

Aspect Shift in Chichicapan Zapotec Narrative Discourse

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0. Introduction

Verb tense-aspect often plays an important role in discourse because it relates the information encoded in the verb to other information in the discourse (Longacre and Levinsohn 1978, Grimes 1975). The main narrative line in Chichicapan Zapotec (ChZ)¹ forms the *backbone* of the story. It is generally encoded in the completive aspect, but is sometimes encoded in the habitual aspect instead. In this paper, I propose that the reason for the shift from completive to habitual in ChZ is that the narrator wishes to highlight certain portions of the backbone; thus the shift from completive to habitual is not triggered by syntactic rules but by a discourse-level strategy.

The shift in aspect in ChZ has parallels in English and Spanish (Schiffrin 1981; Silva-Corvalán 1983). Schiffrin notes that the past tense in English oral narrative shifts to the historical present, while Silva-Corvalán notes that the preterite in Spanish oral narrative shifts to the present. Both Schiffrin and Silva-Corvalán consider the shift to have an "evaluative" function which parallels the highlighting motive that I propose for ChZ. For Schiffrin, the evaluative function of the shift from past to historical present (P-HP) is to replay events so that the listener can interpret for himself the significance of the events (1981:51), while for Silva-Corvalán, the function of the shift is to render "infelicitous" a statement such as *So what?* by making the narrative of greater interest to the listener (1983:774).

Section 1 of this paper describes the aspect system of ChZ, and section 2 describes the shift from completive to habitual (C-H) in this language. Section 3 then relates the direction and function, and section 4 the significance, of the C-H shift in ChZ to Schiffrin's findings for the P-HP shift in English.²

¹ Chichicapan Zapotec is spoken by approximately 5,000 speakers of the town of San Baltasar Chichicapan in the district of Ocotlán, Oaxaca, México. The phonological system of ChZ has the following segmental contrasts (orthographic representations, if different, are given in parentheses): fortis stops *p t ty(chy/ts) k(c/qu) kw(cw)*, lenis stops *b d dy(r/dz) g(g/gu) gw*; fortis affricate *ch*, lenis affricate *j(dx)*; fortis fricatives *s sh(x)*, lenis fricatives *z zh(l)*; fortis lateral *L(ld)*, lenis lateral *l*; fortis nasals *M(mm) N(nn) Ny(nny)*, lenis nasals *m n ny*; semivowels *w y*; and vowels *i(i/wi/yi) e a o u*. There are three suprasegmental features: tones (not written) low, high, low-rising, high-rising, low-falling, high-falling; glottalization *V?(v')*; and syllable types: high-intensity (*Vh*) and low-intensity (*VV*). Zero morphemes are indicated by \emptyset .

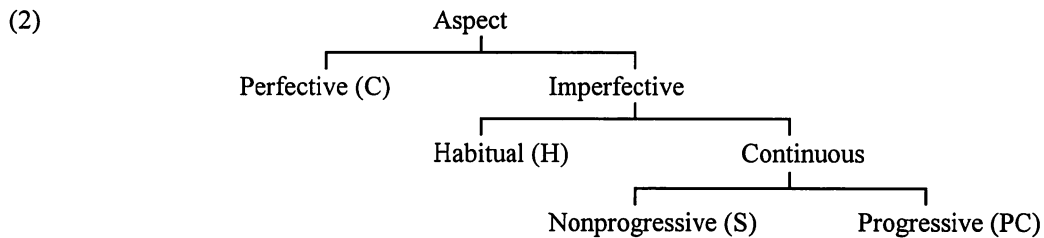
² Schiffrin's study uses quantitative methods because they "greatly enrich the data and allow us to resolve the question by seeing just how speakers themselves deal with it." My approach is primarily descriptive in nature and does not use many statistics. My purpose is to examine Schiffrin's conclusions as applied to a sample of ChZ narrative texts. My primary sample includes one long narrative, one middle-length narrative, and two short narratives totalling approximately 600 clauses. These four narratives are supplemented by approximately twenty other narratives, some of which are quite long. A third source of narrative texts is portions of the New Testament which were translated by a native speaker.

