

TWELVE

The Grammar of the Half-Period Glyph

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Introduction

The “half-period glyph” is a generic designation commonly used for a set of glyphic expressions that make reference to the spans of 10 *winikhaab* (“katun”) or 10 *haab* (“tun”), that is, halves of the major cycles *pik* (or *pih*) (“b’ak’tun”) and *winikhaab* (“k’atun”), in the long count. Work by David Stuart (Stuart et al. 1999b: 2–43) has proven the expression to be of a verbal nature. The lexical morphemes that enter into the half-period glyph are the adverb *tan* with the approximate meaning ‘half’ and the verb *lam* ‘to diminish’. Together the expression probably means something like ‘to half-diminish’. This paper demonstrates that this verb is among the grammatically most versatile in the inscriptions, as it turns up in both verbal forms as well as in a nominalized form, where it may be either unpossessed, alienably possessed, or inalienably possessed. In addition, an adjectivization is attested. The verb has not only clear characteristics of a CVC transitive but also patterns with the class of positionals in some respects. It is thus likely that the verb belongs to a class of ambivalent verb roots that may occur both as positionals and transitives. In the final section the syntactic environments that motivate the different morphological forms are discussed.

Graphic Variation in the Half-Period Glyph

The glyphic expression under investigation typically consists of two logograms, where the sign T606 is infixed to another sign. The decipherment of T606 as TAN was established by a **ta-na** substitution found by Stephen Houston (personal communication, 1987, to Stuart 1997: 8). The other sign in question has recently been read LAM by Stuart (Stuart et al. 1999b: 2–43). The full shape of the LAM sign and the fact that there are indeed two signs involved is revealed by instances where the two signs occur side by side (Figure 12.1). When this is the case there is usually a **na** complement to the TAN sign. The main interest in observing this, apart from determining the sound value of the logogram, is that a final phonetic complement will usually indicate a word boundary. In rare cases,

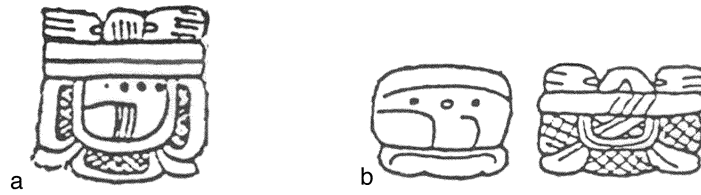


Fig. 12.1. (a) **[TAN]-LAM**, with **TAN** infixed into the **LAM** sign (Copan, St. A; after a drawing by L. Schele); (b) **TAN-na LAM** (Jimbal, St. 2; after a drawing by an unidentified artist in Schele and Grube 1995: 198).

however, such as the seating expression, sometimes spelled **CHUM-mu-la-ji** or **CHUM-mu-wa-ni**, a phonetic complement with a silent vowel may occur word-internally. So, unlike disharmonic complements,²²² harmonic complements are not necessarily restricted to word boundaries. It is difficult, then, to decide whether we are dealing with one or two words, but the morphological observation that the two morphemes are inflected and derived as a unit in such expressions as *u-tan-lam-il* suggests that the compound forms a word.

The decipherment of the half-period glyph

The function of indicating the completion of half a calendrical period was first identified by Goodman (1897: 99) and confirmed by Morley (1917). Thompson (1971: 192–94) provides a summary of contemporary insights about the graphic variation, shape, and function of the glyphic expression. Part of the expression, the logogram **TAN**, was deciphered around 1987 as already mentioned, but it was not until 1999 when David Stuart (Stuart et al. 1999b: 2–43) proposed the reading **LAM** for the second of the two logograms that typically enter into the expression, that a full phonetic decipherment became available.

Although the decipherment of the expression *tan-lam* is not given in Stuart et al. and was not presented along with the new reading at the 1999 Texas Maya Hieroglyphic Forum, the reading appears to be based on a substitution in the name of a Río Azul king, *K'ihnich Lama'w Ek'*, whose substitution pattern includes both a logogram (the proposed **LAM**) on K5022 (Kerr 1989–2000) and a phonetic spelling *la-ma-wa-EK'* on the vessel K7720 (Kerr 1989–2000; Marc Zender and Erik Boot, personal communication to the author, 2000). In any case, the grammatical observations in this paper are valid independently of the meaning and exact shape of the verb.

