On the Status of Applicatives in Tsimshianic*

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Abstract: This paper examines data which shows how the grammatical causative *kwin- in the Tsimshianic languages may be used as a directional applicative. Additional morphology is often associated with *kwin-: there is suggestive evidence that the verbal suffix ‘T’ in Gitksan and Nisgha is the historical remnant of an applicative suffix. This analysis also collapses the two separate lexical entries for gwin- in Sm’algyax as a locative and causative word/proclitic/prefix, to just one.

Keywords: Causative, Applicative, Non-core arguments, Tsimshianic, Salish

1 Introduction

The Tsimshianic languages have an array of valency changing morphology, including three grammatical causatives. The focus of this paper is the causative *kwin-, which is a prefix that attaches to the leftmost edge of unergative and transitive verb stems. This is a productive strategy for deriving direct causatives, such as (1a) in Gitksan, and (as far as I know the only strategy) for deriving indirect causatives in Tsimshianic, as in (1b) (example adapted from Belvin 1997:39):

(1) Gitksan, Interior Tsimshianic (IT)
   a. gwin-ts’in-i-(t)=s  Gwen=hl  hanaak
      CAUS-enter-TR-3=PND  Gwen=CND  woman
      ‘Gwen admitted the woman.’ (Lit. ‘Gwen had the woman come in.’)
   b. gwin-wootxw-i-(t)=s  Bill=t  John ’a=s  Tyler
      CAUS-invite-TR-3=PND  Bill=PND  John  OBL=PND  Tyler
      ‘Bill had Tyler invite John.’

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1Rigsby and Tarpent describe the grammatical causatives, si- and -(t)in, in Gitksan (1986: 341-342, 348-361) and Nisgha (1987: 553-554, 572-574, 679-680), respectively. Dunn (1979) identifies the causative suffix -n in Sm’algyax (p.34), and describes gwin- as a ‘locative proclitic’ (p.45) and gwín separately as a ‘case proclitic’ meaning ‘order, cause’ (p.23, 51). The SLLTD (2013) and other work adapt Dunn’s descriptions.

2For example, *kwin- cannot attach to (prototypical) unaccusative roots, such as witxw:

(i) *gwin-witxw=s  Alvin=t  Gwen
   CAUS-enter=PND  Alvin=PND  Gwen
   Intended: ‘Alvin had Gwen arrive/enter.’ or ‘Alvin admitted Gwen.’
However, in all of the Tsimshianic languages, *kwin- has another function. (2) and (3) are unergative verb stems; however, rather than introducing a causer argument into a clause, a location is introduced along with the insertion of *kwin-:

(2) Gitksan
gwin-t’a=hl gyet lax-ts’eehl aks
CAUS-sit=CND man GEO.LOC-edge water
‘The man sat down at the water’s edge.’

(3) Sm’algyax, Coast Tsimshianic (CT)
gwin-t’-a-a lgw’ileeks da n-dzoog-a aks
CAUS-sit.down=CND old.man LOC POSS-edge=CND water
‘The (old) man sat down at the water’s edge.’

In this paper I examine this use of *kwin- in Tsimshianic, and claim that it involves another kind of valency increasing operation called a directional applicative (Gerdts 2004). In developing this claim I look at the parallels between *kwin- constructions with obliquely marked causees (as in 1b), and other constructions that contain non-core arguments (oblique phrases). I also evaluate data that suggests there may be remnants of a more general applicativization pattern in Gitksan involving what is known as the ‘T’ morpheme in the IT literature. Finally, I show how the directional applicative for Gitksan can be used to collapse the two separate lexical entries for gwin- in Sm’algyax as a locative and causative word/proclitic/prefix, thus deriving the Tsimshianic indirect causative *kwin-.

2 Indirect Causatives, Applicatives, and the Oblique

Unlike English, *kwin- indirect causatives, such as (4a), are monoclausal: in essence, *kwin- increases the valency of a verb root by adding a causer argument; the causee argument is demoted to an oblique position, marked by the general Tsimshianic oblique marker *a, and the patient of the caused event or activity is the direct object. As such, *kwin- indirect causatives are syntactically identical to monoclausal ditransitives (4b) or constructions with involving an instrument, such as (4c):3

(4) a. gwin-hlo’oxs-i-(t)=s John=hl hlit (’a=s Tony)
CAUS-kick-TR-3=DET John=CND hlit OBL=PND Tony
‘John had Tony kick the ball.’

b. hlo’oxs-i-(t)=s John=hl hlit (’a=s Tony)
kick-TR-3=DET John=CND hlit OBL=PND Tony
‘John kicked the ball (to Tony).’

