

Typological aspects of Lillooet transitive verb inflection¹

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1 Introduction

The object of this article is to provide an analysis of the basic features of the Lillooet (Salish) transitive verb, and to compare the manner in which Lillooet marks personal pronominal subjects and objects to the manner in which various other American Indian languages mark these categories. Thus, the first part of this article (§§2-6) will be devoted to a presentation of the Lillooet facts, and will include a discussion of Lillooet word-classes and the various types of Lillooet transitive verbs. Particular attention will be paid to the fact that Lillooet marks pronominal subjects and objects through a combination of case-marking and slot-assignment. The second part of this article (§§7-10) will compare the Lillooet strategy for subject and object marking with two other strategies that are employed by American Indian languages, viz., direct/inverse systems, and feature nesting.

In what follows, the terms ‘subject’ and ‘object’ are used in a rather loose, non-technical sense, in that ‘subject’ refers to the participant who

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As the article will make clear, I concentrate on the essentials of the formal expression of subject-object relations. This means that many details of the inflection of transitive verbs in Native American languages (such as moods or aspects) have been omitted from the discussion. However, detailed descriptions of Lillooet, and of Cree, Pawnee and Nakoda (three languages quoted in my article) can be found in the primary sources for these languages, as referred to in the pertinent sections of my article.

physically performs the action, and ‘object’ to the participant who undergoes that action.² What we will not study is whether these ‘subjects’ or ‘objects’ are marked through a nominative/accusative, an ergative/absolutive, or an agent/patient (or active/stative) system. (For an insightful and richly detailed study of transitive actors as classified by these three systems I refer to Mithun 1999: 204-221.)³ Thus, in a phrase like ‘I beat him’ we are interested in whether Native American languages mark ‘I’ and ‘him’ through case-marking or slot-assignment (or a combination of both, as is done in English), or through a direct/inverse system (in which ‘I’ would not be formally different from ‘me’, and ‘he’ not from ‘him’, and in which a separate marker would indicate whether the action would go from the first person to the third, or from the third to the first), or through feature nesting (in which one marker would express both the subject and the object).

2 Lillooet: Basic information

Lillooet is an Interior Salish language spoken in western British Columbia. There are two major (but mutually intelligible) dialects, a northern one, spoken in and around Fountain, and a southern one, spoken in and around Mount Currie. Differences between the dialects are mainly lexical, e.g., *smúʔac* for ‘woman’ in the northern dialect vs. *syáqcaʔ* in the southern dialect. Years of assimilation and acculturation (mainly through the notorious and now abandoned residential school system) have sharply reduced the

² From a philosophical point of view it may be problematic who is the performer and who the undergoer in the case of many ‘experiencer’ verbs. Thus, in ‘I fear him’ we may as well say that the third person is the performer in that it is that person who presents himself in my fear, and that I am the undergoer. Native American languages, always far less finicky and much more businesslike than the linguistic theories that are designed to describe them, resolve these issues on the spot: in Lillooet ‘to fear someone’ is an active verb, *páq^wuʔ-min*, with a suffix *-min* that we also have in, for example, *pták^wt-min* ‘to tell a legend about someone’ or *ʔiq-min* ‘to arrive here for someone’. (For a discussion of this suffix I refer to §4 of the main text.)

³ As Mithun makes clear, many languages show mixing of various patterns, say nominative/accusative with ergative/absolutive. We see some of this mixing in Lillooet, where, for example, the first person singular (indicative) has the same marker for the intransitive and transitive subject (*-ʔkan*), which is then different from the (transitive) object marker (*-c*). Besides this nominative/accusative pattern we have an essentially ergative pattern in the third person singular (indicative), where the subject marker intransitive is identical to the object marker (both are zero), while the transitive subject marker (*-as*) is different. For more on this topic see Jelinek and Demers (1983: 169-171) and the references there.

number of fluent speakers. Kinkade (1991:152) still lists 300-400 speakers, but this certainly includes those who are fluent and those who are less proficient. Fortunately, the last three decades have seen dedicated efforts to reverse this downward trend, through language teaching programs in reserve-based schools, and through the development of curriculum materials in and about the language. The ongoing and intense involvement of native speakers in these programs is a very welcome and hope-giving aspect of these efforts.

Like all Salish languages, Lillooet is phonologically and morphologically complex. The phonology opposes plain vs. glottalized (ejective) plosives ($p\ t\ c\ \text{ç}\ k\ k^w\ q\ q^w$ vs. $p' \text{ ʔ} \ c' \ k' \ k^w \ q' \ q^w$), and plain vs. glottalized (laryngealized) resonants ($m\ n\ l\ \text{ɫ}\ z\ y\ \gamma\ \text{ʃ}\ \text{ʃ}^w$ vs. $m' \ n' \ l' \ \text{ɫ}' \ z' \ y' \ \gamma' \ \text{ʃ}' \ \text{ʃ}^w$). It also has a series of fricatives (all voiceless, viz. $t\ s\ \text{ʃ}\ x\ x^w\ \text{ç}\ \text{ç}^w$), and it has eight vowels ($a\ q\ i\ j\ u\ \text{ə}\ \text{ə}$). In addition, there are four phonemes ($h\ \text{ʔ}\ w\ w'$) that are classed as laryngeal resonants in van Eijk (1997) (for reasons given there), although phonetically $h\ \text{ʔ}$ are laryngeal obstruents and $w\ w'$ are labio-velar glides. A striking feature of the system is the opposition of certain velarized vs. non-velarized phonemes. Velarization (basically retraction of the tongue-root with simultaneous tensing of the tongue muscles) is indicated with a subscript dot, as in $a\ [\text{ɛ}]$ vs. $a\ [\text{a}]$. In words of more than one vowel, one of these vowels attracts a dynamic stress, marked as an acute (as in $máqa\text{ʔ}$ 'snow' vs. $maqá\text{ʔ}$ 'poison onion', the latter form only used in the northern dialect). The stress may move from its original location to a later vowel, depending on the attachment of a sufficiently large number of suffixes. Also, morphemes may show phonemic adjustments in the form of deletion or insertion of segments. (For examples of stress-shift, and the deletion of a segment, see $nuk^w\text{ʔ-an-cih-as}$ in §3.)

Morphologically, the language employs prefixation, suffixation, infixation and reduplication, often in combination with each other, as in $n-s-n\text{ə}k^w-núk^w\text{a}\text{ʔ}$ 'my (*n*-) friends', with augmentative reduplication of the word $s-núk^w\text{a}\text{ʔ}$ 'friend', which in itself combines the root $núk^w\text{a}\text{ʔ}$ - 'to help' with the nominalizer *s*-.

