

Glottalisation and the Word in Chichimeco

Anneliese Kelterer

Lund University

In this talk, I will address the distribution of glottalisation in Chichimeco Jonaz (Oto-Mangue, Mexico), with respect to the phonological and morphological structure of words. For this investigation, I used audio data from Lastra (2009, 2016) and recordings I made myself in 2017.

The "typical" Chichimeco word consists of a stem syllable and a prefix syllable. Additionally, suffixes can extend the word to up to four syllables. The stem syllable is also the stressed syllable (*sílaba tónica*) which means that the vowel in this syllable is longer (Herrera 2014). However, tone is not restricted according to the prosodic structure of the word as in other Oto-Manguean languages. Instead, stress seems to be related to the occurrence of glottalisation.

The phenomenon of glottalisation manifests in different ways in the phonology of Chichimeco. There are glottal consonants /ʔ/ and /h/, and glottalised and aspirated plosives /p' t' k'/ and /p^h t^h k^h/, as illustrated in Example (1).

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|-----|--------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| (1) | náʔǔ | <i>my husband</i> | nahí | <i>my body</i> |
| | ũnʔǔ | <i>your husband</i> | unhí | <i>his/her body</i> |
| | út'u | <i>his/her hoe</i> | kít ^h æ | <i>his/her oven</i> |
| | nánt'a | <i>one</i> | nánt ^h é | <i>meat</i> |

It has been claimed that Chichimeco Jonaz is a laryngeally complex language (Herrera 2014). This means that it employs tone and different phonation types (i.e. modal and breathy voice) independently. Furthermore, I also analyse creaky voice as phonological. Examples of creaky and breathy vowels with both tones each are given in Example (2).

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|-----|-------|-------------------------------------------|------|----------------------|
| (2) | nímbe | <i>he/she is hungry (his/her hunger?)</i> | nímą | <i>your plate</i> |
| | niβé | <i>you are hungry (your hunger?)</i> | nímá | <i>his/her plate</i> |

The different kinds of glottalisation seem to appear only in stems.

Glottalisation is also a morphological process for pluralisation. In this case, glottal, glottalised and aspirated consonants and non-modal phonation are related in some way. The reason for this seems to be a restriction on how much and what kind of glottalisation is allowed in one and the same syllable.

In the talk, I would like to start a discussion about the nature of these patterns. Are glottals only allowed in the stem, or only in the stressed syllable? In other words, does the restriction have morphological or phonological reasons?

References:

- Herrera Zendejas, Esther. 2014. Mapa fónico de las lenguas mexicanas (Formas sonoras 1 y 2). Mexico City: Colegio de México
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