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Discourse analysis of a South Slavey narrative text

Gillian Story, contributor

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The narrator of the South Slavey narrative text treated in this paper was Sarah Hardisty and the text was recorded by Vic Monus in Jean Marie River, NWT, date unknown.

1. SOME PRELIMINARIES

As a first step in the analysis of the text, an SSA (Semantic Structure Analysis) of the text was done, of the type described by Beekman, Callow, and Kopesec 1981.

In working the SSA, it was assumed that in general the boundaries of grammatical sentences and paragraphs would coincide with boundaries of semantic propositions and paragraphs (clusters of propositions),¹ and therefore, in setting up semantic units in the SSA of the text, since a sound recording of the text was not available to the present writer, attention was paid to the orthographic sentence and paragraph boundaries in the manuscript as indicative of the phonological features characteristic of grammatical sentence and paragraph boundaries.²

Therefore, semantic units in the SSA were set up which, in general, were composed of either less than an orthographic (grammatical) sentence unit (and wholly contained within it) or a whole number (one or more) of sentence units. In some cases, this led to the adoption of one semantic analysis over another putative analysis.

In the present text, the exceptions occur mostly when an orthographic sentence boundary occurs within a quote. The whole quote together with its pre- and post-quotatives (if any) comprise a semantic unit which, apart from the sentence boundaries within the quote, is either an orthographic sentence or is wholly contained within one.

¹However, see K. Callow 1998.153 and Beekman, Callow, and Kopesec 1981.118 concerning the fact that grammatical and semantic unit boundaries do not always coincide.

²The manuscript has eight orthographic paragraphs; that is, a new indented line (and the symbol "¶") marks the points at which a new orthographic paragraph begins. The symbol "¶" has been inserted at additional points in the manuscript for a total of seventeen paragraph breaks (eighteen paragraphs). The present analysis posits eleven major paragraph breaks and an additional eleven at the subparagraph level (the exact number indeterminate since smaller units could also be considered subparagraphs).

Two of the seventeen "¶"-symbols occur mid-sentence and in the present analysis one of these paragraph breaks has been shifted one clause (to a sentence break [at 065]) and the other occurs at a break [at 074] between units that are at a lower level than the paragraph and subparagraph levels considered here.

There are five cases for which there is close but not exact agreement between the manuscript and the present analysis concerning the location of a paragraph break (four at the paragraph level rather than the subparagraph level).

In one case, the orthographic paragraph boundary has been overridden in the present analysis and a (part) repetition [of 043-045 in 046-047] has been considered a case of tail-head linkage between paragraphs (see footnote 31).

Another case is one of those mentioned above where the paragraph break has been shifted one clause [to 065] and there is a second similar case where the paragraph break has been shifted one clause in the present analysis [to 140], to the point between the Closing in the SSA (a narrator's comment on the story) and the Coda (situationally tied to the story-telling setting) of the narrative.²

The fourth case involves an area in the text [032-035] where the narrator has backed up and later repeated a clause (see footnote 17).

The fifth case occurs at a subparagraph level lower than those generally considered here [at 085] and, although the present SSA analysis is preferred, a re-analysis in the SSA would be quite possible.

The net result is that there is close agreement with the manuscript concerning the location of paragraph breaks in ten out of the eleven major paragraph breaks posited in the present analysis. One paragraph break is inserted [at 136] between the Body and the Closing of the narrative which does not correspond to any "¶" in the manuscript.

Otherwise, there is only one exception in the SSA of the text as currently analysed: 090 is orthographically attached to 089 but semantically is more closely related to 091.

The terms 'thematic paragraph' and 'topic' will be used below and need some explication: they are used in the sense given in quotations below.

1.1. Thematic paragraph

Givón (1983.7-8) [check italics are in the original] says:

"Within it [discourse], chains of clauses are combined into larger thematic units which one may call *thematic paragraphs* ... These may further combine into larger yet discourse units (such as 'paragraphs', 'sections', 'chapters', 'parts' or 'stories'). The thematic paragraph is the most immediately relevant level of discourse within which one can begin to discuss the complex process of *continuity in discourse*.

"There are, broadly, three major aspects of discourse continuity which are displayed in or mediated through the thematic paragraph, and which in turn receive structural/grammatical/syntactic expression within the clause. These three continuities thus bridge the gap between the *macro* and *micro* organizational levels of language[:] (a) Thematic continuity (b) Action continuity (c) Topics/participants continuity ...

"The thematic paragraph is *by definition* about the same theme.³ Most *commonly* it also preserves topic and action continuity. However, topics/participants may change within the discourse without *necessarily* changing either action continuity or theme continuity. One is perhaps justified in viewing the three as an *implicational hierarchy* ... :

THEME > ACTION > TOPICS/PARTICIPANTS"

Cooreman (1992) says of the thematic paragraph that it is "a narrative unit in which one or more participants are involved in one or a series of activities which form a unified whole and which move towards the same general goal" (p.244).

Thematic paragraphs combine together into larger thematic units which will be referred to in those terms or simply as units where the reference is plain. Note that these are not chains of just any contiguous paragraphs but contiguous paragraphs which have a higher-level theme (and which in the SSA constitute a higher-level semantic unit - they have a labeled 'node' in the SSA 'tree').

1.2. Topic

Quoting Givón again (1983.8 [check italics in the original]):

"[The functional domain of topic/participant continuity] is linked to the thematic paragraph in a statistically significant but not absolute fashion: Within the thematic paragraph it is most common for one topic to be the continuity marker, the *leitmotif*, so that it is the participant *most crucially involved* in the action sequence running through the paragraph; it is the participant most closely associated with the higher-level 'theme' of the paragraph; and finally, it is the participant most likely to be coded as the *primary topic* - or *grammatical subject* - of the vast majority [sic] of sequentially-ordered clauses/sentences comprising the thematic paragraph. It is thus, obviously, the most *continuous* of all the topics mentioned in the various clauses in the paragraph."

Topic, for Givón, then, is a clause-/sentence-level entity but he also speaks of a theme-level entity which is the most continuous of the topics of the thematic paragraph. This entity could be called 'topic' at the paragraph level. In fact, there may be 'topics' at different levels from the clause up, including topics at discourse level. (For example, in the present text, the woman who killed the Cree is plainly the discourse topic.) We shall have reason to speak of paragraph- and discourse-level topics in following sections.

The following examples illustrate clause- and paragraph-level topics:

046 "Mih kônedhah,"
nets 2sgS.pull.out.pl.again.Impf
"Pull out the nets,"

³Evidently 'theme' for Givón is, or approximates to, a summary statement of the thematic paragraph; for example, T. Payne, working in Givón's paradigm, gives certain themes in a Yagua text as "the squirrel tries to trick the deer into crossing the stream on the back of the boa", and "the deer debates within himself" (T. Payne 1993.93).

- 047 *yéhndi* *ésă*,
3S:4O.say.to.Impf so.it.seems
she said to him
- 048 *ii* *cheeku* *thâh* *niitfah* *ésă* ...
that young.man alone 3S.sg.go.off.Pf so.it.seems
and that young man went off by himself ...

In 047 the woman is the clause-level topic. However, in the development of the paragraph, its theme is 'the young man starts to go out to check the nets', paragraph topic the young man, and 048 refers to his first step in his preparations to go.

And,

- 102 *Igots'êh* *ésă* *ii* *níanôt-fah* *ésă*
and.then so.it.seems there 3S.sg.arrive.back.Pf so.it.seems
And then returning there (to the tent)
- 103 *theda* *ésă* *ésă*
3S.sg.be.sitting.stPf so.it.seems so.it.seems
he was sitting
- 104 *kí* *ekö* *ésă* *naetfeh* *ii* *ts'élî*.
just over.there so.it.seems 3S.sg.come.back.Prog that woman
over there she, that woman, is coming back.
- 105 *Ehnáa* *dene* *gö* *ôki* *cho* *níanîdhah*.
across.from.each.other human arms two big 3S.bring.pl.back.Pf
On either shoulder she was bringing back two big human arms.

In 102 and 103, the young man is clause-level topic. The theme of the paragraph is 'the woman returns with two big human arms and eats them', paragraph topic the woman.

Higher-level topicality then is dependent on the thematic structure.⁴

In the analysis of the present text, the thematic units within each of which one of the participants has been considered the primary topic are paragraphs intermediate in level between the whole discourse and the single clause, each averaging a little under 12 clauses long (though varying widely in length, and longer in the central paragraphs).

1.3. Degrees of topicality

As well as speaking of a participant as topic, at whatever level, it is possible to speak of participants being 'more topical' or, conversely, 'less topical'. In each smaller or larger topical domain, one participant (or participant group) is topic at that level, i.e. more topical than other participants currently 'on stage'⁵. Referring to Givón's work, T. Payne (1993:51) says, "'topic' is seen as a scalar category. Participants are more or less topical at any given point in a discourse."

010 in the Dragon text provides a good example:

- 010 *cheeku* *fié* *detá* *héh* *nánde*
young.man a.certain reflPoss.father with 3S.stay.Impf
a certain young man was living with his father

The preceding paragraph constitutes the Introduction in the SSA, in which the slovenly woman is introduced and described. 010 introduces the young man and his father and is the initial Circumstance to the paragraph in which the woman foists herself on him. The woman, as paragraph topic (of both paragraphs), is more topical than the young man or his father at this point. But, as subject of 010 (which has neutral word order), the young man is more topical at clause-level than his father, a relative topicality which is also signaled by the introduction of his father in his relationship to the young man rather than vice versa.

⁴Not deduced--circularly--from which participant is coded nominally or pronominally.

⁵See T. Payne 1993:13, 55-56 for the metaphorical use of 'on stage'. A previously mentioned participant is on or off stage in much the same way as a character in a play is on or off stage.

1.4. Topicality, relationship terms, and a grammatical hierarchy

In the Geese text, outside quotes, less topical participants are always coded by nouns. In particular, the man's wife and children are always coded by relationship terms. A relationship term (or indeed any noun apart from *dene* 'man' at first introduction) never codes the more topical man (husband and father)--**medené*/**dedené* 'her husband' or **gotá*/**detá* 'their father' do not occur in the text. That is, **dedené éhndi* 'she said to her husband' or **gotá góhndi* 'their father said to them', for example, are non-occurring; instead *mets'éke yéhndi* 'his wife said to him' and *dezhaa (a)góhndi* 'he said (that) to his children' give the same situational sense (Geese 17d and 25c).

Consequently, the greater topicality of the man with respect to his wife and children is manifested grammatically by the following hierarchy:

SubjectPossessor > Subject > DirectObject/IndirectObject

The highest grammatical role coding the man is always higher in the hierarchy than the highest grammatical role coding his wife or children:

<i>mezhaa giéhndi</i>	'his (SPossr ⁶) children (S) said to him (O, =SPossr)'
<i>dets'éke gha dzaa adi</i>	'he (S) spoke badly for his (OPossr, =S) wife (O)' (or, 'his manner of speaking riled his wife')

Using the examples above, *'their (SPossr) father (S) said to them' and *'she (S) said to her husband (O)' are non-occurring in the Geese text.

Note that the hierarchy still holds in the special case of a reflexive possessor *de*-occurring in a coordinate subject NP:

<i>kí</i>	<i>dets'éke</i>	<i>éhdah</i>	<i>dezhaa</i>	<i>éhdah</i>	<i>thâh</i>	<i>nágedéh</i>
just	his.wife	including	his.children	including	alone	they.were.living
'he (S, =SPossr) including his (SPossr) wife (S) and his (SPossr) children (S) were living alone'						

[The possessive *de*- is the grammatical signal that the subject prefix *ge*- '3plS' refers to the man as well as to his wife and children. *de*- is always coreferential with the subject (or, in this case, with one member of the subject group).]

