





# Affixes in a polysynthetic language: Aspect and transitivity in Inuk(ti)tut

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## Roadmap

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- 2. Marked and unmarked Antipassives
- 2.1 Antipassive marker and inceptive marker
- 2.2 Aims of this talk
- 3. Distribution
- 4. Function of the Antipassive marker: viewpoint aspect in Inuit
- 5. Problem: Phonology and ordering
- 6. Some thoughts on Derivation vs. Inflection

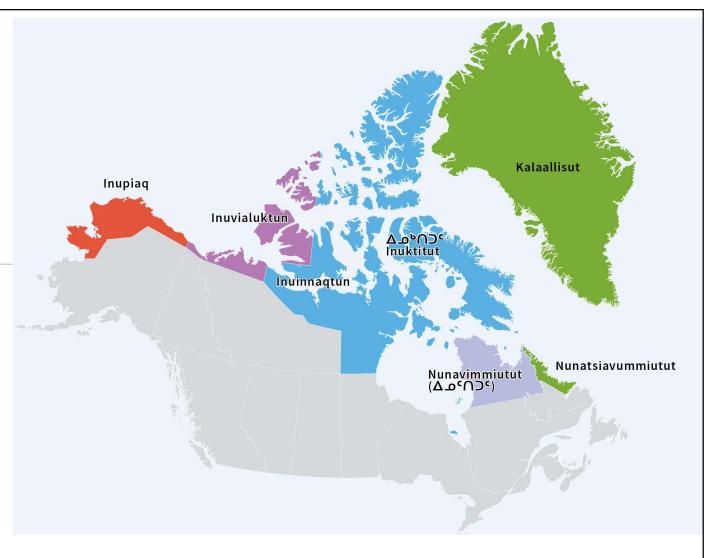
## 1. Languages

Formerly: Eskimo-Aleut Eskaleut

Now:

Inuit-Yup'ik-Unangax

Data is from fieldwork with speakers from Baffin Island and Kugaaruk. My thanks go the speakers who had the patience to bear with my questions.



https://tusaalanga.ca/index.php/about-Inuktut

## Polysynthesis

1. **ani**-ttaa-ttu-**ni isi**-tiq-pati-qqi-yaq-**tiq** go.out-fast-conc-**3s enter**-inchoative-seem-again-cont-**attrib.3s** 'After his quick exit, it sounded as if he were coming back in.'

(Tersis 2009:52)

Extensive phonological processes at the morpheme boundaries: assimilation, deletion, weakening are common

## 2. Marked and unmarked Antipassives

- 2. a. Ergative
  anguti-up arnaq kunik-taa
  man-ERG woman.ABS kiss-PART.3SG/3SG
  'The man kissed the woman'
- 3. a. Marked Antipassive

  anguti kunik-si-vuq arna-mik

  man.ABS kiss-ANTIP-IND.3SG woman-mik

  'the man is kissing a woman'
- b. Intransitive

  anguti niri-vuq

  man.ABS eat-IND.3SG

  'The man is eating.'
- b. Unmarked Antipassive

  anguti niri-vuq niqi-mik

  man.ABS eat-IND.3SG meat-mik

  'the man is eating meat'

## 2.1 Antipassive marker -si

Languages and dialects differ in the number of attested antipassive markers

Regardless, -si is significantly the most productive across the languages

Greenland -si Kalaallisut (West Greenlandic)

-hi Inuktun (Northern Greenland)

Eastern Canadian Inuktut

-si- Nunavik, Labrador, Baffin Island, Kivalliq region

Western(ish) Canadian Inuktut

-hi Utkuhiqsalingmiut, Natsilingmiut, Arviligjuaq, Inuinnaqtun

Iñupiaq (Alaska): -si

Yup'ik: -yi Central Alaskan Yup'ik

-i Siberian Yup'ik

## 2.1 Inceptive marker –*si*

Kalaallisut *'become, make become, begin to'* (Fortescue et al. 1994:405)

(Greenland) 'become, begin to' (Fortescue 1983:44)

'become, get, have got into the state' (Bergsland 1955:117)

