Keeping Things Moving Along:
The Aspectoid Proclitc *yə=* in Hul'q'umi'num' Salish[*]

Lauren Schneider   Donna B. Gerdts
Simon Fraser University   Simon Fraser University

Abstract: Salish languages are well-known for encoding aspects such as imperfective, stative, and durative, as well as plurality, through non-concatenative means. They also have many aspectoidal particles, optional elements that may co-occur with the obligatory aspectual categories. This paper reports on the aspectoidal proclitic *yə=* in Hul'q'umi'num', based on original fieldwork with speakers and analysis of a corpus of stories. We explore the diverse meanings of *yə=*, which range from translational motion to plurality, its distribution with respect to verb type, and its combinatory properties with various aspects and other aspectoidal clitics. As a polysynthetic language with a rich verb complex, Hul'q'umi'num' has many affixes, clitics, and non-concatenative morphological processes that contribute in subtle ways to the semantics of the whole structure, adding spatial, temporal, or referential meanings, and we see in the case of *yə=* that it contributes to all of these domains.

Keywords: aspect, aspectoid, clitics, Hul'q'umi'num' Salish

1   Introduction

This paper researches the clitic *yə=* in Hul'q'umi'num', the Vancouver Island dialect of Halkomelem Salish (ISO 639-3: hur). This work is based on original fieldwork with speakers, the late Dr. Ruby Peter and the late Mrs. Delores Louie, and an analysis of a corpus of transcriptions of recordings from 17 elders.[1] The clitic *yə=* occurs in conversations, but is much more frequent in stories, with a variety of usages. For example, *yə=* occurs three times in the following line from the story *Raven copies his siblings* by Cecelia Leo, first with an imperfective verb, second with a durative verb, and finally with a stative verb.[2]

(1)   wulh tus tthu **yu** ’i’mush **yu** kwun’eem’ ’u tthu qwthalus **yu** sul’its’ ’u tthu slhewut’.

wəł	təs	tᶿə	**yə=ʔiṁəš**	**yə=kʷəne:ṁ**	ʔə	tᶿə	qʷθaləs
PRF	get.here	DT	DYN=walk<IPFV>	DYN=take<DUR>	OBL	DT	platter

yə=səliċ	ʔə	tᶿə	słewət
DYN=full<STA>	OBL	DT	herring

‘Someone came walking along, holding a platter of herrings.’   (CL.1975.5)

Based on examples like these, where *yə=* signals that the action is done ‘while moving’, Suttles (2004:258) glosses *yə-* in the neighboring dialect həṅqəminəṁ as ‘along’. Gerdts and Hukari (to appear), noting that *yə=* often occurs on verbs in a series of events, call it ‘serial’. These previous researchers have also noted that *yə=* prototypically occurs with imperfective verbs, but can also be used with the perfective with the meaning ‘first … (and next)’, as in the following example:

(2)   **yu** yuqwqst ch tthu p’utth’tun yelh ’un’stl’uw’ut kwthu sts’uqw’shens kwthun’ mun’u.

yə=yəqʷ-qs-t	č	tᶿə	ṗətᶿtən	yeł	ʔəṅ-s-ƛəẇ-ət
DYN=burn-LS:point-TR	2SG.SUB	DT	needle	next	2POS-NM-remove-TR

kʷθə	sċəq̇ʷšen-s	kʷθəṅ	məṅə
DT	sliver-3POS	DT.2POS	son

‘(First) burn the needle point before you take the sliver from your son’s foot.’

(Gerdts & Hukari to appear)

Given its association with event structure and temporal flow, *yə=* could be considered to be part of the aspect system. But because *yə=* occurs only optionally and always attached to words otherwise inflected for aspect, it fits in the class of aspectoidals (Kinkade 1976:133), and the purpose of this paper is to explore its meaning and function.

Taking into consideration what we have learned about *yə=* in our study, we suggest the label ‘dynamic’ for this aspectoidal, as it not only adds a meaning of movement or progress to an event or state but also enlivens the story performance by drawing attention to certain sequences of actions. In Section 2, we explore the co-occurrence of *yə=* with aspectual categories and with other aspectoidal clitics. In Section 3, we describe the effects of *yə=* in serial verb constructions. In Section 4, we explore the seemingly optional nature of *yə=* and further discusses its use in narratives. In Section 5, we widen the discussion to a prefix *yə-* that is used in plural contexts. We conclude in Section 6 by briefly discussing some elements in other Central Salish languages that have a similar form or function to Hul’q’umi’num’ *yə=*.

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element, CNJ = conjunction, CNTRPT = centripetal, CS = causative, DEM = demonstrative, DIM = diminutive, DIST = distal, DT = determiner, DUR = durative, DYN= dynamic, FOC = focus, FUT = future, HS = hearsay, INCH = inchoative, INCPT = inceptive, INFO = informative, INTJ = interjection, IPFV = imperfective, LCTR = limited control transitive, LOC = locative, LS = lexical suffix, MIR = mirative, NEG = negation, NM = nominalizer, OBJ = object, OBL = oblique, PAS = passive, PL = Plural, PLR = pluractional, POS = possessive, PRF = perfect, PRLV = prolative, PRO.DT = pro-determiner, PROG = progressive, PROP = proprietive, PROX = proximal, PRST = persistive, PST = past, Q = question, REAL = realized, REM = remote, RL = rhetorical lengthening, SCNJ = subordinating conjunction, SG = singular, STA = stative, SUB = subject, TR = transitive, VBL = verbalizer, V₁ = first verb in series, V₂ = second verb in series, 2P = second-position (clitic), < > = non-concatenative morphology, # = semantically problematic.

2 The aspectoidal *yə=*

In this section, we report on the aspectoidal proclitic *yə=* in Hul'q'umi'num'. We explore its diverse meanings, its distribution with respect to verb type, and its combinatory properties with various aspects and other aspectoidal clitics. We found it most useful to study *yə=* as used in a corpus of stories. All the speakers who shared their stories for the corpus used this clitic frequently, averaging between one to two instances per transcribed page. Several of the speakers used it quite densely in certain sections of texts. While it is not used as frequently as the perfect *wəł=* — see example (1) — it is much more frequent than some of the evidentials, such as the certainty clitic *p̓eʔ*.

For all speakers, the clitic *yə=* is most commonly used with motion verbs, as in (3), and it can add a sense of translational motion to manner of motion verbs, as in (4), or add a motion meaning to non-motion verbs, e.g., *t̓it̓ələm̓* 'singing', as in (5):

(3)   wulh nem' **yu huy'u xwut'e** 'u tnanulh tuywut.

    wəł   nem̓   **yə=həy̓ə**   **x̌ʷə́te**   ʔə   tnanuł   təywət.

    PRF   go.AUX   DYN=leave\<IPFV\>   go.toward\<IPFV\>   OBL   that.way   upstream.north

    'They were on their way up north.'   (WSa.784)

(4)   ni.i.i' ts'u tl'uwulh huye' tthuw'nilh xeel's, **yu 'i'mush**.

    niʔ   čə   ƛ̓əwəł   həye?   tᶿəw̓nił   x̌e:l̓s,   **yə=ʔim̓əš**

    AUX\<RL\>   HS   also.now   leave   PRO.DT   Xeel's   DYN=walk\<IPFV\>

    'And again, Xeel's goes off walking about.'   (EW.1974.10486)

(5)   suw' huye' ts'u wulh **yu t'it'ulum'** yu t'et'un' 'al'.

    səw̓   həye?   čə   wəł   **yə=t̓it̓ələm̓**   yə=t̓et̓ən   ʔal̓

    NM.CN   leave   HS   PRF   DYN=sing\<IPFV\>   DYN=out.of.sight\<IPFV\>   just

    'And he left singing until he was out of sight.'   (EW.1974.111)

A corpus count of 1,010 motion verbs found that they co-occur with *yə=* 23.8% of the time, while non-motion verbs (count 4,294) co-occur with *yə=* only 6.4% of the time. Although the verbs marked with *yə=* often involve movement, we see that the aspect of the clause also plays a part in the use of *yə=*.

