

PREPOSITIONS IN STRAITS SALISH AND THE NOUN/VERB QUESTION*

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0. Introduction. In this paper I would like to call attention to a particular aspect of the grammar of Straits Salish that has received comparatively little systematic attention to date: prepositional phrases. I will argue that the syntax of prepositional phrases provides important data bearing on the important question of whether or not these languages show a distinction between *noun* and *verb* at the level of lexical categories -- a much-disputed question of considerable interest for the study of language universals. Although passing mention of the noun/verb problem was made early on by those working on the languages of the Northwest, including Boas, the problem was first addressed in depth by Kuipers (1968). Jacobsen (1979) considered the problem primarily in Nootka (Wakashan). More recently, Kinkade (1983) has marshalled evidence in support of the claim that there is no noun/verb contrast in the Salish lexicon; Jelinek and Demers (1984), and Jelinek (in press) have concurred, while others, for example Hess and van Eijk (1985), have argued against this view.

A question that remains to be settled is whether there is variation across the members of the Salish family with respect to this feature; since there are important syntactic differences between members of the family, this would not be surprising. We need to determine whether or not the disagreement has arisen from conflicting data, or from differing analyses of essentially parallel data. In order to make headway in solving the problem, we need comparative studies of particular aspects of the syntax of these languages that bear on the question. In this paper, I provide data on the syntax of prepositions in Straits Salish in order to show how this evidence can contribute to the resolution of the problem. I focus on the Lummi language; examples given are Lummi unless otherwise identified.¹ I note also relevant data I have found in the literature on other Salish languages. I will provide some background in the form of an overview of the analysis given in Jelinek (in press) concerning the absence of a noun/verb contrast in Straits Salish. The central claim is that there is a single open lexical class in Straits Salish, the predicate. Within the class of predicates, various subclasses may be distinguished on morphological and semantic grounds; but the external syntactic behavior of these predicates is identical. All inflectable words are predicates, and show two properties:

1) Straits Salish Predicates

- (a) Appear with Subject clitics to form finite clauses; and
(b) Appear with Demonstratives to form Determiner Phrases.

Subject clitics and Determiners do not cooccur, but any open-class word in Straits Salish can occur with either of these elements, deriving in the first case a sentence and in the other case a nominalized construction. The first of these two properties is associated with VPs, and the second is associated with NPs across languages. It is these two conflicting properties of Straits Salish predicates that call into question the presence of a N/V distinction at the lexical level.

Salish has both main or finite clauses and subordinate clauses, which are more complex derived structures introduced by a determiner/complementizer. These subordinate clause types are non-assertions: Propositional, Irrealis, and Relative clauses. The adjoined Relative clauses are of the "headless" or "internally headed" variety that is commonly seen in Native

America, and constitute a class of referring expressions. Propositional and Relative clauses may be designated nominalized clauses.

The generalization that emerges from the study of Salish is that while the contrast between main and nominalized clause types may be a language universal, Salish provides evidence that the contrast between "zero-level" nouns and verbs at the *lexical* level may be subject to parametric variation. The claim is not simply that in Straits Salish, nouns may be derived from verbs, as is not uncommonly seen across languages; the claim is that there are no lexical items that on *syntactic* grounds are exclusively either noun or verb. There is no subclass of predicate that alone is associated with the maximal projections NP and VP. Nominalized clauses are derived from finite main clauses.

Aside from the single open class of predicates to which all inflectable words belong, the Straits Salish lexicon includes only a few closed class items:

2) Closed class elements

- Second position Inflectional Clitics (the Subject; Tense, Modality, and Mood)
- Determiner/Demonstrative pronouns (third person);
- Sentence particles (modals, discourse markers, etc.);
- Adverbs (largely quantificational);
- Conjunctions
- Prepositions

All the closed classes listed in (2) are particles/clitics, with the single exception of adverbs, which constitute a closed class of predicates with a special syntax (Jelinek in press). Not included in (2) are the extensive systems of derivational affixes and other morphological processes. The list of closed classes is small, and each class contains relatively few elements, when compared to languages with more familiar lexical inventories. For most Salish languages, the closed class elements can be easily listed on a single page. As syntactic operators, their functions are quite complex, and a full treatment of their syntax is beyond the scope of this paper. I will identify the Clitics and Demonstratives, since they are crucial to the N/V question, and then concentrate on the class of Prepositions and the evidence they provide.

