

**SECWEPemCTSÍN INDEPENDENT PRONOUNS:
EVIDENCE FOR SUBJECT - OBJECT ASYMMETRY**

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0. Introduction¹

Secwepemctsin is a Northern Interior Salish language. The independent pronouns in this language, and in the entire Salish family, have been relatively unexplored. This paper will present a preliminary analysis on the syntactic behaviour of these independent pronouns.

Section 1 gives a brief overview of Secwepemc syntax; section 1.2 presents the full Secwepemc pronominal paradigm, including an introduction to the independent pronouns and the characteristics that they exhibit. The syntactic behaviour of independent pronouns are presented in section 2. Based on the syntactic behaviour of independent pronouns, sections 2.1 to 2.3 show that there is a subject - object structural asymmetry, supporting a configurational view of Secwepemctsin.

1. Secwepemctsin

1.1 Overview of Secwepemctsin

In Secwepemctsin, the predicate is marked by pronominal clitics and affixes, with nothing else needing to be present (1-4).

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | wikt-(t)-ø-s ²
see-tr-3sg.obj-3sg.subj
He _i saw him _j |
| 2 | Secwécpemc-ken
Shuswap-1sg.ind
I am Shuswap |
| 3 | pelq'-ilc-ø
leave-aut-3sg.ind
He left |
| 4 | tsu-n-t-ø-ém
punch-fc-tr-3sg.obj-pas
He was punched |

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²Suffixes in brackets are those merged with the root or another neighbouring suffix due to phonological reasons.

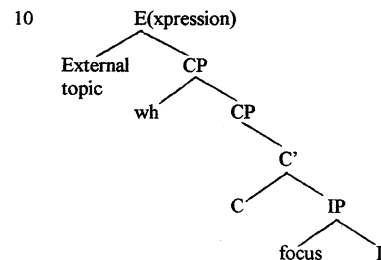
Overt DPs are optional (5, 6)³, and when they are present, the most common word orders are SVO and VOS, although VSO is also possible because order of post-predicate nominals is free (7, 8).

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| 5 | pelq'-ilc-ø re John
leave-aut-3sg.ind det John
John left | |
| 6 | tsu-n-t-ø-ém re John
punch-fc-tr-3sg.obj-pas det John
John was punched | |
| 7 | wikt-(t)-ø-s re John re Mary
see-tr-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det John det Mary
John saw Mary / Mary saw John | |
| 8 | wikt-(t)-ø-s re Mary re John
see-tr-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det Mary det John
John saw Mary / Mary saw John | |

If there is only *one* post-verbal overt nominal in a transitive clause, it is the object. This constraint is known as the "One nominal constraint".

- | | |
|---|--|
| 9 | wikt-(t)-ø-s re John
see-tr-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det John
S/he saw John / *John saw him/her |
|---|--|

Only the subject, but not the object, can appear to the left of the verb unless A' extraction has taken place. The pre-verbal positions available in a clause are: a) external topic position, b) wh position, and c) focus position. All three positions can be filled at one time. These positions are shown in (10).



The external topic is base-generated; this is the position for dislocated nominals, and is equivalent to nominals following "as for..." in English. The wh-position is adjoined to CP, but it is not limited to wh words. It can be occupied by clefted elements. The position referred to as the focus position is the position for preverbal subjects. The term "focus" is used differently from the way it is generally used (Gardiner, 1993).

³I assume the DP Hypothesis (Abney 1987)

Since Secwepemctsin exhibits characteristics of non-configurationality⁴, it has often been classified as a non-configurational language, with a relatively flat structure. However, Gardiner(1993) shows that Secwepemctsin is highly restrictive in its binding possibilities. He has therefore claimed Secwepemctsin to be a configurational language. The characteristics exhibited by independent pronouns, to be presented in this paper, will support Gardiner's claim.

1.2 Secwepemctsin Pronouns

1.2.1 Pronominal Paradigms

It has been mentioned in the previous section that Secwepemctsin pronouns are usually clitics or affixes attached to the predicate of a clause. The full pronominal paradigms are shown in the following tables.

