Lenca for Linguists

(Sketch of an indigenous language of Honduras)

Alan R. King

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In memory of Berta Cáceres (1971—2016)

PREFACE

Before commencing the current Lenca project, I had spent ten years endeavouring to provide for the language needs of a nascent movement in El Salvador (Central America) to recover the Nawat language, which still possesses speakers and has been documented to a certain limited extent. That was a challenging task. However, the challenges for Lenca put it into an entirely different category; that of an impossible venture, according to many! The aim of this venture is nothing less than to bring back to life, for an indigenous community, the language that was their ancestors' until it ceased entirely to be spoken a few decades ago.

The "bringing back to life" is in two senses: it is hoped that people will begin to learn it and use it, but for that to happen the language needs to be described and codified to make it teachable. Given that nobody has ever written a description of Honduran Lenca before and nobody speaks Lenca today, it must therefore first be "reconstructed" by linguists from the fragmentary information available before it can begin to be recovered by the community.

And yet, the first on-line Lenca study groups have commenced this year, after months of planning.[1] Over one hundred individuals have so far enrolled in the virtual groups using Facebook in conjunction with a supporting website[2] as a platform. The programme began to function in April 2017, one year after the assassination of the influential Lenca political and ecological activist Berta Cáceres, after whom this programme has been named.

Study of Lenca by those enrolling in the groups is at this stage self-study, given the lack of conditions and resources for anything else, and we therefore refer to the framework as "study groups" rather than "courses" or "classes". The latter would be preferable and it is to be hoped that the present programme can be instrumental in providing preliminary training to a vanguard of Lencas or others with an adequate linguistic competence out of which future Lenca speakers and teachers might eventually emerge, and whence a more ambitious Lenca language programme may one day be launched which, in the best of cases, might ensure a new future for the language.

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[1] Initially we tried to work through a programme supported by a Honduran governmental project linked to the ministry of education, liaising with local administrators of the project, but there were some serious failings in execution and it turned out to be a false start. Thanks to long experience with such things and a reasonable amount of forethought, disaster did not ensue; rather, we quickly regrouped and pressed on with Plan B, which takes advantage of the same research and materials but is not dependent on any kind of official recognition or resourcing.

[2] Tushik (meaning Our Navel in Nawat) is a portal for resources of many kinds related to the Nawat and Lenca languages (http://tushik.org/). Most of the resources for Lenca that we have used or produced are served from the website. There is a page listing and linking to the most important documentary sources for Honduran Lenca at http://tushik.org/las-fuentes-lexicas-del-lenca-hondureno/. The main materials we have developed targeting practical learners of Lenca are listed at http://tushik.org/lenca-kotik/ from where they may be downloaded.

These study groups will offer a structured and loosely monitored programme of study, articulated into a series of five-week modules (the higher modules are still under development at this time). The first "course" in the beginning module was successfully concluded last month, and a new group of beginners immediately got going, given the high demand for enrolment. The graduates from the first group are now halfway through study of the second module.

The "Berta Nap Laina" (Berta Is Here) Study Groups are each anchored to a specific-purpose Facebook group through which materials, instructions, activities, progress tests and communication are managed for the duration of one module. At the end of the module, in which learners are evaluated on the basis of consistent participation and self-reported progress checked by tests, all learners are removed and the group is reset to begin again with a new group of learners. Learners who have achieved a passing grade will be invited to re-enrol in the next module up; those failing to pass but still interested in continuing are encouraged to re-enrol in the next edition of the module they are in.

A sharp fall-off rate is fully expected in this procedure, with many in the first module in particular failing to participate and dropping away almost immediately. This is inevitable, and is best thought of as a self-selection process. Strategically the really important thing is not how many would-be learners fail initially, but to harvest a few who will persevere and make some real progress, and guide them forward. They are the future hope for Lenca!

Central to the language study groups is a series of language materials being produced in corresponding modules, titled *Mol Pui Tam?* (Can You Speak?).[3] Modules consist of five units; each unit provides for one week's study. The units are made up of dialogues (some of which have been recorded) with notes and exercises, grammar sections, vocabulary lists and exercises. Additional, "ephimeral" support material, such as illustrations, social-media-style "memes" and additional exercises are posted in the study groups in an informal yet coordinated fashion. The groups are used to promote interaction and maximum participation through games, puzzles, jokes and so on.

A more public Facebook group called "Iralapil" (We are sowing)[4] has been engineered to serve as a general interest group, an information hub, a channel to promote and direct interest in learning Lenca and an initial recruitment platform and clearing house for entry into the Berta Nap Laina programme. Although of fairly recent creation, other Lenca interest groups now exist on Facebook, with which we interact and share in order to publicise our work and ensure that others become aware of our work and service.

The medium-term objective of the current study programme is to give people exposure to some form of effective learning of the resuscitated Lenca language; in the course of so doing, to generate a basic level of "use" of the language, thereby constructing and enriching its corpus and collective competence; and eventually, it is hoped, to lead a few of the best students forward to a significant degree of language competence which will permit them in the future to occupy leadership roles to pursue development and promotion of knowledge and recovery of Lenca. While aware of the

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[3] http://tushik.org/mol-pui-tam/.
[4] https://www.facebook.com/groups/954746601258780/.

limited direct effect of our actions, we consider that we are planting seeds which may give rise to eventual results provided there is interest and uptake.

This programme, however, presupposes the prior existence of a body of linguistic knowledge and analysis which has had to be developed almost ex nihilo in the course of the last two years, and the main purpose of the present sketch is to inform about that work and some of its results. Chapters 2 and 3 summarise that process very briefly, while Chapter 9 shows a sample of Lenca sentences as they appear in a source, together with their linguistic analysis, in order to give an idea of the amount of analysis that has been necessary and how it relates back to the input data. A bibliography at the end of this document lists the sources and links to on-line copies of the texts used are also provided. The other chapters focus on what is now known about the Honduran Lenca language (with some passing references to Chilanga Lenca[5] as well) in linguistic terms.

Early in this process, we created a group[6] on Facebook called "Masapeashpi" (We're Back, in Chilanga Lenca) to which a few linguists and specialists were invited, whose purpose was to discuss the findings of my studies, first of Chilanga and later of Honduran Lenca, which I shared by posting a series of documents in the group. Subsequently some of these documents were also posted on the academia.edu site. A third way to access my main linguistic writings about Lenca is to download documents from the Tushik digital library, either from the library's catalogue[7] or via the individual links such as those provided in the bibliography at the end of the present document.

<div align="right">Alan R. King, Zarautz, June 2017</div>

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[5] Jan Morrow and I had worked together to support Nawat language recovery prior to turning to Lenca. Nawat is spoken in El Salvador, which shares its northern border with Honduras. There are really two Lenca languages, spoken in El Salvador and Honduras respectively. In the territory of modern-day El Salvador prior to contact with Europeans, Lenca was the main language of the eastern part of the territory of El Salvador, while Nawat was the most widespread language in western El Salvador. Extinct since the middle of the twentieth century, Lenca was only documented at all properly in a single town in El Salvador close to the Honduran border, Chilanga, but that documentation, including the only contemporary language *description* of a form of Lenca, is sufficient to establish with certainty that Chilanga and Honduran Lenca are not the same language. After having carried out some studies of the Chilanga language, the focus of my attention shifted almost entirely to Honduran Lenca owing to greater local interest, resulting in the project on which we are now embarked.

[6] Membership is by invitation only; please contact Alan King or Jan Morrow.

[7] The Tushik Digital Library is a collection of bibliographical items of interest to scholars researching these and other languages of the area, access to which is by invitation; please contact me to request access to the catalogue and documents.

Contents

1 *What is Lenca?*

Lenca is the name of an indigenous people of Central America who form part of the ethnic and linguistic patchwork that was in place when contact with the Spanish empire took place. The name "Lenca", which was applied by the Spanish to the historical Lencas and sometimes extended as a cover term for indigenous groups of the region generally, is probably an exonym, of unknown origin and etymology.[8] In the carving up of Central American territories in the postcolonial period which gave rise to the current states of the region, the ethnic Lencas found themselves divided between Honduras in the north and El Salvador in the south.

The historical Lencas spoke languages that all belonged to the same isolate family, about whose early history nothing much is known. The last languages of this family were no longer spoken well before the end of the twentieth century. A certain amount of documentation of them had taken place in the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth in the locality of Chilanga in El Salvador and in half a dozen places in an area in Honduras that extends from Guajiquiro to La Esperanza, including the Marcala river valley. These are our only primary sources of knowledge of the Lenca languages.

Analysing the available data, we find that the language of Chilanga is very different from that of the Honduran Lencas; they could not have been mutually intelligible. The Lenca from the Honduran side that is documented presents diversity, presumably between dialects, which we can only imagine would have been greater if we had information about the speech varieties of a larger number of territories. But the differences we can observe are not great enough to require us to consider that the known Honduran varieties do not all belong to a single language.

Hence there are two known Lenca languages, that of Honduras (with several varieties documented) and that of El Salvador (with substantial documentation only for one variety, that of Chilanga, but it is to be assumed that other districts spoke different dialects, and this assumption is supported by local tradition). In most of this sketch we are going to be talking about Honduran Lenca, to which the term Lenca should be understood to refer in the present context unless otherwise qualified.

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[8] Suggested interpretations supposedly in terms of Lenca roots are highly fanciful.

The reason why "Lenca" is used to designate both of these languages is that we lack reliable information about specific names for the languages, and "Lenca" has commonly been applied indifferently to all the speech varieties of the ethnic group. To the best of our knowledge, Lencas themselves, when they still spoke their languages and wished to refer to them, used generic terms meaning "language", such as *kotik* in Honduran Lenca and *putum* in Salvadoran Lenca.

Based on a Hispanicization of the latter word, Lencas are sometimes referred to as *potones* in El Salvador, and their language has on occasion been called *lenca potón*, perhaps adapted from a Lenca expression *Lenca putum* 'Lenca language'. Some Spanish speakers reanalysed the meaning of *potón* as an ethnonym or a name of the specific language rather than generically meaning 'language', while elsewhere *lenca potón* was reinterpreted by people who only spoke Spanish as if *potón* were a qualifier of *lenca* which designated one kind of Lenca as opposed to other kinds of Lenca which, presumably, they thought of as not *potón*. A considerable amount of confusion and inconsistent naming practices has thus arisen.

The areas inhabited by Lencas today, or in which many people self-identify as Lencas, are frequently mountainous with numerous valleys of difficult access, located in remote areas from the point of view of important population centres such as Tegucigalpa or San Salvador. Contact between mainstream Spanish-speaking society and the Lenca communities has been limited, and not very much has ever been known to the rest of the world about Lenca society, customs and languages.

