The Thompson Language. Laurence C. Thompson and M. Terry Thompson. University of Montana Occasional Papers in Linguistics, no. 8. Missoula: Linguistics Laboratory, University of Montana, 1992. Pp. xxvii + 253. $20.00 (paper).

Reviewed by Paul D. Kroeber, *University of Wyoming*

Fine descriptive coverage is now available for Thompson, the third language of the Northern Interior subbranch of the Salish family, joining the work of Aert H. Kuipers (*The Shuswap Language*, The Hague: Mouton, 1974, and *A Report on Shuswap*, Paris: Peeters, 1989) and Jan van Eijk (*The Lillooet Language*, Ph.D. diss., University of Amsterdam, 1985). *The Thompson Language* (henceforth *TL*) presents phonology, morphology, and some basic syntax of this language spoken in southwestern interior British Columbia. Laurence and Terry Thompson have also prepared a dictionary of

Thompson, forthcoming in the same series as *TL*, that should be a further important resource on the language.

The clear, detailed discussion of phonetics and phonological rules (pp. 3–46) is welcome. The phonemes and phonological processes of Thompson are quite typical of an Interior Salish language. Besides the glottalized stops (and resonants), voiceless laterals, and uvular and rounded stops and fricatives expected in the Northwest, the segmental inventory also includes pharyngeal resonants and—a rarity—a curious *z*-like sound, characterized by *TL* (p. 8) as a postdental slit spirant. The basic vowel system is small—*i, e, u*, and schwa—but is augmented by infrequent retracted versions of the basic vowels (p. 11); the primary and retracted vowels are not implicated in systematic vowelharmonylike processes as in Shuswap and some other Interior Salish languages. Thompson has complex patterns of stress placement and frequently reduces unstressed vowels to schwa or deletes them. *TL* accounts for stress placement by classifying roots into "weak" (stress-repelling) and "strong" (stressable), and suffixes into unstressable, "weak" (stressed only if no other suffix is available), "ambivalent" (stressable), and "strong" (stress-attracting) (pp. 27–29). Later remarks (p. 49), unfortunately well after the discussion of stress, imply that the stress class to which a root morpheme belongs is normally predictable from the segmental makeup of the root: roots whose only vowel is schwa mostly seem to be "weak," while those with other vowels are typically "strong" or "ambivalent"; on the basis of the data presented, it seems likely that "weak" suffixes likewise typically have schwa as their vowel, while "ambivalent" and "strong" suffixes have nonschwa vowels. Remarks on derivational layering of stress and vowel reduction (pp. 28–29) suggest a tempting area of investigation for metrical and lexical phonologists; such investigations will have to take account of constructions in which the general stress rules do not seem to apply (discussed on pp. 132–34). Also of interest for the interaction of morphology and phonology (as elsewhere in Salish), though not treated in the phonology section, are the various patterns of reduplication of which Thompson makes heavy use: prefixed CVC- for plural/iterative (pp. 81–85); suffixed –VC for "out of control" (pp. 99–101); -C(V)-, infixed after a stressed vowel, for diminutive (pp. 89–92); and some less productive forms.

Consonant clusters resulting from unstressed vowel deletion undergo further phonological processes, especially in the complex of a transitive marker, object pronominal, and subject pronominal that terminates transitive verbs (pp. 35–36). The authors are careful to note later that analogical changes in transitive verb paradigms have overridden some of these phonological alternations: an alternant of the first person singular subject suffix -*ne*, originally derived from a sequence of transitive marker -*n-t-* plus the unstressed form -*n* of the older first person singular subject suffix, has spread to other verb paradigms in which it is not phonologically explicable (p. 65); and a transitive marker -*min-t-* has apparently been split into two paradigms (pp. 73–76); note also remarks on the desiderative suffix -*memn* (p. 108). Though such developments call into question the present-day psychological reality of the phonological rules by which *TL* accounts for alternations in the transitive suffix complex, there is still great diachronic and heuristic value to setting out the rules explicitly.

