Areality of clause-linkage: The consecutive construction in languages of Veracruz

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Abstract: The consecutive construction was once thought to be unique to African languages. Subsequent work has demonstrated its existence in languages spoken in different parts of the world (e.g., Australia and Oceania). Intriguingly, it often occurs in areal clusters. Its areality is a puzzle, because such constructions are deeply embedded in grammars (i.e., marked with affixes, clitics, or conjunctions), and the forms of the markers themselves are not shared across language boundaries. Here it is shown that Veracruz is another zone where this clause-linkage pattern is attested. Examination of a set of unrelated languages indigenous to Veracruz: Huasteca Nahuatl, Papantla Totonac, San Gabriel Huastec, and Uxpanapa Chinantec, sheds some light on how such areal patterns might come about. Based on a number of intra-genetic variance analyses, systematically informed by what is known from social/cultural history, it is proposed that Huasteca Nahuatl served as the source. The consecutive pattern in Huasteca Nahuatl has different functions. It is used for indicating temporal subsequence, motion-cum-purpose, tail-head linkage, afterthoughts, and commands. Some neighboring languages have copied some of these functions, and developed others.

Keywords: areal linguistics, consecutive, Mayan, Mesoamerican area, Otomanguean, polypredication, syntax, Totonacan, Uto-Aztecan

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Ареальность полипредикации: консекутивные конструкции в языках Веракруса

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Аннотация: Консекутивные конструкции когда-то считались специфической чертой африканских языков, но в дальнейшем были обнаружены и в языках других частей света (например, Австралии и Океании). Примечательно, что это явление нередко носит ареальный характер. Необычность этого в том, что такие конструкции глубоко укоренены в грамматике (оформляются специальными аффиксами, клитиками или союзами), а используемые показатели при этом формально различны в языках ареала. В этой статье мы показываем, что одним из таких ареалов является мексиканский штат Веракрус. Данные ряда неродственных языков этой зоны — уастеканского науатля, папантланского тотонакского, сан-габриэльского уастекского и успанапанского чинантекского — проливают некоторый свет на то, как могли возникнуть такие ареальные явления. На основании анализа внутригенетической вариативности с систематическим привлечением социокультурных исторических данных мы выдвигаем гипотезу о том, что первоисточником послужил уастеканский науатль. Консекутивная конструкция в этом языке многофункциональна:

она оформляет следование во времени, «движение с целью», конструкции с анадиплосисом, комментарии и приказы. Некоторые соседствующие языки переняли часть этих функций и при этом развили новые.

Ключевые слова: ареал Центральной Америки, ареальная лингвистика, консекутив, майя языки, отомангские языки, полипредикация, синтаксис, тотонакские языки, юто-ацтекские языки

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1. Introduction

It is clear that clause-linkage strategies can be transferred across family lines with or without substance. The theoretical importance of exploring this domain has been highlighted by various typological studies [e.g., Schmidtke-Bode 2009: 202–203; Martowicz 2011: 327; Hetterle 2015: 269]. However, we are just beginning to learn about the myriad ways this can happen. The present paper analyzes the areality of the consecutive construction, a clause-linkage pattern that has received little attention cross-linguistically.

The term CONSECUTIVE refers to constructions in which only the first clause shows the formal characteristics of an independent clause, and the following clause or clauses are characterized by a reduction or lack of verbal inflection, and/or by the use of a verbal form called the consecutive [Creissels et al. 2008: 140; Vydrin 2020: 85]. In (1), the temporal frame of the discourse is initially anchored with the past tense marker *-a-*, and the second clause appears with the consecutive marker *ka-*.

(1) MANDA (Atlantic-Congo/Bantu)
*va-**a**-l-ili,* *va-**ka**-wɔk-a…*
3PL.SBJ-PST-eat-PST 3PL.SBJ-CONS-depart-FV
'They ate, and then they went from there…' [Bernander 2017: 196]

Another example is attested in Bambara. In this language, the initial clause shows the formal characteristics of an independent clause, and the following clauses show a reduction of verbal inflection (i.e., they do not appear with any tense-aspect-mood markers). Unlike the Manda example in (1), the Bambara consecutive is not marked with a dependent verbal form. Instead, it occurs with the conjunction *ni* and appears in the infinitive.

(2) BAMBARA (Mande/Western Mande)

nê	*yèrê*	*dòn-na,*	***ni***	***kà***	*nà*	*yèlɛn*	*à*	*kàn,*
1SG.EMPH	self	enter-PFV.INTRANS	CONJ	INF	come	rise	3SG	on

'I came in myself, and then climbed on it,

ni	***k'***	*a*	*ɲíni*.
CONJ	INF	3SG	search

and then search for it.' [Vydrin 2020: 84]

While the consecutive is common in many African languages, this construction is also attested in other areas of the world, such as Australia (example (3)) and Oceania (example (4)). This suggests that the consecutive is not a uniquely African phenomenon.

(3) WANGKAJUNGA (Pama-Nyungan)
yu-ngun-pa-jananya *kartiya-lu*, *mintim-ma-nun-pa-**lta**-ya*.
give-PST-?-3PL.OBJ European-ERG SEW-CAUS-PST-?-SEQ-3PL.SBJ
'The European gave it to them, and then they sewed it.' [Jones 2011: 270]

(4) Lenakel (Austronesian/Oceanic)
k-im-a-ini *petimw* *netg-nil-ar* *miin* *ka*, *m-**ep**-a-lis* *io.*
3-pst-pl-say all name-3-pl pl that and-seq-pl-take 1sg
'They told me all their names, and then they took me away.' [Lynch 1978: 50]

Intriguingly, the consecutive pattern appears in various parts of the world in areal clusters, suggesting that diffusion through language contact is likely to have taken place. The question is: How could such deeply-integrated grammatical systems be transferred, usually without substance? Here this question is explored in four genealogically unrelated Mesoamerican languages spoken in Veracruz: Huasteca Nahuatl, Papantla Totonac, San Gabriel Huastec, and Uxpanapa Chinantec. Some hypotheses are offered regarding the directionality of spread of this pattern, identifying the source and the details of chains of contacts where possible. For this task, exploring the internal diversity of the families or genera composing the areal cluster will be important.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 provides an introduction to the consecutive pattern and its areality. Section 3 discusses the areality of the consecutive pattern in languages spoken in Veracruz. Finally, the paper concludes with a brief summary of the main findings (Section 4).

