

# Classifying Multi-Verb Constructions in Hul'q'umi'num' Salish\*

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**Abstract:** This paper explores multi-verb constructions (MVCs) in Hul'q'umi'num', the Island dialect of Halkomelem Salish. Hul'q'umi'num' exhibits at least three MVC types: auxiliary verb constructions (AVCs), serial verb constructions (SVCs), and verb chain constructions (VCCs). All three consist of two or more verbs and lack any linking element between the verb components. The verb components in AVCs and SVCs must share a subject argument, while component verbs of a VCC need not share. In SVCs and VCCs, a shared subject NP may occur after the first verbal element, but a subject NP may not occur immediately after an auxiliary verb. Typologically, SVC component verbs must match in terms of clausal categories (e.g. tense and aspect), while transitivity matching of verb components is language-specific (cf. Aikhenvald 2018). Hul'q'umi'num' SVCs exhibit the expected aspect matching but do not require transitivity matching. Constructions with mismatched component verb aspect are categorized here as VCCs.

**Keywords:** Hul'q'umi'num', Halkomelem, Salish, multi-verb construction, serial verb construction

## 1 Introduction

This paper explores multi-verb construction types in Hul'q'umi'num', the dialect of Halkomelem Salish (ISO 639-3: hur) spoken on Vancouver Island. This work is accomplished through examination of data from dictionaries, a text corpus, and elicitation. Today only around sixty fluent speakers remain, mostly over the age of seventy, but the language is also spoken by around two hundred second-language speakers. One objective of our research is the in-depth study of aspects of Hul'q'umi'num' that differ significantly from those of English and are thus difficult to translate and are subject to loss through interference. For example, Hul'q'umi'num', like other Salish languages, is a predicate-initial language (Gerds & Hukari 2008:1). The verb may be preceded by an auxiliary, linking element, adverb, or certain clitics (Gerds & Werle 2014:263). The example in (1) below illustrates the basic word order.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Abbreviations used in the paper: 1 = first person, 2 = second person, 3 = third person, AP = applicative, AUX = auxiliary, CN = connective element, CNJ = conjunction, CS = causative, DT = determiner, DYN = dynamic, FUT = future, HS = hearsay particle, INCH = inchoative, IPFV = imperfective, LC = limited control, LEX = lexical verb, MD = middle, MIR = mirative, N = nominalizer, OBL = oblique, OBJ = object, PAS = passive, PRO.DT = pro-determiner, PROX = proximal, PST = past, PL = plural, POS = possessive, Q = question particle, REC = reciprocal, RL = rhetorical lengthening, SG = singular, SUB = subject, TAM = tense, aspect, mood, TR = transitive, V<sub>1</sub> = first verb, V<sub>2</sub> = second verb, VCC = verb chain (construction).

- (1) ni' tsun qw'aqwut tthu spe'uth.  
 niʔ cən q̣'wəq̣w-ət tʰə speʔəθ  
 AUX 1SG.SUB club-TR DT bear  
 'I clubbed the bear.' (Gerdts 2010a:575)

This example consists of an auxiliary introducer clitic and a second-position subject clitic preceding a transitive verb, and this verb complex is followed by the object NP. Canonically, as demonstrated here, noun phrases appear post-verbally (cf. Gerdts 1988).

This project began as an investigation into serial verb constructions (SVCs) in Hul'q'umi'num' and that research revealed that the language utilizes a variety of multi-verb constructions. I will begin here by defining the terminology that I will be using throughout the paper since their usage varies in the literature. The label *multi-verb construction* (MVC) is a broad term encompassing a variety of constructions consisting of multiple verbal elements. MVCs are often made up of an inflected main verb, and another verb marked as dependent to it (Aikhenvald 2011:12). The terminology for the dependent verb varies in the literature, including terms such as *infinitive*, *participle*, *gerund*, and *converb*.

In the literature, the label *serial verb* has been used fairly freely to describe a variety of MVCs. The label 'MVC' broadly encompasses both multi- and mono-clausal constructions that may involve a linking element between the verb components. In contrast, an SVC is understood as a monoclausal construction consisting of multiple independent verbs with no element linking them (cf. Cleary-Kemp 2015; Haspelmath 2016).

- (2) 'i tsun huye' 'imush.  
 ʔi cən həyeʔ ʔiməʃ  
 AUX.PROX 1SG.SUB leave walk  
 'I'm going for a walk.' (RP 13.09.19)

In (2) the predicate consists of two verbs *huye'* 'leave' and *'imush* 'walk'. The definition of SVC being used here excludes MVCs consisting of an independent and a dependent verb, auxiliary verb constructions (AVCs), constructions consisting of coordinated or subordinated clauses, and constructions with coordinated (linked) verbs.

Verb serialization was first identified for languages with analytic and isolating profiles, such as the languages of Southeast Asia and West Africa (Aikhenvald 2018:185–186). They have since been described in languages with more synthetic profiles such as the languages of Amazonia and in polysynthetic languages such as Algonquian (Aikhenvald 2018:186–187). Hul'q'umi'num', like other Salish languages, is considered polysynthetic, and the use of MVCs in this language will be discussed in the next section. Section 2 of the paper will introduce the types of MVCs found in Hul'q'umi'num', which include AVCs, SVCs, and verb chains. In Section 3, I will go into more detail on the differences between SVCs and verb chains.

## 2 Multi-verb construction types

This section examines different kinds of MVCs found in Hul'q'umi'num'.<sup>2</sup> The language has as a

<sup>2</sup> Historically, there is a debate in Salish linguistics as to whether the classical noun, verb, and adjective word

single oblique marker 'u and so meanings often expressed by prepositions in English are expressed by verbs in Hul'q'umi'num'. An example of this are verbs like t'akw' 'go home' and qwus 'go into the water', which encode both motion and direction of motion or endpoint. The language also utilizes MVCs to avoid having two argument NPs in a row, preferring an alternating pattern of Vs and NP (cf. Gerdts & Hukari 2003, 2008).