A grammar of the language is available through van Eijk (1997). (The discussions in §§3, 4-5 and 6 below are essentially a synopsis of §§8, 18 and 22 respectively of van Eijk 1997.)⁴ Excellent introductions to the Salish language family are Thompson (1979) and Czaykowska-Higgins & Kinkade (1998).

⁴ Van Eijk (1997) supplants the earlier studies of the Lillooet transitive verb in van Eijk (1985) and (1990).

3 Lillooet word classes

In order to fully understand the position of the Lillooet transitive verbal complex within Lillooet morphology, it is profitable to gain some understanding of Lillooet word classes and their mutual relationships. Lillooet words fall into the following classes:

- 1) Clitics
- 2) Full words
 - 2.1) Invariable words
 - 2.2) Variable words
 - 2.2.1) Nouns
 - 2.2.2) Verbs
 - 2.2.2.1) Intransitive verbs
 - 2.2.2.2) Transitive verbs

Clitics form a stress-unit with a preceding or following full word (depending on whether they are enclitics or proclitics). An example of an enclitic is the question-marker *ha*, which follows the first full word in a sentence, as in *nuk^w?-an-cih-as ha* ‘does he help you?’ vs. *wa? ha nuk^w?-an-cih-as* ‘is he helping you?’ (with *nuk^wa?* ‘to help’, *-an* transivizer, *-cih* ‘you [object]’, *-as* ‘he’, *wa?* ‘to be busy with, engaged in’).⁵ The shift in stress from *ú* to *í* in the above example, and the dropping of *a* before *?* when this is followed by a vowel, are regular morphophonemic adjustments.

Unlike clitics, full words do not require the presence of a fully stressed word in a sentence as a condition for their own presence. Invariable full words are essentially particles, which do not allow any of the morphological operations mentioned in §2. Variable words (which do allow these operations) fall into nouns and verbs. As is mentioned in van Eijk (1997: 43) and van Eijk & Hess (1986), the main difference between nouns and verbs is that nouns may take possessive markers, while verbs may not. Thus we may combine *tmix^w* ‘land’ with *n-* ‘my’ into *n-tmix^w* ‘my land’, but *?itən* ‘to eat’ does not allow combination with *n-*. However, by combining *?itən* with the nominalizer *s-* into the noun *s-?itən* ‘food’, we obtain a form that can be combined with possessive markers, as in *n-s-?itən* ‘my food’.

⁵ Lillooet makes no tense distinctions. Phrases translated in the present tense could also be translated in the past tense (depending on context), and vice versa. There are no gender distinctions either in the pronominal (or nominal) system. Thus, ‘he/him’ can be translated as ‘she/her’ or ‘it’ as well, depending on context.

The class of intransitive verbs includes stems that translate as verbs ('to sing', 'to work', etc.), but also numerals and adjectives. (Thus, in Lillooet, 'one' is 'to be one', 'sick' is 'to be sick', etc.) Nouns and intransitive verbs (whether the latter translate as verbs, numerals or adjectives) all inflect in the same way, viz., as intransitive verbs, when it comes to forming predications. In other words, in this respect there is no difference between nouns and (intransitive) verbs. The following sets (based on *cut* 'to say', and $\text{ʔux}^w\text{almix}^w$ 'Indian, person, human being') demonstrate this. For comments on the endings (including the use of \emptyset , hyphens and dots) see §6.⁶

<i>cút-k.an</i>	'I say'	$\text{ʔux}^w\text{almix}^w\text{-k.an}$	'I am an Indian'
<i>cút-k.ax^w</i>	'you say'	$\text{ʔux}^w\text{almix}^w\text{-k.ax}^w$	'you are an Indian'
<i>cút-\emptyset</i>	'he says'	$\text{ʔux}^w\text{almix}^w\text{-}\emptyset$	'he is an Indian'
<i>cút-kaʔ</i>	'we say'	$\text{ʔux}^w\text{almix}^w\text{-kaʔ}$	'we are Indians'
<i>cút-k.al'ap</i>	'you.PL say'	$\text{ʔux}^w\text{almix}^w\text{-k.al'ap}$	'you.PL are Indians'
<i>cút-wit</i>	'they say'	$\text{ʔux}^w\text{almix}^w\text{-wit}$	'they are Indians'

The crucial difference between intransitive and transitive verbs is that only the latter may combine with pronominal object suffixes. Also, all transitive verbs are overtly marked with one or more transitivity suffixes. Intransitive verbs may be marked with an intransitivity suffix, or they may be unmarked. Intransitive verbs include $\text{ʔac}'\check{x}$ 'to be seen' (unmarked) and its marked derivation $\text{ʔac}'\check{x}\text{-}\check{a}m$ 'to see, have vision'. Neither of these may take pronominal object suffixes, but the transitive derivation $\text{ʔac}'\check{x}\text{-}\check{a}n$ 'to see someone or something' does allow this possibility. Thus, in order to express 'he sees me' one employs $\text{ʔac}'\check{x}\text{-}\check{a}n\text{-}c\acute{i}h\text{-}as$, while formations like $*\text{ʔac}'\check{x}\text{-}c\acute{i}h\text{-}as$ or $*\text{ʔac}'\check{x}\text{-}\check{a}m\text{-}c\acute{i}h\text{-}as$ are disallowed.

The various types of Lillooet transitive verbs, and their functions, are discussed in §4.

4 Lillooet transitive verbs

Lillooet transitivizers (i.e., transitivity suffixes) fall into four basic types, which are classed as follows:

⁶ The following abbreviations are used in this article: FUT = future; IND = indicative; O = object, PL = plural, PERF INDEP = perfect independent order (in Pawnee), PST = past; S = subject, and SG = singular.

- 1) Plain transitivizers
 - 1.1) directive: *-s*, *-N*, *-nun/-nun'*, *-ən-s*
 - 1.2) indirective: *-xit*
- 2) Relational transitivizers
 - 2.1) directive: *-min/-min'*
 - 2.2) indirective: *-min-xit/-min'-xit*

The symbol *N* stands for a group of transitivizers that consist of *n* or *n'* with a preceding vowel (see, for example, *-ən* and *-an* in *ʔác'x-ən* and *núk^wʔ-an*, discussed in §3). The distribution between *-nun* and *-nun'* (and between *-min* and *-min'*) is morphophonemically predictable and does not need to concern us here. The terms ‘plain’, ‘relational’, ‘directive’ and ‘indirective’ are rather ad hoc. Relational transitivizers indicate that the object is affected less drastically than when a plain transitivizer is involved, and indirective transitivizers basically create three-place verbs, involving an indirect object besides a direct object.⁷ To give an example involving the various types: from (intransitive) *ʔ'iq* ‘to arrive (here)’ we derive *ʔ'iq-s* ‘to bring her/him/it here’ (plain-directive), *ʔ'iq-xit* ‘to bring her/him/it to her/him/it here’ (plain-indirective), *ʔ'iq-min* ‘to arrive here for her/him/it’ (relational-directive), and *ʔ'iq-min'-xit* ‘to arrive here for her/his/its possessions’ (relational-indirective). Note that when someone arrives for a person (*ʔ'iq-min'*), that person is affected less drastically than when he or she is brought (*ʔ'iq-s*). In the same way, from *pták^wt* ‘to tell a legend’ we derive *pták^wt-ən* ‘to tell a legend to someone’ and *pták^wt-min* ‘to tell a legend about someone’. With regard to this set, a person may not be aware of the fact that a legend is told **about** him or her, but a person is certainly affected when a legend is told **to** him or her, in that that person is now equipped with new knowledge.

