

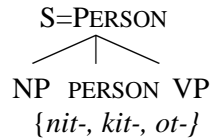
# How PERSON pervades Blackfoot grammar. And why.

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## 1. Introduction

- Show how the grammatical category PERSON pervades the grammar of Blackfoot section 2
- Provide an analysis which accounts for why PERSON pervades the grammar of Blackfoot section 3

- (1) a. In Blackfoot PERSON functions as the head of the clause



→ PERSON plays the role of TENSE and ASPECT

- Discuss the predictions of the analysis: section 4
  - TENSE- is not the head of the clause and therefore does not pervade Blackfoot grammar
  - Aktionsart is PERSON-based (*Animacy* classifies verbs, not Aktionsart)
  - Introducing non-core arguments is restricted by PERSON (*Sentience*)

## 2 The empirical problem: PERSON pervades Blackfoot grammar

BACKGROUND: A WORKING DEFINITION FOR PERSON

- Person is a **deictic category**, interpreted relative to the speaker, encoding the participants in a speech situation. Kibort 2008 (<http://www.grammaticalfeatures.net/features/person.html>)
- a grammatical category used in the **classification of pronouns, possessive determiners, and verb forms** according to whether they indicate the *speaker*, the *addressee*, or a *third party* <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/grammatical+category>

### 2.1 PERSON classification of verb forms

- (2) The Blackfoot verbal template

PERSON- (NEG, Y/N) - (PREVERBS) - [VERB STEM INITIAL-(MEDIAL)-FINAL] - DIR/INV - PERSON/# -3 #/GEN

Frantz 1991

#### 2.1.1 Person prefixes

- (2) The Blackfoot template

**PERSON-**(NEG, Y/N) - (PREVERBS) - [VERB STEM INITIAL-(MEDIAL)-FINAL] - DIR/INV - PERSON/# -3 #/GEN

	<b>independent</b>	<b>conjunctive</b>
1	nit-	nit-
2	kit-	kit-
1+2	∅	∅
3 prox	∅	ot-
3 obv	ot-	ot-

2.2.2 Theme marking

(2) The Blackfoot template

PERSON- (NEG, Y/N) - (PREVERBS) - [VERB STEM INITIAL-(MEDIAL)-FINAL] - **DIR/INV** - PERSON/# -3 #/GEN

Goal	Actor:	1	2	3	3'
1		n/a	-oki	-ok	-ok
2		-o	n/a	-ok	-ok
3		-a	-a	n/a	-ok
3'		-a	-a	-yii	n/a
0		-‘p	-‘p	-m	

Table from Louie 2008: 17 (22)

2.2.3 Agreement suffixes

(2) The Blackfoot template

PERSON- (NEG, Y/N) - (PREVERBS) - [VERB STEM INITIAL-(MEDIAL)-FINAL] - DIR/INV - **PERSON/# -3 #/GEN**

<b>Suffix 1: PERSON/#</b>	<b>Suffix 2: 3 #/GEN</b>
1pl <i>-(i)nnaan</i>	3sg <i>-wa</i>
2pl <i>-oaa(wa)</i>	3pl/obv pl <i>-yi</i>
3pl <i>-oaa(wa)</i>	obv sg <i>-yini</i>

2.2 PERSON classification of nominal forms

(3) The Blackfoot nominal template

PERSON- (PRENOUNS) - [NOUN STEM INITIAL-(MEDIAL)-FINAL] - PERSON/# -3 #/GEN

2.2.1 PERSON classification of possessive marking

Person	Ordering	Translation
1s	nit-STEM-(m)	‘My <u>STEM</u> ’
2s	kit-STEM-(m)	‘Your <u>STEM</u> ’
3s	ot-STEM-(m)	‘His/her <u>STEM</u> ’
3’	ot-STEM-(m)-(wa)	‘His/her <u>STEM</u> ’
Inalienable X	m-STEM	‘a <u>STEM</u> ’
1pl	nit-STEM-(m)-nnaan	‘Our (w/o you) <u>STEM</u> ’
2/1pl	kit-STEM-(m)-nnoon	‘Our (w/ you) <u>STEM</u> ’
2pl	kit-STEM-(m)-oaaawa	‘Your all’s My <u>STEM</u> ’
3pl	ot-STEM-(m)-oaaawa	‘Their <u>STEM</u> ’

2.2.2 PERSON classification of pronouns

Person	Bf form	Translation
1s	nii-stó-wa	me
2s	kii-stó-wa	you
3s	oo-stó-yi	him/her
3’	---	him/her
1pl	nii-stó-nnaana	us (w/o you)
2/1pl	kii-stó-nnoona	us (w/ you)
2pl	kii-stó-oaawa	you all
3pl	oo-stó-oaawayi	them

2.2.3 PERSON classification of demonstratives

**person specification**    **Blackfoot form**

+1, -2	<i>amo</i>
-1, -2	<i>om</i>
+1, +2	<i>anno</i>
-1, +2	<i>ann</i>
+1	<i>am</i>

