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Oblique arguments (in the LFG inventory of grammatical functions) are ones in which a thematic role is explicitly encoded, perhaps by choice of preposition, as in English, or by semantic case marking, as in Finnish. In Algonquian languages it is the relative root morphology in verb stems and preverbs which typically encodes the thematic role associated with particular oblique arguments, as will be seen below.

Other syntactic types of arguments, such as subject, object, second object and complement clauses, appear to the right of the verb unless they are in topic or focus position. (3) is an example with both first object and subject expressed by overt NPs to the right of the verb.

- (3) *i·nike·hipimeko e·hawatawa·či wi·sahke·hani metemo·he·ha Adv V O S*
i·ni=ke·hi=ipi=meko e·h-awataw-a·či wi·sahke·h-ani metemo·h-e·h-a
 then=and=HRSY=EMPH AOR-take.O2.to-3>3/AOR W-SG old.woman-DIM-SG
 'And right then, it's said, the old woman took it to Wisahkeha' (W925)

The initial constituent in (3) is an adverb (the template of (1) does not address possible positions for adverbs), which serves as the host for three enclitic particles.

In contrast to the generalizations that can be made about relative order of elements to the left of the verb, it is difficult to predict the relative order of the right-hand elements, if more than one argument follows the verb. The template in (1) indicates only that any number of constituents may occur in post verbal position, and that they may be associated with the grammatical functions listed in the curly brackets.

The arguments labelled oblique are the ones typically indexed on the verb by means of an overt morpheme known in the Algonquianist literature as a RELATIVE ROOT.⁴ The relative roots are a conspicuous feature of all the Algonquian languages, making the oblique relation an especially significant one in Algonquian syntax. (4) lists some of the relative roots in Meskwaki, giving the form seen in stem-initial position, the preverb form, and a characterization of the relative root's semantics:

4. Rhodes (2006) on Ojibwe uses different terminology than that employed here. The arguments here labeled oblique are called "relative root complements" in Rhodes (2006); what Rhodes calls "obliques" are here considered adjuncts (e.g., temporal expressions).

- (4) Some types of obliques and their associated relative roots

Stem-initial form	Preverb	Semantic type
a. tan-	taši	stationary location
b. in-	iši	goal of motion
c. in-	iši	manner
d. ot-	oči	source (of motion); cause or reason
e. ahpi·ht-	ahpi·hči	'to such an extent, such degree'
f. tasw-	taswi	'so many, so much'
g. ahkw-	ahkwi	'so long'

As is well known, the verbs which bear a relative root as the initial morpheme in the stem require an argument of the semantic type indexed by the relative root. For example, in (5) *taneka·-* 'dance (there)' is a two-place verb, requiring both a subject and an oblique expressing stationary location. The relative root initial is in boldface.

- (5) *taneka·-* 'dance (there)'

A verb stem such as *wi·tamaw-* 'tell, explain,' which is not itself sub-categorized for an oblique argument, may be compounded with the appropriate relative root to add a requirement for an oblique. In this context the preverb form of the relative root is employed, as shown in (6), with the preverb *taši* in boldface, and its associated oblique argument *ayo·hi* 'here' to the left of the verb:

- (6) *ayo·hi ki·htaši-wi·tamo·ne*
ayo·hi ke-i·h-taši-wi·tamaw-ene
 here 2-FUT-(there)-explain-1>2/IND
 'I will explain it to you here' (W859)

Although the relative root morphology plays a prominent role in indexing semantic types of oblique arguments, it is important to note that Algonquian languages also contain verbs which require oblique arguments even though they do not contain an overt relative root. A few Meskwaki examples are listed in (7).⁵

5. AI = Animate Intransitive verb stem class, TA = Transitive Animate, TI = Transitive Inanimate.

- (7) a. awi- 'be (there)' AI
 b. (ih)a- 'go (thither)' AI
 c. pya- 'come (hither)' AI
 d. to·taw-/to·t- 'treat (thus), do (thus) to' TA/TI

Finally, note that the frequency of oblique syntax in Algonquian is in part due to the fact that all the verbs of quotation—the ones framing direct quotes—require an oblique argument. It is the quoted speech or thought which functions as the oblique argument of the quoting verb. (8) lists the basic quoting verbs for Meskwaki:

- (8) a. i- 'say (thus)' AI
 b. in-/it- 'say (thus) to' TA/TI
 c. išite·he- 'think (thus)' AI
 d. ine·nem-/ine·net- 'think (thus) about' TA/TI

FORMAL REALIZATIONS OF OBLIQUE ARGUMENTS

We now turn to a separate question: if a verb requires an oblique argument of some semantic type, how is that requirement fulfilled in the clause? Recall that the framework assumed here states subcategorizational requirements in terms of grammatical relations such as subject, object, or oblique, rather than in terms of constituent structure. This approach works well for the analysis of obliques in Meskwaki since a wide range of formal categories may instantiate an oblique argument.

For example, obliques may be noun phrases. A noun in an oblique noun phrase is often inflected with the locative case ending *-eki* as in *meneseki* '[from the] island' in (9). Note, however, that the locative case in (9) does not specify source: it is the relative root initial on the verb that contributes the semantic gloss of 'from.'

- (9) *meneseki e·hočiwenekoči,*
menes-eki e·h-očiwen-ekoči
 island-LOC AOR-carry.O.from.(there)-3>3/AOR
 'It (an eagle) carried him from the island' (M15B)

Another variety of an oblique NP is a locative deictic, as in (10), illustrating an oblique of goal:

- (10) *ma·hi ki·ha*
ma·hi ke-i·h-a-Ø
 yonder 2-FUT-go.(there)-2/IND
 'You should go over yonder' (W853)

A demonstrative pronoun may also function as an oblique, such as *i·ni* 'that, that way,' in (11), where the oblique is an oblique of manner:

- (11) *i·niča·hmeke ki·hto·taw·waki*
i·ni=ča·hi=meko ke-i·h-to·taw-a·waki
 that=so=EMPH 2-FUT-treat.(thus)-2>3P/IND
 'So you should do that to them indeed' (W99J)

Another way in which an oblique of manner can be expressed is by an adverb, such as *mahkwa·či* 'quietly' in (12):

- (12) *mahkwa·čimeke ki·hanemi-išite·he*
mahkwa·či=meko ke-i·h-anemi-išite·he-Ø
 quietly=EMPH 2-FUT-go.along-think.(thus)-2/IND
 'Your thoughts should be peaceful as you go along' (W861)
 [lit. 'You should go along thinking quietly']

As mentioned in the previous section, verbs of quotation take a direct quote as an oblique argument expressing manner. (13) illustrates this with an extremely short quote:

- (13) "hao," *e·hineči*
 "hao," *e·h-in-eči*
 all.right AOR-say.(thus).to-X>3/AOR
 "'All right," he was told' (M120)

The quoting verbs can also be used with indirect quotes, which are ordinary subordinate clauses shifted for person and obviation. Indirect quotes appear not to the right of the matrix verb, which is the unmarked position for complement clauses in general (cf. (1)), but rather to the left, in the typical position of obliques, since they function as the manner oblique argument of the matrix verb.

- (14) *ašemekopi* *wi·ha·čimoniči* *e·hine·nema·či*
 aše=meko=ipi wi·h-a·čimo-niči e·h-ine·nem-a·či
 just=EMPH=HRSY FUT-narrate-3'/AOR AOR-think.thus.of-3>3'/AOR
 'Because, it's said, he_j just wanted him_j to tell the story' (M7H)
 [lit. '... he_j thought (with regard to him_j) that he_j should tell the story']

Obliques are usually expressed by an overt argument of SOME sort in Meskwaki, whether NP or adverb or clause, but zero anaphora is also possible if the reference of the elided oblique is clear from the context. For example, the imperative *pya·no!* 'come!' need not be paired with an overt oblique—the goal of motion is understood to be the deictic center.

- (15) *pya·no!*
 pya·no!
 come-2/IMP
 'Come [here]!'

