

4. Null elements and fused heads

Overt nominals (including pronouns) do not occur in every place that the syntactic structures of the language might suggest they should or could appear. In fact, personal pronouns are only infrequently used in finite clauses, generally with a contrastive focus effect (see chapter 16); and demonstrative pronouns are used most commonly in a focal function (§16.2.4). As is made clear in §17.1.2, the inflectional apparatus is quite expressive. When that apparatus is missing — for example, in verbless predicate nominal construction with subject-oriented deverbal nouns — an overt pronoun is necessary if the subject is first or second person; see §10.1 and §10.4.

This chapter explores the situations in which a nominal may be completely non-overt. Null arguments are discussed in §4.1 and null possessors in §4.2. Nominals in which the head is expressed by one of the modifiers of the nominal phrase — the so-called fused heads — are discussed in §4.3. Coreference between null arguments and overt nominals, and between null arguments and other null arguments is discussed in the final two sections.

4.1 Null arguments

In example (1), the verb form indicates that three nominals are in play in this clause that is a complete sentence. The prefix **i-** tells us that the subject and direct object are both third person (§17.1.2.1), and the prefix **cö-** tells us that there is a third person indirect or oblique object (§17.1.2.4). The verb stem indicates that the subject is singular (see §17.1.3). Therefore the translation is as given. Obviously, considerable ambiguity arises in the absence of a context.

- (1) **Cöimaafc.**
 3IO-3:3-Px-pound
 ‘Lo/la golpeó con él/ella.’
*S/he pounded him/her/it with it.*¹ RMH_08-04-07_190a

The same is true for (2). The finite verb is inflected with the mood marker **mi-**(§17.1.1.7). The verb stem is plural, so we are sure that the subject is plural. (The singular stem is $\sqrt{\text{afp}}$.) Only third person subject does not determine morphology on a finite intransitive verb, and so the lack of a prefix for subject person means that the verb must be interpreted as having a third person subject.

¹ The interpretation with a plural direct object and this particular verb stem is unlikely because if the event is best described with an imperfective stem ($\sqrt{\text{aafajquim}}$, in this case), that would be used instead of the perfective stem; see §17.1.3. It is also possible that the instrument could be construed as plural.

- (2) **Miizcam.**
 PX-arrive.PL
 ‘Llegaron.’
They arrived. RMH_08-04-07_190b

Various nominals may be made explicit. They and the morphology, as well as the context, must be in agreement, although some special situations also arise (see §17.1.3). A plural subject generally requires a verb inflected for plural subject, and a singular subject requires a verb inflected for singular subject.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>(3) Cmajiic coi miizcam.
 woman.PL the.PL PX-arrive.PL
 ‘Las mujeres llegaron.’
 <i>The women arrived.</i> RMH_08-04-07_191a</p> | <p>(4) * Cmaam cop miizcam.
 woman the.VT PX-arrive.PL
 (‘La mujer llegó.’)
 <i>(The woman arrived.)</i></p> |
| <p>(5) Cmaam cop miifp.
 woman the.VT PX-arrive
 ‘La mujer llegó.’
 <i>The woman arrived.</i> RMH_10-15-07_10</p> | <p>(6) * Cmajiic coi miifp.
 woman.PL the.PL PX-arrive
 (‘Las mujeres llegaron.’)
 <i>(The women arrived.)</i></p> |

The lack of any case marking on the nominals (since there is no case marking) allows for considerable ambiguity when the predicate subcategorizes for more than one nominal (including the oblique objects).

- (7) **José quiij cõimaafc.**
 the.CM 3IO-3:3-PX-pound
 ‘José lo/la pegó con él/ella.’ o ‘Pegó a José con él/ella.’
José hit him/her/it with it. or *S/he hit José with it.* RMH_08-04-07_191b
- (8) **Hast zo cõimaafc.**
 stone a 3IO-3:3-PX-pound
 ‘Pegó una piedra con él/ella.’ o ‘Lo/la pegó con una piedra.’
S/he hit a stone with it. or *S/he hit it/him/her with a stone.* RMH_08-04-07_191c
- (9) **José quiij hast zo cõimaafc.**
 the.CM stone a 3IO-3:3-PX-pound
 ‘José pegó una piedra con él/ella.’ o ‘José lo/la pegó con una piedra.’ o ‘Pegó a José con una piedra.’
José hit a stone with it. or *José hit it/her/him with a stone.* or *S/he hit José with a stone.* RMH_08-04-07_191d

- (10) **Ctamcö coi cöimaafc.**
 man-PL the.PL 3IO-3:3-PX-pound
 ‘Pegó a los hombres con él/ella.’ (*‘Los hombres lo/la pegó con él/ella.’)
*S/he hit the men with it.*² (**The men hit him/her/it/them with it.*) RMH_08-04-07_191e

And, of course, all three nominals of a clause with a verb like **cöimaafc** may be present, although one begins to have more unnatural sentences in that case since typically one “unpacks” the information through successive clauses in order to avoid such a heavy presentation of information. Example (28) from chapter 2 is repeated here as one grammatical example.