Baffin Island 'readiness, commencement of action or motion' (Harper 1979:69)

'now' (Spalding 1993:151)

'now, begins to' (Dorais 1978:45)

Labrador 'now', 'in the process of ', 'starting to' (Beaudoin-Lietz 1982:75)

Nunavik 'begins to' (Dorais 1977:45)

'about to' (Weinroth 1981:49)

Utku 'has become X' (Briggs et al. 2015:94)

Inuinnaqtun 'become' (Kudlak & Compton 2018:222)

Iñupiaq 'start V-ing (aqsi)' (Nagai 2006:107)

### 2.2 Aims

Explanation for the distribution of marked and unmarked antipassives.

Explanation for this wide-spread homonymy.

#### Proposal:

Antipassive –*si* and inceptive –*si* are not homonyms.

They are allomorphs of the same inceptive morpheme.

inceptive -si
inceptive -si Antipassive -si

## 3. Distribution of the Antipassive marker

### Punctual verbs are interpreted as perfective by default.

- 4a. tikit-tuq arrive-PART.3sg 'He just arrived'
- 4b. \*tikit-tuq **ippaksaq** arrive-PART.3SG yesterday 'He arrived yesterday'
- 4c. tiki-lauq-tuq **ippaksaq** arrive-PAST-PART.3SG yesterday 'He arrived yesterday'

(Hayashi and Spreng 2005:5)

- 5. anguti-up nanuq quqir-taa man-ERG polar bear.ABS shoot-PART.3SG/3SG 'The man shot the polar bear.'
- 6. anguti-up uqalimaq-taa the man-ERG read-PART.3sg/3sg 'the man read it (just now)'

All types of verbs are interpreted as perfective in the ergative construction.

## 3. Distribution of the Antipassive marker

### Punctual verbs require the antipassive marker

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7a. anguti-up nanuq quqir-taa man-ERG polar bear.ABS shoot-PART.3SG/3SG 'The man shot the polar bear.'
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7b. Piita quqiq-**si**-juq (tuktu-mit)
Peter.ABS shoot-ANTIP-PART.3SG caribou-*MIK*'Peter **is shooting** a caribou/something.'

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6c. *Piita quqiq-juq (tuktu-mit)
Peter.ABS shoot-ANTIP-PART.3SG caribou-
MIK

