

Meso-American Inflectional Morphology (MAM)

Abstracts

Karla J. Avilés González, CIESAS-D.F. (Mexico), Université François-Rabelais (Tours, France)

¿Renovando la lengua?: Morfología y escritura entre los defensores del Náhuatl

El náhuatl o mexicano es la lengua mesoamericana con mayor número de registros escritos en todo el continente. Desde la época colonial contamos con valiosos textos que van de las primeras descripciones del náhuatl como el *Vocabulario* de Molina (1571) o la gramática de Carochi (1645), hasta una vasta literatura recopilada -entre otros- por nahuahablantes herederos de la nobleza indígena tales como Chimalpáhin (Tena 1998). Sin embargo, la escritura del náhuatl, así como de muchas otras lenguas en México, históricamente ha estado vinculada con un ejercicio de poder elitista que estigmatiza las prácticas lingüísticas y a sus hablantes, por ejemplo utilizándola para castellanizar a la población indígena o para condenar la rica variación que existe al interior de esta lengua (Cf. Cifuentes 1998; Rockwell 2006; Avilés 2009). Es más, Flores Farfán (2007) ha constatado que este poder en su expresión escrita se manifiesta en todos los niveles de la lengua (fonológico, morfológico, etc.), generando además fenómenos como simplificaciones, neologismos o hipercorrecciones que se apartan de la realidad lingüística y al mismo tiempo vehiculan ideologías puristas poco o nada positivas para la vitalidad de las lenguas y culturas que pretenden defender. Por ello, y ante el creciente interés por convertir a la escritura en un recurso más de la rehabilitación lingüística a través de proyectos menos asimétricos y co-participativos, en esta comunicación presentaré una serie de casos que ilustrarán algunos de los problemas que enfrentan los actores empoderados lingüísticamente para codificar gráfica y morfológicamente el registro oral o el imaginario que tienen de él. Sugiero que los defensores de las variedades del náhuatl aquí exploradas (comunidades de Guerrero, Morelos, Puebla y Veracruz), en su intento por segmentar y plasmar formas lingüísticas pueden producir ciertos fenómenos morfosintácticos, así como innovaciones o hipercorrecciones que no sólo se apartan de la estructura gramatical del náhuatl, sino que alcanzan distintos grados de inteligibilidad que no siempre son suficientes para ser comprendidos por la población a la que intentan dirigirse. De esta manera, espero poner en evidencia que identificar científicamente este tipo de dilemas es parte de un profundo proceso de re-conocimiento lingüístico -útil e incluso necesario- que requiere una estrecha colaboración entre lingüistas, hablantes, educadores y antropólogos para desarrollar proyectos y materiales de revitalización lingüística eficaces.

Matthew Baerman, Surrey Morphology Group, University of Surrey

Inflectional interactions in Oto-Manguean

Many Oto-Manguean languages are known for their dense layering of inflectional exponence: e.g. prefixation, suffixation, stem alternations and prosody may all play a role in the paradigm of a single lexeme. In addition, many Oto-Manguean languages display lexically conditioned allomorphy of their inflectional exponents (i.e. inflection classes). Put these two together, and we face the situation that a single lexeme may belong simultaneously to different inflection classes, depending on which aspect of its exponence we are looking at. This adds an interesting new dimension to current explorations on the nature of inflection classes, namely the question of how multiple layered inflectional systems interact with each other.

A typology of inflectional class interaction can be seen as spanning between two poles. At one end we find systems in which there is no interaction at all. Each inflectional layer runs in parallel without reference to the others, the unconstrained cross-classification leading to a proliferation of

paradigmatic types. At the other end we find systems with a tight network of mutual implication, whereby the behaviour of one inflectional layer determines and is determined by the behaviour in another. In some sense the most interesting systems are those that fall in the middle of the typology, where the task of sorting out the inflectional layers and their interaction is particularly challenging.

In this paper I show some of the typological range manifested in the Oto-Manguean languages, and make some speculations about their implications for diachrony and morphological modelling. The examples are drawn from Chatino (Zona Alta), Chinantec (Lealao, Sochiapan, Tlatepuzco) and Mazatec (Chiquihuitlán, Huautla).