2. Consecutive constructions: Cross-linguistic distribution

As mentioned earlier, the term consecutive refers to constructions in which only the first clause shows the formal characteristics of an independent clause, and the following clause or clauses are characterized by a reduction in or lack of verbal inflection (5). Consecutive markers may be overt or not. In this regard, Nurse & Philippson [2006: 165] note that in many Bantu languages, consecutives are unmarked: "We went (marked for past) to the market, we buy bananas, we go home, we eat, etc.", in which the first verb is marked for tense while the rest are unmarked.[1]

(5) Eton (Atlantic-Congo/Bantu)
à-Lté *L-ɲɔ̀ŋ* *ndɔ́gà*, *à-dí-**H***.
1-prs inf-take mango 1-eat-cons
'He takes a mango, and then eats it.' [Van de Velde 2008: 269]

One important terminological issue should be mentioned here. Consecutive markers have been called different things, e.g., "narrative", "sequential" [Persohn 2017: 210]. These terms are not used consistently by different authors. Accordingly, I follow Nurse [2008: 121] and adopt the term consecutive. The consecutive pattern may be used for expressing temporal subsequence. This interpretation is consistent with the frequent occurrence of other clause-linking devices in this type of construction (e.g., consecutive devices may appear with a sequential 'and then' coordinator).[2] This reinforces the sequential reading [Emanatian 1990: 201]. However, the consecutive can also be used for indicating other adverbial relations, and in a number of languages,

[1] The consecutive function is marked in several ways in Bantu languages. One is by the use of prefix *a-* [Nurse 2008: 121]. The use of *na-* is also found in the expression of the consecutive function in Bantu languages. A third way of expressing the consecutive function is with the marker *ku-* [Ibid.: 122]. A fourth way is via null marking. The fifth, and the most common way of encoding consecutive constructions is with the verbal form *ka-* (Derek Nurse, pers. comm.). It is possible that the consecutive *ka-* in Bantu languages has developed from itive markers. The itive meaning 'go and' extends via distal 'there/then' to a function involving temporal subsequence [Nurse, Philippson 2006]. Another consecutive marker found in Bantu is *la-* [Koni Muluwa, Bostoen 2019: 440].

[2] This verbal form tends to be used in past narratives [Persohn 2017: 222], less frequently in timeless situations, followed by futures [Nurse 2008: 120]. While consecutive markers are most typically found

the consecutive clause is semantically underspecified for its relation to the preceding situation [Larry Hyman, pers. comm.; Welmers 1973: 364].

As was mentioned above, the time of the situation is first established, either explicitly in the first verb of the string, or implicitly, because the participants know the context, which therefore does not need mentioning. The following verb is then marked with a verbal form, which replaces the tense marker appropriate to the time established by the first verb [Emanatian 1990: 193]. This marker seems to be in many languages a dependent conjugation, dependent on an established frame of temporal reference. This has led Nurse [2008: 120] to call it a relative tense (in contrast to absolute tenses anchored in the here and now of the moment of speaking). Welmers [1973: 365] says that this marker is found not only in Bantu languages, but also in many Atlantic-Congo languages. Although this is a very general claim and needs quantifying, it suggests that this marker is probably not a Bantu innovation, but inherited from Atlantic-Congo.

Consecutive markers are attested for the most part in Bantu and other Atlantic-Congo languages (e.g., Noon, Mbodomo, Duka, Mbembe). However, they are also found in various Afro-Asiatic languages, such as Berber languages and Southern Cushitic languages [see Mous 1992: 146; Kießling 2000: 85; Galand 2002: 261; Taine-Cheikh 2010: 370; Harvey 2018: 156]. A number of Nilotic languages [Dimmendaal 1983: 174] and Kuliak languages [Schrock 2014: 395] also contain a construction marked with a similar pattern, as in (6) and (7), respectively.

(6) Lopit (Eastern Nilotic)
e-ìyánì *xíwaró* *ŋàmà*, ***x**-o-ìsìérè* *dè=xùróxó.*
3SG-bring leopard.NOM sorghum.ABS SEQ-3SG-give to=goat.kids.ABS
'The leopard brought the sorghum, and then gave it to the young goats.' [Moodie, Rosey Billington 2020: 269]

(7) Ik (Kuliak)
ɪtsóŋ-kɔ-ɛsɛ *rɨj-ík-a* *ɔkɔ́b-ɪma-**k**^{o}′.*
burn-COMPL-SPS forest-PL-NOM cultivate-1PL.EXCL-SEQ
'The forest areas are burned and then we cultivate.' [Schrock 2014: 395]

The consecutive has been described mainly in African languages. However, a closer look reveals that this pattern is also attested in other areas of the world. Various Australian languages seem to have consecutive constructions that convey temporal subsequence [see Kofod 1978: 68; Green 1989: 185; Evans 2003: 26; Mushin 2012: 193]. The Wangkajunga example in (8) shows a consecutive construction. The first clause shows the formal characteristics of an independent clause while the second clause is characterized by the use of the consecutive marker *-lta*.

(8) Wangkajunga (Pama-Nyungan)
yu-ngun-pa-jananya *kartiya-lu,* *mintim-ma-nun-pa-**lta**-ya.*
give-PST-?-3PL.OBJ European-ERG SEW-CAUS-PST-?-SEQ-3PL.SBJ
'The European gave it to them, and then they sewed it.' [Jones 2011: 270]

Algonquian languages also seem to have a similar pattern. In Ottawa, spoken in North America in southern Ontario and northern Michigan, one strategy used for indicating temporal subsequence is a construction in which the first clause shows independent order and the second clause shows conjunct order (9).[3] This seems to match the definition of consecutive constructions adopted in the present study in that the first clause shows the formal characteristics

in past temporal contexts and often described as past tenses in the literature for specific Bantu languages, Nurse [Ibid.: 120] claims that this distribution is discourse-related.

[3] The conjunct order is a verbal order that appears in subordinate clauses [Wolfart 1973; Campana 1996; Brittain 1997]. This verbal order has its own specialized person marking system and its own negation morphosyntax [Valentine 2009: 197]. It contrasts with the independent and imperative orders. Roughly, the independent order is used with verbs in main clauses and the imperative order is used with

of an independent clause and the second clause is characterized by the use of a specialized person marking system prototypical of dependent clauses. Look-alike constructions are also attested in other Algonquian languages (e.g., Innu-aimun [Oxford 2007: 268]).[4]

(9) Ottawa (Algic/Algonquian)
o-gii-gwaashm-aan *zhiishiibeny-an*
3SG.IND-PST-take.out.of.water-3SG.3.OBV.IND duck-OBV
'She took the duck out of the kettle

mii *dash* *gii-bgashzhw-**aad***
and then PST-carve.up-3SG.3.OBV.CNJ
and then she carved it up.' [Valentine 2009: 202]

A similar construction is also attested in Austronesian languages, particularly in languages spoken in Taiwan [see Chang 2006: 310; Zeitoun 2007: 40]. In the Yami example in (10), the first clause is finite and the following clause lacks verbal inflection. The second clause is encoded with the verbal form *ka-*.