- (11) **José quih °enm icaati° quij hast quij cöimaafc.**
 the.FL hammer the.CM stone the.CM 3IO-3:3-PX-pound
 ‘José golpeó la piedra con el martillo.’
*José pounded the rock with the hammer.*³ RMH_07-11-07_15d

There is no way to present the information using *only* overt personal pronouns with the verb, since the only overt third personal pronoun (**ee**) is used only for humans (§16.1.4) and even then it is highly marked and extremely rarely used. There is no personal pronoun for an inanimate object. The use of simple demonstrative pronouns for all of the participants of a verb like **cöimaafc** (*s/he pounded him/her/it with it/them*) is also extremely unnatural. The following elicited sentences are attempts to do this using the demonstrative pronouns **tiix** (DDS) *that one* and **hipiix** (DPS) *this one* (§16.2). The results are judged grammatical, but not what one finds in normal discourse at all.

- (12) a. **Tiix tiix tiix cöimaafc.**
 DDS DDS DDS 3IO-3:3-PX-pound
 ‘Ése golpeó a ése con ése.’
That one pounded that one with that one.
- b. **Tiix hipiix hipiix cöimaafc.**
 DDS DPS DPS 3IO-3:3-PX-pound
 ‘Ése golpeó a éste con éste.’
That one pounded this one with this one.

² This must be understood as perfective since the perfective stem is used. If the action were done to the men one by one (as would be most normal), then the imperfective stem is required. See §17.1.8.

³ This is the preferred interpretation of this sentence although for some speakers, at least, it is ambiguous. For some speakers, if the article **com** (the.HZ) is used with the expression for *hammer* (which other speakers disallow), the interpretation would be that the hammer is the object being pounded, since that article would imply (for them) that the hammer is lying on the table or somewhere and thus is not being used as the instrument.

- c. **Hipiix tiix tiix cöimaafc.**
 DPS DDS DDS 3IO-3:3-PX-pound
 ‘Éste golpeó a ése con ése.’
This one pounded that one with that one. RMH_08-04-07_192

It is quite common for all of the arguments of a verb to be not overtly expressed in the clause, or for only one to be expressed (as a nominal phrase or a pronoun). It is less common for more than one argument to be overtly expressed in a clause. A few examples of well-formed sentences with overt demonstrative pronouns in some functions are given below.

- (13) **He tiix ihsexl aha.**
 IPRO DDS 1SGS.TR-IR.ID-buy AUX-DCL
 ‘Compraré ÉSE.’
I will buy THAT ONE. RMH_08-04-07_193a
- (14) **María quih tiix iséxl aha.**
 the.FL DDS 3:3-IR.ID-buy AUX-DCL
 ‘María comprará ÉSE.’
María will buy THAT ONE. RMH_08-04-07_193b
- (15) **Me tiix immamsisiin.**
 2PRO DDS 2SGS-PX-love
 ‘TÚ amas A ÉL.’
YOU love HIM. RMH_08-04-07_193c
- (16) **Tiix taax czaxö, poho —ox yaza.**
 DDS DDP SN-TR-discuss DOUBT thus DT-speak.PL
 ‘Tal vez está hablando de ESO —dijeron.’
“Maybe he’s talking about THAT,” they said. (Mt 16:7) RMH_08-04-07_194a

4.2 Null possessor

The possessor of a possessed noun may be expressed by an overt nominal, but the absence of an overt nominal does *not* make the phrase ambiguous for person since person is marked on the possessed noun as well (see §13.1.1).

If the possessor is first or second person, the possessor is commonly *not* explicit as a separate pronoun unless it is included for contrastive focus (see examples in §16.1.1 and §16.1.2). The following example is a sentence without contrastive focus on any nominal.

- (17) **Hicoome quih hicaamiz quih iyaasj.**
 1P-younger.sister.ME the.FL 1P-shirt the.FL 3:3-DT-spread.out.to.dry
 ‘Mi hermana menor extendió mi camisa para que se seque.’
My younger sister spread out my shirt to dry. (DS2005, caasj) RMH_08-04-07_194b

On the other hand, if the possessor is third person and the possessed noun is a body part or kinship term, the possessor is most commonly explicit as a nominal phrase unless it is very clear from the context. For that reason, simple phrases that refer to a leaf, a flower, or meat (flesh) — parts of a whole — have *something* overt in the possessor position, as shown by the following examples.

