Aguacatec Syntax from a Functional Perspective

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This paper reports the findings of a preliminary investigation of Aguacatec syntax from a functional perspective. The investigation is preliminary in that it is based on a restricted body of data, mostly from a single text. The perspective is said to be functional in that an attempt is made to explain certain syntactic phenomena found in the text in terms of certain pragmatic notions which determine the structure of narrative discourse in the language. In particular, we will be looking at some of the "packaging phenomena" or "statuses" that nouns may have in a discourse, as discussed by Chafe (1976). These packaging phenomena include such notions as "given" vs. "new", "contrastiveness", "definite" vs. "indefinite", "subject", "topic", and "point of view". There will also be some attention given to the notions of "transitivity", "ergativity", and "grounding". [1]

Most of the data comes from a story about Lu? Tzuu7 or Pedro Tecomate (tzuu7 'tecomate' is a type of hourglass shaped gourd; Pedro Tecomate is more generally known as Pedro Rinales or Pedro Urdemales in Spanish) and a group of apyaay 'travelling salesmen' (pyaa 'journey' (Spanish viaje; ap- 'one characterized by') [2]. A copy of this text is appended to the end of this paper. Hypotheses formed on the basis of this text were checked against, and in some cases revised on the basis of, data from a number of other texts. Three of these are tape recorded texts entitled "Lu? Tzuu7 nín Paaalé7" 'Pedro Tecomate and the Priest'
(hereafter called LTzp), "Ye Q'an'kyooq" 'The Thunder' (hereafter YQ'), and an untitled story about a naawloon (hereafter N; a naawloon is a person who can make his spirit, or naawl, leave his body and go out to do good and/or evil; naawl < Aztec naawalli 'mask, disguise; shaman, wizard, sorcerer; specter, totem, animal double, alter-ego', Andrews 1975:455). These three texts were recorded and transcribed by Aguacatec speaking students at the Proyecto Linguístico Francisco Marroquín in Guatemala. Four others are texts published by the Summer Institute of Linguistics: "Yi Aj Cabinl Tu Yi Umul" 'The beekeeper and the rabbit' (L. McArthur 1973:12-16; hereafter AU), "Aj Ranch Tc'u'l Txuc" 'The rancher inside the animal' (L. McArthur 1973:17-21; hereafter AtTx), "Yi Jale'n Quisliq' E' Tx'i'" 'When the dogs received their duty' (L. McArthur 1973:31-4; hereafter JKTx'), and "El Hombre Y El Zopilote" (Shaw 1972:279-82; hereafter HZ). Copies of these additional texts have not been included here, but examples will be cited from them when appropriate. The spelling of the examples cited from the SIL texts has been changed to conform to that used in this paper.

Before looking at the text material, however, we will consider some of the basic typological and grammatical characteristics of Aguacatec which are prerequisite to understanding the points to be made later.

**Brief Grammatical Sketch of Aguacatec**

Aguacatec is a Mayan language spoken by perhaps some 14,000 people in the municipio of Aguacatán, Department of Huehuetenango, Guatemala. The language is divided into two main dialects. One, the larger and more prestigious, is called Chalchitec and is spoken in the eastern part
of the municipio. The text appended to the end of this paper as well as N and, possibly, the four SIL texts are in this dialect. The other dialect is called Aguacatec and is spoken in the western part of the municipio. LTzP and YQ' are in this dialect. The differences between these two dialects are relatively slight, being confined largely to some minor phonological and lexical differences. Native speakers, however, seem to feel that Chalchitec and the Aguacatec dialect are two separate (though mutually intelligible) languages. In this paper the simple term "Aguacatec" will be used exclusively to refer to the entire language, not to the Aguacatec dialect.

The Aguacatec forms cited here will be spelled according to a practical orthography developed by the Proyecto Lingüístico Francisco Marroquín. The symbols used in this phonemic orthography can be understood by referring to Table 1.

As in other Mayan languages, nouns are not marked for case; however, verbs agree with their subjects and objects according to a split-ergative verb agreement system; and, hence, Aguacatec is usually classified as an "ergative language". In most cases, an intransitive "subject" (or S, employing the terminology of Dixon 1979 [3]) and a transitive "direct object" (or O,) are crossreferenced on their respective verbs by means of a set of "absolutive" prefixes while a transitive "subject" (or A,) is crossreferenced by means of a set of "ergative" prefixes, as seen in:

(1) "a  kxh-u7l
proximate past 2sAbs-ARRIVE HERE
"you arrived"
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>plain stops</th>
<th>glottalized stops</th>
<th>voiceless affricates</th>
<th>glottalized affricates</th>
<th>voiceless fricatives</th>
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<table>
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<td>o</td>
<td>oo</td>
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<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>aa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1

(2)  

\[s \quad s'uu1\]  
prox.past  
3sAbs-ARRIVE HERE

'he arrived'
Tense and aspect are generally indicated by a preposed particle such as the "proximate past" particle \( \text{ja} \) in the above examples. The absence of such particles is interpreted to mean the "indefinite past" tense, which indicates that the action took place sometime before today. This is the tense that is generally used in narrating stories such as the one we are concerned with here. The details of how tense/aspect is indicated and of the various forms of the ergative and absolutive prefixes that are used in different phonological and morphological environments are rather complex and will not be fully dealt with here (see Larsen 1978 for further details). Arguments of stative, equational, and existential predicates are also crossreferenced by absolutive morphemes, whereas the ergative prefixes are used to crossreference noun possessors, as seen in

(5) ooj
'avocado'

(6) aw-ooj
2sErg-AVOCADO
'your avocado'

(7) t-ooj
3sErg-AVOCADO
'his avocado'

In certain types of subordinate clauses 5's are not crossreferenced by the customary absolutive morphemes, however, but rather by the same
ergative prefixes that crossreference A's, thus giving the appearance of a nominative/accusative verb agreement system in those environments. For this reason the verb agreement is said to be "split ergative" (Dixon 1979:79-98). One environment in which this occurs is in time adverbal clauses in the indefinite past tense:

(8) ye aw-uul-e7n,
    THE 2sErg-ARRIVE HERE-nominalizer
    niin tzun na    chin-waann
    AND THEN incomplete 1sAbs-EAT
    'when you arrived, I was eating'

(9) ye t-uul-e7n,...
    THE 3sErg-ARRIVE HERE-nom.
    'when he arrived,...'

(10) ye t-il-ool    axh,...
    THE 3sErg-SEE-active infinitive 2sPro(Abs)
    'when he saw you,...'

(11) ye aw-il-ool    ʰ,...
    THE 2sErg-SEE-act.inf 3sAbs
    'when you saw him,...'

Here it can be seen that the verb forms found in the adverbal clauses of (8-11) are actually derived verbal nouns and, thus, the ergative prefixes crossreferencing their respective S's and A's may be viewed as being formally noun possessors. O's are still marked by the absolutive marker ʰ in the third person singular (as in 11) or by one of the absolutive independent pronouns in the other person/numbers (as in 10).

As mentioned previously, arguments of non-verbal sentences in Aguacatec are absolutes. Depending on the type of predicate involved, the absolutive marker may be either preposed in the form of an independent pronoun or postposed. The following illustrate some of the possible
types:

(12) axh wunaq
    2sPro(Abs) PERSON
    'you are a person'

(13) at-ixh tzne7j
    EXIST-2sAbs HERE
    'you are here'

(14) txik-1-kixh
    VERTICAL-stative-2sAbs
    'you are standing'

(15) kyim-naq-(k)i{xh
    DIE-past participle-2sAbs
    'you are dead'

Other case relations, such as dative, instrument, locative, etc. are usually indicated by "relational nouns". Relational nouns function in much the same way as prepositions do in English; however, unlike prepositions, relational nouns are formally possessed nouns where the possessive prefix refers to the "object" of the relational noun phrase. Many, though not all, relational nouns are preceded by one of the prepositions ta (-a) or t.

(16) ja 6-w-aq' tz-ky-etz
    prox.past 3sAbs-1sErg-GIVE prep-3pErg-POSSESSION
    yaaj
    MAN
    'I gave it to the men'

(17) ja chin-b'een tz-aw-uuch'
    prox.past 1sAbs-GO prep-2sErg-COMpanion
    'I went with you'

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(18) at-∅  t-∅-k'u7l
EXIST-3sABS prep-3sErg-BELLY
'It is inside of it'

Many of the relational nouns that begin with the preposition tz lose
that preposition before a third person singular ergative prefix:

(19) na  chin-b'een t-uuch'
incompletive 1sAbs-GO   3sErg-COMPANION
'I go with him'

Aguacatec also has a number of other prepositions besides tz and t.
Most of these are merely reduced forms of relational nouns, e.g.

(20) wi 'on (top of)' < tz-∅-wi7   'on top of it'
pre-3sErg-HEAD

(21) tu 'with' < (tz-)t-uuch'   'with him'
3sErg-COMPANION

(22) tzl 'at the edge of' < (tz-)s-tzli7 'at its edge'
3sErg-MOUTH

Two prepositions that do not seem to be related to any relational nouns
are

(23) len 'until, up to' (perhaps < leen 'leaving'
(directional; see below) ?)

(24) le 'into' (perhaps also < leen ?)

The basic unmarked word order in Aguacatec is VSO, as in

(25) za  ∅-x-tx'aj   xna7n b'u7y
prox.past 3sAbs-3sErg-WASH WOMAN RAG
'the woman washed the rag'
The only exception to this is with reflexives and reciprocals, where the verb is immediately followed by the reflexive/reciprocal relational noun, which is in turn followed by the subject, thus giving the appearance of having VOS order:

(26) ja $\mathbf{\&}-b'iy$ t-ii$b'$ yaaj
    prox.past 3sAbs-3sErg-HIT 3sErg-REFL MAN
    'the man hit himself'

Various marked word orders are also possible, such as when a constituent that ordinarily comes after the verb is placed before the verb. One case in which this happens is in cleft sentences. For example, in the sentence

(27) $\mathbf{\&}-x$-tx'aij xna7n b'u7y jaalu7
    prox.past 3sAbs-3sErg-WASH WOMAN RAG NOW/TODAY
    'the woman washed the rag today'

the time adverb may be clefted, thus deriving

(28) jaalu7 n-$\mathbf{\&}-x$-tx'aij xna7n b'u7y
    'it was today that the woman washed the rag'

Note here that in the cleft sentence (28), the proximate past particle ja has been replaced by the prefix m- (→ n in (28) by a regular phonological rule). Proximate past is marked by j in main clauses and by m- in subordinate clauses. This suggests that the constituent structure of (27) is something roughly like
(29) 

\[
\text{S} \\
\quad \text{V} \\
\quad \text{NP} \\
\quad \text{NP} \\
\quad \text{ADV}
\]

\[\text{'a xtx'aj} \quad \text{xna7n} \quad \text{b'u7y} \quad \text{jaalul7}\]

whereas the constituent structure of (28) is something like

(30) 

\[
\text{S} \\
\quad \text{ADV} \\
\quad \text{V} \\
\quad \text{NP} \\
\quad \text{NP}
\]

\[\text{jaalul7} \quad \text{ntxt'aj} \quad \text{xna7n} \quad \text{b'u7y}\]

Similarly, with the O clefted, the following sentence is derived:

(31) \text{b'u7y n-]'x-xtx'aj xna7n jaalul7}

'it was the rag that the woman washed today'

It happens, however, that the A of a transitive sentence like (27) cannot be clefted in this same simple way. In order to cleft an A in Agua-
catec, a special verb form must be used, as seen in

(32) \text{xna7n n-]'tx'aj-oon b'u7y jaalul7}

'it was the woman who washed the rag today'

Several things should be noted about the verb stem \text{ -tx'a:oon} in (32). First of all, in spite of the fact that (32) gives the impression of being a transitive sentence like (27), (28), and (31), the verb \text{ -tx'a:oon} is \text{intransitive} being marked only for absolutive agreement. It also has other morphological characteristics of intransitive verbs;
for example, it takes the suffix -(o)q in the future/potential
tense/aspect rather than the suffix -eʔ used with transitive verbs.
Also the suffix -oon is used to derive other clearly intransitive verb
forms. Second of all, though it is impossible to tell which of the
third person singular NPs it is that the verb agrees with in (32), it
can be seen from sentences like

(33) in n-kxh-b'iy-oon
1sPro(Abs) prox.past-2sAbs-HIT-suffix
'I was the one who hit you'

that it is not the clefted A that the verb agrees with but rather the
underlying O. However, when the underlying O is 3s, the intransitive
verb may optionally agree with the underlying A, as seen in

(34) in \{m- n-chin-\} b'iy-oon
\{m-Pro(Abs) prox.past-\{3sAbs-\}\} HIT-suffix
'I was the one who hit him'

This, plus the fact that clefted A's may appear as one of the absolutive
independent pronouns (as seen in 33 and 34; these pronouns may never be
"ergative NPs" [4]), demonstrates that the clefted constituents in (32-
34) are "absolutive NPs". Thus it can be seen that the rule that forms
cleft sentences is sensitive to the ergative/absolutive "relations" in
that ergative NPs cannot be clefted; or, using Dixon's terminology, A's
cannot be clefted unless they are first put into "derived S function".

The construction illustrated by (32-34) is usually referred to by
Mayanists as the "focus antipassive" or "agentive antipassive" construc-
tion. The focus antipassive is not a true antipassive construction if
antipassive is taken, as it often is, to mean an intransitive sentence in which the agent is the absolutive S and the patient is optionally present in an oblique case. Aguacatec does have such a "true" antipassive, called the "absolutive antipassive", to be discussed below. Since the verb form of the focus antipassive is nearly identical to that of the absolutive antipassive, the term "antipassive" has come to be used for this construction also. This makes a certain amount of sense anyway in that the so-called focus antipassive in Aguacatec seems to have a function similar to that of antipassives found in other languages like Dyirbal; namely, it is used to convert ergative NPs into absolutes, thus making them accessible to certain rules which apply only to absolutive NPs.

The characteristics that we have just seen for cleft sentences are also found with relative clauses and WH-questions; as can be seen in

(35) 'a 6-w-1l xna7n (ye)
   prox.past 3sAbs-1sErg-SEE WOMAN (THE)
   m-6-u7l
   prox.past-3sAbs-ARRIVE HERE
   'I saw the woman who arrived'

(36) 'a 6-w-1l b'u7y (ye)
   prox.past 3sAbs-1sErg-SEE RAG (THE)
   n-6-x-tx'aj xna7n
   prox.past-3sAbs-3sErg-WASH WOMAN
   'I saw the rag that the woman washed'

(37) 4a 6-w-1l xna7n (ye)
   prox.past 3sAbs-1sErg-SEE WOMAN (THE)
   n-6-tx'aj-oon b'u7y
   prox.past-3sAbs-WASH-suff RAG
   'I saw the woman who washed the rag'
(38) na7 m-t-ø-u71
WHO prox.past-3sAbs-ARRIVE HERE
'who arrived?'

(39) na7 m-t-ø-ø-b'iy
WHO prox.past-3sAbs-3sErg-HIT MAN
'who did the man hit?'

(40) na7 m-t-ø-b'iy-oon
WHO prox.past-3sAbs-HIT-antipass MAN
'who hit the man?'

It can be seen from this that in addition to morphological ergativity, Aguacatec can also be said to have some ergative syntax since the syntactic rules of clefting, relative clause formation, and WH-question may apply to absolutive NPs but not to ergative NPs. (Using the terminology of Dixon 1979, one could say that these rules operate on an "S/O pivot" rather than an "S/A pivot".)

