

Inflectional Verb Classes in Acazulco Otomi

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Abstract: Acazulco Otomi (Oto-Pamean, Oto-Manguéan) is an endangered language spoken by about 200 elderly people in San Jerónimo Acazulco, a village located 35 km Southwest from Mexico City (Mexico). The language is tonal, verb-initial and head-marking. This language has four inflectional classes of verbs, which differ from each other (a) in the allomorphs of tense-aspect-mood proclitics they select, and (b) in the type of stem alternations they present across their paradigm. Although class membership is a lexical property for each particular verb, the existence of verb pairs across different classes suggests that the classes emerged from valence-changing morphological strategies that are no longer productive nowadays. This chapter shows how the historical development of inflectional classes of verbs in Acazulco Otomi might have occurred. In addition, it discusses the possibility that one of these classes, which I treat as class IV, may still be under the process of lexicalization.

Keywords: Otomi, Oto-Manguéan, verb conjugations, morphophonology, tone

1. Introduction

The Otomi family (Oto-Manguéan, Oto-Pamean) is a group of indigenous languages spoken in Central Mexico. Inflectional morphology is particularly diverse in verbs in head-marking languages like Otomi; inflectional morphology in nouns is much less diverse. An Otomi verb can be inflected for person of the Subject, person of the Object, tense, aspect, mood (TAM), and associated motion (Andrews 1993; Bartholomew 2004; Cárceres 1907[1580]; Hekking & Andrés de Jesús 1984; Lastra 1989, 1997; Palancar 2009, 2012a; Voigtlander & Echegoyen 1979; Wallis 1956); the verbal inflection in some Otomi languages even includes the registration (*i.e.* non-promotional cross-reference; Aissen 1990; Norman 1978) of non-arguments (Hernández-Green 2012; Palancar 2012; Voigtlander & Echegoyen 1979). Given all these grammatical category types associated to the verb, it is not surprising that verbs in Otomi languages display great morphological complexity. Inflectional classes in some Otomi languages (Hernández-Green 2012; Lastra 1997; Palancar 2012b; Voigtlander & Echegoyen 1979) increase the complexity of the verbal system of the family. This chapter is centered on the inflectional

classes of verbs in Acazolco Otomi, a severely endangered Otomi language spoken by about 200 elderly people in San Jerónimo Acazolco (Ocoyoacac, Mexico State), a small town located 35 km. Southwest of Mexico City. The location of San Jerónimo Acazolco with respect to Mexico City and other Otomi-speaking communities can be seen in Figure 1.

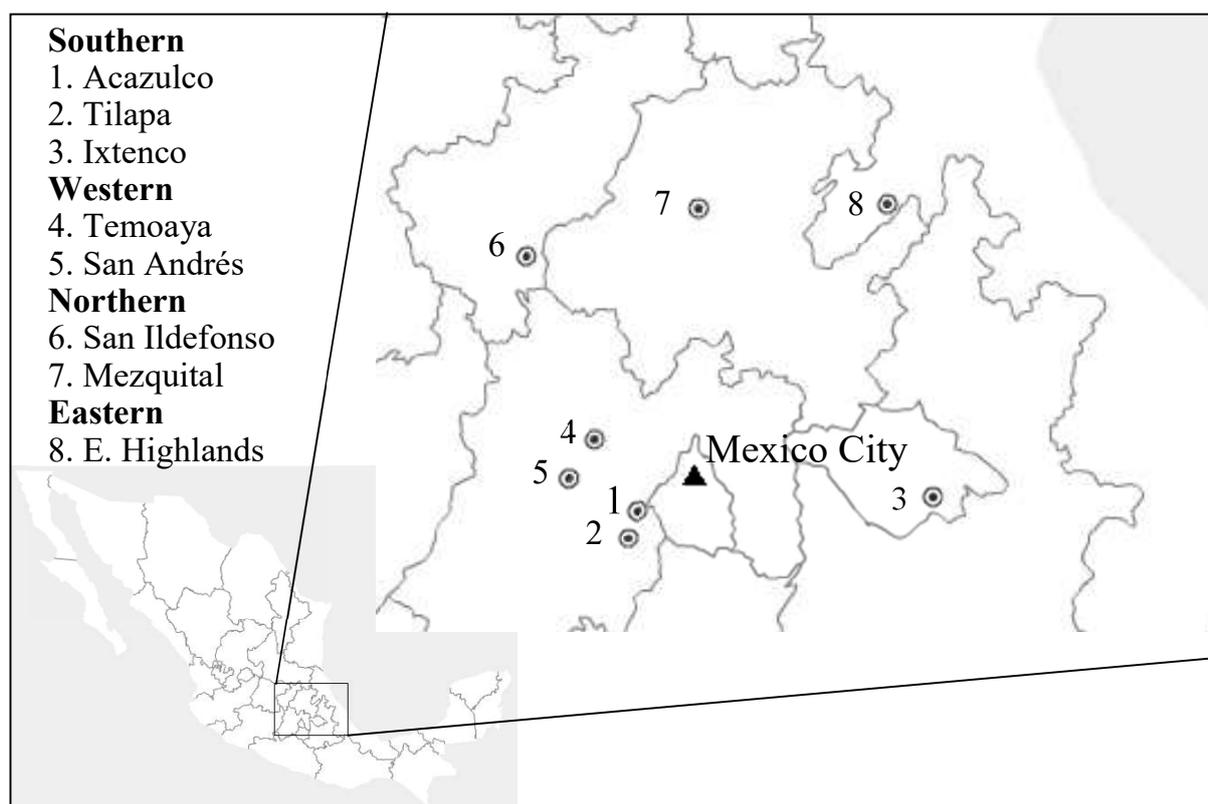


Figure 1. Map of (some) Otomi-speaking communities

An inflectional class is “a set of lexemes whose members each select the same set of inflectional realizations” (Aronoff 1994:64). When we claim the existence of more than one inflectional class, it implies that “there is more than one realization for a given morphosyntactic array” (Aronoff 1994: 64). Verbs in Acazolco Otomi are grouped in classes according to the set of TAM/Subject proclitics they select for each particular bundle of inflectional categories (*i.e.* morphosyntactic array). Verbs from Class I like *tsĩ* ‘eat, drink’ in (1a) below, for example, select the proclitic *ra* for 3rd person Subject, Realis mood,¹ and Incomplete aspect, while verbs from Class III

¹ Not glossed for convenience, due to its high frequency; the aspect categories labeled here as “Incomplete”, “Complete”, and “Ingressive” are labeled as “imperfective”, “perfective”, and “immediative” in Hernández-Green (2018), respectively.

like *khǎ* ‘make’ in (1b) select the proclitic *radi* when inflected for the same inflectional categories.

- (1)a. *ra tsĩ*²
 3.ICP eat
 ‘S/he’s eating it.’
- b. *radi khǎ*
 3.ICP make
 ‘S/he’s making it.’

Morphological contrasts between inflectional classes in Acazulco Otomi also include stem alternants. The alternations of the stem consist of segmental and tonal mutations with respect to the Basic stem. The Basic stem occurs in 3rd person, Realis mood, and Incompletive aspect, as shown in (1) above. The verb *tsĩ* ‘eat, drink’ from Class I takes the stem alternant *zĩ* when inflected for 3rd person, Realis mood, and Completive aspect, as shown in (2a) below. The stem alternant has a lenited initial consonant (/ts/ → /z/), and is labeled “stem B” in this chapter. In contrast, the verb *khǎ* ‘make’ from Class III in (2b) takes no stem alternant for the same inflectional categories.

- (2)a. *bi <z>ĩ*
 3.CPL eat
 ‘S/he ate it.’
- b. *bi khǎ*
 3.CPL make
 ‘S/he made it.’

Stem alternants with tonal contrasts are illustrated below in (3). The Class I verb *tsĩ* ‘eat’ takes the low-tone stem alternant *tsì* in (3a) when inflected for 2nd person, Realis mood, Completive aspect. The Class III verb *khǎ* ‘make’, on the other hand, does not display any tone changes in 2nd person Completive, as it can be seen in (3b).

- (3)a. *gí tsì*
 2.CPL LT.eat
 ‘You ate it.’
- b. *gí khǎ*
 2.CPL make
 ‘You made it.’

² Practical alphabet (when different from IPA): <a> = [ɔ], <e> = [ɛ], <o> = [ɔ], <u> = [i], <ā> = [ã], <ē> = [ẽ], <ô> = [õ], <ü> = [y], < > = [ʔ, ʔ], <h> = [h, h̄], <ñ> = [ɲ], <r> = [r], <ṛ> = [r̄], <w> = [w, w̄], <x> = [ʃ], <y> = [j, j̄], <ž> = [ʒ]. Low tone is omitted in glossed texts and in TAM/Subject proclitics.

Relevant features of Acazulco Otomi verbal morphology are described in Section 2, and a comprehensive description of inflectional classes of the verbs of the language is provided in Section 3. Section 4 deals with the syntactic and semantic properties of each inflectional verb class. In Section 5 I discuss a group of patientive verbs that seems to be in the process of becoming an inflectional class. Section 6 concludes with final remarks.

2. Verbal morphology of Acazulco Otomi

Otomi languages are head-marking and have a variety of grammatical category types associated with the verb, namely person (Subject and Object), tense, aspect, mood (TAM), associated motion (Guillaume 2009; Wilkins 2006), and adjunct registration. The following subsections outline the features of such grammatical category types that are relevant to verb inflectional classes in Acazulco Otomi.

2.1. TAM system

Mood and aspect are primary TAM categories in Acazulco Otomi (Hernández-Green 2018). The mood categories of the language are Realis, Irrealis, Optative, and Imperative; aspects include Completive, Incompletive, Habitual, and Ingressive. Mood and aspect categories come in pairs most of the time, in the mood-aspect bundles listed in Table 1 below. The ticked cells (✓) are possible mood-aspect bundles in Acazulco Otomi; mood-aspect bundles in cells with a dash (–) do not occur.³ Only the Realis and Irrealis moods will be taken into account in this chapter. The Optative and the Imperative will not be described, as they do not have aspectual contrasts; moreover, the Optative only occurs with 3rd person Subject, while the Imperative occurs with 2nd person.

	Completive	Incompletive	Habitual	Ingressive
Realis	✓	✓	✓	✓
Irrealis	✓	✓	✓	–
Optative	–	–	–	–
Imperative	–	–	–	–

Table 1. Mood-aspect bundles in Acazulco Otomi

³ Although aspectual contrasts are not found in Optative and Imperative, these moods often have perfective interpretation.

The grammatical category bundles shown in Table 1 above are indicated in the verb by means of a *portmanteau* formative preceding the verb stem, named *proclitic*, *verb proclitic*, or *TAM proclitic* in Otomi literature. I will use either term throughout the chapter. TAM categories are fused in the proclitic, together with person of the Subject (1st, 2nd, 3rd).⁴ Consider the examples in (4) below. The proclitic *gu* ‘1.IRR’ in (4a) indicates 1st person Subject, Irrealis mood and Completive aspect in a cumulative way;⁵ the proclitic *dra* ‘3.IRR.ICP’ in (4b) indicates 3rd person Subject, Irrealis mood, and Incompletive aspect.

- (4)a. **gu** <mb>ǎ=ga
 1.IRR go=1
 ‘I’ll leave.’
- b. **dra** pǎ
 3.IRR.ICP go
 ‘S/he would be going.’

Although these formatives are clitics, I link them to the verb stem with the = symbol only when it is relevant to the presentation of the data, as I do in the following paragraphs. Unlike other clitics (say, object pronouns in a number of Romance languages), the inflectional formatives shown in (4) above always occur preceding the verb stem, and never following it. This has led to some researchers to treat them as prefixes (Cárceles 1907[1580]; Lastra 1989); others consider them as prefixes, but write them separate from the verb stem (Andrews 1993), and even label them “proclitics” (Voigtlander & Echegoyen 1979).

However, the TAM proclitics are not prosodically bound to the verbal stem as an affix would be. Monosyllabic TAM proclitics are hosted by the verb stem when occurring initially in a prosodic phrase, as in the examples in (4) above and in the sentence shown in (5a) below, but they will attach to any syllable preceding them in the same prosodic phrase, as in the example in (5b). The coupling of the TAM proclitic with the syllable of *kha* ‘and’ seems to give it more prosodic independence.

- (5)a. **bi**=<mb>ǎ=yu
 3.CPL=go=PRO.3PL
 ‘They left.’

⁴ For a more analytic morphological treatment of these proclitics, see Hernández-Green (2015).

⁵ For convenience, the Completive aspect is not glossed in Irrealis, as it is more frequent than the other aspect categories in this mood.

- b. *kha=bi* <*mb*>*ǎ=yu*
 and=3.CPL go=PRO.3PL
 ‘And then they left.’

Disyllabic TAM proclitics do not attach to the verb stem as monosyllabic TAM proclitics do, as it is shown in (6) with the proclitic *radi* ‘3.ICP’. This independence is perhaps due to the fact that TAM proclitics like *radi* ‘3.ICP’ are formed by a couple of syllables themselves, just like the couple *kha=bi* in (5b) above.

- (6) *radi hyèni*
 3.ICP be.sick
 ‘S/he’s sick.’

