

# Discourse functions of Salish applicatives<sup>1</sup>

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Many syntactic analyses of applicative constructions concentrate on the argument structure associated with the applied object. But what these analyses fail to capture is the reasons that applicatives are used, especially in cases where a non-applicative counterpart is possible. In this paper, we examine one hundred examples of relational applicatives from Salish texts. What is obvious in most cases is that the applied object has discourse prominence. Either the outcome of the action affecting the object is central to the story or the applied object itself is highly topical. Thus, the NP is worthy of being cast as an argument rather than an oblique.

## 1 Salish relational applicatives

Salish languages have two types of applicatives: redirective and relational (Kiyosawa 1999, 2000, 2002). In redirective applicative constructions, the direct object role is redirected to a non-theme nominal—the applied object. The verb stem is usually transitive, and the semantic role of the applied object is usually goal, malefactive, possessor, or, as in (1b), benefactive.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The following abbreviations are used in glossing the data: ABS.DET: absent determiner, APPL: applicative, ART: article, AUG: augmentative, AUX: auxiliary, BEN: benefactive applicative, CLF: cleft, CLT: clitic, CMPL: completive enclitic, CONF: confirmative, CONJ: conjunctive, CONT: continuative, CS: causative, DEM: demonstrative, DER: derivation, DET: determiner, DIM: diminutive, DIR: directional, DIST: distal, EP: established past, ERG: ergative, EST.REM: established remote, EVID: evidential, EXIS: existential enclitic, EXP: expectational, FOC: focus, FUT: future, IM: immediate, IMP: imperative, IMPF: imperfect, INCHO: inchoative, INT: introductory, IRR: irrealis, LCL: localizer, LCTR: limited control transitive, LNK: linker, LOC: locative, MDL: middle, NEG: negative, NOM: nominalizer, NPROX: nonproximal, OBJ: object, OBL: oblique, PART: particle, PASS: passive, PERF: perfect, PL: plural, POS: possessor applicative, POSS: possessive marker, PREP: preposition, Q: interrogative, QUOT: quotative, R.FILLER: rhetorical filler, RDP: reduplication, RDR: redirective applicative, REFL: reflexive, REL: relational applicative, RPRT: reportive, SER: serial, SG: singular, SSUB: subordinate subject, SUB: subject, TOP: topical object marker, TR: transitive, UNR: unrealized, VOC: vocative.

- (1) a. niʔ ləkʷa-t-əs kʷθə s̥čəšt. *Halkomelem* (f.n.)  
 AUX break-TR-3ERG DET stick  
 'She broke the stick.'
- b. niʔ ləkʷ-əʔc-t-əs tʰə swiʷləs ʔə kʷθə s̥čəšt.  
 AUX break-BEN-TR-3ERG DET boy OBL DET stick  
 'She broke the stick for the boy.'

In relational applicative constructions, the verb stem is usually intransitive, and the semantic role of the applied object is usually goal or direction of motion as in (2b), stimulus of a psychological or perceptual event as in (3b), goal of a speech act, source, or undergoer of an adverse event.<sup>3</sup>

- (2) a. niʔ nem kʷθə swiʷləs. *Halkomelem* (f.n.)  
 AUX go DET boy  
 'The boy went.'
- b. niʔ nəʔem-nəs-əs kʷθə John.  
 AUX go-DIR-3ERG DET John  
 'He went up to John.'
- (3) a. ni cən siʔsiʔ ʔə kʷθə snəxʷəl. *Halkomelem* (f.n.)  
 AUX 1SUB frighten OBL DET canoe  
 'I was frightened at the car.'
- b. ni cən siʔsiʔ-meʔ-t kʷθə sqʷəmey.  
 AUX 1SUB frighten-REL-TR DET dog  
 'I was frightened at the dog.'

In this paper we focus on relational applicatives. In most Salish languages, dative and benefactive constructions are obligatorily expressed as applicatives. However, as seen in (3) above, some semantic roles can be expressed as either oblique NPs or as applied objects. Thus, relational applicative constructions, since they often have non-applicative counterparts, are well suited for a study of applicative use.

Salish languages have from one to three relational applicative suffixes, given in Table 1.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See Gerdts (2004) for a discussion of Halkomelem directional applicatives. Gerdts and Kiyosawa (2005) treat psych applicatives in Halkomelem, and Gerdts and Kiyosawa (2004) treat psych applicatives in Salish languages in general.

<sup>4</sup> The following references were consulted for the information in this table: Bates et al. 1994, Beaumont 1985, Carlson 1972, 1980, Carlson and Flett 1989, Davis and Saunders 1997, Doak 1997, Egesdal and Thompson 1998, Galloway 1997, Gerdts 1988b, Hess 1967, Kinkade 1980, 1991, Kuipers 1967, 1974, 1992, A. Mattina 1994, N. Mattina 1993, Montler 1986, Thompson and Thompson 1992, Van Eijk 1997, Watanabe 2003.

BRANCH		LANGUAGE	RELATIONAL
Bella Coola		Bella Coola	-m
Central Salish		Sliammon	-mi, -ni
		Sechelt	-mí, -ni
		Squamish	-miñ, -ni
		Halkomelem	-meʔ/-miʔ, -nəs
		Nooksack	-ni
		Saanich	-ŋiy, -nəs
		Klallam	-ŋə, -nəs
		Lushootseed	-bi, -di, -c/-s
Interior Salish	Northern Interior Salish	Lillooet	-min/-miñ
		Thompson	-mi
		Shuswap	-m(i)
	Southern Interior Salish	Okanagan	-min
		Spokane	-mi
		Coeur d'Alene	-mi
	Columbian	-mi	
Tsamosan		Upper Chehalis	-mis/-mn, -ni, -tas/-ts
Tillamook		Tillamook	-əwi, -əs

Table 1. Salish relational applicatives

Relational applicatives are used to express psychological events, motions, speech acts, transfers, and adversatives, as seen in the following examples:

#### Psychological Event

- (4) lháyel-mí-t 'ashamed of' *Sechelt* (Beaumont 1985:108)  
 (5) c-ləš-eš(-s)-wəš-š 'angry at' *Tillamook* (Egesdal & Thompson 1998:257)

#### Motion

- (6) təkʔilx-mn-s 'run to' *Shuswap* (Kuipers 1992:50)  
 (7) kʷənəjət-nəs-ájəs 'ran after' *Saanich* (Montler 1986:168)

#### Speech Act

- (8) qʷay-mi-t 'scold' *Sliammon* (Watanabe 2003:259)  
 (9) s-yáʔš-ni-t-n 'tell' *Upper Chehalis* (Kinkade 1991:170)

#### Transfer-Source

- (10) kʷúln-ni-t 'borrow from' *Squamish* (Kuipers 1967:79)  
 (11) qáda-di-d 'steal from' *Lushootseed* (Bates et al. 1994:172)

#### Adversative

- (12) θeʔc-meʔ-t 'get dark on him/her' *Halkomelem* (Gerds & Kiyosawa 2005)  
 (13) tékɪ-m-t-i-t 'We get rained on.' *Thompson* (Thompson & Thompson 1992:74)

Table 2 shows the distribution of the various Proto-Salish relational applicative suffixes according to their form and function in the modern languages.