2.1 Aspect vs. aspectoid

The clitic *yə=* interacts in interesting ways with aspect. Hul'q'umi'num', like other Salish languages, is well-known for encoding aspects such as imperfective, stative, and durative through non-concatenative (marked '< >' in glosses) means (cf. Gerdts 1988; Hukari & Peter 1995; Suttles 2004; Urbanczyk 2011).

Table 1: Sample of aspectual verb inflections (Hukari & Peter 1995)

Verb inflection	APA	Gloss	Translation
kwunut	kʷən-ət	take-TR[3]	'take, hold, catch'
kwukwun'ut	kʷəkʷən̓-ət	take-TR<IPFV>	'taking, catching'
kwun'et	kʷən̓-et	take-TR<DUR>	'hold, possess'
kwulush	kʷələš	shoot	'shoot it'
huy'kwul'usht	həy̓kʷəl̓əš-t	shoot-TR<IPFV>	'shooting it'
si'kwul'esh	siʔkʷəl̓eš	shoot<STA>	'gun: holding, carrying a gun'
thuyt	θəy-t	fix-TR	'fix, make it'
they't	θey̓-t	fix-TR<IPFV>	'fixing, making it'
sthuthi'	s-θəθiʔ	STA-fix<STA>	'fixed, okay'
ts'tl'um	c̓ƛ̓əm	jump	'jump'
ts'etl'um'	c̓eƛ̓əm̓	jump<IPFV>	'jumping'
ts'i'ts'tl'im'	c̓iʔc̓ƛ̓im̓	jump<DUR>	'hopping'

These languages also have large inventories of clitics as well as adverbs with aspectual, temporal, and spatial meanings. The *aspectoidal* clitics are optional elements that may co-occur with the obligatory aspectual categories (Kinkade 1976:133; cf. Friedrich 1974). Hul'q'umi'num' has a variety of clitic types (cf. Gerdts & Werle 2014), including introducer clitics, enclitics, second-position clitics, and proclitics:

Table 2: Sample of Hul'q'umi'num' clitic types

Type	Clitic	APA	Gloss
introducer	*'i*	ʔi=	'here and now' (proximal)
enclitic	*ulh*	=əɬ	'past'
2P clitic	*tse'*	=ceʔ	'future'
proclitic	*wulh*	wəɬ=	'now, then' (perfect)
proclitic	*hwi'*	xʷiʔ=	'now, next, suddenly, unexpected' (mirative)
proclitic	*hwun'*	xʷən̓=	'still, yet' (persistive)
proclitic	*hwu*	xʷə=	'become' (inchoative)
proclitic	*yu*	yə=	'on-going, dynamic'

To be precise, Gerdts and Werle (2014) distinguish between two types of proclitics, the outer proclitics, such as *wəɬ=* and *xʷiʔ=*, and the inner (aka pre-predicative) clitics *xʷən̓=*, *xʷə=*, and *yə=* based on various tests such as ordering and interchangeability, and furthermore differentiate between inner proclitics and prefixes by tests such as pauses and syllabification.[4]

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[3] Perfective aspect is encoded by the plain form of the verb and thus is unmarked. In this paper, it should be assumed that the verb is perfective unless otherwise indicated by the gloss.

[4] One difference between *yə=* and the other pre-predicative clitics *xʷən̓=* and *xʷə=* is that the latter two can appear on a range of categories including nouns, adjectives, and verbs while *yə=* only appears on verbs. "Adjectives" here refers to true adjectives and not stative verbs used adjectivally. See Gerdts and Schneider (2023) for a discussion of non-verbal predicates.

We see then that *aspectoidals* are expressed by clitics, while the obligatory *aspects* are expressed via non-concatenative morphology:

Table 3: Aspect vs. aspectoid

Aspect	Aspectoid
non-concatenative	clitics
IPFV, STA, DUR, PL …	PRF, INCH, MIR …
obligatory	optional

The two different types of aspectual information can be divided neatly into categories based on function and morphological expression. The two categories work together to elaborate the internal structure of the event, the unfolding of the situation over time, and the contextualization of action or state. The next section explores the interactions of the aspectoidal clitic *yə=* with several aspectual categories.

2.2 Co-occurrence with aspect

Aspectually, *yə=* is used in events that are continuing — e.g., *yə x̌ətə* 'kept doing' in (6) — repeating — *yə təy̓ti?qəl̓* 'moving place to place' in (6) — or concurrent — *yə t̓it̓ələm̓ kʷsis yə ?il̓htən̓* 'singing while eating' in (7):

(6) 'uw' **yu xut'u** 'ul' 'u tey' 'uw' **yu tuy'ti'qul'** 'a.a.al'.
    ?əw̓ **yə=x̌ətə**   ?əl̓ ?ə tey̓ ?əw̓ **yə=təy̓ti?qəl̓**   ?al̓
    CN   DYN=do<IPFV> just OBL DEM CN DYN=move.place<IPFV.PL> just<RL>
    'They kept doing that, just moving from place to place.'   (WS.1977.106)

(7) 'a.a.a, hwun' **yu t'it'ulum'** kwsis **yu 'i'lhtun'**.
    ?a   xʷən̓   **yə=t̓it̓ələm̓**   kʷsis   **yə=?i?l̓tən̓**
    ah<RL>   PRST   DYN=sing<IPFV>   DT   DYN=eat<IPFV>
    'And he was singing while he was eating.'   (EW.1974.102)

Given its use with continuing activities, it is not unexpected that *yə=* is compatible with aspects such as durative, imperfective, and stative:

Table 4: Frequency of co-occurrence with aspect categories

Aspect	With *yə=*	
durative	39%	(79 of 197 examples)
imperfective	13.8%	(240 of 1010 examples)
stative	7.3%	(94 of 1280 examples)
perfective	>1%	(12 of 1455 examples)

The difference in the counts reflects the fact that plain perfective verbs are by far the most frequent, and those marked durative are the least frequent.

To illustrate the frequency of *yə=* with various aspectual categories, we'll look at a handful of high frequency verbs. For example, the transitive form of the verb root √*kʷən* 'take, grab, hold', as in (8), has both an imperfective (9) and a durative (10) form:

(8)   'nem' tsun tse' **yu kwunut** kwthu nu shuptun' …

          nem̓   cən   ceʔ   **yə=kʷən-ət**   kʷθə   nə   šəptən̓
          go.AUX   1SG.SUB   FUT   DYN=take-TR   DT   1POS   knife
          'I am going to get my knife …'   (EW.11128)

(9)   'i' wulh m'i t'ul'tth'els 'i' ni' ch 'uw' **yu kwukwun'ut** 'al'.

          ʔiʔ   wəł=m̓i   t̓əl̓t̓θels   ʔiʔ   niʔ   č   ʔəw̓   **yə=kʷəkʷən̓-ət**   ʔal̓
          CNJ   PRF=AUX   spurt   CNJ   AUX   2SG.SUB   CN   DYN=take-TR<IPFV>   just
          'And sometimes they are spurting out and you can grab them.'   (EW.26951)

(10)   sis 'uw' hwu 'uy' tthuw'nilh, sis 'uw' **yu kwun'etus**.

          sis=ʔəw̓   xʷə=ʔəy̓   t̓əw̓nił,   sis=ʔəw̓
          NM.AUX.3POS=CN   INCH=good   PRO.DT   NM.AUX.3POS=CN
                 yə=kʷən̓-et-əs
                 DYN=take-TR-3SUB<DUR>
          'And it became good for him, and he took it along.'   (ST.6247)

The perfective form of √kʷən is the most frequent at about 565 cases, and it only occurs with yə= about 0.9% of the time, as in (8). The imperfective form of √kʷən is less frequent, with only about 18 cases in the corpus, such as (9), and it co-occurs with yə= 22.2% of the time. The durative form kʷən̓et occurs about 145 times in the corpus and co-occurs with yə= 42.8% of the time, such as (10).

    The verb root √θəy 'fix, make ready, build' has both an imperfective (11) and a stative (12) form.