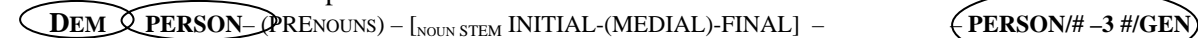
adapted from Frantz 1971: 31, 1991: 63

2.5 Summary: The distribution of PERSON marking in Blackfoot

(2) The Blackfoot verbal template



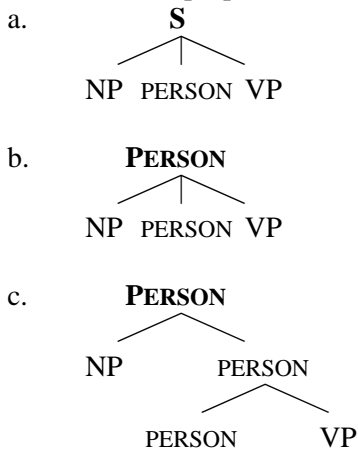
(2) The Blackfoot nominal template



3 The analysis: Why PERSON pervades Blackfoot grammar

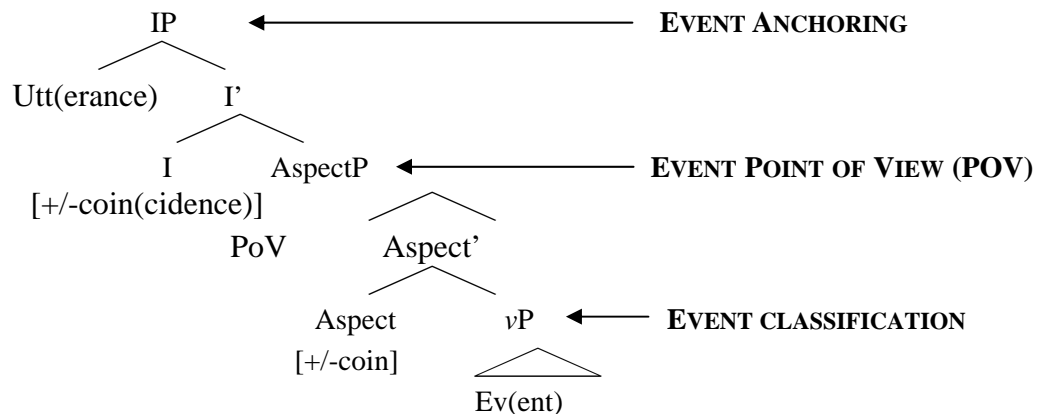
3.1. Proposal: Person heads the Blackfoot clause

(4) The essence of the proposal

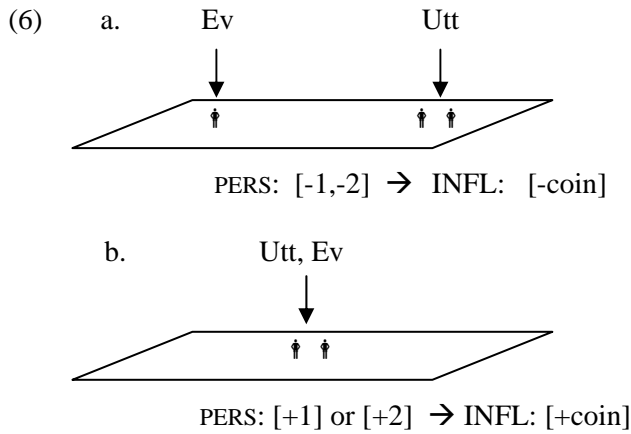
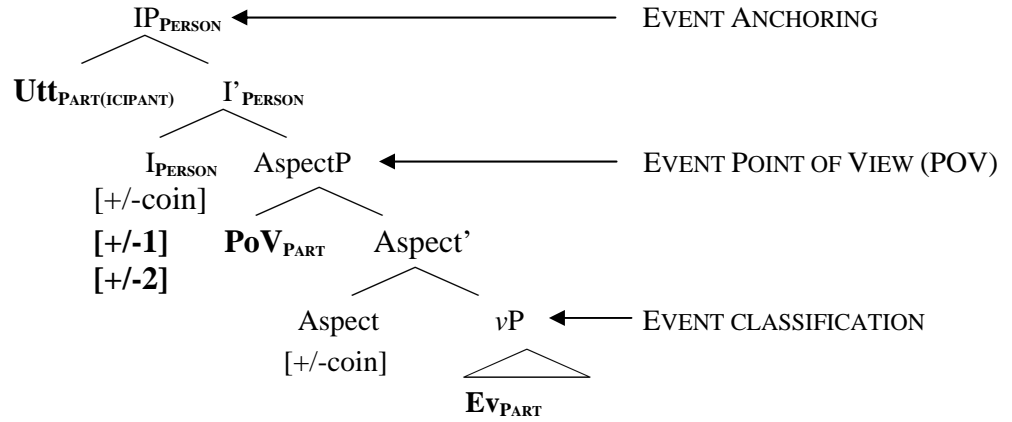


(5) The details of the proposal

a. **Universal Base:** hierarchically organized functional categories with abstract core function



- b. **Parametric substantiation:** the substantive content of functional categories is subject to variation
- c. In **Blackfoot** PERSON [+/-1], [+/-2] values the abstract coincidence feature in INFL (i.e., PERSON replaces TENSE)



*'He is the past tense of you.'* (Rachel Ermineskin, p.c.)