TAM proclitics in San Ildefonso Tultepec Otomi (Palancar, 2009) and Tilapa Otomi (Palancar 2012a) have similar prosodic properties as those of Acazolco Otomi. The independence coupling of syllables in (5b) and (6) above obeys to a trochaic foot pattern (Harris 2007: 134) in Acazolco Otomi, where the prominent root syllable of the verb *pǎ* ‘go’ (stem alternant *mbǎ*) must correspond to the first syllable in a foot. A similar trochaic foot pattern of syllable coupling with rhythmic (*i.e.* prosodic) motivations –though not explicitly associated with TAM proclitics– is also observed in Eastern Highlands Otomi (Voigtlander & Echegoyen 1979: 25).

Acazolco Otomi has two secondary TAM categories, indicated by means of clitics attached to the TAM proclitic. The clitic *x=* ‘ALREADY’ usually indicates the starting point of the situation described by the verb; with Completive TAM proclitics, the clitic has readings similar to the Perfect in English. The Past tense is realized by the clitic *m=* ‘PST’, and it never occurs with the Completive TAM proclitics in the Realis mood. Examples of the clitic *x=* ‘ALREADY’ and the Past with Incompletive proclitics are shown in (7a, b), respectively.

- (7)a. *x=na* ‘*wǎi*
 ALREADY=3.ICP rain
 ‘It’s raining already.’ {txt}
- b. *m=rá* ‘*wǎi*
 PST=3.ICP rain
 ‘It was raining.’

The clitics illustrated in (7) above are secondary, in the sense that they are not obligatory for the inflection of a verb in Acazolco Otomi (Hernández-Green 2018); the TAM categories indicated by the proclitic (see Table 1) in

contrast, are obligatory. The full set of TAM proclitics available in the language will be provided in Section 3.1.

2.2. Person and number

The person categories in Acazulco Otomi are first, second, and third.⁶ As it has been shown in Section 2.1, the TAM proclitic also serves as morphological exponent of person of the Subject. Additionally, person (1st and 2nd) and number (dual, plural) can be indicated by means of suffixes and enclitics. These elements occupy the morphological slots “-1” (Object suffix for 1st/2nd person), “=1” (person enclitic), “=2” (number enclitic), and “=3” (Object enclitic for 3rd person) shown in (8) below.

(8)	stem	-1	=1	=2	=3
		-o	=person	=number	=3o

The Object suffixes in slot “-1” are *-gi* ‘1o’ and *-k’i* ‘2o’; 3rd person Object is either unmarked (mostly for Patients, and also for some Recipients) or indicated with the enclitic *=bi* ‘3o’ (for most Recipients and Benefactives, and also some indirect Patients). The position and function of these markers is illustrated below in the examples in (9a, b). While in (9c) the 3rd person Object remains unmarked (Patient), the Benefactive 3rd person Object in (9d) is indicated by the enclitic *=bi* ‘3o’.

- (9)a. *bi ní-gi*
 3.CPL see-1o
 ‘S/he saw me.’
- b. *bi ní-k’i*
 3.CPL see-2o
 ‘S/he saw you.’
- c. *bi ní*
 3.CPL see
 ‘S/he saw him/her/it.’
- d. *bi kha-h=pi*
 3.CPL make-APL=3o
 ‘S/he made it for him/her/it.’

In slot “=1” we find the person enclitics *=ga* ‘1’ and *=ge* ‘2’ and their allomorphs. The enclitic *=ga* ‘1’ can refer to either the Subject or the Object. The first person enclitic *=ga* is obligatory if the verb does not receive any

⁶ Hernández-Green (2018) considers that, apart from the Object enclitic *=bi* ‘3o’, the 3rd person is not overtly marked in the verb in Acazulco Otomi.

other person-marking suffix(es) or enclitic(s), as shown in (10a), in these cases, its absence is agrammatical, as in (10b). The enclitic =*ga* is optional with *-gi* ‘1O’ (10a), and it never co-occurs with *-k’i* ‘2O’ (11b).

(10)a. *dí ní=ga*
1.CPL see=1
‘I saw him/her/it.’

b. **dí ní*
1.CPL see
Intended reading: ‘I saw him/her/it.’

(11)a. *bi ní-gi(=ga)*
3.CPL see=1O(=1)
‘S/he saw me.’

b. *dí ní-k’i(*=ga)*
1.CPL see-2O(*=1)
‘I saw you.’

The second 2nd person enclitic =*ge* ‘2’ is only used for emphatic/contrastive purposes, as in (12) below. It also can refer to the Subject, as in (12a), or to the Object, as in (12b).

(12)a. *bú hō=ge*
IMP.EXL have=2
‘YOU go and get it (because I won’t).’ {txt}

b. *nux-k’i=ge didi ’nda’-k’i=ge nuk’an corazón*
CONTR-2O=2 IRR give-2O=2 DET.SG.2POSS heart
‘As for YOU, they will give YOU (a stab in) your heart.’ {txt}

The person enclitics =*ga* ‘1’ and =*ge* ‘2’ do not indicate a specific syntactic role, as the data presented above in (10), (11) and (12) show.

Number categories (dual, plural) are marked by means of enclitics that occupy slot “=2”. The number system in Acazolco Otomi has inclusive/exclusive distinctions in non-singular 1st person (*i.e.* “we including you” vs “we excluding you”) and it is rather asymmetric, very similar to that of Tilapa Otomi (Palancar 2013). In 1st person, the plural and dual Inclusive are indicated by the enclitics =*hu* ‘1PL’ (or allomorph =*mphu*) and =*wi* ‘1DU’, respectively. There is only plural number in the Exclusive, indicated with the enclitic =*mbe* ‘PL.EX’ (or the much less common =*he* ‘PL.EX’). In 2nd person, the enclitic =*wi* ‘2PL’ (cognate with 1st person dual =*wi*) indicates the plural for 2nd person. There are no special forms for dual in 2nd person. The number of the 3rd person is not marked in the verb. The number system of Acazolco Otomi is shown below in Table 2.

	DU	PL	PL.EX
1	=wi	=hɨ	=mbe
2	=wi		–
3	–		–

Table 2. Number system in Acazulco Otomi

The number enclitics in Table 2 are placed immediately to the right of the verb stem or the Object suffix, as it is shown in the examples of (13a-c). The enclitic =*ga* ‘1’ can co-occur only with =*mbe* ‘1PL.EX’, as in (14); the enclitic =*ge* ‘2’ never co-occurs with number enclitics.

- (13)a. *gu kũt'i=hɨ 'a tẽhe*
 1.IRR enter=1PL.IN LOC.P water
 ‘We.PL.IN will get in the water.’ {txt}
- b. *gu tsĩ=wi na hmé*
 1.IRR eat=1DU DET.SG tortilla
 ‘We.DU.IN will eat this food.’ {txt}
- c. *gu nzó'-k'=wi ra h-yühü*
 1.IRR talk.to-2O=2PL ACT IMPRS-speak.Otomi
 ‘I’ll talk to you.PL in Otomi.’ {txt}
- (14) *khó='tshe dí nú=ga='mbe*
 no.one=anymore 1.CPL see=1=1PL.EX
 ‘We.EX didn’t see anyone.’ {txt}

The number enclitics of Otomi languages do not specify syntactic role. This can be seen in example (13c) above, where the enclitic =*wi* ‘2PL’ indicates the plurality of the 2nd person Object. The fact that the syntactic role is not specified in person/number enclitics may suggest that they create a great deal of ambiguity. They do really not do such thing, because the TAM proclitic specifies the Subject, the verb often receives Object suffixes too, and the role of the argument referred to by the enclitic can be inferred from these clues. Such inferences rely on one restriction that applies to the whole system of person marking in Acazulco Otomi, which can be stated as follows.

- (15) Suffixes and enclitics on the verb never express argument configurations where the Subject and the Object belong to the same set of referents.

The restriction stated above implies that reciprocal/reflexive cannot be coded by means of suffixes/enclitics, nor can argument configurations where one includes the other, such as 1st person singular Subject vs 1st person plural exclusive Object. Consider the following example in (16) below, where the

proclitic *gu* ‘1.IRR’ indicates 1st person Subject and the suffix *-k’i* ‘2O’ indicates the Object. The enclitic *=wi* is potentially ambiguous, as it could either indicate 1st person dual inclusive or 2nd person plural, and either Subject or Object. However, as the suffix *-k’i* clearly indicates 2nd person Object, the Subject cannot be 1st person dual because it already includes the 2nd person. This cannot happen, according to the person restriction stated above in (15). So, the enclitic *=wi* must be interpreted as 2nd person plural Object.

- (16) *gu nzó’-k’=wi*
 1.IRR talk.to-2O=2PL
 ‘I’ll talk to you.PL.’ {txt} *Not*: ‘YOU AND I will talk to you.SG.’

The fact that there is only one slot (“=2”) for number enclitics suggests that there must be a great deal of conflict between them. Table 3 below shows that there are only two cells where conflict actually takes place. The table shows the Subject/Object configurations that are possible in Acazolco Otomi, where Subject is arranged in rows and the Object in columns. The shaded cells indicate that such configuration is not possible according to the person restriction in (15); the dash “–” indicates that no suffixes or enclitics are required. The only cells where there is conflict are 2PL vs PL.EX configurations (in boldface), as in principle they would require two number enclitics, *=wi* ‘2PL’ and *=’mbe* ‘PL.EX’. In actual speech, the 1st person enclitic *=’mbe* ‘1PL.EX’ overrides the 2nd person enclitic *=wi* ‘2PL’ and takes slot “=2”, as it can be seen in the cells in boldface in Table 3. These are the only cells in the paradigm where there really is ambiguity: for 1st person plural exclusive Subject/Object, the number of 2nd person Subject/Object is ambiguous.

		O									
		1SG	2SG	3SG	1DU	1PL	1PL.EX	2PL	3PL		
S	1SG		-k’i	(=ga)				-k’i=wi	(=ga)		
	2SG	-gi(=ga)		–			-gi(=ga)=’mbe		–		
	3SG	-gi(=ga)	-k’i	–	-gi=wi	-gi=hü	-gi(=ga)=’mbe	-k’i=wi	–		
	1DU			=wi					=wi		
	1PL			=hü					=hü		
	1PL.EX			-k’i=’mbe	(=ga)=’mbe				-k’i=’mbe	(=ga)=’mbe	
	2PL	-gi=wi		=wi				-gi(=ga)=’mbe		=wi	
3PL	-gi(=ga)		–	-gi=wi	-gi=hü	-gi(=ga)=’mbe	-k’i=wi	–			

Table 3. Possible Subject/Object configurations in Acazolco Otomi

The system of person/number marking in Acazulco Otomi can be very complex, as it has been shown in this subsection. As it turns out, most of the suffixes and enclitics described here are independent from the morphological contrasts between the inflectional verb classes of the language; only =’*mbe*’ ‘PL.EX’ plays a role in such contrasts (see Section 3.3).

2.3. Associated motion

The inflection of verbs in Otomi languages can code spatial deictic categories of associated motion. The term “associated motion” refers to grammatical categories in verbs “used to indicate that the verb-stem action happens against the background of a motion event with a specific orientation in space” (Wilkins 2006: 28). Such categories are fused together with TAM and Subject person categories in the verb proclitic, and their number, value and paradigmatic distribution vary from language to language within the Otomi family (see Andrews 1993; Bartholomew 2004; Lastra 1989; Palancar 2009, 2012a; Voigtlander & Echegoyen 1979).

Acazulco Otomi verb inflection has three distinct associated motion categories: Extralocative, Cislocative, and Translocative. The Extralocative (EXL) always has perfective readings, it can be found in both Realis and Irrealis moods, and it is used to indicate that the situation described by the verb takes place in a location different from the deictic center (*i.e.* where the speaker is located at the moment of speech act), as shown in (17a) below; it can also indicate movement toward the deictic center and perfective aspect, as in (17b).

- (17)a. *dú* ’yǒ=*ga*=’*mbe* *k’u* *něh*=*a*
 1.EXL walk=1=PL.EX there too=ENCL
 ‘We.EX walked around there too (at El Sumidero).’ {txt}
- b. *ǒra* *bú* *kó’* *k’a* *éstandárte*
 now 3.EXL take.down DET.SG banner
 ‘And then they bring the banner down (here).’ {txt}

The Cislocative has imperfective readings and is used to indicate that the situation described by the verb occurs in movement toward the deictic center. It can be found in the Realis, as well as in the Irrealis. The English translation of verbs inflected for the Cislocative often include the verb *come*, as can be seen in (18a, b) below.

- (18)a. *ba h<y>on nu khö'i*
 3.CSL look.for DET.SG person
 'That person has come looking for him.' {txt}
- b. *gwadi tū=ga=m té't'aphi*
 1.IRR.CSL carry=1=1POSS agave.sap
 'I would come carrying my agave sap.' {txt}

The Extralocative and the Cislocative might seem paradigmatically complementary, as the former is perfective, the latter is imperfective, and they both can indicate movement towards the deictic center. However, their functions are not always parallel: the Cislocative never indicates an imperfective situation in a location out of the deictic center, while the main function of the Extralocative is to code perfective situations occurring out of the deictic center.⁷

The Translocative indicates a situation occurring in (or after) movement in any direction, except toward the deictic center. Unlike the two associated motion categories described above, the Translocative has Complete/Incomplete distinctions, and it occurs in both Realis and Irrealis. The example shown in (19a) below is in the Incomplete aspect (Realis mood), while the one in (19b) is in the Complete (Irrealis mood).