0.1. The derivation of the sentence: second position clitics. Finite (main) clauses are derived by combining a predicate with a clitic string where various inflectional categories are marked. Included are a Subject pronoun and other clitics marking the optional features of Tense, Modality and Mood.

- | | |
|--------------------|---------|
| a. t'iləm'=lə'=sən | I sang. |
| sing=PAST=1sNOM | |
- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| b. si'em=sə'=sx ^w | You will be noble/a chief. |
| noble=FUTURE=2sNOM | |
- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| c. ičik ^w as=yəx ^w =i | Evidently, we are tired. |
| tired=EVID-1pNOM | |

Whatever the lexical-semantic features of the predicate may be, it combines directly with the clitic string; a central feature of Straits Salish syntax

is the absence of a copular verb. The inventory of second-position clitics is:

4) The sentence operators

- a. The Tense clitics
 =sə' Future
 =lə' Past

- b. The modal clitics
 =yəq Optative
 =yəx^w Evidential
 =č'ə' Probability
 =q Conditional

- c. Mood
 =ə Interrogative

Sentences with no overt Tense marking are often given a past time or perfective interpretation.

There is an "ergative split" in Straits Salish; first and second person arguments show a Nominative/Accusative contrast, while third person arguments are Ergative/Absolutive (Jelinek 1993b). Number is not marked in the third person, where the Absolutive is phonologically null.

5) The Subject pronouns

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| a. Nominative case | b. Absolutive case |
| =sən "I" | =Ø |
| =sx ^w "you" | |
| =i "we" | |
| =sx ^w hələ "you pl." | |

In addition to predicates like those seen in (3), corresponding semantically to verbs, nouns and adjectives in other languages, there are also predicates that are Wh-words, locatives, existentials and cardinality expressions.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 6) a. wet=sxw
who=2sNOM
Who are you? | b. česə =sə'-i
two =FUTURE=1pNOM
We'll be two (in number). |
| c. 'əwənə=Ø
NEG EXIST=3ABS
There isn't any. | |

A predicate appearing without a first or second person NOMINATIVE subject clitic, as in (6c) is unambiguously interpreted as having a phonologically null, definite third person ABSOLUTIVE subject. Additional examples are given in (7).

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| 7) a. t'iləm'=Ø | He/she/it/they sing. |
| b. si'em=Ø | He (etc.) is a chief. |
| c. ičik ^w əs=Ø | He (etc.) is tired. |

Transitive predicates include a Transitivity suffix and an object suffix. Again, if no first or second person object is marked, and the predicate is marked transitive, then a third person object is the default interpretation.

- 8) a. leŋ-t-Ø=sən
see-TR-3ABS=1sNOM
I saw him/her/it/them.

The set of object suffixes is:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| 9) a. Accusative | b. Absolutive |
| -oŋəs 1sg or 2sg | NULL 3 person |
| -oŋəi 1pl | |
| -oŋət Reflexive (any person/number) | |

The third person Ergative pronoun (transitive agent) is -g.

- 10) leŋ-t-s=lə'=Ø
see-TR-3ERG=PAST=3ABS
He saw him.

The Ergative is morphologically an internal argument, preceding the clitic string. The Absolutive can be either internal or external: transitive object (Ex. 8) or intransitive subject (Ex. 7).

0.2. Possessive pronouns. Possessive pronouns occur with nouns across languages; a question that immediately arises is whether there is a set of Salish predicates that can be classed as nouns on the grounds that they occur with possessive affixes (see discussion in Hess and van Eijk, 1985). If the Salish predicate describes something that can be characterized grammatically as possessed, for example material objects, relations, feelings or experiences, a Possessive pronoun may be affixed to it. However, the resulting complex form remains a predicate: these derived predicates occur with the clitic string to produce a finite sentence.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 11) a. nə-ŋənə=sx ^w
1sPOSS-child=2sNOM
You are my child. | b. nə-men=lə'=Ø
1sPOSS=PAST=3ABS
It is my late (deceased) father. |
|---|---|