In Kuno's terms, the narrator's empathy is with the man.⁷

This hierarchy, derived from the Geese text, will be examined with respect to the present narrative.

2. PARTICIPANT STATUS

2.1. Major participants

In this text, the woman and the young man are both considered to be the major participants for the following reasons:

1. The woman is clearly THE major participant in that the Prelude to the story in the SSA announces that it will be about a certain woman like a dragon, who killed the Cree.⁸ In the final Denouement (or Outcome) in the Body of the story, there is a description of the new woman that she becomes after the events of the story, and in the subsidiary Denouement before that, there is a discourse by the young man's father about why the woman did what she did. Moreover, in the Closing, the storyteller adds her comment on why the woman had been as she was.
2. However, there are indications that the young man as well as the woman is a major participant. Both the woman and the young man take significant initiatives at different points in the story: the woman moves in with the young man at her own initiative, she prepares herself for her confrontation with the Cree, she dictates to the young man; the

⁶The abbreviations are SPossr 'possessor of subject noun'; S 'subject noun'; O 'direct or indirect object noun'; = 'coreferential with'.

⁷See, for example, Kuno 1987.203ff.

⁸Interestingly, all three entities in this 'title', the woman, the dragon, and the Cree, are the three problems which appear in the narrative (at different thematic levels), each eventually finding their resolution.

young man discovers the Cree and later "medicines" the woman back. In plain number of mentions, the young man ranks almost equally with the woman.

3. Both are 'problem solvers', the woman concerning the Cree and the young man concerning the woman-become-dragon.
4. One, or both of them, are always on stage.⁹ One, or both of them together, are topical throughout the narrative, if not at lower levels (clause or thematic subparagraph), at least at higher levels (thematic paragraph).
5. Both are introduced in the structure *N + fíé* 'a certain N' (004, 010). (The woman is mentioned in 002 previously in the Prelude to the story and in the same NP structure but the mention in 004 occurs in the Story Proper, in its Introduction.) They are also introduced in non-eventive clauses, 004 'a certain woman doesn't even dress herself well' (and five other non-eventive clauses immediately following), and 010 'a certain young man was living with his father' (and in the Geese text the major participant is introduced similarly: 'a certain man had many children').¹⁰

T. Payne defines central characters as those "that the text is about and which are normally present throughout the text. Central characters do not lose their status as central characters, even if they are not mentioned for an entire episode ..." (1993:56). These features characterize the participants here called major.

In summary then, note that both the woman and the young man are major participants in the discourse. At every point in the narrative, either the woman or the young man is found to be the most topical participant at the paragraph level. Both are introduced into the narrative by a phrase of the form *N + fíé* (*fíé* 'one, a certain'). (Similarly, in the Geese text, the man is the major participant, more topical than other participants throughout the narrative, and is introduced by a phrase of the form *N + fíé*.¹¹)

2.2. Minor participants

The term 'minor participant' is used in the approximate sense of Payne's non-central major characters, defined by him as "those characters mentioned 5 or more times in 20 clauses in a single episode. Characters mentioned only 4 times in 20 clauses are also considered major if in the majority of those mentions (i.e., 3 or 4) the character was a subject ..." (T. Payne 1993:56).

The minor participant is the young man's father.

1. At paragraph level, he is always less topical than the woman and the young man. In his speeches, the narrative is still concerned with events concerning these major participants, the woman and the young man, foreshadowing future events or reflecting on past ones involving the major participants.¹²

⁹Excepting in clauses or short subparagraphs which provide background material. For example, in the brief paragraph 021-024, the people propose to move camp. In the larger thematic paragraph, the woman is the more topical. (The people, inasmuch as they are coded by *ts'e-* 'unspecified subject', are backgrounded grammatically as well as thematically.)

¹⁰Levinsohn (1992:114) quotes the clause introducing the prodigal son, 'a certain man had two sons', as an example of the introduction of a major participant in a non-event clause. This clause is very parallel to the clause introducing the man in the Geese text. In the Geese text, the children are minor participants but in the story of the Prodigal Son, the father is not major and the sons minor--all three of the father and the two sons are major participants (see Levinsohn 1992:118f.). Might this clause in the Prodigal Son, translated literally in Slavey, fail to register the sons as major participants?

¹¹Givón has several times discussed the use of the numeral 'one' to mark referential-indefinite entities; for example, he says, "a number of languages use special morphemes to mark referential-indefinite nominals as distinct from non-referential ones. Many languages use the numeral 'one' for such a purpose (cf. Creoles, Israeli Hebrew, Mandarin Chinese, Persian, Sherpa, Romance languages, Germanic languages, etc.)" (Givón 1984). A participant at first introduction is, of course, referential-indefinite.

Similarly, "Hopper and Thompson (1984:719) have shown that, in many languages, the presence versus the absence of words like 'one' or 'a certain', in connection with the introduction of a participant, depends on whether or not 'it figures in the discourse as a salient [topical] participant'" (quoted in Levinsohn 1992, p.98 [italics in Levinsohn]).

¹²For further discussion, see section 3.1.c. below.

2. He exercises initiative only in directing the young man to remain behind with the woman one more night (while the rest of them move to another fishlake). He never interacts with the woman directly.
3. He is never a 'problem resolver'.
4. The young man's father is introduced without any special formula such as *N + fié* but rather is introduced in 010 in his relationship to the young man:

010 *cheeku* *fié* *detá* *héh* *nánde*
 young.man a.certain reflPoss.father with 3S.stay.Impf
 a certain young man was living with his father

Also, concerning subsequent references to minor participants, Levinsohn's remarks concerning major versus minor could be echoed for Slavey: "One difference between major and minor participants is that the latter just appear and disappear, without any formal introduction. They are often referred to in full, each time they are involved in the story [for the coding of minor participants in Slavey, see in particular section 3.2 below]. Major participants, in contrast, are formally introduced in some way and typically are involved in a series of events" (Levinsohn 1992.113).

5. Even when the young man and his father act conjointly, they are not coded in a neutral coordinate structure but in a manner which indicates the greater topicality of the young man (or as if from the young man's viewpoint):

017 *ii* *cheeku* *á* *detá* *chu* *mih* *ghálageenda*
 that young.man -- reflPoss.father also nets 3plS.work.at.Impf
 that young man and his father work on the nets

de- 'reflPoss', or 'his own' (always coreferential with the subject as stated above), may not possess a subject noun, except in coordinate structures¹³ such as 017.

2.3. Participant status and topicality

Levinsohn (1992.116) says of participant status and salience ['topicality'] that, "[t]he difference between salience and the status of a participant as major versus minor may be summarized as follows:

- the status of a participant never changes [cf. T. Payne 1993.56 quoted above];
- a major participant may be locally topical or nontopical, according to whether or not the author selects him or her as the focus of attention."

(Also, "[i]t appears that minor participants are always nontopical; the author never makes them the focus of attention" (Levinsohn 1992.115).) He has found the two factors above to be relevant to many discourse features of New Testament Greek. They will also be found relevant to Slavey participant coding, discussed in section 3 below.

2.4. Non-central participants

Human (or anthropomorphized) participants that are not major or minor will be called non-central participants. See section 4.1 for the coding of non-central participants.

2.5. Props

Non-human animate or inanimate entities will be called 'props'. See section 4.2 for the coding of props (see also section 3.2.2.1). Analysis to date has not confirmed that the distinction between non-central participants and props is a relevant one.

3. MAJOR AND MINOR PARTICIPANT CODING

3.1. Nominal coding by relationship terms

In the Geese text, as mentioned above, it was found that, outside quotes, the major participant was coded nominally at first introduction, *dene fié* 'a certain man', and always pronominally (as possessor, as subject, or as direct or oblique object) at any later mention, and remained the primary topic (the most topical participant) throughout the narrative. The

¹³A similar structure is found in the Geese text:

dets'éke éhdah dezhaa éhdah thâh nágedéh
 He, including his wife and his children, they were living alone

Note the same use of *de-*.

See Saxon 1986.213, fn. 9 for "reflexive possessors in coordination" in Dogrib.

minor human participants, his wife and children, were always coded nominally and always related to the man by grammatical possession, *mets'éke/dets'éke* 'his wife' and *mezhaa/dezhaa/medezôâ* 'his children'. (Similarly, outside quotes, the minor non-human participants, the geese, were always coded nominally.)

Therefore the hypothesis will be tested that in this text also, when a participant is coded by a noun which is possessed, that participant will be found to be less topical than the participant coded by the possessive.

Outside quotes, there are sixteen cases of possessed relationship terms, in 010, 011, 017, 026, 031, 033, 066, 074, 080, 112, 113, 115, 116, 128, 129, and 131.

Among these, in 033, 112, 113, and 115, there is reference to the young man's father's group (rather than his father alone). 026, 031, 128, and 129 are pre- or post-quotatives (026, 031, and 128), or a summary quotative (129), to quotes addressed to the young man by his father.

- a. Considering first the other examples, 010, 011, 017, 066, 074, 080, 116, and 131, there is no example among these eight which appears to contradict the hypothesis. The participant less topical within the paragraph receives nominal coding (and the more topical receives pronominal coding).

For example,

065 *Ezhi t'áh éså kí kaondíh éså*
that and.so so.it.seems just it.is.so so.it.seems
tôejihdéhthfah sóondi
3S.sg.start.to.run.back.up.ashore.Pf maybe.so
So he ran back up (into the bush)

066 *á dets'éke kaéhndi*
-- reflPoss.wife 3S.say.so.to.Impf
he spoke to his wife

and,

080 *Mets'éke éså ekö kádéhthfah*
3poss.wife so.it.seems over.there 3S.sg.start.out.from.Pf
His wife started out (of the tent) to go over there

066 and 080 occur in the unit 065-087; the theme is 'the young man reports the Cree to his wife and he stays while she goes to investigate (and he hears sounds of an affray)'. The woman is the less topical within the unit and at three points in this unit (in 066, 074, and 080) is coded by *-ts'éke* 'wife'; that is, the nominal coding is of the less topical. The noun is grammatically possessed by *me-/de-* 'his'/'his own', referring to the young man, who is the more topical participant with respect to the theme.

131 *ôhk'éh dedené gha mékáeht'éh edé*
sometimes reflPoss.husband BEN 3S.cook.Impf when
sometimes when she cooked for her husband

131 occurs in a paragraph of which the theme is 'the woman becomes a different person' and the woman is the primary topic; her husband (the young man) is the less topical and receives nominal coding. The possessive *de-* refers to the woman.

Note that the inverse relationship terms *-ts'éke* 'wife' and *-dené* 'husband' are used in 066, 080, and 131 in these examples depending on the relative topicality of the participants at those points.

- b. As mentioned above, in 033, 112, 113, and 115 the reference is to the young man's father's group. The group is coded by *metá ... ge-* (033, 113) and *detá go-* (112, 115) (the pronominals *ge-* 'they' and *go-* 'them'/'their' with which *metá/detá* 'his father' are in cross-reference show that a group is referred to and not the father alone; in addition, in 033, with subject *metá ... ge-*, the verb stem is plural). There is no reference to the group by pronominal alone.

For example,

033 *ekö ekö fuetúé gots'ë metá*
over.there over.there fish.lake to.it 3Poss.father
gogedéhthe sóondi.
3plS.pl.start.to.go.Pf maybe.so
his father's group started to go over there to a fish lake.

033 is the Concluding Incident to the unit 021-033 whose theme is 'the young man is instructed (by his father) to remain behind with the woman after the group have left'.

The other three cases, 112, 113, and 115, occur in the opening subparagraphs to the unit 110-129 whose theme is 'the woman's action in relation to the young man is the subject of conversation between him and his father'.

