

Lexical & Grammatical Differences in the Chielúú Dialects

0____(preface)

0.1____(conventions)

When speaking of the Dialects, I may refer to them as a whole as Chielúú, however this is in-world, specifically the western dialect. One can identify from the diphthongs and ejectives. The eastern dialect is specifically Chiilúú and can be differentiated from its larger tonemic inventory. To be short, (W) or will denote the modern Western dialect and (E) will denote the modern Eastern dialect. Earlier forms of the language are abbreviated similarly with (PCh) denoting the proto language and (OCh) denoting what is deemed “Old Chiilúú,” and is the stage of the language at the point of divergence.

0.2____(motivations)

I had composed a mythological short story explaining how a flower in-world got its name to do for a potential relay (shout out to Nemo for the inspo), yet the length of the text seemed too long. As I was composing the text, I first had the ambitious idea of running two rings: one with the western dialect and one with the eastern. The text was then translated into the two dialects. What was likely a shower thought or some passing idea came to me for the Dialects to split more than just phonologically but in the grammatical and lexical realms also. Being more comfortable with the western dialect, the text was translated into it first, then a more transparent translation of the eastern dialect. Some words, expressions, and other syntactic constructions were highlighted to shift or create varied meaning between the two. This, if put to a relay, would introduce a variable where the English text was the same, yet the torch had two languages, very closely related. A shorter version of these torches are, as of this recording, at the precipice of completion and will be used to begin a relay at a future time.

When creating this document, I wanted to ensure that there was a diachronic motivation behind these evolutions. The shorter examples of this collection have, what I have reconstructed, the journey from the proto-language to the time of dialectal divergence and then the current stage of the dialects. This three-stage approach was a constraint in what commonalities in grammar or words needed to stay. For example, grammaticalized

aspects that the dialects share needed a stage either at or before the divergence point, where the suppletion of the archaic meanings must have come after.

1____(worldbuilding)

1.1____(culture notes)

The island of Xip'uupát p'unáá Sichúú (or Xip'uupát, for short) is about the size of Hispaniola in the southern half of the world. It exhibits a climate that borders the typical oceanic (Cfb) climate and the subpolar (Cfc) variety. The island is similarly mountainous although it is more distributed throughout, hence the majority of the inhabitants live in villages along the bays, fjords, and coasts of the island.

The people on the western side of the island put emphasis on foodstuffs as they are more agrarian. Their diet has more fruits and tubers that are grown in the farms in the flatter areas of the island. They are known for making doughs, whether from grain or tubers. The climate is more on the mild side and has more of a mix of deciduous and conifer trees.

The eastern population puts emphasis on drinking as they are more skilled at fermentation and preserving methods. Their diet has more meat, especially from seafood that is caught off the shores. They are known for having deep, rich soups and broths that boil for days on end. The climate is colder as with the elevation, where the forests have a great majority of conifers rather than deciduous.

1.2____(language diachronics)

The language family is split into five stages of evolution from the proto-stage to the modern forms of both dialects. The phonological evolution is not relevant to this topic, yet it is of note that each stage is about three to five sound changes.

In terms of the grammatical evolution, much of the commonalities of the grammar emerged at the Old stage, or when the dialects split and began to become more distinct. This is not a surprising conclusion but those words that had been grammaticalized or suppleted, specifically with the latter, are common between the dialects. Any other changes to the lexicon or morphology after this start to form unique usages of words and constructions.

2____(dialectal differences)

2.1____(lexical differences)

2.1.1____(suppletive differences)

(PCh) xis haju ni: u:phi i:tfut ku:nthi:hi:
My friend is sitting on the log

(OCh) xe:ju ni: u:phi u:phi i:tfut ku:nthi:fi
My friend sat on the log

u:phi ⇒ “to sit” grammaticalized to perfective marker

(W) Xééyu nii úúpí saang ííchú kuonsieshí
My friend sat on the log

*sa:ŋ ⇒ saang “to wait”

(E) Xééyu nii úúhi oonyáá chá ííchú kuuntsiishí
My friend sat on the log

*u:ŋja: si:tfja: ⇒ oonyáá chá “put down oneself”

(PCh) maji:s mikk’u xu:kkhu: ku:tf
The otter gathers / picks up oysters

(OCh) maji:h mekk’u xo:kkhu: ku:tf / maji:h **thaht’o:h** xo:kkhu: ku:tf
The otter picks up / gathers oysters // The otter collects oysters

(W) Mayii **sat’oo** xóáxúú kúút
(W) Niyaa mék’u xóáxúú kúút

The otter **collects** oysters
The girl carries oysters ⇐ takes on the “gather” meaning

(E) Mayii **tsatóo** xóóxuu kúú

(E) Niyaa mékú chá íchú xóóxuu kúú

The otter **collects** oysters

The girl stands by oysters ⇐ takes on the “pick up” meaning

chá ⇒ 3ANIM pronoun behaves as reflexive

2.1.2 ____ (derivational differences)

(PCh) si:tʃja: na:tʰi ku:tʃ (xa:k) tʃawu: (sa:h) siʔi: mu:xxu:

The “people hunting” are drinking “freshwater ripening”

(OCh) si:tʃja: na:tʰi ku:tʃ xa:k (niphu /) tʃawu: (sa:h) siʔi mo:hxu:

The people hunting keep drinking alcohol

xa:k “to beat, hit repeatedly” ⇒ iterative marker

siʔi mo:hxu: “freshwater ripening” ⇒ alcohol

(W) Sháá náátʰi kúút **xáá nípú** saa sichi moaxúú

(E) Sháá náátʰi kúú **xáá chawúú** saa sichi mooxúú

The hunters are celebrating with alcohol

xáá nípú “to eat over & over” ⇒ to celebrate

xáá chawúú “to drink over & over” ⇒ to celebrate

cf. (W) xáá sháchí / (E) xáá chăchí ⇒ to chew / gnaw

(PCh) si:tʃja: ni:xtʃhup xun tʃawu: siʔi: mu:xxu:

The “person teaching” “spins drinking” “freshwater ripening”

(OCh) si:tʃja: ne:hʃup xon tʃawu: si:tʃi mo:hxu:

The person teaching often drinks alcohol

xon “to spin” ⇒ frequentative marker

(W) Sháá neeshú xong **áánu sichí**.

(E) Sháá neeshú xong **chawúú súúsan**.

The teacher often gets drunk.

áánu sichí ⇒ cover + water; referencing the production of steam when distilling alcohol.

cf. áánu sichí ⇒ “to steam, to produce steam”

(W) áánu xeafúú / (E) áánu xeefúú ⇒ cover + bark; “to protect”

chawúú súúsan ⇒ drink + spin ; referencing the behavior of the state of drunkenness

2.1.3 ____ (pragmatic differences)

(W) Méhu ch’oo úúpí **kóyu xaa kúút kúmi fít**.

(E) Méhu chóo úúhi **kóyu púhuu kúú mishaa kóotaa**.

The two parents felt an attraction for each other.

kóyu xaa kúút kúmi fít ⇒ “their eyes are burning”

kóyu púhuu kúú mishaa k’oataa ⇒ “their hearts begin to thunder”

2.2____(grammatical differences)

(W) Xi ietlóó yierúú fíti **fi** p'ooyu kiyaa niyáá

(E) Xi iichoó yiirúú píti **saa** póoyu kiyaa niyáá

I am sending a letter to your older sister.

The preposition **mexíí** was originally used for distransitive constructions in both dialects. As it became underused, speakers began to use new prepositions to mark indirect objects, depending on the dialect spoken. The Western uses “**fi**” which has the meaning of “toward” while the Eastern uses “**saa**,” or the benefactive “for.”

2.2.1____(short term plans for evolution)

2.2.1.1____Loss of alienability and simplification of pronouns

Both dialects currently have an alienability distinction, where inalienable possession can be marked pronominally for most possessors. In addition, the third person pronouns are distinguished by three levels of animacy.

	Singular		Plural			
			general		possessive	
	general	possessive	inclusive	exclusive	inclusive	exclusive
1st person	xi	xééyu	xip'o	xichá	xip'uu	xichóó
2nd person	p'o	p'ooyu	p'ochá		p'ochóó	

3rd person animate	chá	cháyú	kú	kóyu
3rd person “midanimate”	la	layu	fít	fíchu
3rd person inanimate	ch’íí	X	ín	X

For one dialect, a viable path is to lose one of the inanimate pronoun sets and begin a clearer animate/inanimate distinction. This could lead to only animate arguments being marked for inalienable possession and form an animacy distinction in possessive.

The other dialect could do something similar but push forward with the alienable marking strategy for all nominal arguments while the inalienable becomes the strategy for pronominal arguments.

2.2.1.2____Aspectual and modal simplification

The Chielúú dialects do not mark for tense, however they make up for it in six aspects and four moods. Some of these are used much more frequently than others, for example úúpí as the perfective marker and féé as the optative marker.

An evolution that could occur is the conflation of three aspects: the frequentative, iterative, and semelfactive. As it currently stands, xáá as the iterative marker is used much more derivationally than the other two and could transition to some fixed expressions. The semelfactive ch’áhí could extend into the iterative’s domain in one dialect while the frequentative xong could take the role in another.

2.2.2____(long term plans for evolution)

2.2.2.1____Spelling reform and orthographic change

For this goal to be worked toward, a digitization of the Chielúú script will first need to occur. The dialects are currently written using an alphabet for each of the phonemes in the proto-language. Because of this, the script is no longer one-to-one with the sounds of either modern dialect. A minor spelling reform could assist in differentiating the dialects, with one major area being the way tone is written currently.

2.2.2.2____Affixation of grammaticalized particles

This is the loftiest of the goals presented yet affixes are used derivationally. One of the features of the language is that many verbs can be strung together until a noun is heard from again, especially if there is a grammatical marker before. Because of this, if something is going to begin to agglutinate, it would start with aspect marking, specifically the perfective úúpí. A reduction of the word and tonal shifts due to affixation will be explored, and with the loftiness of this goal, a potential semantic shift to a past tense marking could be entertained.