(11)   si.i.is 'uw' tsqw'i'qw'ul'esh, sus 'uw' **yu they'tus**, yu hwtth'utth'a'tum' thu sqw'uqw'ul'ush …

          si.i.is   ʔəw̓   c-q̓ʷiʔq̓ʷələš,   səs   ʔəw̓
          NM.AUX.3POS   CN   VBL-bird<PL>   NM.AUX.3POS   CN
                yə=θey̓-t-əs   yə=xʷ-t̓ət̓aʔtəm̓   θə   sq̓ʷəq̓ʷələš
                DYN=fix-TR-3SUB<IPFV>   DYN=LOC-skin<IPFV>   DT   bird<PL>
          'So, he started hunting the birds, fixing them, pulling the skins off the birds …'   (BA.74)

(12)   'uwu ni'us **yu sthuthi'** …

          ʔəwə   niʔ=əs   **yə=sθəθiʔ**
          NEG   AUX=3SUB   DYN=fix<STA>
          'It wasn't done properly …'   (ST.1962.131)

The imperfective form of √θəy co-occurs with yə= 15.6% (of 64) of the times it occurs, such as (11), while yə= only occurs on one of 191 perfective cases of √θəy. The stative form sθəθiʔ co-occurs with yə= less frequently than the imperfective at 4.1% (of 169), as in (12) above.

    To sum up so far, yə= typically occurs with unbounded aspects. Perfective aspect, especially in isolated examples, implies completion (i.e., is telic), and so is incompatible with yə=. On the other hand, durative, imperfective, and stative are typically unbounded.

    In addition to occurring with various aspectual categories, the aspectoidal clitics also co-occur with one another.

2.3 Co-occurrence with other aspectoidal clitics

The clitic *yə=* can co-occur with other aspectoidal clitics. First, let's consider co-occurrence with 'outer proclitic' — these will occur before *yə=* since *yə=* is an 'inner' proclitic (Gerdts & Werle 2014:248).

Examples (13) and (14) demonstrate the mirative proclitic *xʷiʔ=* (cf. Gerdts 2011) co-occurring with *yə=*.

(13)   'i ch kwu'elh **hwi' yu** stsekwul' 'un'sh'i huli?

ʔi	č	kʷəʔeł	**xʷiʔ=yə**=scekʷə́l	ʔən̓	š-ʔi	həli
AUX	2SG.SUB	indeed	MIR=DYN=how\<STA>	2POS	NM.OBL-AUX	alive

'How is it that you are alive?'   (WSa.22525)

(14)   mukw' lhwet 'uw' **hwi' yu** lhi'lhekw kws t'akw's.

mə́kʷ	łwet	ʔəw̓	**xʷiʔ=yə**=łiʔłekʷ	kʷs	tákʷs
all	who	CN	MIR=DYN=hurry\<IPFV>	DT.NM	go.home

'Everyone is suddenly in a hurry to go home.'   (AS.32926)

Compare with a sentence that has only *xʷiʔ=*:

(15)   nus nuw' **hwi'** t'a'thut kw'ouyukw.

nəs	nəw̓	**xʷiʔ=**táʔθət	k̓ʷuyəkʷ
1POS.NM	AUX.CN	MIR=try\<IPFV>	trolling

'And then I tried trolling.'   (AG.29622)

xʷiʔ= alone often has an operational 'and then' or 'now' meaning, while *xʷiʔ=* and *yə=* together tends to mean 'and then suddenly' when used with the imperfective or indicates that the speaker is surprised that some state is the case.

Examples (16) and (17) demonstrate the perfect *wəł=* co-occurring with *yə=*.

(16)   'a.a.a 'i p'e' **wulh yu** 'e'wu tthu qa'.

ʔa	ʔi	p̓eʔ	**wəł=yə=**ʔew̓ə	t̓ʷə	qaʔ
ah\<RL>	AUX	CERT	PRF=DYN=walk\<IPFV>	DT	water

'Ah, the tide was coming up.'   (EW.15628)

(17)   'a.a.asha! **wulh yu** t'at'ukw' thu *granny*.

ʔa:ša	**wəł=yə=**tátək̓ʷ	θə	*granny*
oh.shucks	PRF=DYN=come.home\<IPFV>	DT	granny

'Oh shucks! Here's granny coming home.'   (EC.18249)

Compare with a sentence that has only *wəł=*:

(18)   … 'i' **wulh** 'i'shul' tsun.

… ʔiʔ	**wəł=**ʔiʔšə́l	cən
CNJ	PRF=paddle\<IPFV>	1SG.SUB

'… and already I was paddling.'   (ET.28177)

The examples with both *wəɬ=* and *yə=* indicate that the event is happening right now, at the time of speaking. *wəɬ=* alone has a variety of uses, but the one here indicates that the event being referenced was already in progress at the reference time.

Turning to examples of co-occurrence of the inner proclitics *yə=* and the inchoative *xʷə=*, we found only three examples in our corpus, and in each case *yə=* preceded *xʷə=* and also the inchoative was the culmination of a series of events, as discussed in Section 3.[5]

(19) ni' ch nem' yu hul'meel's tl'e' **yu hwu** huy'qwthut.

  niʔ č   nem̓ yə=həɬme:ls   λ̓eʔ **yə=xʷə=həẏqʷθət**

 AUX 2SG.SUB go   DYN=kick<IPFV>   also DYN=INCH=fire<IPFV>

 'You are kicking again toward the fire.'   (ST.6440)

Examples (20) and (21) demonstrate the persistive proclitic *xʷən̓=* co-occurring with *yə=*.

(20) wa'lu ni'uhw 'uw' **hwun' yu** t'ut'a'thut.

 waɬə niʔ=əxʷ ʔəw̓ **xʷən̓=yə=t̓əta ʔθət**

 maybe AUX=1PL CN   still= DYN=try<IPFV>

 'I guess we should keep trying.'   (WSa.816)

(21) 'a.a.a, **hwun' yu** t'it'ulum' kwsis **yu** 'i'lhtun'.

 ʔa **xʷən̓=yə=t̓it̓ələm̓**   kʷsis yə=ʔiʔɬtən̓

 ah<RL> PRST=DYN=sing<IPFV> DT   DYN=eat<IPFV>

 'And he kept singing when he was eating.'   (EW.11471)

Compare with a sentence that has only *xʷən̓=*:

(22) **hwun'** le'lum'utus 'i' wulh nem' tthu qwuni' …

 xʷən̓=leˈləm̓-ət-əs   ʔiʔ wəɬ nem̓ t̓θə qʷəniʔ

 PRST=look-TR-3SUB<IPFV> CNJ PRF go DT seagull

 'They were still watching it and a seagull went to it …' (MG.1439)

xʷən̓ alone with an imperfective verb has the meaning of 'still doing that thing', while both *xʷən̓=* and *yə=* with an imperfective verb has the meaning 'keep doing that thing'.

In Table 5, the total represents how often each other clitic occurs in the corpus, and the rightmost column indicates how often that clitic co-occurs with *yə=*.

Table 5: Frequency of co-occurrence with other aspectoidal clitics

Clitic	APA	Gloss	Corpus total	+ *yə=*
hwun'	xʷən̓	persistive	294	22 (7.5%)
hwi'	xʷiʔ	mirative	295	12 (4%)
wulh	wəɬ	perfect	2,364	58 (2.4%)

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[5] Two of the occurrences involved the frozen expression *hwu'eyul* /xʷəʔeyəl/ 'go away'. According to Gerdts and Werle (2014), the sequence of *xʷə= + yə=* is acceptable, and they gave one example, but we found no examples of this in the corpus.

In sum, *yə=* tends to occur with unbounded aspects (durative and imperfective) and thus can easily co-occur with the persistive *xʷə́n̓=*, which focuses on the middle of an event. *yə=* is rarer with bounded aspects (perfective) and also is infrequent with the perfect *wəⱡ=*, which signals the start or completion of an event, the inchoative *xʷə=*, which signals the completion of a change of state, and the mirative *xʷiʔ=*, which adds the meaning of surprise about an event.