The rich morphology of Thompson appropriately occupies the bulk of *TL* (pp. 47–137). The description detailed, and copiously exemplified, includes a good many intriguing remarks on the semantics of forms, though—inevitably at this stage of the investigation—those remarks are often best taken as suggestive rather than definitive. I will only touch on some of the highlights of the morphology here.

As is typical of Interior Salish languages, intransitive predicates mark subject pronominal categories by a paradigm of clitics; pronominal possessors are affixal; and pronominal categories of subject and object of transitive predicates are represented by suffixes. Object suffixes are preceded by a transitive marker -*t-*, itself usually preceded

by one or another of a class of suffixes that yield various subtypes of transitive predicate; the pre-transitive suffixes, the transitive marker, and the object and subject pronominal suffixes all interact phonologically and indeed merge to some extent (pp. 59–76; cf. p. 107). Various intransitive suffixes also exist, notably the "middle" (mostly active-intransitive) suffixes (pp. 102–7). All those complexities are lucidly detailed.

As elsewhere in Salish, many of the transitive and intransitive formations explicitly code values of the "control" category to which Laurence Thompson has drawn attention in other publications (e.g., "Control in Salish Grammar," in *Relational Typology*, edited by Franz Plank, 391–428, Berlin: Mouton, 1985). That category is a parameter wherein [+ control] specifies that the event is proceeding under the control of the subject (or oblique-marked agent, in passive clauses), while [- control] specifies that in one way or another the subject/agent is not in full control (e.g., the event happens without the agent's volition, or is carried out only with difficulty). Words may also be neither [+ control] nor [- control]. Besides differing in their control value, morphemes also differ in the degree to which they are able to impose their control value on the word in which they occur, in ways apparently not dictated by hierarchical morphological structure of the word; that is, the outermost affix is not necessarily the one that determines the control value of the whole word (pp. 51–56).

Though *TL* does not put it this way, [- control] might be construed as implying that the subject is—in any of several ways—not a prototypical agent. A matter that may need clarification is whether each of the purportedly [- control] affixes in the language allows the full range of noncontrol understandings (nonvolitional, success-with-difficulty, etc.; clearly some [- control] affixes do allow the full range, but do they all?). Also, in some Coast Salish languages it has been reported that [+ control] forms, while denoting volition, need not imply that the act was successful (and so can sometimes be translated "try to . . ."); it remains to be seen whether Thompson shows anything similar. In future work I suspect it will be desirable to identify grammatical or collocational properties that correlate with [+ control] or [- control], as a check on the intuitive identification of the control value of particular forms; such tests would seem particularly important in view of the heterogeneity of the morphological and lexical devices that are said to encode control, the majority of roots and many affixes in the language being claimed to have some control value. For example, one would like it to be explicitly demonstrated that forms with the suffix *-ekst* 'hand' (putatively [+ control]) actually do behave similarly to the clearly [+ control] transitives marked by the suffix sequence *-n-t-*. Whatever the complications, the relatively overtly marked Thompson (and general Salish) control categories are typologically important, and it will be rewarding to explore their consequences for understandings of causation, agency, and prototypical transitivity that have developed in work on other languages.

Aspectual categories (pp. 92–99) are less extensively represented in the morphology of Thompson than in some other Salish languages. A stative (resultative) prefix, an inchoative, and some less frequent forms occur, but there is no morphological perfective-imperfective opposition as is frequent (though diversely expressed) in Salish languages of the coast and in Southern Interior Salish languages such as Kalispel. I suspect, however, that lexical-level aspectual or *Aktionsart* notions may intertwine with "control."

Like other Salish languages, Thompson has a large inventory of so-called "lexical suffixes"—that is, suffixes denoting body parts or other relatively concrete notions (pp. 112–14). The lexical suffixes are probably not a homogeneous set of morphemes. Kuipers and van Eijk, for example, propose that Shuswap and Lillooet lexical suffixes can be divided somewhat roughly into classes—body part suffixes versus others—that differ in their morphosyntactic behavior (e.g., Kuipers 1974:59); one would like to know whether some such classification would be appropriate for Thompson as well. (I also wish that a complete list of lexical suffixes had been provided.)

