Ideophones in UNT

- ideophones (Doke 1935): lexicalized sound-symbolic, onomatopoeic or synesthetic expressions, sometimes called “expressives” or “affect words”
- generally have distinctive syntactic, morphological, or phonological properties
- tend to have an emotive function
- in UNT, can have extremely specific meanings evocative of entire events

ʔoŋɬuɬ uɬilː makawán iʃčːːn kįwį
ʔoŋɬuɬ liː–maka–wan iš–čaːn kįwį
**wood-pecker.pecking** INST–hand–say 3PO–shin tree
‘the woodpecker makes the tree trunk sound’ (RM)

- ideophones are quite common in the languages of the world, but are generally over-looked in theories of parts of speech

*Are ideophones their own part of speech or do they belong to some other lexical class?*
Outline of the talk

• background on the language and the UNT project
• phonological and morphological properties of ideophones
  ➢ sound symbolism
  ➢ word-level stress
  ➢ reduplication
• adverbs in UNT
• syntax of ideophones and adverbs
• semantics of ideophones and adverbs
• ideophones and adverbs as parts of speech
Upper Necaxa Totonac

- around 150 Mexican indigenous languages belonging to 9 phylogenetic groups
- UNT is a member of the isolate Totonac-Tepehua family
- government census lists ~200,000 speakers of Totonacan languages
- unknown number of languages in family
- best guess, 10 – 20
- time-depth ca. 2000 yrs (???)
Upper Necaxa Totonac

- spoken in four villages in the Necaxa River valley in the Sierra Norte of Puebla
- around 3,000 speakers, most in their 40s or older
- still spoken by school aged children in Patla and Cacahuatlán
- probably the L1 of no more than half a dozen infants

more information on the state of the language at http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~totonaco/SOL.html
The UNT Project

- field visits beginning in 1998
- SSHRC funding since 2001
- students involved in fieldwork since 2003
- consultants in Edmonton for short visits: ‘01, ‘02, ‘05, ‘06
- project has been working on
  - dictionary (currently ca 8,900 entries, 13,000 example sentences, 19,676 recordings, standalone DVD version)
  - grammar (sketch 2004, more to come)
  - texts (about 12 hours transcribed)
  - acquisition (12 hours of naturalistic video [ages 1;8 to 2;10], 10 hours of taped task-based elicitation [2;10 to 12])

more information on the UNT project at http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~totonaco/
The language

- flexible word order, unmarked VOS (?)
- nom/acc alignment, no nominal case
- agglutinative and highly polysynthetic
  \[
  jiskinka:tate:šq?onikutumaj:o:nampalân
  \]
  \[
  \]
  'they would want to be coming by to pay us all again'

- four aspects, three tenses, four moods
- agreement with subject and 2 objects
- two causatives, four applicatives
- classifiers, no number inflection in NPs
- no prepositions, bodypart terms used as locatives
- use of bodypart prefixes with verbs and adjectives
Phonology

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- ejective fricatives, no ejective stops
- vowels distinguish five qualities, length, and laryngealization
Properties of ideophones

- phonological and morphological properties
  - sound symbolism
  - (lack of) word-level stress
  - reduplication
Sound symbolism

- **Sound symbolism**: a direct linkage between sound and meaning such that their relation is, albeit non-predictable, nevertheless non-arbitrary

- ideophones across languages, including UNT, tend to rely most heavily on three types (Hinton, Nichols, & Ohala 1994)
  - onomatopoeia
  - synesthesia
  - conventionalized sound symbolism
Onomatopoeia

- use of words that imitate or are reminiscent of their referents
- most universally-noted feature of ideophones (Childs 1994)

čululu ‘water trickling’
ʔoːsʔoːs ‘object making clicking, rapping, or tapping noises’
kalañkalañ ‘person biting through hard food’
ɬapq̃ɬapq̃ ‘object being struck and making a hollow sound’
luːp ‘object dropping into water’
pač ‘small stone falling’
tsanana ‘insects buzzing’
wą:tawą:ta ‘person sharpening a machete’
šnoŋšnoŋ ‘a cord or elastic being stretched’
Synesthesia