(10) Yami (Austronesian/Batanic)
ya *ni-k-an* *so* *wakay* *na*, ***ka**-kan* *pa* *ovi*.
AUX PFV-FOC-eat OBL sweet.potato 3SG.GEN CONJ-eat still yam
'He ate a sweet potato, and then he ate a yam.' [Rau, Dong 2006: 105]

Longacre [2007: 417] shows that various languages spoken in Southern Vanuatu (Oceanic) express temporal subsequence with consecutive constructions. Although not explicitly mentioned by Longacre, this phenomenon seems to be attested in Anejom̃ [Lynch 2000: 99], Sye [Crowley 1998: 247], Ura [Crowley 1999: 216], Kwamera [Lindstrom, Lynch 1994: 10], South-West Tanna [Lynch 1982: 16], North Tanna [Sverredal 2018: 27], and Whitesands [Hammond 2015: 36]. In Lenakel, the initial clause in a narrative sets the tense-aspect stage by means of the past tense marker *-im*. After that the narration is carried forward by a clause that appears with the marker *-ep* (11).[5]

(11) Lenakel (Austronesian/Oceanic)
*k-**im**-a-ini* *petimw* *netg-nil-ar* *miin* *ka*, *m-**ep**-a-lis* *io*.
3-PST-PL-say all name-3-PL PL that and-SEQ-PL-take 1SG
'They told me all their names, and then they took me away.' [Lynch 1978: 50]

Not only Southern Vanuatu languages, but also Central Vanuatu languages seem to have a look-alike construction signaling temporal subsequence, in particular, South Pentecost

commands. It should be noted that these orders also have their own inflectional templates and their own negation morphosyntax [Ibid.: 197].

[4] A similar construction is also attested in Macro-Je languages. Consecutive constructions are mainly found in Je Setentrional languages, such as Canela, Apinajé, Kayapó, Suyá/Kĩsêdjê [Rodrigues 1999: 197]. In these languages, the first clause has the properties of an independent clause and the second clause is a nominalized clause. Clauses are linked with a coordinating device meaning 'and' that functions as a switch-reference marker.

[5] The markers illustrated above are known in Southern Vanuatu languages as sequential aspect-markers [Lynch 1978: 50; 2000: 99] or echo-subject markers [Crowley 1998: 247]. With respect to echo-subject markers, a comment is in order here. Echo subject markers are only employed in various languages for indicating a same-subject relation between clauses [Lynch 1983]. However, echo-subject markers, in various languages of Southern Vanuatu, have developed an additional function [Bril 2004: 28]. Crowley [1999: 216] mentions that echo verb construction encoded with *m-* in Ura express a same-subject relation between clauses. Interestingly, echo subject markers can also be used for expressing a sequential relationship between clauses. In a similar fashion, Crowley [1998: 247] notes that the Sye echo subject markers *m-* is not only used for indicating same-subject, but also temporal subsequence.

languages (e.g., Abma, Ske [Schneider 2010: 218; Johnson 2014: 84]), Malakula languages (e.g., Ahamb, Big Nambas [Fox 1979: 83; Rangelov 2020: 243]), and Epi-Efate languages (e.g., Lelepa [Lacrampe 2014: 425]).

The discussion so far has shown that the consecutive pattern is attested not only in Africa, but also in other areas. The distributions certainly suggest that such constructions can be spread via contact given that they seem to appear in areal clusters. Speakers seem to have replicated the consecutive pattern with native material. Here it is shown that Veracruz is another zone where the consecutive pattern is attested.

3. Consecutive constructions in Mesoamerica

Mesoamerica is home to about 140 languages. There is general agreement that Mesoamerica has seven established and mostly uncontroversial language families — Mayan, Mixe-Zoquean, Tequistlatecan, Totonacan, Oto-Manguean, Uto-Aztecan, and Xinkan — and three language isolates — Cuitlatec, Huave, and Tarascan [Campbell 2016: 114]. A number of works have demonstrated that clause-linkage constructions in Mesoamerican languages allow to formulate several theoretical generalizations that can inform our theories of clause combining [e.g., Olguín Martínez 2022a].

After a careful analysis of the ranges of ways in which Mesoamerican languages express temporal subsequence, it was found that most of them use the Spanish loanwords *despues* 'after' or *entonces* 'and then'. Interestingly, there are four Mesoamerican languages not genetically related that contain a construction in which the first clause shows the formal characteristics of an independent clause, and the following clause is characterized by a reduction or lack of verbal inflection. These languages are spoken in Veracruz, a Mexican state stretching along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico. In Huasteca Nahuatl, temporally subsequent constructions are formed with the coordinator *huankino* 'and then' (12). The initial clause in a narrative sets the tense-aspect-mood stage with the perfective marker *-k*. After that the narration is carried forward by a clause that is nominalized with *-tok*.[6]

(12) Huasteca Nahuatl (Uto-Aztecan/Aztecan)
toahui *neh-nen-k* *semilhui-tl*,
woman RDP-walk-PFV all.day.long-ABS
'The woman walked all day long,

huankino *siah-**tok***
then get.tired-NMLZ
and then she got tired.'

A similar pattern is found in Papantla Totonac. In this language temporal subsequence is signaled with the conjunction *ntonses* 'and then' (13). The initial clause in a narrative sets the tense-aspect-mood stage by means of present tense marker *-ma*. After that the narration is carried forward by a clause lacking any tense-aspect-mood markers and person markers.

(13) Papantla Totonac (Totonac-Tepehua)
k-an-ma *ma:-cuk-í:* *cha'lhka:tnán*,
1SG.SBJ-go-PRS TRANS-start-TRANS work
'I started working (with my new boss),

[6] Cross-linguistically, clauses linked with 'and then' devices always follow an iconic order. In addition, 'and then' devices tend to introduce clauses that appear with the same properties as independent declarative clauses; each clause is marked for its own independent time reference and shows overt person marking [Olguín Martínez 2022b: 252].

ntonses *mu-ju:* *tu:min* *nak* *bolsa*.
then TRANS-put.inside money in pocket
and then I started earning more money.'

In San Gabriel Huastec, the conjunction *ta:m* 'and then' is used for expressing a temporal subsequence relation (14). In this example, the sequential relation is expressed with a construction that appears with a finite verb followed by a clause that carries the conjunction *ta:m* 'and then' and lacks any tense-aspect-mood markers. The finite verb, always occurring in sentence-initial position, carries the tense-aspect-mood marking.

(14) San Gabriel Huastec (Mayan)
ʃoʔ *ʔu=tuh-e:l* *ʔan* *ʔahib* *ʔal* *ʔan* *bitsow*,
today ABS.3=start-INCOMPL DEF party PREP DEF town
Today, the party of the town (officially) started,

ta:m *ma:l-in* *ʔu=ʔakan*.
then get.swollen-MIDDL 1SG.POSS=foot
and then my foot got swollen.'