Claudine Chamoreau, CNRS (CEMCA – SEDYL/CELIA)

Diversity of enclitics in Purepecha

Purepecha (isolate) has different kinds of enclitics: pronominal in (1), and non-pronominal in (2) and (3).

(1) *ka=kxī ikyapa-rini wanto-nts-kwarhe-pa-ntha-ni xa-rha-x-p-ka*
 and=1PL get.angry-CENTRIF-PART.IM tell-IT-MID-CENTRIF-CENTRIF-INF be.there-FT-
 AOR-PAS-ASS1/2
 ‘[...] and, getting angry, we discussed.’ (IH10: 128)

(2) *no=tΣka=ni xwina-Σ-ka ugo-ni xupi-ka-ni xutΣi kawayu-ni*
 NEG=then=1 allow-AOR-ASS1/2 Hugo-OBJ take-FT-INF POS1 horse-OBJ
 ‘I do not allow Hugo to take my horse.’ (JR10: 2)

(3) *ajta jiniani ire-ka-s-ti, chari tata jingoni=thu, primu-e-s-ti*
ima=thu
 as far as there live-FT-AOR-ASS3 POS2PL father COM=too cousin-PRED-AOR-ASS3
 DEM=too
 ‘He lived up to there, with your father too, he is also a cousin.’ (AR1: 10)

These enclitics do not attach to a particular class of stem but rather to specific positions. They generally show two types of positions: a fixed position, called Wackernagel or second-position as in (1) and (2); and a floating position, that is, close to the constituent marked by the enclitic, it may encliticize to the constituent or to the end of the nominal phrase, as in (3). In the first position, its scope is the clause while in the second, this is generally the constituent or the phrase (Aikhenvald 2002, Bickel & Nichols 2007). In the 16th century, these positions were obligatory: pronominal and some non-pronominal enclitics have a fixed position and other non-pronominal enclitics show a floating position.

Nowadays, the old positions show some signs of weakening. Non-pronominal enclitics keep their position while pronominal enclitics show variations and tend to move to the right position in the clause, and may encliticize to the predicate itself or to the last element before the predicate. Clitic doubling is also frequently found; this is a process whereby a clitic and a non-clitic referring to the same argument are allowed to co-occur in the same clause (4).

(4) *pawani=kxīni jucha ma kantela intsī-mpi-a-ka=kxī*
 tomorrow=2PL.OBJ 1PL a candle give-ASSOC-FUT-ASS1/2=1PL
 ‘Tomorrow, we will offer you a candle.’ (JR2: 24)

This third type of position is accompanied by formal, distributional, and functional changes. My hypothesis for explaining the restriction of this new position to pronominal enclitics is that they

choose their host for their grammatical properties, showing a head-attraction (see Haig 2008 for Western Iranian Languages). At the synchronic level, I will argue that this movement characterizes some pragmatic marked contexts. At the diachronic level, this movement may be analyzed as the first step of a typological change in the position of pronominal enclitics (Anderson 1993: 74, Siewierska 2004 and Dixon 2004 for pronouns in Western Yolngu).

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Maurizio Gnerre y Flavia Cuturi, Université de Naples, L'Orientale

Afijos fusionales, dedicados y portmanteau, en ombeayiüts

La morfología del Huave de San Mateo del Mar (*ombeayiüts*) es predominantemente aglutinante, con afijos gramaticales y derivacionales tanto 'monoexponenciales', como 'poliexponenciales' ('fusionales' o 'cumulativos', que codifican, es decir, dos o más valores morféimicos). Ejemplos son: 1) el prefijo *mon-* 'Pl.', que ocurre sólo con una sub-clase Nominal y de Nombres deverbalizados: *na-xey* 'hombre', *mon-xey* 'hombres'; *ne-kiaach* 'maestro', *mon-kiaach* 'maestros' < *a-kiaach* 'enseña'; 2) el sufijo *-e/a* 'Nom.', que ocurre solamente con los pronombres personales: *xik-e* 'yo': *xik* 'me'; *ikoots-a* 'nosotros (incl)', *ikoots* (Obj. '-Ø').