- (19)a. *ardi xah=a 'u*
 3.ICP.TRL pray=ENCL PRO.3PL
 'They pray as they go.' {txt}
- b. *xo dír tsó k'u k'a güi=a*
 so 3.CPL.TRL fall there DET.SG cloud
 'So the cloud goes and pours down there.' {txt}

The proclitics that fuse TAM, Subject person and associated motion together will be presented in Section 3.1. The set of TAM proclitics including associated motion categories is different for each inflectional class, as it will be shown in that part of the chapter.

2.4. Adjunct registration

In Acazolco Otomi, pragmatically salient adjuncts (*i.e.* non-arguments) are often registered (*i.e.* cross-referenced) in the inflection of the verb. Pragmatically salient contexts for adjuncts are interrogation, relativization,

⁷ In a different approach, Extralocative and Cislocative can be considered as the same grammatical category (see Hernández-Green 2015).

focalization, and anaphoric reference for topic continuity purposes (see Hernández-Green 2012; Palancar 2012b).

The registration of the adjunct is indicated in the verb by special subsets of TAM proclitics that fuse together Subject person, mood, aspect, and adjunct registration. There are three subsets of registration proclitics in the language, according to the type of adjunct they refer to: Locative, General, and Adverbial. The Locative subset of TAM proclitics has imperfective readings only and registers location-type adjuncts. The Locative TAM proclitic *bí* ‘3(LOC)’ in the second clause (*i.e.* the second line) in (20a) refers anaphorically to the location *Mbòxkhi* ‘Atlapulco’ mentioned in the first clause. In (20b), the verb takes the Locative proclitic when the location FP ‘*a hwáhi* ‘in the cornfield’ is focused (*i.e.* it is the new/most relevant information).

- (20)a. *o da <mb>ǎ ’a Mboxkhi=a*
 or 3.IRR go LOC.P Atlapulco=ENCL
porke bí kha k’a ngo n(u)=á
 because 3(LOC) LT.exist DET.SG festival there=ENCL
 ‘Or they may go to Atlapulco_i, because the festival is there_i.’ {txt}
- b. *pá bí ’mbon k’u ’a hwáhi=a*
 indeed 3(LOC) lie there LOC.P cornfield=ENCL
 ‘They are lying IN THE CORNFIELD indeed.’ {txt}

The General subset registers ablative, allative, instrument, means, and reason adjuncts. In the following examples, the proclitic *dá* ‘1.IRR(GEN)’ is used to ask about an allative (*i.e.* goal) adjunct in (21a), and an instrument adjunct in (21b). Compare (21b) with (22), where the Object is interrogated and the proclitic *gu* ‘1.IRR’ (*i.e.* no registration) is used instead.

- (21)a. *ǎbu k’u dá <mb>a=ga?*
 where REL.LOC 1.IRR(GEN) LT.go=1
 ‘Where should I go?’ {txt}
- b. *tébe dá hēhki=ga?*
 what 1.IRR(GEN) LT.cut.off=1
 ‘What am I supposed to cut it off with?’
- (22) *tébe gu hēhki=ga?*
 what 1.IRR cut.off=1
 ‘What am I supposed to cut off?’

Also notice that the verb stem is also different between (21b) and (22): the stem with adjunct registration in (21b) has a low tone (which is not

represented in the examples), while the non-registration stem in (22) has a high tone.

The Adverbial subset registers some expressions of time (the “o’clock” type), duration (in hours, days, *etc.*) and measure (*by dozen, by package, etc.*), as well as reason adjuncts and some adverbs. In the following constructions, the interrogation of manner and time triggers the adjunct registration in (23a, b), respectively.

- (23)a. *ǎnkha dí xox=a ’u?*
 how 2.IRR(ADV) LT.pick.up=ENCL PRO.3SG
 ‘How are you going to pick them up (*i.e.* the ears of corn)?’ {txt}
- b. *tér ǒra gi peh=a?*
 what.time 3.ICP(ADV) work=ENCL
 ‘What time does s/he work?’

The TAM proclitic subsets of adjunct registration are different for each inflectional class in Acazulco Otomi. The full set of proclitics for each class will be provided in Section 3.1; the stem alternants that occur in the adjunct registration subparadigm will be described in sections 3.2 and 3.3.

3. Inflectional classes

Verb lexemes in Acazulco Otomi are classified into four inflectional classes. Classes I, II and III are categories of morphomic nature (*i.e.* pure form; see Aronoff 1994: 22), with no syntactic or semantic membership restrictions whatsoever. As for Class IV, it seems to be strongly motivated by both syntactic and semantic features. On the one hand, all of its members seem to be patientive intransitive verbs, *i.e.* verbs that code S the same way as the Object in a transitive clause.⁸ Accordingly, situations described by verbs from Class IV profile Patient-like (or Recipient-like) Subjects. Moreover, transitive verbs from Class III form impersonal constructions by taking the inflectional apparatus of Class IV. Nevertheless, there are some morphological, syntactic and semantic features of verbs inflected following the Class IV pattern that suggest the emergence of a fourth inflectional class in the language, as I propose in Section 5.

In the following subsections I describe the three morphological dimensions that define the inflectional verb classes in Acazulco Otomi. The

⁸ I use the labels “Subject” and “Object” for syntactic roles, but the labels “S” and “O” for thematic roles.

first dimension is concerned with the set of TAM proclitics a verb takes across the paradigm (Section 3.1), the second dimension groups the verbs according to the stem alternants (*i.e.* mutation of the initial consonant) they select in particular cells in the paradigm (Section 3.2), and the third is the tone stem alternants (Section 3.3), where different classes differ in the distribution of tone changes in the stem across the paradigm.

3.1. TAM/Subject proclitics

Classification of Otomi verbs based on the TAM proclitics they take is one of the earliest, as it is precisely the main criterion in Cárceres' division of Colonial Otomi (16th Century) into the *tānā* conjugation and the *tāti* conjugation (Cárceres 1907[1580]). In the classification found in Lastra (1997), Palancar (2012a), Voigtlander & Echegoyen (1979), and my own, the set of TAM proclitics is also the primary criterion for classification into inflectional classes. In all these classifications, the distribution of the morpheme /ti~ṭi~di/ in the TAM proclitic set across the paradigm is key to the formal distinction of classes.⁹ Synchronically, /di/ has no semantic content at all, but it is merely a sound form that contrasts one inflectional class from the other. In this section, I am going to describe the distribution of /di/ –its variant /gi/ and any other contrasts in the form of the TAM proclitic– in Classes I, II, and III; Class IV will be described separately at the end of the section.

A subset of TAM proclitic for Class I, II, and III is given in Table 4 below. This subset corresponds to mood/aspect inflection without associated motion or adjunct-registration categories, and I have labeled it “Basic paradigm”. Each row corresponds to a specific combination of mood, aspect, and person. I have shaded the cells where the morpheme /di/ or its variant /gi/ occurs. The shaded cells in each row take the same TAM proclitic, as do the unshaded cells in each row too. The shading pattern shows the areas of the paradigm where classes take the same TAM proclitic as another class. That been said, it is evident that Class I and II take the same TAM proclitics in a large area of the paradigm, while Class III takes a proclitic similar to that of Class I and II but with the morpheme /di~gi/ “added”. An exception to this general principle is that transitive and intransitive verbs in Class I take different TAM proclitics in 1st and 2nd person, Habitual aspect: transitives

⁹ In Voigtlander & Echegoyen (1979), a nasal prefix N- is also relevant to the classification.

take the same proclitics as Class III (with /di/), while intransitives take the same proclitics as Class II (without /di/). We will encounter more splits based on transitivity and/or person like this in other areas of the paradigm, as well as in the distribution of stem alternants (see Section 3.2 and 3.3). In 1st/2nd person Completive (Realis) it is Class II that has /di/ “added”, and not Class III. Class distinctions are only neutralized in 3rd person Completive (Realis), and 1st/2nd person Ingressive, where Table 4 has no shading.

		Class I		Class II	Class III	
		(tr.)	(intr.)			
		‘see’	‘sit’	‘walk’	‘give’	
Realis	CPL	1	dí núga	dí mǐhka	dídí ’yǒga	dí ’únga
		2	gí nú	gí mǐ	gídí ’yǒ	gí ’úni
		3	bi nú	bi mǐ	bi ntǵ’ǒ	bi ’úni
	ICP	1	drá núga	drá mǐhka	drá ’yǒga	drádí ’únga
		2	grá nú	grá mǐ	grá ’yǒ	grádí ’úni
		3	ra nú	ra mǐ	ra ’yǒ	radi ’úni
	HAB	1	dádí núga	dán mǐhka	dán ’yǒga	dádí ’únga
		2	gádí nú	gán mǐ	gán ’yǒ	gádí ’úni
		3	an nú	an mǐ	an ’yǒ	adi ’úni
INGR	1	xtá núga	xtá mǐhka	xtá ’yǒga	xtá ’únga	
	2	xtágí nú	xtágí mǐ	xtágí ’yǒ	xtágí ’úni	
	3	xta nú	xta mǐ	xtagi ntǵ’ǒ	xtagi ’úni	
Irrealis	CPL	1	gü núga	gü mǐhka	gidi ’yǒga	gidi ’únga
		2	gi nú	gi mǐ	gidi ’yǒ	gidi ’úni
		3	da nú	da mǐ	di ntǵ’ǒ	di ’úni
	ICP	1	gra núga	gra mǐhka	gra ’yǒga	gradi ’únga
		2	gra nú	gra mǐ	gra ’yǒ	gradi ’úni
		3	dra nú	dra mǐ	dra ’yǒ	dradi ’úni
	HAB	1	gadi núga	gan mǐhka	gan ’yǒga	gadi ’únga
		2	gadi nú	gan mǐ	gan ’yǒ	gadi ’úni
		3	dan nú	dan mǐ	dan ’yǒ	dadi ’úni

Table 4. TAM proclitics in the Basic paradigm (Class I, III, II)

The TAM proclitic sets presented in Table 4 above only indicate person of the Subject, mood, and aspect. In Table 5 below I present the different sets of proclitics verbs take when inflecting for the Extralocative, the Cislocative, and the Translocative. I have labeled these “Motion paradigm”. The alignment (*i.e.*

areas where the same TAM proclitics occur) of Class I and II is greater in the Motion paradigm than it is in the Basic paradigm, but it is still not complete: 1st and 2nd person in the Cislocative in Class I transitive verbs take the same TAM proclitics as Class III, the rest take the same proclitics as Class II verbs. All three classes take the same Completive Translocative proclitics. This neutralization of Class I, II and III can be seen in the rows with no shading in Table 5. Also notice that the Extralocative is only found in the Completive aspect, as it always has perfective readings, while the Cislocative is found in the Incomplete aspect due to its imperfective readings.

		Class I		Class II	Class III		
		(tr.)	(intr.)				
		‘see’	‘sit’	‘walk’	‘give’		
Realis	EXL	1	dú nũga	dú mĩhka	dú ’yõga	dí ’ũnga	
		2	gú nú	gú mĩha	gú ’yõ	gwí ’ũni	
		3	bú nú	bú mĩha	bú ’yõ	bí ’ũni	
	CPL	1	dín nũga	dín mĩhka	dín ’yõga	dín ’ũnga	
		2	gín nú	gín mĩha	gín ’yõ	gín ’ũni	
		3	ín nú	ín mĩha	ín ’yõ	ín ’ũni	
	ICP	1	dádí nũga	dá mĩhka	dá ’yõga	dádí ’ũnga	
		2	gwádí nú	gwá mĩha	gwá ’yõ	gwádí ’ũni	
		3	ba nú	ba mĩha	ba ’yõ	badi ’ũni	
	TRL	1	dár nũga	dár mĩhka	dár ’yõga	dárdí ’ũnga	
		2	gár nú	gár mĩha	gár ’yõ	gárdí ’ũni	
		3	ar nú	ar mĩha	ar ’yõ	ardi ’ũni	
	Irrealis	EXL	1	gu nũga	gu mĩhka	gu ’yõga	gwí ’ũnga
			2	gu nú	gu mĩha	gu ’yõ	gwí ’ũni
			3	du nú	du mĩha	du ’yõ	dí ’ũni
CPL		1	gín nũga	gín mĩhka	gín ’yõga	gín ’ũnga	
		2	gín nú	gín mĩha	gín ’yõ	gín ’ũni	
		3	dín nú	dín mĩha	dín ’yõ	dín ’ũni	
ICP		1	gwadi nũga	gwa mĩhka	gwa ’yõga	gwadi ’ũnga	
		2	gwadi nú	gwa mĩha	gwa ’yõ	gwadi ’ũni	
		3	da nú	da mĩha	da ’yõ	dadi ’ũni	
TRL	1	gar nũga	gar mĩhka	gar ’yõga	gardi ’ũnga		
	2	gar nú	gar mĩha	gar ’yõ	gardi ’ũni		
	3	dar nú	dar mĩha	dar ’yõ	dardi ’ũni		

Table 5: TAM proclitics in the Motion paradigm (Class I, II, III).

