

Independent Pronouns in Blackfoot¹

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INTRODUCTION²

Blackfoot like the other Algonquian languages is a head marking language where arguments are marked in the verbal complex and full DPs are only optionally realized overtly. There is a series of independent morphologically complex pronouns, which we refer to as *independent pronouns*. The paradigm of Blackfoot independent pronouns is given in Table 1.

	PROXIMATE	OBVIATIVE
1	<i>n-iistó-wa</i>	<i>n-iistó-yi</i>
1P	<i>n-iistó-nnaan-wa</i>	<i>n-iistó-nnaan-yi</i>
2	<i>k-iistó-wa</i>	<i>k-iistó-yi</i>
21	<i>k-iistó-nnoon-wa</i>	<i>k-iistó-nnoon-yi</i>
2P	<i>k-iistó-waaw-wa</i>	<i>k-iistó-waaw-yi</i>
3	<i>o-(ii)stó-wa</i>	<i>o-(ii)stóa-yi</i>
3P	<i>o-(ii)stó-waawa-wa³</i>	<i>o-(ii)stó-waawa-yi</i>

Table 1: Blackfoot independent pronouns (adapted from Frantz 2009)

The goal of this paper is to explore the morphology, syntax, and semantics of independent pronouns within the framework of Déchaine & Wiltschko's 2002 typology of pronouns thereby providing a basis for a comparative analysis of Algonquian pronouns (see also Déchaine et al. 2011). After introducing our theoretical assumptions we introduce our proposal: Blackfoot independent pronouns instantiate the category ϕ P, a functional category sandwiched between DP and NP. We argue for our proposal based on the internal syntax of independent pronouns (i.e.,

¹ If not otherwise indicated, the data for this paper comes our fieldwork. We have worked with two consultants from the Kainaa (Blood) dialect (one consultant is in her mid sixties, the other in her mid forties) as well as one consultant from the Siksika dialect (also in her sixties). At times that data diverge from what has been reported in the work by Donald Frantz (his grammar and the dictionary). At this point we do not know whether this is due to a difference in dialect or ideolect, or due to some other factor.

² Abbreviations (in glosses as well as in syntactic representations) are as follows: 1=1st person; 12 =1st person plural inclusive; 2=2nd person; 3=3rd person; AN=animate; CONJ=conjunction; D=determiner; DEM=demonstrative; DIR=direct; IMPF=imperfective; IN=inanimate; INT=intensifier; LINK=linker (relative root); MED=medial; N=noun; OBV=obviative; PL=plural; POSS=possessor; PRO=pronominal stem; PROX=proximate; REFL=reflexive; VAI=animate intransitive verb

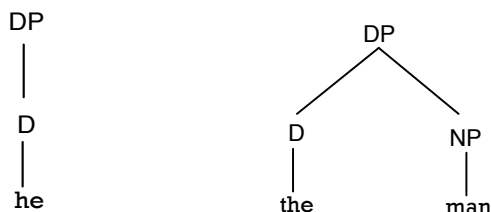
³ According to Frantz 2009 proximate 3rd person pronouns are unattested in Blackfoot. This is in accordance with the judgments from our Kainaa consultant. However our Siksika consultant makes use of the whole paradigm listed in Table 1.

their morphological properties) as well as their external syntax (i.e., their distribution). Finally, we show that the context of use for independent pronouns in Blackfoot is also consistent with our analysis. We conclude by situating our findings in the context of a larger project on comparative Algonquian syntax (see Déchaine & Wiltschko, in print).

BACKGROUND: A TYPOLOGY OF PRONOMINAL FORMS

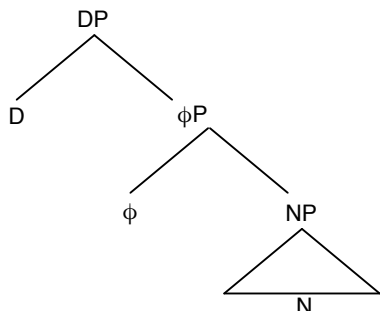
Ever since Postal's 1969 influential paper on pronouns, it is often assumed that pronominal forms universally belong to the same category, namely D. In particular, Postal argues that pronouns are intransitive determiners. Accordingly, they differ from regular determiners, which take an NP complement, but otherwise they are categorically identical. This is illustrated in (1).