3   The aspectoidal *yə=* in serial verb constructions

This section explores the effect of *yə=* on the meaning of serial verb constructions (SVCs). Hul'q'umi'num' SVCs are monoclausal constructions made up of two or more independent verbs, which have no linking element connecting them and have shared aspect (cf. Schneider 2021). As discussed previously, *yə=* is more common on motion verbs than non-motion verbs, and, *yə=* can add motion to a non-motion verb (as in (5) above). SVCs are also frequently made up of motion verbs, and can function to add motion to a non-motion event (cf. Schneider 2022a; Schneider 2022b). Because of the similarities in semantic function, it is not surprising that we would find *yə=* occurring on the verbs in an SVC.

As has been established, *yə=* often co-occurs with imperfective aspect, as in (23) to (26).

(23)   yu 'i.i.imush ts'u tthu xeel's, 'uw' yath 'uw' **yu 'i'mush yu le'lum'utus** tthu mustimuhw
ni'ulh **yu** lhelhuq'utus …

yə=ʔiməš	c̓ə	tᶿə	x̌e:l̓s,		
DYN=walk	HS	DT	Xeel's		
	ʔəw̓	yaθ	ʔəw̓	**yə=ʔim̓əš**	**yə=lel̓əm̓-ət-əs**
	CN	always	CN	DYN=walk	DYN=look-TR-3SUB<IPFV>
		tᶿə	məstiməxʷ	niʔ=ʔəⱡ	**yə=ⱡeⱡəq̓-ət-əs**
		DT	people	AUX=PST	DYN=lay.down-TR-3SUB<IPFV>

'Xeel's was walking along, always walking and looking at the people that he had put down on earth …'   (EW.10290)

In (23), the creator *Xeel's* is doing the walking and looking, and these actions are continuously happening at the same time. In (24), the subject is also walking, but the second verb describes the direction of motion instead of simultaneous action.

(24)   yuse'lu skweyul kwus nem' **'i'mush yu tl'upul'**.

yəsel̓ə	s-kʷeyəl	kʷəs	nem̓	**ʔim̓əš**	**yə=ƛ̓əpəl̓**
two	NM-day	DT.NM	go.AUX	walk<IPFV>	DYN=go.down<IPFV>

'It took him two days coming down from the mountains.'   (WSa.line.298)

Both (24) and (25) involve a manner of motion verb followed by a direction of motion verb.

(25)   nilh tsun p'e' **yu t'it'utsum', yu lhulheel'** 'i' hwi' nets' tun'u 'i nu shhw'i.

niⱡ	cən	p̓eʔ	**yə=t̓it̓əcəm̓**		**yə=ləle:lʔ**
3FOC	1SG.SUB	CERT	DYN=swim<IPFV>		DYN=go.to.shore<IPFV>
	ʔiʔ	xʷiʔ	nec̓	tən̓ə	ʔi	nə=šxʷʔi
	CNJ	MIR	different	DT.POS	PROX.AUX	POS=place.where

'I was indeed swimming along, going to shore and here I am at a different place.'

(WSa.line.463)

(26) ts'aal'uts 'u tu'i smunmeent **yu qwasthut, yu shahwukw'um'**.

    ċa:l̓əc   Ɂə   tǝɁi   smǝnme:nt

    go.over.mountain   OBL   DT.PROX   mountain\<PL\>

           yǝ=qʷasθǝt   **yǝ=šaxʷǝk̓ʷǝm̓**

           DYN=go.in.water\<IPFV\>   DYN=bathe\<IPFV\>

    'He went over the mountains, going into the water and bathing as he went.'

<div align="right">(WSa.line.743)</div>

Example (26) illustrates how a directional verb *yǝ=qʷasθǝt* 'going into the water' can be combined with a non-motion verb *yǝ=šaxʷǝk̓ʷǝm̓* 'going along bathing' — with *yǝ=* marked on both verbs to make them concurrent — to add motion to a non-motion event.

    To investigate the effect of *yǝ=* on this type of imperfective construction, we began by presenting Mrs. Louie with a corpus example with *yǝ=* on both verbs:

(27) hith 'i' wil' thuw'nilh tl'e' wulh **yu 'i'mush yu tsetl'um'**.

    hiθ   ɁiɁ   wil̓   θǝw̓nił   λ̓eɁ   wǝł

    long.time   CNJ   appear   PRO.DT   also   PRF

           yǝ=Ɂim̓ǝš   **yǝ=ceλ̓ǝm̓**

           DYN=walk\<IPFV\>   DYN=jump\<IPFV\>

    'Quite a while later he appeared, jumping around.'   (AM.4342)

Then, we isolated the verbs into a shorter sentence (28a) and started to take the *yǝ=* out and see how it affected the meaning (28b–e).

(28) a. ni' **yu 'i'mush yu tsetl'um'** tthu smuyuth.

        niɁ   **yǝ=Ɂim̓ǝš**   **yǝ=ceλ̓ǝm̓**   tᶿǝ   smǝyǝθ

        AUX   DYN=walk\<IPFV\>   DYN=jump\<IPFV\>   DT   deer

        'The deer was walking, jumping.'

  b. ni' **yu 'i'mush tsetl'um'** tthu smuyuth.

        niɁ   **yǝ=Ɂim̓ǝš**   **ceλ̓ǝm̓**   tᶿǝ   smǝyǝθ

        AUX   DYN=walk\<IPFV\>   jump\<IPFV\>   DT   deer

        'The deer was walking and jumping (at the same time).'

  c. ni' **yu 'i'mush tsi'tstl'im'** tthu smuyuth.

        niɁ   **yǝ=Ɂim̓ǝš**   **ceɁcλ̓im̓**   tᶿǝ   smǝyǝθ

        AUX   DYN=walk\<IPFV\>   jump\<DUR\>   DT   deer

        'The deer was walking and prancing along.'

  d. ni' **'i'mush yu tsetl'um'** tthu smuyuth.

        niɁ   **Ɂim̓ǝš**   **yǝ=ceλ̓ǝm̓**   tᶿǝ   smǝyǝθ

        AUX   walk\<IPFV\>   DYN=jump\<IPFV\>   DT   deer

        'The deer was walking and jumping (over sticks in the path).'

e. ni' **'i'mush tsetl'um'** tthu smuyuth.

ni?	**ʔim̓əš**	**ceƛ̓əm̓**	tᶿə	sməyəθ
AUX	walk\<IPFV>	jump\<IPFV>	DT	deer

'The deer was stepping and hopping around (playing).' (DL.10.22)

Mrs. Louie said that (28a) and (28b) are about the same; she offered (28c) as an alternative. The durative form proposed in (28c) — *ceʔcƛim̓* — is the jumping, hopping motion associated with deer and rabbit. Mrs. Louie interpreted (28d) as if 'there are a bunch of sticks or branches in his path that he has to jump over'. Finally, she said that (28d) and (28e) are similar; in (28e) the deer is a fawn playing, stepping, and hopping around. In this case, if *yə=* occurs on the first verb, the 'walking' and 'jumping' actions are continuously and simultaneously happening. When the *yə=* only occurs on the second verb, as in (28d), it is more like the 'walking' action is periodically interspersed with the 'jumping' action as the deer went along and had to jump over obstacles.

In the next corpus example, the original speaker only put *yə=* on the first verb.

(29)   wulh nem' **yu huy'u xwut'e** 'u tnanulh tuywut.

wəɫ	nem̓	**yə=həy̓ə**	**x̌ʷət̓e**	ʔə	tnanuɫ	təywət
PRF	go.AUX	DYN=leave\<IPFV>	go.toward\<IPFV>	OBL	that.way	upstream.north

'They were on their way up north.' (WSa.784)

Compare (29) with (30a–d) below; Mrs. Louie agreed with the original speaker that if *yə=* was present, it was best if it was only on V₁.

