

# **PHONEMIC SYSTEMS OF COLOMBIAN LANGUAGES**

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**PHONEMIC SYSTEMS  
OF COLOMBIAN  
LANGUAGES**

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

The studies of this monograph are presented as tentative, as Dr. Waterhouse indicates in her introduction. Bibliography and discussion of related languages in the literature are, therefore, omitted. The studies were prepared in a field seminar held in Lomalinda, the base of the Summer Institute of Linguistics operation in Colombia, from February to April 1965 under Dr. Waterhouse's direction.

The papers are data oriented and all cast in the same format for easy comparison. It is hoped that the volume will be useful in shedding light on some of the little-known languages of South America.

## INTRODUCTION

This volume is composed of preliminary phonological statements of seven indigenous languages of Colombia, South America. The authors, with one exception, had resided less than a year in the areas where the languages are spoken, hence no claim is made that these papers represent the last word on these languages. Rather, an attempt is here made to present routine structural statements, in a more or less uniform format, of preliminary (but I am convinced solid) data from a group of hitherto little-known languages.

The first two languages described, Tucano and Guanano, are members of the Eastern Tucanoan family, spoken in the Vaupés area. Yucuna and Guajiro are classed as Arawakan, Muinane as Boran, Camsá as Mocoa, Guahibo as Guahibo-Pamigua. Muinane and Yucuna are spoken to the south of the Tucanoan area, Guahibo to the north. The other two are found in the western part of the country, Guajiro in the Guajiro peninsula to the north, Camsá in the Sibundoy valley in the south.

Of interest to area linguistics is the similar six-vowel system found in six of the seven languages, the complex consonantal system of Camsá, and the diversity of suprasegmental systems encountered.

The specific characteristics of each language are presented in a brief note before each paper.

Viola G. Waterhouse

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# 6

## CAMSA PHONOLOGY

Linda Howard

Camsá is here presented with examples written in the orthography designed for use in teaching the people to read their own language, as an example of the kinds of adjustments that can and often must be made to adapt a sound system to the written form of a trade or national language.

Special features of Camsá are the retroflex consonants, not found in the other languages of this volume; the large number of fricatives and affricates; the contrast of alveolar and palatal laterals; the free fluctuation of bilabial consonants, and of front vowels; the multiplicity and complexity of consonant clusters, all syllable initial; and the large number of Spanish loans freely incorporated into the grammatical system and their resultant influence on the phonology.

0. Introduction
1. Inventory of phonemes
2. Consonants
3. Vowels
4. Suprasegmental phonemes
5. Distribution

## 6. Special phonetic characteristics

## 7. Borrowed words

0. Introduction. This paper presents a description of the phonemes of Camsá and a statement of their distribution.<sup>1</sup> Camsá is spoken by approximately 2,500 Indians who live in the Sinbunday valley. This valley, entirely surrounded by mountains, has an altitude of 6,500 feet and is located three hours by road from Pasto, Nariño. The Indians are mostly bilingual and the large number of Spanish loan words commonly used by the people has exerted much influence on the language. For this reason the language is in a state of flux and some of the phonemes have a very limited distribution. This analysis takes into account both the native sounds and changes due to Spanish influence.

1. Inventory of phonemes. There are 28 segmental phonemes in Camsá: 22 consonants and 6 vowels. Consonant phonemes are classified as follows: voiced obstruents /b d g/, voiceless stops /p t c/, voiceless affricates /ts tx ch/, voiceless fricatives /f s x sh j/, nasals /m n ñ/, laterals /l ll/, vibrant /r/, and semivowels /w y/. These phonemes are charted as follows:

<sup>1</sup>This information is based on an 8 1/2 month study of Camsá: 5 1/2 months in an Indian home and an additional 3 months of concentrated study with Pedro Jacanamejoy, a thirteen-year-old boy. Much valuable help was gained from a paper written by Alberto Juajibioy Chindoy, "Breve estudio preliminar del grupo aborigen de Sibunday y su lengua Camsá en el sur de Colombia", Boletín del Instituto de Antropología, Medellín, August, 1962. I would also like to express my appreciation to Viola Waterhouse for her help and encouragement in writing this paper.