For example,

112 *Detá gok'éh fégedéhtthe.*
 reflPoss.father 3plPoss.following.after 3plS.dl.start.to.go.Pf
 They two started off after his father's group.

In view of the themes of 021-033 and 110-129, it is clear that the nominal coding of the father's group in 112, 113, and 115 is of a participant less topical than either the woman or the young man (or of his father) and the hypothesis is supported.

- c. The pre- and post-quotatives, in 026, 031, 128, and 129, belonging to quotes spoken by the young man's father, occur in the initial and final paragraphs of the unit 021-129, a Preliminary Incident and a Denouement respectively in the SSA--026 and 031 in the Preliminary Incident and 128 and 129 in the Denouement. These two paragraphs 'bracket' the two central units, Occasion and Outcome in the SSA.

In the two central units, there is no mention of the young man's father and in the unit taken as a whole, the woman and the young man are obviously the more topical. With respect to the Preliminary Incident and the Denouement, the theme of the Preliminary Incident is '(a proposal is made that the group move to another fish lake and,) as instructed by his father, the young man is to remain behind with the woman after the group have left' and that of the Denouement is 'the woman's action in relation to the young man is the subject of conversation between him and his father' as asserted above; that is, in these two units, the content of the quotes constitute the nucleus of the thematic unit and consequently the woman and the young man are more topical than his father.

For example, the nucleus of the Preliminary Incident is the young man's father's speech, the substance of which is: 'you stay behind with the woman and then follow us with her':

026 *ezhi cheeku metá kayéhndi,*
 that young.man 3Poss.father 3S:4O.say.so.to.Impf
 the young man's father spoke to him,

...

027 *ezhi ts'élî deḡözü hüt'íi shétî t'áh,*
 that woman beyond.anything so.much 3S.eat.Impf because
 "Because that woman eats so very much,

028 *nahetf'ähâ mih wôh mameh*
 1/2plPoss.after nets concerning 3Poss.in.the.lead.of
nanîtéh. ...
 2sgS.sleep.again.Impf
 after we've left [in our absence], you camp another night with her
 on account of the nets.

...

030 *mameh sek'éh dûtfá*
 3Poss.in.the.lead.of 1sgPoss.following.after 2sgS.sg.start.to.go.Opt
olêê,
 should
 [then] you should start after me with her,

031 *metá yéhndi.*
 3Poss.father 3S:4O.say.to.Impf
 his father said to him.

The reason given for their following later is the need for the woman's appetite for fish to be satisfied; the speech also foreshadows later events (involving the young man and the woman). It seems therefore that even in this section of the

narrative in which the young man's father's speech is central, the narrative is still concerned with events concerning the woman and the young man.¹⁴

In this sense, the young man can be said to be more topical than his father in this unit.

The Denouement consists of a speech interchange between the young man and his father. In replying, his father discourses about the woman. The nuclear proposition in his speech is: 'to that extent [in what she did], she helped/saved you'. As in the Preliminary Incident, the narrative continues to be directed towards events concerning the woman and the young man.

However, in this case, the post-quotative following the young man's father's speech contains a relationship term -*zhaa* 'son' referring to the young man who has been deemed the more topical (and the expectation is therefore that the coding of the young man would be pronominal):

128 *dezhaa* *éhndi*.
 reflPoss.son 3S.say.to.Impf
 he said to his son.

The expected form of 128 would have been *metá yéhndi* 'his father said to him'. Just as *medené/dedené* 'her husband' and *gotá/detá* 'their father' do not occur in the Geese text referring to the more topical man (in quotatives paralleling 128 in which the wife or children reply to the man, and elsewhere), it could be expected that *mezhaa/dezhaa* 'his son' would not occur in the present text referring to the more topical young man. The relationship term -*zhaa* 'son' is not used to code the young man elsewhere (and the young man's father is not coded only pronominally in any other clause outside quotes).

It seems probable that 129 immediately following 128 functions as a corrective to it, in effect restoring the proper discourse topicality balance between the young man and his father:

129 *Metá* *ésä* *adi*.
 3Poss.father so.it.seems 3S.say.so.Impf
 His father said that.

In conclusion, there seems to be no unambiguous exception in this narrative to the hypothesis above concerning relationship terms.

Further, the topicality hierarchy found in the Geese text is, apart from 128, supported by this text also:

SubjectPossessor > Subject > DirectObject/IndirectObject

026, 031, 033, 074, 080, 113, and 129 illustrate the relation SubjectPossessor > Subject, and 010, 011, 066, 112, 115, 116, and 131 the relation Subject > DirectObject/IndirectObject.

For example,

113 *metá* *mih* *wôh* *nagendetéh*.
 3Poss.father nets concerning 3plS.sleep.again.Impf
 his (SPossr) father's group (S) were camping for fishing.

and,

116 *ezhi* *dene* *ésä* *detá* *kaéhndi*,
 that man so.it.seems reflPoss.father 3S.say.so.to.Impf
 and that man (S) spoke to his (OPossr, =S) father (O)

017, containing a reflexive possessive *de-* in a coordinate subject NP, exemplified in section 2.2 above, also supports the relation SubjectPossessor > Subject just as a parallel example in the Geese text (discussed above) does so.

Before leaving this section, mention should be made of 016 and 094. In both these examples, -*ts'éke* 'wife' occurs but in both the noun is contained in a phrase which is not an argument of the verb (as in the examples so far considered) but is predicational, predicate 'become the wife of' and 'be the wife of' respectively:

¹⁴In the Geese text, the substance of the quotes concerns the man's thoughts and actions relative to the geese so that even when his wife or children speak the narrative is still concerned with the man in relation to the geese.

- 016 *yets'éke theléh.*
 4Poss.wife 3S.become.stPf
 she became his wife.
- 094 *ii mets'éke ö ôt'e.*
 that 3Poss.wife indeed 3S.be.so.stPf
 that (dragon) was his wife.

ye- may not be coreferential with the subject but since in both these examples the possessive is not coreferential with the subject, either pronominal ye- or me- would be grammatical within the clause. However, 016 occurs in a paragraph whose theme is 'the woman moves in with the young man' and 094 occurs in a paragraph whose theme is 'the young man discovers a dragon (who is his wife)'. ye- refers to the young man when he is not the primary topic and me- when he is.¹⁵ Pronominal coding of the participants is discussed further below.

3.2. Major and minor participant coding in general

In this text, in the Story Proper 004-138 (that is, excluding 001-003 and 139-141 which are tied to the story-telling situation), either the woman or the young man are the primary topic, the woman in 004-047 and 105-138, and the young man in 048-104.¹⁶ As noted above, the woman and the young man are the major participants. The young man's father is the minor participant and is always less topical than either the woman or the young man.

Outside quotes, there are exactly 100 examples¹⁷ in the Story Proper of subject¹⁸ and object¹⁹ nominal or pronominal coding of the woman, the young man, and the young man's father (counting the four examples of conjoint coding of two referents together as each 1 in the count²⁰--and ascribing the count of 1 to the more topical rather than to the less topical participant in each case). With respect to nominal and pronominal coding and to topicality, the distribution is as follows (that is, conflating figures for subject and object):

¹⁵Rice 1989.1009 mentions Thompson's suggestion that a discourse function of the Athapaskan pronominals cognate with Slavey me- is "to indicate an unstated object when the subject is a nonidentical third person and the object a topic or focus of the discourse" (Thompson 1979).

¹⁶The boundaries of these spans are not precisely congruent with the boundaries of paragraph-level semantic units. See 3.2.3.1.c. below for 'fuzziness' of the span boundaries.

¹⁷Omitting 032 and 034 which are corrected by 035, and omitting 128 of which 129 is considered the corrective (as discussed above in section 3.1.c). 032-035 are probably a bit tangled. 035 is fairly plainly a correction of 034--adding the prefix na- 'again' to the verb--and is a virtual repeat of 032. Probably the storyteller got ahead of herself with 032, backed up with 033 which probably properly belongs to the previous unit and is so analysed here, and then proceeded with 034 and its correction 035, 033 correctly preceding 035.

¹⁸'Subject' includes the case of a postpositional object of an impersonal predicate *mets'ë nihts'i* 'the wind was blowing towards her' or 'she was downwind' (097).

¹⁹Using 'object' to cover the cases of direct object of a transitive verb, or oblique object with an intransitive verb (or possessor of a predicate noun in 016 and 094).

²⁰Rather than 1 each, 1 for the more topical (which is the primary topic in three of the cases) and 1 for the less topical for a total of 2 for each of these clauses.

Dragon text	N	pro	Total
primary topic	4	62	66
less topical	22	12	34
Total	26	74	100

In the Geese text, the distribution is as follows, where the primary topic is the man throughout the text and the non-topical (or less topical) are his wife, his children, and the geese:

Geese text	N	pro	Total
primary topic	1	26	27
less topical	18	0	18
Total	19	26	45

In the Geese text, there is only one example of nominal coding of the primary topic and this occurs at first introduction of the man. Otherwise, the primary topic is always coded pronominally and the less topical participants outside quotes are coded nominally.

The present text, the Dragon text, exhibits the same general pattern (coding of the minor participant, the young man's father, is always nominal outside quotes) though nominal coding of the primary topic is not restricted to first introduction and there is some pronominal coding of less topical participants. Each of these cases will be discussed below.

Reference will be made to subjects as 'same' or 'different', 'same' when the subject is coreferential with the subject of the preceding clause (SS), 'different' when it is not (DS). In assessing whether the subject is 'same' or 'different' between clauses (SS or DS), (1) the subject has been considered 'same' in a post-quotative if it is coreferential with the subject of a paired pre-quotative (that is, disregarding, or skipping over, the quote); (2) both in the case of a 'merger' of two referents in conjoint coding and in the case of a 'split' of conjoint coding, the subject has been considered 'different'.²¹

3.2.1. Pronominal coding of primary topic and nominal coding of less topical

By default, the coding of the primary topic is pronominal and of the less topical participants is nominal. In illustration of pronominal coding of the primary topic and nominal coding of the less topical, note the following examples:

- a. The woman is primary topic in 004-020 (and beyond), and there is nominal coding of the woman in 004 (at first introduction) but pronominal coding in the rest of the section 004-020. The following summarizes the nominal and pronominal coding of participants in the section (with more topical participants bolded and less topical italicized):

004: **Woman** is introduced
005-009: **She** is slovenly and **she** eats lots
 010-011: *Young man* and *his father* are introduced
012-016: **She** moves in with *that young man* and **she** becomes *his* wife
 017: *That young man* and *his father* are working on the nets
018-020: **She** stuffs herself with however much fish is caught

In 004 there is nominal coding of the woman at first introduction. Then, in 005-020, there are 12 examples of the pronominal subject coding of the woman, including cases of 'different' subject (that is, where the young man is the subject referent in the previous clause or clauses and not the woman). In the same section, the young man is coded pronominally only in the case of 'same' subject (that is, when there is no grammatical role change with respect to the subject referent; see section 3.2.2.1 below): '**She** moved in with *that young man* and **she** lived by *him* and **she** became *his* wife'.

- b. A similar section is found in 048-104 in which the young man is now the primary topic:

048-059: **That young man** goes to the lake

²¹In actual fact, in the case of a merger when one of the participants coded conjointly is the primary topic, it appears that Slavey treats the subject as if it were 'same' (see section 3.2.4 below).