The examples in (12) illustrate "psych" predicates with a Possessive pronoun marking the Experiencer, while the subject is a second position clitic.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 12) a. nə-sλ'i'=sx ^w
1sPOSS-value=2sNOM
You are my dear/valued. (I like you.)
[s-λ'i'= be dear/valuable] | b. nə-sləl=Ø k ^w ye'-ən
1sPOSS=intent=3ABS DET go-1sIRR
It is my intention to go. |
|--|--|

Ex. (12b) shows an adjoined subordinate Irrealis clause, with Irrealis subject marking; the subject clitics listed in (5) occur only in main clauses. Possessive pronouns appear also as subjects in subordinate Propositional clauses.

- 13) 'əw' xči-t-θ=sən k^w ən-s-ye'
 LINK know-TR-3ABS=1sNOM DET 2sPOSS-SBD-go
 (And so) I know (it), that you left.

Thus, the two functions of Possessive pronouns are clearly distinct syntactically. They take part in deriving complex predicates (11, 12) where they are not subjects, and in deriving subordinate Propositional clauses (13) where they are subjects.

Subordinate clauses are derived by one of the Demonstrative/Determiners, which also function as Complementizers. This leads us to the topic of Determiner Phrases.

0.2. Determiner Phrases. In addition to Propositional and Irrealis subordinate clauses, Straits Salish also has adjoined relative clauses (see Hale 1973; Jelinek 1988). In these constructions, comparable to a "headless" or "free" relative, the Determiner/Demonstrative corresponds to an iota operator in binding one of the arguments of the relativized predicate, producing a referring expression. Compare the following:

- 14) a. leŋ-t-oŋəs=sx^w
 see-TR-1/2sACC=2sNOM
 You saw me. Finite transitive clause
- b. cə leŋ-t-əx^w
 DET see-TR-2SUBORD
 the (one that) you saw Patient-headed relative
- c. cə len-t-oŋəs
 DET see-TR-1/2ACC
 the (one that) saw you/me Agent-headed relative

Ex. (14a) shows a transitive clause; (14b) shows a Patient-headed relative clause, while (14c) is Agent-headed. Relatives derived from an intransitive predicate are Subject-headed:

- 15) a. cə t'iləm' the (one who) sings
 b. cə si'em the (one who is a) chief
 c. cə ičik^wəs the (one who is) tired
 d. cə ɣənə the (one who is a) child
 e. cə nə-men=lə the (one who is) my late father

Note that a relative clause can be derived from a "psych" predicate, with a POSS Experiencer, as in (16).

- 16) cə nə-sλ'i the (one who) is dear to me/
 the one I like

In sum, relatives may be derived from any main clause type. However, a relative clause cannot be derived from a subordinate clause: either a Propositional clause (where the subject is marked in a POSS pronoun) or an Irrealis clause (with a Subordinate Subject pronoun). In these subordinate clause types, all arguments remain overt.

- 17) a. * cə nə-s-ye' b. * cə ye'-ən
 DET my-SBD-go DET go-1sIRR

The set of Determiner/Demonstratives in Lummi is as follows:

18) General	Female	
ti'ə	si'ə	proximate and visible
cə	sə	neutral
k ^w ə	k ^w ə	distal or out of sight
k ^w cə	k ^w sə	remote

Straits Salish Determiner Phrases correspond to NPs in that they are referring expressions, but it is important to note that they differ from NPs in two respects: a) their lexical head can be any member of the open class of predicates, and b) they are adjoined subordinate clauses which do not occupy A-positions, but are comparable to topics.

- 19) a. sway'qə'=θ cə leŋ-t-ən
 man=3ABS DET see-TR-1sSBD
 He is a man, the one I saw.
 (The one I saw is a man.)
- b. leŋ-t-θ=sən cə sway'qə'
 see-TR-3ABS=1sNOM DET man
 I saw him, the one who is a man.
 (I saw the/a man.)

Evidence that Determiner Phrases are adjuncts that do not occupy argument positions is provided by the absence of expected subject/object asymmetries with respect to permitted coreference. In the following example, the NP follows the predicate of the subordinate temporal clause, yet it is coindexed with the third person pronominal subject in both clauses.