## Consonants

	Labial	Alveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar
Stop vl.	p	t			c
Obstruent vd.	b	d			g
Affric. vl. <sup>2</sup>		ts	tx	ch	
Fric. vl.	f	s	x	sh	j
Nasal vd.	m	n		ɲ	
Lateral vd.		l		ll	
Vibrant vd.		r			
Semivowels vd. <sup>3</sup>	w			y	

## Vowels

	Front	Central	Back
High	i	ë	u
Low	e	a	o

2. Consonants.

2.1. Consonant contrasts. The voiceless unaspirated stops contrast with the voiced unaspirated obstruents at the same points of articulation.

<sup>2</sup>Homorganic affricates are considered unit phonemes because this is allowed by the CV pattern of nonsuspect sounds and because their being considered as clusters would result in larger clusters than permitted by the nonsuspect pattern of the language: *joftsbetxana* 'to carry a child'. Phonetic sequences of nasal plus consonant at the same point of articulation and of consonant plus high voiced vowel are all considered to be two phonemes because this is allowed by the CV pattern.

<sup>3</sup>Suspect /w y/ are considered consonant when occurring syllable initial and vowel when occurring after a consonant according to the nonsuspect CV patterns.

[xanguwána] /janguwana/ 'to blow'	[buyfše] /buyishe/ 'water'
[xanguána] /janguana/ 'rotten'	[tetiše] /tetiexe/ 'papaya'

/p b/	oyepandayá 'one who does not pronounce words correctly', oyebabaná 'stutterer'
/t d/	mënté 'today', ndé 'reply to native greeting'
/c g/	bebincuá 'daughter-in-law', tanguá 'old man'

The voiceless unaspirated stop contrasts with the voiceless fricative at the same point of articulation.

/c j/	shacuana 'grass', shajuana 'beans'
-------	------------------------------------

The voiceless stop /t/ contrasts with the voiceless affricates.

/t ts/	botamaná 'pretty', botsamaná 'to sleep'
/t tx/	mënté 'today', mëntxena 'meat'
/t ch/	taná 'to sleep in another place', chaná 'yam'

The voiceless affricates contrast with the voiceless fricatives.

/s ts/	saná 'dinner', tsashá 'jungle fruit palm'
/x tx/	xocá 'sick', txombiache 'woven belt'
/sh ch/	shanyá 'one who guards', chanyá 'the other one'

The voiceless fricatives /s x sh/ contrast with each other.

/s x/	sësna 'cold', xëxona 'child'
/s sh/	saná 'dinner', shanyá 'one who guards'
/x sh/	xnená 'white woman', shnana 'medicine'

The voiceless affricates contrast with each other.

/ts tx/	tsashá 'jungle fruit palm', txabá 'good'
/ts ch/	tsoca 'inside', choca 'there'
/tx ch/	txabá 'good', chaná 'name'

The nasals<sup>4</sup> contrast with each other.

/m n/	jama 'in order to go', jana 'to go'
/n ñ/	ninacuro 'firefly', niñá 'firewood'
/m ñ/	shema 'woman', niñá 'firewood'

The laterals contrast with each other.

/l ll/	jaliana 'to read', mallajta 'many'
--------	------------------------------------

The palatal semivowel /y/ contrasts with the alveopalatal nasal /ɲ/ and lateral /ll/.

/ɲ y/	niñá 'firewood', miyá 'sweet potato'
/ll y/	miyá 'sweet potato', mullejona 'marble'

The bilabial /b/ contrasts with the semivowel /w/.

/b w/	batá 'aunt', wata 'year'
-------	--------------------------

The alveolar lateral and the vibrant contrast with each other and also with the alveolar nasal.