- (1) a. intransitive determiners b. transitive determiners



This analysis of pronouns is still widespread within the generative tradition (see Elbourne 2005 for a recent incarnation). It is however, not the only available analysis for pronouns. In particular, Déchaine & Wiltschko 2002 (henceforth D&W) develop a typology of pronouns according to which pronouns are not a homogenous class within and across languages (see also Cardinaletti & Starke 1999; Wiltschko 1998, 2002). Based on morphological, distributional (syntactic) and semantic properties, D&W identify three categorically distinct types of pronouns. These distinct categories correspond to independently motivated nominal phrases. That is, assuming that nominal projections more generally consist of at least three layers (DP, ϕ P, and NP) as illustrated in (2), it is expected that we find three corresponding pro-forms as well.

- (2) 3 layers in the nominal phrase



If there are indeed three distinct pro-forms available, then we expect these pro-forms to differ in their internal make up (how many layers are present in a given pro-form). Pro-DP will show the morphological properties of DPs: it may consist of a DP, a ϕ P and an NP layer; Pro- ϕ Ps will show the morphological properties of ϕ Ps consisting of a ϕ P and an NP layer; and Pro-NPs will

not contain layers in the functional domain. Moreover, given that a difference in categorical identity correlates with a difference in syntactic distribution, it is expected that different pro-forms will show different distributional effects. Pro-DPs function as arguments; Pro- ϕ P's may function as either predicates or arguments; and Pro-NPs function as predicates. Finally, different categories are associated with different functions, which in turn has effects on the interpretation of a given pro-form. Thus different pronominals are expected to have different semantic properties. Pro-DPs are associated with a definite, or indexical interpretation; Pro- ϕ P's behave as variables; and Pro-NPs behave like nominal constants. This is summarized in table 2 below.

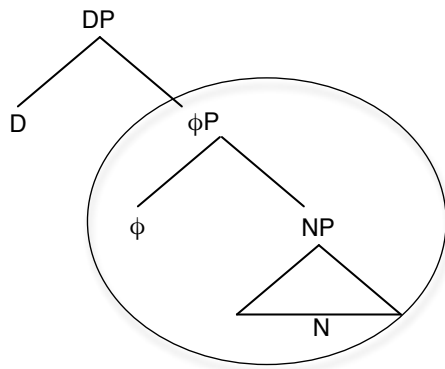
Pronominal	DP	ϕ P	NP
Internal syntax	DP-syntax	absence of D	NP-syntax
Distribution	argument	argument or predicate	predicate
Semantics	definite, indexical	variable	constant

Table 2: Pronouns are a heterogenous class (Déchaine & Wiltschko 2002)

THE PROPOSAL: BLACKFOOT INDEPENDENT PRONOUNS ARE ϕ P'S

The main goal of this paper is to explore the morphological, syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic properties of Blackfoot independent pronouns. We propose that their behaviour can be understood on the assumption that they are not DPs (contra Postal 1969, Elbourne 2005). Instead they instantiate a functional category above NP but lower than DP: they are best analyzed as ϕ P's in the D&W typology. This is illustrated in the tree structure in (3): Blackfoot independent pronouns correspond to the circled portion of the tree.

(3) Blackfoot independent pronouns are PhiPs



As Pro-PhiPs, we expect Blackfoot independent pronouns to lack the syntactic properties associated with the D-layer: they are expected to differ distributionally from full DP's; they are expected to pattern as arguments or predicates and they are expected to behave like variables rather than being indexical. In the remainder of this paper we show that this does indeed capture the properties of Blackfoot independent pronouns.

EVIDENCE FROM INTERNAL SYNTAX

We start our investigation with an exploration of the internal syntax of Blackfoot independent pronouns, i.e., with their morphological properties. To identify the pieces that make up an independent pronoun consider the 2nd person pronouns in (4).

- (4) a. **k-iistó-waaw-yi**
2-PRO-2PL-OBV
b. **k-iistó-wa**
2-PRO-PROX

The stem *iistó*, which according to Frantz & Russell 1995 is a dedicated pronominal stem, is introduced by a person prefix *k-*, suffixed by the 2nd person plural suffix *waaw*, as well as the obviative suffix *-yi* (or the proximate suffix *-wa*). Accordingly independent pronouns can be characterized by means of the morphological template in (5).

- (5) [PERSON - [PRONOMINAL STEM] (PLURAL) – {PROXIMATE/OBVIATIVE}]

In this section, we discuss each of these pieces of morphology in turn. We will show that the internal composition of Blackfoot independent pronouns is compatible with our claim that they lack a DP-layer.

Person prefixes

We start with a discussion of the person prefixes associated with independent pronouns (*n-/k-/w*). The same person prefixes are also used elsewhere in the language. They constitute the short form of the regular person prefixes (*nit-*, *kit-*, and *ot-*). In Blackfoot, the short and long forms of the person prefixes appear on clauses in the independent and conjunctive paradigm as well as on possessed nominal constructions. As we are concerned here with pronominal and thus nominal syntax, we limit the discussion to person prefixes in nominals.⁴ Blackfoot possessive constructions allow for both, the short and the long form of the person prefixes. The former are used for inalienably possessed nouns, whereas the latter are used for alienably possessed nouns (Bliss & Gruber 2011). This is illustrated in table 3.

