Missing determiner/complementizers in wh-questions. Evidence from Sḵwx̱wú7mesh and Halq'eméylem[1]

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According to standard analyses, Salish wh-questions are formed by means of clefting. In this construction, the cleft is introduced by a determiner/complementizer. In this paper, we present preliminary data on a previously unnoticed pattern in Upriver Halq'eméyelem and Sḵwx̱wú7mesh where the determiner/complementizer is missing. We discuss several well-formedness conditions associated with this pattern and suggest possible avenues for a formal analysis.

1 The phenomenon

Core argument wh-questions in Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (henceforth Sḵ) and Upriver Halq'eméylem (henceforth UHk) can be formed by the pattern of wh-questions found across the Salish family. That is, the wh-word is in initial position, followed by a determiner/complementizer which is followed in turn by the remaining clause[2,3]:

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[1] We would like to thank the Halkomelem elders Elizabeth Herrling, Elizabeth Phillips and the late Rosaleen George for sharing their knowledge of Halq'eméylem. Original Halkomelem data belongs to the Stó:lō nation language program (Stó:lō Shxwelí). We would also like to thank the Squamish elders the late Lawrence Baker, the late Tina Cole, Lena Jacobs, Yvonne Joseph, the late Eva Lewis, and Margaret Locke. Original Squamish data are the property of the Squamish Nation Education Department. Data presented in this paper stems from original fieldwork. This research is funded by the Squamish Nation Education Department and by SSHRC grant #410-1998-1597 to Henry Davis and SSHRC grant #410-2002-1078 awarded to Martina Wiltschko.

[2] We use the term "determiner/complementizer" to refer to the functional element that follows the wh-word (*kwi* in Sḵ and *kw'e* in UHk). At this point we are agnostic as to whether this element is a complementizer or a determiner. Note also that the subject agreement on the verb is lost in case the subject is extracted ((1)a and (2)a) (see Gerdts 1988 among others).

[3] All data are presented in the official orthographies. The key to the Hk orthography is as follows a = æ or ɛ; ch = tʃ, ch' = tʃ', e (between palatals) = ɪ, e (between labials) = ʊ, e (elsewhere) = ə, lh = ɬ, o = a, ō = o, xw = xʷ, x̱ = χ, y = j, sh = ʃ, th = θ, th' = tθ', tl' = tɬ', ts = c, ts' = c', x = x or xʲ, x̱w = χʷ, ' = ʔ, ´ = high pitch stress, ˋ = mid pitch stress (Galloway 1980 for discussion on this orthography and Galloway 1993 on the properties of stress in Upriver Halkomelem). The key to the Sḵ orthography is as follows: e = ə, i = i, e or E, u = u, o, or O, ch = tʃ, ch' = tʃ', lh = ɬ, tl' = tȯ', kw = kw̓, kw' = k'w̓, xw = xw̓, x̱

(1) a. Swat kwi na kw'ach-nexw alhi slhanay'? *Sk*
Who D/C RL see-TRANS DEM.FEM. woman
'Who saw the woman?'

b. Stam kwi na huy'-s-t-as alhi slhanay'?
What D/C RL finish-CAUS-TRANS-3S DEM.FEM woman
'What did the woman eat?'

(2) a. Tewat kw'e i-lh kw'ets-lexw the slhàli? *UHk*
Who D/C AUX see-TRANS DET.FEM woman
'Who saw the woman?'

b. Stam kw'e i-lh lepex-es the slhàli?
What D/C AUX–PAST eat-3S DET.FEM woman
'What did the woman eat?'

The analysis most commonly assumed for this type of wh-questions is that of a cleft. Under this analysis, the question word is base-generated in its initial position, and the determiner/complementizer introduces a relative clause, which presumably contains an empty operator (OP). The OP moves to a higher position, leaving behind an empty category (e), as in (3).

(3) [Q-word] [*OP*... KW .....*e*]$_{\text{RELATIVE CLAUSE}}$

This kind of question formation is reminiscent of the English questions in (4), except that in Salish languages (including Sḵ and UHk) copulas and expletives are generally absent.