1. Aspects in Chichicapan Zapotec

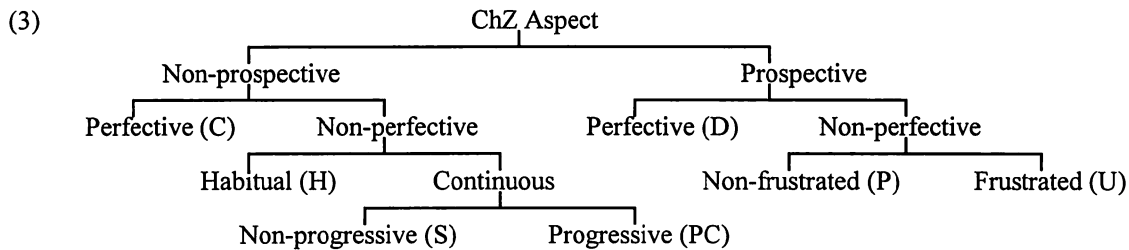
ChZ has seven aspects: completive (C), habitual (H), stative (S), present continuous (PC), potential (P), unreal (U), and future definite (D).³ As per Comrie (1976), C is perfective, and H, S, and PC are imperfective. P, U, and D probably fit under Comrie's "prospective" category (1976:64). To illustrate, I list in (1) each of the seven verb aspects for the verb *ihnn* 'hear' with literal English glosses:

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|------|----------|------------------|-----|---------|------------------------|
| (1) | (C) | b-ihnn | 'heard' | (P) | j-ihnn | 'intends to hear' |
| | (H) | r-ihnn | 'hears' | (U) | ny-ihnn | 'would have heard' |
| | (S) | n-iinn | 'is heard/known' | (D) | z-ihnn | 'will definitely hear' |
| | (PC) | ca-yihnn | 'is being heard' | | | |

Comrie makes a primary distinction between tense systems and aspect systems. While tense focuses primarily on time, aspect focuses on the internal/external view of an event. Within aspect he distinguishes between perfective and imperfective. Perfective aspect views an event from the outside and does not concern itself with the internal structure of an event. Imperfective, however, focuses on the internal structure. I reproduce his branching diagram of aspectual oppositions (1976:25) in (2), adding the corresponding labels for ChZ aspects in parentheses.



In order to include the potential, unreal, and future definite aspects of ChZ, I expand Comrie's aspectual oppositions for ChZ to include prospective vs. non-prospective and frustrated vs. non-frustrated, as represented in (3). Note that I consider the future definite category to be perfective.



³ In Appendix 1 I give a summary of the morphological form of the different aspect categories and examples of verbs conjugated in each of the aspects, and in Appendix 2 I give a list of abbreviations. More detail about how grammatical features are used in ChZ discourse is given in Benton (1989).

The oppositions in ChZ aspect categories shown in (3) are concerned with their primary, or grammatical, meanings. In the context of discourse, these categories have secondary meanings as well. For example, in narrative discourse, either the completive or habitual aspect (except in relative clauses) encode backbone information (i.e., narrative line information essential to the plot), while the continuous aspects encode background. In relative clauses, the habitual aspect is also used to encode background information. The prospective aspects, on the other hand, are used to encode collateral information (see Grimes 1976). In the non-narrative discourse types, the habitual aspect in main clauses encodes backbone information in procedural and expository discourse, while in hortatory discourse, the potential, unreal, and also a special form of the completive, are used to encode backbone.

2. The completive to habitual shift

In ChZ narrative discourse, the main events are normally encoded in the completive aspect. The sequence of completive verbs makes up the backbone of the narrative. Other events provide the background for these main events. Such background information is usually expressed using the stative aspect or the present continuous aspect.

A main event in the narrative backbone, however, may be given more prominence by encoding it in the habitual aspect. The shift from completive to habitual aspect makes that event more vivid, similar to the shift from the past to the historical present in English.