I now turn to the TAM proclitic sets that code adjunct registration. I have labeled this subset of inflection categories “Registration paradigm”, and the TAM proclitics found in it are shown in Table 6 below. Unlike the Basic and Motion paradigms, the Registration paradigm aligns Class I and III in more areas; Class I and II take the same proclitic only in the Locative and in 3rd person Adverbial. This last person-based split is particularly interesting, as the Adverbial proclitics of Class I and III are aligned in 1st and 2nd person, while in 3rd person the alignment is between Class I and II. In the Registration paradigm all verbs in Class I take the same TAM proclitics, whether they are transitive or intransitive. I only give examples of the Class I transitive verb *nú* ‘see’ in Table 6 below.

		Class I ‘see’	Class II ‘walk’	Class III ‘give’
CPL	1	dá nùga	dádí ’yǒga	dá ’únga
	GEN 2	gí nù	gádí ’yǒ	gí ’úni
	3	í nú	á ’yǒ	í ’úni
	1	dá nùga	dádí ’yǒga	dá ’únga
	ADV 2	gí nù	gádí ’yǒ	gí ’úni
	3	gá nú	gá ’yǒ	gí ’úni
Realis	1	dí nùga	dí ’yǒga	dídí ’únga
	LOC 2	gí nú	gí ’yǒ	gídí ’úni
	3	bí nú	bí ’yǒ	bídí ’úni
INCPL	1	drá nùga	drádí ’yǒga	drá ’únga
	GEN 2	grí nù	grádí ’yǒ	grí ’úni
	3	rí nú	rá ’yǒ	rí ’úni
ADV	1	dra nùga	dradi ’yǒga	dra ’únga
	2	gru nù	gradi ’yǒ	gru ’úni
	3	ga nú	ga ’yǒ	gi ’úni
Irrealis CPL	1	dá nùga	dádí ’yǒga	dá ’únga
	GEN 2	dí nù	dádí ’yǒ	dí ’úni
	3	dí nú	dá ’yǒ	dí ’úni
	1	dá nùga	dádí ’yǒga	dá ’únga
	ADV 2	dí nù	dádí ’yǒ	dí ’úni
	3	ká nú	ká ’yǒ	kí ’úni

Table 6. TAM proclitics in the Registration paradigm (Class I, III, II)

Most of the formal differences between inflectional classes presented in the tables above have to do with the presence/absence of the /di/ (or /gi/)

sequence in the TAM proclitics of each class. Each class aligns (*i.e.* takes the same TAM proclitics) with either other class in different subparadigms: Class I aligns with Class II in a bigger area of the paradigm, but it aligns with Class III in a good part of it too. In contrast, Class III and II rarely align: this only happens in the Basic paradigm in 3rd person Ingressive and in the three grammatical persons in the Completive Irrealis (see Table 4). In certain subparadigms, the alignment between classes even shows splits based on person/transitivity (*e.g.* in the Habitual and the Cislocative, see Table 4 and Table 5) or just on person (*e.g.* Adverbial registration, see Table 6). The whole picture of inflectional classes in Acazulco Otomi verbs is a rather intricate one, as it has been shown.

To end this section, I will present the TAM proclitics in the inflectional pattern of Class IV, which contains only intransitive verbs with Patient-like S. The proclitics in this class are not supposed to indicate person of S, but the person of S is rather coded by means of Object suffixes. In the examples below, the proclitic *bidi* ‘CPL’ indicates Completive aspect (Realis mood), but not person. The person of the only argument of the verb (*i.e.* S) is indicated by means of Object suffixes: *-gi* ‘1O’ in (24a), *-k’i* ‘2O’ in (24b), and no suffix in (24c) for the 3rd person. None of these examples can have causative readings.

- (24)a. ***bidi*** *tìn-gi*=ga
 CPL get.dizzy-1O=1
 ‘I got dizzy/drunk.’ *Not*: ‘He/she/it made me dizzy/drunk.’
- b. ***bidi*** *tìn-k’i*=a
 CPL get.dizzy-2O=ENCL
 ‘You got dizzy/drunk.’ *Not*: ‘He/she/it made you dizzy/drunk.’
- c. ***bidi*** *tì*=a
 CPL get.dizzy=ENCL
 ‘S/he got dizzy/drunk.’ *Not*: ‘He/she/it made him/her dizzy/drunk.’

Although they do not indicate person, half of the TAM proclitics of Class IV seem to be “based” on 3rd person proclitics from either Class I or III plus the /di/ morpheme. These proclitics can be seen in the shaded cells in Table 7 below. The other half of the proclitics are identical to 3rd person proclitics from Class III. They are in italics in Table 7. The proclitics in boldface in columns “Class I” and “Class III” correspond to the 3rd person markers on which the proclitics of Class IV verbs are “based” on; the proclitics in parentheses in these columns are not formally related to those of Class IV. Whether the proclitic is “based” on Class I or III appears to correlate with

syntactic conditions: the adjunct registration is “based” on Class I, while the rest of the paradigm is “based” on Class III.

		CLASS IV 'get dizzy'	CLASS I	Class III	Class II
Realis	COMPLETIVE	BASIC	<i>bidi</i> t̃	bi	bi
		EXTRALOCATIVE	<i>bídí</i> t̃	(bú)	bí (bú)
		TRANSLOCATIVE	<i>ín</i> t̃	ín	ín ín
		GENERAL	<i>ídí</i> t̃	í	í (á)
		ADVERBIAL	<i>gádí</i> t̃	gá	(gí) gá
	INCOMPLETIVE	BASIC	<i>radi</i> t̃	(ra)	radi (ra)
		CISLOCATIVE	<i>badi</i> t̃	(ba)	badi (ba)
		TRANSLOCATIVE	<i>ardi</i> t̃	(ar)	ardi (ar)
		LOCATIVE	<i>bídí</i> t̃	(bí)	bídí (bí)
		GENERAL	<i>rídí</i> t̃	rí	rí (rá)
HABITUAL	BASIC	<i>gadi</i> t̃	ga	(gi) ga	
	ADVERBIAL	<i>adi</i> t̃	(an)	adi (an)	
INGRESSIVE	BASIC	<i>xtagi</i> t̃	(xta)	xtagi xtagi	
Irrealis	COMPLETIVE	BASIC	<i>didi</i> t̃	(da)	di di
		EXTRALOCATIVE	<i>dídí</i> t̃	(dú)	dí (dú)
		TRANSLOCATIVE	<i>dín</i> t̃	dín	dín dín
		GENERAL	<i>dídí</i> t̃	dí	dí (dá)
		ADVERBIAL	<i>kádí</i> t̃	ká	(kí) ká
	INCOMPLETIVE	BASIC	<i>dradi</i> t̃	(dra)	dradi (dra)
		CISLOCATIVE	<i>dadi</i> t̃	(da)	dadi (da)
		TRANSLOCATIVE	<i>dardi</i> t̃	(dar)	dardi (dar)
	HABITUAL	BASIC	<i>dadi</i> t̃	(dan)	dadi (dan)

Table 7. TAM proclitics of Class IV verbs

The inflection of verbs taking the proclitics shown in Table 7 above seems to have syntactic/semantic motivations: most of them are intransitive verbs with a Patient-like S, which is coded with Object suffixes. Such features suggest that this group of verbs should not be considered as an inflectional class, as “the distribution of lexical items over canonical inflectional classes is synchronically unmotivated” (Corbett 2008). Nevertheless, I will address this issue in Section 5, proposing that Class IV might be in the process of emerging as a new –however not-so-canonical– inflectional verbal class in Acazolco Otomi.

3.2. Stem alternants

Verbs in Acazolco Otomi may take up to three different stem alternants, depending primarily on the inflectional class they belong to, and secondarily what their initial consonant is. I will label these stem alternants A, B, and C. Stem A is taken as the form from which the other stem alternants are derived, and it corresponds to the verb stem found in the Incomplete aspect of the Basic paradigm. The distribution of these stem alternants in the paradigm will be represented in tables like Table 8 below. The table represents the distribution of stem A in the paradigm of verbs with just one stem (*i.e.* no stem alternants) in the Basic, Motion, and Registration paradigms. The rows represent aspect categories and the columns represent associated motion and registration categories. Mood is not represented, as both the Realis and the Irrealis take the same stems in the same aspect, associated motion and registration categories. Cells with a dash – are category bundles that do not exist in the language.

	Basic	Motion			Registration		
		EXL	CLS	TRL	GEN	ADV	LOC
COMPLETIVE	A	A	–	A	A	A	–
INCOMPLETE	A	–	A	A	A	A	A
HABITUAL	A	–	–	–	–	–	–
INGRESSIVE	A	A	–	–	–	–	–

Table 8. Pattern A (all classes)

All verbs in Class III and IV follow pattern A shown above, as do most verbs in Class II and a subgroup of verbs in Class I. The verb *thógi* (I intr.) ‘pass’ exemplifies this pattern in Table 9 below. This verb has the same initial /th/ in all grammatical persons across the whole paradigm. Only the verb stem without the TAM proclitic will be included in the tables of this section.

	Basic	Motion			Registration		
		EXL	CLS	TRL	GEN	ADV	LOC
COMPLETIVE	thógi	thógi	–	thógi	thógi	thógi	–
INCOMPLETE	thógi	–	thógi	thógi	thógi	thógi	thógi
HABITUAL	thógi	–	–	–	–	–	–
INGRESSIVE	thógi	thógi	–	–	–	–	–

Table 9: Stem A of verb *thógi* (I intr.) ‘pass’

Some verbs in Class II have two stem alternants. Stem A occurs in most cells of the paradigm, as it can be seen in Table 10 below. Stem B occurs in 3rd person in the Completive and Ingressive of the Basic paradigm. This is

indicated by the shaded cells in in Table 10. The resulting pattern is labeled “pattern AB” of Class II.

	Basic	Motion			Registration		
		EXL	CLS	TRL	GEN	ADV	LOC
COMPLETIVE	B	A	–	A	A	A	–
INCOMPLETIVE	A	–	A	A	A	A	A
HABITUAL	A	–	–	–	–	–	–
INGRESSIVE	B	A	–	–	–	–	–

Table 10. Pattern AB (Class II)

Stem B in Class II is formed by adding the Class II Nasal Prefix N_{II-} to stem A. This prefix triggers different morphophonological changes according to the consonant it attaches to. Only verbs beginning with /'mb, 'nd, 'y, kh, ph, th, t, ts, z/ may take the prefix, although not all of them do; verbs beginning with other consonants never take the prefix. The morphophonological changes triggered by the prefix N_{II-} can be represented as follows. In (25a) the prefix simply assimilates to the place of articulation of the initial consonant. In (25b) the prefix causes the lenition of the initial consonant. The greater changes are observed in (25c), where the prefix precedes pre-glottalized resonants. The verbs in (26) could also take a stem B, given their initial consonant, but they never do. These verbs are exceptions to the rule of applying the N_{II-} prefix to verbs beginning with the consonants illustrated in (25), and they follow pattern A (Table 8 above).

			<i>stem A</i>	<i>stem B</i>	
(25)a.	/N _{II-} kh/	→	[ŋkh] khă	n-khă	‘exist’
	/N _{II-} ph/	→	[mph] phóge	m-phóge	‘bang’
	/N _{II-} th/	→	[nth] thède	n-thède	‘laugh’
	/N _{II-} z/	→	[nz] zòni	n-zòni	‘weep’
b.	/N _{II-} t/	→	[nd] tĩhi	n-dĩhi	‘rush’
	/N _{II-} ts/	→	[nz] tsà'ndi	n-zà'ndi	‘run’
c.	/N _{II-} 'mb/	→	[mp'] 'mbài	m-p'ài	‘stand’
	/N _{II-} 'nd/	→	[nt'] 'ndàtho	n-t'àtho	‘be alone’
	/N _{II-} 'y/	→	[ntx'] 'yàtho	n-tx'átho	‘abound’
(26)	'yái		‘bring water (from well)’		
	phèk'ani		‘gather greens’		
	tě		‘grow up’		
	tínt'ẹ		‘thresh barley’		
	tۆge		‘stand somewhere high’		
	tsàhte		‘bite (AP)’		
	tsíhme		‘eat (AP)’		
	tsú		‘be afraid’		
	tsúhte		‘scorn (AP)’		

The distribution of stems A and B in the paradigm of the Class II verb *zòni* (II intr.) ‘weep’ is shown in Table 11 below. Stem B only appears in two cells of the paradigm, and always in 3rd person. Tables containing verbs in this section will also exhibit tone changes in the stem. These tone changes are described in Section 3.3. In the corpus, only 25 verbs from Class II (32.5%) take stem B in the cells indicated in Table 11 corresponding to the pattern AB; the other 52 verbs (67.5%) only have one stem and follow the pattern A (Table 8 above).