In addition to the focus antipassive construction, Aguacatec also has a true antipassive, which is usually called the "absolutive antipassive". For example, corresponding to

(41) ja g-e-tzok' sii7
prox.past 3sAbs-2sErg-CUT FIREWOOD
'you cut firewood'

there is

(42) ja kxh-tzook'-oon t-etz sii7
prox.past 2sAbs-CUT-antipass 3sErg-POSS FIREWOOD
'you cut (on) the firewood'

Here the ergative A in (41) becomes an absolutive S in (32), and the absolutive O in (41) becomes an oblique patient in (42) introduced by the dative relational noun tz- -etz (many speakers, at least some of
the time, use the relational noun tz- -e7 ('on, at, with, about' rather than the dative). This oblique patient is optional so that the absolutive antipassive may be used to form an intransitive sentence with agent S and no patient in the same way that the passive can be used to form an intransitive sentence with patient S and no agent. The verb form in (42) is nearly the same as that used in the focus antipassive, the only difference being that the root vowel of most non-derived transitive verb roots lengthens in the absolutive antipassive (there are a few transitive roots that do not do this for some reason). With derived transitive verb stems the focus and absolutive antipassive verb forms are always indistinguishable. When the patient is present in the absolutive antipassive construction, as it is in (43), the meaning is usually slightly different from the meaning of the regular transitive sentence. This difference usually seems to involve the fact that the result of the action on the patient has not been fully realized, as suggested by the use of the preposition on in the translation of (42). With a few transitive verbs, the absolutive antipassive form without patient may take on a reflexive meaning, as in

(43) iæ  ø-tx'aaaj-oon
    prox.past 3sAbs-WASH-antipass
    'he washed (things/himself)'

The passive in Aguacatec has two forms with transitive verb roots, as shown in

(44) iæ  ø-b'iy-1-i j  yaa j aw-a7n
    prox.past 3sAbs-HIT-pass-intr.suff MAN 2sErg-AGENT
    'the man was hit by you'

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The difference between the two forms seems to be that the form in -ʃ (or -ch with roots containing an ʃ) emphasizes the result of the action on the patient (or perhaps takes the patient's "point of view"), whereas the form in -x puts more emphasis on the fact that the action was caused by an agent regardless of whether or not one is explicitly mentioned. Both forms may optionally take an oblique agent phrase as shown in (44-5). The relational noun -saq'un (lit. 'work') may be used in place of -a7n in the agent phrase. With derived transitive verb stems, there is only one passive form:

(46) ʃ-a ʃ-k'aay-ij aw-a7n
prox.past 3sAbs-SELL-intr.suff 2sErg-AGENT
'it was sold by you'

from

(47) ʃ-a ʃ-a-k'aay
prox.past 3sAbs-2sErg-SELL
'you sold it'

(the stem is derived from the noun k'a7y 'sale').

Another common syntactic construction in Aguacatec takes the form of a main clause, usually with a finite verb, followed by a complement clause with a nominalized verb form. This complement clause is introduced by tan, a reduced form of the relational noun t-a7n (3sErg-AGENT) which is always used when this relational noun is followed by its "object" NP. All such nominalized clauses introduced by tan will here be referred to as "purpose clauses". Some examples of purpose clauses
(48) ja chin-a-chaq
    prox.past 1sAbs-2sErg-ORDER
    tan x-tx'aj-l-e7n b'u7y
    Comp 3sErg-WASH-passive-infinitive RAG
    'You ordered me to wash the rag'

(49) ja n-o7k tan wa-a7n
    prox.past 1sAbs-Enter Comp EAT-infin
    'I began to eat'

(50) chin-b'een tan 2-loq'-ch-e7n txilikun
    1sAbs-GO Comp 3sErg-BUY-pass-infin BEAN
    'I will go to buy beans'

(51) ja q-iky' junt tiir
    prox.past 1pAbs-PASS ANOTHER TIME
    tan q-opoon-e7n
    Comp 1pAbs-ARRIVE THERE-infin
    jalen Antigua
    until Antigua
    'We passed on again in order to reach Antigua'
    (H. McArthur 1979:109)

(52) 6'qa-k'wuch-e7 t-etz
    3sAbs-1pErg-PRAY-potential 3sErg-POSS
    qa-taaj tan xh-ch'ee-y-aal
    1pErg-FATHER Comp 3sErg-HELP-active infinitive
    o7
    1pPro(Abs)
    'we will pray (it) to God so that he will help us'

(53) 6'qa-k'wuch-e7 t-etz qa-taaj
    3sAbs-1pErg-PRAY-pot 3sErg-POSS 1pErg-FATHER
    tan qa-ch'ee-y-e7n
    Comp 1pErg-HELP-(pass)infin
    'we will pray (it) to God so that he will help us'
It can be seen in these examples that in purpose clauses, both A's and S's may be deleted by EQUI (as in 48, 49, 50, 53) if they are coreferential with a matrix clause S (as in 49 and 50), a matrix clause O (as in 48), or a matrix clause indirect object (as in 53). Examples (51) and (52) show that in at least some of these cases, EQUI is optional. If there is no coreferential S, O, or indirect object in the matrix clause (cf. 54), then EQUI cannot apply, even if there is a coreferential A (as in 54) [6].

Another thing to note about these examples is the form of the verbs in the purpose clauses. As noted above, purpose clauses have nominalized verb forms; however, there are three different nominalizations which appear in exx. (48-54). When the A of a transitive purpose clause is deleted by EQUI, as in (48, 50, and 53), the verb takes a form called the "passive infinitive". Passive infinitives are always derived with the nominalizing suffix -e7n and have a possessive prefix coreferential with the underlying O. Furthermore, those passive infinitives which are derived from transitive verb roots (as opposed to derived transitive verb stems such as the one in 53) show an overt passive suffix (e.g. -l in 48 and -ch in 50). Thus, it appears that the transitive purpose clause has been passivized with the underlying O "advancing" to S and the underlying A being deleted. Since the derived passive intransitive verb form is nominalized, its S is crossreferenced by an ergative possessive prefix. When the A of a transitive purpose clause is not
deleted by EQUI, another nominalized verb form may be used. This is called the "active infinitive", derived by a suffix -WVL, as seen in (52) and (54). This is the same verb form that was seen in (10) and (11). The ergative possessive prefix crossreferences the A, and the O is crossreferenced by an absolutive morpheme following the verb. Actually, purpose clauses like those in (52) and (54) seem to be relatively rare. More often one finds that the passive infinitive is used here too; however, since the underlying A is not deleted by EQUI, it appears as an oblique agent phrase. An example of this, corresponding to (54), is (cf. line 80 of appended text):

(55) 3qa-\~toy-e7
    3sAbs-1pErg-FIND-pot WAY comp
    xub's-e7n  q-a7n
    3sErg-TRICK-(pass)infin 1pErg-AGENT
    'we will find a way to trick him'
    (lit. 'we will find a way for his being tricked by us.')

When the purpose clause is intransitive, as in (49) and (51), the verb takes a form called the "intransitive infinitive". In most cases, the intransitive infinitive is identical in form to the nominalized verb forms seen in (8) and (9), which are called "intransitive verbal nouns". However, there are a few intransitive verbs which have irregular infinitives but regular verbal nouns, e.g.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verbal noun</th>
<th>infinitive</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-wit 'sleep'</td>
<td>wit-e7n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-waan 'eat'</td>
<td>waan-e7n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>waatl</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>waa7n (Chalchitec)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>waa7a7n (Aguacatec dialect)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If the $S$ is not deleted by EQUi, it is crossreferenced on the intransitive infinitive by means of an ergative possessive prefix (as in 51). If the $S$ is deleted by EQUi, there is no prefix on the infinitive (as in 49).

It can be seen, then, that since in purpose clauses A's and S's are both crossreferenced by ergative prefixes and O's are crossreferenced by absolutive morphemes, we have here another environment for split ergativity in Aguacatec. And it appears that this apparent nominitive/accusative verb agreement in purpose clauses correlates with the fact that the syntactic rule of EQUi treats S's and A's alike as EQUi targets in purpose clauses. It is also interesting to note that, as was mentioned before, S's and O's (as well as indirect objects), but not A's, in the matrix clause are possible EQUi controllers. Thus, the rule of EQUi treats S's and O's alike in the matrix clause; and this seems to correlate with the ergative/absolutive verb agreement system in matrix clauses. There appears, therefore, to be a correlation between morphological ergativity or accusativity and the way in which the syntactic rule of EQUi treats A's, S's, and O's in these constructions. It is not the case, however, that morphological ergativity and accusativity always correlate with syntactic ergativity and accusativity in Aguacatec. For example, it would be possible for a purpose clause to be embedded in a matrix clause which was itself a time adverbial clause embedded within another clause. If the time adverbial clause were in the remote past tense, its verb, as we saw before in (8-11) would be nominalized and the verb agreement would be nominative/accusative. Nevertheless, the rule of EQUi would work in the same way as was seen in
(48–55). An example of this is

(56) ye t-opoon-eŋn yaaŋ
THE 3sErg-ARRIVE THERE-intrans.v.n MAN
tan wa-aŋn
comp EAT-intr.infin
'when the man arrived to eat,...'

Here it can be seen that in spite of the fact that the S of the matrix clause is crossreferenced by an ergative prefix (because of the nominative/accusative verb agreement in this environment) it still controls the EQUI deletion of the S of the purpose clause, just as it would if it showed the "normal" ergative/absolutive verb agreement (cf. 49) [7].

Another element found associated with verbs in Aguacatec is the directional. Directionals function much as do post verbal particles in English. There is a set of intransitive verbs of "motion" in Aguacatec, with each of which is associated a special directional particle. Some of these verbs and their associated particles are shown in Table 2. In the imperfective aspects (incomplete or potential) the directional element takes the form of one of the directional particles placed after the verb, as seen in (57) and (58).

(57) na ˙s-tz'iiŋ' kuŋ
incompl 3sAbs-3sErg-WRITE DOWN
'he is writing it down,'

(58) ˙s-tz'iiŋ'-eŋ kuŋ
3sAbs-3sErg-WRITE-pot DOWN
'he will write it down'

In the perfective aspect (that is, in the various past tenses), the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>intransitive verb of motion</th>
<th>directional particle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-b'een 'to go'</td>
<td>niin 'thither'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-saaj 'to come'</td>
<td>tzaaj 'hither'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-eel 'to leave'</td>
<td>leen 'leaving, &quot;out&quot;'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ook 'to enter'</td>
<td>keen 'entering, &quot;in&quot;'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-kuu? 'to descend'</td>
<td>ku7n 'descending, &quot;down&quot;'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-kyaaq 'to stay'</td>
<td>kyeen 'staying'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-iky' (Chal.; Agc. dial.:</td>
<td>ky'een 'passing'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-iik') 'to pass'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2

directional element takes the form of one of the intransitive verbs of motion showing absolutive agreement with the S, if the sentence is intransitive, or with the O if the sentence is transitive. The main verb follows and, if transitive, takes the form of the active infinitive, which shows ergative agreement with the A:

(59) \( \text{ja} \quad \text{b'-kuu?} \quad \text{a-tz'iib'-aal} \)
\text{prox.past 3sabs-DESCEND 2sErg-WRITE-act.inf}
'you wrote it down'

(60) \( \text{ja} \quad \text{kxh-b'een w-uky'-aal} \)
\text{prox.past 2sAbs-GO 1sErg-CARRY-act.inf}
'I carried you off'

(61) \( \text{akxh-je7} \quad \text{trimp-uj} \)
\text{2sAbs-RISE FALL-intr.suff.}
'you fell (suddenly)'
(or maybe better: 'you up and fell')
The last example shows that directionals may have certain idiomatic uses. When the constructions shown in (59-61) occur in the environments in which nominalized verb forms are used, the directional element is nominalized and shows ergative agreement with the S or O:

(62) ye ḋ-kwe-e7n a-tz'iib'-aal
    THE 3sErg-DESCEND-intr.v.n 2sErg-WRITE-act.inf
    'when you wrote it down...'

(63) ye a-b'een-e7n w-uky'-aal
    THE 2sErg-GO-intr.v.n 1sErg-CARRY-act.inf
    'when I carried you off,...'

(64) ye a-je-e7n trimp-uj
    THE 2sErg-RISE-intr.v.n FALL-intr.suff
    'when you fell...'

Note that in sentences like (62-64), A's, S's, and O's all show ergative agreement. With this in mind it would seem that Dixon's (1979:76-8, 97-8 n. 6) notion of an "extended ergative" system more accurately reflects what goes on in at least some of the types of subordinate clauses which are environments for split ergativity in Aguacatec than does the notion of "nominative/accusative" system.

Quotations are often followed by a special quotative verb chi7 `he says; it is said'. When the subject follows this verb, the j is usually dropped:

(65) ḋ-chi Lu7
    3sAbs-SAY PEDRO
    'said Pedro'

The subject shows absolutive agreement with this verb; however, if the absolutive prefix has a vowel, the stress uncharacteristically goes on
this vowel, and the $i_{(\cdot)}$ of the stem is dropped, as in

(66) che7-ch
   3pAbs-SAY
   'they said'

This verb is never marked for tense/aspect; however, if necessary, the
tense/aspect can be indicated by using the appropriate form of the verb
$-b'\text{\textbar}an$ 'to do' [8]:

(67) che7-ch  $\mathbf{\digamma}^{-\mathbf{\digamma}}-b'\text{\textbar}an$
   3pAbs-SAY  3sAbs-3sErg-DO
   'they said' (indefinite past)

(68) go7-ch   $\mathbf{\digamma}^{-\mathbf{\digamma}}-b'\text{\textbar}an$
   1pAbs-SAY  future-3sAbs-3sErg-DO
   'we will say'

When chi$(_{(\cdot)}$ is followed by the particle $tzun$ 'so, then', they combine to
form $stzun$ 'he said then'.

Scope of the Present Investigation

Having explained some of the basic terminology that I will be
using, I will now turn to the problem at hand. The present investiga-
tion was undertaken in order to see if certain syntactic and morphologi-
cal phenomena often found in Aguacatec texts, but not very often found
in sentence elicitation, could be explained from a functional point of
view. In particular, the following points were investigated:

1. The use of the particle $-tz$
2. The use of the genitive relational noun -eetz in contexts where it seems to have nothing to do with possession

3. The use of the "definite article" ye

4. The notions of "subjecthood" and "transitivity"

5. The use of certain subordinate clause verb forms in clauses that do not seem to be obviously subordinate.

The results of some of these investigations were more successful than others, as will be seen.

Most of these phenomena have already been discussed in the literature. For example, numbers 2 and 3 in the above list have been discussed by Harry S. McArthur at the third Mayan Workshop in Coban, Guatemala in July, 1978. McArthur, using data from AU, AtTx, and JKTyTx', describes the use of -eetz and ye roughly according to the chart shown in Table 3 [9]. Thus thematic participants (major participants which are "themes") are marked by -eetz. Themes are said to be either local (within a sentence or clause) or global (over a larger stretch of discourse). Minor participants, which are neither thematic nor active participants, are marked with ye. Major participants may also be marked with ye in occurrences where they have not yet come to dominate the action.