060-064: What is observed of the enemy at the lake
 065-073: **He** returns and speaks to **his** wife
 074-079: **His** wife replies to **him**
 080-082: **He** waits while **his** wife goes
 083-087: What is heard of conflict
 088-104: **He** goes to investigate and then does "medicine" (for the woman's return)

In 049-104 there are 21 examples of the pronominal subject coding of the young man and none of his nominal coding, subject or object, including cases where the pronominal coding is carried over a number of clauses in which there is no reference to the young man; for example, 065 after five clauses, 081 after one, and 088 after five. In 089, there is pronominal subject coding of the young man followed by 090-093 describing the lake suffused with blood and the dragon on the ice and no mention again of the young man till 094 when it is disclosed that the dragon is his wife. (Attention was drawn to 094 at the end of section 3.1 where it was noted that *me-* 'his' was in accord with the primary topic status of the young man at this point.) In 095 the young man is coded as subject again but still pronominally.

In the same section, his wife, the less topical participant, is coded nominally three times by a relationship term, *mets'éke/dets'éke* 'his wife'/'his own wife', in 066, 074, and 080. The use of the relationship term *-ts'éke* 'wife' parallels the use of *-ts'éke* 'wife' and *-zhaa/dezôâ* 'children' in the Geese text for less topical participants (see section 1.4 above).

Just as in 005-020 there could be pronominal coding of the less topical young man if there was no grammatical role change ('same' subject), so in this section also, in 079 and 089. 079 is a post-quotative *yéhndi* 'she said to him' pairing with the pre-quotative *mets'éke kadi* 'his wife spoke' (074) and the reference to the young man as addressee is clear. For further discussion of 079 with respect to the pronominal coding of the less topical, see section 3.2.2.1 below. 089 is a virtual repeat of 088; see section 3.2.5 for discussion of clause repeats in relation to participant coding.

088 and 097 (pronominal coding of less topical with 'different' subject) and 084 and 104 (postverbal nominal coding of less topical with 'different' subject) in this section are exceptional examples which will receive discussion below in sections 3.2.2.2 and 3.2.3.2. The second two are exceptional in that the subject NPs are postverbal (and also that they code the woman by a non-relationship term in a section in which she is the less topical).

- c. In the section 105-135 in which the woman is now the primary topic again, there is no nominal coding of the woman. On the other hand, the less topical participants, the young man and his father, are coded nominally:

105-109: **She** returns with two human arms and **she** eats them
 110-115: **She** makes a suggestion and **they** follow *his* father.
 116-118: *That* man speaks to *his* father [about the woman]
 119-129: *His* father replies [about her]
 130-135: **She** becomes a different woman (e.g. **she** cooks for **her** husband)

Note especially 131 '**she** cooks for **her** husband' in which the relationship term *-dené* 'husband', inverse to *-ts'éke* 'wife', is used (again, see section 1.4 above).

In 105-135 there are 12 examples of the pronominal subject coding of the woman including 2 of conjoint coding with the young man (112 and 115). In one example, 130, there is a role change ('different' subject) but the subject coding of the woman is still pronominal. There are no examples of nominal coding of the woman in this section.

118, in which there is pronominal coding of the less topical young man, is a post-quotative pairing with 116 'that [young] man says to his father', and there is no grammatical role change between 116 and 118 (paralleling 074 and 079 mentioned above).

Before leaving this section, note that 026 and 116 exhibit nominal coding of the young man and the young man's father in accord with the fact that both participants are less topical than the woman at these points. This appears to be sufficient reason for the nominal coding

though on the other hand there is a sufficient break in subject continuity that this break could be the reason for the nominal coding:

026 *ezhi cheeku metá kayéhndi*
 that young.man 3Poss.father 3S:40.say.so.to.Impf
 that young man's father spoke to him

Preceding 026, there are six clauses in which the suggestion is made by persons unspecified that a move be made to a different fish lake.

116 *ezhi dene ésă detá kaéhndi*
 that man so.it.seems reflPoss.father 3S.say.so.to.Impf
 that man spoke to his father

Preceding 116, the woman and the young man conjointly arrive where his father's group are fishing.

See section 3.2.3.3 for mention of thematic unit boundaries (where subject discontinuities typically occur) in relation to nominal coding, and section 3.2.3.4 below.

3.2.2. Other pronominal coding

It could perhaps be expected that pronominal coding would occur in cases of 'same' subject and nominal coding in cases of 'different' subject. There is some such correlation in the Dragon text though the prime correlation is that discussed in section 3.2.1 above, pronominal coding of primary topic and nominal coding of less topical. There are only two cases when pronominal coding is used for the less topical when the subject is 'different', counter to both expectations, and these will be discussed in section 3.2.2.2 below.

3.2.2.1. 'Same' subject (SS) pronominal coding of less topical

The single factor that most commonly accounts for the pronominal coding of less topical participants (pronominal rather than nominal) is 'same' subject. Often any object²² referents as well are the same in the consecutive clauses.

For example, in 014, 015, and 016 below, in 014 (which repeats 012), the woman, the primary topic, is coded pronominally (by zero subject coding) and the young man, the less topical participant, is coded nominally. In 015 (which repeats 013), and 016, there is no grammatical role change:

014 *ii cheeku ts'ě tádéhtfah t'áh*
 that young.man to 3S.sg.move.camp.Pf and.so
 she moved in with that young man

015 *yegáh nánde*
 4Poss.beside 3S.stay.Impf
 and she stayed with him

016 *yets'éke²³ theléh.*
 4Poss.wife 3S.become.stPf
 and became his wife.

The same situation pertains when the object codes a 'prop'. The young man is the primary topic in 048-104; the prop *ek'á* 'fat' is mentioned in 099 (and 096). There is no grammatical role change between 099, 100, and 101, and the fat is coded pronominally in 100 and 101:

099 *ek'á k'edehfi ésă,*
 something's.fat 3S.melt.Impf so.it.seems
 melting the fat,

100 *dék'ö ayilá*
 3S.be.burning.stPf 3S:40.do.Pf
 he made it burn

101 *yech'á tôdéhtfah*
 4Poss.away.from 3S.sg.ashore.again.Pf
 and he went ashore away from it again [leaving it to burn]

²²'Object', as above, is shorthand for direct or oblique object or, as in 016 and 094, possessor of a predicate noun.

²³-*ts'éke* 'wife' is predication in this clause (not an argument of the verb) and therefore the noun does not count as nominal reference to a participant. See also 094.

045 is also an example of pronominal coding of the less topical. In 036-042, the woman has been acting alone (and is the primary topic). She now addresses the young man. The subject is 'same' and the pronominal coding in question is that of the young man, the less topical, in 045:

- 042 *sée ii gochô theda lôô.*
 exactly there unspecPoss.in.sleep 3sgS.sg.be.sitting.stPf evidently
 and was sitting there at the time when people sleep.
- 043 *Káa netá gok'éh fedútthi*
 indeed.so 2sgPoss.father 3plPoss.after 1plS.dl.start.to.go.Opt
olêê.
 should
 "We should go after your father's group."
- 044 *Mih kônedhah,*
 nets 2sgS.pull.out.again.Impf
 Pull out the nets",
- 045 *yéhndi.*
 3S:40.say.to.Impf
 she said to him.

However, in 042 there was no mention of the young man. The fact that the woman and the young man are the only participants on stage *and the content of the quote* appears to allow the pronominal coding of the young man in 045.

A further exception to nominal coding of the less topical is found in 079 in another post-quotative. The post-quotative 079 pairs with the pre-quotative 074. Post-quotatives which pair with pre-quotatives have been considered examples of 'same' subject. The young man is now the primary topic and the pronominal coding in question is that of the woman in 079:

- 074 *mets'éke kadi,*
 3poss.wife 3S.say.so.Impf
 his wife spoke:
- 075 *ekö goáohndá.*
 over.there 1sgS:arealG.look.at.Opt
 "I will look at the situation over there."
- 078 ... *kóó sek'éh goáúndá íle,*
 even 1sgPoss.following.after 2sgS.look.at.situation.Opt not
 ... don't come looking after me,"
- 079 *yéhndi.*
 3S:40.say.to.Impf
 she said to him.

In this case, it is the subject referent which is the less topical and in the paired pre-quotative 074 the subject, 'same' as in 079, codes the less topical participant nominally, *mets'éke* 'his wife', as expected. Again, it is probably the fact that the woman and the young man are the only participants on stage *and the content of the quote* which allows the pronominal coding of the less topical in 079.

The only example of a free pronoun occurs in 011, *ededî* 'third person'. With only one example, it is not possible to say why a free pronoun is used at this point. It appears to be introduced as a 'peg' on which to 'hang' the modifier *zô* 'only'. 011 has been counted among the examples of pronominal coding of less topical with no grammatical role change:

- 011 *Kí ededî zô á detá héh nánde*
 just 3PRO only -- reflPoss.father with 3S.sd.stay.Impf
 There was just him [he was the only boy] and he lived with his father

3.2.2.2. 'Different' subject (DS) pronominal coding of less topical/discourse topic

In 088 and 097 there is pronominal coding of a less topical participant but, unlike the examples considered in the section immediately above, in these the subject and object referents are not 'same'. More than that, in the preceding clause there is no reference to the less topical participant now receiving mention. In both, the reference in question is to the woman and the reference is 'out of the blue'.

In 088, it is the (oblique) object that has reference to the woman:

- 087 *Nodêê sée edláodéhthaa nionénîzá édhî*
 finally exactly what.length.of.time! struggle.ended it.is.heard

ö ésă tsíne agújá.
indeed so.it.seems quietly situation.becomes.Pf
Finally after who knows how long (after quite a while) when the sound
of struggle ended it became quiet.

088 It'áh ekö ekö yek'éh déhtfah.
and.so over.there there 4Poss.following.after 3S.sg.start.to.go.Pf
So he started to go over there after her.

In 097, it is the 'subject' (oblique object of an impersonal verb²⁴) that has reference to the woman:

096 k'í met'áh thela ii k'í
arrows 3Poss.interior.of 3S.pl.be.situated.stPf there arrow
dhéh t'áh kaondíh hat'ää gots'éh ek'á kaondíh
pouch in it.is.so fall.time from.then something's.fat it.is.so
sáecho thegô á k'éndíh
it.is.a.certain.suitable.size 3S.be.dried.stPf -- 3S.be.keeping.Impf
líi ésă niyedíchú ésă
which.it.happens.that so.it.seems 3S:4O.grab.up.Pf so.it.seems
he snatched up a piece of dried fat (of a certain size) from falltime
which it happened that he was keeping in an arrow pouch--in which were
arrows

097 yedah mets'ë nihts'i ésă
4Poss.over 3Poss.to 3S.blow.in.wind.Impf so.it.seems
the wind blowing over it towards her [she was downwind of it]

In either case, 088 and 097, the less topical woman is coded pronominally after an interval of three clauses and two clauses respectively. In the case of 097, the reference to the woman three clauses earlier has actually been to the woman-become-dragon and the earlier reference to the woman (as woman) is nine clauses back (an interval of eight clauses).

However, the woman is the primary topic of the whole Story Proper; that is, at the highest thematic level. It is probably no accident that these exceptional pronominal codings of the less topical participant (less topical at the level generally considered) refer to the primary participant at discourse level.²⁵

3.2.3. Other nominal coding

Just as pronominal coding of the less topical is fairly exceptional when the subject is 'different', so nominal coding of the primary topic is fairly exceptional when the subject is 'same'. The two cases that occur in the Dragon text are discussed in section 3.2.3.1.b. below.

3.2.3.1. Nominal coding of primary topic

There are four examples in the Dragon text of nominal (not pronominal) coding of the primary topic, in 004, 037, 048, and 136.

²⁴See footnote 18.

²⁵There is some parallel in Tlingit (a Na-Dene language) in the long-range use of <ash>, the focal object pronominal. "<ash> is most frequently used to signify a person who has previously been specified as actor (and generally grammatical subject) but is now in some other [grammatical] role while remaining the foregrounded participant" (Naish 1966.132 [revised]):

wé atyádi gáax / ax káak ash xánt góot / ash x'eiwawóos',
that child was.crying / my uncle him to came / him he.asked

wáa sás i wanee
how Q you it.happened.to

'The child was crying. When my uncle came to him, he (uncle) said to him (child), "What happened to you?"'