- (3) **huye'** tthuw'nilh 'es-hw **nem'** **qwsuthut tus** 'u tthu qa'.
- |              |                                   |                   |             |                           |            |     |                  |       |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|---------------------------|------------|-----|------------------|-------|
| <b>həyeʔ</b> | t <sup>h</sup> əw <sup>ni</sup> ɬ | ʔesx <sup>w</sup> | <b>nem̩</b> | <b>q<sup>w</sup>səθət</b> | <b>təs</b> | ʔə  | t <sup>h</sup> ə | qaʔ   |
| leave        | PRO.DT                            | seal              | go          | go.into.water             | get.there  | OBL | DT               | water |
- 'And the seal left, going into the water.' (Gerdts & Hukari 2008:7)

Serialization and verb chaining are used as a means distributing NPs through a sentence so that each verb has at most one post-verbal NP. I will begin by discussing auxiliary verb constructions (AVCs) in Hul'q'umi'num' (§2.1). Next, I will talk about SVCs (§2.2) and then distinguish them from 'verb chains' (§2.3). The next section begins by introducing a typology for AVCs.

## 2.1 Auxiliary verb constructions

An *auxiliary verb* is understood here as an element that forms a monoclausal verb phrase in combination with a lexical verb; the auxiliary component exhibits semantic bleaching and performs some grammatical function (Anderson 2006:4). Anderson (2006) defines five types of AVCs in terms of syntactic, semantic, and morphosyntactic head-ship, two of which are shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1:** Typology of AVCs (Anderson 2006:24)

AUX-headed	LV	AV	LEX-headed	LV	AV
→ syntactic	–	+	→ syntactic	–	+
→ semantic	+	–	→ semantic	+	–
→ morphosyntactic	–	+	→ morphosyntactic	+	–

In an AVC, the auxiliary verb is always the syntactic head, while the lexical verb is always the semantic head. The differentiating factor is the morphosyntactic (inflectional) headship; the morphosyntactic head is where the primary verbal participants and functional categories are encoded (Anderson 2006:22). In the AUX-headed pattern, the inflectional head is the auxiliary, and in the LEX-headed pattern, it is the lexical verb. English follows the AUX-headed pattern:

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classes apply to Salish languages. Authors such as Kinkade (1983) and Kuipers (1968) have argued rather that Salish and neighboring languages (i.e., Wakashan and Chemakuan) have only two kinds of words: predicates and particles (Kinkade 1983:25). Particles are defined by Kinkade as uninflectable elements expressing temporal, aspectual, modal, or deictic notions, while 'full words' are everything else. Kinkade (1983:27) argues that any full word may constitute the main predicate of a Salishan sentence. Koch and Matthewson (2009:126) note that in Salish "it is now generally accepted that *noun* and *verb* are distinguished by both morphology and syntax, albeit much more subtly than in languages like English". For the present work, it will be assumed that *noun* and *verb* are meaningful categories in Hul'q'umi'num'.

- (4) a. She **is** swimming. c. I **was** dreaming.  
 b. I **am** eating. d. They **were** running.

In this example, the tense (and person) inflection is marked on the auxiliary, while the lexical verb is in a non-finite form. Hul'q'umi'num', on the other hand, follows the LEX-headed pattern. This pattern consists of an uninflected or fixed form of an auxiliary and a lexical verb with all of the obligatory inflectional morphology characteristic of finite clauses lacking auxiliaries (Anderson 2006:116). This is demonstrated by example (5) below.

- (5) nem' tst suw'q't kw'un'a ts'usqun'.  
**nem** ct **səw'q-t** k'wəna cəsqaŋ  
 go.AUX 1PL.SUB search.IPFV-TR DT golden.eagle  
 'We will go looking for the golden eagle.' (WS 1977: line 25)

Here, the auxiliary appears in its fixed form and the lexical verb is marked with both imperfective aspect and a transitive suffix.

There are four auxiliaries in Hul'q'umi'num' (Gerdt 1988). The auxiliaries *ni'* (distal) and *'i* (proximal) situate the clause in time and space. The auxiliary *nem'* 'go' is used to indicate motion away from the place the speaker is located or movement forward in time, and *m'i* 'come' is used to indicate motion towards the speaker's location or events just now taking place. Example (6) below illustrates each of the auxiliaries.

- (6) a. **ni'** 'imush. c. **nem'** 'imush.  
**ni?** ?iməš **nem** ?iməš  
 AUX.DIST walk go walk  
 'He walked.' 'He went and walked.'
- b. **'i** 'imush. d. **m'i** 'ewu.  
**?i** ?iməš **mi** ?ewə  
 AUX.PROX walk.IPFV come come.here  
 'He's walking.' 'Come here.' (Gerdt 1988:23)

The space-time auxiliaries *ni'* and *'i* are analyzed as introducer clitics that introduce the verb phrase (Gerdt & Werle 2014:249).

Interestingly, Hul'q'umi'num' auxiliaries can occur as full verbs. Hul'q'umi'num' auxiliaries never take verbal morphology unless they are acting as a full verb. The contrast between the auxiliary and full verb functions of *nem'* can be seen when they co-occur, such as in (7) and (8) below.

- (7) 'a **nem'** ch **nemustuhw** 'u kwu'i s'e'tl'q.  
 ?a nem č neməstəx<sup>w</sup> ?ə kwu'i še?l'q  
 Ah AUX 2SG go.CS OBL DT outside  
 'Ah, take it outside.' (AM 4159)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Text corpus: *Spaal' Copies His Siblings* by Andrew Misheal.