The form *tan*, more precisely *ta[h]n*, is attested in the lowland languages with meanings ranging from 'chest' to 'front' and 'face'. For Ch'orti' (Wisdom 1950b) it is attested as *tahn* 'inner side or surface of, center, interior, concave side of'. This entry is crucial for

222. An example where the presence of complementation may help to identify a word boundary is the **KAL-ma-te**, *kalo'm te* expression. Here the complement vowel *a* is in disharmony with the under-spelled *o* vowel, in a pattern that indicates glottalization. If the Mayas intended just one word, the form would more likely have been spelled **KAL-lo-mo-te**, because a vowel that is synharmonic with a spelling internally may be deleted, whereas a disharmonic vowel may not.

the interpretation of the glyphic text, since it shows that Classic Ch'olan *ta[h]n* may also mean 'center' or 'middle'. For ease, I shall be using the broad transliteration *tan*.

The root *läm* means 'diminish' in Ch'ol and is likely related to *lam* in Yucatecan, which means 'to sink'. There are possible cognates in Eastern Mayan languages like K'iche' and Teko, but their meanings are so far removed from those of the languages just mentioned that we cannot be sure that they are actually related. In addition, their meanings do not fit the semantic contexts of the half-period glyph (see below for the linguistic data). We should in any case, all else being equal, prefer to use the Ch'ol data in our interpretation since we know that the language of the inscriptions throughout the southern lowlands was an early form of Ch'olan (Lacadena and Wichmann 2002; Houston et al. 2000).

LINGUISTIC DATA:

| | |
|----------|--|
| Chol | <i>läm</i> (t.v.) 'calmar (enfermedad) ²²³ (Aulie and Aulie 1978) <la:m-el> 'pass, recede, diminish, improve, heal' (Attanasi n.d.: 287) |
| Yucatec | <i>lam</i> (t.v.) 'to penetrate, sink, push in /buttons on machine/' (Bricker et al. 1998: 164) (a transitive form with similar meaning is found in colonial sources cited in Barrera Vásquez 1995: 438) <i>lam-al</i> 'hundirse o sumirse en el agua, o en cosas blandas y emboscarse' (Arzápalo Marín 1995: 1859) (other colonial sources similarly exhibiting an intransitive form of the verb are cited in Barrera Vásquez 1995: 438) |
| Lacandon | <i>k-u-raam-än</i> 'se sumbe' (dentro de un envase) (Canger 1970) |
| Tzotzil | <i>lam</i> (t.v.) 'cover oneself, apply compress' (Laughlin 1975) <i>lam</i> (i.v.) 'be eased (pain), be mended (roof)' (Laughlin 1975) |
| Teko | <i>lam</i> 'to close, shut' (Kaufman 1969) |
| K'iché | <i>lam</i> (v.) 'to stop, impede' (Edmonson 1965) |

The data from Chol and Yucatec, as well as the forms from Tzotzil, if both of those forms are related, all contain both transitive and intransitive forms. This makes it likely that there was some variability with respect to transitivity at the early Ch'olan linguistic stage represented by the inscriptions. In fact, I would suggest that there was, although the types of verb involved seem to have been a transitive and special kind of intransitive, namely a positional.

The Derivational Paradigm of (*tan*-)*lam*

Up to this point the two morphemes *tan* and *lam* have been discussed in isolation from their morphological context. Part of the aim of the paper, however, is to discuss their morphology. I have observed the patterns listed in Table 12.1.

223. A form that seems to be related to the verb *läm* 'calmar' is *läm-p'ehl* 'ten', but the resemblance is probably fortuitous, because the latter form is likely to be a descendant of a form that may be reconstructed as proto-Mayan **laju'ng*. While the exact shape of this reconstruction requires more arguments, we can at least be quite certain that the proto-Mayan word for 'ten' should consist of two syllables and would have a shape different from *lam*.

TABLE 12.1. The Derivational Paradigm of *(tan-)lam*

| PART OF SPEECH | MORPHOLOGICAL SUBCATEGORY | WITHOUT PREPOSITION | WITH PREPOSITION |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| VERB | Antipassive | <i>tan-lam-a'w</i> | <i>ti-tan-lam-a'w</i> |
| | Positional | <i>tan-la[-h-]m-aj</i> | |
| NOUN | Unpossessed nominalization | <i>lam</i> <i>tan-lam</i> | <i>ti-tan-lam</i> |
| | Alienably possessed nominalization | <i>u-lam</i> <i>u-tan-lam</i> | <i>t-u-tan-lam-i</i> |
| | Inalienably possessed nominalization | <i>u-tan-lam-il l</i> | |
| | Adjectivization | <i>tan-lam-al</i> | |

Each of the morphological subcategories is characterized by certain affixes, some of which have only recently been identified. They are briefly described below. A discussion of the role of the preposition in the *ti* + NOUN constructions is also given, and *ti* + VERB constructions are discussed in the section preceding my conclusion.