The child is the foregrounded participant. This is an example of the short-range use of <ash>. <ash> may also be used to refer to the discourse topic after the discourse-topic participant has been off stage for maybe a number of thematic units and <ash> will be understood to refer to that participant.

- a. The nominal coding in 004 is easily accounted for since this is the point of first introduction of the woman in the Story Proper:

004 *ts'élî fíé kí nezû kóó chu níáedeněhtf'ûh íle*
 woman a.certain just well even also 3S.dress.self.CImpf not
 a certain woman just doesn't even dress herself well

(010 in which the young man and his father are introduced and coded nominally are not examples of nominal coding of the primary topic.)

- b. It is suggested that nominal coding occurs in 136 because a 'world shift' occurs at this point. The concept of 'world shifts' in relation to participant coding is used by Clancy:

"Clancy (1980) shows how coding choices in English and Japanese narratives are at least partially influenced by the thematic structure of the text. In particular, NPs tend to be used at thematic junctures, even though RD [referential distance, the number of clauses since last mention] may be low. The particular thematic boundaries that Clancy considers are 'world shifts,' i.e., shifts between the 'real world' where the narrator and an interviewer are the participants ["the situation in which the narrative is being recounted"], and the 'story world' ["the world being depicted in the narrative"]." (T. Payne 1993.92 [, 53])

136 is the first clause of the Closing of the Story Proper:

136 *ii ts'élî kaondíh gha megha kaondíh gha góǝ*
 that woman she.is.so FUT 3Poss.BEN it.is.so FUT there.is.necessity
 to be like that [have medicine?], that woman had to be like that [eat lots]

In the Closing, the narrator quotes what people have told about the woman, how she had to be the greedy woman that she was in order to do what she did. There is a shift from the world of the woman and the young man to the world of comment by persons outside the story. The coding is nominal in spite of the fact that the woman is the subject referent in the immediately preceding clause. Thematic boundaries elsewhere have not entailed nominal coding; for example, in the post-quotative 111, where the quote 110 is the first clause in the final Denouement, and there is no change in subject referent between 109 and 111 (see section 3.2.3.3 below).

037 also appears to be a case of nominal coding of the primary topic at a world shift, this time a shift from the immediate events in the narrative to a narrator's comment (that is, where the narrator intrudes into the story):

036 *kí kandehe íle lôô.*
 just 3S.do.so.Impf not evidently
 she is not acting so [the way she usually does].

037 *Dii ts'élî fáûlíi shétî*
 this woman always 3S.eat.Impf
 This woman, always eating

038 *dáondíh kí náíkuli t'áh zô ô't'e*
 how.is.she? just 3S.be.ragged.stPf with only 3S.be.so.stPf
 and how ragged as she was,

Between 036 and 037, as between 135 and 136, there is no change of subject referent. Pronominal coding of the woman, the primary topic, in 036 is expected. World shift is an explanation of why nominal coding of the primary topic should occur in 037.

There are two other examples of nominal coding at world shifts that have not been listed above since they occur in quotes. The world shifts in the case of the quotes 027-030 and 117 are shifts between the story world, the world of the narrative, and the quote world, the immediate world of the young man and his father who are here conversing:

027 *ezhi ts'élî deǝǝzě hūtf'íi shétî t'áh,*
 that woman beyond.anything so.much 3S.eat.Impf because
 because that woman eats so very much

028 *nahetf'âhâ mîh wôh mámehe nanîtéh ...*
 1/2plPoss.after nets concerning 3Poss.in.the.lead.of 2sgS.sleep.again.Impf
 after we've left, you camp another night with her on account of the nets ...

and,

117 *ii ts'élî kajá*
 that woman 3S.do.so.Pf
 that woman did so

- c. The nominal coding of the primary topic in 048 is a different case. 048 is the first clause in the unit 048-104 in which the young man is the new primary topic. However, in 105 where there is again a change in primary topic there is not nominal coding of the new primary topic, the woman.

For argument's sake, the points of primary topic change have been given as 048 and 105.²⁶ In fact, at least in the mind of the hearer, the point of change is probably fuzzier and the primary topic change is not actually fully established until three or four clauses later when the development of the thematic paragraph has clarified.

This may explain why nominal coding occurs in 048 but does not occur in 105, as follows:

Concerning 048, previous to 048 the woman has been primary topic and coding of the young man, the less topical, has been nominal in default of other considerations. The coding of the young man continues to be nominal in 048 in the presence of a change of subject referent (otherwise there is a strong potential for ambiguity):

- 046 *Mih kônedhah*
nets 2sgS.pull.out.again.Impf
"Pull out the nets",
- 047 *yéhndi ésä,*
3S:40.say.to.Impf so.it.seems
she said to him
- 048 *ii cheeku thâh niïtfah ésä*
that young.man alone 3S.sg.go.off.Pf so.it.seems
and that young man went off by himself
- 049 *sénïtfah*
3S.sg.get.ready.Pf
and got ready
- 050 *shéetî gots'êh ésä*
3S.eat.Pf and so.it.seems
after eating,
- 051 *yahtthee mih ts'ë tê k'ëhë déhtfah,*
far.out nets to ice accordant.with 3S.sg.start.to.go.Pf
he started to go on the ice [following a creek?] to the nets way out,

Concerning 105, previous to 105 the young man has been primary topic and coding of the woman, the less topical, has been nominal in default of other considerations. However, pronominal coding of the less topical may occur when there is no grammatical role change (see section 3.2.2.1 above). Between 104 and 105 there is no change in subject referent and coding of the woman is pronominal in 105:

- 102 *Igots'êh ésä ii níanôtfah ésä*
and.then so.it.seems there 3S.sg.arrive.back.Pf so.it.seems
And then returning there (to the tent)
- 103 *theda ésä ésä*
3S.sg.be.sitting.stPf so.it.seems so.it.seems
as he was sitting
- 104 *kí ekö ésä naetfeh ii ts'élî.*
just over.there so.it.seems 3S.sg.come.back.Prog that woman
over there she is coming back, that woman.
- 105 *Ehnăa dene gö ôki cho níanîdhah.*
across.from.each.other human arms two big 3S.bring.pl.back.Pf
Across from each other (on either shoulder) she was bringing back two big human arms.
- 106 *A dii kaondîh wôh shéts'atî tf'ăhă enidé,*
-- this it.is.so (eat).of unspecS.eat.Pf after when
"After someone has eaten this kind of thing [ms: in such quantity],
- 107 *azhîi k'ëhë ats'ut'é?*
what? accordant.with unspecS.be.so.Opt

²⁶In the SSA, 046 and 102, not 048 and 105, initiate the thematic paragraphs. The clauses 046-047 and 102-104 are circumstantial to these thematic paragraphs and initially the subjects in them are 'same' as in the thematic paragraphs previous to them. See footnote 31 for discussion of the paragraph break preceding 046.

what will he be in alliance with? [ms: what more will one want? what will one live on from now on?]"

- 108 *ndi ndi ésă,*
3S.say.Impf 3S.say.Impf so.it.seems
saying,
- 109 *ii séé káa gots'ë ii dene gö ôki cho*
that exactly indeed.so to.then those human arms two big
wôh séé azhō wôh shéetî.
(eat).of exactly all (eat).of 3S.eat.Pf
she ate all of those two big human arms.

The difference, then, between 045 and 105, both occurring in the neighbourhood of a primary topic switch, is that in one case there is a change of subject referent (between 047 and following clauses) and in the other case there is not (between 104 and following clauses).

3.2.3.2. Postverbal nominal coding

The examples to be discussed in this subsection are further examples of nominal coding of a less topical participant (the default coding, see section 3.2.1) but are exceptional in that the NP occurs postverbally.

Slavey is an SOV language but in this text a postverbal subject NP occurs in 084 and 104, *ii ts'élî* 'that woman'. (No mention is made of postverbal NPs in Slavey in Rice 1989 though she mentions 'right extraposition' of postpositional phrases, subject complements, and relative clauses, pp.1191-96.) 084 and 104 are also exceptional in that elsewhere in the span 048-104 in which the young man is the primary topic and the woman is the less topical, any nominal coding of the woman has been by a relationship term as exemplified above in section 3.1.a (exx. 066 and 080) and section 3.2.2.1 (ex. 074), *mets'éke/dets'éke* 'his wife'/'his own wife'.

In 084, the manuscript has a period following the verb and also following the postverbal NP *ii ts'élî* 'that woman'. However, the NP has no function in the following clause and therefore, unless it is a sentence fragment, it is an argument (or adjunct) of the verb of 084:

- 084 *ekō gojîdêê déhtfah. Ii ts'élî.*
over.there 3plPoss.(go).to.meet 3S.sg.start.to.go.Pf that woman
she started off to meet them. That woman (did)

In 104 the same NP follows the verb without pause:

- 104 *kí ekō ésă naetfeh ii ts'élî.*
just over.there so.it.seems 3S.sg.come.back.Prog that woman
over there she is coming back, that woman.

That there is apparently no pause following the verb in 104 is against the postverbal NP being an 'afterthought'.

While two examples is clearly insufficient evidence from which to draw any firm conclusions, there is a suggestive passage in Cooreman 1992 which may be relevant to the present case: "[Marked] SV order in Ute, Spanish, Biblical Hebrew, and Tagalog is more commonly found when the thematic unity of the paragraph is disrupted, either at the beginning of a new paragraph, or *when the paragraph theme is temporarily suspended*, for example to give meta-comments, to elaborate, describe, or give information not directly pertaining to the 'theme' of the paragraph ... , *but is later resumed*" (Cooreman 1992.244) [*italics the present writer's*]. The marked order in Slavey of course is not SV but VS.

The tentative hypothesis put forward here then is that a postverbal NP is used when a participant that is less topical than the primary topic of the thematic paragraph is foregrounded locally (perhaps only within a single clause).

That the woman is locally foregrounded in 084 and 104 could be the reason for coding by a non-relationship term in these clauses, *ii ts'élî* rather than *mets'éke*.

It may be significant that in the SSA, both 084 and 104 function in a Circumstance leading up immediately to the final Outcome in a larger thematic unit Resolution, resolution of the problem of the Cree and the problem of the dragon respectively. The climactic events reported following 084 are:

- 085 *Gots'êh ésă edek'éh edek'éh*
and so.it.seems something.is.fired something.is.fired
edek'éh edek'éh edek'éh
something.is.fired something.is.fired something.is.fired

- edek'éh ö
something.is.fired indeed
And then there was a relentless bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang!
- 086 nodêê kí ts'eyáts'ízeh, ts'eyáts'ízeh.
finally just unspecS.DISTR.scream.Impf unspecS.DISTR.scream.Impf
everyone is finally just screaming wholesale.
- 087 Nodêê séé edláodéhthaa nionénîzá édhi
finally exactly what.length.of.time! struggle.ended it.is.heard
ö ésä tsíne agújá.
indeed so.it.seems quietly situation.becomes.Pf
Finally after who knows how long (after quite a while) when the sound
of struggle ended it became quiet.

Note that the events are described from the point of view of the young man; they are what he hears of the woman's confrontation with the Cree (notice the various lexical items denoting sound). The young man continues to be the primary topic right through to 104.