'Peter is shooting a caribou/something.'
```

## 3. Distribution of the Antipassive marker

## Durative and stative verbs do not require the antipassive marker

- 8a. arnaq miqsuq-tuq (qarling-nit) woman.ABS sew-PART.3SG pant-*mik*.DL 'the woman is sewing (a pair of pants)/something'
- 8c. arnaq miqsu-si-tuq (qarling-nit) woman.ABS SEW-INCPT-PART.3sg pant-mik.DL 'the woman is about to sew (a pair of pants)/something'

8b. Piita taku-juq (nanur-mik)
Peter.ABS see-PART.3SG polar bear-mik
'Peter sees a polar bear/something'

- 8d. Piita taku-*si*-juq (nanur-mik)

  Peter.ABS see-INCPT-PART.3sg polar bear-*mik*'Peter **is starting** to see (a polar bear)/something'

  "he just realizes that there is a polar bear"
- $\rightarrow$  Imperfective/stative reading without -si  $\rightarrow$  Inceptive reading with an inceptive marker

## 3. Distribution of the antipassive marker

Summary: Punctual verbs require the antipassive marker.

Durative or stative verb roots do not.

This distribution pattern is attested across the language family (with some questions about Yup'ik and Unangam).

**Proposal:** The reason for this distribution is semantic.

Antipassives are imperfective.

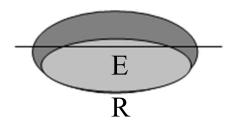
→ Verbs that are by default interpreted as perfective require a morpheme that enables imperfective readings.

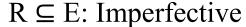
## 4. Function of the Antipassive marker: viewpoint aspect **Punctual:**

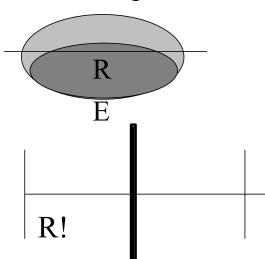
- a. A verb is punctual iff  $E \subseteq R$
- b. A verb is durative iff  $R \subseteq E$

#### **Viewpoint aspect:**

 $E \subseteq R$ : Perfective







E!

- → If E is punctual, R cannot be a subset of E.
- → Imperfective viewpoint R needs to stretch or refocus.

## 4.1 The function of the Antipassive inceptive marker

11a. makpiq-tuq

open-PART.3SG

'It's opened.'

11b. Piita

makpi<mark>q-</mark>\$i-juq

Piita.ABS

open-ANTIP-PART.3SG

'Peter is opening something.'

11c. makp(-s)-juq

open-INCPT-PART.3SG

'It is opening.'/It's about to open.'

11d. Piita-up makpiq-taa

Piita.ERG open-PART.3SG.3SG

'Peter opened it.'

11e. Piita makpi-si-jaa

Piita.ABS open-INCPT-PART.3SG.3SG

'Peter is about to open it.'

REGULAR INTRANSITIVE: PERFECTIVE

ANTIPASSIVE, IMPERFECTIVE, -SI

REGULAR INTRANSITIVE, IMPERFECTIVE -SI

ERGATIVE TRANSITIVE, PERFECTIVE

ERGATIVE TRANSITIVE, PERFECTIVE, INCEPTIVE -SI

## 4.2 Summary

The distribution of the antipassive marker supports the idea that the inceptive marker and the antipassive marker are the same inceptive morpheme.

The analysis accounts for the semantics of the antipassive construction and the distribution of the antipassive marker.

It also accounts for the accidental homonymy between antipassive -si and inceptive -si across a large part of the language family

 $\rightarrow$  It is not homonymy.

### 5. Problems for the allomorphy analysis

**Phonology**: Inceptive –*si* deletes preceding consonants in some Eastern Inuit variants.

inceptive -si
deleting-si nondeleting -si

Order: In elicited data, they can occur twice.

