

Deriving the definiteness effects in Nuu-chah-nulth locatives

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1. The problem

- locatives in Nuu-chah-nulth are expressed by affixal predicates which describe a relationship between a location argument and a locatum argument (Wojdak *in prep*; see also Rose 1981, Davidson 2002).

	<i>predicate</i>	<i>location</i>	<i>locatum (theme)</i>
(1)	ʔuuqʔʔiis ʔu-ʔaqʔ-ʔiis Ø- inside -3.IND	čʔamaqʔʔakʔi čʔamaqʔʔak-ʔi oven-DET	ciixsac ciixsac frying.pan
	There's a frying pan in the oven.		

- depending on what the morphological host for the locative affix is, there seems to be two different kinds of definiteness effects in locatives:

(i) an indefiniteness restriction on a bare locatum argument when the predicate suffixes to the expletive morpheme *ʔu-*.

(2)	ʔu-čuu-ʔiis Ø- in.container -3.IND	niisʔak-ʔi pot-DET	haʔum food
	There's food in the pot. (# The food is in the pot.)		

(ii) a definiteness restriction on a bare locatum argument when the prediates suffixes to the locative morpheme *hiʔ-*.

(3)	hiʔ-čuu-ʔiis LOC- in.container -3.IND	haʔum food	niisʔak-ʔi pot-DET
	The food is in the pot. (# There's food in the pot.)		

¹ Nuu-chah-nulth is a Southern Wakashan language spoken on Vancouver Island. We would like to thank our Nuu-chah-nulth consultants for sharing their language & insights with us: Mary Jane Dick, Katherine Fraser, Christine Nicolaye, Barbara Touchie, Barney Williams Jr. and Sarah Webster. The data presented here are from the Ahousaht dialect, but to the best of our knowledge the generalisations also hold for the other dialects we've worked with (Kyuquot, Ucluelet, Clayoquot). Thanks to Sandra Chung, Henry Davis, Rose-Marie Déchaine, Lisa Matthewson & Martina Wiltschko for their feedback & suggestions. Fieldwork on Nuu-chah-nulth was supported by a UBC Hampton Fund Research Grant in the Humanities and Social Sciences awarded to Henry Davis.

QUESTION 1: why is a bare locatum argument obligatorily interpreted as

- indefinite in *ʔu*-locatives**
- definite in *hiʔ*-locatives**

- bare nominal in Nuu-chah-nulth are generally ambiguous between indefinite and definite interpretations

(4)	a.	ʔaq-aq-ʔiis long-very-3.IND	čistuup rope
		The/some rope is very long.	
	b.	ʔaq-aq-ʔiis long-very-3.IND	čistuup-ʔi rope-DET
		The rope is very long.	

QUESTION 2: why are *ʔu*-locatives ruled out when the locatum is *pro*?

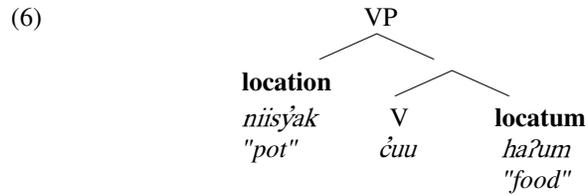
(5)	Q:	waas-ak-k where-POSS-2.Q	ciixsac frying.pan
		Where's your frying pan?	
	A1:	hiʔaqʔʔiis hiʔ-ʔaqʔ-ʔiis LOC- inside -3.IND	čʔamaqʔʔak čʔamaqʔʔak oven
		It's in the oven.	
	A2: #	ʔuuqʔʔiis ʔu-ʔaqʔ-ʔiis Ø- inside -3.IND	čʔamaqʔʔak čʔamaqʔʔak oven

1.1. The proposal

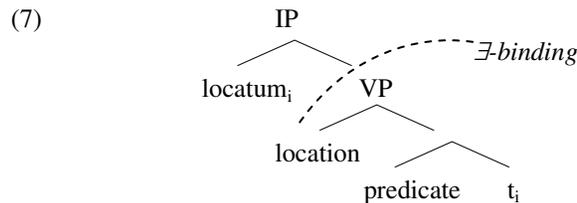
THE PROPOSAL: the definiteness effects are linked to subject-raising (see Freeze 1992)