Indeed, now that morphemes and nonconcatenative morphological processes have been identified and the study of their semantics has been suggestively begun, morphological combinatorics in general awaits more systematic study in Thompson (and other Salish languages) in terms of what morpheme and stem classes accept which affixes or nonconcatenative processes, and with what semantic or syntactic effect (such effects possibly differ depending on the type of base to which an affix is added). Some of the groundwork for this sort of investigation has been laid by the Thompsons' reports on control, though other aspects of syntax and semantics will need to be considered too.

The coverage of syntax (pp. 138–86) is proportionally less full than the coverage of morphology—and is certainly a field that will reward further study. One of the most useful aspects of this section of the book is the identification of a variety of function words: a large number of particles (falling into several order classes) that cliticize to predicates (pp. 138–41); articlelike and prepositionlike proclitics that introduce argumental expressions (pp. 144–56); a set of auxiliaries coding aspectual, directional, and other notions (some also used as independent predicates) that may precede the main predicate, attracting encliticized particles if any (pp. 142–44); and various other syntactically specialized words (pp. 163–73). Basic patterns of clausal syntax are also described: predicate is typically (though not always [pp. 159–61]) initial in the clause (p. 138); subject, object, and oblique arguments follow, but have considerable freedom of order among themselves (p. 148); ditransitive predicates (such as 'give', and derived benefactives) require the patient to be coded as an oblique, while recipient or beneficiary is coded as direct object (p. 147–48).

In general, the discussion in the syntax sections is clear, the cited examples numerous, and the analyses reasonable. Structural matters are somewhat scanted, however, especially configurational aspects of structure that are not directly signaled by overt morphemes. There is no need to dwell on this limitation, to be sure, since the authors certainly had no intention of producing a complete and definitive account of syntax. In one or two places, however, it seems to me that *TL* implies (or at least allows the unwary reader to draw) disputable conclusions about Thompson syntactic structure, and those points deserve discussion.

TL, in common with numerous other works on Salish languages, denies the appropriateness of a distinction between nouns and verbs at the lexical level, on the grounds that translation equivalents both of English nouns and of English verbs can function as predicates without special marking (p. 131); certainly this is a defensible position, though not a completely uncontroversial one. At the phrasal level, *TL* likewise draws no distinction comparable to the English distinction between complement clauses and NPs (this is more or less explicitly stated on p. 173), classing translation equivalents of both as either "complements" or "adjuncts," depending on the introductory proclitic. And indeed translation equivalents of both NPs and complement clauses are introduced by similar sorts of articlelike proclitics: *e* 'Direct', *k* 'Unrealized', etc. However, my own experience with the language suggests that a distinction, admittedly subtle, between complement clause and NP can be drawn at least some of the time.

Referential expressions corresponding to English NPs must be overtly marked as oblique by the proclitic *t(ə)* or by some other preposition when they are in oblique contexts (that is, are neither subject nor object); but propositional expressions corresponding to English complement clauses are typically not so marked, when their introductory article is *k* 'Unrealized'. The contrast is neatly exemplified in the following sentence (glossing modified here):

łep–nwéłn kn k n-s-kʷné-m t k n-ṣúp 'I forgot to get my soap [when shopping]' (łép- 'forget', -nwéłn [- control] Middle, *kn* "1st person singular subject of intransitive", *k* Unrealized, *n-* "1st person singular possessive",

s– Nominalizer, $k^w né$- 'get', -m [+ control] Middle, t Oblique, k Unrealized, n- "1st person singular possessive", ṣup 'soap'). [p. 151]