As is shown in (15), a typical consecutive construction in Uxpanapa Chinantec starts with a finite clause that is inflected for tense-aspect-mood and person and the following clause carries the conjunction *joba'* 'and then'. This clause is devoid of tense-aspect-mood values and person marking.

(15) Uxpanapa Chinantec (Oto-Manguean/Chinantec)
ca-jme'-na' *e* *jmiñí* *do*,
COMPL-prepare-2PL DEF.INAN steam DEM
'You prepared the food (for us),

joba' *júng=b*.
then die.ANIM=EMPH
and then you died.'

The parallelisms in these Mesoamerican languages cannot be explained as a common inheritance, because the languages are not genetically related. The most likely explanation is language contact, because the languages are spoken in the same geographical region (Veracruz), but it is difficult to see how such patterns could be transferred from one language to another. The questions are: How can we determine the directionality of spread of these clause-linking patterns (i.e., who passed it to whom)? Do speakers of replicating languages copy all properties and functions of a syntactic pattern from a model language?

To explore these questions, the present paper adopts a contact-induced change model and conducts a number of intra-genetic variance analyses, systematically informed by what is known from social/cultural history. The clusters composed of these features seem to be the result of event-based triggers (inducers), that is, historical events that led patterns to spread due to intensive language contact. In this particular scenario, patterns have been copied not because they have a universally high probability of developing, but out of mere fashion [see Bickel 2017]. Bickel [2015: 911] mentions that "event-based theories account for those processes of copying and replication that are not grounded in how well structures fit with the way our brain or communication works, but that instead result from whatever happens to be popular and en vogue in a given situation during a given time." Put another way, event-based theories explain that the relevant structures were replicated by speakers just for their prestige at the time, and not for any functional reason.

In the following subsections, a number of intra-genetic analyses are conducted for each of the genera and families forming the areal cluster: Aztecan, Totonac-Tepehua, Mayan, and Chinantec. By intra-genetic variance analyses is meant the analysis of the internal diversity of the genera

or families composing the areal clusters [Comrie 1993: 10; Kibrik 1998: 61]. Bickel [2008] mentions that for many typological research questions, it has become crucial to study intra-genetic variance.[7] This is essential, for example, if one wants to estimate historical stability, transition probabilities, and direction of spread of a pattern.

3.1. Consecutive constructions in Huasteca Nahuatl

Nahuatl is a Southern Uto-Aztecan language that belongs to the Aztecan genus of the Uto-Aztecan language family. Nahuatl is perhaps one of the best documented Native American languages [Canger 1988]. There are around 1.5 million Nahuatl speakers in Mexico. However, because of the geographical distances among Nahuatl speakers, many spoken Nahuatl varieties have arisen. Flores Farfán [2010: 38] mentions that modern Nahuatl is a set of almost 12 varieties with different degrees of intelligibility. The data used in this work are drawn from one field work period in Teposteco, Chicontepec, Veracruz. This community has 363 inhabitants, and Spanish is used as the main means of instruction in all the different educational levels (Eladio Cruz, pers. comm.).

Nahuatl is a polysynthetic language with agglutinating tendencies. A simple clause in this language may consist only of a verbal word encoding not only the participants, but also voice information (e.g., causatives, applicatives), tense-aspect-mood markers, and illocutionary markers, among others. Peregrina Llanes [2015: 38] notes that simple clauses in Huasteca Nahuatl show different word orders. However, the SVO order is the most frequent. Huasteca Nahuatl shows nominative-accusative patterning in that the S of an intransitive construction and A of a transitive construction are marked in the same way, while the P of the transitive construction is marked differently.

Speakers of Huasteca Nahuatl indicate temporal subsequence with a consecutive construction. In this type of construction, the first clause contains tense-aspect-mood information. The second clause, however, has no tense-aspect-mood information besides the *huankino* marker (16). The context of the example suggests that the same tense-aspect-mood information present in the first clause has scope over the second clause.

(16) Huasteca Nahuatl (Uto-Aztecan/Aztecan)

Juan	*mo-kokoa-ki,*	***huankino***	*ia-**tok***	*kokoh-kali.*
Juan	REFL-get.sick-PFV	CONJ	go-NMLZ	pain-house

'Juan got sick, and then he went to the hospital.'

The Huasteca Nahuatl consecutive pattern can also be used for indicating motion-cum-purpose, as in (17).

(17) Huasteca Nahuatl (Uto-Aztecan/Aztecan)

n-ia-s,	***huankino***	*ki-nalikich-tis-**tok**.*
1SG.SBJ-go-FUT	CONJ	3SG.OBJ-cross-CAUS-NMLZ

'I will go to cross (the river).'

Cross-linguistically, this function is also attested in a number of Bantu languages. Many Bantu languages have a consecutive construction which, in addition to its regular consecutive use, can also be used after the verb 'to go' for encoding a motion-cum-purpose construction. An example is attested in Mbugwe, where the consecutive prefix *ká-* signals temporal subsequence, but also

[7] Kibrik [1998: 61] notes that the extragenetic approach must be enriched by the intragenetic approach since this will enable us to make more fine-grained typological generalizations. Typologists should not blind themselves to the fact that important insights into cross-linguistic variation can also be gleaned from the examination of variation among languages genetically related [Comrie 1993: 10].

purposive relations after ‘to go’ (18) [Wilhelmsen 2019: 555]. In Mbugwe, the verb meaning ‘to go’ must appear in this construction and cannot be elided. However, in Swahili and some other Bantu languages, this type of consecutive construction expressing purpose does not have to appear with a verb meaning ‘to go’ [Almasi et al. 2014], as in the Kagulu example in (19). This is known as the consecutive subjunctive [Wilhelmsen 2019: 555], the itive subjunctive [Maganga, Schadeberg 1992: 107; Guérois 2015: 389] or the subsecutive [Devos 2008; Van der Wal 2009].

(18) Mbugwe (Atlantic-Congo/Bantu)
fét-á *ó-ká-rem-a* *i-onda* *r-áákɔ́*.
go-IMP 2SG-CONS-cultivate-FV 5-field PP-2SG.POSS
‘Go to cultivate your farm.’ [Wilhelmsen 2019: 555]

(19) Kagulu (Atlantic-Congo/Bantu)
aseye *chi-**ka**-tambul-a* *ma-sina.*
1PL.SBJ 1PL.SBJ-CONS-mention-FV 6-name
‘We will (go to) mention names.’ [Petzell 2008: 114]

The Huasteca Nahuatl consecutive pattern can also be used for expressing an afterthought. In (20), the *huankino* clause does not indicate a temporal subsequence relation holding between clauses. Instead, it gives further information about the situation expressed in the first clause.

(20) Huasteca Nahuatl (Uto-Aztecan/Aztecan)
ome *machetes* *teki-tia-ya* *iselti.*
two machetes work-CAUS-IPFV themselves
‘The machetes work by themselves.’