-both *ʔu*-locatives and *hiʔ*-locatives share the same underlying structure (see Freeze 1992).
 -***hiʔ*-locatives**: the locatum raises to subject position
 -***ʔu*-locatives**: the locatum remains in object position
 - a bare locatum argument in object position is subject to VP-level existential binding (Diesing 1992)

- Underlying structure for the locative predicate –*ćuu* "inside a container" (Wojdak 2004)

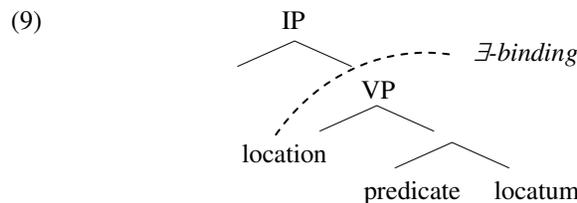


- in *hit-*locatives, the locatum argument raises to subject position and escapes VP-level existential binding (Diesing 1992).



- (8) *hit-ćuu-ʔiš* *haʔum* *niisʔak-ʔi*
 LOC-**in.container**-3.IND food pot-DET
 The food is in the pot. (# There's food in the pot.)

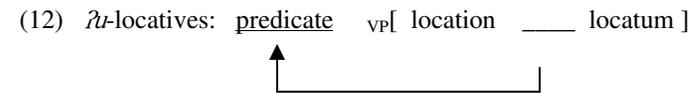
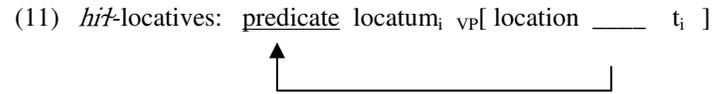
- in *ʔu-*locatives, the locatum remains below VP and is existentially bound.² A bare nominal is obligatorily indefinite in *ʔu-*locatives.



- (10) *ʔu-ćuu-ʔiš* *niisʔak-ʔi* *haʔum*
 ∅-**in.container**-3.IND pot-DET food
 There's food in the pot. (# The food is in the pot.)

² For explicitness, we assume that the location has not raised out of the VP in *ʔu-*locatives, and instead occupies its theta-subject position. This corresponds to the availability of indefinite bare nominal locations, eg. *ʔu-kuxs-ʔiš ʔuucma ʔiʔi'ćumʔ* "A woman is wearing a hat" (ex. 26).

- in both types of locatives, there is movement of the predicate to a position higher than the subject, yielding the VSO word order of the language.



2. Predictions of the analysis

- The locatum satisfies subject diagnostics in *hit-*locatives
 - word order (§2.1)
 - possessor-raising clausal inflection (§2.2)
 - clausal inflection (§2.3)
- The locatum satisfies object diagnostics in *ʔu-*locatives
 - word order (§2.1)
 - incorporation (§2.4)
- The indefiniteness restriction in *ʔu-*locatives is not absolute (§2.5)

2.1 Word order: VSO

- VSO is the preferred word order in Nuu-chah-nulth. VOS is ruled out in potentially ambiguous contexts:

- (13) *ʔuʔuuyukʔiš* Ken Kay
ʔu-yuk[+R]-3.IND Ken Kay
 ∅-**cry.for**-3.IND Ken Kay
 Ken is crying for Kay.
 (unavailable interpretation: Kay is crying for Ken)

- the analysis of the definiteness effects predicts a word order difference between *hit-*locatives (locatum=subject) and *ʔu-*locatives (location=subject).

- In *hit-*locatives, there is a preference for the locatum to precede the location:

- (14) *hiʔaqʔʔiš* *ciixsac* *ćamaqʔʔakʔi*
hit-ʔaqʔ-ʔiš *ciixsac* *ćamaqʔʔakʔi*
 LOC-**inside**-3 frying.pan oven-DET
 The frying pan is inside the oven.