Sadly the languages have been lost, but the sense of ethnic identity is still strong in Lenca communities, and it is in this context that the interest recently shown by some people in attempting a linguistic recovery is of importance. It is in response to such expressions of interest that the work reported here has been undertaken.
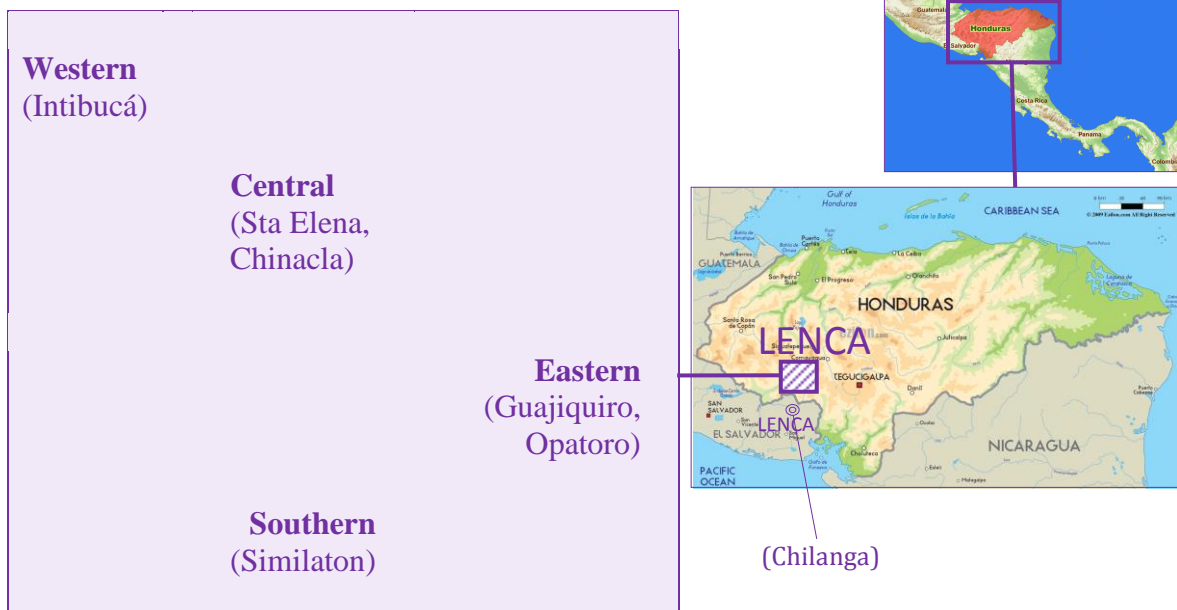
2 *Reconstructing Lenca*

How do you get communities to learn, much less use, an ancestral language that nobody speaks any longer, thereby performing *language recovery from zero*? Furthermore, how can sufficient knowledge of a language be achieved in order to be able to teach people to speak it when the language no longer has any speakers, nobody knows the language at present and it was never fully or systematically described: how can we achieve the *"reconstruction"* of a dead language?

RECORDED HONDURAN LENCA DIALECTS

Western
(Intibucá)

Central
(Sta Elena, Chinacla)

Eastern
(Guajiquiro, Opatoro)

Southern
(Similaton)

(Chilanga)

By calling the development of a comprehensive description of the language on the basis of fragmentary and incomplete data language reconstruction, I do not, of course, mean the same thing that the term *reconstruction* is taken to refer to in the scholarly discipline of historical linguistics. In a new context a term may acquire a different sense; in the present context, *reconstruction* refers to a process which takes available fragmentary and unsystematic raw linguistic data as input and aims to produce as its ouput a coherent practical, *systematic* description of that language.

The data that can be taken as input for the development of a systematic grammar of Honduran Lenca consist of word lists and some other materials contained in publications dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (see the

Bibliography). These materials list raw Lenca data collected in the named localities, as shown in the following table. (Regarding the twentieth century dates of some items, note that date of publication does not necessarily reflect when the data of interest had been collected.)

	Localities: Guajiquiro	Opatoro	Similaton	Sta. Elena	Chinacla	Intibuca
Doblado & Girard 1951	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Hernández & Pinart 1897	✓					
Membreño 1897	✓		✓			
Moreno 1924/1949	✓					
Squier 1858	✓	✓	✓			✓

This set of sources covers the practical totality of our primary data. The five documents are, to the best of our knowledge and according to their own evidence, mutually independent sources. That is no longer so when the list is extended to include other documents, which not only hardly contribute any new information (except when it is quite probably spurious, see below), but take to repeating (often without attribution) each other's data, proliferating inherited errors, introducing new errata and generally confusing issues.

Works such as Campbell, Chapman & Dakin (1978), Herranz (1987) and Lehmann (1920), which also contain Honduran Lenca material, were taken into account in the project but are omitted from the table for specific reasons.

Lehmann's (1920) account does not contain original work (unlike his section on Chilanga Lenca); he limits himself to reproducing edited versions of the data provided by his predecessors (already tabulated above).

Some modern enthusiasts set much store by Herranz (1987), for no good reason since his data is too recent (obtained after the disappearance of the last people who knew Lenca properly), containing a small amount of authentic primary material mixed together in an insufficiently transparent manner with a larger amount of material derived from the proper sources already at our disposal; its contribution of new information is very limited, difficult to interpret and contains abundant errors.

Campbell et al. (1978) is an interesting testimony of one of the last *rememberers* but it was again produced at too late a date to be a good source of new information

about the language; the amount of data it supplies is very small and much of it is obscure; the same applies to the tape recording which the brief article reports on.[9]

Kunan pil?
(¿Quiénes somos?)

Kotik niwak i shapata!
(¡Aprende lenca y descúbrelo!)

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[9] Other items sometimes taken into consideration are also superfluous and misleading in some ways. Andrews (1970) contains tables collecting together a hand-picked selection of items copied (usually accurately, sometimes not) from the primary sources for the purpose of proving an extremely dubious hypothesis of genetic relationship between unrelated language families; its use as a data source is pointless if the originals are to be had. Gavarrete (2004) has been discovered by J. Morrow (and confessed to him regretfully by the author himself when pressed) to be the result of a blatant plagiarism of a published work on *Cacaopera* (an unrelated language formerly spoken in a part of present-day El Salvador very close to the Salvadoran Lenca area), wilfully mislabeled as if it were a book on Lenca and published in the "author's" native Honduras, thereby sowing serious confusions with repercussions that persist today. Lardé y Larín (1951), which calls itself a *diccionario*, reproduces a derivative compilation based on data from extant primary sources of both Lenca languages, thrown together mechanically and alphabetized without any sort of analysis.

3 *Dialects, variation, standardization*

From what is now known I estimate that the distance *between Chilanga Lenca and Honduran Lenca* may be on an order of magnitude approaching that between Latin and Greek of the classical period. Although clearly related in a general way, they are markedly different in many details. Apart from some phonological contrasts, considerable differences in lexicon coupled with significant morphological contrasts would have reduced spontaneous mutual intelligibility to a percentage in the single digits. Typologically they are syntactically similar, but we cannot include complex sentence syntax in the comparison because hardly anything is known about this aspect of Chilanga in the absence of any continuous text.

Some disclaimers are in order before attempting any estimate regarding the mutual distance *among the Honduran dialects*. It is hard to be certain how widely dialects might have varied in the language's heyday on the basis of the records that have survived. We can compare the localities in the documented region, but the overall quantity of data is small and unevenly distributed. The adjoining table gives the number of vocabulary items in word lists for each dialect from the sources that we have used. Our knowledge of some of those few varieties is especially scanty and incomplete; this will affect the accuracy of any comparison that we can hope to achieve.

Locality	Source	Words
Guajiquiro	Doblado	96
	Pinart	604
	Membreño	432
	Moreno	63
	Squier	93
Opatoro	Doblado	230
	Squier	80
Similaton	Membreño	300
	Squier	36
Sta. Elena	Doblado	193
	"	75
(Chinacla	*Doblado*	*79)*
(Intibuca	*Squier*	*55)*

Two of the localities mentioned cannot be described coherently from the data available, Chinacla[10] and Intibuca, on account of the insufficient quantity of data,

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[10] Doblado's short Chinacla wordlist raises special issues; much of its content is scarcely recognisable as Lenca and is difficult to explain or integrate into the picture provided by a comparison of all other sources. It is therefore omitted from consideration henceforth. Doblado provides two different word lists for Sta. Elena, whence the two word counts. It is the longer of the

which is just enough to confirm that Honduran Lenca was spoken but not enough to characterise the dialects reliably. This leaves us with four actually describable dialects: Guajiquiro, Opatoro, Similaton and Sta. Elena.

Sadly, the data we have cover a smaller area than the territory over which Lenca was undoubtedly spoken in the past, and we have no way of judging the linguistic relationship that must once have held between the area we can map linguistically and those we can't, other than to make the obvious assumption that Lenca in its historical entirety would have been more heterogeneous than is evident from the extant data, which come from a fairly compact region. Relying on this deficient data corpus, I think that variation across the Lenca speaking area of Honduras might have been about of the order of that amongst the North Germanic speech varieties of Scandinavia: a respectable degree of surface variation within the bounds of a common, coherent underlying system, with considerable mutual intelligibility despite easily perceived local differences.

Guajiquiro is the best-known form of Lenca, so in the initial stage of my analysis I focused on Guajiquiro Lenca to build a coherent picture of a single dialect before expanding the net to include other varieties. A further advantage of making Guajiquiro dialect the starting point for the analysis ensues from the fact that it is the only variety for which a continuous text of any substance is found, This formed the basis of my initial investigations into Lenca morphology and syntax. After several months of painstaking analysis, I turned to the rest of the corpus and drew up profiles identifying the salient characteristics of each dialects. On the strength of this expanded database, I subsequently reappraised and reformulated the sum of knowledge to date of the phonology, grammar and lexicon of Honduran Lenca.

We are aware that the Lencas have inherited a strong tradition of local identity and autonomy, matching the mountainous terrain and remote population centres of their historical territory. The notion of the former existence of a heterogeneous network of differentiated speech varieties also appears to persist. In our interactions with people interested in Lenca language and culture, we have been told by some that *Lenca* doesn't refer to a single language since each community possessed its own language and that the Lencas were merely a confederation of associated peoples. As a non-scientific appraisal and with much of the evidence missing, I think we should be cautious to accept the linguistic part of this assertion at face value.

Some members of present-day communities have expressed the wish to learn not just "Lenca" but *their* Lenca, the old language of their specific town or valley. If there were a real possibility of granting this request we would not be opposed to the idea in principle. But for most of the areas where Lenca ethnic identity is still celebrated there is no record of their local language of old.

Even if we had more complete knowledge of Lenca dialectology the question would have to be asked whether it was practical to attempt to split up a barely nascent wave of awakening interest in the Lencas' ancestral language by recreating a division into numerous dialects. As it is, there is not even a great deal of choice. Therefore a pan-Honduran Lenca supra-dialectal norm is proposed which provides

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two lists that has been found most useful; it gives us an enticing glimpse of a dialect with some notable differences from the more southerly varieties.

a standard point of departure for learners, speakers, writers and teachers of the language.

Lenca Unificado Moderno (LUM) is not intended to *replace* more complex historical realities but to make the language approachable and learnable. Those wishing to tackle matters requiring greater sophistication such as the study of regional variation or analysis of historical texts can use LUM as a launching pad, while others will probably be content to acknowledge LUM as a good enough approximation to the Honduran Lenca language which captures the essence of the language.

In the following discussion of Lenca, LUM forms are presented except where otherwise noted, and are in **bold**, while any other forms cited, including dialectal Honduran Lenca, Chilanga Lenca or other languages, are in *italics*.
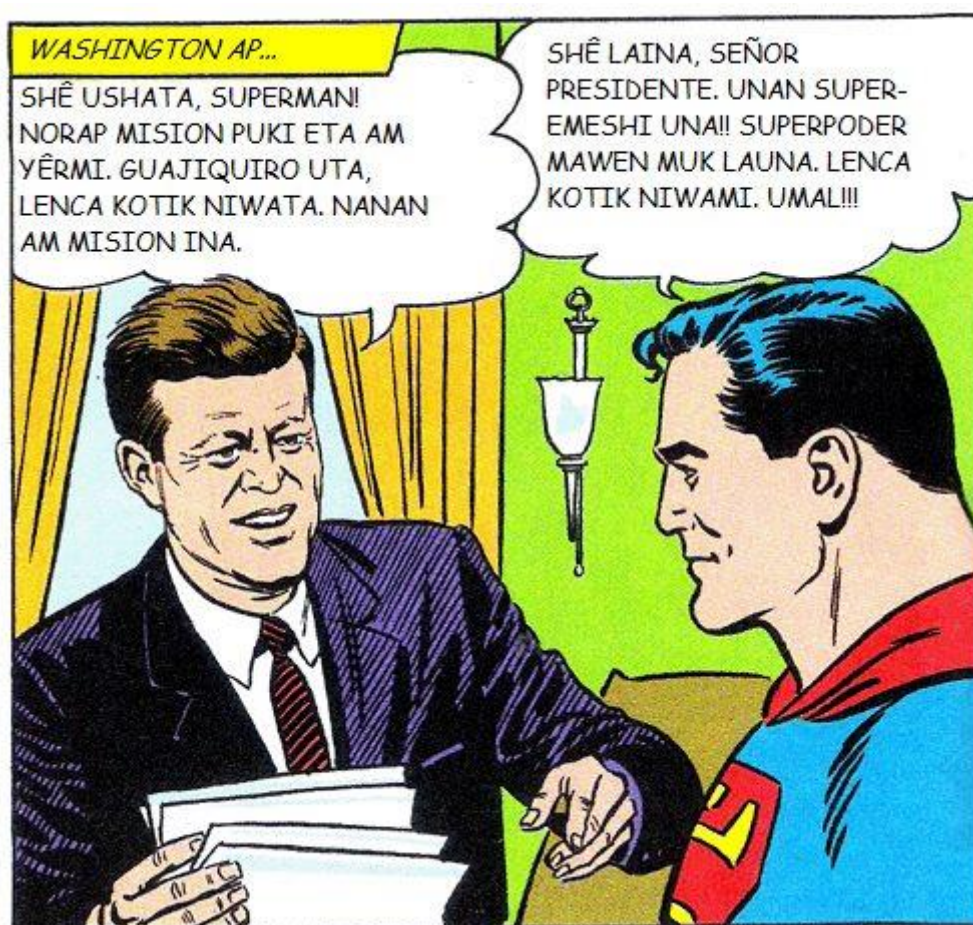
4

