

## Juggling arguments: VSVO and other word orders in Hul’q’umi’num’ Salish SVCs

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**Abstract.** This paper investigates the word order of serial-verb constructions in Hul’q’umi’num’ Salish. Hul’q’umi’num’ SVCs are monoclausal constructions consisting of two(+) verbs that can function as independent lexical verbs, have matching aspect, share one(+) argument, and are not connected by any linking element. Two-verb SVCs may consist of transitive and intransitive verbs. The first question concerns subject and object NP placement. For constructions with two overt NPs, an alternating VSVO pattern is both preferred in elicitation, and the only order occurring in the corpus. Only shared arguments may intervene between the verb components. Hul’q’umi’num’ SVCs exhibit flexible word order in elicitation, but certain grammatical word orders generate ambiguity. Various pragmatic strategies work together to prevent or rescue ambiguous constructions. SVCs are an understudied feature of Central Salish languages; thus investigation of this topic broadens the scope of the current literature.

**Keywords.** Halkomelem; Salish; serial verb constructions (SVC); word order; corpus

**1. Introduction.** This paper investigates the word order of serial-verb constructions (SVCs) in Hul’q’umi’num’ the Island dialect of Halkomelem Salish (ISO 639-3 hur). Hul’q’umi’num’ does not neatly fit the typological profile of most serializing languages. Verb serialization tends to occur in analytic languages, and Hul’q’umi’num’ exhibits a more synthetic profile (Kiyosawa & Gerdts 2010a: 1). Also, serializing languages tend to be verb-final or verb-medial (Aikhenvald 2018: 188), while Hul’q’umi’num’ is predicate-initial, the word order being VSO/VOS (Gerdts 1988). Hul’q’umi’num’ two-verb SVCs may consist of two intransitive verbs (1), an intransitive verb and a transitive verb (2), or two transitive verbs (3).<sup>2</sup>

(1) ni’ huye’ ’imush tthu swiw’lus.

niʔ            həyeʔ    ʔiməš    tʰə    swiwʌs  
DIST.AUX    leave    walk    DT    boy  
‘The boy walked away (leave + walk).’

(RP 04.10.19)

(2) nem’ tsun t’itsum kwunut tthunu shun’tsu.

nem        cən        ʔicəm    kʷən-ət    tʰənə        šəncə  
go.AUX    1SG.SUB    swim    take-TR    DT.POS    catch  
‘I’ll swim and get my catch.’

(DL 20.04.22)

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<sup>2</sup> Examples consist of four lines: the first represents the Hul’q’umi’num’ community’s orthography, which is included to ensure accessibility; the second is APA, which is used most often in Salishan linguistics; symbol correspondences: <tl’> /ʎ/ = glottalized lateral affricate, <ts> /c/ = ts, <ch> /č/ = tʃ; <sh> /š/ = /ʃ/, <x> ǰ = χ.

- (3) ni' **thuytus** tthu swiw'lus **yuq'utus** tthu shuptun.  
 ni?            **θəy-t-əs**            t<sup>θə</sup>    swiwləs    **yəq'ət-əs**            t<sup>θə</sup>    šəptən  
 DIST.AUX    fix-TR-3SUB    DT    boy            rub-TR-3SUB    DT    knife  
 'The boy fixed, sharpened the knife.'  
(DL 07.10.22)

Before unpacking the behavior of multi-verb clauses, I will give some background on single verb clauses in Hul'q'umi'num'.

1.1. SINGLE VERB CLAUSES. An important research question to be addressed here concerns argument placement: where are subject and object NPs permitted to occur in SVCs? The discussion of this question will begin with the patterns found in clauses with a single verb. Salish clauses minimally consist of a predicate, which may be verbal (4), nominal, or adjectival (see Gerdts & Schneider in press).

- (4) ni' tsun **qw'aqwut** tthu spe'uth.  
 ni?            cən            q<sup>w</sup>aq<sup>w</sup>-ət    t<sup>θə</sup>    speʔəθ  
 DIST.AUX    1SG.SUB    club-TR    DT    bear  
 'I clubbed the bear.'  
(Gerdts 2010a: 575)

The discussion of argument placement will be grounded in previous work; three relevant principles emerge from existing literature. First, Salish languages disprefer having two contiguous NPs (Gerdts & Hukari 2008; Hukari 1976; Kuipers 1967: 172; Van Eijk 1997: 227). Second, ongoing topics in discourse tend to be zero (Beck 2000; Davis 1994; Gerdts & Hukari 2008; Kroeber 1995). In addition to being left out, topics in Salish languages are usually the subject (Kinkade 1990; Davis 1994; Beck 2000). Finally, many of these languages interpret a single postverbal NP as the object (i.e., the 'ONI condition' following Gerdts 1988). In order for a single postverbal NP to be interpreted as the subject, it must be marked by a reference-tracking determiner (Gerdts & Hukari 2004):

