

## **Chapter 9: Noun Phrases**

In this chapter, I set forth the components of noun phrases (9.1) with a description of possible orderings among these parts. I then describe the function of each part. The definite article and the issue of definiteness in general are discussed in section 9.2. Modification with adjectives is described in section 9.3. Nominal compounds are described in section 9.4. The set of MIG Zoque quantifiers, including the plural clitic +haa? (NPL2), is discussed in section 9.5. Coordination and comparison in noun phrases are described in section 9.6. Possessed nouns are described in section 9.7. Although relative clauses are properly components of noun phrases, they are discussed in chapter 11 because they share characteristics with other kinds of subordinate clauses.

### **9.1. Components of a noun phrase**

The components of a MIG Zoque noun phrase are quantifiers, deictics, the definite article *bi*, adjectives, nouns (which may be compounded), possessed nouns, relative clauses, and postpositions such as locatives and *?əyti?*, 'of; about'. The noun phrases found in the corpus are usually simple in terms of structure and number of components, most commonly including only a deictic and a noun. Deictics are vastly more common than the definite article. Relative clauses seem to be the preferred means of supplying additional information about characters and objects in Zoque narratives, so quantifiers and adjectives are rare.

While the order of noun phrases in a clause is free, the order of components within a noun phrase is not. The general schema is shown below:

	Quantifier				Relative clause
Negative	- Deictic	-	Adjective	- Mod Noun	- <b>Head Noun</b>
	Definite			- Plural	- Possessed noun
					Postposition

I use the term *head noun* to refer to the noun that is required, the one that is filling an argument role of a verb. In RRG terms, this is the nucleus of the noun phrase. The following examples were elicited to illustrate this order when most of the possible elements are included.

(9.1)

- (i) minpa hemhi bi komi papəndəkka  
 0 min-pa hemhi? bi komi? papən+dəkka  
 3A come-INC all DEF big devil+NPL

bi hehšukpá? camkuyho?

bi 0 heh-šuk-pa+V?k camkuy?+ho?

DEF 3A live-3PL-INC+REL forest+LOC2

'All the big devils that live in the forest are coming.' (elicited)

- (ii) ?ən huyyə hemhi capac yəkwihdəkka'  
 ?ən+ huy-wə hemhi? capac yəkwiH+dəkka  
 1E+ buy-COM all red shirt+NPL

?əy təppə ?əm ?awin bi ?əŋmayyobá?

?əy+ təp-wə ?əm+ ?awin? bi ?əŋ.may.?oy-pa+V?k

3E+ sew-COM 2E+ sibling DEF MOUTH.count.ANTIP-INC-REL

'I bought all the red shirts that your sister the teacher sewed.' (elicited)

## 9.2. Definiteness

Nouns are not obligatorily marked as to definiteness, but can be marked as definite with the article *bi* or a deictic. Nouns not marked as definite are not necessarily interpreted as indefinite. There is no morpheme to mark indefiniteness. *tum* 'one' may be used as an indefinite article, perhaps on analogy with Spanish *uno/a* 'one; an'.

### (9.2) definite

- (i) *bi wit ʔawin lusyo ʔi rromán*  
*bi wit=ʔawin lusyo ʔi rromán*  
 DEF walk=brother lucio and román  
 'the friends Lucio and Román' (ZOH1R18 018)

- (ii) *bi kumkuy hentedəkka ʔəy nəkšukkə*  
*bi kum.kuyʔ hente+dəkka ʔəy+ nək-šuk-wə*  
 DEF bury.INSTR1 people+NPL 3E+ go-3PL-COM  
 'The townspeople went.' (ZOH1R18 150)

- (iii) *nəmpa bi ʔaŋkimmobáʔ*  
*0 nəm-pa bi ʔaŋ.kim.ʔoy-pa +Vʔk*  
 3A say-INC DEF MOUTH.mount.ANTIP-INC +REL  
 'The mayor says...' (ZOH1R24 033)

### (9.3) unmarked, indefinite

- (i) *yəʔ dəššən ʔiššóʔ*  
*yəʔ dəš ʔən+ ʔiš-wə+Vʔk*  
 this 1Prn 1E+ see-COM+REL  
  
*gagə ʔamintə kwandu tihhə rebolusyón*  
*gagə ʔamintə kwandu 0 tih-wə rebolusyón*  
 that year when 3A go-COM revolution  
 'This that I saw in that year when there was a revolution' (ZOH1R24 001)