Preceding 104, in 102-103, the young man sits waiting expectantly for the return of the woman. 104 is what the young man sees as he does so. Events following 104 are climactic as were those following 084:

- 105 Ehnáa dene gö ôki cho níanîdhah.
across.from.each.other human arms two big 3S.bring.pl.back.Pf
Across from each other (on either shoulder) she was bringing back two big
human arms.
- 106 A dii kaondíh wôh shéts'atî tf'ähâ enidé,
-- this it.is.so (eat).of unspecS.eat.Pf after when
"After someone has eaten this kind of thing [ms: in such quantity],
- 107 azhíi k'ëhě ats'ut'é?
what? accordant.with unspecS.be.so.Opt
what will he be in alliance with? [ms: what more will one want? what will
one live on from now on?]"
- 108 ndi ndi ésä,
3S.say.Impf 3S.say.Impf so.it.seems
saying,
- 109 ii séé káa gots'ë ii dene gö ôki cho
that exactly indeed.so to.then those human arms two big
wôh séé azhō wôh shéetî.
(eat).of exactly all (eat).of 3S.eat.Pf
until she ate [ms: (so saying) she ate] all of those two big human arms.

The return of the woman as a woman in 105-109, due to the "medicine" of the young man (088-101), resolves the problem of the woman-become-dragon. (Following 084 the young man continued to be the primary topic, whereas following 104 the woman becomes the primary topic again, to the end of the Story Proper.)

More examples of postverbal NPs are needed to test whether there is any validity to the hypothesis of local foregrounding.

Note that 084 and 104, without the postverbal NP, are examples of pronominal coding of a less topical participant and therefore have some affinity with 088 and 097 that were discussed under section 3.2.2.2.

3.2.3.3. Thematic unit boundaries and nominal coding

In the two Slavey texts so far analysed, there is no evidence for 'stronger' coding (nominal rather than pronominal) at higher-level thematic unit boundaries for which there are not alternative explanations (discussed above) for the nominal coding (of either primary topic or less topical participant(s)).

Rather than nominal coding occurring following thematic unit boundaries, pronominal coding is often found. For example, there is no nominal coding in Dragon 065, 088, 110, and 130, the initial clauses to four successive paragraphs, each clause occurring following a fairly high-level thematic boundary.

This is contrary to what has been found in some languages. T. Payne 1993 refers to the work of Clancy (in English and Japanese) and Barbara Fox (in English) which has demonstrated the relevance of 'episode boundaries' in relation to nominal coding.²⁷

Levinsohn has also found episode boundaries relevant to participant coding in New Testament Greek. He refers to the work of Barbara Fox and also says, "Marked forms occur in specific contexts, in particular at the beginning of narrative units and in highlighted sentences" (Levinsohn 1992.117). In similar vein, Tomlin (1987) says, "Individuals will use full nouns on first mention after an episode boundary; individuals will use pronouns to sustain reference during an episode" (quoted in Thompson 2000).

However, Levinsohn also has found that, in New Testament Greek, once the central character has been introduced, "reference to the central character typically is minimal" (p.122). "In the Gospels, Jesus is the central character and, if we take the Bible Society paragraphing as an indication of the beginning of new narrative units, the norm there is for reference to Jesus to be zero ... , even when 'Jesus' was not the subject of a previous clause" (p.123). In its coding of the primary topic, Slavey appears to be closer to New Testament Greek than to English or Japanese.

3.2.3.4. 'Different' subject and nominal coding

As in the section immediately above, the point to be made in this section is negative. The Dragon text--and the Geese text--provide no real evidence for 'stronger' coding with changes of subject referent for which there are not alternative explanations (discussed above) for the nominal coding (of either primary topic or less topical participant(s)).

This also is contrary to what has been found for English and Japanese:

"In these narratives [20 English and 20 Japanese narratives based on the pear movie²⁸] most nominal reference occurred when the referent in question was mentioned again in subject position following a clause having a 'different' subject referent, that is, in cases of switch reference In Japanese 71 percent of all coreferential noun phrases occurred at points of switch reference; the corresponding figure for the English narratives was as high as 92 percent." (Clancy 1980.160).

The figures in the following chart are a subset of those contained in the chart at the beginning of section 3.2, abstracting just those which relate to subjects. Also, instead of charting primary topic vs. less topical, the chart opposes SS ('same' subject) to DS ('different' subject):

Dragon text	N	pro	Total
SS	4	51	55
DS	12	13	25
Total	16	64	80

Similarly, the following chart abstracts just those which relate to subjects from the earlier Geese text chart:

Geese text	N	pro	Total
SS	2	12	14
DS	10	9	19
Total	12	21	33

²⁷"Two recent works which incorporate the notion of thematic structure into the question of choice of participant-coding devices are Clancy (1980) and Barbara Fox (1986). ... Clancy also notices that discourse boundaries tend to elicit stronger coding devices [full NP rather than pronoun, say] than would be expected, given a strictly linear view of continuity based on number of mentions or distance since last mention. The particular boundaries that Clancy finds relevant are 'world shifts' Clancy also finds 'episode' boundaries significant.

...

"Barbara Fox ... shows that the choice between the use of a pronoun versus a full noun phrase in English is influenced by the hierarchical structure of the content of the text." (T. Payne 1993.53)

²⁸See Chafe 1980.

Conflating these two charts:

Conflated	N	pro	Total
SS	6	63	69
DS	22	22	44
Total	28	85	113

Since the charts are for only two texts, not a great deal can be learnt from them as the figures are too dependent upon the type of participant interaction in the individual texts (how much dialogue, how much only one participant is on stage at a given time, etc.), but one thing does seem to emerge and that is that when there is a change in the subject referent, the coding is as likely to be pronominal as nominal--that is, in the analysis to date, there is no real suggestion of a relationship between 'stronger' coding and change of subject referent.

026 and 116 perhaps come closest to providing such evidence. In section 3.2.1, these two clauses were exemplified and it was suggested that the fact that both participants (the young man and his father) were less topical than the woman at these points in the narrative appeared to be sufficient reason for the nominal coding of these two participants. However, there is a sufficient break in subject continuity in 026 and 116 that this break could be a further reason for the nominal coding.

On the other hand, note, for example, 065, 095, and 130. At these points in the narrative, there are marked breaks in subject continuity but there is pronominal coding, not nominal.

For example,

130 *kajā* *tf'ähâ* *ö*
 3S.do.so.Pf after indeed
 from the time she did that

Preceding 130, the young man and his father have been conversing about the woman. 130 is the initial clause of the final Denouement in which the reformed woman is described.

3.2.4. Participant splits and mergers

Allusion has been made above (in section 3.2) to participant 'splits' and 'mergers'. Splits occur in 036 and 116; that is, in the clause in question, a participant is coded individually that has been coded conjointly with another participant in the last preceding reference to that participant. In 036, the woman is coded individually and in 035 had been coded conjointly with the young man. In 116, the young man is coded individually and in 115 had been coded conjointly with the woman.

The difference between 036 and 116 is that in 036 the woman, coded individually, is the primary topic and in 116 the young man, coded individually, is a less topical participant. This is reflected in the fact that in 036 the woman is coded pronominally and in 116 the young man is coded nominally:

035 *ii* *nagendetéh* *ésä*,
 there 3plS.sleep.again.Impf so.it.seems
 they camping there again,

036 *kí* *kandeh* *íle* *lôô*.
 just 3S.do.so.Impf not evidently
 she is not acting so [the way she usually does].

and,

115 *detá* *gok'éh* *nífégîthe* *ésä*
 reflPoss.father 3plPoss.following.after 3plS.dl.arrive.Pf so.it.seems
 they two arrived there following his father's group

116 *ezhi* *dene* *ésä* *detá* *kaéhndi*
 that man so.it.seems reflPoss.father 3S.say.so.to.Impf
 that man spoke to his father

The pronominal coding in 036 and the nominal coding in 116 have been considered cases of pronominal coding of the primary topic and nominal coding of the less topical. (116 is doubly a split in that both the young man and his father are coded individually whereas in 115 they were both coded conjointly, the father included in the group.) A split in 06a in the Geese text is coded similarly in that nominal coding of a less topical minor participant occurs in 06a.

026 could also be considered a split in that the previous reference to the young man and his father occurred in 017 and they were coded conjointly. In 026 they are coded individually; both are less topical participants and are coded nominally.

Mergers occur in 035, 112, 017, and 033; that is, participants that are coded conjointly have been coded individually in the last preceding reference to one or both of the participants.

In 035 and 112, the woman and the young man are coded conjointly and the woman is the primary topic. There is no nominal coding in these clauses of either the primary topic, the woman, or the less topical participant, the young man.

Previous to 035²⁹, the young man has been coded individually in 031 (and in 033 as subject possessor):

- 031 *metá* *yéhndi*.
 3Poss.father 3S:40.say.to.Impf
 his father said to him.
- 033 *ekö* *ekö* *fuetúé* *gots'ë* *metá*
 over.there over.there fish.lake to.it 3Poss.father
 gogedéhthe *sóondi*.
 3plS.pl.start.to.go.Pf maybe.so
 his father's group started to go over there to a fish lake.
- 035 *ii* *nagendetéh* *ésä*,
 there 3plS.sleep.again.Impf so.it.seems
 they camping there again,

The woman has been off stage since 020 (though alluded to in the father's quote 027-030) but as primary topic is not coded nominally in 035. Although the young man is less topical than the woman, the young man also, in this instance of conjoint coding, is not coded nominally in 035.

With respect to 112, in 111, the immediately previous clause, the woman is coded individually. As in 035, in 112 when the woman, the primary topic, is coded conjointly with the young man, there is no nominal coding of either the woman or the young man.

If conjoint coding with the primary topic is not sufficient reason for the lack of nominal coding of the less topical young man in 035 and 112, then probably the explanation for the lack is that the content of previous quotes, 027-030 and 110, allows for the pronominal coding of the young man in 035 and 112, parallel in this to 045 and 079 as discussed above in section 3.2.2.1.

017 and 033 are different from 035 and 112 in that the participants coded conjointly are not the primary topic and there is no reason for other than nominal coding. In 017, the young man and his father are coded conjointly; they are less topical than the woman and are coded nominally:

- 016 *yets'éke* *theléh*.
 4Poss.wife 3S.become.stPf
 she became his wife.
- 017 *Ii* *cheeku* *á* *detá* *chu* *mih* *ghálageenda*
 that young.man -- reflPoss.father also nets 3plS.work.at.Impf
 That young man and his father work on the nets

033 is similar to 017 in that the participants coded conjointly, his father's group (including his father), are not the primary topic and are coded nominally.

Similarly, in 04 of the Geese text, there is nominal coding of the less topical conjoined participants, the man's wife and his children. (His wife and children are minor participants and are never coded pronominally outside quotes.)

In summary, no new principles appear to be required to account for the coding of participant splits and mergers. The coding generally follows the principle of pronominal coding of the primary topic and nominal coding of the less topical participant; if a less topical participant is coded conjointly with the primary topic, both receive pronominal coding.

²⁹032 and 034 code the same content as 035, but 035 is a correction to 034, and 032 is out of order (034--and 035--repeats 032 in the correct order) so that the real progression in the clauses here is 031, 033, and 035 (omitting 032 and 034). See footnote 17. The corrections do not affect the coding of the merger.

3.2.5. Clause repeats and participant coding

Apart from what is found in corrections³⁰, when a clause or sequence of clauses is repeated, the choice of pronominal and nominal coding is the same in the individual clauses of the repeat as in the corresponding clauses of the original (nominal coding in the original does not switch to pronominal in the repeat).

For example, in the clauses recounting the woman's preliminary moves in relation to the young man, 014-015 repeat 012-013 and the nominal coding of the young man in 012 is repeated in 014 whereas if this were not a repeat pronominal coding in 014 might have been expected since there is no change in the subject and object referents (see section 3.2.2.1 above).

The repeats in 046-047³¹, 025, 041, and 089 of 044-045, 023-024 (in part), 040, and 088 respectively, are more in the nature of links between thematic units, 046-047 at a higher level and 025, 041, and 089 at a lower level, but the same observations concerning coding hold.