/n l/	jana 'to go', rala 'money'
/n r/	jana 'to go', chora 'later'
/r l/	rala 'money', chora 'later'

2.2. Consonant variants. The voiced obstruents have fricative and stop allophones. The bilabial stop and fricative allophones freely fluctuate in all environments. The fricative allophone is the most common; the stop tends to occur after another consonant or in absolute word initial, but even in these environments, it may vary with the fricative.

<sup>4</sup>Alberto Juajibioy Chindoy includes a syllabic  $\eta$  in his paper, which I have analyzed as / $\text{ʃn}$ /. Thus his  $\text{m}\eta\text{tjaja}$  'leg' and  $\text{ng}\eta\text{ntsiana}$  'hummingbird' are written  $\text{m}\eta\text{ntjaja}$  and  $\text{ng}\eta\text{ntsiana}$  according to my analysis.

Examples are: *tbëtēja* 'root', *bembe* 'daughter', *bebmä* 'mother', *baco* 'uncle', *mabo* 'come'.

The voiced alveolar and velar stops [d g] occur after nasal.<sup>5</sup> The voiced fricative allophones occur only in loan words, but since these have been so assimilated into the language, they are included in the analysis. Examples of nasal plus stop word initially and medially are: *ndayá* 'what', *ngona* 'smoke', *intsendbemana* 'it is broken', *buan-ganá* 'red'. Examples of voiced fricatives [d̥] and [g̥] in loan words are: *jadibujana* 'to draw', *jagastana* 'to spend'.

The voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ is voiced when it occurs contiguous to /d/. Elsewhere it is voiceless. Examples are: [zdísá] /sdēsá/ 'I am eating'; [ndzantsána] /ndsantsana/ 'flea'.

The alveolar /n/ has a velar allophone [ŋ] before velars. Examples are: *yengó* 'aracacha plant', *bebinco* 'son-in-law', and *chanjá* 'I will go'.

The vibrant /r/ is pronounced as a retroflexed voiced alveolar fricative word initially. Elsewhere it is pronounced as a flap like the Spanish r. Examples are: [zala] /rala/ 'money', /chora/ 'later'.

The semivowel /y/ has a voiced alveolar affricate allophone [dʒ] after [n]. Elsewhere it retains its palatal semivowel quality. Examples are: *nyetscanga* 'everyone', *bominyi* 'eye', *yifse* 'tomorrow' and *cuaye* 'come'.

2.3. Consonant fluctuation. The bilabial phonemes /p b f/ present a difficult problem of analysis due to the amount of fluctuation, and the fact that a statement of complementary

<sup>5</sup>It is possible that at an earlier stage *Camsá* had *nd* and *ng* as unit phonemes. Even now, some speakers tend to write *nd* and *ng* as *d* and *g*. The introduction and frequent use of Spanish loans with [d̥] and [g̥] in contrast to [nd] and [ng], however, make the analysis of [d̥] and [d] as allophones of /d/ and [g̥] and [g] as allophones of /g/ more feasible at this stage of the language.

distribution can be made for /f/ and either /p/ or /b/, if loan words are not taken into account.

There is no good contrast between voiceless unaspirated stop /p/ and voiceless fricative /f/ in native words. They are considered separate phonemes because /p/ contrasts with /f/ in loan words and because the people react to them as separate phonemes in native words although /f/ occurs only as first member of a cluster and /p/ occurs in a cluster only in one word: *limpe* 'everything'. The phonemic pattern of sounds seems to indicate that the voiceless bilabial stop and fricative may be just beginning to show phonemic differentiation and the number of loan words in which they occur contrastively makes it necessary to consider them separate phonemes: *plasoca* 'in the plaza', *flacojema* 'thin'.

