

# LANGUAGE



# DATA

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## FROM PHONOLOGY TO DISCOURSE

EDITOR

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LANGUAGE DATA  
Amerindian Series No. 9

**From Phonology to Discourse:**  
Studies in Six Colombian Languages

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Editor

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# CONTENTS

FOREWORD	v
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## I PHONOLOGY

Coreguaje: Tone, Stress, and Intonation Frances L. Gralow	3
Epena Pedee: Nasalization Phillip L. Harms	13
Piapoco: The Phonological Word Deloris A. Klumpp	19
Páez: Pitch and Stress in the Phonological Word and Phrase Florence L. Gerdel	31
Guahibo: Long Vowels and Stress Riena W. Kondo	43
Guayabero: Phonology and Morphophonemics Jack Keels	57

## II MORPHOSYNTAX - DISCOURSE

Coreguaje: Domains of Focus Markers Dorothy Cook and Stephen Levinsohn	91
Piapoco: Continuity of Situation and Antitopic in Narrative Discourse James Klumpp, Deloris A. Klumpp, and Stephen Levinsohn	117

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## FOREWORD

The papers in this volume present phonological and morphosyntactic characteristics of six languages—Coreguaje, Epena Pedee, Páez, Piapoco, Guahibo, and Guayabero—from five language families of Colombia, South America.

The phonology articles (discussing phonological features of all six languages) treat special isolated problems, most of which had been resistant to analysis for many years. Francis Gralow's analysis of Coreguaje suprasegmentals as primarily an intricate interlocking of tone and intonation has climaxed a long period in which the field workers vacillated between establishing a stress versus a tonal system. Once the tone-intonation interaction was discovered, however, the analysis of stress also became clear. Phillip Harms, in order to explain the Epena Pedee data, posits basic and derived nasality. Basic nasalization spreads in certain prescribed contexts and ceases in others. Deloris Klumpp, in her Piapoco analysis, presents a level below the word termed *the foot*. One foot must bear all heavy or all lenis stresses, but this restriction does not hold at the level of the word. Florence Gerdel, in order to explain the occurrence of pitch-stress on a number of particles in Páez, found it necessary to postulate both a phonological word and a phonological phrase. Riena Kondo indicated that she was happy to be able, finally, to posit what she had long known to exist in Guahibo—long vowels. In fact, she has now established the existence of two types of long vowels: those which are basically long, and those which are generated. The Guayabero article by Jack Keels is the most extensive treatment of phonology: it centers on the analysis of vowel sequences (and related evidence for a six-vowel system, with complicated variation).

The postulation of a phonological hierarchy of several levels (separate from a grammatical hierarchy) was crucial in the analysis of the majority of these phonological problems. Earlier publications on tagmemic phonology were of considerable help to the field workers.

The two morphosyntax-discourse articles also deal with the resolution of specific problems by taking into account higher-level

conditioning factors. Cook and Levinsohn show that four focus-marking enclitics in Coreguaje can only be adequately explained when their domain is seen to extend beyond the sentence to other parts of the discourse. With reference to Piapoco, Klumpp, Klumpp, and Levinsohn discuss the interaction of word order variation, the use of demonstratives, and the presence or absence of a particular suffix. Their explanation of the phenomena is in terms of two recently proposed discourse-pragmatic notions: continuity of situation and antitopic.

Most of the work on the phonology articles was done in a field workshop of the Summer Institute of Linguistics in Lomalinda, Colombia, under my leadership. The grammar papers were written primarily in a workshop directed by Stephen Levinsohn at the same location. Stephen Walter assisted in various revisions subsequent to the workshops.

The papers were being written at a time of great anxiety. During the workshops our friend and colleague Chet Bitterman was abducted from the Institute's city headquarters and then murdered by his captors. This situation impressed upon us even more the shortness of time available to complete the analyses of the indigenous languages of Colombia and to help each group to have a literature of its own. Chet's desire to serve in this respect is also ours, and we present this volume in grateful remembrance of his dedication.

Ruth M. Brend  
January 1983