		Basic		Motion			Registration		
		EXL	CLS	TRL	GEN	ADV	LOC		
COMPLETIVE	1	zòni	zòni	–	zòni	zòni	zòni	–	
	2	zòni	zòni	–	zòni	zòni	zòni	–	
	3	nzòni	zòni	–	zòni	zòni	zòni	–	
INCOMPLETIVE	1	zòni	–	zòni	zòni	zòni	zòni	zóni	
	2	zòni	–	zòni	zòni	zòni	zòni	zóni	
	3	zòni	–	zòni	zòni	zòni	zòni	zóni	
HABITUAL	1	zóni	–	–	–	–	–	–	
	2	zóni	–	–	–	–	–	–	
	3	zóni	–	–	–	–	–	–	
INGRESSIVE	1	zòni	zòni	–	–	–	–	–	
	2	zòni	zòni	–	–	–	–	–	
	3	nzòni	zòni	–	–	–	–	–	

Table 11: Stems A and B of verb *zòni* (II intr.) ‘weep’

The distribution of stem alternants in Class I is more complex than that of Class II. First, more than 3/4 of Class I verbs have stem alternants. Second, some of these have two stem alternants and some have three. Third, the distribution of stem alternants in the paradigm is wider than that of Class II verbs. Fourth, stem alternants have slightly different distributions in transitive and intransitive verbs. And last, in 1/4 of the verbs the stem alternant extends to 2nd person besides 3rd person.

Table 12 below show the distribution of stems A, B, and C of transitive verbs with three stem alternants. The corresponding pattern for intransitive verbs is shown in Table 13. Stem B (shaded cells) is found in the 3rd person in the Completive and Ingressive of the Basic paradigm, as well as in the Completive of the Translocative, and in the General registration subparadigm. In transitive verbs it is also found in the Cislocative and the

Habitual; this does not happen in intransitives. Stem C (shaded letters) is found in the 3rd person in the Adverbial registration subparadigm.¹⁰

	Basic	Motion			Registration		
		EXL	CLS	TRL	GEN	ADV	LOC
COMPLETIVE	B	A	–	B	B	C	–
INCOMPLETIVE	A	–	B	A	B	C	A
HABITUAL	B	–	–	–	–	–	–
INGRESSIVE	B	A	–	–	–	–	–

Table 12: Pattern ABC (Class I tr.)

	Basic	Motion			Registration		
		EXL	CLS	TRL	GEN	ADV	LOC
COMPLETIVE	B	A	–	B	B	C	–
INCOMPLETIVE	A	–	A	A	B	C	A
HABITUAL	A	–	–	–	–	–	–
INGRESSIVE	B	A	–	–	–	–	–

Table 13: Pattern ABC (Class I intr.)

Verbs following the pattern ABC begin with the fortis consonants /p, t, ts, tx, k, kw/ and their aspirated counterparts /th, kh, khw/.¹¹ Stems B and C are formed from stem A. In stem B the initial consonant is lenited; in stem C, the initial is lenited and a homo-organic nasal segment precedes it. Lenis counterparts of aspirated and non-aspirated consonants are /b, d, z, ž, g, gw/. Examples of these stem alternants are shown in (27) below.

	<i>stem A</i>	<i>stem B</i>	<i>stem C</i>	
(27)	pǒdi	bǒdi	mbǒdi	‘know’
	tát’i	dát’i	ndát’i	‘find’
	thè	dè	ndè	‘hold (in hand)’
	tsà	zà	nzà	‘bite’
	txíts’i	žíts’i	nžíts’i	‘take away’
	kùni	gùni	ngùni	‘grind’
	khò	gò	ngò	‘collect’
	kwát’i	gwát’i	ngwát’i	‘approach’
	khwàdi	gwàdi	ngwàdi	‘be completed’

¹⁰ It also occurs in the Completive of the Basic paradigm and in the Extralocative (Completive) when the proclitic is combined with the enclitic *x* = ‘ALREADY’. These forms are not described here.

¹¹ There are no verbs with initial /tsh, txh/; verbs with initial /ph/ in the corpus do not follow this pattern.

The distribution of stem alternants of a transitive verb and an intransitive verb are illustrated below in Table 14 and Table 15, respectively. The shaded cells correspond to stem B, and the shaded letters to stem C. Notice that stem alternants only appear in 3rd person cells; 1st and 2nd person always take stem A in verbs that follow the pattern ABC. 112 Class I verbs (38.2%) in the corpus behave like *tsà* (I tr.) ‘bite’ and *kwát’i* (I intr.) ‘approach’, according to their transitivity.

		Basic		Motion		Registration		
		EXL	CLS	TRL	GEN	ADV	LOC	
COMPLETIVE	1	tsà	tsà	–	tsà	tsà	tsà	–
	2	tsà	tsà	–	tsà	tsà	tsà	–
	3	zà	tsà	–	zà	zà	nzà	–
INCOMPLETE	1	tsà	–	tsà	tsà	tsà	tsà	tsà
	2	tsà	–	tsà	tsà	tsà	tsà	tsà
	3	tsà	–	zà	tsà	zà	nzà	tsà
HABITUAL	1	tsà	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2	tsà	–	–	–	–	–	–
	3	zà	–	–	–	–	–	–
INGRESSIVE	1	tsà	tsà	–	–	–	–	–
	2	tsà	tsà	–	–	–	–	–
	3	zà	tsà	–	–	–	–	–

Table 14: Stems A, B, and C of verb *tsà* (I tr.) ‘bite’

		Basic		Motion		Registration		
		EXL	CLS	TRL	GEN	ADV	LOC	
COMPLETIVE	1	kwát’i	kwát’i	–	kwát’i	kwát’i	kwát’i	–
	2	kwát’i	kwát’i	–	kwát’i	kwát’i	kwát’i	–
	3	gwát’i	kwát’i	–	gwát’i	gwát’i	ngwát’i	–
INCOMPLETE	1	kwát’i	–	kwát’i	kwát’i	kwát’i	kwát’i	kwát’i
	2	kwát’i	–	kwát’i	kwát’i	kwát’i	kwát’i	kwát’i
	3	kwát’i	–	kwát’i	kwát’i	gwát’i	ngwát’i	kwát’i
HABITUAL	1	kwát’i	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2	kwát’i	–	–	–	–	–	–
	3	kwát’i	–	–	–	–	–	–
INGRESSIVE	1	kwát’i	kwát’i	–	–	–	–	–
	2	kwát’i	kwát’i	–	–	–	–	–
	3	gwát’i	kwát’i	–	–	–	–	–

Table 15: Stems A, B, and C of verb *kwát’i* (I intr.) ‘approach’

115 other verbs in Class I have two stem alternants instead of three. These verbs form two subgroups according to their initial consonant, and the form and distribution of stem B. In the first group, most verbs have initial consonants /p, ph/ (plus one verb with initial /t/), and stems A and B have a distribution very similar to that of the verbs following the pattern ABC (Table 14 and Table 15 above). The only difference is that stem B occurs in the cells where stem C is expected. Again, transitives and intransitives behave slightly different. In the second subset, the initial consonants are /h, ’/ plus a vowel. Table 16 below shows the pattern AB for transitives, and Table 17 shows the pattern followed by intransitives. The stem alternant represented by a B in parentheses only occurs with verbs in the second subset of pattern AB.

	Basic	Motion			Registration		
		EXL	CLS	TRL	GEN	ADV	LOC
COMPLETIVE	B	A	–	B	B	B	–
INCOMPLETIVE	A	–	B	A	B	B	A
HABITUAL	B	–	–	–	–	–	–
INGRESSIVE	B	A	(B)	–	–	–	–

Table 16. Pattern AB (Class I tr.)

	Basic	Motion			Registration		
		EXL	CLS	TRL	GEN	ADV	LOC
COMPLETIVE	B	A	–	B	B	B	–
INCOMPLETIVE	A	–	A	A	B	B	A
HABITUAL	A	–	–	–	–	–	–
INGRESSIVE	B	A	(B)	–	–	–	–

Table 17: Pattern AB (Class I intr.)

Stem B of the verbs following the pattern AB of Class I also is formed from stem A. In the first subset of verbs, the initial consonant is lenited and a nasal segment precedes it, just like stem C in the pattern ABC. The following data illustrate the formation of stem B in these verbs.

	<i>stem A</i>	<i>stem B</i>	
(28)a.	p ǎ	mb ǎ	‘sell’
	p ènti	mb ènti	‘send’
	p ùni	mb ùni	‘hit with hand’
b.	ph àdi	mb àdi	‘watch’
	ph è’mbi	mb è’mbi	‘hit with stick’
	ph ùdi	mb ùdi	‘begin’
c.	t í	nd í	‘be on the floor (rigid object)’

The distribution of stems A and B in the paradigm of Class I verbs (first subset of pattern AB) is illustrated in Table 18 and Table 19 below. Once again, stem B is only found in 3rd person forms. Verb *pǎ* (I tr.) ‘sell’ illustrates the pattern AB for transitive verbs, while *phùdi* (I intr.) ‘begin’ illustrates that of intransitives.

		Basic		Motion			Registration		
		EXL	CLS	TRL	GEN	ADV	LOC		
COMPLETIVE	1	pǎ	pǎ	–	pǎ	pà	pà	–	
	2	pà	pǎ	–	pà	pà	pà	–	
	3	mbǎ	pǎ	–	mbǎ	mbǎ	mbǎ	–	
INCOMPLETIVE	1	pǎ	–	pǎ	pǎ	pà	pà	pǎ	
	2	pǎ	–	pǎ	pǎ	pà	pà	pǎ	
	3	pǎ	–	mbǎ	pǎ	mbǎ	mbǎ	pǎ	
HABITUAL	1	pǎ	–	–	–	–	–	–	
	2	pà	–	–	–	–	–	–	
	3	mbà	–	–	–	–	–	–	
INGRESSIVE	1	pǎ	pǎ	–	–	–	–	–	
	2	pà	pǎ	–	–	–	–	–	
	3	mbǎ	pǎ	–	–	–	–	–	

Table 18. Stems A and B of verb *pǎ* (I tr.) ‘sell’

		Basic		Motion			Registration		
		EXL	CLS	TRL	GEN	ADV	LOC		
COMPLETIVE	1	phùdi	phùdi	–	phùdi	phùdi	phùdi	–	
	2	phùdi	phùdi	–	phùdi	phùdi	phùdi	–	
	3	mbùdi	phùdi	–	mbùdi	mbùdi	mbùdi	–	
INCOMPLETIVE	1	phùdi	–	phùdi	phùdi	phùdi	phùdi	phùdi	
	2	phùdi	–	phùdi	phùdi	phùdi	phùdi	phùdi	
	3	phùdi	–	phùdi	phùdi	mbùdi	mbùdi	phùdi	
HABITUAL	1	phùdi	–	–	–	–	–	–	
	2	phùdi	–	–	–	–	–	–	
	3	phùdi	–	–	–	–	–	–	
INGRESSIVE	1	phùdi	phùdi	–	–	–	–	–	
	2	phùdi	phùdi	–	–	–	–	–	
	3	mbùdi	phùdi	–	–	–	–	–	

Table 19. Stems A and B of verb *phùdi* (I intr.) ‘begin’

The second subset of verbs following the pattern AB of Class I are those with initial /hV, 'V/ (where V stands for any vowel). In these verbs, Stem B is formed by palatalizing the initial consonant of the verb, as it is shown in the following data.

	<i>stem A</i>	<i>stem B</i>	
(29)a.	'òde	'yòde	'hear'
	'èni	'yèni	'measure'
	'údi	'yúdi	'show'
b.	hòni	hyòni	'look for'
	héhki	hyéhki	'cut off'
	hě't'i	hyě't'i	'look at (downhill)'

Verbs like those in (29) follow the pattern AB of Class I just like the verbs of the first subset, except for two differences: a) stem B extends to the 2nd person, besides the 3rd, and b) stem B is also found in the Ingressive Cislocative. This is illustrated in Table 20 and Table 21 below with the transitive verb *hòni* (I tr.) 'look for' and the intransitive verb 'ó (I intr.) 'be in', respectively.

		Basic		Motion			Registration		
		EXL	CLS	TRL	GEN	ADV	LOC		
COMPLETIVE	1	hòni	hòni	–	hòni	hóni	hóni	–	
	2	hyóni	hòni	–	hyóni	hyóni	hyóni	–	
	3	hyòni	hòni	–	hyòni	hyòni	hyòni	–	
INCOMPLETE	1	hòni	–	hòni	hòni	hóni	hóni	hóni	
	2	hòni	–	hyóni	hòni	hyóni	hyóni	hóni	
	3	hòni	–	hyòni	hòni	hyòni	hyòni	hóni	
HABITUAL	1	hòni	–	–	–	–	–	–	
	2	hyóni	–	–	–	–	–	–	
	3	hyóni	–	–	–	–	–	–	
INGRESSIVE	1	hòni	hòni	–	–	–	–	–	
	2	hyóni	hòni	hyóni	–	–	–	–	
	3	hyòni	hòni	hyòni	–	–	–	–	

Table 20. Stems A and B of verb *hòni* (I tr.) 'look for'

The data presented in this section shows that the stem alternant patterns are aligned with the inflectional classes described in Section 3.1. Patterns ABC and AB of Class I do not extend to other classes, and neither does pattern AB of Class II. Pattern A, which involves no stem alternants at all, is found in all the verbs from classes III and IV, as well as in most verbs in Class II and some verbs in Class I.

