

The Functions Of *lëë* In Xanica Zapotec Narrative Discourse With Some Implications For Comparative Zapotec¹

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0. Introduction

One of the characteristics of many Zapotec languages, including Xanica Zapotec², is the presence of a morpheme cognate with the Xanica form *lëë*, (referred to in general as *laa form*³) which functions at the discourse level as some sort of focus particle, and at the morphosyntactic level as a semantically empty "phonological host" (Marlett 1993:85) to which phonologically dependent clitics can attach.⁴ Other Zapotec languages, such as Isthmus Zapotec (Pickett 1960, Marlett 1993), have a *laa* form, but it is used only as a phonological host and does not seem to have a discourse function, although other languages have a different morpheme which encodes the discourse functions, such as Sierra Juárez Zapotec (reported in Longacre 1986), which has a morpheme *nna* which is postposed to a constituent and indicates some degree of prominence.⁵ According to Marlett (1993:83n2), Texmelucan Zapotec is the only Zapotec language known which does not have a *laa* form at all.

In Zapotec languages which do have a *laa* form functioning on a discourse level, its characterization has been the subject of several articles by analysts who have grappled with its proper use in the contexts of native-authored and translated text materials in various Zapotec languages (Riggs 1987, Kreikebaum 1987, Benton 1987, Ward 1987).⁶ As mentioned above, it is often analyzed as having the discourse function of focus, although at least one analyst (Ward 1987) has called into question the adequacy of the term *focus* for some of the uses of this morpheme in Quiquitan Zapotec.

0.1. Purpose

The main purpose of this paper is to present an initial analysis of the discourse functions of *lëë* in XZ narrative discourse, as observed in 7 narrative texts. This analysis is presented in sections 1 and 2. The analysis presented in these sections is couched in terms of the theory of discourse analysis

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²Subsequently referred to as XZ. XZ is a variant of Zapotec spoken in the municipality of Santiago Xanica, in the extreme southeastern corner of the ex-district of Miahuatlán, in the state of Oaxaca. There are an estimated 4000 speakers of XZ. Fieldwork under the auspices of SIL has been in progress since 1988.

³I use *laa form* as a cover term for the set of cognate forms. *Laa* is chosen for being the nearest to the supposed reconstructed form of **laa* [laʔ]. The reflex in XZ is *lëë* [læʔ].

⁴Reflexes that have been observed cross-linguistically are: *laa* (Quiatoni, Albarradas, Chichicapan); *lee* (Amatlán); *lle* [že] (Atepec); and *lëë* (Xanica, Xanagúfa, Quiquitan, Quiegolani).

⁵The possible relationship of Sierra Juárez *nna* with the *laa* forms is discussed in section 3.2.

⁶As opposed to its syntactic patterning, although this has also been a topic of research (Marlett 1993, Ward 1987, Benton 1987).

as presented in Longacre 1983 (with modifications as presented in Longacre 1985 and 1981).

The secondary purpose of this paper is to demonstrate how the *laa* form differs among several Zapotec languages. It is argued here that these types of discourse-level differences must be carefully studied and presented for each Zapotec language in order to facilitate the application of cross-linguistic comparisons. Evidence is given in section 3.1 of some differences found between XZ and Albarradas Zapotec as to how the so-called "focus particle" inter-relates with subject fronting. Section 3.2 discusses the possibility that the *laa* form is an evolved reflex of a proposed (in Longacre 1986) Proto-Otomanguean discourse particle ***na*, which has survived in both form and position in Sierra Juárez Zapotec and in Northern Popoloca. Section 3.3 and 3.4 discuss some implications of the study of discourse level features in Zapotec to matters of comparative Zapotec. Section 3.5 ends with the presentation of an implicational hierarchy of *laa* form constructions that is proposed to hold universally for the Zapotec languages.