- (18) **Hehe istj hipcom coosot iha.**
 plant 3P-leaf Px.HZ SN-narrow DCL
 ‘Esta hoja es estrecha.’
This leaf (lit., this plant’s leaf) is narrow. (ALIM 23) RMH_08-04-07_194c
- (19) **Hehe yapxöt hipquij hehe yapxöt quisil iha.**
 plant 3P-AON-bloom Px-CM plant 3P-AON-bloom SN-small DCL
 ‘Esta flor es una florecita.’
This flower (lit., this plant’s blossom) is a small flower. (ALIM 18) RMH_08-04-07_194d
- (20) **Ziix ipxasi hipquih caaitic iha.**
 thing 3P-flesh Px-FL SN-soft DCL
 ‘Esta carne es blanda.’
This meat (lit., this thing’s flesh) is soft. (HE 52) RMH_08-04-07_194e

One situation in which the possessor is commonly *not* (if ever) expressed is when the subject is coreferent with the possessor of the immediately following nominal phrase. Consider the following examples:

- (21) [**Juan quij**] [**ata quij**] **iihax caaitom iha.**
 the.CM 3P-mother the.CM 3P-with.SG SN-speak DCL
 a. ‘Juan está hablando con su madre.’
Juan_i is speaking with his_i mother. RMH_08-04-07_194f
 b. (*Juan_i is speaking with his_i/her mother.)
 c. (*S/he is speaking with Juan’s mother.)
- (22) [**Quisíil° anxö haa° cop**] [**ai quij**] **cötafp, ...**
 child injured the.VT 3P-father.ME the.CM 3IO-RL-arrive
 a. ‘El niño herido vino a su padre, ...’
The injured boy_i came to his_i father, ... RMH_08-04-07_195a
 b. (*The injured boy_i came to his_i father, ...)
 c. (*S/he came to the injured boy’s father, ...)

A priori, these sentences should be ambiguous. One would expect sentence (21) to also have the interpretation *S/he is speaking with Juan’s mother* (with a null subject), and sentence (22)

referent as possessor is not possible, thus precluding certain interpretations. (Even the allowed interpretation here is not easily obtained — and may in fact be impossible for some speakers — since the juxtaposition of a male-reference nominal followed by **iiquet** is so unusual.⁵)

- (29) **Juan quij iiquet° com °hant cōquiiis° iha.**
 the.CM her.child the.HZ land 3IO-SN-TR-? DCL
- a. ‘Juan está cuidando al hijo / a la hija de ella.’
Juan is taking care of her daughter. RMH_08-04-07_196c
- b. (*Juan está cuidando a su hijo/hija.) (**Juan is taking care of his child.*)

This shows that there is a very strong disposition to interpret a sequence of DP N_{POSS} as possessor and possessed, suggesting that the structure with a non-overt possessor, as shown in (30), must have the interpretation shown except under very special conditions.

- (30) DP_a [[Ø_b] DP_{poss}] a = b

These strong expectations or constraints may be overridden if other factors come into play. For example, in the following sentence, the subject of both major clauses has already been introduced. There is no Different Subject marking between these clauses (see §3.6.1), and so the subject of **tiin** and the subject of **cōiyooho** must be the same. As shown in §4.4.2, an overt subject is not likely to be coreferential with a preceding null subject, so **Leví** cannot be the subject of these clauses. This leaves the option that **Leví** is the possessor of **yaazi**, and the interpretation is the one given — which is precisely one that in simpler cases is judged as not grammatical.

- (31) °Ox tpacta ma°, hant ihmaa z iiqui tiin,
 then place other a 3P-toward RL-go
- taax iti Leví Alféo quih yaazi° quij cōiyóoho.**
 DDP 3P-on the.FL his.child the.CM 3IO-3:3-DT-see

‘Entonces fue a otro lugar y en esa ocasión vio a Leví, hijo de Alfeo.’ RMH_07-11-07_19e
Then he went somewhere else, and on that occasion he saw Levi, son of Alphaeus.
 (Mk 2:14)

In the following example, the expectation expressed in (30) is overridden by pragmatic considerations: one does not normally take hold of one’s own hand.

⁵ One consultant suggested that it would look more reasonable if there were a comma after **Juan quij**.

- (32) **Pedro cop** [[\emptyset] **inol cop**] **iyíjɛ.**
 the.VT 3P-hand the.VT 3:3-DT-grab
 ‘Pedro le tomó la mano.’
Pedro took his/her hand. RMH_08-04-07_197

The complement of a postposition, structurally a possessor, may also be explicit or implicit. These facts are discussed in detail in chapter 22.

