Elasticity and Cohesion: Multi-Verb Constructions as a Narrative Strategy*

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Abstract: The verbs in Hul'q'umi'num' multi-verb constructions (MVCs) are bound together by shared arguments, yet this boundness exhibits varying degrees of elasticity — e.g., the relationship between auxiliaries and (main) verbs is less elastic than that of independent verbs. Rhetorical strategies — e.g., lengthening, pausing — allow for the story-teller to stretch out these constructions for effect. Similarly, the story-tellers use single agents and polyptoton to create cohesion across oral paragraphs. Often the verbs in MVCs appear nearby, tying them to the surrounding narrative structure. MVCs are typically used to pack in action words in moments of motion, building tension, and high action. This paper ties together previous work on word order in MVCs and illustrates the importance of their discourse contexts. MVCs are frequent in Hul'q'umi'num' narratives and have been thus far understudied because they are not widespread across Salish, and thus it is important to document them as a unique narrative feature.

Keywords: multi-verb constructions, serial verbs, oral paragraphs, Salish, Halkomelem, Hul'q'umi'num'

1 Introduction

This paper investigates the oral paragraph as an environment for multi-verb constructions (MVCs) in Hul'q'umi'num', the Island dialect of Halkomelem Salish (ISO 639-3: hur), through examination of a 17,000 line text corpus and elicitation. MVCs are not common across the Salish language family, and thus there have been few dedicated studies of this kind of construction in the Salish language family.[1] This paper looks at how the oral paragraph influences the realization of MVCs. The verbal elements in all MVCs are bound together by arguments shared throughout an oral paragraph, yet this boundness exhibits varying degrees of elasticity; the verb components may be separated from one another by shared arguments and pauses.

So far, MVCs are only attested in a few Central Salish languages. Halkomelem is a Central Salish language of the Pacific Northwest (British Columbia and Washington). It is one of 23 Salish languages currently or historically spoken in what is now known as British Columbia, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington. Halkomelem consists of three main dialects: Hul'q'umi'num' (Island: Cowichan, Nanaimo), hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓ (Downriver: Musqueam), and Halq'eméylem (Upriver: Chilliwack). Hul'q'umi'num' is the focus of this paper.

I will begin by providing an overview of my work on word order in Hul'q'umi'num' MVCs. Section 1 outlines the syntactic types of MVC distinguished by Schneider (2021), and Section 1.2 will cover previous work on motion constructions and word order patterns in serial verb constructions (Schneider 2022a; 2022b; 2023). Finally, Section 1.3 will turn to oral paragraphs in Hul'q'umi'num'.

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[1] Previously, Montler (2008) provided an analysis of serial verbs in Klallam.

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1.1 Multi-verb constructions in Hul'q'umi'num'

MVCs are constructions consisting of two or more lexical verbs that share one or more arguments and are not connected by any linking element. Hul'q'umi'num' exhibits at least three kinds of MVCs: auxiliary verb constructions (1), serial verb constructions (2), and verb chain constructions (3).[2]

(1) ni' tsun huye'.
ni? cən həye?
DIST.AUX 1SG.SUB leave
'I left.' (RP 06.19)

(2) ni? tsun hwu'alum' 'imush.
ni? cən xʷə?aləm̓ ʔiməš
DIST.AUX 1SG.SUB return walk
'I walked back.' (return + walk) (RP 06.19)

(3) ni' tsun 'imush yu t'it'ulum'.
ni? cən ʔiməš yə=t̓it̓ələm̓
DIST.AUX 1SG.SUB walk DYN=sing<IPFV>
'I walked along singing (as I went).' (RP 06.19)

In each, the verb components can stand alone as independent lexical verbs, and the verbs share at least a subject argument. The verb components in these constructions exhibit varying degrees of what I have referred to as *boundness*, the relative connectedness of the aggregate verbal elements:

Table 1: Cline of boundness of verb components (Schneider 2021: 405)

Most bound				*Least bound*
Aux. verb construction (AVC)	>	Serial verb construction (SVC)	>	Verb chain construction (VCC)

Hul'q'umi'num' auxiliaries can function as independent verbs (Gerdts 1988: §1.4.1). Auxiliaries can be distinguished from main verbs in that subject NPs may not occur directly after an auxiliary, occurring after either of the full verbs:

[2] Four-line examples consist of a line in the Hul'q'umi'num' community's orthography, which is included to ensure accessibility; the second line is APA, which represents pronunciation, and the third line is the corresponding gloss; finally, the fourth line represents a natural English translation.
Abbreviations – 1, 2, 3: person marking, AUX: auxiliary, CN: connective element, CNJ: conjunction, CS: causative, DIR: directional (verb), DIST: distal, DT: determiner, DYN: dynamic, FOC: focus, FUT: future, IPFV: imperfective, LCTR: limited control transitive, MID: middle, N: nominalizer, OBL: oblique, PAS: passive, PFV: perfective, PL: plural, POS: possessive, PRF: perfect, PRO.DT: pro-determiner, PROX: proximal, PST: past, REC: reciprocal, RFL: reflexive, RL: rhetorical lengthening, SG: singular, SUB: subject, TR: transitive, $V_{1/2/3}$: first/second/third verb in series, V_0: linked verb preceding series of verbs, < >: non-concatenative morphology.

(4) a. ni’ huye’ ’imush **tthu swiw’lus**.

niʔ	həyeʔ	ʔiməš	**t$^{\theta}$ə**	**swiẇləs**
DIST.AUX	leave	walk	DT	boy

‘The boy left, walked.’

b. ni’ huye’ **tthu swiw’lus** ’imush.

niʔ	həyeʔ	**t$^{\theta}$ə**	**swiẇləs**	ʔiməš.
DIST.AUX	leave	DT	boy	walk

‘The boy left, walked.’

c. * ni’ **tthu swiw’lus** huye’ ’imush.

niʔ	**t$^{\theta}$ə**	**swiẇləs**	həyeʔ	ʔiməš.
DIST.AUX	DT	boy	leave	walk

Intended: ‘The boy left, walked.’ (RP 10.19)

Similarly, if there are two auxiliaries in a row, the second one behaves more like a full verb, allowing the subject argument immediately after it:

(5) a. ni’ nem’ **tthu swiw’lus** huye’ ’imush.

niʔ	nem̓	**t$^{\theta}$ə**	**swiẇləs**	həyeʔ	ʔiməš
DIST.AUX	go.DIR	DT	boy	leave	walk

‘The boy went, left, walked.’

b. * ni’ **tthu swiw’lus** nem’ huye’ ’imush.

niʔ	**t$^{\theta}$ə**	**swiẇləs**	nem̓	həyeʔ	ʔiməš
DIST.AUX	DT	boy	go.DIR	leave	walk

Intended: ‘The boy went, left, walked.’ (RP 10.19)

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.

AVCs are the most bound, consisting of an auxiliary and a lexical verb. SVCs exhibit a medium degree of boundness, consisting of two lexical verbs with a shared subject and matching aspect. Finally, VCCs are the least bound because the verb components are more independent of one another, which is shown by the fact that the verb components may have aspect mismatch, as in (3). All three of these construction types will be on display in the discussion of oral paragraphs.

1.2 Verb and word order

Typologically, motion SVCs can be divided into two overarching types: directional motion and associated motion (Lovestrand & Ross 2021). Directional SVCs consist of two motion verbs, where at least one contributes path information:

(6) ni’ tsun **’ushul t’akw’**.

niʔ	cən	**ʔəšəl**	**t̓aḱ^{w}**
DIST.AUX	1SG.SUB	paddle	go.home

‘I paddled home.’ (DL 26.04.22)

In the first type, illustrated in (6), one of the verbs indicates the direction of motion and the other usually indicates the manner. While certain verbs exhibit more flexibility than others, most often, the manner verb occurs first, and the path verb typically occurs second. In the text corpus, the manner verb most often precedes the path verb (almost 90 percent of the time).[3] Some verbs, such as *tsam* 'go uphill' exhibit more flexible ordering:

(7) siis 'uw' **xwchenum** tthu tth'amuqw'us **tsam**.

si:s	ʔəẇ	**x̌ʷčenəm**	tᶿə	t̓ᶿaməq̓ʷəs	**cam**
and	CN	run	DT	sasquatch	go.uphill

'And the Sasquatch ran up the hill.' (ST 6017)

(8) sis 'uw' wulh **tsam xwchenum**.

sis	ʔəẇ	wəɬ	**cam**	**x̌ʷčenəm**
and	CN	PRF	go.uphill	run

'And now she went uphill and ran.' (ST 6364)

In (7), V_1 encodes manner followed by V_2 which encodes path, and in (8), V_1 encodes path, then V_2 encodes manner.