- (5) a. ni' lemutus tthu swuy'qe'.  
 ni?            lem-ət-əs            t<sup>θə</sup>            swəy'qe?  
 DIST.AUX    look-TR-3SUB    DT            man  
 'S/he/it/they saw the man.' // \*'The man saw her/him/it/them.'
- b. ni' lemutus tthuw'nilh swuy'qe'.  
 ni?            lem-ət-əs            t<sup>θə</sup>**w'nil**            swəy'qe?  
 DIST.AUX    look-TR-3SUB    PRO.DT    man  
 'The man saw her/him/it/them.'  
(DG p.c.)

Gerdts & Hukari (2008: 3) found the following frequencies for single-verb clauses with at least one overt NP argument: VO 53%, V 35%, VSO/VOS 9%, VS 4%).<sup>3</sup> In light of these facts, multi-verb clauses should exhibit a relative high frequency of VVO and VV and a low frequency of VVSO/VVOS and VVS.

1.2. SERIAL VERB CONSTRUCTIONS. While Hul'q'umi'num' exhibits several types of multi-verb constructions (cf. Schneider 2021), serial verbs are the focus of this paper. Hul'q'umi'num' SVCs are monoclausal constructions consisting of two or more verbs that can function as independent lexical verbs, share at least one argument, have matching aspect, and are not

<sup>3</sup> This data is restricted to transitive clauses in which both the subject and the object are third person (Gerdts & Hukari 2008: 2).

connected by any linking element (cf. Aikhenvald 2018; Haspelmath 2016; Lovestrund 2018; Schneider 2021).<sup>4</sup> This section will outline two types of motion SVCs and discuss the sequence of the verbs in order to set the stage for the in-depth discussion of word order.

Motion SVCs most often consist of two intransitive verbs,<sup>5</sup> and they can be divided into two types: *directional* and *associated* motion (cf. Lovestrund & Ross 2021). Directional SVCs consist of two motion verbs, where at least one contributes path information. There are three subtypes of directional SVCs in Hul’q’umi’num’: MANNER + PATH (6), PATH + PATH (7), and *huye*’ (PATH) + MANNER/PATH (8).

- (6) ni’ tsun **’ushul t’akw’**.  
 niʔ            cən            ʔəʃəl            ʔakʷ  
 DIST.AUX    1SG.SUB    paddle        go.home  
 ‘I paddled home.’ (DL 26.04.22)
- (7) nem’ tsun **hwu’alum’ tl’pestun**.  
 nem            cən            xʷəʔaləm            ʔ-pestən  
 go.AUX    1SG.SUB    return        VBL-United.States  
 ‘I’m going back to the United States.’ (DL 06.12.21)
- (8) ’i tsun **huye’ ’imush**.  
 ʔi            cən            həyeʔ            ʔiməʃ  
 PROX.AUX    1SG.SUB    leave        walk  
 ‘I’m going for a walk.’ (RP 13.09.19)

In the first subtype, one of the verbs, most often the first verb (V<sub>1</sub>), indicates the manner of motion, and the other, most often V<sub>2</sub>, indicates the direction. In the second subtype, both verbs indicate direction; each verb may encode the starting point, general trajectory, or endpoint. The ordering of the verb components is flexible with a tendency towards a logical ordering such as iconicity or general to specific. The third subtype involves the Hul’q’umi’num’ verb *huye*’ ‘leave’ and another motion verb (either manner or direction). The verb *huye*’ is the most frequently serialized verb in the text corpus, and it also exhibits a strong preference for occurring as the first verb component when serialized. This is in contrast to the MANNER + PATH type, where the directional component tends to occur second, and the PATH + PATH type where the order is flexible and more dependent on semantics and discourse (see Schneider 2022a).

Associated motion is defined as a verbal grammatical category whose function is to associate different kinds of translational motion to a verb event (Guillaume & Koch 2021: 3). There are three subtypes of associated motion SVCs in Hul’q’umi’num’: concurrent motion (9) and (10), purposive motion (11), and subsequent motion (12) (cf. Lovestrund & Ross 2021).

<sup>4</sup> The only other work dedicated to SVCs in another Salish language is Montler’s (2008) work on Klallam (ISO 639-3: clm) motion verbs. Serial verbs in Halkomelem are also mentioned in passing by Gerdts (2010b), Gerdts and Hukari (2011), and Kiyosawa and Gerdts (2010b).

<sup>5</sup> Two-verb SVCs are by far the most common, but constructions with three to five verbs do occur. For this paper, as well as previous studies, counts have been largely restricted to two-verb constructions. Examples of constructions with more than two verbs are included when they offer additional insight into the analysis.