4.3 Nominals with fused heads

In addition to the simple cases above, such as (1), where no overt nominal appears in the clause to correspond to the arguments of the verb, there are many cases of nominals in which the modifiers of the head appear but the head itself is not an overt noun. While these could be analyzed as simple null heads, the presentation here assumes that the head and one of the modifiers fuse together to form a *fused head*.⁶ This is illustrated graphically for two simple examples, described in detail below, in Figures 4.1-2.

Most of the different kinds of elements that occur in the noun phrase may fuse with the head: indefinite articles (§4.3.1), demonstrative adjectives (§4.3.2), adjectives (§4.3.3), deverbal nouns as heads of relative clauses (§4.3.4), and the intensifier **hapi** (~ **hipi**) (§4.3.5). The definite articles do not fuse with the head, however, nor does the head noun of a modifying noun

Figure 4.1: Demonstrative adjective as fused head, example (42)

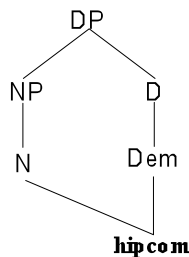
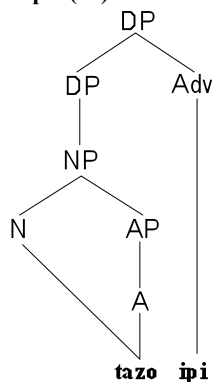


Figure 4.2: Adjective as fused head, example (50)



⁶ This presentation follows Huddleston and Pullum (2002:410ff): “Fused-head NPs are those where the head is combined with a dependent function that in ordinary NPs is adjacent to the head, usually determiner or internal modifier”

phrase (§8.2.1), as the following examples illustrate.

- (33) * [**Quij**] **ihscméxl** **aha.**
 the.CM 1SGS.TR-IR.ID-N-buy AUX-DCL
 ('No lo/la tomaré/compraré.) (*I won't take/buy the one.*)
- (34) * [**Hatéeya**] **ano** **hpsosi** **(a)ha.**
 glass 3P.in/from 1SGS.IN-IR.ID-UO-drink AUX-DCL
 ('Tomaré de el de vidrio.') (*I will drink from the glass one.*)

Furthermore, the equivalents to *the one on the table* and *the ones in the sea* do not exist. These lacunae do not seem to follow from any other fact since PPs do in fact modify nominals (see §8.2.1).

4.3.1 Fusion of indefinite articles and head

The indefinite articles (§21.1) **zo** and **pac** may be both the determiner and the head of the nominal phrase, in a fused head construction. In a more traditional presentation they would be considered pronouns as well as indefinite articles.⁷ The article **pac** as fused head is ambiguous for plurality, just as it is in its use with overt heads (see §21.1): it may mean *some* (of a group of individuals) or *some* (of a liquid/powder mass entity).

- (35) **Zo** **toc** **cotom** **ma, itípjç,** ...
 a/one there 3IO-RL-lie DS 3:3-RL-grab
 'Capturé uno de ellos, ...'
One of them was there, he grabbed him ... (Conejo_Puma_5.1)
- (36) **Zo** **cöitámlajç** **ma, ...**
 a/one 3IO-3:3-RL-bring-PL DS
 'Le trajeron uno ...'
They brought him one, ... (Mk 12:16) OP_2-2-07_115
- (37) **Zo** **hyonyaa.** (38) **Z** **iyonyaa.**
 a/one 1SGS.TR-DT-N-own a/one 3:3-DT-N-own
 'No tengo ninguno.' 'No tiene ninguno.' OP_2-2-07_117
I don't have any. (Overheard) OP_2-2-07_116 *S/he doesn't have any.* (Overheard)
- (39) ... **xapóo** **coi** **ano** **ntita,** **pac** **itácotim,** ...
 sea.lion the.PL 3P.in AW-RL-move some 3:3-RL-kill-IMPF
 '... fue entre los lobos marinos, mató algunos ...'
... he went among the sea lions, he killed some ... (DS2005, caacöim) OP_2-2-07_118

⁷ The categories used in the 2005 dictionary were of this traditional type.

- (40) **Pac he camjc.**
 some IIO IM-bring
 ‘Tráeme algunos.’
Bring some to me! (Overheard) RMH_08-04-07_198
- (41) **Pac tipjöc ma, mos pac cxatlc iha.**
 some RL-thick-PL DS also some SN-thin-PL DCL
 ‘(La corteza de) algunas es gruesa y de otras es delgada.’
(The bark of) some is thick, and some is thin. (DS2005, cahsnáailc) OP_2-2-07_119

See §8.5 for examples of the fused-head determiners in the partitive construction.

