Causatives and transitionals in Kwadacha Tsek’ene

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University of Washington
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Tsek’ene

- a.k.a. Sekani, Sékanais, etc.
- Kwadacha (a.k.a. Fort Ware)

from Kari 2008
Distribution of Na-Dene languages.
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Mike Abou

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Outline

• 2 types of transitionals and causatives
• Periphrastic transitionals and causatives
  – in other Ath. languages
  – in Tsek’ene
• The Ath. prefix ʔa=, ʔə=
2 types of transitionals and causatives

• Morphological; i.e. formed with bound morphemes
• Syntactic (periphrastic); i.e. formed with words
• Kwadacha Tsek’ene orthography notes
  – u = [ə]/[ʌ]
  – i = [i]
  – ii = [i]
  – oo = [u]
  – wu = [ʊ]
  – è etc. (low tone transcribed)
Morphological transitional

• n-ìì- ‘become, get, turn’
  – dubùt ‘he is hungry’
  – dinììbùt ‘he is, got hungry’
  – suzul ‘it’s warm’
  – nunììdzììl ‘it got warm’

• Lexicalized transitional
  – dinììdiììl ‘it’s ripe, it ripened’
  – cf. wididììl ‘it (sky) is pink, purple’
  – P+i#n-ìì- ‘start to’ (with non-motion verbs (activities))
    • minììtsègh ‘she started to cry’
    • cf. ghiitsègh ‘she cried’
Morphological causative

• h-
  – mukàà’ nuwajè’ ‘his wound healed’
  – yuƙàà’ nuwiïhjè’ ‘she healed his wound’
  – yhèlh su’ọ ‘a trap is set’
  – yhèlh siih’ọ ‘I have a trap set’

• Lexicalized h-
  – dinììnhtl’iis ‘make it black’
  – cf. dinùstl’ùts ‘it’s black’
Periphrastic transitional and causative

- More productive than morphological
- $u#D$-jàh ‘become, happen, occur’
  - deh jàh dììlh deh
  - prog: dììlh
  - cust: u-nu#$D$-’ììh
  - incp: u#$d$-t’è’
- $u#O$-làh ‘make, do O’
  - leh làh lììlh leh
Causative/transitional verb prefix

• Leer 2006: ‘thus, so (default adverb of manner)’
  – ʔa:= in Eastern, Tsuut’ina, Southern, Pacific
  – ʔə= in British Columbian
  – də-ʔa: >
    • t’a:= ‘just so’ in Eastern, Southern
    • t’ə= default manner adverb in Alaskan (Kut, Den)
Other languages

• Periphrastic transitional
  – Slave ‘inchoatives’ (Rice 1989:1301-2)
    • Nhâts’î nâtse  ‘adadée. (Bl)
      wind 3.is.strong 3.is.becoming
      ‘The wind is getting strong.’
  – Dene Súłhiné (Cook 2004:358). The sentence is also ‘well-formed without’ ’ajá, ‘an auxiliary verb’.
    • T’axà hots’į k’oth bóret’į ’ajá.
      suddenly then-from cloud it-be-seen it-happen
      ‘Suddenly then clouds became visible.’
  – Witsuwit’en
    • Honzu  ‘igegh.
      area.is.good it.happened
      ‘(Something) good happened.’
  – Deg Xinag
    • Ngichox ts’i didiyoq.
      3s.is.big COMP it.happened
      ‘She got big.’
Periphrastic causative

• Slave (Rice 1989:1302-6)
  – Tse tadehkwí ’asíhwhę.
    wood I.chop he.makes.me
    ‘He makes me chop wood.’ (BI)/ ‘He lets me chop wood.’

• Dene Sųłhiné (Cook 2004:354)
  – Ghejën ’ásłá.
    he.sang I.made.him.so
    ‘I made him sing.’
Properties of periphrastic transitionals and causatives in Tsek’ene