	PSYCHOLOGICAL EVENT	MOTION	SPEECH ACT	TRANSFER- SOURCE	ADVERSATIVE
NIS	*-mi			∅	*-mi
SIS	*-mi			∅	∅
Nk	*-ni			∅	∅
Sq	*-ni	*-mi, *-ni		*-ni	∅
Hl	*-mi	*-nəs	*-mi	∅	*-mi
Ld	*-mi, *-nəs	*-nəs		*-ni	∅
Other CS	*-mi, *-ni	*-nəs	*-mi, *-ni	*-ni	*-mi, *-ni
Ch	*-ni, *-nəs	*-mi	*-ni	∅	∅
Ti	*-mi, *-nəs	*-mi,	*-nəs	∅	∅

Table 2. Distribution of the relational applicatives<sup>5</sup>

The purpose of our paper is to shed some light on the functions of Salish applicatives in actual use. Relational applicatives are not all that common, but a search of texts in several languages from three branches of the Salish language family yielded one hundred examples. See Table 3.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The proto-forms of verbal suffixes were reconstructed by Kinkade (1998).

Abbreviations are: NIS: Northern Interior Salish, SIS: Southern Interior Salish, Nk: Nooksack, Sq: Squamish, Hl: Halkomelem, Ld: Lushootseed, CS: Central Salish, Ch: Upper Chehalis, Ti: Tillamook.

<sup>6</sup> Texts used for this project were: Bella Coola: Davis and Saunders 1980, Columbian: N. Mattina 2004, Halkomelem: Hukari et al. 1977 and unpublished texts provided by Donna Gerds and Tom Hukari, Lillooet: Davis 2001, Nooksack: Galloway et al. 2004, Okanagan: Mattina and De Sautel 2002, Sechelt: Beaumont 1985, Shuswap: Gardiner and Compton 2004, Sliammon: Watanabe 2003, Squamish: Kuipers 1974, Thompson: Thompson and Eggedal 1993.

LANGUAGE	TEXTS	SENTENCES/LINES	APPLICATIVES
Bella Coola	5	551S	12
Columbian	1	42L	2
Halkomelem	12	1687S + 741L	21
Lillooet	1	158S	10
Nooksack	1	28L	12
Okanagan	8	998S	13
Sechelt	4	168L	5
Shuswap	1	42S	1
Sliammon	2	293S	17
Squamish	3	114S	2
Thompson	1	209S	5
TOTAL			100

Table 3. Relational applicatives in Salish texts

We base the following discussion on these data.

## 2 Topicality

While the syntax of applicatives has received much attention, there have been few attempts to explain the reasons for choosing applicative constructions over intransitive oblique phrases. Two studies along these lines are Donohue's (2001) examination of *Tukang Besi* (Austronesian) applicatives from the viewpoint of Givón's (1983) theory of topicality and Peterson's (1999) cross-linguistic study of applicatives in fifty languages<sup>7</sup>. Apparently, a variety of semantic and discourse factors come into play in the use of applicatives. Gerdt's and Kiyosawa (to appear) give a brief overview of some of these for Salish applicatives

What is obvious is that in most cases the applied object has discourse prominence. The outcome of the action affecting the object or the applied object itself is often highly topical or central to the story. Thus, the NP is worthy of being cast as an argument NP rather than an oblique. In this section, we discuss the notion of discourse prominence in some detail. First, we discuss NPs that are topics in the traditional sense of the main character—what we refer to as primary topics. Then we expand our discussion to include other persons and things of interest to the discourse—what we refer to as secondary topics. Then we turn to a brief discussion of three ways applicatives are used to express topics, depending on their position relative to other occurrences of the same NP.

<sup>7</sup> See Darnell (1997) for a discussion of voice in Squamish texts from the point of Givón's framework. He says little, however, regarding applicatives. Peterson's sample includes one Salish language—Halkomelem, based on the data and analysis of Gerdt's (1988b).

## 2.1 Primary topics

Primary topics in Salish languages are usually subjects (Beck 1996a, 1996b, 2000; Davis 1994; Kinkade 1990), and passive is the most common means for expressing non-agentive NPs that are topical (Kinkade 1987). The following two examples are passive applicative constructions. The person referred to as “the young man” and “him” (the young hunter left behind in the eagle’s nest) is the main character and on-going topic in the story, and appears as the subject of the passive applicative.

**EAGLE** (*Halkomelem*—Tom Hukari, p.c.)

- (14) səw̓            n̓əm̓-nəs-əm    tʰəw̓nił    swiwləs,    səw̓  
 NOM:LNK    go-DIR-PASS    that.one    young.man    NOM:LNK
- θət-s-t-əm,            “ʔam-əs-θamə    ct            ʔə    k̓w̓  
 say-APPL-TR-PASS    give-APPL-TR:2OBJ    1PL.SUB    OBL    DET
- hay    ʔaɪ̓    qəx̃    --p̓qəlwət--    ʔəw̓-həli-t-əx̃w̓    tʰeý̓  
 very    just    much    blanket            LNK-save-TR-2SSUB    DET
- sʔeləx̃w̓    niʔ    q̓ay-t-əx̃w̓.”  
 elder            AUX    kill-TR-2SSUB

‘That young man was approached and they said to him, “We will give you many blankets if you help the elder you killed.”’ (771)<sup>8</sup>

**EAGLE** (*Halkomelem*—Tom Hukari, p.c.)

- (15) ʔəwə    k̓səs            ʔeʔ    siʔsiʔ-meʔ-t-əm            tʰəw̓nił    ʔə  
 NEG    DET:3SSUB    too    be.afraid.of-REL-TR-PASS    that.one    OBL
- tʰəw̓    θiθə,    niʔ    təl̓-n-əm            k̓səs            ʔəw̓  
 DET    big-PL    AUX    know-LCTR-PASS    DET:3SSUB    LNK
- čecəw̓-ət-əs            ʔaɪ̓    tʰeý̓    m̓əmən̓ł,    ʔələs-t-əs.  
 help(IMPF)-TR-3ERG    just    DET    little-(PL)    feed(IMPF)TR-3ERG

‘The big adult eagles were not afraid of him anymore, they got to know him, that he was just helping them feed the young ones.’ (176)

In our survey, 25% of the applicative constructions were passive.