Associated motion involves the addition of motion to a non-motion event (Guillaume & Koch 2021). Thus, while directional SVCs typically consist of two motion verbs, associated motion SVCs consist of a motion and a non-motion verb, as in (9).

(9) nem' tsun **t'itsum kwunut** tthunu shun'tsu.

neṁ	cən	**t̓icəm**	**kʷən-ət**	tᶿənə	šəṅcə
go.AUX	1SG.SUB	swim	take-TR	DT.POS	catch

'I'll swim and get my catch.' (DL 20.04.22)

In purposive associated motion SVCs like (9), a motion event precedes an intended non-motion event. When an SVC expresses a sequential event, then the order of the two verbs is expected to be temporally iconic (cf. Lord 1973).

Purposive motion constructions are almost always tense-iconic. The default reading for a pair of serialized perfective verbs is a sequential, temporally iconic one. Interestingly, certain discourse contexts allow for non-iconic verb order in purposive motion SVCs:

(10) 'uw' hay tsun tse' nem' **nuw'ilum tsam**.

ʔəẇ	hay	cən	ceʔ	neṁ	**nəẇiləm**	**cam**
CN	3FOC	1SG.SUB	FUT	go.AUX	enter	go.uphill

'I will go up by myself and go inside.' (SM 4464)

Out of context, examples such as this are treated as tense-iconic automatically, which exposes a limitation of isolated elicitation. Use of the text corpus to guide the understanding of these constructions is essential. Certain verb orders only occur because of the context around them.

[3] This count excludes the path verb *huye'* 'leave', which behaves differently and will be mentioned in Section 3.

While semantics plays a role in the order of the verbs, additional patterns emerge when looking at the transitivity of the verbs and where their arguments occur. As is demonstrated by the above examples, two-verb SVCs may consist of intransitive and transitive verbs. Transitive constructions (both single- and multi-verb) with two overt NPs are rare in Hul'q'umi'num' texts (Gerdts & Hukari 2003; 2008). When SVCs do involve two overt NP arguments, an alternating VSVO pattern is preferred in elicitation, and is the only order that occurs in the corpus (Schneider 2023). In the next section, I will provide some brief background about the nature of oral paragraphs in Hul'q'umi'num'.

1.3 Oral paragraphs in Hul'q'umi'num'

In most languages, intonational units can be identified by changes in pitch and rhythm (cf. Dooley & Levinsohn 2001; Himmelmann 2006). A typical Hul'q'umi'num' oral paragraph consists of two to five clauses strung together, with overall declining intonation (Beck & Bennet 2007; Gerdts p.c.; Gilkison 2020). This section describes some of the strategies speakers use to distribute Vs and NPs over the entire oral paragraph (Schneider & Gerdts 2023).

Observe a typical oral paragraph: (verbs are bold, agents underlined, patients wavy underline).[4]

(11) a. *'i.i.i tus 'u kwu skweyuls 'i'* ***thuytus*** *kwey'* *s'eluhw*, *xut'ustum' tswe' 'u tthu suy'win'.*
'Then one day the old man started preparing something.'

b. ***kwunutus*** *tthu xpey' sus suw'* ***t'qw'atus***, *suw'…* ***qw'aqwutus*** *tthu xpey'*, ***thuytum*** *tthu shes…*
'He took some cedar, and he cut it, and he hit it, preparing a sea lion.'

c. *ni.i.i.i'* ***theey'tus***, *tl'lim' nuw'* ***hwu sa.a.ay'*** *tthuw'nilh.*
'He kept preparing it, then he was ready.'

(WSa: *The Elder and the Sea Lion*)

The agent is *s'eluhw* 'the elderly man' and the patients are *xpey'* 'cedar' and *shes* 'sea lion'. This example shows a classic Hul'q'umi'num' pattern of ending the oral paragraph with the agent expressed with a refreshing pro-determiner *tthuw'nilh* (Gerdts & Hukari 2004). There are seven total verbs, two expressions of the agent, and three of patients. Below is another typical oral paragraph:

(12) a. ***'e.e.ey'*** *tthu swa.a.aw'lus…* ***q'aq'i'utus*** *tthu xut'ustum shes…* **q'aytum** tthu shes.
'And all the young men were killing what we call sea lions, they killed the sea lions.'

b. ***lumnum*** *kwthu shes suw'* ***'aalh, 'a.a.alhs*** *tthu swaw'lus 'u tthu snuhwulhs.*
'When they saw the sea lions, the young men got on their canoes.'

c. *suw'* ***tseeltewut*** *kwu shes 'i'* ***thuq'thuq'tum*** *'u kwu xut'ustum thuyumun, kwun'el's kwun' xwi'lum' 'u kwun' thq'ustun.*
'And they went after the sea lions, and they speared them with the *thuyumun*, which has rope attached to a spear.' (WSa: *The Man who Became a Sea Lion*)

In this example, there are eight total verbs, two expressions of the agent, and four expressions of

[4] In this paper, entire oral paragraphs will not be glossed morpheme-by-morpheme.

patients. There are four common patterns in these paragraphs (Schneider & Gerdts 2023):

- There are more Vs than NPs (Gerdts & Schneider 2021),
- patients are overtly expressed more than agents (Gerdts & Hukari 2003; 2008),
- the Vs and NPs are interleaved to avoid two overt NPs in a row (Gerdts & Schneider 2021), and
- a single agent is maintained throughout the oral paragraph (Gerdts & Hukari 2003; 2008).

Additionally, both examples (11) and (12) show the strategy of expressing patients more often as overt NPs, even if they were just mentioned, than as pronouns (Gerdts 2002). The paragraphs also demonstrate polyptotonic repetition — the use of forms derived from the same root (Axelrod & Gómez de García 2007; Gerdts 2002; 2018), for example:

(13) a. √*thuy* 'make'

(11a)	*thuytus*	θəy-t-əs	make-TR-3SUB	'fix it, make it/them'
(11b)	*thuytum*	θəy-t-əm	make-TR-MID	'prepare it/them'
(11c)	*theey'tus*	θe:ẏ-t-əs	make-TR-3SUB<IPFV>	'fixing it, making it/them

b. √*q'ay* 'die'

(12a)	*q'aq'i'utus*	q̇aq̇iʔ-ət-əs	die-TR-3SUB<IPFV>	'killing it/them'
(12b)	*q'aytum*	q̇ay-t-əm	die-TR-MID	'be killed'

Repetitions that run through the oral paragraph (and sometimes even beyond) give it cohesion that aids the listener in following the story (Gerdts 2018).

This section outlined features of the Hul'q'umi'um' oral paragraph discussed in previous literature. In the next section, I will examine two short Hul'q'umi'num' narratives by pulling out oral paragraphs containing MVCs in order to look at how the constructions play into the structure of the narrative.

2 Oral paragraphs & MVCs

In this section, I will examine excerpts from two stories that have been formatted in what has been referred to as 'poetry versions', focusing on paragraphs containing MVCs. The written version of these stories is presented by writing the oral paragraphs in free form lines that correspond to intonational units. The leftmost edge of a line correlates to the starting pitch. Like other Salish languages, Hul'q'umi'num' oral paragraphs start with a high pitch, and then there is an overall decline in pitch to the finish (Gerdts p.c.; Gilkison 2020).[5] Within the paragraph, there may be a reset in the pitch, usually a partial reset, and this is represented by indenting the line (Alphonse et al. 2021: 3).

[5] Cf. Beck and Bennet (2007) for Lushootseed.

2.1 *tth'uwxe'le'ts | Basket Ogress*

The following examples (14), (16), and (18) come from the story *tth'uwxe'le'ts | Basket Ogress*, which is a traditional Coast Salish story told by the late Sti'tum'at | Dr. Ruby Peter (Peter 2016).[6] This narrative is relatively short, being 6:23 minutes long. This story is about an Ogress who steals children, putting them in her basket, so she can cook and eat them. In the examples below, I have maintained the alignment from the original analysis and added the bold and underlining — the verbs have been bolded and MVCs have been underlined.[7]

In (14a), the verbs involve *Tth'uwxe'le'ts* moving about and searching for children to eat, and (14b), adds that her slave is along with her, doing the work of grabbing what she wanted.