3This is not unusual: *kwin- indirect causatives confirm a typological generalization that if a language has monoclausal indirect causatives, the causee argument is often demoted to an oblique position (which is often interpreted as an instrument) while the patient of the caused event or activity is the direct object; see Peterson (2012) for a cross-linguistic survey.
The examples above also show how (in certain contexts) obliquely marked nominals are optional in causative, ditransitive, and instrument constructions. Like causatives, grammatical applicatives also increase the valency of a clause by introducing an instrument, comitative, or benefactive argument (cf. Shibatani and Pardeshi 2002; a.o.). As with indirect causative constructions, grammatical applicative constructions are often monoclausal, as in Kinyarwanda in (5):

(5) Kinyarwanda (Kimenyi 1988)
\[ \text{umugóre a-ra-andik-iish-a íbarúwa íkarámu} \]
\[ \text{woman she-PRES-write-INST-ASP letter pen} \]
\[ \text{‘The woman is writing a letter with a pen.’} \]

There is a morpheme in the IT verb stem that is a plausible candidate for a grammatical applicative: in a few cases the insertion of causative \textit{kwin-} is accompanied by the addition of the suffix -t/-d -- occasionally glossed as ‘T’ in the IT literature -- to a verb root, as in (6) (both examples adapted from Rigsby:349):

(6) Gitksan
a. \textit{gwin’t’amíy’hl letter ’as Barbara kwin’t’am-t-i-y’hl letter ’a=s Barbara}
\[ \text{CAUS-mark-T-TR-1sg-CND letter OBL=PND Barbara} \]
\[ \text{‘I had Barbara write a letter.’} \]

b. \textit{gwinbahl’dis Bill-hl skana loo-t gwin-pahl-t-i-(t)=s Bill=hl skana loo-t}
\[ \text{CAUS-spread.out-T-TR-3sg-PND Bill=CND cedar.mat OBL-3sg} \]
\[ \text{‘Bill made him spread out the cedar mat.’} \]

In many of these cases in Gitksan the oblique causee, interpreted as an instrument, is not optional. Compare (7a) with (7b) (adapted from Tarpent 1987:652):

(7) a. \textit{gwingojis Mary-hl ges-t (’as Lucy) kwin-kots-i-(t)=s Mary=hl ges-t (’a=s Lucy)}
\[ \text{CAUS-cut-TR-3=PND Mary=CND hair-3 OBL=PND Lucy} \]
\[ \text{‘Mary had her hair cut (by Lucy).’} \]

b. \textit{gwingotsdis Mary-hl ges (’as Lucy) kwin-kots-t-i-(t)=s Mary=hl ges-t (’a=s Lucy)}
\[ \text{CAUS-cut-TR-3-PND M.=CND hair-3 OBL=PND Lucy} \]
\[ \text{‘Mary had her hair cut by Lucy.’ ‘Mary had Lucy cut her hair.’} \]

\[^4\text{Tarpent (1987: 553) also reports this for Nisgha but gives no clear examples involving causative \textit{kwin-}.}\]
Rigsby (1986) often glosses the verbal suffix -t/-d as a fortified allophone -ti of the transitivizer -i- (occasionally glossed as ‘INCR’). However, the alternation in (7) fits the profile for a grammatical applicative, which appears to be concomitant with indirect causativization, and with ‘T’ indexing the instrument argument.

Tarpent (1987: 633–669) provides an extensive analysis of the ‘T’ morpheme in Nisga, called the ‘definite medial suffix’, and claims that the surface distribution and meanings of ‘T’ are conditioned by a number of fairly productive – and complicated – phonological and morphosyntactic processes. ‘T’ often occurs in ditransitives and clauses with benefactives, goals, instruments, locations etc., which suggest that ‘T’ can index non-core (oblique) arguments in general. I tested 18 verb roots in Gitksan, selected as they can be used with optional benefactives, and because many of them contain intervocalic obstruent sequences on the right edge of the verb stem that did not under go the predicted Tsimshianic-specific obstruent voicing (Brown 2010; Rigsby 1986), indicating the underlying presence of ‘T’. A sample is given in (8) – (10):

(8) a. siwa\textsubscript{tdihl} \quad gyethl \quad 'os ('ahl Sammy)
   si-wa-t-ti-(t)=hl \quad gyet=hl \quad 'os ('a=hl Sammy)
   CAUS-name-T-TR-3=CND man=CND dog OBL=CND Sammy
   ‘The man named his dog Sammy.’ (see also Rigsby 1986: 324 and 358)
   b. *siwa\textsubscript{dihl} \quad gyethl \quad 'os ('ahl Sammy)
   si-wa-ti-(t)=hl \quad gyet=hl \quad 'os ('a=hl Sammy)

