

Insubordination in the Languages of the Pacific Northwest ¹

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1. Introduction

(1) Insubordination (Evans 2007, Mithun 2008)

a. Definition:

A matrix, ‘stand-alone’ utterance that exhibits morpho-syntactic properties that are ‘otherwise indicative’ of subordinate clauses.

b. Example (Tlingit)

Tlél	tóo	awunoogú	áwé	tle.
tlél	tóo	a-wu-noog-ú	áwé	tle.
not	inside	3O-PERF-felt-SUB	foc-part	then

He didn't even feel [the sea].

(Lit. 'That he didn't even feel it.')

Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer 1987; p. 112; line 69

c. Another Key Property: No Direct Translation into English

- (i) Speakers translate these structures into English using finite matrix clauses.
- (ii) ‘Direct’ translation into English using a subordinate clause produces a discourse that is not felicitous (in English).

(2) Insubordination in the Americas vs. the Pacific Northwest

a. Insubordination is found in several different regions of the Americas:
Southwest, Arctic, California Coast (Mithun 2008)

b. Insubordination is *not* found throughout the Pacific Northwest:
Thus far, it has only been found to exist in the more Northern languages (Tlingit, Haida, Gitksan, Nisga’a), and in the more Southerly Halkomelem language.

c. Insubordination *may* distinguish the (Northern) Pacific Northwest from immediately surrounding regions
Insubordination is not found in the (Northern Athabaskan) languages which border the (N)PNW languages on the east.

¹ Special thanks are owed to Donna Gerdts, for all her help and instruction regarding the Halkomelem data, for encouraging my work on this subject, and for inviting me to present it at this forum. I also wish to thank Jason Brown and Tyler Peterson for important discussion and data regarding the Tsimshianic languages. The following individuals offered valuable comments upon earlier versions of this work, as well as crucial information regarding individual language families: Emmon Bach (Wakashan), Henry Davis (Salish, Wakashan), Lisa Matthewson (Salish), Keren Rice (Athabaskan).

(3) **Central Empirical Claims of This Talk**

- a. Insubordination exists in some (but not all) languages of the Pacific Northwest
- b. Insubordination does not exist in neighboring languages that fall outside the *sprachbund* (with one exception: Cree)

(4) **Outline of the Talk**

- Further Background: ‘Insubordinate Backgrounding’ vs. ‘Quasi-Clause-Chaining’
 - Insubordinate Backgrounding (and Quasi-Clause-Chaining?) in Tlingit
 - Insubordinate Backgrounding and Quasi-Clause-Chaining in Haida
 - Quasi-Clause-Chaining in Gitksan and Nisga’a
 - Insubordinate Backgrounding and Quasi-Clause-Chaining in Halkomelem
 - Insubordination in Other Languages of the Pacific Northwest, and Neighboring Regions
 - Concluding Questions and Comments
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2. Insubordination: Distinguishing Two Key Sub-Types

(5) **Prior Work on Insubordination**

- a. Evans (2007)
 - (i) Identifies the phenomenon; introduces the term ‘insubordination’
 - (ii) Focuses on cases where (due to its meaning) insubordination appears to result from elision of a (true) matrix verb.
- b. Mithun (2008)
 - (i) Doesn’t use term ‘insubordination’
 - (ii) *Focuses on cases where (due to semantics) it is difficult to apply Evans’s (2007) ‘ellipsis’ analysis.*
 - (iii) *Identifies (roughly) two key (semantic) subtypes within this category.*

(6) **Two Semantic Sub-Types of Insubordination (Mithun 2008)**²

a. Insubordinate Backgrounding

(i) *Definition:*

Insubordination which signals that the sentences are

- *not* advancing the ‘main narrative’, but are instead
- providing ‘background’, ‘incidental information’, ‘explanation’, ‘emotional evaluation’, *etc.*

Side-Note:

In general, the term ‘insubordinate backgrounding’ refers to cases where insubordination signals that the speaker has ‘stepped out of the main narrative’, and is giving ‘parenthetical’/‘amplificatory’ or ‘background/set-up’ information.

(ii) *Example (Navajo; Mithun 2008)*

Boldfaced –**o** is a marker of subordination in Navajo; see Mithun (2008) for more details on the text and its use of insubordination.

Hádaá'léi'ya, hastiin léi' nihaanííyá**o** akwe'é...

One day a man came(-SUB) to visit us here.

...Áko. Ha'at'íish éíya, “Ndií'aah!” shi'doo'niido...

So. "go and get", something or other, I was told(-SUB)...

Akóne' yáh eeshwod ndéé.

I ran off into the hogan.

“Nléi hont'ahdi si'á” dishní ndéé.

"It's sitting way back there in the corner" I was saying.

T'áh éi áadi sidá léi.