(14) a. *'i-i-i ts'u yath 'uw' **wi'wul'** thu tth'uwxe'le'ts,*
*__**sew'q'**__ 'u tthu stl'ul'iqulh.*

***'uy'st-hwus** kws **lhey'xt-s** tthu stl'ul'iqulh*
ni' 'u tthu tsa'luqw.

'Tth'uwxe'le'ts was always **coming** around **looking** for children.
She liked to eat children up in the mountains.'

b. *sis m'uw' **t'at'uhw** m'i **'e'wu** 'u tthu shhw'is tthu hwulmuhw.*
*wulh **tetsul** 'utl' kwa'mutsun,*
***yu kwun'atul'** 'u thu skw'uyuth.*

*yath 'uw' **kwun'etus** nilh yaay'us*
'u tthuw' mukw' stem tthu ni' stl'i's.

'i' nilh thu skw'uyuths
*nilh ni' __**kwukwun'ut**__,*
*__**'amust**__ 'u tthuw' stem 'ul' stl'i's.*

'She would come down the mountain, coming here to where the First Nations people dwelled, arriving here at Quamichan, together with her slave.
She always had her slave with her to do all the work that she wanted done.
And her slave was the one **grabbing** and **taking** to her whatever she wanted.'
(Alphonse et al. 2021:3; Peter 2016)

In (14a), the continuing patient *tthu stl'ul'iqulh* 'the children' is repeated twice (Alphonse et al. 2021: 8). The verbs are both imperfective and syntactically intransitive, and the shared subject occurs between them. The effect of imperfective aspect is to indicate simultaneity of 'coming' and 'looking' (cf. Schneider 2022b).

In (14b), there is a verb chain made up of an imperfective first verb *kwukwun'ut* 'grabbing it' and a perfective second verb *'amust* 'give to'. Both verbs are transitive, and the shared subject is *thu skw'uyuth* 'the slave' in the previous clause and the shared object is *stem 'ul' stl'i's* 'whatever

[6] *Basket Ogress* was made into a 'poetry version' by Christopher Alphonse, Roseanna George, Martina Joe, Thomas Johnny, Donna Modeste, A.V. Sharon Seymour, and Helen Yu Zhang with the help of Donna B. Gerdts for a field methods class taught by John Lyon in 2021.

[7] In this method, the indentation is meant to represent the intonation contour. The left edge represents the higher starting pitch, and thus each paragraph begins there. The amount of indentation of each subsequent line is meant to demonstrate the change in pitch relative to the starting pitch.

she wanted'. The NP argument *thu skw'uyuth* 'the slave' is repeated twice in the paragraph, first as an oblique argument and second as a clefted focus argument. In addition, the verb root √*kwun* 'take, grab' is repeated three times in (14b):

(15) √*kwun* 'take, grab'

yu kwun'atul'	yə=kʷən̓-atə̓l	DYN=take-REC<STA>	'being together'
kwun'etus	kʷən̓-et-əs	take-TR-3SUB<STA>	'holding on to it/them'
kwukwun'ut	<kʷə>kʷən̓-ət	take-TR<IPFV>	'taking, grabbing it/them'

These paragraphs serve to set the scene for the rest of the narrative. The MVCs are used to communicate moments of high motion and action, and the effect is to set the stage for the building tension in the story.

Example (16) is a case of growing tension as it explains how *Tth'uwxe'le'ts* is having her slave prepare her fire, so she can cook and eat the children.

(16) a. *wulh* ***kwunnum*** *'utl' tth'uwxe'le'ts tthu t'xumulu,*
suw' ***thut-s****, "a.a.a, ni' tl'am!*

'uy' kwun's ***yuqwul'tsup****,*
qw'ulum *tst 'u tthu ni'* ***kwunnuhwut****."*

'When Tth'uwxe'le'ts had grabbed six children, she said, "Oh, that's enough!
You best **build a fire,** and we'll **cook** what we caught."'

b. *suw'* ***thuythut-s yuqwul'tsup****,*
thuytus *thu skw'uyuths thu huy'qw.*

'So the slave [**prepared**] **built** a fire.'

c. *ni' wulh* ***saay'st-hwus*** *tthu pi'kwun,*
ni' tse' ***sht'uyum't-s*** *tthu stl'ul'iqulh.*

suw' ***yu q'eq'up'utus yu hunum'st-hwus*** *'u tthu pi'kwun,*
xuxeem' stl'ul'iqulh.

'So she got the big barbecue sticks ready to attach the children to.
So she **tied them up** [**put them**] **onto** the barbecue sticks, the crying children.'

(Alphonse et al. 2021:5; Peter 2016)

The agent shifts from *Tth'uwxe'le'ts* in (16a) to 'the slave' in (16b), and so is overtly stated and then maintained throughout the rest of (16b) and (16c), whereas there are several patient NPs — *the fire*, *the barbecue sticks*, and *the children* (two times).

All of the underlined verbs in (16a) and (16b) are perfective and syntactically intransitive. In (16a), it is clear that the pair of verbs — *yuqwul'tsup* 'make a fire' and *qw'ulum* 'barbeque' — are in separate clauses because of the second-position clitic *tst* 'second-person singular subject' following the second verb. These two verbs refer to separate events: make a fire now to barbecue children later. In contrast, the two verbs in (16b) — *thuythut* 'get ready' and *yuqwul'tsup* 'make a fire' — refer to the same event. This is reflected in the translation where in both (16b) and (16c), one of the verbs is not reflected in the English. I have added the bracketed verb phrases in order to show a more literal translation. In (16c), the underlined verbs are imperfective and syntactically transitive. In addition, paragraphs (16a) and (16b) are knit together using repetition:

(17) a. √*yuqw* ‘burn’

(16)	*yuqwul’tsup*	yəqʷ-əl̓cəp	burn-log	‘make a fire’
(16)	*yuqwul’tsup*	yəqʷ-əl̓cəp	burn-log	‘make a fire’
(16)	*thu huy’qw*	θə həy̓qʷ	DT burn<IPFV>	‘a fire’

b. √*thuy* ‘make, prepare, fix’

(16)	*thuythut-s*	θəy-θət=s	make-RFL=3POS	‘get (oneself) ready’
(16)	*thuytus*	θəy-t-əs	make-TR-SUB	‘prepare it, make it/them’

The verb chain in paragraph (16a) shares the verb *yuqwul’tsup* ‘make a fire’ with the SVC in paragraph (16b). In addition, the other verb from the SVC in (16b) is repeated again in the next line to create space for the argument NPs. This is a rare case where both NPs are expressed exhibiting VSO word order. The MVCs function to allow the story-teller to densely pack the action words into the paragraphs, and the three paragraphs in (16) function to build the tension in the story leading up to the climax.

Finally, the paragraphs in (18) demonstrate the most climactic part of the story where the *Tth’uwxe’le’ts* has tripped into the fire and is screaming for help, and the slave is shouting, “I am helping you!”, while actually pushing her deeper into the fire, and in so doing saves the children from being eaten:

(18) a. *“’uy’!* ***ts’uwuthamu*** *tsun tse’,”*
suw’ ***xut’us*** *thu skw’uyuths.*
kwunutus *tthey’ thi sts’esht-s.*

xut’u *kwus ts’ets’uwutus,*
’i’ ni’ ***yu thextus***, ***yu the.e.extus***,
yu hun’wushus *’u thu huy’qw.*

‘“Okay, I will help you,” said her slave.
She took her big stick, though she was saying she would help her, she was **shoving** [**putting**] her deeper into the fire.’

b. *wulh* ***yuqw*** *tth’uwxe’le’ts*
’i’ ’uw’ tuteem’,
*“****ts’ewutham’sh****!*
ts’ewutham’sh*!”*

‘And Tth’uxe’le’ts burned up, shouting, “Help me! Help me!”’

c. *“’i tsun* ***ts’uts’uw’utha’mu****!*
’i tsun ’uw’ ***ts’uts’uw’utha’mu****!”*

’i’ nilh ***yu thextus***
yu hun’wushum’ *’u thu huy’qw.*

‘“I’m helping you! I AM helping you!”
But she was in fact **pushing** [**putting**] her deeper into the fire.’

(Alphonse et al. 2021:7; Peter 2016)

Similar to (16), paragraphs (18a)–(18c) are knit together using repetition.