An antipassive morpheme spelled glyphically by means of **wi** or **wa** signs suffixed to logograms of verbal nature has been identified by Lacadena (2000) as identical in shape with an antipassive suffix reconstructed for proto-Mayan as **-V(w)* by Smith-Stark (1978). On the basis of glyphic expressions of the type **tz'a-pa-wa-TUN-ni**, **CHOK-wa-ch'a-ji**, **CH'AM-wa-K'AWIL** (or **CH'AM-wi-K'AWIL**), and **K'AL-wa-TUN** (or **K'AL-wi-TUN**) Lacadena proposes that *-(V)w* is an object incorporation antipassive. He also points out that the same suffix may also have the function of an absolutive antipassive, citing tentative evidence from the rather eroded monuments Calakmul St. 33 and Caracol St. 6, where the verb 'to scatter' appears without an ergative prefix and where no objects follow. The suffix material in these examples is hard to identify because of weathering, but Lacadena suggests that the suffix represented by the damaged signs in both cases could be *-(V)w*. If this is the case there would be evidence for an absolutive antipassive. The function of the absolutive antipassive is to turn the former transitive subject (A) into an intransitive subject (S) and delete the former object or demote it to an oblique. If, indeed, spellings of the type **TAN-LAM-wa** represent a verbal form it is unlikely that they can be anything but the absolutive antipassive. Such spellings are never followed by an expression that could represent an incorporated object, so they provide new evidence in favor of Lacadena's hypothesis that the *-(V)w* suffix may function not only as an object incorporating antipassive but also as an absolutive antipassive. I have rendered the suffix with a glottal stop. The explanation for this phonological feature is found in Lacadena and Wichmann (n.d.); it does not represent a grammatical reinterpretation.

Let us turn to spellings of the type **TAN-LAM-ja**, which I very tentatively suggest could be positionals. It is widely accepted that one of the morphemes spelled by a glyphic **ja** is part of passive morphology. A "passive" suffix *-aj* was recognized by Bricker and Schele (cf. Schele 1982; MacLeod 1984; Bricker 1986). Lacadena (this volume) adds pre-

One might suppose that the adverb *tan* in *tan-lam* could effect the possibility of zero derivation like the incorporated objects in *u-k'al-tuun*, etc. Might it be possible that there is a more general rule according to which any incorporating structure, including structures with incorporating adverbs, allows for nominalization by zero derivation? The argument against such a hypothesis is provided by instances where *lam* occurs in its bare-root form, not accompanied by *tan*. The clearest example of this is found on Naranjo, St. 25 (D10). There are other cases where the nominalized form *lam* is possessed, such as Copan St. 15, where *u-lam* appears at least once, perhaps twice.

The instances where *lam* occurs without *tan* are in a minority. The great majority of unpossessed nominalizations include *tan*. Indeed, the form *tan-lam* 'it was the half-diminishing' is the most frequent of all the variants as a whole of the half-period expression. The syntactic patterns found are:

DATE *uti tanlam*

'on DATE the half-diminishing happened' (DPL H.S. 4, Step II; Laguna Perdida; UAX St. 26, Back; CPN Alt. Q; QRG St. F, West [a variant: *u[h]ti ti tanlam*])

DATE *uto'm tanlam*

'on DATE the half-diminishing will happen' (DPL Stairs; CPN Alt. H')

10-“k'atun” *iyuwal tanlam*

'it was 10 k'atun and then came the half-diminishing' (CPN St. J)

DATE *tanlam*

'on DATE (it was) the half-diminishing' (NAR St. 25; PNG St. 4, left; SBL St. 7; PAL Pal. Tabl., N10; BLK St. 5)

VERB(S) *ti tanlam*

'[verbal action(s)] on the half-diminishing' (CPN St. A; JMB St. 2; NAR St. 13, 22, 24, 31 [Back])

To sum up, there are clear instances of unpossessed nominalizations as well as possessed transitives and nonpositional intransitives achieved by zero derivation. All four basic, logical possibilities are found: *lam*, *tan-lam*, *u-lam*, *u-tan-lam*.