Hont'ah was still sitting back there.

t'óo baayániizí**o**

I got so embarrassed(-SUB)

Ch'ináánshwod.

I ran back out.

² While Mithun (2008) identifies the two subtypes named here, she does not herself introduce names for these uses of insubordination. The names given here and used throughout this talk are strictly my own.

b. Quasi-Clause-Chaining

(i) *Definition:*

Insubordination which signals that the sentences

- describe closely related events and/or states
- describe sub-events that together constitute a larger event of primary interest or concern

Side-Note:

In its function and appearance, this use of insubordination is reminiscent of ‘clause chaining’ in the Sino-Tibetan Languages (Thurgood & LaPolla 2003), particularly Tibetan (DeLancey 2003a,b). Thus, I have chosen the name ‘quasi-clause-chaining’ for this sub-type.

(ii) *Example (Central Alaskan Yup’ik; Mithun 2008)*

Boldfaced **-lu-** and **-na-** are markers of subordination in Yup’ik; see Mithun (2008) for more details on the text and its use of insubordination.

Cirunelek ikna nugegaa.

He shot the one across there with the antlers.

Nutegangrani ikna cirunelek ilai-wa arnaqatak irniani-llu --

Even as he began to shoot that one over there, the one with the horns, its relatives, a female and her offspring--

Cirunelek tuai nutegar**luku**.

And so, he shot(-SUB) the one with the horns repeatedly.

Tuai’ll taun’ piqerr**luni**

And then that one suddenly got up(-SUB)

Avai tagel**luni**.

It went up(-SUB)

Massinarpukllu ayarciigan**ani**.

And our motor wouldn’t start(-SUB)

Side-Note

These two semantic categories are rather like *contraries* of one another:

- Insubordinate Backgrounding:
*Sentence is **not** part of the connected narrative; speaker is ‘stepping out of the narrative’*
- Quasi-Clause-Chaining:
*Sentence **is** part of the connected narrative; speaker is maintaining ‘tight’ narrative flow*

(7) The Non-Complementarity of the Two Semantic Sub-Types

As pointed out by Mithun (2008), both these semantic sub-types of insubordination can co-exist *in the same language*.

Mithun (2008) discusses the case of Yup'ik (illustrated below), but we'll also see that several languages of the Pacific Northwest also exhibit both 'insubordinate backgrounding' and 'quasi-clause-chaining'

Example: Insubordinate Backgrounding in Central Alaskan Yup'ik (Mithun 2008)
Boldfaced *-I'* is a marker of subordination (participle) in Yup'ik; see Mithun (2008) for more details on the text and its use of insubordination.

Anguarluagguq qerarluk.
He said that I should row the boat and we could cross.

Iccugg', Frankiq angyangqellrul'
Remember, Frank had(-SUB) a big boat

3. Insubordinate Backgrounding (and Quasi-Clause-Chaining?) in Tlingit

(8) Principal Empirical Claims

- a. The general phenomenon of insubordination exists in Tlingit, a Na-Dene language of Southeast Alaska, Northwest British Columbia, Southwest Yukon Territory.
- b. Some 'insubordinate clauses' in Tlingit are cases of 'insubordinate backgrounding'.
- c. Some 'insubordinate clauses' in Tlingit *may* be cases of 'quasi-clause-chaining'.

Side-Note:

Many of the data and generalizations of this section are taken from:

Cable, Seth (2008) "Matrix Clauses Bearing Morphological Markers of Subordination in Tlingit." Manuscript. University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Available at:
<http://people.umass.edu/scable/papers/Tlingit-Insubordination.pdf>

This manuscript contains:

- A fuller description of the (complex) morpho-syntax of subordination in Tlingit
- A fuller discussion of the general phenomenon of insubordination in Tlingit
- A corpus of 36 instances of the phenomenon, with their original surrounding context.

(9) **Markers of Subordination in Tlingit**

The morpho-syntax of subordination in Tlingit is relatively complicated. The following is a *much* simplified description, leaving out several important details. I refer the reader to Cable (2008) for a fuller description.

Tlingit morphology distinguishes two types of embedded clause:

a. ‘Subordinate Clauses’ (Complement Clauses and Adverbial Clauses)

Verb ends in the suffix *-i* (~ *-u*), whose tone is opposite that of the verbal root.

- (i) Main Clause: xwasiteen 'I saw it'
- (ii) Subordinate Clause: xwasateení 'that I saw it.'

b. ‘Attributive Clauses’ (Relative Clauses)

Verb ends in the suffix *-i* (~ *-u*), whose tone is uniformly low.

- (i) Main Clause: xwasiteen 'I saw it'
- (ii) Attributive Clause: xwasiteeni 'which I saw.'

Both these two morpho-syntactic types appear in the ‘in subordinate clauses’ of Tlingit.