- **synesthesia**: the notion that the physiological properties of perceptions are designed to view different perceptual stimuli as the same (Nuckolls 1999)
- the phonetic properties of the word are considered to be iconic of some sensory quality of its signified

  *lam* `bright light flashing, a fire flaring up`
  *liplip* `object sparkling like a diamond or piece of glass`
  *nuːtunuːtu* `stick waving back and forth`
  *nuːtutunuːtutu* `stick waving back and forth as it is climbed`
  *tenene* `bright light or flame flickering or shimmering`
Conventionalized symbolism

- UNT has several frequent sound-symbolic conventions
  
  vowel length = duration
  
  \textit{lu}:p ‘object dropping into water’
  
  \textit{lup} ‘sharp object striking and sticking into something’

  \underline{CVCC vs CVCCV syllable structure} (punctual vs cyclical/distributed)
  
  \textit{ton\textsuperscript{3}ton\textsuperscript{3}} ‘end of a stick striking the ground’
  
  \textit{ton\textsuperscript{3}uton\textsuperscript{3}lu} ‘person going along planting corn with a stick’

  \underline{fricative alternation} (most commonly /s/ < /š/ < /ɬ/ = increasing force)
  
  \textit{lan\textsuperscript{3}s} ‘hand striking hard’
  
  \textit{lan\textsuperscript{3}š} ‘blow striking with force’
  
  \textit{lan\textsuperscript{3}l} ‘blow striking with great force’

- this pattern is also seen in verbs, adverbs, and adjectives
Word-level stress

• in UNT, stress is regularly assigned to the final syllable of verbs and to heavy-final or penult syllables in other word classes
• UNT ideophones in text are given either
  □ without differential stress marking on any syllable, or
  □ particular syllables are stressed for rhythmic effect or dramatic or imitative purposes
• in isolation
  □ ideophones may follow the default pattern for non-verbs
  □ -CV reduplications may have stress on the initial syllable
  □ the ideophone may not have differential stress

loʔoʔo piš-4i:-wiːl tzamáː ?tni
IDPH throat–dance–sit that drunk
‘the drunk is sitting there singing raucously’
Reduplication

- with the exception of ideophones (and one sub-class of adverb) UNT does not make use of reduplication
- ideophones in UNT are almost always reduplicated in context
- they follow one of two patterns
  - full reduplication
  - final -CV reduplication
- reduplication reflects such things as iteration, intensity, and duration

\[
\begin{align*}
  \text{pač makawán} & & \text{pačpač tamakawán} \\
  \text{pač} & \text{ maka–wan} & \text{pačpač} & \text{ta–maka–wan} \\
  \text{idph} & \text{ hand–say} & \text{idph} & 3\text{PL.SUBJ–hand–say} \\
  \text{‘the pebble falls’ (LB)} & & \text{‘the pebbles fall’ (CF)}
\end{align*}
\]
Full reduplication

- fully reduplicated ideophones are more punctual or cyclical in meaning
  
  čiuxčiux ‘water dripping slowly onto the floor’
  
  poʔpoʔ ‘clapping sound’
  
  kalantkalant ‘person biting through hard food’
  
  lakslwilaksliwi ‘a four-legged animal limping on three legs’
  
  paːnɬupaːnɬu ‘someone toothless chewing food’

- some examples show multiple applications:
  
  kunikunji ‘caterpillar crawling’
  
  kunikunikunji aníÔ:
  
  kunikunikunji an–níÔ:
  
  idph go–PF
  
  ‘the caterpillar had crawled off’ (LC)
Final -CV reduplication

- this type of reduplication seems more frequently to mark intensity, locative distributivity, and/or duration
  - ḋošušu ‘hollow object being tapped’
  - lapšaša ‘fish out of water wriggling’
  - milili ‘wind blowing’
  - mululu ‘water welling up out of the ground’
  - spatata ‘viscous substance oozing (mud, pus)’
  - yenene ‘water boiling in a pot’

- this reduplication may also have multiple applications
  - xalala ‘stones crackling with heat’
    - xalalala makawán čiwíš
    - xalalala maka–wan čiwíš
  - IDPH hand–say stone
    - ‘the stones crackle with heat’ (LB)
Adverbs in UNT

