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Patron: Amith, Jonathan

Journal Title: Papers from the American Indian languages conferences held at the University of California, Santa Cruz, July and August 1991 /

Volume: Issue:
Month/Year: 1991 **Pages:** 168-72

Article Author:

Article Title: Buckley, Eugene; Low-tone spreading in Chalcatongo Mixtec

Imprint: Carbondale ; Dept. of Linguistics, South

ILL Number: 68493492



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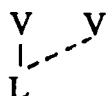
Low-Tone Spreading in Chalcatongo Mixtec

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This paper discusses a rule of Low-Tone Spreading found in the variety of Mixtec spoken in the town of Chalcatongo (Oaxaca, Mexico), which is absent from the closely related San Miguel el Grande dialect documented by Pike (1948) and Dyk and Stoudt (1973). The analysis is based on the speech of Luciano Cortés Nicolás.

1. The rule. Chalcatongo Mixtec has three distinctive tones: High (H), Mid (M), and Low (L); I treat the Mid tone as underlyingly unspecified and filled in by default rule (cf. Pulleyblank 1986). Low-Tone Spreading occurs in several different environments, but in all cases a Low tone spreads rightward onto a vowel (mora) which otherwise would bear Mid tone, i.e. a toneless vowel:

- (1) *Low-Tone Spreading (basic form)*



Once the rule applies, the target vowel is no longer unspecified and will not receive a default M.

2. Spreading within the root. San Miguel has roots with the surface tones LM but none with LL; Chalcatongo has LL and no LM. There is evidence in Chalcatongo from the linking of a floating High tone that the surface LL roots actually derive from underlying LM: when the H tone links to the first syllable of the root, it replaces the L and the root surfaces as HM. One source of this floating H is the preposition *hĩĩ* 'with'. We can see from the following simple examples that it changes the first tone of the noun to H:

- | | | | |
|-----|-------------------|--------|------------------|
| (2) | <i>kítì</i> | MM | 'horse' |
| | <i>hĩĩ kítì</i> | HH HM | 'with (a) horse' |
| (3) | <i>háʔà</i> | ML | 'foot' |
| | <i>hĩĩ háʔà</i> | HH HL | 'with (a) foot' |
| (4) | <i>šùʔú</i> | LH | 'money' |
| | <i>hĩĩ šùʔú</i> | HH HH | 'with money' |
| (5) | <i>halúlí</i> | MHH | 'child' |
| | <i>hĩĩ halúlí</i> | HH HHH | 'with (a) child' |

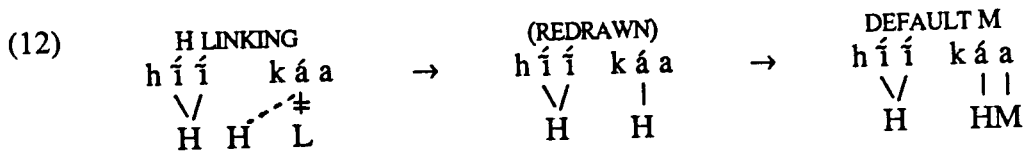
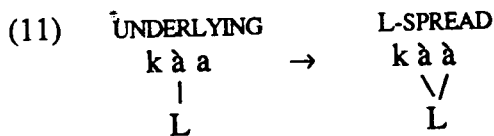
But when the surface tone on the noun in isolation is LL, the form after *hĩĩ* is HM:

- | | | | |
|-----|----------------------|-------|-----------------|
| (6) | <i>kàà</i> | LL | 'metal' |
| | <i>hĩĩ káa</i> | HH HM | 'with metal' |
| (7) | <i>sèʔè</i> | LL | 'son' |
| | <i>hĩĩ séʔe(-rí)</i> | HH HM | 'with (my) son' |

The same is true for verbs, which take a floating H in the Continuative aspect:

- | | | | |
|------|--------------|----------|-----------------------------|
| (8) | haà
háà | ML
HL | 'arrive'
'is arriving' |
| (9) | kùù
kíú | LL
HM | 'enter'
'is entering' |
| (10) | hàʔà
háʔa | LL
HM | 'pass (a test)'
'passes' |