An overview of Lenca

Lenca[11] varieties share a fairly simple basic phoneme inventory. In the stops three places of articulation are distinguished: /p t k/. There are two fricative phonemes, both of which are sibilants: /s ʃ/.[12] The inventory is completed by two nasal consonants, two liquids and two semivowels: /m n[13] l r w j/.[14] The phonetics of this consonant system is complicated by the existence of allophones for the stops, which may be voiceless or voiced non-distinctively: [p~b], [t~d], [k~g].[15] There are five cardinal vowel phonemes in Lenca (/a e i o u/), as well as falling diphthongs (/aj ej uj aw ew ow/).[16]

The basic maximal shape of modern Lenca syllables is CVC. Certain types of alternation and variation in word forms within and between dialects are best explained by assuming a hypothetical proto-stage possibly with maximal CV syllable projection, which has tended to evolve towards CV(C) structure via final vowel deletion, leaving traces in the morphology and in variant forms, e.g. **kar** or

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[11] Although the overall focus in this description is on Honduran Lenca, statements in this chapter in particular referring to "Lenca" that are not otherwise qualified are also applicable to the Chilanga Lenca language of El Salvador.

[12] There is evidence of non-sibilant fricatives but only as syllable-final allophones of stop phonemes; these are dialect variants not reflected in the LUM standard: **wak** [wak~wag~wah] 'foot'; **map** [map~mab~mah~mob(a)~mof] 'woman'.

[13] In syllable-final position before a pause or a heterosyllabic vowel, /n/ was realized as velar [ŋ], just as in other languages of the area such as Nawat and local Spanish: **kotan** [kotaŋ] 'forest', **kotan eta** [kotaŋeta] 'a forest'. I assume there was probably resyllabification across "weak" morpheme boundaries such as between a clitic and a host or in a verb-auxiliary sequence, which would have resulted in an alveolar nasal in sequences such as **kotan ap** [kotanap~kotanab] 'in the forest', **lan una** [lanuna] 'I was' (rather than *[kotaŋap~b], *[laŋuna] etc., for which there is no evidence), since the /n/ is treated as syllable-initial: /ko·ta·nap/, /la·nu·na/. Syllable-final /n/ followed by a consonant adopts the latter's point of articulation, e.g. **lan pil** [lam'bil] 'we were', **lan tam** [lan'tam] 'you (sg.) were (dubitative)', **lan kil** [laŋ'gil] 'you (pl.) were', **lan yem** [laɲem] 'you (sg.) were'.

[14] The Chilanga language augments this with the addition of five glottalized consonants corresponding to the three stops and two fricatives; the glottalized sibilants are pronounced as affricates: /pʔ tʔ kʔ t͡sʔ t͡ʃʔ/.

[15] In Chilanga, also for the non-glottalized sibilants /s ʃ/, which may be either voiceless or voiced, and either fricatives or affricates: [s~z~t͡s~d͡z], [ʃ~ʒ~t͡ʃ~d͡ʒ].

[16] In LUM orthography, written *ai, au* etc. except when a vowel follows in the same orthographic word, e.g. **wei** 'for, to', **layik** 'calling', **tau** 'house', **mawen** 'much'. The Guajiquiro dialect also has a rising diphthong *ia* (*ie* in neighbouring Opatoro) which corresponds to some instances of *e* in other dialects. In didactic materials *ê* is used to identify the known cross-dialectal correspondences, e.g. **kên** (Guajiquiro [kiaŋ], elsewhere [keŋ]) 'leg'.

kari 'what', **-tam(i)** '2s dubitative ending', **nap(a)** 'here', **lem(a)** 'bed', **-in(a)** '3s indicative ending', **mol** 'to speak (stem)', **mol-pil** 'we speak', **mol-ka** '(variant gerund form)' but **moli-k** 'speaking (usual gerund), **moli-n** 'spoken' (participle'), **moli-una** 'I speak'.

Stress in Honduran Lenca is poorly documented and open to conjecture. It is thought that perhaps word-stress was weak or absent and phonological phrases tended to be stressed on the final syllable.[17]

Full inflectional morphology only exists in verbs, and is of a suffixing kind. In finite forms inflection consists of an optional tense marker and an obligatory subject-indexing person-number marker: **eni-una** 'I hear', **u-mi** 'I want to go', **u-p-una** 'I shall go'. There is subject pro-drop: **(Unan) eniuna** 'I hear'. Pronominal objects are expressed by proclitics bound to the verb (**am eniuna** 'I hear you'); lexical object NPs are not obligatorily indexed by object clitics (e.g. **Berta eniuna** 'I hear Berta'). Nonfinite verb forms are obtained through suffixes to the invariable verb stem: **eni-k** 'hear (gerund)', **u-n** 'go (participle)'.

There are two verbs 'to be' more or less as in Spanish (*ser, estar*). The real copular verb (corresponding to *ser*) has the anomaly that its stem (**wa-**) may be omitted in many contexts; when this happens the subject marker remains, and becomes an enclitic attaching to the preceding word, e.g. **puki wa-ina** '(he/she/it) is big' ~ **puki ina** (pronounced [pugi'na]) 'ditto', cf. **puki la-ina** '(he/she/it) is big (now)', compare Sp. *es grande* versus *está grande*.

Most of the tense (TAM) structures in Honduran Lenca can be analysed as auxiliary constructions. These follow the generic template: Verb - NF suffix + Auxiliary - SM (NF = nonfinite, SM = subject marker), e.g. **eni-k la-una** 'I am listening'. The past tense construction **eni-n una** 'I heard' is formed with the copula **wak** 'to be' as auxiliary, with the auxiliary stem **wa-** deleted in this case. The underlying presence of an auxiliary verb is suggested by the nonfinite gerundial construction in which it surfaces: **eni-n wa-k ne** 'after hearing, having heard'. Auxiliary constructions have such a strong presence in the Honduran Lenca verb system that it is tempting to think that in origin all indicative verb forms originated as periphrastic constructions which have reached different stages of morphological coalescence.

The non-indicative mood, which I call volitive, may go back to a deeper stratum of inflection; this mood uses a different set of subject markers (e.g. indicative 1s **-una**, volitive 1s **-mi**); the indicative subject markers are obviously related to the personal pronouns (**unan** 'I'...), to which the volitive markers, on the other hand, are unrelated.[18]

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[17] In Chilanga Lenca, on the contrary, phrasal stress regularly falls on the penultimate syllable with few exceptions. This stress assignment occurs *after* the incorporation of clitics into phrasal units, e.g. Chilanga *'ishko* 'man', *ish'ko-na* 'the man', *sap* 'eye(s)', *'u-sap* 'my eye(s)'. Clitic boundaries do not limit the operation of allophony rules (hence ['sap] but ['uzap~'ud͡zap].

[18] The Chilanga Lenca system of conjugation is not cognate to the Honduran system in a way that is immediately evident, and the basic tenses in Chilanga are less obviously periphrastic on a synchronic level. The Chilanga present tense form *isakanpi* [isa'kambi] 'we sow, we are sowing', for example, is probably derived from the same pattern as the Honduran cognate **ira-k la-pil** [ira(g)la'bil] 'ditto' (formed like **eni-k la-una** 'I am listening'), but cannot be described synchronically as periphrastic within Chilanga. There exist periphrastic tense forms in Chilanga too, but their formation need not have a common origin with the Honduran patterns. For example, one of the future tenses in Chilanga transparently comprises a periphrasis using the present tense of 'to go' as auxiliary (in parallel with

Noun phrases have no case or number marking, and no gender or noun-class system. Adjunct functions can be signalled by enclitic postpositions (**kotan ap** 'in the forest', **am man** 'with you', **api wei** 'for us', **Tegucigalpa nam** 'from Tegucigalpa'). Topics can be signalled by the enclitic **ne**.[19]

Noun phrases have a proclitic and an enclitic position which may be filled by various items. The proclitic position is available to possessive and demonstrative determiners (**u** 'my', **na** 'this' etc.). The enclitic position can be used by the definite article, the topic marker, a postposition or a clitic form of the copula. Most of these enclitic categories are mutually exclusive so there is usually only one enclitic per noun phrase, e.g. the definite article cannot co-occur with the topic marker, a postposition or a short copula. There is also only one proclitic position per phrase (***u na tau / *na u tau** 'this my house', cf. Nawat *ini nu-kal* 'this my-house' which is grammatical).

Sentence syntax is SOV, with many of the usual trappings of such languages. Topicalization is the main way in which clauses may diverge from a strict SOV order. Subordinate clauses may be finite or non-finite; subordinators take the form of clause-final or post-verbal suffixes or particles. Adjunct clauses are free to precede or follow the matrix clause.

Is Lenca an agglutinative language, as has occasionally been suggested? That depends. A standard definition says that agglutination is "a type of morphological structure in which words can be readily divided into a linear sequence of distinct morphemes, each of which typically has a fairly consistent shape and a single consistent meaning or function" (R.L. Trask, *A dictionary of grammatical terms in linguistics*, Routledge, 1993, p. 12). But how are we to define "word" here?

Examples of agglutinative structures mentioned in non-specialist discussions include Swahili *a-li-ku-on-a* 'he/she saw you' (cited by Trask), Turkish *ev-ler-iniz-den* 'from your houses' (Wikipedia, sub "Agglutination"), Japanese *tabe-sase-rare-ru* 'can cause someone to eat' (B. Comrie et al., *The atlas of languages* (rev. ed.), 2008, p. 53), and so on. These stock examples seem implicitly to assume that it is an uncontrovertible fact that *alikuona, evlerinizden* and *tabesaserareru* are single words — which they may well be, but what are the principles on which this identification is made? Should we just ask a speaker of the language: Is this all one word?[20]

Most of the data upon which we must base a reconstruction of the structure of Honduran Lenca was gathered before the twentieth century by people who lacked linguistic training, who made an effort to document the living language of their

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Spanish); Honduran Lenca has its own periphrastic future tenses but does not use 'to go' in this way. Thus some of the development of the tense systems of Honduran and Salvadoran Lenca may have occurred independently, yet they nevertheless appear to be built out of a shared proto-system, in which tense may have played a less significant role than aspect and inflectional morphology was perhaps limited or even non-existent.

[19] The **ne** topic construction is only attested in one Honduran dialect, Guajiquiro, but this is the only dialect in which any substantial continuous text is extant, so it is not to be concluded that other dialects lacked the construction. It is unlikely that **ne** existed (in that form, at least) in Chilanga as it would probably have found its way into at least an occasional example if it had. It is possible that a non-cognate Chilanga clitic form, *pa*, might have had a related function. (The only known morpheme in Honduran Lenca which could be a possible cognate of Chilanga *pa* would be the locative postposition **ap**.)

