DESIGNATION OF THINGS AND OBJECTS IN THE SALISHAN LANGUAGE COUEUR D'ALENE

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In the present article the author presents the means of designation of things and objects in the Salishan language Coueur d'Alene. The author concludes that there is no need for Coueur d'Alene to have a word class of nouns to designate things and objects, one only needs a class of predicates to perform the function of reference. Such a designation of things and objects is determined by the fact that the Coueur d'Alene language belongs to the 'language of microcommunities' that does only with the rheme of the utterance.

Keywords: Coueur d'Alene language, verb, lexical suffix, predicate, nominal root, rheme of the utterance, language of microcommunities.

Coueur d'Alene is a Southern Interior Salishan language spoken in northern Idaho. It is severely endangered and has less than 10 fluent elderly speakers.

Coueur d'Alene provides us with valuable material for the diachronic reconstruction of the parts-of-speech system. The language is typologically unusual since it contains elaborate morphological and syntactical structures as far as the variation in the identification of objects and things in the discourse is concerned.

The material for the research was 12 texts in Coueur d'Alene – 'Tales with Historical Elements' – 12 stories identified by Reichard as having historical elements, narratives recounting 'actual historical encounters which were remembered by living people or which had happened not less than a hundred years ago' [Ivydoak.com/ Coueur d'Alene/ReichardTexts.htm].

The aim of the report is to present the means of denoting the designations of things and objects in Coueur d'Alene. The instances were extracted from the above-mentioned texts in Coueur'dAlene.

Having analyzed the means of denoting things and objects in Coueur d'Alene we have singled out the following ways to express substantive meanings:

1) A number of designations for objects and things are denoted by lexical suffixes.

a. *hnq'et'pitkwe'*
hn – qet – p – itkʷeʔ
loc – climb – nonvol. = water
'he climbed out of the water'

b. *'adalk'wi'qs*

ʔec – delkʷ = y'qs
cust / cover with cloth = nose
'It was pulled over his / her nose'

2) Terms for objects and things are often formed directly from morphological verbs with or without additional nominalizing morphology

a. *sgwelp*
s – gʷel – p
nom – burn – nonvol.
'fire'

b. *'utsqhatsqhatsuts*
ʔuc – xecut + CVC – s
remain/accompany + augmentative – 3sg
'his / her companions'

c. *'etswish*
cust / dwell
'house'

d. *sits'ms*
sic – m – s
cover – mdl – 3sg
'blanket'

e. *'eesidstm*
ʔec – sidest – m
cust / overnight – mdl
'camp'

f. *etsich'n*
ʔec = icn
tie = back
'bow'

3) Terms for objects and things are often formed from morphological verbs with the additional morphology (lexical suffixes):

a. *tmikhu'lmkhws*
t – mixʷ = ulmxʷ – s
loc – hang = earth – 3 sg
'their land'

b. *qhatsnu'mis*
xec = num – n – s
clothe = body – instr. – 3 sg
'his/ her clothes'

c. *stqwilkup*

s – t – qʷil = kʷup
nz – loc – kindle = fire
'fireplace'

d. *t'apemislsh*
tap = min – s – ls
shoot = instr – 3sg – 3pl
'their brothers and arrows'

4) There are instances where substantive meanings are expressed in a descriptive way.

The notion of 'west' *sq'wenp'n* is expressed in a descriptive way, i.e. where the sun sets:
sq'wenp'n
s – qʷenp – n
nz – sunset –loc

The notion of 'trade clothing' *'nadosa'lqsi'wes* is also expressed in a descriptive way by a verbal root 'exchange' with the attached lexical suffixes 'face', 'clothes', 'between':
'nadosa'lqsi'wes
nid = us = alqs = iwes
exchange = face = clothes = between

The notion of 'mate' is translated 'a fellow you dwell with':
snukwtswishs
s – nukʷ – c – wis – s
nz – fellow – loc – dwell – 3sg

The notion of 'sense' *tsikweman* is expressed by the root 'cranium' + instrumental suffix:
tsikweman
cikʷ – min
cranium – instr.

5) There are some nominal roots with or without the additional nominalizing morphology. These are mostly the lexemes denoting animals, such as fish, snake, frog, black bear, woodpecker, horse, pine squirrel, rat, or such instances as the following:

a. *smi'yem*
s – miy'em
nz / woman
'woman'
    b. *sqiltch*
s – qiltc
nz – meat
'body'

So we can infer that designation of objects and things in Coueur d'Alene is expressed by lexical suffixes on the one hand, and by morphological verbs on the other hand. Nominal roots constitute a rather closed class. Thus in this case one can speculate upon a *flexible* part of speech (by D. Beck) [Beck] that conflates two or more major classes filling a variety of syntactic roles. One can also regard it as *recycling* (by J. Anward) [Anward, 2000, p. 33] of verbs as term expressions.

Since the function of reference in Coueur d'Alene is carried out by personal affixes or lexical suffixes occurring in the predicate or by the predicate itself, there is no need to have a word class of nouns, one only needs a class of predicates.

According to our findings such a designation of things and objects in Coueur d'Alene is determined by the fact that this language belongs to '*the archaic language type*' (by O. Ikonnikova) [Ikonnikova, p. 35-37] and to '*the language of micro communities*' (by G. Melnikov). According to G. Melnikov in the languages of micro communities the rheme is communicatively expressed while the theme is not, because its content is evident and known to the listener [Melnikov, p.34], which is confirmed by the material of the Salishan language Coueur d'Alene. That's why Coueur d'Alene does only with the rheme of the utterance.

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