- (ii) behcha cəmmoba  
 behcha 0 cəm.ʔoy-pa  
 horse 3A carry.ANTIP-INC  
 'Horses will carry (them).'
- (ZOH1R24 090)
- (9.4) unmarked, definite
- (i) nəmmə gobyernu ʔən cidampa  
 0 nəm-wə gobyernu ʔən+ ciʔ-tam-pa  
 3A say-COM government 1E+ give-1/2PL-INC  
 The goverment said, "We're going to let them have it." (ZOH1R24 010)
- (ii) toto yeʔcpa bi ʔaŋkimmobáʔ ʔaŋhi  
 totoʔ 0 yeʔc-pa bi ʔaŋ.kim.ʔoy-pa+Vʔk+ʔaŋhiʔ  
 paper 3A arrive-INC DEF MOUTH.mount.ANTIP-INC+REL+LOC3  
 ʔi kocunuʔaŋhiʔ  
 ʔi kocunu+ʔaŋhiʔ  
 and soldier+LOC3  
 'A letter arrived to where the commander and the soldiers were.'
- (ZOH1R24 038-9)
- (9.5) marked indefinite with 'one'
- (i) ʔən pəkcoŋŋə tum totoʔ  
 ʔən+ pək=coŋ-wə tum totoʔ  
 1E+ get=join-COM one paper  
 'I received a letter.'
- (ZOH1R24 060)
- (ii) nəkpa tum tenyente hosé ʔəy nəhi  
 0 nək-pa tum tenyente hosé ʔəy+ nəhi  
 3A go-INC one lieutenant José 3E+ name  
 'A lieutenant named José goes.'
- (ZOH1R24 098)
- (iii) gaʔ ʔokmaŋŋə tum tukšiʔ  
 gaʔ ʔok.maŋ-wə tum tukšiʔ  
 that DOWN.step-COM one fight  
 'That started a fight.'
- (ZOH1R24 003)

### 9.3. Modification with adjectives

Adjectives appear before the nouns that they modify. Descriptive phrases are rare in Zoque narratives, so there are very few 'live' examples of adjective-noun phrases. The following examples are taken from the lexicon or from elicitation sessions.

(9.6)

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| (i) wayay nəʔ<br>'cold water (soft drink)'      | (ii) home yaŋke<br>'young gringo' |
| (iii) čik cikin kahaŋ<br>'small spotted jaguar' | (iv) ʔapu pən<br>'old man'        |
| (v) capac ʔaša<br>'red blouse'                  | (vi) yakku hahcuku<br>'poor ants' |
| (vii) kupi pən<br>'lazy man'                    | (viii) cuway pən<br>'foolish man' |
| (ix) niŋki yəkwiħ<br>'thick shirt'              | (x) waha naš<br>'hard earth'      |

Adjectival or existential relative clauses appear after the nouns that they modify. There are two alternate forms of the relative clause marker: +Vʔk and +pəʔk. The vowel-initial alternate follows words or phrases that end in vowels (as all verb complexes do, since all the inflectional suffixes are vowel-final). The consonant-initial alternate follows words that end in consonants, and thus appears with many of the adjectives. Relative clauses are discussed further in section 11.1.

(9.7)

(i) komiʔk kuy ʔokoš  
komiʔ+Vʔk kuy ʔokoš  
large+REL tree shrub  
'large tree'

(ii) meša komíʔ  
meša komiʔ+Vʔk  
table large+REL  
'large table'

(iii) ʔaša capacpəʔ  
ʔaša capac+pəʔk  
blouse red+REL  
'red blouse'

(iv) yəkwih homéʔ  
yəkwih home+Vʔk  
shirt new+REL  
'new shirt'

The existential relative clause construction is always employed when modifying a noun with a deverbal adjective derived with the NOM3 suffix, **-E** (and less frequently, the NOM2 suffix, **-A**). The relative marker is required for these forms whether they appear before or after the noun. Note that the stress in the second example of each of the pairs shown below is on the final syllable of the relative clause, as expected, since a vowel has been contracted (section 3.3.8). Stress falls on the first syllable in the first example of each pair, possibly because there is some aesthetic constraint preventing two primary stresses from occurring right next to each other. Nouns typically have only one or two syllables, unless they are formed from complex verb stems.

(9.8)

(i) hašeʔk šiš  
haš.E+Vʔk šiš  
roast.NOM3+REL meat  
'roasted meat'

(ii) šiš hašéʔ  
šiš haš.E+Vʔk  
meat roast.NOM3+REL  
'roasted meat'

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>(iii)    ʔumiʔk kəši<br/>                 ʔum.E+Vʔk   kəš.E+Vʔk<br/>                 spill.NOM3+REL food.NOM3+REL<br/>                 'spilled food'</p>          | <p>(iv)     kəši ʔumĩʔ<br/>                 kəši ʔum.E+Vʔk<br/>                 food spill.NOM3+REL<br/>                 'spilled food'</p>         |
| <p>(v)      hapeʔk pici<br/>                 hap.E+Vʔk   pic.E+Vʔk<br/>                 crush.NOM3+REL soak_corn.NOM3_REL<br/>                 'crushed nixtamal'</p> | <p>(vi)     pici hapéʔ<br/>                 pici hap.E+Vʔk<br/>                 nixtamal crush.NOM3+REL<br/>                 'crushed nixtamal'</p> |
| <p>(vii)    hipšəʔk šək<br/>                 hipš.A+Vʔk   šək<br/>                 burn.NOM2+REL bean<br/>                 'burned beans'</p>                         | <p>(viii)   šək hipšəʔ<br/>                 šək hipš.A+Vʔk<br/>                 bean burn.NOM2+REL<br/>                 'burned beans'</p>          |
| <p>(ix)     hokeʔk neaʔ<br/>                 hok.E+Vʔk neaʔ<br/>                 smoke.NOM3+REL wall<br/>                 'smoky wall'</p>                            | <p>(x)      neaʔ hokéʔ<br/>                 neaʔ hok.E+Vʔk<br/>                 wall smoke.NOM3+REL<br/>                 'smoky wall'</p>           |

#### 9.4. Noun compounds

Noun-noun compounds are vastly more common in the corpus than Adjective-Noun phrases. Many names of plants and animals are nominal compounds, and it seems to be a common way to add new terms to the language. The syntax of nominal compounds is analogous to that in English: the first noun modifies the second.