- 20) q'əq'enəɬ=0 'aɬ š-šət-ŋ-s cə 'əs'eləx^w
 slow=3ABS CONJ SBD-walk-MIDDLE-3POSS DET old man
 The old man is slow when he walks.
 (*He is slow when the old man walks.)

Finally, Determiner Phrases can not appear as sentential predicates. The following are not interpretable as sentences.

- 21) a. cə leŋ-t-oŋəs (*it is) the one that saw me
 b. cə sway'qə' (*it is) the man

That is, Determiner Phrases lack a truth value, in contrast to finite clauses.

1. Against a "null" copula analysis. To summarize so far: although we may distinguish among various sub-classes of predicates on semantic and morphological grounds, all predicates fall together into a single syntactic class. That is, there are no syntactic reflexes of the morphologically and semantically definable predicate classes. Whether the Predicate includes a Possessive, Ergative, or Accusative pronoun as an internal argument, whether it can be used to describe material objects, events, relations or properties, any inflectable word is a predicate. In main clauses, Predicates take a clitic subject to derive a sentence; sentences take Determiners (and certain internal changes) to derive Determiner Phrases, which are adjoined subordinate clauses.

1.1. Distribution of the proposed copula across predicate type. It might be argued that the feature of Straits Salish syntax that underlies these properties of predicates is the fact that the copular verb is null. Across languages, we see adjectival or nominal predicates appearing with a copular verb to derive sentences. In these constructions, the copula is typically a semantically empty tense operator that builds finite predicates based on nouns, adjectives, non-finite verb forms, and the like. Thus, some predicates require a copula to build a finite expression, and some do not; and in Straits Salish, it might be claimed, some predicates include a null copula, while others do not. This would explain the fact that all Straits Salish predicates have the same syntax, combining with a subject clitic.

The problem with a proposal of this kind, of course, is that we have no formal grounds for deciding which predicates would select this null copula. The problem is that unless an internal argument is present in a construction, the status of a predicate as "nominal" or "verbal" is indeterminate; this problem arises with all intransitive sentences, as noted by Kuipers (1968). Furthermore, a striking and frequently noted fact about Salish is that no root, even adverbial, appears to be immune from transitivization.

- 22) mək^w-t=lə'=sən
all-TR-3ABS=PAST=1sNOM
I took all of them/it. ("totalled")

Across languages, it is not uncommon for the copula to be null in certain tense or person contexts, while overt elsewhere. Since there is no morphological or syntactic evidence for a verb "be" for any tense, person or predicate type in Straits Salish, we must conclude that either all or no sentences have a phonologically null copula.

1.2. Distribution across clause type. We saw that Tense, Modality and Mood are optionally marked in clitics that precede the subject clitic, and take the same form whatever lexical features the predicate may show -- whether the best available English translation is noun, verb, or adjective. If there is a universal null copula, then this system of inflectional heads might include a copular element, an auxiliary verb "be". Let us consider the evidence on this point.

Subordinate clauses differ from main clauses in the inventory of inflectional heads they include. For example, sentence Mood is not marked in subordinate clauses, and some modal particles are excluded from all but main clauses, while Tense appears in all clause types. But the feature that is of interest here is that each clause type has a particular set of subject markers, distinct from the main clause clitics; and in each clause type, all predicate classes show identical subject marking.

- 23) a. Propositional clauses: Possessive pronoun marks the subject
b. Irrealis clauses: Subordinate subject markers
c. Relative clauses: "Head" is non-overt, bound by Determiner; non-head Agents are marked the same as subordinate subjects in Irrealis clauses.