(10) **Two Structural Types of Insubordinate Clauses in Tlingit**

a. Free-Standing Subordinate Clause

A free-standing, matrix clause appears to be headed by a predicate bearing the ‘subordinate clause’ morphology in (9a).

Example:

Tlél tóo awunoogú áwé tle.
tlél tóo a-wu-noog-ú áwé tle.
not inside 3O-PERF-felt-SUB foc-part then

He didn't even feel [the sea]. (Lit. 'That he didn't even feel it.')

Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer 1987; p. 112; line 69

b. Relative Clause Modifying a Light Noun

A free-standing, matrix clause appears to consist of a relative clause modifying one of a small set of ‘light nouns’ (*yé* ‘way, manner, place’, *át* ‘thing’, *aa* ‘one’)

Example:

Ách áwé du tláax wusiteeyi aa.
Á-ch áwé du tláa-x wu-sitee-yi aa.
3O-INST foc-part her mother-P PERF-be-REL one

This is how she became her mother. (‘Through this, one who became her mother.’)

Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer 1990; p. 178; lines 54 – 59

Cable (2008) claims that the two structural types above are cross-cut by three principle semantic types (properties).³

(11) **Three Semantic Types of Insubordinate Clauses in Tlingit**

a. Rhetorical / Deliberative Questions

Insubordination signals that the question is not one that the listener is truly expected to answer, but is instead either ‘rhetorical’ or ‘self-directed’

Ch’u wáa **yóo tukdatángi** sá kwshíwé wé shaatk’...?
 Ch’u wáa yóo tukdatáng-i sá kwshíwé wé shaatk’...?
 just how think-SUB Q dubit. that girl
What was she thinking, anyway, that young girl...?
 (Lit. ‘What she was thinking, that young girl?’)
 Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer 1987; p. 244; lines 20 – 24)

b. Exclamatives

Insubordination signals that the clause is an exclamative.

Wé át, wé át aadéi **koogeyi** yé;
 Wé át, wé át aa-déi kooge-yi yé
 that thing that thing 3O-towards big-REL way
How many the hooligans were! (Lit. ‘The way that those things were many!’)
 Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer 1987; p. 158; lines 111-114)

c. ‘Other’

“No distinctive semantic feature” (Cable 2008).

“These sentences are translated into English as simple declarative clauses, and don’t obviously carry any distinctive, discourse-structural content.” (Cable 2008)

Tlél tóo awunoogú áwé tle.
 tlél tóo a-wu-noog-ú áwé tle.
 not inside 3O-PERF-felt-SUB foc-part then
He didn't even feel [the sea]. (Lit. 'That he didn't even feel it.')

Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer 1987; p. 112; line 69

Contrary to the claim of Cable (2008), many – though not all – examples falling into the ‘other’ category **do** share a semantic feature in common:

They are instances of insubordinate backgrounding!!!

³ Cable (2008) also distinguishes a fourth semantic type of insubordinate clause, those ‘dealing with causes and/or effects’. At present, however, I believe that the postulation of such a fourth category is erroneous, as the few (*i.e.*, 4) examples constituting that category actually group together with examples from the ‘other’ category (11c), in that many are actually instances of ‘insubordinate backgrounding.’

(12) **Insubordinate Backgrounding in Tlingit**

In the examples below, I will not always include a gloss, but will instead simply bold-face the subordinate markers of interest (cf. (6aii), (6bii), (7))

- a. Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer 1987; p. 198; lines 98 - 100
- (i) Tayeedéi s woo.aat.
They went to bed.
 - (ii) Hél wáa sá utee-**yí**.
not how Q be-**SUB**
Because there wasn't(-SUB) anything different.
(Lit. 'That there was nothing wrong.')
 - (iii) Ch'a lingít ch'u shóogu lingít.
Just a human, a real human.
 - (iv) Gwál tla_x dé kei_x'akaadéi áwé shákdei. A dakádeen aa ya_x uwatáa.
It must have been early down. He rolled away from her.
- b. Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer 1990; p. 178; lines 54 – 59 (cf. (10b))
- (i) Du tláa eeté_x ayawsikáa, "atléi."
In place of her mother, she called her "mother".
 - (ii) Ách áwé du tláa_x wusitee-**yi** aa.
This is how she became(-REL) her mother.
 - (iii) Du éesh yádix_x xat sateeyéech, xát tsú tle a_x yát x'awdliyoó, "a_x éek'."
Because I became the child of her father, she also adopted me, calling me "my brother."
- c. Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer 1987; p. 112; lines 68 – 70 (cf. (10a))
- (i) “A tayedéi nagú!” yóo ash yawsikaa.
“Go under this,” it said to him.
 - (ii) Tlél tóo awunoog-**ú** áwé tle.
He didn't even feel(-SUB) the sea.
 - (iii) Gwá! Aan, hít! Áa yaa woogoot wé diyée.
Oh! It's a village, a house! He went there, down there.

