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### Bound variable subjects in Labrador Inuttut: '4th person' verbal inflection

This talk considers a Binding pattern in Labrador Inuttut, found in subordinate clauses containing a main verb marked with conditional, causal, or dubitative mood, and operating only across 3rd person sentential participants. In examples (1)-(3), the '4th person' inflection found on the verb of the subordinate clause in the sentences in (a) indicates that the subject of that clause is obligatorily in a binding relation (to be defined) to the subject of its superordinate clause, whether it be the ergative subject of a transitive verb (1), the absolutive subject of an intransitive verb (2), or the (derived) absolutive subject of a passivised verb (3) (also true, but not shown here, is that it does not matter what kind of 'subject' is found in the superordinate clause, be it ergative, absolutive, or derived-via-passivisation). However, the 'binding relation' is not strictly one of coreference (or disjoint) reference between subjects, as indicated by the sentence in (5a). Is the relevant binding relation here one of what Finer (1984) called *partially overlapping reference*? That would be compatible with the facts exemplified in (5a), but the sentence in (6b) is judged compatible only with a situation where both Hulda and Piita will belong to the potentially late crowd, and non-felicitous otherwise. The sentence in (6a) is judged compatible with a situation where either one or both of Hulda and Piita is/are not included in the group that will (potentially) be late. The felicitousness of the 'neither Hulda nor Piita will belong to the late crowd' reading is unproblematic: 'different subjects' (*referentially disjoint*, following tradition) are marked via 3rd person agreement on the verb of the subordinate clause. But two contexts involving what appears to be partially overlapping reference between the subjects – where Hulda, but not Piita, will belong to the potentially late crowd, and where Piita, but not Hulda, will – are also fully compatible with (6a). Problem: We would have to say that partially overlapping reference triggers 4th person inflection on the verb of the subordinate clause ('same subject') in some cases, as in (5a), but not in others, as in (6a). An account of the peculiarities of binding in these constructions is argued to follow from the adoption of two independent approaches to variable binding that have been proposed in Kratzer (2009) – namely, that semantic binding is tied to  $\lambda$ -operators introduced by verbal functional heads, rather than to 'antecedent' DPs (see also Kratzer 1998b, von Stechow 2003, and Adger & Ramchand 2005) –, and in Branigan & Wharram (2019) – namely, that any nominal in Inuktitut – including proper names – not receiving a weak indefinite reading must be receiving its interpretation via combination with a (phonetically-null indefinite) determiner which denotes a choice function variable which is left free, its interpretation being contextually determined, in the sense of the skolemised choice function approach of Kratzer (1998a, 2003). Ultimately, it is shown that 4th person (verbal) inflection in Inuttut is the (unambiguous) morphophonological spell-out of  $\phi$ -feature set unification, via the operation of *Feature Transmission under Binding* (Kratzer 2009).

- (1) a. quviasu-niat-tuk                      Hulda                      taku-guniuk  
       be.happy-NFUT-PART.3SG.ABS    H.(ABS.SG)              see-COND.4SG.ERG.3SG.ABS  
       '(S)he<sub>1</sub>'ll be happy if she<sub>1/\*2</sub> sees Hulda'  
       b. quviasu-niat-tuk                      Hulda                      taku-ppauk  
       be.happy-NFUT-PART.3SG.ABS    H.(ABS.SG)              see-COND.3SG.ERG.3SG.ABS  
       '(S)he<sub>1</sub>'ll be happy if she<sub>2/1</sub> sees Hulda'
- (2) a. quunga-niat-tuk                      kingugai-guni                      b. quunga-niat-tuk                      kingugai-ppat  
       be.angry-NFUT-PART.3SG.ABS    be.late-COND.4SG.ABS              be.angry-NFUT-PART.3SG.ABS    be.late-COND.4SG.ABS  
       '(S)he<sub>1</sub>'ll be angry if (s)he<sub>1/\*2</sub> is late'                      '(S)he<sub>1</sub>'ll be angry if (s)he<sub>2/1</sub> is late'
- (3) a. quviasu-niat-tuk                      naala-jau-guni                      b. quviasu-niat-tuk                      naala-jau-ppat  
       be.happy-NFUT-PART.3SG.ABS    obey-PASS-COND.4SG.ABS              be.happy-NFUT-PART.3SG.ABS    obey-PASS-COND.3SG.ABS  
       '(S)he<sub>1</sub>'ll be happy if she<sub>1/\*2</sub> is obeyed'
- (4) a. kingugai-niat-tut                      pisu-gutik                      b. kingugai-niat-tut                      pisu-ppata  
       be.late-NFUT-PART.3PL.ABS        walk-COND.4PL.ABS                      be.late-NFUT-PART.3PL.ABS        walk-COND.3PL.ABS  
       'They<sub>1</sub>'ll be late if they<sub>1/\*2</sub> walk'                      'They<sub>1</sub>'ll be late if they<sub>2/1</sub> walk'
- (5) a. kingugai-niat-tut                      pisu-guni                      b. kingugai-niat-tut                      pisu-ppat  
       be.late-NFUT-PART.3PL.ABS        walk-COND.4SG.ABS                      be.late-NFUT-PART.3PL.ABS        walk-COND.3SG.ABS  
       'They'll be late if (s)he walks' ((s)he must be one of them)              'They'll be late if (s)he walks' ((s)he is not one of them)
- (6) a. kingugai-niat-tut                      Hulda    Piita-lu                      pisu-ppaanik  
       be.late-NFUT-PART.3PL.ABS    H.(ABS)    P.(ABS)-CONJ                      walk-COND.3DL.ABS  
       'They'll be late if Hulda and Peter walk'  
       b. kingugai-niat-tut                      Hulda    Piita-lu                      pisu-guttik  
       be.late-NFUT-PART.3PL.ABS    H.(ABS)    P.(ABS)-CONJ                      walk-COND.4DL.ABS  
       'They'll be late if Hulda and Peter walk'

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