There seem to be a number of problems with this, however. For one thing, it is not clear exactly how the terms "theme" and "active participant" are being used. The term "theme", of course, has been used in a variety of ways by different authors. Halliday (1967), for example, uses the term to mean something like the point of departure of a sen-


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic Participant</th>
<th>Active Participant</th>
<th>Non-Active Participant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Erg-eetz + noun</strong></td>
<td><strong>Erg-eetz + noun</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subject</strong> (=agent S ?) of event clause</td>
<td><strong>Direct object</strong> (= patient S or O)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-Thematic Participant</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Noun</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ye + noun</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Direct object</strong> (= patient S or O), agent in passive construction</td>
<td><strong>Direct object</strong> (= patient S or O), instrument, indirect object</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3

tence (which for Halliday conveniently turns out to always be the first element in a sentence, at least in English). McArthur does not seem to be using the term in this sense, however, since McArthur's themes do not always come at the beginning of a sentence nor does every sentence have one. Kuno (1975) defines theme as "what the sentence (or discourse) is about." One could imagine that many of McArthur's examples of themes fit this definition; however, in some cases, such as in example (89) below, it is not clear that the constituent marked with -eetz is either "the point of departure" or "what the clause is about". While Halliday seems to believe that every sentence has a theme, Kuno (1975:278) claims that there are, in fact, sentences without themes such as those which he calls "presentational sentences", e.g. 'Up jumped a rabbit.' Kuno
further claims (1975:326) that Halliday's notion of theme is completely independent of discourse functions and thus is a useless concept. Chafe (1976:28), on the other hand, believes that the term "theme", in any sense, is superfluous. Kuno's definition of theme seems to correspond to Chafe's definition of "subject". Also note that what Kuno calls "theme" is called by some writers "topic"; however, in this paper the term "topic" will be used to refer only to those phenomena which Chafe (1976:49-53) calls "topics, English style" (i.e., constituents which are fronted and contrastive), "topics, Chinese style" (i.e., the framework within which the main predication holds, a phenomenon found in many "topic-prominent" languages), and another kind of "topic" mentioned by Chafe, which seems to be something like a "premature subject", found in some other types of topic-prominent languages like Caddo.

As for whether or not the term "theme" is superfluous, it seems that there is a sense in which many kinds of discourses are "about" somebody or something. Of this there can be little doubt, and the person or thing that a discourse might be about might just as well be called "theme" as anything else. What really seems to be at issue, however, is whether or not such a notion of theme is ever overtly manifested in the grammar of any given language; and if it is overtly manifested, is it independent of all other grammatical categories found in the language. In many languages, such as English, this notion of theme seems to have been "grammaticalized" and is overtly manifested as "subject" as Chafe shows. In such languages, then, the term theme may indeed be superfluous since it seems to be pretty much subsumed under the notion of subject (though Kuno may disagree with this, since his
themes are not always subjects). I would like to keep an open mind about this, however, and not automatically assume that all languages have grammaticalized theme as subject. There may be languages which have not grammaticalized theme as subject; and among such languages there may be some in which the notion of theme is overtly manifested in some other way in the grammar [10], and there may be others in which the notion of theme is not overtly manifested in the grammar at all.

We might assume, then, that McArthur is using the term "theme" in some sense like "what the sentence (or discourse) is about" (since that definition seems to fit his use of the term a little better than does Halliday's) and that "active participant" means something akin to (potential?) agent (it is not clear how the "direct object", as seen in the lower left hand box of Table 3, fits in here). But even if this is so, there seem to be some even more serious problems with McArthur's interpretation. For example, in the appended text, the main character, L'uu7 Tzuu7, is introduced in line 4 and named in line 5. He seems to continue to be the (global?) theme in the assumed sense of the word through at least line 11. In these lines he appears as the grammatical subject, and also often as the semantic agent, of a number of transitive and intransitive clauses. Yet he is not once marked by -eetz until line 13. However, previously in line 13, the a'pyaa; have been marked by -eetz, thus apparently indicating that they are the theme. In fact, it does seem that the a'pyaa; which were first introduced in line 6, perhaps are the (local?) theme in line 12 and perhaps continue to be the theme through at least the first part of line 13. However, the a'pyaa; in line 12 are not marked by -eetz but are, in fact, marked by ye, which
according to McArthur indicates a non-active non-theme. And this in spite of the fact that the a'pyaa' are the subject of the intransitive time adverbial clause and of the transitive main clause, agent of those same clauses, and furthermore "what those clauses are about". While it is true that the a'pyaa', have not yet come to dominate the action in line 12, thus perhaps making the use of ye appropriate, it nevertheless does not seem to make much sense to say that the a'pyaa', marked by ye in line 12, are not the theme of that line (but then what is?), and then become the theme, marked by -eetz, in line 13 (suddenly dominating the action?) only to be superseded by the reemergence of Lu7 Tzuu7 as the theme, being marked by -eetz for the first time, near the end of that same line. And in any case, to claim that this is in fact what is going on here only because it would then agree with the scheme in Table 3 would be to argue in circles. What would be desirable would be an independent and well motivated way of determining what things like themes, active participants, etc. are and then see to what extent they can be correlated with morphemes like -eetz and ye. I will not actually attempt this at this point; however, impressionistically it seems that while McArthur's treatment does perhaps account for at least some of the data seen in the three texts that he referred to in his presentation, it does not work in general.

Number 1 in the above list, the use of the particle tz, is discussed in L. McArthur (1979). According to this analysis (L. McArthur 1979:221),

Aguacatec discourse in general organizes information according to whether or not it is considered to be of primary interest. The information of primary interest constitutes the MAINLINE of the
discourse, as opposed to information which is BACKGROUND, or supportive, in nature. In addition to the distinction between mainline and background information, there is a further category which consists of information which is HIGHLIGHTED by the addition of the -tz affix, and which intersects with the other types of information.

The disparity in frequency of occurrence of -tz in different texts can be attributed to the difference in orientation of varying discourses. A narrative which is event-oriented may have -tz marking almost every predicate, functioning as a type of progression marker highlighting succeeding events which form the BACKBONE of the narrative and which are to be built upon later. Other discourses, which are not primarily event-oriented, or are explanatory in nature, have relatively few occurrences of -tz.

Thus, in narrative texts, such as the one appended to this paper, the "events" of the narrative are said to constitute the "mainline" of the discourse. Mainline events are further divided into those which are of "primary interest" and those which are of "secondary interest". This difference between events of primary and secondary interest is generally signalled by the tense/aspect marking of the verb and is discussed in greater detail in H. McArthur (1979) [11]. Opposed to the mainline events is the "background" information. According to this analysis, tz may appear in a primary or secondary mainline event clause in order to "highlight" it, indicating that the event is one which "moves the story along" and which will be "built upon" later. These highlighted mainline events are said to form the "backbone" of the narrative. Tz also occasionally occurs in a clause giving background information in order to highlight it as "crucial background material". In other discourse genres, tz is not used as much as it is in narratives, and its function is somewhat different also; however, in all cases tz can be said to indicate a clause which is being "highlighted" for one reason or another.
While this analysis seems to work reasonably well for the data which McArthur presents, we might note a few problems with it. For example, consider lines 21-24 of the appended text. Pedro is trying to trick the merchants into believing that he has a magic pitcher that will boil water, roast meat, heat tortillas, etc. without having to build a fire. Unbeknownst to the merchants, however, Pedro has in fact built a fire under the ground on which he places his pitcher. In line 21 we are told that Pedro put his pitcher on the ground. This event seems to be one which advances the action (the stage is now set for Pedro to fool the merchants) and also seems to be one which is built upon later (this act allows the fire to heat the pitcher, thus enabling Pedro to perform the tricks described in lines 24ff). Thus, we should predict that this clause will contain the particle tz; however, inspection of line 21 shows that it does not. Line 22 seems to be background information; it does not advance the action; we already know that the fire is underneath, and this line is merely reminding us of that fact. Thus, we would predict, correctly in this case, that this clause would not contain the particle tz. The purpose of line 23 is debatable. It is not clear why Pedro piled a little sand around the pitcher; and thus, it is difficult to determine whether or not this clause advances the action or not. Certainly it is not something that is built upon later. It can be seen, however, that this clause does contain the particle tz. If this clause were intended to be background information, we would conclude, according to McArthur's theory, that tz is marking this clause as crucial background information. However, it seems clear that the information being given here is in no sense crucial. On the other hand, if it is the case that this clause is a mainline event, we would have to
conclude that tz is highlighting this clause as something that advances the action. Yet it is not clear why this clause would be advancing the action more than line 21, which we saw does not contain tz. Moving on to line 24, it seems that this line does advance the action (the fact that the pitcher appears to boil without being heated is part of Pedro's plot to trick the merchants), and yet it does not contain tz. Other problematical examples of this type can be found throughout the appended text. In the following section, an alternative analysis for the use of tz will be proposed, and then I will compare this alternative analysis with that of McArthur to see to what extent the two analyses can be reconciled.

It can be seen, then, that there are some problems with the analyses that have been proposed for some of these phenomena. We must therefore look into these and the other above mentioned matters somewhat more carefully in order to find a more adequate, and hopefully less circular, treatment. In what follows we shall consider each of the five phenomena mentioned above in turn.

The Particle Tz

In looking at texts in Aguacatec one often finds the enclitic particle tz appended to certain words, though this particle seldom, if ever, occurs in eliciting sentences from an informant. When examples of it are pointed out to them in texts, native speakers generally claim that the particle does not have to be there but otherwise seem to be unable to explain what difference it makes if it is there. If nothing else this seems to indicate at least that this particle is optional.
Though at first sight it seems to occur "scattered here and there" throughout a text, it is actually placed regularly according to a simple rule. Given that simple sentences consist of one or more of the following elements:

\[(69) \text{(PARTICLES)} + \text{PREDICATE} + \text{(PARTICLES)} + \{A\} + \{S\} + \text{(PARTICLES)} + \text{(+O) (+OTHER CONSTITUENTS)}}\]

the particle t\_z, if it occurs at all, will be appended to the rightmost element of (69) excluding "OTHER CONSTITUENTS". The appearance of being scattered here and there is due to the fact that some of the elements of (69) are optional and some may not appear overtly even if present. For example, an A, though obligatory in a transitive sentence, may be pro-nominalized, in which case it appears only as an agreement marker on the verb. All of this suggests that whatever the function of t\_z may be, it probably refers to the clause as a whole and not just to the constituent to which it is cliticized.

As a first approximation to the function of t\_z, consider its use in the following excerpt from the appended text (lines 6-12) [12]:

\[(70a) \text{ b'een tilool Lu7 ye teele7n tzaaj} \]
\[\text{HE-SAW-IT PEDRO THE ITS-LEAVING HITHER} \]
\[\text{chichoojo7n kob'ox ajpyaaj.} \]
\[\text{THER-PAY SOME MERCHANT} \]
\[\text{'Pedro saw some merchants(travelling salesmen) receiving their pay.'} \]

\[(70b) \text{ xe7te7n tzun-tz tan itxumle7n} \]
\[\text{HIS-STARTING THEN-tz TO ITS-BEING-THOUGHT} \]
\[\text{juun tajzza7q1,} \]
\[\text{ONE HIS-IDEA} \]
\[\text{'So starting to have an idea,'} \]
(70c) niin tzun b'een 117-tz tan k'otle7n
AND THEN HE-WENT HE-tz TO ITS-BEING-DUG
juun jul tzi b'ee7;
ONE HOLE AT-EDGE ROAD
'he went to dig a hole at the side of the road:'

(70d) niin kyaaj kyeen tq'ool q'aaq'-tz tk'uu71 jul
AND HE-LEFT-IT FIRE-tz IN-IT HOLE
'and he left a fire inside the hole:'

(70e) kyaaj kyeen tq'ool sii7-tz;
HE-LEFT-IT FIREWOOD-tz
'he left firewood:'

(70f) niin tzun paqxij-tz.
AND THEN HE-RETURNED-tz
'and then he returned.'

(70g) ej ma ye kyopoone7n ye
AND WHEN THE THEIR-ARRIVING-THERE THE
e7 ajpyaaj qaale7 xmuqe7-t
plural MERCHANT WHERE IT-WAS-BURIED-particle
ye q'aaq',
THE FIRE
'And when the merchants arrived where the
fire had been buried,'

(70h) niin tzun e7kuu7-tz
AND THEN THEY-DESCENDED-tz
'they sat down.'

Here it can be seen that the protagonist of the story, Lu7 Tzuu7 'Pedro
Tecomate', is the subject of each of the principal clauses in (70a-g)
(where "subject" is taken to mean 'either A or S'). Furthermore it can
be seen that tz appears in each of these clauses except the first one.
In (70g) the subject changes to 'the merchants' and tz does not appear.
In (70h), however, the merchants are still the subject and tz reappears.
Thus, it seems that tz functions as a "same subject" marker. This, in
fact, accounts for most of the occurrences of tz remembering, of course,
that native speakers judge its use to be optional and, thus, not every instance of same subject is marked.

There are, however, some occurrences of tz which cannot be characterized this way. For example, in the same text (line 43), after telling how the merchants went crazy over what they saw, we find [13]:

(71) tooke7n tzun chiyool ajpyaaj-tz
ITS-ENTERING THEN THEIR-WORD MERCHANT-tz
te7: ABOUT-IT
'So the merchants, starting to discuss it,...'

Here, although we continue to talk about the merchants, tz cannot be interpreted as indicating same subject because ajpyaaj is not the subject but rather the possessor of the subject chiyool, which is here introduced for the first time. This suggests that perhaps tz does not mark same subject but rather same "theme", where theme is taken to be something like "the main participant that the discourse is about". As might be expected, the theme is usually the subject; however, there are some cases such as in (71) where this is not the case.

Another problematical example is the following (from N):

(72) ej niin tzun b'een naawloon tan
AND THEN HE-WENT NAAWLOON TO
je7se7n tzaaj choklaat xe
ITS-BEING-RAISED HITHER CHOCOLATE IN
chikoo7k ye eequm kanteel
THEIR-CRATES THE CARRIER CANDLE
niin kuu7 q'aaq'-tz ta7n
AND IT-DESCENDED FIRE-tz BY-HIM
'And so the "naawloon" went to take the chocolate from the crates of the candle carriers, and he made a fire.'
(lit. '...fire descended by him.')
Here the subject of the last clause is g'aaq 'fire', and tz is appended to this. However, this is the first time that the fire has been mentioned; therefore, tz cannot be marking g'aaq as same subject. However, it seems clear that the subject of the first clause, naawloon, is the theme of that clause, and it seems likely that it continues to be the theme of the second clause in spite of the fact that it is not the subject but rather an oblique agent. Thus, once again tz can be taken to mean same theme. Another similar example is (73) from the beginning of AU.

(73a) Pwees i b'an chij
WELL Focus IT-DID-IT IT-IS-SAID
at juun yaaj xa7q
THERE-IS ONE MAN HE-WENT-OFF
tan joylein kaab'il wunaq txuk.
Comp FIND-IT ITS-HONEY PERSON ANIMAL (=BEE)
'Well, it is said that what happened was that there was a man who went off to look for honey.'

(73b) Niin b'e'en tk'y'aal juun tzuu7
AND HE-TOOK-IT ONE TECOMATE
t-etz ku7ib'il ye kaab'.
3sErg-Genitive ITS-STORAGE THE HONEY
'And he took a tecomate gourd in which to keep the honey.'

(73c) Tpoone7n ii7-tz xo7l
HIS-ARRIVING-THERE 3sPro-tz AMONG-IT
xtzee7
WOODS
'Arriving in the woods'

(73d) nooje7n kyeen tzun juun
ITS-FILLING STAYING THEN ONE
wutziile7n kaab'-tz,
BIG HONEY-tz
'((and) then having found a large amount of honey,'
Here it seems clear that the man is the theme throughout this entire paragraph, and indeed every clause from (73c), which is the fourth clause in a row to have the man as subject, until the end of the paragraph contain tz except for (73e). What is interesting here is that in (73d) and (73f), even though these clauses contain tz, the man does not overtly appear at all although he must be understood to be the agent in both cases. Nevertheless, given that the man is the theme throughout the entire paragraph, it does not seem unreasonable to assume that tz in (73d) and (73f) indicates that the man continues to be the theme in these clauses in spite of the fact that he is not explicitly mentioned.

There is actually nothing strange about this considering that there are analogous situations in English. For instance, those clauses which have undergone "EQUI-NP Deletion" as well as some of those which have undergone "GAPPING" are "understood" as having the same subject as the previous clause in spite of the fact that no subject is explicitly mentioned.

We might consider another possible interpretation of these data, however. It might be that tz does indicate same subject but refers to deep subject rather than surface subject. This could perhaps account for all of the examples we have seen as long as we assume sufficiently
abstract deep structures and rules for deleting underlying subjects. Alternatively, we could take tz to mean same agent. However, example (74) should show that tz must be taken to mean same theme.