• UNT also has a large class of adverbs


  \textbf{enviously INST–feel.pain REL see REL 1SG.SUBJ–harvest}

  ‘he is jealous because he sees what I harvest’ (RM)

• adverbs can’t be reduplicated
• they participate in derivational processes (ideophones don’t)
• they form a semantically heterogeneous class
  ▪ time, manner, and place expressions
  ▪ configurational adverbs
  ▪ descriptive adverbs
  ▪ dynamic adverbs
TMP adverbs

- consist of the familiar time, manner, and place type expressions
- are uniformly pre-verbal, with the exception of some locative and temporal adverbs, which can be clause-final
- make up a surprisingly small proportion of the adverb class in UNT

\[\begin{align*}
&qk\text{čá}:n \text{ ‘honestly, fully-measured (of wares)’} \\
&qk\text{číp}:s \text{ ‘many’} \\
&a:\text{kús} \text{ ‘just a while ago’} \\
&a:\text{mištsayán} \text{ ‘in a week’} \\
&kas \text{ ‘fast; strongly’} \\
&kikl \text{ ‘enviously’} \\
&xiks \text{ ‘annoyingly, problematically’} \\
&xaláx \text{ ‘deeply, sadly (sigh, breath)’} \\
&snu:n \text{ ‘gravely (ill, wounded)’} \\
&talása \text{ ‘frequently’} \\
&te:lá: \text{ ‘sometimes’} \\
&tintakú:x \text{ ‘all day’} \\
tonj?él\text{tu} \text{ ‘on the other side of the river’} \\
tsa\text{x} \text{ ‘only, just’} \\
tsenú \text{ ‘over there’}
\end{align*}\]
Configurational adverbs

- describe configurations, orientations, and postures

  ḡkékátáx ‘inside out’
  čikáx ‘open, apart (limbs); loosely folded’
  ṭe:poʔqoʔ ‘piled up (sand, dirt)’
  kinkatáx ‘with head bent forward, with head bowed’
  kypúks ‘bent over’
  lą?apul̃ñs ‘face down, flat on one’s face’
  lą?kaláks ‘having one’s leg bent backwards’
  lantáʔ ‘lying flat with one’s belly pressed to the ground’
  mą?ateʔáx ‘arms open and rounded’
  mą?slapúx ‘covered, covered over (body of something)’
  piʔoʔ ‘turned up at the edge’
  pu:tsáx ‘lined up with long axis towards the speaker’
  tsqʔostáx ‘kneeling’
  špi:t ‘in a straight line (larger objects)’
Descriptive adverbs

- have meanings more akin to English adjectives

`čaláx` ‘brittle, fragile’
`ćipš` ‘dense’
`či:š` ‘blurry’
`ʔɔ:nɬoːtɬ` ‘curly, twisted, tangled’
`lampúːɬ` ‘wet’
`łamáŋ` ‘rounded, full’
`łʼanán` ‘red or yellow of ripe fruit’
`łtoxoʔ` ‘baggy, sack-like’
`mox` ‘round and bulky, spherical’
`pɔnʔoʔ` ‘bubbly, foamy’
`stiléʔ` ‘star-shaped’
`s’oʔoʔ` ‘salty’
`tsuːʃsoʔ` ‘red’
`škútq` ‘sour’

- many colour terms have both adverbial and adjectival forms:

`stanlánŋ ɑmáːɬ` `škaːn`
`stanlánŋ aːn−maːɬ` `škaːn`
white `go−PRG` water
‘the water is flowing clean’ (PS)

`šastanlánŋa` `škaːn`
`ša−stanlánŋ−a` `škaːn`
DTV−white−ADJ water
‘clean water’ (PS)
### Descriptive adverbs vs. adjectives

**mox** wakáł išma:sé? ?o:šúm
\[\text{round}\] be.high 3PO–nest wasp
‘the wasp nest is up there all big and round’ (SC)

**ʔáta** wakáł išma:sé? ?o:šúm
\[\text{big}\] be.high 3PO–nest wasp
‘the big wasp nest is up there’ (SC)

‘its big nest’ ‘its big nest’ | ‘its big round nest’ ‘its big round nest’

\[\text{DTV–big}\] be.high 3PO–nest wasp
‘the big wasp nest is up there’ (SC)
Dynamic adverbs