(9) sus 'uw' nem' tst 'uw' **sisuxwum' lhilhuts'ut.**  
 səs ʔəw̃ nem ct ʔəw̃ **sisəx̃wəm** **liləc-ət**  
 N.AUX.3POS CN go.AUX 2PL.SUB CN wade<IPFV> cut-TR<IPFV>  
 'And we would wade into the water and cut (the bulrushes).' (ET 28247)

(10) nem' **huya'stum tl'uyq'ustum** sus 'uw' thuhw.  
 nem **həyaʔ-st-əm** **ʔəyq-əst-əm** səs ʔəw̃ θəx<sup>w</sup>  
 go.AUX leave-CS-PAS pin.down-CS-PAS N.AUX.3POS CN disappear  
 'He (the man) was taken away, pinned down, and he disappeared.' (WSa 410)

Imperfective aspect on both verb components indicates concurrent actions (9). In addition, certain discourse contexts can set the stage for serialized perfective verbs to have a simultaneous reading, such as (10). While concurrent motion SVCs describe simultaneous events, the other two subtypes describe sequential events. The first sequential associated motion SVC is *purposive motion* where a motion precedes an intended non-motion event, such as (11). The second sequential associated motion SVC is *subsequent motion*, where the motion event happens after the non-motion event, such as (12).

(11) nem' tsun **t'itsum kwunut** tthunu shun'tsu.  
 nem cən **ʔicəm** **kʷən-ət** t<sup>0</sup>ənə ʂəncə  
 go.AUX 1SG.SUB swim take-TR DT.POS catch  
 'I'll swim to get my catch.' (DL 20.04.22)

(12) ni' tsun **lhumts't** tthu sth'oom **huye'stuhw.**  
 niʔ cən **ləmc-t** t<sup>0</sup>ə st<sup>0</sup>u:m **həyeʔ-stəx<sup>w</sup>**  
 AUX 1SG.SUB pick-TR DT berry leave-CS  
 'I picked the berries and took them away.' (DL 23.05.22)

Subsequent motion is the least common type of motion SVC in Hul'q'umi'num' (Schneider 2022b) and in the world's languages (Lovestrand & Ross 2021). The arguments are shared in this type of *cumulative subject* SVC (Aikhenvald 2006: 18).<sup>6</sup> The resulting meaning is that 'X did V to Y and then X took Y (somewhere)', and it entails that subject and object moved together in some direction after the non-motion event took place.

To sum up, in directional motion SVCs, the order of the verbs is typically determined either by the construction (e.g., MANNER + PATH), or by the semantics and discourse (e.g., PATH + PATH). Concurrent associated motion SVCs have flexible verb order while sequential associated SVCs most often have temporally iconic verb order. Directional motion SVCs largely consist of two intransitive motion verbs while associated motion SVCs may include a transitive verb component. The next section will zoom out to look at patterns of word order in two-verb SVCs. Instead of being organized in terms of the verb semantics, they are categorized in terms of verb transitivity. Thus, verb order is no longer the focus but instead the analysis will focus on how the arguments are distributed.

**2. Corpus and elicitation informed syntax.** The most frequently occurring type of SVC in the text corpus is an intransitive-intransitive (INT-INT) construction. This includes the vast majority

<sup>6</sup> A cumulative subject is when "the subject and object of VP<sub>1</sub> together carry out the state of affairs in VP<sub>2</sub>." (Ameka 2006: 130).

of the directional motion constructions discussed previously. For INT-INT SVCs (Table 1) VV is by far the most common order, with an alternating VSV pattern being the next most common.

| order | attested | count |       |
|-------|----------|-------|-------|
| VV    | ✓        | 173   | 73%   |
| VSV   | ✓        | 40    | 16.9% |
| VVS   | ✓        | 24    | 10.1% |
| Total |          | 237   | 100%  |

Table 1. Intransitive-Intransitive word order combinations

It is unsurprising that VV is by far the most common type of construction given the tendency of the language to zero out topics, which are usually subjects, and given that the language makes use of second-position clitics for first and second person subjects, rather than NPs. The higher frequency of VSV over VVS shown in Table 1. indicates that there is a preference for an alternating V NP V pattern (Gerds & Schneider 2021). The following sections will now move to transitive constructions.