The functions of the plain-directive transitivizers are discussed in §5.

5 Plain-directive transitivizers

The plain-directive transitivizers show a complex pattern of formal and functional overlaps. Collectively, these transitivizers serve four different functions: (1) causativization, (2) expressing that the subject addresses (speaks to, shouts at, etc.) someone, (3) expressing that the subject nourishes a certain thought about someone, and (4) a direct transitivization (i.e., the non-

⁷ Among Salishanists it has been a matter of debate whether the recipient is the direct or the indirect object of the plain-indirective transitivizer. See van Eijk (1997: 263) and Matthewson (1999: 229) for discussions of this topic.

causative application of an action to an object). These functions match up as follows with the various transitivizers:

Causativization:	- <i>N</i>	- <i>s</i>
Addressing:	- <i>N</i>	- <i>s</i>
Nourishing a thought:	- <i>nun/-nun'</i>	- <i>s</i>
Direct transitivization:	- <i>N</i>	- <i>ən-s</i>

Examples of the various functions and their markers are: **causativization:** *ʔac'x̄* 'to be seen' > *ʔac'x̄-ən* 'to see someone' (i.e., 'to cause someone to be seen'), *ʔ'iq* 'to arrive (here)' > *ʔ'iq-s* 'to bring someone here;'; **addressing:** *wəʔáw* 'to shout, holler' > *wəʔáw-ən* 'to shout, holler at someone', *xʷítən* 'to whistle' > *xʷítən-s* 'to whistle at someone;'; **nourishing a thought:** *wənáxʷ* 'true' > *wənáxʷ-nun'* 'to believe someone', *ʔ'əx* 'sweet, tasty' > *ʔ'əx-s* 'to like it (food);'; **direct transitivization:** *ptak* 'to pass by' > *pták-ən* 'to pass by someone', *ʔúqʷaʔ* 'to drink' > *ʔúqʷaʔ-ən-s* 'to drink it up' (from underlying **ʔúqʷaʔ-ən-s*).

Only for causativization is there a clear basis for the selection of either -*N* or -*s* as the transitivizer. We have -*N* where the action is within the control of the performer (i.e., the subject), while we have -*s* when the action is not within the control of the performer. Thus we have -*N* in *ʔac'x̄-ən* 'to see someone', *k'áx-an* 'to dry it' (from *k'áx* 'to be dry'), *ciq-in* 'to stab someone' (from the root *ciq-* 'to get stabbed'), or *púʔ-un* 'to boil it' (from the root *púʔ-* 'to get boiled'): in all these cases the result is rather easily achieved and within the control of the performer. On the other hand, we have -*s* in *ʔ'iq-s* 'to bring here', where the object may resist being brought, and in *qam't-s* 'to hit it', from *qam't* 'to get hit', where a certain skill is required to achieve the goal of the action.⁸ We may have shifts from -*N* to -*s* or vice versa, when the control status of a verb changes. Thus, besides *ʔac'x̄-ən* 'to see it' we have *ka-ʔac'x̄-s_a* 'to catch sight of something' (an action that lies outside the control of the performer, with the 'resultative' prefix *ka-* and the

⁸ In order to be marked for (plus) control, a verb does not have to imply an action that is instigated or intended by the performer. The main criterion here seems to be 'ease of effort', as discussed in van Eijk (1997: 112). Thus, verbs like 'to forget it' (*ʔáp-ən*) and 'to miss (a target)' (*xik'-ən*) take a control transitivizer, because the goal of the action is easily achieved (although generally not intended). This analysis is subjected to a critical review in Kuipers (1991), to which van Eijk (1991) offers a rejoinder. For the occasional discrepancy between instigation and control see also Mithun (1999: 215-216). Salish languages other than Lillooet may demarcate control along slightly different lines.

accompanying clitic $_a$), and $s\text{-}\mathcal{?ac}'\check{x}\text{-}s$ ‘to watch over someone or something’ (an action that requires more effort than just seeing something, with the stative prefix $s\text{-}$, not to be confused with the nominalizer $s\text{-}$).

For the non-causative categories it is not clear why some verbs select a transitivizer from the left column, and others a transitivizer from the right column.

6 The transitive paradigm

In this section we give two transitive paradigms, based on cun ‘to tell, order someone’, and on $\check{x}'iq\text{-}s$ ‘to bring someone (here)’. The form cun is somewhat unusual in that its parallelling intransitive form is cut ‘to say, speak’, with a suffix $-t$ that generally has an aspect-like function but normally does not pattern as an intransitivizer (see van Eijk 1997: 72-73 for details). The root $cu\text{-}$ is bound and does not occur without either $-n$ or $-t$.

The following paradigms are in the indicative mood. In addition to this mood, Lillooet also employs a subjunctive, which is mostly used in dependent clauses, generally serves conditional or optative notions and is formally identical to the indicative in part of its paradigm. There is also a third category, the factual paradigm, which is mainly used in negative constructions and ‘why’ constructions. It is always marked with the nominalizer $s\text{-}$, but in all but one of its forms (the ‘I-you’ relation) it is formally identical to the subjunctive paradigm or to both the subjunctive and indicative paradigms. For details on the functions and forms of the subjunctive and factual paradigms I refer to van Eijk (1997), §22.

Of the indicative paradigm, we give both the active and passive forms. As is shown below, the passive forms are needed, because they are used to express the transitive forms with a first person plural subject. The order of the constituents in an active form is as follows: transitive stem (always marked with a transitivizer) followed by the object suffix and then the subject suffix. Thus, the internal order of the inflected transitive verb is VOS.⁹ For an example see $nuk^w\mathcal{?}\text{-}an\text{-}c\acute{i}h\text{-}as$ ‘he helps you’ in §3.