The following sentences in the Cable (2008) corpus of Tlingit insubordination also seem to be cases of 'subordinate backgrounding' (numerals refer to those used in Cable (2008)):

V, XIV, XIX, XX, XXI, XXIV, XXVI, XXX, XXXI

(13) **Possible Cases of Quasi-Clause-Chaining in Tlingit**

As mentioned above, there are still many examples in the Cable (2008) corpus that fall within the ‘other’ category in (11c), but *aren’t* obviously cases of ‘insubordinate backgrounding.’

Most of these examples simply resist analysis at present. But, two of them appear as if they might be cases of ‘quasi-clause-chaining’. As illustrated below, these insubordinate clauses seem to describe closely related ‘sub-events’

a. Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer 1987; p. 172; lines 131 - 133

- (i) Aagáa ch’a gunayéidei áwé s woo.aat.
Then they moved to a different place.
- (ii) Ch’u tle ch’u yéi tee-yí, ch’u yéi tee-yí.
Then they stayed(-SUB) there, they stayed(-SUB) there.
- (iii) Wáa yei kunayáat’ sá kwshéi wé tle dáxnáx at yátx’i du jee yéi wootee.
She was with him long enough to have two children.

b. Dauenhauer & Dauenhauer 1987; p. 110; lines 21 - 23

- (i) é! Kei wjik’én.
My! He leaped to the shore.
- (ii) Ch’u shóogu áx wulixáat’-i yé áwé.
just same there stuck-REL way foc-part
He stuck to the spot right there.
(Lit. ‘The way that he stuck to the spot there.’)
- (iii) Héendei guxshax’éel’ yóo áwé duwajée.
They thought he would slip into the sea.

(14) **Summary: Insubordination in Tlingit**

- a. The general phenomenon of ‘insubordination’ *does* occur in Tlingit.
- b. While much remains to be worked out regarding the semantics/pragmatics of insubordination in Tlingit, it does appear that the language *does* employ ‘insubordinate backgrounding’.
- c. It also appears that the language may employ quasi-clause-chaining (though this is not as well-attested in the present corpus of examples)

4. Insubordinate Backgrounding and Quasi-Clause-Chaining in Haida

(15) Principal Empirical Claims

- a. The general phenomenon of insubordination exists in Haida, a language isolate of Southeast Alaska (Prince of Wales Island) and Northwest British Columbia (Queen Charlotte Islands).
- b. Some ‘insubordinate clauses’ in Haida are cases of ‘insubordinate backgrounding’
- c. Some ‘insubordinate clauses’ in Haida are cases of ‘quasi-clause-chaining’.

(16) Markers of Subordination in Haida

Following the detailed grammar of Enrico (2003), the morpho-syntax of subordination in Haida can be rather subtle, and principally concerns the expression of present tense.

- a. Generalization:
In main clauses, the present tense suffix is *-(g)ang*. In finite (i.e., tensed) subordinate clauses, the present tense suffix is *-s* (~ *-as*).

- b. Subordinate Clauses
“Factive [*i.e.*, tensed – SC] complements are the syntactically unmarked type, identical in form to indicative root clauses *except that the relative present tense suffix –s ~ -as replaces other present tense suffixes.*” (Enrico 2003; p. 810; emphasis mine)

Example:

[Bill st'i-7ahlan-s]-ran dii 7unsiid-ang
Bill sick-must-PRES-P I know-PRES

I know that Bill must be sick.

(Enrico 2003; p. 810)

- c. Relative Clauses
“The (finite) relative clauses... simply have the general form of embedded finite clauses (the relative present tense suffix *-s* replaces root present tense suffix *(g)ang*...” (Enrico 2003; p. 564)

Example:

[nang st'i-7ahlan-s]-uu 7istl'a.aa-ang qasa.a-ang
INDEF sick-must-PRES-FOC arrive-going.to-PRES

The person who must be sick is going to come here.

(Enrico 2003; p. 564)

Side-Note:

As shown in the quotes above, Enrico (2003) refers to the subordinate present tense marker *-s* as ‘relative present tense’. It appears that this terminology is due to the fact that, as in many other languages, a present tense embedded under a past-tense in Haida needn’t refer to the actual present, but rather to the anterior matrix topic time (Enrico 2003; p. 610).

(17) **Insubordination in Haida**

Generalization (16a) suggests that suffix *-s* in Haida is restricted to subordinate clauses. However, as Enrico notes (Enrico 2003; p. 1312), one does on occasion find in Haida texts cases where main clauses bear the ‘relative present’ *-s*.