(9.9)

(i) hoho tək  
'palm house'

(ii) nəc pak  
'armadillo shell'

(iii) tuh nəʔ  
'rain water'

(iv) limeta ʔaŋhap  
'bottle cap'

(v) ʔašuš poh  
'garlic vine'

(vi) kocək muʔk  
'hill grass'

It can be difficult to determine if a compound is actually one word or two. Stress is the only clue, and if both parts have more than one syllable, it will not be a definite guide. Some compounds are formed from nouns that no longer appear independently in the language; these can be safely assumed to be one word.

(9.10)

(i) papən  
pa=pən  
wild=man  
'devil'

(ii) ʔaŋwayʔ  
ʔaŋ=wayʔ  
mouth=hair  
'beard'



In the following example, primary stress falls on the penultimate syllable of the compound, indicating that it is a single phonological word. (This is the only example with this stress pattern in the corpus.)

(9.11)

hamatin  
hama=tin  
sun=shit  
'money'

In the next set of examples, stress falls on the penultimate syllable of each part of the compound, or, in the case of a one-syllable component, on that single syllable. The primary, strongest, stress for the whole is the primary stress of the second component. This is the normal case for compounds with components of more than one syllable.

(9.12)

(i) kape ʔaŋkəi  
kape ʔaŋ=kəy.E  
reed MOUTH=carry\_in\_hand.NOM7  
'door made of reeds'

(ii) maca šohoʔk  
macaʔ šohoʔk  
star grass  
a type of grass

In compounds of two monosyllabic nouns, which are very common, stress is roughly equal for each component (examples i-iii). Stress on the second syllable indicates that we have two phonological words (examples iv-v).

(9.13)

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <p>(i) hamca?<br/>ham=ca?<br/>lime=stone<br/>'limestone'</p>                        | <p>(ii) mənnaš<br/>mən=naš<br/>yam=earth<br/>'yam farm'</p>              | <p>(iii) kuytəm<br/>kuy=təm<br/>tree=fruit<br/>'avocado'</p> |
| <p>(iv) kuy ʔaŋkaš<br/>kuy ʔaŋ.kaš.0<br/>tree MOUTH.step.NOM6<br/>'tree branch'</p> | <p>(v) hama mok<br/>hama mok<br/>day corn<br/>'spring corn planting'</p> |  |

## 9.5. Quantification

The set of quantifying terms in MIG Zoque can be formally divided into two groups: the quantity words, such as məhmə, 'a lot'; and the clitic morphemes +há? (NPL2) and +štá? (ONLY), which have quantifying effects on the phrases to which they attach.

Zoque	English	Spanish
ʔičíŋ	few; a little	poco
ʔoméŋ	a little	poquito
məhmə	many; a lot	mucho; bastante
meši	few	poco
hemhi?	all	todo
šəhə?	several; a lot; many	varios; bastante; mucho
+há?	each	cada quien
+štá?	only; just; no more	no más

**Table 9.1: MIG Zoque quantifiers**

### 9.5.1 Quantity words

There is some overlap in meaning among the six quantity words. *ʔičín*, *ʔomén*, and *meši* all specify a small quantity, 'few; a little'. *məhmə* and *šəhəʔ* both specify a large quantity, 'many; a lot'. Syntactically, *məhmə*, *šəhəʔ*, and *meši* exhibit the same behavior: they can either quantify nouns or function as pronouns, and all can be made into verbs with the versive *.ʔa*. There are no versive forms of either *hemhiʔ* or *ʔičín*. *hemhiʔ* is unique in its ability to co-occur with the definite article. *ʔičín* functions most commonly as an adverb, limiting the scope of the action (e.g., "hurry a little"), but it can also be used to limit a quantity of objects. *ʔomén* may no longer be in common use - I found no example of it in the corpus, apart from its entry in the lexicon.

*məhmə* and *šəhəʔ* are very similar in most respects, except that *šəhəʔ* can not be used to quantify mass entities, such as water or salt. *məhmə* can be used of any kind of object, and appears much more frequently in the corpus. It can also be used as an intensifier with adverbs (example 9.14 i) and verbs (ii). Both words appear as pronouns (iii and iv), as quantifiers of noun phrases (v and vi), and with the versive (vii and viii).