⁴ For a discussion of person prefixes in the clausal domain, see Déchaine & Wiltschko 2011; for a discussion of the distribution of long and short forms in the clausal domain see Bliss & Gruber 2011. This contrasts with Proulx 1989 who argues that short person prefixes are restricted to dependent nominal stems.

	Inalienably possessed nouns <i>mo'tsís</i> ('hand')	Alienably possessed nouns <i>omitaa</i> ('dog')
1	<i>n-o'tsís</i>	<i>nit-omitaa</i>
2	<i>k-o'tsís</i>	<i>kit-omitaa</i>
3	<i>w-o'tsís</i>	<i>ot-omitaa</i>
1P	<i>n-o'tsís-innaan</i>	<i>nit-omitaa-innaan</i>
21	<i>k-o'tsís-innoon</i>	<i>kit-omitaa-innoon</i>
2P	<i>k-o'tsís-ooawa</i>	<i>kit-omitaa-ooawa</i>
3P	<i>w-o'tsís-ooawa</i>	<i>ot-omitaa-ooawa</i>

Table 3: Blackfoot possessor constructions

As shown in Bliss & Gruber 2011, the distinction between short and long forms is not lexically conditioned. That is, one and the same noun can be prefixed with either a short or a long prefix depending on whether the possessive relation is construed as inalienable (as in (6)a) or as alienable (as in (6)b).⁵

- (6) a. *amo no'tokáán*
 amo n-o'tokaan
 DEM 1-hair
 'This is my (own) hair.'
- b. *amo nito'tokáán*
 amo nit-o'tokaan
 DEM 1-hair
 'This is my (clipping of his) hair.'

Bliss & Gruber 2011

Note that the two sets of prefixes have been traced back to Proto-Algic (Proulx 1989). Independent pronouns differ from possessive constructions in that only the short form of the prefixes is possible; they cannot be prefixed with the long form. This is shown in table 4 (for the purpose of illustration we here omit the proximate/obviative morphology as it plays no role for the present argument).

	Independent pronoun	Not attested
1	<i>n-iisto</i>	<i>*nit-iisto</i>
2	<i>k-iisto</i>	<i>*kit-iisto</i>
3	<i>w-iisto</i>	<i>*ot-iisto</i>
1P	<i>n-iisto-innaan</i>	<i>*nit-iisto-innaan</i>
21	<i>k-iisto-innoon</i>	<i>*kit-iisto-innoon</i>
2P	<i>k-iisto-ooawa</i>	<i>*kit-iisto-ooawa</i>
3P	<i>w-iisto-ooawa</i>	<i>*ot-iisto-ooawa</i>

Table 4: Blackfoot independent pronouns

⁵ According to Frantz' 1991/2009 grammar, the demonstrative should be suffixed with the inanimate singular suffix *-yi*. It is however common for speakers to drop this suffix. We have here adopted the convention of following what the speakers say rather than what would be expected according to the grammar. At this point we do not know what determines whether or not this suffix is spelled out.

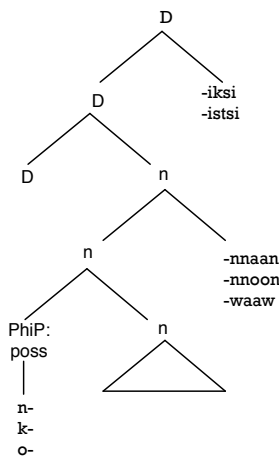
According to Bliss & Gruber, the short forms of the person prefixes are generated low in the nominal projection. In particular, they argue that the invariant part of the long person prefixes (*it*) is best analyzed as an instantiation of D. The fact that independent pronouns are prefixed with the short forms, which lack *it*, is thus consistent with our analysis of independent pronouns according to which they lack a DP layer.

Plural marking

We now turn to plural marking associated with Blackfoot independent pronouns. As can be observed in table 3 and 4, independent pronouns are suffixed with a plural marker otherwise used for possessors (*-nnaan*, *-innaan*, *-nnoon*, *-waaw*, and *-oaawa*). This suggests that independent pronouns have possessor syntax. There is however a non-trivial problem associated with this pattern. This problem presents itself as follows. In the context of possessive constructions, we observe that there is an additional plural marker (*-iksi* or *-istsi* depending on the animacy of the referent), which indicates the plurality of the referent rather than the plurality of the possessor. To see this, consider the example in (7) and its structural representation in (8).