- a. nan jaada srwaansing 'l@ qiigas7asing, 7inarway 'laara k'u7aan-s.
INDEF woman one 3 be.father one.side her be.short-PRES
The one girl that he had, one of her legs was(-SUB) short.
(Enrico 2003; p. 1301)
- b. tl'1 rasdllts'iyaaay dluu, 7un.gu xan nang st'aay hlkuhllnaa-s-ii.
INDEF take.in when on.top CL INDEF tail be.up-PRES-topic.change
When they brought it in, a (seal's) tail was(-SUB) lying on top.
(Enrico 2003; p. 1309) (taken from Swanton 1901; p. 151)
- c. kun.aa-gee-dang.ahl-aan-.uu kan tlaa.ahl-7iihl-s.
before-DEF-with-CL-FOC whale be.ten-PUNC-PRES
Together with those from before, there were(-SUB) now ten whales.
(Enrico 2003; p. 1348) (taken from Swanton 1908; p. 652)

Side-Note:

In all the examples above, taken directly from Enrico (2003), the suffix *-s* is glossed as ‘present’, but translated into English as *past* tense.

I believe that this simply reflects the fact that such ‘narrative present’ is in Haida a ‘less marked’ structure than it is in English. Thus, Enrico has chosen not to directly translate these sentences as present-tense, since the resulting English discourse would not reflect the more ‘neutral’ character of the original Haida.

(18) **Insubordinate Backgrounding in Haida**

Enrico’s own generalizations regarding the function of insubordination in Haida suggest that ‘insubordinate backgrounding’ is one such function.

- a. Enrico’s Generalization (Enrico 2003; p. 1312)
“...the use of relative *-s* at the end of a root clause ... is fairly strongly correlated with backgrounding.”
- b. Enrico’s Textual Data (Enrico 2003; p. 1312)
(i) ‘The one whom they gave away’: 16.4% of foreground root clauses end in *-s*; 32.7% of background root clauses.
(ii) ‘The blind man at Island Point Town’: 33% of foreground root clauses end in *-s*; 46% of background root clauses end in *-s*.

(19) **Quasi-Clause-Chaining in Haida**

As is clear from the data in (18b), however, not all cases of insubordination in Haida are ‘insubordinate backgrounding’.

Other generalizations made by Enrico (2003) suggest that some of these other cases might be instances of ‘quasi-clause-chaining’.

a. Finite Clause ‘Concatenation’

Enrico (2003; p. 973) describes a process of ‘concatenation’ in Haida, whereby clauses are strung together “without anything corresponding to a conjunction between them”.

Importantly, *in all the examples that Enrico (2003) provides of concatenation of two finite, present-tense clauses, all but the final clause bears the ‘relative (subordinate) present tense suffix’ –s.*

- (i) [hlrun.aal hlangaa-s], hlangaan 7w-ii gaw-gang.
be.three could-PRES little.bit 3-into be.absent-PRES
It could be three (containers-full), but it needs a little bit more.
(Enrico 2003; p. 973)

b. Frequency and Use in Some Texts

According to Enrico, in some people’s speech, use of ‘relative present’ –s in main clauses is rather frequent:

“However, Masset consultant Adam Bell’s mythic narrative sentences frequently ended in –s, e.g. in this stretch of ‘The Blind Man at Island Point Town’:

- (i) sq’iinee ’laa qajguud.aan qagaan xiigan-s-ii.
The gulls made a racket over his head.
- (ii) 7aadang.an.uu ’laa.aa nang khlgulaayaan.
Somebody spoke to him quietly.
- (iii) “Nang 7iitl’aagdaas dang qats’a.algaa,” hin ’laa tl’a suudaa-s.
“The chief tells you to come in,” they said to him.
- (iv) ga ’la 7aanggee, ’laa-da tl’a xa.aydee,
As soon as he replied, and as soon as they (gulls) grabbed him,
- (v) saa.an ’la stlee ’laa tl’a xajajuu-s. ’laa tl’a dan dlasdlats’aa-s.
they caught his hand right up (in the sky), and pulled him inside.”
(Enrico 2003; p. 1348)

(20) **Insubordination in Haida Exclamatives**

As we saw earlier for Tlingit, exclamatives in Haida also display instances of ‘insubordination’.

a. Generalization (Enrico 2003; p. 158)

“A very common type [of exclamative – SC] in both dialects consists of a clause containing one of the adverbs *tlii*, *tlll* ‘quite a bit’...and marking present tense with the relative present tense suffix *-as* ~ *-s*... The form of present tense and the final pitch are characteristics of embedded clauses.”

- (i) Tlll ta k’iináa-s.
quite be.hot-PRES
It’s so hot!

(Enrico 2003; p. 158)

b. Other Structures

Following the discussion excerpted above, Enrico (2003) goes on to describe a number of other ‘exclamative constructions’ in Haida. Interestingly, all of them have the property that present tense must be expressed via the ‘relative present tense suffix *-s*’. (Enrico 2003; p. 158 – 168)

- (i) ’ll st’a sk’agyaadaa-s-7aa.
3 be.wearing.shoes-PRES-FRAG
She’s wearing shoes!