0.2. The corpus of data

The seven texts selected for this study are the product of the efforts of three native speakers of XZ and, in my opinion, represent a range of storytelling ability. Luis Martínez (pen name), the author of "Mi perro Solín," "Los tres consejos," "Los dos compadres," and "El matón" was approximately 50 years old when he wrote these stories. His work represents the craft of a master story-teller, judging by XZ audience response and the popularity of trial editions of his materials.⁷ Samuel Luis (pen name), the author of "Las hormigas y el elefante" and "Cómo empecé la escuela" was about 17 years old when he wrote these stories. They represent the efforts of one who is slowly gaining expertise in writing in his language. The anonymous speaker who narrated "Cómo construyeron la clínica" is a preliterate speaker of the language who was about 45 years old at the time he recorded the text. This narrator was quite uncomfortable about the whole process of storytelling, and it was difficult to elicit any types of subsequent changes to the text once it was given. Although this information would appear to indicate that level of literacy in the idiom corresponds to level of storytelling ability, I feel that in this case it is just a fortuitous coincidence.⁸

Examples from the narratives are given throughout the paper as pertinent.⁹

1. Clitic *lëë* as discourse particle

The following types of expressions with *lëë* were found in the course of the analysis of the XZ narrative texts mentioned above. Although the generalizations given here are consistent with the text material studied, any claim as to the universal characterization of *lëë* in XZ narrative discourse will be dependent on the examination of a larger corpus of narrative texts.

⁷See Palomino de Piper (1994) for a detailed discourse analysis of "Mi perro Solín."

⁸This could, however, become a fruitful topic for research. See Smith 1987 for discussion of the differences between oral and written narratives.

⁹The phonemes of XZ are listed here with orthographical symbols, where different, given in parentheses: p, t, \emptyset (ts), k^y (ky), k, k^w (kw), β (b), d, f (only loanwords), s, š (x), z, ž (zh), m, n, ñ, ng^w (ngw), l, r, w, y, i, e, æ (ë), u, o, a. The syllable nucleus may be a simple vowel: a; laryngealized: a' (aa); glottalized: a? (a'); or aspirated: a^h (ah). There is contrastive tone in XZ, which is not represented in the practical orthography. The abbreviations used in this paper are listed in the appendix.

1.1. *lëë* + connector

Lëë with connectors--especially temporal expressions--tends to have a cohesive function à la Halliday & Hasan (1976). For this reason it is usually found episode-internally, and is expressly ungrammatical in the discourse- or episode-initial position. For example, in the "Solín" text, *lëë* is used with temporal/sequential expressions consistently in episode-internal paragraphs, but not at the beginning of an episode, as shown in example (1). It is also found consistently in the resolution/evaluation paragraphs that Palomino de Piper (1994) posits as the characteristic closing of a narrative episode, as shown in examples (2) and (3).

- (1) *Lëë* tiemp mseets xsu'yn mañ ka, ngwas Solin...
 * moment C.sound POS.rattle animal that C.jump Solín
 'The moment the rattle sounded, Solín jumped...'
- (2) *Lëë* xoze mud nkwë_nahp ngwe lefant.
 * thus manner C.ambush 3a elephant
 'And in that manner they set an ambush for the elephant.'
- (3) *Lëë* xoze ngwislo rrgu'na falt.
 * thus C.begin H?.ls miss
 'Thus I began to miss [classes].'

The cohesive function of *lëë* + connector, then, corresponds to the notional idea of presupposed information or expected sequence of events. Temporal expressions not marked with *lëë*, occurring discourse-/event-initial, correspond to new information or an unexpected sequence of events.

Within this view of the use of *lëë* + connector, it is worth examining the few apparent counterexamples in the corpus of data, where a temporal/sequential expression occurs episode-internally without *lëë*.

In the "Solín" text, the two sentences of the resolution paragraph of Episode 3 do not have the expected *lëë*, even though they are episode-internal, as shown in examples (4) and (5).

- (4) Orka *lëë* Solin ngwas, mtee ya' axta laas =me,
 then * Solín C.jump C.place hand until chest 3h

 axta lyuu ngwlaak mën ka
 until ground C.fall person that

 'Then Solín jumped (and) placed his paws on the man's chest until that person fell to the ground.'
- (5) Orka ngwnaaba pasens lo =me...
 then C.ask.ls forgiveness face 3h
 'Then I asked his forgiveness...'