The discourse uses of the completive and habitual aspects is illustrated in the excerpts from the *Sun and Moon* legend shown in (4). Note that in (4a) through (4d) there is a sequence of backbone verbs in the completive aspect. Subsequently, however, several backbone verbs use the habitual aspect. For instance, in (4g) ‘they only H-laugh’ appears instead of ‘they only C-laughed’, and in (4h), ‘the white snake H- opens its mouth’ instead of ‘the white snake C- opened its mouth’:

- (4) a. Nee chin ba-dzihn loh dahan, chi'chi gu-nyi'-nee lasaa' ra' bi
and when C-arrive face field then C-speak-with REFL PL 3h
‘And when they arrived in the field, then they spoke together,’

gu-na'zu ra' bi la'h daada guhl lliguehta laadzi
C-seize PL 3h PREP sir old ? ?
‘they seized their grandfather,’

ba-chi'bi-du'h ra' bi la'h ba llaa'n tuhbi yahga
C-tie-rope PL 3h PREP 3hr bottom one tree
‘they tied him to the trunk of a tree,’

ya chi'chi Ø-ziaa ra' bi.
now then PC-return PL 3h
‘and then they are going home.’

- b. Chin b-waa ra' bi, r-ahbi ra' bi loh x-nanihta lliguehta
when C-return PL 3h, H-say PL 3h face PS-grandmother ?

laadzi ra' bi:
? PL 3h

'When they arrived home, they said to their grandmother,'

"b-wa'ha, sto' tuhbi bidzihin b-achi-dxiinn nu
C-look heart one deer C-PL2-kill 1plx

la'n dee', Ø-zio'pa g-a-nee nu, " r-ahbi ra' bi.
in this PC-come P-TV-with H-say PL 3h

"Look, the heart of a deer that we killed (is) in here; we brought it," they say.'

- c. Ya seguihdu ba-ca'h ba-n, chi'chi ba-zo'ba ba-n loh deh
now then C-take 3hr-3in, then C-set 3hr-3in face ash

guu'-yi-n.
C-be.cooked-3in

'Now then she took it, then she put in on the (hot) ashes; it was cooked.'

- d. Chi'chi gu-rih ra' ba ny-ahw ra' ba-n chin bi-re'h-nyi'
Then C-sit PL 3hr U-eat PL 3hr-3in when C-leave-speak

tuhbi bwi'dzida'ka;
one frog

'Then they sat down; they would have eaten it when a frog came out speaking.'

- e. r-ahbi ma: "R-ahw lasaa', r-ahw lasaa', r-ahw lasaa'."
H-say 3an H-eat REFL H-eat REFL H-eat REFL
'It says, "You eat each other! You eat each other! You eat each other!"'

- f. Chi'chi r-ahbi x-nanihta lliguehta laadzi ra' bi:
Then H-say PS-grandmother ? ? PL 3h
'Then their grandmother says to them,'

"Cwidahdu binyi-'hn biza'bi yu'dxi, a'-yi x-tatita tu
look.out child-DM orphan ? FOC-there PS-grandfather

ni'ca gw-a Ø-chiinn tu, ni'chin r-nyi' maan ca zi'ca!"
that C-go P-kill 2pl thus H-speak animal that thus

"Look out, little orphan children. That's your grandfather there you went to kill! Thus that animal speaks like that!"

- g. Ya la'h ra' bi sohla ru-llihdzi ra' bi, chi'chi gu-nyi' la'ga'h
now PREP PL 3h only H-laugh PL 3h then C-speak again

bwi'dzida'ka:
frog

'Now then, they just laugh; then the frog spoke again.'

"R-ahw lasaa', r-ahw lasaa', r'ahw lasaa'!"
H-eat REFL H-eat REFL H-eat REFL
"You eat each other! You eat each other! You eat each other!"

[In the next ten sentences, the children are put into an oven to await the arrival of a white dragon that will eat the children as punishment for their crime.]

h. Ya seguihdu chin ba-dzihn ma rwaa' yaa chi,
 now then when C-arrive 3an mouth oven that
 'Now when that animal (the dragon) arrived at the mouth of that oven,'

r-iaala rwaa' bwe'lda roosi chi g-ahw la'h ra' bi,
 H-open mouth snake white that P-eat PREP PL 3h
 'that white snake opens its mouth to eat them.'

chi'chi gu-ca'ha ra' bi pahla dxuuca, cun la'h-an ru-la'ha ra' bi
 then C-take PL 3h shovel broken with PREP-3in H-throw PL 3h

dxiah lda'h rwaa' ma hasta que noo b-wi'hnn ra' bi gahn guh-chi
 rock hot mouth 3an until that finally C-do PL 3h win C-die

ma.
 3an

'Then they took the broken shovel; with it they throw hot rocks into its mouth until finally they managed to make it die.'