(74a) poro xhchiwutz niin ajpyaa Languages BUT IN-FRONT-OF-THEM MERCHANT THE jee7n xtx'aanuul tilb' t-etz chi7b'aj ITS-ROASTING 3sErg-Gen MEAT tzwutz ye xaaaru7; IN-FRONT-OF-IT THE PITCHER 'But it was right in front of the merchants that the meat roasted before the pitcher:'

(74b) xhchiwutz niin ye tooke7n xtxooliil HIS-BEGINNING-TO-LINE-IT-UP Lu7 ye 7waj te7; xaaaru7 PEDRO THE TORTILLA ABOUT-IT PITCHER 'it was right in front of them that Pedro began to line up the tortillas around the pitcher:'

(74c) xhchiwutz niin ajpyaa tz ye jee7n MERCHANT-tz THE ITS-RISING sib'eel t-etz 7waj tan stz'e7e7n. ITS-SMOKE 3sErg-Gen TORTILLA BY-IT ITS-BURNING 'it was right in front of the merchants that smoke came up from the tortillas from their burning.'

Here the tz in (74c) cannot be taken to mean same subject nor same agent since a'pyaa' is neither a subject nor an agent at any level but rather is the head of a locative noun phrase. Nevertheless, a'pyaa' does seem to be the theme throughout (74). Therefore, we can conclude that there is a notion of discourse theme which is relevant to Aguacatec syntax and which is distinct from, though closely related to, the notion of subject. Furthermore, we can conclude that tz is an optional marker of the fact that a clause has the same theme as the previous clause.
Even this characterization of tz is not completely correct. We should note four complications that must be dealt with in any complete treatment of the use of this particle:

(1) It is not always true that tz means 'same theme as the previous clause' since certain types of clauses are typically ignored in looking back at the 'previous clause'. Some instances of this can be found in the examples we have already looked at. One type of clause that is ignored is an object complement clause. Thus, when tz appears in (70b), it ignores the preceding object complement ye teele7n tzaa; chichoo'ø7n kob'or a'pyaa'; in (70a) and instead refers back to the theme of the matrix clause b'een tilool Lu7. In the same way, purpose clauses such as tan k'otle7n 'uun 'ul tzi b'ee7 in (70c) are ignored. Examples of this can also be seen in (70b), (72), and (73). Though adverbial clauses are generally not ignored in this way, they are ignored if they are embedded within another subordinate clause. Thus, the adverbial clause (70g) contains another adverbial clause qale7 xmuqe7t ye g'aaq' embedded within it and is itself embedded within the matrix clause (70h). The tz in (70h) ignores the most deeply embedded clause in (70g) but not the less deeply embedded clause e'i ma ye kyopone7n ye e7 a'pyaa'. All of this suggests that tz may operate under some kind of "command" type constraint such as has been used in explaining pronominal anaphora in English; however, this needs further study.

(2) The second thing to note is that direct quotations are generally ignored in the same way as the clause types just discussed (see footnote [13]). Sometimes tz occurs in the quote formula formed with chi'. An example of this can be seen in line 14. Here the tz in the
quote formula stzun Lu7 niin-tz..., indicates that the theme of the quote formula, Lu7, is the same as the theme introduced at the end of the line preceding the quoted material, that is, line 13. Note that the theme of the quoted material in line 14 is not Lu7. When tz appears in the clause following a stretch of dialogue, as in line 108, it indicates that the theme of that clause, in this case, the merchants, is the same as the theme of the clause which preceded all of the quoted material (including the quote formulas), in this case, line 104. Note that the merchants as a group are not the theme of any of the intervening quoted material nor in any of the quote formulas in lines 105-108. A similar example has already been seen in lines 36-43.

(3) The third thing to note is that tz does not always refer back to the theme of the previous non-ignored clause. In some cases a clause with a particular theme may introduce a new theme near the end and then the next clause may contain tz if its theme is the same as this newly introduced theme. An example may be seen in:

(75a) niin kuu7 tq'ool-tz wi AND HE-PUT-IT-DOWN-tz ON
txa7x ch'im tzwutz ye GREEN GRASS IN-FRONT-OF-IT THE
xaaruu7 xhchiwutz e7 PITCHER IN-FRONT-OF-THEM plural
ajyaaaj.
MERCHANT
'And he put it on the grass before
the pitcher in front of the merchants.'

(75b) na chitze7een niin e7 THEY-WERE-LAUGHING THITHER plural
ajyaaaj-tz te7j MERCHANT-tz ABOUT-HIM
'The merchants were laughing at him.'
Here, tz in (75a) indicates that the theme of that clause, Lu7 Tzuu7, is the same as the theme of the previous clause. However, at the end of that clause, the a‘pyaa‘ merchants‘ are reintroduced; and tz appears again in (75b) indicating that the a‘pyaa‘ continue as the theme of that clause. Judy Aissen has suggested to me that it might make some sense to say that themes are not only something that clauses (or sentences?) may have but also something that adverbials may have. This would relate to the fact that (75b) contains the “same theme particle” tz even though the a‘pyaa‘ were not the theme in (75a) but rather were reintroduced in the locative phrase xhchiwutz e7 a‘pyaa‘. According to this view, then, (75b) has the particle tz because it has the same theme as the preceding “theme containing constituent”, namely, the locative adverbial phrase xhchiwutz e7 a‘pyaa‘. A similar situation was also seen in (74). This would then presumably also relate to the fact that adverbial clauses, as opposed to most other kinds of subordinate clauses, are not ignored in looking for the antecedent of tz. If there is some truth to all of this, it might not be just an idiosyncratic fact about Aguacatec. In Quechua, for example, there is a suffix -qa, which is usually called by quechuanists the “topic marker”. Its function seems to be to mark contrastiveness on the NP which is the theme and also at times to indicate a shift to a new theme. However, one also sometimes finds adverbs which take the suffix -qa, thus suggesting that in Quechua too there is some kind of connection between themes and adverbials.

(4) The fourth thing to note is the above mentioned optionality of tz. It appears that tz tends to be used more often when the possibility of ambiguity may arise and less often otherwise. Thus, it tends to be
used less often in non-third person discourse than in third person discourse with two or more participants mentioned. Even in this latter situation, tz seems to be used less often when the third person participants are consistently mentioned by name than when they are consistently pronominalized.

A full treatment of these details is beyond the scope of this paper, however. For our purposes here, it is sufficient to observe that the use of the particle tz is based on some notion of theme. Then, looking at examples of the use of this particle we can note some interesting facts about the distribution of themes in Aguacatec. We have seen that in most cases themes are subjects, that is, A's and S's. We have also seen that there are some cases where the theme is not the subject but rather some other constituent such as possessor of the subject as in (71), oblique agent as in (72), and head of a locative phrase as in (74). We have also seen a case in (73) where the theme does not even overtly appear in the clause, though it is understood to be the agent. What has never been found, however, in any of the texts that I have looked at, is a case where an O was a theme. Therefore, given that A's and S's are included in the set of possible themes, and O's are excluded, it can be said that themes in Aguacatec are distributed on a nominative/accusative basis. This would seem to argue against a claim made by Plank (1979) that O's are grammaticalized topics (which is his term for theme) in ergative constructions. In fact in Aguacatec, O's are the one thing that can never be themes (or "topics" in Plank's terminology).
Having decided that the particle tz is an optional same theme marker, it would be well to examine certain potential problems which have been heretofore glossed over. For one thing, it may have been noticed that the tz in the phrase 1 tzun b'antz 'so what happened was...' at the beginning of line 6 was conveniently ignored in the discussion of (70) above. Here the verb -b'en 'to do' seems to be used in its impersonal sense (see footnote [8]), and thus we might imagine that the "same theme" referred to by tz is the story as a whole, which was talked about in lines 1-3. If this is true, however, we are stuck with explaining how this tz in line 6 can "jump over" lines 4 and 5 in order to refer to something last mentioned in line 3. Note that that lines 4 and 5 do not fit under any of our previously defined categories of clauses that are ignored in looking for the antecedent of tz. Another possibility is that -b'en is not impersonal here and that what 1 tzun b'antz actually means here is 'so what he (= Pedro) did was...'. If this is so, then the same theme referred to by tz is Lu7 Tzuu7, introduced in line 5. This would then correlate perfectly with what has been said above about the use of tz. Though this use of tz definitely needs further study, it seems likely that the theory advocated here, that tz is an optional same theme marker, can accommodate this case also.

Another use of tz is seen in the word ji7tz. This word, which is probably derived from ji7-tz (3sPro-tz) as seen in line 8, is used when the argument of an equational predicate undergoes a kind of "left dislocation". It is thus often translated as 'he/she/it is' although it is certainly not a copulative verb. An example from LTzp is seen in (76).
Here we might say that tz indicates that the immediately preceding NP is to be understood as the subject (= theme) of the sentence i17 jwun paalee7 'he is a priest' though this would appear to be an exception to the rule for the placement of tz as shown in (69). However, arguments of stative predicates ordinarily follow the predicate, and here we see that both ye yaa; and i17tz precede the predicate jwun paalee7. We might consider the possibility, then, that i17tz in (76) is not only fronted but clefted. It was seen in examples (28-34) that clefted constituents are in a higher clause than the non-clefted part of the sentence. Thus, if i17tz is in fact a clefted constituent, it would be the predicate of its clause; and thus, the tz is in fact placed according to (69) and indicates that the theme of the clause containing i17tz, namely i17 (3sPro), is the same as the theme of the preceding clause, namely ye yaa; [14]. Some evidence for this may be seen in line 66 of the text:

(77) poro na 0-eel x-txuum Lu7
    BUT incompl 3sAbs-LEAVE 3sErg-THOUGHT PEDRO
t-eetz ye b'i17-tz na chi-txuum-uun
    3sErg-Gen THE WHAT-tz incompl 3pAbs-THINK-antipass
c7 ajpyaa; t-e7;
    plural MERCHANT 3sErg-SKIN

'but Pedro was imagining what the merchants were thinking of' (lit., 'but Pedro's thought was leaving of what the merchants were thinking about it.')

Here tz appears on the question word b'i17 'what' (note that, as shown in line 94, tz is not obligatory here). We saw in examples (38-40) that WH-question words are clefted; therefore, in the embedded question ye
b'17tz na chitxuumun e7 a'pyas tte7; the question word b'17-tz is a
clefted constituent and is the predicate of its clause. Thus, the
placement of tz conforms to (69) and indicates that the theme of that
clause, namely the questioned constituent, is the same as the theme
introduced at the end of the preceding clause, namely the antecedent of
b'17tz, the possessor of the relational noun teetz.

In the previous section I briefly discussed L. McArthur's (1979)
theory of the use of tz as a marker of "highlighting" and showed that
there were some problems with it. In this section I have proposed an
alternative theory of the use of tz as a same theme marker. I also
claimed that tz was optional and that its use was to some extent deter-
mined by the potential ambiguity that there may be among the referents
of anaphoric devices. There is a strong possibility, however, that
these two theories are not incompatible. We might hypothesize that tz
is in fact a same theme marker as proposed here but that it is not in
fact optional but rather used only in "highlighted" clauses. That is,
tz marks the fact that a clause is both "highlighted" and continues the
same theme. Thus, clauses which seem to continue the same theme but
which do not have tz have the form they do because they are not
highlighted. Clauses which appear to "move the story along" and which
are "built upon later" but which do not contain tz have the form they do
because they do not continue the same theme. It must be remembered,
however, that in this paper we are only talking about a certain type of
narrative text. McArthur claims that tz works somewhat differently in
other genres. An examination of the examples that she presents from
these other genres seems to indicate that tz functions at least in part
as a same theme marker in these cases too. However, there are two cases where this does not seem to be true. One is an example from a "personal history narrative" (L. McArthur 1979:229). This text, however, appears to contain a number of non-third person participants, and it may be that the morphemes which crossreference these non-third person participants are enough to keep straight who the theme is. Thus, it may be that the function of tz as a same theme marker may be suspended in such cases so that it may be used strictly for highlighting. The other case is an example of "procedural discourse" (L. McArthur 1979:236). However, it might be expected that this type of discourse may not have a theme in sense in which I am using the term here, that is, a central participant which the sentences are "about". Thus, in this case too, it may be that the function of tz as a same theme marker has been suspended, and it is used strictly as a marker of highlighting [15]. All of this, of course, needs further study.

The Relational Noun -eetz

We will now turn to the examination of another morpheme, the relational noun -eetz. The basic meaning of this relational noun in Mayan languages generally is 'genitive'; that is, it indicates some kind of possessive relation between two NPs. In Aguacatec, however, this use seems to be limited to cases where the "possessive relationship" is of a highly "non-prototypical" nature, as in

(78) juun maap t-etz tnum
    ONE MAP 3sErg-Gen TOWN
    'a map of the town'
Here it can be seen that the "possessed" NP is followed by the relational noun, which always takes a possessive prefix coreferential with the "possessor" NP. If an overt possessor NP actually appears (as in 78), it immediately follows the relational noun, and the vowel of the relational noun is shortened. Usually the possessed NP does not take any kind of possessive prefix (as in 78); or if it does take such a prefix (as in 79), it does not refer to the "possessor" NP marked by -eetz. There is another use of this relational noun, however, which apparently is an innovation in the Mamean languages. Some examples of this use can be seen in

(80) xh-chee j (t-et z) yaaj
3sErg-HORSE 3sErg-Genitive MAN
'the man's horse'

(81) (q-eetz) qa-chee j ~ qachee j (qeeetz)
1pErg-Gen 1pErg-HORSE
'our horse'

Here it can be seen that the relational noun may sometimes appear before the possessed NP. Furthermore, it can be seen that the possessed NP does take a possessive prefix coreferential with the possessor NP. Also, as suggested by the use of parentheses in (80) and (81), -eetz is optional in these constructions. When -eetz is used it indicates contrastiveness in the same way as would adding heavy stress to the possessors in the English translations (see Chafe (1976) for a discussion of contrastiveness). Sometimes -eetz is used in Aguacatec, as well as in
other Mayan languages, without a head NP as a possessive pronoun as in:

(82) ye ka7l ya7stzun t-eetz
THE HOUSE THAT-THEN 3sErg-Gen
'the house is his'

(83) ej niin tzun jee7 tq'ool t-eetz wi txan ch'im
AND THEN HE-SET-IT 3sErg-Gen ON GREEN GRASS
'And he set his on the grass'

In (83), though not necessarily in (82), it seems that -eetz is also contrastive, indicating that of the possible things (in this case, pitchers) that we could be talking about, it was the one that belonged to him that he put on the grass. There are other uses of -eetz, however, that are not related to possession, as seen in

(84) ej jalchaan, niki' loo7 oor
AND DAWN WHAT dubitative HOUR
ltk'y'le7n t-eetz Lu7,
HIS-HAVING-PASSED 3sErg-Gen PEDRO
kyiky'e7n-t ky-eetz
THEIR-PASSING-particle 3pErg-Gen
ajpyeaj MERCHANT
'and at dawn (who knows at what hour Pedro moved on?) the merchants moved on'

Here tetz Lu7 cannot be understood as 'Pedro's' nor 'of Pedro'; similarly kyetz a'pyaa' cannot mean 'the merchants' nor 'of the merchants'. It seems clear, however, that the the use of -eetz in (84) has one thing in common with its use in (80), (81), and (83), namely, that it indicates contrastiveness. That is, what Pedro did is being contrasted with what the merchants did. Because of this, the English translation can be appropriately read with heavy stress on 'Pedro' and 'merchants' as indicated in (84). Actually, given that the verb forms tiki'y'le7n and
kyiky'ẽn in (84) are nominalizations, one might argue that -eetɛ does have something to do with possession even here. However, the nominalized verb forms in (84) result from the clefting of adverbial phrases before verbs in the indefinite past tense. If the verbs had been in some other tense, they would not have been nominalized; however, -eetɛ could still have been used here. An example of this can be seen in line 72 of the text:

(85) sqeen chi-kuu? ky-ɛtɛ ajpyąaj
perfect 3pAbs-DESCEND 3pErg-Gen MERCHANT
xe juuu chin wi7 tzeeʔ
UNDER ONE augmentative HEAD TREE
'the merchants had sat down under a big tree'

Stress in English has other uses, of course, besides indicating contrastiveness. For example, in

(86) We got home late last night and found our front door open.

the heavy stress does not seem to indicate contrastiveness since the door is not being compared with anything else; but since we expect the front door to be closed, our surprise at discovering this unexpected situation is indicated by the heavy stress on door. In Aguacatec, -eetɛ is used in an analogous way, as seen in line 62 of the text:

(87) ma kyopooneʔn, qopiįj taaneʔn
BUT THEIR-ARRIVING-THERE OPENED ITS-FORM
t-ɛtɛ jul.
3sErg-Gen HOLE
'But when they arrived, the hole was open.'