(9.14)

- (i) *hoŋho ʔokcunəmpa komo gaʔ cawowo ʔi məhmə hoŋhoʔ*  
*hoŋhoʔ 0 ʔok.cuʔ.ʔa-Anəm-pa komo gaʔ caʔ=wowo*  
 inside 3A DOWN.night.VERS1-INDEF-INC like that rock=hole  
  
*ʔi məhmə hoŋhoʔ*  
*ʔi məhmə hoŋhoʔ*  
 and a\_lot inside  
 'It's dark inside since it's a cave and very far inside.' (ZOH1R15 050)

- (ii) si məhmə ʔəy kaʃti:gcəkpám ʔəy mama  
 si məhmə ʔəy+ kastigar=cək-pa+ʔam ʔəy+ mama  
 if a\_lot 3E+ hurt=do-INC+NOW 3E+ mother  
 'If it's hurting its mother a lot' (ZOH1R36 942)
- (iii) tihtammə məhmə  
 tih-tam-wə məhmə  
 go&return-COM many<sup>1</sup>  
 'Many of us went.' (ZOH1R18 005)
- (iv) šəhə tehidammə yəhi yədə ʔotelho?  
 šəhə? tehi.ʔa-tam-wə yəhi? yədə ʔotel +ho?  
 many there\_are.VERS1-1/2PL-COM here this hotel +LOC2  
 'There are a lot of us here in this hotel.' (ZOH1R55 113)
- (v) miš ciwə məhmə kopaktoe  
 miš+ ci?-wə məhmə kopak=toy.E  
 2>1+ give-COM many head=hurt.NOM3  
 'You gave me a lot of headaches.' (ZOH1R14 059)
- (vi) tomás ʔəy ʔaŋwitcoŋŋə šəhə poŋ katemako  
 tomás ʔəy+ ʔaŋ.wit=coŋ-wə šəhə? poŋ katemako  
 tomás 3E+ MOUTH.walk=join-COM many time catemaco  
 'Tomás visited Catemaco many times.' (elicited)
- (vii) yahakhá? gə hamatin məhməʔám ga?  
 yahakhaa? gə hamatin 0 məhmə.ʔa-wə+ʔam ga?  
 long\_ago that money 3A a\_lot.VERS1-COM+NOW that  
 'Long ago, that was a lot of money, that was.' (ZOH1R18 257)
- (viii) porke dedəkka šəhəsukkə  
 porke də? +dəkka 0 šəhə?.ʔa-šuk-wə  
 because that +NPL 3A many.VERS1-3PL-COM  
 'Because there are a lot of them.' (ZOH1R25 089)

---

<sup>1</sup> It doesn't seem to be necessary to use the first person agreement marker də in these clauses with quantifiers referencing the subject.

(9.15)

- ʔičín has the most varied syntactic behavior of the quantity words. It appears to be most commonly used as a lessening adverb, parallel with the intensifiers *hakke* and *wenu* (examples 9.16 i-iii). It can also quantify a noun phrase (iv). Unlike the other quantity words, it can also appear with the plural clitic *+haaʔ*, when it means something like 'little by little' (v and vi).

(9.16)

- (i) nəmpa rromán ʔištamə gahi ʔičíŋ  
0 nəm-pa rromán ʔiš-tam-Aʔ gahiʔ ʔičíiŋ  
3A say-INC román see-1/2PL-IMPV there a\_little  
'Román says, "Look over there a little way."' (ZOH1R18 159)
- (ii) para ke ʔičíŋ pinək ʔəy meho:rcəkpa kumkuyʔ  
para ke ʔičíiŋ pinək ʔəy+ mehorar=cək-pa kumkuyʔ  
for that a\_little CONFAC 3E+ improve=do-INC town  
'So that he improves the town a little.' (ZOH1R28 372)
- (iii) pero ʔičíŋ həʔkštamə  
pero ʔičíiŋ həʔkš-tam-Aʔ  
but a\_little hurry-1/2PL-IMPV  
'But hurry up a little.' (ZOH1R25 036)
- (iv) ʔəy šoššə ʔičíŋ šək  
ʔəy+ šoš-wə ʔičíiŋ šək  
3E+ cook-COM a\_little bean  
'She cooked a few beans.' (elicited)
- (v) də ʔotonpa ʔənpən ʔičíŋháʔ  
də+ ʔoton-pa ʔənpən ʔičíiŋ +haaʔ  
1A+ speak-INC zoque a\_little +NPL2  
'Little by little, I'm speaking Zoque.' (elicited)
- (vi) ʔəy ha:mcəkpa bəše ʔičíŋháʔ  
ʔəy+ ham(V)<sup>2</sup>=cək-pa bəše ʔičíiŋ +haaʔ  
3E+ \*mind=do-INC SEEM a\_little +NPL2  
'He seems to be remembering little by little.' (ZOH1R12 724)

---

<sup>2</sup> The form, class and meaning of this morpheme are obscure. It seems to mean something like 'mind', and possibly was at some stage of the language a noun with a final vowel. MAR Zoque has a verb haməh, 'to remember it' (Kaufman, p.c.). The MIG Zoque form appears in this construction, compounded or incorporated with cək- and in another likely incorporation construction, hamV=ʔoktokoy-, (\*mind=DOWN.get\_lost), 'to go crazy'.

hemhi?, 'all', can be used as a pronoun (9.17 i and ii) or to quantify noun phrases (ii). It is the only quantity word that co-occurs with the definite article bi (iii). It exhibits the most freedom of position of the quantity words, appearing both before and after the noun phrase that it quantifies (iv - vi). There is no versive form of this word.