(Enrico 2003; p. 159)

(21) **Summary: Insubordination in Haida**

- a. The general phenomenon of ‘insubordination’ *does* occur in Haida.
- b. Following generalizations made by Enrico (2003), it appears that one function of insubordination in Haida is ‘insubordinate backgrounding’.
- c. Other generalizations and data of Enrico (2003) suggest that another function of Haida insubordination is ‘quasi-clause-chaining’.

5. **Quasi-Clause-Chaining in Gitksan and Nisga’a**

(22) **Principal Empirical Claims**

- a. The general phenomenon of insubordination exists in Gitksan and Nisga’a, two closely related Tsimshianic languages of Northwest British Columbia.
- b. Insubordinate clauses in these languages appear to be cases of quasi-clause-chaining.

(24) **Insubordination in Gitksan and Nisga'a**

It has sometimes been noticed that the generalization in (23aiii) is not entirely correct.

That is, while main clauses in texts are generally in the independent form, it is not uncommon in natural discourse for matrix, stand-alone utterances to appear in the *dependent form* (without any material preceding the verb).

a. Nisga'a

(i) *Tarpent's Generalization:*

“An apparent problem [for descriptions like (23) – SC] are clauses which are dependent in form, but *which lack a dependent marker*...Tarpent (1987) notes that sometimes, in informal conversation, sentences can occur which are dependent in form, but *lack a dependent marker*...” (Hunt 1993; p. 148 – 151)

(ii) *Data:*

nə qaks ʔisaʔan-t
1sERG finally finish-3ABS
I finally finished it! (Hunt 1993; p. 149)

b. Gitksan

(i) *Rigsby's Generalization:*

“...[A speaker can use dependent form when the clause is] ‘loosely’ coordinated in a series with a previous sentence *without a conjunctive particle*...” (Rigsby 1986; p. 273)

(ii) *Data:*

(none given)

(25) **Quasi-Clause-Chaining in Gitksan (and Nisga'a?)**

While neither Tarpent (1987) nor Rigsby (1986) discusses in detail the semantics/pragmatics of such ‘free dependent forms’, Rigsby does note in the quote above (24bi) that such insubordination occurs when the sentence is “loosely coordinated in a series with a previous sentence” (Rigsby 1986; p. 273).

This suggests that the phenomenon described above falls under the rubric of ‘quasi-clause-chaining’.

(26) **Summary: Insubordination in Gitksan and Nisga'a**

- a. The general phenomenon of insubordination *does* exist in Gitksan and Nisga'a,
- b. Insubordination in these languages appear to be cases of quasi-clause-chaining.

6. Insubordinate Backgrounding in Halkomelem

(27) Principal Empirical Claims

- a. The general phenomenon of insubordination exists in (Island) Halkomelem, a (Coast) Salish language of Southwest BC (Southeast Vancouver Island).
- b. Insubordinate clauses in this language appear to be cases of subordinate backgrounding (though a limited type of quasi-clause-chaining may also exist).

Side-Note:

All the data regarding insubordination in Halkomelem were provided by Donna Gerds (p.c.). I bear full responsibility for any errors.

(28) Markers of Nominalization in Island Halkomelem

Regarding Halkomelem, the morpho-syntax that will be of interest to us is that of *nominalization* rather than *subordination* more broadly.

- a. Morphology of Nominalization in Halkomelem (Gerds 1982; p. 71 – 72)
 - (i) The verb (predicate) is prefixed with either *š-* or *s-*
 - (ii) Possessive agreement appears on the verb (predicate), and indexes the understood subject of the verb (predicate)

- b. Illustrative Data

- (i) *Finite Main Verb (Predicate)*

ni	<u>č</u>	<u>wəł</u>	<u>łciws</u>	ʔə	k ^w θə	q ^w əlmən
AUX	2sS	already	tired	OBL	DET	talk
						(Gerds 1982; p. 71)

You are already tired of the talk.

- (ii) *Nominalized Verb (Predicate)*

ni	<u>ʔə-wəł</u>	<u>š-łciws</u>	k ^w θə	q ^w əlmən	
AUX	2sPOSS-already	NOM-tired	DET	talk	
					(Gerds 1982; p. 71)

The talk was your tiring.

- c. Key Fact Regarding Nominalization

Nominalized clauses do not typically on their own function as stand-alone main clauses.

(29) **Insubordination in Island Halkomelem**

While nominalized clauses do not typically function as matrix, stand-alone utterances, Donna Gerdts (p.c.) has observed that there are special contexts where this is possible.

a. “Cherry Bark” (Gerdts p.c.)

(i) ni? ʔə x^wə sa:yʔ?

Is it ready? [referring to recording equipment]

(ii) k^wən's hak^wəš t^θə t'ələm'.

k^w-ən'-s hak^wəš t^θə t'ələm'.
DET-2sPOSS-NOM use DET cherry.bark
Your using cherry bark.

