Insights into the Interaction of Tone, Stress and Morphophonology in Wampis

This talk accounts for the tone and stress systems in Wampis, a Jivaroan (or Chicham) language from the Peruvian Amazonia. Wampis presents several fascinating word-level phenomena, such as vowel elision, vowel harmony, nasalization, and other different morphophonological processes. The complex interplay between these word-level phenomena, a strict phonotactic structure, and prosody results in extreme opacity (cf. Kiparsky 2000), as seen in (1), and poses significant challenges for the analysis and description of languages like Wampis.

(1) /hintinakaratinu/	- [hintíŋkartin]	'teacher'
/paantamana/	- [paánman]	'plantain (accusative)'

While this interaction between stress and tone has led to various categorizations of other Jivaroan languages as having 'pitch accent', 'tone-stress', 'accent' or 'stress' systems (Beasley & Pike 1957; Fast 1975; Payne 1990; Overall 2018), it is important to note that Wampis has certain characteristics. Wampis has a single tone in a privative H/Ø system (Hyman 2009) and exhibits three clearly distinct high-tone types - lexical, metrical and grammatical - that interact with one another. Complex interactions between these different tones, the stress system, vowel elision, and morphophonological processes result in variations of word forms and their associated prosody. Working within an Optimality Theory framework (Prince & Smolensky 1993; René 1997), I argue that the surface opacity found in Wampis can be explained by the application of a set of word-formation constraints and faithfulness constraints with respect to tone, rather than by the application of a large number of morphological and phonological rules (Peña 2016). A better understanding of the phenomena presented in Wampis is not only valuable for comprehending the interaction between tone and stress systems but also for shedding light on broader typological and theoretical issues such as word derivation order and prosody, in a region that, with few exceptions (Zimmermann 2013; Rose 2019), requires to be better understood typologically and theoretically. Moreover, it contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of the phonological aspects of languages in general.

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