### 3.2 Accounting for the distribution of PERSON marking in Blackfoot grammar

#### 3.2.1 Person prefixes = PERSON HEAD

(2) The Blackfoot template

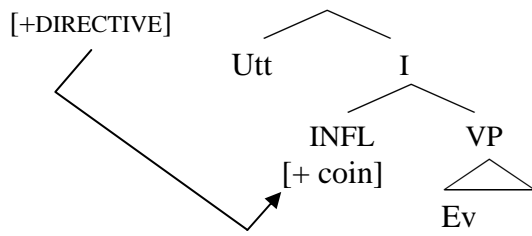
**PERSON**-(NEG, Y/N) - (PREVERBS) - [VERB STEM INITIAL-(MEDIAL)-FINAL] - DIR/INV - PERSON/# -3 #/GEN

- 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> person prefixes assert that the utterance participant coincides with an event participant

- (7) a. *nitsikákomimmawa nitána*  
**nit**-iik-wákomimm-a-wa n-itan-wa  
 1-very-love(TA)-DIR-3SG 1-daughter-3SG  
 'I love my daughter.' (Frantz 1991: 51, ex. a)
- b. *kitsikákomimmawa nitána*  
**kit**-iik-wákomimm-a-wa n-itan-wa  
 2-very-love(TA)-DIR-3SG 1-daughter-PROX  
 'You love my daughter.' (Frantz 1991: 51, ex. c)

→ '... the person affixes do not signal the function of persons, but only that they are involved' (Frantz 1971: 18)





- No person prefixes in the subjunctive order
  - ... unanchored clauses
    - i) future oriented conditionals
    - ii) generic temporal clauses (*whenever*)

- (14) a. *ikkamínimmiinnaaniki, nitáaksowatoo'pinnaana*  
 ikkam-Ini-mmiinnaaniki nit-yáak-Iowatoo-'p-innan-wa  
 if-see(TI)-1PL(S) 1-FUT-eat(TI)-THEME-1PL-IN.SG  
 'If we see it, we'll eat it.' (Frantz 1991: 113, ex. m)
- b. *ikkamáyo'kainoainiki, nitáakahkayi*  
 ikkam-á-yo'kaa-inoainiki nit-yáak-wa:hkayi  
 if-DUR-sleep(AI)-2PL(S) 1-FUT-go.home  
 'If you (guys) are sleeping, I'll go home.' (Frantz 1991: 113, ex. l)
- c. *ai'sóotaasi, áakitsipiimmiaawa*  
 a'-sootaa-si yáak-it-IpiiM:-yi-aawa  
 INCHOAT-rain(II)-IN.SG(S) FUT-then-enter-3PL-PRO  
 'When it rains, they will go in.' (Frantz 1991: 113, ex. p)

- Conjunctive clauses: person prefixes obligatory

- (15) a. *áyo'kaawa nitái'to'toohsi*  
 á-Io'kaa-wa nit-á'-it-o'too-hs-yi  
 DUR-sleep(AI)-3SG 1-INCHOAT-there-arrive(AI)-CONJ-CONJ  
 'He was asleep when I got there.' (Frantz 1991: 111, ex. a)
- b. *nitáissskammawa kitá'waawayákiysi*  
 nit-á-ssskamm-a:-wa kit-á'-wa:wayaki-yi-hs-yi  
 1-DUR-watch(TA)-DIR-3SG 2-INCHOAT-hit(TA)-INV-CONJ-CONJ  
 'I was watching over her, when she hit you.' (Frantz 1991: 111, ex. b)
- c. *úksoka'piiwa otáissootaahsi*  
 iik-soka'pii-wa ot-á-sootaa-hs-yi  
 very-good(AI)-IN.SG 3-DUR-rain(II)-CONJ-CONJ  
 'It's good that it's raining.' (Frantz 1991: 111, ex. e)

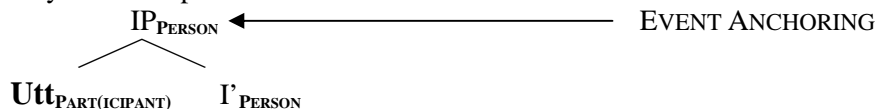
### 3.2.2 Theme marking = Aspect HEAD

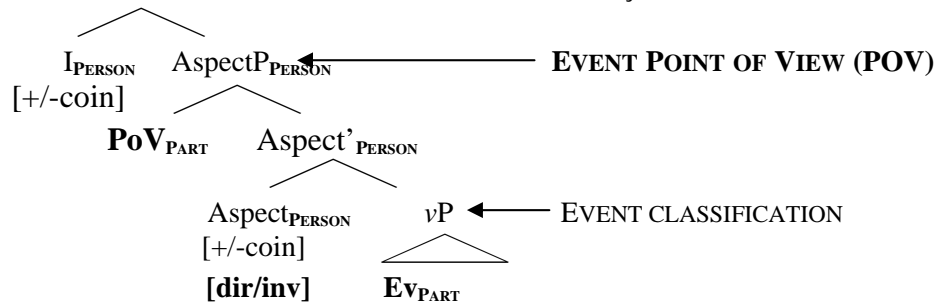
In Blackfoot PERSON also substantiates Aspect

WHY?