- (7) *nitánninaaniksi*
n-itan-innaan-iksi
1-daughter-1PL-3PL
‘our daughters’

- (8) Pluralized possessive construction



In (7), the suffix *-innaan* indicates the plurality of the possessor (translated as *our*) while *-iksi* marks plurality of the referent (translated as *daughters*). We assume that the Blackfoot plural marker (*-iksi*, *-istsi*) is generated in the DP-layer of the nominal projection (Wiltschko 2009).

Now consider the independent pronouns. They can only be suffixed with the possessor plural marker but not with the *-iksi/-istsi* plural marker for the referent. There is however no obvious reason as to why this should be so. Why should we not be able to pluralize the possessor

and the referent or the referent alone?⁶ The problem is highlighted by the example in (9) which contains a possessive construction involving the noun meaning *body* (*kistominoonistsi*) as well as an independent pronoun (*kistonnoon*). Both are marked with the plural possessive agreement (*-innoon*) but only the possessed noun is also suffixed with the plural marker for the referent (*-istsi*).

- (9) *kiistonnoon kiistominoonistsi aisttsiya*
 k-istoo-nnoon k-isto-m-inoon-istsi a-istts-yi-aawa
 2-PRO-PL12 2-body-POSS-PL12.PL IMPF-hurt-PL-pro
 ‘Our bodies are hurting.’

On the present analysis, according to which the independent pronoun lacks the DP-layer, the absence of the plural marker for the referent follows: the plural marker is associated with the DP-domain and consequently, the independent pronoun cannot host this plural marker.

The pronominal stem

We now turn to the pronominal stem *iistó*. According to Frantz & Russell 1995: 22, it serves as a dedicated pronominal base (PRO for short). What is crucial for our purpose is that this pronominal stem has the distribution of a noun in Blackfoot. Crucially it does not behave like a D-element as would be predicted under the assumption that all pronominal forms are (intransitive) determiners. In terms of its morphological position, *iistó* patterns like a noun: it follows the person prefix and precedes the plural suffix as shown in (10).

- (10) a. niistonnaana
 n-**iistó**-nnaan-wa
 1-PRO-1PL-PROX
 ‘we’
 b. nitáninnaaniksi
 n-**itan**-innaan-iksi
 1-daughter-1PL-3PL
 ‘our daughters’

What is crucial for the present purpose, however, is that the pronominal stem is clearly not a D-element. In Blackfoot, demonstrative determiners precede the person-prefixed noun (see for example (6) and (13)). Thus if the categorical identity of the pronominal stem were that of a determiner, we would expect it to precede the person prefix, contrary to fact. The nominal status of the pronominal stem is consistent with the analysis of independent pronouns as ϕ Ps which contain an NP-layer.

⁶ An anonymous reviewer points out that this restriction may follow from the fact that the possessor IS the referent. This however begs the question: if there is a possessor and a referent involved (even if they are identical) then it is still not clear why the pluralizer for the referent cannot be used.

Proximate/obviative marking

Finally, we turn to proximate/obviative marking. Our discussion here will have to remain somewhat inconclusive. At least for some speakers, all independent pronouns can be used as either proximate or obviative marked, as indicated in Table 1 above. According to one of our consultants however, not all of the expected forms are attested. As summarized in table 7, the 3rd person singular proximate form is not attested (though the plural one is); while the 1st and 2nd person forms (including the 1st person inclusive form) obviative marked forms are unattested. Instead the obviative paradigm appears to be restricted to 3rd person. This is not unexpected given the observed possessor syntax.

	Proximate	Obviative
1	<i>n-iistó-wa</i>	* <i>n-iistó-yi</i>
1p	<i>n-iistó-nnaan-wa</i>	* <i>n-iistó-nnaan-yi</i>
2	<i>k-iistó-wa</i>	* <i>k-iistó-yi</i>
21	<i>k-iistó-nnoon-wa</i>	* <i>k-iistó-nnoon-yi</i>
2p	<i>k-iistó-waaw-wa</i>	* <i>k-iistó-waaw-yi</i>
3	* <i>o-(ii)stó-wa</i>	<i>o-(ii)stóa-yi</i>
3p	<i>o-(ii)stó-waawa-wa</i>	<i>o-(ii)stó-waawa-yi</i>

Table 7: Independent pronouns in the Kainaa dialect

This contrasts with the Siksika dialect, which appears to have a full paradigm for both proximate and obviative marked independent pronouns. According to Bliss (2006) local actors must be proximate while local goals must be obviative. This is shown in (11) and (12).