Other aspects are used in ChZ narrative for events that are not part of the backbone of the story. For example, in the paragraph that provides the setting for a narrative, it is frequently the case that an introductory sentence employing verbs in the completive is followed by a sentence which provides further detail by using verbs in the present continuous. This is illustrated in the setting for the *Market Trip* given in (5).

(5) a. Gu-yuu' tuhbi bwiinn guihtxyi, gw-ah ba o sea bi-re'h ba;
 C-be one person town C-go 3hr or rather C-leave 3hr
 'There was a town-person; he went or rather he left.'

b. Pura nesisidahd Ø-zee ba dxiaa' lahtsi, Ø-zee Ø-si' ba xica
 for need PC-go 3hr market Ocotlan PC-go P-buy 3hr whatever

cohsa nin r-chi'hn para x-famihyi ba o lasaa'-yi'hn ba o
 thing REL H-need for PS-family 3hr or relative-DM 3hr or

llii'n ba.
 child 3hr

'Out of need he's going to Ocotlan market, he goes to buy whatever thing that is needed for his family or relatives or his children.'

In the peak paragraph of the narrative, interesting detail is supplied using verbs in the present continuous and the stative. Such information is not essential to the development of the plot and therefore is not backbone, but rather background. Example 6, the peak section of *Market Trip*, shows the use of the stative aspect in (6c) and (6d). Note that the present continuous aspect is found in sentence (6a), which provides the setting for the paragraph.

- (6)a. Pwihsi seguihdu Ø-zee-zah ba laa'yi chi.
Well then PC-go-walk 3hr middle there
'Well he keeps walking around there.'
- b. Pur tantu demahla la'ga'h nin gu-zahca ba, ba-dxi'loh ba tuhbi
for such evil again REL C-happen 3hr C-encounter 3hr one

guba'n.
robber

'For such evil again that befell him; he met a robber.'
- c. Pwihsi ri'chi n-ahpaa que r-claa'dzi guba'n chi
well there S-have that H-want robber that

nyu-zia'tii' lo qui nin n-u'a ba.
U-remove that which REL S-carry 3hr

'Well, there that robber wants (lit: has to want) that he would take away that which he is carrying.'
- d. Cun ayi xi n-u'a ba, ayi xi mweeyi n-u'a ba, ayi lliitii',
with NEG any S-carry 3hr NEG any money S-carry 3hr NEG nothing

pwihsi ri'chi gu-ridxihndxi ra' ba.
well there C-fight PL 3h

'Since he isn't carrying anything, no money he carries, nothing at all, well they were fighting together there.'
- e. Pwihsi hasta que no b-wi'hnn ba gahn, gu-le'hellu'h ru ba,
well until that finally C-do 3hr win C-take.away more 3hr
'Well, when he finally won, he took away more (from the robber).'
- f. Pwihsi mweeyi ru chi gu-zi' ba xi cohsa, per b-wi'hnn ba
well money more that C-buy 3hr what thing, but C-do 3hr

chihnga guba'n.
EXPL robber

'Well, with that other money he bought a little, but he really beat up the robber.'

Besides the use of the habitual with action verbs, the habitual is also used with speaking verbs to introduce direct quotes. ChZ has a number of speaking verbs, listed in (7).

- (7) -uu'yi 'converse'
-ze'ta 'mention'
-nyi' 'speak'
-dzi'h 'talk back'
-nah 'say (personally witnessed)'
-ahbi 'say (not personally witnessed)'

Of all these verbs, however, ChZ heavily favors the use of *-ahbi* to introduce quotes: the completive form is used to introduce indirect quotes and the habitual form is used to introduce direct quotes. The example given in (8), which is taken from the Gospel of Luke, chapter 8, illustrates the contrast

between the completive and habitual forms of this verb.