(4) a. [who] is it [*OP* that *e* saw the woman]

b. [what] is it [*OP* that the woman ate *e*]

In this paper, we discuss a pattern which (to our knowledge) has not yet been discussed in the literature. This pattern appears to be similar to the one in (1) and (2), except that the determiner/complementizer is missing. Following

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= q, ḵ' = q', ḵw = qW, ḵw' = q'W, x̲ = X, x̲w = XW, y' = j', 7 = ʔ. Abbreviations used are as follows: 1 = 1st person, 2 = 2nd person, 3 = 3rd person, appl = applicative, asp = aspect, aux = auxiliary, caus = causative, comp = complementizer, cont = continuative, d/c = determiner/complementizer, dem = demonstrative, det = determiner, fem = feminine, fut = future, impf = imperfect, indep = independent pronoun, intrans = intransitive marker, irr = irrealis, lnk = linker, neg = negation, nom = nominalizer, o = object, obl = oblique, pass = passive (object) agreement, passive = passive marker, past = past tense, poss = possessive subject, pref = unglossed prefix, pl = plural, poss = possessive agreement, rl =realis, rln = relational, Q = question marker, s = subject, ser = serial, sg = singular, ss = subjunctive subject agreement, trans = transitive.

Kroeber 1999, we refer to this pattern as "*unmarked fronting*". This pattern is exemplified in (5) and (6).

(5) a. Swat na kw'ach-nexw alhi slhanay'? *Sk*
Who RL see-TRANS DEM.FEM. woman
'Who saw the woman?'

b. Stam na huy'-s-t-as alhi slhanay'?
What RL finish-CAUS-TRANS-3S DEM.FEM woman
'What did the woman eat?'

(6) a. Tewat i-lh kw'éts-lexw the slháli? *UHk*
Who AUX-PAST see-TRANS DET.FEM woman
'Who saw the woman?'

b. Stam i-lh lépex-es the slháli?
What AUX-PAST eat-3S DET.FEM woman
'What did the woman eat?'

At first glance, the only difference between the two patterns is the presence or absence of the determiner/complementizer as shown in (7).

(7) a. [Q-word] [*OP* KW.....*e*]$_{\text{RELATIVE CLAUSE}}$ *Cleft*

b. [Q-word] [.....]$_{?}$ *Unmarked fronting*

At this point it is not clear what the status of the remaining clause is (as indicated by the question mark in (7)b); we will return to this question in section 6. Consequently, the goal of this paper is a very modest one, namely to provide some initial data on this phenomenon, which has some peculiar and currently ill-understood restrictions associated with it. It is important to note at the outset that a violation of these restrictions does not always lead to strict ungrammaticality. However, at this point we have not been able to determine whether this has to do with speaker variation, contextual knowledge or some other phenomenon.

The paper is organized as follows. In section 2, we discuss previous descriptions of wh-questions; in section 3 we turn to wh-questions involving core vs. oblique arguments; in section 4 we discuss restrictions associated with the question word; in section 5 we present restrictions associated with the remaining clause; and in section 6, we discuss the implications of the data.

2 Previous descriptions

The pattern containing the determiner/complementizer is the one attested in most Salish languages (see Kroeber 1999, Davis et al. 1993).

(8) a. Wa-s-ck ti=ka-ƛ'ap *Bella Coola*
who-3S.SU-DUBITATIVE DET=IRR-go
'Who, I wonder, will go?'

b. gat k^{w}=pə-pn-aš-ax^{w}-uɬ *Comox*
who DET=IMPF-bury-TRANS-2S.TRANS.S-PAST
'Who were you burying?'

c. g^{w}at k^{w}i=q^{w}ə-k^{w}áx^{w}-a-c *Lushootseed*
who DET=IRR-help-TRANS-1SG.O
'Who will help me?'

d. stam' k^{w}u=ʔác'x̌-ən-as *Lillooet*
what DET=see-TRANS-3TRANS.S
'What did she/he see?'

e. swét k=wík-t-x^{w} *Thompson*
who DET=see-TRANS-2SG.TRANS.S
'Who did you see?'

f. swéty' k=c-k'^{w}lmét-n-c-s *Shuswap*
who DET=see-hither-send-TRANS-2SG.O-3TRANS.S
'Who sent you?'

g. stím' ye?=c-k-pa?-pa?s-ínk-əm-st-x^{w} *Okanagan*
what DET=ASP-PREF-REDP-feel.bad-inside-RLN-TRANS-2SG.TR.SU
'what are you feeling bad about?'

h. stém' ɬu?=wíč-t-x^{w} *Kalispel*
what DET=see-TRANS-2SG.TRANS.S
'What did you see?'