La mayoría de los afijos 'poliexponenciales' no son 'dedicados', y ocurren con, o son "compartidos" por, dos o más clases de palabras. Ejemplos son: 1) los prefijos que codifican 1 pl. y 3., tanto con Nombres como con Verbos; 2) el sufijo *-Vw*, '3. Pl.' que ocurre con las formas verbales, con el Pron. personal 3.: *nej*, *nejiw*. y con algunas formas posesivas.

Pero talvez sólo dos afijos poliexponenciales, *-Vy* y *-an*, pueden ocurrir con (casi?) todas las clases, abriéndose a distintos valores 'dedicados', más 'gramaticales-funcionales' o más 'derivacionales-semánticos'. Ejemplos para *-Vy* son: 1) 'reflexivo', 'frecuentativo', 'instrumental' y 'absolutivo' con formas verbales-nominales, 2) 'enfático/absolutivo' con los pronombres personales, 3) 'presentativo' con los deícticos, y 4) 'modalidad adverbial' con las adposiciones. Estos son, entonces, afijos 'guardarropa', o *portemanteau*, que son 'poliexponenciales' de una forma diferente, por calidad y cantidad, de los otros: no solo son 'compartidos', sino también sus valores morféimicos son 'distribuidos', realizando el núcleo de su valor semántico en el interface con las distintas clases de palabras.

Alain Kihm (CNRS-Paris 7) & Jean Léo Léonard (Paris 3 & IUF)

Mazatec Verb Paradigm Classification (MVPC): a diasystemic glimpse and the native grammarian's lesson

Was the Mazatec verbal complex properly described, as a fairly predictable inflectional category and relation network, or was it actually undersketched or overclassified? This is the question we shall try to answer in the present paper.

Paradoxically, one of the most insightful surveys of Mazatec verb stem formation is to be found in a work devoted to comparative phonology (Kirk 1966). Besides the well known aspect and person/aspect prefixes (*tí-*, *ki-*, *ka-*, or *si-*, *su-*, *ni-*, *nu-*, etc.), Kirk points out many formative strategies involved in Mazatec verbal paradigms, e.g. compounding with aspectual and motion auxiliaries such as **whé* 'USE UP', **hi* 'GO', **wi* 'PASS' and **wa* 'TAKE' (both understated by Kirk), **wha'a* 'PASS BY', **he* 'END', **mq* //na-wa// 'ABLE', **tsi'i/si-* 'DO', etc. Even nowadays many of these elements can easily be identified: e.g. in Jalapa Mazatec *b'a-* //wa'// 'TAKE', *b'e-* //we'// 'PUT', *je* 'END', *fe-* //we-he'// 'END UP', *fj-* //wi-hi'// 'GO', *n'e-* //ne'// 'DO', *si-* 'CAUSE', etc.

Moreover, derivation plays a far more significant role in Mazatec verb stem formation than meets the eye. Verb stem formation indeed involves a wide array of intensive, directional, comitative and aspectual, i.e. adverbial, suffixes such as *-jin*, *-jnu*, *-kjá*, *-ne*, *-kjún*, *-sun*, *-t'a*, *-ko* (originally compounded), which impart fine-grained semantic specifications to the roots. Such stem-forming adverbial suffixes also provide slots for a threefold argument marking of Agent, Patient and Applicative or Experiencer. This accounts for the many intricacies of the apparently complex stem patterns usually described for varieties such as Chiquihuitlán or Jalapa. In other words, a basic flaw in the description of Mazatec verb inflection is that both the inner complexity of stem formation and multiple agreement marking, and the contrastive evidence from dialectal variation have been underestimated. Descriptions focused too heavily on canonical, context-free paradigms, on the one hand, while monographic surveys of inflectional patterns missed stem-forming evidence coming from dialectal variation throughout the Mazatec dialect network, on the other hand. Last but not least, the outsider's point of view – i.e. the linguist as a learner –, strongly influenced by Greco-Latin or Spanish grammatical tradition, biased the classification of Mazatec verb inflection.