2.1. TRANSITIVE-TRANSITIVE. Table 2 contains eleven possible word order combinations for SVCs with two transitive verb components (TR-TR). On the left are orders with one or more non-overt NPs, while orders with two overt NP arguments are on the right.

| order  | DTS | PDS | count | order | DT | PDS | count |
|--------|-----|-----|-------|-------|----|-----|-------|
| VV     | --  | --  | 38    | VSVO  | ✓  | ✓   | 3     |
| VVO    | ✓   | --  | 10    | VVOS  | ✓  | ✓   | 0     |
| VOV    | ✓   | --  | 8     | VSOV  | ✓  | ✓   | 0     |
| VSV    | *   | ✓   | 2     | VOVS  | #  | ✓   | 0     |
| VVS    | *   | ✓   | 0     | VVSO  | #  | ✓   | 0     |
|        |     |     |       | VOSV  | #  | ✓   | 0     |
| Total: |     |     |       |       |    |     | 61    |

Table 2. Transitive-Transitive word order combinations<sup>7</sup>

In TR-TR SVCs, subject and object arguments are shared by the verb components. There are six possible word orders for TR-TR SVCs with two overt NP arguments. The examples below present the unambiguous word orders: VSVO (13), VVOS (14), VSOV (15).

- (13) ni' thuytus tthu swiw'lus yuq'utus tthu shuptun. (VSVO)  
 ni?            θəy-t-əs            t<sup>θ</sup>ə    swiwləs            yəq'ət-əs            t<sup>θ</sup>ə    šəptən  
 DIST.AUX    fix-TR-3SUB    DT    boy            rub-TR-3SUB    DT    knife  
 'The boy fixed, sharpened the knife.' (DL 07.10.22)
- (14) ni' thuytus yuq'utus tthu shuptun tthu swiw'lus. (VVOS)  
 ni?            θəy-t-əs            yəq'ət-əs            t<sup>θ</sup>ə    šəptən            t<sup>θ</sup>ə    swiwləs  
 DIST.AUX    fix-TR-3SUB    rub-TR-3SUB    DT    knife            DT    boy  
 'The boy fixed, sharpened the knife.' (DL 20.04.22)

<sup>7</sup> Table key: DTS = determiner marked subject, PDS = pro-determiner marking subject, ✓ = grammatically and semantically unambiguous, # = subject/object unclear, \* = ungrammatical, -- = not applicable.

- (15) ni' thuytus tthu swiw'lus tthu shuptun yuq'utus. (VSOV)  
 ni?            θəy-t-əs            tʰə    swiwləs    tʰə    šəptən    yəq-ət-əs  
 DIST.AUX    fix-TR-3SUB    DT    boy            DT    knife        rub-TR-3SUB  
 'The boy fixed the knife, sharpens it.' (DL 07.10.22)

While all three of these orders are grammatical and semantically unambiguous, the alternating pattern VSVO in (13) is the only corpus-attested pattern.

The remaining three word orders, VVSO (16), VOVS (17), VOSV (18), tend to elicit ambiguous interpretations and require explicit marking of the subject with the reference-tracking pro-determiner *tthuw'nilh* in order to be easily understood.

- (16) ni' thuytus yuq'utus #**tthu/tthuw'nilh** swiw'lus tthu shuptun. (VVSO)  
 ni?            θəy-t-əs            yəq-ət-əs            #tʰə/tʰəw'nil    swiwləs    tʰə    šəptən  
 DIST.AUX    fix-TR-3SUB    rub-TR-3SUB    DT/PRO.DT    boy        DT    knife  
 'The boy fixed, sharpened the knife.' (DL 20.04.22)
- (17) ni' thuytus tthu shuptun yuq'utus #**tthu/tthuw'nilh** swiw'lus. (VOVS)  
 ni?            θəy-t-əs            tʰə    šəptən    yəq-ət-əs            #tʰə/tʰəw'nil    swiwləs  
 DIST.AUX    fix-TR-3SUB    DT    knife        rub-TR-3SUB    DT/PRO.DT    boy  
 'The boy fixed, sharpened the knife.' (DL 20.04.22)
- (18) ni' thuytus tthu shuptun #**tthu/tthuw'nilh** swiw'lus yuq'utus. (VOSV)  
 ni?            θəy-t-əs            tʰə    šəptən    #tʰə/tʰəw'nil    swiwləs    yəq-ət-əs  
 DIST.AUX    fix-TR-3SUB    DT    knife        DT/PRO.DT    boy        rub-TR-3SUB  
 'The boy fixed, sharpened the knife.' (DL 20.04.22)

The constructions in (16)–(18) proved ambiguous without explicit subject marking with a pro-determiner *tthuw'nilh*; the consultant indicated that in the *tthu* examples it was unclear if it was 'the boy' who was being sharpened or 'the knife'. Interestingly, the presence of an inanimate object did not seem to improve the chances of the construction being understood correctly.

The alternating VSVO order is both the only construction that occurs in the text corpus and was also preferred by the consultant. The non-occurrence of the other patterns in texts can be explained by an avoidance of ambiguous orders (VVSO, VOVS, VOSV) and the established discourse features of Salish. For example, the fact that in single-verb clauses, two contiguous NPs is dispreferred at least partially explains absence of VVSO/VVOS and VOSV/VSOV in texts. In addition, the tendencies for topics to be subjects, and ongoing topics to be zero likely explains why VOVS does not occur, while VOV, such as (19), is attested and unambiguous.