11 Intransitive Clitic Paradigm (Clitics)

	1 sg.	2 sg.	3 sg.	1 pl. incl.	1 pl. excl.	2 pl.	3 pl.
Indicative	-ken	-k	-Ø	-kt	-kucw	-kp	-Ø
Conjunctive	-wen	-(w)cw	-(w)s	-(w)t	-kucw	-(w)p	-(w)s
Possessive	n-	-7	-s	-kt	-kucw	-mp	-s

12 Transitive Suffix Paradigm (Suffixes)

1 sg.	2 sg.	3 sg.	1 pl. incl.	1 pl. excl.	2 pl.	3 pl.
-(é)n	-(é)c	-(é)s	-(é)t/-(é)m	-kucw	-(é)p	-(é)s

13 Object paradigm (Suffixes)

1 sg.	2 sg.	3 sg.	1 pl. incl.	1 pl. excl.	2 pl.	3 pl.
-séem/-sm-	-sí-/s-	Ø	-él/-l-	-kucw	-úlm-/lm-	Ø

In transitive sentences, the object always precedes the subject.

In addition to the clitic and affixal paradigms, there is a separate set of pronouns in Secwepemctsin. Since this set of pronouns are free morphemes and behave like independent lexical items, as opposed to the bound status of the pronominal clitics and suffixes, I will refer to them with the analysis-neutral term, "independent pronouns"⁵. These are used in intensifying contexts only, to emphasize the reference to a particular nominal⁶ in the discourse context (14, 15). The independent pronouns are anaphorically related to a referent available either deictically or in the discourse, and they are used to place contrastive, or narrow, focus on the intensified referent⁷. An independent pronoun can appear adjacent to and on the left of its overt referent, as in (14), or without an overt referent in the sentence, as in (15a, b). Regardless of the referent, the pronominal suffix or clitic on the predicate is always present. The full independent pronoun paradigm is given in table (16).

⁴Characteristics of non-configurational languages include free word order, use of discontinuous expressions, and free or frequent pro-drop. (Gardiner 1993, Davis 1997b and reference therein.)

⁵These independent pronouns are generally known as "emphatic pronouns" across Salish languages because of their function to emphasize.

⁶This restriction is in accordance with Cardinaletti (1994) claim that if there is more than one set of pronouns, the strong set (in this case the independent pronouns) can only have a limited set of referents, which must be [+human].

⁷Time and space limits prevent me from a full discussion of what it means to be focused at this point.

14 [nwi7-s re Mary] ts'um'-qs-en-Ø-s re John
[emph-3sg.poss det Mary] lick-nose-fc-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det John
Mary herself kissed John⁸

15 a [nwi7-s] ts'um'-qs-en-Ø-s re Mary
emph-3sg.poss lick-nose-fc-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det Mary
He himself kissed Mary

b tsú.ts'.em-qs-en-tsem-s [newi7-s]
lick(redup)-nose-fc-1sg.obj-3sg.subj emph-3sg.poss
He himself kissed me

16 Independent pronominal paradigm (adopted from Kuipers 1974)⁹

1 sg.	2 sg.	3 sg.
n-tse.ts-we7	7-enwi7	newi7-s
1sg.poss-tse(redup)-deic	2sg.poss-emph	emph-3sg.poss
1 pl. incl.	1 pl. excl.	2 pl.
wll-enwi7-kt	wll-enwi7-s-kucw	wll-enwi7-mp
pl-emph-1pl.inc.poss	pl-emph-3sg.poss-excl	pl-emph-2pl.poss
		pl-emph-3sg.poss

1.2.2 Characteristics of Secwepemctsin Independent Pronouns

Independent pronouns in Secwepemctsin can be arguments. Although Salish arguments in general are accompanied by a determiner, independent pronouns in Secwepemctsin are never accompanied by determiners, except for the first person singular.