There is no clear contrast between /f/ and /b/. In clusters /f/ occurs as first member of a cluster before a voiceless phoneme. /b/ occurs as both first and second member of a cluster, but as first member it occurs only before voiced consonants. However, native preference seems to be to consider /b f/ separate phonemes because of their contrast in loan words: *flacojema* 'thin' and *blandëxtxá* 'banana', *famillanga* 'family' and *banga* 'many'.

The phoneme /f/ presents the most difficult problem of analysis. Because of its limited distribution in native words it could be considered an allophone of either /p/ or /b/.<sup>6</sup> However, because of native reaction and its use in loan words, I have chosen to make it a separate phoneme. In loan words it may be pronounced as a labiodental [f] or bilabial fricative [p̪]: *florxá* 'flower', *frescuana* 'fresh'. When it

<sup>6</sup>An alternative analysis is to consider /f/ as an allophone of /p/: [p̪] occurs in clusters and [p] occurs elsewhere. Or it could be considered an allophone of /b/: [p̪] occurs before voiceless phoneme and [b] occurs next to voiced phoneme. Since [p̪] and [b] occur in contrast before vowels, they cannot be combined.

occurs initial in a cluster it may fluctuate with the stop [p]: pshajantsá-fshajantsá 'white', pshendëshe-fshendëshe 'yucca'. When it occurs word medially it may be replaced by the voiced bilabial fricative [b] in fast speech; in slow speech it is pronounced as a voiceless bilabial fricative [p̥]: [chab̥táca-chaptáca] 'with him', [lesconú̥b̥ta-esconú̥pta] 'nine'.

### 3. Vowels.

3.1. Vowel contrasts. The 6 vowels contrast with each other.

/i e/	waciñá 'son', wabensá 'little sister'
/i ë/	jinyana 'to see', jënyá 'sun'
/e a/	ndé 'reply to native greeting', ndá 'who'
/a o/	obaná 'dead', oboná 'fat'
/o u/	boyá 'man', buyishe 'water'
/u e/	cuscungo 'owl', bayajënga 'animals'

3.2. Vowel variants. The front vowels /i e/ are separate phonemes but also may fluctuate in some morphemes as in buyishe-buyeshe 'water', jetiñe-jitiñe 'afternoon'. The back vowels /u o/ may also fluctuate as in beuna-beona 'fish', ochanëshá-uchanëshá 'crown'. The low front vowel /e/ varies in phonetic quality from [ɪ e ε]; the norm is [ε].

### 4. Suprasegmental phonemes.

4.1. Stress. Every word contains one phonemic strong stress which may occur on either the penultimate or the final syllable: canyá 'alone', cánye 'one', batá 'aunt', wáta 'year', bebínco 'son-in-law', bebincuá 'daughter-in-law'. Since it most often occurs on the penultimate syllable, it is written only when it occurs on the final syllable.



## 5. Distribution.

5.1. Syllable patterns. A syllable consists of a nucleus filled by a vowel or vowel cluster plus an optional onset of one to three consonants. However, no syllable contains more than four phonemes, so \*CCCVV does not occur. The syllable pattern V occurs only word initial and medial; VV occurs only word initial. The other patterns may occur in any position. A phonological word consists of one or more syllables. (Hyphen indicates syllable division.)

	Initial	Medial	Final
V <sub>1</sub>	a-oa 'you'	be-u-na 'fish'	--
V <sub>2</sub> V <sub>3</sub>	al-na-na 'heart'	--	--
C <sub>1</sub> V <sub>4</sub>	be-tá 'aunt'	be-co-ñe 'near'	bo-yá 'man'
C <sub>2</sub> V <sub>2</sub> V <sub>3</sub>	bla-co 'basket'	bua-cua-txa 'forearm'	ja-tra-bi-alá 'to play'
C <sub>2</sub> C <sub>3</sub> V <sub>4</sub>	sté-txa-ja 'back'	bi-chta-ja 'tongue'	be-taco 'feet'
C <sub>2</sub> C <sub>3</sub> V <sub>2</sub> V <sub>3</sub>	shbua-chá 'middle-aged'	ja-cjua-na-na 'bewitch'	be-bi-nouá 'daughter-in-law'
C <sub>4</sub> C <sub>5</sub> C <sub>6</sub> V <sub>4</sub>	stjo-ca 'below'	cie-stri-nyi 'carnival'	ngo-fxná 'green'

5.2. Single consonants. C<sub>1</sub> is the consonant slot of CV and CVV syllables. It is filled by all single consonants. However, /ñ ll/ never occur word initially.