		Basic		Motion		Registration		
		EXL	CLS	TRL	GEN	ADV	LOC	
COMPLETIVE	1	'ó	'ó	–	'ó	'ò	'ò	–
	2	'yó	'ó	–	'yó	'yò	'yò	–
	3	'yó	'ó	–	'yó	'yó	'yó	–
INCOMPLETIVE	1	'ó	–	'ó	'ó	'ò	'ò	'ò
	2	'ó	–	'ó	'ó	'yò	'yò	'ò
	3	'ó	–	'ó	'ó	'yó	'yó	'ò
HABITUAL	1	'ò	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2	'ò	–	–	–	–	–	–
	3	'ò	–	–	–	–	–	–
INGRESSIVE	1	'ó	'ó	–	–	–	–	–
	2	'yó	'ó	'yó	–	–	–	–
	3	'yó	'ó	'yó	–	–	–	–

Table 21. Stems A and B of verb 'ó (I intr.) 'be in'

Whether a verb from Class II follows pattern A seems to be phonologically determined, as it was shown in (25) above. The pattern Class I verbs follow seems to be strongly correlated with the phonological properties of its initial consonant as well. The onsets corresponding to each stem pattern found in Class I are shown below in (30). Exceptions to the generalization are listed next to the onsets. These exceptions represent less than 5% of Class I verbs in the corpus (14 out of 293).

<i>onsets</i>	<i>exceptions</i>
(30)a. (Pattern ABC) /t, th, ts, tx, k, kh, kw, khw/	pě 'steal' pǒdi 'know' pó 'be in (liquid)' póngi 'remain' pǒhó 'come out' pǒni 'go out' pǒts'e 'rise out' pǒxádi 'rise (sun)'
b. (Pattern AB) /p, ph, 'V, hV/	tí 'be on the floor'
c. (Pattern A) other onsets	phúgi 'bubble' phǔnts'i 'fall' thěge 'be over' thógi 'pass' thót'i 'go downhill'

The data in (30) suggest that stem alternants were morphophonologically conditioned at a certain stage of the history of Acazulco Otomi, and Otomi languages in general. This is supported by the fact that stem alternants with similar processes (lenition, nasalization, palatalization) are found in all Oto-Pamean languages. Bartholomew proposes that stem alternants in Oto-Pamean are the result of an old system of inflectional prefixes in the proto-language that caused modifications of stem initial consonants. The prefixes were dropped in a later stage, but the modifications remained as vestiges of the old system (Bartholomew 1965: 42). The prefix N_{II}- in Class II must have developed from an old nasal prefix, as proposed by Palancar (2006) with data from San Ildefonso Tultepec Otomi and Eastern Highlands Otomi. Having revised these facts, verbs following pattern A (no stem alternants) must be newly created lexemes in the language that do not stick to old inflectional patterns.

3.3. Tone stem alternants

The stem alternants described in Section 3.2 consist of stem alternations based on segmental mutations of the verb stem across the paradigm. The tone stem alternants are concerned with the suprasegmental, *i.e.* tonal mutations of the verb stem. In such mutations, the tone of the stem changes to either low or high tone. Like stem alternants, tone stem alternants are only found in the paradigm of verbs from Class I and II, while verbs from Class III and IV do not have them. The distribution of tone stem alternants across the paradigm is fairly straightforward; whether the tone changes to low or high tone depends on the suffixes/enclitics the verb stem receives, as it will be described later in this section.

The areas of the paradigm where tone stem alternants are to be found follow three patterns. The first pattern, which is followed by all transitive verbs from Class I, is illustrated in Table 22 below with the verb *níí* ‘see’. Tone stem alternants occur in the shaded cells, where the high tone of *níí* ‘see’ changes to low tone *nìí*. This table shows the Realis and Irrealis separate, as the 2nd person Completive suffers tone mutation in the Realis, but not in the Irrealis. In certain areas of the paradigm only the 2nd person takes tone stem alternants (*e.g.* Ingressive, Cislocative), while in others it is only 1st and 2nd (*e.g.* General, Adverbial), or only 2nd and 3rd (*e.g.* Habitual).

	'see'		Basic			Motion			Registration		
			EXL	CLS	TRL	GEN	ADV	LOC			
Realis	COMPLETIVE	1	nú	nú	–	nú	nù	nù	–		
		2	nù	nú	–	nù	nù	nù	–		
		3	nú	nú	–	nú	nú	nú	–		
	INCOMPLETE	1	nú	–	nú	nú	nù	nù	nú		
		2	nú	–	nù	nú	nù	nù	nú		
		3	nú	–	nú	nú	nú	nú	nú		
	HABITUAL	1	nú	–	–	–	–	–	–		
		2	nù	–	–	–	–	–	–		
		3	nù	–	–	–	–	–	–		
	INGRESSIVE	1	nú	nú	–	–	–	–	–		
		2	nù	nù	–	–	–	–	–		
		3	nú	nú	–	–	–	–	–		
	Irrealis	COMPLETIVE	1	nú	nú	–	nú	nù	nù	–	
			2	nú	nú	–	nù	nù	nù	–	
			3	nú	nú	–	nú	nú	nú	–	
INCOMPLETE		1	nú	–	nú	nú	–	–	–		
		2	nú	–	nù	nú	–	–	–		
		3	nú	–	nú	nú	–	–	–		
HABITUAL		1	nú	–	–	–	–	–	–		
		2	nù	–	–	–	–	–	–		
		3	nù	–	–	–	–	–	–		

Table 22. Tone stem alternants (Class I tr.)

The second pattern of distribution of tone stem alternants is found with all the intransitives from Class I, and it is shown below in Table 23. Tone mutations in this pattern covers a slightly different area with respect of the pattern followed by the transitives from Class I, and has more areas where all three grammatical persons have the same tone mutation (*e.g.* Habitual, Incomplete Translocative, Locative). Only the General and Adverbial subparadigms contrast 1st/2nd person (with have tone mutation there) against the 3rd (which has no mutation). In these areas, the high tone of *mí* ‘sit’ changes to low tone *mì*.

	'sit'		Basic			Motion			Registration		
			EXL	CLS	TRL	GEN	ADV	LOC			
Realis	COMPLETIVE	1	mí	mí	–	mí	mǐ	mǐ	–	–	–
		2	mí	mí	–	mí	mǐ	mǐ	–	–	–
		3	mí	mí	–	mí	mí	mí	–	–	–
	INCOMPLETE	1	mí	–	mí	mǐ	mǐ	mǐ	mǐ	–	–
		2	mí	–	mí	mǐ	mǐ	mǐ	mǐ	–	–
		3	mí	–	mí	mǐ	mí	mí	mǐ	–	–
	HABITUAL	1	mǐ	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
		2	mǐ	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
		3	mǐ	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	INGRESSIVE	1	mí	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
		2	mí	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
		3	mí	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Irrealis	COMPLETIVE	1	mí	mí	–	mí	mǐ	mǐ	–	–	–
		2	mí	mí	–	mǐ	mǐ	mǐ	–	–	–
		3	mí	mí	–	mí	mí	mí	–	–	–
	INCOMPLETE	1	mí	–	mí	mí	–	–	–	–	–
		2	mí	–	mǐ	mí	–	–	–	–	–
		3	mí	–	mí	mí	–	–	–	–	–
	HABITUAL	1	mí	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
		2	mǐ	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
		3	mǐ	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–

Table 23: Tone stem alternants (Class I intr.)

The third tone mutation pattern covers a smaller area of the paradigm with respect to the first two patterns described above, and it is found in all verbs from Class II. The third pattern is similar to that of the intransitive verbs from Class I, except that no tone mutation is to be found in the General and Adverbial subparadigms. Tone mutations in the third pattern occur in all three grammatical persons and are the same in the realis and the irrealis, as shown in Table 24 below. In the shaded cells, the verb 'yǒ 'walk' (rising tone) changes to the low tone form 'yò.

'walk'		Basic		Motion		Registration		
		EXL	CLS	TRL	GEN	ADV	LOC	
COMPLETIVE	1	'yǒ	'yǒ	–	'yǒ	'yǒ	'yǒ	–
	2	'yǒ	'yǒ	–	'yǒ	'yǒ	'yǒ	–
	3	'yǒ	'yǒ	–	'yǒ	'yǒ	'yǒ	–
INCOMPLETIVE	1	'yǒ		'yǒ	'yò	'yǒ	'yǒ	'yò
	2	'yǒ	–	'yǒ	'yò	'yǒ	'yǒ	'yò
	3	'yǒ	–	'yǒ	'yò	'yǒ	'yǒ	'yò
HABITUAL	1	'yò	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2	'yò	–	–	–	–	–	–
	3	'yò	–	–	–	–	–	–
INGRESSIVE	1	'yǒ	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2	'yǒ	–	–	–	–	–	–
	3	'yǒ	–	–	–	–	–	–

Table 24. Tone stem alternants (Class II)

The pattern of tone stem alternants presented above shows a fairly straightforward distribution of such forms across the paradigm. The tone of the verbal stem in Classes I and II can change to either low (\rightarrow L) or high (\rightarrow H) tone in the shaded cells in Table 22, Table 23, and Table 24 above. In those tables, only changes from high/rising to low tone were shown, for the sake of simplicity. Whether the stem tone changes to high or low in those “tone-mutation cells” is determined by the suffixes or enclitics the stem receives. The conditions for tone mutation in “tone-mutation cells” are stated in (31). The default mutation is \rightarrow L, while the mutation \rightarrow H occurs in specific morphological conditions.

- (31) \rightarrow L occurs in all tone-mutation cells, unless:
- The verb has *root + stem formative* structure (see below) and it does not receive any suffixes or enclitics; the mutation \rightarrow H occurs instead.
 - The verb receives any of the following suffixes/enclitics: *-te* ‘AP’, *=’mbe* ‘PL.EX’, *=thoho* ‘just’, *=möhö* ‘CFC’; the mutation \rightarrow H occurs instead.
 - The verb is a compound where the second element is an incorporated noun; the mutation \rightarrow H occurs instead.

The “root + stem formative structure” refers to verbs (and nouns as well) historically formed by a monosyllabic root plus a second element called the *stem formative*, in a derivation process no longer productive nowadays (Palancar 2009: 11). There is evidence that most stem formatives once had spatial semantics (Hernández-Green 2009; Voigtlander *et al.* 2006), and there are reflexes of them in all Oto-Pamean languages. The number of these

stem formatives varies from language to language: while Matlatzinca has reflexes for 15 out of the 16 original stem formatives from proto-Oto-Pamean, Chichimeco only has 7 of them (Bartholomew 1965: 99).

The conditions for tone mutation stated in (31) are illustrated in the data below. The data in (32) contains verb forms that have the morphological structure that could potentially trigger the \rightarrow H change. However, the verbs keep their “lexical” tone (indicated in parentheses) because they are inflected for 3rd person Incompleteive, a cell of the paradigm where no tone mutations are expected (see Table 22, Table 23, and Table 24). The verbs *zòni* ‘weep’ and *húxi* ‘whistle’ in (32a) have the root + stem formative structure (stem formatives *+ni* and *+xi*), with no suffixes or enclitics; the verbs in (32b) have the antipassive suffix *-te*, and the verbs in (32c) have incorporated nouns (spelled out in parentheses).

- (32)a. ra zòni ‘s/he’s weeping’ (L)
 ra húxi ‘s/he’s whistling’ (H)
- b. ra tsàhte ‘it is biting (people)’ (L)
 ra núhte ‘s/he’s visiting people’ (H)
- c. ra tùthe ‘s/he’s thirsty’ (L) (-the < tēhe ‘water’)
 ra tsihme ‘s/he’s eating’ (H) (-hme < hmé ‘tortilla’)

The verb forms presented below in (33) do not have the morphological structure that triggers the mutation \rightarrow H in (31), and therefore should suffer the default mutation \rightarrow L in “tone-mutation cells”. But yet again, these verbs keep their “lexical” tone because they are inflected for 3rd person Incompleteive where no tone mutations are expected. The forms in (33a) are the same verbs from (32a), but this time the enclitic *=tshẹ* ‘on its own’ – which does not trigger the mutation \rightarrow H – is attached to them. The verbs in (33b) are the same verb roots from (32b) above, but this time without the antipassive *-te* (which could potentially trigger the mutation \rightarrow H); these verbs are plain roots, and do not have a stem formative. The verbs in (33c) have the same root as those in (32c) above, except that they do not have an incorporated noun (which could potentially trigger the mutation \rightarrow H); they do not have a stem formative either, but they are only plain roots.

- (33)a. ra zòn=tshẹ ‘s/he’s weeping alone’ (L)
 ra húx=tshẹ ‘s/he’s whistling alone’ (H)
- b. ra tsà ‘s/he’s biting it’ (L)
 ra nú ‘s/he’s seeing it’ (H)
- c. ra tù ‘s/he’s dying’ (L)
 ra tsǐ ‘s/he’s eating it’ (LH)

The verb forms in (34) and (35) below have the same morphological structure as those in (32) and (33), respectively, but they are inflected for 3rd person Habitual, which is a cell where tone mutations are expected in all verbs from Class I and II (see Table 22, Table 23, and Table 24). Tone changes occur under these conditions: all verbs in (34) are pronounced with a high tone, whatever their “lexical” tone is; a low tone is observed in all the verb forms in (35), whether their lexical tone is low, high, or rising.