17 wí.w.kt-(t)-Ø-en re n-tsétswe7
see(redup)-tr-3sg.obj-1sg.subj det 1sg.poss-emph
I myself saw him

18 a re John wikt-(t)-Ø-s re Mary
det John see-tr-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det Mary
John saw Mary

b newi7-s wikt-(t)-Ø-s re Mary
emph-3sg.poss see-tr-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det Mary
He himself saw Mary

⁸Italicized pronominals in English translations throughout this paper reflect the emphasis expressed by Secwepemctsin independent pronouns. Although the function of Secwepemctsin independent pronouns is similar to that of the intensifier function of English reflexive *-self*, and is translated as so in this paper, the intensifying pronouns of Secwepemctsin and English cannot be equated, since English *-self* can never appear on its own; for example, the English equivalent of (15a) is ungrammatical: **Himself kissed Mary*.

⁹The independent pronouns are all composed of a stem (henceforth "emphatic stem") and the possessive clitic. The emphatic stem for the first singular form is different from the rest of the paradigm. According to Newman (1977), the first person singular stem in Secwepemctsin is derived from the proto-Salish first person singular emphatic stem *ʔəmfá, while the stem for the rest of the Shuswap paradigm is derived from the proto-Salish second person singular stem *nəwi.

Independent pronouns can also be predicates (19), which in Salish typically do not take determiners (19, 20)¹⁰.

19 a *re newi7-s re wikt-(t)-ø-m-es
 *det emph-3sg.poss det see-tr-3sg.obj-pas-3sg.conj
 It is *him* that saw him/her

b newi7-s re wikt-(t)-ø-m-es
 emph-3sg.poss det see-tr-3sg.obj-pas-3sg.conj
 It is *him* that saw him/her

20 a *re John re wikt-(t)-ø-m-es
 *det John det see-tr-3sg.obj-pas-3sg.conj
 It is John that saw him/her

b John re wikt-(t)-ø-m-es
 John det see-tr-3sg.obj-pas-3sg.conj
 It is John that saw him/her

Independent pronouns display an interesting human effect: They cannot refer to inanimates or animals. Instead, they always refer to humans. This is consistent with Cardinaletti's (1994) claim that strong pronouns crosslinguistically refer to [+human] elements.

21 re mélemst'ye illen-ø-s re ts'í
 det wolf eat-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det deer
 The wolf ate the deer

22 *newi7-s illen-ø-s re ts'í
 *emph-3sg.poss eat-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det deer
 It *itself* ate the deer

Independent pronouns can also be the possessor in a DP.

23 xwe.xwí-c-t-ø-en newi7-s te úq'wi-s
 like(redup)-ben-tr-3sg.obj-1sg.subj emph-3sg.poss obl sibling.of.same.sex-3sg.poss
 I like *his* brother

There can be no more than one independent pronoun per clause¹¹.

24 *re John xwíst-ø-és re Mary,
 *det John like-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det Mary,
 ts'úm-qs-en-ø-s newi7-s newi7-s
 lick-nose-fc-3sg.obj-3sg.subj emph-3sg.poss emph-3sg.poss

John likes Mary, *3rd person emphatic* kisses *3rd person emphatic* (uninterpretable)

25 *re John xwíst-ø-és re Mary,
 *det John like-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det Mary,
 re newi7-s ts'úm-qs-en-ø-s re newi7-s
 det emph-3sg.poss lick-nose-fc-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det emph-3sg.poss

John likes Mary, *3rd person emphatic* kisses *3rd person emphatic* (uninterpretable)

1.2.3 The Construction of Secwepemctsin Independent Pronouns

1.2.3.1 Internal Construction

Although an independent pronoun can function as a unit per se, as an argument, or as a predicate, the fact that independent pronouns in Secwepemctsin are all marked by possessive clitics (see table in (16)) suggests that they are not single morpheme items, and that they must have internal structure.