In fact, it seems that -eetɛ can generally be translated as heavy stress in English. However, the converse is apparently not true. For example,
heavy stress can also indicate new information in English, as in

(88) Once upon a time there was a king. And
    he lived with his family in a large castle.
   (given) (new)

However, -eetz is never used to introduce new information in Aguacatec unless it is specifically contrastive.

If we now examine the distribution of -eetz we find that it can be used with almost any NP. For example, we have seen -eetz used with noun possessors as in (80-81), and S's in (73f) and (84). It also occurs with oblique agents, as in

(89) ...juun sweerteʔɛ̃ ntx'amx
      ONE THIS-LUCKY-THING IT-WAS-CAUGHT
      w-eetz waʔn
      1sErg-Gen BY-ME
      '(look at)...this lucky thing that I caught

Examples of -eetz used with O's are extremely rare, but they do exist. One example was seen in (83), and two more can be seen in (90) and (91).

(90) niin b'aaŋ kyeen chitzooliil ye ky-eetz
    AND THEY-RELATED-ALL-OF-IT THE 3pErg-Gen
    ky-ąb'il
    3pErg-DESIRE
    'and they related all of their wishes'

(91) kun plil ye w-eetz
    GO TRY THE 3pErg-Gen
    '(if you think your life is tough...)
    go and try mine!' (Shaw 1972:280)

Examples of -eetz used with A's are also fairly uncommon. One example is in the following, which is a common formula for beginning a story:
(92) at-\$  tuun yool
    EXIST-3sAbs ONE WORD
  \$-w-lit-naq  w-eetz
    3sAbs-1sErg-HEAR-remote past 1sErg-Gen
  'there is a story that I have heard'

Here, however, it does not seem that -eetz is contrastive: it would not
be appropriate for me to read the English translation with heavy stress
on the pronoun 'I', singling myself out from the set of possible hearers
of stories. The weetz in (92) seems to be functioning as some kind of
non-contrastive pronoun in support of the ergative prefix on the verb.
It should be remembered that the ordinary independent pronouns in Agua-
catec are absolutes and are never crossreferenced by ergative pre-
fixes. Another example is seen in the following from AtTx:

(93a) niin tzun b'een b'eq'ool,
    AND THEN HE-SWALLOWED-HIM
  'And then he (the animal) swallowed him
   (the patron),'

(93b) niin aaj  junt tiirtz xe a7 chij.
    AND HE-WENT ANOTHER TIME-tz IN WATER quotative
  'and he went back into the water, they say.'

(93c) i  tzun b'eene7n tilool t-etz
    Focus THEN HIS-SEEING-IT 3sErg-Gen
  moos ye b'eene7n t-etz
    SERVANT THE HIS-GOING 3sErg-Gen
  patroon tan  txuk,
    PATRON BY-HIM ANIMAL
  'when the servant saw that the patron
   had been taken off by the animal,'

(93d) niin tzun aajtz   lajqe7l...
    AND THEN HE-WENT-tz QUICKLY
  'he (the servant) went quickly...'

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In (93c) *patroon* is the S of the intransitive verb *b'eeen?n*, and *tetz* is apparently used with this NP because of the unexpectedness of his being carried off by the animal. This use of *-eetz*, then, is like that seen previously in (87). It can also be seen in (93c) that *tetz* is used with *moos*, which is the A of the transitive verb *b'eeen?n *tilool*. Once again, however, the use of *-eetz* with this A does not seem to be for indicating contrastiveness. The servant is not being singled out from the set of possible viewers of this event; in fact, it is clear that he is the only one who could have possibly seen it. What *-eetz* seems to be doing here is signalling a shift to a new theme. It is clear that the animal was the theme in the preceding lines, and it appears that the servant becomes the theme in (93c) as demonstrated by the fact that the same theme marker *tz* appears in (93d). Not all cases of theme shift are marked by *-eetz* in this way (cf. the theme shift in 75), but it does seem that the majority of instances of *-eetz* used with A's do indicate theme shift as in (93).

It seems unlikely, however, that examples like (92) can be explained in terms of theme shift. In a few "personal history" texts which I have briefly looked at, it appears that the first person singular genitive relational noun *weetz* is used very frequently in the same way as was seen in example (92); however, it seems that few of these instances of *weetz* can be construed as indicating either contrastiveness or theme shift. It is not clear why *-eetz* should be used so frequently in reference to the first person; however, such seemingly unwarranted emphasis given to first person participants is probably related to the notion of "empathy" (Kuno 1976, Kuno and Kaburaki 1977), which
apparently accounts for the kind of "egocentricity" in language use which seems to also be reflected in the notion of an "animacy hierarchy" with first person singular at the top. See DeLancey (1981:644-6) for further discussion of this point.

What seems clear, however, is that -eetz never appears to be used to indicate contrastiveness with A's. If an underlying A is to be made contrastive, it must be either clefted, as in (32), or made into an oblique agent of a passive and be preceded by -eetzi as in (89). Alternatively, though, one might want to say that -eetz can indicate contrastiveness with A's but that it is a different kind of contrastiveness from that marked on S's and O's. With the O in (83), -eetzi indicates that of the possible things (pitchers) that he could have set on the grass, it is the one that is his that is being talked about. With the S's in (84) -eetzi indicates that of the possible people that could have passed on, it was Pedro (and afterwards the merchants) who did so. Thus, in both of these cases, -eetzi is selecting out a member of the set of possible arguments of the verbs. In (93c), however, it could be said that -eetzi is not selecting out a member of the set of possible "see- ers" but rather is selecting out a new theme from the set of possible themes. From this point of view, then, it might make some sense to say that the theme shift marked by -eetzi in (93c) is a "contrastive theme shift", whereas the theme shift in (75), which is not marked by -eetzi, is a "non-contrastive theme shift".

It appears, then, that unlike thematization, which operates on a nominative/accusative basis, contrastiveness as marked by -eetzi operates on an ergative/absolutive basis since S's and O's are included in the
set of things that can be made contrastive, while A's are excluded. It
should be remembered, however, that even though O's may be contrastive,
as seen in (90) and (91), there seems to be a great reluctance to do
this in practice. Usually underlying O's which are to be contrastive
are first put into derived S function as was seen in (93c) with tetz
patron.

We shall now take a very brief look at the introduction of new
information. New information is often introduced by means of the
"existential predicate" at 'there is/are; to be in a place' followed by
a quantified noun phrase. The most common quantifier is the number ruun
'one', which also functions much like an indefinite article. An example
of this construction was seen in (92). Arguments of at are always
crossreferenced by means of absolutive suffixes. New information can be
introduced in numerous other ways, however. For example, in (70a)
kob'ox a'pyaa 'some merchants' is introduced as the possessor of an S.
In (70c) ruun yul 'a hole' is introduced as the possessor/S of a "pas-
sive infinitive". In (70d) q'asq 'fire' is introduced as an O. In
(72) q'asq 'fire' is introduced as an S. What is never found, however,
is new information introduced as a surface A; ergative subjects of
transitive verbs are always given NPs. Thus, since S's and O's may be
new, but A's never may be, it can be seen that new information, like
contrastiveness, but unlike thematization, is distributed on an
ergative/absolutive basis.

It has been seen, then, that if we examine functional notions such
as contrastiveness and new information, we find that ergativity is mani-
fested in Aguacatec in other ways besides verb agreement and choice of
"pivot" (Dixon 1979) for certain syntactic rules. Furthermore, it appears that Plank's (1979) claim that ergativity can be accounted for in semantic and pragmatic terms is true, at least in Aguacatec. In this connection, it should be noted that one of the ergative syntactic rules we have seen is that which derives cleft sentences, and it is clear that clefting is another way of indicating contrastiveness. Furthermore, looking at the morphology of relative clause formation and WH-question formation, it appears that these two rules involve the same morphology as the clefting rule. In fact all three rules look like different versions of the same rule. This is not entirely unreasonable since cleft sentences, relative clauses, and WH-questions all deal with identifying a particular member from a set of possibilities; and this is essentially what contrastiveness is all about too. One could say, then, that relativization and WH-question formation bear a "family resemblance" (Rosch and Mervis 1975) to the kind of contrastiveness indicated by clefting; and, hence, the same syntactic rule (focus antipassive) is involved in these three constructions. Thus, it makes sense that these three rules should operate on an ergative/absolutive basis since, as we saw in the discussion of -eetz, contrastiveness in general is restricted such that it can apply to S's and O's but never to A's.

It is also interesting to note that the reluctance to make O's contrastive with -eetz seems to have spread to relative clause formation. We saw in (21) that O's may undergo relativization; and while (21) is a perfectly acceptable sentence, there seems to be a tendency not to use this construction but rather put the underlying O into "derived S function" before relativizing it, thus forming sentences like

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(94) ja $\theta$-w-il b'u7y (ye) n-$\theta$-tx'aj-x
prox.past-3sAbs-WASH-passive
t-an xna7n
3sErg-Agent WOMAN
'I saw the rag that was washed by the woman'

As for the ergative verb agreement, we might wonder if this too could have some kind of pragmatic basis. While it is not clear that this is in fact the case, we might note the following facts. We have seen that thematization in Aguacatec has a nominative/accusative basis, but the verb agreement system does not seem to be based on this as it apparently is in some other languages. The reason for this might be as follows: Surface A's in Aguacatec seem to be subject to numerous restrictions, as we have seen. They may or may not be themes, and they may be given, but they may never be new nor contrastive. O's may not be themes, but they may be either given or new and either contrastive or non-contrastive. Surface S's, unlike the others, seem to be under no restrictions whatsoever. They may or may not be themes, may or may not be contrastive, and may be either new or given. Thus, since O's have fewer such restrictions on them than do A's, there may be a sense in which they bear a greater "family resemblance", in the sense of Rosch and Mervis (1975), to S's than do the more marked A's. And it may be at least in part for this reason that S's and O's are categorized in the same way in the verb agreement system while A's are treated differently, thus motivating morphological ergativity [16]. It is also interesting to note that in most treatments of ergativity it is said that ergative NPs (i.e. A's) are "marked" whereas absolutes (S's and O's) are unmarked (cf., e.g., Dixon 1979:71-9). However, it appears that in Aguacatec, with respect to the functional parameters discussed here,
there is actually a "cline" of markedness with A's being highly marked (in the sense of being under a number of restrictions), O's being less marked, and S's being unmarked.

The Definite Article Ye

The particle *ye* in Aguacatec has a number of uses: it optionally introduces relative clauses, as in line 1 of the text (but cf. line 4); it often introduces complement clauses, as in line 6; it often introduces time adverbial clauses, as in line 13; and it is often used as the definite article. While all of these uses are undoubtedly related in some way (note that in the uses with subordinate clauses these clauses may be considered to be NPs), I will here consider only the use as definite article. *Ye* is said to be the definite article largely because native speakers translate it as such. However, an examination of the text will show that there are many NPs which seem to be definite (or at least are so translated) but which do not take *ye* (see Chafe 1976:38-43 for a discussion of definiteness). In fact, *ye* seems to be used relatively infrequently as a definite article. As noted above, H. McArthur considers *ye* to be the marker of a non-active non-thematic participant; however, we have seen that there are certain problems with this. We will examine here some of the pertinent facts about the use of this particle.

As might be expected, the use of the definite article *ye* has neither an ergative/absolutive basis like contrastiveness and new information nor a nominative/accusative basis like themes. It is found with A's, such as *ye chitaa* "their father" in line 56; it is found with S's,
such as ye e7 a'pyaa' 'the merchants' and ye q'aag' 'the fire' in line 12; and it is found with 0's, such as ye 7wa' 'the tortilla(s)' in line 30. It is also found with other types of constituents such as the object of a locative relational noun, ye xaaruu7 'the pitcher', in line 26. Nevertheless, there do seem to be a number of constraints on the use of ye. For one thing an NP does not seem to take ye if it is either an A or an S which is marked by -eetz. An O, however, may sometimes take both ye and -eetz, as seen in (90) and (91). Another constraint on ye seems to be that it does not go on continued themes which could be marked by te (though it apparently can go on newly introduced themes; see line 12 of text). This seems to correlate, at least in part, with McArthur's claim that ye indicates a "non-thematic participant". Thus, if we consider ye to be the definite article, but subject to these two constraints, it can be seen why many apparently definite NPs do not take ye. However, there are still cases of other apparently definite NPs which do not take ye. For example, in line 29, xaaruu7 'pitcher' appears as the object of the locative relational noun tzwutz. This pitcher was first mentioned in line 17 and was also mentioned in lines 20-24, and 26. Thus, it would seem that in line 29 this pitcher should be "identifiable" (cf. Chafe 1976:39) and, therefore, should be definite. It can also be seen that this NP is not subject to any of the above mentioned constraints on the use of ye. Thus, this NP should take the definite article; and, in fact, it can be seen that xaaruu7 is preceded by ye in line 29. However, in the following line, 30, the same NP, xaaruu7, which is the object of the relational noun te7i, should take ye for all of the same reasons that it did in line 29; however, it can be seen that it does not, although the NP 7wa' in that same line
does take ye (presumably because "the tortillas" is a generic aggregate NP; see Chafe 1970:192). Whatever the reason for this may be, it is probably related to one further constraint on the use of the definite article: generally only one NP per clause may be marked with ye. There is an apparent counterexample in line 104; however, since ye b'aa 'the first one' is in apposition to ye k'ase7n 'the waking (one)', we may consider this to be like the repetition of the same NP and not a true counterexample. In fact, in all of the texts that I have looked at, there only seems to be one other counterexample, which is found in LTzP when the priest says:

(95) nik'na7 oor tz'-f'-uul ye yaa7
WHAT HOUR fut-3sAbs-ARRIVE HERE THE MAN
tu ye ko7k
WITH THE CAGE
'when will the man come with the cage?'

This seems to indicate that the one-per-clause constraint is not entirely correct, although the fact that examples like (95) are so rare (one example in eight texts) surely must be significant. It is probably also significant, however, that in example (95) neither the man nor the cage seem to be the theme. If this sentence could be said to have a theme at all, it would probably have to be the 'hour'. It does seem to be the case that when ye appears on an A, that NP is not the theme. Note the use of ye with the A chita`a: 'their (the merchants\') father' in line 56 where the merchants, rather than the father, seem to be the theme. It would also seem to be the case that if ye appears on an S (as in 95), that NP is not the theme unless it is a newly introduced theme (as in line 12 of the text). But even if the constraint could be
revised along these lines, we would still be unable to predict which of
several possible NPs would in fact receive the one occurrence of ye.