The forms given below deviate in two respects from those given in van Eijk (1997). In the first place I mark the zero-suffix (which signals the third

⁹ In sentences involving full word arguments (of the type ‘the man shoots the bear’), the order may be VSO or VOS (or, better, PSO or POS, with ‘P’ representing ‘predicate’). Van Eijk (1997: 67) gives the ratio 4:1 for PSO:POS in texts. However, as Matthewson (1999: 228) points out, POS is more typical of the northern dialect, while PSO is more common in the southern dialect. For more on this matter see also van Eijk (1995) and (2002).

singular object and, where the subject is a third person, also the third plural object) with $-\emptyset$, rather than just leaving it unmarked. In the second place, some object or subject suffixes are in fact complex, consisting of combinations of suffixes. (For example, the suffix $-ʔkan$ for first singular subject indicative consists of an indicative marker $-ʔk$ and the first singular subject marker $-an$.) In cases like these I mark the internal boundaries within the object or subject suffixes with a period, while the hyphen indicates the boundaries between the stem, the object suffix, and the subject suffix. (Thus, $-ʔkan$ will be spelled $-ʔk.an$.) Details of the functions of the composing parts of the various object and subject suffix-complexes are discussed following the paradigms.

As the examples indicate, the two paradigms use different suffixes for first singular object and for second singular object, for third plural subject where the object is a third person, and for the third singular passive. The forms we find with $\lambda'iq-s$ are typical for any verb with the transitivizer $-s$ (regardless of whether that has a causativizing or any different function) or $-ən-s$. All the other transitivizers select the object/subject forms that we find with *cun*.

<i>cún-ci-ʔk.an</i>	‘I tell you’	$\lambda'iq-s-tum'i-ʔk.an$	‘I bring you’ ¹⁰
<i>cún-∅-ʔk.an</i>	‘I tell him’	$\lambda'iq-s-∅-k.an$	‘I bring him’
<i>cun-tumúʔ-k.an</i>	‘I tell you.PL’	$\lambda'iq-s-tum'úʔ-k.an$	‘I bring you.PL’
<i>cun-tan.i-ʔk.an</i>	‘I tell them’	$\lambda'iq-s-tan'.i-ʔk.an$	‘I bring them’ ¹¹
<i>cún-c-k.ax^w</i>	‘you tell me’	$\lambda'iq-s-tum'x-k.axw$	‘you bring me’
<i>cún-∅-ʔk.ax^w</i>	‘you tell him’	$\lambda'iq-s-∅-k.axw$	‘you bring him’
<i>cun-tumúʔ-k.ax^w</i>	‘you tell us’	$\lambda'iq-s-tum'úʔ-k.axw$	‘you bring us’
<i>cún-wit-k.ax^w</i>	‘you tell them’	$\lambda'iq-s-wit-k.axw$	‘you bring them’
<i>cún-c-k.al'ap</i>	‘you.PL tell me’	$\lambda'iq-s-tum'x-k.ál'ap$	‘you.PL bring me’
<i>cún-∅-ʔk.al'ap</i>	‘you.PL tell him’	$\lambda'iq-s-∅-k.al'ap$	‘you.PL bring him’
<i>cun-tumúʔ-k.al'ap</i>	‘you.PL tell us’	$\lambda'iq-s-tum'úʔ-k.al'ap$	‘you.PL bring us’
<i>cun-wit-k.ál'ap</i>	‘you.PL tell them’	$\lambda'iq-s-wit-k.ál'ap$	‘you.PL bring them’

¹⁰ As alternate forms for ‘I-you’ one also uses *cún-cin-ʔk.an* and $\lambda'iq-s-tum'in-ʔk.an$.

¹¹ Alternate forms are *cún-wit-k.an* and $\lambda'iq-s-wit-k.an$, with the suffix $-wit$ borrowed from the ‘you.PL-them’ forms.

<i>cún-c-as</i>	‘he tells me’	ʔ <i>'iq-s-tum'x-as</i>	‘he brings me’
<i>cún-cih-as</i>	‘he tells you’	ʔ <i>'iq-s-tum'ih-as</i>	‘he brings you’
<i>cún-∅-as</i>	‘he tells him/ them’	ʔ <i>'iq-s-∅-as</i>	‘he brings him/ them’
<i>cun-tumúł-as</i>	‘he tells us’	ʔ <i>'iq-s-tum'úł-as</i>	‘he brings us’
<i>cun-tam.ál'ap-as</i>	‘he tells you.PL’	ʔ <i>'iq-s-tam.ál'ap-as</i>	‘he brings you.PL’
<i>cun-c.al-ít.as</i>	‘they tell me’	ʔ <i>'iq-s-tum'x.ál-it.as</i>	‘they bring me’
<i>cun-cih-ás.wit</i>	‘they tell you’	ʔ <i>'iq-s-tum'ih-as.wit</i>	‘they bring you’
<i>cún-∅-it.as</i>	‘they tell him/ them’	ʔ <i>'iq-s-∅-twit.as</i>	‘they bring him/ them’
<i>cun-tumúl-it.as</i>	‘they tell us’	ʔ <i>'iq-s-tum'úl-it.as</i>	‘they bring us’
<i>cun-tam.al'ap-ás.wit</i>	‘they tell you.PL’	ʔ <i>'iq-s-tam.al'ap-ás.wit</i>	‘they bring you.PL’

The passive forms are:

<i>cún-c.al-əm</i>	‘I am told’	ʔ <i>'iq-s-tum'x.ál-əm</i>	‘I am brought’
<i>cún-ci-m</i>	‘you are told/ we tell you’	ʔ <i>'iq-s-tum'i-m</i>	‘you are brought/ we bring you’
<i>cún-∅-əm</i>	‘he is told/ we tell him’	ʔ <i>'iq-s-∅-tum'</i>	‘he is brought/ we bring him’
<i>cun-tumúl-əm</i>	‘we are told’	ʔ <i>'iq-s-tum'úl-əm</i>	‘we are brought’
<i>cun-tam-ʔk.ál'ap</i>	‘you.PL are told/ we tell you.PL’	ʔ <i>'iq-s-tam-ʔk.ál'ap</i>	‘you.PL are brought/ we bring you.PL’
<i>cún-tan-əm.wit</i>	‘they are told/ we tell them’	ʔ <i>'iq-s-tan-əm.wit</i>	‘they are brought/ we bring them’

As the forms show, some pronominal subjects and objects allow various markers, depending on context. Thus, the third person plural subject is marked as *-twit.as* after a third person object if the transitivizer is *-s* or *-ən-s*. However, it is marked as *-it.as* after a third person object if the transitivizer is not *-s* or *-ən-s*, or after a first person object (with any transitivizer), and it is marked as *-as.wit* after a second person object (with any transitivizer). The marker for the third person plural object has three variants (*-tan.i*, *-wit*, and *-∅*), depending on the following subject suffix. The suffixes *-c/-tumx* ‘me’ and *-tumul* ‘us’ have the forms *-c.al/-tumx.al* and *-tumul* before *-it.as*. Most remarkably, the suffix *-tumul*, which generally expresses ‘us’, expres-

ses ‘you.PL (object)’ when combined with *-k.an* ‘I’.¹² The indicative marker *-k* has this shape after obstruents, but *-ʃk* after vowels and resonants.¹³ The marker *-ci* for second singular object has the form *-cih* before a vowel.