The first person singular form is composed of the first person singular possessive clitic, *n-*, the first person singular emphatic stem (often appearing in reduplicated form) *-tse.ts-*, and the deictic marker *-we7*, no longer productive (Newman 1977). The rest of the paradigm consists of the emphatic stem *-nwi7-*, derived from the proto-Salish second person singular stem *-nawi-*, and the appropriate possessive clitic. In addition, the plural independent pronouns contain the affix *wll-*, 'group of people', 'collective plural'. Since *wll-* and *-we7* are never separated from independent pronouns and are never dropped, they are syntactically invisible, and I will simply analyze them as being part of the pronouns themselves.

1.2.3.2 Independent Pronouns and Determiners.

According to Kuipers (1974:59), who did research on the Northern dialect of Secwepemctsin, the singular independent pronouns are all recorded with articles *re* (present absolutive actual determinate article, which I gloss as (*present*) *determiner*) or *te* (relative actual determinate article, which I gloss as *oblique (determiner)*), but not any other article. This is so even in predicate position (26).

26 re n-tsétswe7 I wcosté-ø-c¹²
 det 1sg.poss-emph det mention-3sg.obj-2sg.subj
 I am the one you mentioned (Kuipers 1974:117, line 39)

This paper concentrates on the Southern dialect of Secwepemctsin, which does not have any determiner (either *re* or *te*) co-occurring with independent pronouns¹³, even when an ordinary argument nominal would require one in the same position (27-29)¹⁴.

¹²*l-* is the absent determiner.

¹³According to Newman (1977), Halq'emeylem is the only Salish language where determiners are found on independent pronouns.

¹⁴The only counterexample to this is with the first person singular independent pronoun. However, *re* is sometimes judged to be optional in the predicate position with, and only with, the first person independent pronoun. Such judgments suggest that *re* may have been merged into the first person singular independent pronoun. I will treat these cases as exceptional.

re n-tsétswe7 re wikt-(t)-ø-m-es
 det 1sg.poss-emph det see-tr-3sg.obj-pas-3sg.conj
 It is I that saw him.

¹⁰There are counterexamples to this claim in the Southern Interior and in Upper Chahalis (Matthewson, 1996).

¹¹Martina Wiltschko (pc): Galloway claims that in Halq'emeylem, when both arguments in a transitive clause are third person independent pronouns, VSO word order is preferred (presumably to disambiguate); if there is only one independent pronoun, the word order does not matter.

- 27 re John wikt-(t)-ø-s re Mary
 det John see-tr-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det Mary
 John saw Mary
- 28 newi7-s wikt-(t)-ø-s re Mary
 emph-3sg.poss see-tr-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det Mary
 He himself saw Mary
- 29 *re newi7-s wikt-(t)-ø-s re Mary
 *re emph-3sg.poss see-tr-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det Mary
 He himself saw Mary

Although the lack of determiners accompanying Southern independent pronouns may arise from the fact that speakers of this dialect often delete *re* [ɣə] phonologically, the possibility ultimately does not hold due to the following reasons.

A) Even if *re* is dropped due to phonological reasons, there is no reason for *te* to be absent in cases where a Northern independent pronoun would have it, since there has not been any known case of *te* deletion in Southern Secwepemctsin. In (30, 31) below, the sentences are grammatical in the Northern dialect, but ungrammatical in the southern dialect.

- 30 */ te n-tsétswe7 re wikt-(t)-ø-m-es
 */ obl 1sg.poss-emph det see-tr-3sg.obj-pas-3sg.conj
 I'm the one who saw him (It is I that saw him)
- 31 */ te 7-enwi7 re wikt-(t)-ø-m-es
 */ obl 2sg.poss-emph det see-tr-3sg.obj-pas-3sg.conj
 You're the one that saw him (It is you that saw him)

B) The language consultant offers strong intuitions about the presence or absence of determiners. She is able to distinguish between cases where “*re* is there, but you just don't hear it”, versus cases where *re* is simply absent.

Facts A and B thus illustrate that with regards to determiners on Secwepemctsin independent pronouns, the difference between the Northern and the Southern dialects cannot be explained simply by phonological deletion; rather, the dialects are operating on two distinct systems.