This may be explained by the fact that the episode where examples (4) and (5) occur is the peak of a larger section in the macrostructure of the story. Longacre points out that "discourse peak is often marked by something new [that] has been *added to* and something [that has been] *taken away*" (1985:85). In this case it appears that part of the surface marking of peak is the "taking away" of the expected *lëë* (see section 1.2 for a discussion of what is "added to" in the discourse peak). There is

some notional evidence for the absence of *lëë* in these cases because of the fact that the dog's aggression is not entirely justified in the situation, nor is the author's apology for the dog's actions (although this last may indeed be a case of an implied cultural assumption that a drunk person is not ultimately responsible for his/her actions while under the influence).

A similar behavior of *lëë* + connector is observed in the "Consejo," "Compadres," "Hormigas" and "Matón" texts as well. It is somewhat weaker in the extemporaneous 1st person narrative "Cómo empecé la escuela," and is non-existent in the "Clínica" text. It may well be that the "Clínica" text, with its lack of cohesive elements, is more like a listing of events rather than like a structured narrative text. In any event, the fact that the use of *lëë* + connector can vary from speaker to speaker seems to correlate with its function being determined on the discourse level (as opposed to the morphosyntactic level).

1.2. *lëë* + VP

Texts in XZ also permit the use of *lëë* + VP, as illustrated in examples (6) through (9).

- (6) Sin *lëë* mkë'la =na.
 instead * C.kill.1s 3inan
 'Instead I killed it.'
- (7) *Lëë* ngwdet me_wi'n ka.
 * C.enter small.boy that
 'The young boy entered.'
- (8) no *lëë* syëët nu ñobts ñaa nu skwel
 and * F.return le I.was.time.NEG I.go le school
 'and when we returned there wasn't time to go to school'
- (9) *lëë* ngwalo mkëht mën =me
 * C.finish C.kill person 3h
 'they finally killed him'

This is a highly marked use of *lëë* and functions as a signal of peak. It gives the feeling of immediately sequential events, and can often be translated as a type of complex clause structure with 'when/then' or 'when/that', as illustrated in examples (10) and (11).

- (10) *Lëë* ngwzaal =me mën ka
 * C.meet 3h person that

lëë ngwni'l =me lo mën ka, rëb =me:
 * C.talk.already 3h face person that H.say 3h

 'When they met up with that person, then he spoke to him, saying:'
- (11) *Lëë* ngwnëë =me *lëë* zal zhambayl =me...
 * C.see 3h * F.go.already POS.compadre 3h
 'When he saw that his *compadre* was going...'

I treat this use of *lëë* + VP as an example of the "something [that] is added to" that Longacre

discusses in his article on narrative peaks (Longacre 1985).

1.3. *lëë* + NP

XZ exhibits frequent left shift of the subject NP, as illustrated in examples (12) and (13).¹⁰ Left shift, especially of subjects, is a characteristic of most Zapotec languages, although it appears that the frequency of permitted left shifts among Zapotec languages may be distributed along a continuum whose poles are strict VSO order and free SVO order.¹¹

(12) ke lëë lefant_i ngwtsib t_i waan, waan
 that * elephant_i C.come t_i slowly slowly
 'that the elephant was coming slowly, slowly'

(13) Tsi'n wits za tiemp lëë doktor mlën.¹²
 15 days go time * doctor C.arrive
 'Fifteen days later the doctor arrived.'

Longacre (1992:210) lists three functions of left shift in Biblical Hebrew, which is also a VSO language: (1) paraphrase; (2) amplification; and (3) contrast, including tableau effects.

An examination of *lëë* + NP in the 7 texts included in the corpus of data suggests that the discourse functions of the construction are: (1) contrast, often with a tableau effect; (2) participant activity or speech; and (3) introduction of secondary characters with crucial or pivotal information. These functions may be grouped into the larger category of *participant prominence*.