As already indicated, the nominalized forms may be possessed. We have already seen one type of possession. But there are two kinds of possession: alienable and inalienable possession. The morphological difference is that alienable possession is achieved by prefixation of the ergative marker and no further changes, whereas inalienable possession in addition to the ergative marker requires a suffix *-il*. The half-period glyph is excellent for illustrating the semantic difference signaled by these two morphological processes. It turns out that whenever the possessor is human, the *-il* is absent, but when the possessor is the time-period that is diminished, the *-il* is required.²²⁶

cannot be a god-name in these contexts, or else the analysis is wrong. Freidel et al. (1993: 444, n. 45) cite different linguistic sources, including sixteenth-century Poqom <ih cam cavil> 'one who carries the figures of the gods', which supports the idea that *k'awiil* may also refer to god images and not a specific god. (Cf. also Davletshin (in press) for a relevant discussion of the relationship between scepters and gods.)

226. Houston et al. (2001) discuss the *-il* suffix on possessed nominals, dividing its functions into

The pattern where the possessor is a human is seen on Palenque, East Tablet, Temple of the Inscriptions. In other cases we can infer the presence of a human possessor even if the monument is damaged in the critical places (NAR St. 31, Front, A3; CPN St. 15; CPN inscribed cylinder).

When the possessor is a time period, this time period is usually designated by its last date in the 260-day period, if not the whole calendar round date, as in the following examples:

- <*u-tan-lam-il* 2 *ajaw* (=9.3.10.0.0) (UAX St. 22, B3)
 VERB *t-u-tam-lam-il* 8 *ajaw* (=9.12.10.0.0) (CPN St. 6)
 VERB *t-u-tan-lam-il* 8 *ajaw* (=9.6.10.0.0) (TUL St. 1)

The pattern according to which *tan-lam-il* is always followed by a period glyph may perhaps shed some light on the “bird-man glyph” occurring on the stucco inscription from Temple XIX at Palenque; this is associated with the date 9.13.17.9.0, which lies half a hotun before the period ending 9.14.0.0.0 (Stuart 2000a: 14). Stuart notes a similar glyph following the expression *u-tan-lam-il* in association with the date 9.14.12.9.0 on an undesignated Tonina stela. He suggests that here it occurs as a “verb or predicate” and “somehow describes some general characteristic of the date.” It seems that it ought to refer directly to a time-span, although it is confusing that in the Palenque case it seems to refer to *half a hotun*, whereas in the Tonina case it seems to refer to a *whole hotun*, given that this is the span of time needed for a half-diminishing to produce the date 9.14.12.9.0.

The last kind of derivation is one that produces an adjective. The single existing example of this is found on Copan St. P. There the text seems to say:

| | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------|---|-------------------|
| TZUTZ-ja | / | TAN-na / LAM-la | / | LAKAM-TUN-ni |
| <i>tzuh-tz-aj-Ø</i> | | <i>tan-lam-Ø-al</i> | | <i>lakam tuun</i> |
| finish-PASS-THEM-3sA | | half-diminish-NOM-ADJ | | banner stone |
| ‘The half-diminished banner-stone was finished’ | | | | |

The context for this expression is odd because the verb *tzutz* is usually not found with other patients than time periods. Here it seems to refer to a monument. Nevertheless, there is little doubt about the interpretation of *tan-lam-al* as an adjective that qualifies the composite noun, *lakam tuun* ‘banner-stone’. An adjectival suffix *-VI* was identified in Houston et al. (2001). Although the authors do not provide the specific example that we are discussing here, it fits well their list of *-VI*-carrying forms, some of which are *tu-witz-il* ‘on his hilly (place)’, *kab’-al-k’uh* ‘earthly god’, *k’uh-ul* ‘holy’, *pohp-ol chay* ‘mat-like fish’.

three categories, one of “partitive possession,” where the possessum is part of the possessor (as a door is part of a house), so-called other-worldly possession where the possessor typically is a supernatural entity, and finally a class of miscellaneous items. It is difficult, however, to decide whether the instances of *u-tan-lam-il* are cases of partitive or other-worldly possession. Some such subcategory as the “inanimate possession” discussed by Laughlin (1975: 25) may also be represented in the inscriptions. Any subcategorization of the category marked by *-il* will necessarily be a matter of interpretation with a certain amount of speculation involved.

Generally the forms that are being adjectivized are nouns. In the case of *tan-lam-al* we are also, apparently, confronting a nominal, *tan-lam*, that is derived into an adjective by means of the vowel-harmonic *-VI* suffix.