- (11) a. *Niistówa nitákomimmayini ani ninááyi*
n-iisto-**wa** nit-akomimm-**a**-yini an-(y)i ninaa-yi
1-PRO-PROX 1-love-DIR-OBV DEM-OBV man-OBV
‘I love that man’
- b. **Niistóyi nitákomimmawa oma ninááwa*
c. **Niistóyi nitákomimmayini ani ninááyi*
- (12) a. *Oma ninááwa nitákomimmoka niistóyi*
om-(w)a ninaa-wa nit-akomimm-**ok**-(w)a n-iisto-**yi**
DEM-PROX man-PROX 1-love-INV-PROX 1-PRO-OBV
‘That man loves me’
- b. **Oma ninááwa nitákomimmoka niistówa*
c. **Ani ninááyi nitákomimmokini niistówa*

According to Bliss 2005 proximate/obviative marking is a form of *Point-of-View*-marking, which is in turn associated with a verbal functional projection below IP. Assuming a parallel between nominal and verbal projections, we may conclude that proximate/obviative marking is also associated with an intermediate functional projection. This is consistent with our claim that Blackfoot independent pronouns are Pro-φPs.

We now turn to the external syntax of independent pronouns. We show that in terms of their syntactic distribution independent pronouns differ from full DPs (which are introduced by a demonstrative). If we take distributional differences as being indicative of categorical differences, we have further evidence that Blackfoot independent pronouns are not DPs.

In what follows, we show that independent pronouns may co-occur with determiners. They also show a different distribution than full DPs when it comes to their linear order relative to possessors. Moreover they can be used as predicates and they cannot be used in equative constructions that receive a possessive construal. We discuss each of these properties in turn.

Independent pronouns co-occur with determiners

According to our claim that Blackfoot independent pronouns instantiate ϕ Ps and thus lack a DP layer we predict that they can co-occur with a (demonstrative) determiner. This prediction is borne out as shown in (13). The 3rd person independent pronoun may be preceded or followed by the demonstrative.⁷

- (13) a. *anna oostoyi iiksspita*
ann-wa o-iisto-yi iik-sspita
DEM-AN.SG 3-PRO-OBV INT-tall
‘He’s very tall.’
- b. *oostoyi anna iikstoonaatsspita*
o-iisto-yi ann-wa iik-sspita
3-PRO-OBV DEM-AN.SG INT-tall
‘He’s very tall.’

Independent pronouns have a different distribution from full DPs

Next we discuss some linear ordering effects that differentiate full DPs from independent pronouns. Consider first the possessive construction in (14). If the possessor is a full DP, it must precede the possessed DP as in (14)a. If, in contrast, the DP possessor follows the demonstrative, which associates with the possessed noun, the result is ungrammatical.

- (14) a. [*amo ninna*] *omiksi ota’siksi* POSS-D-N
amo n-inna om-iksi ot-a’siksi
DEM 1-father DEM-AN.PL 3-mount-AN.PL
‘my father’s horses’ Frantz 2009: 75(t)
- b. **omiksi* [*amo ninna*] *ota’siksi* D-POSS-N
om-iksi amo n-inna ot-a’siksi
DEM-AN.PL DEM 1-father 3-mount-AN.PL

⁷ We have not yet come across examples in which the demonstrative would precede a 1st or 2nd person independent pronoun. This may be due to a feature clash: 1st and 2nd person pronouns are specified as [1] and [2] respectively. In contrast, the demonstrative determiner is specified as [3]. Consequently demonstratives may only co-occur with 3rd person pronouns.

When the possessor is realized as an independent pronoun, however, the situation is different. In this case the possessor may either precede (15) or follow the demonstrative (16) construed with the possessed noun.

(15) *kii oostoyi anna otowan iikohkatsistaiaikimm* POSS-D-N
kii o-iisto-yi ann-wa o-ottoan iik-ohkat-istáiaikimm
 CONJ 3-PRO-OBV DEM-SG 3-knife INT-also-be.dull
 ‘...and his knife is also dull.’