(19) a. √*thex* 'push'

(18a)	*yu thextus*	yə=θex̌-t-əs	DYN=make-TR-3SUB<IPFV>
(18a)	*yu the.e.extus*	yə=θex̌-t-əs	DYN=make-TR-3SUB<IPFV.RL>
(18c)	*yu thextus*	yə=θex̌-t-əs	DYN=make-TR-3SUB<IPFV>
			'pushing it/them'

b. √*nuw'* 'in'

(18a)	*yu hun'wushus*	yə=hənẇ-əš-əs	DYN=in-TR-3SUB<IPFV>
			'putting it in, bringing it/them in'
(18c)	*yu hun'wushum'*	yə=hənẇ-əš-əm̓	DYN=in-TR-PAS<IPFV>
			'being put in, brought in'

In this case, the repetition is reflected at the beginning and end of a set of oral paragraphs, emphasizing the climax.

The first overarching observation in (14), (16), and (18) is that the MVCs occur in clusters in the story told by Ruby Peter. Each of these clusters represents moments of motion and/or high action in the narrative. Verbs are more frequent than NPs, and this is often accomplished through polyptotonic repetition of a verb root. When an NP is present, it is usually a patient, which are more often overtly expressed, whereas a single agent is usually mentioned at the beginning and understood to continue through the rest of the paragraph (Gerdts & Hukari 2003; 2008). In this particular story, Peter stacks the verbs, one after another, rather than alternating them with NPs. Next, I will compare her narrative with another story-teller's narrative.

2.2 *chumux qwul'ilh | Pitchy log man*

The next set — (20), (22), (23), and (24) — is from the story *chumux qwul'ilh | Pitchy log man*, which is a traditional Coast Salish story told by thixil-hwut | Mrs. Jimmy Joe (Ellen Rice) (Joe).[8] This narrative is 11:29 minutes long. In this story, Pitch would often go out fishing on his boat, but one day he fails to make it to shore before he is melted by the sun. His children find out how he died from Loon, and they decide to avenge his death. As with the previous set of examples, I have maintained the alignment from the original analysis, but I have bolded the verbs and underlined the MVCs.[9]

This example describes Pitch's usual activity coming home from fishing before the sun is up and splashing himself to cool off before drying the fish he caught while out on the water.

(20) a. *wulh* ***hun'lheelt****.*
nilh ts'u suw' ***qwasthut****-s tthuw'nilh* ***kw'ulhusum****.*
nilh suw' ***yu ts'ey'hwtums*** *thu sq'i'li.i.i.*

'Finally, he made it ashore.
He **submerged** and **splashed** himself.
They dried the dried fish.'

[8] *chumux qwul'ilh | Pitchy log man* was made into a 'poetry version' by Donna B. Gerdts.

[9] In this method, the indentation is meant to represent the intonation contour. The left edge represents the higher starting pitch, and thus each paragraph begins there. The amount of indentation of each subsequent line is meant to demonstrate the change in pitch relative to the starting pitch.

b. *'uw' mukw' skweyul [kwsuw']* ***tutaal's****.*
'uw' yath 'uw' ***tutaam'*** *tthuw'ne'ullh.*
wulh ***hwu sum'um'ne'***
mukw' suw'wuy'qe'.

sis 'uw' ***ts'e'yhwe.e.em' ts'e'yhwe.e.em'*** *'u tthu stsa'tx.*

'Every day he went out on the water. And they always hollered to him. And now they had children, all boys.
They kept on **drying** and **drying** the halibut.' (Joe: line 30–36)

In (20a), there are two imperfective, syntactically intransitive verbs — *qwasthut* 'submerge himself' and *kw'ulhusum* 'splash himself'. The pro-determiner occurs between the verbs as a pronominal shared subject argument. The verb root meaning 'dry' is repeated three times:

(21) √*ts'uy'hw* 'dry'

(20a)	*yu ts'ey'hwtums*	yə=c̓ey̓xʷ-t-əm=s	DYN=dry-TR-PAS=3POS<IPFV>	'it/they was/were being dried'
(20b)	*ts'ey'hwe.e.em'*	c̓ey̓xʷ-em̓	dry-MID<IPFV.RL>	'get dry'
(20b)	*ts'ey'hwe.e.em'*	c̓ey̓xʷ-em̓	dry-MID<IPFV.RL>	'get dry'

In example (20), the MVCs function to express motion as well as scene setting. A similar effect is happening in (22), where the story-teller is rebuilding after the death of Pitch and shifting the agency of the story to Loon and to Pitch's children.

(22) a. *wulh* ***hum'i yu p'alhthut*** *tthu me'mun'us*
'uw' yath xwum ***yu ts'its'usum'****.*
nilh thu lhqe'lts's ni' sil'anums,
nilh ni' sil'anums.

suw' m'i.i.i ***ts'isum*** *tthuw'ne'ullh.*

'The children were **maturing**, always growing too fast. Their months were their years, they were years to them.
And they grew older.'

b. *suw' 'i tthu swakwun*
—tl'uw' 'i tthu swakwun.
suw' ***kw'uy'ut****-s tthuw'ne'ullh tthu swakwun,*
*"'****uwu*** *ch* ***huy'thustuhw*** *tthunu me'mun'u*
'uw' ni' 'us ***tstamut*** *kwthu mens.*
'uwu *ch* ***huy'thustuhw****."*

'uw' ***st'e*** *kwu'elh tthu swakwun wulh* ***tsset.***

'And loon was there—there was also the loon there. And they warned the loon, "Don't tell my children about what happened to their dad. Do not tell them!"
And loon did what he was told.'

[[yee]]

c. *nilh* ***tssetum*** *tthu swakwun* ***thuyt***
kw' qu.u.ux tuxwa'ts tth'um'een.
suw' ***thuyt-s,***
he'kwul'usht*-s tthu ma'uqw*
t'ut'e'tus*.*

'Loon was ordered to make a lot of bows and arrows. And **made** them and he **tried hunting** ducks.'

(Joe: line 54–63)

In (22a), a motion verb is used to indicate metaphorical motion in the construction *hum'i yu p'alhthut*, which is translated as 'maturing, growing up'. All of the verbs in (22c) are linked by the shared syntactic subject *tthu swakwun* 'the Loon', mentioned in the first line of the oral paragraph; the five verbs are laid out in the table below:

Table 2: Verbs in paragraph (22c)

	Verb		**Aspect**	**Subject**	**Object**
V_1	*tssetum*	'was told to do it (PAS.)'	PFV	*tthu swakwun*	n/a
V_2	*thuyt*	'make, prepare it/them'	PFV	*tthu swakwun*	*tuxwa'ts tth'um'een*
V_0	*thuyt*	'make, prepare it/them'	PFV	*tthu swakwun*	*tuxwa'ts tth'um'een*
V_1	*he'kwul'usht-s*	'shooting it/them'	IPFV	*tthu swakwun*	*tthu ma'uqw*
V_2	*t'ut'e'tus*	'trying it'	IPFV	*tthu swakwun*	*tthu ma'uqw*

First, there is an INT(PAS)-TR SVC with VSVO word order. Second, there is a string of three verbs, which I am going to propose is a verb chain combined with an SVC. V_0 repeats V_2 (*thuyt*) from the previous construction, further linking them, then this is followed by an imperfective TR-TR SVC with VOV word order. V_0 has a different aspect and a different object from the second pair, which indicates that it is part of a separate clause from the two following verbs. The MVCs function to create cohesion through repetition and shared arguments. The effect of these paragraphs is to set the stage for the second act of the story.

Below are the two final examples from this story; (23) describes the building tension leading up to the climax, while (24) describes the resolution after the climax.

(23) *suw'* ***qwulmutewut*** *tthu swakwun,*
*"****nem'*** *ch kwu'elh.*
nem' ch ***t'akw'****.*
yuthust *ch kwthunu shhwuw'weli,*
m'i *tst tse' 'uw'* ***hwu'alum',***
nem'ut q'aayt *tthu sum'shathut."*

'Now they told loon, "Go then. Go home and tell my relatives, we will **return** after we **go** and **kill** the sun."'

(Joe lines 86–88)

(24) *'i' yelh sus* ***m'i*** *tl'e' wulh* ***hwu'i*** *'u tthu ni' 'ulh 'uw'* ***shtusth***,
ni' tl'e' wulh ***kwulushtus*** *tthuw'ne'ullh.*

sus 'uw' ***<u>tl'pil</u>***,
<u>tus</u> *'u tthu shhwuw'welis.*

'They made it back to where they had started from, and they once again shot an arrow. And they **<u>descended, arriving</u>** to their relatives.'