- (8)a. ba-zuh-llihbi bi nez Ø-zuu nyaa' Jesuhs,
 C-stand-knee 3h where PC-stand foot Jesus
 'She bowed at Jesus's feet;'

guh-dzi bi delaanta loh ra' bwiinn bi-dxi' bi la'h Nyi'h
 C-say 3h before face PL people C-touch 3h PREP 3d
 'she said before the people that she touched Him.'

hohr chi gahca b-iaaca bi guel-dxyihdxyi nin r-ahca bi.
 hour that same C-heal 3h NOM-sick REL H-be to 3h
 'Immediately she was healed of the sickness that she had.'

- b. Chi'chi r-ahbi Jesuhs: "Xii'hi-hn, guh-ca ba-s-iaaca-hn yi'h."
 then H-say Jesus child-1s C-be C-CA-heal-1s 2so
 'Then Jesus says, "My child, I was able to heal you."'

The effect of using *-ahbi* in the completive in verse (8a) is to downplay the woman's words in contrast to what Jesus then says in verse (8b).

Example (9), from *Grass Mat Idiot*, shows the regular use of *-ahbi* with direct quotes in paragraphs building up to the peak section. This is a typical use of direct quotes, as they usually do not occur in peak sections of ChZ narratives.

- (9)a. Pwihsi ya zi'chi como llii'n ra' ba gu-roo' ra' la bi,
 well now thus as child PL 3hr C-big PL now 3h
 'Well now thus, as his children are now grown,'

ya chi'chi chi'h r-ahbi ba loh ra' llii'n ba:
 now then ? H-say 3hr face PL child 3hr
 'now then he says to his children,'

"Dx-ia'han si tu tin na'h a'-n gu-zaa'ha s-tuhbi nehza."
 P-remain only 2pl for 1so FOC-1s P-go other-one way
 "Just stay because I am going another way."

- b. Pwihsi ya chi'chi chi'h r-ahbi ra' llii'n ba loh ba:
 Well now then ? H-say PL child 3hr face 3hr
 'Well now then his children say to him,'

"Caa Ø-chee lu'h?"
 where P-go 2s
 "Where are you going?"

- c. Chi'chi chi'h r-ahbi ba: "Guriin nehza hasta gu-zaa'ha-hn."
 Then ? H-say 3hr different way where P-go-1s
 'Then he says, "It's a different way where I go."'

- d. Ya chi'chi chi'h r-ahbi ra' llii'n ba loh ba:
 Now then ? H-say PL child 3hr face 3hr
 'Now then his children say to him.'

"Pera xa gu-zee lu'h; nihn tuhbi cabahyu ayi n-ahpa nu'h."
 but how P-go 2s neither one horse NEG S-own 1plin
 "But how will you go? We don't even own a horse."

- e. Ya chi'chi chi'h r-ahbi ba: "Gu-n-aann chi'h-n xa gu-zaa'ha-hn."
 now then ? H-say 3hr C-S-know ?-1s how P-go-1s
 'Now then he says, "I already know how I'll go."'

Other verbs of speaking, such as *-nyi'*, can be used in the completive to introduce direct quotes, as in (10d). The same quote appears in (10b), introduced by *-ahbi* in the habitual. The repetition of the same quote, introduced by a different verb, is probably rhetorical underlining.

- (10)a. Chi'chi gu-rih ra' ba ny-ahw ra' ba-n chin bi-re'h-nyi'
 Then C-sit PL 3hr U-eat PL 3hr-3in when C-leave-speak

tuhbi bwi'dzida'ka;
 one frog

'Then they sat down; they would have eaten it when a frog came out speaking.'

- b. r-ahbi ma: "R-ahw lasaa', r-ahw lasaa', r-ahw lasaa'."
 H-say 3an H-eat REFL H-eat REFL H-eat REFL
 'It says: "You eat each other! You eat each other! You eat each other!"'