Recent fieldwork elicitation and team work with native Mazatec linguists having developed their own theory of Mazatec Verb Paradigm Classification (MVPC) suggest that the system may be trimmed down to no more than five conjugations, e.g. in Huautla Mazatec Neutral Aspect/Past completive 3SG according to Juan Casimiro Nava: (1) *wa-* (*batécha* 'sweep'); (2) *we'-/kV'* (*b'éitse/tsa-k'éitse* 'light a fire'); (3) *wa-/ka-* (*bangoya/tsa-kangoya*); (4) causative *si-/ni-* (*sixá/nixá* 'work'); (5) a prefixless set of irregular stems (*té/chá* 'dance'). We call this introspective dimension of MVPC "the native grammarian's lesson", also including in it how speakers react to the elicitation of verb paradigms.

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Expressive morphology in Yucatec Maya

In this paper, I will directly address axes 1 and 3. This paper will contribute to our knowledge of the psychological reality of morphemes, roots and stems through an examination of the derivational processes of Yucatec Maya lexical categories. Examination of expressive morphology will provide reasons for re-thinking certain assumptions about the nature of roots and their derivations.

To address axis 1, I will first describe the range of derivations that I will consider to be “expressive morphology”. After I briefly define the notion of ‘expressive grammar’ in contrast to ‘plain grammar’ (Potts, 2007; Zwicky & Pullum, 1987), I will give some examples of expressive stems (that are adverbs, as in ex. 1 below and adjectives, as in 2 to 12) and of a specific sub-class of expressives in Yucatec Maya, the ideophonic derivations (see examples 13-14).

In Yucatec Maya, the lexical classification of expressive words (stems) is contingent on three features: (1) morphology, (2) semantics and (3) syntax. I will show how morphology (i.e. derivation) is inextricable from semantics and that syntactic position is one way to distinguish word class (in the frame of expressive morphology at least). I will also show how morphological derivation is a productive process through which speakers create an expressive lexicon in Yucatec Maya, i.e. new stems. This point will directly address the questions of how lexical categories relate to the existence of roots and how roots and stems can be and need to be taken as two different things in Yucatec Maya. Analysis of spontaneous and elicitation data suggests that the creative process of expressive words in Yucatec Maya is more constrained by semantics than phonology or morphosyntactic rules.

This point will lead to the second part of the paper that addresses axis 3 in posing the question: Do roots (specifically verbo-nominal roots) have some psychological reality in Yucatec Maya? To put it differently, is there evidence that roots are even recognized as such by Maya Yucatec speakers?

Morphosyntactically, it seems that verbo-nominal roots are readily subject to derivation (or inflection, following Lois and Vapnarsky (2006)) and that it is difficult for speakers to ascribe an infinite form to them (in contrast with Indo-European languages). It is noteworthy that in Bricker et al. (1998)’s dictionary it is often the case that the roots presented as entries appear always, in speech, in their derived form. Therefore, that leaves the possibility of roots being traced back from their derived form, although these roots may not be recognized by the speakers. This is the case for expressive derivations and tractability is only possible through cognates in neighboring languages (Chol in the present case).

Semantically, in the formation of expressive words (adverbs, adjectives and ideophones), it seems that the meaning of the root is only minimal and it is through the derivation process that they acquire a concrete realization (to qualify some specific aspect(s) of a percept). For instance, the root *tak'* has the raw meaning of ‘adhere/adherence’ and once derived becomes *tak'aknak* ‘sticky with an unbounded pattern’, *táahk'a'ach* ‘sound of something getting stuck,’ e.g. walking with flip flop) or in compound *chak-tak'-e'en*, ‘dirty red’, etc (see also examples below).

Cognitively, elicitation with speakers show that they tend to reinterpret ideophonic derivation as compounded CVC-CVC roots, although they are able to form new stems from specific chosen CVC roots. That is, Yucatec Maya speakers have strong feelings about a CVC form being somehow the ‘natural’ form of words in Maya, i.e. on the basis of their phonological profile. In this sense, there is an illusion of transparency for the speakers to (re-)interpret words, even when they in fact apply a different principle to construct those words.