- the opposite preference holds for *ʔu*-locatives, where the location precedes the locatum argument:

(15) ʔuuqʔʔiis čʔamaqʔʔakʔi ciixsac
 ʔu-aqʔ-ʔiis čʔamaqʔʔak-ʔi ciixsac
 Ø-**inside**-3 oven-DET frying.pan
 There's a frying pan in the oven.
 (consultant's comment: "you have to use this order, or else it sounds like the oven is in the frying pan")

2.2 Possessor-raising corresponds to subject

- possessor-marking on a predicate corresponds to the subject (Davidson 2002, Ravinski *in prep*)

(16) ʔu-yuʔaaʔ-uk-siis hupkumʔ ʕiniiʔ
 Ø-**find**-POSS-1sg.IND ball dog
 My dog found the ball. (*possessor=subject*)

(*unavailable interpretation* : The dog found my ball.)

- In *hiʔ*-locatives, the possessor-marking on a predicate matches the locatum

(17) hiʔ-čuu-ʔak-ʔiis haʔum niisʔak
 LOC-**in.container**-POSS-3.IND food pot
 His food is in the pot. (*possessor=locatum*)

(*unavailable interpretation* : The food is in his pot.)

- in *ʔu*-locatives, the possessor-marking on a predicate matches the location

(18) ʔu-ʔaʔ-uk-ʔiis ʕimtii Lucy čʔupčʔupšumʔ
 Ø-**on.surface**-POSS-3.IND name Lucy sweater
 There is a name on Lucy's sweater. (*possessor=location*)
 (consultant's comment: "could be ANY name, like a team name")

(*unavailable interpretation*: Lucy's name is on a sweater.)

- this pattern is predicted if the locatum is the subject of *hiʔ*-locatives, and the location is the subject of *ʔu*-locatives.

2.3 Clausal inflection corresponds to subject

- Clausal agreement in Nuu-chah-nulth is triggered by subjects.

(19) naatsi-čič-ʔ-it-siis John ʔamiiimitʔi
 see-PERF-PST-1sg.IND John yesterday
 I saw John yesterday.

- in *hiʔ*-locatives, the subject inflection matches the locatum, not the location.

(20) hiʔ-ʔis-siis ʔaʔkuu
 LOC-**on.ground**-1sg.IND DEIC
 I'm sitting over here.

(21) hiʔ-ʔiis-siis
 LOC-**on.beach**-1sg.IND
 I'm on the beach.

- in *ʔu*-locatives, the subject inflection matches the location, not the locatum.

(22) a. ʔu-čitum-siis sačkaʔs
 Ø-**on.side.of.head**-1sg.IND comb
 I've got a comb on the side of my head.

b. ʔiʔičumʔ-uxssiis
 ʔiʔičumʔ-**kuxs**-siis
 straw.hat-**on.head**-1sg.IND
 I'm wearing a straw hat.

c. ʔu-qumʔ-siis sačkaʔs
 Ø-**on.head**-1sg.IND comb
 I have combs in my hair.

2.4 Incorporation of objects

- in Nuu-chah-nulth, affixal predicates show an alternation between suffixation to the expletive morpheme *ʔu*-, and suffixation to an object:

(23) a. ʔuʔaamitʔiis čakup maʔʔii
 ʔu-ʔaap-mit-ʔiis čakup maʔʔii
 Ø-**buy**-PST-3.IND man house
 A man bought a house.

b. maḥtʰiiʔamitʔiš čakup
 maḥtʰii-ʔaap-mit-ʔiš čakup
 house-**buy**-PST-3.IND man
 A man bought a house.

- suffixation to an object has been analysed as incorporation (Davis and Sawai 2001, Wojdak 2003). There is a subject-object asymmetry in this incorporation which rules out suffixation of the predicate to its subject:

(24) * čakup-ʔaap-mit-ʔiš maḥtʰii
 man-**buy**-PST-3.IND house
 A man bought a house.