- (8) **nem'** ch **nemustuhw** 'u kwu'i tuywut kwu mustimuhw.  
 nem č neməstəx<sup>w</sup> ?ə kwu'i təywət k<sup>wə</sup> məstiməx<sup>w</sup>  
 AUX 2SG go.CS OBL DT north DT people  
 'You will take them to the northern people.' (WS 65)<sup>4</sup>

Looking at the data presented above, *nem'* clearly exists as an auxiliary and a full verb. This type of construction resembles a similar English construction such as *you are going to go outside*. *Go* in both languages has lost some of its semantic weight in these contexts and taken on a grammatical function.

The main structural feature that SVCs and AVCs have in common is that they are both monoclausal (Anderson 2006:304). Additionally, they both lack any sort of linking element between the verbal elements, such as a coordinator or subordinator. Since Hul'q'umi'num' follows the LEX-headed pattern, any obligatory inflectional morphology will appear on the main verb rather than the auxiliary. So, inflectional morphology (affixes and reduplication) can be used as a language-specific differentiating factor between auxiliary and lexical verbs as well. The difference between AVCs and SVCs can also be seen in the placement of NP subjects. In (9) below, a subject NP may occur at the end of the verb phrase (9a) and intervening between the two main verbs (9b), but not directly following the auxiliary (9c).

- (9) a. ni' huye' 'imush **tthu swiw'lus**.  
 ni? həye? ?iməš t<sup>θə</sup> swiw'ləs  
 AUX.DIST leave walk DT boy  
 'The boy left, walked.'
- b. ni? həye? t<sup>θə</sup> swiw'ləs ?iməš  
 'The boy left, walked.'
- c. \* ni? t<sup>θə</sup> swiw'ləs həye? ?iməš (RP 04.10.19)

The primary differentiating factor cross-linguistically is that AVCs involve semantic bleaching of one of the verbal elements, while SVCs involve the use of two or more full lexical verbs (cf. Anderson 2006; Cleary-Kemp 2015; Haspelmath 2016; Lord 1993). Thus, the distinguishing factor between SVCs and AVCs typologically is based on the relationship between the component verbs and the resulting meaning of the construction as a whole. If the meaning of the construction is concatenative or combinatorial, then the construction can be considered an SVC; if one of the verbal elements expresses a semantic or functional modification of the other, then the structure is an AVC (Anderson 2011:810). This generalization plus the language-specific criteria discussed above can be used to draw a clear line between AVCs and SVCs in Hul'q'umi'num'.

## 2.2 Serial verb constructions

The term 'serial verbs' first appeared in print (in English) in Balmer and Grant (1929)'s grammar of Fante-Akan (ISO 639-3: fat), and Stewart (1963)'s analysis of Twi (Akan) (ISO 639-3: twi) used the term "serial verbs construction" (Lovestrand 2018:7). Since it was coined, the term *serial verb construction* has been used fairly freely to describe a variety of MVCs and more recently authors have made attempts to restrict the included constructions. Haspelmath (2016:296) provides the

<sup>4</sup> Text corpus: *s'eluhw 'i' tthu shes* | *The Elder and the Sealion* by Wilfred Sampson.

following definition: “A serial verb construction is a monoclausal construction consisting of multiple independent verbs with no element linking them and with no predicate-argument relation between the verbs.” The key components of this definition that will be focused on in this paper are that it is a productive monoclausal construction consisting of independent, lexical verbs, and that the construction lacks any sort of linking element between the verb components (cf. Cleary-Kemp 2015).

Serial verbs are mentioned in the Hul’q’umi’num’ and Salish literature, but with the exception of Montler’s (2008) work on Klallam (ISO 639-3: *clm*) SVCs, the topic is largely understudied. For example, Kroeber (1999:170) mentions a “serial-verb-like construction” in a footnote and Jelinek (2000:219–220) mentions “serial predicates” as support for her predicate raising analysis. Serial verbs in Halkomelem are mentioned in passing by Gerdts (2010b), Gerdts and Hukari (2003, 2011), and Kiyosawa and Gerdts (2010).

Hul’q’umi’num’ SVC verb components exhibit the ability to function as an independent predicate. This is demonstrated by the data in (10) below.

- (10) a. ni’ tsun **huye’**.  
 ni?            cən            həye?  
 AUX.DIST    1SG.SUB    leave  
 ‘I left.’
- b. ni’ tsun **shaqwul**.  
 ni?            cən            šaqwəl  
 AUX.DIST    1SG.SUB    cross.over  
 ‘I crossed over.’
- c. ni’ tsun **huye’ shaqwul**.  
 ni?            cən            həye?      šaqwəl  
 AUX.DIST    1SG.SUB    leave      cross  
 ‘I left, crossed over.’ (RP 20.06.19)

In (10a) and (10b), the verb complex consists of an auxiliary introducer clitic, a first-person subject second-position clitic, and an intransitive verb. In (10c), there are two verbs. This shows that each of the component verbs can both stand alone as main verbs in a mono-verbal clause and can also occur in series with one another. It should also be noted that the verbs are not connected via any sort of linking element.

In (11) below, the three verbs *huye’* ‘leave’, *’imush* ‘walk’, and *tsam* ‘go uphill, away from water’ can be reordered without any significant change to the overall meaning of the phrase.