All of this seems to be vaguely reminiscent, however, of the situa-
tion in Tagalog as discussed by Schachter (1976, 1977). In Tagalog
exactly one NP in a sentence may be selected as what Schachter calls the
"topic" and marked by the particle ang. One characteristic of the "ang
phrase" in Tagalog is that it is always definite, and the only way to
indicate definiteness in Tagalog is with ang. While other NPs in a sen-
tence might seem to be definite, only one may be selected to be marked
with ang. It is possible that Aguacatec ye may be somewhat like Tagalog
ang. They are quite similar in that there is only one per clause
(although, as already noted, the one-per-clause constraint is not quite
so rigid in Aguacatec as it is in Tagalog), and in that they both indi-
cate definiteness. They are also similar in that neither of them indi-
cates discourse theme. Schachter (1977:281-2) seems to indicate that in
spite of the fact that the ang phrase in Tagalog is commonly called the
topic, it does not indicate discourse theme in the sense that that term
is being used here. Similarly, as was noted above, ye also does not
ordinarily occur with themes in Aguacatec. One difference between Taga-
log and Aguacatec, however, is that sentences in Aguacatec are
apparently not required to have a "ye phrase" though most types of sen-
tences in Tagalog do have to have an ang phrase.

Van Valin and Foley (1980:339), looking at Tagalog from the per-
pective of "role and reference grammar", describe ang as the marker of
"pragmatic peak" where pragmatic peak is defined as the one nominal con-
stituent of a clause that is "singled out for special morphosyntactic
treatment as the pragmatically most salient NP in the clause." (Van Valin and Foley 1980:338). They go on to say that

Pragmatic salience is established by two interacting factors, discourse prominence (i.e. definiteness, specificity and given-
ness), on the one hand, and...the speakers 'focus of interest', on the other, i.e. that participant which the speaker treats as
the most salient in the situation under consideration. (Van Va-
lin and Foley 1980:338)

A further characteristic of pragmatic peak in those languages which have
them (referrred to as "reference-dominated languages" by Van Valin and
Foley) is that it is a "grammaticalized" constituent which may control
rules of anaphora and deletion (Johanna Nichols, personal communica-
tion), such as the subject in English and the ang phrase of Tagalog.
Thus, in spite of the many similarities between Aguacatec ye and Tagalog
ang, ye cannot be considered to be the marker of pragmatic peak in Agua-
catec since the ye phrase does not meet this latter criterion. Accord-
ing to the criteria mentioned here, it would appear that the absolutive
NPs would have to be the pragmatic peak in Aguacatec (which appears to
definitely be a "reference-dominated" rather than a "role dominated"
language according to Van Valin an Foley's typology). Nevertheless, it
does seem that ye calls some kind of special attention to one of the
definite and (usually) non-thematic NP's in the clause. Therefore, we
might say that ye marks a definite NP as being a "center of attention".
That this is so is suggested, though not definitively proven, by fact
that the examples of ye seen in the text generally seem to appear in NPs
which indicate one of the more important participants in a clause (along
with the theme and any contrastive constituents). Thus, for example, in
line 29 there are three participants mentioned: the merchants (theme),

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the meat, and the pitcher. All three of these are definite, but the one non-thematic NP that the speaker chooses to single out as "center of attention" is the pitcher, ye xaaruu7, which has played a fairly important role in this part of the story. In line 30, the speaker apparently chooses the tortillas, ye ʔwa’, as the "center of attention" rather than the pitcher or Pedro. The phrase teʔ: xaaruu7 is apparently being treated here as an incidental locative expression. It seems to be the case that NPs of rather marginal importance, such as b’eeʔ 'the road' in the locative phrase of line 8, never get marked by ye even though they may be definite and even though there is no other NP in the clause that is so marked. This would presumably be because the speaker does not consider such NPs to be the center of attention. This idea, of course, needs further study and refinement. If there is any validity to it, however, we might then wonder if the use of ye with time adverbial clauses and some relative clauses might have to do with these clauses being "centers of attention" with respect to their matrix clauses.

Subjects and Transitivity

It has been seen that both the ergative/absolutive and the nominative/accusative distinctions are relevant in Aguacatec. The latter in particular is related to the notion of theme. One might wonder, however, just what is the significance of the notion "subject" in Aguacatec given that the notion does seem to be related to, though to some extent independent of, theme and the other notions we have looked at. I do not have a very satisfactory answer to this; however, it seems that whatever determines the selection of subjects in Aguacatec must be
somewhat different from what determines the selection of subjects in English. This can be seen from the fact that many clauses which are rendered best as transitives in English seem to be rendered in Aguacatec as intransitive clauses with patient subjects and optional oblique agent phrases. In general this phenomenon may result from the fact that absolutive NPs are less marked (i.e. under fewer restrictions) than are ergative NPs. However, this alone is insufficient to determine which clauses will be transitive and which intransitive. In any case it seems that whether an NP appears as a transitive subject or as an oblique agent of an intransitive verb is not determined by whether or not it is a theme. It should be remembered that, as has been seen, oblique agents as well as A's may be themes.

In some cases, determining whether a sentence should be transitive or intransitive may be based on lexical considerations. For example, in line 49 of the text one finds

(96) b'untz ky17kt sii7
SO THAT THERE IS NO LONGER FIREWOOD
>Edit-qq
niin
3sAbs-1pErg-CARRY AND
ky17kt qa-q'aaq' Edit-kuu7
THERE IS NO LONGER 1pErg-FIRE 3sAbs-DESCEND
'...so that we will no longer carry firewood
and no longer make fire'

Here the first verb is transitive and the second verb is intransitive. This may have to do with the fact that -qq `carry' is basically a transitive verb whereas -kuu7 `descend' is basically intransitive. And while there is a transitive causative stem -ku7saq' that can be derived from -kuu7, it happens that 'for fire to go down' is for some reason a common idiomatic way of saying 'to make a fire' (cf. ex. 72 above).
This will not, however, explain the use of the intransitive verb plus agent phrase in line 81:

(97) getOrElse{kuu=q    q-a7n    t- 그렇지{k'u7l}
3sAbs-DESCEND-pot 1pErg-Agent prep-3sErg-BELLY
un saak
ONE  GUNNY SACK
'we will stick him in a gunny sack' (lit. 'he
will go down by us inside of a gunny sack')

But looking ahead to lines 91-93, it can be seen that the a\textsuperscript{pyese}\textsuperscript{a} do not actually "stick" Pedro into a gunny sack but rather give him the sack and tell him to get in himself. Thus, the construction in (97) may be due to the fact that the a\textsuperscript{pyese}\textsuperscript{a} are not, strictly speaking, agents here but rather something more like "indirect causes". Looking back to (96), we might wonder if the reason that 'to make fire' is expressed as 'for fire to descend (by someone)' might not be because humans are conceived of as the "indirect causers" of fires rather than their "makers".

This still will not explain, however, why in line 80 the merchants say that they will find a way to fool Pedro tan kyime\textsuperscript{a}n 'in order to kill him' (lit. 'so that he will die'). In fact, it is fairly common in Aguacatec to say that 'someone dies by someone' rather than 'someone kills someone'. I suspect, though at present this is little more than a supposition, that the reason for this may be similar to the tendency seen in other languages to avoid admitting guilt. Thus, if a mother hears the sound of breaking glass coming from the kitchen and calls out, "What happened?", her young child is likely to respond with, "A glass broke" (not "I broke a glass"), or in Spanish, "Se me cayó un vaso" 'a glass fell from me' (not "Boté un vaso" 'I dropped a glass').
None of these explanations, though, will account for the relative clause in (89). Presumably the construction here is determined by the fact that the agent is contrastive (remember that As may not be contrastive). The problem with this, however, is that soon after this sentence in LTzp there is a very similar sentence where the oblique agent is not made contrastive with -eetz.

It should be noted in passing that DeLancey's (1981) attempt to account for voice changes (e.g. active vs. passive) in the world's languages in terms of "attention flow", "viewpoint", and "empathy" will not explain the Aguacatec constructions being discussed here. DeLancey claims that there is a "natural" order of "attention flow" from "source" to "goal" and that the order of NPs in a clause ordinarily reflects this natural order. The order of NPs in a clause is called "linguistic attention flow"; and, thus, linguistic attention flow is said to ordinarily follow natural attention flow. He also claims that events are most naturally viewed from the "viewpoint" of the participant with which the speaker has the most "empathy" (Kuno and Kaburaki 1977). Ordinarily the first NP in a clause is the source, starting point of natural attention flow, the starting point of linguistic attention flow, and the viewpoint NP. Sometimes, however, the viewpoint NP is not the starting point of natural attention flow. DeLancey claims that the function of passive in English and other languages is to change the order of the NPs such that the starting point of linguistic attention flow (i.e., the first NP) is not the starting point of natural attention flow but rather the viewpoint NP in the cases when the two do not coincide. It should be noted, however, that the order of NPs in a clause can often be
changed in Aguacatec without resorting to voice changes. Furthermore, when voice changes are resorted to in Aguacatec, it is not clear that the first NP is either the starting point of natural attention flow or the viewpoint NP. Thus, for example, we have seen that passive was used in (89) and the first NP to appear is "this lucky thing". Yet it would seem that the source of the action of "catching" would have to be the first person singular agent. Furthermore, the speaker of this sentence is the first person singular agent himself; and one would expect him to have more empathy with himself than with the thing that he caught. Thus, it appears that the starting point of linguistic attention flow in this clause is neither the starting point of natural attention flow, nor the viewpoint NP. Although not all of the examples we have seen in this section involve passives, there is nevertheless a formal similarity between intransitive verbs with oblique agents and passives with oblique agents; and it appears that problems similar to those seen in example (89) can be found in each of the examples discussed in this section.

There may, however, be another explanation, which could perhaps account for all of the examples we have seen. Saksena (1980) argues that there is a semantic notion of "affectedness" which has consequences for the grammar of Hindi and other languages. This notion is also discussed by Ackerman (1981) and by Dahl and Karlsson (1976) (where it is referred to as "crucial change in the state of the object"). The general idea here is that in at least some languages the case marking of an argument sometimes depends on the extent to which the argument is "affected" by the action. Looking at the examples we have seen, it
would appear that one could make the claim for Aguacatec that patients which are very highly affected (i.e., those which undergo some major change of state) tend to appear as intransitive S's whereas patients which are less affected by the action tend to appear as transitive O's. Thus, for example, the fire in (96) (which undergoes creation), Pedro in (97) (who gets enclosed in a sack), Pedro in line 80 of the text (who gets killed) and the lucky thing in (89) (which gets captured) all undergo some kind of major change of state and all appear as S's of intransitive verbs. On the other hand, the firewood in (96) gets carried; but it does not really undergo any major change of state and, thus, appears as the O of a transitive verb. These examples, however, are merely suggestive. More evidence is needed to prove this claim. A possible problem with this idea is the fact that all of these intransitive verbs do have transitive forms. If the claim being made here is correct, why should such transitive forms even exist? One hypothesis that may explain this is that the transitive forms are used when one wants to draw attention away from the affectedness of the patient and concentrate more on the effect on the agent or experiencer. A suggestive piece of evidence for this hypothesis is found in the story JKyTx'. According to this story, at one time the coyote took care of the man's animals while the dogs lived in the woods. The dogs heard, however, that the coyote had eaten the man's animals. They decided to go report this to the king and suggest that they could do the job better than the coyote and, therefore, should be given a chance to prove themselves. The king then called the coyote and the man in order to check the dogs' story. Now it happens that the verb meaning "to eat something" in Aguacatec is an intransitive verb which may optionally take an oblique agent
phrase. Thus, for example when the king asks the man if the coyote had in fact eaten his chickens, the man answers (among other things):

(98) a b'aaj w-aatktx t-aq'un
    prox.past 3sAbs-GET FINISHED OFF 1sErg-CHICKEN 3sErg-WORK
    'my chickens were eaten by him'

Obviously food undergoes a fairly radical change of state on being eaten. Thus, it stands to reason that it would appear as the S of an intransitive verb rather than the O of a transitive. However, previously in this story, when the dogs are considering going to visit the king, they say to the man:

(99) ye 07 q-atetz ky1 ns
    THE 1pPro 1pErg-Gen NEG incompl
    b'aaj-sa-aj ye e7 kne7r
    3sAbs-1pErg-GET FINISHED OFF-caus-trans THE P1 COAT
    tu e7 ky'itx
    WITH P1 CHICKEN
    'As for us, we don't eat chickens and goats'

Here the verb appears as a transitive causative. However, it would appear that in this particular case, the dogs are less concerned with the effect of eating on the hypothetical chickens and goats and more concerned with the effect such an act would have on their reputations. Thus, this example suggests that the transitive form of such verbs is used to draw attention away from the patient and onto the agent as the affected participant.

Nominal Clauses

We have seen already that subordinate clauses in Aguacatec frequently have nominalized verb forms. There are clauses, however, which
use the same nominalized verb forms, but which are not obviously subordinate clauses. Thus, for example, in line 7 of the text the main predicate is the intransitive verbal noun ə-xeʔt-eʔn 'his starting' rather than the finite intransitive verb ə-xeʔt 'he started'. Yet it is not obvious that this sentence functions as a subordinate clause either in the sentence of line 6 or in the sentence of line 8. In most cases it seems possible to translate such "nominal clauses" (as I will call them) as gerundive clauses in English. Thus, line 7 has been translated as 'so starting to have an idea' rather than 'so he started to have an idea'. However, there are cases where one finds fairly long strings of these clauses (e.g. lines 83-86 and 96-100) where their treatment as gerundive clauses seems rather awkward, at least in translation. It should also be noted that these clauses are usually translated into Spanish by native speakers of Aguacatec as finite main clauses in the past tense rather than as gerundive clauses; though this could possibly be due to the fact that strings of gerundive clauses sound as awkward in Spanish as they do in English. Another thing to consider is that the nominalized verb forms used in these clauses are crossreferenced for subject by an ergative prefix, whereas the subject in English and Spanish gerundive clauses is deleted by EQUi [17]. For this reason native speakers may feel that nominal clauses in Aguacatec are more like finite clauses in Spanish than like gerundive clauses. This situation is not unique to Aguacatec, however, since there seem to be parallels in other languages. For example, in the North Caucasian languages Chechen and Batsbi, one finds strings of non-finite "conjunct clauses" together with finite "main clauses". Nichols (1981) relates these clause types to the notion of "grounding". Following this lead,
we might wonder if the use of nominal clauses in Aguacatec isn't related to grounding.

Grounding has to do with those parts of a discourse which are "foregrounded" as opposed to those which are "backgrounded". The foreground consists of the main points of a discourse and is apparently equivalent to what the McArthurs call "mainline". Thus, in a narrative text such as the one appended here, the foreground consists of the events of the narrative (see also Hopper and Thompson 1980:280-1). The background, on the other hand, is "that part of the discourse which does not immediately and crucially contribute to the speaker's goal, but which merely assists, amplifies, or comments on it" (Hopper and Thompson 1980:281). We might speculate that nominal clauses in Aguacatec represent either foregrounded or backgrounded material.

As a preliminary test of this hypothesis, I selected a number of lines from the text and tried to determine subjectively whether they represented foregrounding or backgrounding [18]. For a variety of reasons, this was not always an easy thing to do. For one thing, the distinction between foreground and background is not in all cases perfectly clear cut. For another thing, it was not clear what kinds of units I should be considering. I initially tried to do this by considering each individual clause as a separate unit and then determining whether the clause was foreground or background. This method turned out to be rather messy and did not give particularly revealing results. I next tried to consider whole sentences; however, in some cases this method seemed to group things together which intuitively seemed like they should be separate. It also begged the question of whether or not to
consider nominal clauses to be subordinate. As a compromise, the method I finally decided on was to consider nominal clauses and time adverbial clauses as separate units and otherwise to take whole sentences as units. I am not certain that I can adequately justify this method (I am not even entirely convinced that it is correct), but it did seem to be a fairly workable procedure. The results of this are shown in the first two columns on the left of Table 4 (in line numbers which contain a letter in Table 4, e.g. 12a, the number with "a" means the first clause of that line, the number with "b" means the second clause of that line, and so on; the line numbers of nominal clauses are circled). It can be seen in Table 4 that all of the nominal clauses are foreground, but there are also many foreground lines which are not nominal clauses.