- Semantic
- Phonological
- (Syntactic)
Semantic properties

• Transitional: change of state
  – dinììbut ‘he’s getting, got hungry’
    • MA: “getting hungry”
  – dubùdajàh ‘he got hungry’

  dubùt          ujàh
  he’s hungry he became

  • MA: “he's hungry…it's not any different”
Transitional

• Active verb complements possible
  – Shòwak'èdahànujàh.
    shòwa-k’èdah unujàh
    well-3s.is.walking.around became
    ‘He’s walking around good again.’ (MA: “You see Alfred got broken leg. He broke his leg fall time. And now he start walking around pretty good.”)
  – Kòòla ’uyii ts’òòdane soonè' 'utsudzàjàh.
    ’utsuts ujàh
    finally that child bread 3s.is.eating.sth became
    ‘Finally that child has started to eat bread.’ (MA: “little ones start eatin’ bannock”)
• Gwa nukhu’èh nawnììdzulhawìjàh. ’Uwute’e. nawnììdzulh uwìjàh there with.you.pl. it’s.getting.warm it.became it’s.nice ‘Now the weather's getting warm for you (pl.). It’s nice (outside).’
Causative

- Causative = cause change of state?
- Ditsììghà’ dut’elàlàh.
  dut’el ulàh
  her.hair red she.made
  ‘She dyed her hair red.’
- Lìdii lhidììhaslàh.
  lhidììh uslàh
  tea it’s.tasty I.made.it
  ‘I made the tea taste good.’
- No transitive complements found to date (unlike Slave).
  – *Barbara ’utsùn ’eht’èsaslàh.
    ’eht’ès uslàh
    meat she’s frying s.th. I made her
    ‘I made Barbara fry some meat.’
Phonological changes

• Syllabification

• Vowel quality
  – C]_complement matrix[u → .C][a
  – CV][u
    • Cu/o][u → .Cw][a
    • Cii/e][u → .C][a, Cii/e][.a, .Cj][a
    • Ca][u → .C][a

• Tone
Vowel quality

- Leer 2006: ‘thus, so (default adverb of manner)’
  - ??a:= in Eastern, Tsuut’ina, Southern, Pacific
  - ??e= in British Columbian

- Tsek’ene

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<td>1s</td>
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<td>‘un- ~ ‘an-</td>
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<td>2p</td>
<td>‘ah-</td>
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<td>3p</td>
<td>‘ughu-</td>
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F2 x F1 vowel plot (MA): ts__d
## Vowel quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>‘make, build O’, ’ulà’ ‘boat’, -q yes/no Q</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1s</td>
<td>’ulà’ ’usleh ‘I’m building a boat’ 🎧</td>
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<tr>
<td>2s</td>
<td>’ulà’ ’unlehq ‘are you building a boat?’ 🎧</td>
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<tr>
<td>3s</td>
<td>’ulà’ ’uleh ‘he’s building a boat’ 🎧</td>
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<tr>
<td>1p</td>
<td>’ulà’ ’uts’uleh ‘we’re building a boat’ 🎧</td>
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<tr>
<td>2p</td>
<td>’ulà’ ’ahlehq ‘are you (pl.) building a boat?’ 🎧</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3p</td>
<td>’ulà’ ’ughuleh ‘they’re building a boat’ 🎧</td>
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# Vowel quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>‘happen, become’; kòòla ‘finished’, kọ, -ọ yes/no Q</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1s</td>
<td>kòòla ’usjàh ‘I’m finished’ 🎧</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2s</td>
<td>kọ ’anjàhọ, kọ ’unjàhọ ‘are you ready?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3s</td>
<td>kòòla ’ujàh ‘she’s finished’ 🎧</td>
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Syllabification and vowel quality

• C-final complement verb
  – dubùt ‘he’s hungry’
  – ’ujàh ‘he became’
  – dubùdajàh ‘he got hungry’
  – dinùstl’ùts ‘it’s black’
  – ’anleh ~ ’unleh ‘make it’
  – dinùstl’ùdzanleh ‘make it black’
Syllabification and vowel quality

• V-final complement verb
  – wìsdlii ‘it’s cold’
  – wìsdlii.awìjàh ‘it’s gotten cold’
  • “over 2 months now wùsdliiawijàh”
  – nidòòwè (‘it is absent’) (negative existential)
  – siidìi’ nidòò.wasjàh ‘my mind went blank (temporarily or permanently)’
Why resyllabify?