- I<sub>PERSON</sub> establishes a relation between the Utterance participant and a Point of View participant
- Since I<sub>PERSON</sub> functions as the anchoring category, the arguments to be ordered must be **participant arguments**
- Therefore Aspect must also be PERSON-based

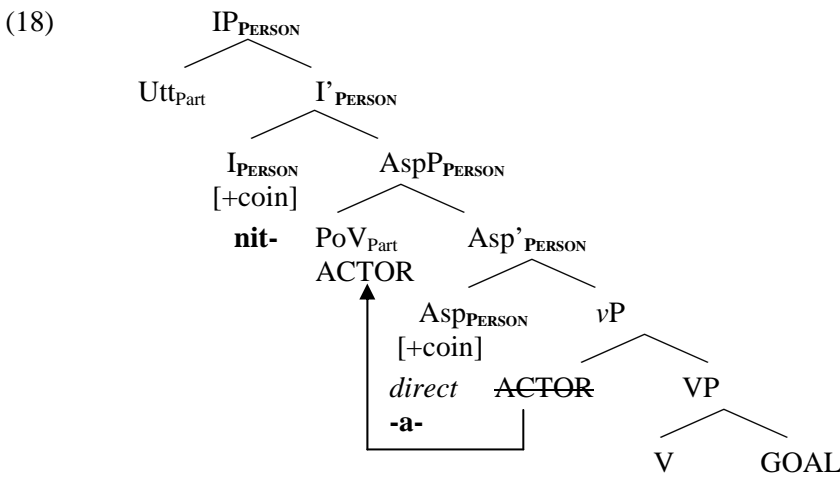
(16) Blackfoot direct inverse system = Aspect



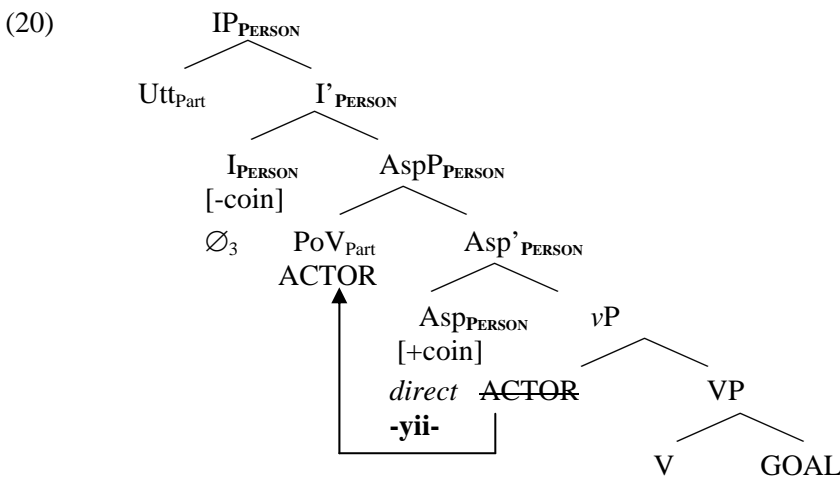


- Direct marking asserts that the ACTOR coincides with the Point of View participant (Bliss 2005)

(17) *Nitáawayakiaa*  
*nit-(w)aawayaki-a-wa*  
 1-hit-**DIR**-3SG  
 'I hit him.'

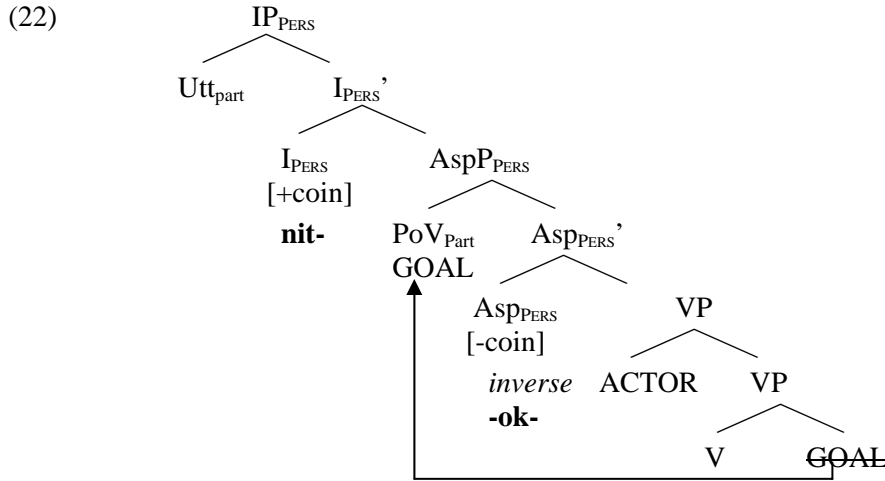


(19) *Sí'katsiwa ani póconi*  
*si'kat-(y)ii-wa an-(y)i pokon-(y)i*  
 kick-**DIR**-PROX DEM-OBV ball-OBV  
 'He kicked the ball' Bliss 2005: 65 (57)