The NPs involved in the *lëë* + NP construction include proper nouns, noun phrases, and independent person clitics. The independent person clitics in XZ are given in (14).¹³ Examples of the use of this construction are given in (15) through (18).

¹⁰The fact that left shift in XZ can occur with or without *lëë* somewhat complicates the characterization of the discourse function of *lëë* + NP; as a result, the conclusions presented in this section are to be taken as preliminary, contingent on a fuller analysis of subject fronting in XZ.

¹¹It has been claimed that Rincón Zapotec (Northern Zapotec) has evolved into a VOS language (Marlett 1985) which, within a Principles and Parameters view of word order, such as that described in Piper 1992 for Zapotec, has the same effects as an SVO language for the purposes of the discussion at hand. The crucial fact here is that the canonical V-S link has been disrupted by Subject NP Shift.

¹²Note that this is the only occurrence of *lëë* in the "Clínica" text. It probably marks the peak of the story, and certainly marks the appearance of the most prominent participant in the narrative, the doctor, who comes to begin practice in the new clinic the town has built.

¹³Ngwe would be considered a dependent person clitic, except for one instance in other data where it occurs without *lëë*:

Ryana lo tsi'n noo ngwe rzë
 H.go.ls to work also 3a H.follow
 '(When) I would go to work, he would follow.'

In this slot it is ungrammatical to use *lëëngwe*:

*Ryana lo tsi'n noo lëëngwe rzë

This may suggest that for some reason the work *noo* also functions as a head. If this analysis holds true, *ngwe* would be the only known example in any Zapotec language of an independent 3rd person clitic (cf. Marlett 1993:83).

- (14) na '1s' lii '2s'
 nu '1e' ku '2p'
 naa '1i' ngwe '3a'
- (15) Orka lëë Solin rislo ro'n.
 Then * Solín H.begin H.cry
 'Then Solín would begin crying.'
- (16) lëë ti mus kol mde't kwent lo min'
 * one worker old C.tell story face youngster
 'an old worker told the youngsters a story'
- (17) No lëë na rnina lo =me:
 and * I H.say.1s face 3h
 'And I was saying to him.'
- (18) Lëë or lëë ngwe ya_mer yzin ngwe lits merto'...
 * when * 3a any.time.now P.arrive 3a house ant
 '(And) when he was about to arrive at the ants' house...'

2. Lexicalized lëë

There are a few words in XZ that appear to incorporate *lëë*: *lëëza* 'when', *lëëtsa* 'so that', and *lëë* + dependent person clitic.¹⁴ These are treated as cases of *lëë* for the reason that they occur in the same clause-initial positions as *lëë* + connector (*lëëza* and *lëëtsa*) and *lëë* + NP (*lëë* + dependent person clitic).¹⁵

They are treated as cases of lexicalized *lëë*, as opposed to cases of the clitic *lëë*, for two reasons: (1) the presence of *lëë* is now obligatory, i.e. determined by lexical selection; and (2) native speakers view them as part of one word, i.e. the same speaker will recognize other cases of *lëë* as separate words, even though s/he may not be able to come up with a word translation in Spanish for *lëë*.

Examples of *lëëza* and *lëëtsa* are given in (19) and (20).

- (19) *lëëza* miina ngwzets lë'n kyal
 when C.hear.1s C.noise stomach corn.field
 '(It was) when I heard a noise in the corn field.'
- (20) Ykë_nahpaa lefant lëëtsa wëhtaa ngwe
 P.trap.li elephant so.that P.kill.li 3a
 'Let's ambush the elephant so that we can kill him.'

The morphosyntactic behavior of the *lëë* + dependent person clitic construction has been

¹⁴This phenomenon has also been observed at least for Amatlán Zapotec (D. Riggs, personal communication).

¹⁵It is interesting to note that Kreikebaum (1987, sections 3.5ff) has demonstrated that in Sto. Domingo Albarradas Zapotec, *laa* 'focus' and *laa* 'phonological host' are two separate morphemes based on evidence of tone sandhi.

amply described for Zapotec languages in general by Marlett (1985, 1993). The dependent person clitics in XZ that require *lëë* as phonological host when they are separated from their usual heads (VP, possessed NP, PP, etc.) are given in (21). Examples from the texts studied are given in (22) and (23).