2 Syntactic Behaviour of Independent Pronouns

Although there is evidence that there are syntactic asymmetries in Secwepemctsin, these asymmetries have all been attributed to the distinction of ergative versus absolutive arguments. While the ergative-absolutive distinction does in fact exist, as illustrated in section 3.1, I will show in sections 3.2 to 3.4 that there indeed is structural asymmetry between subjects and objects in Secwepemctsin.

2.1 Cleft Constructions

In Secwepemctsin cleft sentences, the clefted element is base-generated at the left edge of the sentence, and it is predicative. A lower clause within the clausal DP is present containing a predicate and operator movement of the empty argument to the *wh* position. When the clefted element is an absolutive-marked argument (object),

nothing happens to the lower predicate (32). When the clefted element is an ergative-marked argument (transitive subject)¹⁵, conjunctive morphology and passive marking are triggered on the lower predicate (33).

- 32 Scott xwe.xwistét-ø-en
 Scott like(redup)-3sg.obj-1sg.subj
 It is Scott that I like
- 33 (*re) John wikt-(t)-ø-m-es
 (*det) John see-tr-3sg.obj-pas-3sg.conj
 It is John who saw him/her / *It is he who saw John

Independent pronouns behave just like these nominal predicates in terms of extraction facts. There is no change to the lower predicate with a clefted absolutive (34), while conjunctive morphology accompanies forms where the ergative argument (subject) is clefted (35, 36).

- 34 newi7-s xwe.xwistét-ø-en
 emph-3sg.poss like(redup)-3sg.obj-1sg.subj
 It is him that I like
- 35 newi7-s wikt-(t)-ø-m-es
 emph-3sg.poss see-tr-3sg.obj-pas-3sg.conj
 He himself saw him/her
- 36 7-enwi7 wikt-(t)-ø-m-es
 2sg.poss-emph see-tr-3sg.ind-pas-3sg.conj
 You saw him/her
- 37 ?7-enwi7 wikt-(t)-ø-c
 ?2sg.poss-emph see-tr-3sg.obj-2sg.subj
 You saw him/her

Note that although (36) and (37) are both grammatical, and mean the same thing, the consultant prefers (36), the clefted sentence, for greater emphasis on 7-*newi7*, ‘you’.

Thus, cleft facts show that there is a difference between subjects/ergative-marked arguments versus objects/absolutive-marked arguments. Whether this is a pure structural distinction (subject versus object positions) or an ergative versus absolutive distinction is the subject of the following section.

2.2 Subject - Object Asymmetry

2.2.1 Transitive Clauses

It has been shown that post-verbal nominals exhibit free word order (38). While the only restriction on DP arguments in relation to predicates is that only the subject can be preverbal in the canonical word order (39), there is a further limitation on independent pronouns. Independent pronouns prefer to be the subject of a clause in contexts where the arguments are all third person. This is so regardless of whether the independent pronoun is

¹⁵Secwepemctsin is a split-ergative language. Subjects of transitive clauses are ergative, while objects of transitive clauses and subjects of intransitive clauses are absolutive.

pre-verbal or post-verbal (40, 41). Readings where an independent pronoun is interpreted as the object are not possible.

- 38 wikt-(t)- \emptyset -s re Mary re John
see-tr-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det Mary det John
Mary saw John / John saw Mary
- 39 re Mary wikt-(t)- \emptyset -s re John
det Mary see-tr-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det John
Mary saw John / *John saw Mary
- 40 wikt-(t)- \emptyset -s re John newi7-s
see-tr-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det John emph-3sg.poss
He *himself* saw John / *John saw *him*
- 41 newi7-s wikt-(t)- \emptyset -s re John
emph-3sg.poss see-tr-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det John
He *himself* saw John / *John saw *him*

Independent pronouns' preference for subject orientation is also true for cases where the independent pronoun appears adjacent to its overt referent. In (42) the pronoun is subject oriented, and in (43) the pronoun is object oriented.