<sup>8</sup> The number in parenthesis after the translation indicates the line or sentence number in the story.

LANGUAGE	ACTIVE	PASSIVE	TOTAL
Bella Coola	7	5	12
Columbian	2	0	2
Halkomelem	11	10	21
Lillooet	8	2	10
Nooksack	9	3	12
Okanagan	11	2	13
Sechelt	4	1	5
Shuswap	1	0	1
Sliammon	15	2	17
Squamish	2	0	2
Thompson	5	0	5
TOTAL	75	25	100

Table 4. Active vs. passive applicatives

Although topics are usually subjects, several languages have an object topic construction, which uses specialized morphology to mark a topical object (Davis 1994; Kinkade 1987, 1989, 1990). For example, in Lillooet a relational applicative (indicated by the suffix *-min*) can be used to promote an NP to object so that it can be topicalized (indicated by the suffix *-talí*).

**KAYÁM** (*Lillooet*—Davis 2001:331)

- (16) ...nʔńwas s-yəqy'qca? ni=naq̣'-min-talí=ha=tu?  
 ...two.human NOM-women(RDP) ABS.DET=steal-REL-TOP=EXIS=CMPL  
 ni=qáck-sw=a...  
 ABS.DET=older.brother-2SG.POSS=EXIS...

'...it was two women who stole your older brother...' (137)

Promotion to applied object also allows the NP to be the head of a cleft construction (17) or preverbal focus (18):

**PUSH-BACK-SIDES-OF-HIS-HAIR** (*Thompson*—Thompson & Egesdal 1993:301)

- (17) ʔe s-cú-t-s "ʔe xeʔe xʷuý nəs-m-ne."  
 INT NOM-say-IM-3POSS INT nearby FUT take-REL-1SG.SUB  
 'He said: "That's the one I'm going to get."'

**GHOST CATCHING** (*Nooksack*—Galloway 2004:154)

- (18) te q̣ó:y xochém(w)esnítxw kwém ílh kw néch'o  
 [tə] q̣ó:y xwčém(ʷ)əs-nít-čǰʷ kwəm íł kʷ nǰčo  
 ART dead meet-IND-2SG.SUB will PREP ART one  
 xonánat.  
 xonǰ:nət  
 night

'the dead you will meet one night,' (3b)

## 2.2 Secondary topics

While primary topics in Salish languages are usually subjects, applicative NPs that end up as objects, not subjects, also seem to exhibit some degree of discourse prominence. They often serve as secondary topics, that is, they may be the co-star of a story, or be an item or place of interest to the story.

For example, in the Halkomelem story “Wren”, it is established in the first line (19) that Wren’s grandmother is the co-star. She re-enters the story in (20) after 25 lines, and we see in example (21) that grandmother is the object of a directional applicative. She goes on to be of interest and, in fact, inspires Wren’s song, which is a standard feature of Wren stories in Coast Salish languages.<sup>9</sup>

**WREN** (*Halkomelem*—Tom Hukari, p.c.)

(19) ‘Little wren had a granny.’ (1)

(20) ‘He [Wren] then headed for home. His grandparent was sitting down when he arrived home. “Do some knife-sharpening my dear grandmother; What I have caught is like a little island.” “Oh, what are you saying that for, to me that is hungry?” the grandmother says to him.’ (27–30)

(21) ʔi ʔəw̄ ʔəwə ʔəw̄ yə-hənəm-nəs-əs θə  
 AUX LNK NEG LNK SER-go(IMPF)-DIR-3ERG DET  
 siʔlə-s s-əw̄ yə-həȳθ-əs-t-s  
 grandparent-3POSS NOM-LNK SER-tell(IMPF)-APPL-TR-3POSS  
 yə-tiʔələm.  
 SER-sing(IMPF)

‘But he continued and went closer to his granny and told her in song.’ (31)

(22) ‘He was asking his dear grandma to do some sharpening. He was telling his grandma to sharpen a knife.’ (32–33)

(23) niʔ kʷəʔeʔ niʔ ʃəʔə-stxʷ-əs “yəq̄yəq̄=e:ṅ  
 3-FOC indeed AUX say(IMPF)-CS-3ERG sharpen(IMPF)=end  
 sisəʔlə.”  
 grandparent(DIM)

‘This is why he was saying, “yəq̄yəq̄:e:ṅ sisəʔlə.”’ (34)

Secondary topics are added to and subtracted from the topics list as the story progresses, but they are central to the story at the point when they appear as applied objects.

<sup>9</sup> To save space, we usually give only the English translation, except for clauses in which applicatives appear.



## 2.3 Three types of topics

In sum, applicative constructions are used when a semantically oblique NP is prominent to the discourse, either as a primary or secondary topic, and thus is worthy to appear as an argument NP—the applied object or subject of the passive applicative. Applicative constructions relate to topicality in three ways, depending on when and how the NP is introduced into the text.

### 2.3.1 Continuing topics

A continuing topic is someone or something that has been established and will continue to be salient. The grandmother in the Wren story above is a good example of a continuing secondary topic: the NP gets established and then persists as topic through a segment of the text. Another example of this is “his relatives” in the Stoneheads story. This NP is established in example (24) as a transitive object and appears as the applied object in (26). His relatives are eventually massacred by the evil Stonehead. In fact, the storyteller, by bringing up “relatives” in example (24), but then detouring on to the subject of weaponry in example (25), is really teasing the audience just like the evil Stonehead toys with his relatives, visiting them before he goes back to slaughter them four days later.

STONEHEADS (*Halkomelem*—Tom Hukari, p.c.)

- (24) səw̃ xʷəʔaləṃ tʰəw̃nił, niʔ wəł təl̥-nəxʷ-əs  
 NOM:LNK return that.one AUX then know-LCTR-3ERG  
 tʰə ʃxʷəw̃eli-s.  
 DET relatives-3POSS

‘He then went back home, he had found his relatives.’ (61)

- (25) ‘When he got home he started preparing his weapons. He tried the hardest wood of what he’s going to use for a weapon from small trees. And when he hit them they just broke. He hit with them and they broke. Finally he found one that was very hard, he found one that didn’t break.’ (62–66)

- (26) yełsəs neṃ həyeʔ nəm-nəs-əs tʰə ʃxʷəw̃eli-s.  
 next go depart go-DIR-3ERG ART relatives-3POSS  
 ‘He then finally went after his relatives.’ (67)

- (27) ‘They were playing “qiʔqtəmas” (hockey), when he got there flying. They started rushing [scrambling to get away] but he just did that [to scare them] and he left to go back home. He didn’t hurt them.’ (68)

- (28) ‘It was four days before he clubbed them all, clubbed all his relatives (object) on their heads.’ (71)

One way to show that an applied object is highly topical is to show that it continues to be salient across a segment of discourse.