The Syntactic Context of Half-Period Statements

We now move beyond the description of the morphological patterns of the half-period glyph and try to explain some of the syntactic patterns found.

Coordination

Mora-Marín (1998) gives an excellent overview of the syntactic motivation for intransitivization processes in Mayan languages. A pattern commonly found is the pairing of morphological ergativity with syntactic accusativity. That is, morphologically it is common to treat subjects of intransitive verbs (S) and objects of transitives (O) identically and different from subjects of transitives (A). Syntactically, however, subjects of transitives and intransitives may be aligned in opposition to objects. Mora-Marín notes that some Ch'olan and Yucatecan languages operate with an S/A pivot for purposes of interclausal coordination. He also notes, however, that some other Mayan languages, such as Jakalteko and Tz'utujil, are even more restricted, requiring an S/S pivot. That is, in these languages neither As nor Os are tolerated in clause coordination. As a consequence, any transitive verb is disallowed and must be intransitivized before entering into clause coordination. The question for the linguistic epigraphy of Classic Maya texts that rise out of such observations is what kind of constraint, if any, applies to coordination in Classic Ch'olan.

The examples of coordination involving verbal forms of the half-period expression all show the coordination of sentences with an S/A pivot, where the order of the verbal subjects in the two or more coordinated sentences is S-A or S-A-A, viz.:

3-AJAW 3 “MOL” TAN-LAM-wa u-CHOK-wa CH'AJ-ji . . .

3 Ajaw 3 “Mol” *tan-lam-a'w-Ø u-chok-o'w-Ø ch'ajj NP*

‘On 3 Ajaw 3 Mol he half-diminished, he (NAME) scattered drops’ (Aguateca St. 1)

DATE TAN-LAM-wa u-10-TUN u-K'AL-wa-TUN u-CHOK-wa ch'a-ji . . .

DATE *tan-lam-a'w-Ø u-10-tun, u-chok-o'w ch'ajj*

‘On DATE he 10th-*tuun*-half-diminished, he bound the stone, he (NAME) scattered drops’ (Ixlu Alt. 1)

DATE . . . TAN-LAM-wa u-CHOK-wa ch'a-ji . . .

DATE *tan-lam-a'w u-chok-o'w-Ø ch'ajj NP*

‘On DATE he half-diminished, he (NAME) scattered drops’ (Tonina, M. 104)

In the instances where the half-period expression enters into coordination it is clear that an S/A pivot is preferred. The consistent order of the S and A is surely not a coincidence. Du Bois (1985, 1987b) has observed that in the structure of discourse a new discourse entity will almost invariably be introduced in S function, not only in ergative languages but

also in languages in general. Clearly there are deviations from the pattern when one moves beyond just those examples that involve the half-period expression, but elucidating which patterns are the more generally preferred would involve a larger study, including a discussion of Mora-Marín (this volume) and a critical examination of his analyses, something that is beyond the scope of this paper.

Subordination

At this juncture I venture the hypothesis that constructions of the type *ti tan-lam-a'w* are complement clauses expressing purpose. This interpretation is grounded in the fact that these clauses always occur in close association with another clause as well as the existence throughout the Mayan languages of a construction type CLAUSE₁ + PREPOSITION + CLAUSE₂, where CLAUSE₂ is a purpose complement. The clearest²²⁷ contexts for *ti tan-lam-a'w* clauses are the following:

DATE *u-chok-o'w ch'ah ti tan-lam-a'w* NAME (CRC Alt. 12)
 DATE *ti-tan-lam-a'w u-chok-o'w ch'aaj* LOC. NAME (DPL St. 15)

Apart from the order of the clauses (and phonological differences in the word ‘drops’²²⁸) the two examples are identical. I would suggest that they be translated ‘he scattered drops in order to half-diminish’. The interpretation of the *ti tan-lam-a'w* clause as a purpose complement is based on parallel structures in various Mayan languages constituted by (1) a verb, (2) a preposition functioning as complementizer, and (3) an intransitized or nominalized verb, for example:

| | | | | |
|--|------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------|
| CH'ORTI' | | | | |
| <i>u-w-otz'-i-Ø</i> | | <i>u-b'ujk</i> | | |
| A3-?-THEM-3A | | A3-clothes | | |
| <i>che</i> | <i>ke'</i> | <i>twa'</i> | <i>a-kor-m-a</i> | <i>u-jut</i> |
| QUOT | SUB | SUB | C3-undress-AP-THEM | A3-surface |
| ‘he (?) his clothes, they say, so his body would become nude’ (Fought 1972) ²²⁹ | | | | |