(30)   a.   nem' **yu huy'u xwut'e** 'u tnanulh tuywut.

nem̓	**yə=həy̓ə**	**x̌ʷət̓e**	ʔə	tnanuɫ	təywət
go.AUX	DYN=leave\<IPFV>	go.toward\<IPFV>	OBL	that.way	upstream.north

'He's leaving turning to the north. (waaay north)'

b.   #nem' **yu huy'u yu xwut'e** 'u tnanulh tuywut.[6]

#nem̓	**yə=həy̓ə**	**yə=x̌ʷət̓e**	ʔə	tnanuɫ	təywət
go.AUX	DYN=leave\<IPFV>	DYN=go.toward\<IPFV>	OBL	that.way	upstream.north

c.   nem' **huy'u xwut'e** 'u tnanulh tuywut.

nem̓	**həy̓ə**	**x̌ʷət̓e**	ʔə	tnanuɫ	təywət
go.AUX	leave\<IPFV>	go.toward\<IPFV>	OBL	that.way	upstream.north

'He's leaving turning to the north. (waaay north)'

d.   nem' **huye' xwut'e** 'u tnanulh tuywut.

nem̓	**həyeʔ**	**x̌ʷət̓e**	ʔə	tnanuɫ	təywət
go.AUX	leave	go.toward\<IPFV>	OBL	that.way	upstream.north

'He left, turning to the north.' (DL.10.22)

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[6] Example (30b) is marked with # because Mrs. Louie did not think that adding *yə=* to *x̌ʷət̓e* 'going toward' made sense. Because of this, there is no translation for this line.

Mrs. Louie said that (30a) and (30c) are pretty much the same; she supplied (30d) as an alternative to (30c), making the first verb perfective. Moving *yə=* around in example (30) does not have quite the same effect as in (28); this is likely due to the semantics of the verbs themselves. In this case, it does not make as much sense to 'turn north as they go along' in the same way it makes sense to 'hop over things as they go along'. To probe this further, a further test would be to construct a context in which the actor is unable to continue north (perhaps there is some large obstacle), and they are going along, turning to the north whenever they can.

Generally, when both verbs are imperfective, if *yə=* is marked on V_1, marking on V_2 tends to be unnecessary and optional; both actions are continuously and simultaneously happening and are thought of as a single event.

(31) Imperfective Vs

   yə= V_1 *(yə=)* V_2 | ——————————— |
                       walking + jumping = walk-hopping along (i.e., prancing)

Marking *yə=* exclusively on V_2 in this context seems to indicate that the second action happened at the same time as the action described by V_1, but perhaps these are describing subevents of a complex action.

(32) Imperfective Vs

   V_1 *yə=* V_2 | ——x——x——x—— |
                       walking + jumping = walking and jumping over things

In imperfective SVCs, if *yə=* is marked on V_1, marking on V_2 tends to be optional. Both actions are continuously and simultaneously happening, where V_2 is providing additional information about the manner of motion in V_1, as in (31). Marking *yə=* exclusively on V_2 in this context seems to indicate that, while the second action is happening at the same time as V_1, perhaps V_2 is an ongoing but repeating action, as in (32).

As has been demonstrated, *yə=* most often co-occurs with unbounded aspects. But, in the following text corpus example, *yə=* occurs on the second verb in the string, which is perfective.

(33)   m'ihw ts'u **lheel, yu xlhastham** tst tse' 'i' yelh 'us nem' 'u kw'uni' 'un' yu shhwunum'.

   m̓i=əxʷ   c̓ə   **le:l**   **yə=x̌las-θamə**   ct   ce?   ?i?   yeł
   come=2SG.SUB   HS   go.ashore   DYN=eat-TR.2OBJ   1PL.SUB   FUT   CNJ   then

      ?əs   nem̓   ?ə   kʷəni?   ?ən̓   yə=šxʷənəm̓
      AUX.3POS   go   OBL   DIST.DEM   2POS   DYN=OBL.NM.go<IPFV>
   'Come ashore, and we will feed you before you go on your way.'   (EW.10714)

In (33), there are two conceptually distinct actions, i.e., it is not the case that they will be fed while they are coming to shore. This interpretation is supported by the fact that there is a clause boundary between the verb components, which is apparent from the presence of second-position clitics (*ct* 'we' and *ce?* 'future') following the second verb, rather than subordinate subject suffixes.[7]

Both *yə=* and SVCs are more common in contexts where motion is being expressed, thus their co-occurrence is expected. These strategies work together to express the internal structure of events.

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[7] For more on second-position clitics and clause boundaries, see Bätscher (2014) and Schneider (2021).

4   Optionality and discourse use

One puzzle encountered when working on aspectoidals is their seemingly optional nature. Isolated examples can be acceptable with or without *yə=*. Elicitations with speakers reveal that they do not have a firm sense of the meaning that *yə=* contributes. For example, in the case of a progressive-type construction, the meaning really does not change with (34a) and without (34b) *yə=*.

(34)   a.   yath 'uw' **yu** 'i'mush lhunu mun'u.

yaθ   ʔəẃ   **yə=ʔiṁəš**   ɬə-nə   məṅə
always   CN   DYN=walk<IPFV>   DT-1POS   child
'My daughter is always walking.'

   b.   yath 'uw' 'i'mush lhunu mun'u.

yaθ   ʔəẃ   ʔiṁəš   ɬə-nə   məṅə
always   CN   walk<IPFV>   DT-1POS   child
'My daughter is always walking.'   (DL.01.23)

Nevertheless, speakers have a clear sense of when *yə=* should be used. Working with Dr. Peter on transcriptions and translations of stories, she often suggested adding a *yə=* especially to motion verbs in the imperfective or verbs in a series, but she never suggested deleting a *yə=*. We mark her additions in the transcription of the text corpus with [brackets], for example:

(35)   tsakw wa'lu ni' **[yu]** shhwun'um's kws nem's t'akw'.

cakʷ   walə   niʔ   **[yə=]**šxʷəṅəṁs   kʷs   neṁ-s   ṫaḱʷ
be.far   maybe   AUX   [DYN=]OBL.NM.go<IPFV>   DT   go-NM   go.home
'Perhaps he had a long way to go going home.'   (CP, *Old woman who became a bluejay*)

As we were working on this with Mrs. Louie, she suggested that *yə=* adds a sense that the action is more 'definite' and 'clear', like it is happening right in front of you. The presence of *yə=* makes the telling of the event more vivid. In testing example (35) with and without *yə=*, Mrs. Louie told us "you can tell it's a story with the extra *yu*." Similarly, repeatedly during elicitation, this consultant indicated that it would be easier to tell if there should be a *yə=* or not if there was more context about the events before and after.

Studying the use of *yə=* in our story corpus reveals an uneven distribution. Sometimes speakers go several minutes without using a single *yə=*, especially in sections that are setting the scene or relating characters' thoughts or conversations. And then when the action picks up and the characters are moving in time and space and engaging in actions central to the narrative, a flurry of *yə=* marked words will appear. Here is a sample paragraph from the late Willie Seymour's *squl'ew' sxwi'em'* | *The beaver story* (Seymour 2016).[8]

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[8] *squl'ew' sxwi'em'* | *The beaver story* can be read and listened to at:
https://saalhsqwal.hwulmuhwqun.ca/willie-seymour-beaver-story/

(36) a. sis ’uw’ **yu** tl’itl’uts’ul’s nem’ lemutus tu’i ’i ’u kw’i tsa’luqw.

        sis=ʔəw̓   yə=ƛ̓iƛ̓əc̓əl̓s   nem̓   lem-ət-əs   təʔi   ʔi

        NM.AUX.3POS=CN   DYN=sneak\<IPFV\>   go   see-TR-3SUB   DT.PROX   AUX

            ʔə   k̓ʷi   cal̓əqʷ

            OBL   DT   upward.slope

        ‘So he decided to go and see what was happening up here on the mountain.’
        (lines 39–40)

    b. ni’ wulh hwu stutes kwus **yu** ts’its’elhum’utus … “Hup ho!”