Kroeber 1999: 262f.

To the best of our knowledge, unmarked fronting (i.e. the pattern without the determiner/complementizer) is not attested in any of these languages. The only other Salish language that has been described as allowing this pattern is Tillamook (see Kroeber 1999):

(9) tu=ki g^{w}ə-(ʔu)haɬ diš=dešƛ'ə?əč-gas(?)-yeɬ *Tillamook*
what=WH.Q FUT-eat DEM=grandparent-(?)-1P.POSS
'What will our grandfather eat?' (TillT *Big Eater* 9)

Kroeber 1999: 387

We do not know whether the restrictions on unmarked fronting we find in Sḵ and UHk (to be discussed below) hold for Tillamook as well.

3 Core vs. oblique arguments

The first restriction we observe concerns core vs. non-core (i.e., oblique) arguments. Before we discuss the patterns found in wh-questions, we will briefly introduce the phenomenon of non-core (i.e. oblique) arguments. These are arguments which are part of the argument-structure of the verb (at least at some level of representation) but which are not licensed by means of an agreement suffix on the verb. Rather, they are often introduced by an oblique marker (which has however been lost in the Upriver dialect of Halkomelem as well as in Sḵ). The following types of arguments (bolded in (10)-(14)) fall within this category:

THEME arguments of benefactives/applicatives *UHk*

(10) a. Íleq-elhts-eth-óx-es tl' John **te** **púkw.**
buy-APPL-TRANS-1SG.O-3S DET.OBL John DET book
'John bought me a book

b. Tsel óxw-eth-òme **te** **púkw.**
1SG.S give-TRANS-2SG.O DET book
'I gave you a book.'

(11) a. Na silh7a-shi-t-as alhi Mary **ta** **sts'ukwi7.***Sḵ*
RL buy-APPL-TRANS-3S DEM.FEM Mary DET fish
'S/he bought Mary a fish.'

b. Na exwa7-t-as alhi Mary **ta** **sts'ukwi7.**
RL give-TRANS-3S DEM.FEM Mary DET fish
'S/he gave Mary a fish.'

THEME arguments of verbs of saying[4]

(12) Qwélqel-st-es te Strang te Konrad **te** **shóxwyem.** *UHk*
tell-CAUS-3S DET Strang DET Konrad DET story
'Strang told Konrad a story.'

THEME/PATIENT arguments of (unergative) intransitives

(13) Tsel ílhtel **te** **sthóqwi.** *UHk*
1SG.S eat DET fish
'I ate some fish.'

[4] At this point, we have not elicited this type of sentence in Sḵ.

(14) Chen ilhen **ta** **sts'ukwi7**. *Sk*
1SG.S eat DET fish
'I ate fish.'

If non-core arguments are questioned the determiner/complementizer may not be missing unlike in case of core-argument extraction:[5]

THEME arguments of benefactives/applicatives

(15) a. Stám ??(kw'e-s) íleq-elhts-et-es tl' John te Mary? *UHk*
What D/C-NOM buy-APPL-TRANS-3S DET.OBL John DET Mary
'What did John buy for Mary?'

b. Stám ??(kw'e-s) óxwes-t te Strang?
What D/C-NOM give-TRANS DET Strang
'What did he give to Strang?'

(16) a. Stam *(kwi) na silh7a-shi-t-as alhi Mary kwa John? *Sk*
what D/C RL buy-APPL-TRANS-3S DEM.FEM Mary DET John
'What did John buy Mary?'

b. Stam *(kwi) na s-7exwa7-t-as alhi Mary kwa John?
what D/C RL NOM-give-TRANS-3S DEM.FEM Mary DET John
'What did John give to Mary?'

(17) THEME arguments of verbs of saying
Stám ??(kw')a-s yéthest? *UHk*
what D/C-2.SG.POSS-NOM tell
'What did you tell him?'

(18) THEME arguments of (unsative) intransitives
Stám ??(kwlh) í-xw as-í:lhtel? *UHk*
what D/C AUX-2SG.S NOM-eat
'What were you eating?'