(34)a.	an zóni	‘s/he weeps’	(L) → H
	an hùxi	‘s/he whistles’	(H) → H
b.	an tsáhte	‘it bites (people)’	(L) → H
	an núhte	‘s/he visits people’	(H) → H
c.	an túthe	‘s/he’s (often) thirsty’	(L) → H
	an tsíhme	‘s/he eats’	(H) → H
(35)a.	an zòn=tshe	‘s/he weeps alone’	(L) → L
	an hùx=tshe	‘s/he whistles alone’	(H) → L
b.	an zà	‘s/he bites it’	(L) → L
	an nù	‘s/he sees it’	(H) → L
c.	an tù	‘they (often) die’	(L) → L
	an zì	‘s/he eats it’	(LH) → L

The three tone stem alternant patterns described in this section align somehow with the classes based on TAM proclitic set, which were described in Section 3.1, like stem alternants do (see Section 3.2): the first and second patterns (see Table 22, Table 23) correspond to transitive and intransitive verbs from Class I, respectively, while the third pattern (see Table 24) corresponds to Class II.

4. Syntactic/semantic profile of the inflectional classes

The label “inflectional class” given to the groupings of verbs described in Section 3 presupposes that there is no syntactic (*i.e.* transitivity, diathetic configuration) or semantic motivation underlying the morphological behavior of each grouping. There are, however, interesting tendencies among the inflectional classes of verbs in Acazulco Otomi. Such tendencies define the syntactic/semantic profile of each class, and suggest hypotheses about the path they followed in their historical development. Still, we should keep in mind that these classes are defined on a morphological basis only. This section deals with Class I, II, and III; Class IV will be dealt with in Section 5.

To describe the syntactic profile, I will address two specific syntactic features of verbs in Acazulco Otomi. One is transitivity, and how the inflectional classes are populated in terms of the number of arguments the verb takes. The other feature is the existence of transitive/intransitive (tr./intr.) pairs of morphologically related verbs, where each verb may belong to a different inflectional class.

The statistic data presented in this section were obtained from a sample of 572 Otomi verbs, from texts and elicitation in San Jerónimo Acazulco. The proportion between transitive and intransitive verbs in the sample is fairly balanced (50.9% vs 46.9%), as in can be seen in (36) below; there are also a few basic (*i.e.* non-derived) ditransitive verbs.

(36)

	#	%
transitive	291	50.9%
intransitive	268	46.9%
ditransitive	13	2.2%
<i>total</i>	572	

As for class membership in terms of transitivity, the data in (37) below show that there is an overwhelming population of intransitive verbs in Class II (98.7%). Both Class I and III contain (di)transitive and intransitive verbs, though in different proportion: most verbs from Class I are transitive (72.5%), while in Class III there is a slightly bigger proportion of intransitive verbs with respect to transitives (57.5% vs 40.1%). The figures in the row labeled “total” also show that the most populated grouping in the sample is Class I, while Class II is the least populated.

(37)

	Class I %		Class III %		Class II %	
transitive	204	72.5%	85	40.1%	1	1.3%
intransitive	70	24.7%	122	57.5%	76	98.7%
ditransitive	8	2.8%	5	2.4%	0	0%
<i>total</i>	283		212		77	

Although transitivity cannot be considered as a motivation for class membership –as both transitive and intransitive verbs can be found in all three classes–, it is worthwhile to comment on the evident tendency of Class I to contain transitive verbs, while Class III and II have more intransitive verbs. This suggests that class membership was once transitivity-motivated.

The data concerning tr./intr. pairs presented below –as well as the semantic profile of Class II and III– support this hypothesis.

There are 158 tr./intr. pairs in the sample, which means that 316 verbs out of 572 (55.2%) are coupled with another morphologically related verb with different valence. For the sake of comparability, no pairs involving ditransitives were considered. The number of tr./intr. pairs by inflectional class is shown in (38) below. The shaded cells correspond to those pairs in which the verb belong to different classes (\neq). The number of pairs in different class (123 pairs) is three and a half times greater than those in the same class (only 35 pairs). In addition, pairs where the transitive verb belongs to Class I and the intransitive to a different class (92 pairs) are ten times more numerous than those pairs where both verbs belong to Class I (only 9 pairs). In contrast, in pairs where the transitive verb belongs to Class III there is no clear tendency as to whether the intransitive verb belongs also to Class III (26 pairs) or to a different class (31 pairs).

(38)

	intr.			class	
	I	II	III	=	\neq
<i>tr.</i> I	9	32	60	9	92
III	15	16	26	26	31
				35	123

Different-class pairs have more suggesting tendencies. There are 60 pairs with Class I transitive and Class III intransitive. In 46 of them (76.7%) the Class III intransitive is a middle¹² version of the Class I transitive. As for the 32 pairs with Class I transitive and Class II intransitive, in 27 of them (84.4%) the Class II intransitive is an antipassive version of the Class I transitive. Finally, in 29 out of the 31 pairs (93.5%) with a Class III transitive, the transitive is the causative version of the intransitive verb. Some examples of these pairs are shown in (39) below. Two transitive/middle pairs between Class I and III are shown in (39a), two transitive/antipassive pairs between Class I and II in (39b), and two pairs of causative/intransitive pairs between Class III and II in (39c).

¹² Where “middle” includes reciprocal, reflexive, anticausatives, and self-centered events (see Kemmer 1993).

	transitive		intransitive		
(39)a.	hò	'hit'	ntxhò	'hit oneself'	I tr. ↔ III intr. (MID)
	'òt'e	'make'	ntx'òt'e	'get prepared'	
b.	xòngi	'harvest'	xòpho	'harvest'	I tr. ↔ II intr. (AP)
	khùni	'grind'	khùni	'grind'	
c.	'mbà'mbi	'put up'	'mbài	'stand up'	III tr. (CAUS) ↔ II intr.
	khă	'do, make'	khă	'exist'	

The tendencies presented above suggest that there is a strong correlation between inflectional classes in Acazulco Otomi (and Otomi languages in general) and transitivity. Other facts supporting this hypothesis is the population of classes in terms of transitivity (see 37) above) and the numerous transitivity-based splits in the paradigm of Class I (see Section 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3). Transitivity correlations (of various degrees) in inflectional classes can also be observed in other languages of the Oto-Pamean branch (Pame languages, Berthiaume 2012; Valle 1989; Tlahuica Martínez Ortega 2012; Matlatzinca, Escalante & Hernández 1999), as well as other Oto-Manguan languages in the Zapotecan branch (Campbell 2011).

Although valence is not at all the synchronic motivation for class membership in verbal inflectional classes in Acazulco Otomi, classes show some noteworthy tendencies. Three quarters of Class I verbs are transitive, while Class II is an overwhelmingly intransitive group of verbs (76 intransitives, 1 transitive). In contrast, the number of transitive and intransitive verbs is balanced in Class III. Most tr./intr. pairs of morphologically related verbs (92 out of 123) have a Class I transitive verb and either a) a Class III middle verb, or b) a Class II antipassive verb. This fact, together with the valence tendencies in the classes themselves, suggest that the historical development of class differentiation may have been originally based on transitivity contrasts or shifts.

5. Patientive verbs: An emerging inflectional class?

There is a group of intransitive verbs in Acazulco Otomi that typically denote agentless situations (including passive-impersonal, impersonal, states, and inchoative events), display patientive marking of their only argument (*i.e.* they code S as Object, by means of Object suffixes), and have a special set of TAM proclitics that resemble 3rd person Subject proclitics from the inflectional classes described in Section 3. I have labeled this group of verbs “Class IV”, as an analogy of such inflectional classes. The sentence in (40b) below

illustrates the patientive marking. Most transitive verbs from Class III have impersonal counterparts belonging to Class IV. The Class III verb *'ndah*-¹³ ‘give (to 1st or 2nd person)’ has a 1st person Agent (Subject) and a 2nd person Recipient (Object) in (40a) below. Its impersonal counterpart *nthah*- ‘be given’ from Class IV is illustrated in (40b), with 2nd person Recipient and indefinite Agent. The event of being given food can be interpreted as impersonal or passive, as the alternate translations suggest. Notice that the Recipient is coded by means of the Object suffix *-k'i* ‘2O’; the Agent cannot be overtly expressed in sentences like (40b).

- (40)a. *kha gidi 'nda'-k'i ru séyö*
 An d 1.IRR give-2O SG money
 ‘And I’ll give you some money.’ {txt}
- b. *kha didi nthah'-k'i k'an hmé*
 and IRR be.given-2O DET.SG.2POSS tortilla
 ‘And they will give you food.’ {txt} ‘And you will be given food.’

The stative verb *něhki* ‘be visible’ receives patientive marking too, as can be seen with the 1st person S in 0a), which is coded as Object by the suffix *-gi* ‘1O’. Verbs with stem formative *+hki* lose it when Object suffixes attach to them. The stem formative is retained which 3rd person S in 0b), as 3rd person Object is normally not overtly marked in Otomi languages (see Section 2.2).

- (41)a. *radi ně-gi=ga*
 ICP be.visible-1O=1
 ‘I can be seen.’
- b. *xí didi něhki k'a 'ndónkhwa*
 PURP IRR be.visible DET.SG ayate
 ‘So that the *ayate*¹⁴ is visible/looks good.’ {txt}

In the same way, the verb inchoative verb *ndòhki* ‘become fat’ takes the suffix *-gi* ‘1O’ to code 1st person S in 42a) below, losing the stem formative *+hki*; the stem formative is retained with 3rd person S, as it can be seen in 42b).

- (42)a. *bidi ndo-gi=ga*
 CPL become.fat-1O=1
 ‘I grew fat.’
- b. *bidi ndohki k'úi yó*
 CPL become.fat DET.PL.3POSS head
 ‘They became numb-minded.’ {txt} (Lit. ‘Their heads grew fat.’)

¹³ As this verb is always followed by a 1st or 2nd person Object suffix, its “free” form is not known.

¹⁴ A sack to put the ears of corn in while harvesting, made of agave fiber.

The fact that the majority of the verbs that follow the inflectional pattern of Class IV lack a referential/topical Agent (according to the typology drafted in Malchukov & Ogawa 2011) suggests that this group of verbs is semantically motivated. Moreover, the diathetic configuration of most of these verbs (*i.e.* the coding of a Patient-like S as an Object) suggests syntactic motivations as well. In the following subsections I put these facts in the context of the more canonical inflectional classes (I, II, and III) described above in Sections 3 and 4, and propose that Class IV might be emerging as a new inflectional class in Acazulco Otomi.

5.1. Is Class IV a subclass of Class III?

In principle, the inflectional morphology of Class IV qualifies as an inflectional class when compared with Class I, II, and III, as the realization of grammatical categories (person, TAM, associated motion, adjunct registration) requires forms that are specific to it.

The set of TAM proclitics that verbs from Class IV take is different from that of the other classes, and there is no evidence that it is based on the set of any particular inflectional class. Some of its proclitics seem to be “taken” directly from Class III, others seem to be “based” on Class III proclitics plus the morpheme /di/, and yet others seem to be “based” on Class I plus /di/ (see Table 7, Section 3.1). There is no regular cell-to-cell match between Class IV proclitics and proclitics from any other class, which makes it difficult to claim that Class IV is a subclass rather than an inflectional class on its own.

However, the fact that neither Class III nor Class IV have stem alternants makes Class IV appear as a subclass of Class III. Class I and II are sufficiently distinct in this respect, but Class III and Class IV look like one class when seen under this light.

In addition, Class IV could still be considered as a subclass of Class III at another level different from mere morphological coincidences. Most of Class IV impersonal verbs have transitive counterparts in Class III, and intransitive counterparts in Class II. The data shown in (43) below are from the sample described in Section 4. There are only 15 Class III transitive verbs with an impersonal counterpart in Class IV in the sample, but this pattern is easily extendable to other transitive verbs in Class III as well. The two Class II intransitive verbs with impersonal counterparts in Class IV are the antipassive

verbs *ntshǒpho* ‘harvest’ and *nkhómphini* ‘perform the *rogación*’,¹⁵ which could be easily conceived as impersonal activities in the community.

(43)

	Class IV impersonal	%
Class III (tr.)	15	88.2%
Class II (intr.)	2	11.8%
<i>total</i>	17	

There are many potential tr./intr. pairs between Class III and IV, as it is a rather productive process in the language. This suggests that Class IV might be a subclass within Class III. However, the fact that intransitive verbs from Class II can also have (at least two) impersonal counterparts in Class IV blurs the otherwise clear picture of transitive/impersonal pairs in Class III.

There is another weak point to the argument of considering Class IV as an inflectional class at the same level as the other classes: the coding of the person of S is different. In Class I, II, and III, grammatical information about person of S is contained in the TAM proclitic (*i.e.* syntactic Subject). In Class IV, in contrast, the TAM proclitic seems not to indicate person of S at all, but this grammatical category is rather indicated by an Object suffix (or the absence of it, with 3rd person Subject). Class IV does not have different TAM proclitics for different Subject persons, so it is morphologically inconsistent to treat it at the same level as Class I, II and III.

5.2. The coding of S

As it was shown in examples (40), (41), and (42) above, S is coded by Object suffixes in verbs from Class IV, rather than in the TAM proclitic. The question arises whether the class (*i.e.* Class IV) is motivated by patientive marking, or the patientive marking is motivated by the class. In other words, we need to find out what the direction of the motivation is, if any.