Huankino *mo-palehuik-ti-ohui-tok*.
CONJ REC-help-CAUS-AUX-NMLZ
‘They help each other (when they work).’

A similar function is also attested in other languages around the world. In Nyang’i, there are constructions appearing with the verbal form *-(e)se*, as in (21). In this type of construction, the first clause contains tense-aspect-mood information. The second clause, however, has no tense-aspect-mood information besides the *-(e)se* marker. The context of all examples suggests that the same tense-aspect-mood information present in the first clause is in effect in the *-(e)se*-marked clauses [Beer 2017: 118]. In this language, the consecutive pattern can be used not only for expressing temporal subsequence, but also afterthoughts, as in (21) and (22).

Nyang’i (Kuliak)
(21) *diɛcɛ=sɛkɛ* *di* *nene* *mutu=seke* *ɲaŋi* *n-ake* *ate*,
say=PST matter these be=PST Nyang’i REL-EXIS EXCL.M
‘These things I said were Nyang’i,

*die-**se*** *amane* *ka* *amane*.
bring-SEQ like.this and like.this
I talked like this and like this.’ [Beer 2017: 118]

(22) *camɪka* *ɲerukude*.
want main.road
‘They need/want a main road.’

*aʊg-**ese*** *ɲerukude*, *mut* *naa* *au* *na* *Lobalaŋɪt* *tan* *darɛ* *Kaiceri*.
go-SEQ main.road be SUB go SUB Lobalangit to there Kaiceri
‘A main road that goes from Lobalangit to Kaiceri.’ [Beer 2017: 118]

The Huasteca Nahuatl consecutive pattern shows a fourth function. There are contexts in which the consecutive construction is used for expressing an imperative function (23).

In a sequence of clauses, the non-final clause is morphologically full-fledged (its verb is inflected as finite), and the other is nominalized: its verb appears in a form which cannot be used in independent clauses.

(23) Huasteca Nahuatl (Uto-Aztecan/Aztecan)
diablo *ki-ihtoa-k,* ***huankino*** *neka* *xi-a-tok.*
devil 3SG.OBJ-say-PFV CONJ there IMP-leave-NMLZ
'The devil told (the boy): "Leave!"'

A similar function is also attested in a number of African languages. The language So of the Kuliak family contains a consecutive construction that conveys temporal subsequence [Carlin 1993: 147; Heine, Carlin 2010]. In this language, consecutive constructions are marked with *na-*, *nɔ-* (24). Heine & Carlin [2010], in their dictionary of So, show examples where this clause-linking device is used for signaling temporal subsequence. Furthermore, they show examples in which this verbal form appears in imperative constructions — e.g., *Stay nearby!* [Ibid.: 13]. In a similar fashion, the Turkana consecutive pattern can not only be used for indicating temporal subsequence, but also imperatives [Dimmendaal 1983: 174].

(24) So (Kuliak)
…it-ac *akayon* ***na-ac*** *nao* *tuenen.*
reach-VEN morning SEQ-come raiders there
'…the morning came, and then the raiders came there.' [Carlin 1993: 167]

The Huasteca Nahuatl consecutive pattern is also found in tail-head linkage contexts. Tail-head linkage is a discourse pattern that is pervasive cross-linguistically. It refers to a construction which contributes to discourse cohesion and structuring in that it "links sentences or paragraphs together, usually by repetition of at least part of the previous clause" [Thurman 1975: 342]. This repetition is a predominant resource in the organization of narratives in many languages of the world. Stenzel [2016: 437] shows that this strategy functions "like a spotlight in an unfolding theatrical production, directing the audience's attention to specific scenes on the stage, illuminating first one, then moving on to another while leaving the first in the shadows." In the example in (25), the tail clause is *ohuintitok* 'he got drunk' and the head clause is *ohuintiki* 'he got drunk'. This function is also attested in other languages around the world. In Logoori (a Bantu language), the consecutive pattern, in addition to its regular consecutive use, can also be used in tail-head linkage constructions [Sarvasy 2019: 85].

(25) Huasteca Nahuatl (Uto-Aztecan/Aztecan)
ki-kua-k *ki-kua-k,* ***huankino*** ***ohuin-ti-tok****.*
3SG.OBJ-eat-PFV 3SG.OBJ-eat-PFV CONJ danger-CAUS-NMLZ
'He ate a lot, and then he got drunk.'

ohuin-ti-ki, ***huankino*** *hues-tok* ***huankino*** *ki-tlalanteh-tok*.
danger-CAUS-PFV CONJ fall-NMLZ CONJ 3SG.OBJ-get.up-NMLZ
'He got drunk, and then he fell down, and then he got up (with a lot of pain).'

Other Nahuatl varieties do not seem to show the same situation as Huasteca Nahuatl. In Tetelcingo Nahuatl, the conjunction *wan* conveys temporal subsequence. The example in (26) is a finite construction in that each verb is fully inflected and could in principle stand alone. Put another way, the clause introduced with the conjunction *wan* has a fully inflected verb that is identical to verbs of ordinary main clauses.

(26) Tetelcingo Nahuatl (Uto-Aztecan/Aztecan)
o-mo-tlɔli-to *i-cin-tla* *sen-te* *kʷaw-tl,*
PST-REFL-place-went 3SG.POSS-bottom-LOC one-NUM tree-ABS
'He went and set down under a tree,

wan *om-pa o-mik sa nima*.
CONJ middle-on PST-die.PFV just immediately
and then there he died forthwith.' [Tuggy 1979: 140]

The conjunction *wan* is also used for indicating temporal subsequence in North Puebla Nahuatl. The series of clauses in the example in (27) show morphological evidence of finiteness; each verb is fully inflected and could in principle stand alone.

(27) North Puebla Nahuatl (Uto-Aztecan/Aztecan)
o-ki-kiš-ti in sigaro, ***wan*** *o-ki-maka-k,*
PFV-it-go.out-CAUS ART cigarette CONJ PFV-it-give-PST
'He took out a cigarette and then gave it to him,

wan *no=yohke o-ki-kiš-ti in seriyo*,
CONJ also=same PFV-it-go.out-CAUS ART match
and then he also took out a match,

wan *o-ki-cocon para ma=šotla*.
CONJ PFV-it-strike to OPT=ignite
and then struck it.' [Brockway 1979: 190]

In Michoacan Nahuatl, temporally subsequent constructions are built around the conjunction *kʷakín* (28). Clauses linked with this device are morphologically full-fledged and show evidence of finiteness.