In the suffixes *-tumx/-tumx-al*, *-tumi*, *-tum* (and also *-tumuʔ/-tumul*, and *-tan.i*, when these follow *-s* or *-ən-s*), *m* or *n* is glottalized after monosyllabic stems, but *m* and *n* remain unglottalized after bisyllabic stems, as in *x^witən-s-tumx-as* ‘he whistles (*x^witən*) at (*-s*) me’.

As is mentioned above, and shown in the paradigms, some suffixes are complex. Thus, the third person plural suffix is based on the singular form *-as*, combined with a plural marker that is *-it* or *-twit* (preceding *-as*) or *-wit* (following *-as*). Evidence for dividing *-tani* ‘them’ (when the subject is ‘I’) into two suffixes comes from the passive paradigm, where we have the related form *-tan* in the combination *-tan-əm.wit*. (The *i* in *-tan.i* also occurs in the imperative paradigm.) The suffix *-tam.al’ap* has an object marker *-tam* (for which see also the next paragraph), combined with *al’ap* that also occurs in the subject marker *-ʃk.al’ap*.

Of the passive forms, the first four in each set have an object suffix followed by a passive marker *-əm* or *-m* that takes the place of the subject suffix.¹⁴ (Note that the object markers for first singular and plural are the same as in the forms where we have a third plural subject.) The form for ‘you.PL’ has an element *-tam* that is also part of the object suffix *-tam.al’ap*. In the passive form it seems to intransitivize the preceding transitive stem. More complex is the passive form for ‘they’. The element *-tan* also occurs in the forms for ‘I-them’, where it is part of the object complex *-tan.i*. The

¹² Shifting or merging between first and second person markers occurs in other languages as well. In Zacapoaxtla Aztec (as quoted in Jensen 1990: 62, based on Nida 1949), the prefix *ti-* signals the second singular when not combined with the plural suffix *-h*, but the first plural when it is combined with this marker. (For a discussion of this phenomenon see also Jacobsen 1980: 211-212, with examples drawn from Classical Aztec, or Nahuatl.) In Sarcee, there are two forms to mark the first and second person plural object, but these forms (*nih-* and *naa-*) are in free variation and are used for both persons, so that the first and second person plural objects are not formally distinguished (Cook 1984: 197). Lummi (Coast Salish) has a single marker *-oŋəʃ* for both the first and second person singular object (Jelinek and Demers 1983: 168).

¹³ Occasionally, we have *-ʃk* after obstruents (but never *-k* after vowels or resonants), as in *ʔ’iq-ʃk.an* (an alternate form of *ʔ’iq-k.an*) ‘I am here!’ (or ‘hello!’).

¹⁴ There has been some debate as to whether the passive in Salish is a true passive or an ‘indefinite actor’ paradigm. For discussions of this topic see Newman (1985), Thompson & Thompson (1992: 58), and van Eijk (1997: 264).

form *-tan* is here interpreted as an object suffix for the third plural, although historically it probably had a different function.

For the historical background of Lillooet (and general Salish) object formation I refer to Newman (1979). Kinkade (p.c., 2002), however, has brought to my attention that many of Newman's observations have to be revised in the light of subsequent research. Certainly, Newman's Lillooet examples have to be reassessed. The form for 'it blew on me' (Newman 1979: 299) is *púx^w-un'-c-as*, not *púx^w-un'-c*, which would mean 'blow on me!' (Newman does give *púx^w-un'-c-as* [or rather, *púx^w-un't-s-as*] as the underlying form of *púx^w-un'-c-as*, but this would require a deletion rule for *-as* that in fact does not exist in Lillooet.) The form for 'he brought me' may historically be *ʔ'iq-stu-m'x-as*, as given by Newman on p. 300, but synchronically it has to be divided *ʔ'iq-s-tum'x-as*, as given above. (Newman's examples are retranscribed from his system into the one used in this article, also with addition of resonant-glottalizations and stress marks where Newman omits them.) The initial *t* we have in a number of object suffixes (*-tumut*, etc.) was historically a separate suffix and part of the transitivity complex (as shown in Newman's form *pux^w-un't-s-as* above). Synchronically, however, it is best assigned to the object suffix.

As the paradigms show, the subject markers for first singular and for second singular and plural are the same in the intransitive paradigm (as given in §3) and the transitive paradigm. As for the other persons, the differences can be read from the paradigms. The intransitive first plural marker *-kat* is identical to the first plural possessive marker, and synchronically there is no reason for splitting off *k* as a separate unit (the intransitive first plural subjunctive being *-at*). The markers for the intransitive third persons also occur in the transitive, but in different functions.

7 Typological considerations

As the examples and discussion in §6 demonstrate, Lillooet uses a rather common strategy for marking pronominal objects and subjects, viz., case-marking in combination with slot-assignment. We find this same strategy in English, where we have slot-assignment of the type SVO (rather than the internal VOS order we find in Lillooet), combined with case-marking, as in 'I saw him' vs. 'he saw me'. Of course, English uses full words to mark pronominal roles, where Lillooet (and many other Native American languages) use affixes. However, this difference is irrelevant for the purposes of this article, and we can safely use the term 'case' for the difference between Lillooet *-c* and *-k.an*, which parallel English 'me' and 'I' exactly. (For the

use of ‘case’ to describe the difference between ‘me’ and ‘I’ etc. see Huddleston 1990: 50.)

The combination of slot-assignment and case-marking is found in many other languages as well, including Native American languages. As an example we may take Choctaw, a member of the Muskogean family which is spread through the southeastern United States. The following information is taken from Jensen (1990: 167), which in turn is taken from Merrifield *et al.* (1967: 9). The constituents of the Choctaw system can be arranged as follows, with negative numbers indicating prefixes, positive numbers indicating suffixes, and higher numbers indicating greater distance from the stem, as shown below.