(Joe: line 125–127)

Similar to the excerpts from the previous story, the MVCs occur in instances of motion and/or high action. Examples (20a), (23), and (24) all contain motion. Repetition and/or imperfective aspect are used in (20b), (22a), and (22c) to denote ongoing activities. In addition, (23) provides another example of MVCs being used in a case of building tension as the children of Pitch announce to Loon that they are going to go kill the sun to avenge the death of their father.

While Peter's MVCs tend to be at peak climax, Joe's MVCs are clustered more during scene setting, building tension, and resolution. The similarities between the two story-tellers' narratives are that patients tend to vary throughout the paragraph and are therefore overtly expressed to maintain clarity; a single agent (often the syntactic subject) is maintained throughout the oral paragraph. If the agent changes, then it will be overtly stated. Another observation is that Joe uses more interleaving of Vs and NPs than Peter in these particular narratives. Additionally, polyptotonic repetition of verb roots is used by both speakers to create cohesion across the paragraph. While there were just a few cases where more than two verbs were linked together in these narratives, this kind of multi-*multi*-verb construction is the focus of the next section.

3 Multi-*multi*-verb constructions

The two previous narratives are relatively short — *Basket Ogress* 6:23 and *Pitch* 11:29 minutes — and they provide several illustrative examples of two and occasionally three linked verbs. In order to examine and compare constructions consisting of three verbs, I will examine a much longer narrative. The story *ts'usqun'* | *Golden Eagle*, told by Wilfred Sampson (WSa) in 1977 and recorded by Tom Hukari, is approximately 1:44:47 hours long. Whereas the brevity of the previous narratives allow for a chronological walk through the MVCs in the story, in this narrative, I will skip around and highlight constructions based on their features.

All of the three-verb MVCs consist of one or more motion verbs. As was discussed previously, there is some flexibility in the ordering of manner and path verbs. In two-verb SVCs, manner typically precedes path and, when both verbs encode path information, the order is flexible with a tendency toward iconicity or specificity (Schneider 2022a). For example:

(25) suw' **huye.e.e' 'imush tsam**…

səẇ	**həye?**	**?iməš**	**cam**
N.CN	leave<RL>	walk	go.uphill

'So he departed walking uphill…' (WSa 1977: line 420)

All three are intransitive motion verbs with an unmarked third-person singular subject. First, V_1 establishes the starting direction; it indicates that the subject is leaving his current location. Next, V_2 describes the manner of motion: *walk*; and finally, V_3 provides the trajectory of motion: *uphill*.

The same three verbs *huye', 'imush*, and *tsam* are used again in another example a little later in the story, but they are in a slightly different order.

(26) nem' **huye' tsam 'imush**, mukw' 'ul' 'untsu.

neṁ	**həyeʔ**	**cam**	**ʔiməš**	məḵʷ	ʔəl̓	ʔəncə
go.AUX	leave	go.uphill	walk	all	just	where

'That was when he left to go up into the hills, just walking everywhere.'

(WSa 1977: line 426)

In this example, like the previous one, V_1 is *huye'* 'leave' and this verb indicates that the subject is leaving his current location. In contrast with the previous example, V_2 provides the trajectory of motion: *uphill*, and the manner of motion is given by V_3. The examples in (27) demonstrate that the three verbs can be reordered without any significant change to the overall meaning of the phrase.

(27) a. hwun' netulh ni' tsun **huye' 'imush tsam**.

xʷəṅ	netəɬ	niʔ	cən	**həyeʔ**	**ʔiməš**	**cam**
early	morning	DIST.AUX	1SG.SUB	leave	walk	go.uphill

'Early in the morning I left, walked, went uphill.'

b. hwun' netulh ni' tsun **huye' tsam 'imush**.

xʷəṅ	netəɬ	niʔ	cən	**həyeʔ**	**cam**	**ʔiməš**
early	morning	DIST.AUX	1SG.SUB	leave	go.uphill	walk

'Early in the morning I left, went uphill, walked.'

c. hwun' netulh ni' tsun **'imush huye' tsam**.

xʷəṅ	netəɬ	niʔ	cən	**ʔiməš**	**həyeʔ**	**cam**
early	morning	DIST.AUX	1SG.SUB	walk	leave	go.uphill

'Early in the morning I walked, left, went uphill.' (RP 06.19)

The question that arises is: what influences the speaker's choice between these verb orders? In order to determine this, I zoomed out to the oral paragraph in order to see the context. First, (28) provides additional context for (25) and Figure 1 below provides an image of the intonation contour of the underlined portion.[10]

(28) line 420: *suw' **huye.e.e' 'imush tsam**…*
***tsam** 'u tu smunmeent,*
'So he departed walking uphill, uphill into the mountains,'

line 421: *mukw' 'untsu **shhwunum's** kws **'i'mushs**,*
tu smunmeent…
***nem'** 'u tu xa'lutsa'.*
'going everywhere, to different places, different mountains, going to different lakes.'

line 422: ***xut'ustum' kw'aythut** tu swiw'lus.*
'The young man did the so-called ritual bathing.' (WSa 1977: line 420–422)

[10] Image (and following images) were created using Praat (Boersma & Weenink 2023).

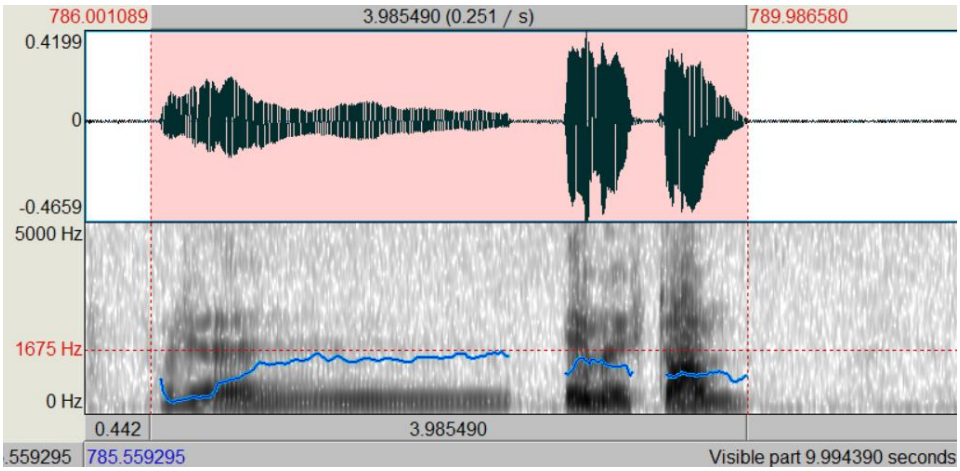

Figure 1: Intonation contour (blue) for verbs in line 420 (red)

In order to compare, example (29) provides context for (26) and Figure 2 provides an image of the intonation contour of the underlined portion.

(29) line 426: *nem' **huye' tsam 'imush**,*
mukw' 'ul' 'untsu,
'That was when he left to go up into the hills, just walking everywhere,'

line 427: *tu smunmeent **shhwunum's** kws **'i'mushs**,*
***nem'** 'u tu'i xa'lutsa'.*
'going to different mountains and lakes.' (WSa 1977: line 426–427)

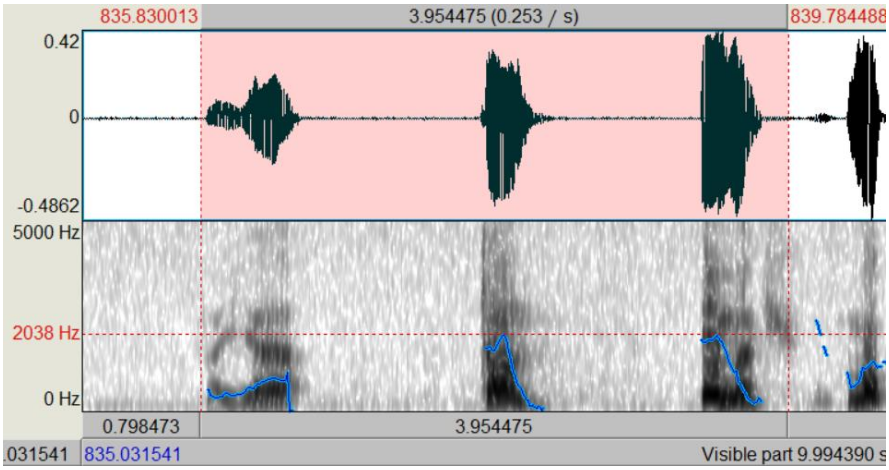

Figure 2: Intonation contour (blue) for verbs in line 426 (red)

In both examples, the manner verb root √*'imush* 'walk, hunt' is repeated (lines 421 and 427). Both of these SVCs are at the beginning of their respective oral paragraphs, so I will focus on what comes after each one. For (28), V_3 in line 420 is repeated after a pause with a specific destination in an oblique phrase. For (29), line 426 ends with the phrase *mukw' 'ul' 'untsu* 'just everywhere'. The main difference between these two examples seems to be that having *tsam* at the end of (28) enables

the speaker to point directly to the destination, whereas having *'imush* at the end enables the speaker to indicate that there was not a specific destination and that the subject walked to many places.

