Abstract

The traditional approach to analyzing verbs in Tlingit and related Na-Dene (Dene–Eyak–Tlingit) languages is to represent each paradigmatic morpheme of the verb with a position class ('slot') in a template that accounts for linear order (Leer 1975; Kari 1989, 1992; Young 2000). In this talk I describe a derivational syntactic approach to the Tlingit where all morphemes are distinct syntactic terminals and the structure is built by successive Merge operations. The resulting AspP is spelled out by a regular mapping of syntactic terminals to phonological domains, resulting in a large word sometimes accompanied a few proclitics. The root is the basis of lexical specification and all nonconcatenative morphology is actually syntactic.