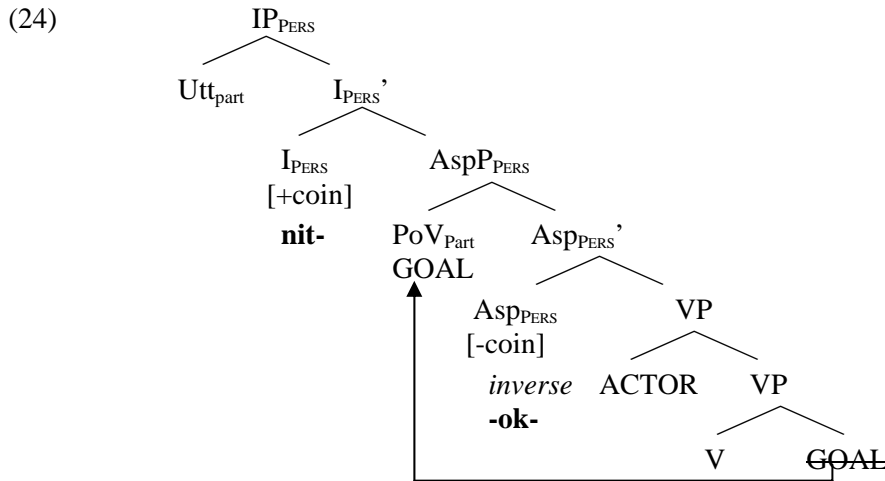


- Inverse marking asserts that the ACTOR does not coincide with the Point of View participant

- (21) *Nitááwayakioka*  
*nit-(w)aawayaki-ok-wa*  
 1-hit-INV-3SG  
 'He hit me.'



- (23) *Otáákomimmoka*  
*ot-aakomimm-ok-(w)a*  
 OBV-love-INV-PROX  
 'S/he<sub>OBV</sub> loves him/her<sub>PROX</sub>' Bliss 2005: 67 (59b)



#### 4 Predictions of the analysis: PERSON pervades Blackfoot grammar yet further

PERSON contributes the substantive content to the head of the clause in Blackfoot

FURTHER CONSEQUENCES:

- TENSE does not pervade Blackfoot grammar *section 4.1*
- EVENT CLASSIFICATION is PERSON-based (Animacy) *section 4.2*
- Nominal licensing is PERSON-based (Sentience) *section 4.3*



## 4.1 Blackfoot lacks Tense

- absence of obligatory TENSE marking in Blackfoot

(25) Kit-ána aasáí'ni-wa  
 2-daughter cry-3sg  
 'Your daughter cried' (Frantz 1991: 36 (v))  
 'Your daughter is crying' (Siksika)

(26) Blackfoot 'past' (Frantz 1991)  
 i) lack of a- (durative)  
 ii) i- or ii- stem initially  
 iii) prefix ná-  
 iv) initial change (-ay-)

- None of these forms are dedicated past markers

i) presence of durative a- is compatible with past interpretation (thus not a dedicated past TENSE)

(27) *ámo kiisskoohtsik ámoksi nóókskaitapi itáóki'kaayaa*  
 amo kiisskoohtsik amo-iksi nioókska-itapi it-á-oki'kaa-yi-aawa  
 DEM long.time.ago DEM-AN.PL three-person LOC-DUR-camp.AI-3PL-PRO  
 'A long time ago there were three people camping'

(28) *Ki ma itskai'sowa'si'taki ninaayi itaohpokiyo*  
 ki om-wa it-sska'-sa-wa'si-i'taki nínaa-yi it-á-ohpo'kiiyoo  
 and DEM-PROX LOC-extremely-NEG-become-feel.emotion.AI man-OBV LOC-DUR-follow.AI  
 '...and the man got really angry; he followed him'

(29) *ki ma aakii mi ásíka'pistotsim otsitapihpiyaa ki otohkohtaa ki otoisomo'si*  
 ki om-wa aakíí om-yi á-sikk-a'pistotsi-m...  
 and DEM-PROX woman DEM-IN.SG DUR-VERB-clean-make.TI-TI.THEME  
 ... ot-itapi-yi-hp-yi-yi-aawa ki oto-ohkohtaa ki oto-somo'si  
 3-live.AI-NOM-IN.SG-3PL-PRO and go.to.do-gather.firewood.AI and go.to.do-fetch.water.AI  
 '...and the woman would clean up their camp and she would go after firewood and go after water'  
 (BB: the creation story)

ii) *ii-* is compatible with a present and a past interpretation (thus not a dedicated past TENSE) Armoskaite 2007

(30) a. Nitaiisiksipa anna Martina  
 nit-a-ii-siksip-wa anni Martina  
 1sg-Impf-ii-bite-3sg Det Martina  
 'I am biting Martina'  
 'I bite Martina'

b. Nitsiisiksipa anna Martina  
 nit-ii-siksip-wa anni Martina  
 1sg-ii-bite-3sg det Martina  
 'I bit Martina' Armoskaite 2007 (ex. 4)

iii) *na-* (restricted to Siksika) is an epistemic modal (thus not a dedicated past TENSE) (Bliss & Ritter 2007)