(19) Stam??(kwi) s-7ilhen-s lha Mary? *Sk*
what D/C NOM-eat-3POSS DET.FEM Mary
'What did Mary eat?'

At first glance, it might seem that the necessity for the complementizer in case of non-core argument extraction is related to the well-known fact that this kind of extraction is marked in special ways. For example, Gerdts 1988 observes that "when the nominal which is extracted bears an oblique relation in the corresponding simple clause, direct extraction is not possible" (p. 69):

[5] As noted above, violations of the restrictions discussed here do not always yield strict ungrammaticality. We use "??" to represent this.

(20) a. ni łíc'-ət-əs ʔə kʷθə šə́pten. *Island Hk*
AUX cut-TRANS-3S OBL DET knife
'He cut it with the knife.'

b. *(ʔə) šə́pten kʷθə [ni łíc'-ət-əs].
OBL knife DET AUX cut-TRANS-3SG.S
(A knife is what he cut it with.)
Gerdts 1988: 69 (148a/b)

(21) a. ni lhcíws ʔə kʷθ̓ə sqʷál.
AUX tired OBL DET talk
'He is tired of the talk.'

b. *(ʔə) stém k'w [ni lhcíws]?
OBL what DET AUX tired
(What is he tired of?)
Gerdts 1988: 70 (149a/b)

Rather, as Hukari 1977 has pointed out, in order to extract obliques, the embedded clause must be a nominalization (see also Kroeber 1999: 309):

(22) a. ni cən q'ʷáqʷ-ət ʔə kʷθə ʔən?-šápəl-ʔeɬ. *Island Hk*
AUX 1SG.S club-TRANS OBL DET 2POSS-shovel-PAST
'I hit him with your shovel.'

b. ni nə-š-q'ʷáqʷ-ət kʷθə ʔən?-šápel-ʔəɬ.
AUX 1POSS-NOM-club-TRANS DET 2POSS-shovel-PAST
'I hit him with your shovel.'/'Your shovel was my hitting him with.'
Gerdts 1988: 70 (151a/b)

(23) a. yáθ ʔu yə-x̌ʷánčənəm ʔə tənʔa' šé.ɬ. *Island Hk*
always LNK SER-run OBL DET road
'He always ran on that road.'

b. yáθ ʔu š-x̌ʷánčənəm-s tənʔa' šé.ɬ.
always LNK NOM-run-3POSS DET road
'He always ran on that road.'/'This road was always his running on.'
Gerdts 1988: 70 (152a/b)

(24) a. ni č wəɬ łcíws ʔə kʷθə qʷə́lmən-s. *Island Hk*
AUX 2SG.S already tired OBL DET talk-3POSS
'You are already tired of his talk.'

b. ni wəɬ ʔən-š-ɬcíws kʷθə qʷə́lmən-s.
AUX already 2POSS-NOM-tired DET talk-3POSS
'You are already tired of his talk.'/ 'His talk was your tiring.'
Gerdts 1988: 71 (153a/b)

In the examples in (15) - (19) the determiner/complementizer must be present even if the clause contains a nominalizer. In other words, the presence of the nominalizer (which is a requirement of non-core argument extraction) requires the presence of a determiner/complementizer.

Note that the above examples do not include another type of non-core argument, namely passive AGENTs, which we turn to next. What we observe is that UHk and Sḵ differ in an interesting way. Whereas in UHk the passive AGENT behaves like an oblique argument in that it triggers the presence of the determiner/complementizer and nominalization in extraction ((25)b), in Sḵ this does not seem to be the case ((26)b).

AGENT arguments of passives

(25) a. Óxw-eth-òm kw' kyópi. *UHk*
give-TRANS-2SG.PASS.O DET coffee
'Somebody gave you coffee.'/'You were given coffee.'

b. Tewát *(kw'e-s) óxw-eth-òm kw' kyópi
Who D/C-NOM give-TRANS-2SG.PASS.O DET coffee
'Who gave you coffee' ('Who were you given coffee from?')

(26) a. Chen ch'aw-at-em. *Sḵ*
1SG.S help-TRANS-PASSIVE
'I was helped.' / 'Someone helped me.'

b. Swat (kwi) na ch'aw-at-em?
who D/C RL help-TRANS-PASSIVE
'Who was helped?'