[20] Matters are complicated by the recognition of clitics as a distinct morpheme type which is neither a "full word" nor a mere agglutinative affix.

informants by eliciting and copying words and phrases. We may be fairly certain that the collectors of these data did not know or understand any Lenca themselves, hence they could only record (as best they knew how) the sounds they thought they heard, but they were not in a position to *analyse* what they heard morphologically or syntactically, and it seems that they rarely knew whether or where to divide what they heard into discrete words. Hence Membreño's text corpus from Guajiquiro abounds with "words" such as *carabelamga, ishteguantami,* and so on, whose actual meanings, disentangled for the first time by our linguistic analysis, are 'that you were going to die' (in LUM spelling: **kara pelam ka**), 'didn't you see?' (LUM: **ish te wan tami**), etc.

The word lists sometimes contain phrases or even sentences, whether or not the documenter knew it. Apart from items explicitly glossed by whole utterances, such as *¿cabnam pulatami?* '¿de dónde vienes? (source: Pinart) or *animisheimomashiley* glossed 'le está pegando a la mujer' (Doblado), we also find other phrases such as *moltebuyina* 'mudo' (Pinart) which really means 'He/She cannot speak'. The LUM spellings of these phrasal examples and accurate glosses of their meanings are, respectively, **Kap nam pu(k) latami?** 'Where are you coming from?', **Ana emeshi i map mashi(k) lai(na)** 'that man is beating his wife' and **Mol tê pui ina** 'He/She cannot speak'.

In the spelling system proposed for LUM, morphemes which can reasonably and justifiably be treated as separate words (including clitics or auxiliaries) are so treated. This does not result in a complete absence of inflections or simple "agglutinative" structures. Examples from the sentences just cited are **mashi-k** 'strike-GERUND', **pu-k** 'come-GERUND', **la-ina** '*estar*-3s', **la-tam(i)** '*estar*-DUBITATIVE.2s', **pela-m** 'FUTURE-2s' and so on.

In the raw source data there are spurious word-divisions and the same morpheme sequences may be written without a break or with one in different instances, even in adjacent items. In the short sample of source

LUM spelling	Source spelling	
u wiran	*u-güiran*	my village
u familia	*ú-familia*	my family
u yêrta	*u-yarta*	give me
u ish tê wan tami?	*ú ishteguantami*	didn't you come to see me?
u te tê ina	*utetena*	does not do [to] me
ushak ne	*u-shagne*	upon arriving

text presented in Chapter 9, from which some of the above illustrations were taken, we do not need to look far to see contradictions in the way word-divisions are used: compare for example *tinguishinuna* 'I waited' with *enin uná* 'I heard' (in LUM, **tinkishin una** and **enin una**).

It would be possible to respell Lenca to make it look more "agglutinative", simply by attaching all clitics and auxiliaries to the word they precede or follow, e.g.

LUM spelling	"Agglutinative" respelling	
U latan nan Carlos ina.	*Ulatannan Carlosina.*	My name is Carlos.
Nanan u seya ina	*Nanan useyaina.*	This is my younger brother.
Ishiuna kotik shuntê niwan yêm ka!	*Ishiuna kotik shuntê niwanyêmka!*	I see that you have learnt a little Lenca.

18

5 *Phonology*

The vowel inventory of Honduran Lenca is /a e i o u/ with cardinal phonetic values.

Although rising diphthongs are not otherwise very common, data for Guajiquiro dialect present the sequence "ia" in certain words, generally corresponding to /e/ in most other dialects. Following *y* and sometimes *sh*, the Guajiquiro variant may present "a" rather than "ia". However, some words with "(i)a" also have variants with "e" in Guajiquiro, and no rule has been identified to predict when such alternations occur. For LUM, I have decided to opt for *e* in the spelling of such words, but for didactic purposes I propose the option of using *ê* to identify words in which the *e* of other dialects is or may be replaced by "ia" or "a" in Guajiquiro, e.g. **kê** 'stone' (Guaj. [ke] or [kia], other dialects [ke]), **yêr-** 'give' (Guaj. [jar-], other dialects [jer-].

There are falling diphthongs, of which the most common are shown here. As a spelling convention,

ei / êi	ui	eu	ou
ai		au	

these forms are used except when followed by a vowel within the same word, in which case *y* is used rather than *i*, and *w* rather than *u*, e.g. **shêitam** 'do you like/want?' but **eye** 'tortilla', **tau** 'house' but **shawa** 'tomorrow'. This rule does give rise to some spelling alternations within paradigms: for example, the stem of 'to like, to want', **shêi-** ([ʃaj] in Guajiquiro, see above), as in **shêitam** 'do you like/want?', **shêipil** 'we like/want', etc., is written as **shêy-** in **shêyina** 'he/she likes/wants', **shêyiuna** 'I like/want', the gerund **shêyik** or the participle **shêyin**.

In some words, a monosyllabic word form ending in a consonant has a variant in which the final consonant is followed by a vowel, which is usually either *a* or *i* (occasionally *e*), **kar** or **kari** 'what', **kap** or **kapa** 'where', **am** or **ami** 'you', **umal** or **umali** 'let's go', **map** or **mapa** 'woman' etc. In such words, these may be free variants, and strict rules do not seem able to predict their occurence, except in the case of verb stems, where there is also a pattern of alternation between *i* and zero following a final consonant, but according to certain rules: thus e.g. **mol-** 'speak' in **mol-tam** 'do you speak?', **mol-pil** 'we speak', **mol-mal** 'let's speak', **mol-ina** 'he/she speaks' but **moli-k** (gerund), **moli-n** (participle), **moli-una** 'I speak'. I propose using the ad hoc term "fluid vowels" to refer to these phenomena.

The consonant phoneme inventory is shown here. The phonetic realizations of most of these phonemes seems to be straightforward. /n/ had a velar realization before a pause. Before stops it assimilates in place of articulation to the following consonant. The main complications concern the stop consonants /p t k/ themselves, which each had two allophones, voiced and voiceless; /p/ and /k/ also had fricative allophones in some dialects, it seems. The distribution of these allophones is mostly determined by rules, but these are a little complex and varied somewhat between dialects.

p	t			k
	s	sh		
m	n			
	l	r		
		y		w

All three stop phonemes may be voiced after /n/, but voicing does not always happen. For example, the imperative form **tan-ta** 'sit down!' is attested as *tanda*, but **en-ta** 'listen!' is not given in the data as *enda* which is what would be expected. There may have been free variation. For /p/ and /k/ voicing is usual after /n/.

The pronunciation of /k/ is voiced between vowels within a word (e.g. **shoko** 'white' [ʃogo]) and generally in word-internal positions unless adjacent to a voiceless consonant (e.g. **tepka** 'seven' [tepka] or the dimunitive suffixes **-ska** [ska] etc., and even then, sometimes /k/ is voiced, e.g. **mokta** 'all' [mogta]). Word-initially, it is voiceless, e.g. **kê** 'stone' [ke], [kia]. The pronunciation of /p/ is voiceless between vowels within a word (e.g. **napir** 'pig' [napir]).

The contrast between the behaviour of these two stops is seen in the proclitics **api** (first person plural) and **aki** (second person plural): **api** is pronounced [api], whereas **aki** is [agi] (or [aj]).

Both /p/ and /k/ are usually voiced in initial position in grammatical morphemes that are closely bound to a preceding word (whether as a suffix or an enclitic), as is the case of the morphemes **pil** 'we', **kil** 'you (pl.)', **pela-** (future auxiliary), **ka** (complementizer), **-kin** (verbal noun suffix). Exceptions occur sometimes when the stop is adjacent to a voiceless consonant, e.g. **kos-ki-** 'to remove', **tish-ki-** 'to teach', **u-p-tam** 'will you go?'

For the most part these patterns are consistent across the data for different dialects, but less consistency is observed when /p/ or /k/ is in word-final position, where each may display at least three allophones: voiced stop, voiceless stop or voiceless fricative; a fourth option is for the final stop to become silent. /p/ is voiced if followed by a "fluid vowel", e.g. **nap** 'here' may be [nap] or [nab], but also [naba].

The source data contain scanty and sometimes contradictory evidence making it hard to draw firm conclusions about the nature and placement of stress. Probably most verb forms were stressed on the last syllable; it is to be borne in mind that given Lenca's SOV syntax, the verb typically stands last in its clause, so this would actually be the last syllable of the clause. It is plausible that stress was assigned to syntactic groups rather than to individual words. It is assumed that fluid vowels were unstressed, e.g. **nap** ['naba], **umal** [u'mali].

6 *Morphology*

The syntax of the noun phrase is clearly structured. It can involve both proclitic and enclitic elements which may surround a lexical nucleus. In the noun phrase, proclitics are either demonstrative (**na tau** 'this house') or possessive (**u tau** 'my house'); enclitics comprise a determiner (**tau nan** 'the house'), postpositions (**tau ap** 'in/at/to the house') etc. There is a postposed topic particle **ne** which may follow NPs.

The proclitics are shown in this table. The demonstrative proclitics always precede a noun. The possessive and object proclitics are identical in form; the former precede nouns, the latter verbs. These proclitics also precede postpositions (**u man**

Demonstrative		Possessive		Object	
na	*this*	**u**	*my*	**u**	*me*
ina	*that (near)*	**am**	*your (sg.)*	**am**	*you (sg.)*
ana	*that (far)*	**i**	*his, her, its*	**i**	*him, her, it*
		api	*our*	**api**	*us*
		aki	*your (pl.)*	**aki**	*you (pl.)*
		al	*their*	**al**	*them*

'with me') and the topic marker **ne** (**u ne** 'I TOPIC').

The possessive proclitics express number of the possesser since number (singular or plural) is incorporated into the person system, as shown. Quantifiers may also encode number lexically in obvious ways (**eta** 'one, a(n)' is singular, other numerals are plural...). Apart from these, there is no grammatical expression of number at all in the noun phrase.[21]

Nouns cannot be preceded by both a demonstrative and a possessive; verbs cannot be preceded by two object markers.

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[21] Glosses are conventionally cited as singular for ease of exposition, but are really neutral for number (except as mentioned) and gender, e.g. **na** is not only 'this' but also 'these'; **i** is 'his, her, its'.

The enclitics that can follow a nominal nucleus containing any of (Noun) (Adjective) (Quantifier) are shown in this table.

The postpositions (some listed below) are counted as enclitics on distributional grounds (**tau nan** 'the house', **tau**

Def. article		Postposition		Topic mkr.	Copula	
					una	*I am*
					tu	*am I?*
					yêm	*you are (sg.)*
		ap	*in, at, to*		**tam**	*are you (sg.)?*
nan	*the*	**man**	*with*	**(ne)**	**ina**	*is*
		etc.			**ti**	*is?*
					pil	*we are*
					kil	*you are (pl.)*
					lana	*they are*

ap 'in/to the house', *tau nan ap), as are the short forms of the copula (**tau ina** 'it's the house', *tau nan ina).

The position of the topic marker in the table is less clear: it does not co-occur with the article **nan** (**tau ne** 'the house TOPIC', *tau nan ne) but it does not preclude postpositions (**tau ap ne** 'in the house TOPIC); however, **ne** is also itself a postposition meaning 'about' (**kayu ne molmal** 'let's talk about the horse'), in which case it does not co-occur with another postposition or with topic **ne**.

In phrases where it is syntactically compatible (e.g. **tau nan**), the article **nan** is less obligatory than English *the* in definite noun phrases. Enclitics including the article may co-occur with any of the proclitics (**na tau nan** 'this house', **u tau nan** 'my house', **u tau ap** 'in/to my house', **u tau ne** 'my house TOPIC', **u tau ina** 'it is my house').

Quantifiers may co-occur with enclitics (**tau mawen ap** 'in many houses'). This applies to **eta** 'one' which is also used as indefinite article (**tau eta'p** 'in/to a/one house', **tau eta ina** 'it is a house' etc.).

This table shows some of the most basic postpositions. The full form **ap** occurs after consonants or diphthongs (**kin ap** 'on the road', **tau ap** 'in/to the house', but **wara'p** 'in/to the river', **ili'p** 'in/to the tree'). **(A)p** may be omitted in complements of certain verbs (**wiran umal** 'let's go to town').