(iii) yaθʔəł cən ʔəw' pətəm'ət θə nə ten, ni? scek^wəl' k^wsəs x^wə cq'ix̄ t^θə
scλ'ics t^θə leʔcəs.

*I used to ask my mother: how do you make it black? How do you make
embrication on the basket?*

(30) **Insubordinate Backgrounding in Island Halkomelem**

As described by Gerdts (p.c.), there are two uses of such ‘insubordinate nominalizations’ in Halkomelem that are reminiscent of ‘insubordinate backgrounding’.

First, one can use such nominalizations at the very beginning of a discourse, to provide a kind of ‘title’ or ‘general summary’ for the content of what follows (*cf.* (29a))

a. “Fish Soup” (Gerdts p.c.)

(i) k^w-ən'-s ʔteʔ-əm' ʔe t^θə sɫap'
DET-2sPOSS-NOM make-MID OBL DET soup
Your making fish soup.

(ii) ʔi? ʔəw' hay k^ws λ'lim's ʔəw' ʔew's t^θə sce:ɫtən,
You have to use really fresh fish,

(iii) ʔi? ʔteʔəm' č ʔə t^θə sɫap'.
when you make the soup.

Secondly, such ‘insubordinate nominalizations’ are frequent at the very *end* of a discourse, where they provide a kind of ‘wrap-up’ or ‘general summary’ regarding the preceding narrative (Gerdts p.c.).

Given that, under such use, the speaker is ‘stepping out of the narrative’ and offering comment upon it, such use is quite reminiscent of ‘insubordinate backgrounding’

(31) **Quasi-Clause-Chaining in Island Halkomelem (?)**

A third use of these ‘in subordinate nominalizations’ is somewhat reminiscent of ‘quasi-clause-chaining’.

As described by Gerdts (p.c.), in subordinate nominalizations are commonly used when a speaker is giving a series of sequentially-ordered instructions, such as in a recipe.

a. “Recipe Talk” (Gerdts p.c.)

The following clauses are taken from the middle of a recipe (Gerdts p.c.)

(i) yəw'en' k^w-ən'-s t^θχ^wat t^θə sce:ɬtən
first DET-2sPOSS-NOM wash DET salmon
First, your washing the salmon.

(ii) ʔən'-s ʔəw' q'aʔt k^wθə səplil
2sPOSS-NOM link add DET bread
Your adding the bread.

Under such use, the speaker could be described as ‘linking together a series of closely related subevents, which compose a larger event of central importance’. Thus, such cases are quite reminiscent of ‘quasi-clause-chaining’.

(32) **Summary: Insubordination in Island Halkomelem**

- a. The general phenomenon of insubordination *does* exist in (Island) Halkomelem.
- b. In subordinate clauses in this language appear to be cases of subordinate backgrounding (though a limited type of quasi-clause-chaining may also exist).

7. **Insubordination in Other Languages of the Region**

(33) **Interim Summary: Pacific Northwest Languages Exhibiting Insubordination**

- a. Tlingit Na-Dene; Southeast Alaska, Northwest British Columbia
- b. Haida Isolate; Southeast Alaska, Northwest British Columbia
- c. Gitksan Tsimshianic Northwest British Columbia
- d. Nisga'a Tsimshianic Northwest British Columbia
- e. Halkomelem Salish Southwest British Columbia

Thus far, preliminary investigation suggests that insubordination does not exist in other languages of the region...

(34) **No Insubordination in Sm'algyax (Coast Tsimshian, 'Tsimshian Proper')**

a. Negative Claim:

Thus far, it seems that insubordination does *not* exist in Sm'algyax (unlike its relatives Gitksan & Nisga'a).

b. Evidence:

No mention of insubordination in the literature on Sm'algyax, including the grammar sketch of Boas (1911).

(35) **No Insubordination in Wakashan Languages**

a. Negative Claim:

Thus far, it seems that insubordination does *not* exist in the Wakashan languages (Nuu-chah-nulth, Ditidaht, Haisla).

b. Evidence:

(i) No discussion of it in the literature on these languages.

(ii) Scholars with expertise in Wakashan languages have reported that that the phenomena observed above in Tlingit, Haida, Gitksan, Nisga'a and Halkomelem are not familiar to them from the languages they study:

- Henry Davis (Nuu-chah-nulth)
- Adam Werle (Ditidaht)
- Emmon Bach (Haisla)

(36) **No Insubordination in Lillooet (Interior Salish)**

a. Negative Claim:

Insubordination does not exist in the Interior Salish language St'át'imcets (Lillooet)

b. Evidence:

Scholars with expertise in St'át'imcets (Henry Davis, Lisa Matthewson) have reported that there is nothing akin to the Halkomelem 'insubordination' of Section 6 in St'át'imcets.