Both the complement clause k n–s–$k^w né$–m t k n–ṣúp 'that I get my soap' and the argument within it t k n–ṣúp 'my soap' are introduced by the proclitic k 'Unrealized' (the complement clause moreover is inflectionally nominalized, its subject being treated as a possessor). And neither of these expressions can be construed as subject or object of their respective governing predicate, since both lep–nwéln 'forget' and $k^w né$–m 'get' are active intransitive (with their subject slots filled by a first person pronominal). But only the semantically NP-like expression t k n–ṣúp is overtly marked with the oblique proclitic; the complement clause is not overtly marked oblique by any preposition. Such examples could be multiplied. Thus some sort of distinction between complement clause and NP seems justified in Thompson, although a less glaring one than in English. If I am right about this, then one must modify the claim in TL (p. 149–50) that k 'Unrealized' normally does not cooccur with the oblique marker, since that claim was based on a failure to draw a distinction between NP and complement clause; the purportedly exceptional instances of k preceded by the oblique marker (p. 154) actually represent the normal treatment of k-introduced NPs ('some firewood', 'some berries') in oblique contexts. (The label NP might be somewhat unsuitable for Salish languages if there really is no noun-verb distinction at the lexical level, but this terminological issue is tangential to the question of whether a distinction of phrasal category exists.) Thompson in this respect is reminiscent of the Coast Salish language Squamish, in which a nominalized subordinate clause type is likewise reported as differing from NPs by failing to receive overt oblique marking (Kuipers, The Squamish Language, The Hague: Mouton, 1967, p. 184).

More generally, my own impression is that Thompson has a system of clausal subordination that is less loose-jointed than TL sometimes implies. For example, it may be "impossible to identify a particular Thompson structure that would meaningfully be designated a relative clause" (p. 176), if what is meant by "a particular structure" is a single specific set of morphological devices internal to the clause; but one should not just leave matters there. I find it not too difficult to identify relative clauses in terms of their external syntax—namely, clauses occurring within NPs and containing an understood argument whose referent is identical to that of the containing NP. And once that is done, it is readily possible to identify specific morphological subtypes of relative clause. Most notably, morphology of the relative clause predicate varies depending on what argument within the relative clause is relativized: relativization of a locative is marked by conjunctive mode enclitics, relativization of other obliques by nominalization, and relativization of subject of transitive by a combination of indefinite subject marker plus conjunctive just in case the relative clause has a third person object, while otherwise relativization of subject or object is without special mark. (Similar interactions of morphology and relativization are reported widely among Salish languages; Lillooet and especially Shuswap quite closely resemble the Thompson scheme.) Although the various morphological categories (nominalization, conjunctive, and so on) implicated in relativization appear in nonrelative clause types as well, the subvarieties of relative clause are distinguishable from nonrelative clause types by various details of their internal morphosyntax as well as by their external syntactic context. Thompson categories certainly do not match those of English one-to-one, but that hardly adds up to "vagueness of subordinations" (p. 176) in Thompson—quite the contrary, in fact. While TL makes available much useful information on some areas of syntax, there will certainly be more to say about clause linkage and some other topics, and more precise ways to say it, than TL attempts.

The numeral system (including the inventory of classifier suffixes and reduplica-

tions) and kinship terms are discussed in an appendix (pp. 187–96). A long narrative text, with morpheme-by-morpheme glosses and free translation, that is also included (pp. 199–227) is especially valuable since it is the first such text to be made available in Thompson. It would increase the considerable interest of the text if we were told more about how its printed form was arrived at; I gather from M. Terry Thompson (p.c. 1994) that it does not exactly reproduce the original recording, but rather (reasonably enough) incorporates alterations and additions made by the narrator during the process of transcribing and analyzing the story, so that what we see is probably best not assumed to represent a single performance on a particular occasion.

Typographical errors are few and mostly not significant, the most annoying one I have noticed being the displacement of most of the first line of table 4 (p. 58) to the right by one position. And the typography in general is attractive and legible. A bibliography (pp. 229–33) and a subject index (pp. 235–53) are the final convenient features rounding off this substantial and informative work.