Locative	**ap, 'p**	'in, at, to'
Ablative	**nam**	'from'
Comitative	**man**	'with'
Instrumental	**lan**	'with, by'
Dative	**wei**	'to, for...'
Theme	**ne**	'about'

Self-standing pronominal forms ending in **-nan** exist for the demonstratives and personal pronouns (see above, proclitics). In the demonstrative pronouns **-nan** is optional (**na** or **nanan** 'this'). In the independent personal pronouns **-nan** is obligatory (**unan** 'I',

Dem. pronouns		Indep. pers. pronouns	
na(nan)	*this*	**unan**	*I*
ina(nan)	*that (near)*	**amnan**	*you (sg.)*
ana(nan)	*that (far)*	**inan**	*he, her, it*
		apinan	*we*
		akinan	*you (pl.)*
		alnan	*they*

*u). The personal proclitics, not the independent personal pronouns, are used with postpositions or topic-marking **ne** (**u man** 'with me', **u ne** 'I TOPIC', *unan man, unan ne).

Object proclitics primarily indicate a patient (**u ishyêm** 'you see me') but with some verbs may also express a recipient (**u yêryêm** 'you give me', **u molyêm** 'you

tell me' etc.). Indirect objects can also be expressed as postpositional phrases with **wei** 'to, for' (**u wei yeryêm = u yeryêm**).

Verbs have finite and nonfinite forms. Three basic nonfinite forms are essential to periphrastic conjugation: the stem form (no inflection), the gerund (**-k**) and the participle (**-n**).

Verb stems are sorted into two classes for convenience when describing their inflection. Those whose stem form ends in a consonant insert *i* between the stem and some endings including the **-k** of the gerund and the **-n** of the participle (**mol, molik, molin** 'speak'); these constitute the first class. All others, which do not insert a vowel, make up the second class (**liwa, liwak, liwan** 'buy'). I have decided to use the gerund as a citation form for verbs, hence **molik** 'to speak', **liwak** 'to buy'.

All gerunds in which **-k** is preceded by a vowel other than *i* (like **liwak** 'buy', **kok** 'enter', **uk** 'go', **puk** 'come', stems **liwa-, ko-, u-, pu-**) belong to the second class. Most ending in *-ik* belong to the first class (like **molik**, stem **mol-**), but in some the *i* is a permanent part of the stem so they are grouped in the second class (e.g. **molshik** 'read', **tipik** 'go up', with invariable stems **molshi-, tipi-**). These are predictable from phonological shape: such verbs either have a stop or a consonant cluster preceding the *i*.

There are two main synthetic finite forms. Both are unmarked for tense, but contrast in mood: indicative (called unmarked tense) and optative-cohortative-imperative-jussive (called volitive). Both the indicative and the volitive are formed from the stem by adding distinct sets of person (subject) endings. In the indicative there is a second set of subject markers in the singular which are typically used in questions (called dubitative; the non-dubitative indicative endings may be called affirmative). The upper table shows the paradigm of a Class I verb (**molik** 'speak') in these synthetic finite forms; the lower table shows that of a Class II verb (**liwak** 'buy').

Indicative:		Volitive:
Affirmative	*Dubitative*	

Affirmative		Dubitative		Volitive	
moli	-una	mol	-tu	mol	-mi
mol	-yêm	mol	-tam	mol	-ta
mol	-ina	mol	-ti	mol	-iu
mol	-pil			mol	-mal
mol	-kil			mol	-tal
mol	-lana			mol	-iu

Indicative:		Volitive:
Affirmative	*Dubitative*	

Affirmative		Dubitative		Volitive	
liwa	-una	liwa	-tu	liwa	-mi
liwa	-yêm	liwa	-tam	liwa	-ta
liwa	-ina	liwa	-ti	liwa	-yu
liwa	-pil			liwa	-mal
liwa	-kil			liwa	-tal
liwa	-lana			liwa	-yu

The indicative synthetic tense is unmarked for tense and may refer to present or past time.[22] It is used with stative verbs generally to express the present (**launa** 'I am, estoy', **tishiuna** 'I know'), and with dynamic verbs to express either habitual or past (**moliuna** 'I speak' or 'I spoke'). The verb **wak** 'to be, ser' has a full form that is regular (**X waina** 'is X') and a short form where the stem *wa* is omitted and the ending alone is used as an enclitic (**X ina** 'is X').

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[22] In Chilanga Lenca, the apparent cognates of the Honduran unmarked tense, which lacks a segmental tense marker, provides a past tense, except for the irregular and defective verb *yan-* 'estar' which responds to Honduran **lak**, where it gives a present tense: Chilanga *ya*[ŋ]*u, yanmi, yanpa, yanpi...*, LUM **launa, layêm, laina, lapil...** 'I am, you are, he is, we are...'.

The volitive[23] has a variety of uses, some of which depend on the person; uses are different in main and subordinate clauses. In main clauses, the 1s volitive may expresses volition or intention (**molmi** 'I want to speak, I shall speak'); in the 1p, 'let's' (**molmal** 'let's speak'), in the second person it is imperative (**molta, moltal** 'speak!' sg./pl.), in the third person it is jussive (**moliu** 'let (him/them) speak').

	Main verb		Auxiliary
Imperfective:	*gerund*	+	**lak**
Perfective:	*participle*	+	**wak**
Prospective:	*stem*	+	**pelak**

Other finite forms are generally periphrastic constructions, consisting of a non-finite form of the main verb followed by an auxiliary. The main patterns are shown here. The auxiliaries conjugated in the unmarked indicative tense are understood as present tense.

In the imperfective construction, the gerund (the verb's citation form, ending in **-k**) is followed by the verb **lak** 'estar', e.g. **molik laina** 'is speaking'. In the perfective construction, the participle (in **-n**) is followed by the short

Present	*Past*	*Future*		
Affirmative				
molik launa	molin una	mol pelauna	*or*	molpuna
" layêm	" yêm	" pelayêm		molpêm
" laina	" ina	" pelaina		molpena
" lapil	" pil	" pelapil		molpepil
" lakil	" kil	" pelakil		molpekil
" lalana	" lana	" pelalana		molpelana
Dubitative				
molik latu	molin tu			molpetu
" latam	" tam			molpetam
" lati	" ti			molpeti

form of the copula (**molin ina**); this has the meaning of a past or perfect, 'spoke, has spoken'. In the future or prospective construction, the plain verb stem is followed by a form of **pelak** (**mol pelaina** 'will speak'). There is an alternative future tense which is perhaps a contraction of the "long" future: **molpena**.

More complex periphrastic tenses may be obtained by using the auxiliary in a different tense form, including periphrastic tenses (**molik lan ina** 'was speaking', **mol pelan ina** 'was going to speak').

Negation of verbs involves the particle **tê**, which is placed after the verb's stem and is followed by a form of the copula **wak**, e.g. **mol tê ina** 'does not speak', past **mol tê wan ina** 'did not speak, has not spoken' (**wan ina** is the past of **wak**).

In the domain of the noun phrase, there is some evidence for variation in both the form and the distribution of the definite article enclitic **nan**. Variant forms include *anan, ana, na*. It's use in the Guajiquiro texts is frequent and seems unmarked, yet it is completely unattested in some dialects.

Unmarked		*Past*		
Negative		*Negative*		
mol tê una		mol tê wan una		
" " yêm		" " " yêm		
" " ina		" " " ina		
" " pil		" " " pil		
" " kil		" " " kil		
" " lana		" " " lana		
Neg. dub.		*Neg. dub.*		
mol tê tu		mol tê wan tu		
" " tam		" " " tam		
" " ti		" " " ti		

Phonologically based variation in conjugation morphology includes the optional addition or truncation of final vowels in many

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[23] The Chilanga cognate of the Honduran volitive paradigm is its imperative system. It is not known whether these forms had the other functions of the Honduran volitive given the scarcity of syntactic data.

forms (**shêitami = shêitam** 'you like (dub.)', **lin = laina** 'está', **umali = umal** 'let's go') and alternations involving diphthongs (**leina = laina** 'está').

Besides **-una**, there is evidence for an alternative 1s indicative affirmative subject marker, **-on**. It is natural to attempt to account for this alternation fully in terms of the phonological phenomena just mentioned, but some difficulties remain.[24] This phenomenon is not to be confused with a different one of suffixing **-on** to *other* finite verb forms (not replacing the subject marker but in addition to it), e.g. **lainon = laina** 'está', **shêitamon = shêitam** 'you like (dub.)', **umalon = umal** 'let's go'. It is thought that this added a stylistic nuance and my guess is that it may have signalled familiarity between interlocutors.

Kunan tu?

(¿Quién soy?)

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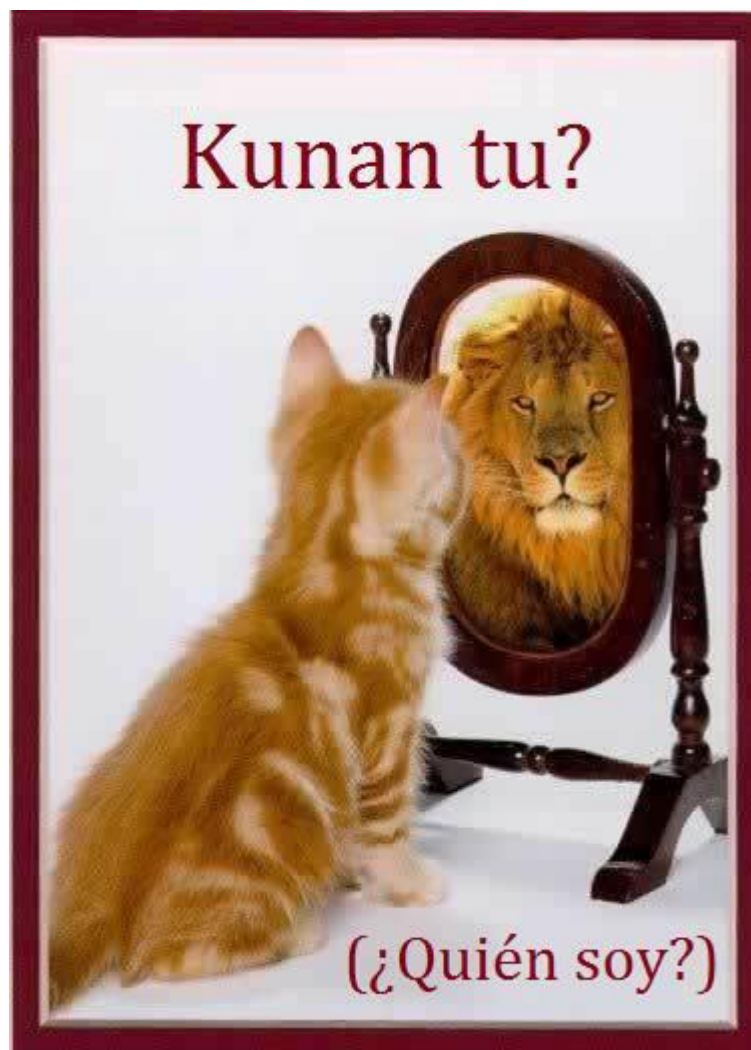
[24] Chilanga Lenca, from El Salvador, has two 1s endings, *-on* and *-u*, the latter corresponding to Honduran **-una**.

7 *Syntax*

The syntax of noun phrases was discussed in Chapter 6 in connection with clitics. On a macro-level the pattern would be: (PROCLITIC) + NUCLEUS + (ENCLITIC). Note that there is only one proclitic and one enclitic slot. Thus while different *types* of proclitic and of enclitic are eligible to be used in these slots, the choice of on proclitic (e.g. a possessive) excludes the possibility of co-occurrence of another (e.g. a demonstrative), and similarly, only one enclitic per noun phrase is possible. The Nucleus may include an adjective and/or a quantifier, in that order, after a noun. Thus a fuller statement of noun phrase structure is:

(PROCLITIC) +	NUCLEUS	+ (ENCLITIC)
Demonstrative **Possessive**	**Noun** **(Adjective)** **(Quantifier)**	**Def. article** **Postposition** **Topic marker** **Short copula**

N-N genitive constructions are scarcely attested in the corpus, and we are left to assume, on the basis of Lenca's typological profile, data from Chilanga Lenca where it is documented and the fact that such a pattern is commonplace in indigenous languages of the area generally, that the possessor precedes the possessed noun which takes the 3s possessive **i: map i wewe nan** 'the woman's child' (woman 3s child DEFINITE, i.e. 'woman her child').