• derived through final -(V)CV reduplication from configurational adverbs

\[akłtsáx\ yaːɬ\]
\[akłtsáx\ yaːɬ\]
head.up stand
‘he’s standing with his head held high’ (PS)

\[akłtsaxaxa\ əmáɬ tsumaxát mu:štumáɬ nakʔałəʃká:n\]
\[akłtsax–axa\ ʔn–maːɬ tsumaxát mušt–maːɬ nak=ʔałəʃkaːn\]
head.up–DYN go–PRG girl swept.away–PRG LOC=river
‘the girl is swept away by the river with her head held up [out of the water]’ (PS)

• like ideophones
  ▫ dynamic adverbs have no fixed word-level stress (cf. \[akłtsaxaxa\])
  ▫ they can be reduplicated multiple times
Syntax of ideophones and adverbs

- both ideophones and adverbs precede the verb they qualify

**Ideophone**

*sutsut* kiltu:ma:yuxu:má:j šalakpi:tsún kapsnáp
*sutsut* kiltu:–ma:–yux–u:–ma:j ša–lakpi:tsún kapsnáp
**IDPH** edge–CS–go.down–CS–PRG DTV–pieces paper
‘he is tearing off little bits of paper’ (LB)

**Adverb**

*ţtan?áx* ma:pi:–kan iš–q:š’a: xú:kį
**stretched.out** spread.out–IDF 3PO–skin deer
‘they stake out the deerskin’ (LB)
Syntax of ideophones and adverbs

- both can either precede or follow predicate particles

**Ideophone**

- *lays mat lakpa:lásli*
- *laŋs* mat lakpa:–las–lį
- *IDPH QTV temple–slap–PFV*
  ‘he slapped him hard in the temple’ (MR)

**Adverb**

- *mat poʔpoʔ makawamáːt štąʔanán*
- *mat* poʔpoʔ maka–wan–maːł štąʔa–nán
- *QTV IDPH hand–say–PRG make.tortilla–IDO*
  ‘there was the sound of someone making tortillas’ (MR)

- *lantáx mat čipapál tsamá: liːltám*
- *lantáxmat* čipa–paːɬ tsamá: liːltám
- *glued.down QTV grab–RPT–PFV that glue*
  ‘he hit it and the glue trapped him again’ (MR)

- *mat ?ọ́l čiːwakál mat taːlmaːn*
- *mat* ?ọ́l čiː–waká–ɬ mat taː–ɬmaːn
- *QTV roped tie–be.high–PFV QTV CLS–long*
  ‘he tied it up there with rope’ (MR)
Syntax of ideophones and adverbs

• either can attract the optative prefix ka-

\[\text{lun}\text{s } \text{ka}+\text{yux}+\text{t}+ \text{yux}+\text{l}+\text{tsam}+\text{a}: \text{escalera} \]

‘jump down! [she said and] the ladder came down’ (BC)

\[\text{kalun}\text{s } \text{yux}+\text{t}+ \text{yux}+\text{l}+\text{tsam}+\text{a}: \text{escalera} \]

‘jump down! [she said and] the ladder came down’ (LB)

\[\text{l}\text{?st\text{o}n}? \text{kat}\text{\t\text{p}\text{\t\text{a}}}+\text{a}\text{:\text{ stretched OPT--lie.down:2SG.SUBJ}} \]

‘lie down stretched out!’ (LB)

\[\text{kal}\text{?st\text{o}n}? \text{t}\text{\t\text{p}\text{\t\text{a}}}+\text{a}\text{:\text{ OPT--stretched lie.down:2SG.SUBJ}} \]

‘lie down stretched out!’ (LB)
Syntax of ideophones and adverbs

- adverbs but not ideophones combine with the intensifying clitic =tunka ‘a lot’

```
mat la?maxtsatunká mat ti: tačíl texe:ľa:wág:nín
mat la?maxtsa=tunká mat ti: ta–čin–ľ
texe:ľa:wág:n–nin
```
QTV long.ago=lots QTV REL 3PL.SUBJ–arrive.here–PFV outsider–PL
‘many years ago, they say, the outsiders were those who arrived here’ (PS)