(21) =me '3h' =na '3inan'
 =zha '3m' =le '2s'

(22) Lëë =me rzu_ti'ts lo zhin' =me
 She H.chat face son 3h
 'She chatted with her sons.'

(23) rluux ngwe lits merto' or rnëë ngwe ke lëë =na xuxkwaal
 H.spend 3a house ant when H.see 3a that it was.already.made
 'He would destroy the ants' house when he knew that it was already made.'

It is important to note that, when *lëë* occurs with *independent* person clitics, it is not a case of lexicalized *lëë*, but rather a case of *lëë* + NP with the discourse functions as described in 2.2 above. However, since =me '3h' has to be accompanied by *lëë* when it shifts position, it is unclear when *lëë* =me is a case of simple left shift, and when it is a case of left shift with *lëë*.

3. The significance of *laa* forms for comparative Zapotec

As it was pointed out above that not every Zapotec language has a discourse use of a *laa* form, it was also mentioned that the specific uses of this morpheme vary from language to language. This is briefly discussed in this section, and implications are raised regarding the significance of dialect variance to the subgrouping of the Zapotec languages,¹⁶ and regarding the application of dialect adaptation programs such as CARLA.¹⁷

3.1. The interaction of *laa* forms with subject fronting

Kreikebaum 1987 is a detailed study of the behavior of fronting in Santo Domingo Albarradas Zapotec (Valley). There is a co-occurrence restriction in Albarradas Zapotec between fronting with *laa* and pronoun copy after the verb: if a fronted subject with *laa* occurs, then there cannot be a pronoun copy; if the fronted subject is without *laa*, the pronoun copy is permitted, but is not obligatory, as shown in examples (24) and (25) (Kreikebaum 1987:43, 61).

(24) tihb žin +doo r-ahp -iž tihb jib +gunaa...¹⁸
 one person.3m+DIM H-havel-3m one goat+female
 'a boy had a goat...'

¹⁶Such a project is being undertaken for the Southern Zapotec languages (Piper, in preparation).

¹⁷Computer Assisted Related Language Adaptation, an automated parsing-synthesis package produced by SIL for adapting text materials between related languages.

¹⁸The additional glosses used in the Albarradas examples are: m 'masculine'; 'dependent clitic boundary?'; DIM 'diminutive'.

- (25) laa tyo'p žin +[g(w)-u'] zohb ro' kantin
 * two person.m+[C -drink] sit mouth inn
 'There were two drunk fellows at an inn.'

Kreikebaum prefaces the example presented here as (24) with the following statement: "The pronoun copy is absent when the morph /laa/ is preposed to a fronted subject noun phrase." (1987:43).

In contrast, *lëë* + NP fronted subjects in Xanica Zapotec *are* permitted to co-occur with pronoun copy, as seen in examples (26) through (28).¹⁹

- (26) no or lëë na raza...
 and when * I H.bathe.1s
 'And when I was bathing...'
- (27) Lëë or lëë ngwe ya_mer yzin ngwe lits merto'...
 * when * 3a any.time.now P.arrive 3a house ant
 '(And) when he was about to arrive at the ants' house...'
- (28) Orka lëë ti =me rëb =me lo zhambayl =me:...
 Then * one 3h H.say 3h face POS.compadre 3h
 'Then one of them said to his *compadre*:...'

3.2. The evolution of *laa* forms

According to Longacre (1986:139), drawing on work by Gibbs (1977), Sierra Juárez Zapotec (SJZ) has a "mystery particle" *nna*, the discourse functions of which seem to relate well to the discourse functions of *lëë* as sketched here for XZ. The major difference (besides the phonological dissimilarity) lies in the fact that SJZ *nna* occurs *postposed* to temporal expressions, noun phrases and verbs, whereas XZ *lëë* occurs *preposed* to the same constituents.