The two examples do have fairly different prosody. In both, the initial verb *huye'* has a rising pitch, but in Figure 1 the pitch gradually falls from the peak caused by the rhetorical lengthening of the /e/ vowel, while in Figure 2 there is a relatively large pitch reset at each of the following verbs as well as a noticeable pause between each of them; pauses will be addressed in Section 4. Interestingly, the total length of both constructions is quite similar (3.9545 ~ 3.9855 seconds).

The MVCs in (25) and (26) both begin with the path verb *huye'* 'leave'. In fact, this is the case for nine of the 16 three-verb MVCs in the *ts'usqun'* | *Golden Eagle* text. This verb is both the most frequently serialized verb in the text corpus, occurring over twice as often as the next most frequent, and is also the only verb that exhibits a strong preference for occurring as the first verb component when serialized.[11] Both the frequency and inflexibility of ordering indicates that a process of grammaticalization is ongoing. The verb *huye'* is beginning to take on a more auxiliary-like function (Schneider 2022a). Below in (30) and (31) are two more examples that begin with *huye'* and have similar constructions following it.

(30) sus 'uw'… **huye' 'imush suwq'** 'u kw' s'ulhtuns tse' kwu shni's 'u tey' kws **'i.i.i'mushs** tuw'ne'lulh.

səs	ʔəẇ	**həyeʔ**	**ʔiməš**	**səwq̓**	ʔə	k̓ʷ	sʔəɬtəns	ceʔ
N.AUX.3POS	CN	leave	walk	search	OBL	DT	food	FUT
kʷə	šniʔ-s		ʔə	teẏ	kʷs	**ʔim̓əš-s**	təẇnel̓əɬ	
DT	that.place-3POS		OBL	DT	DT.N	walk<RL>	PRO.DT<PL>	

'And then they started out to hunt for their food, which would be kept there (in their camp) while they hunted.'

(WSa 1977: line 50)

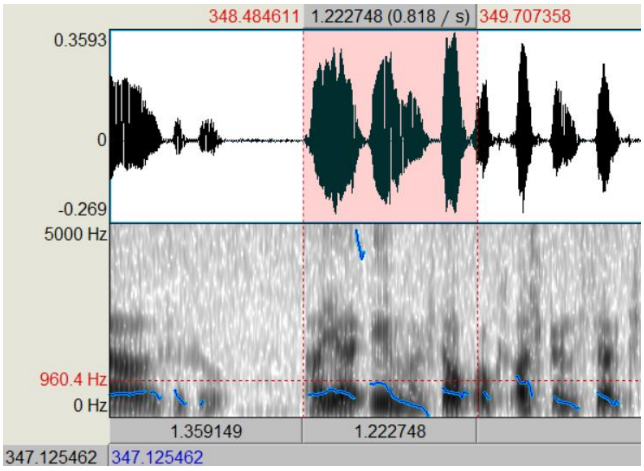

Figure 3: Intonation contour (blue) for verbs in line 50 (red)

[11] The verb *huye'* 'leave' occurs in 46 two-verb SVCs in the text corpus, the next three most common directional verbs each occur in about 20 two-verb SVCs. In addition, *huye'* occurs as the first of two serialized verbs in 45 of the 46 cases.

The intonation contour for (30) is given in Figure 3. In this example, V_1 is *huye'* 'leave', V_2 *'imush* 'walk' provides the manner of motion, and *suwq'* 'search' provides the intended activity.[12] In sum, this is both a directional motion and a purposive motion SVC. In addition, the verb root in V_2 is repeated at the end of the oral paragraph. The prosody here is similar to (26) in that the pitch of *huye'* is slightly lower than the resets of the two following verbs, and similar to (25) in that the pauses are quite short, but overall the pitch is quite a bit lower as it occurs in the middle of an oral paragraph instead of near the beginning.

The next example also has a lower overall pitch, characteristic of the middle of the paragraph. This example consists of two path verbs followed by the verb *suwq'*:

(31) kwunutus tu tuxwa'ts suw' **huye' nem' suwq'** 'u kw' s'ulhtuns.

səẇ	**həyeʔ**	**nem̓**	**səwq̓**	ʔə	kʷ	sʔəɬtən-s
N.CN	leave	go	search	OBL	DT	food-3POS

'He picked up his yew bow and went hunting for his food.' (WSa 1977: line 440)

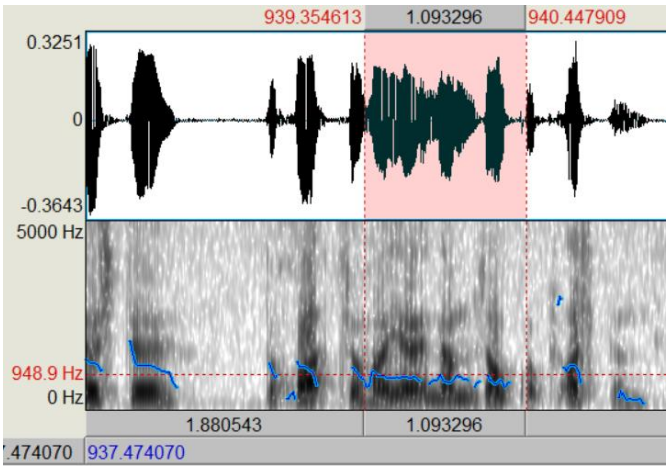

Figure 4: Intonation contour (blue) for verbs in line 440 (red)

Here instead of a manner verb for V_2, there is another directional verbal element *nem'* 'go'. Hul'q'umi'num' auxiliaries can function as independent verbs (Gerdts 1988: §1.4.1). Clause-initial *nem'* that precedes another verb is treated as an auxiliary, and in this position, it does not take any inflectional morphology. In contrast, if *nem'* is the only verb, occurs before an oblique argument, and/or takes inflectional morphology, it is treated as a full verb, such as in (32).

(32) yath nem' 'uw' **hunum'** 'u tthu hwulmuhw.

yaθ	nem̓	ʔəẇ	**hənəm̓**	ʔə	tʰə	xʷəlmuxʷ
always	go.AUX	CN	go.DIR<IPFV>	OBL	DT	First.Nations.people

'He always goes there to the First Nations people.' (ST 8715)

[12] The verb *suwq'* 'search, look for' does entail motion in that the actor is moving about while searching.

This presents a question of how to treat V *nem'* V constructions. Do these constructions represent three verbs in the same clause (VVV) or separate linked clauses (V[AUXV])? This type of construction is relatively frequent, as further exemplified by (33) and (34).

(33) suw' **huye.e.e's** tuw'ne'lulh **ne.e.em' tsam**…
sə̓w̓ **həyeʔ** tə̓w̓ne'ə̓ł **nem̓** **cam**
N.CN leave<RL> PRO.DT<PL> go<RL> go.uphill
'So they departed for the highest part of the mountains…' (WSa 1977: line 71)

In this example, a pro-determiner occurs after V_1 as the pronominal subject. In the next one, the pro-determiner occurs at the end after all of the verbs.

(34) **huye.e.e' nem' tl'pil** tuw'ne'lulh.
həyeʔ **nem̓** **ƛ̓pil** tə̓w̓ne'ə̓ł
leave<RL> go go.down PRO.DT<PL>
'They started down to a lower elevation.' (WSa 1977: line 83)

To determine the syntactic role of *nem'* in the constructions, we can compare second-position clitic placement in a construction where the second verbal element is a full verb that does not double as an auxiliary — *hwu'alum'* 'return' in (35) — with constructions with *nem'* as V_2, as in (36).