- (11) a. hwun’ netulh ni’ tsun **huye’ ’imush tsam**.  
 xwən    netəl    ni?            cən            həye?      ?iməš      cam  
 early    morning    AUX.DIST    1SG.SUB    leave      walk      go.uphill  
 ‘Early in the morning I left, walked, went uphill.’
- b. hwun’ netulh ni’ tsun **huye’ tsam ’imush**.  
 xwən    netəl    ni?            cən            həye?      cam            ?iməš  
 early    morning    AUX.DIST    1SG.SUB    leave      go.uphill    walk  
 ‘Early in the morning I left, went uphill, walked.’

- c. hwun' netulh ni' tsun 'imush huye' tsam.  
 x<sup>w</sup>əñ      netəł      niʔ      cən      ʔiməš      həyeʔ      cam  
 early      morning      AUX.DIST      1SG.SUB      walk      leave      go.uphill  
 'Early in the morning I walked, left, went uphill.'  
(RP 20.06.19)

Verb serialization is very common in motion constructions such as these typologically and in Hul'q'umi'num'. Often, one verb contributes the direction of motion, and another contributes the manner of motion. In the examples in (11) above, *huye* 'leave' indicates the starting direction, *'imush* 'walk' indicates the manner of motion, and *tsam* 'go uphill' contributes the goal or endpoint.

Across the world's languages, different classes of verbs differ in how likely they are to occur in an SVC. A hierarchy is provided in Table 2 below.

**Table 2:** Verbs most likely to occur in SVCs (Aikhenvald 2018:244)

basic motion verbs	(e.g. 'come', 'go')
< other active intransitive verbs	(e.g. 'arrive', 'wander', 'crawl')
< posture verbs	(e.g. 'sit', 'stand', 'lie')
< verbs of transfer or causation	(e.g. 'give', 'make')
< further transitive verbs	(e.g. 'pass', verbs of speech)
< stative verbs	

As is shown in the table above, intransitive verbs are more common in SVCs than transitive verbs in the world's languages. In order to see if this generalization holds for Hul'q'umi'num', I conducted a survey of a 960-line text.<sup>5</sup> I found that SVCs consisting of two or more intransitive verbs are by far the most common type occurring in Hul'q'umi'num'. There were about 81 SVCs total and of those, 59 consist of two or more syntactically intransitive verbs.

- (12) suw' huye's tsam tuw'nilh swiw'lus.<sup>6</sup>  
 səw      həyeʔ-s      cam      təwnil      swiwləs  
 N.CN      leave-N      go.uphill      PRO.DT      young.man  
 So that young man went up the hills (into the forest).  
(WS 1977: line 28)

This observation aligns with typological expectations about the transitivity of SVC verb components. An SVC has an overall transitivity, which depends on the transitivity of the component verbs (Aikhenvald 2018:4). Cross-linguistically, languages differ in their conditions on transitivity in SVCs. Some languages allow only intransitive serial verbs, others allow both intransitive and transitive serial verbs, and a subset of those that allow transitive verbs require transitivity matching (Aikhenvald 2018: §4.5).

Hul'q'umi'num' SVCs do not require transitivity matching across the verb components. The next most common pattern (17 of 81 SVCs) involve both an intransitive verb and a transitive verb.

<sup>5</sup> Text corpus: *ts'usqun'* | *Golden Eagle* by Wilfred Sampson. Recorded on August 5, 1977, by Tom Hukari. Transcription by Ruby Peter. Typed by Tom Hukari, Sarah Kell, and Donna Gerdts.

<sup>6</sup> The linker *suw'* triggers agreement because it is a nominalization. The scope of the agreement extends only to V<sub>1</sub> in (12).

- (13) suw' qul'e.e.et nem' tɫ'pil hwunin'sus.  
 səw̃ qəlet nem̃ ʔpil xʷənins-əs  
 N.CN again(RL) go go.down arrive.TR-3SUB  
 'So they again went down, and they got there to them.' (WS 1977: line 81)

The effect of the transitive verb in this example is to introduce an object into the argument structure. Like the example above, most often, when the verbs within an SVC vary in terms of transitivity, the intransitive verb occurs first, and the transitive verb occurs second (14 of 17 mismatches).

The last type to be discussed here is SVCs consisting entirely of transitive verbs. There were only two cases of this in the text surveyed. They are provided below in (14) and (15).

- (14) suw' kwunut-s 'i'wustus tu st'e 'u tu'inulh stth'am', tɫ'e'luqt.  
 səw̃ kʷən-ət-s ʔwəs-t-əs tə stə ʔə təʔinəl stʰam̃ ʔeləqt  
 N.CN take-TR-3POS show-TR-3SUB DT like OBL DT bone long.PL  
 'So he pointed to a bone, a long bone, that was on this side.' (WS 1977: line 474)

In (14), the two transitive verbs share the same subject and the same object, and the object occurs after the sequence of verbs. The example below involves three transitive verbs.

- (15) suw' q'uynuhw tey' smuyuth, tsum'utus t'ukw'stuhwus.  
 səw̃ ʔəy-nəxʷ teỹ sməyəθ cəm̃-ət-əs təkʷ-stəxʷ-əs  
 N.CN kill-LCTR DT deer pack.on.back-TR-3SUB go.home-CS-3SUB  
 'He killed that deer, put it on his back and took it home.' (WS 1977: line 346)

In (15), all three transitive verbs — *q'uynuhw* 'manage to kill it,' *tsum'ut* 'pack it on one's back,' and *t'ukw'stuhw* 'take it home' — share the same subject and the same object. Interestingly, the shared object occurs between V<sub>1</sub> and V<sub>2</sub>. Hul'q'umi'num' SVCs allow argument NPs to intervene between the verb components. Pro-determiners (Gerds & Hedberg 2018) can also intervene between the verb components:

- (16) nilh ts'u suw' qwasthut-s tthu'w'nilh kw'ulhusum.  
 nil̃ çə səw̃ qʷas-θət-s tʰəw̃nil̃ kʷələs-əm̃  
 3FOC HS N.CN submerge-RFLX-3POS PRO.DT splash.face-MD  
 He submerged and splashed himself. (MJJ 1962: line 31)<sup>7</sup>

Here the syntactically intransitive verbs share a single subject argument, marked by the pro-determiner, which occurs between the verbs. Gerds and Hukari (2008) and Gerds and Schneider (2021) observe that verb serialization is one of the strategies used to spread argument NPs out. This permits the speaker to conform to the claim of Gerds and Hukari (2003, 2008) that there is a strong tendency in Hul'q'umi'num' to avoid having two argument NPs in a row. Hul'q'umi'num' has other methods for achieving this balance, in addition to SVCs. In the next section I will discuss another type of MVC that is used to accomplish this balance: verb chains.

<sup>7</sup> Text corpus: *chumux qwul'ilh* | *Pitchy Log Man* by Mrs. Jimmy Joe. Recorded March 30, 1962, by Wayne Suttles. Translated by Theresa Thorne, 1996. Transcribed by Ruby Peter, July 2007.

### 2.3 Verb chains & polyptoton

Gerdts and Hukari (2003, 2008) use the term *verb chain* to describe a construction in which several verbs in a row share a single subject. I will use the label *verb chain* as a less restricted category of MVC, currently a catch-all for constructions that do not qualify as SVCs. An example of a feature that would exclude a construction from inclusion in the SVC category would be if the aspect does not match across the component verbs. While requirements for transitivity matching discussed above are language-specific, cross-linguistically, serialized verbs are expected to match in terms of clausal categories such as tense, aspect, mood, and modality (Aikhenvald 2018:1). This is a feature that I will use to set SVCs apart from verb chain constructions (VCCs). While the aspect across verb components of an SVC should match, this is not necessary for VCCs, such as the one below.

- (17) 'i' wulh m'i **wil'** tey' s'eluhw **yu 'i'mush.**  
 ʔiʔ      wəl      mi      **wil'**      tey'      sʔeləx<sup>w</sup>      yə=ʔiməʃ  
 CNJ      PERF      come      appear(PFV)      DT      elder      DYN=walk.IPFV  
 'and then the elder appeared, walking.'  
(WS 1977: line 883)

Here the first verb is in the plain perfective form and the second verb has imperfective aspect. Since SVCs are monoclausal, grammatical categories such as aspect are expected to have the complete SVC in their scope (Aikhenvald 2018:4). Typologically, verbal categories (e.g. mood, reality status, evidentiality, tense and aspect, and negation) may be marked once per SVC or may be marked on every component verb; the entire construction has just one tense, aspect, mood, and modality value (Aikhenvald 2018:106). Examples such as (17) would not be cases of single-marking where the aspect has scope over the entire SVC because the 'appear' action is not interpreted as continuing along like the 'walk' action is.

Another type of construction that falls under the VCC category are polyptotonic MVCs. Polyptoton is defined as the repetition of words derived from the same root (cf. Axelrod & Gómez de García 2007). This type of repetition is very common in Hul'q'umi'num' texts and the function is typically to intensify or provide further semantic specification, such as in example (18) below (cf. Gerdts 2018).

- (18) suw' **kwulushs** tthu sa'si.i.iqwt **kwulushtum** tun'a skweyul.  
 səw'      k<sup>w</sup>ələʃ-s      t<sup>h</sup>ə      saʔsi:q<sup>w</sup>t      k<sup>w</sup>ələʃ-t-əm      təna      sk<sup>w</sup>eyəl  
 N.CN      shoot-POS      DT      younger.sibling(RL)      shoot-TR-PAS      DT      day  
 'Now the younger brother started shooting into the air.'  
(MJJ 1962: line 77)

Aikhenvald (2018:79) notes that SVCs with synonymous or nearly synonymous verbs are found in few productively serializing languages. This is one reason to exclude this type of construction from the SVC category. Another rationale for these being excluded from classification as SVCs is that repetitions often exhibit aspect mismatch.

- (19) a. suw' **thu.u.uytus 'imush, 'i'mush, 'i.i.i'mush.**  
 səw'      θə:y-t-əs      ʔiməʃ      ʔiməʃ      ʔi:məʃ  
 N.CN      ready-TR-3SUB(RL)      walk      walk.IPFV      walk.IPFV(RL)  
 'So they got everything ready to walk and walked and walked.'

- b. yuse'lu skweyul kws 'i'mushs tuw'ne'lulh ...  
 yəselə skʷeyəl kʷs ʔiməš-s təwnelel  
 two day DT walk-3SUB PRO.DT  
 'They walked for two days...' (WS 1977: line 51–52)

The first two instances of *'imush* 'walk' are perfective and the second two are imperfective. This example is especially interesting because there is a pair of verbs at the beginning *thuytus 'imush* 'they got everything ready to walk' and then the second verb is repeated three more times ('they walked and walked and walked'), indicating this second event went on for a lengthy period of time.

Polyptoton can also involve the use of the same root in a mix of verbs and nouns.

- (20) a. suw'q's 'u tu 'uy' smeent xut'ustum' yuq'ustun.  
 səwq̣-s ʔə tə ʔəỵ sme:nt ʃətə-stəm̄ yəq̣-əs-tən  
 seek-3POS OBL DT good rock call-PAS rub-round.OBJ-INST  
 'He looked for the stone called the sharpener.'
- b. yuq'utus tu smee.e.ent, yuq'talust-hwus tu smeent.  
 yəq̣-ət-əs tə smee:nt, yəq̣-tal-əstxʷ-əs tə sme:nt  
 rub-TR-3SUB DT rock(RL) rub-REC-CS-3SUB DT rock  
 'He started rubbing the rocks, rubbing them together.' (WS 1977: line 347–348)

In these two lines, the root *yuq* 'rub, scrape against' is used three times. It appears once in the first line as a noun, and twice in the second line as verbs. The object of all of the verbs is *tu smeent* 'the rock', which is also repeated three times in the two lines.