- but this morpheme also cliticizes to adjectives and verbs

```
ngk?elwá tsamá: kapéx naktaːsá porque tsuma:tunká
na–jk–?el–wa tsamá: kapéx nak=taːsá porque tsuma:=tunká
FUT–1SG.SUBJ–mouth–eat this coffee LOC=cup because full=lots
‘I’ll sip a bit off the top of the coffee in the cup because it is very full’ (RM)
```

```
iksmani:tunká waːtsá
jk–smaníː= tunká waːtsá
1SG.SUBJ–feel.at.home=lots here
‘I really feel at home here’ (RM)
```
Semantics of ideophones and adverbs

- one of the notable features of ideophones is their semantic specificity
- they often evoke a scene involving specified types of actors participating in a certain manner in a particular type of event

ʔalaŋ?ʔalaŋ? ‘person chewing or biting down on a pebble’ lamama ‘coals glowing red’
xalala ‘red-hot rocks crackling from heat’ ?aŋʔaŋ ‘person crawling along on all fours’
ʔanliʔanli ‘person making a face and showing their teeth’ ?eŋʔeŋ ‘a rabbit or deer hopping’
ʔonʔuʔu ‘woodpecker pecking on a tree’ kalala ‘running at a low level (water)’
čen?ečen?e ‘large bottle filled with liquid being shaken’ tonʔon ‘heart beating’
paŋʔupaŋʔu ‘toothless person chewing food’ peŋʔpeŋ ‘pustules growing’
šumšum ‘a large bird swooping’ wayaya ‘person leaving abruptly or without explanation’
salala ‘salax lukút spirit passing by dragging bones’ šaxšax ‘dirt, sand, or dust striking a surface’
šmačmat ‘person cutting cane or long grass with machete’ yo:n?yo:n? ‘person staring greedily/lustfully/aggressively’
ʔanaʔana ‘person running around in a panic because they are late’

- meanings are consistent across speakers and can be elicited without context
- they do not rely on the meaning of a particular verb or on discourse
- they are often the only means of expressing concepts such as insects buzzing, hearts beating, water dripping, etc.
Semantics of ideophones and adverbs

• thus, many ideophones have nearly the semantic content of entire clauses …
• … but not all ideophones are that specific

čaščaš ‘person moving quickly, person making an energetic motion’  
laŋ?šlaŋ?š ‘blow striking with force’  
łqrłq: ‘object falling, object being felled’  
luxłułuxłu ‘object bouncing up and down’  
pilipili ‘object rolling’  
tuktuktuk ‘object snapping off, breaking after the application of force’  
swilaswila ‘person or animal running about quickly’  
ľ’entiľ’enti ‘dumb person doing something’
Semantics of ideophones and adverbs

- this makes them hard to distinguish on semantic grounds from morphologically and phonologically ordinary descriptive adverbs

- aʔapu:táx ‘drooping, bent downwards (branches)’
- ?q̱ł ‘tied with rope’
- xulúx ‘hanging in bunches (small objects)’
- ka:lì:ʔowaxnit ‘disgusting (place)’
- ka:ṉltì ‘with teeth showing’
- ląʔmonʔṯ ‘liquified inside (egg)’
- ląṯáʔa ‘looking greasy, shiny with grease’
- liḵs ‘throwing a tantrum, acting spoiled, whining (children)’
- lámáŋ ‘rounded, full’
- łmuk ‘bent over by the weight of its fruit (tree)’
- ł’at ‘close together, tight’
- łéʔe: ‘having the smell of burnt hair, fingernails, horn, meat, or beans’
- sti:l ‘spread out (small objects), distributed evenly’
- wíl’èʔ ‘having long, messy hair; being jumbled up (clothes)’
Are ideophones a part of speech?

- phonologically, ideophones are somewhat distinctive
  - make use of sound symbolism
  - lack fixed word-level stress
  - in the last of these properties, they overlap with dynamic adverbs
- morphologically, they undergo reduplication, overlapping with dynamic adverbs
- syntactically, they are like most adverbs
- semantically, they overlap with descriptive adverbs

so, is there any way to define ideophones as their own part of speech?
Are ideophones a part of speech?