(28) Michoacan Nahuatl (Uto-Aztecan/Aztecan)
ya newal nič-maka-he se libro,
now me me-give-PFV.PL a book
'They gave me a book,

kʷakín *nič-ili-he…*
CONJ me-say-PFV.PL
and then they said to me… [Sischo 1979: 370]

This subsection has shown that Huasteca Nahuatl contains a consecutive pattern with different functions. It is used for indicating temporal subsequence, motion-cum-purpose, tail-head linkage, afterthoughts, and commands. Given that other Nahuatl language varieties do not seem to have a consecutive pattern, one hypothesis is that Huasteca Nahuatl developed this pattern due to language contact. The following subsections explore the ranges of ways in which temporal subsequence is indicated in Totonac-Tepehua, Mayan, and Chinantec languages.

3.2. Consecutive constructions in Papantla Totonac

Papantla Totonac is a member of the Totonac-Tepehua language family. This is a genetic grouping of languages with (to date) no demonstrable ties to any other Mesoamerican languages [Beck 2004: 1]. Relations between individual languages are still unclear beyond the initial branching of the family into Tepehua and Totonacan.

The data used in this work are drawn from one field work period in El Remolino. This town is located in the municipality of Papantla, Veracruz. The community has roughly 1,200 inhabitants and is divided into neighborhoods. However, this is only for the purposes of organizing the community itself, since this division is not yet officially registered. El Remolino is a Totonac community, but there are also mestizo inhabitants. The majority of elders in the community are fluent in Totonac, Spanish, and Nahuatl. They are almost the only ones who speak Totonac and wear traditional clothing. As in other Totonacan languages, Papantla Totonac has a rich verbal

morphology. Verbs are marked not only for person and number of syntactic arguments, but also for a variety of tense-aspect-mood categories (e.g., optatives, irrealis, counterfactual), as well as for a wide range of valency-changing morphemes (e.g., causatives, applicatives).

Speakers of Papantla Totonac express temporal subsequence with a consecutive construction. The first clause is full-fledged; it contains tense-aspect-mood values and person marking. The verb of the second clause appears in a form which cannot be used in independent clauses; it lacks tense-aspect-mood and person marking. Clauses are linked with the conjunction *ntonses*.

(29) Papantla Totonac (Totonac-Tepehua)
ta-xtu-lh *chi'xkú* *nak* *áqxtaqa,*
INGR-outside-COMPL man PREP house
'The man left the house,

ntonses *laq-lhku* *chaw*.
CONJ INTENS-burn tortilla
and then the tortillas were burnt.'

Other Totonac-Tepehua languages do not seem to express temporal subsequence with a consecutive pattern. In Necaxa Totonac, clauses linked with the conjunction *ali:stá:n* show morphological evidence of finiteness; each verb is fully inflected and could in principle stand alone:

(30) Necaxa Totonac (Totonac-Tepehua)
pus *mat* *ɑn-ɬ* *tamá:,*
INTERJ QUOT go-PFV lie.down
'So he went to lie down,

ali:stá:n *mat* *ta-ʃtú-tʃì* *tʃu:wá* *tsamá:* *misín*.
CONJ QUOT INCH-out-PROX now that nagual
and then they say, now the nagual came out here.' [Beck 2004: 107]

In a similar fashion, Pisaflores Tepehuan [MacKay, Trechsel 2010: 315] and Xicotepec Totonac [Reid 1991: 84] indicate temporal subsequence with a construction in which clauses are morphologically full-fledged and show evidence of finiteness.

It is likely that Papantla Totonac developed the consecutive pattern due to language contact. Note that unlike the Huasteca Nahuatl consecutive pattern, the Papantla Totonac pattern is only used for expressing temporal subsequence.

3.3. Consecutive constructions in San Gabriel Huastec

Huastec is a Mayan language. This family, consisting of some thirty languages, is divided into Huastecan, Yucatecan, Ch'olan-Tseltalan, Greater Q'anjob'alan, and Eastern Mayan (Mamean-K'ichean). Huastec is spoken today in a small area of southeastern San Luis Potosí and northern Veracruz, Mexico. This Mayan language is of particular concern to linguistics because it has been isolated in space from other members of the Mayan family [Edmonson 1988: 7]. The Veracruzano dialect of Huastec is spoken in the area around Tantoyuca, Tantima, Tancoco, and Chinampa. The data used in this work are drawn from one fieldwork period in El Mamey San Gabriel in the municipality of Tantoyuca. This community has roughly 162 inhabitants, and Spanish is used as the main means of instruction in all educational levels. San Gabriel Huastec, like other Mayan languages, is head-marking. Grammatical relations are all indicated in the head by means of Set A (ergative) and Set B (absolutive) pronominal inflections.

San Gabriel Huastec encodes temporally subsequent constructions with a consecutive pattern. The initial clause sets the tense-aspect stage with the completive aspect marker *-uw*. After that, the narration is carried forward with a non-finite clause that appears with the conjunction *ta:m*:

(31) San Gabriel Huastec (Mayan)
ʔin=k'ap-uw *t'ahat* *ja:n* *hafi* *nahe:ʔ* *ʔan* *k'apne:l,* ***ta:m*** *jaʔul.*
3.ERG=eat-TRANS.COMPL much much REL DEM DEF food CONJ get.sick
'He ate that meal, and then got sick.'

There are discourse contexts in which the conjunction *ta:m* seems to play an important role in the area of processing ease. The initial clause in (32) was preceded by a very long narrative sequence of actions. In this particular communicative scenario, speakers may require a break to formulate their next utterance. This may lead speakers to repeat the clause-linking device *ta:m* a number of times:

(32) San Gabriel Huastec (Mayan)
na *maria* *ʔin=k'ak'-θ-aʔ* *ʔan* *haʔ,*
HUM Maria 3.ERG=boil-CAUS-TRANS.COMPL DEF water
'Maria boiled the water,

ta:m ***ta:m*** ***ta:m*** *waj.*
CONJ CONJ CONJ sleep
and then she took a nap.'

Other Mayan languages do not seem to express temporal subsequence with a consecutive construction. In Chol, the conjunction *che' jiñ* links two finite clauses; each verb is fully inflected and could in principle stand alone.

(33) Chol (Mayan)
tsa'=bi *och-i-∅,*
PFV=REP enter-INTRANS-3.ABS
'He (the man) entered,

che' ***jiñ*** *tsa'=bi* *k'oty-i* *i-pejk-añ-∅* *li* *x-ixik-ob.*
and then PFV=REP arrive-INTRANS 3.ERG-talk-TRANS-3.ABS DET CL-woman-PL
and then he came to talk to the women.' [Vázquez Álvarez 2011: 437]

In Itzaj, the clause introduced with the conjunction *ka'* has a fully inflected verb that is identical to verbs of ordinary main clauses:

(34) Itzaj (Mayan)
a' *'ayim-ej* *tal-ij* *y-alam* *a'* *ja'-ej,*
DET crocodile-TOP come-3SG 3SG.A-below DET water-TOP
'The crocodile came beneath the water,

ka' *t-u-mach-aj.*
then COMPL-3SG.A-grab-COMPL.TRANS
and then it grabbed him.' [Hofling, Tesucún 2000: 565]

Popti shows an interesting scenario in that temporal subsequence is indicated with a construction similar to the San Gabriel Huastec consecutive pattern. The first clause contains aspectual information, and the following clause lacks aspectual marking, that is, the aspect marker *ch-* cannot occur in clauses introduced with the conjunction *cat*:

(35) Popti (Mayan)
ch-*oñ* *wa'i* ***cat*** *cu-way-oj.*
ASP-1PL.A eat then 1PL-sleep-suff
'We eat and then we will sleep.' [Craig 1977: 66]

San Gabriel Huastec contains a construction not attested in other Mayan language (but see Popti). Given that this pattern is also attested in other unrelated languages spoken in the same region, diffusion through language contact may have taken place here.