4.3.2 Fusion of demonstrative adjectives and heads

The demonstrative adjectives (§21.3) also may be fused with the head of the nominal phrase. In a more traditional presentation they would be considered pronouns as well as adjectives. The demonstrative adjectives have primarily (if not exclusively) exophoric uses when used in this way, but the medial set (those beginning with **ti-**) are also sometimes used anaphorically.

Examples of exophoric use

- (42) **¿Hipcom haa -ya x? ¿Himcom haa -ya x?**
 PX.HZ SN.EQ QM or DT-HZ SN.EQ QM or
 ‘¿Es éste? ¿O es aquél?’
Is it this one? Or is it that one? (DS2005, -x) OP_2-2-07_109
- (43) **Ticom ihyoqueépe.** (44) **Tiquij he hoyacj iha.**
 MD-HZ 1SGS.TR-DT-like MD-CM 1PRO 1P-ON-call.sibling DCL
 ‘Me gusta ése.’ ‘Ése es mi hermano/a.’ OP_2-2-07_113
I like that one. (DS2005, ticom) OP_2-2-07_110 *That one is my brother/sister.* (DS2005, tiquij)
- (45) **¿Ticop haa -ya nsexl tee!**
 MD-VT AUX QM 2SGS-IR.ID-buy RHET
 ‘¿A poco vas a comprar ése?’
You aren’t going to buy that one, are you?! (DS2005, tee) OP_2-2-07_112
- (46) **¿Mohat! ¿Hizac iti cazcam!**
 TWD-IM-move-PL PX-LC 3P-on IM-arrive.PL
 ‘¿Vengan! ¿Vengan aquí!’
Come (pl.)! Come (pl.) here! RMH_07-11-07_35b

Examples of anaphoric use

- (47) **Ticop z itaazi,**
 MD-VT one 3:3-RL-carry
ihmaa, ticop mos z itaazi ma, ...
 other MD-VT also one 3:3-RL-carry DS

‘Ésa llevó a uno (de los hermanos), y la otra llevó a uno, ...’
That one took one (of the brothers), the other took one, ... (Dos_Hermanos_50-51)

4.3.3 Fusion of adjective and head

The class of adjectives is quite small (see chapter 23) and only three adjectives may fuse with the head: **cöhaisx** *injured (by hunting weapon)*, **ihmaa** *other*, and **tazo** *one*. Three examples are given here. (See also the discussion in chapter 23.)

- (48) **¡Cöhaisx** **tintica** **iiqui** **hpancojc!**
 injured MD-AW 3P-toward IM-run-PL
 ‘¡Corre tras el que está herido!’
Run after the injured one! (Offered) RMH_08-04-07_200a

- (49) **Ihmaa** **zo** **haa** **tiij** **ma,** ...
 other a there RL-sit DS
 ‘Otro estaba allí, ...’
Another one was there, ... (Mt 25:15) RMH_08-04-07_200b

- (50) **Tazo** **ipi** **haa** **poop,** ...
 one INTNS there IR.DP-stand
 ‘Ninguno está allí ...’
Not one is there, ... (Jn 8:11) RMH_08-04-07_200c

4.3.4 Fusion of deverbal noun with head

A deverbal noun, representing the verb of a relative clause, may fuse with the head of a nominal phrase. (For general description of relative clauses modifying overt heads, see §8.4.)

- (51) [**czaxö** **cop**] (52) [**caacoji** **cop**]
 SN-TR-discuss the.VT SN-big the.VT
 ‘el/la que le(s) habla/hablaba’ ‘el/la que es/era grande’
the one who is/was talking to him/her/them the big one
- (53) ... [**caii** **quij**] [**quixt** **coi**] **cöihóoctam** **hac** ...
 mature the.CM SN-small.PL the.PL 3IO-3P-AON-look.at-PL the.LC
 ‘... cómo los menores vieron al mayor ...’
... how the younger ones viewed the elder ... (siete_filos 03) RMH_11-19-07_113
- (54) °Ox **tpacta ma x°**, [**ccaa** **tintica**] **itamjc** **x,**
 then SN-TR.-look.for MD-AW 3:3-RL-bring UT
hax cop an itaquim x,
 water the.VT 3P.in 3:3-RL-put.items UT

‘Entonces el/la que lo busca lo trae, los mete en agua, ...’ RMH_08-04-07_200d
Then the one who looks for it brings it, puts them in water, ... (ES2007 an_icooquim 02)

- (55) [**Cooil** **quij**] **inséxl** **haa -ya?**
 SN-blue/green the.CM 2SGS-IR.ID-buy AUX QM
 ‘¿Comprarás el/la azul?’
Will you buy the blue one? RMH_07-11-07_11b

4.3.5 Fusion of intensifier **hapi** with head

Of the various adverbs that may modify a nominal phrase (chapter 24), only the intensifier **hapi** (dialectal variant, **hipi**) may fuse with the head. The referent must be deduced from the context, of course; it may be first or second person only if the nominal with **hapi** is cross-referenced on a verb or noun with first or second person inflection.