- 42 [newi7-s re Mary] ts'um-qs-en- \emptyset -s re John
[emph-3sg.poss det Mary] lick-nose-fc-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det John
Mary *herself* kissed John
- 43 *ts'um-qs-en- \emptyset -s [newi7-s re John]
*lick-nose-fc-3sg.obj-3sg.subj [emph-3sg.poss det John]
Someone/he/she kissed *John himself*

(44) below presents an interesting case. It is marginal because it is caught in a conflict of grammatical constraints. The one nominal effect (section 1.1) forces the post-verbal overt DP (independent pronoun) to be the object, while the independent pronoun prefers to be the subject of the clause. The sentence cannot satisfy both restrictions at the same time, and becomes difficult for the consultant to interpret. (45), on the other hand, satisfies both constraints, and is therefore grammatical.

- 44 ?wikt-(t)- \emptyset -s newi7-s
?see-tr-3sg.obj-3sg.subj emph-3sg.poss
He *himself* saw someone / *Someone saw *him/her*
- 45 newi7-s wikt-(t)- \emptyset -s
emph-3sg.poss see-tr-3sg.obj-3sg.subj
He *himself* saw something/somebody

In sentences with non-third person independent pronominal arguments, there appears to be no asymmetrical restriction for independent pronouns' subject orientation. The sentences below are judged to be grammatical by the language consultant.

- 46 a wi.w.kt-(t)- \emptyset -en n-tsetswe7
see(redup)-tr-3sg.obj-1sg.subj 1sg.poss-emph
I saw him (you didn't)
- b n-tsetswe7 wi.w.k-t- \emptyset -en
1sg.poss-emph see(redup)-tr-3sg.obj-1sg.subj
I saw him (you didn't)
- 47 wi.w.kt-(t)-sem-s n-tsetswe7
see(redup)-tr-1sg.obj-3sg.subj 1sg.poss-emph
He saw *me* / It's *myself* that he saw

The fact that independent pronouns can only be interpreted as the subject, and not the object, of a transitive clause with two third person arguments can lead to two interpretations: A) There is an asymmetry between subjects and objects, and B) There is an asymmetry between ergative arguments and absolutive arguments.

The next section will show that interpretation B is the correct one.

2.2.2 Intransitive Clauses

The variety of intransitive predicates shown below illustrates that the subject restriction for independent pronouns is indeed based on the property of the syntactic subject, and not on semantic roles or ergative/absolutive distinctions, which are unavailable in intransitive clauses because of Secwepemctsin's having a split-ergativity system. (48-50) show intransitive clauses with independent pronoun arguments without overt referent in the same clause, and (51) shows intransitive clauses with independent pronoun arguments adjacent to their overt referents.

- 48 a lecús-k 7-enwi7
pretty-2sg.ind 2sg.poss-emph
It is *you* who is pretty
- b 7-enwi7 lecús-k
2sg.poss-emph pretty-2sg.ind
It is *you* who is pretty
- 49 a qwetséts-kt will-enwi7-kt
leave-1pl.ind pl-emph-1pl.poss
We are the ones that left
- b will-enwi7-kt qwetséts-kt
pl-emph-1pl.poss leave-1pl.ind
We are the ones that left
- 50 a setsinem- \emptyset newi7-s
sing-3sg.ind emph-3sg.poss
It is *her* that sings.

- b newi7-s setsinem- \emptyset
 emph-3sg.poss sing-3sg.ind
 It is *her* that sings.
- 51 a setsinem- \emptyset newi7-s re Mary
 sing-3sg.ind emph-3sg.poss det Mary
 It is *Mary herself* that sings.
- b newi7-s re Mary setsinem- \emptyset
 emph-3sg.poss det Mary sing-3sg.ind
 It is *Mary herself* that sings.