- (19) ni' thuytus tthu shuptun yuq'utus. (VOV)  
 ni?            θəy-t-əs            tʰə    šəptən    yəq-ət-əs  
 DIST.AUX    fix-TR-3SUB    DT    knife        rub-TR-3SUB  
 'S/he fixed, sharpened the knife.' (DL 20.04.22)

This section discussed constructions where both verb components are transitive and both subject and object are shared. Either argument may intervene between verb components; this can be either the shared subject (most common) or the shared object (when the subject is zero). The next sections will address constructions with an intransitive and a transitive verb component.

2.2. INTRANSITIVE-TRANSITIVE. Mixed-transitivity constructions involve one shared argument and one non-shared argument. In INT-TR constructions (Table 3), the subject is shared, and the transitive component functions to add an object into the argument structure.

| order  | DTS | PDS | count | order | DTS | PDS | count |
|--------|-----|-----|-------|-------|-----|-----|-------|
| VV     | --  | --  | 17    | VSVO  | ✓   | ✓   | 12    |
| VVO    | ✓   | --  | 22    | VVOS  | #   | ✓   | 0     |
| VOV    | *   | --  | --    | VVSO  | #   | ✓   | 0     |
| VSV    | *   | ✓   | 0     | VOVS  | *   | *   | --    |
| VVS    | *   | ✓   | 0     | VOSV  | *   | *   | --    |
|        |     |     |       | VSOV  | *   | *   | --    |
| Total: |     |     | 51    |       |     |     |       |

Table 3. Intransitive-Transitive word order combinations

These constructions are limited to VSVO, VVOS, and VVSO as possible orders with overt NP arguments because the object cannot precede the transitive verb, as demonstrated by (20).

- (20) a. ni' huye' lemutus tthu shuptun. (VVO)  
 ni? həye? lem-ət-əs t<sup>ə</sup> šəptən  
 DIST.AUX leave look-TR-3SUB DT knife  
 'S/he left to go look at the knife.'
- b. \*ni' huye' tthu shuptun lemutus (tthuw'nilh swiw'lus). (\*VOV[S])  
 \*ni? həye? t<sup>ə</sup> šəptən lem-ət-əs (t<sup>ə</sup>əw<sup>ə</sup>nił swiw<sup>ə</sup>ləs)  
 DIST.AUX leave DT knife look-TR-3SUB PRO.DT boy  
 (DL 25.10.22)

Like TR-TR, VSVO is again the only corpus-attested pattern with two overt NPs.

- (21) ni' huye' tthu swiw'lus lemutus tthu sqwumey. (VSVO)  
 ni? həye? t<sup>ə</sup> swiw<sup>ə</sup>ləs lem-ət-əs t<sup>ə</sup> sq<sup>wə</sup>mey  
 DIST.AUX leave DT boy see-TR-3SUB DT dog  
 'The boy left to look at the dog.' (DL 25.10.22)

Unlike TR-TR, in INT-TR both VVOS and VVSO were ambiguous without the use of a pro-determiner to mark the subject.

- (22) ni' huye' lemutus #tthu/tthuw'nilh sqwumey tthu swiw'lus. (VVOS)  
 ni? həye? lem-ət-əs t<sup>ə</sup> sq<sup>wə</sup>mey #t<sup>ə</sup>ə/ t<sup>ə</sup>əw<sup>ə</sup>nił swiw<sup>ə</sup>ləs  
 DIST.AUX leave see-TR-3SUB DT dog DT/ PRO.DT boy  
 'The boy left to look at the dog.' (DL 25.10.22)
- (23) ni' huye' lemutus tthu swiw'lus #tthu/tthuw'nilh shuptun. (VVSO)  
 ni? həye? lem-ət-əs #t<sup>ə</sup>ə/ t<sup>ə</sup>əw<sup>ə</sup>nił swiw<sup>ə</sup>ləs t<sup>ə</sup> šəptən  
 DIST.AUX leave see-TR-3SUB DT/ PRO.DT boy DT knife  
 'The boy left to go look at the knife.' (DL 20.04.22)

Without any context, the examples with *tthu* are unclear as to who is doing the looking, and as before, the presence of *tthuw'nilh* makes it clear that it is 'the boy'. Similarly to the previous set of examples, the presence of an inanimate object such as 'knife' did not seem to improve the chances of the construction being understood correctly.

In sum, if V<sub>1</sub> is intransitive only the shared subject may occur between the verbs; the object of V<sub>2</sub> may not intervene. The next section addresses when V<sub>1</sub> is transitive and V<sub>2</sub> is intransitive.