- (56) **Hapi** **siitax** **caha.** (57) ¡**Hapi** **toc** **cösiij!**
 INTNS IR.ID-go AUX.SN-DCL INTNS there 3IO-IR.ID-sit
 ‘ÉL/ELLA irá.’ (*Yo irá. *Tú irás.) ‘DÉJALO allí.’
*S/HE will go. (*I/you will go.)* *Leave it ALONE there!* (DS2005, hipi)
- (58) **Hapi** **nsiitom** **aha.**
 INTNS 2SGS-IR.ID-speak AUX-DCL
 ‘TÚ debes hablar.’
YOU should talk. RMH_08-04-07_201c
- (59) **Hapi** **masóoza** **ha.**
 INTNS 2PLS-IR.ID-speak.PL AUX-DCL
 ‘USTEDES deben hablar.’
YOU (pl.) should talk! RMH_08-04-07_201d
- (60) **hapi** **ito** **quij** (61) **hapi** **mito** **quij**
 INTNS 3P-eye the.CM INTNS 3P-eye the.CM
 ‘SU ojo’ ‘TU ojo’
HIS/HER eye RMH_08-04-07_201e *YOUR eye* RMH_08-04-07_201f

4.4 Null pronouns and overt nominal coreference

An explicit nominal most typically appears early in a context, with coreferential pronouns — including non-overt pronouns — following it. This is true for simple sentences (§4.4.1) as well as for multiclausal sentences (§4.4.2).

4.4.1 Monoclausal situations

A null pronoun may be coreferential with an overt nominal phrase in the same clause under certain conditions. The most common case of this is when the subject and a possessor in the clause are coreferential as in (62). (See the discussion above in §4.2 for additional details.) This is possible whether or not the subject actually precedes the null possessor. (See §3.12 for discussion of right-dislocated nominals.)

- (62) **Juan qui** [Ø **itaamt** **coi**] **iyoo**ho.
 the.CM 3P-sandal(s) the.PL 3:3-DT-see
 ‘Juan encontró sus huaraches.’
*Juan_i found his_i sandals.*⁸ RMH_08-04-07_202a
- (63) [Ø **Itaamt** **coi**] **iyó**ho, **Juan qui**.
 3P-sandal(s) the.PL 3:3-DT-see the.CM
 ‘Juan encontró sus huaraches.’
Juan_i found his_i sandals. RMH_08-04-07_202b
- (64) [Ø **Ata** **quij**] **hant** z **iiqui** **miin**, **Juan qui**.
 3P-mother the.CM place a 3P-toward PX-go the.CM
 ‘La madre de Juan fue a otro lugar.’
Juan’s mother went somewhere. RMH_08-04-07_202c
- (65) [Ø **Ata** **quij**] **coop** **iha**, **Juan qui**.
 3P-mother the.CM SN-UO-sew.basket DCL the.CM
 ‘La madre de Juan está haciendo una canasta.’
Juan’s mother is making a basket. RMH_08-04-07_202d

A null possessor cannot be otherwise coreferential with an overt, non-dislocated nominal phrase or pronoun.

- (66) [Ø **Ata** **quij**] **Juan qui** **iyó**ho.
 3P-mother the.CM the.CM 3:3-DT-see
 ‘Su madre vio a Juan.’ (*La madre de Juan_i lo_i vio.)
*His/her mother saw John. (*John_i’s mother saw him_i.)* RMH_08-04-07_202e

Subject-object coreference requires a reflexive construction. As these are discussed in detail in §11.2), the facts are not presented here.

4.4.2 Multiclausal situations

The most natural presentation in a multiclausal sentence is for an overt nominal to appear earlier in the sentence than any coreferential null pronouns, as in (67). (In these examples, irrelevant null pronouns are not represented.)