This indicates that the passive AGENT in Sḵ is treated like a 'core argument'. We leave the source of this difference as a matter for future research.

4 Restrictions on the question word/phrase

In this section we are focusing on the initial part of wh-questions, i.e. the Q-word in the representation in (27):

(27) a. [Q-word] [*OP* KW……*e*]$_{\text{RELATIVE CLAUSE}}$ *Cleft*

b. [Q-word] [……]? *Unmarked fronting*

As a rough approximation, we observe that the absence of a determiner/complementizer is facilitated by forcing the wh-word to be interpreted as a phrase. For example, one way of doing this is to add an overt noun to the wh-word as shown in (28) through (31). Again, it is important to note, that we are talking about tendencies, as opposed to strict (un)grammaticality judgments:

(28) a. Tewát ??(kw'e) xám? *UHk*
who D/C cry
'Who is crying?'

b. Tewát slhálì (?kw'e) xám?
who woman D/C cry
'Which woman is crying?'

(29) a. Tewát ??(kw'e) th'éxw-òs-em? *UHk*
who D/C wash-face-INTRANS
'Who washed their face?'

b. Tewát stl'ítl'òqelh (?kw'e) th'éxw-òs-em?
who boy D/C wash-face-INTRANS
'Which boy washed his face?'

(30) a. Swat ??(kwi) na xaam? *Sk*
who D/C RL cry
'Who cried?'

b. Swat slhanay' (?kwi) na xaam?
who woman D/C RL cry
'Which woman cried?'

(31) a. Swat ??(kwi) tl'aktay'kwem?
who D/C tall
'Who is tall?'

b. Swat swi7ka (?kwi) na tl'aktay'kwem?
who man D/C RL tall
'Which man is tall?'

Another way of forcing the wh-word to be interpreted as a phrase is to use a form which is otherwise translated as *where*. Again, once the phrasal interpretation is forced, the determiner/complementizer can be freely dropped:

(32) a. Tl'ó kw'e elétse slhálì (kw'e) í-lh xám? *UHk*
3INDEP D/C where woman D/C AUX-PAST cry
'Which girl was it that cried?'

b. Tl'ó kw'e elétse swíweles (kw'e) mamíy-t-es tl' Strang?
3INDEP DET where boy D/C help-TRANS-3S DET.OBL S
'Which boy is Strang helping?'

(33) a. Encha ta sts'ukwi7 na huy'-s-t-as ta swi7ka? *Sk*
Where DET fish RL finish-CAUS-TRANS-3S DET man
'Which fish did the man eat?'

c. Encha slhanay' (?kwi) na xaam?[6]
where woman D/C rl cry
'Which woman cried?'

In Sk, it is also possible to drop the determiner/complementizer if the particle *melh* follows the wh-word:

(34) Swat melh (kwi) na kw'ach-nexw-as ta skakl?
who then D/C RL see-TRANS-3S DET baby
'Who did the child see?'

The emerging generalization is that in the presence of a question word which is unambiguously a phrase (i.e., if it is followed by an overt noun), the absence of the determiner/complementizer is preferred; if the wh-word appears by itself, the presence of the determiner/complementizer is preferred.

(35) a. [Q-word] [KW...]

b. ? [Q-word N] [KW...]

c. ??[Q-word] [.....]

d. [Q-word N] [.....]

We will briefly return to possible implications of this generalization in section 6.

5 Restrictions on the remaining clause

In this section, we focus on the restrictions associated with the remaining clause in the context of a missing determiner/complementizer. By "remaining clause" we mean the material following the wh-phrase as shown in (36):

[6] It is not only possible to drop the determiner/complementizer in Sk, it appears to be at the very least preferred.

(36) a. [Q-word] [*KW*.....]RELATIVE CLAUSE

b. [Q-word] [ ]?

Stating the generalization informally, we observe that it is easier to drop the determiner/complementizer if the remaining clause is "bigger", i.e., contains more overt material or structure.

For example, while the determiner/complementizer seems to be required in (37), it is optional in (38), where the remaining clause is negated:

(37) a. ??Tewát láyem? *UHk*
who laugh
'Who is laughing?

b. Tewát kw'e láyem?
who D/C laugh
'Who is laughing?'