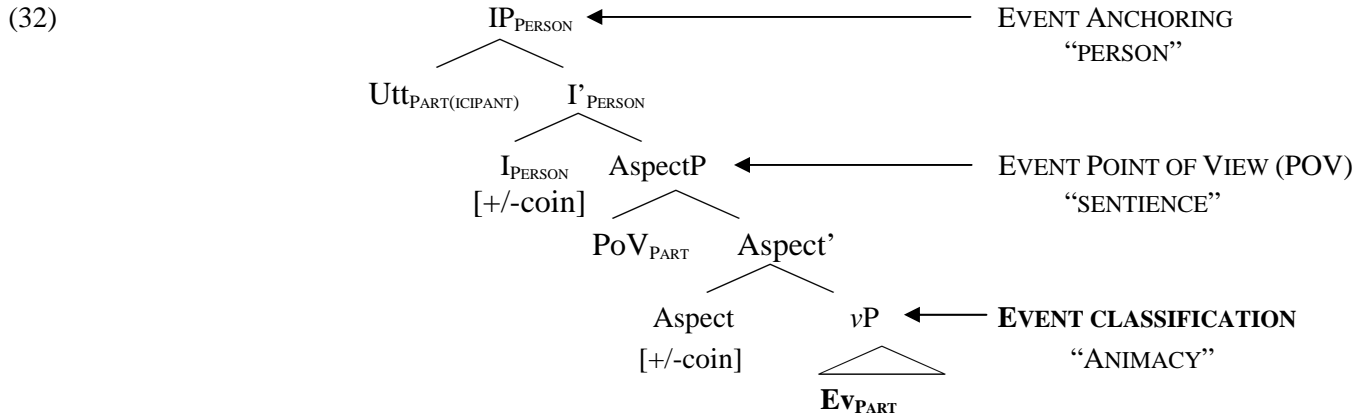
(31) a. *Nítssksíni'p aná imitááwa náisiksipiwayi ní John*  
 nit-ssksini-'p an-(w)a imitaa-wa na-i-siksip-(y)ii-wa-ayi ni J  
 1-know.TI-1:INAN DEM-PROX dog-PROX NA-CONN-bite-PROX-PRO DEM J  
 'I know the dog **na-** bit John.'

b. *Nitsikáánistsi'takiwa aná imitááwa (\*ná)áhksiksipiwayi ní John*  
 nit-ik-aanist-i'taki-wa an-(w)a imitaa-wa...  
 1-very-say-feel-PROX DEM-PROX dog-PROX

...aahk-siksip-(y)ii-wa-ayi                      ni John  
 NONFACT-bite.TA-DIR-PROX    DEM John  
 'I think the dog (*\*na-*) bit John.'

- iv) initial change is not a dedicated past tense marker either because
  - ... restricted to a small subset of stems (sV or ICV; Frantz 1991)
  - ... initial change is also found in some imperatives forms and a few nominalized verbs (Frantz (1991: 36))

4.2 EVENT CLASSIFICATION IS PERSON-BASED (Animacy) (Ritter & Rosen 2007, Louie 2008)



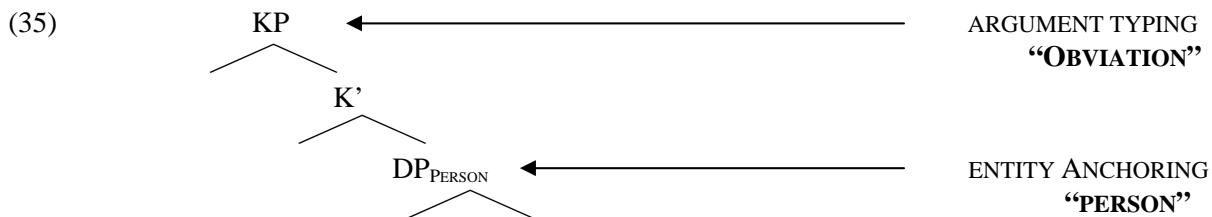
(33) Event classification specifies properties of the **Event participant (i.e., Animacy)**

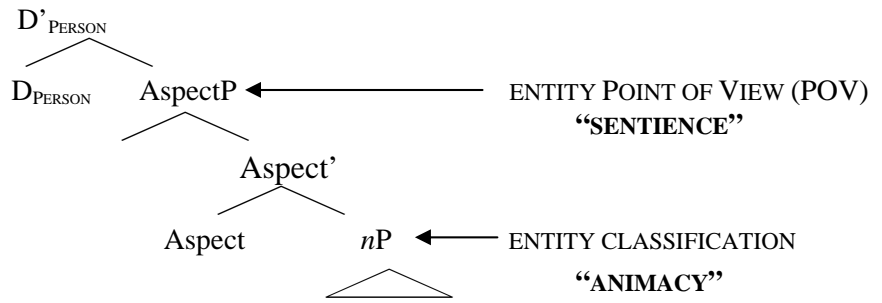
	<b>4 kinds of verbs</b>	<b>external animate argument</b>	<b>Single animate argument</b>
		associated with vP	associated with VP
II	-	-	-
AI	-	-	+
TI	+	+	-
TA	+	+	+