5.3. Consonant clusters of two. Consonant clusters are very common in Camsá. The most frequent type of cluster consists of two voiceless consonants differing as to point of articulation. A nonphonemic transitional vocoid [ə] occurs between stop plus stop or consonant plus nasal at a different point of articulation. Examples are: [t<sup>ə</sup>ka-ní-ñe] /tcanéñe/ 'broken', [wa-k<sup>ə</sup>ná] /wacná/ 'cow', [xa-m<sup>ə</sup>ná-na] /jamnana/ 'to loan'. Initial fricatives are lengthened and have optional off-glide before nonfricative consonants at a different point of articulation: [f<sup>u</sup>tse-ŋgá] /ftsengá/ 'black', [wa-f<sup>u</sup>té-na] /waftena/ 'rain', [xua-sh<sup>ə</sup>có-na] /juashcona/ 'moon', [x·tá-na] /jtana/ 'blind'. If the following consonant is voiced the lengthening of the fricative becomes slightly voiced as in [s<sup>ə</sup>ba-rú-ko] /sbaruco/ 'basket'.

The consonants may be divided into six classes: stops (S), affricates (A), fricatives (F), nasals (N), liquids (L), and semivowels (Sv). The possible combinations in clusters may be charted as follows:

	S	A	F	N	L	Sv
S	X	X	X	X	X	
A	X		X	X		
F	X	X	X	X	X	
N	X	X	X	X		X

The limited distribution of the liquids /l ll r/ and the semivowels /w y/ is discussed below. All combinations of the first four classes are possible word initially except NN, AA. Word medially all combinations are possible except AA. C<sub>2</sub> is the first consonant slot of CCV and CCVV syllables. It is filled by all consonants except /p d g l ll ñ w y/. The second consonant slot is C<sub>3</sub>. This is filled by all consonants except /f ll w y/.

Stops. /p/ very seldom occurs in a cluster. There is only one example of an apparently native word in which /p/ occurs in a cluster: *limpe* 'everything'. /t/ occurs before /c b j m/ both initially and medially and before /r/ word medially. /c/ occurs before /b s ts l/ initially and before /b j ts n r l/ word medially. /b/ does not occur as first member of a cluster word initially. Medially it occurs only before nasals in native words. It may occur before liquids both initially and medially in loan words. It occurs before /l/ in *blandëtchá* 'banana' which also seems to be a loan word. As second member it occurs both initially and medially. /d g/ never occur as first member of a cluster. They occur only as second member of a cluster after /n/.

Affricates. /ts/ occurs before /j b m/ initially and /j b c n/ medially. /ch/ occurs before /n/ initially and

/c t b j n sh m/ medially. /ts/ does not occur in a cluster word initially. Medially it occurs before /c t n b/.

Fricatives. /f/ occurs before /c sh x ts tx ch j/ word initially and /t c sh s ts j/ medially. /s/ occurs before /t b ch/ initially and /c t n/ medially. /j/ occurs before /t ts/ initially and /t b n s/ medially.

Nasals. /m/ does not occur as first member of a cluster word initially. Medially it precedes /b n ñ/. /n/ occurs before /d g ts tx y/ initially and /b d g t c ts tx y ch/ medially. /ñ/ does not occur initially in a cluster. It occurs only after /m/ word medially.