Turning now to the syntax of the simple clause, unmarked order is verb-final, i.e. SOV. There is pro-drop, so the S (and O) need not be represented by a clause constituent if adequately specified (in a finite clause where the verb is inflected for person of subject), e.g. **Kotik moliuna** 'I speak Lenca' (Lenca speak.1s), or if overt specification is considered unnecessary (in a nonfinite clause), e.g. **Ushak ne am mol pelauna** 'When [I] arrive [here], I will tell you' (arrive.GERUND TOPIC 2s speak FUTURE.1s). Subject-indices are obligatory on finite verbs; object marking is not, and is only used if a nominal O is not expressed, e.g. **U ishina** 'He/She/It sees me', **I ishina** 'He/She/It sees him/her/it' but **Map nan ishina** 'He/She/It sees the woman', not *map nan i ishina (or if this is possible, it is at least not required). Notice that if the object is a personal pronoun it is represented by a proclitic satellite of the verb from which it is inseparable (**Map nan u ishina**, not *U map nan ishina, except when the latter means '*My* wife sees' or 'He/She sees *my* wife').

NB. In periphrastic TAM constructions, it is the lexical verb of which the pronominal object is an argument that is preceded by the object proclitic, e.g. **u ishik laina** 'is seeing me' (1s see.GERUND *estar*.3s), not *ishik u laina. This does not necessarily apply to other kinds of embedding construction, e.g. **puk u ishin ina** 'he/she came and saw me' (see.GERUND 1s see.PARTICIPLE be.3s).

Among noun phrases or other constituents preceding the verb in the unmarked order, the subject usually precedes others (including nominal objects), hence the default order is SOV (**Map nan shui nan ishin ina** 'The woman saw the dog', **Map nan wiran ap liwak laina** 'The woman is buying in the town').

For various reasons this default order may be disrupted: topicalization is frequent. A constituent treated as a topic is placed in one of the topic positions, of which a main clause has two: the beginning of the clause and the end of the clause. Thus there is a "nuclear clause" consisting of (S) (O) V which may be preceded in its entirety and/or followed in its entirety by topics, hence (T_1) (S) (O) V (T_2).

T_1 and T_2 may be differentiated pragmatically as foreground-topic and background-topic. Any nominal constituent can optionally be topicalized; sometimes topicalization is obligatory, when an interrogative constituent pre-empts the position immediately preceding the verb, e.g. **Map nan tau ap laina** 'The woman is in the house', but **Kunan laina tau ap?** 'Who is in the house?' with **tau ap** displaced to T_2 position. Adjuncts, whether phrasal or clausal, are very frequently topicalized, e.g. **Shawa mokta wiran ap umal** 'Let's all go to town tomorrow' (tomorrow [T_1] all [S] town to go.VOLITIVE.1p).

Topics (in either T_1 or T_2 position) are frequently (but optionally) followed by the topic marker **ne**, e.g. **Kunan laina tau ap (ne)?**, **Shawa (ne) mokta wiran ap umal**). A personal pronoun subject can be topicalized with **ne**, using the proclitic form of the pronoun, as before postpositions, e.g. **U ne wiran ap umi** 'I (T_1) want to go to town' (I TOPIC town to go.VOLITIVE.1s), cf. **Unan wiran ap umi** 'I want to go to town' (I town to go.VOLITIVE.1s), without marked topicalization of the subject pronoun.

To judge from our texts, subordination was widely used in Lenca discourse and its various constructions demand careful study. Not so coordination, for which limited resources are in evidence. Not only is there a dearth of coordinating connectors like *but, or* and so on, there is no single equivalent to *and* either. Clause constituents may be coordinated or listed in several ways, depending on the context.

One such is the use of a postposition such as **man** 'with' with the second of two constituents, e.g. **eye shinak man** 'tortillas and beans' (tortilla bean with). Another postpositon, **li**, occurs when human referents are coordinated (**u pap u li** 'my father and I'). The first item in this coordination construction is often followed by **ne**, the topic marker (**u pap ne u li**). Use of this type of construction is limited by the fact that it cannot be governed by a postposition to indicate the function of the compound NP within the clause because the enclitic postposition slot is already occupied by **man** or **li**, but it is available for constituents like subjects and objects which do not require such a postposition, e.g. **Eye shinak man kormi** 'I want to eat tortillas and beans', **U pap ne u li ta nan irak lapil** 'My father and I are sowing the cornfield'.

Another option for conjoining any number of nominal constituents is a "listing construction" in which every nouns in the list is followed by **a**, e.g. **Miguel a, Berta a pupelana** 'Miguel and Berta will come' (M. *a* B. *a* come.FUTURE.3p); **Tau a, ta a muk lalana** 'They have houses and cornfields'; **Ama a, mira a, shinak a korpil** 'We eat maize, plantains and beans'.

Neither of these devices can conjoin clauses. If two clauses sharing the same same subject are to be coordinated, this may be achieved by using the gerund of the verb in the first clause and only fully conjugating that of the last clause, e.g. **U seya nan puk u ishin ina** 'My younger brother came and saw me' (1s younger.brother DEFINITE come.GERUND 1s see.PARTICIPLE COPULA.3s).

A morpheme which may be used to coordinate both clause constituents and clauses is **ikwa**. Placed between two nouns it coordinates them; the second item may still be followed by **man**, e.g. **Kashlan eria ikwa shui man am yêrmi** 'I'll give you four chickens and a dog'. When **ikwa** is used to conjoin clauses it is placed after the gerund of the verb of the preceding clause, and its meaning is 'as soon as', e.g. **Ushak ikwa am mol pelauna** 'As soon as [I] arrive [here], I will tell you' (arrive.GERUND *ikwa* 2s speak FUTURE.1s).

The gerund is also used to form various kinds of nonfinite subordinate clause. When followed by **ne** (the topic marker), the gerundial clause has an adjunct function, often but not always a time clause, e.g. **Ushak ne am mol pelauna** 'When [I] arrive [here], I will tell you' (arrive.GERUND TOPIC 2s speak FUTURE.1s).

Other types of subordinate clause, such as complement clauses and some reason clauses, may have a finite verb, which stands at the end of the clause and is followed by a subordinator, e.g. **Enin una kara pelam ka** 'I heard that you are going to die' (i.e. you are dying) (hear.PARTICIPLE COPULA.1s die FUTURE.2s *ka*), **Unwayêm kali pun una** 'I came because you are ill' (be.ill.2s *kali* come.PARTICIPLE COPULA.1s). Subordinate clauses such as these are free to be placed before or after the matrix clause as one wishes.

A subordinate volitive clause may express purpose, e.g. **Kayu eta u yêrta u wiran umi** 'Give me a horse so that I may go to my village' (horse one 1s give-VOLITIVE.2s 1s town go-VOLITIVE.1s). Volitives may also be found in conditional and concessive clauses. In subordination we encounter "tensed volitives", that is a periphrastic TAM construction of the same kind already seen but with the last auxiliary in the volitive mood, e.g. **kara wan ta ne** 'if you had died' (die COPULA-PARTICIPLE COPULA.VOLITIVE.2s TOPIC).

8 *Lexicon*

The documents that provide our corpus are mostly made up of word lists, generally not very long ones, but between them they contain five or six hundred distinct vocabulary items, some of which are clear and are attested more than once, while others are presented in such a way that they need to be reconstructed and some are only attested once.

From this vocabulary it can be inferred that Lenca words are either simple or compound. Primary lexical stems for the most part conform to a monosyllabic, or at the most a (C)VCV phonetic shape, with a few longer ones (e.g. CVCVC or CVCCV). Probably the monosyllables historically derive from shapes of the CVCV kind in which the final vowel has tended to be lost in many but not all cases, whence the "fluid vowel" phenomenon.

Monosyllabic (CVC)		Bisyllabic (CVCV)	
kê	'stone'	**ama**	'maize'
kên	'arm'	**ili**	'tree'
kin	'path'	**kashi**	'sun'
lem	'bed'	**kata**	'pot'
mon	'rabbit'	**mina**	'mother'
pap	'father'	**mira**	'banana'
rak	'flesh'	**pala**	'hill'
sin	'cup'	**sela**	'hammock'
ta	'cornfield'	**toro**	'head'
tau	'house'	**wala**	'hand'
wak	'foot'	**wara**	'river'

The range of phonological shapes of verbal roots generally follows a similar pattern to that of nominal roots, with the relationship between monosyllabic and bisyllabic roots made more evident by the fact that an *i* is added (or restored) to consonantal (Class I)

(Class I)		(Class II)			
Monosyllabic -C		Monosyllabic -V		Bisyllabic -V	
ay-	'say'	**ko-**	'enter'	**ira-**	'sow'
en-	'hear'	**la-**	'estar'	**kara-**	'fall, die'
ish-	'see'	**mu-**	'have'	**kolko-**	'open'
kor-	'eat'	**pu-**	'come'	**kopi-**	'close'
kos-	'go out'	**te-**	'make'	**liwa-**	'buy'
mol-	'speak'	**u-**	'go'	**niwa-**	'learn'
tan-	'sit'	**wa-**	'be'	**shapa-**	'find'

stems in certain inflected forms (**mol** 'speak', gerund **molik**, participle **molin**, 1s **moliuna**; cf. **liwa** 'buy', gerund **liwak**, participle **liwan**, 1s **liwauna**). Verb stems with more complex phonological structures than these are usually compound, derived or borrowed.

Lenca has its share of loan words. Borrowing in different periods is evidenced by the presence of words which can be identified as loans from another indigenous language or from Spanish. Loans from indigenous languages in Lenca sometimes undergo native derivation, e.g. **tet** 'work (n.)' > Nawat *te*[ɣ]*it* → **tet-wa-k** 'to work' formed with Lenca affixes. (The earliest form of the loan in Lenca was probably *teiti,

Borrowings < Sp.		Spanish
kashlan	'hen'	*castellana
kayu	'horse'	caballo
kushtal	'sack'	costal
leshe	'milk'	leche
patush	'duck'	patos
shupu	'liquor'	*chupo
wakash	'cow'	vacas

since **tetwak** has a variant **teitiwak**; in accordance with Lenca historical phonology, the loss of the interconsonantal *i* (> *teitwa-) would have led to obligatory levelling of the diphthong to avoid a closed syllable containing a diphthong (> **tetwa-**).) A pronunciation of **tetwak** is attested with voicing of the internal /t/, a sporadic Lenca phonological development: **te**[d]**wak**.

In nominal compounds the qualifying component precedes, as in **ketau** 'cave' (cf. **kê** 'stone', **tau** 'house').

Compound noun		← Components			
amasarin	'grain of maize'	**ama**	'maize'	**sarin**	'seed'
inshuk	'beard'	**in**	'mouth'	**shuk**	'body hair'
ketau	'cave'	**kê**	'stone'	**tau**	'house'
kuishoror	'hurricane'	**kui**	'rain'	**shoror**	'wind'
waktik	'sandal'	**wak**	'foot'	**tik**	'face'
walalasel	'finger'	**wala**	'hand'	**lasel**	'digit'
washkata	'pitcher'	**wash**	'water'	**kata**	'pot'
wemap	'girl'	**we(we)**	'child'	**map**	'woman'
yukanta	'pine grove'	**yukan**	'pine'	**ta**	'(corn)field'

Compound verbs are less common. The verbs **kolkok** 'open' and **kopik** 'close' may take **in-** before them: **inkolkok, inkopik**; this is the noun **in** 'mouth' (which also compounds with nouns, cf. **inshuk** above), and these are exactly parallel with the Nawat verbs *(ten)tapua* and *(ten)tzakwa*, where *ten* 'mouth' denotes an edge or opening. However, such formations, which are commonplace in Nawat, seem to be rare in Lenca.