2.3. TRANSITIVE-INTRANSITIVE. The final type are those that consist of a transitive verb followed by an intransitive one; these constructions are the least common SVC type (>2%). Table 4 below shows the corpus counts; the subject argument is never expressed as an overt NP, and thus the pro-determiner distinction is irrelevant for this construction.

| order | count | order  | count |
|-------|-------|--------|-------|
| VV    | 5     | VSVO   | --    |
| VVO   | --    | VOVS   | --    |
| VOV   | 2     | VVSO   | --    |
| VVS   | --    | VVOS   | --    |
| VSV   | --    | VOSV   | --    |
|       |       | VSOV   | --    |
|       |       | Total: | 7     |

Table 4. Transitive-Intransitive word order combinations

Like the previous constructions, the argument between the verbs is shared; in this case, the shared argument is the object of V<sub>1</sub> and the subject of V<sub>2</sub> (marked [O<sub>1</sub>/S<sub>2</sub>]), demonstrated in (24). In (a), the object NP (underlined) occurs in the preceding clause and the SVC word order is VV. In (b), the object occurs between the two verbs forming VOV.

- (24) a. sis 'uw' tssetus tthu sta'luss, 'uw' 'umutus \_ **nem**' 'u tthu pqwutsun'.
- sis                    ʔəw̃    cse-t-əs                    t<sup>θ</sup>ə    staləs-s                    ʔəw̃  
 N.AUX.3POS    CN    tell-TR-3SUB    DT    spouse-3POS    CN
- ʔəm-ət-əs**                    **nem**                    ʔə                    t<sup>θ</sup>ə                    pq<sup>w</sup>əcəñ  
 sit-TR-3SUB                    go.AUX    OBL    DT                    log
- ‘She told her husband to go sit (himself) down on the log.’
- b. sis 'uw' tssetus \_, 'uw' 'umutus tthu sta'luss **nem**' 'u tthu pqwutsun'.
- sis                    ʔəw̃    cse-t-əs                    ʔəw̃  
 N.AUX.3POS    CN    tell-TR-3SUB    CN
- ʔəm-ət-əs**                    t<sup>θ</sup>ə    staləs-s                    **nem**                    ʔə                    t<sup>θ</sup>ə                    pq<sup>w</sup>əcəñ  
 sit-TR-3SUB    DT    spouse-3POS    go.AUX    OBL    DT                    log
- ‘She told him, her husband, to go sit (himself) on the log.’ (DL 11.11.22)

The verbs in the first and second clauses both have ‘the husband’ as the object. Because of the proximity, the object can be explicit in one and left out in the other.

Interestingly, V[O<sub>1</sub>/S<sub>2</sub>]V appears to be the only word order that allows any overt NPs:

- (25) a. ni' lumnuhwus tthu shuyulhs 'umut.
- niʔ                    ləm-nəx<sup>w</sup>-əs                    t<sup>θ</sup>ə    šəyəl-s                    ʔəmət  
 DIST.AUX    see-LCTR-3SUB    DT    elder.sibling-3POS    sit.down
- ‘S/he saw her/his elder sibling sit down.’
- b. \*ni' lumnuhwus 'umut tthu shuyulhs.
- \*niʔ                    ləm-nəx<sup>w</sup>-əs                    t<sup>θ</sup>ə    šəyəl-s                    ʔəmət  
 DIST.AUX    see-LCTR-3SUB    DT    elder.sibling-3POS    sit.down (DL 24.11.22)



follows one of two different patterns: (i) a repeated object with different verbs, and (ii) a repeated verb with different objects, or some combination of the two patterns. Example (29) is from the corpus and demonstrates two different verbs with identical objects:

- (29) nuts'a' skweyul 'i' ne.e.em' **suwq'tus** kwu smuyuth, **t'uhwstuhwus** kwu smuyuth.  
 nəcaʔ sk<sup>w</sup>eyəl ʔiʔ nem **səwq̣-t-əs** k<sup>wə</sup> sməyəθ  
 one day CN AUX.go<RL> search-TR-3SUB DT deer  
**t̚ax<sup>w</sup>-st̚ax<sup>w</sup>-əs** k<sup>wə</sup> sməyəθ  
 go.downhill-CS-3SUB DT deer  
 'One day they went deer hunting and brought the deer down from the mountain.'  
 (WS 20964)

Here the two verbs *suw'q't* 'search for it' and *t'uhwstuhw* 'bring it downhill' represent two distinct events happening to the same object. DL said that this sentence did not make sense without the comma (28.12.22). When I attempted to merge these two events into one event of going out and getting deer, it was rejected:

- (30) \*ni' nem' **suw'q'tus** kwu smuyuth **t'uhwstuhwus**.  
 \*niʔ nem **səwq̣-t-əs** k<sup>wə</sup> sməyəθ **t̚ax<sup>w</sup>-st̚ax<sup>w</sup>-əs**  
 DIST.AUX go.DIR search-TR-3SUB DT deer go.downhill-CS-3SUB  
*Intended:* 'He went deer hunting and brought it down the mountain.' (DL 28.12.22)

The problem with this example is that the verb *suw'q't* 'search for it' does not entail finding the item being searched for. This has to be treated as two distinct events; one can conceptually understand that the subject found what they were looking for during some space in between the events in a sentence like (29), but an SVC cannot be used to describe something like this.