Objects in subordinate clauses are the same as main clause objects. Whether the predicate has the semantic features associated with a noun, verb, adjective, Wh-word, etc., they all share the same syntax in subordinate clauses, just as they do in main clauses. Consider the following examples of Irrealis clauses:

- 24) a. čte-t-ŋ=sən k^wə ye'-əs
ask-TRAN-PASS=1sNOM DET go-3SBD
I was asked if he went.
b. čte-t-ŋ=sən k^wə 'əy-əs
ask-TRAN-PASS=1sNOM DET good-3SBD
I was asked if it was good.
c. čte-t-ŋ=sən k^wə swi'qoəl-əs
 DET young man-3SBD
I was asked if he was a young man.
d. čte-t-ŋ=sən k^wə t'əm'-t-0-əs
 DET hit-TRAN-3ABS-3SBD
I was asked if he hit him.
e. čte-t-ŋ=sən k^wə nə-s-λ'i'-əs
 DET 1sPOSS-SBD-value-3SBD
I was asked if it's what I like. ("psych" predicate)
f. čte-t-ŋ=sən k^wə wet-əs
 DET who/person-3SBD
I was asked who it was.

The uniformity of subject marking across predicate type in subordinate clauses in Straits Salish is evidence that it is not just the presence of the second position clitic sequence that produces the uniformity of syntax for all the predicate subclasses, since the clitic sequence is confined to main clauses.

If a language has no copula, a contrast between noun and verb as lexical categories is precluded. I turn now to a survey of the syntax of prepositions in Straits Salish, which will bring conclusive evidence to bear upon this question.

2. Prepositions in Straits Salish. Prepositions are closed class elements, syntactic operators whose functions sometimes overlap with those of certain "oblique" case markers across languages. That is, in some languages there may be Dative and Benefactive cases, while in others these grammatical functions are assumed by prepositions (cf. English "to" and "for"). Prepositions also serve to introduce various oblique expressions that are typically "optional" or not subcategorized for by the verb: locative and temporal phrases ("in, at, on"); Passive agents ("by"), etc. A survey of the published literature on the Salish languages will show that Salishanists agree that the inventory of the closed class of prepositions in these languages is extremely small.

2.1. The inventory of prepositions. There is one preposition that is attested in a number of Salish languages: 'ə, generally called the Oblique marker. Some Lummi examples (Demers field notes, 1977):

- 25) a. k^wənəŋ-t-ŋ=sən ə cə nə-men
help-TR-PASS=1sNOM OBL DET 1sPOSS-father
I was helped by my father.
b. 'oŋə-t-0=sən cə nə-sčēčə 'ə cə sčēnəx^w
give-TR-3ABS=1sNOM DET 1sPOSS-relative OBL DET fish
I gave a fish to my relative.

- 25) c. q'əp-ŋ=sən 'ə ti'ə sčol
gather-MID=1sNOM OBL DET firewood
I am gathering firewood.
- d. qey'ləs=Ø 'ə ti'ə qəyəs
sad=3ABS OBL DET day
He is sad today.
- e. 'əw-s-x'wəne'ŋ 'ə ti'ə x'otqəm
NEG-be how OBL DET Whatcom (Bellingham)
It's not like (here) at Bellingham.
- f. 'əstesi=sən 'ə cə swəy'qə'
near=1sNOM OBL DET man
I am close to the man.

In (25a), there is an oblique optional agent; in (25b), the *theme* argument of the predicate "give" is oblique; in (25c) the derived intransitive (Middle) predicate takes an oblique "indirect" object; (25d) shows a temporal adjunct; and (25e,f) show locative adjuncts. Because of its wide range of functions, this particle was described informally as a "universal preposition" in Lummi by Charles, Demers, and Bowman (1978).

Montler (1986, pp. 237-239) provides examples showing a range of uses of the oblique 'ə in Saanich. Galloway (1986) designates 'ə an oblique case marker in Samish. Efrat (1969) glosses the particle 'ə as marking an "oblique referent" in Sooke. Thompson and Thompson (1971, p. 265) identify 'ə as introducing oblique adjuncts in Clallam. In other Coast Salish languages, Gerdtz (1981) identifies an oblique marker 'ə in Halkomelem; Hess and Hilbert (1978, p. 30) survey the range of uses of 'ə in Lushootseed, and identify it as marking the following: 1) Possessors; 2) Adverbial expressions; 3) "Indirect" objects of certain active intransitives ("Anti-Passives"); 4) adjoined subordinate clauses; 4) Passive agents; 5) the Theme argument of ditransitives. All these uses appear in Lummi also.