Diminutive nouns are formed by adding one of the endings **-(i)skan, -(i)shkan** or **-(i)nka** (**weskan** 'small child', cf. **we(we)** 'child'). The same occur with other words (e.g. adjectives, quantifiers) except that **-(i)s(h)ka** does not end in *n* (**shuntiska** or **poriska** 'little', cf. **shun** 'a little', **pori** 'small'; **sheulinka** 'reddish, orange, yellow', cf. **sheula** 'red').

The participle (ending in **-n**) and the gerund (in **-k**) of verbs may sometimes be used as derived nouns. The participle-derived noun, which is more common, designates a participant in the "action", sometimes objective (a patient or result) and other times subjective (an agent), and occasionally an instrument, e.g. **washan** 'urine', cf. **washak** 'to urinate'; **tishin** 'doctor', cf. **tishik** 'to know'; **wakin** 'grindstone', cf. **wakik** 'to grind'. A gerund is sometimes nominalized as a designation of an action or the outcome or objectivication of the action (**sherak** 'rent').

Base word		Derived verb	
kosik	'go out'	**koskik**	'remove'
tishik	'know'	**tishkik**	'teach'
lak	'be, estar'	**lankik**	'remain'
mam	'feces'	**mankik**	'defecate'
arik	'burn (intr.)'	**arshik**	'burn (tr.)'
kulik	'copulate'	**kulshik**	'plough'
lumak	'shake (intr.)'	**lumshik**	'shake (tr.)'
karak	'fall, die'	**kashik**	'kill' (?)
lip	'lightning'	**lipshik**	'flash'
shê	'good'	**sheshik**	'get better'
pashik	'finish (intr.)'	**pashak**	'destroy'
talik	'drink'	**talak**	'get drunk (?)'
wash	'water'	**washak**	'urinate'
kui	'rain (n.)'	**kuiwak**	'rain (v.)'
teli	'evening'	**telwak**	'be/get late'
tet	'work (n.)'	**tetwak**	'work (v.)'

Another deverbal noun-forming suffix is **-(k)in**, which can be used to derive nouns bearing a variety of relations to the meaning of the source verb, usually objects or concepts, less frequently people (**korkin** 'food', cf. **korik** 'to eat'; **purkin** 'broom', cf. **purik** 'to sweep'; **talkin** 'drunkard', cf. **talik** 'to drink'). These may be termed verbal nouns.

A number of verb-forming suffixes or "extensions" are observed in the Lenca lexicon. The syllables **-ki-** and **-shi-** added to the root of primary verb stems sometimes increase their valency (producing a causative: **koskik** 'remove', cf. **kosik** 'go out'; **tishkik** 'teach', cf. **tishik** 'know'; **arshik** 'burn (tr.)', cf. **arik** 'burn (intr.)'; **kulshik** 'plough', cf. **kulik** '*roll over (intr.)' > 'copulate'; **lumshik** 'shake (tr.)', cf. **lumak** 'shake (intr.)'; probably also **kashik** 'kill', cf. **karak** 'die'), though other times they seem to modify the meaning in an almost random way without necessarily affecting valency (**lankik** 'remain', cf. **lak** 'estar'). These suffixes can also derive verbs from nouns (**lipshik** 'flash', cf. **lip** 'lightning'; **mankik** 'defecate', cf. **mam** 'feces'; **sheshik** 'get better', cf. **shê** 'good').

For valency reduction, there is some evidence to suggest the existence of a reciprocal-reflexive-mediopassive verbal derivative suffix **-ay-**. There is also some evidence to suggest that an alternation between i~$\varnothing$ and a in the root-final vowel can also signal a transitivity alternation (**pashik** 'finish (intr.)' ~ **pashak** 'destroy') or a semantic modification (**koskik** 'remove', see above ~ **koskak** 'hunt'; **talik** 'drink' ~ **talak** 'get drunk'). This area requires further study.

Perhaps **-a-** is also a denominative verb-deriving suffix in **washak** 'urinate', cf. **wash** 'water'. But the most productive denominal suffix may be **-wa-** (**kuiwak** 'rain (v.), cf. **kui** 'rain (n.)'; **telwak** 'be/get late', cf. **teli** 'evening'). The homonymy between the suffix **-wa-** and the copula **wa-** results in some doubts: is *cashiguaina* 'ya amaneció' to be parsed as **kashi waina** (day COPULA.3s) or **kashiwaina** (day.DERIV.3s)? In addition to deriving verbs from Lenca nouns, **-wa-** can derive Lenca verbs from borrowed words, as in **tetwak** 'to work' (from a Nawat loanword) and **lamarwak** 'to embrace' if this comes from Sp. *amar*, as is probable.

However, the most usual and productive way to turn a Spanish verb into a Lenca one is by combining the Spanish infinitive with the verb **tek** 'make, do' which functions as a light verb and may be fully conjugated, e.g. **creer am teuna** 'I believe you' (*believe* 2s make.1s).

9 *Sample source text*

In this chapter I will take a sample of continuous conversational text in Honduran Lenca as noted in the late nineteenth century. Proceeding line by line, I shall first present the sentence in its original spelling in the source together with the translation provided in the source (in Spanish). On a second line, I rewrite the Lenca sentence as I reconstruct it following the conventions proposed for Modern Unified Lenca (LUM), accompanied by an idiomatic translation (in English) of the reconstructed meaning (which may differ slightly from that in the source document. On a third line, I provide a morpheme-by-morpheme analysis, followed by a literal morphological gloss.

The source of this text is Alberto Membreño, *Hondureñismos. Vocabulario de los provincialismos de Honduras*, Tegucigalpa, 1897.

(Line)

[2]

U-shagne enin uná amnan unguac carabelamga.	*Cuando vine supe que Ud. estuvo de muerte de su enfermedad.*
Ushak ne enin una amnan unwak kara pelam ka.	When I arrived I heard that you were ill and about to die.

usha-k ne eni-n una am-nan un-wa-k kara pela-m ka

arrive.here-GERUND TOPIC hear-PARTICIPLE COPULA.1s 2s-PRONOUN illness-DERIV-GERUND die PROSPECTIVE-2s COMPLEMENTZR

[3]

Quintegh pug ú ishteguantami am tinguishinuna magüen.	*Y cómo no fuiste a verme: yo te esperé mucho.*

[a] **Kin tek puk u ish tê wan tami?** — How come you didn't come and see me?

Kin te-k pu-k u ish tê wa-n tam?

which do-GERUND come-GERUND 1s see NEG COPULA-PARTICIPLE COPULA.DUB.2s

[b] **Am tinkishin una mawen!** — I waited for you a long time!

Am tinki-shi-n una mawen

2s wait?-DERIV-PARTICIPLE COPULA.1s much

[6] *Magüen ú tuniamá ú-familia, neuly am yun ab isteguanbilga inian pulauná cariari am ofrecer-tiba ishta.*

Siento mucho, lo mismo como mi familia, no haberte visto en tus necesidades; pero hoy vine á ofrecerte algún servicio.

[a] **Mawen u tunina u familia ne u li ami un ap ish tê wan pil ka,**

My family and I are very sorry that we didn't see you in your illness,

mawen u tun-ina u familia ne u li am un ap ish tê wa-n pil ka

much 1s hurt-3s 1s family TOPIC 1s by 2s illness in/to see NEG COPULA-PARTICIPLE COPULA.1p COMPLEMENTZR

[b] **inê puk launa kariari am ofrecer te para ishta.**

therefore I am coming for you to see whether anything may [be] offer[ed] you.

inê pu-k la-una kariari am ofrecer te para ish-ta

so come-GERUND estar-1s anything 2s offer do PROSPECTIVE.SUBORDNTR see-VOLITIVE.2s

[7] *Norane ofrecer utetena, olonguayu toni mulaunà; sheshliara-nan-ñe cayu eta u-yarta u-güiran humí.*

Hasta hoy no se me ofrece nada, porque estoy provisto aún de remedios: sólo que en mi restablecimiento necesito una bestia para conducirme a mi pueblo.

[a] **Nora[p] ne ofrecer u te tê ina,**

I don't need anything now,

nora-p ne ofrecer u te tê ina

this.time-in/to topic offer 1s do neg 3s

[b] **olonwayu toni muk launa;**

I have enough medicine;

olonwayu toni mu-k la-una

medicine enough have-gerund estar-1s

[c] **sheshiara anap ne kayu eta u yêrta u wiran umi.**

[but] when [I] get better lend me a horse so I can go to my village.

shê-shi-ara anap ne kayu eta u yêr-ta u wiran u-mi

good-deriv-subord anaph topic horse one 1s give-volitive.2s 1s town go-volitive.1s

map
mujer
(Vocabulario Lenca de Honduras)

10 *Sample teaching dialogue*

The following is an excerpt from a dialogue written as study material as part of a coursebook for learners of Lenca.

Ah, Diana, pun yêm!	Ah, Diana, you have come!
ah Diana pu-n yêm	ah Diana come-PARTICIPLE COPULA.2s

Kap lan tam?	Where have you been?
kap la-n tam	where estar-PARTICIPLE COPULA.2s

Telwaina!	It's late!
tel-wa-ina	late-DERIV-3s

Inê, tishiuna telwaina ka.	Yes, I know that it's late.
inê tishi-una tel-wa-ina ka	so/yes know-1s late-DERIV-3s COMPLEMTZR

Kunan ti na?	Who is this?
kunan ti na	who COPULA.DUB.3s this

Nanan u seya ina.	This is my younger brother.
na-nan u seya ina	this-PRONOUN 1s younger.brother COPULA.3s

Shê latam?	How are you? (lit. Are you well?)
shê la-tam	good estar-DUB.2s

Shê launa.	I am well.
shê la-una	good estar-1s

Amnan kotik niwaptam anaman?	Are *you* going to learn Lenca also?
am-nan kotik niwa-p-tam ana-man	2s-PRONOUN language learn-FUTURE-DUB.2s that-with

Niwami!	I want to learn!
niwa-mi	learn-VOLITIVE.1s

U latan nan Carlos ina.	My name is Carlos.
u latan nan Carlos ina	1s name DEF Carlos COPULA.3s

Shê laina, Carlos.	Okay, Carlos.
shê la-ina, Carlos	good estar-3s, Carlos

Ishiuna kotik shuntê niwan yêm ka!	I see that you have [already] learnt a little Lenca!
ishi-una kotik shun-tê niwa-n yêm ka	see-1s language little-APPROX learn-PARTICIPLE COPULA.2s COMPLEMENTZR

Elementary Vocabulary

Lenca — Español

A

a	y (posp.)
am	tu, te
ama	maíz
amnan	tú
ana	aquel, -llo
anaman	también
anap	allá
ap	en, a
api	nuestro
apinan	nosotros
apishaya	despacio
arshik	quemar
aulak	llegar (allá)
awinki	venado
ayak	bajar
ayik	decir

B

bus	autobús

C

cafe	café
castellano	castellano, español
clase	clase

E

enik	oir, escuchar
eria	cuatro
eshara	trapo
eta	un, -a
eye	tortilla

G

galan	galán

H

hora	hora
hora mokta'p	siempre

I

ili	árbol
ilik	correr
in tê	no hay
ina$_1$	ese, eso
ina$_2$	es (ver wak)
inan	él, ella
inap	ahí
inê	sí, así
irak	sembrar
isis	diez
ishaipepil	nos veremos
ishik	ver
ishkik	mostrar