(35) a. m'i **tsun** hwu'alum' 'imush.
m̓i **cən** xʷəʔaləm̓ ʔiməš
come.AUX 1SG.SUB return walk
'I came walking back.'

b. *m'i hwu'alum' **tsun** 'imush.
m̓i xʷəʔaləm̓ **cən** ʔiməš
come.AUX return 1SG.SUB walk
Intended: 'I came walking back.' (RP 10.19)

(36) a. suw' huye' **tsun** nem' tsam.
sə̓w̓ həyeʔ **cən** nem̓ cam
N.CN leave 1SG.SUB go.AUX/DIR go.uphill
'So I left to go up the mountain.'

b. suw' huye' nem' **tsun** tsam.
sə̓w̓ həyeʔ nem̓ **cən** cam
N.CN leave go.AUX/DIR 1SG.SUB go.uphill
'So I left [and] I went up the mountain.' (DL 08.06.23)

Unlike *hwu'alum'* 'return', *nem'* can be followed by the first-person subject clitic. Moving the second-position clitic does slightly change the translation of the sentence. In (36a), the verbs have a purposive interpretation 'I left [in order] to go up the mountain', whereas in (36b) the syntax results in two sequential subevents, 'I left [and then] I went up the mountain'. This fact that a second-position subject clitic may occur after it indicates the presence of a clause boundary and that the structure is V[AUXV].

Next, I will address constructions with similar compositions of verbs but that have longer pauses between the verb components.

4 Much ado about nothing (i.e., pauses)

As was mentioned previously, because an argument can intervene between the verb components, such as in (33), it can be difficult to determine the significance of longer pauses. There is essentially already space allowed between the verb components. This discussion will consist of two parts: the difference between the pauses that generally occur between auxiliaries and verbs (Section 4.1) and between two verbs (Section 4.2).

4.1 Pauses after auxiliaries

It would be unexpected to see long pauses between an auxiliary verb and the main predicate because these auxiliaries exhibit a higher degree of boundness. As demonstrated by (4) and (5), an NP (or pronominal pro-determiner) subject may not occur between the auxiliary and first full verb. It is also the case that long pauses do not seem to occur as often when *nem'* occurs as an auxiliary (37), as when it is a full verb (38).[13]

(37) suw' qul'e.e.et nem' **tl'pil** …**hwunin'sus**.

səẇ	qəl̓et	nem̓	**ƛ̓pil**	xʷənin̓səs
N.CN	again	go.AUX	go.down	arrive.there

'So they again went down, [and] they got there to them.' (WSa 1977: line 90)

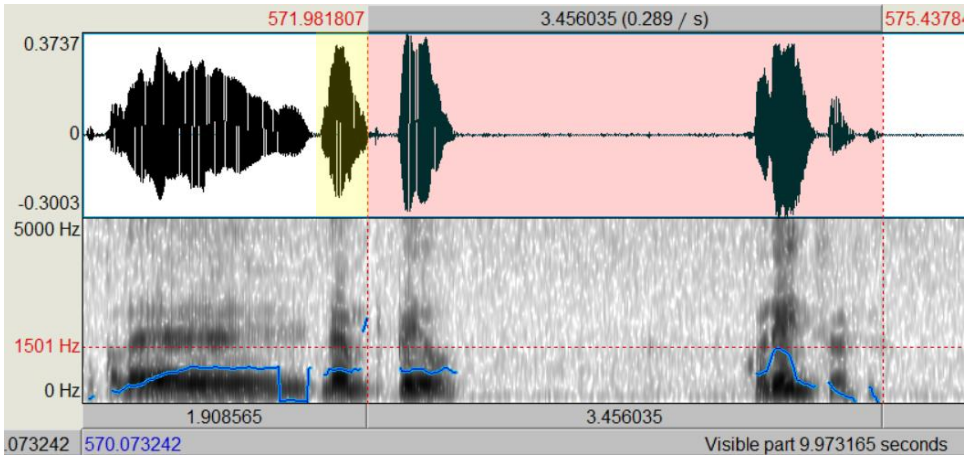

Figure 5: Line 90: auxiliary in yellow; verbs in red

There is virtually no pause between the auxiliary *nem'* and *tl'pil* 'go down', but the gap between the verbs *tl'pil* and *hwunin'sus* is 1.9410s. In the next example, the gap between the verbs *nem'* and *ts'imul* 'get near' is 0.5390s, and between *ts'imul* and *'imush* 1.0060s.

[13] As was mentioned in Section 1.1, when there are two of the auxiliary elements in a row, the second behaves like a full verb. Thus, the verbal composition of the example in (38) is AUXVVV.

(38) ni’ wulh **nem’** …**ts’imul’**…**’imush** tuw’nilh.

niʔ	wəɬ	nem̓	c̓iməl̓	ʔiməš	təẇnił
DIST.AUX	PRF	go.DIR	get.near	walk	PRO.DT

‘He was getting closer; he traveled.’ (WSa 1977: line 365)

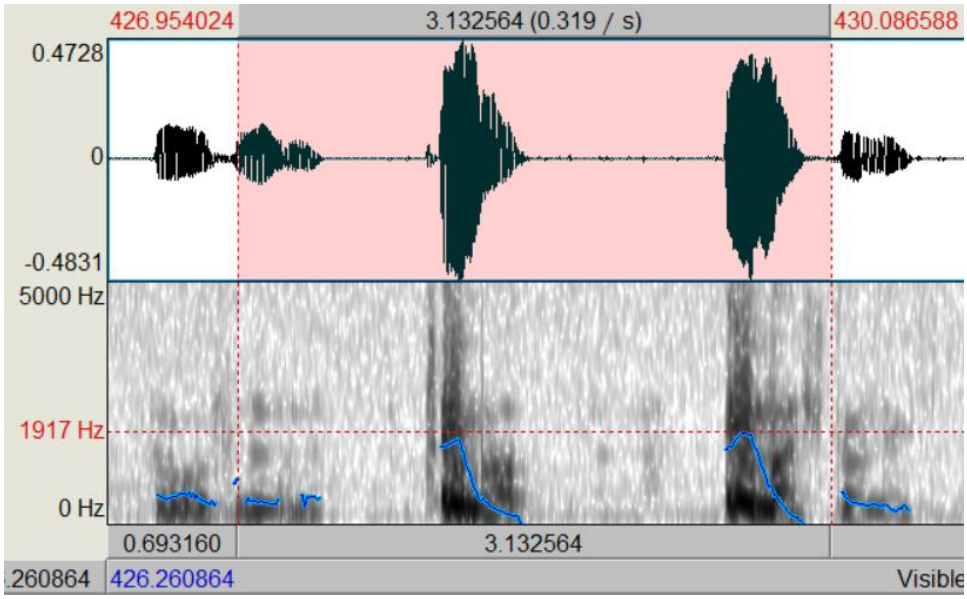

Figure 6: Line 365: verbs in red

The position of *nem’* in this clause — after both the auxiliary *ni’* and a pre-predicate clitic (*wulh* ‘perfect’) — helps to distinguish its status as a verb. In addition, there is a pause of about half a second, which is longer than what you would typically find after an auxiliary.

This discussion of pauses is not a proposal for a fixed rule; simply, it is expected that pauses between auxiliaries and verbs should be shorter on average than those between multiple full verbs. Preliminary findings indicate that this is the case, and a more in-depth survey with more detailed measurements is an area of future work. Next, I will turn my focus to longer pauses between verbs.

4.2 Pauses between verbs

In this example, the pause is between V_2 and V_3:

(39) suw’ **hu.u.uye.e.e’ ’i.i.imush**… **ts’a.a.a’luts** ’u tu nuts’a’ smeent.

səẇ	**həyeʔ**	**ʔiməš**	**c̓a:l̓əc**	ʔə	tə	nəc̓aʔ	sme:nt
N.CN	leave<RL>	walk<RL>	go.over.mountain<RL>	OBL	DT	one	mountain

‘And they started their walk to go to the other side of the mountain.’ (WSa 1977: line 66)

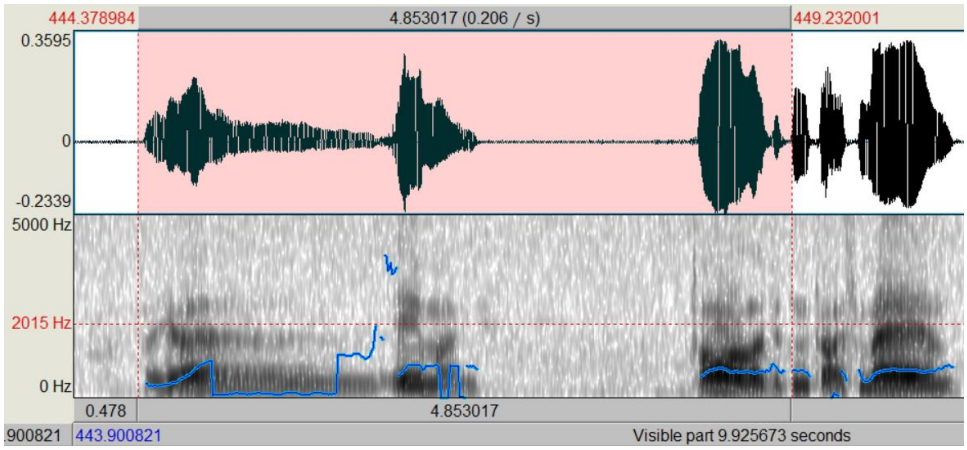

Figure 7: Line 66: verbs in red

Similar to previous examples, *huye'* 'leave' has a rising inflection, as well as rhetorical lengthening. In fact, all three verbs in this example exhibit some degree of lengthening. The pause between *'imush* 'walk' and *ts'a'luts* 'go over mountain' is about 1.5790s.