4. CODING OF NON-CENTRAL PARTICIPANTS AND PROPS

The above sections have concentrated on the coding of major and minor participants.

4.1. Coding of non-central participants

The only other humans referred to in the Dragon text are groups:

(1) The young man's father's group (a group which includes his father) (033 and 112-115, and, in quotes, 043 and 110), already referred to above. Outside quotes, this group is coded nominally by *metá/detá* 'his (own) father' (and by *netá* 'your father' in quotes) in cross-reference with *ge-* '3plS' or *go-* '3plPoss', and only once, in 114, only pronominally, by *ge-* '3plS', in the second of two clauses in both of which the subject refers to the group.

(2) The Slavey. Coded by *dene* (000) and by *go-* (083), assuming that *go-* here refers to the Slavey.³² *go-* in 083 could be either '3plPoss' or 'unspecPoss' (if the latter, then *gonee k'eh* could be glossed 'on(to) the land' rather than 'on(to) their--the Slaveys'--land').

(3) The rather shadowy Cree. Coded by *endá* 'enemy' (000, 002), by *dene* 'people' (062, following the young man's sighting of guns 060-061), by *nahedhehé ka enidhé* 'the ones seeking our death' (068) in cross-reference with *ge-* '3plS' (069), by *káhsee ekö ö ezhi nágedéh ii* 'those, the ones living over there' (083) in cross-reference with *ge-* '3plS' (083) and *go-* '3plPoss' (084), and by *ts'e-* 'unspecS' (086; by inference, those who are screaming are the Cree). That the nominal coding in 062, 068, and 083 refers to the Cree is to be inferred from general knowledge of the situation between the Cree and the Slavey and from the introduction to the narrative.

(4) The group coded in 021-025 by *ts'e-* 'unspecS'. An unspecified group suggests a move to another fishlake.

None of these qualify as major or minor participants. None of them persist more than two or three clauses beyond their local first mention though, as noted above, within that range their coding may be pronominal.

The dragon (092-094) might also be considered human since the woman has turned into a dragon (and the identification is made in 094). In 092, the dragon is coded by the subject nominal

³⁰032, 034, and 129. See footnote 17 and section 3.1.c.

³¹The manuscript suggests a new paragraph at 043 though the subject is not 'different' till 048. From that point, there is clearly a switch to the young man as primary topic. However, 046-047 are linked intonationally to 048 so that a paragraph break immediately preceding 048 has not been considered tenable. 046-047 repeat 044-045, constituting (part of) a quote and its post-quotative, and, if a paragraph break is assumed before 046, 046-047 constitutes the head of inter-paragraph tail-head linkage. The distribution of the evidential *esá* in 046-050 (none occurring in the immediately preceding clauses) may confirm this break though the function of this particle is not fully analysed. On the other hand, other repetition of clauses and sequences of clauses in this text do not occur inter-paragraph, and inter-paragraph tail-head linkage does not seem to be characteristic of Slavey. Nevertheless, for the moment, a paragraph break before 046 is preferred to one before 043.

³²Alternatively, *go-* refers to the Cree, and is in cross-reference with *káhsee ekö ö ezhi nágedéh ii* 'those, the ones living over there', the subject of the clause.

dahsiî dlucho ts'edi kaondíh cho 'something huge like what people call a dragon (was sitting on the ice)', and by zero subject pronominals in 093-094.

4.2. Coding of props

Of the remaining entities occurring in the narrative, most receive one mention only in a nominal coding; for example, *deké* 'her moccasins' in *deké kóó chu nezû kechídezhah íle* 'she doesn't tie up her moccasins well' (008).

If there is further mention of a 'prop', then the coding may be pronominal but perhaps only if there is no intervening clause in which there is no reference to the prop. In the following example, the fat is introduced nominally in 096 and receives pronominal coding in 096-097.³³ Reference to the fat skips 098 and then the fat receives nominal coding in 099 and pronominal coding in 100-101 (*ek'á* 'fat' and the pronominals coding 'fat' are bolded in the example):

- 096 ... *hat'ää* *gots'êh* ***ek'á*** *kaondíh*
 fall.time from.then something's.fat it.is.so
sáecho *thegô* *á* *k'éndíh*
 it.is.a.certain.suitable.size 3S.be.dried.stPf -- 3S.be.keeping.Impf
líi *ésä* *niyedíchú* *ésä*
 which.it.happens.that so.it.seems 3S:40.grab.up.Pf so.it.seems
 he snatched up a piece of dried fat from falltime which it happened that
 he was keeping ...
- 097 ***yedah*** *mets'ë* *nihts'i* *ésä*
 4Poss.over 3Poss.to 3S.blow.in.wind.Impf so.it.seems
 the wind blowing over it towards her
- 098 *ii* *köah* *thehtsî*
 there little.fire 3S.make.Pf
 he made a little fire there
- 099 ***ek'á*** *k'edehfi* *ésä*,
 something's.fat 3S.melt.Impf so.it.seems
 melting the (some?) fat,
- 100 *dék'ö* *ayílá*
 3S.be.burning.stPf 3S:40.do.Pf
 he made it burn
- 101 ***yech'á*** *tôdéhtfah*
 4Poss.away.from 3S.sg.ashore.again.Pf
 he went ashore away from it again [ms: left it to burn]

5. DEMONSTRATIVE + NP

Since *ii* ~ *ezhi* functions as a demonstrative locative ('there'), pronoun, or nominal modifier, it has not always been possible to analyse its function unambiguously in any given case, especially when the noun it may modify is a locative noun. In the following examples, the fishlake is the same lake in each case. The lake is first mentioned in 021 so that *ii* in this example is unlikely to be a demonstrative modifier:

- 021 *káa* *thaa* *ii* *fuetúé* *náts'îdé*,
 indeed.so long.time there fish.lake unspecS.pl.dwell.at.Pf
 People (having) lived there at the fishlake a long time,
- 058 *ezhi* *fuetúé* *ts'ë* *kédítfah*,
 there fish.lake to 3S.sg.come.down.to.shore.Pf
 So coming down there to the fishlake,
- 090 *ezhi* *fuetúé* *tu* *nechá* *ôt'e*.
 there fish.lake lake 3S.be.big.stPf 3S.be.so.stPf
 the fishlake there is a big lake.

However, its use as modifier with a 'given' noun, exemplified in 109 below, is also attested unambiguously in conjunction with the major and minor participants in this narrative. After first mention, the woman and the young man are either coded by relationship terms or by a demonstrative modifier + NP, *dii/ii ts'élî* 'this/that woman', and *ii cheeku/dene* 'that young_man/man'.

³³The object pronominal *ye-* occurs in the verb of 096 since the clause-level object is fronted ('topicalized' in one sense of the term) or 'left-dislocated'. In the absence of such fronting, an object pronominal does not cooccur with a clause-level object.

At second mention, a prop also may occur with a demonstrative (unless, in 109, the demonstrative is locative):

- 105 *Ehnáa dene gö ôki cho níanîdhah.*
 across.from.each.other human arms two big 3S.bring.pl.back.Pf
 On either shoulder she was bringing back two big human arms.
- 106-108 Quote + *ndi ndi éssä,*
 3S.say.Impf 3S.say.Impf so.it.seems
 "...", saying,
- 109 *ii séé káa gots'êh ii dene gö ôki cho*
 that exactly indeed.so from.then those human arms two big
wôh séé azhõ wôh shéetî.
 (eat).of exactly all (eat).of 3S.eat.Pf
 she then ate all of those two big human arms.

The only occurrence of a demonstrative modifier + NP in the Geese text codes the specific geese who have come level with the man (27) and after whom he now jumps (in attempting to fly with them):

- 28 *det'á láondíh thehtsî t'áh ezhi det'ô*
 reflPoss.wings it.is.like 3S.make.Pf by.means.of those geese
k'êh niedihka
 after 3S.leap.off.Pf
 with his things-like-wings he had made he leapt off after the geese

Other references to geese outside quotes are indefinite or non-definite³⁴.

If the referent is indefinite or non-definite, it appears probable that only nominal coding is used, without a demonstrative, at first and at any subsequent mention; see, for example, 017, 028, 029, 044, 046, 051, 053, 067, 113, and 114, in each of which *mîh* 'net(s)' occurs.

6. PARTICIPANT VIEWPOINT

6.1. 'Understood' verbs of perception

The passage 085-087 in the Dragon text is remarkable in that it relates a climactic series of events in the narrative (from the Prelude to the narrative, one might have supposed THE climactic series), and yet the events are told, not from the viewpoint of an omniscient narrator but from the viewpoint of the young man, who is not on the scene to witness them at first hand but who only hears the sounds of them at a distance.³⁵ Note the verbs *edek'êh* 'something is fired' and *ts'eyáts'ízeh* 'someone is screaming', denoting events that can be heard, and the verbs (*níonénîzá*) *édhî* '(the end of the struggle) is heard' and *tsíne agújá* 'it became quiet', denoting the cessation of sound:

- 085 *Gots'êh éssä edek'êh edek'êh*
 and so.it.seems something.is.fired something.is.fired
edek'êh edek'êh edek'êh
 something.is.fired something.is.fired something.is.fired
edek'êh õ
 something.is.fired indeed
 And then there was a relentless bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, bang!
- 086 *nodêê kí ts'eyáts'ízeh, ts'eyáts'ízeh.*
 finally just unspecS.DISTR.scream.Impf unspecS.DISTR.scream.Impf
 everyone is finally just screaming wholesale.
- 087 *Nodêê séé edláodéthaa níonénîzá édhî*
 finally exactly what.length.of.time! struggle.ended it.is.heard
 õ éssä tsíne agújá.

³⁴Givón uses this term as follows: "The category NON-DEFINITE may be viewed as a subcategory of referential-indefinite, in the sense that while the verbal expression indicates that the speaker is committed to the existence of some individual, the actual identity of that individual is left unspecified, presumably because it is of no import in that particular communication. A reasonable inference is, then, that it is the genus affiliation of the individual which really matters." (fn.11 in Givón 1978).

³⁵The fact that the events of 085-087 are told from the viewpoint of the young man is one reason for doubting whether topicality in this section has shifted from the young man to the woman.

indeed so.it.seems quietly situation.becomes.Pf
 Finally after who knows how long, when the sound of struggle ended, it became quiet.

The events are not coded as complements of a verb 'hear': 'the young man heard (that) ...'.

Again, 091-094 are similar to 085-087. In 091 there is no verb of perception, 'he saw (that) ...', of which 091 would be the complement:

- 091 Kí séé godetsile edelé ôt'e.
 just exactly area.is.red something's.blood 3S.be.so.stPf
 (He saw) it is all red--it is blood.
- 092 It'áh éšă dahsiî dlucho ts'edi kaondîh
 and.so so.it.seems something dragon unspecS.say.Impf it.is.so
 cho éšă tê k'eh theda éšă,
 big so.it.seems ice on 3sgS.sg.be.sitting.stPf so.it.seems
 And something huge like what people call a dragon is sitting on the ice,

Following up the cessation of sounds of conflict, the young man goes to investigate and when he reaches the lake he sees that it is all red with blood. Moreover, he sees a dragon sitting on the ice. The fact that his wife-become-dragon has destroyed the Cree is not disclosed until he himself reaches the scene of the conflict.