K

ka	que
kalapa	nueve
kali	porque
kanashti	canasta
kap	dónde
kar	qué
karak	caer, morir
kariai	por qué
karman	cuándo
kashi	día
kashlan	gallina
kasi	largo
kasip	lejos
kata	olla
kau	cacao
kaurak	caminar
kayu	caballo
kê	piedra
kelik	asar, tostar
kelkin	comal
kên	pierna
kenin	brazo
kepan	peña
ketau	cueva
kil	sois
kin	camino
kin' hora'p	¿a qué hora?
kina	¿cuál?
kinê	cómo
kok	entrar
kolkok	abrir
kopik	cerrar
kopikopi	mariposa
korik	comer
korkin	comida

korok	vestirse	**mirin**	verdad
koron	camisa, ropa	**misak**	robar
kosa	bueno	**misi**	gato
kosik	salir	**mishu**	hijo
koskak	cazar	**miti**	frío
kotan	monte	**mokta**	todo, -s
kotik	lengua, lenca	**molik**	hablar
ku-eta	cuarenta	**molshik**	leer
ku-pe	ochenta	**mon**	conejo
kulshik	arar	**muk**	tener
kumshik	llenar	**mukuk**	llevar
kunan	quién		
kupik	atar	**N**	
kushik	poner	**na**	este, esto
kushtal	saco, costal	**nam**	desde, de *(posp.)*
kutek	cortar (fruta)	**nan**	el, la, los, las
kuto	corto	**nap**	aquí
		napir	cerdo
L		**nawe**	chile
lak	estar	**ne**	acerca de, *marcador de*
lan	con (instrumento)		*tópico*
	(posp.)	**niwak**	aprender
lankik	quedarse	**niwan**	estudiante
lashayik	acordarse	**norap**	ahora
latan	nombre	**noraptê**	ahorita
latik	vacío		
lawa	tres	**O**	
layik	llamar	**olon**	medicina
lem	cama, tapesco		
lepa	tigre	**P**	
leshe	leche	**pala**	cerro
li	y *(posp.)*	**palan**	pecho, mama
libro	libro	**pap**	padre
liwak	comprar	**parik**	quitar
lok	jolote	**pashak**	destruir
loron	sombrero	**pashik**	acabarse
lum	tierra	**patush**	pato
lumak	menearse	**paulak**	cansarse
		pe	dos
M		**pelak**	*auxiliar futuro*
mailep	antes, primero	**pero**	pero
mal	¡vamos a...! (= **umal**)	**pesha**	hija
man	con *(posp.)*	**piak**	acostarse
manipê	cuesta	**pik**	vender
manishik	soñar	**polko**	redondo
mashik	golpear	**pori**	pequeño
mashti	machete	**poro**	hoja(s)
mawen	mucho	**puk**	venir
merik	romper	**puki**	grande
mes	mes	**pulranka**	tarro
mesa	mesa	**purik**	barrer; volver
mina	madre	**purkin**	escoba
mira	plátano		

R

rak	carne
rapa	dulce
ripak	brincar
rok	levantarse
ruwa	duro

S

sai	cinco
sarik	dormir; tapiscar
sawik	lavar
sêk	pagar
sela	hamaca
semana	semana
sepe	sal
seya	hermano menor
sin	taza
sinka	azul
sira	abeja
sisi	hormiga
siwa	caliente
siwan	fruta
soi	rana
sulik	soltar
sunak	despertarse

SH

shak	leña
shakanik	platicar
shala$_1$	cuello
shala$_2$	lago
shalala	culebra
shali	huevo
shapa	barranco
shapak	encontrar
shapon	jabón
shawa$_1$	mañana
shawa$_2$	seco
shê	bueno, bien
shêlinka	bonito, lindo
sheula	rojo
sheulinka	amarillo
shêyik	querer
shika	verde
shina	papel
shinak	frijoles
shiri	negro
shirishir	mosca
shishi	agrio
shit	año
shiwik	escribir
shoko	blanco

shololo	alto
shua	coyote
shui	perro
shulu	pollito
shun	poco
shuna	flor
shuntê	un poco (de)
shuntiska	pequeño
shupak	chupar (alcohol)
shupu	guaro, chicha
shupuk	rápido
shupuk-shupuk	recio, fuerte
shur	ave
shurishur	ardilla
shusha	ratón

T

ta	milpa
tak$_1$	¿cuánto(s)?
tak$_2$	plantar
talik	beber
tan	suelo
tanik	sentarse
taposhi	cangrejo
tashik	botar, tirar
tashu	anciano
tau	casa
tayik	cortar
tê	no
teipan	iglesia, templo
tek	hacer
teka	valle, llano
telwak	tardar, ser tarde
telwan	ayer
tepa	ancho
tepere	bajo
tepka	ocho
têrak	olvidar
tesh	tortuga
teta	abuela
tetwak	trabajar
têyik	pedir
tinkishik	esperar
tipik	subir
tishik	saber, conocer
tishkik	enseñar
tishkin	profesor, -a
toko	arena
tolo	abuelo
toro	cabeza
toto	bebé
towi	malo, defectuoso

tuak	bañarse
tukik	meter, enterrar
tumin	dinero
tunik	doler
tupan	metate

U

u	mi
uk	ir
ulik	bailar
umshik	pastorear
unan	yo
unwak	estar enfermo
ushak	llegar (allá)
uwa	tabaco

W

wak₁	ser
wak₂	pie
wakash	vaca, ganado
wakik	moler
wala	mano
wamasta	veinte
wanko	banco
wanto	después, luego
wara	río

wash	agua
washkata	cántaro
wayik	llorar
wei	a, para, de *(posp.)*
weri	barriga
wesuk	centro
wewe	niño, -a
wie	seis
wira	bravo
wiran	pueblo
wirik	reñir, pelear
wiska	siete
wishik	soplar

Y

yaku	armadillo
yaru	mono
yawa	hacha
yek	cuerpo
yêrik	dar
yeshonak	pensar, contemplar
yolik	alegrarse, reirse
Yosh n'am sêyu	gracias
yuk	espalda
yuka	fuego

Elementary Vocabulary

Español — Lenca

A

a	wei, ap *(posp.)*
abeja	sira
abrir	kolkok
abuela	teta
abuelo	tolo
acabarse	pashik
acerca de	ne *(posp.)*
acordarse	lashayik
acostarse	piak
agua	wash
ahí	inap
ahora	norap
alegrarse	yolik
alto	shololo
allá	anap
amarillo	sheulinka
anciano	tashu
ancho	tepa
antes	mailep
año	shit
aprender	niwak
aquel, -llo	ana
aquí	nap
árbol	ili
ardilla	shurishur
arena	toko
armadillo	yaku
arar	kulshik
asar	kelik
así	inê
atar	kupik
autobús	bus
ave	shur
ayer	telwan
azul	sinka

B

bailar	ulik
bajar	ayak
bajo	tepere
banco	wanko
bañarse	tuak
barranco	shapa
barrer	purik
barriga	weri

bebé	toto
beber	talik
bien	shê
blanco	shoko
bonito	shêlinka
botar	tashik
bravo	wira
brazo	kenin
brincar	ripak
bueno	shê, kosa
bus	bus

C

caballo	kayu
cabeza	toro
cacao	kau
caer	karak
café	cafe
caliente	siwa
cama	lem
caminar	kaurak
camino	kin
camisa	koron
canasta	kanashti
cangrejo	taposhi
cansarse	paulak
cántaro	washkata
carne	rak
casa	tau
castellano	castellano
cazar	koskak
centro	wesuk
cerdo	napir
cerrar	kopik
cerro	pala
clase	clase
comal	kelkin
comer	korik
comida	korkin
cómo	kinê
comprar	liwak
con	man, lan *(posp.)*
conejo	mon
conocer	tishik
contemplar	yeshonak
correr	ilik

cortar	tayik		este, esto	na
cortar (fruta)	kutek		estudiante	niwan
corto	kuto		estudiar	niwak
coyote	shua			
cuál	kina, kinanan		**F**	
cuándo	karman		flor	shuna
cuánto(s)	tak		frijoles	shinak
cuarenta	ku-eta		frío	miti
cuatro	eria		fruta	siwan
cuello	shala		fuego	yuka
cuerpo	yek		fuerte	shupuk-shupuk
cuesta	manipê			
cueva	ketau		**G**	
culebra	shalala		galán	galan
chile	nawe		gallina	kashlan
chupar (alcohol)	shupak		ganado	wakash
			gato	misi
D			golpear	mashik
dar	yêrik		gracias	Yosh n'am sêyu
de	nam *(posp.)*, i, wei		grande	puki
decir	ayik		guaro	shupu
defectuoso	towi			
desde	nam		**H**	
despacio	apishaya		hablar	molik
despertarse	sunak		hacer	tek
después	wanto		hacha	yawa
destruir	pashak		hamaca	sela
día	kashi		hija	pesha
diez	isis		hijo	mishu
dinero	tumin		hoja(s)	poro
doler	tunik		hormiga	sisi
dónde	kap		huevo	shali
dormir	sarik			
dos	pe		**I**	
dulce	rapa		iglesia	teipan
			ir	uk
E				
él, ella	inan		**J**	
el, la, los, las	nan		jolote	lok
ellos, -as	alnan			
en	ap		**L**	
encontrar	shapak		lago	shala
enfermo, estar	unwak		largo	kasi
enseñar	tishkik		lavar	sawik
enterrar	tukik		leche	leshe
entrar	kok		leer	molshik
escoba	purkin		lejos	kasip
escuchar	enik		lenca (lengua)	Kotik
ese, eso	ina		lengua	kotik
espalda	yuk		leña	shak
español	castellano		libro	libro
esperar	tinkishik		lindo	shêlinka
estar	lak		llamar	layik
			llano	teka
			llegar	aulak, ushak

llenar	kumshik	para	wei *(posp.)*
llevar	mukuk	papel	shina
llorar	wayik	pastorear	umshik
lo, la	i	pato	patush
los, las, les	al	pecho	palan
luego	wanto	pedir	têyik
		pelear	wirik
M		pensar	yeshonak
machete	mashti	peña	kepan
madre	mina	pequeño	pori, shuntiska
maíz	ama	pero	pero
malo	towi	perro	shui
mano	wala	pie	wak
mañana	shawa	piedra	kê
mariposa	kopikopi	pierna	kên
me	u	plantar	tak
medicina	olon	plátano	mira
menearse	lumak	poco	shun
mes	mes	pollito	shulu
mesa	mesa	pollo	kashlan
metate	tupan	poner	kushik
meter	tukik	por qué	kariai
mi	u	porque	kali
milpa	ta	primero	mailep *(adv.)*
moler	wakik	profesor, -a	tishkin
mono	yaru	pueblo	wiran
monte	kotan		
morir	karak	**Q**	
mosca	shirishir	que	ka
mostrar	ishkik	qué	kar
mucho	mawen	quedarse	lankik
		quemar	arshik
N		querer	shêyik
negro	shiri	quién	kunan
niño, -a	wewe	quitar	parik
no	tê		
no hay	in tê	**R**	
nombre	latan	rana	soi
nos	api	rápido	shupuk
nos veremos	ishaipepil	ratón	shusha
nosotros	apinan	recio	shupuk-shupuk
nueve	kalapa	redondo	polko
nuestro	api	reirse	yolik
		reñir	wirik
O		río	wara
ochenta	ku-pe	robar	misak
ocho	tepka	rojo	sheula
oir, escuchar	enik	romper	merik
olla	kata	ropa	koron
olvidar	têrak		
os	aki	**S**	
		saber	tishik
P		saco	kushtal
padre	pap		

sal	sepe		**tortuga**	tesh
salir	kosik		**tostar**	kelik
seis	wie		**trabajar**	tetwak
semana	semana		**trapo**	eshara
sembrar	irak		**tres**	lawa
sentarse	tanik		**tu**	am
ser	wak		**tú**	amnan
sí	inê			
siempre	hora mokta'p		**U**	
siete	wiska		**un, -a**	eta
soltar	sulik		**usted**	amnan
sombrero	loron		**ustedes**	akinan
soñar	manishik			
soplar	wishik		**V**	
subir	tipik		**vaca**	wakash
suelo	tan		**vacío**	latik
			valle	teka
T			**¡vamos a...!**	umal, mal
tabaco	uwa		**veinte**	wamasta
también	anaman		**venado**	awinki
tapesco	lem		**vender**	pik
tardar	telwak		**venir**	puk
tarro	pulranka		**ver**	ishik
taza	sin		**verdad**	mirin
te	am		**verde**	shika
templo	teipan		**vestirse**	korok
tener	muk		**volver**	purik
tierra	lum		**vosotros**	akinan
tigre	lepa		**vuestro**	aki
tirar	tashik			
todo, -s	mokta		**Y**	
tortilla	eye		**y**	a, man, li *(posp.)*
			yo	unan

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