- c. Chi'chi r-ahbi x-nanihta lliguehta laadzi ra' bi:
 Then H-say PS-grandmother ? ? PL 3h
 'Then their grandmother says to them,'

Cwidahdu binyi-'hn biza'bi yu'dxi, a'-yi x-tatita tu
 look out child-DM orphan ? FOC-there PS-grandfather

ni'ca gw-a Ø-chiinn tu, ni'chin r-nyi' maan ca zi'ca!"
 that C-go P-kill 2pl thus H-speak animal that thus

"Look out, little orphan children. That's your grandfather there you went to kill; thus that animal speaks like that!"

- d. Ya la'h ra' bi sohla ru-llihdzi ra' bi, chi'chi gu-nyi'
 now PREP PL 3h only H-laugh PL 3h then C-speak

la'ga'h bwi'dzida'ka: "R-ahw lasaa', r-ahw lasaa', r'ahw lasaa'!"
 again frog H-eat REFL H-eat REFL H-eat REFL

'Now then, they just laugh; then the frog spoke again, "You eat each other! You eat each other! You eat each other!"'

When the habitual aspect is used with other speaking verbs, it has a performative function. However, all instances of this usage found to date are in the first person singular (1s), as illustrated in (11). Thus, the performative use may be due as much to the first person as to the habitual aspect.

- (11) Rii' r-nyi'-nee-'n yi'h: ayi Ø-suh lu'h galahta galaayi,
 here H-speak-with-1s 2so NEG P-stand 2s ? middle
 'Here I'm counseling you: Don't stand around in the middle (of the street).'

ayi rii ri'chi a'-lu'h ca-yuu'yi-dxyi'dxyi-nee lu'h ndxi'hw,
 NEG here there FOC-2s PC-converse-word-with 2s man
 'Don't be here and there talking with men.'

In summary, verbs conjugated in the completive aspect carry forward the backbone information in ChZ oral narrative, although in some cases backbone is carried by verbs in the habitual. The latter cases include regular action verbs as well as verbs of speaking. No syntactic rules are proposed to account for this shift in aspect. Rather, I propose that it is a reflection of the speaker's intent, i.e. that the norm for oral narrative backbone in ChZ is the completive, and that when the narrator wishes to highlight certain portions of the backbone he shifts to the habitual. This proposal for ChZ is not a new idea, but is also found in Schiffrin (1981) and Silva-Corvalán (1983), as discussed below.

Thus the primary meanings of the tense-aspect system of ChZ are modified to some extent in discourse, making room for the interplay of their secondary meanings. This provides a more adequate account of the nature of tense-aspect for a natural language in all contexts, including both interpersonal dialogue and monologue narrative.

3. Direction and function of aspect shift

In relation to tense-switching in English narrative, three facts that Schiffrin notes are: (a) there is a tendency for verbs in either the P or HP to cluster (1981:51); (b) the direction of the switch is significant (1981:56); and (c) a switch from HP to P in English narrative serves to separate events which are seen as separate by the narrator (1981:55). Section 3.1 examines her first point, and section 3.2 her second and third points, in relation to the C-H shift in ChZ.

3.1. Clustering of verbs in the habitual

For non-direct speech verbs, I do not find a notable tendency for clustering in the habitual. The only case in which there is any clustering is found in (12e-f) from *Market Trip*.

(12)a. Chin guh-cabwa' ba, o sea chin gw-ah bwiinn
 when C-realize 3hr or rather when C-go person

nin r-uhnn cohbra, b-wi'hnn ba cohbra.
 REL H-do charge C-do 3hr charge

'When he realized, or rather when the person went who charges, he charged (him).'

b. Pwihsi ga-rah ga'h mweeyi-'hn nin n-wa' ba.
 well P-end ? money-DM REL N-carry 3hr
 'Well, the little money that he is carrying will quickly run out.'

c. Gw-ah 0-chilli ba ri'chi, ya b-ia'han ba sin mweeyi.
 C-go P-pay 3hr there now C-remain 3hr without money
 'He went to pay there; now he remained without money.'

- d. Pwihsi ayi mweeyi ru para gu-xi'n ba; cuun xchi'h mweeyi?
 well NEG money more for P-waste 3hr which ? money
 'Well, there's no more money that he will waste; wherever is there any money?'
- e. Ca r-sah mweeyi?
 where H-obtain money
 'Where is money obtained?'
- f. R-luu'yi ayi xi mweeyi n-wa' ba.
 H-show NEG any money S-carry 3hr
 'It appears that he isn't carrying any money.'