- the incorporation pattern in *ʔu*-locatives diagnoses the locatum as the object. Only the locatum argument can incorporate; the location argument cannot incorporate.

(25) a. ʔu-čuu-ʔiš qaʔuuc-ʔi haʔum
 Ø-**in.container**-3.IND basket-DET food
 There's food in the burden basket.

b. haʔum-ču-ʔiš qaʔuuc-ʔi
 food-**in.container**-3.IND basket-DET
 There's food in the burden basket.

c. * qaʔuuc-ču-ʔiš haʔum
 basket-**in.container**-3.IND food

(26) a. ʔu-kuxs-ʔiš ʔuucma ʔiʔičumʔ
 Ø-**on.head**-3.IND woman straw.hat
 A woman is wearing a straw hat.

b. ʔiʔičumʔ-uxs-ʔiš ʔuucma
 straw.hat-**on.head**-3.IND woman
 A woman is wearing a straw hat.

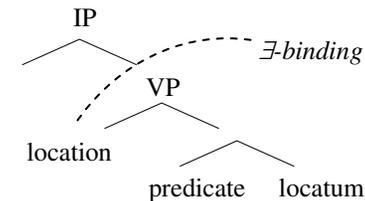
c. * ʔuucma-kuxs-ʔiš ʔiʔičumʔ
 woman-**on.head**-3.IND straw.hat

- this pattern is predicted if locatum arguments are the object of *ʔu*-locatives.
- this test is inapplicable for *hiʔ*-locatives: this type of locative does not show an incorporation alternation

2.5 The indefiniteness restriction in *ʔu*-locatives is not absolute

- under the analysis of *ʔu*-locatives, the locatum remains within the VP.

(27) *ʔu*-locatives: locatum is subject to existential binding



- The implication of (27) is that if a (bare) locatum is indefinite, it must be in the object position.
- however, the analysis predicts that definite locatum arguments should be possible in *ʔu*-locatives, provided that they are bound by a definite determiner.
- the prediction holds: the ban on definite locata in *ʔu*-locatives is not absolute. In restricted contexts, the definite locata are possible in *ʔu*-locatives:

(28) ʔuuqʔʔiʔiš čʔamaqʔʔak ciixsacʔi
 ʔu-ʔaqʔ-ʔiš čʔamaqʔʔak ciixsac-ʔi
 Ø-**inside**-3.IND oven-DET frying.pan-DET
 Inside the oven is the frying pan. (ie. not the pot)

- both *hiʔ*-locatives and *ʔu*-locatives allow possessed locatum arguments, for example:

(29) a. hiʔ-čpiʔi-ʔiš ʔihʔaqʔʔak-uk-ʔitk ʔišʔiqʔʔak-uk-ʔi Ken
 LOC-**on.top**-POSS-3 shirt-POSS-2sg.POS pants-POSS-3.P Ken
 Your shirt is on top of Ken's pants.
 (*consultant's comment*: this is "telling where it is")

b. ʔu-čpiʔi-ʔiš ʔihʔaqʔʔak-uk-ʔitk ʔišʔiqʔʔak-uk-ʔi Ken
 Ø-**on.top**-POSS-3 shirt-POSS-2sg.POS pants-POSS-3.POS Ken
 Your shirt is on top of Ken's pants.
 (*consultant's comment*: this is "telling what it is")

Question: but if definite locatum arguments are freely allowed in *ʔu*-locatives, then why don't we see more of them?

- why are *ʔu*-locatives banned with *pro* locatum arguments, for example?

(30) Q: waasih niis-ʔuu-ʔi
 where-3.Q boiled-result-DET
 Where's the boiled fish?

A1: hit-ʔuu-ʔis ʔahʔii niisʔak-ʔi
 LOC-in.container-3.IND DEIC pot-DET
 It's in the pot.