Evidence that the omission of verbs of perception may be characteristic of Slavey narration is found in the following example also:

- 060 yahnâa ts'ë gots'êh éšă kí tthik'íhí
 far.across to from.there so.it.seems just guns
 éšă ôt'e.
 so.it.seems 3S.be.so.stPf
 (he saw) there are guns way across.
- 061 Kí dahsiî mek'eh sadee cho
 just something 3Poss.on sunshine big
 Lots of things on which there is bright sunshine
- 062 kí séé dene kí nî't'i
 just exactly people just 3S.be.stretched.to.a.point.stPf
 láondîh cho éšă
 it.is.like big so.it.seems
 lots of people extending-away-like [into the bush]
- 063 kí kéđit'i láondîh.
 just 3S.be.stretched.out.to.shore.stPf it.is.like
 reach-down-to-the-shore-like.
- 064 Kí melôh íle.
 just 3poss.end not
 There was just no end (in sight).

First the young man identifies the presence of guns by the bright shining of the sun on them and then realises that guns mean people. The omniscient narrator would have known that there were people there from the start; instead, their presence is gradually disclosed through the young man's perceptions of the situation but without a verb of perception, 'he saw (that) ...'.³⁶

6.2. Progressives and participant perception

While progressives are used in other contexts (see, for example, Geese 14 where a progressive is used in an immediate context which is non-narrational), it appears that a progressive verb may be used when (the movement³⁷ of) some character in the narrative is seen from the viewpoint of one of the participants.

³⁶In the immediate context, in 059, there is a verb which relates to taking care by observation, *séé kehoehndih éğüh éšă* 'having observed the scene carefully', but its indirect object *ke-* 'situation' does not refer to what is seen but to the total situation that is surveyed. Moreover, *éğüh* denotes flashback: the young man had been observing the situation and as a result he saw the evidence for the guns.

³⁷The verb stems with which progressives occur are limited; most progressives are progressives of motion verbs.

In the following example, the young man is telling his wife what he has seen at the lake:

- 067 mih ts'ě niathehtfah ǒ
nets to 1sgS.sg.go.out.again.onto.lake.Pf indeed
I was ready to go out on the lake to check the nets,
- 068 káa nahedhehé ka enidhê
indeed.so 1/2plPoss.corpses for 3S.search.stPf
[I saw] (the ones) seeking our death,
- 069 nahets'ě nageadéh lôô.
1/2plPoss.to 3plS.pl.come.back.Prog evidently
they are coming back here (towards us).

Why did he not go out on the lake? because of what he saw of the enemy. Note that in 069 a progressive verb is used. In this case, the viewpoint is that of the young man.

A similar use of a progressive occurs in 104:

- 103 theda éśă éśă
3S.sg.be.sitting.stPf so.it.seems so.it.seems
he was sitting
- 104 kí ekö éśă naetfeh ii ts'élî.
just over.there so.it.seems 3S.sg.come.back.Prog that woman
over there she, that woman, is coming back.

As the young man is sitting waiting, he sees the woman returning.

The Geese text also provides examples:

- Gse24b Det'ô nechá naedéh,
geese lots.of 3S.pl.come.again.Prog
The geese are approaching,
- 24c séé ts'u lá goah adandih.
exactly spruce tip past.it 3S.become.so.Prog
and they are coming right past the tip of the spruce.

(It seems likely that 24b-24c constitute a speech by the children--though, if this is a correct hypothesis, the quotatives are elliptical.) The man's children perceive the approach of the geese; the verbs of both clauses are progressive.

In the second example from the Geese text, the progressive verb is again contained in a speech by the children who perceive that the geese are approaching close to the spruce where the man is:

- Gse26a Á káa dúh á káa séé negháádé néh
-- yes now -- indeed.so exactly level.with.2sgPoss with.2sgPoss
aodéhthaa geadéh t'áh, ...
the.space.is.that.much 3plS.pl.come.Prog and.so
Yes now! exactly level with you! they are coming that far from you, ...

6.3. Progressives in Navajo narration

Midgett 1987 discusses the function of the progressive in Navajo. There seems to be a remarkable overlap in narrative function between the Slavey progressive and the cognate Navajo progressive. The Navajo progressive in one of its functions is "used to increase the reportability [what makes the story worth telling] of the story (always in question in a purely personal narration) by increasing the sense of the vividness of the events taking place, of the observer's intimate participation in them" (p.119). In many cases, Midgett found "the verb form represents the situation as being vividly perceived by an observer, situated 'inside' it, so to speak, and viewing it from an internal perspective" (p.125). "The inflection is used to convey the immediacy and vividness of lived experience and to bring this observer (and the listener or reader with him) into the story world, which is by definition removed from immediate experience" (p.126-27). The examples she quotes translate, "While the people were talking in this way, a turkey *came walking* by the hogan entrance. Then it *was walking along* with the necklace hanging around its neck" and, "Some time later, here *comes* the wolf" (p.127) [progressive glosses italicized].

At the same time, in these examples, "[t]he Progressive forms each represent a turning-point in the plot. The first two form the climax of a story in which a woman who thought she was leaving her necklace on a protruding branch in the dark, actually put it on the neck of a turkey. The moment of revelation is here presented in the Progressive rather than the

Perfective Mode. The reason seems to be that the narrator wants to emphasize the emotions of the spectators, rather than the mere appearance of the turkey itself. ... The Progressive is also used to emphasize the experience of two men who have climbed a tree to escape wolves, and the Progressive form is used to profile their perception of the returning of the wolf to their tree. Both expressions recall the idiom 'here he comes!'..." (p.127-28). In other words, one function of the Navajo progressive is "to represent key events in the story" (p.108).

Some of these remarks could have been made almost word-for-word for the Slavey examples. Earlier, the present writer has said of Geese 24 and 26, "24-26 consists of a conversational exchange between the man and his children ... Rather than a string of clauses containing Perfective verbs relating the events leading up to the climax, the story is told through the eyes of the participants. The effect is to slow down the narration as well as to enable the narrator to portray the excitement of the children in a more vivid way:

"In 24 [b-c], the geese are seen through the eyes of the children approaching the spruce which the man has climbed and on which he is now poised at the very tip. Two Progressive verbs describe the approach of the geese. ...

"In 26 [a-b], the geese have come exactly level with the tree--the verb is again Progressive [in 26a]--and the right moment has arrived. The children tell the man to go with the geese right now; the verb is an Imperative imperfective [in 26b] (maybe the children are too excited to use the more polite Optative imperative!)."

Similar remarks concerning vividness and climax could be made of Dragon 069 and 104 exemplified above.

7. QUOTATIVES AND THE VERB OF SAYING (-*ndi*/-*di*/-*si*)

The term 'verb of saying' is used here of a verb containing the stem -*ndi*/-*di*/-*si* 'say'. The verb of saying occurs introducing or concluding quotes: pre-quotatives precede a quote and post-quotatives follow a quote. The term non-quotative 'say' is used of verbs containing the same stem but not introducing or concluding a quote.

Many of the observations made concerning quotatives in the Geese text hold good in the present text.

1. All quotatives (i.e. those functioning as 'Orienters' to quotes in the SSA) are Imperfective.
2. If there is a pre-quotative, there is also a corresponding post-quotative. In the Geese and Dragon texts there are 7 examples of quotes with pre-quotatives (and paired post-quotatives), 8 with post-quotatives alone, and one with neither.
3. Pre-quotatives are generally transitive but are not always so. The transitivity of pre-quotatives is probably controlled by topicality considerations.
4. Post-quotatives are either transitive or intransitive. The intransitive post-quotative *ndi* 's/he says' has only been found when the subject codes the primary topic (the man in the Geese text and either the woman or the young man in the Dragon text).

A possible correlation between the transitivity of a post-quotative and the content of the quote is a subject for further research (but see section 3.2.2.1 above in comments on 045 and 079 re quote content).

5. Intransitive examples of non-quotative 'say' in these two texts contain either adverbial *ka*- '[say] so, that' (Geese 10, 15, 16c³⁸, 17b, Dragon 140) or adverbial *a*- '[say] so, that' (Geese 01, 11, Dragon 077, 081), where *a*- is in cross-reference with an adverbial in the clause descriptive of the manner of speaking.

For example, in Geese 11 *dets'éke gha dzáá adi* 'he spoke badly for his wife (or, his manner of speaking riled his wife)', *a*- is in cross-reference with *dzáá* 'badly' and in Dragon 077 *dahsââ agodi* 'it sounds in some manner', *a*- is in cross-reference with *dahsââ* 'in some manner'. In Geese 01 and Dragon 081 it appears that *a*- is in cross-reference with an instrumental adverbial phrase of the form NP + *t'áh*, *thaa t'öh gondi t'áh* 'by means of an oldtime story' and *dáondíh t'áh* 'by means of what?' respectively.

³⁸*kadîndi* in Geese 16c, which might have been thought to be a quotative to putative quote 16b, is not analysed as such, but 16b and 16c are both analysed as Grounds to 16d. Note that if 16b were a quote, it would be an indirect quote since the main verb in 16b is second person (not first person), and also 16c would be an exception to what appears to be a rule that, with respect to quotatives, only pre-quotatives contain *ka*-.

The intransitive non-quotative 'say' containing *ka-* do not cooccur with an adverbial in the clause in cross-reference with *ka-*; for example, Geese 15 *fáûlíi kadi* 'he was always saying that'.

The examples of the same stem in Geese 36, Dragon 001 and 092 are also non-quotative but contain neither *ka-* nor *a-* and have the sense of 'mean (N by it), name (it N)', and not 'say': Geese 36 *ezhi á dehsi* 'that was it (the story) that I meant [and had been talking to you about before I told the story]'; Dragon 092 *dahsiî dluecho ts'edi* 'something they call a dragon'.

6. Pre-quotatives contain the adverbial prefix *ka-*; post-quotatives do not but may contain the adverbial prefix *a-* (anaphorically referring to a preceding quote).

As just noted, *ka-* in non-quotatives is not in cross-reference with a clause-level adverbial and similarly there is probably a certain disjunction between pre-quotatives and the immediately following quote; pre-quotatives might be better glossed as 'N spoke (to M)' rather than 'N said [that] (to M)'.

It is possible that, just as a pre-quotative contains *ka-* and is disjunct in some degree from its following quote, so a post-quotative which contains *a-* is disjunct in some degree from its preceding quote. The two examples in the texts are Geese 25c and Dragon 129.

In the Geese text, the post-quotative 25c in question belongs to a quote 25a-b which immediately follows what is probably a quote without either pre- or post-quotatives (24b-c).³⁹ It seems possible that the narrator was about to omit the post-quotative in 25 also but then added it as an afterthought⁴⁰:

- 24b *Det'ô nechá naedéh,*
geese lots.of 3S.pl.come.again.Prog
"The geese are approaching,
- 24c *séé ts'u lá goah adandih.*
exactly spruce tip past.it 3S.become.so.Prog
and they are coming right past the tip of the spruce."
- 24a [Ø]⁴¹
[they say,]
[his children say,]
- 25a *Káa edé*
OK if
"If it is OK,
- 25b *káa séhdahndí,*
yes 2plS:1sgO.say.to.Opt
you say 'yes' to me,"
- 25c *dezhaa agóhndi.*
reflPoss.children 3S:3plO.say.so.to.Impf
he said [that] to his children.

In the case of Dragon 129, there is certainly a degree of disjunction between 129 and the quote 119-127 since a first post-quotative 128 precedes the second post-quotative 129:

- 128 Quote + *dezhaa éhndi*
reflPoss.son 3S.say.to.Impf
"...," he said to his son.
- 129 *Metá ésă adi*
3Poss.father so.it.seems 3S.say.so.Impf
His father said that.

³⁹Alternatively, 24b-c is not a quote at all but is simply a continuation of the third person narration.

⁴⁰If this analysis is correct, it lends support to the analysis of 024 as a quote without quotatives though the two analyses do not stand or fall together.

⁴¹The zero clause 24a was placed before 24b-c and therefore numbered '24a' before it was realized that a pre-quotative only occurred if a post-quotative also occurred.

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