(9.17)

- (i) dedə pəndəkka wichukpa komo numšukpa hemhi?  
 dedə pən+dəkka 0 wit-šuk-pa komo 0 num-šuk-pa hemhi?  
 that men+NPL 3A walk-3PL-INC like 3A steal-3PL-INC all  
 'Those men went around stealing everything.' (ZOH1R24 007)
- (ii) gadə papən hemhi pə?tpa ?əy nəkə? ?əy yakkapa  
 gadə pa=pən hemhi? pə?t-pa ?əy+ nək.E+V?k ?əy+ yak.ka-pa  
 that devil all pass-INC 3E+ go.dINC+REL 3E+ CAUS.die-INC  
 'That devil, all who go passing by, he kills.' (ZOH1R18 034-5)
- (iii) ?əy wehšukkə hemhi bi hentedəkka gadə kumkuyho?  
 ?əy+ weh-šuk-wə hemhi? bi hente+dəkka gadə kumkuy?+ho?  
 3E+ call-3PL-COM all DEF people+NPL that town +LOC1  
 'They called all the people in that town.' (ZOH1R18 141)
- (iv) ga meru ?əy ?əŋkimpa bi kocunudəkka hemhi?  
 ga? meru ?əy+ ?əŋ.kim-pa bi kocunu+dəkka hemhi?  
 that exactly 3E+ MOUTH.mount-INC DEF soldier+NPL all  
 'That very one commands all the soldiers.' (ZOH1R24 048)
- (v) hemhi ga bencecəkkə  
 hemhi? ga? 0 bencer=cək-wə  
 all that 3A be\_beaten=do-COM  
 'They were all beaten.' (ZOH1R24 375)
- (vi) gay mahpa ga hemhi?  
 ga? ?əy+ mah-pa ga? hemhi?  
 that 3E+ water-INC that all  
 'He waters them all.' (ZOH1R24 458)

The related form *hemhiʔok* means 'all over'. All the examples that I have of this word come from the interview with the healer, in which it always refers to the body (example 9.18). This is the only occurrence of this *.ʔok* morpheme (not the same as the prefix *DOWN*) in *MIG Zoque*, but *MAR Zoque* has an affix *.ʔok* that means 'the end of beginning of a thing' (Kaufman, p.c.).

(9.18)

nakacə ʔəm kwerpuho hemhiʔok  
 nakaʔc-Aʔ ʔəm+ kwerpu+hoʔ hemhi.ʔok  
 crush-IMPV 2E+ body+LOC2 all.X  
 'Crush it (tobacco leaves) all over your body.' (ZOH1R36 319)

### 9.5.2. Quantifying clitics

*+háʔ* (NPL2) has related functions: (a) plural-marking first and second person discourse participants; (b) set distribution (an 'each' function); (c) and creating plural forms of question words<sup>3</sup>. I am perhaps guilty of excessive lumping by grouping these together in a single morpheme, rather than splitting them into three phonologically identical ones, but there seems to be a continuum of related function here.

As a plural-marker, *+háʔ* applies to pronouns (9.19 i, iii, and iv), noun phrases (ii and iii), and predicative adjectives (iv and v). Examples (vi and vii) are included in this set to show the contrast between the use of *+háʔ* and *+dəkkay*, the third person plural marker.

---

<sup>3</sup> *MAR Zoque* has *hateʔ* (Kaufman, p.c.).



(9.19)

(i) dəʃhá? də yaŋkehá?

dəʃ+haa? də+ yaŋke+haa?

1Prn+NPL2 1A+ yankee+NPL2

'We're gringos.'

(ZOH1R17 026)

(ii) ?um nəmtammə ke yam ?aŋpən pənhá?

?u ?əm+ nəm-tam-wə ke ya ?əm+ ?aŋpən pən+haa?

NEGimpv 2E+ say-1/2PL-COM that NEG 2A+ zoque man+NPL2

'Don't say that you're not people who speak Zoque.' (ZOH1R57 041)

(iii) mišhá? kumkuypənhá? me?ctamə

miš+haa? kumkuy? pən+haa? me?c-tam-A?

2Prn+NPL2 town man+NPL2 look\_for-1/2PL-IMPV

bi šeme pəndəkkay

bi šem.E pən+dəkkay

DEF play.NOM3 men+NPL

'You townspeople look for the musicians.'

(ZOH1R18 187)

(iv) dəʃhá? komo də našmaŋkuyhá? də našnəktampa

dəʃ+haa? komo də+ naš=maŋkuy?+haa? də+ naš=nək-tam-pa

1Prn+NPL2 since 1A+ earth=foot+NPL2 1A+ earth=go-1/2PL-INC

'We, since we were on foot, we were walking.' (ZOH1R15 028)

(v) neywin ban cuwayhá?

neywin ban cuway+haa?

we very foolish+NPL2

'We are very foolish.'

(ZOH1R16 110)

(vi) hehanəmpa ban cuway ney hente

0 heh-Anəm-pa ban cuway ney hente

3A live-INDEF-INC very foolish IE people

'Our people lived very foolishly.'