The corpus example in (31) provides another example of how the same object can be repeated across multiple verbs, and there is also repetition of the verb root.

- (31) suw' **kwunutewut** tthu swakwun, **yu 'i'mush** tthu swakwun, suw' **hwu kwun'et-s**  
 tthu w'nilh tthu swakwun.  
 səẉ **k<sup>wən</sup>-ət-ewət** t<sup>θə</sup> swak<sup>wən</sup> **yə=ʔiməš** t<sup>θə</sup> swak<sup>wən</sup>  
 N.CN take-TR-3SUB DT loon DYN=walk<IPFV> DT loon  
 səẉ **x<sup>wə</sup>=k<sup>wən</sup>et-s** t<sup>θə</sup>ẉnil t<sup>θə</sup> swak<sup>wən</sup>  
 N.CN INCH=take-3POS<DUR> PRO.DT DT loon  
 'And then they captured a loon, the loon was walking by, and they captured it.'  
 (MJJ 1962: line 15)

In this example there are three verbs, the features of which have been laid out in Table 5 below.

| Verb   | Valence      | Argument(s)                              | Aspect       |
|--|--------------|--|--------------|
| k <sup>w</sup> ən-ət-ewət<br>take-TR-3PAS                        | Passive      | Subject: loon (overt NP)                 | Perfective   |
| yə=ʔiməš<br>DYN=walk<IPFV>                                       | Intransitive | Subject: loon (overt NP)                 | Imperfective |
| x <sup>w</sup> ə=k <sup>w</sup> ənət-s<br>INCH=take.TR-3POS<DUR> | Transitive   | Subject: 3SUB<br>Object: loon (overt NP) | Durative     |

Table 5. Repetition linking clauses

Each verb in this example has its own arguments; all three verbs share the referent ‘the loon’ which is expressed each time as an overt NP. Each verb also has a different aspect; the first verb is perfective, the second is imperfective, and the third is durative. Serialized verbs are expected to match in terms of clausal categories such as tense, aspect, mood, and modality (Aikhenvald 2018:1). Thus, the shift in aspect, alongside repeated overt NP marking of ‘the loon’, is evidence that these should be treated as multiple clauses, rather than a single one.

The next set of examples in (32) and (33) represent identical verbs with different objects.

- (32) tsusutus ‘uw’ ne’mus q’putum kw’ syalh... **thuytus** tthu shhw’a’mut, **thuytus** kw’i s’e’tl’q.

cəs-ət-əs      ʔəw      neməs      q̄pətəm      k<sup>w</sup>      syal...      **θəy-t-əs**  
tell-TR-3SUB    CNJ    go.3SUB    gather-TR-PAS    DT    wood    make.ready-TR-3SUB  
t<sup>θ</sup>ə      šx<sup>w</sup>ʔamət      **θəy-t-əs**      k<sup>w</sup>i      sʔeʔλq  
DT    bed    make.ready-TR-3SUB    DT    outside<STA>

‘And he told them to go and gather wood, make their beds, and do things outside.’

(EW 10302)

- (33) ‘uwu sqiq’quq’us tthu hwulmuhw kws **q’ayt-s** kwthu stem s’ulhtuns.

ʔəwə      sqiq̄q̄əq̄-əs      t<sup>θ</sup>ə      x<sup>w</sup>əlməx<sup>w</sup>  
NEG    bound.up-3SUB    DT    First.Nations.people  
k<sup>w</sup>s      **q̄ayt-s**      k<sup>w</sup>θə      stem      sʔəltən-s  
DT.N    kill-3POS    DT    what    food-3POS

‘There was no law to stop the First Nations People from catching all the different kinds of food.’