(9) a. wot\textsubscript{diyhl} \quad kartxw'y \quad ('as Bruce)
   wot-t-i-\textsubscript{y}=hl \quad kartxw-\textsubscript{y} \quad ('a=s Bruce)
   sell-T-TR-1sg=CND car-1sg OBL=PND Bruce
   ‘I sold my car (to Bruce).’
   b. *wot\textsubscript{diyhl} \quad kartxw'y \quad ('as Bruce)
   wot-i-\textsubscript{y}=hl \quad kartxw-\textsubscript{y} \quad ('a=s Bruce)

(10) a. lumak\textsubscript{dis} \quad Walter=hl daala \quad ('as Bruce)
    lumak\textsubscript{-i-}(t)=s \quad Walter=hl daala \quad ('a=s Bruce)
    donate-T-TR-3=PND W.=CND money OBL=PND Bruce
    ‘Walter donated/contributed/put in money to/for Bruce.’
    b. *lumag\textsubscript{is} \quad Walter=hl daala \quad ('as Bruce)
    lumak\textsubscript{-i-}(t)=s \quad Walter=hl daala \quad ('a=s Bruce)

If this morphological analysis of these surface forms is correct, then these tests suggest that in Gitksan ‘T’ is either unproductive, or has become fused to the verb root (or it really is an allophone of TR). In fact, only 6 out of the 18 verb roots tested have an isolable ‘T’, and there was only one case where ‘T’ could be
isolated and removed (from a non-causative construction), allowing the non-core ‘a-marked argument to be dropped (example adapted from Rigsby 1986: 324):

(11) a. mahlis Mark ‘ahl gimxtit dim wil saa
mahl-t-i-(t)=s Mark ‘a=hl gimxt-t tim wil saa
tell-t-TR-3-PND Mark OBL=CND sister-3 FUT COMP away
daà’whlt go’ohl laxmò’on
taa’whl-t kò’=hl laxmu’n
leave-3 LOC=CND coast
‘Mark told his sister that he would leave to go to the coast.’

b. mahlis Mark dim wil saa daà’whl t...
mahl-i-(t)=s Mark tim wil saa taa’whl-t...
tell-TR-3-PND Mark FUT COMP away leave-3...
‘Mark said he would leave to go to the coast.’

However, this is not the end of the applicative story. Zavala (2002) documents cases in Olutec where the applicative morphemes kùj (12a) and mü:- (12b,c) have causative and locative readings when attached to unergative and motion verbs:

(12) Olutec (Zavala 2002: 247)

a. ∅=kùj?-etz-ì-pa ja? je? majaw
3.ABS=APPL-dance-INV-INC:1 3.ANIM that woman
‘He is making that woman dance.’

b. je?=mù: tax=mù:-mi:n?-a?n-ek
there 1.LOCAL=APPL-come-IRR-INV.LOCAL
‘You are going to bring me there.’

c. je?=mùː=ak tax=mùː-ñax-e ?ala:ñwre-pa?t-pi
there=ANIM 1.LOCAL=APPL-cross-1NC:DI wire-under-LOC
‘I passed (my child) there, under the wire.’

Gerdts (2004) describes a pattern in Halkomelem Salish similar to (12b,c), where a specialized subtype of applicative -nas in (13b) introduces a goal, direction, or location, which Gerdts calls a directional applicative:

(13) Halkomelem (Salish; Gerdts 2004: 3)

a. ni?= nerî kʰoʔa swiwlás
AUX go DET boy
‘The boy went.’

b. ni?= naʔem-ñas-əs kʰoʔa John
AUX go-DIR:TR-3.ERG DET boy
‘He went up to John.’
3 The Directional Applicative in Tsimshianic

I suggest the Tsimshianic languages triangulate the Olutec and Halkomelem facts: *kwin-* can introduce either a core (i.e. causer) argument or a non-core (i.e. instrument) argument into a clause. These are the causative and directional applicative meanings of *kwin-*, respectively. In the latter use, locatives phrases are introduced, frequently indicated by the locatives lax- and ko’o- in IT, and da in CT.

As in IT, *kwin-* in Sm’algyax in a causative prefix, which can be used to derive indirect causatives, as in (14b), the stem of which is a direct causative derived from the intransitive root yełk ‘smooth’ in (14a) and the causative prefix si- (see Belvin 1997 and Peterson 2012 for details on multiple causatives in Tsimshianic):

(14) a. ‘lii-yelg-a ha-’li-txooxk
    on-smooth-CND INST-on-eat
    ‘The table is smooth.’ (Dunn 1979: 2232; SLLTD 8.3.2.1.)

b. gwin-si-yelk na-ga-t’s’ooxs dp awaa-n
    CAUS-CAUS-smooth POSS-PL-shoe DET.PL DEM-2sg
    ‘Tell those people to shine their shoes.’ (SLLTD 5.6.)