• Leer 2006: ‘thus, so (default adverb of manner)’
  – ?a:= in Eastern, Tsuut’ina, Southern, Pacific
  – ?ə= in British Columbian
  *add?
  – ə/a:= in Transitional (at least in Tsek’ene)
  • ‘Transitional Athabaskan (a provisional grouping)
    (as a rule not included here: Tsetsaut, Tutchone, Tagish-Tahltan, Kaska, Sekani, (most?) Beaver)’
Word-initial glottal stop in Tsek’ene

- **Surface contrasts**
  - ’òdze ‘over here’
  - q ‘yes’
  - woowqh ‘because of them’
  - ’Udoo k’udà’ bùdii _wahkèdq? ‘Haven’t you (pl.)
    bought groceries yet?’
  - ’udoo wahts’ììt ‘don’t lie (you pl.)’
Word-initial glottal stop in Tsek’ene

- Epenthetic
  - ’utsugh ‘he’s crying’
Tonal changes

• No tonal change
  – HL] [
    • nitsìì’ ‘he’s bad’
    • nitsìì’ajàh ‘he became bad’
  – LL] [
    • dinùstl’ùts ‘it’s black’
    • dinùstl’ùdzajàh ‘it became black’
Tonal changes

- Inserted L
  - HH] [
    - wuyq ‘she’s smart’
    - wuywàjàh ‘she got smart’

(MA: “baby when they started to grow bigger they gettin smart eh”)

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Graph showing pitch and time variations.
Tonal changes

- Inserted L
  - LH] [LH]
    - moonèlè ‘she’s pretty’
    - moonèelàjàh ‘she became pretty’
    - nùstloç ‘there’s a lot’
    - soonè’ nustlwàḻàh ‘she made a lot of bannock (fry-bread)’
• He, nòòwa joo more nustlwàjàh. nùstlọ ujàh
wolverine too many became
‘Wolverine increased in number.’
Why insert L?

• Other complements in Tsek’ene
  – L] [w~k- areal object of postposition

• ‘learn’
  – Ts’òòdane ’utsùn dut’èsìì koodi’ììh. ‘The child is learning how to cook meat for herself.’
  – Ts’òòdane ’utsùn dut’èsii oodi’ììh.

• ‘know’
  – Ka’îîlhahii keedìih. ‘He knows how to work.’
  – ’Udoo ka’îîlhahii eedìih. ‘He doesn’t know how to work.’
COMP in Slave

• ‘The complementizer, if present, is gú.’ (p. 1302)
• Causative
  – w’a k’ará’erehsi gú ’asílá.
    dish 1sg.wash COMP 3.caused.1sg
    ‘We had her wash dishes.’
• Inchoative
  – sefigha dek’ale gú ’agodadee. (Hr)
    1sg.hair 3.is.white COMP area.is.becoming
    ‘My hair is turning white.’
Summary and questions

• Verb complements of causative and transitional verbs fuse phonologically with matrix verb
  – why: prefix is vowel initial

• Inserted L in some causatives and transitionals
  – why: L as COMP
    • elsewhere in Tsek’ene L marks complements to areal object of P prefix
  – cf. Slave COMP gú

• Vowel quality change
  – make matrix V prominent?
ə= ‘thus, so (default adverb of manner)’

- Attested (historical) derivatives of u#D-ja`h ‘become, happen’ in Tsek’ene
  - u#d+n+D+ja`h ‘be stuck’
  - du`#D-ja`h ‘what happened to?’
  - ka#D-ja`h ‘do, happen’
  - P+ka#D-jja`h ‘look for P, go for P’
  - ko`o`la#D-ja`h ‘finish’
  - P+gha tiiya#w-D-ja`h ‘P is tired’
  - P+e`#D-ja`h ‘imitate, do like P’
  - de`#D-ja`h ‘sound’ (sound occurred)
  - dza#D-ja`h ‘do poorly, be in poor shape’
  - -k'e`h dza#D-ja`h ‘copy, imitate’
  - so`o`na#D-ja`h ‘fail’
  - -ta#D-ja`h ‘join, become member of group, go among’
  - ts'ula#D-ja`h ‘get hurt’
  - k'ula#D-ja`h, k'ula la#D-ja`h ‘almost die’
  - 'uma#D-ja`h ‘be gone’
  - P+k'o`~wa#D-a`h ‘help P’
ə= ‘thus, so’ beyond X?

• Witsuwit’en ’i#D-gegh ‘happen, occur’
  – ’i#d+D+gegh ‘make noise’
  – -c’a ’i#w+D+gegh ‘fail at hunting/trapping’
  – -cats ’i#w+D+gegh ‘defecate’
  – lha’#d+D+gegh ‘be finished’
  – ’et di#D+gegh ‘happen thus’

• Deg Xinag di#D+yoq ‘happen, die’
  – P+q'a di#D+yoq ‘P falls in love’
  – di+ni#D+yoq ‘become (state)’