        niʔ   wəł   xʷə=s-tətes   kʷəs   yə=c̓ic̓eləm̓-ət-əs

        AUX   PRF   INCH=STA-close\<STA\>   DT.NM   DYN=hear-TR-3SUB\<IPFV\>

            həp ho

             INTJ

        ‘He snuck up closer and could hear … “Hup ho!”’ (lines 41–42)

    c. sis ’uw’ **yu** tl’itl’uts’ul’s suw’ lemutus ’i’ squl’ew’ sq’uq’ip kwus **yu** hwakw’tus tu
       thqet [**yu**] hunum’ust-hwus ’u tu qa’. “Hup ho!”

        sis=ʔəw̓   yə=ƛ̓iƛ̓əc̓əl̓s   səw̓   lem-ət-əs   ʔiʔ   sqəl̓ew̓

        NM.AUX.3POS=CN   DYN=sneak\<IPFV\>   NM.CN   see-TR-3SUB   CNJ   beaver

            s-q̓əq̓ip   kʷəs   yə=xʷak̓ʷ-t-əs   tə   θqet

            STA-be.with\<STA\>   DT.NM   DYN=drag-TR-3SUB\<IPFV\>   DT   tree

               [yə]=hənəm̓-əstxʷ-əs   ʔə   tə   qaʔ   həp ho

               [DYN=]go-CS-3SUB\<IPFV\>   OBL   DT   water   INTJ

        ‘He crept closer and saw beavers tugging together on a tree bringing it to the water.
        “Hup ho!”’ (lines 43–45)

    d. ni’ wa’lu **yu** xi’xlhem’utus tu kwus **yu** t’at’uhwstum’ tu snuhwulh, tu q’xuw’lh.

        niʔ   wal̓ə   yə=x̌iʔx̌łem̓-ət-əs   tə   kʷəs

        AUX   perhaps   DYN=watch-TR-3SUB\<DUR\>   DT   DT.NM

            yə=tatəxʷ-stəm̓   tə   snəxʷəł   tə   q̓x̌əw̓ł

            DYN=go.home-CS.PAS\<IPFV\>   DT   canoe   DT   war.canoe

        ‘They must have been watching when they brought down the canoe, that big canoe.’
        (lines 46–47)

    e. ’u shus tl’uw’ **yu** xut’e ’u tey’ tuw’ne’ullh.

        ʔə   šəs   ƛ̓əw̓   yə=x̌əte   ʔə   tey̓   təw̓neʔəlł

        OBL   thus   really   DYN=do\<IPFV\>   OBL   DT   PRO.DT

        ‘So they were copying.’ (line 48)   (Seymour 2016)

As Gerdts (2010) discusses, the lines in (36a), (36b), and the first half of (36c) are delivered very softly and slowly with stretched out intonation, leading up to the climactic revelation of the *sqəl̓ew̓* 'beavers', and then followed by a speedily delivered denouement. The use of *yə=* makes this section of the story especially vivid and dramatic.

As mentioned above, Dr. Ruby Peter had strong intuitions about the importance of using the aspectoidal *yə=* and she often inserted it into texts she was editing. She regularly used it herself in oral performances of stories. For example, in her telling of *Tth'uwxe'le'ts — The basket ogress* (Peter 2016), she uses *yə=* three times in the lines where she describes the onerous act of preparing the kidnapped children for barbecuing:[9]

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

      səw̓   **yə=q̓eq̓əp-ət-əs**   **yə=hənəm̓-stxʷ-əs**   ʔə

      NM.CN   DYN=tie.up-TR-3SUB<IPFV>   DYN=go-CS-3SUB<IPFV>   OBL

               tᶿə   piʔkʷən,   x̌əx̌e:m̓   sƛ̓əl̓iqəł

               DT   roasting.stick   cry<PL.IPFV>   child<PL>

      'So she tied them up onto the barbecue sticks, the crying children.'

    b. kwus wulh **yu** t'ut'uyum'tus tthu smuqw'iws 'u thu qulum's.

      kʷəs   wəł   **yə=ƛ̓əƛ̓əyəm̓-t-əs**   tᶿə   sməq̓ʷiws

      DT.NM   PRF   DYN=stick.to-TR-3SUB<IPFV>   DT   balsam.pitch

               ʔə   θə   qələm̓-s

               OBL   DT   eye-3POS

      'And then she put balsam pitch into their eyes.' (Peter 2016; Alphonse et al. 2021:13)

She also uses *yə=* four times in the climax of the story where she describes the character Tth'uwxe'le'ts burning up:

(38) a. 'i' nilh **yu** thextus **yu** hun'wushum' 'u thu huy'qw.

      ʔiʔ   nił   **yə=θex̌-t-əs**   **yə=hənw̓-əš-əm̓**   ʔə

      CNJ   3FOC DYN=push-TR-3SUB<IPFV>   DYN=in-TR-PAS<IPFV>   OBL

               θə   həy̓qʷ

               DT   fire

      'But she was in fact pushing her deeper into the fire.'

    b. wulh yuqw tth'uwxe'le'ts, **yu** kwukwtsem'.

      wəł   yəqʷ   tᶿəwx̌el̓eʔc   **yə=kʷəkʷcem̓**

      PRF   burn   NAME   DYN=scream<IPFV>

      'And Tth'uwxe'le'ts burned up, screaming.'

    c. kwus wulh yuqw 'i' ni.i.i' lhakw' tthu qwa'tsup, lhakw' tthu qwa'tsups.

      kʷəs   wəł   yəqʷ   ʔiʔ   ni̓ʔ   łak̓ʷ   tᶿə   qʷaʔcəp

      DT.NM   PRF   burn   CNJ   AUX<RL> fly   DT   cinder

               łak̓ʷ   tᶿə   qʷaʔcəp-s

               fly   DT   cinder-3POS

      'When she was burning, the cinders were flying.'

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[9] *Tth'uwxe'le'ts — The basket ogress* can be read and listened to at:
https://sqwal.hwulmuhwqun.ca/learn/stories/tthuwxelets-the-basket-ogress/

d. sus ’uw’ **yu** ’eeye’q, ni.i.i’ hwu sqw’uli’qw’lush,
   hay ’ul’ qux sqw’uli’qw’lush, hay ’ul’ qux kwus nuts’tul.

səs=ʔəẃ	**yə=ʔe:yeʔq,**	niʔ	xʷə=sq̓ʷəliʔq̓ʷləš
NM.AUX.3POS=CN	DYN=change\<IPFV\>	AUX\<RL\>	INCH=bird\<DIM.PL\>

	hay	ʔəl̓	qəx̌	sq̓ʷəliʔq̓ʷləš	hay	ʔəl̓	qəx̌	kʷəs	nəc̓təl
	3FOC	just	more	bird\<DIM.PL\>	3FOC	just	more	DT.NM	different

‘And they changed into little birds, many little birds, many different kinds of birds.’

(Peter 2016; Alphonse et al. 2021:18)

Notably, some of the occurrences of *yə=* in texts fall on events or states that do not seem to otherwise involve motion, on-going activity, etc. and so we are left with the impression that one of the functions of *yə=* is as a narrative device used at the discretion of the story-teller to make sections of a story more dynamic.

5   Plural prefix *yə-*

There is also a predicative prefix (or possibly proclitic) *yə-* that occurs on verbs which seems to refer to a plural participant of an event. Hul’q’umi’num’, like other Salish languages, marks plurality on nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, with meanings related to either plural participants or pluractionality (cf. Gerdts 2012; Huijsmans & Mellesmoen 2021; Suttles 2004). As noted by Gerdts (2012), most nominals have plural forms, but only some nominals require plural inflection when they are semantically plural (39), and many nominals need not be inflected for plurality (40).

(39)   ’ii tl’e’ wulh t’il’t’ulum’ kw’un’a **q’e’lumi’**?

ʔi:	ƛ̓eʔ	wəł	til̓t̓ələm̓	k̓ʷən̓a	**q̓el̓əmiʔ**
AUX.Q	also	PRF	sing\<IPFV.PL\>	DEM	young.lady\<PL\>

‘Are those young ladies singing again?’   (Hukari & Peter 1995)

(40)   lukwlukwa’qwt ch tthu ni’ wulh qulqulul ’u tthu **sp’eq’um**.

ləkʷləkʷaʔqʷ-t	č	tᶿə	niʔ	wəł	qəlqəl-əl	ʔə	tᶿə	**sp̓eq̓əm**
break-TR\<PL\>	2SG.SUB	DT	AUX	PRF	bad-INCPT\<PL\>	OBL	DT	flower

‘Break off the flowers that have gone bad.’   (Hukari & Peter 1995)

Modifiers and verbs optionally inflect for plurality even if the semantically plural nominal that they reference does not.