Examples

Reduplications

- CV-CVC reduplication “time repetition”

- (1) *tak'* (mv) ‘stick, adhere’
ta-tak' xiimbal
‘walking with sticky feet’

- *CVC-v-CVC and CVC-un/en-CVC “spatial repetition”*
 - (2) *k’ix* (n) ‘thorn’
k’ixik’ix several thorns on the bark of a tree close to one another
k’ixunk’íix several groups of thorns spread over on the bark of a tree
 - (3) *lem* (mv) ‘shiny, sparkle, bright visual event’
lemunléem several soldiers with shiny swords to their belts
- *CV-CVC-kil template “general property of an object, visual experience”*
 - (4) *k’ix* (n) ‘thorn’
k’ik’ixkil ‘stinging’ (e.g. rough fabric, 3 day growth of beard)
 - (5) *lem* (mv) ‘shiny, sparkle, bright visual event’
lelenkil ‘shiny’ (e.g. sparkling cloth, thunder, shiny metal)
- *CVC-lemak suffix “tactile experience”*
 - (6) *’op’* (mv) ‘break’
’op’lemak ‘easily broken (tactile/body experience)’
(e.g. dried tortilla crushed by hand)
 - (7) *k’ix* (n) ‘thorn’
k’ixlemak ‘stinging (tactile/body experience)’
(e.g. having a small piece of wood in the eye)
- *CVC-vknak “tactile experience with an idea of an unbounded pattern”*
 - (8) *’op’* (mv) ‘break’
’op’oknak ‘easily broken (tactile/body experience with unbounded pattern)’
(e.g. light bulb crushed with the fingers)
 - (9) *k’ix* (n) ‘thorn’
k’ixinak ‘stinging (tactile/body experience with unbounded pattern)’
(e.g. rubbing the fur of a wild boar)

Sensory compounds CVC¹-CVC²-e’en

- (10) With color term: *chak* (adj) ‘red’
 - (a) with *hul* (mv) ‘beam’
chak-hul-e’en ‘red-beaming (of light)’
 - (b) with *t’ab* (mv) ‘light up’
chak-t’ab-e’en ‘red-lighting up’
 - (c) with *hop’* (mv) ‘start’
chak-hop-e’en ‘red-starting to fire up’
 - (d) with *nik* (pos) ‘spread out, fallen without order’
chak-nik-e’en ‘red-spread out’

With temperature terms *síis* ‘cold’ and *k’iin* ‘lukewarm’.

- (11) *síis-nul-e’en*
cold-bruise-SUF
‘cold-bruise’ [e.g. touching ice]
- (12) *k’iin-t’ab-e’en*

hot/warm-light.up-SUF
'hot lighting up' [e.g. being close to a starting fire]

Ideophonic derivation

- $C_1\acute{v}hrv\acute{v}C_2$ "rapid motion"

(13) *huts'* (pos) 'a Figure moving toward, near or behind a Ground'.

<i>húuhru'uts'</i>	<i>ka'ah</i>	<i>bin</i>	<i>le ch'o'o'</i>	<i>t-u-paach</i>	<i>le p'uul-o'</i>
IDPH.place.near	CONJ	go	DET rat-TD	LOC-3ERG-back	DET jar-TD

'*húuhru'uts'* went the rat behind the jar' (LPB)

- $C_1\acute{v}hC_2\acute{v}\acute{v}C_3$ "ways/sounds of falling"

(14) *haw* (pos) 'facing upward'

<i>háahwa'an</i>	<i>ka'ah</i>	<i>lúub</i>	<i>le chan</i>	<i>paal-o'</i>
IDPH.face.up	CONJ	fall	DET small	child-TD

'*háahwa'an* fell the small child' (BMY)

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Enrique L. Palancar, Surrey Morphology Group

Reducing inflectional complexity: An alternative view of Chinantec conjugation classes

Chinantec is a small Mesoamerican language family of the Oto-Manguean stock comprising about 14 different varieties. Verb inflectional classes in Chinantecan languages have become a matter of interest for morphological theory because of their puzzling internal diversity and morphological abundance (see Finkel & Stump 2009, Stump & Finkel 2007). Foundational in the treatment of inflectional classes in Chinantec is the approach by Merrifield (1968) of Palantla Chinantec, who proposes the existence of at least 89 different inflectional classes or conjugations. This analysis rests on the concept of a "triplet": a set of three prosodic TAM exponents per grammatical person. For example, for the encoding of third person, some verbs may select Triplet 1 [P(resent) tone 12, F(uture) tone 1, C(ompletive) tone 1], others Triplet 2 [P tone 12, F tone 1, C tone +2], others Triplet 3 [P tone 12, F tone 12, C tone 12], and so on.