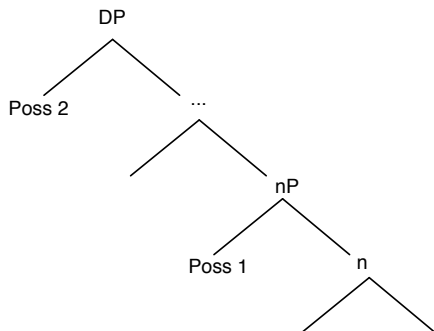
(16) a. *Oma kiisto kottoan iikiksisaiikim* D-POSS-N
oma k-iisto k-ottoan iik-iksisáikii-m
 DEM 2-PRO 2-knife INT-be.sharp
 ‘Your knife is sharp....’

b. *oma niisto notowan iiksistáiaikimm*
oma n-iisto n-ottoan iik-istáiaikimm
 DEM 2-PRO 2-knife INT-have.dull.edge.VAI
 ‘... but my knife is dull.’

c. *kii anna oostoyi otowan iikohkatsistaiaikimm*
kii ann-wa o-iisto-yi o-ottoan iik-ohkat-istáiaikimm
 CONJ DEM-SG 3-PRO-OBV 3-knife INT-also-be.dull
 ‘...and his knife is also dull.’

The pattern we observe with independent pronouns suggests that there are two possessor positions available in the Blackfoot DP. This has indeed been independently argued for in Ritter & Rosen 2011. Specifically, they argue that possessors are generated in the specifier position of *nP* (which also hosts the possessed noun affix). On their analysis, full DP possessors obligatorily move to the specifier position of DP. Thus, the pattern we observe with independent pronouns provides support for their analysis, which is illustrated in (17).

(17) 2 possessor positions in the Blackfoot DP (Ritter & Rosen 2011)



What is crucial for our purposes, is that independent pronouns are possible in both positions, whereas full DPs are restricted to the higher possessor position. This is compatible with our

analysis according to which independent pronouns are associated with a different categorical identity than full DPs. As a consequence they differ in their distribution.

Independent pronouns can function as predicates

It is one of the crucial differences between DPs and ϕ Ps that the former always function as arguments whereas the latter may be used as arguments or as predicates. The distribution of independent pronouns is consistent with this analysis. We have already seen in previous sections, that they can serve as arguments (e.g. (11)/(12)). The example below indicates that they can also serve as predicates.

- (18) *Niisto* *anna* *Tootsinam*
 n-iisto *anna* *Tootsinam*
 1-PRO DEM T.
 ‘It is me, Tootsinam.’

Independent pronouns cannot be used in equative constructions with a possessive construal

In the context of equative constructions, Blackfoot independent pronouns do not allow for a possessive construal. This is shown in (19).

- (19) **isstoan nistoo*
 istoán n-iisto
 knife 1-PRO
 intended: ‘The knife is mine.’

What is remarkable about the ungrammaticality of (19) is that the equivalent construction in Plains Cree is well-formed. Here the independent pronoun allows for a possessive construal, as shown in (20).

- (20) *níya ôma* PLAINS CREE
 n-íya ôma
 1-PRO DEM
 ‘it’s mine’ Déchaine et al. 2011

As argued in Déchaine et al. 2011, independent pronouns in Plains Cree are proDP’s and as such behave like full DPs. We hypothesize that the possessor construal of the independent pronoun in (20) is facilitated by the DP layer. And if this is the case, then the absence of the DP layer in Blackfoot independent pronouns is predicted to result in the absence of the possessive construal in this context. Whether or not this analysis is on the right track has to await future research.

We have now provided support for the claim that independent pronouns in Blackfoot have a distribution different from full DPs. This is consistent with our analysis according to which they instantiate ϕ Ps.

In this section we provide further evidence for our analysis of Blackfoot independent pronouns as Pro- ϕ Ps. We now show evidence from their context of use: independent pronouns can be used for reflexive interpretations; they can function as bound variable anaphors; but they cannot be indexical. All of these properties are consistent with our analysis of independent pronouns as Pro- ϕ P.s

Independent pronouns can occur in reflexive contexts

According to Déchaine & Wiltschko 2011, pronouns that may occur in reflexive contexts are Pro- ϕ Ps. This is especially true for languages that do not have dedicated reflexive pronouns. Blackfoot is such a language. There is a dedicated reflexive construction, which is characterized by the presence of a dedicated verbal suffix (*ohsi*).

- (21) *Nistoo nitoto 'im 'ohs*
 N-iistoo nit-otoi'm-ohsi
 1-PRO 1-blame-REFL
 'I am blaming myself.'

However, it is also possible to use a regular – non-reflexive marked – verb and in this case, an independent pronoun may receive a reflexive construal. This is shown in (22).

- (22) *Nitoo 'ohsipoyi niistoo kiistoo ki noohkatosipoyi kiistoo*
 nit-oh-t-i'poyi **n-iisto** ki **k-iisto** ki k-ohkatt-i'poyi **k-iistoo**
 1-toward-speak 1-PRO and 2-PRO and 2-also-speak 2-PRO
 'I talked about myself and you also talked about yourself.'