2.2.3 Promotion to Subject

There has been an extensive debate among Salish linguists regarding the passive construction, centering around the question of whether the patient truly achieves syntactic subject status in a passivized sentence (see Blake 1997 and references therein). The use of independent pronouns shows evidence that patients indeed get promoted to subject, and this promotion is only possible if there is a subject - object asymmetry.

(52, 53) are two ordinary transitive sentences. (53) cannot be interpreted as “*Mary kissed he himself*” because the independent pronoun cannot be interpreted as the object. This is the constraint I will reinforce presently.

- 52 ts'um-qs-en- \emptyset -s re John re Mary
 kiss-ls-fc-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det John re Mary
 John kissed Mary/Mary kissed John
- 53 ts'um-qs-en- \emptyset -s newi7-s re Mary
 kiss-ls-fc-3sg.obj-3sg.subj emph-3sg.poss re Mary
He himself kissed Mary / *Mary kissed *he himself*

Passivization in Secwepemctsin is achieved by replacing the subject suffix with the passive marker *-m* on the predicate. The semantic object (theme or experiencer) is promoted to become the syntactic subject, and the semantic subject (agent) is demoted so that no marking on the predicate is present, and the overt agent DP is either marked with an oblique *te* or completely disappears (54).

(54) is the passivized counterpart of one reading of (52). (55) shows that the derived subject DP can be replaced by an independent pronoun, evidence for subject status.

- 54 ts'um-qs-en-t- \emptyset -em (te John) re Mary
 lick-nose-fc-tr-3sg.obj-pas obl John det Mary
 Mary was kissed (by John)
- 55 ts'um-qs-en-t- \emptyset -em (te John) newi7-s
 lick-nose-fc-tr-3sg.obj-pas (obl John) emph-3sg.poss
She herself was kissed (by John)

After the semantic subject (agent) is demoted, it can no longer be an independent pronoun. Compare the ungrammatical sentence in (56) with the grammatical sentence in (53). The semantic roles of *newi7-s* are exactly the same; it is the syntactic status that makes them different.

- 56 *ts'um-qs-en-t- \emptyset -em [te newi7-s] re Mary
 lick-nose-fc-tr-3sg.obj-pas [obl emph-3sg.poss] det Mary
 Mary was kissed by *him*

The distinction between non-passivized transitive sentences and passivized sentences shown here presents important evidence that promotion of the object *does* result in a new derived subject. Passivization in Secwepemctsin indeed has syntactic promotion of the object to subject, and demotion of the agent to oblique status. It is not merely a process of eliminating the ergative argument. Moreover, the syntactic asymmetry between the subject and object positions also support Gardiner's claim that Secwepemctsin is a configurational language.

2.3 Discourse factor

There is a possibility that the subject - object asymmetry is a result of discourse factors, and not structural configurationality. Subjects more easily correspond to topics, and pronouns also more easily correspond to topics. The relationship between topicality, subject, and pronoun may give rise to the observation that independent pronouns prefer to be in subject position and not in object position. Although this is a likely scenario, a resolution is available which overturns the topicality explanation.

In the examples given in this section, all the utterances are introduced by a “like” clause: *John likes Mary*, or *Mary likes John*. This is to establish the person who likes as the discourse topic and to set up the person who is liked as an available discourse referent. The second clause of each utterance, the “kiss” clause, contains an independent pronoun argument.

All things being equal, the independent pronoun in the second clause is associated with the discourse topic *and* the subject of the “like” clause.

- 57 re John xwist- \emptyset -és re Mary,
 det John like-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det Mary,
 ts'um-qs-en- \emptyset -s newi7-s re Mary
 lick-nose-fc-3sg.obj-3sg.subj emph-3sg.poss det Mary
 John likes Mary, *he himself* kisses Mary / *Mary kisses *he himself*
 *He kisses Mary *herself*
- 58 re John xwist- \emptyset -és re Mary,
 det John like-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det Mary,
 ts'um-qs-en- \emptyset -s re Mary newi7-s
 lick-nose-fc-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det Mary emph-3sg.poss
 John likes Mary, *he himself* kisses Mary / *Mary kisses *he himself*
 *He kisses Mary *herself*