Liquids. /l r/ occur after stops in Spanish loans. In native words /l/ occurs initially after /sh/ and medially after /s/. /r/ occurs only word medially after /t c/ and before /m/.

Semivowels. /w/ does not occur in a cluster. /y/ occurs after /n/ initially and medially.

The following chart depicts the types of two-consonant cluster combinations possible.

	VI-VI	VI-Vd	Vd-VI	Vd-Vd
BB	teanēne 'broken' jatoans 'to break'	tbētēja 'root' intaatbemana 'he is sitting'	---	---
SA	otsomañe 'he is sleeping' toctsoñe 'he went'	---	---	---
SF	tjañe 'mountain' montjeñe 'look'	---	---	---
SN	---	tmojá 'drinker' jobstmans 'to wait'	---	---
SL	---	clestrinyl 'carnival' jaciastriyana 'to dance'	---	ebñecañe 'broken' blandōtxá 'banana'

	VI-VI		VI-Vd
AS	--- betsco 'fast'		tsbuañache 'leaf' juatsboca 'up'
AF	tsjaaha 'nose' juatejinyana 'to study'		---
AN	---		tsmans 'below' jotanshá 'bed'
FS	jtatamyana 'to close' ohiaiejta 'all day'		shbuschá 'middle-aged' jeshbuana 'to hunt'
FA	ftsangá 'black' jofcheucucayana 'to get wet'		---
FF	fshendésha 'yucca' coxufja 'needle'		---
FN	---		xnená 'white woman' sjoeneyana 'to cough'
FL	---		ehloftxe 'bird' selepaye 'thank you'
	Vd-VI		Vd-Vd
NS	ménté 'today' ---		ndayá 'what' bambeshe 'tree trunk'
NA	ntsamiaahe 'knee' bacantxe 'ugly'		nyeté 'yesterday' jinyana 'to see'
NN	---		---
			biannayá 'weaver'
LN	---		---
			intsarmendá 'to sew by hand'
LS	---		---
			escardonatxe 'bug'

5.4. Consonant clusters of three. Clusters of three consonants are not as common in the language as clusters of two.  $C_4$  is the first consonant slot of CCCV syllables. It is filled by /b t s sh n/. The second consonant slot is  $C_5$ . This is filled by /d t c ch ts j sh x m y/. The third consonant slot is  $C_6$ . This is filled by /b c j m n r/. Examples word initially are: stjoca 'below', shcnena 'wooden plate', schbomá 'lazy', tcménjibobinyana 'wake up', ndmoca 'where'. Examples word medially are: jaclestrinyana 'to dance', joftsbetxana 'to carry a child', jissshconana 'to return', indoafxná 'blind', insendbemana 'it is broken', montjeshe 'look', indmäna 'it is', waménxnayá 'I am tired', intsenshniñana 'it is hot'. In general, one can say that in clusters of

three consonants, the first consonant is most often a nasal, the second consonant is most often a stop, and the third member is most often a nasal; but other combinations may occur.

5.5. Single vowels. There are six vowels which are distributed in syllables as follows.  $V_1$  consists of all vowels except /*ë*/ and fills the V slot of V syllables.  $V_2$  consists of /*a i o u*/ and fills the first slot of VV, CVV, and CCVV syllables.  $V_3$  consists of /*a e i o*/ and fills the second slot of VV, CVV, and CCVV syllables. However, /*ë u*/ never occur word final in any syllable type.  $V_4$  consists of all vowels and fills the V slot of CV, CCV, and CCV syllables.