Again, this pattern is consistent with the analysis according to which Blackfoot independent pronouns are ϕ Ps.⁸

Independent pronouns can function as bound variables

One of the crucial diagnostics for the ϕ P status of pronouns in the D&W analysis concerns the possibility for a bound variable interpretation. While ϕ Ps can function as bound variables, DPs cannot. Before we show the Blackfoot data, we briefly introduce the concept of a bound variable (see Reinhart 1983). Consider the example in (23).

- (23) *I talked about myself and you did too.*
 i) You talked about me.
 ii) You talked about yourself.

As indicated, there are two interpretations available for this sentence. On one interpretation everyone including you talked about me. This is known as the strict identity reading. The identity of the object in the elided VP is strictly identical to the object in the first conjunct.

⁸ This differs from independent pronouns in Plains Cree (analyzed as proDPs), which do not allow a reflexive construal (Déchaine et al. 2011).

On the other interpretation, everybody talked about themselves: I talked about myself and you talked about yourself. This is considered the bound variable interpretation (also known as the sloppy identity reading). This is so because the object of the elided VP is not identical to the object in the first VP conjunct. This suggests that the elided VP cannot simply be a phonological copy of the first conjunct. Instead, we can understand this pattern if we assume that the object in the first conjunct allows for a variable interpretation: its interpretation varies with the assignment by the antecedent. As a consequence, the object in the second conjunct is also a variable bound by the closest antecedent, which in this case is the 2nd person subject *you*.

With this in mind, we can now consider the Blackfoot data in (24). For our consultant, this sentence is only compatible with a bound variable (sloppy identity) interpretation. This means that the independent pronoun is compatible with a bound variable interpretation supporting its analysis as a Pro- ϕ P.

- (24) *Nitoo 'ohtsipoyi nistoo kistoo ni'toyi*
 nit-oht-i'poyi **n-iistoo**, k-iistoo ni'toyi
 1-LINK-speak 1-PRO 2-PRO same
 'I talked about myself and you too.'
 = (i) and you also talked about yourself
 ≠ (ii) and you talked about me

Independent pronouns cannot be indexical

Finally, we note that independent pronouns cannot be used as indexicals. This can be seen based on the fact that the use of an independent pronoun is incompatible with a pointing gesture (25a). Instead a demonstrative has to be used in this context (25b).⁹

- (25) *Context: As an answer to the question "Who did that?"*
I'm pointing at a man saying:

- a. **oostoyi (ani)*
 o-iisto-yi (waanii)
 3-PRO-OBV say
- b. *anna (ani)*
 ann-wa (waanii)
 DEM-AN.SG say
 'He (said it).'

Again, this is consistent with our analysis of Blackfoot independent pronouns as Pro- ϕ Ps. Déchaine & Wiltschko 2010 argue that D is the locus of indexicality. Since independent pronouns lack a DP layer, it follows that they cannot be used as indexicals.

⁹ An anonymous reviewer reports that this is not the case for all speakers of Blackfoot. Again, we don't know whether this difference is due to a dialectal difference or some other factor.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper was to explore the properties of independent pronouns in Blackfoot. We have shown that independent pronouns do not have the same distribution as full DP's. This suggests that they have a different categorical identity. Instead we argued that they instantiate the category ϕ in the sense of Déchaine & Wiltschko's 2002 typology of pronouns. Thus, pronouns are not universally of category D (contra Elbourne 2005).

More broadly, this paper is part of a larger research project, namely the development of a comparative Algonquian Syntax. As part of the same project, Déchaine et al. have shown that independent pronouns in Plains Cree have very different properties. They in fact do behave like DPs and are thus analyzed as Pro-DPs. Interestingly, they also are introduced by person prefixes, just like their Blackfoot counterparts analyzed here. This means that the syntactic properties of cognate morphemes may vary and that the mapping between morphology and syntax is a source of variation.

Appendix: On the status of the “pronominal stem”

According to Déchaine & Wiltschko, pronouns are not primitives. Consequently we do not expect a dedicated pronominal stem such as the one we find in Blackfoot. In this appendix, we show that there are some reasons to think that the so called pronominal stem *iistó* is not a dedicated pronominal, but is instead found elsewhere in the language. In particular, the Blackfoot noun meaning *body*, whose lexical entry is given in (26)a, looks suspiciously similar to the pronominal stem, as the morphological decomposition in (26)b illustrates.¹⁰

- (26) a. *moistóm* (inanimate noun) also: *moostom* Frantz & Russell 1995: 100
'body'
- b. *moistóm*
m-oisto-m
m-body.IN-POSS
'body'

Note that it is typologically common for a body part noun to be used as the basis for a pronoun or a reflexive pronoun (Heine & Kuteva 2002). In fact, as shown by Dahlstrom 1988, independent pronouns in Fox show precisely this pattern. In particular, as illustrated in table 5, Fox makes use of two distinct series of independent pronouns. One is the so called emphatic series, based on the stem *wina* whereas the other – of interest in the present context – is the so called *niyawí* series, which is based on the stem *iyaw*, which is the inanimate noun for body.

