NOM-share-STAT)). (Mattina 1972:74)

(20) Coeur d’Alene:

a. hoy le s.park.ałaqs hn-kʷiʔc-es
then DET turtle LOC-night-COND
‘Then Turtle when it was night…’ (Doak & Montler 2006)

b. hoy kʷin-t-s le sic-m-s
then take-TR-3ERG DET cover-MDL-3SG
‘Then he took it his blanket…’ (Doak & Montler 2006)

The lexeme sparkalaqs ‘turtle’ goes back to the verbal root ‘turned inside out’ with the lexical suffix -alaqs ‘end’ and the nominalizer s- attached to it. The lexeme sic ‘blanket’ goes back to the verbal root ‘cover’.

(21) Coeur d’Alene:

a. řekʷun lut le s-tariʔ-CVC-m pintč t-kʷel-s-gʷul
she / he said NEG DET NOM-thunder-AUG-MDL always LOC-about-NOM-dust
‘She / he said is it not true that Thunder always travels about in dust.’ (Doak & Montler 2006)
b. čem ʔec-ʔem-ut le s-miyem
dark CUST-sit-STAT DET NOM-woman
‘Just staying home his wife.’ (Doak & Montler 2006)

(22) Colville-Okanagan:
laʔ k-s-k-pəl-əl=ikst
when have-NOM-grow-CONN=branch
‘…when it has boughs…’ (Mattina 1985:6)

Having analyzed the texts, we have come to the conclusion that in the Southern Interior Salish languages, there is a process of morphological formation of nominals by means of reanalyzing syntactic structures of subordinate clauses into lexical ones (with the nominalizer s-)

(23) [the subordinate clauses with the subordinate markers → prefixal morphological formation of the nominalized verbal predicates]

In fact, we observe the process of morphological formation of the former verbal predicates into nominals by means of the prefix s-, which indicates that a situation or state is to be viewed as an entity, cf.:

(24) Colville-Okanagan:

a. ḥaxaʔ yi s-tkʷʷut-ən-s-əlx
DEM DET NOM-walk-walk-INSTR-his-PL
‘Here are their tracks.’ (Mattina 1985:34)

b. k-terq-iks-əs yi s-əl-cal
RES-kick-branch-his DET NOM-stand-stand
‘He kicked the trees.’ (Mattina 1985:42)

Due to the material of the Interior Salish languages, we can trace that the nominals are in fact former subordinate clauses attached to the verbs which can be proved by the polyfunctional prefix s- functioning as a lexical nominalizer and as an aspectual marker of a neutral aspect, cf.:

(25) Coeur d’Alene:

s-ʔel-min-t-sut-s
NOM-move.body-REL-TR-REFL-3SG
‘he moved (he did not even move)(‘he died’)’ (Doak & Montler 2006)

In (25) due to the syncretic nature of s- as a nominalizer and as a marker of a neutral mode the situation is viewed as stative, one should interpret it as though ‘he did not move’, i.e. ‘died’.

3 Conclusion

We come to the conclusion that the Interior Salish languages demonstrate the areal grammatical strategies relevant for revealing the mechanisms of diachrony of nominals by transforming syntactic structures into lexical ones in the following way: [subordinate clauses with the subordinate markers → prefixal morphological formation of the nominalized verbal
predicates]. So, the Interior Salish languages provide the evidence that nominals are of verbal origin that could be characteristic of the ancient language.

References