### 2.3.2 Backward-looking topics

Often the applied object refers to a nominal that has already been established as salient. That is, it looks backwards for its reference. We see that this can happen within a single sentence, as in examples (29) and (30).

**PUSH-BACK-SIDES-OF-HIS-HAIR** (*Thompson—Thompson & Egesdal 1993:301*)

- (29)   ʔe    s-cix<sup>w</sup>-s                    teʔe    k<sup>w</sup>én-s                    ɪ  
 INT   NOM-lie.PL-3POSS   PART   grasp-TR.3SUB   EP  
  
       s-čəm-čém                        ʔe    s-áǰ<sup>w</sup>-m-s                    u  
       NOM-RDP.AUG-small.bone   INT   NOM-throw-REL-3SUB   to  
  
       ɪʔe.  
       EST.REM

‘He took the bones that were lying around and threw them over there.’  
 (197)

**KAYÁM** (*Lillooet—Davis 2001:331*)

- (30)   ... qañim-[ən]s-as   ti=waʔ   ʔəmʔímn-əm   s-k<sup>w</sup>látən ...  
 hear-CS-3ERG            DET=prog   animal.noise-MDL   NOM-woodpecker ...  
  
       niɪ=ǰuʔ   ʔayɪ   nás-miñ-as   níǰ=ǰuʔ   s=cíx<sup>w</sup>-miñ-as  
       FOC=so   then   go-REL-3ERG   FOC=so   NOM=go-REL-3ERG

‘He heard a woodpecker calling, and he went towards it; then he came upon him...’ (138)

But sometimes the nominal referred to the applied object occurs several sentences prior, as in (31) and (32).

**A HUNTING INCIDENT** (*Squamish—Kuipers 1967:240ff.*)

- (31)   ‘Spring had arrived, and the time had come when the bears come out of hiding. And so we got hungry for bear-meat. We went upstream in a canoe and reached a place below Ash Slough. Then I spotted a bear. We approached and went up close, then I went ashore and sneaked up on it. It came within range, then I shot at it. Then it dropped.’ (1–7)

- (32) ʔn-s-na\_mn\_ǵánacut-ní-t-an  
 1SG.POSS-NOM-AUX\_PART\_return-APPL-TR-1SG.SUB  
 kʷəci\_snəxʷíʕ-čət, s-mn\_cún-t-an  
 ART\_canoes-1PL.POSS NOM-PART\_tell-TR-1SG.SUB  
 kʷs\_n-sǵʷúʔ-t:  
 ART\_1SG.POSS-wife-late/deceased

‘Then I returned to our canoe and told my wife.’ (8)

In most cases, the applied object is mentioned earlier in the story. That is, applied objects do not often occur in out-of-the-blue contexts.

### 2.3.3 Forward-looking topics

A systematic exception to NPs not appearing as applied object at first mention is when the applied object is used as a forward-looking topic. That is the applied object sets up a new topic, which then is salient in the next section. We see this for example in (34). The hero dreams about “a girl”, which is both the applied object and a new secondary topic, and then goes on to talk about her looks, hair, etc. in the subsequent lines.

#### PUSH-BACK-SIDES-OF-HIS-HAIR (Thompson—Thompson & Egesdal 1993:301)

- (33) ʕʷóyt e kʷu ǵuʔ ʔe s-ʔikʷlxʷ-s.  
 sleep RPRT PER INT NOM-dream-3POSS  
 ‘He slept and had a dream.’ (202)
- (34) ʔikʷlxʷ-s-m-s k s-mútec ʔe  
 dream\_image-REL-3SUB UNR NOM-woman INT  
 n-kəm\_cín-s e s-cwé[-w]xʷ.  
 LCL-body.surface=mouth DIR NOM-creek[-RDP.DIM]  
 ‘He dreamed about a girl at the mouth of a creek.’ (203)
- (35) ‘A good looking girl in his dream. Golden was the girl’s hair. It was golden hair. He said, “That’s the one I’m going to get.”’ (204–207)

This example also illustrates another common pattern that we see in applicatives: the intransitive verb is given without an object in (33), and then the same verb but with the applied object is given in the next line. Thus, it is the applied object that is the important new information and not the action of the verb itself in examples such as (34).

## 2.4 Summary

The examples given above are typical of the data we found in Salish texts: in the vast majority of cases, the applied object is central to the discourse,

often serving as either the primary or secondary topic and often as an on-going topic. The Salish results are thus consistent with what Donohue (2001) notes in his study of the Austronesian language *Tukang Besi*: “discourse-prominent references are more likely to appear as applied objects than as oblique phrases”.

### 3 NP type: person/animacy hierarchy

The high degree of topicality of the applied object ties in with the patterns we see regarding person and animacy hierarchies and applicative constructions. Higher animate arguments are more discourse-worthy and so are more likely to appear as applicative objects.

This would account for the person/animacy effects that Gerdts (1988a, 1988b) notes for *Halkomelem* psych applicatives. According to speaker judgments, animate NPs like ‘the priest’ in (36) are better applied objects than inanimate NPs like ‘the words of the priest’ in (37).

*Halkomelem* (Gerdts 1988a)

(36) niʔ cən qel-meʔ-t kʷθə ləplit.  
 AUX 1SUB believe-APPL-TR DET priest  
 ‘I believed the priest.’

(37) ??niʔ cən qel-meʔ-t kʷθə sqʷaqʷəl-s kʷθə ləplit.  
 AUX 1SUB believe-APPL-TR DET word-3POSS DET priest  
 ‘I believed the words of the priest.’

In contrast, inanimate NPs (38) are better obliques than animate NPs (39).

*Halkomelem* (Gerdts 1988a)

(38) niʔ cən qel ʔə kʷθə sqʷaqʷəl-s kʷθə ləplit.  
 AUX 1SUB believe OBL DET word-3POSS DET priest  
 ‘I believed the priest’s words.’

(39) ?\*niʔ cən qel ʔə kʷθə ləplit.  
 AUX 1SUB believe OBL DET priest  
 ‘I believed the priest’s words.’

However, as Gerdts and Kiyosawa (2005) show, if some context is provided, the acceptability of inanimate applied objects improves greatly. After all, a stimulus can play a central role, even if it is inanimate. For example ‘the fog’ is crucial in (40).