**q’aytus** kwthu smuyuth, **q’aytus** thu kwewe’uts, **q’aytus** thu stseelhtun.

**q̄ayt-əs**      k<sup>w</sup>θə      sməyəθ      **q̄ayt-əs**      θə      k<sup>w</sup>eweʔəc  
kill-3SUB    DT    deer    kill-3SUB    DT    elk  
**q̄ayt-əs**      θə      sce:ltən  
kill-3SUB    DT    salmon

‘They could kill the deer, kill the elk, kill different kinds of fish.’ (MG 1917-1919)

The examples in (32) and (33) demonstrate the qualities of lists discussed in Gerdts and Gilkison (2018). Their work focuses on NP coordinate structures expressed with and without the connective element ‘i’ ‘and, but, or’, which occurs between NPs, for example:

- (34) *thuyulhtstewut 'u tthu lhew'qum' 'i' tthu se'uq.*  
 ʈəy-əlc-tewət                    ʔə            tʰə            ləwqəm            ʔiʔ            tʰə            seʔəq  
 made-BEN-3SUB.PAS            OBL            DT            mussel            CN            DT            bracken.root  
 ‘They then prepared for them mussels and roots of the bracken fern.’ (MJJ)  
 (Gerds & Gilkison 2018: 5)

The NPs *mussels* and *bracken roots* represent a closed set, and the items conceptually form a coherent unit (Gerds & Gilkison 2018: 5). In contrast, when the connective element is not used, the NPs represent an open list:

- (35) *mukw' stem s'i'lhtun's—smuyuth, kwewe'uts, spe'uth.*  
 məkʷ            stem            sʔiʔlhtən-s            sməyəθ            kʷeweʔəc            speʔəθ  
 all            what            food-3POS            deer            elk            bear  
 ‘They have everything to eat—deer, elk, bear.’ (ST)            (Gerds & Gilkison 2018: 6)

The NPs here represent an open list of exemplars, and the items are conceived of individually (Gerds & Gilkison 2018: 6). Given this, (32) and (33), which have identical verbs with different objects and no linking elements, can also be treated as open lists of exemplars.

**3. Conclusion.** In SVCs, the verb components describe a single event (or very closely related subevents). The following table sums up the findings thus far for the syntactic and discourse factors that influence the why certain word orders with overt NPs do (not) occur in the corpus.

|       | TR-TR |      |        | INT-TR |      |        |
|-------|-------|------|--------|--------|------|--------|
|       | PI    | *2NP | Unamb. | PI     | *2NP | Unamb. |
| VSVO✓ | ✓     | ✓    | ✓      | ✓      | ✓    | ✓      |
| VOVS  | ✓     | ✓    | *      | *      |      |        |
| VVSO  | ✓     | *    | *      | ✓      | *    | *      |
| VVOS  | ✓     | *    | ✓      | ✓      | *    | *      |
| VSOV  | ✓     | *    | ✓      | *      |      |        |
| VOSV  | ✓     | *    | *      | *      |      |        |

Table 6. Transitive word orders with overt NP arguments<sup>8</sup>

VSVO is the only construction with overt NP arguments that does not fail any of the principles. If a construction fails PI (predicate-initial), it is ungrammatical and cannot be rescued. If a construction fails either \*2NP (avoid adjacent NPs) or Unamb. (unambiguous), it is grammatical but unlikely to occur in natural speech. Ambiguous constructions can be rescued by means of a subject marking pro-determiner, but as rescuing an ambiguous construction likely requires additional effort, this does not happen often. Pro-determiners are more often used to rescue transitive constructions that violate the ONI condition (two cases of VSV in Table 2).

V<sub>1</sub> determines the subcategorization for the construction because only an argument shared by both verb components may intervene between them. If V<sub>1</sub> is intransitive (INT-INT and INT-TR) only the shared subject may occur between the verb components. In contrast, if V<sub>1</sub> is transitive (TR-TR and TR-INT), either the shared subject (most common) or the shared object

<sup>8</sup> Table key: ✓ grammatical, does not violate, \* violates principle, \*2NP – violated by two adjacent NPs, PI (predicate initial) – violated when object NP precedes its predicate, Unamb. – violated when agent/patient roles are unclear.



verb components. Hul'q'umi'num' SVCs exhibit remarkably flexible word order in elicitation, but certain grammatically possible word orders generate ambiguity. Various discourse and pragmatic strategies work together to prevent or rescue ambiguous constructions. SVCs are an understudied feature of Central Salish languages and so it is an important area of research in the subfield. The fact that Hul'q'umi'num' is a synthetic, predicate-initial language, and yet exhibits non-contiguous SVCs with an alternating VSVO pattern is unexpected in light of generalizations made by current SVC literature, thus investigation of this topic also broadens the scope of the typology.

ADDITIONAL ABBREVIATIONS. <>: non-concatenative morphology, CN: connective element, CNJ: conjunction, CS: causative, DIR: directional (verb), DT: determiner, DYN: dynamic, INCH: inchoative, INT: intransitive, LCTR: limited control transitive, N: nominalizer, PAS: passive, POS: possessive; PRO.DT: pro-determiner; RL: rhetorical lengthening, ST: stative, SUB: subject, V<sub>1</sub>: first verb in series, V<sub>2</sub>: second verb in series, VBL: verbalizing prefix.

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