In sum, the component verbs of an SVC are expected to match in terms of clausal categories, while requirements on transitivity matching are languagespecific. The component verbs of Hul'q'umi'num' SVCs exhibit the expected aspect matching but do not require transitivity matching. Constructions with aspect mismatches on the verb components have been classified as VCCs. The next section will elaborate on some of these differences between SVCs and VCCs in Hul'q'umi'num' as well as discuss (mis)matched voice morphology.

### 3 More on (mis)matching morphology in multi-verb constructions

As was mentioned above, cross-linguistically, the component verbs of an SVC are expected to share clausal categories, such as aspect. The count of SVCs in the text mentioned above reveals that a large majority of serialized verbs have plain perfective morphology (~88%). Just under ten percent are imperfective. In SVCs, imperfective aspect is used to indicate two continuing actions happening simultaneously, such as (21) below.

- (21) yuse'lu skweyul kwus nem' 'i'mush yu tl'upul'.  
 yəselə skʷeyəl kʷəs nem̄ ʔiməš yə=ʔəpəl̄  
 two day DT.N go walk.IPFV DYN=going.down.IPFV  
 'It took him two days coming down from the mountains.' (WS 1977: line 298)

As expected, the aspect of both of the component verbs in this example match. Elicited data also show cases of two imperfective verbs in example (22).

- (22) ni' tsun **yu 'i'mush yu t'it'ulum'**.  
 ni? cən yə=**ʔiməʃ** yə=**títələm**  
 AUX.DIST 1SG.SUB DYN=walk.IPFV DYN=sing.IPFV  
 'I walked along singing (as I went).' (RP 28.06.19)

But the data also reveal a puzzle that some verbs cannot be serialized unless they are imperfective, for example, the activity verb *t'ilum* 'sing' in (23).

- (23) a. ni' tsun **'imush yu t'it'ulum'**.  
 ni? cən **ʔiməʃ** yə=**títələm**  
 AUX.DIST 1SG.SUB walk DYN=sing.IPFV  
 'I walked along singing (as I went).'
- b. \*ni' tsun **'imush t'ilum**.  
 ni? cən **ʔiməʃ** **tíləm**  
 AUX.DIST 1SG.SUB walk sing (RP 28.06.19)

The speaker rejected examples like (23) even though serialization of two perfective verbs is the most frequent type of SVC. Either the aspect matching condition on SVCs is too strong, or constructions with mismatched aspect need to be analyzed not as SVCs but rather as VCCs.

It should also be noted that mismatches where V<sub>1</sub> is imperfective and V<sub>2</sub> is perfective were always marked ungrammatical.

- (24) \*ni' tsun **yu t'it'ulum' 'imush**.  
 ni? cən yə=**títələm** **ʔiməʃ**  
 AUX.DIST 1SG.SUB DYN=sing.IPFV walk (RP 28.06.19)

This judgement is not due to verb order, as reversing the order found in (22) to *yu t'it'ulum' yu 'i'mush* would also be perfectly acceptable and would have the same meaning.

In order to investigate this further, a more in-depth study of prosody would be extremely useful but was beyond the scope of this study. Like single-verb clauses, SVCs are expected to be pronounced with a single intonation contour (Aikhenvald 2006; Haspelmath 2016). Like other Salish languages, Hul'q'umi'num' intonation starts high at the beginning of an oral paragraph and gradually drops (Beck & Bennett 2007; Gilkison 2020). Both single-verb and multi-verb clauses should have the same overall intonation contour, which would demonstrate that the verbs belong to a single prosodic unit. Greater pauses would also be expected between verb components of a VCC than between components of an SVC. If confirmed, these patterns would provide more support for the analysis that MVCs with mismatched aspect are not SVCs.

In addition to aspect, most often, SVCs match in terms of voice as well.

- (25) **hwunin'sus tus** tuw'ne'lulh 'i' hwi' skw'ey kws tl'pils.  
**xʷəniŋs-əs** **təs** **təwnelel** 'i' xʷi? skʷey kws ʔpils  
 arrive.TR-3SUB get.there PRO.DT CNJ MIR unable.to DT.N go.down  
 'When they got to them, they got there but they could not get down to them.'  
 (WS 1977: line 84)

- (26) ts'alusum tuw'nilh swiw'lus suw' **pasutum kwulushtum** tu ni' 'a'mut.  
 çaləsəm təwnil swiwləs səw **pas-ət-əm kʷələš-t-əm** tə niʔ ʔamət  
 turn.around DT young.man N.CN hit-TR-PAS shoot-TR-PAS DT AUX sit.IPFV  
 'The young man turned around and the one who was sitting was hit, was shot.'  
 (WS 1977: line 842)

In example (25) above, both verbs in the first clause are active, and in example (26), both verbs of the second clause are passive. In (26), the verbs share a single argument: *tu ni' 'a'mut* 'the one who was sitting'.

It is not always the case that a voice mismatch on the verb components results in different subject arguments. The following example demonstrates how a mismatch in voice marking may not necessarily result in different subjects for the component verbs.