(40) ʔeʔət xʷiʔ siʔsiʔ-meʔ-t-əs tʰə speʔxʷəm kʷs  
 AUX INCHO frightened-REL-3ERG DET fog DET:NOM  
 nem-s ʔəlim-t-əs tʰə snəxʷəl-s.  
 go-3SSUB steer-TR-3ERG DET canoe-3POSS

‘He’s scared of the fog when he drives his car.’ *Halkomelem* (Gerdts and Kiyosawa 2005)

Sometimes the applicative can be used to highlight a participant of a complement clause:

- (41) ʔi cən wəʔ ʃtəʔe:wəñ-meʔ-θət kʷə-nə-s hay  
 AUX 1SUB PERF think-REL-TR:REFL DET-1POSS-NOM finish  
 ʔə kʷθə nə-sya:ys.  
 OBL DET 1POSS-job

'I was thinking about quitting my job.' *Halkomelem* (Gerdt and Kiyosawa 2005)

The importance to me of my quitting my job is highlighted by expressing 'me' as the applied object of the verb 'think', resulting in a reflexive.

Similarly, when an intransitive construction with an oblique NP is used even though the stimulus is animate (42), there is a downplaying of the participation of the stimulus.

- (42) niʔ ʔə č wəʔ kʷiʔəm ʔə kʷθə ʔi  
 AUX Q 2SUB PERF fed.up OBL DET AUX  
 hiwələm sʃəliqəʔ?  
 playing children

'Are you fed up with the playing children?' *Halkomelem* (Gerdt and Kiyosawa 2005)

Presumably, it is the disturbance made by the playing children that is annoying, not the children themselves.

To quantify the effect the person and animacy of the applied object, we constructed a database of *Halkomelem* psych applicatives from elicited sentences, summarized in Table 5.

	APPLIED OBJECT	OBLIQUE
1ST/2ND PERSON	40	0
PROPER NOUN	20	1
OTHER HUMAN	57	6
ANIMAL	10	6
INANIMATE	19	22
CLAUSE	5	8

Table 5. Applied object vs. oblique NP

As the distribution in Table 6 shows, whether the NP appears as an applied object or an oblique correlates with its person and animacy.

	1ST/2ND PERSON	PROPER	HUMAN	ANIMAL	INANIMATE	CLAUSE
APPLIED OBJECT	100%	95%	90%	63%	46%	38%
OBLIQUE	0%	5%	10%	37%	54%	62%

Table 6. Applied object vs. oblique NP in Halkomelem psych constructions

We can see that, while there is no absolute grammatical condition on the expression of NPs in psych constructions, the higher the animacy of the NP, the more likely that it will appear as an applied rather than an oblique object. Gerds and Kiyosawa (2005) speculate, however, that these results may simply be an artifact of other properties, for example topic-worthiness. So, for example, first and second persons are universally more central to the discourse, and animates generally outrank inanimates in their degree of importance in a conversation. Thus, the person/animacy effects could simply be a by-product of effort to make elicited data interesting.

The applicative data taken from Salish texts allows us to test this hypothesis.<sup>10</sup> We classify the data with applied objects from the point of view of the person and animacy of the applied object, and give the results in Table 7.

LANGUAGE	1ST/2ND PERSON	HUMAN	ANIMAL	ITEM	LOCATION	TOTAL
Bella Coola	0	6	0	4	2	12
Columbian	0	1	0	1	0	2
Halkomelem	2	9	3	4	3	21
Lillooet	0	7	1	1	1	10
Nooksack	3	9	0	0	0	12
Okanagan	1	5	0	7	0	13
Sechelt	1	4	0	0	0	5
Shuswap	0	0	1	0	0	1
Sliammon	0	3	8	6	0	17
Squamish	0	1	0	0	1	2
Thompson	1	3	0	1	0	5
TOTAL	8	48	13	24	7	100

Table 7. Person/animacy of applied object

At first glance, there are fewer animate NPs (69%) and more inanimate NPs (31%) than expected.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, we discuss the examples in more detail in the subsequent sections.

<sup>10</sup> In our analysis of the Salish text data, we do not study oblique NPs, only applied objects, so we cannot discuss their relative frequency, as we did in the elicited data.

<sup>11</sup> Differences between the elicited data and the data from texts in the frequency of some types of NPs are immediately apparent. First and second persons figure more prominently in elicitations than texts. Also, in our Halkomelem database (Table 5), there are only 24 examples that have inanimate or clausal applied objects out of 150 sentences, i.e. 16% of the data. However, in the data from Salish texts, the percentage of inanimate applied

### 3.1 First and second persons

First and second person NPs are less common in texts than in our elicited data. We find that they do occur as both applied objects and oblique objects, sometimes even in the same sentence. as in example (43).

WREN (*Halkomelem*—Tom Hukari, p.c.)

- (43) “o-o-o hay cən peʔ ʃwəm nəm-nəs-amə ʃwəm  
 only 1SG.SUB indeed can go-DIR-2SG.OBJ can  
 cən peʔ nem ʔəw nem ʔə-ʃ nəwə  
 1SG.SUB indeed go LNK go OBL-DET you  
 ʔiʔ ʔəw qay-θamə cən.”  
 CONJ LNK kill-TR.2SG.OBJ 1SG.SUB

“O-o-oh, I can come to you, I can really come over to you and kill you.”  
 (9)

Another example of a second-person applied object is given in (45).

THE BEAVER (*Sechelt*—Beaumont 1985:187ff)

- (44) ‘He saw a snake-woman inside a house. She was a fine woman, a very pretty snake. Then the man said:’ (9–11)

- (45) “čálím če qʷáliwan, we  
 how 2SG.POSS heart if  
 yáqcuwam-mít-c-an?”  
 look.for.a.wife-REL-2SG.OBJ-1SG.SUB

“How would you feel if I married you?” (12)

- (46) ‘Then the woman said: “Not me; It’s not you that I want. Your eyes are small, your belly is broad, your legs are short; I don’t like you.”’  
 (13–16)

### 3.2 Animate NPs

In the case of third person NPs, almost half of our examples have human applied objects (see (21), (26), (34)), though animals are also common, especially as personified characters. The examples in (48) and (50) illustrate personified animals:

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objects is almost doubled: 31% of the applicative constructions have inanimate applied objects. Note also that the occurrence of animal applied objects is also low in elicited data (7% in our Halkomelem database). However, it jumps up to 13% in the texts. This is probably because animals are often personified characters in texts, as will be discussed below.