(ZOH1R3 040)

- (vii) kumkuypəndəkka cunšukpa  
 kumkuy? pən+dəkka 0 cun-šuk-pa  
 town man+NPL 3A be\_happy-3PL-INC  
 'The people of the town are happy.' (ZOH1R18 194)

When +há? appears with a third person entity, it adds a distributive meaning. It is used with number words to mean 'one by one', 'two by two', etc., as shown in example (9.20 i). tumhá?, 'one+NPL2' is also translated 'each' in the appropriate context (ii)<sup>4</sup>. It is used with measure nouns to mean 'unit by unit', as shown in example (iii). Examples (iv and v) illustrate the distributional meaning most clearly. In (iv), the men are worried about their families, since they're far away from home working on an endless dictionary project. But each man is concerned about his own family, not about all the families as a unified set. In (v), a group of students is about to enter a dark cave, so each gets his or her own lamp.

(9.20)

- (i) tumhá? nəkšukpa  
 tum+haa? 0 nək-šuk-pa  
 one+NPL2 3A go-3PL-INC  
 'They went one by one.' (ZOH1R25 137)
- (ii) piceŋho? tumhá? ?ən ?aŋmaytammə  
 piceŋho? tum.haa? ?ən+ ?aŋ=may-tam-wə  
 because one.NOM4 1E+ MOUTH=count-1/2PL-COM  
 'For this reason, we each taught one of them.' (ZOH1R57 033)

---

<sup>4</sup> MAR Zoque has the form hate?, 'each' (Kaufman, 1996).

- (iii) cunnenhá? wanakpám  
 cun.neeŋ+haa? 0 wanak-pa+?am  
 drip.MEAS+NPL2 3A go\_down-INC+NOW  
 'It falls drop by drop.' (ZOH1R36 538)
- (iv) yan muštammə hunəŋ tehi?awə bi dən familyahá?  
 ya ?ən+ muš-tam-wə hunəŋ tehi.?a-wə bi dən familya+haa?  
 NEG 1E+ know-1/2PL-COM how there\_is.VERS-COM DEF XE family+NPL2  
 'We don't know how our families are.' (ZOH1R10 517)
- (v) ?ən pəktammən lamparahá? dəšhá?  
 ?ən+ pək-tam-wə ?ən+ lampara+haa? dəš+haa?  
 1E+ get-1/2PL-COM 1E+ lamp+NPL2 1Prn+NPL2  
 'We got our lamps.' (ZOH1R15 049)

Finally, +há? is used to form plural interrogatives, shown in the examples in (9.21). These have a somewhat distributional flavor<sup>5</sup>.

(9.21)

- (i) ?iyaŋhá? də mintammə yəhi katemako berakrus  
 ?iwə.?aŋ+haa? də+ min-tam-wə yəhi katemako berakrus  
 who.X+NPL2 1A+ come-1/2PL-COM here catemaco veracruz  
 'Who all of us came here to Catemaco, Veracruz' (ZOH1R18 002)
- (ii) tiyaŋhá? ?əm ?okupcəkpa  
 ti.?aŋ+haa? ?əm+ ?okupar=cək-pa  
 what.X+NPL2 2E+ use=do-INC  
 'What all do you use?' (ZOH1R36 014)
- (iii) gay ?okcamməba hunəŋhá? ?əy pə?thayyə  
 ga? ?əy+ ?ok.cam.?əy-pa hunəŋ+haa? ?əy+ pə?t.hay-wə  
 that 3E+ DOWN.chat.SUF-INC how+NPL2 3E+ pass.APPL-COM  
 'He tells them how it went with him.' (ZOH1R18 290)

---

<sup>5</sup> Actually, these forms are reminiscent of a use of the plural marker 'all' in my own dialect, which also applies to interrogatives. For example: "What all'd y'all get for Christmas?" and "Where all'd y'all go in Europe?"

### 9.5.3. Only

The clitic +štáʔ can attach to any word class in MIG Zoque, except probably the intensifiers. Its general meaning is the same in all cases: it limits the set or extent or scope of the action. It attaches outside (to the right of) a plural clitic (9.22 i) or postposition (v amd viii), but inside the adverbial clitic +ʔam (NOW), shown in example (ii). Example (iii) shows that even when attached to the verb complex, it can serve to delimit one of the verb's arguments. In (iv), +štáʔ is limiting the scope of the action: they just sit, they don't work. Example (v) shows the clitic limiting a noun phrase to one out of a possible two, and example (vi) shows it setting a precise limit, when attached to a number. Examples (vii and viii) show +štáʔ with a locative deictic and a postpositional phrase.

(9.22)

- (i) gaʔ komo nəmtampa cəhən kokedəkkaštáʔ  
gaʔ komo (ʔən+) nəm-tam-pa cəhən koke+dəkka+štaaʔ  
that like (1E+) say-1/2PL-INC X fish +NPL +ONLY  
'He is, as we say, just the big fish<sup>6</sup>.' (ZOH1R28 258)
- (ii) ʔawindəkka ʔən hamcəktampaštám de rromán  
ʔawinʔ+dəkka ʔən+ ham(V)=cək-tam-pa+štaaʔ+ʔam de rromán  
sibling+NPL 1E+ \*mind=do-1/2PL-INC+ONLY+NOW of román  
'Brothers, now we only remember Román.' (ZOH1R18 292)

---

<sup>6</sup> cəhən koke is a type of large fish. The local idiom 'the big fishes' means 'the powerful ones'.