However, there are examples that have glosses and translations of verbs involving motions and goals, that can be morphologically analyzed as complex verb stems with *kwin-*: examples include gwindyaa ‘close by’, gwin-se’ik ‘pull towards’ (non-human), gwinspiil ‘pull towards’ (human), and the following:

(15) a. gwinyaa
    gwin-yaa
    towards-walk
    ‘walk to.’ (SLLTD 7.2.1.1.)

b. gwin-yaa han’a k’aatg-a lguwoomlg-a
    towards-walk woman 3A pity-CND child-CND
    ‘The woman came by to pity the crying child.’ (SLLTD 7.2.1.1.)

Dunn (1979) (and most later research based on Dunn) claims there are two separate morphemes in Sm’algyax: gwin-’1 close/towards’ (14), and gwin-’2 make causative’ (15). I claim that these are the same morpheme, as (14)–(17) fit the profile for the directional applicative use of Tsimshianic *kwin-*: recall that in Gitksan the applicative attaches to unergative stems and introduces a location; the same holds in Sm’algyax, as with yaa ‘walk’ in (15), it is plausible that sgüü ‘lie down’ in (16) and t’aa ‘sit down’ in (17) are unergative roots in Sm’algyax:

5A similar morphological analysis is often done in the Sm’algyax Living Legacy Talking Dictionary (SLLTD) (2013), where gwin is sometimes written as prefix, proclitic and a separate word. Based on IT, I analyze Sm’algyax gwin- as a prefix.
a. la tsin-t dzon ada gwis-halaayt-a hoy-t wil
INCEPT enter-3 John and blanket-shaman-CND use-3 COMP

tgu-miilk-d-a wil sgiüü=s wilyam
around-dance(?)-3sg-CND COMP lie.down=PND William
‘John came in wearing a shaman’s blanket and danced around William
who was lying down.’ (SLLTD 7.1.3.)

b. ‘ap sm-gwin-sgiüü-a [na-kwduun n-lak]loc
really very-CAUS-lie.down-CND where-around place-fire
‘He laid really close to the fireplace.’ (SLLTD 5.5)

(17) a. t’aa-n [a wil guusg-a gyemk]loc
sit.down-2sg PREP COMP shine-CND sun
‘Sit where the sun is shining.’ (SLLTD 8.5.3)

b. gwin-t’aa-a lgu’wileeks [da ndzoog-a aks]loc
CAUS-sit.down-CND old.man LOC edge-CND
‘The man sat down at the water’s edge.’

The directional applicative use of *kwin- can be fairly productively obtained
in Gitksan (although I could not find any clear examples in the Nisgha literature).
However, there appears to be a restriction such that if the directional applicative is
used, a location must be included, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (18b).

(18) Gitksan
a. t’a=hl gyet (lax-ts’eihl aks)loc
sit=CND man GEO.LOC-edge water
‘The man sat down (at the water’s edge).’

b. gwin-t’a=hl gyet *(lax-ts’eihl aks)loc
CAUS-sit=CND man GEO.LOC-edge water
‘The man sat down close to the water’s edge.’

Additionally, it appears that the inclusion of a goal with some unergative
verbs actually requires *kwin-, as evidenced by the ungrammaticality of (19c):

(19) a. yee nit
go 3sg
‘He went.’

b. gwin-yee nit [go’o=s John]loc
CAUS-go 3sg LOC=PND John
‘He went up to John.’

c. *yee nit [go’o=ss John]loc
4 Conclusion

Given the rich valency changing morphology in Tsimshianic, a sensible move is to investigate the status of applicativization. This preliminary study shows that the Tsimshianic languages do not have typical applicatives, at least not productively or synchronically. However, there is suggestive evidence that may shed some light on the elusive ‘T’ morpheme in IT: it may be the remnant of the indexation of non-core arguments, which may include an oblique phrase concomitant with (but not exclusive to) the directional applicative use of kwin-. The indirect causative *kwin- can be used as a specialized type of applicative, the directional applicative, when attached to unergative roots. Applying a comparative analysis based on kwin- in IT, I presented data showing that there is only one gwin- in CT, which is identical to its IT counterpart. One question emerges from this analysis: does causative *kwin- really have two ‘uses’ as I claim? Perhaps the SLLTD is correct: kwin- is actually two separate morphemes. More work is needed to support either analysis.

References


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