#### non-deleting −si → deleting −si

- 12a. anguti kunik-si-si-vuq arna-mik man kiss-ANTIP-INCEPT-3SG woman-MIK 'The man is starting to kiss the woman'
- 12b. \*anguti kuni-sj-si-vuq arna-mik man kiss-ANTIP-INCEPT-3SG woman-MIK 'The man is starting to kiss the woman'

#### More common is -liq as second inceptive marker

- 13a. anguti kuni **k-si-liq**-puq arna-mik man kiss-ANTIP-INCEPT-3SG woman-MIK 'The man is starting to kiss the woman'
- 13b. \*anguti kuni-liq-si-vuq arna-mik man kiss-ANTIP-INCEPT-3SG woman-MIK 'The man is starting to kiss the woman'

How can two allomorphs occur twice in one word?

## 5.1 Difference between deleting and non-deleting *-si*

inceptive -si

deleting-si nondeleting -si

Elsewhere

Phonological

condition: adjacent to V

Semantic condition: a punctual

feature

The two –*si* allomorphs have different properties depending on their structural position.

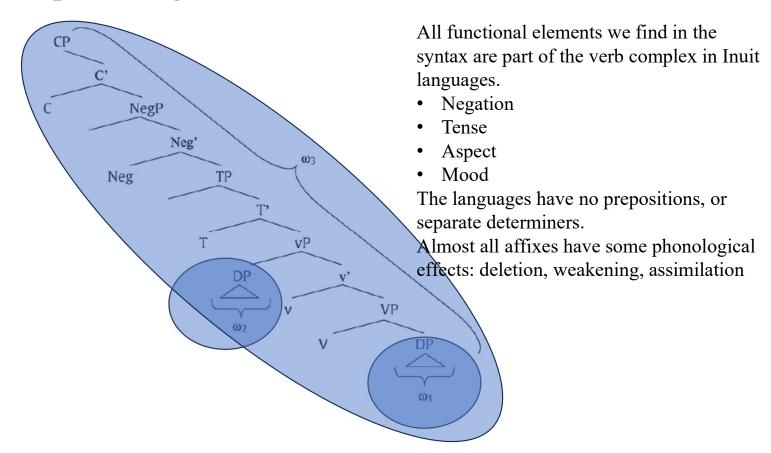
The first non-deleting –si affects case and agreement

→ functional

The deleting –si does not affect case and agreement

→ derivational

## 5.2 Phases in Inuktitut (Compton&Pittman 2010) Every phase is a phonological word



## 5.3 Phases: Phonological vs. Semantic

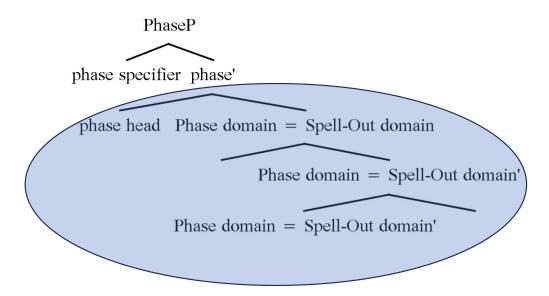
Phases have been defined as Spell-Out Domains, originally assumed to be the same for both PF senso-motoric interface and LF conceptual-intentional interface.

However, there are mismatches. (Grohmann 2009, Zeijlstra 2009)

**Phonological Phases:** domains for stress assignment and other phonological processes. Also treated as domains for linearization in Distributed Morphology.

**Semantic Phases:** functional boundary that is not accessible for further syntactic processes (Chomsky 2000, et seq.)

→ "chunks" to be interpreted, linearized, pronounced



## 5.4 Semantic Spell-Out vs Phonological Spell-Out

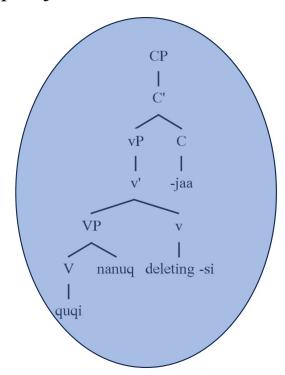
si- will only form a semantic phase when it has a syntactic function

- → It creates a boundary for a semantic word.
- → but not for a phonological word.
- *v*P is not a semantic phase for ergative transitive constructions to allow raising of the internal argument to get absolutive case
- vP is a phase if there is no raising of lower arguments in the clause.
  - $\rightarrow$  vP is a semantic phase with Antipassives only

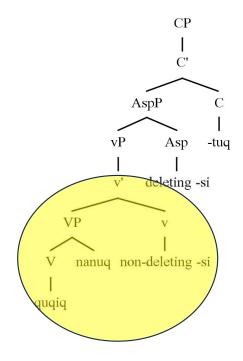
(Bittner & Hale 1996, Spreng 2006, 2012, Yuan 2018).

## 5.5 Deleting vs. non-deleting –si

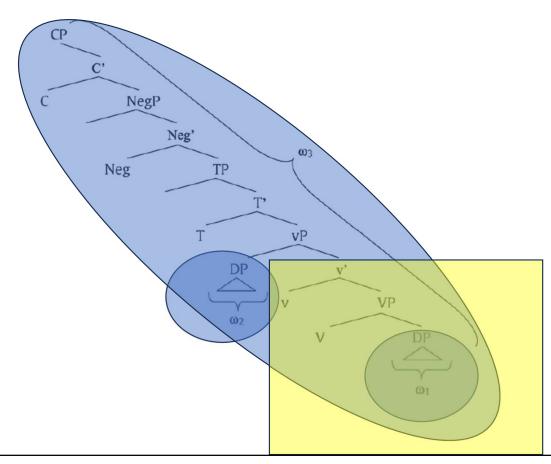
Phonological and Semantic Spell-Out: quqi-si-jaa



Semantic Spell-Out: quqir-si-si-juq



## 5.6 Semantic and phonological Spell-Out domains are not identical



## 6. Some thoughts on the ordering of functional and derivational material

Traditionally, all suffixes except for the agreement marker at the end in Inuit languages have been considered derivational.

Functional elements such as non-deleting -si affect case and agreement but are very close to the verb root.

Farthest from the root = a phase boundary

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# THANK YOU! NAKURMIIK! MA'NA!