3.4. Consecutive constructions in Uxpanapa Chinantec

The Chinantec languages comprise one of the major branches of the Oto-Manguean stock of Mesoamerican languages. Chinantec languages are spoken in northern Oaxaca and a few towns in Veracruz. They are largely monosyllabic, with highly elaborate tonal inflection for person marking and aspect [Campbell 2017]. There are roughly 14 major Chinantec languages (where 'language' is defined as a speech community with mutual intelligibility not in excess of 80 % with other communities) [Silverman 2005: 211]. Data for this study have been drawn from one fieldwork period in Uxpanapa, Veracruz. This community has roughly 1,589 inhabitants, and Spanish is used as the main means of instruction at all educational levels (Roman Salazar, pers. comm.).

In Uxpanapa Chinantec, temporal subsequence is signaled with a consecutive pattern. In (36), the first clause is finite, and the following clause lacks any tense-aspect-mood values. The second clause is encoded with the conjunction *joba'*.

(36) Uxpanapa Chinantec (Oto-Manguean/Chinantec)
ca-guié=in' *do* *quia,*
COMPL-3SG.arrive=3.people DEM near
'He (the drunk man) arrived there (very close to his hometown),

joba' *ngá=r* *e* *do*.
then see.INAN=3.people DEF.INAN DEM
and then he saw it (something weird happening).'

Other Chinantec languages also encode temporally subsequent constructions with a conjunction. However, unlike the Uxpanapa Chinantec example in (36), they do not seem to use a consecutive pattern for expressing temporal subsequence. In Lealao Chinantec, a sequential relation is expressed with a construction that appears with a finite verb followed by another finite clause that carries the conjunction *mi^{H}hą^{M}* 'and then' (37). Each verb is fully inflected and could in principle stand alone.

(37) Lealao Chinantec (Oto-Manguean/Chinantec)
hą^{L}mi^{H}ʔe$^{\cdot M}$ *ʔi^{L}-lí^{M}* *baile,* ***mï^{H}hą^{M}*** *ʔi^{H}-zia^{H}a^{H}.*
tomorrow INT-be.3.SG dance then INT-dance.1PL
'Tomorrow the dance will take place, and then we will dance.' [Rupp 1989: 53]

The Comaltepec Chinantec example in (38) is a finite construction. Not only does the initial clause have a fully inflected verb, but the following clauses introduced with the conjunction *ho^{L}* 'and then' do as well.

(38) Comaltepec Chinantec (Oto-Manguean/Chinantec)
geʔ^{M} *ko$^{\cdot L}$* *bëʔ^{LH},* ***ho^{L}*** *ka^{L}-hninʔ^{LH}naʔ,*
arrive.COMPL.3SG one truck then PST-impede.COMPL.1PL
'A truck arrived and then we stopped it,

ho^{L} *ka^{L}-hę^{LM}*.
then PST-stop.COMPL.3SG
and then it stopped.' [Anderson 1989: 49]

The conjunction *hă̋u^{M}* 'and then' is used for indicating temporal subsequence in Sochiapan Chinantec. The series of clauses in the example in (39) show morphological evidence of finiteness; each verb is fully inflected and could in principle stand alone.

(39) Sochiapan Chinantec (Oto-Manguean/Chinantec)
ka^{L}-hĭ̋e^{LM} *cáï^{M}* *mí^{H}tiei^{MH},* ***hă̋u^{M}*** *ka^{L}-kuő̋u^{L}.*
PST-see.TRANS.ANIM.DIR.3SG dog cat then PST-run.INTRANS.ANIM.3SG
'The dog saw the cat, and then ran away.' [Foris 2000: 258]

3.5. Discussion

The examples shown in the previous sections should have made it clear that the consecutive pattern plays an important role in discourse structuring and narrative sequencing in Huasteca Nahuatl, San Gabriel Huastec, Papantla Totonac, and Uxpanapa Chinantec. These languages are spoken in the same region (Veracruz) and they are not genetically related. In addition, it was shown that other languages genetically related to these four languages do not seem to have the same pattern for narrative sequencing. Instead, they contain constructions in which each verb is fully inflected and could in principle stand alone. It is clear that language contact may have played a role in the diffusion of the consecutive pattern in this region.

The diffusion of the consecutive pattern is the result of pattern replication. In this scenario, only the patterns of the other language are replicated, i.e., the organization, distribution, and mapping of grammatical or semantic meaning, while the form itself is not borrowed [Heine, Kuteva 2006; Matras, Sakel 2007]. Put another way, no phonetic substance is involved but rather the transfer of patterns or structural templates [Kuteva 2017: 166]. Here it is proposed that Huasteca Nahuatl served as the source of the diffusion of the consecutive pattern

The first evidence to support this hypothesis comes from asymmetric bilingualism. There are a number of San Gabriel Huastec speakers who also speak Huasteca Nahuatl (Roberto Cora, pers. comm.). Many San Gabriel Huastec people make *sacahuil*, a giant 3-1/2-foot-long tamale which is the local festival specialty. San Gabriel Huastec people usually go to the markets around the area where they spend the day selling bowls of *sacahuil* and cups of coffee. For the most part, they use Nahuatl to talk to everyone who passes by. As for Papantla Totonac, many elders learned Nahuatl when they harvested vanilla because they had a lot coworkers who spoke Nahuatl (Adrian Murrieta, pers. comm.). With respect to Uxpanapa Chinantec, a number of elders also speak Nahuatl. Most of them learned this Uto-Aztecan language when they built canoes. Their coworkers were mostly Nahuatl speakers. Several Uxpanapa Chinantec women also learned Nahuatl when they used to sell their crafts (e.g., Chinantec huipil) in the markets around the area. Note that Huasteca Nahuatl speakers do not consider it important to learn San Gabriel Huastec, Papantla Totonac, or Uxpanapa Chinantec. This socio-cultural context seems to be a case of asymmetric bilingualism, defined as a "situation whereby a community speaking language A tends to become bilingual in another language B, while the reverse is not true. Because speakers of B tend not to learn language A, this increases the social pressure upon A speakers to eventually shift to language B" [François 2012: 99].