- (67) **Pedro_i cop** **inol** **cop** **ití**pc, Ø_i **ima**fitot.
 the.VT 3P-hand the.VT 3:3-RL-grab 3:3-PX-help.stand
 ‘Pedro le tomó la mano, le ayudó ponerse de pie.’
Pedro took her hand, he helped her stand up. (Ac 9:41) RMH_08-04-07_203a

The question arises whether something analogous to the English sentence *After she finished*

⁸ If the sandals found were of someone else who is not mentioned explicitly, one would use the absolutive form (see §13.1.2) of the noun: **hatáamt**.

dinner, Mary went to the movies is possible, with a null pronoun in the first (dependent) clause and an overt, coreferential nominal in the second, independent clause. Such examples have *not* been found in common texts nor have they been overheard in conversation.⁹ Given the amount of textual material that has been examined, this is not an insignificant fact. Nevertheless, constructed example (68) was judged grammatical, albeit unnatural, by some speakers, but in fact the alternative readings make the positive judgments somewhat suspect for the intended reading (a).

- (68) ?* Ø_i **Inol cop itíjpc, Pedro_i cop imafítot.**
 3P-hand the.VT 3:3-RL-grab the.VT 3:3-PX-help.stand
 Problematic reading: ‘Tomándole la mano, Pedro le ayudó ponerse de pie.’
Taking his/her hand, Pedro helped him/her stand up.
 More possible reading: ‘Tomándole la mano, le ayudó a Pedro ponerse de pie.’
Taking his hand, s/he helped Pedro stand up. RMH_08-04-07_203b

Similar judgments were given for the following pair of sentences. The examples are very natural when the antecedent precedes the null pronoun but very unnatural or ungrammatical when the antecedent follows the null pronoun.

- (69) **Juan_i quih tafp, Ø_i zixcám z iyóohit.**
 the.FL RL-arrive fish a 3:3-DT-eat
 ‘Juan llegó y comió un pescado.’
John arrived and ate a fish. RMH_08-04-07_203c
- (70) ?* Ø_i **Tafp, Juan quih zixcám z iyóohit.**
 RL-arrive the.FL fish a 3:3-DT-eat
 ‘Después de llegar, Juan comió un pescado.’
After he arrived, John ate a fish. RMH_08-04-07_203d
- (71) **Cói¹⁰ Juan quih °hacx ipi tommiih°, Ø_i oeen° coi**
 yet the.FL s/he.had.not.died.yet his.children the.PL
iquíisax° quih quiipe quih oo cöiyóoh.
 spirit the.FL SN-good the.FL DL 3IO-3:3-DT-say/do

⁹ However, one example is found in the explanation of basket-making text, a text which may have been adapted for use as this literacy booklet that had step-by-step explanations.

- (i) **Itaxi, cmaam quij izquipót coi imazeee.**
 3:3-RL-finish woman the.CM inferior.material the.PL 3:3-PX-make.coil.filler
 ‘Cuando termina, la mujer hace relleno del material inferior.’ RMH_08-13-07_38c
When she finishes it, the woman makes coil-filler from the inferior quality splint material. (Canasta 15)

A consultant in 2007 did not like this word order, in fact, and suggesting moving the subject to the beginning of the sentence.

¹⁰ The adverb **cói** may also occur naturally after the phrase **Juan quih**. RMH_08-04-07_204

‘Antes de morir, Juan bendijo a sus hijos/hijas.’

Before he died, John blessed his children. RMH_08-04-07_203e

- (72) ? **Cói** Ø_i °**hacx ipi tommíh**°, **Juan quih oéen**° **coi**
 yet s/he.had.not.died.yet the.FL his.children the.PL
iquíisax° **quih quiipe quih oo cöiyóoh.**
 spirit the.FL SN-good the.FL DL 3IO-3:3-DT-say/do

Problematic reading:¹¹

‘Antes de morir, Juan bendijo a sus hijos/hijas.’

Before John died, he blessed his children. RMH_08-04-07_205

- (73) **Ctam_i ticop taaitom**, Ø_i **ox yee:** ...
 man MD-VT RL-speak thus DT-say
 ‘Ese hombre habló, y dijo: ...’
That man spoke and said: ... (Mk 15:36) RMH_08-04-07_206a
- (74) ? Ø_i **Taaitom, ctam_i ticop ox yee:**¹²
 RL-speak man MD-VT thus DT-say
 ‘Hablando, ese hombre dijo: ...’
Speaking, that man said: ... RMH_08-04-07_206b

In all of the preceding examples, the two clauses have been presented in the typical Dependent – Independent order (see chapter 3). The judgments become a bit sharper when the preceding patterns are examined with postposed clauses (§3.7). The options are ranked in the order of naturalness and acceptability. It is notable that when the antecedent follows the null pronoun and at the same time occurs in a dependent clause, the acceptability is much lower.¹³