There is also a predicative prefix (or possibly proclitic) *yə-* that sometimes occurs with semantically plural nominals:[10]

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[10] As discussed above, Gerdts and Werle (2014) use tests like pauses, syllabification, and ordering with other elements to differentiate pre-predicative clitics from prefixes. However, our data on the plural are too scant to make a decision about its analysis. Dr. Peter though suggested that the dynamic *yə=* be written as a separate word while she attached the plural *yə-* to its host.

(41) mukw' kwthu suw'wuy'qe' 'uw' tsput, ha' nem' nem' 'u tthu kw'atl'kwu 'i' nuw' **yu**ha'kwushus tthu pu'ult.

mək̓ʷ	kʷθə	səẁwəẏqeʔ	ʔəẁ	c-pət	haʔ	nem̓	nem̓	ʔə
all	DT	man\<PL>	CN	VBL-boat	if	AUX	go	OBL

	tᶿə	k̓ʷaƛk̓ʷə	ʔiʔ	nəẁ	**yə**-haʔk̓ʷəš-əs	tᶿə	pəʔəlt
	DT	sea	CNJ	AUX.CN	PL-use.it-3SUB	DT	boat\<PL>

'All of the men own boats that they use for fishing.' (RP 11.22.2011)

(42) ….shni's 'i' ni' hwi' **yu**le'lumuhwus kwuw' mukw' 'ul' stsekwul mustimuhw.

… šniʔs	ʔiʔ	niʔ	xʷiʔ=**yə**-leləməxʷ-əs	kʷəẁ
where.it.is	CNJ	AUX	MIR=PL-look.LCTR-3SUB\<IPFV>	DT.CN

	mək̓ʷ	ʔəl̓	scek̓ʷəl̓	məstiməxʷ
	all	just	how	people

'….and this is where they saw many different nations.' (WSa.157.line.61)

(43) m'i tse' **yu**kwunutus kwthunu mun'u kwthu shkwey'xutssum' — lupen, sqw'qwum, maal, 'i' kwthu humun.

m̓i	ceʔ	**yə**-kʷən-ət-əs	kʷθənə	mən̓ə	kʷθə	šk̓ʷeẏx̌əcsəm̓
AUX	FUT	PL-take-TR-3SUB	DT.1POS	child	DT	tools

	ləpen	sq̓ʷqʷəm,	ma:l	ʔiʔ	kʷθə	həmən
	shovel	axe	maul	CNJ	DT	hammer

'My son will bring all the tools — shovels, axes, mauls, and hammers.' (RP 11.22.2011)

The nominal triggering this plural is a collective or distributive plural, and often the examples contain the quantifier *mək̓ʷ* 'all' or *k̓ʷin* 'how many', and elicitations reveal that single entities are incompatible with the prefix *yə-*:

(44) m'i tse' **yu**hwuhwe kw' kw'in'ule'ts saxwul.

m̓i	ceʔ	**yə**-xʷəxʷe	k̓ʷ	k̓ʷin̓-əleʔc	sax̌ʷəl
AUX	FUT	PL-be.lowered.down\<PL>	DT	many-bundle	grass

'There will be so many bales of hay lowered down.' (RP.2010)

(45) m'i tse' (*yu)hwe kw' nats'ule'ts saxwul.

m̓i	ceʔ	(*yə-)xʷe	k̓ʷ	nəc̓-əleʔc	sax̌ʷəl
AUX	FUT	(PL-)be.lowered.down	DT	one-bundle	grass

'There will be one bale of hay lowered down.' (RP.2010)

One thing we noted was that while the plural prefix *yə-* occurs on many types of verbs, it does not occur with plain adjectives or adverbs — as in the (a) examples of (46) and (47) below — rather the modifier is cast as a durative or stative — as in the (b) examples.

(46) a. m'i tse' 'uw' (*yu)mukw' tthu luplaash kwun's m'i tuyqt.

m̓i	ceʔ	ʔəẁ	(*yə-)mək̓ʷ	tᶿə	ləpla:š	kʷən̓s	m̓i	təyq-t
AUX	FUT	CN	(PL-)all	DT	board	DT.2POS.NM	come	move-TR

'You will move all the lumber at once.'

b. m'i tse' 'uw' **yusum'mikw'** tthu luplaash kwun's m'i tuyqt.

m̓i	ce?	?ə̓w̓	**yə=sə̓m̓mik^w**	t^θə	ləpla:š	k^wə̓n̓s	m̓i	təyq-t
AUX	FUT	CN	PL=all\<STA\>	DT	board	DT.2POS.NM	come	move-TR

'You will move all the lumber at once.' (RP.2010)

(47) a. (***yu**)**kw'in** tthu lumutou ni' kwsetuhw?

(*__yə-__)**k̓^win**	t^θə	ləmətu	ni?	k^wset-əx^w
(*PL-)how.many	DT	sheep	AUX	count-2SUB

'How many sheep did you count?'

b. **yukw'ikw'un'** tse' kw' sunihwulh nem' tl'pestun?

yə-k̓^wik^wə̓n̓	ce?	k̓^w	sənix^wəł	nem̓	ƛ̓-pestən
PL-how.many\<STA\>	FUT	DT	canoe\<PL\>	go	VBL-United.States

'How many canoes will go to the States?' (RP.2010)

We have also not found *yə-* on nouns, and so like dyamic *yə=* it is a pre-predicative prefix limited to verbs.

Looking for the plural prefix in the neighboring dialects, we see that in the Upriver dialect of Halkomelem, *yə-* is used as a (gender unspecified) plural determiner (used mostly for humans), where it apparently denotes a collective plural, and the examples given usually involve generic statements (Galloway 1993:390–391).[11]

(48) Upriver Halkomelem

łəq̓=əł	x̌ə̓tə	**yə**	x^wəlməx^w
know=PST	say\<IPFV\>	PL.DT	First.Nation.person

'The Indian people used to say …' (Galloway 1993:391)

This determiner serves as the base for the demonstrative *yəθέ* 'those people (there), them (human)' and it is also seen as an element in the pro-determiner *yəƛa:ləm* 'that's them (gender unspecified), they, them' (Galloway 1993:403). The Downriver dialect, Musqueam, does not seem to have *yə* as a plural determiner, but it is found as an element in the plural demonstratives: *yəθέ?*, *yəθéləẏ* 'those, they, them'; *yən̓á* 'these, they, them'; *yən̓á:łtən* 'they, them, those' (Suttles 2004:351–353). Comparative-historical data might reveal if other Salish languages had plural determiners or predicative prefixes, but for the Hul'q'umi'num' dialect, the plural *yə-* is manifested only as a predicative prefix, and when we presented data from other dialects to our consultants for their consideration, the plural determiner was not familiar to them.

This begs the question whether one or two *yə*'s are needed for the analysis of Hul'q'umi'num'. After all, one could see that it is a natural extension of a dynamic marker associated with unbounded events to grammaticize to become a pluractional marker.[12] They appear in the same pre-verbal position, and we have no examples of them co-occurring. However, contrasting the data in (44) and

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[11] In Hul'q'umi'num', the masculine determiners are used for human plurals, regardless of gender.

[12] See work on Salish pluractionality (e.g., Bar-El 1998:§4; Gerdts 2012; Huijsmans & Mellesmoen 2021; Matthewson 2000; Mellesmoen & Huijsmans 2019).

(45) with the following verifies the difference between plural readings and dynamic readings, and also the usefulness of the contexts provided by consultants.