In Interior Salish, Squamish (Kuipers, 1967) and Thompson (Thompson and Thompson, 1992) also show a contrast between direct and oblique adjuncts, where oblique adjuncts are introduced by a particle t-. Van Eijk (1985) defines a system of four proclitic prepositions for Lillooet. Bella Coola, a northern outlier of the Salish family with many syntactic differences, shows a comparable set of four prepositions (Nater, 1981).

Aside from the Oblique marker, virtually no other (free-standing) prepositions have been attested for Straits Salish. Montler (1986) has recorded a directional preposition λ'ə in Saanich; in Lummi this form appears procliticized to a predicate, and will be described in a later section (#2.5).

2.2. The distribution of prepositions. A striking property of Salish is the absence of prepositional phrases consisting of a preposition with a pronominal object, or an "inflected" preposition or postposition of the kind so common in Native America. That is, the pronominal object forms that occur with predicates do not occur with prepositions. Compare:

- 26) a. leŋ-t-oŋəs b. *'ə-oŋəs
saw-me [to-me]

The subject and Possessive pronouns also cannot occur with prepositions.

- 27) a. *'ə=sən b. *ne-'ə
[to-I] [my-to]

The subordinate subject affixes are also excluded; this exhausts the inventory of pronominal paradigms in the language -- there is no set of object suffixes that are peculiar to prepositions. In fact, 'ə and the few other attested prepositions occur only before DET Phrases, as in the examples in (25) above. Questions that immediately arise are

- 28) a. How are oblique (non-subject, non-object) first, second and third person deictic arguments treated in the grammar?
- b. What is the feature of Salish syntax that motivates this constraint against prepositions with pronominal objects?

That is to say, what makes this typologically peculiar feature of Salish grammar a) possible, and b) obligatory?

2.3. The Person-deictic Predicates. What makes the exclusion of this construction type possible is the presence of a set of Person-deictic predicates. These predicates mark the bundle of semantic features associated with pronominal paradigms across languages: the features of person and number. These predicates are not pronouns; they are third person in syntax. Like all other predicates, they appear either a) in clause initial position, followed by the clitic string, or b) appear with a Determiner, to form Determiner Phrases. They occur in oblique adjuncts and in focus constructions. This set of predicates in Lummi is:

29) Person	1	2	3
SG	'əs	nək'wə	nił
PL	niŋəl	nək'wiliyə	nəniłiye

An example showing an oblique Determiner Phrase built on a person-deictic predicate:

- 30) leŋ-t-ŋ=sx'w 'ə cə 'əs
see-TR-PASS=2sNOM OBL DET BE ME
You were seen by ME (masculine).

Note that since the Determiner marks masculine gender, the Determiner Phrase also has that interpretation. Gender is not marked in the pronominal system of Salish. A person-deictic predicate functioning as a main clause predicate:

- 31) nək'wə=yəx'w=Ø sə nə-ten
BE YOU=EVID=3ABS DET 1sPOSS-mother
It must be YOU who are my mother.

These predicates undergo various derivational and inflectional processes. In Irrealis clauses, they have overt third person subject inflection.

- 32) čte-t-ŋ=sən k'wə nək'w-əs
ask-TRAN-PASS=1sNOM DET BE YOU-3SBD
I was asked if it was you. (Person predicate)

- 33) xən-ŋ cə Bill kʷ 'əs-əs
do/act-MID DET Bill DET BE I-3SBD
Bill acted for me. (in my place; acting as if he were me)

Since they are predicates with their own argument structure, they function much like cleft constructions in other languages in placing a referent in focus. A relative clause:

- 34) leŋ-t-θ=sən cə nəkʷ
see-TR-3ABS=1sNOM DET BE YOU
I saw the one that was YOU.

Al Charles explained to Demers that (34) would be used as when recognizing someone in a crowd. Compare:

- 35) nəkʷ=θ cə leŋ-t-ən
BE YOU=3ABS DET see-TR-1sSBD
YOU are the one I saw.