However, there is a definite tendency for direct-speech verbs in the habitual aspect to cluster in ChZ narrative. While they may be expressed as relatively fixed formulas in ChZ, the fact that examples such as (8) above exist indicates that the speaker has an option to use a different aspect sequence. Example (13) is from the *Grass Mat Idiot* story. I omit the content of the direct quotes in order to focus on the direct speech verbs.

- (13)a. Pwihsi ya zi'chi como llii'n ra' ba gu-roo' ra'
 well now thus as child PL 3hr C-big PL

 la bi, ya chi'chi chi'h r-ahbi ba loh ra' llii'n ba: "..."
 now 3h now then ? H-say 3hr face PL child 3hr
 'Well now thus as their children they are now grown, now then he says to his children, "...'
- b. Pwihsi ya chi'chi chi'h r-ahbi ra' llii'n ba loh ba: "..."
 well now then ? H-say PL child 3hr face 3hr
 'Well now then his children say to him, "...'
- c. Chi'chi chi'h r-ahbi ba: "..."
 then ? H-say 3hr
 'Then he says, "...'
- d. Ya chi'chi chi'h r-ahbi ra' llii'n ba loh ba: "..."
 now then ? H-say PL child 3hr face 3hr
 'Now then his children say to him: "...'

In contrast to verbs in the habitual aspect, I do find a tendency for clustering with verbs in the completive aspect. This clustering is often with short clauses and tends to give a staccato-like cadence to the action. The discourse effect of this clustering is to quickly summarize events. It is typically used in complicating action episodes, such as in (14), from *Sun and Moon*. Note also the shift from the completive to the present continuous, which signals the difference between backbone and background.

- (14) Nee chin ba-dzihn 0 loh dahan, chi'chi gu-ny'i'-nee lasaa' ra' bi
 and when C-arrive 0 face mountain then C-speak-with REFL PL 3h

 gu-na'zu ra' bi la'h daada guhl lliguehta laadzi ba-chi'bi-du'h ra' bi
 C-seize PL 3h PREP sir old ? ? C-tie-rope PL 3h

la'h ba llaa'n tuhbi yahga, ya chi'chi Ø-ziaa ra' bi.
 PREP 3hr bottom one tree now then PC-return PL 3h

'And when (they) arrived in the field, then they talked between themselves; they seized the grandfather, they tied him up to a tree trunk, now then they are going home.'

3.2. Direction of aspect shift

Next, Schiffrin notes that the direction of the tense shift from P to HP is significant in English oral narrative, and that when the tense switches back from HP to P, it separates events in the narrative (1981:56). Both of these observations are also true for the switch between the completive and the habitual in ChZ narrative.

First, whenever the completive switches to the habitual, it has the effect of making the material in the habitual more vivid for the listener. I have already discussed this in section 2, and I make further comments on it in section 4. Recall, however, the section of the *Sun and Moon* legend, repeated in (15), in which the dragon arrives to eat the two children. Note the shift to the habitual, then back to the completive, then back to the habitual, and finally back to the completive.

(15) Ya seguihdu chin ba-dzihn ma rwaa' yaa chi,
 now then when C-arrive 3an mouth oven that
 'Now when that animal (the dragon) arrived at the mouth of that oven,'

r-iaala rwaa' bwe'lda roosi chi g-ahw la'h ra' bi,
 H-open mouth snake white that P-eat PREP PL 3h
 'that white snake opens its mouth to eat them.'

chi'chi gu-ca'ha ra' bi pahla dxuuca, cun la'h-an ru-la'ha ra' bi
 then C-take PL 3h shovel broken with PREP-3in H-throw PL 3h

dxiah lda'h rwaa' ma hasta que noo b-wi'hnn ra' bi gahn
 rock hot mouth 3an until that finally C-do PL 3h win

guh-chi ma.
 C-die 3an

'Then they took the broken shovel; with it they throw hot rocks into its mouth until finally they managed to make it die.'