We can explain this by treating the underlying form as LM. In isolation the L spreads onto the following syllable (11); but when the H replaces the L, the spreading rule cannot occur and a default M is inserted (12):



3. Spreading from a prefix. The verb prefix (or proclitic) *nì-*, which marks Complete aspect, bears an underlying L tone. In the following examples the tones of the root are unchanged (though there are segmental changes which mark the Realis mood):

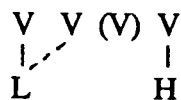
- | | | | |
|------|--------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| (13) | táʔú
nì-táʔú-de | HH
L-HH-M | 'break'
'he broke it' |
| (14) | kunu
nì-hinu-rí | MM
L-MM-H | 'run'
'I ran' |
| (15) | kusù
nì-kišì-rí | ML
L-ML-H | 'sleep'
'I slept' |

Notice in (14) and (15) that the L from the prefix does not spread onto the following vowel, even though it is underlyingly toneless (and surfaces as M). This is because all cases of Low-Tone Spreading across morpheme boundaries impose additional requirements on the environment beyond the simple schema in (1). Specifically, in order for a L to spread from the prefix onto the root, there must be a H tone after the toneless vowel(s) within the root; *nì-hinu-rí* shows that the presence of H in the person marking suffix will not trigger the rule. But when there are one or more toneless vowels followed by a H in the root, Low-Tone Spreading does apply:

- | | | | |
|------|------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| (16) | kutáʔá
nì-kutáʔá-rí | MHM
L-LHM-H | 'fight'
'I fought' |
| (17) | cindée
nì-cindée | MHH
L-LHH | 'help'
'helped' |
| (18) | kacáʔá
nì-hàcáʔá | MHH
L-LHH | 'dance'
'danced' |

We can express this revised version of Low-Tone Spreading, which applies in derived environments, as follows:

(19) *Low-Tone Spreading (derived environment)*



Here a simple mora is one which will surface as M if no rule applies to it. Low-Tone Spreading seems to apply regardless of the number of toneless moras which separate the L and H. The rule applies iteratively to all the toneless syllables preceding the H; but the scope of the rule excludes the suffix (or, alternatively, the suffix is added after the rule has applied).

4. Spreading in compounds. Another case in which Low-Tone Spreading requires a H trigger is in noun compounds:

(20) ML + MH → ML LH

nuù	'face'	rosá	'rose'	nuù ròsá	'face of rose'
nuù	'face'	pisú	'floor'	nuù pìsú	'surface of floor'
ʔinì	'insides'	tĩńí	'mouse'	ʔinì tìńí	'insides of mouse'

(21) LL + MH → LL LH

sèʔè	'son'	tĩńí	'mouse'	sèʔè tìńí	'son of mouse'
ńùʔù	'tooth'	tĩńí	'mouse'	ńùʔù tìńí	'tooth of mouse'

(22) HL + MH (H) → HL LH (H)

táà	'father'	halúlí	'child'	táà hàlúlí	'father of child'
táà	'father'	tĩńí	'mouse'	táà tìńí	'father of mouse'
táà	'father'	rosá	'rose'	táà ròsá	'father of Rose'
náà	'mother'	rosá	'rose'	náà ròsá	'mother of Rose'

There is a special case involving monosyllabic words (including CVʔV, which contains a long glottalized vowel) with the isolation pattern LH. When they serve as the first element of a compound, they take the form LL. This happens regardless of the tone in the second element of the compound:

(23)

còʔó	'flea'	kití	'horse'	còʔò kití	'flea of horse'
		rĩ	'sheep'	còʔò rĩ	'flea of sheep'

(24)

šùʔú	'money'	báʔù	'coyote'	šùʔù báʔù	'money of coyote'
		sókó	'well'	šùʔù sókó	'money of well'
		ńaʔa	'woman'	šùʔù ńaʔa	'money of woman'

The reason for this change in tone is unclear, but notice that the L tone spreads onto a following M when the required H is also present:

We expect this result given the formulation of the rule in (19). This is simply an application of the rule at the phrasal level, where the distinction between root and suffix is no longer accessible or relevant to the phonology.

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