- (iii) cənnəštám ?əy manakdəkka  
 0 cən-wə+štaa?+?am ?əy+ manak+dəkka  
 3A sit-COM+ONLY+NOW 3E+ child+NPL  
 'Now only his sons are seated.' (ZOH1R24 543)
- (iv) pic nəkpaštán cəntammə  
 pic nək-pa+štaa? ?ən+ cən-tam-wə  
 thus go-INC+ONLY 1E+ sit-1/2PL-COM  
 'That's why we just go to sit.' (ZOH1R28 275)
- (v) tum caŋkuypi?tštá? ?ən nukka  
 tum caŋkuy?+pi?t+štaa? ?ən+ nuk-wə  
 one hand+INSTR+ONLY 1E+ grab-COM  
 'I grabbed it with just one hand.' (ZOH1R25 187)
- (vi) nəntiam hak cənkuŋ? ?apena tuwaŋštá? ?ašta həšho  
 nəntiam hakke cən.kuy? ?apena tuwaŋ+štaa? ?ašta həš.ho?  
 there\_isn't very sit.INSTR1 hardly three+ONLY until BACK.LOC2  
 'There weren't many seats, barely just three in the back.' (ZOH1R10 451)
- (vii) yəhištá? wanaktáŋ  
 yə.hi+štaa? wanak-taŋ  
 DCT1.LOC1+ONLY go\_down.HORT  
 'Let's get down right here.' (ZOH1R10 272)
- (viii) šišoštá? ?əy pəkkə  
 šiš+ho?+štaa? ?əy+ pək-wə  
 meat+LOC2+ONLY 3E+ get-COM  
 'They got her just in the flesh (a flesh wound).' (ZOH1R24 750)

## 9.7. Coordination and comparison

Noun phrases or parts of noun phrases can be coordinated by means of the Spanish conjunction *y*, 'and' (transcribed *ʔi* in Zoque), or by simply juxtaposing the conjoined elements. The Spanish conjunction method is the most common.

(9.23)

- (i) ʔən huyyə mecaŋ ʔaša tumə capacpəʔ ʔi tumə yəkyək  
 ʔən+ huy-wə mecaŋ ʔaša tumə capac+pəʔk ʔi tumə yəkyək  
 1E+ buy-COM two huipil one red+REL and one black  
 'I bought two huipils, one red and one black.' (elicited)

- (ii) məhmə yə:mʔune tihhə ʔi məhmə ha:yʔune?  
 məhmə yoməʔ=ʔuneʔ 0 tih-wə ʔi məhmə haya=ʔune?  
 many female=child 3A go&return-COM and many male=child  
 'Many girls went and many boys.' (ZOH1R15 043)

- (iii) ʔəm wattoba ʔəm kəškuy moŋkuy hemhi?  
 ʔəm+ wat.ʔoy-pa ʔəm+ kəš.kuyʔ moŋ.kuyʔ hemhi?  
 2E+ earn.ANTIP-INC 2E+ eat.INSTR1 sleep.INSTR1 all  
 'You'll earn your food, lodging, everything.' (ZOH1R18 292)

Comparison in noun phrases, as in verb phrases, is done by means of the Spanish comparative *mas*, 'more', and follows the Spanish syntactic pattern. I find no hints in the corpus as to how this might have been done before the invasion, but Suarez (1983:110) observes that in Tlahuitoltepec Mixe "comparison of superiority is rendered by two clauses, one asserting the quality for the item compared, the other negating it for the term of comparison". This would produce phrases like "he is tall, I am not so tall".

(9.24)

- (i) de bi mas triste  
deʔ bi mas triste  
that DEF more sad  
'That's the saddest.'  
(ZOH1R18 363)
- (ii) ʔəy ceʔkpa mas pən  
ʔəy ceʔk-pa mas pən  
3E ask-INC more man  
'He asked for more men.'  
(ZOH1R24 015)
- (iii) yoya bi mas šaša ʔəy kəšpa mas mok  
yoya bi mas šašaʔ ʔəy+ kəš-pa mas mok  
pig DEF more fat 3E+ eat-INC more corn  
'The fattest pig eats the most corn'  
(elicited)
- (iv) tehi mas wəhə ke miš  
tehi.ʔa-wə mas wəhə ke miš  
there\_is.VERS-COM more good that 2Prn  
'There is one better than you.'  
(ZOH1R26 021)
- (v) mas de kuk cak kəmpa pa gaʔ  
mas de kuk 0 cak.ʔəm-pa para gaʔ  
more of center 3A leave.PASS-INC for that  
'More than half remained for him.'  
(ZOH1R28 334)

## 9.7. Possession

The ergative set of person agreement markers is used to mark possessors of nouns. Possessed nouns can be further specified with the definite article or a deictic, as shown in examples (9.25 iv - vi).