Second, a study of the types of connective words between clauses, when there is a shift in aspect or a sequence of habitual-habitual, is revealing. Of the three possible sequences, C-H, H-H, and H-C, each has a distinctive type of linkage ranging from no overt linkage (C-H), linkage with *chi'chi* 'then' (H-H), and contrastive linkage (*ya* 'and', *seguihdu* 'later', *perr* 'but', etc.; H-C). Thus, the H-C shift, more than the C-H or H-H shifts, serves to separate events in ChZ oral narrative.

The chart in (16) below summarizes these three types of interclausal linkage. The numbers indicate the number of times each type of aspect shift co-occurs with linkage type in the four texts used as data for this study (*Sun and Moon* legend, *Seven Rivers* legend, *Market trip* story, and *Grass Mat Idiot* story).

(16)	C-H	H-H	H-C
<i>chi'chi</i>	6	18	7
contrastive linkage	0	0	16
no overt linkage	26	7	1

4. Significance of the C-H shift

As Schiffrin does for the P-HP shift in English oral narrative, I propose that the function of the C-H shift in ChZ oral narrative is to replay events for the listener, as if they were occurring at the time of the narration, in order to keep their interest up in the story. If the backbone were cast entirely in the completive aspect, the result would be a less interesting story. For example, the use of the completive in direct-speech verbs would make the event seem more remote for the listener. In fact, the use of the completive there implies that the speaker is not giving a verbatim account but only a summary of what was said. Story-telling is an art which presupposes a variety of listener interest-enhancing skills on the part of the speaker, and the C-H shift is one of those skills.

In summary, then, I find Schiffrin's analysis of the P-HP tense shift in English to provide a ready-made solution to a similar tense-aspect shift in Chichicapan Zapotec. I expect that other languages with similar shifts of tense or aspect can be analyzed in a similar manner with the understanding that "rules" at the discourse level are usually tendencies, not absolutes.

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Appendix 1: Examples of ChZ aspects

Following is a summary of the morphological forms of the ChZ aspect categories with examples of verbs conjugated in each of the aspects. For the present continuous category, the form of the prefix is predictable: *ka-* is used with non-positional verbs that have either non-third person subjects or singular third person subjects; *ri-* is used with non-positional verbs that have plural third person

subjects; and *o-* is used with positional verbs (e.g. sitting, standing, grouped together, hanging). Also, the stative form has a related meaning (e.g. the non-stative forms of *-ahpa* mean ‘watch over’ while the stative form means ‘to own’), but many verbs do not have a stative form. Furthermore, in the present continuous, the first person plural has optional prefix, *j-*. The use of this prefix implies that the first person plural is referring to either a sizeable group of people or is emphasizing the fact that the verb has a first person plural subject.

Aspect	Abbrev.	Prefix	‘bathe’	‘go’	‘hear’	‘sit’
Habitual	H	r-	r-ahza	r-yah	r-ihn	r-zohba
Continuous	C	gu-,b-	guh-za	gu-ah	b-ihn	gu-zohba
Present	PC	ka-	ka-yahza	---	ka-yihn	---
Continuous		ri-	ri-yahza	---	ri-yihn	---
		Ø-	---	Ø-zee	---	Ø-zohba
Stative	S	n-	---	---	n-iin	---
Potential	P	g-	g-ahza	---	---	---
		j-	---	---	j-ihn	---
		Ø-	---	Ø-chee	---	Ø-soobaa
Unreal	U	ny-	ny-ahza	ny-ah	ny-ihn	nyi-zohba
Future	D	z-	z-ahza	z-yah	z-ihn	zi-zohba
Definite						

Appendix 2: Abbreviations

CA	causative	1plin	first person plural inclusive
		1plx	first person plural exclusive
DM	diminutive	1s	first person singular
		1so	first person singular object
FOC	focus		
		2pl	second person plural
PL	plural	2s	second person singular
PREP	preposition	2so	second person singular object
PS	possessive		
		3an	third person animal
NEG	negative	3d	third person diety
		3h	third person human
REFL	reflexive	3hr	third person human respect
REL	relative	3in	third person inanimate
TV	theme vowel		