- (27) sis 'uw' **qw'im 'aalhstum** 'u tthu snuhwulh kwis wulh p'ukw.  
 sis ʔəw **qʷim ʔa:l-stə-m** ʔə tʰə snəxwəl kʷis wəl  
 and CN get.out.of.water get.on-CS-PAS OBL DT canoe DT.N PERF  
 pəkʷ  
 rise.to.surface  
 'And they took him from the water and put him on the canoe, the one who had surfaced.'  
 (MG 1346)<sup>8</sup>

The SVC *qw'im 'aalhstum* could be translated 'get out of the water and was caused to be aboard'. The verb *'aalhstum* is marked with both causative and passive morphology (cf. Gerds 1998; Gerds & Hukari 1998, 2011). This makes both verbs in the SVC syntactically intransitive, sharing a single argument. Table 3 below demonstrates how the semantic roles and syntactic functions are impacted by Hul'q'umi'num' verbal morphology.

**Table 3:** Argument structure: intransitive + derived intransitive

	Verb	Structure		
<b>V<sub>1</sub></b>	<b>qw'im</b>	SUB   <b>agent<sub>i</sub></b>		
	'aalh	SUB	—	OBL   vehicle
	'aalhstuhw	SUB	—	OBJ OBL     causer causee <sub>i</sub> vehicle
<b>V<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>'aalhstum</b>	SUB — OBL     <b>causee<sub>i</sub> vehicle</b>		

The causative suffix *-stuhw* introduces that argument, the causee. Next, the passive suffix *-m* promotes the causee into subject position resulting in the SVCs having the same subject. **V<sub>1</sub>** conveys a MOTION + SOURCE meaning, while **V<sub>2</sub>** conveys a MOTION + GOAL/LOCATION meaning. This example illustrates that a voice mismatch may not be not enough to exclude a construction from

<sup>8</sup> Text corpus line 1346: *Clallam Story 1: Whale hunter* by Manson George.

consideration as an SVC. If the verbs share the same subject and are marked with the same aspect inflection, there is no reason to exclude them.

Some additional examples with voice mismatch are given in (28) and (29) below. These constructions utilize polyptoton and their verbs have different subject arguments.

- (28) xut'e 'u tey' 'i' wulh nem' **kwunutus, kwunutum** thu sta'lusthulh,  
 ʃəte ʔə tey' 'i' wəl nem **kʷən-ət-əs kʷən-ət-əm** θə staləsθəl  
 do.IPFV OBL DT CNJ PERF go.AUX take-TR-3SUB take-TR-PAS DT wife.PST  
 'While he was doing this, he took up with the wife (of his friend),' (WS 1977: line 199)

These repetitions are used to back up and state the verb again, often adding another argument. The voice mismatch in these examples results in the verbs having different subjects. In (28), the object of the first verb is the subject of the second verb, *thu sta'lusthulh* 'the wife (past)'. That  $V_1$  and  $V_2$  have different subjects does not provide evidence for preferring a VCC versus an SVC analysis. The most common type of SVCs cross-linguistically are same-subject SVCs, but some languages allow different-subject SVCs. In this case, the  $V_2$  is always intransitive (Aikhenvald 2006, Haspelmath 2016). Based on this, then, (28) could be an SVC, as  $V_2$  is intransitive (i.e. passive).

However, we find exceptions to the generalization that  $V_2$  should be intransitive. In the next example, the passive verb comes first and the transitive verb second.

- (29) suw' **tth'asutum, tth'asutus** tuw'nilh.  
 səw̃ i̯<sup>0</sup>as-ət-əm i̯<sup>0</sup>as-ət-əs təw̃nil̃  
 N.CN pound-TR-PAS pound-TR-3SUB PRO.DT  
 'It was cut in lengths and pounded (by that young man).' (WS 1977: line 30)

Here, the subject of the intransitive  $V_1$  *tth'asutum* 'it was pounded' is the object of the transitive  $V_2$  *tth'asutus* 'he pounded it'. This type of construction is best treated as a VCC rather than an SVC because they do not share a subject. This example lends evidence to the analysis of this type of polyptotonic construction as something other than SVCs. When the voice mismatch results in different subjects, the construction is excluded from classification as a Hul'q'umi'num' SVC.

At this stage, polyptoton has been generally excluded from SVC because constructions consisting of identical and synonymous verbs are excluded from this category in the literature. That being said, this may not be the best way to approach Hul'q'umi'num'. In future work, it may be necessary to delineate polyptotonic SVCs, VCCs, and linked clauses.

#### 4 Conclusion

Hul'q'umi'num' exhibits at least three kinds of multi-verb constructions: auxiliary verb constructions, serial verb constructions, and verb chain constructions. These constructions all consist of multiple verbs with no linking element between the verb components. The findings are summarized in the table below.

**Table 4:** Hul'q'umi'num' multi-verb constructions

	Auxiliary verb construction	Serial verb construction	Verb chain construction
All components are independent lexical Vs	+	+	+
V components share subject	+	+	±
Subject NP comes after first verbal element	-	+	+
Aspect mismatch allowed	n/a	-	+

The two verb components in these constructions exhibit varying degrees of what I am going to refer to as *boundness*, the relative connectedness of the aggregate verbal elements.<sup>9</sup> The cline of boundness is provided in the table below.

**Table 5:** Cline of boundness of verb components

<i>Most bound</i>				<i>Least bound</i>
Auxiliary verb constructions	>	Serial verb constructions	>	Verb chain constructions

AVCs are the most bound, consisting of an auxiliary and a lexical verb. A variety of elements can occur between component verbs of SVCs and VCCs, including subject NPs. In contrast, subject NPs may not occur directly after an auxiliary, occurring instead after the first full verb, cf. (9). Another differentiating factor between auxiliaries and lexical verbs in this language is that any obligatory inflectional morphology (affixes and reduplication) will appear on the main verb rather than an auxiliary since Hul'q'umi'num' follows the LEX-headed pattern. SVCs exhibit a medium degree of boundness, being defined as MVCs that consist of two or more verbs that (i) can function as independent lexical verbs, (ii) share a subject, (iii) have matching aspect, and (iv) are not connected by any sort of linking element. VCCs are the least bound because the verb components are more independent of one another. This is shown by the fact that the verb components need not share a subject and may have aspect mismatch.