(9.25)

- |     |  |      |   |       |  |
|-----|--|------|---|-------|--|
| (i) | ʔən hatəŋ<br>1E+ father<br>'my father' | (ii) | ʔəm yəkwiħ<br>2E+ shirt<br>'your shirt' | (iii) | ʔəy mačete<br>3E+ machete<br>'his machete' |
|-----|--|------|---|-------|--|

- (iv) ya toyyám bim cek  
ya 0 toy-wə+ʔam bi ʔəm+ cek  
NEG 3A hurt-COM+NOW DEF 2E+ belly  
'Now your belly doesn't hurt.' (ZOH1R36 022)

- (v) gahi tehiʔawə dəš bi dən mə?  
gahi 0 tehi.ʔa-wə dəš bi dən mə?  
there 3A there\_is.VERS1-COM 1Prn DEF XE wife  
'There is my wife.' (ZOH1R12 200)

- (vi) dəš mama ʔən pəkpám den tuŋ  
dəš mama ʔən+ pək-pa+ʔam deʔ ʔən+ tuŋ  
1Prn mama 1E+ get-INC+NOW that 1E+ road  
'I, mama, now I'll take my road.' (ZOH1R26 011)

The syntax of a phrase in which both possessor and possessee are referenced by nouns (rather than merely by agreement markers) is:

Possessor Noun - Ergative marker - Possessed Noun  
agreeing with Possessor



(9.26)

- (i) bi kocunu ?əy ?aŋkimpá?  
 DEF soldier 3E+ leader  
 'the leader of the soldiers' (ZOH1R24 034)
- (ii) rrančo ?əy nəhi kahaŋ  
 ranch 3E+ name jaguar  
 'a little town called Jaguar' (ZOH1R18 106)
- (iii) našey paʔčukkə bi rromán bi ?okpən ?əy təkho?  
 naše ?əy+ paʔt-šuk-wə bi rromán bi ?oko=pən ?əy+ tək+ho?  
 truth 3E+ find-3PL-COM DEF román DEF old\_woman=man 3E+ house+LOC2  
 'In fact they found the Román in the old woman's house.'  
 (ZOH1R18 143)

There are possessive pronouns for each of the three discourse persons: *təntiʔ*, 'mine', *mintiʔ*, 'yours', and *?əytiʔ*, 'hers/his/its/theirs'. They may be used redundantly with the possessive agreement marker, as seen in examples (9.26 ii and iii). A chain of possessive noun phrases is shown in example (vi).

(9.27)

- (i) miššəm cəkə minti ne?  
 miš ?əm+ cək-Aʔ mintiʔ ne?  
 2Prn 2E+ do-IMPV 2PosN also  
 'You do yours too.' (ZOH1R24 401)
- (ii) təntin kopakho ?ən ?aŋnitpa  
 təntiʔ ?ən+ kopak+hoʔ ?ən+ ?aŋnit-pa  
 1PSN 1E+ head+LOC2 1E+ have-INC  
 'I have it in my head (the knowledge).' (ZOH1R32 119)
- (iii) təntin yo:mmanak ?ən cipa  
 təntiʔ ?ən+ yoməʔ=manak ?ən+ ci-pa  
 1PosN 1E+ female=child 1E+ give-INC  
 'I'll give my daughter.' (ZOH1R18 232)

- (iv) ʔəy həʃhuppə ʔəy mačete románʔəyti?  
 ʔəy+ həʃ.hup-wə ʔəy+ mačete román +ʔəyti?  
 3E+ BACK=pull-COM 3E+ machete román +3PosN  
 'Román pulled out his machete.' (ZOH1R18 090)
- (v) pəʔtəpa moso bi ʔalegria santa wani:tʔəyti?  
 0 pəʔt-pa moso bi ʔalegria santa wanita +ʔəyti?  
 3A pass-INC beautiful DEF happiness saint juanita +3PSN  
 'The festivities of Santa Juanita pass beautifully.' (ZOH1R32 065)
- (vi) ʔəy wəthayya ʔəy yəkwiħ ʔən hatəŋʔəyti  
 ʔəy+ wət.hay-wə ʔəy+ yəkwiħ ʔən+ hatəŋ +ʔəyti?  
 3E+ tear.APPL-COM 3E+ shirt 1E+ father +3PSN  
 'He tore my father's shirt.' (elicited)

The third person possessive ʔəyti? can also mean 'about', just as 'of' in English can be used to indicate possession or topic. The Spanish preposition *de*, 'of', may also be used for this purpose. In example (9.27 i), both the Spanish and the Zoque morphemes appear, bracketing the noun phrase between them<sup>7</sup>.

---

<sup>7</sup> This redundant construction, with the Spanish function word on the left and the Zoque function morpheme on the right, is a particular favorite of this speaker, Sr. Omobono Sánchez Miguel. Text ZOH1R36 is a 90-minute interview with him about traditional medicine (he's a curandero); this text is the source of most of my examples of the pairing of Spanish and Zoque function words because he is so consistent about using them together.

(9.28)

(i) de nəpin tiniʔəyti ʔən campa  
de nəpinʔ tin.E +ʔəytiʔ ʔən+ cam-pa  
of blood shit.NOM3 +3PSN 1E+ talk-INC  
'I'm going to talk about dysentery.'  
(ZOH1R36 002)

(ii) ʔən campa tum kwentu soldaoʔəyti ʔi satornino  
ʔən+ cam-pa tum kwentu soldao +ʔəytiʔ ʔi satornino  
1E+ talk-INC one story soldier +3PSN and satornino  
'I'm going to tell you a story about the soldiers and Satornino.'  
(ZOH1R11 001)