Gerdtz (1981) analyzes a particle 'əʌ' in Halkomelem as a combination of the Oblique 'ə plus a Determiner 'ʌ', which occurs only after the Oblique marker, before proper names and the "emphatic pronouns". Gerdtz uses the term "emphatic pronouns" for the person-deictic predicates. Montler (1986) cites Raffo (1972) who describes 'əʌ as "the prepositional particle" in Songish; Montler draws attention to some parallels between Saanich and Songish with respect to this particle, and some differences. Saanich has constructions with the Oblique marker and the demonstrative tʰ.

- 36) λ'iw' č'ə' 'ə tʰ nəkʷ (1986, p. 205; Saanich)
escape EVID OBL DEM you
He ran away from you.

However, 'əʌ' does occur as a preposition in Saanich (Montler p.c.) and perhaps also in Samish as well.² It has not been attested for Lummi.

In sum, although there are differences in how oblique adjuncts are marked, it is clear that these Salish languages consistently employ Determiner Phrases built on Person-deictic predicates in constructions requiring first, second or third person oblique deictic arguments. Therefore:

- 37) Straits Salish prepositions take scope *only* over Determiner Phrases, producing oblique adjuncts.

Since the prepositions serve to introduce subordinate clauses, their syntax is comparable to that of the conjunction 'əʌ "as, while, when" which is also attested everywhere in Straits Salish; 'əʌ has also been called a preposition. It can introduce both Propositional and Irrealis clauses. Lummi examples:

- 38) a. xʷəŋ' 'aʌ š-šət-ŋ-əs
fast=3ABS CONJ SBD-walk-MIDDLE-3POSS
He's fast when he walks. (He walks fast)
b. 'əw'=sxʷ qʷəqʷəl 'əʌ 'iən-əxʷ
NEG=2sNOM speak CONJ eat-2sSBD
You don't talk while you eat.

In order to convey the directional and locative notions that are frequently expressed in prepositions across languages, Salish makes use of two strategies. The first is the use of full words, predicates, that are locative or directional in meaning; the second is a set of relational prefixes that convey these notions.

2.4. Locative and Directional predicates. These predicates build main clauses. Some Lummi examples:

- 39) a. sʰəqʷ to go through
b. λ'əčələwəl to be underneath
c. 'nəwəl to be inside
d. ʔəl go ashore

Predicates of this kind are well documented in the Salish languages. They may also occur with other "motion" predicates to build complex predicates. Some Saanich examples (Montler 1989):

- 40) a. čč'əsət; sčəč'əʌ be between two things
b. t'ekʷəl cross over
c. 'anəw'əʌ be in the middle
d. t'anəstəl' sit next to s.o.

2.5. Relational/Directional prefixes. Straits Salish shows a few relational and directional elements which may be prefixed to a root, deriving a complex predicate which is syntactically intransitive. These relational/directional prefixes are not analyzed as incorporated prepositions, since they cannot take objects, and thus do not increase the valence of the predicate.

- 41) Possessive Relational

- a. telə=θ money=3ABS
It's money.
b. č-telə=sən PSR-money=1sNOM
I have money.
c. sieni'=sən female=1sNOM
I am a woman.
d. č-sieniy'=sxʷ PSR-female=2sNOM
You have a wife.

This is the most common type of simple Possessive sentence. Note that these sentences are syntactically intransitive.

- 42) Attributive Relational

- čʰ-John=θ
ATR-John=3ABS
John is responsible/ It's John's fault.

- 43) Directionals

- a. λi-xʷotqəm=sən to-Bellingham=1sNOM
I [am going] to Bellingham.
b. čə-xʷotqəm=sən from-B'ham=1sg
I [am] from Bellingham.

(Bellingham [xʷotqəm "waterfall"] is a town in the Lummi area of Washington state.) An example of a Directional prefix in a subordinate Irrealis clause:

- 44) se'e-t-ŋ=sən k'w xi-tawən-ən
tell-CT-PASS=1sNOM DET to-town-1sSBD
I was told [to go] to town.

In (44), the predicate *xi-tawən* (based on English "town") has a prefixed directional element, and is followed by the first person singular subordinate subject suffix. There are other prefixes (Causative, Purposive, Mutative) that can introduce subordinate predicates, and thus function as conjunctions or complementizers.

- 45) xče-t-ŋ cə sčeenəx'w s'w-'iŋən-s ə cə čənčix'wəŋ
dry-TR-PASS DET salmon for-eat-3SBD OBL DET winter
The salmon was dried so they could have food for the winter.