A2: * ʔu-ʔuu-ʔis ʔahʔii niisʔak-ʔi
 Ø-in.container-3.IND DEIC pot-DET

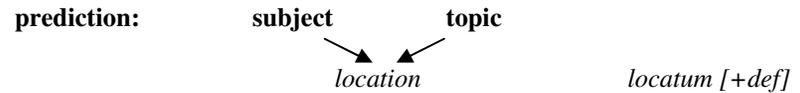
- **idea:** Subjects in Nuu-chah-nulth are linked to topichood.
- the topic of a sentence, being discourse-old information, necessarily entails familiarity/definiteness in some sense (Chafe 1975).
- This would explain why *ʔu*-locatives (necessarily with a location subject) are banned in contexts where the locatum is the topic.

(31) Q: waasaʔukʔs ʔaatʔaʔis
 waas-ʔak-uk-ʔs ʔaatʔaʔis
 where-TEMP-POSS-1sg.Q children
 Where's my kids? (kids = topic)

	topic	subject	
A1:	hiʔiitʔisʔaʔ	<i>pro</i>	maʔʔiiʔakʔi Ken
	hit-ʔiit-ʔis-ʔaʔ	<i>pro</i>	maʔʔii-ʔak-ʔi Ken
	LOC- inside -3.IND-PL	<i>pro</i>	house-POSS-3 Ken
	They're inside Ken's house. topic/subject MATCH		

	subject	topic	
A2: *	ʔu-ʔiit-ʔis-ʔaʔ	maʔʔiiʔakʔi Ken	<i>pro</i>
	Ø- inside -3.IND-PL	house-POSS-3 Ken	<i>pro</i>
	topic/subject MISMATCH		

- This would also predict a restricted set of contexts where *ʔu*-locatives with definite locata can occur.
- under the idea that topics=subject, this means that when both locatum and location are familiar in the discourse context, **an *ʔu*-locative is used only when the location is more salient than the definite locatum.**



(32) ʔu-ʔpii-ʔis ʔisʔiqʔak-uk-ʔi Ken ʔihʔaqʔak-ʔitk
 Ø-on.top-POSS-3 pants-POSS-3.POS Ken shirt-POSS-2sg.POS
 Your shirt is on top of Ken's pants.

- this prediction corresponds to the following context for an *ʔu*-locative with a definite locatum:

context: Mary Jane and I went out berry-picking, and we had a few burden baskets with us. We got a basket of salal, a basket of blackberries, and a basket of cranberries. We take the berries home & we start to clean them. I fall asleep & in the meantime Mary Jane finishes with the blackberries & the cranberries. All of a sudden I wake up & then I ask whether there's anything left for me to clean. Mary Jane answers with (33).

subject	topic
↙	↘
location	
	locatum [+def]

(33) ʔuʔuuyaqitʔis qaʔuuc ʔamaʔi
 ʔu-ʔuu-yaqit-ʔis qaʔuuc ʔama-ʔi
 Ø-inside-on.floor-3.IND basket salal.berries-DET
 In the basket over there on the floor is the salal.

3. Conclusion

- our analysis of locatives accounts for a range of data (definiteness effects, word order, possessor-raising pattern & subject inflection) with one story: the locatum raises to subject position in *hit*-locatives but not *ʔu*-locatives.

For future research:

- an analysis of the origin/function of the locative morpheme *hiʔ*. Is it the same morpheme as the *hiʔ-* that appears in predicative contexts (34) and in relative clauses (35)?

(34) hiʔ-ʔiʃ makuʔwas
 LOC-3.IND store
 She's at the store.

(35) ɕʉpʉuqsmitʔiʃ hiʔʔitqsuuʔaaʔ waʔiɕ
 ɕʉpʉuqs-miʔ-ʔiʃ hiʔ-ʔitqsuu-ʔaaʔ waʔiɕ
 smell-inside-3.IND LOC-2pl.REL-always sleep
 It smells where you always sleep.

- further investigation into the topic/subject link in Nuu-chah-nulth, with locatives & elsewhere. Are subjects and topics inherently linked in Nuu-chah-nulth?

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