## Verbal obviation in Ktunaxa, an agreement analysis Anne Bertrand (UBC) & Rose Underhill (UBC)

<u>Introduction</u>: Ktunaxa obviation is marked on nouns, verbs, and certain adverbials. Past analyses focus on DP obviation, which tracks coreference (Garvin 1951; Dryer 1992, 1998; Underhill 2020); and verbal obviation is typically analyzed as agreement with an obviative subject, accounting for contrasts as the one shown in (1).

(1) a.  $\mathcal{C}$ an<sub>prox</sub> wax-i b. [Ma-?is  $\mathcal{C}$ an]<sub>obv</sub> wa-s-i  $\mathcal{C}$ an arrive-IND mother-3POS  $\mathcal{C}$ an arrive-OBV-IND ' $\mathcal{C}$ an is here.'

<u>Problem</u>: Examples where the verb is marked for obviation in the absence of a subject (2), or with a proximate subject (3), are inconsistent with an agreement analysis.

(2) a. Wa-łukukut-ni b. Wa-łukukut-s-i come-rain-IND come-rain-OBV-IND 'It's raining.'

(3) a. Ni¢tahał<sub>prox</sub> wu·kat-i na?uti-s b. Ni¢tahał<sub>prox</sub> wu·kat-s-i na?uti-s boy see-IND girl-OBV boy see-OBV-IND girl-OBV 'The boy saw the girl.' 'The boy saw the girl.' (in past, or a story)

<u>Analysis</u>: Following Bertrand (2019), we argue that verbal obviation in (2b, 3b) tracks disjoint reference between topic situations (different time, location, or participants), rather than subject agreement. However, this analysis predicts that any context where a matrix verb and a subordinate verb belong to disjoint situations, the subordinate verb will be marked as obviative. This prediction is not supported by the data, as shown in (4) where the matrix and subordinate clause denote situations disjoint in time.

(4) Małi qaki?-ni k wukqa xa?łcin-s wałkwa-s Małi say-IND COMP find dog-OBV yesterday-OBV "Mary said that she found a dog yesterday."

In addition, as shown in (5), some sentences where the verb is marked for obviation are ambiguous: if verbal obviation on the subordinate verb is interpreted as agreement, it yields an interpretation where the obviative DP is the subject. If verbal obviation is interpreted as signaling topic-situation disjunction, the subject of the subordinate verb is the proximate DP. In that case, the verb and its subject do not match in obviation.

- - (i) "John's mother; said that she; washed herself;." (disjoint situation or OBV SBJ)
  - (ii) "John's<sub>i</sub> mother said that he<sub>i</sub> washed himself<sub>i</sub>." (disjoint situation only)

<u>Proposal</u>: Based on distributional evidence, we show that verbal obviation is licensed in Infl. We argue that it is always the result of an agreement relation with either a subject in  $\nu$ P or with a situation pronoun in Infl. Mismatches in obviation between a verb and an overt subject arise when the subject has moved to the left-periphery of the clause. We hypothesize that all instances of mismatch (cf. (5ii)) involve the movement of a subject outside of InflP/ $\nu$ P. As in antiagreement patterns (Baier, 2018 and references therein), subject agreement is disrupted. In that case, Infl agrees with the situation pronoun in InflP. Verbal obviation thus obeys the following hierarchy: InflP/ $\nu$ P-internal DP subject > situation pronoun > InflP external DP subject. This hierarchy accounts for the greater frequency of obviation agreement with a subject.

## **Bibliography**

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So, I'm still not very certain of where the situation pronoun should be exactly, but we could imagine something like this:

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IP-internal subject, I agrees with subject:
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[CP [IP [XP situation] [IP [DP subject] [I -s/0] [vP [DP t] [vP ...]]]]]
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IP-external subject, I agrees with situation:

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[CP [DP subject] [IP [XP situation] [IP [DP t] [I -s/0] [vP [DP t] [vP ...]]]]]
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For now, let's set aside the question of why extraction would prevent I from agreeing with the subject. When the subject is an overt DP in a non-peripheral position, I should always agree with the subject. I agree that the linear order of DPs doesn't necessarily tell us much in Ktunaxa, but let's assume for the sake of argument that a subject following V is internal to IP. This hypothesis would predict the following:

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Hanuti xa?ł¢ins na?uti(*s) same or different situation
Hanutsi xa?ł¢ins na?uti*(s) same or different situation
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When the subject is an overt DP in a peripheral position, I should agree with the situation:

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Na?uti ma hanut(s)i xa?ł¢ins situation marked on V
Na?utis ma hanut(s)i xa?ł¢ins situation marked on V
```

When the subject is an overt DP in a peripheral position relative to its embedded clause, I agrees with the situation, but because the situation must be different from the matrix situation, it looks like subject agreement:

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*Małi qaki?ni Semos k wiłqa situation marked on V, cannot be same situation
Małi qaki?ni Semos k wiłqaps situation marked on V, cannot be same situation
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This predicts obligatory mismatch in cases like the following (needs testing):

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Małis qakłapsi Semo k wiłqaps situation marked on V, cannot be same situation *Małis qakłapsi Semo k wiłqa situation marked on V, cannot be same situation
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When the subject is a null pro, the two structures are phonologically ambiguous. This ends up being a problem for the embedding cases—the sentences (interpretations) marked ungrammatical here are predicted by this theory to be well-formed.

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*?ati¢ki?is Mati qakiksi k ?iktuqumik pro pro should = Mati, but this is ungrammatical ?ati¢ki?is Mati qakiksi pro k ?iktuqumik same situation, pro = brother
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?ati¢ki?is Mati qakiksi k ?iktuqunakis pro pro = brother
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<sup>\*?</sup>ati¢ki?is Mati qakiksi pro k ?iktuqunakis different situation, pro \neq brother, but it can

So I guess we would need to say more about these cases to get things fully functional, but I feel like we can scrape by without justifying that in the abstract?

The anti-agreement bit is interesting—idk if it's worth digging too much into, but it does seem like it could be an avenue to explore if we end up keeping this analysis. I left a link in the google doc to a nice survey abt anti-agreement by Nico Baier.