(38) a. Tewát éwe lí-s láyem? *UHk*
who NEG AUX-3S laugh
'Who is not laughing?

b. Tewát kw'e éwe lí-s láyem?
who D/C NEG AUX-3S laugh
'Who is not laughing?

(39) a. ??Tewát í-lh xwí? *UHk*
who AUX-PAST wake up
'Who woke up?

b. Tewát kw'e í-lh xwí?
who D/C AUX-PAST wake up
'Who woke up?

(40) a. Tewát kw'e éwe lí-s í th'exw-ós-em? *UHk*
who D/C NEG AUX-3S AUX wash-face-INTRANS
'Who didn't wash their face?'

b. tewát éwe lís í th'exw-ós-em
who NEG AUX-3S AUX wash-face-INTRANS
'Who didn't wash their face?'

(41) Swat kwi haw k-as ts'its'ap'? *Sk*
who D/C NEG IRR-3SS work
'Who didn't work?'

Similarly, the presence of an auxiliary facilitates the absence of a determiner/complementizer:

(42) a. ?Tewát í-lh láyem? *UHk*
who AUX-PAST laugh
'Who was laughing?'

b. Tewát kw'e í-lh láyem?
who D/C AUX-PAST laugh
'Who was laughing?'

(43) a. Swat kwi na nam' huya7? *Sḵ*
who D/C RL go leave
'Who left?'

b. Swat kwi na nam' huya7?
who D/C RL go leave
'Who left?'

(44) a. Swat kwi na ts'its'ap'? *Sḵ*
who D/C RL work
'Who worked?'

b. ??Swat na ts'its'ap'?
who RL work
'Who worked?'

In sum, we observe that more material in the remaining clause facilitates determiner/complementizer-dropping. As mentioned above, the restrictions associated with the remaining clause, just like the ones associated with the question word, are mere tendencies as opposed to absolute constraints. That is, if one of the facilitating requirements is met, others can be violated. This was seen for example in (28)-(31), where a phrasal wh-phrase was sufficient to license determiner/complementizer dropping even when the remaining clause did not contain any "extra material". In the next section, we will discuss the theoretical implications of the present findings.

6 Implications and conclusions

In this paper, we have discussed a previously unnoticed pattern of question formation in UHk and Sḵ. In both languages, wh-question formation can use the usual Salish pattern: the clefting strategy. In this pattern, the question word is followed by a determiner/complementizer. The pattern discussed in this paper is on the surface similar to the clefting pattern except that there is no determiner/complementizer. We have referred to this second pattern

as unmarked fronting (following Kroeber 1999 who mentions that this pattern occurs in Tillamook). The two patterns are summarized below:

(45) a. [Q-word] [*OP* KW.....*e*]$_{\text{RELATIVE CLAUSE}}$ *Cleft*

b. [Q-word] [.....]$_{?}$ *Unmarked fronting*

Furthermore, we have seen that unmarked fronting is associated with a number of restrictions, summarized here. First, if the question word is unambiguously a phrase rather than a head, the absence of the determiner/complementizer is preferred; if on the other hand the question word appears by itself, the presence of the determiner/complementizer is preferred. Second, determiner/complementizer dropping seems facilitated if the remaining clause contains more material/structure.

There are in principle at least two possible options to analyze these two patterns. According to one analysis, unmarked fronting could simply be an instance of clefting where the remaining clause is a relative clause in which the determiner/complementizer is simply not used.

(46) [Q-word] [*OP* .....*e*]$_{\text{RELATIVE CLAUSE}}$

The absence of a determiner/complementizer within a relative clause is not surprising, given that relative clauses in general are not marked by such a determiner/complementizer in either Sḵ or UHk:

(47) *Sḵ*

Chen	kw'ach-nexw	ta	sẅi7ḵa...	
1SG.S	see-TRANS	DET	man	
...(*kwi)	na	huy'-s	ta	sts'uḵwi7
... (D/C)	RL	finish-CAUS	DET	fish

'I saw the man who ate the fish.'

(48) *UHk*

Tsel	kw'éts-lexw	te	swiyeqe...	
1SG.S	see-TRANS	DET	man	
...la	xwmékweth-et	te	Martina[7]	
AUX	kiss-TRANS	DET	Martina	

'I saw the man that kissed Martina.'