227. I exclude from the discussion the following two examples from Caracol: DATE *u-chok ti tan-lam-a'w*] (CRC St. 6) and DATE *u-k'al-tuun ti tan-lam-a'w* NAME (CRC Alt. 23). A bare form *chok* with no derivational material, as in the first example, is unexpected, and in both examples nonverbal predicates seem to be followed by antipassives. The problem in both cases is that the main verb is not tensed while the complement is. This is not the way languages usually behave. Another strange construction type is CR *k'al-tuun ti tan-lam* NAME (NAR St. 24, E15-D16), where NAME seems to be the S although I would normally interpret *k'al-tuun* as a nonverbal predicate. It is not clear whether VERB-NOUN compounds with no glyphic *wa* are nonverbal predicates from nominalized incorporating verbs or, as the Naranjo example would suggest, incorporating (but otherwise underived) intransitive verbs.

228. The Caracol example has the spelling *ch'a-ha* with reduction of vowel length, a dialectal development characteristic of eastern inscriptions (Houston et al., this volume; Lacadena and Wichmann 2002), as well as neutralization of the /h/ : /j/ distinction, also not unexpected (cf. Grube, this volume).

229. In Fought this is, for unknown reasons, mistranslated “he took off his clothes, they say, to go fishing.”

TZOTZIL

kolta-[o]-on ta s-t'ox-el j-si'
 help-imp-B1sg prep A3-split-el A1-firewood
 'Help me split my firewood' (Aissen 1987: 16)

TZ'UTUJIL

xinpit ch atz'ejtiik
 B1-came to your-being-seen
 'I came to see you' (Dayley 1985: 383)

Conclusion

This study has shown that the preferred way of expressing half-period statements is by impersonal, nominal constructions. If the agent of the change of time is a human, this agent may be introduced as a possessor. The resulting linguistic expression is an alienable possession. If the change of time is construed as belonging to the greater period that is "half-diminished," this period may also be introduced as possessor, but in this case the construction is one of inalienable possession, requiring the suffix *-il*. This grammatical fact perhaps provides a little window into the way the Maya thought about time: although humans may perform rituals that secure the change of time periods, time cannot be viewed as an intrinsic part of humans. Time is only intrinsically a part of time itself.

Based on the different verbal morphology associated with the half-period glyph, we have identified *lam* as a verb of a type that is known to occur in a Ch'olti' as well as in other Ch'olan languages and beyond, but that has hitherto received little attention in linguistic epigraphic studies, namely the class of ambivalent positional-transitive verbs.

The strongest argument for the status of a transitive is, as we have seen, the antipassives. There can be little doubt that the instances of **TAN-LAM-wa** spellings indeed represent antipassives. Not only is there no other candidate with this kind of morphology in the modern, attested languages but the antipassive also conforms to our expectations. The examples of *tan-lam-a'w* would be the best to date of absolute antipassives. It is interesting that the antipassive of the half-period glyph occurs only in coordinated and subordinated constructions. Foley and Van Valin (1984: 289) remark on the Jakalteko antipassive constructions in *-n(i)* that they "are possible only as part of certain syntactic processes." If it can be shown that this is also the case for the *-V'w* antipassive in general in the Maya inscriptions, it is a significant step forward in our understanding of the syntax of the Classic Maya script, but that piece of research would exceed the limits of the present paper.

Many Mayan languages exhibit an S/A pivot requiring a constituent that is to be coordinated or subordinated to appear in an S or A function, so it is not surprising that we have found in the examples involving the half-period expression that the preferred coordinate constitutions are in S and A functions. The order of these (S-A or S-A-A) is explained by the tendency for ergative languages and languages in general to introduce a new discourse entity in non-A function.

Apart from providing insights into coordination, the half-period expression sheds light on subordination, specifically purpose complements. It appears that purpose clauses

in Mayan languages often have the structure preposition + intransitivized/nominalized verb and that this type of construction is represented in the Classic inscriptions by constructions of the type transitive verb + *ti* + *tanlama'w*.

In sum, the half-period expression provides an exceptionally rich area for testing old and introducing new hypotheses about the morphology, syntax, and discourse structure of the Classic period Ch'olan inscriptions.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Albert Davletshin and Lars Kirkhusmo Pharo for their comments on this paper.