Furthermore, Longacre's linking of the SJZ *nna* to the *na* in Northern Popoloca (NP; Machin 1977), which has similar discourse functions, leads him to speculate that the two forms (*nna* and *na*) are historically cognate (Longacre 1986:146). If this is so, and given the fact that Proto-Zapotecan and Proto-Popolocan are not particularly closely-related branches within Proto-Otomanguan (POM), it may result that SJZ *nna* and NP *na* are reflexes of a POM discourse marker ***na*.

The question then is: Are the *laa* forms of many Zapotec languages historically cognate with SJZ *nna* (and thus back to POM ***na*)? If so, then a major series of innovations has occurred within those Zapotec languages with *laa* forms: not only a phonological innovation, but also a structural innovation, i.e., the change from postposed to preposed position. This question merits careful study, since such a structural innovation could provide insights into the Zapotec sub-grouping problem. Some preliminary implications for subgrouping are mentioned in the next section.

¹⁹It would be more conclusive to have an example of *lëë* + Proper Noun or *lëë* + full NP with pronoun copy, but no such example was found in the corpus of data. However, the presence of the determiner *ti* 'one' in (28) makes it reasonably clear that the preceding *lëë* is clitic *lëë*, not lexicalized *lëë*.

3.3. Implication for genetic/typological sub-grouping

Studying the different discourse properties of *laa* forms can lead to grouping patterns which may have genetic or typological significance. This section mentions a few of the differences noted.

It was mentioned in the introduction that not all Zapotec languages have a *laa* form with discourse-level functions. Those languages which *do* have such a function appear to be restricted to a sub-set of the Valley group and to Southern group. It was shown in Section 3.1 that there are differences among languages as to how *laa* forms combine with subject fronting.

A review of the articles available reveals that there are also differences among languages as to which elements can be preposed by *laa* forms. For example, the *laa* form + VP construction is permitted in the following varieties of Zapotec:²⁰ Albarradas, Quiatoni, Quiquitani, Xanica and Xanaguá; the first two belong to the Valley subgroup, while the other three belong to the Macro-Yautepec subgroup of the Southern Sierra area. It apparently is *not* found in Amatlán Zapotec, which belongs to the Miahuatlán subgroup of the Southern Sierra area of languages, nor in Mitla, which belong to the Valley group. This may prove to be an example of a higher-level shared innovation that could support claims to the genetic link (or diffusion) between some Valley languages and the Macro-Yautepec languages, and to the differentiation between Macro-Yautepec languages and Miahuatlán languages.²¹

3.4. CARLA

CARLA (Computer Assisted Related Language Adaptation) has been gaining acceptance within SIL as a highly valuable tool for the automatic generation of text adaptations between related languages. It is usually acknowledged that the CARLA output constitutes a rough draft in the target language which then must undergo substantive editing by a native speaker of the target language.

A pilot CARLA project is currently in progress in the Mexico Branch of SIL, involving a source text in Isthmus Zapotec which is being parsed and subsequently adapted into Quiegolani Zapotec (Macro-Yautepec). It should be clear from the preceding discussion of the wide range of variance in the use of *laa* forms between Zapotec languages, that the output of a CARLA adaptation may not necessarily reflect the different uses of the forms in the target language.

In fact, as mentioned above, Isthmus Zapotec apparently does not use the *laa* form at the discourse level. In contrast, Quiegolani Zapotec, the target language for the SIL-Mexico pilot project, *does* use the *laa* form at the discourse level (Regnier, personal communication). This implies that the native speaker of Quiegolani Zapotec must be trained to be aware of the need to modify the adapted text, in this case adding the necessary *laa* forms as dictated by his/her feel for the discourse structure of the text.²² It remains to be seen how much of the discourse functions of *laa* forms could be encoded with CARLA in order to generate at least some of them automatically. It should also be possible to delete occurrences of *laa* forms which are needed by the source language but not by the target language.

²⁰This list is not exhaustive.

²¹See Reeck (n.d.) and Piper (in preparation) for details.