A rather different way in which an oblique argument may be realized is found in participles, nominalized verb forms used in relative clauses. Relative clauses may be formed on any of the arguments of the lower verb, including an oblique argument. For example, the stem in (16) is *oči-* 'come from (there)' which requires a subject and an oblique expressing source. If a relative clause is formed from this stem with the oblique argument as head, the resulting participle is glossed 'the place from which <subject> came,' as in (16) with a second person singular subject:

- (16) *we·či·yani*
 IC-oči·yani
 IC-come.from.(there)-2/PART/OBLIQUE.HEAD
 'the place where you came from' (W851)

It is important to draw a clear distinction between the way an oblique argument is expressed in participles like (16), and the phenomenon of zero anaphora exemplified in (15). In (15) we have a "real" zero—it is possible for the verb to take an overt oblique in the usual position to the left of the verb, but the speaker chooses to omit the overt argument since the reference is clear from the context. Furthermore, there is no inflectional morphology on the verb in (15) (or any of the preceding examples) which expresses the oblique argument.

Participles such as the one in (16), however, are different. There is inflectional morphology on the verb which indicates that the oblique argument is the head; moreover, an overt oblique CANNOT appear as an argument of the verb in the relative clause. The verb's requirement for an oblique argument is satisfied by the relative clause construction, in which the head of the relative clause is specified as binding the oblique of the lower verb.

Participles may appear in many different contexts. The specific form given in (16) is taken from a question-word question, given in (17) below. The syntax of (17) is representative of the majority of Meskwaki question-word questions.

- (17) *ta·tepiya·pi* *we·či·yani?*
 ta·tepi=ya·pi IC-oči·yani
 where=may.I.ask IC-come.from.(there)-2/PART/OBLIQUE.HEAD
 'Where did you come from?' (W851)

Since the question word in (17), *ta·tepi* 'where?', appears to the left of the participle, one might be tempted to analyze *ta·tepi* as the oblique argument of *oči-* 'come from (there).' This, however, would be incorrect. The structure here is that of an equational S with a zero copula. The question word is equated to the participle 'the place from which you came.' In terms of the word order template in (1), the question word is in focus position and the participle may be considered to be a subject, which would put them on either side of a zero copula verb.

Participles are not only found in equational sentences, of course: they can also function as an argument of an overt verb. Consequently, to our list of the possible formal realizations of the oblique relation we must add that an oblique may be expressed as a participle, as in (18):

- (18) *e·šimeko·natawe·netaki* *e·hiši·ketemina·koči*
 IC-iši=meko -natawe·net-aki e·h-iši·keteminaw·ekoči
 IC-thus=EMPH -seek-3>0/PART/OBL AOR-thus-bless-3'>3'/AOR
 '[the spirit_j] blessed him_j just the way he_j wanted.' (M2F)

In (18) the verb on the right is the matrix verb, *iši-keteminaw-* 'bless <object> in such a way,' and the oblique specifying the manner of blessing is the participle verb form on the left. The participle is a relative clause formed on an oblique argument of the lower verb, *iši-natawe·net-* 'seek, want (thus)' so the gloss for the participle is 'the way that he wanted.'

A final possibility for expressing an oblique is that in certain cases a preverb can itself satisfy the verb's requirement for an oblique. In (19) the preverb *menwi* 'good, well' specifies the manner in which the subject treats the object.

- (19) *wi·hmenwito·tamo·kima·hi* *owi·ya·wa·wi*
wi·h·menwi-to·t-amo·ki=ma·hi ow-i·ya·w-wa·w-i
 FUT-well-treat.(thus)-3P>0/IND=you.see 3-body-3P-INAN
 'They will do well for themselves' (W237)

In other words, the stem *to·t-* 'treat (thus)' needs an oblique of manner (cf. (11) above), but this requirement is satisfied in (19) within the verb complex by a preverb, not by any element in an external position. There are many tokens of the particular compound *menwi-to·t(aw)-*, so it perhaps should be considered to be lexicalized; indeed, in the Meskwaki syllabary no word boundary symbol is written after *menwi* in the examples I have checked.

(20) is another example of a preverb satisfying the requirement for an oblique argument, here an oblique expressing degree or extent. Note that the relative root is itself instantiated by a preverb, *ahpi·hči* 'to (such) extent' and that no word boundary symbol appears between the two preverbs.