¹⁰ The question as to *moistóm* is synchronically decomposable has to be addressed in future research. The point here is simply that such a decomposition is possible given the available building blocks of Blackfoot.

	Blackfoot	Fox	
	independent pronouns	emphatic pronouns <i>wina</i> : contrastive marker	<i>niyaw</i> pronouns (used as arguments of verbs) <i>iyaw</i> = ‘body’ (inanimate)
1	<i>n-iistó-wa</i>	<i>n-ina</i>	<i>ni-yawi</i>
2	<i>k-iistó-wa</i>	<i>k-ina</i>	<i>ki-yawi</i>
3	<i>o-(ii)stó-ayi</i>	<i>w-ina</i>	<i>ow-iyawi</i>
1p	<i>n-iistó-nnaan-wa</i>	<i>n-ina-na</i>	<i>ni-yanani</i>
21	<i>k-iistó-nnoon-wa</i>	<i>k-ina-na</i>	<i>kiyanani</i>
2p	<i>k-iistó-waaw-wa</i>	<i>k-inwa-wa</i>	<i>kiyawawi</i>
3p	<i>o-(ii)stó-waaw-awa</i> <i>o-(ii)stó-waaw-ayi</i>	<i>w-inwa-wa</i>	<i>owiyawawi</i>

Table 5: Blackfoot independent pronouns vs. Fox independent pronouns (from Dahlstrom 1988)

The fact that another Algonquian language uses the noun meaning *body* for its independent pronoun, provides initial support for the hypothesis that Blackfoot independent pronouns, too, contain such a noun.

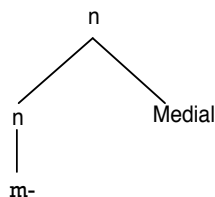
To make the case that the Blackfoot pronominal base and the noun meaning *body* are indeed related, if not identical, we need to account for the occurrence of the extra morphology: a prefix *m-* and a suffix *-m*.

For the prefix *m-*, Proulx (1989: 47) has argued that we are dealing with an “unetymological *m-* later added to a medial to form a new independent stem”. That is, many of the formatives denoting body-parts are prefixed with *m-* to form an independent noun.¹¹

- (27) a. *mo'tsis*
m-o'tsis
'hand'
- b. *moapssp*
m-oapssp
m-eye.MED
'eye'

This suggests that the prefix *m-* can be analyzed as a light noun (in the sense of van Riemsdijk 1990, see also Lowenstamm 2007) thus deriving full-fledged nouns out of acategorical forms. This is schematized in (28).

(28) *m-* as a light noun



¹¹ Since the prefix *m-* is pervasively used in this way, it is not clear why Proulx 1989 calls it an *unetymological suffix*.

Accordingly, the *m-* prefix in the noun for body is independently attested. This is consistent with the proposed decomposition of the word for *body* into a stem that looks just like the pronominal stem and the *m-* prefix.¹²

What about the suffix *-m* found on *moistóm*? As can be seen in the examples below, this suffix is not found on other nouns derived from medials.

- (29) a. *noistómi*
 n-oistó-**m**-yi
 1-body-POSS-OBV
 ‘my body’
- b. *no'tsiístsi*
 n-o'tsís-ístsi
 1-hand.MED-PL
 ‘my hands’
- c. *noápsspa*
 n-oapssp-wa
 1-eye.MED-PROX
 ‘my eye’

As shown in Ritter & Rosen 2010, the *-m* suffix serves as a possessed noun suffix. Interestingly, however, it is restricted to alienable nouns as shown in the data in (30).

- (30) *nitomitaama*
 nit-imitaa-**m**-wa
 1-dog-POSS-3SG
 ‘my dog’

Thus, for the purpose of *-m* suffixation, *moistom* (‘body’) behaves like an alienable noun. This is somewhat unexpected. On the one hand, *body* is not typically alienable. On the other hand for the purpose of prefixation, *moistom* behaves like an inalienable noun in that it combines with the short form of the person prefixes.

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¹² According to Frantz 2009: 74, the initial *m-* is not to be analyzed as a separate morpheme. This leaves unexplained the fact that it is a salient feature of body part nouns. As such it appears to be a form associating a particular sound (/m/) with a particular function (inalienability or body-part). And this is precisely what we would expect if *m-* were decomposable.

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