(49) ni' **yu** sts'uts'e' kwthu **snuhwulh** 'u lhu kaa.

niʔ	**yə=sc̓əc̓eʔ**	kʷθə	**snəxʷəɬ**	ʔə	ɬə	ka:
AUX	DYN=be.on<STA>	DT	canoe	OBL	DT	car

'The canoe was on top of the car (as the car was moving along).'   (RP 22.11.2011)

(50) ni' **yu** sts'uts'e' kwthu **sunihwulh** 'u lhu kaa.

niʔ	**yə=sc̓əc̓eʔ**	kʷθə	**sənixʷəɬ**	ʔə	ɬə	ka:
AUX	DYN=be.on<STA>	DT	canoe<PL>	OBL	DT	car

'The canoes were on top of the car (as the car was moving along).'   (RP 22.11.2011)

In many instances is it difficult to tell, in the absence of clearer contexts, whether a pre-predicative *yə* is signaling a plural or a dynamic meaning.

(51) ni' **yust'ut'in'** kwthu sunihwulh kwsus wulh thaythut kws 'uwatul's.

niʔ	**yə-st̓ət̓in̓**	kʷθə	sənixʷəɬ	kʷsəs	wəɬ=θayθət	kʷs	ʔəwatəl̓s
AUX	PL-line.up<STA>	DT	canoe<PL>	DT.NM	PRF=get.ready	DT.NM	race

'The canoes were lined up at the start of the race.'   (RP.22.11. 2011)

(52) 'uwu ch me'mul'quhw kwun's m'i **yu kwun'eem'** 'ukw' la'thun 'i' kw' lupat.

ʔəwə	č	mem̓əlq-əxʷ	kʷən̓s	m̓i	**yə=kʷən̓e:m̓**
NEG	2SG.SUB	forget-2SUB	DT.2POS.NM	come	DYN=take<DUR>

	ʔək̓ʷ	laʔθən	ʔiʔ	k̓ʷ	ləpat
	OBL.DT	plate	CNJ	DT	cup

'Don't forget to bring plates and cups to the meeting.'   (RP.22.11. 2011)

(53) 'i **yu 'i'mush** 'u tthu tsuwmun sus 'uw' **yu q'eptus** tthu ts'e'luwi'.

ʔi	**yə=ʔim̓əš**	ʔə	t̓θə	cəwmən	səs=ʔəw̓
AUX	DYN=walk<IPFV>	OBL	DT	shore	NM.AUX.3POS=CN

yə=q̓ept-əs		t̓θə	c̓el̓əwiʔ
DYN=gather.TR-3SUB<IPFV>		DT	shell<PL>

'She was walking along the shoreline picking up shells.'   (RP.2011)

If criteria for the dynamic, such as motion or verb chaining, are met, we have opted to analyze *yə* as the aspectoidal proclitic *yə=*, as the use of the plural prefix *yə-* is extremely rare.

6 Conclusion

We hope this study of *yə=* contributes to the cross-linguistic research on aspectoidals and their relationship to aspect and event semantics. As a polysynthetic language with a rich verb complex, Hul'q'umi'num' has many affixes, clitics, and non-concatenative morphological processes that contribute in subtle ways to the semantics of the whole event structure, adding temporal, spatial, and referential meanings, and we see in the case of *yə=* that it contributes to all of these domains, making it difficult to label. We have considered terms such as 'progressive', 'continuous', and

'incompletive', as they capture the sense that the action or state is on-going or unbounded, but these terms are generally used for aspects rather than optional aspectoidal elements.[13] The term 'serial' suggested by Gerdts and Hukari (to appear) captures the temporal use of *yə=* to mean 'first, next' and also highlights the use of *yə=* in a chain of verbs or in serial verb constructions (Schneider to appear).[14] This label though does not capture the prototypical function of *yə=* on motion verbs or its ability to add a meaning of motion to non-motion verbs. We have settled on the term 'dynamic', as it captures the meaning of movement or progress in an action or state and in addition captures the intuition of our consultants that *yə=* is used to draw attention to certain crucial or climactic events, thus enlivening the story performance.

We have left open the issue of the plural *yə-* and if it should be considered to be a manifestation of the aspectoidal, since it is very easy to conceive that the sort of on-going events signaled by the dynamic often involve pluractionality. Perhaps a comparison with similar morphemes in other Central Salish languages will shed light on this issue.

While we have found no straightforward equivalent to Hul'q'umi'num' *yə=* in the neighboring languages, we do find some common threads. For example, *yéʔ* is the verb 'go', frequently used as an auxiliary with motion verbs in SENĆOŦEN (cf. Campbell 2023; Montler 2018).

SENĆOŦEN (Saanich, Central Salish)

(54) a. **yéʔ**   láʔ   sən   téyəl.
          go   PST   1SG.SUB   go.upstream
          'I went upstream.'

      b. tə-téy̓əl̓   sən.
          ACTL-go.upstream   1SG.SUB
          'I'm going upstream.'   (Turner 2006:40)

(55) a. kʷɬ   **yeʔ**   kʷə   t̓ák̓ʷ   θə   *Janet.*
          REAL   go   INFO   go.home   DT   NAME
          'Janet went home; Janet's gone home.'

      b. **yeʔ**   sən   ʔi   t̓á-t̓ək̓ʷ.
          go   1SG.SUB   AUX   ACTL-go.home
          'I'm going home; I'm on my way home.' (already walking)   (Turner 2006:30)

Historically, there were many bilingual speakers of Hul'q'umi'num' and SENĆOŦEN. Perhaps Hul'q'umi'num' *yə=* had an auxiliary verb source that procliticized as an aspectoid.

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[13] The term 'progressive' is used by Hukari and Peter (1995) and Suttles (2004), and 'continuative' is used by Gerdts (1988) for what is now called 'imperfective'.
[14] Section 3 described the effect of *yə=* in serial verb constructions. In imperfective SVCs, if *yə=* is marked on the first verb, then marking on the second tends to be optional. The second verb is typically providing additional information about the manner of the action described by the first verb, as in (31). Marking *yə=* exclusively on the second verb seems to indicate that the action described by that verb is an ongoing but repeating action, as in (32).

The dxʷləšucid progressive proclitic *lə=* co-occurs with the same types of verbs, sometimes marking multiple verbs in a sequence (cf. Beck & Hess 2010).

dxʷləšucid (Lushootseed, Central Salish)

(56) huy   **lə**=ʔíbəš   liɬ-ʔígʷɬ.
      SCNJ   PROG=walk   PRLV-shore
      'Then he was walking along the shore.' (ML 29)   (Bierwert 1996:71)

(57) čəda   **lə**=ʔəƛ̓   **lə**=gʷəč̓-alikʷ   dxʷ-ʔal   kʷi   siʔab
      1SG.CNJ   PROG=come   PROG=search-ACTV   CNTRPT-LOC   REM   noble
               ʔas-bəs-sləx̌il.
               STA-PROP-daylight
      '... so I am coming, looking for the nobleman who possesses the daylight.'
                                                                (HM 51) (Beck & Hess 2010:11)

In the nearby Central Salish language Sḵwx̱wú7mesh, Bar-el (1998) analyzes the particle *wa* as an auxiliary pluractional marker that can be used to indicate an imperfective meaning.

Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish, Central Salish)

(58) a.   čən-t   wa   x̌a:m.
           1SG.SUB-PST PLR   cry
           'I was crying.'   (Bar-El 1998:38)

      b.   čən-t   x̌a:m.
           1SG.SUB-PST cry
           'I cried.'   (Bar-El 1998:39)

So we see that other Central Salish languages have aspectoidals that modify an event in terms of boundedness and plurality. As often is the case in comparing across Central Salish languages, one can often find elements that are similar in either form or function, but seldom both, a complexity that can be attributed to both the time-depth of that branch of the language family and the on-going contact and multilingualism of its speakers.[15]

Additional cross-linguistic and language-internal research will no doubt shed more light on the analysis of the dynamic *yə=*. Today's speakers and learners of Hul'q'umi'num' have expressed interest in learning to tell stories in the traditional style of their ancestors. We hope that this examination of *yə=* as used in legacy materials will be of help towards that goal.

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[15] See, for example, Gerdts and Hukari (2008) on denominal verbs.

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