One potential problem with this analysis has to do with the fact that the remaining relative clause in the unmarked fronting construction serves as an argument. However, it is usually the case that arguments are obligatorily

[7] In the example (48), we have glossed Sḵ *na* as a realis marker and UHk *la* as an auxiliary. In comparing the two languages, we find that the two morphemes might actually instantiate the same function. This would be consistent with their phonology, as Proto-Salish /*n/ became /l/ in UHk. We leave this open for future research.

introduced by determiners. In particular, it is not possible to drop the determiner of a nominal argument in either Sk or UHk (just like in the other Salish languages; see Matthewson 1998).

(49) Chen kw'ach-nexw *(ta) swi7ka... *Sk*
1SG.S see-TRANS DET man
'I saw the man.'

(50) Tsel kw'éts-lexw *(te) swiyeqe... *UHk*
1SG.S see-TRANS DET man
'I saw the man.'

Thus, if unmarked fronting does indeed involve a clefting construction we would have to conclude that the remaining clause is special in that it does not need an overt determiner/complementizer in order to be used as an argument.[8] One piece of supporting evidence for the assumption that clausal arguments are special, comes from the fact that the clausal objects do not trigger a transitivizer and or object agreement.

(51) Na tsut lha Kirsten... *Sk*
RL say DET.FEM Kirsten...
...kwi-s-es tl'aktay'kwem ta swi7ka.
...COMP-NOM-3POSS see-TRANS-3S DET
'Kirsten said that the man was tall.'

(52) Í-lh xét'e the Mali... *UHk*
AUX-PAST say DET.FEM Mary...
...kw'-s-es syémyem kw's spelwá-lh.
...COMP-NOM-3S pregnant DET year-PAST
'Mary said that she was pregnant last year.'

Recall that we have seen several restrictions on the unmarked fronting construction. It is not at all clear how these restrictions would be analyzed under the cleft analysis of unmarked fronting. Of course, this might not be a problem because, as we have seen, these restrictions are only tendencies. At this point, we do not have enough evidence to conclude that we are indeed dealing with a clefting construction with a deleted determiner/complementizer in the remaining relative clause.

An alternative analysis of this unmarked fronting would be that there is no clefting involved. In this case, the remaining clause would not be analyzed as a relative clause at all. Instead, the question word would be analyzed as having moved directly to its clause initial position by means of A'-movement.

[8] Of course this argument only goes through if the determiner/complementizer is a determiner or alternatively if it is a complementizer and complementizers serve the same function as determiners.

(53) [Q-word .....*e*]
└──────┘

Consistent with this type of analysis is the fact that unmarked fronting is in fact available in these languages. We see it in the context of quantifier fronting:

(54) [$_{QP}$ I7x̲w lha slhanay'] na huy'-s-t-as[9] [$_{QP}$ t] ta sts'uk̲wi7. *Sk̲*
all DET.FEM woman RL finish-CAUS-TRANS-3S DET fish
'All the women ate the fish.'

(55) [$_{QP}$ Mékw' ye pú:s] hélp'ex [$_{QP}$ t] te sth'óqwi. *UHk*
all DET.PL cat eat.CONT DET fish
'All the cats ate the fish.'

As for the restrictions associated with unmarked fronting discussed in section 4 and 5, this second alternative at least provides us with a possible analysis. In particular, the generalization regarding the question word receives an interesting interpretation. Note that under the clefting analysis the question word must be a predicate. Under the fronting analysis, the question word is a moved argument. Consequently, the restriction on the question word might be the result of a restriction on predicates: it simply is easier to interpret a full phrase as an argument than as a predicate. However, the restriction associated with the remaining clause does not receive a straightforward explanation under this analysis. Another problem with the fronting analysis stems from the fact that it has been argued that languages make use of either the clefting strategy or the fronting strategy but never of both (Cheng 1991).

Unfortunately, we have to conclude that at this point we do not have conclusive evidence that would help decide between the two analyses. Furthermore, we would like to mention that the nature of the restrictions on unmarked fronting (which are merely tendencies) might indicate that they have to do with discourse factors. At this point, we are unable to determine what these would be.

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[9] This structure cannot be using the clefting strategy, as the agreement morphology is still present on the verb.

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