Question: To what extent does insubordination occur in the other Coast Salish languages?

(37) **Summary: Insubordination in the Pacific Northwest**

- a. Insubordination is principally limited to the northern-most languages: Tlingit, Haida, Gitksan-Nisga'a (though it also appears to occur in the more southerly Halkomelem).
- b. As the languages in question are not provably related (aside from Gitksan and Nisga'a), it seems that insubordination may be an areal feature of the Northern Pacific Northwest (perhaps centered around the Nass River).

<i>Question:</i> To what extent may insubordination link the Northern Pacific Northwest with other, neighboring regions?
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(38) **No Insubordination in Northern Athabaskan**

- a. Negative Claim:
Unlike their relatives Navajo and Tlingit, it seems that insubordination does *not* exist in the Northern Athabaskan languages (adjacent to the Northern Pacific Northwest languages)
- b. Evidence:
 - (i) In her study of insubordination in Navajo, Mithun (2008) carefully examines whether such phenomena occur in *cognate* subordinate forms in other branches of Athabaskan. She finds that they do not.
 - (ii) Scholars with expertise in Northern Athabaskan languages have reported that the insubordination phenomena observed above in Tlingit are not familiar to them from the languages they study:
 - Keren Rice (Slavey)

(39) **Insubordination in Cree (Algonquian)**

As reported by Mithun (2008), one nearby language family where insubordination does *widely* occur is Algonquian, particularly across the language varieties making up the Cree dialect continuum.

Furthermore, as extensively studied by Cook (2008), the Plains Cree dialect (Nēhiyawēwin), which is adjacent to some of the Interior Salish and Northern Athabaskan languages, also exhibits insubordination.

Given that an organized discussion of Cree 'insubordination' already occurs in Mithun (2008) and Cook (2008), I won't provide the details of it here...

(40) **Quasi-Clause-Chaining in Cree**

As described by both Mithun (2008) and Cook (2008), insubordination in (Plains) Cree appears to be of the ‘quasi-clause-chaining’ type:

Verbs that are subordinative in form (*i.e.*, in the so-called ‘conjunct order’) may be used in matrix clauses when those clauses are part of the ‘main storyline’, “are used for the main, sequenced events that move the narrative along” (Mithun 2008).

(41) **Summary: Insubordination in Neighboring Languages**

a. Generalization:

Insubordination does *not* link the languages of the Northern Pacific Northwest with those of adjacent regions.

b. Evidence:

(i) Insubordination does not occur in the Northern Athabaskan languages that neighbor the Northern Pacific Northwest languages.

(ii) Although insubordination *does* occur in Plains Cree, that language is rather far removed from the languages of the *Northern* Pacific Northwest (Tlingit, Haida, Nisga’a, Gitksan)

Indeed, Plains Cree is only immediately adjacent to Northern Athabaskan and Interior Salish languages, none of which seem to possess insubordination...

(42) **Conclusion: Insubordination as a Potential Areal Feature**

Insubordination may be an areal feature of the Northern Pacific Northwest:

(a) Within the Pacific Northwest, it is largely confined to the northern languages: Tlingit, Haida, Gitksan, Nisga’a

(b) Insubordination does not occur in languages bordering those of the Northern Pacific Northwest (*i.e.*, Northern Athabaskan).

8. Concluding Questions

(43) Diachronic Questions

- a. *Is there any relationship between the insubordination found in Halkomelem and that found in the Northern Pacific Northwest?*

(Probably not. It most likely developed independently.)

- b. *What is the historical relationship between the insubordination found in the languages of the north? Did it develop independently in each language, or did it spread via contact?*

Something to perhaps bear in mind here is the following picture:

(i) Functions of Insubordination in the Northern Pacific Northwest

	Sub-Background	Quasi-Clause-Chain
Tlingit	<i>Predominate</i>	<i>Less Attested</i>
Haida	<i>Less Attested</i>	<i>Predominate</i>
Gitksan-Nisga'a	<i>Unattested</i>	<i>Predominate</i>

(ii) One Possibility: Two Independent Sources for Insubordination

- i. Quasi-Clause-Chaining begins in Gitksan-Nisga'a & spreads north
- ii. Subordinate Backgrounding begins in Tlingit & spreads south

(44) Synchronic Questions

What is the precise syntax and (compositional) semantics of insubordinate clauses?

- a. *How can independent clauses come to have these morpho-syntactic properties that are usually confined to subordinate clauses?*
- b. *How are those morpho-syntactic properties able to contribute the particular semantics/pragmatics of 'insubordinate backgrounding' and 'quasi-clause-chaining'?*

(i) Work That Begins to Address These Questions:

- Truckenbrodt (2006) *Insubordination in German*
- Cook (2008) *Insubordination in Plains Cree*

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