- the most characteristic features of ideophones are phonological, but a phonologically-defined part of speech seems like a non-starter
- reduplication can’t be taken as definitive because of the overlap with dynamic adverbs
- the most promising criteria seemed to be semantic — ideophones are not plain semantic predicates but evoke entire scenes complete with schematic event-participants
  - but that’s not true of all ideophones
  - there is also a good deal of overlap with descriptive adverbs

  kanltît kilwanʔorìt čiči
  kanltît           kil–wan–ʔoː–ɬ–čiči
  showing.teeth    mouth–say–all–PFV dog
  ‘the dog bared all of its teeth’ (LC)

- kanltît is much more specific than ideophones like pačšpačš
  ‘something popping or rapping’
Defining lexical classes

• this is a familiar problem in the typology of lexical class systems
• the meanings of major parts of speech
  ▫ tend to cluster around central or prototypical semantic categories
  ▫ overlap with respect to the inclusion other types of meanings (Dixon 1982; Schachter 1985; Beck 2003)
• many researchers thus advocate either
  ▫ the use of only syntactic criteria in the definition of lexical classes (Hengeveld 1992; Baker 2003), or
  ▫ syntactic criteria in combination with semantic criteria (Croft 1991; Beck 2002; Aikhenvald & Dixon 2004)
  ▫ parts of speech are essentially labels applied to sets of words to define their distributional properties in syntactic structure
  ▫ these sets may be motivated iconically by aspects of their semantics

what does syntax have to say about ideophones in UNT?
Ideophones vs. adverbs

- syntactically, ideophones look a lot like adverbs except for properties four and five
  - the fifth property applies only to certain temporal and locative expressions, which can also be pre-verbal
  - the fourth property — ability to host the intensifying clitic =tunká — applies to words belonging to other parts of speech
- pre-verbal position and ka-climbing seem to be the most relevant properties in terms of making distributional statements about particular word classes
- these group ideophones together with adverbs

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? = not attested in the available data

Syntactic properties of adverbs and ideophones
The class of predicate qualifiers

- *This study indicates that ideophones should not be classified separately from adverbs at the highest-level of the lexical-class taxonomy (i.e., part of speech)*
- because of their identical syntactic distribution, it seems more promising to groups ideophones together with adverbs into a larger class of *predicate qualifiers*
- using the syntactic, morphological, and phonological properties discussed above, we can create sub-classes within this part of speech
Predicate qualifiers: a new part of speech?

- a super-ordinate class of predicate-qualifiers subsumes ideophones and adverbs
- whether we refer to this class as “adverbs” depends on how determined we are to cling to the familiar Indo-European sense of the word
  - ideophones may seem semantically bizarre — but so are UNT descriptive adverbs, which are otherwise well-behaved adverbs
  - even in English, the semantic uniformity of adverbs is an illusion
  - English adverbs express a range of meaning types (Schachter 1985)
  - English adverbs have much more heterogeneous distributional properties than the conflated ideophone-adverb class in UNT
- it might be worthwhile maintaining the term “adverb” but re-adjusting our expectations for it (particularly on the semantic level) based on data like this from a non-Indo-European language
Ideophones as a part of speech

- The term "ideophone" is certainly worth maintaining for its descriptive value in discussions of UNT word classes.
- It is of little use in syntactic modeling or sentence-level grammatical description.
- The term "adverb," on the other hand, serves just as well and allows for the correct level of descriptive and theoretical generalization.
- This casts doubt on the utility of the ideophone as a cross-linguistically valid part of speech with syntactic properties that are predictable from language to language.
  - The semantic category of expressive, onomatopoeic or synesthesic words does seem to manifest itself in a large number of languages.
  - Over all the syntactic properties of words belonging to this semantic class seem to be cross-linguistically heterogeneous.
  - It may be possible that in some languages they merit their own part of speech.
- Ideophones in any particular language are amenable to a wide-variety of language-specific treatments in terms of their parts-of-speech classification.