- (34) Examples of the four verb classes in Blackfoot
- II (Inanimate Intransitive): *iiyiko* 'be difficult'
  - AI (Animate Intransitive): *iiyikoosi* 'be difficult'
  - TI (Transitive Inanimate): *iiyiki'tsi* 'find (it, inanimate) difficult'
  - TA (Transitive Animate): *iiyikimm* 'find (it, an., him/her/you/me) difficult'

4.3 Nominal licensing

- There is a connection between TENSE/ASPECT and the licensing of nominal arguments (CASE)
- If Blackfoot replaces TENSE/ASPECT with PERSON we might expect nominal licensing to proceed differently
- There is evidence that Blackfoot lacks Case (Ritter & Rosen 2005, Ritter & Wiltschko 2004).
- ... and it appears that PERSON plays a role in the licensing of nominals (see also Lochbihler 2008)





- Non-thematic objects must be sentient (Bliss 2006)

- Benefactives triggering agreement must be sentient

(36) *Nitááhkanomoawa anna issítsimaan amiksi si'káániksi.*  
 nit-waahkan-**omo-a**-wa ann-wa issítsimaan am-iksi si'kaan-iksi  
 1-sew-**TA.BEN-1:3-PROX** DEM-PROX baby.ANIM DEM-PL blanket.ANIM-PL  
 'I sewed those blankets for the baby.' (Bliss 2006: (12))

(37) *Nihtááhkanayi amiksi si'káániksi anni ákssin.*  
 n-iht-aahkani-**a**-yi am-iksi si'kaan-iksi ann-yi akssin  
 1-PURP-sew.**TA-1:3-PL** DEM-PL blanket.ANIM-PL DEM-OBV bed.INAN  
 'I sewed those blankets for the bed.' (Bliss 2006: (13))

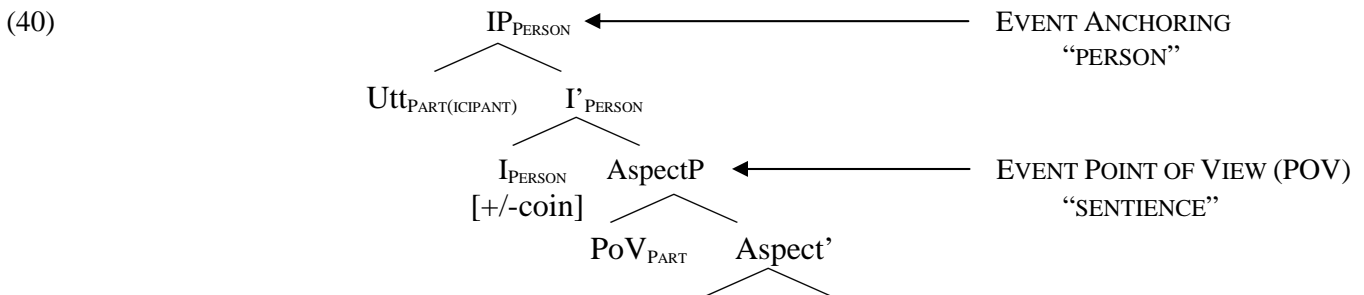
- Sources triggering agreement must be sentient

(38) *Nitohpómowawa óma aakíkoan ámostsi asoká'siistsi.*  
 nit-ohpommo-**a**-wa om-wa aakiikoan amo-stsi asoka'sim-istsi  
 1-buy.from.**TA-DIR-PROX** DEM-PROX girl.ANIM DEM-PL dress.INAN-PL  
 'I bought from that girl these dresses.'

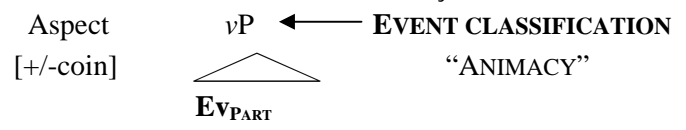
(39) *Nitsitohpommatoo'piyaaw amostsi asoka'siistsi ...*  
 nit-it-ohpommatoo-'**p**-yaawa am-ostsi asoka'sim-istsi  
 1-there-buy.**TI-1:INAN-PL.PRO** DEM-PL dress.INAN-PL  
 ... *omi iitaohpommao'pi.*  
 om-(y)i iitaohpommao'p-yi  
 DEM-OBV store.INAN-OBV  
 'I bought these dresses from the store.'