In order to avoid one of the problems mentioned above, that of determining whether a particular line is foreground or background, it would be nice if there were some less subjective way of determining grounding. Hopper and Thompson (1980) argue that grounding is related to their notion of "Transitivity". Transitivity (with a capital "T", as opposed to the more traditional notion of transitivity with a lower case "t") has to do not only with the number of arguments that a verb may have but also with a number of other factors shown in Table 5. Thus, Transitivity is viewed as a continuum. A fairly "prototypical" transitive sentence, such as the farmer killed the duckling, should rate very high in Transitivity, that is, it should possess all of the properties shown in the "High Transitivity" column of Table 5. Any given sentence, however, may rate lower than this, anywhere down to the lowest Transitivity such as in a sentence like would that sunsets not be so beauti-
ful. Hopper and Thompson (1980:283-4) then go on to claim that "the audience infers grounding not from a single morphosyntactic feature, but from a CLUSTER OF PROPERTIES, no single one of which is exclusively characteristic of foregrounding." They then go on to say that "this cluster of properties is precisely that which characterizes high Transitivity." Thus, assuming that this is correct, one could try to rate the sample lines from the text for Transitivity in order to see how well the results of this correlate with one's subjective judgements of foreground
and background. The results of this are shown in Table 4 where, for example, an "x" in column A means that this line was rated high with respect to property A in Table 5, and so on. Of course, some of the decisions to be made in rating these lines for Transitivity were also not always perfectly clear cut, and for this reason some of the squares in Table 4 contain a "?" rather than an "x" or a blank. The numbers in the column marked "T" are intended to be an overall Transitivity rating for each line, calculated by giving one point for each "x" and 0.5 point

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High Transitivity</th>
<th>Low Transitivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Participants</td>
<td>2 or more participants, A and O</td>
<td>one participant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Kinesis</td>
<td>action</td>
<td>non-action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Aspect</td>
<td>telic (=action viewed from an endpoint)</td>
<td>atelic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Punctuality</td>
<td>punctual</td>
<td>non-punctual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Volitionality</td>
<td>action of agent volitional</td>
<td>action of agent non-volitional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Affirmation</td>
<td>affirmative</td>
<td>negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Mode</td>
<td>realis</td>
<td>irrealis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Agency</td>
<td>agent high in potency</td>
<td>agent low in potency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Affectedness of O</td>
<td>0 totally affected</td>
<td>0 not affected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Individuation of O</td>
<td>0 highly individuated</td>
<td>0 non-individuated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5

191
for each "?". It can be seen that for the most part those lines which were subjectively judged to be background rated relatively low in Transitivity while those subjectively judged to be foreground rated relatively high. The only glaring discrepancies are in lines 3 and 102, which were judged to be background but received Transitivity scores of 6 and 8 respectively, and in line 7, which though judged to be foreground, only received a 4. Those lines which have an "x" in the column marked "Nom" are those clauses which are nominalized (including both nominal clauses as well as nominalized time adverbial clauses). The average Transitivity scores for the various types of lines are shown in Table 6.

Thus, on the average, there does seem to be a significant difference in Transitivity between foreground and background clauses, as seen in Table 6. It can also be seen in Table 6 that nominalized foreground clauses, though still relatively high in Transitivity, are on the average somewhat lower in Transitivity than are non-nominalized foreground clauses.

| Overall average | 6.05 |
| Average background | 3.45 |
| Average nominalized background | 4.00 |
| Average non-nominalized background | 3.31 |
| Average foreground | 7.23 |
| Average nominalized foreground | 7.06 |
| Average nominal foreground | 6.90 |
| Average non-nominalized foreground | 7.63 |

Table 6
clauses (note that the average Transitivity of nominal clauses is not much lower than that of nominalized clauses in general). This calls to mind H. McArthur's (1979) analysis of these clauses. According to McArthur, in "definite-event narrative", background is indicated by the use of any aspect other than the "§-aspect", which I have here called the "indefinite past tense". The mainline (=foreground) is divided into primary events, indicated by finite clauses in the indefinite past, and secondary events, indicated by nominalizations such as those found in what I have called "nominal clauses" and in nominalized time adverbal clauses [19]. Thus, it seems that McArthur's division of foreground into primary and secondary events, which was determined by morphological criteria, is reflected by the fact that, as shown in Table 6, the secondary events (i.e. the nominalized foreground) are slightly lower in Transitivity than the primary foreground. Of course, in order to demonstrate this conclusively, one would have to rate a larger sample of text material for Transitivity and then determine whether any differences found in the Transitivity of nominalized and non-nominalized foreground were statistically significant. Nevertheless, the preliminary figures shown in Table 6 suggest that there is something to McArthur's analysis [20].

It is also interesting to note that Nichols (1981) seems to have reached a similar conclusion in her analysis of Chechen. In analyzing texts in Chechen and Batsbi, Nichols found it necessary to distinguish two levels of grounding: "text-level" grounding and "episode-level" grounding. Text level background includes introduction, descriptive passages, scene setting, closing, and asides, while text level fore-
ground includes the episodes containing plot. On the episode level (= text level foreground), incidental information and restatements of known events are background while predications which advance the plot are foreground. It was found that in some Chechen texts, non-finite "con-junct clauses" were favored in text level backgroundering. However, in some other texts the conjunct clauses had relatively high Transitivity and were found in episode level background (which is part of the foreground relative to the text level) [21]. Thus, Aguacatec seems to be very much like Chechen and Batsbi in that it distinguishes (at least) three types of grounding. And in particular, Aguacatec seems to be very much like those varieties of Chechen which use non-finite conjunct clauses for episode level background since Aguacatec uses non-finite (nominalized) clauses in foreground of lower than average Transitivity (or in McArthur's terms, mainline clauses of secondary interest).

One final thing to note about nominal clauses is that while they are fairly common in the appended text and also in the texts in L. McArthur (1973), they seem to be much less frequent in LTzp and N; and they do not occur at all in YQ'. While LTzp, N, and YQ' were transcribed from tape recordings, the texts in McArthur's book are said to have been written by native speakers. I am not certain of the origin of the appended text; however, I have been unable to find a tape recording of it, thus suggesting the possibility that it too may have been written down directly (so far, I have been unable to consult with Mendez on this). In studies which have compared spoken and written English (e.g. Kroll 1977, O'Donnell 1974) it has often been found that, among other things, written English (or more generally, "planned" English) often
contains more subordinate clauses than does spoken (or "unplanned") English. We might speculate, then, that the differences in frequency of nominal clauses in various Aguacatec texts is an example of the same phenomenon that has been reported for English.

Given that the use of nominal clauses in Aguacatec is related to grounding, we might further speculate as follows: In producing a "planned text", a speaker or writer has time to "stand back", as it were, and take a broad overview of the text as a whole (in writing, this could even be done after the first draft is produced), consider its structure, and make subtle decisions as to such things as grounding. Thus, in this type of text one would expect that all of the grammatical devices available for indicating grounding (such as nominal clauses in Aguacatec) could be exploited to their fullest. On the other hand, since spoken language is generally produced in sequences of short "spurts" (sometimes called "information units", "idea units", or "foci"; see Chafe 1979), the speaker does not have much of an opportunity to consider the overall structure of the text at the same time that it is being produced, and thus the speaker is less able to make global decisions as to grounding. This would be especially true in unplanned spoken language; and, therefore, one would expect to find that the grammatical devices for indicating grounding would not be fully utilized in this type of text.

Conclusion

We have looked at a number of morphological and syntactic phenomena in Aguacatec which, from the point of view of "sentence grammar", seem
to be somewhat mysterious. It has been seen, however, that by looking at these phenomena from a functional perspective and considering their use in the context of a discourse, some sense could be made out of these phenomena; and in many cases further interesting lines of research were opened up. It was also seen that ergativity has an important role to play in the organization of Aguacatec discourse. In conclusion, then, it could be said that the results reported in this paper represent a first step towards a functional grammar of Aguacatec. Tlineys.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Wallace Chafe and Johanna Nichols for taking the time to discuss with me many of the issues presented here. Without their help this paper would have fared much the worse. The usual disclaimers apply, of course. I would also like to thank Farrell Ackerman, Judith Aissen, Jack DuBois, and Catherine O'Connor for their helpful comments and suggestions.

Footnotes

[1] This paper represents the second substantial revision of a paper written in March, 1980, entitled "A preliminary look at Aguacatec narrative discourse". A portion of the first revision was presented on February 16, 1981, at the seventh annual meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society. That portion appears in BLS 7 under the title "Functional correlates of ergativity in Aguacatec" (Larsen 1981). Some of the ideas contained in this paper were also
presented at the West Coast Mayan Symposium at U. C. Santa Barbara in April, 1981.


[3] My use of these convenient labels, however, does not carry with it any commitment to Dixon’s claim that A, S, and O are universal semantic-syntactic primitives.

[4] Roughly, an "ergative NP" is one that can trigger ergative agreement with a verb. Similarly, an "absolutive NP" is one that can trigger absolutive agreement with a verb. (But see footnote [7]).

[5] This sentence is not actually attested in my data, but has been included as a parallel to (55) below, which is attested. It has been modelled on actually attested sentences such as the following from JKy'Tx', p. 32:

(i) poro chin tajwe7n ku7n tz-Ø-in-chaq
    BUT VERY NECESSARY DOWN future-3sAbs-1sErg-ORDER
    ye yaaaj tan w-il-it-zal...
    THE MAN Comp 1sErg-HEAR-act.infin
    'but it is necessary that I send for the man so that I can investigate it'

See also (52).

[6] Note that it should be possible to say

(i) qajoye7 puuntiil tan xub'se7n;

however, this would mean 'we will find a way for him to be tricked (by someone)'. It does not mean the same as (54): 'we will find a way (for us) to trick him' and, therefore, is not derived from (54) by EQUI.
[7] Thus, it is not clear whether the S of the verb -opoone7n should be considered, following the rule in footnote [4], to be an ergative NP because of the verb agreement or an absolutive NP because of its syntactic behavior.

[8] -b'an is a transitive verb root; however, it is unique in that it has certain impersonal uses, such as the one shown here. See also its use in line 6 of the appended text.

[9] This chart has been adapted from that shown in McArthur's handout in Spanish. I have added in parentheses some suggestions for changes in his terminology in order to avoid confusion with the terminology used in this paper (for example, McArthur seems to refer to patient S's as "direct objects"). Hopefully, by making these suggestions I have not misrepresented his position.

[10] If the analysis to be presented in this paper is correct, it would appear that Aguacatec is one such language.

[11] I will not discuss H. McArthur (1979) in detail in this paper; however, I will on occasion refer to those parts of it which relate to points to be discussed here (in particular, number 5 in the list of topics). McArthur's main point is that different genres of discourse in Aguacatec can be distinguished by the tense/aspect categories that characteristically occur in the mainline clauses, and that background clauses are distinguished from mainline clauses also by the use of other tense/aspect categories within each genre. His arguments seem to be basically sound although I find that I have certain disagreements with him as to just what the various tense/aspect categories are and how they are marked. Note that
what the McArthurs call "mainline" information corresponds more or less to what Hopper and Thompson (1980:280) call "foreground" (as opposed to "background"). The phenomena of foregrounding and back-grounding together are referred to by Hopper and Thompson as "grounding".

[12] The first part of line 6 of the text, j tzun b'antz, has been ignored here for purposes of exposition. The significance of this phrase will be taken up later.

[13] Actually, it can be seen by looking at the text that there is a stretch of dialogue (lines 37-42) between line 36, where the merchants went crazy over it, and line 43, which is being discussed here. It will be seen presently, however, that such direct quotations must be ignored in looking back for the referent of tz. Thus, in this case, in order to find the referent of tz in line 43, we have to look back to line 36.

[14] Note that j7tz can also refer to something said by another speaker, in which case it may be translated as 'yes, that is correct, it is him/her, he/she is the one, etc.' Some examples of this are seen in lines 77 and 79 of the text.

[15] The idea that a morpheme may "suspend" some of its functions in certain environments is not necessarily just an ad hoc explanation invoked to save this analysis of Aguacatec tz. Another example is the Lakota conjunction na 'and'. This conjunction also indicates that the following clause has the same subject as the preceding clause if there is no full NP subject in the following clause and the verb agreement in the following clause is compatible with that
in the preceding clause. Otherwise, this conjunction is interpreted simply as 'and' with no implication of "same subject" (see Van Valin to appear for details). A further example can be seen in the Northern Pomo "different subject" marker, which when used on certain classes of verbs may still be used even if the following clause has the same subject provided that the subject of the second clause has a different semantic "role" from that of the first clause (see O'Connor 1981).

[16] Farrell Ackerman has pointed out to me that, since all Mayan languages have split-ergative verb agreement, one cannot legitimately make the claim being made here unless it can be shown that other Mayan languages distribute themes, new information, and contrastiveness in the same way as Aguacatec such that these distributions can be reconstructed for Proto-Mayan. Otherwise, one would have to claim that each Mayan language developed ergative verb agreement independently for different reasons, which is not likely. My impressions of the few other Mayan languages that I know suggest that it is likely that these functional parameters are distributed as in Aguacatec. However, further investigation is obviously required to resolve this issue. (In this respect, now see DuBois 1981 and England 1981).

[17] Given that gerundive clauses in English and Spanish are "subjectless" and can therefore only be fully interpreted after finding the subject of the main clause, it would seem that long strings of such clauses would be more difficult to process than long strings of clauses which have subjects. This, then, may very well explain why

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long strings of nominal clauses, which are marked for subject, can occur in Aguacatec while their translation as long strings of gerundive clauses in English or Spanish sounds awkward. In spite of the fact that the subjects of Aguacatec nominal clauses are not deleted by a rule of EQUI-NP DELETION, there often does seem to be an "equi-subject" requirement on strings of such clauses: note that the clauses in lines 83-86 and also in lines 96-100 all share the same subject. Thus, this equi-subject requirement on Aguacatec nominal clauses may be functionally equivalent to the use of EQUI-NP DELETION in gerundive clauses in English and Spanish.

[18] Lines 1-13 were chosen more or less arbitrarily although the decision to stop at 13 was not made arbitrarily; line 14 contains a direct quote, which I did not want to have to deal with. Lines 94-102 were chosen specifically because they contain a number of nominal clauses.

[19] Note that this applies only to the genre that McArthur calls "definite-event narratives".

[20] Note that Table 6 also shows a difference in Transitivity between nominalized and non-nominalized background clauses; however, since there were only two nominalized background clauses in the sample, it is not clear whether this is significant or not.

[21] Jones and Jones (1979) also argue that there are more than just two levels of grounding. They claim that all of the languages discussed in Jones (1979) exhibit a minimum of three levels of "information", which they call "background", "events", and "peak". In addition to these three basic levels, however, some languages
divide the background into "ordinary" and "significant" background and/or they may divide events into "ordinary" and "significant" events. Thus, some of the languages that they discuss may have up to five levels of grounding according to their system.

References


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ROSCH, ELEANOR and CAROLYN B. MERVIS. 1975. Family resemblances: studies in the internal structure of categories. Cognitive Psychology


Text

The following text was written down and translated into Spanish by Gaspar Méndez López, an Aguacatec speaking student at the Proyecto Lingüístico Francisco Marroquín. The English translation given here was made by me, comparing both Méndez's Spanish translation and the Aguacatec original. A certain amount of interpretation on my part has gone into this English translation (e.g. in the case of the "nominal
clauses"). The Aguacatec version has not been tampered with other than
to correct spelling errors. The punctuation in the Aguacatec version is
Méndez’s. The line divisions and numbering are mine.