Given free post-predicate nominal order, *ts'um-qs-en- \emptyset -s newi7-s re Mary* (as in 57) could have three possible readings: a) *He himself* kisses Mary, b) Mary kisses *he himself*, and c) He kisses *Mary herself*.¹⁷ Given that VOS is a more common word order than VSO, reading (b) should be preferred. The sentence could also be

¹⁷The reading ‘*Mary herself* kisses him’ is unavailable because of the one nominal constraint.

interpreted as reading (c), with 'Mary' being the overt referent. Yet, the independent pronoun resists any reading in which it is associated with the object of the "like" clause, resulting in reading (a) being the only grammatical reading.

Even in questionable utterances (59) and (60)¹⁸, the only possible reading is for the independent pronoun to be subject oriented within the clause, disregarding the established topic.

59 ?re John xwist-ø-és re Mary,
 ?det John like-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det Mary,
 ts'úm-qs-en-ø-s newí7-s re John
 lick-nose-fc-3sg.obj-3sg.subj emph-3sg.poss det John

??John likes Mary, *she herself* kisses John (the only possible reading)

60 ?re John xwist-ø-és re Mary,
 ?det John like-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det Mary, lick-nose-fc-3sg.obj-3sg.subj
 ts'úm-qs-en-ø-s re John newí7-s
 lick-nose-fc-3sg.obj-3sg.subj det John emph-3sg.poss

??John likes Mary, *she herself* kisses John (the only possible reading)

The judgments on the above sentences show that the subject restriction for independent pronouns is at play, and that it is not simply that the independent pronoun prefers to be coreferent with the established discourse topic.

3 Conclusion

I have shown that Secwepemctsin independent pronouns, which function as intensifiers, can be predicates as well as arguments. Being the strong pronouns of the language, they can only refer to humans, but not animals or inanimates. A brief discussion of the internal construction of independent pronouns also took place.

I established, through clefts, transitive clauses, intransitive clauses, and passives, that not only is there an ergative-absolutive distinction, a clear structural asymmetry between subjects and objects exist. This asymmetry manifests itself in the independent pronouns' preference to be subject oriented in clauses containing two third person arguments. Thus, the behaviour of independent pronouns supports the claim that Secwepemctsin is a configurational language that exhibits non-flat syntactic structure.

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¹⁸The reason for the questionable status of (56, 57) may be that they are pragmatically strained.

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APPENDIX A: ABBREVIATIONS

aut	autonomous	o	object
caus	causative	obl	oblique
conj	conjunctive	obj	object
det	determiner	obv	obviative
perf	perfect	pas	passive
dir	direction	pl	plural
emph	emphatic	poss	possessive
excl	exclusive	ptc	particle
fc	full control	redup	reduplication
hab	habitual	s	subject
ind	indicative	sg	singular
intr	intransitive	subj	subject
irr	irrealis	top	topic
lex.sx	lexical suffix	tr	transitive
neg	negative	unsp	unspecified
nom	nominative		

APPENDIX B: KEY TO SECWPEMCTSÍN/SHUSWAP ORTHOGRAPHY:

Ortho- graphy	Phonemic script	Ortho- graphy	Phonemic script	Ortho- graphy	Phonemic script	Ortho- graphy	Phonemic script
p	p	l	l	x	ɣ	ʔ	ʔ
p'	p'	l'	l'	xw	ɣ ^w	e	ə
m	m	k	k	r	ʎ		
m'	m'	k'	k'	r'	ʎ'		
t	t	kw	k ^w	g	ŋ		
ts	tʃ	kw'	k ^{w'}	gw	ŋ ^w		
ts'	ts'	c	x	gw'	ŋ ^{w'}		
s	s	cw	x ^w	h	h		
n	n	q	q	w	w		
n'	n'	q'	q'	w'	w'		
t'	ʎ	qw	q ^w	y	y		
ll	ʎ'	qw'	q ^{w'}	y'	y'		