5.6. Vowel clusters. A vowel cluster consists of a strong vowel and a weak vowel. Strong vowels are /*a e o*/. Weak vowels are /*i*/ in any position, and /*u*/ when it occurs as first member of a vowel sequence. Two strong vowels cannot stand together in one syllable. A strong and a weak vowel or two weak vowels together form a diphthong and usually constitute one syllable. If the weak vowel is stressed, the vowels constitute two distinct syllables. Examples of diphthongs are:

[ai] /ai-ná/ 'living'	[ia] /bia-co/ 'basket'
[oi] /sto-noi-ca/ 'back'	[io] /ndio-xo-ftá/ 'good-bye'
[ui] /ngui-chi/ 'mud'	[ie] /tetiexe/ 'papaya'
[ua] /buajtana/ 'good afternoon'	
[ue] /juenanana/ 'to sound'	

Examples of vowel sequences which are not diphthongs are:

[ai] /aíñe/ 'yes'
[eu] /beuna/ 'fish'
[ao] /jaocupana/ 'to occupy'

[au] /jausana/ 'to use'

[oa] /indoafxná/ 'blind'

## 6. Special phonetic characteristics.

6.1. Pitch. Pitch appears to be determined by the placement of stress. It may be noted that in general when the final syllable is stressed, all syllables tend to carry the same pitch. When the penultimate syllable is stressed, the final syllable is generally lower in pitch than the stressed syllable. The stressed penultimate syllable may be of the same pitch as the prestressed syllables or somewhat higher. In words of more than three syllables, the initial syllable seems to have a higher tone than the syllables immediately preceding the penultimate stressed syllable. Although this appears to be the general pitch pattern, specific patterns have not been fully analyzed.

6.2. Length. The vowel of the stressed syllable is lengthened slightly. Length is also used to show emphasis, in which case the stressed syllable is lengthened more than usual.

6.3. Other. Words which are stressed on the penultimate syllable may unvoice the final vowel or the vowel may be lost entirely. This may occur in isolation; it generally occurs in a clause. Examples are: [buaxtána ~ buaxtánA ~ buaxtán] /buajtana/ 'good afternoon', [ntxamO tcmojá bobinyan] 'How did you wake up?', [buetA wata cojtsebomna] 'How old are you?'

Words beginning with /b/ may be introduced by a non-phonemic [i]. Words beginning with /i/ may be introduced by nonphonemic [y]. Examples are: [ʷbuechitsanʷko] /buechitsanëco/ 'hat', [ʷbatá] /batá/ 'aunt', [yñe-iñe] /iñe/ 'fire', [yinsémna-insémna] /insemna/ 'is'.

Words are pronounced rapidly with vowels practically

eliminated word medially. A degree of emphasis is placed on the vowel of the first syllable with the following syllables squeezed together before the stressed syllable. A lower tone is usually found on the rapid syllables.

7. Borrowed words. There are a large number of Spanish loan words in the language. Nouns and adjectives which are borrowed usually take the Camsá ending for that particular class: redondëne (redondo) 'round', cuchillëshe (cuchillo) 'knife', sapatëshe (zapato) 'shoe', avionëshá (avion) 'airplane', naranjabé (naranja) 'orange', silensiñe (silencia) 'silence'.

Verbs in most cases add ja- or jo- before the Spanish verb stem. Spanish -ar verbs take the suffix -ana and -er and -ir verbs take -iana. Examples are: jademandana (demandar) 'to demand', joquedana (quedar) 'to stay', jadescubriana (descubrir) 'to discover', jaserbiana (servir) 'to serve', jatendiana (atender) 'to attend'.

If the stressed syllable is too far forward for Camsá the Spanish is changed by moving the stress back to the penultimate syllable. Examples are: numéro (número) 'number', muséca (música) 'music', lastéma (lástima) 'pity', puestíñe (puesto) 'place', plasóca (plaza) 'in the plaza'.

In some cases phonemes are changed to accommodate the native language. For example the voiceless bilabial fricative does not occur in Camsá as a single consonant. Therefore facil becomes 'paselo'. The vowel is added because words do not end in a consonant.

In a few native words a voiced velar fricative may occur nonphonemically as a transition between vowels as in beunabeguna 'fish'. Sometimes it is carried over into Spanish in words such as legon (leon) 'lion', bugo (buho) 'owl'.