## 5 Conclusion

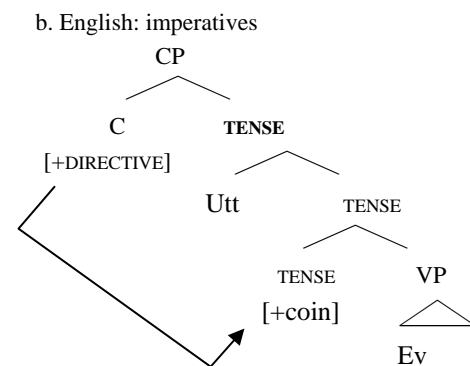
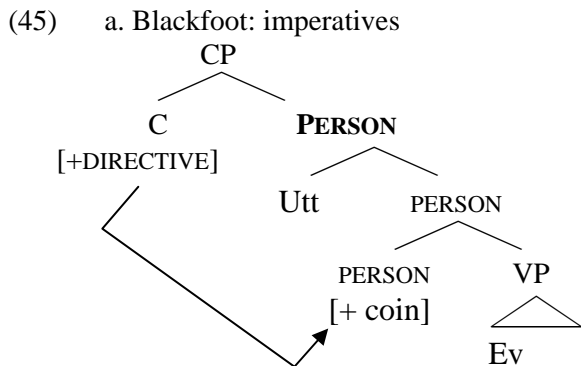
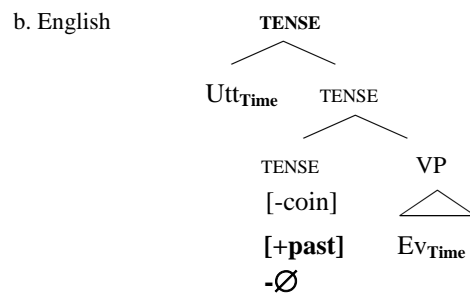
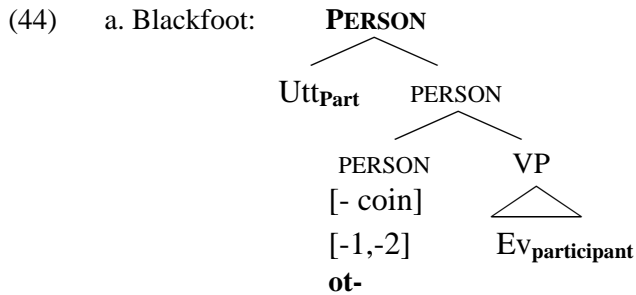
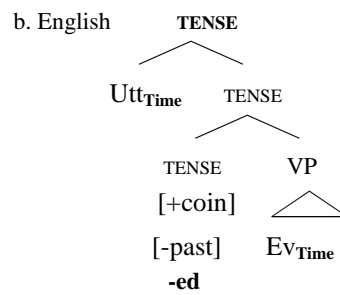
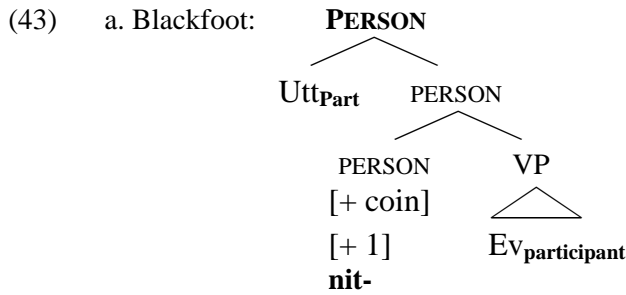
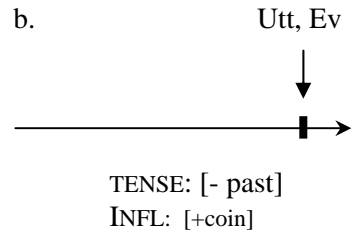
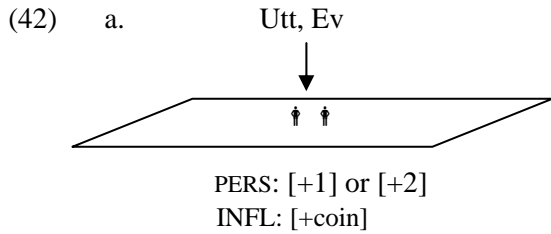
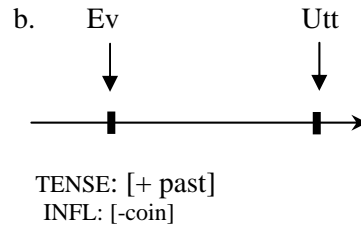
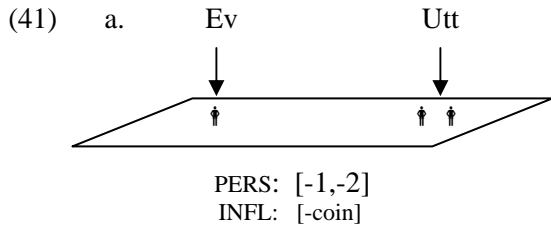
- The pervasiveness of PERSON in the grammar of Blackfoot derives from its status as the head of the clause
- As the head of the clause it pervades the system: it plays a role in expressing Event Anchoring, event point of view, event classification, as well as nominal licensing
- It remains to be seen how other Algonquian languages behave in this respect



Ritter & Wiltschko: How PERSON Pervades Blackfoot Grammar. And Why.



**Appendix : Contrasting Blackfoot and English**



(46) English: verbal classification based on *Aktionsart* (specifies properties of Ev<sub>Time</sub>)  
4 kinds of verbs INITIATOR MEASURE

Ritter & Wiltschko: How PERSON Pervades Blackfoot Grammar. And Why.

	associated with vP	associated with VP
states	-	-
activities	-	+
accomplishments	+	-
achievements	+	+