NEGLIGENCE IN COLONIAL VALLEY ZAPOTEC

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents an overview of negation in Colonial Valley Zapotec (CVZ) based on a corpus of texts written in Valley Zapotec between 1565 and 1808. There are four negative markers in CVZ, two bound (ya-, qui-) and two free (aca, yaca). Standard negation employs a negative word and an optional clitic, =ti. Understanding the syntax of an historical form of Valley Zapotec allows us to make some observations about related forms in modern Valley Zapotec languages, in particular San Lucas Quiavití Zapotec (SLQZ). For example, the morpheme =ti, which is required in clausal negation in SLQZ, is not obligatory in any negative constructions in CVZ until around 1800. In Vellon 1808, the youngest text in the corpus, we observe =ti required in one type of clausal negation. This allows us to observe details of the development of the modern Valley Zapotec negation system, including the fact that the remaining changes leading to obligatory =ti in clausal negation in SLQZ must have occurred within the last 200 years.

1. INTRODUCTION

Valley Zapotec (Otomanguean) is part of the central branch of the Zapotec language family (Smith Stark 2003b). It has a long history of alphabetic writing, with the earliest known text dating to 1565 (Oudijk 2008). Modern forms of Valley Zapotec, such as San Lucas Quiavití Zapotec (ISO code [zab], Lewis et al. 2015) are endangered and under-documented. This paper focuses on the form of Valley Zapotec attested in archival documents from the Mexican Colonial period, which we call Colonial Valley Zapotec (CVZ). We use CVZ data from both published sources and our own analysis of documents.

CVZ, like most Zapotec languages, is verb initial, with a basic word order of VSO, though movement of an argument or adjunct to a pre-verbal position is possible in certain

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