- (20) *kekimesimeko* *keče·wahpi·hči-kehke·neta·pena*
kekimesi=meko ke-če·wi-ahpi·hči-kehke·net-a·pena
 everyone=EMPH 2-equally-to.(such).extent-know-21>0/IND
 'All of us have the same knowledge' W842

VERBS WITH MORE THAN ONE OBLIQUE ARGUMENT

Let us now consider the verbs which require more than one oblique argument. A preverb which requires an oblique may be added to a verb stem already subcategorized for an oblique, as in the following example:

- (21) *awitameko* *ke·ko·hi* *iši-* *ateška·wi* *-išawihkapa*
awita=meko ke·ko·hi iši- ateška·wi -išawi-hkapa
 not.POT=EMPH any.way thus- with.delays -thus.happen.to.S-2/POT
 'You would not have experienced delays in any way' W1092

In (21) *ateška·wi* 'with delays' is the oblique argument associated with the verb stem *išawi-* 'do, fare thus; have thus happen to one.' The verb complex

also contains the preverb *iši-* 'thus,' which requires its own oblique argument, satisfied by *ke·ko·hi* 'something/anything; some.way/any.way.' The preverb is discontinuous from the remainder of the verb complex, allowing each of the oblique arguments to be immediately to the left of the associated relative root.

Examples like (21), with two lexical NP obliques associated with a single verb, are relatively rare in the Meskwaki textual corpus. A more common context in which the multiple oblique valence obtains is when the preverb *oči-* 'from, for such a reason' is added to a verb already subcategorized for an oblique and the entire compound verb is inflected as a relative clause headed by the oblique of source/reason. The result is a participle glossed 'the reason why such-and-such happened.' The examples below are all of this form. We may therefore say that one of the obliques, the one associated with *oči* 'from,' is expressed by the morphology indicating that it is coreferential with the head of the relative clause. The question of interest here is how is the second oblique argument expressed?

In some cases, the second oblique is not expressed at all—in other words, we find cases of zero anaphora, parallel to the construction seen in (15) above. This is illustrated in (22), again with the verb *pya·-* 'come.'

- (22) *nahi, mani we·čina·hkači-pya·ya·ni:*
nahi, mani IC-oči=na·hkači -pya·ya·ni:
 well this IC-from=again -come-1/PART/OBLIQUE.HEAD
 'Well, this is why I have come again:' (W906)

(23) is another example in which the second oblique is expressed by zero anaphora. Here the verb *išawi-* 'do (thus), fare (thus), have (something) happen to <subject>' is used with no overt oblique—the event that happened is simply known from the previous context.

- (23) *manamekoho mi·kona we·čišawiyani*
mana=mekoho mi·kon-a IC-oči-išawi-yani
 this.anim=EMPH feather-SG IC-from-fare.(thus)-2/PART/OBLIQUE.HEAD
 'This very feather is why [that] happened to you.' (W47G)

Another possibility for the multiple-oblique constructions is for the preverb *oči* to be separated from the remainder of the verbal complex, resulting in a discontinuous compound verb. The second oblique is expressed by an overt argument; by displacing *oči*, the overt oblique appears immediately

adjacent to the main verb stem, the portion of the verb which requires the second oblique. For example, in (24) the quote *ki'hna'kwa* 'you should leave' is immediately to the left of the stem *in-* 'say thus to'; in (25) the demonstrative *i'ni* 'that' is immediately to the left of *to'taw-* 'treat <object> in such a manner'; in (26) the deictic *ayo'hi* 'here' is immediately to the left of *ako't-* 'hang,' which requires a locative oblique.

- (24) *i'niča'hi* *we'či-* *'ki'hna'kwa'* *-inena'ni*
i'ni=ča'hi *IC-oči-* *'ke-i'h-na'kwa-Ø'* *-in-ena'ni*
 that=so *IC-from-* *2-FUT-leave-2/IND* *-say.(thus).to-1>2/PART/OBL.*
 'So that is why I said to you, "You should leave."' (W929)

- (25) *i'ni we'či-* *i'ni* *-to'to'nakowe*
i'ni IC-oči- *i'ni* *-to'taw-enakowe*
 that *IC-from-* that *-treat.(thus)-1>2P/PART/OBLIQUE.HEAD*
 'That is why I treat you in that way.' (W943)