**THE SEAL AND THE RAVEN** (*Sechelt*—Beaumont 1985:181ff)

- (47) 'Raven was a bad man: a thief, clubbing people on the head, a boaster. He had a lot of wives.' (39–41)
- (48) *ti'táyaq-mít-em*    *ʔe*    *te*    *ǰéǰ'áls*.  
got.angry-REL-PASS    OBL    DET    Creator  
'The Creator was angry with him.' (42)

**MINK AND GRIZZLY** (*Sliammon*—Watanabe 2003:548ff)

- (49) 'Mink's leftover fish bones were lying there. She found them on the beach. "Oh, he's poor. He must be hungry. He must have had a snack." Grizzly said. "It's okay." She kept on going. She kept on going (over there). She reached another point. There was some more remains that Mink left. Grizzly was getting angry.' (92–99)
- (50) *ǰ'wit*    *q'əł*    *ǰlł-mi-t-as*    *qayǰ*  
really    come    angry-REL-TR-3ERG    Mink  
'She was getting angry at Mink.' (100)

In some cases, actual animals also appeared as applied objects, but they always played some central role in the story. For example, in "Eagle", the young man was left by his devious wife-stealing partner in the eagle's nest. But he made himself useful by helping to care for the baby eagles, and the eagles eventually carried him back home. Thus, the eagles (and their extraordinary strength) are central to the story and appear as the applied object in (52) even though they are non-personified animals.

**EAGLE** (*Halkomelem*—Tom Hukari, p.c.)

- (51) "I am leaving you all, I am going home." He was thanking his companions [the Eagles]. (244–245)
- (52) *łǰiləš*    *t'əw'nil*    *səw-nəm-nəs-ewət*    *t'əw'nənəl*  
stand    that.one    NOM:LNK -go-DIR-3.SUB.PASS    those.little.ones  
*ʔiʔ*    *ʔip-ət-əm*.  
CONJ    pat-TR-PASS  
'He stood up and went to them and started patting them.' (246)

Another case of this type is observed in "Lizard Chronicles"; the storyteller warns the children that the *utscén*, 'lizard' will follow them and get them if they are not careful.



- (53) re stsmé[m]elt me<sup>7</sup> qex-p-qín. “ta<sup>7</sup> penhén re  
 r sčmé[m]əlt mε<sup>?</sup> qəx̣-p-qín. “ta<sup>?</sup> pənhén r  
 DET children EXP crazy-RES-head not ever DET
- s-qwen-mí[n]-ø-en ye<sup>7</sup>éne utscén re  
 s-q<sup>w</sup>ən-mí[n]-ø-ən yə<sup>?</sup>énə učxén r  
 NOM-want-REL-3OBJ-1SUB this lizard DET
- s-kwe(n)-nwé[w’]en-t-sem-s.”  
 s-k<sup>w</sup>ə(n)-nwé[w’]ən-čəm-s.”  
 NOM-get-LCTR-1OBJ-3SUB

‘The children are going to go crazy. “I never want that lizard to get me.”’  
 (18)

In sum, we see that applied objects are animates of all types—humans, personified animals, and actual animals.

### 3.3 Things

As the data in Table 8 reveal, many cases of things expressed as applied objects were observed in our sample, many more than we expected, given our previous research on Halkomelem. We found two factors at work in these data. First, the line between living things and inanimate things is vaguely defined in the Salish story world. For example Mink was so prone to collecting wives, that he even married a cloud, tree pitch, and a salal bush.

#### MINK AND GRIZZLY (*Sliammon*—Watanabe 2003:548ff)

- (54) ‘I’m going to tell you about Mink. What Mink was like when he was around. Mink was doing everything, being bothersome. He’s always looking for something to do.’ (2–5)
- (55) hihiw say-sx<sup>w</sup>-as-ut<sup>?</sup>əǰu k<sup>w</sup>\_sa-saɬtəg-əm  
 very like-CS-3ERG-PAST\_CLT DET\_RDP.IMPF-wife-MDL  
 (?ə\_)k<sup>w</sup>ut<sup>?</sup>uwk<sup>w</sup>  
 OBL\_CLT\_all  
 ‘He liked to get married to everything.’ (6)
- (56) ?uwk<sup>w</sup> tam sa-saɬtg-am-(m)i-t-as  
 all what RDP.IMPF-wife-MDL-REL-TR-3ERG  
 ‘He was getting married to everything.’ (7)
- (57) ‘Mink had lots of women.’ (8)
- (58) ?uwk<sup>w</sup> ta:m saɬtg-am-(m)i-t-as  
 all what wife-MDL-REL-TR-3ERG  
 ‘He got married to everything.’ (9)

- (59) saɬg-am-(m)i-t\_kʷa tə\_i<sup>θ</sup>amqʷɪ  
 wife-MDL-REL-TR\_QUOT DET\_cloud  
 'He married the cloud.' (10)
- (60) saɬg-am-(m)i-t\_kʷa tə\_ɟaykʷ  
 wife-MDL-REL-TR\_QUOT DET\_eagle  
 'He married the eagle.' (11)
- (61) saɬg-am-(m)i-t\_kʷa tə\_waʃas  
 wife-MDL-REL-TR\_QUOT DET\_frog  
 'He married the frog.' (12)
- (62) 'Even the ... (what's the name of that...) pitch of tree.' (13)
- (63) miya\_kʷa taŋ saɬg-am-(m)i-t-as  
 even\_QUOT DEM wife-MDL-REL-TR-3ERG  
 'He married even that.' (14)
- (64) miya\_kʷa tə\_ɪaq=ʔay ʔə\_saɬtəg-am-(m)i-t-as  
 even\_QUOT DET\_salalberry=tree CLF\_wife-MDL-REL-TR-3ERG  
 'He married even the salal bush.' (15)
- (65) miya tə\_i<sup>θ</sup>umaɟ'a (ʔə)\_saɬtəg-am-(m)i-t-as  
 even DET\_barnacle (CLF)\_wife-MDL-REL-TR-3ERG  
 'Even the barnacle, he married.' (16)
- (66) 'And, I'm going to tell you the story about that.' (17)
- (67) hi\_saʔ\_ga tiʔi hihiw (ʔə\_)t<sup>θ</sup>ɟʷaqʷθus-θi  
 it's\_CLT\_CLT here first CLF\_1SG.POSS\_story-TR-2SG.OBJ  
 kʷ\_s-saɬg-am-(m)i-t-ʔu-s\_kʷa  
 DET\_NOM-woman-MDL-REL-TR-PAST-3POSS\_QUOT  
 tə\_naʔa tə\_ʃawgas  
 DET\_(R.FILLER) DET\_grizzly.bear  
 'I'll tell you first about the time when he married the Grizzly.' (18)

Thus, the items are presumably personified. The data in this story alone skewed the numbers in our sample.