-2	-1	Stem	+1	+2
<i>iš-</i> 2SG.S	<i>sa-</i> 1SG.O	<i>pīsa-</i>	<i>-li</i> 1SG.S	<i>-tok</i> PST
	<i>či-</i> 2SG.O	<i>so</i>		<i>-čī</i> FUT
		<i>paya</i>		
		<i>čakmāne</i>		

Thus we have forms like *iš-sa-pīsa-čī* ‘you will see me’, *iš-sa-so* ‘you hit me (present)’, *či-paya-li-čī* ‘I will call you’, and *či-čakmāne-li-tok* ‘I liked you’. What is a bit peculiar (but not problematic) about this system is that the subject function is signalled by a prefix in the case of ‘you’, but by a suffix in the case of ‘I’.¹⁵

Another example of slot-assignment and case-marking is provided by Pawnee, a Caddoan language originally spoken in Nebraska, but now in Oklahoma, and described in Parks (1976). Extracting the singular subjects and objects from Parks’s discussion, who bases his examples on *pirus* ‘to whip’ in the indicative mood, we have the following order of constituents.

-3	-2	-1	Stem	+1
<i>ta-/ti-</i> IND	<i>t-</i> 1SG.S	<i>ku-</i> 1SG.O	<i>pirus</i> ‘to whip’	<i>-∅</i> PERF INDEP
	<i>s-</i> 2SG.S	<i>a-</i> 2SG.O		
	<i>∅</i> 3SG.S	<i>∅</i> 3SG.O		
		<i>ir-</i> 3SG.O		

¹⁵ Jensen sets up an underlying system where *-li* is a prefix, which then requires a transformation rule assigning it its proper suffix position. I see no use for this. It is quite common for languages to mark certain persons with prefixes, and others with suffixes. (In Lillooet, the first singular possessive is marked with a prefix *n-*, while all other possessors are marked with suffixes.)

The indicative is signalled by the prefix *ta-*, which is *ti-* before the third person subject. The form *ir-* for ‘him’ is used in the case of ‘switch-reference’, i.e., when “there is a change of third person subjects – when a second, or new, third person is introduced into the conversation or narration, or when attention is being focused on a third person object” (Parks 1976: 165). For the use and distribution of the aspectual suffix *-∅* see Parks (1976: 190ff). The paradigm yielded by combining the above morphemes is given below. Following Parks (1976: 181-182), and in recognition of the forbidding morphophonemics of Pawnee, we list these examples both in their underlying forms (in the left column, between slashes), and in their surface forms.¹⁶

<i>/ta-t-a-pirus-∅/</i>	<i>tatapiru</i>	‘I whipped you’
<i>/ta-t-∅-pirus-∅/</i>	<i>tatpiru</i>	‘I whipped him’
<i>/ta-s-ku-pirus-∅/</i>	<i>taskupiru</i>	‘you whipped me’
<i>/ta-s-∅-pirus-∅/</i>	<i>taspiru</i>	‘you whipped him’
<i>/ti-∅-ku-pirus-∅/</i>	<i>tikupiru</i>	‘he whipped me’
<i>/ti-∅-a-pirus-∅/</i>	<i>tapiru</i>	‘he whipped you’
<i>/ti-∅-∅-pirus-∅/</i>	<i>tipiru</i>	‘he whipped him’
<i>/ti-∅-ir-pirus-∅/</i>	<i>tihpiru</i>	‘he whipped him’

In addition to the combination of slot-assignment and case-marking, the strategy that is employed by the languages discussed above, we also have the theoretical possibilities of slot-assignment without case-marking, or case-marking without slot-assignment.

We have the former strategy in part of the English paradigm, i.e., in phrases like ‘you saw it’ vs. ‘it saw you’, where it is slot-assignment alone that marks the roles of the third (neuter) person and the second person. We have the same pattern in Pawnee */ti-∅-∅-pirus-∅/* ‘he whipped him’, although the fact that both the subject and the object are marked zero renders this example rather moot. Pure slot-assignment without case-marking seems to be rare among Native American languages, although it is the strategy employed in large parts of the paradigm of (Lower) Chinook, which is (or was) spoken along the lower Columbia River, and is described in Boas (1911), from which the following examples are taken. In this language we have (within an ergative system) the order SO, expressed by prefixes, as in *a-n-L-ō'-cg-am* ‘I (*n-*) took (*-cg-*) it (*L-*)’ (p. 581, *a-* ‘transitional’, *ō'* ‘directional’, *-am* completive). However, for most of the persons (including all first and

¹⁶ In the Pawnee examples, I replace Parks’s ‘+’ symbols with hyphens, in order to maintain consistency with the examples from other languages in this article.

second persons in singular, dual and plural), the prefixes are identical for subject and object, and it is the relative order that disambiguates between the functions, as in *a-m-xā'-n-El-gu'L-itck* 'you (*m-*) expressed yourself to me (*n-*)' (p. 587, see there for full analysis). Note that the first person singular prefix *n-* does not distinguish between subject and object functions, but that the SO order does.¹⁷

To my (admittedly not exhaustive) knowledge, there are no Native North American languages that use case-marking alone, without slot-assignment for subject or object. In such a language the order of the constituents would have to be entirely free, as in (rather bad) Latin *ego te video = te ego video = ego video te*, etc. for 'I see you' and *tu me vides = me tu vides = tu vides me*, etc. for 'you see me', or we would have slot-assignment for persons, but not for subject and object, as if in English one would use 'I saw him' for (indeed) 'I saw him', but *'me saw he' for 'he saw me', with 1V3 (First Person – Verb – Third Person) instead of SVO. There is a beginning of such a system in Choctaw, as quoted above, where the first suffix slot is reserved for the first person singular (but only in the subject role). Where we do have slot-assignment for persons, but not for subjects or objects, it seems restricted to the so-called direct/inverse system, which is discussed in §8 below.

In addition to slot-assignment and case-marking (and the combination of these strategies), and the direct/inverse system, there is feature nesting. This last strategy is discussed in §9.

8 Direct/inverse systems

Broadly speaking, in a direct/inverse system one has assigned slots for grammatical persons, but no case marking for subject or object on the markers themselves for these persons. Instead, one has a separate set of markers which will indicate whether the action is performed by one person on the other, or vice versa. This system is attested for, among others, the Algonquian and Kutenai (Ktunaxa) families.¹⁸ As an example from Algonquian we

¹⁷ The deletion of case distinctions has reached its completion in Chinook Jargon, a trade language based on Chinook – see Mithun (1999: 587-589), Silverstein (1972), and Zenk (1984) for details on the history and structure of this language. Thus we have phrases like *nika* (I) *nanitch* (see) *mika* (you), or *nesika* (we) *kwass* (fear) *mesika* (you.PL). These examples are due to Jay Powell (p.c., 2002), who also alerted me to the articles by Zenk and Silverstein mentioned above.