Second, the Huasteca Nahuatl consecutive pattern has developed more functions than the consecutive pattern of the other Mesoamerican languages. It has been proposed that if a linguistic pattern has more functions in 'X' than in 'Y', this may provide information about the direction of areal diffusion. This idea was proposed by Jacobsen [1980], who mentions that if a particular trait is BETTER INSTALLED in 'X' than in 'Y', this indicates that the trait spread from 'X' to 'Y'. By better installed is meant a pattern found in 'X' that has developed a larger range of functions than in 'Y' [Campbell 1985: 31]. The main thrust of this theoretical notion is that more time is required to produce a good or deep installation.

Third, it has been proposed that Papantla Totonac, San Gabriel Huastec, and Uxpanapa Chinantec copied other clause-linkage patterns from Huasteca Nahuatl [Olguín Martínez 2022b]. An example comes from 'let alone' clauses. In Huasteca Nahuatl, the 'let alone' clause is introduced with the conjunction *menos*.[8] This clause-linking device is a loanword from Spanish.[9]

[8] In 'let alone' constructions, the 'let alone' clause indicates a situation whose actualization is regarded as less probable in relation to another situation [Fillmore et al. 1988: 523; Croft 2022: 545].

[9] In Spanish, *mucho menos* 'let alone' clauses cannot occur with the negative marker *no* 'not'. Accordingly, the occurrence of the negative marker *amo* seems to be an internally motivated development in Huasteca Nahuatl.

Note that the *menos* 'let alone' clause occurs with the negative marker *amo*. Negation appears in the 'let alone' clause when the situation is characterized as surprising. This indicates that negative markers seem to have a mirative function in 'let alone' clauses. DeLancey [1997: 36] notes that mirativity is a cross-linguistic category that is primarily about surprise and senses related to surprise, such as suddenness and unexpectedness.

The example in (40) was uttered in a context in which the fact that the hard-working woman did not burn the firewood is unexpected. The mother of the hard-working woman was worried because her daughter always burns her firewood every day.

(40) Huasteca Nahuatl (Uto-Aztecan/Aztecan)
ki-ih-lia *amo* *yoyon-paka-s,*
3SG.OBJ-say-APPL NEG clothes-wash-FUT
'She said (yesterday) that she would not wash her clothes,

menos ***amo*** *ya* *ki-tlati* *nochicahui-tl*.
CONJ NEG 3SG.SBJ 3SG.OBJ-burn firewood-ABS
let alone burn the firewood.'

tenana *tle* *nopa* *okichpil-me* *kin-ku* *pampa* *teki-ti-k* *hueyi*.
mother that DET kid-PL 3PL.OBJ-grieve because work-CAUS-PFV big
'The mother of the kids was worried because she (always) works a lot.'

There are contexts in which the *menos* 'let alone' clause does not appear with the standard negative marker *amo*. This is only attested in contexts in which it is not surprising that the 'let alone' situation did not occur. In (41), it is not surprising that the boy did not do his homework because he is very lazy.

(41) Huasteca Nahuatl (Uto-Aztecan/Aztecan)
nopa *telpokero* *tlen* *nopa* *tlatsi-hui* *tlatsi-hui* *tlatsi-hui.*
DET young that DET lazy-RESUL lazy-RESUL lazy-RESUL
'The boy is very very very lazy.'

amo *tlaxpana*, *amo* *teki-tia-ya* *i-mila*.
NEG sweep NEG work-CAUS-IPFV 3SG.POSS-milpa
'He doesn't sweep, he does not work in his milpa.'

okichpil *axkanah* *mo-mach-ti-ya*,
boy never REFL-study-CAUS-IPFV
'The boy never studies,

menos *ki-chihua-ki* *teki-tl*.
CONJ 3SG.OBJ-do-PFV work-ABS
let alone do his homework.'

Interestingly, Papantla Totonac, San Gabriel Huastec, and Uxpanapa Chinantec also contain 'let alone' clauses in which negative markers have a mirative function [Olguín Martínez 2022b].

4. Final remarks

This paper has set out to explain how the consecutive pattern has developed in four Mesoamerican languages: Huasteca Nahuatl, San Gabriel Huastec, Papantla Totonac, and Uxpanapa Chinantec. It was proposed that language contact played a role in the development of this pattern. This is because: (i) the languages are spoken in the same region (Veracruz), (ii) they are not genetically related, and (iii) the probability of chance resemblance is low given the rarity of the strategies.

It was proposed that Huasteca Nahuatl served as the source of the diffusion of the clause-linkage pattern. This hypothesis is based on socio-cultural factors (i.e., asymmetric bilingualism) and deep installation (i.e., the fact that the consecutive pattern contains more functions in Huasteca Nahuatl than in the other Mesoamerican languages).

One of the main findings of this paper is that speakers may copy several functions of a clause-linkage pattern from a model language. This can set the stage for further processes of development, which may be internally motivated. Although some details must remain an object of speculation, close comparison of the systems for marking the consecutive pattern in Huasteca Nahuatl, San Gabriel Huastec, Papantla Totonac, and Uxpanapa Chinantec provides a glimpse of some ways in which areal concentrations might develop.

ABBREVIATIONS

1, 2, 3 — 1st, 2nd, 3rd person
5, 6 — noun classes 5, 6
? — uncertain gloss
A — agent
ABS — absolutive
ANIM — animate
APPL — applicative
ART — article
ASP — aspect
AUX — auxiliary
CAUS — causative
CL — classifier
CNJ — conjunct
COMPL — completive
CONJ — conjunction
CONS — consecutive
DEF — definite
DEM — demonstrative
DET — determiner
DIR — direct
EMPH — emphatic
ERG — ergative
EXCL — exclusive
EXIS — existential
F — feminine
FOC — focus
FUT — future
FV — final vowel
GEN — genitive
HUM — human
I — agreement prefix
IMP — imperative
INAN — inanimate
INCH — inchoative
INCOMPL — incompletive
IND — indicative
INF — infinitive
INGR — ingressive
INTRANS — intransitive
INT — intensive
INTENS — intensifier
INTERJ — interjection
IPFV — imperfective
LOC — locative
M — masculine
MIDDL — middle
NMLZ — nominalizer
NOM — nominative
NUM — numeral
OBJ — object
OBL — oblique
OBV — obviative
OPT — optative
PFV — perfective
PL — plural
POSS — possessive
PP — prepositional phrase
PREP — preposition
PROX — proximative
PRS — present
PST — past
QUOT — quotative
REC — reciprocal
RDP — reduplication
REL — relativizer
REP — reportative
RESUL — resultative
REFL — reflexive
SBJ — subject
SEQ — sequential
SG — singular
SPS — sequential impersonal passive
SUB — subordinator
TOP — topic
TRANS — transitive
VEN — venitive

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