The second factor we observed is that items are often topic-worthy because they are associated with to a central character. For example in "Seagull Steals the Sun", Seagull tricks Sun into a box, causing the world to go dark and everything to die. Raven sends the ants through the floorboards to spy to see if Seagull has Sun. The ants see Seagull, who has deluding himself into thinking he is actually the son of the Sun, talking to the box. So when mention is made of Seagull approaching the box, expressed as an applied object in (68), we know that he is also approaching the Sun.

**SEAGULL STEALS THE SUN** (*Halkomelem*—Hukari et al. 1977)

- (68) . ʃeʔ čə wət nəʔəm-nəs-əm ʔə-ʃ qwəni tʰə ʃθəm.  
 too EVID then go-DIR-PASS OBL-DET seagull DET box  
 'And the seagull went to the box again.' (199)
- (69) "niʔ ʔə č xʷʔiyəñəm, ʔə meʔ?"  
 AUX Q 2.SUB listen(IMPF) VOC dad  
 "Are you listening, Dad?" (200)

In the following Halkomelem example, the importance of the smoke, expressed as an applied object in (73), is that it is leading them to the house of *Syaləčaʔ*, the title character.

**SYALUTSAʔ** (*Halkomelem*—Tom Hukari, p.c.)

- (70) ni-i-iʔ wəčeʔ ʔə kʷəʔinət ʔiʔ niʔ wət wil  
 AUX get.to.top OBL over.there CONJ AUX then appear  
 tʰə sʃeyəqəm.  
 DET smoke  
 'When they got to the mountain top they could see smoke.' (21)
- (71) səw təl-nəx-ʷəs θəwñit "wət nit tʰey niʔ  
 NOM:LNK think-LCTR-3ERG that.one now 3.FOC DET AUX  
 ʃeyəqəm."  
 smoke(IMPF)  
 'She thought, "That is the place where the smoke is coming from."' (22)
- (72) hay sis ʔəw wət nem.  
 and so LNK then go  
 'They started again.' (23)
- (73) mi-i-i ʔewə-nəs-əs tʰə ʃeyəqəm.  
 come come-DIR-3ERG DET smoke(IMPF)  
 'They walked towards the smoke.' (24)

In the following example from Bella Coola, the knife, which appears as an applied object in (76), is noteworthy because, as we are told later, "It is the only reason the man reached the village."

**THE SPIDER AND TWO OTHER STORIES** (*Bella Coola*—Davis & Saunders 1980:28ff)

- (74) 'There was nothing the people could do to help themselves then. There was only one alive.' (83–84)

- (75) ʔas-tq̄ln-lʃs-an-iʃ-s-kʷ  
 LOC-knife-end-corner-genital-3SUB-QUOT  
 'He had a knife on his hip.' (85)
- (76) ʔanu-lčma-m-i-s ta-tw̄la-tʃ  
 CONT-belt-REL-3OBJ-3SUB NPROX-knife-DIST  
 'He was carrying the knife on his belt.' (86)
- (77) 'He was the one whose legs began to feel heavy, and his arms, too. He would use the knife to cut them in half. The man would get lighter.'  
 (87-89)
- (78) s-maw-kʷ ta-tq̄la-tʃ si-čkt-s ta-ʃmsta-tʃ  
 DER-one-QUOT NPROX-knife-DIST DER-reach-he NPROX-person-DIST  
 ʔuʃ-ta-apsuʃ-tʃ ... ʔaʃ-ʔanuʃimli:k.  
 PREP-NPROX-village-DIST ... PREP-Anaheim.Lake  
 'The knife is the only reason the man reached the village, Anaheim Lake.' (99)

In sum, though we find many more inanimate items appearing as applied objects than we were led to expect based on our experience with elicited data, in every case, the item is either directly linked to an animate character or crucial to the storyline. This leads us to conclude that centrality rather than animacy per se is the determining factor in the use of applied objects.

### 3.4 Locations

We find very few instances of places being expressed as applied objects, even though they are frequently referred to in stories. The locations that did occur as applied objects all seem to support the notion of centrality. What we find for Salish thus parallels what Donohue (2001:237) reports for Austronesian:

"Locations are much more commonly encountered in oblique coding strategies than as applicatives. This is because they are typically less important in the storyline, being neither active in the story nor destinations for action to move towards. This tendency can be over-ridden, however, when there is some degree of topicality assigned to the location."

Places appear as applied objects only if they are linked to important characters. For example, in the Seal story, a man and his wife go out to hunt in the place where the seals gather. As the story unfolds, the man is captured by the seals and eventually turns into one. His relatives keep going back to the location of the seals to try to recapture him and bring him home.

SEAL (*Halkomelem*—Tom Hukari, p.c.)

(79) “We will get some food for our elders.” (8)

- (80) “o-o-o ʔəy-əs nem ct kʷəʔel nem ʔə kʷ  
 okay good-3SUB go 1PL.SUB indeed go OBL DET  
 netəl nis xʷcəkʷcəkʷ ʔiʔ nem ct  
 morning AUX:3SSUB low-tide CONJ go 1PL.SUB  
 nem nəmnəs kʷə šqʷəmtən-s tʰə ʔesxʷ,”  
 go go-DIR DET landing.place-3POSS DET seal  
 θət-s θə steniʔ.  
 say-3SSUB DET woman

“‘O-o-oh, okay, we will go in the morning, when the tide is low we’ll go; we’ll go to where the seals come out,’ the wife said.” (9)

(81) ‘And then, very early the next day, these young people get up.’ (10)

- (82) kʷənatəl ʔə θə staʔləs-θ səw həyeʔ  
 together OBL DET spouse-3POSS NOM:LNK depart  
 nəm-nəs-əm tʰə šniʔ-s tʰə ʔesxʷ kʷ-s  
 go-DIR-PASS DET where-3POSS DET seal DET-NOM  
 qʷiqʷəm-s.  
 emerge(IMPF)-3SSUB

‘With his wife he left, going to the place where the seals get out of the water.’ (11)

(83) ‘It was the breaking of dawn when they got there to hunt the seal (object). He saw a lot of seals (object) out of the water on the island. He said to his wife, “you wait here with the canoe.” (12–14)

(84) nem cən ceʔ nəm-nəs kʷəna ʔi s-qʷimqʷəm ʔesxʷ.”  
 go 1SUB FUT go-DIR DEM AUX NOM-emerge(IMPF) seal  
 “‘I am going to sneak up on the seals that are out of the water.’”

(85) ‘So the young man left. He walked and sneaked up on the seal (object).’ (16–17)

In the following example from a Bella Coola Raven story, “the surrounding area” is not only a location but also the object of Raven’s transformation skills.