- (75) a. Dependent Independent
Juan_i quih hascám z iti tíij, Ø_i **heme**° **yoofp.**
 the.FL ABS-reed.boat a 3P-on RL-sit camp DT-arrive
 ‘Juan llegó a campamento en una balsa.’
Juan arrived at camp in a balsa. RMH_08-04-07_206c
- b. Independent Dependent
Juan_i quih heme° **yoofp,** Ø_i **hascám z iti tíij.**¹⁴ RMH_08-04-07_206d

¹¹ René Montaña Herrera pointed out a very felicitous reading for this example that in fact avoids the syntactic problem: *Before s/he_i died, s/he_i blessed John's children.*

¹² If this example is grammatical, it is very unusual nonetheless. No example like it occurs in any text (so far as I know), although sentences beginning with the word **taaitom** are very common in the NTT.

¹³ This is a familiar array of facts, of course, and not unlike English.

¹⁴ A variation on this sentence or the first which is completely acceptable as well, is the one which postposes the subject to the end of the sentence: **Heme yoofp, hascám z iti tíij, Juan quih.**

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| c. | Dependent
? Ø _i Hascám z iti tiij, | Independent
Juan_i quih heme^o yoofp. <small>RMH_08-04-07_206e</small> |
| d. | Independent
?* Ø _i Heme yoofp, | Dependent
Juan_i quih hascám z iti tiij. ¹⁵ <small>RMH_08-04-07_206f</small> |

4.5 Coreference between null pronouns

In normal discourse, coreference commonly and naturally involves null pronouns. When the referent is not required to be first or second person because of cross-referencing morphology, considerable ambiguity may result. The ambiguity is diminished severely, of course, in the case of subjects in chained clauses because of Different Subject marking or the lack of it (see §3.6). For example, in a sentence like (76) the subject of **toi** *they were* is obligatorily the same as the subject of **imíitoj** *they ate it* because there is no Different Subject marking between the two clauses. The subject of **toi** cannot be some other people nor even the “that stuff” that is the direct object of the clause with **imíitoj**.

- (76) Ø_i **Taax iti toi,** Ø_i **xiica tacom imíitoj.**
DDP 3P-on RL-be.FL-PL thing.PL MD-HZ 3:3-PX-eat-PL
 ‘Estaban allí, comieron eso.’
They_i were there and they_i ate that stuff. (Muerte_Cóquimexp_9)

When the clause has an overt subordinator or coordinator, Different Subject marking is not possible (see §3.6.1 and chapter 25). In such a situation, interpretation is guided by pragmatics and not by syntactic or morphological factors. The following examples with overt subordinator and coordinator (and hence no Different Subject marking) illustrate this. The subjects of the pairs of clauses are understood to be coreferential because of the context and not because of any grammatical constraint.

- (77) Ø **Anxö toohit xox,** Ø **xitéjüc.**
INTNS RL-UO-eat although EM-thin
 ‘Aunque come mucho, es flaco/a.’
Although s/he eats a lot, s/he is thin. (DS2005, xox) RMH_08-04-07_207a
- (78) Ø **Misil xo** Ø **mazím.**
PX-small but PX-pleasant
 ‘Es pequeño pero bonito.’
It is small but it is pretty. (DS2005, xo) RMH_07-11-07_36c

Pragmatics also guides the interpretation of null pronouns when they are non-subjects. In

¹⁵ René Montaña Herrera reports that this kind of sentence structure is heard from young people today. I have not confirmed this observation, however, and it is impossible to guess whether the crucial facts are the same.

the following examples, the null pronoun is likely to be interpreted as coreferential with the underscored nominal in the preceding clause, but nothing in the grammar requires this.

- (79) °An iquitzil° pac me hyaamx tax, cmaax Ø ihmiiijc.
 pants some 2IO 1SGS.TR-DT-say+IO SBRD now 1SGS.TR-PX-bring
 ‘Te prometí pantalones y los he traído.’
I promised you pants and now I have brought them. (DS2005, tax) RMH_08-04-07_207b
- (80) Juan quih poofp ta x, ; Ø hax cöhaas!
 the.FL IR.DP-arrive DS UT water 3IO-IM-cause.drink
 ‘Si Juan viene, dale agua a tomar.’
If Juan comes, give him/her water to drink! RMH_08-04-07_208a
- (81) Ihptáalim, hamt ihtahójöz, [Ø iti] hpyiij.
 1SGS.IN-RL-play dirt 1SGS.TR-RL-cause.mounded 3P-on 1SGS.IN-DT-sit
 ‘Yo estaba jugando, hice una montícula de tierra y me senté en ella.’
When I was playing, I made a hill in the sand and sat on it. (DS2005, cahójöz) RMH_08-04-07_208b