In the next example, the pause occurs between V_1 and V_2, but there is also a pro-determiner pronominal subject in that space as well.

(40) **hwu'alum's** tuw'ne'lulh… **'imush tus** 'u tey'.

xʷəʔaləm̓-s	təẇneɬəɬ	**ʔiməš**	**təs**	ʔə	teẏ
return-3POS	PRO.DT<PL>	walk	arrive	OBL	DT

'So they returned to where the golden eagle was, walked, got there.' (WSa 1977: line 124)

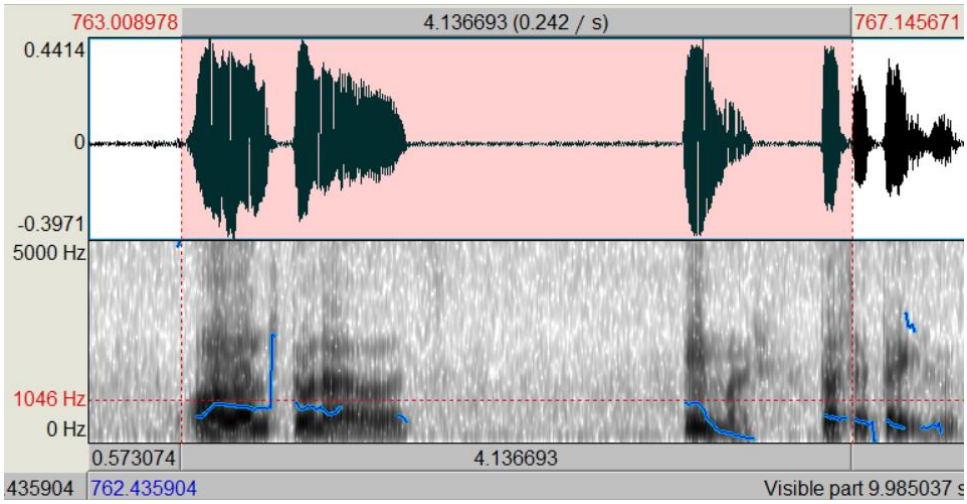

Figure 8: Line 124: verbs in red

The pause between the pro-determiner subject and the V_2 is about 1.6615s. The space that includes both the pro-determiner and the pause takes up about 2.4633s.

The following example follows a similar pattern with an NP subject after V_1 followed by a fairly lengthy pause.

(41) suw’ **q’uynuhwus** tthey’ smuyuth… **tsum’utus t’ukw’stuhwus**.

səw̓	**q̓əy-nəxʷ**	tey̓	sməyəθ	**cəm̓-ət-əs**	**t̓əḵʷ-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.’ (WSa 1977: line 346)

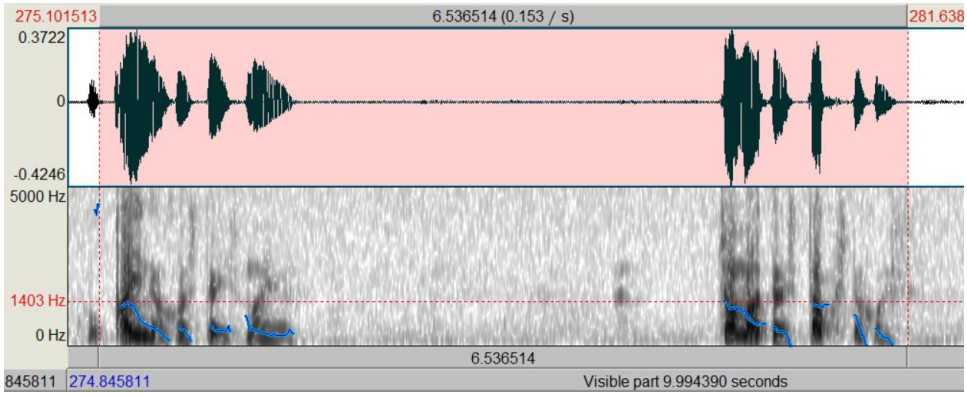

Figure 9: Line 346: verbs in red

The pause between *tey’ smuyuth* and *tsum’utus* is quite long (~3.3895s). 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. Their order is temporally iconic.

Pauses are largely a rhetorical device like rhetorical lengthening. That said, the pause length between an auxiliary and main verb is, on average, quite short if there is any, while the pause between two full verbs varies from none at all to pauses exceeding three seconds.

5 Conclusion

Building on the concept of *boundness* — the relative connectedness of the aggregate verbal elements — from Schneider (2021), I find that the relationship between the verbal elements of the various types of MVCs is one of different levels of *elasticity*. The verbal elements in all three types of MVC are bound together by shared arguments (and repetition), yet this boundness exhibits varying degrees of elasticity depending on the nature of the verbal components of each construction. The relationship between auxiliaries and main verbs is less elastic than that of two main verbs. Rhetorical strategies such as lengthening and pausing allows for the story-teller to stretch out these constructions for effect. Similarly, the story-tellers often employ a single agent as well as polyptoton to create cohesion across an oral paragraph or even multiple paragraphs. Often one (or more) of the verbs in an MVC appears nearby, tying it to the surrounding story structure. All three types of MVC are used to pack in action words in moments of building tension and high action. They are also frequently used to encode motion events.

In terms of prosody, like single-verb clauses, SVCs are expected to be pronounced with a single intonation contour (cf. Aikhenvald 2006; Haspelmath 2016). Both single-verb and multi-verb clauses having similar overall intonation contours would indicate that both verbs in an MVC belong to a single prosodic unit. Because Hul’q’umi’num’ SVCs allow non-contiguous constructions, the verbs clearly function as independent phonological words. Additionally, due to the fact that arguments may intercede between the verbs, limited conclusions can be drawn from pauses, which

are more common between full verbs than between an auxiliary and a main verb. Furthermore, pauses within units, such as between proclitics and their hosts or between determiners and their nouns, are not unexpected in Halkomelem (Gerdts & Werle 2014: §3.2.2).

The syntactic tests employed so far indicate that there is not a clause boundary between the verbal components of AVCs or SVCs. These constructions fulfill many of the semantic functions typical of SVCs cross-linguistically — directionality, posture, complex motion events, complex interlinked subevents (cf. Aikhenvald 2018: §7; Lovestrand 2018: §3), and thus it continues to be of use to utilize 'serial verb' as a comparative concept. By zooming out to the level of the oral paragraph, it becomes clear that MVCs are a part of the greater narrative structure.

This paper seeks to tie together previous work on the verb and word order of MVCs and illustrate the importance of the discourse contexts in which these constructions occur. MVCs are a frequent occurrence in Hul'q'umi'num' narratives and have been thus far understudied. They are not widespread across the entire Salish language family and so it is important to document them as a uniquely Halkomelem narrative feature.[14] As L2 speakers take on the responsibility of carrying on the oral traditions of their Elders, constructions such as this one are important story-telling strategies for their narrative tool kit. Next steps for this work could include finding ways to teach these constructions to budding story-tellers in order to help them mirror the legacies of those who came before them (e.g., Alphonse et al. 2021).

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[14] So far MVCs have been confirmed in Klallam (Montler 2008), another Central Salish language, but they have not been examined in the context of narratives. I suspect that this these constructions, or similar structures, exist elsewhere in Central Salish to varying degrees.

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