¹⁸ Kutenai is an isolate, spoken in British Columbia, Idaho and Montana. Mithun (1999) describes the direct/inverse system in (Algonquian) Ojibway on pp. 222-226, and that of Kutenai, and Tewa and Towa (of the Kiowa-Tanoan family), on pp. 226-228.

may quote Cree, and particularly the (southern) Plains dialect, as spoken in Saskatchewan, of which we have a number of excellent descriptions, including Ahenakew (1987), Okimâsis & Ratt (1999), and Wolfart (1996).¹⁹ In this language a phrase like ‘I see him’ is rendered as *ni-wâpam-â-w*, while ‘he sees me’ is rendered as (underlying) *ni-wâpam-ik[w-w]* (a morpho-phonemic rule deletes the final *w* segments in this latter form, so that it is actually pronounced *ni-wâpam-ik*).²⁰ In both forms, the root *wâpam-* means ‘to see’, the prefix *ni-* indicates the first person (singular), while *-w* indicates the third person (singular). Since these affixes are not inflected for case, or use slot-assignment to mark subject or object roles, a third strategy is needed to indicate subjects or objects. This task falls to the suffixes *-â* and *-ikw*, of which the former (the direct) indicates that the action goes from the first to the third person, while the second (the inverse) indicates that the action goes from the third to the first person. Crucial to this system is the notion of hierarchy, which, at least in Algonquian, puts the various persons on a scale as follows: $2 > 1 > 3 > 3'$. Thus, the second person outranks the first, and these outrank the third proximate (3), which in turn outranks the third obviative (3').²¹ Where a higher-ranked person acts on a lower-ranked person, we will have a direct marker, and where this relation is reversed we have an inverse marker, as in the examples given above.

¹⁹ These works on Cree are written from different points of view, with different objectives. Wolfart is a thorough description of the language in structuralist terms, Okimâsis & Ratt is a richly detailed teaching manual, and Ahenakew is a synopsis of the basic inflectional categories and paradigms of Cree, set out in a very lucid and accessible manner. For another excellent study on Cree, the reader is also referred to Peter Bakker (this volume).

²⁰ The forms *ni-wâpam-â-w* and *ni-wâpam-ik[w-w]* are a recasting in synchronic terms of what are on a deep underlying level (based on diachronic considerations) *ne-wâpam-â-wa* and *ne-wâpam-ekw-a*, see Wolfart (1996: 412-413).

Traditional Cree orthography (as used in Ahenakew 1987, and in Okimâsis & Ratt 1999) uses hyphens more sparingly than is done in my article or in Wolfart (1996). In the traditional (roman) orthography, hyphens are employed mainly to mark off ‘preverbs’ and ‘prenouns’, essentially bound verbs and nouns that precede the main stem.

²¹ The proximate third person is the third person that is in focus (essentially the third person that is mentioned first in the discourse), while the obviative marks the third person that is out of focus. One of the functions of this distinction is to disambiguate structures like ‘John saw Bill while he was working’, where Cree would distinguish between a proximate and an obviative ‘he’ and thus make clear whether ‘he’ would refer to ‘John’ or to ‘Bill’. The obviative is traditionally indicated with a prime.

The situation sketched so far is, however, only the tip of the iceberg as far as Algonquian direct/inverse marking is concerned. The grammar of Cree (and its Algonquian relatives) is notoriously complex, and the transitive animate verbal system (which is where the direct/inverse system comes into play) poses probably the greatest challenge to those who undertake a study of these languages. For example, in the relation ‘he sees him’ (3-3’) the direct marker is *ê*, not *â*, and there is only one third person marked, so that the resulting form is *wâpam-ê-w*. The accompanying inverse (3’-3) still uses *-ikw*, but again with only one third person marked, so that the resulting form here is *wâpam-ik* (from underlying *wâpam-ik[w-w]*). In addition, there are two major moods in Cree (usually labelled the ‘independent’ and the ‘conjunct’), and these show their own idiosyncrasies when it comes to marking the direct and inverse. Finally, in one part of the paradigm we seem to have feature nesting, the topic of our next section.

9 Feature nesting

Feature nesting is essentially a system where two morphemes, each with its own set of features, are combined into one single morpheme. With regard to subject/object inflection, this means that one single and indivisible morpheme refers to two different persons, one in the subject role, the other in the object role. The notion of feature nesting was originally developed by Anderson (1977) and it is applied by Jensen (1990: 51-52) to Sayula Popoluca, a Mixean language spoken in Mexico. Below, we repeat a selection from Jensen’s data (which are taken from Merrifield *et al.* 1967: 12), adding hyphens for easy recognition of the constituent morphemes. (The suffix *-p* indicates the present [progressive] tense, and the root *čeʔm-* means ‘to seek’.)

<i>tʌ-čeʔm-p</i>	‘I am seeking you’
<i>tʌn-čeʔm-p</i>	‘I am seeking him/it’
<i>ʔin-čeʔm-p</i>	‘you are seeking him/it’
<i>ʔi-čeʔm-p</i>	‘he is seeking him/it’
<i>ʔiš-čeʔm-p</i>	‘he is seeking you’
<i>ʔiš-čeʔm-p</i>	‘you are seeking me’
<i>tʌš-čeʔm-p</i>	‘he is seeking me’

Note that the forms for ‘he is seeking you’ and ‘you are seeking me’ are identical. As the examples show, Sayula Popoluca employs prefixes which combine two different persons, one as subject and the other as object, and in such a way that these prefixes can not be subdivided into separate markers

for each person. There are recurring sequences and segments, such as *tA* or *?i* (which function as self-contained prefixes or as parts of prefixes), but we cannot assign a consistent meaning to these. It may be possible that this system goes back to an older system in which the prefixes could be divided into separate constituents, but that later developments have blended the original constituents and their meanings. As things stand now, the Sayula Popoluca prefixes can be described as double portmanteau morphemes, e.g., *tAn-*, which combines ‘I’ [+I, -II, -plural, +subject] with ‘him’ [-I, -II, -plural, -subject].

Cree employs what certainly looks like feature nesting in part of its verbal paradigm. As is mentioned in §7, there are two major moods in Cree, the ‘independent’ and the ‘conjunct’, and in the conjunct the relations ‘I-him’ and ‘you-him’ (direct) and ‘he-me’ and ‘he-you’ (inverse) are marked by morphemes that give no separate recognition to the subject or the object in each relation. The conjunct (which is often signalled by a ‘preverb’ *ê-*, and which is notoriously difficult to translate) employs suffixes exclusively, in contrast to the independent, which employs both prefixes and suffixes. Using the stem *wâpam-* ‘to see’ again as the basis of our examples, we obtain the following forms: *ê-wâpam-ak* ‘as I see him’, *ê-wâpam-at* ‘as you see him’, *ê-wâpam-it* ‘as he sees me’, *ê-wâpam-isk* ‘as he sees you’. As the examples show, we have *a* in the direct forms, and *i* in the inverse forms, but even if we would separate these segments from the rest of the suffixes in which they occur (something that is not supported by the rest of the Cree paradigm, since *a* and *i* do not occur in these functions outside these forms), we would still be left with segments that would combine two persons in one form. (Thus, even if we would split off *a* from *-ak*, we would have an element *k* that signals neither the first nor the third person outside this form within the Cree paradigm, and that thus can best be interpreted as representing both persons, in different roles, at the same time.)²²

Feature nesting is also found outside Cree and Sayula Popoluca. For example, in the active transitive paradigm of Nakoda (Assiniboine), a Siouan language spoken in southern Saskatchewan and adjacent areas, pronominal subjects and objects are generally marked as prefixes, with the order depending on the persons involved. (The order is generally OS, but there are complications where the prefix *u-* for ‘we/us’ is involved, see Schudel 1997: 52-

²² There is a suffix *-k* that occurs in part of the Cree macro-paradigm to mark a third person subject in the conjunct paradigm, but the overall verbal structure of Cree does not suggest that it is related to the *k* in *-ak*. It is important to note that Wolfart (1996) does not break up *-ak*, etc.