- (26) *we'či-* *ayo'hi* *-ako'to'ya'ni*
IC-oči- *ayo'hi* *-ako't-o'ya'ni*
IC-from- here *-hang.O.(there)-1>0/PART/OBLIQUE.HEAD*
 'The reason why I am hanging it here.' (W857)

Although the preverb *oči* is frequently separated from the remainder of its verb in these cases of multiple oblique arguments, it is also possible to leave *oči* in place, without creating a discontinuous compound verb. An example of this is (27), where the direct quote appears to the left of *oči* and is thus not immediately adjacent to the verb stem *in-* 'say thus to.' (28) is a similar example, again with a direct quote and the verb stem *in-*.

- (27) *i'ni 'hawo'* *we'či-inaki*
i'ni 'hawo' *IC-oči-in-aki*
 that all.right *IC-from-say.(thus).to-1>3/PART/OBLIQUE.HEAD*
 'That is why I said, "All right," to him.' (W135)

- (28) *išewe'na mani 'kesanakowe'* *we'či-inena'ni:*
išewe'na mani 'ke-sanakowe-Ø' *IC-oči-in-ena'ni:*
 but this *2-say.hard.proposition-2/IND* *IC-from-say.(thus).to-1>2/PART/OBL*
 'But this is why I tell you, "What you say is a hard proposition."' (W921)

(29) is a little more complicated: the demonstrative *i'ni* 'that' appears twice. At first glance it seems to be another example of the construction seen in (27) and (28), where the speaker chooses not to separate the preverb from the rest of the verb. But perhaps because the quoted material is a bit longer, the demonstrative *i'ni* appears again after the quote. A possible analysis might be that the second *i'ni* is the one equated to the participle which follows, and the oblique associated with the quoting verb should be taken to be zero anaphora, referring to the quote which precedes.

- (29) *i'niča'hi* *'ahpene'čimeko* *nenehke'neti'ko'*
i'ni=ča'hi *'ahpene'či=meko* *nenehke'neti'-ko'*
 that=so always=EMPH think.of.each.other-2P/IMP

- i'ni we'či-inenakowe*
i'ni IC-oči-inenakowe
 that *IC-from-say.thus-1>2P/PART/OBL*
 'So that is why I tell you, "Always think of each other."' (W865)

CONCLUSION

This paper has examined a particularly robust portion of the Meskwaki word order template given in (1): the relative position of oblique arguments and the verb. It has been shown that Meskwaki verbs subcategorized for a single oblique argument overwhelmingly prefer to express the oblique with an overt argument immediately to the left of the verb—even, in a few cases, in the preverb position preceding a relative root. In certain contexts, however, zero anaphora is also possible for obliques. The use of the preverb *oči-* 'from; for such a reason' in relative clauses expressing cause or reason entails that many verbs in such relative clauses require more than one oblique argument. The preference for expressing the oblique immediately to the left of the portion of the verb indexed for that argument seems to be the motivation for discontinuous preverb-verb constructions in this class of multiple-oblique verbs.

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Micro-Variation in Agreement, Clause-Typing and Finiteness: Comparative Evidence from Blackfoot and Plains Cree

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INTRODUCTION: SYNTACTIC MICRO-VARIATION

We address the following question: how can one model syntactic variation between languages? The theoretical literature approaches this question in two ways. On one view, a change in the value of large-scale macro-parameters has dramatic consequences for the grammar as a whole; this approach often models differences between (usually unrelated) language types. Irrespective of the merits of the macro-parametric approach—which remains controversial—it is not a useful analytic tool for modeling syntactic variation between related languages. In contrast, the micro-parametric approach posits that incremental differences in grammars of closely related languages reflect small-scale, fine-grained changes. A hallmark of micro-parametric syntactic analyses is that the syntactic properties of cognate morphemes are subject to variation. Consequently, the mapping between morphology and syntax is a primary source of variation. In this context, our goal is to explore micro-variation in agreement, clause-typing and finiteness in Blackfoot and Plains Cree. While Blackfoot (together with Cheyenne and Arapaho) is part of the geographic Plains subgroup, Plains Cree is the westernmost member of the Cree-Montagnais-Naskapi continuum, itself part of the Central Algonquian sub-group.¹

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