The class is certainly not motivated by the patientive marking, as there is at least one verb with patientive marking that belongs to Class I and not to Class IV. The Class I intransitive verb *tsà* ‘be/get well’ codes its Patient-

¹⁵ A ritual consisting of the ringing of the church’s bells, prayer, and the waving of consecrated palm leaves in the air, in order to prevent hailstone from striking the crops.

like only argument by means of Object suffixes, as it is done in (44) below with the suffix *-gi* ‘1O’.

- (44) *něh-ki=ga dí zəh=ka bi <z>a-gi=ga*
 too-1O=1 1.CPL get.stronger=1 3.CPL get.well-1O=1
 ‘Me too, I grew stronger and got well.’ {txt}

If the patientive marking were the motivation for class membership, the patientive verb *tsà* ‘be/get well’ in (44) above would take the TAM proclitic set from Class IV, which it does not. So, we cannot establish that the patientive marking implies Class IV.

The direction of implication seems to be that Class IV implies patientive marking. Although not all patientive verbs belong to Class IV (as we saw in the paragraph above), Class IV verbs seem to follow a patientive marking pattern. I say that they “seem to”, rather than they “do”, because such pattern is not clear in certain Class IV verbs that can only have 3rd person inanimate Subjects. As 3rd person Objects are rarely overtly expressed in verbs, the patientive marking pattern is not evident in this kind of verbs. Some examples are shown in (45) below. The Class IV verbs *yóxt’e* ‘be toasted’ (45a) and *nk’angi* ‘become green’ (45b) only take inanimate Subjects, and therefore cannot be contrasted with overtly marked 1st or 2nd person Subjects to make the patientive marking evident.

- (45)a. *bidi ’yóxt k’a tx=thühme*
 CPL be.toasted DET.SG AFF=bread
 ‘The bread became brittle.’ {txt}
- b. *kha didi k’ang yu paxi*
 and IRR become.green DET.PL herb
 ‘And the grass becomes green.’ {txt}

Verbs like *yóxt’e* ‘be toasted’ and *nk’angi* ‘become green’ take the same TAM proclitics as other verbs that are clearly patientive, like *ndòhki* ‘become fat’. Nevertheless, saying that they all take the same set of TAM proclitics is very different from saying that all verbs in Class IV really follow a patientive marking pattern. In fact, there is no way to find out whether all of them do or not.

To summarize, membership to Class IV is not motivated by the patientive marking, as at least one patientive verb can also be found in Class I. From the opposite perspective, it is somewhat problematic to state that membership to Class IV implies the patientive marking pattern, as such pattern is not evident in all verbs of the class.

5.3. Semantics

Although Class IV cannot be said to be tightly correlated to patientive marking, the patientive semantics of most of its verbs supports the idea that it follows a Patient-oriented pattern. Class IV contains a great deal of stative, inchoative, semelfactive, impersonal/passive, and impersonal verbs, where the Patient-like S argument is fore-grounded but still coded as Object. As there are so few Class IV verbs in the sample, I have listed them below in (46), and grouped them according to their semantic type. Inchoative and semelfactive types in (46a, b) do not require an Agent. Although the events described by the impersonals in (46d, e) would normally require an Agent, it has been demoted (*i.e.* back-grounded, deleted). The Patient-like argument is still retained in the impersonal/passive events described by the verbs in (46d), but the verbs in (46e) refer to activities where no definite Agent or Patient are identifiable.

(46)a.	záhki	‘become strong’	(inchoative)
	ts’üt’i	‘become thin (inanimate)’	
	hót’i	‘become ripe’	
	kòni	‘become cold’	
	põxki	‘become black’	
	ts’óni	‘become spoiled’	
	zát’i	‘stick’	
	gáhki	‘become thin (animate)’	
	’mbédi	‘get lost’	
	pàt’i	‘become hot’	
	tì	‘become dizzy’	
b.	nthóhni	‘boom’	(semelfactive)
	nýuni	‘rumble (a thunder)’	
c.	něhki	‘be visible’	(stative)
	’ùgi	‘hurt’	
d.	ntshàdi	‘be recited’	(impersonal
	xàdi	‘be recited’	/passive)
	’yóxt’e	‘be toasted’	
	hògi	‘be sharpened’	
	khöhpi	‘be consecrated’	
	münts’i	‘be gathered’	
	gònt’i	‘be knocked (a door)’	
e.	ntshõpho	‘harvest’	(impersonal)
	nkhómphini	‘perform the <i>rogación</i> ’	

Verbs from Class IV have in common the absence of an Agent, whether it is not required or it has been back-grounded. The fact that all of these verbs

are agentless seems to be the motivation for grouping them in Class IV. However, Class I, II, and III also have inchoative verbs like *tági* ‘fall’ (Class I), *mphàni* ‘pour out’ (Class III), and *tòni* ‘bloom’ (Class II); at least one passive verb can also be found in Class II: *xíxthe* ‘be baptized’.¹⁶

This means that the direction of the implication must be the other way round: if a verb belongs to Class IV, then it is agentless. We saw a similar pattern with the implications related to the patientive marking in Section 5.2, where Class IV implies (or seems to imply) the patientive marking, and not the other way round. But yet again, Class IV does not always imply an agentless event. The Class IV inchoative verb *tì* ‘become dizzy’ can also be interpreted as ‘be/get drunk’. In its “drunkenness” reading, the Subject can be interpreted as an Agent, as it is shown in (47) below. The speaker gives an account of the New Year celebration and the different activities it involves. Getting drunk is also an activity in such events, and people that get drunk act as Agents (*i.e.* with volition) while doing it.

- (47) *dí hǎx=ka=he gwa, bidi tìn-gi=ga='mbe*
 1.CPL wake=1=PL.EX here CPL become.dizzy-1O=1=PL.EX
 ‘We stayed up all night, we got drunk.’ {txt}

Except for the agentive readings of the verb *tì* ‘get dizzy’, Class IV is strongly correlated with agentless events. As this correlation suggests synchronic motivations, Class IV cannot be considered as a canonical inflectional class, at least not at the same level as Class I, II, and III.

5.4. What is Class IV?

The form and function features of Class IV verbs somehow blur the line that distinguishes a canonical inflectional class from an inflectional class that is motivated synchronically by semantics and syntax. I review such features in the following paragraphs.

Class IV inflection contains a set of TAM proclitics that are sufficiently distinct from those of the other classes. It is true that some of its proclitics can be said to be “taken” directly from Class III, with the morpheme /di~gi/ added or not. However, the same can be said of Class I and III: in many cases, Class III proclitics are exactly the same as Class I proclitics plus /di~gi/. The main criterion for the classification of verbs in inflectional

¹⁶ Although they were not included in the original sample, other two semantically passive verbs *ntx'ági* ‘be buried’ and *nkhü't'i* ‘be paid one’s salary’ can also be found in Class III.

classes is precisely the distribution of /di~gi/. According to this criterion, Class IV is a verb class at the same level as the others.

Some aspects of the morphology of Class IV suggest that it could be a subclass of Class III. If we look at stem modifications across the paradigm, Class IV aligns with Class III as neither have stem alternants. In contrast, verbs from Class I have their own consonant mutations that are different from those we find in Class II verbs; moreover, the distribution of such stem alternants is different for Class I transitives, Class I intransitives, and Class II. Tone stem alternants also have different distribution in Class I and II. Seeing how different Class I and Class II are in terms of stem alternants and their distribution, one could be tempted to put all verbs without stem alternants in one inflectional class, *i.e.* put Class III and Class IV in one class. However, this creates more problems than it solves. Such classification would require to specify that the new class has two subclasses with different TAM proclitic sets, and different ways of coding S in each subclass. A simpler, more elegant analysis would keep Class III and IV separate, and would only point out that both classes coincide in the fact that neither has stem alternants.

The fact that Class III transitive verbs have impersonal counterparts in Class IV also suggests that both should be considered as one class. The problem with this argument for combining both groups of verbs into one is that not all verbs from Class IV have a transitive counterpart in Class III. For example, the Class IV verb *tì* ‘get dizzy’ does not have a Class III counterpart **tì* ‘make dizzy’. Other Class IV have intransitive (non-impersonal) counterparts in Class II rather than in Class III (see Section 5.1). To summarize, as tr./intr. pairs between Class III and IV do not show a clear one-to-one correspondence, it is hard to establish a straightforward parallelism between both classes in terms of valence alternations.

The facts presented in the paragraphs above show that Class IV is sufficiently independent from the other classes, in terms of the lexemes contained in it and their morphology. However, Class IV correlates very strongly with the patientive marking (*i.e.* coding of S with Object suffixes) and agentless events/states. At first glance, such correlations suggest that Class IV is motivated synchronically, and that its inflectional patterns obey morphosyntactic functions rather than the morphomic part of grammar. It is very likely that the morphology of Class IV derived historically from an inchoative/impersonal construction, for which cognate constructions can still be found in Tilapa Otomi (Palancar 2012a) and Tlahuica (Oto-Pamean;

Martínez Ortega 2012: 157). Compare the inchoative construction with *tú-* ‘INCH’ in Tilapa Otomi in (48a) with its cognate sentence in Acazolco Otomi in (48b). From these data it becomes apparent that the /di/ sequence in Acazolco Otomi is cognate with the inchoative marker *tú-* ‘INCH’ of Tilapa Otomi.

- (48)a. $b^{<w>}u=tú^hpa-'k'i$
 <TRANSLOC>PST.R=INCH-heat.up.AS-2O
 ‘You got hot.’ (Palancar, 2012a)
- b. *bidi* $pà'-k'i$
 CPL get.hot-2O
 ‘You got hot.’

Many syntactic and semantic features of Class IV are clearly inherited from old inchoative/impersonal constructions as the ones presented above in (48), and in most cases such features behave as part of the synchronic grammar of the language. However, the fact that there is at least one patientive verb in Class I suggests that the patientive marking pattern is no longer –or perhaps never was– an exclusive feature of Class IV. Moreover, as there at least one verb in Class IV that can have agentive readings (*i.e.* *tì* ‘get dizzy~get drunk’), which suggests that the class is no longer an exclusively patientive group of verbs. In my view, this suggest an early stage of emergence of a new inflectional class, whose morphology starts to get rid of its original morphosyntactic motivations.

In a broader, cross-linguistic perspective, it is very likely that the “bleaching” of the morphosyntactic functions of certain inflectional morphemes is the ultimate motivation of inflectional classes in the languages of the world. Class IV of Acazolco Otomi is an example of how the earlier stages of such “bleaching” looks like in a natural, currently spoken language.

6. Final comments

Acazolco Otomi has three distinct inflectional classes of verbs. These classes contrast morphologically at three levels. On a first level, each takes a different set of inflectional formatives. On a second level, verbs from classes I and II have different stems resulting from mutations of their initial consonant, while verbs from Class III have no stem alternants at all. On a third level, the two classes with stem alternants also have tone stem alternants, while the third class with no stem alternants lacks tone stem alternants as well.

The facts presented in this chapter suggest that inflectional classes in Acazolco Otomi (and Otomi languages in general) developed from morphological processes of diathetic switch (*i.e.* changes of the mapping between semantic and syntactic roles). On the one hand, Class I presents a few splits based on transitivity, where transitive verbs behave differently from intransitives in certain cells of the paradigm. Both transitives and intransitives from Class I are otherwise leveled, and there is no need to divide them into two different classes. On the other hand, transitive/intransitive pairs between classes suggest an old morphological process for deriving antipassive and middle verbs may have resulted in the emergence of Class II and Class III in Acazolco Otomi. The process through which this change may have happened is *lexicalization*, and the original morphology of diathetic switch has been semantically bleached in the synchronic stage. Once lexicalization has occurred, lexemes can be recruited in the new inflectional classes, such as the transitive verbs in classes II and III.

A class of Patient-oriented verbs seems to be in the process of emerging as a new inflectional class in Acazolco Otomi. The morphological apparatus that is particular to this class is strongly correlated with patientive marking of the Subject (*i.e.* it is coded by Object suffixes) and agentless events. However, the fact that there are verbs that occur only with this morphology (*e.g.* *tì* ‘get dizzy/drunk’, *něhki* ‘be visible’) suggests that the class should be considered as another lexical class of verbs. Moreover, one of these verbs –*tì* ‘get dizzy/drunk’– is getting rid of its agentless interpretation and functioning more like an agentive verb in certain contexts. This may be the initial stage of a process of semantic bleaching that could lead to the eventual emergence of this group of verbs as an inflectional class.

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Abbreviations

ACT = activity marker; ADV = adverbial registration; AFF = affective marker; AP = antipassive; B = stem B; C = stem C; CAUS = causative; CFC = counterfactual; CONTR = contrastive marker; CPL = completive; CSL = cislocative; DET = determiner; DU = dual; ENCL = enclitic; EX = exclusive; EXL = extralocative; GEN = general registration; HAB = habitual; ICP = incomplete; IMP = imperative; IMPRS = impersonal; IN = inclusive; INGR = ingressive; IRR = irrealis; LOC = locative; LT = low tone mutation; MID = middle; O = object; P = preposition; PL = plural; POSS = possessor; PRO = pronoun; PST = past; PURP = purpose; SG = singular; TRL = translocative.

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