In this paper, I have studied the inflectional properties of a sample of 690 verbs from Merrifield and Anderson (2007) in detail. I have analyzed the interaction of inflectional triplets in the encoding of grammatical person and in the making of the different conjugations. Taking this perspective favors the observation of valuable generalizations. For example, Triplet 1 is used to encode the TAM values of many verbs that have no distinction of person; Triplet 2 is used only in a handful of verbs; Triplet 3 does not encode aspectual distinctions, etc. In the paper, I propose that there are five main types of

verbs in Palantla Chinantec attending to their paradigmatic profile: (i) non-inflected verbs (10.2%); (2) verbs inflected for TAM only (25.9%); (iii) verbs inflected for person but not for TAM (9.1%); (iv) verbs inflected for TAM in the 3rd person only (11.7%); and (v) verbs inflected for person and for TAM (42.6%). This perspective has the further advantage of reducing the number of inflectional classes from 89 to 30 (with a number of subclasses) and provides a more comprehensive view of how Chinantecan verbs are organized in the lexicon for inflectional purposes.

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Gilles Polian, CIESAS SURESTE

Pluraccionalidad en tseltal

En este trabajo, presento un estudio preliminar de cuatro patrones morfológicos en tseltal (maya) que marcan cada uno un tipo de pluralidad del evento en el verbo, fenómeno conocido como pluraccionalidad o pluralidad verbal. En los últimos años, el estudio de este tipo de marcadores, que incluyen iterativos, distributivos, frecuentativos, etc., ha despertado un gran interés en la lingüística (Cusic, 1981, Durie, 1986, Lasersohn, 1995, Cabredo y Laca, pa., entre otros), sobre todo desde el lado de su semántica y su relación con la pluralidad nominal, y disponemos de un número creciente de estudios que describen y comparan marcas pluraccionales en una gran diversidad de familias lingüísticas. Es en particular conocido que muchas lenguas de Norteamérica tienen sistemas de marcación de la pluralidad más desarrollada sobre los verbos que sobre los nominales (Mithun, 1988). En cambio, existen hasta ahora muy pocos estudios de este tipo sobre lenguas de Mesoamérica, y la información disponible sobre la pluraccionalidad en las diferentes gramáticas es por lo general escasa. El presente trabajo se inscribe en la voluntad de explorar este terreno en una lengua maya, como parte de un trabajo mayor de descripción de la gramática de la lengua tseltal.

La multiplicidad de los marcadores pluraccionales en tseltal los vuelven un caso de estudio interesante, ya que llevan a preguntarse cuál es la diferencia entre cada uno de ellos. Voy a mostrar que dos de estos marcadores son de tipo iterativo y dos son de tipo distributivo, pero que mantienen especificidades tanto en su semántica como en su interacción con la transitividad. Mostraré asimismo la variación observada a nivel dialectal, donde se observa que ciertas variantes dialectales están en proceso de reanalizar los afijos distributivos como marcas flexivas de número.

Referencias

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Daniel Silverman, San Jose State University

Summary of Comaltepec Chinantec Morpho-Phonology

Comaltepec Chinantec possesses an extremely rich morpho-phonology, including (1) a complicated pattern of tone sandhi that is both phonologically and morphologically conditioned, (2) a complex system of stem modification in its verbal aspectual morphology, and (3) vowel and nasal harmony it is system of pronominal clitic suffixation.

The data presented herein were originally compiled by Judi Lynn Anderson and Wanda Jane Pace, both SIL affiliates. The goals of this presentation are as follows:

- (1) To reconfigure the presentation of the data in such a way that brings out the deeper phonological patterns that are in evidence.
- (2) To consider in greater and more systematic detail some of the finer aspects of morpho-phonological patterning.
- (3) To reinforce the proposal that many languages' morpho-phonological systems must rely heavily on memory, and not on some supposed generative capacity.