²²This is not an indictment of CARLA, since the same situation necessarily exists when materials are translated manually from Spanish to Zapotec (or, for that matter, from Isthmus Zapotec to Quiegolani Zapotec), since Spanish obviously does not employ any *laa* forms. It has been my experience that a talented Zapotec translator will insert the *laa* forms when they are needed.

3.5. An implicational hierarchy of laa forms

The small amount of cross-linguistic data seen in this paper on the presence of laa forms and its functions seems to suggest the implicational hierarchy given in (29) may be valid for the Zapotec languages in general.

(29) Hierarchy of laa forms

1. laa + VP
2. laa + other NPs
3. laa + dependent person clitic
4. lexicalized laa; laa + connectors²³

The hypothesis is that if a language has feature *n* on the hierarchy, it also has all of the features greater than *n*. From what has been discussed in this paper, Zapotec languages can show an ample range of parametric values. The chart in (30) shows the values for the four Zapotec languages discussed in this paper.

(30) Values on laa form implicational hierarchy for 4 Zapotec languages

| | Texmelucan | Sierra Juárez | Amatlán | Xanica |
|---|------------|---------------|---------|--------|
| 1 | - | - | - | + |
| 2 | - | - | + | + |
| 3 | - | + | + | + |
| 4 | ? | ? | + | + |

This chart should be read in the following way: a plus value for any feature for a language implies a plus feature for all other features higher on the hierarchy (where 4 > 3 > 2 > 1).

Since XZ has a plus value for feature 1 (laa + VP), it has a plus feature for values 2-4 also. However, the fact that Amatlán Zapotec has a plus value for feature 2 (laa + NP or laa + connectors) only implies that it also has a plus value for features 3-4; it does not imply a plus value for feature 1 (which in fact it does not have).

4. Conclusions

In this paper I have shown the three known uses of *lëë* as observed in seven Xanica Zapotec narrative texts and their discourse functions. With connectors of time and/or sequence, *lëë* is used non-discourse- or non-episode-initially with the cohesive function of known information or expected sequence of events. With VPs, *lëë* marks clauses in the peak with the function of heightened activity or immediacy. With fronted NPs, *lëë* signals contrast among participants, often staging them in a tableau effect; marks changes of participants; and introduces secondary characters with crucial or pivotal information. These uses have the discourse function of participant prominence. *Lëë* has also lexicalized with certain morphemes: *lëë* + dependent person clitic, *lëëza* 'when', and *lëëttsa* 'so that'. I have claimed that the lexicalized occurrence of *lëë* no longer affects the narrative on the discourse level, as judged by the fact that its occurrence is lexically determined rather than context determined.

²³The order between other NPs and connectors (feature 3) is not clear.

I have also compared the uses of *lëë* in XZ with several of the uses in other Zapotec languages, with the goal of working toward a more comprehensive understanding of *laa* forms on the language family level. It is clear that as more work is done on the discourse functions of *laa* forms cross-linguistically, there will be a corresponding benefit to work being done in various areas of comparative Zapotec.

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Abbreviations

| | | | |
|-------|---|----------------|---|
| CARLA | Computer Assisted Related Dialect Adaptation | * | arbitrary literal gloss for <i>laa</i> forms |
| NP | Northern Popoloca | - | compound juncture |
| POM | Proto-Otomanguean | . | implicit morpheme boundary |
| SIL | Summer Institute of Linguistics | = | dependent clitic marker |
| SJZ | Sierra Juárez Zapotec | ? | unanalyzed form |
| XZ | Xanica Zapotec | | |
| 1e | 1st person exclusive | 3a | 3rd person animal |
| 1i | 1st person inclusive | 3h | 3rd person human (generic) |
| 1s | 1st person singular | 3inan | 3rd person inanimate |
| 2p | 2nd person plural | 3m | 3rd masculine (male speech) |
| 2s | 2nd person singular | | |
| C | completive aspect | VP | verb phrase |
| F | future aspect | NP | noun phrase |
| H | habitual aspect | PP | prepositional phrase |
| P | potential aspect | POS | possessive prefix |
| | | t _i | trace (i = co-indexation) |