Now that I have established a preliminary analysis of MVCs in Hul'q'umi'num', I am going to end by outlining a number of remaining issues as there remains much work on this topic. First, there is much to be done on the semantic and discourse functions of SVCs, and possibly MVCs more broadly. It is evident from the discussion above that concepts of motion and direction are commonly expressed by Hul'q'umi'num' SVCs. Typologically, it is also common for SVCs to be used to express posture, state, resultative, or comparative meanings (cf. Lovstrand 2018).

An example of a construction of future interest would be the locative construction illustrated below.

(30) Locative constructions in three Salish languages

a. Hul'q'umi'num'

niʔ	cən	ʔəʃəl	neḿ	ʔə-λ	snəneyməxʷ.
AUX	1SG.SUB	paddle	go	OBL-DT	Nanaimo

'I paddled to Nanaimo.'

(Gerds 2010b:4)

<sup>9</sup> I will use *boundness* for now as I search for a better label.

b. Klallam  
**štəŋ hiya? ʔuxʷ ʔa? tə spuqʷs.**  
 walk go go.to OBL DT bluff  
 ‘He walked over to the bluff.’ (Montler 2008:10)

c. Squamish  
**łəč-t-as 0u ʔ=tə=qaʔya**  
 push-TR-3.TR.SUB go OBL=ART=water  
 ‘He pushed it into the water’ (Kroeber 1999:46)

Each of these examples consists of two or more verbs followed by an oblique phrase. The verb immediately preceding the oblique has the meaning *go* and the oblique phrase indicates the goal or endpoint. This construction is of interest first because it has multiple verbs and second because it appears across Salish languages.<sup>10</sup>

Another topic of future work is to compare MVCs with VP coordinate constructions. All three MVCs discussed above lack any kind of linking element between the verb components, which makes them distinct from coordination (31), and subordination (31).<sup>11</sup>

- (31) a. ni’ q’uwutum ʔi t’ilum kwthu slhunlheni’.  
 niʔ q̣əwətəm ʔiʔ ṭiləm kʷθə slənʔeniʔ  
 AUX drum CNJ sing DT women  
 ‘The women drummed and sang.’ (at the same time)
- b. ni’ t’ilum kwthu slhunlheni’ suw qw’uyilushs.  
 niʔ ṭiləm kʷθə slənʔeniʔ səẉ q̣ʷəyiləš-s  
 AUX sing DT women N.CN dance-3POS  
 ‘The women sang and then danced.’ (Gerdts 2016: 1)

Gerdts and Gilkison (2018) address NP coordination and lists, including paratactic coordination, where there is no explicit coordinator between the members of the list. Since the language allows coordination without a linking element, it will be important to distinguish MVCs from lists of verbs lacking a coordinating element. The cline of boundness introduced above could be applied to verbs in this sort of construction as well. In this case, verb coordination with an explicit coordinator would be considered less bound, while verb parataxis would be considered more bound.

Coordinated clauses and verbs (including parataxis) are multiclausal. For now, a detailed treatment of the monoclausality versus multiclausality of MVCs has been set aside. AVCs and SVCs are asserted as monoclausal in the literature, but more work is needed to classify VCCs.

Finally, to illustrate the complexity of how multiple VPs can stack in one long sentence, consider the following example.

<sup>10</sup> Constructions like these have been described as verb serialization in the literature (Gerdts 2010b; Davis & Mellesmoen 2019; Montler 2008), but I have not yet determined whether to include them under the definition of SVC being used here.

<sup>11</sup> Bätischer (2014) provides a treatment of linking elements in Hul’q’umi’num’.

- (32) suw' kwunutewut tthu swakwun, yu 'i'mush tthu swakwun,  
suw' hwu kwun'et-s tthu'nilh tthu swakwun.  
 səw̃ kʷən-ət-ewət tʰə swakʷən yə=ʔiməʃ tʰə swakʷən  
 N.CN take-TR-3SUB DT loon DYN=walk.IPFV DT loon  
 səw̃ xʷə=kʷənet-s tʰəw̃nił tʰə swakʷən  
 N.CN INCH=take.ST-3POS PRO.DT DT loon  
 'And then they captured a loon, that was walking by, and they captured it.'  
 (MJJ 1962: line 15)

In this example there are three verbs:

- *suw' kwunutewut tthu swakwun*, 'they **took** the loon,'
- *yu 'i'mush tthu swakwun*, 'the loon was **walking along**,' and
- *hwu kwun'et-s tthu'nilh tthu swakwun*. 'they **took possession** of that loon'.

Each verb in this example has its own arguments. The first and third verbs are transitive and mirror one another, having the same third-person subject and 'the loon' as their object. The middle verb is an intransitive motion verb with 'the loon' as its subject. All three verbs share the referent 'the loon'. It is not certain that the VCC label should be stretched to accommodate this kind of example.<sup>12</sup>

Though this project began as an investigation into Hul'q'umi'num' SVCs, my research has revealed that the language exhibits a diverse variety of MVCs. Future work will delve further into the meanings and uses of these constructions in order to gain a more thorough understanding of when and why L1 speakers rely on MVCs to artfully express events in stories.

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<sup>12</sup> Donna Gerds (p.c.) suggests that the middle clause may be a parenthetical and the third clause may be a restart, but there are other examples of stacked VPs that seem more closely bound.

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