58.) Thus, with *kʔu* ‘to give (it to someone)’ we have *ma-ya-kʔu* ‘you (*ya-*) give it to me (*ma-*)’, *∅-ya-kʔu* ‘you give it to him/her (\emptyset)’ and *∅-wa-kʔu* ‘I (*wa-*) give it to him/her’. However, to express the relation ‘I-you’, Nakoda uses feature nesting, in the form of the prefix *či-*, as in *či-čʔu* ‘I give it to you’.²³ (The palatalization of *kʔ* to *čʔ* in this last form is regular, see Schudel 1997: 55, fn. 7).

10 Conclusions

In this article, we have shown that Native American languages select from three major strategies when it comes to marking personal pronominal subjects and objects: (1) a combination of slot-assignment (for subjects and objects) plus case-marking, (2) inverse/direct systems, (3) feature nesting. Pure slot-assignment (without case-marking) does occur, but seems quite rare. In a number of languages we also have mixed systems, such as Cree, which has traces of feature nesting within a direct/inverse system, or Nakoda, which has an instance of feature nesting within a ‘slot and case’ system.

At a somewhat deeper level of analysis, we may argue that all strategies, except for pure slot-assignment (without case-marking), are some form of case-marking. Languages like Lillooet, Choctaw or Pawnee should require no further argumentation in this respect. For Cree, we may argue that we have extraneous case-marking in the form of the direct and inverse markers. We could then say that the structure of Cree is more agglutinative, while that of, say, Lillooet would be more fusional. (To draw a comparison, we could say that Cree *ni-wâpam-â-w*, with the role-marker separate from the person markers, would be opposed to Lillooet *ʔac'x-ən-cih-as* ‘he sees you’, with role and person merged into *-as* or *-cih*, in the same way that Turkish *adam-lar-da* ‘in the men’, with locative *-da* separate from plural *-lar*, would be opposed to Latin [*in*] *viris* ‘in the men’, with locative and plural merged into one suffix, *-is*.)²⁴ With regard to feature nesting, there is at least a formal marking of relations, without reliance on slot-assignment, and in this respect feature nesting can be classed with ‘traditional’ case-marking, as in Lillooet (which has slot-assignment as an additional device), and with direct/inverse systems.

²³ Schudel uses the hook ‘ ̣ ’ to mark nasal vowels in Nakoda.

²⁴ In Lower Chinook there is a prefix *g-* or *k-* which indicates that the preceding pronominal prefix is the subject, as in *a-t-k-L-ō'-cg-am* ‘they (*t-*) took it’ (Boas 1911: 581, cf. ‘I took it’ as given in §7). This prefix is limited only to the third singular neutral and the third dual and plural, and what we have here is agglutinative case-marking, which may be a remnant of a direct/inverse system.

In a number of studies, attempts have also been made to interpret ‘slot and case’ systems in the light of person hierarchies and direct/inverse systems. For example, Jelinek & Demers (1983) set up a hierarchy [1 and 2 > 3 > N] for Lummi (a Coast Salish language spoken in northwestern Washington), on the basis of a number of subject-object (agent-patient) restrictions in this language. For example, while we can express the ‘I-him’ and ‘you-him’ relations through straightforward transitive (active) forms (as in *xč̣i-t-∅-sn* ‘I [-sn] know him [-∅]’ and *xč̣i-t-∅-sx^w* ‘you [-sx^w] know him’), the ‘he-me’ and ‘he-you’ relations can only be expressed through passive forms, as in *xč̣i-t-ŋ-sn* ‘I am known (by him)’ and *xč̣i-t-ŋ-sx^w* ‘you are known (by him)’. This is consistent with the fact that hierarchy rules “require that the element of highest rank in the agent hierarchy in a sentence be the subject of that sentence” (p. 169).²⁵ The authors also discuss whether the Lummi passive is in fact a passive or rather an inverse construction, but they reject this latter alternative on p. 183. For details of hierarchies and the passive/inverse problem in Lummi (and in rather closely related Squamish, Halkomelem and Lushootseed) I refer the interested reader to Jelinek & Demers’s discussion.

With regard to Squamish, Jacobs (1994) claims that the passive in that language is functionally an inverse. The articles by Jelinek & Demers, and by Jacobs, are also briefly mentioned in Mithun (1999: 228), as part of a larger discussion on hierarchies and the passive/inverse problem.²⁶

Whichever theoretical approach one chooses, the fact remains that Native American languages show a wondrous variety in marking the universal distinction between the pronominal subjects and objects of an action. It is the

²⁵ The exclusion of ‘he-me/you’ through an active (non-passive) form also meshes with the fact that we have the same object suffix (*-oŋəs*) for both first and second singular object (see fn. 12). Thus, a form like **xč̣i-t-oŋəs-s* (with *-s* 3SG.S) would be ambiguous between ‘he knows me’ and ‘he knows you’. Jelinek & Demers also note (on p. 172) that the fact that first and second singular have the same object form is consistent with their equivalence on the hierarchy scale.

My transcriptions of the Lummi forms deviate from Jelinek & Demers only in that I add *-∅* for the third (singular) object, which they leave unmarked. Also, I translate the third object as ‘him’ where they have ‘it’. (Like Lillooet, Lummi makes no pronominal gender distinctions.)

²⁶ A classic case of hierarchies is that involving *yi-* and *bi-*verbs in (Athabaskan) Navaho, as discussed in, for example, Hale (1976: 45). However, hierarchies and the passive/inverse problem, and the related issue of ergativity, tie in with the problem of how to define ‘subject’ and ‘object’, and all of this is part of a hornet’s nest that we decided to stay away from in this article (as per the end of §1).

author's hope that this article has brought up a few aspects of this variety that the reader may have hitherto been unfamiliar with.

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