**FAMINE AND A STORY ABOUT THE RAVEN** (*Bella Coola*— Davis & Saunders 1980:67ff)

(86) 'The raven came and did not like it to be an ocean from here upriver to Stuié. The raven then changed it around...he changed our ocean around. He changed it to where people could pass.' (77-79)

(87) puł̥-s-k<sup>w</sup>-ć                      ǐaǰ<sup>w</sup>  
 come-he-QUOT-PERF              that.one  
 s-ka-nu-almk-m-is-ć                      a:x<sup>w</sup>a  
 DER-UNR-AGENT-pole.canoe-REL-he/it-PERF              surrounding.area  
 ?u:l-a:ǰi-tu-ć.  
 PREP-upriver-CONF-PERF

'He came here upriver again poling his canoe.' (88)

(88) 'He was playing with the canoe pole. Because there were going to be human beings is why he put good signs around here.' (91-92)

**3.5 Summary**

In sum, what we see in our data overall is that it is not the person or animacy of the NP that determines whether it appears as an applied object or an oblique, but rather its topic-worthiness. Higher animates are inherently more topical, and things and places of interest to the storyline or to the main character are also topical and thus can appear as applied objects.

**4 NP type**

We have argued above that applied objects are topical. Peterson (1999:51), in his cross-linguistic study of applicatives, points out that topics are often associated with the first of several oppositions—animate/inanimate, pronominal/non-pronominal, specific/non-specific, (identifiable/non-identifiable, proper/non-proper,) long/short (phonetically). Thus, given our claim that applicative objects are generally topical, we should see a preference for these features. Although we have insufficient data to test many of these, we have seen, in fact, that there is a person/animacy effect in the use of applied objects. But what about the type of NP?

One way to organize a discussion on NP type is along the lines of the givenness hierarchy (Gundel et al. 1993) which links the degree to which an NP is central to the discourse to its type of expression. For example, research on English and other languages has revealed that topics are universally expressed in the weakest form available in a language, a weak pronoun (e.g. *he* in English), or, if possible, a zero NP. Strong pronouns, demonstratives, definite NPs, indefinite NPs, etc. can be organized as points along this hierarchy.

This leads us to examine the Salish applicative data from the viewpoint of the form of expression of the NP. The results are given in Table 8. The number in parentheses indicates how many applied NPs appear as subjects of passive applicatives.

LANG	NON-OVERT NP		OVERT NP			TOTAL
	1ST/2ND PRO	ZERO	DEM	DEM NP	NP	
Be	0	3 (1)	3 (3)	0	6 (1)	12
Cm	0	1	0	0	1	2
Hl	2	4 (2)	3 (2)	2 (1)	10 (5)	21
Li	0	4	0	0	6 (2)	10
Nk	3 (3)	7	1	0	1	12
Ok	1	10 (2)	1	0	1	13
Se	1	1 (1)	0	0	3	5
Sh	0	0	0	1	0	1
Sl	0	2 (1)	3	0	12 (1)	17
Sq	0	1	0	0	1	2
Th	1	2	1	0	1	5
TOTAL	8	35	12	3	42	100

Table 8. NP type of applied object

Setting aside first- and second-person objects, which are always verb suffixes in Salish languages, we see that third-person NPs can be expressed in a variety of ways. They can be zero or overt. Overt NPs can consist of simply a demonstrative, a demonstrative phrase, or an article and a head noun. We see that zero NPs (35 examples) do not in fact outnumber overt NPs (totaling 57 examples), as would be expected from the association of topics with zero NPs, given our claim that applied objects are generally topical. However, NPs consisting simply of a demonstrative (12 examples), which is the closest thing that Salish languages have to a weak third-person pronoun, do outnumber demonstrative NPs with overt heads (3 examples). Nevertheless the high occurrence of NP phrases consisting of an article and a head (42 examples) bears comment.

Overall, what we find is that the NP types of applied objects closely resemble the NP types of objects in non-applicative constructions. Gerds and Hukari (2003) note the tendency for subjects to be zero and objects to be overt. They examine 81 transitive sentences in which both the subject and object are third-person NPs and find the following distribution of zero versus overt NPs:

	ZERO SUBJECT	OVERT SUBJECT	TOTAL
ZERO OBJECT	35%	4%	38%
OVERT OBJECT	53%	9%	62%
TOTAL	88%	12%	100%

Table 9. Overt vs. zero NPs

The data show that 88% of subjects are zero, compared to 38% of objects. When objects are zero, they are highly topical, or they appear in clauses that closely parallel clauses with the NP expressed as an overt object. Conversely, 62% of

objects are overt NPs, compared to 12% of subjects. Subjects are rarely overt because they are on-going topics, which, as expected cross-linguistically, are zero NPs. And, as Gerdtts and Hukari (2003, 2004) note, overt subjects are used for “refreshing” a topic after a string of zero subjects, and that most often simple demonstratives are used for this purpose.

If we take only the third-person applied objects into account (setting aside first- and second-person applied objects and subjects of passive applicatives), 42% of applied objects are zero while 58% are overt. This is comparable to the 38% versus 62% of third-person objects found in the Gerdtts and Hukari sample of simple transitive clauses. Thus, the type of the applied NP seems to relate more to the grammatical relation of the NP than to its topicality: the close link of topic to subject in Salish skews the results. In sum, the Salish facts deviate from the cross-linguistic pattern reported by Peterson (1999) and thus are worthy of further study.

## 5 Conclusion

The results of this study are somewhat preliminary since our data sample was small. Nevertheless, our research has revealed that in most cases the applied object has discourse prominence. Either the outcome of the action affecting the object is central to the story or the applied object itself is highly topical. Thus, the NP is worthy of being cast as an argument rather than an oblique. The function of applicatives thus parallels the function of passives, which are used in many languages to place a patient that is more central than the agent into the subject position.

Our study also shows that applied objects tend to rank high on the person/animacy hierarchy. When inanimate NPs, such as things or locations, are expressed as applied objects, they are important to the storyline or to the main character and are thus highly topical. We conclude that the person/animacy effects attested in our data sample are just a reflection of the centrality of the applied object.

Examination of the NP type of the applied object, along the lines of the givenness hierarchy, proved inconclusive. Linking topic to zero expression, while it may be useful in treating the subjects in Salish languages, seems un insightful in the analysis of applied objects. Applied objects follow the pattern of general objects in Salish languages: they are expressed as overt NPs around 60% of the time.

The functions of the applicative are only revealed when the data are examined in their textual setting. As more texts from Salish languages become available, especially in electronic format, a more precise study will be possible.

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