Syntax-Prosody mismatches in Teotitlán Zapotec

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Intonational Phrase is a prosodic constituent that is larger than the Prosodic Word or the Prosodic Phrase, which corresponds more or less to the syntactic clause (Nespor & Vogel 1986: Ch. 7), which is a linguistic unit consisting of a subject and a predicate. In Teotitlán Zapotec, an Otomanguean language spoken in the state of Oaxaca, Mexico, the domain of Tone Sandhi and Final Glottalization is the Intonational Phrase. Intonational Phrase is often defined as the domain of intonational contours (cf. Nespor & Vogel 1986: Ch. 7), but intonation contours are not reported to be employed for pragmatic purposes in this language.

Tone Sandhi is a tonal process where a syllable with a low (a) or mid (ã) tone alternates with a falling (á) or a high (á) tone when it follows a syllable with a mid tone (ã), as illustrated in (1). In this example, the syllable \textit{tq}: (in boldface) alternates with a falling tone (\textit{tq}:) after a syllable with the mid tone, \textit{ʒ}:. In the following examples, the first line shows the surface forms that are pronounced by the speakers, and the second line the underlying forms. The hyphen (-) connects affxes while the equal sign = connects clitics (which are outside of the phonological word). The intonational phrase boundaries are indicated by \textit{||...||} and the syntactic clause boundaries are indicated by \textit{[...]}.

The domain of Tone Sandhi is larger than the prosodic word boundaries indicated by the spaces in the first line as we can observe in (1), but it is not the case that this tone rule is applied when a syllable with a low or a mid tone follows a syllable with a mid tone. For instance, in (2), the syllable \textit{zît} (in boldface) follows a syllable with the mid tone, \textit{pàn}, but Tone Sandhi is not applied here. This is because the domain of application of Tone Sandhi is the Intonational Phrase, and that there is an Intonational Phrase boundary between \textit{pàn} and \textit{zît}.

The other process, Final Glottalization, is a process where a vowel with a low or high tone in an atomic open syllable at the final position of an Intonational Phrase is glottalized. In (3) the final 1SG enclitic =\textit{a} is glottalized because it is found in the final position of the Intonational Phrase, while in (4) the same clitic is found within the Intonational Phrase and thus Final Glottalization is not applied.

The Intonational Phrase in Zapotec defined this way in many cases correspond to the syntactic clause, but not necessarily. First, there are cases where the Intonational Phrase is larger than the syntactic clause, as in (5). Here, the mid-tone syllable \textit{dàn} and the following syllable \textit{gu} (in boldface) constitute independent syntactic clauses (quotation clause and the main clause), but Tone Sandhi is applied and the tone on \textit{gu} alternates from a low tone to the high tone. Thus, the structure here is \textit{||[...][...]|}. On the other hand, there are cases where the Intonational Phrase is smaller than the syntactic clause. In (6), the initial element in the prepositional phrase, \textit{kun}, follows a syllable with a mid tone, \textit{kî}, but Tone Sandhi is not applied. This is because the phrase beginning with \textit{kun} constitutes an independent Intonational Phrase. Thus, the structure here is \textit{[||...||...||]}.

In this talk, we examine the cases of such Syntax-Prosody mismatches in Teotitlán Zapotec at the level of the Intonational Phrase, and situate it in a typological and theoretical perspectives. From the typological perspectives, Himmelman et al. (2018) and Himmelman (2022) conclude that phonetic Intonational Phrase is universal and even non-native speakers can judge its boundaries, while phonological Intonational Phrase, as in the cases discussed so far, is grammaticalized and differ in individual languages. From theoretical perspectives, it has been argued that the illocutionary clauses show more consistent mapping to an Intonational Phrase than standard clauses (Selkirk 2011). Furthermore, Gussenhoven (2004: 292) claims that reporting clauses are either incorporating or cliticizing, while complex reporting clauses cannot be incorporated. The goal of this presentation is to examine if these generalizations also hold in Zapotec, where the Intonational Phrase is not defined with intonational contours as in other better described languages.
(1) \[ \text{ba-ʒū:ʒ tēː] \]
ba-ʒū:ʒ tēː
COMPL-fray INT
‘frayed/scratched (something) a lot’

(2) \[ \text{[ˈzitˈtæ̰ː měːdy ˈgūpān,]} \]
\[ \text{[ˈzitˈtæ̰ː měːdy ˈgūpān]} \]
much INT money COMPL-have=3SG.F much INT money COMPL-have=3SG.F
‘He had a lot of money, he had a lot of money!’

(3) \[ \text{nis=rú ri-kāːz=a} \]
\[ \text{nis=rú ri-kāːz=a} \]
water=more HAB-want:1SG=1SG
‘I want more water.’

(4) \[ \text{ri- kāːz =a ə- gaː kyēː} \]
\[ \text{HAB-want:1SG=1SG POT-trim head.of:1SG} \]
‘I want to get a haircut.’

(5) \[ \text{r-yubləːz tēː=ダン gu-ńnj: bi'n+giːʒ naza-kē'ŋkī} \]
\[ \text{HAB-be.in.a.hurry INT=3PL.F COMPL-say youngster+toff good-DIM=INV.DEM} \]
‘They are very much in a hurry, said the Little Prince’

(6) \[ \text{gu-ńnj: bi'n+giːʒ naza-kē'ŋkī zū:bàn ˈkyēː:kī} \]
\[ \text{kun náll ˈnyē nak } \]
\[ \text{kun=n-áll nyē=ɐ=kī} \]
\[ \text{COMPL-witness:1SG youngster+toff good-DIM=INV.DEM be.sitting=3SG.F head=INV.DEM} \]
\[ \text{with=STAT-hang leg=3SG.INF} \]
‘I saw that the Little Prince sitting over up there, (with) his legs (were) hanging’

References