In this section, we have demonstrated that the Oblique marker in Lummi (and any other possible prepositions) occurs only before adjoined relatives and other subordinate clauses, deriving oblique adjuncts. These oblique Determiner Phrases may be derived from Person-deictic Predicates. We have established that there are no prepositional phrases with pronominal objects. We have also looked at other lexical and derivational means for the expression of locative and directional notions in these languages. In the final section, we will return to the initial question of the presence or absence of a noun/verb contrast in Salish, and how the syntax of prepositions provides evidence that is relevant to this problem.

4. Summary and conclusions. Straits Salish prepositions take scope only over Determiner Phrases, producing oblique adjuncts. In contrast, predicates can include pronominal objects to produce transitive expressions. We may outline this distribution of permitted objects as follows:

- 46) a. PREDICATE: governs pronominal object;
assigns grammatical case -
ACC, ERG or ABS.
- b. PREPOSITION: governs DET Phrase;
assigns Oblique case,
deriving an oblique adjunct.

Prepositions are closed class elements, and are not inflected.

Only predicates have pronominal objects. Recall that the class of pronominal object forms that appear with predicates includes the NULL third person absolutive; therefore, a predicate with a null argument is interpreted as having a third person absolutive argument, as we saw in the examples (7, 8, 10) above. In contrast, a preposition with no overt DET P argument is not interpretable at all; it is ungrammatical.

- 47) * 'ə [oblique null third person]

This is evidence against a possible NULL third person pronoun occurring with prepositions, and we have seen that first and second person pronouns are excluded from this environment. Note also that the following are ungrammatical:

- 48) a. * 'ə cə si'əm=θ
[it is by, for (etc.) the chief]

- 48) b. * 'ə cə 'eləŋ=sən
[I am at, by, in, on (etc.) the house]

A preposition plus the Determiner Phrase that it governs does not constitute a predicate, since the predicate of the Determiner Phrase is bound by the Determiner. Since there is no unbound predicate, the examples in (48) cannot be sentences. They contain only oblique adjuncts, oblique adjoined clauses.

This fact has clear consequences for the question of a noun/verb contrast, and whether there is a null copular verb in Salish. If there were a null copular verb as a component of the inflectional system marked in the clitic string, then we would expect to see Salish sentences like those shown to be excluded in (48). We are led to the conclusion that it is the *predicate itself* that has the semantic and syntactic property of finiteness, unless the predicate is under the scope of a Determiner, deriving a subordinate non-asserted clause. The closed class of adverbial predicates, largely quantificational, also lack the feature of finiteness, and cannot serve as the single predicate in a clause.

In sum, there are no sentences with a copular "main verb", sentences where a copula appears, and a lexical predicate does not. The generalization for Salish sentences is:

- 49) All and only open class predicates are inflected
for their arguments, producing sentences.

Just as each word with lexical content can serve as a predicate, there are no sentences that are not based on a root with lexical content. A copula has no lexical content, and is not an open class predicate.

Jelinek (1993a, in press) argues that Lummi is a Pronominal Argument language, where Determiner Phrases are adjuncts, clitics and affixes serve as arguments, and there are no NPs in argument positions. Evidence in support of this claim is the absence of determiner quantification, which is restricted to elements in argument positions. The absence of a copula, along with the absence of determiner quantification and lexical arguments, follows from the absence of a noun/verb contrast at the lexical level.

NOTES

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¹ Lummi and Samish are sometimes considered to be dialects of the same language. Victor Underwood claimed to speak both, along with Saanich and some Cowichan. As with all bilinguals, the question of language contact and influence needs to be taken into account. There were clear differences between Victor's speech and that of Lena Daniels. See Galloway 1986.

² The following example is from Montler's transcription of the "Mermaid at Deception Pass" story by Victor Underwood.

- i) ...nə-səl'i k'w nəčtales 'əl' nek'w (1988, p 3)
 ...I want SUB I marry PREP.DET you
 ...I want to marry you.

Other versions of this story by Underwood (cf. Galloway's 1986 transcription) do not show this particle.

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