Juun Xtxoolb’il ye Xhe7n B’anaq Lu7 Tzuu7 Tyeemp Tzaaj
A Story about How Pedro Tecmate Did Long Ago

1. At juun yool ye na chiyol wunaq jaalu7.
   There is a tale that the people tell now.

2. mi b’intziij nqo kyi7 pe7,
   If it’s true or not? (I don’t know).

3. e7 tu7 wunaq na yoloon teetz jaalu7.
   It’s just that the people tell about it now.

4. At juun yaa7 na xoon wi muunt teen tzaaj
   There was a man who used to walk the earth long ago.

5. Lu7 Tzuu7 b’ii7 le qayool,
   Pedro Tecmate was his name in our language.

6. i tzun b’antz niin b’een tilool Lu7 ye teele7n tzaaj chichoojo7n
   kob’ox ajpyaa7,
   And it happened that Pedro saw some merchants (travelling salesmen)
   receiving their pay.

7. xe7te7n tzuntz tan xtxumle7n juun tajtzaa7ql,
   So starting to have an idea,
8. niin tzun b'een ii7tz tan k'otle7n juun jul tzi b'ee7
   he went to dig a hole at the side of the road,
9. niin kyaaaj kyeen tq'ool q'aq'tz tk'u7l jul
   and he left a fire inside the hole,
10. kyaaaj kyeen tq'ool sii7tz
    left firewood,
11. niin tzun paqxijtz,
    and then returned.
12. ej ma ye kyopoone7n ye e7 ajpyaaj qale7 xmuqet7 ye q'aaq' niin tzun
    e7kuu7tz,
    And when the merchants came to where the fire had been buried, they
    sat down.
13. che7n ate7 kyetz ajpyaaj tan wasa7n xe juun tzee7 ye tuule7n tzaaj
tetz Lu7,
    The merchants were there eating under a tree when Pedro arrived.
14. cho7n pe7 xwit woq tzne7; stzun Lu7 niintz tzkyetz e7 ajpyaaj,
    "Are you going to sleep here?" said Pedro to the merchants.
15. cha7tz b'in che7ch ajpyaaj.
    "Here," said the merchants.
16. Aaj chinwitoq b'in nook tzixlaj,
    "Ah, then I will sleep a little beside you."
17. ej niin b'eentz tan tiki'le7n tetz tk'aa7 tk'u7l juun xaaruu7 tx'otx'
   And he went to get his water in a clay pitcher.
18. ma kyetz ajpyaaj na ch'iich' ye kyeetz,
   But the merchants, since theirs was of metal.
19. chim b'aalaj niin kyetz chixaaruu7 ye e7 ajpyaaj
   the merchants' pitcher was very nice.
20. ma tetz Lu7 Tzuu7 na tx'otx' tu7,
   But Pedro Tecomate's was just of clay.
21. ej niin tzun jee7 tq'ool teetz wi tx'a7x ch'im,
   And he put his on the grass,
22. poro che7n at kyeen q'aaq' tzaq',
   but the fire was underneith.
23. ej niin jetzaaj juu7'ii1 mu7xh taal puqlaajtz
   And he piled up a little sand around it,
24. poro le raat niin pulte7n tetz xaaruu7
   but soon the pitcher boiled.
25. ej niin b'een tetz Lu7tz tan qxule7n tzaa7 alaj chin xhchib'
   And Pedro went to cut off a piece of meat,
26. niin kuu7 tq'ooltz wi txa7x ch'im tzwutz ye xaaruu7 xhchiwutz e7 ajpyaaj
and he put it on the grass before the pitcher in front of the merchants.

27. na chitze7een niin e7 ajpyaajtz te7:’

The merchants were laughing at him.

28. mb’ii7 sb’ne7 nokx yaab’,

"What’s that crazy guy going to do?"

29. poro xhchiwutz niin ajpyaaj ye jee7n xtx’aanuul tiib’ tetz chi7b’aj tzwutz ye xaaruu7

But it was right in front of the merchants that the meat roasted before the pitcher.

30. xhchiwutz niin ye tooke7n xtxooliil Lu7 ye 7wa7 te7:’ xaaruu7

It was right in front of them that Pedro began to line up his tortillas along the pitcher.

31. xhchiwutz niin ajpyaajtz ye jee7n sib’eel tetz 7wa7 tan stz’e7e7n

It was right in front of the merchants that smoke came up from the tortillas from their burning.

32. poro kyi7k q’aaq’ na kyil niin

But there was no fire that they could see.

33. poro cho7n at kyeen q’aaq’ tsaq’un Lu7 ‘aq’ tx’otx’

But Pedro had left the fire under the ground.

34. ej stz’e7e7n tetz 7wa7

And (with) the tortillas burning,
35. jukaane7n tetz chi7b'aj tan tz'e7e7n atite7t
   and the meat shrivelling up from burning there,

36. qale7n kyeele7n yaab' e7 ajpyaa7 te7j
   the merchants went crazy over it.

37. taa7 stzun juun b'an,
   "Papa," said one,

38. qaloq'e7 juun qaxaaruu7atz.
   "Let's buy ourselves that pitcher.

39. kunu7 fa7j qale7n niin iil na ook q'aa7q'1 qeetz qasii7
   Just think how hard it is for our firewood to burn.

40. tz'uu1 ak'
   It'll come wet,

41. tz'uu1 tzaa7jo7t tan we7j
   we'll nearly get finished off from hunger,

42. qo7q wi7 niin ab'aal
   or it'll be raining."

43. tooke7n tzun chiyool ajpyaa7tz te7j
   So the merchants discussed it:

44. l lo7q sk'aay sqeetz
   "Would that he sell it too us."

45. poro ya7tz niin b'in tajb'il tetz Lu7 Tzuu7 tan k'aa7yiil ye xaaru7
    na pwoq na tsaj Lu7 skye7j ajpyaa7
But that's what Pedro Tecomate wanted: to sell the pitcher, because money was what Pedro wanted from the merchants.

46. ej ma chiwi7t waane7n niin tzun ook chitaaj e7 ajpyaaj tan jaqle7n xaaruu7.

And when they finished eating, the father of the merchants began to ask for the pitcher.

47. k'aaye7u7 ye xaaruu7u7 sqeetz

"Sell us your pitcher.

48. jatna7 miil na taaaju7 sqaq'e7 te7j

However many thousand you want we will give for it."

49. aa7 loq'e7 niinu7 taa7 b'untz kyi7kt si17 qeeq niin kyi7kt qaq'aar' kuu7

"Ah, buy it, Papa, so that we will no longer have to carry firewood nor make a fire.

50. jalt kuntu7 lb'een quky'aj a7 niin1 qatuk'b'aaaj ku7n niin qatxool keen qawaa7tz te7j xaaruu7 niin qaq' kyeen qachib' tzwutz b'untz jaal ku7n lqiky'tz.

We'll just bring water and set it down and put our tortillas around the pitcher and also put our meat in front of it so that we can pass on quickly.

51. at pe7 sqeetz tuuch' ab'aal mpe naq tzaan ab'aal.

What does the rain matter to us it's raining."
52. tooke7n tzun traat te7d xaaru7

So making a deal for the pitcher,

53. jat loo7 miil b'an tetz xaaruuu7

who knows how much the pitcher cost?

54. ej niin tzun kyaaj kyeen jatxij te juun k'oloj pwoqa7s tq'ab' Lu7 Tzuu7

So a pile of that money was left in the hand of Pedro Tecomeite.

55. ej jalchaan, niky' loo7 oor tiky'le7n tetz Lu7, kyiky'e7nt kyetx ajpyaaaj

and at dawn (who knows at what hour Pedro moved on?) the merchants moved on.

56. ma topoone7n oor tan tz'amle7n b'eene7n xhoaqool ye chitaaj juun tan tiky'le7n a7 tul xaaruu7

When lunch time came, their father sent one of them to bring water in the pitcher:

57. niin kuu7 kyiq'ooltz wi txa7x ch'im chi tuleej Lu7 teetz

and they put it down on the grass like Pedro had done with it.

58. na7 na pult ku7nt tooke7n chitxoolii11 chiwaa7tz juun tzii7 niin.

Around where it was going to boil they lined up their tortillas.

59. niiky'aane7n tetz xaaruuu7 tan puqlaaj

(And with) the pitcher filling up with sand,

60. kyi7 niin na pult te7tz lo7q niin.
that thing didn't boil at all.

61. ej chipaqxe7n tzun juun tiirtz tan tilwe7n ye xhe7n ku7n taane7n
    So they went back again to see how it had been.

62. ma kyopoone7n qopi7 taane7n tetz jul
    But when they got there, the hole was open.

63. che7n at kyeen q'aaq' tzaq' te7tz
    The fire was down inside that.

64. ej i tzun kyaaltz aaj poro kyi niin tz'eel tzwutz
    And so what they said was, "Ah, but he won't get away from us.

65. alo niin lnooj keent
    Some day we will find him."

66. poro na eel xtxuum Lu7 teetz ye b'i7tz na chitxuumuun e7 ajpyaaj
    te7j na nachool b'in ii7
    But Pedro imagined what the merchants were thinking of because he
    was intelligent.

67. na tb'iit niin Lu7
    Pedro heard everything.

68. ma teele7n juun k'oloj tyeemp noojje7nt keen Lu7 chiq'ab' ye e7
    ajpyaaja7tz
    After much time had passed, Pedro found himself again in the hands
    of the merchants.
69. kwee7n tzun junt tajtzaa7q1 Lu7 Tzuu7 tk'u7l,
So Pedro Tecomate, having another idea:
70. qale7 7nchaje7 wiib' xhchiwutz szun Lu7 b'antz
"I will even show myself to them," said Pedro.
71. kwee7n tzun chikuluul kyib'
thus finding each other.
72. sqeen chikuu7 kyetz ajpyaa7 xe juun chin wi7 tzee7 stzi17 juun
chumaam a7,
The merchants had already sat down under a big tree on the bank of
a large river.
73. i te7n niin yool Lu7a7s taaltz b'ajx tiir
Pedro said the same words that he had said the first time:
74. che7n pe7 chiwitu7 szun Lu7.
"Are you going to sleep here?" said Pedro.
75. cha7tz b'in che7ch ajpyaa7
"Here," said the merchants.
76. aaj taa7 ku7n ya7stzun juun taa7q1 ye k'aayiin ye xaaruu7 sqeetz.
"Ah, Papa, that's the guy who sold us the pitcher.
77. kun i7tz, szun juuna7tz
Look! It's him," said that one.
78. nq'eera7tz szun junt b'an tzaaj.
"No it isn't," said another.

79. kyi7 i7tz chi junt.

"Yes it is," said another.

80. aaj qale7 qajoye7 puuntuil tan xub'se7n ii7 qa7n tan kyime7n

"Ah, we will look for a way to fool him in order to kill him.

81. kuuq qa7n tk'u7l juun saak che7ch b'an

We will stick him in a gunny sack," they said.

82. ej ma yel wit niin tzun qab'okl niintz wi a7

"And when he sleeps, we'll throw him in the river."

83. kwee7n tzun q'aaq' tetz Lu7

So Pedro, making his fire.

84. tooke7n tetz Lu7 tan tx'ujte7n

starting to busy himself,

85. waane7n tetz Lu7tz,

(and) eating,

86. xa7q tzaaj Lu7tz skye7;

he (then) went to them.

87. jalchaan pe7 eeq chiky' kyeeru7 stzun b'an

"Are you going to move on early tomorrow?" said Pedro.

88. jalchaan che7ch ajpyya7

"Early," said the merchants.

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89. aaj b'a7n b'in stzun Lu7

"Ah, good," said Pedro.

90. qawitoq b'in na ja chinsaktij weetz stzun Lu7 b'antz

"Then let's sleep because I'm tired," said Pedro.

91. b'eene7n tzun kyi7q'ool juun saaktz tetz Lu7

So giving a gunny sack to Pedro,

92. i tzun kyaal teetz nkween tul juun saake7; na wi7 ni7 niin che7w.

what they said to him was, "Get into this gunny sack because it's really cold."

93. kuuj chi Lu7

"Okay," said Pedro.

94. poro nsqeen eel xtzuum Lu7 teetz ye b'ii7 kyaajbi7il ye ajpyaaj te7?,

But he had already imagined what the merchants were going to do to him.

95. ma ye tooke7n ni7n tetz aq'b'ai7l ye kyaaje7n samm kyetz ajpyaaj tan waatl, niin tzun jee7 k'ootzoon tetz Lu7tz.

And when night came and the merchants had gotten numb from sleep, Pedro got up.

96. tooke7n tzuntz tan mole7n tzaaj kyeyqiil e7chq b'e7ch kyeetz e7chq chiwaa7 e7chq chix7lo7x mb'ii7 kuniin ky'a7n kya7n,

And starting to gather all of their clothes, their tortillas, their napkins, everything they carried,
97. ryaatiil cheejtz kyeqiil ku7n b'eene7n xajooltz tk'u71 te juun saaka7tz,

the horse's riata and everything he put in that gunny sack.

98. kwee7n tzun nuk'uuultz chi taane7n ii7 teetz ye wite7n,

Then forming it like he had been while he slept,

99. tooke7n tzun tq'ool ye twi7 ii7 xlaj

and then putting his hat beside it,

100. ma nuk'xe7n kyeen ta7n niin iky' tetz Lu7tz jalaj ky'een a7.

and when he had it arranged, he passed over to the other side of
the river.

101. ej jalena7s tzun chinaachoone7n kyetz ajpyaaj

and then after that the merchants woke up.

102. poro sqeen iky'poon tetz Lu7 jalaj ky'een chumaam a7

But Pedro had passed over to the other side of the river.

103. ma chinaachoone7n ye e7 ajpyaaj

When the merchants woke up:

104. yaj stzun ye k'ase7n ye b'aax

"Hey you guys," said the first one awake.

105. oor tzijee7n oor tzijee7n

"Get up, get up.

106. tz'uul chaan sqiil.
It's already getting light.

107. kyil kxjiloon stzun juuna7tz b'an,

Don't talk," said that one.

108. jee7n tzun chipalool ye saaktz

So lifting up that gunny sack,

109. b'eene7n tzun chitrmpuultz wi a7

and throwing it into the river,

110. poro kyeqiil chiwaa7 kyeqiil e7chq chitw17 mb'ii7 kuniin ky'a7n kya7n, ryaatiil cheej i kuniin te7tz b'eene7n chitrmpuultz wi a7

But all of their tortillas, all of their hats, everything that they carried, the horse's riatas and all of that they threw in the river.

111. i tzun b'eene7n kyiilooltz tetz Lu7

So what they said to Pedro was:

112. cheeb' ku7n xhb'een Lu7 che7ch b'an niin

"Good bye, Pedro," they said.

113. kuu7 ryaat niin tiir ku7n tamaal stzun Lu7 b'an tzaaj len jalaj ky'een a7

"OK, thanks, riatas and all of the tamales," said Pedro on the other side of the river.

114. poro nq'etz Lu7 ye b'een chitrmpuul wi a7

But it wasn't Pedro that they threw in the river:
115. ma na ku?n b'e?ch kyeetz chiwaa? kyeqiil chitaqle?n b'eentz tk'u?1 juun saaka7tz tan Lu?7 niin e?7 te?7n niin trimpwuun niintz wi juun chin wutziile?n a7

but rather it was their clothes, their tortillas, all of their things that Pedro put in that gunny sack; and they themselves threw it into the great river.

116. ej ya?stzun teele?n chitxuum ajpyaajtz teetz ye nq'etz Lu?7 lo?oon kya?7n

And in this way the merchants realized that it was not Pedro that they had screwed,


but they themselves who had gotten screwed by Pedro.

118. Tyooxh tu?7

Thank you.
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