CHAPTER THREE
PHONOLOGY AND PHONETICS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives synchronic analyses of the phonology and phonetics of Zaiwa. Table 3.1 illustrates the canonical form of the Zaiwa syllable and gives an overview of all Zaiwa phonemes. The next chapter will separately discuss a multitude of morpho-phonological processes.

3.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF ZAIWA PHONOLOGY

• Initials
There are four initial categories, viz. bilabial, dental, alveolar and velar. One of the characteristics of the initials of the dental category is that the use of the post-consonantal glide /y/ is restricted, as further discussed in Section 3.4. The alveolar initials /z, c, s/, which are normally realised [ts, tsʰ, s] respectively, have palatal allophones [çç, ççʰ, ʃ] when followed by either /i/ or the post-consonantal glide /y/, cf. /zo¹¹/ [tso¹¹] 'eat' vs. /zi²¹/ [ççi¹¹] 'ride', and /zan³⁵/ [tseŋ³⁵] 'healthy' vs. /zyan³⁵/ [ççen³⁵] 'wife (of)'. Until the present study, these allophones were interpreted as representing a separate initial category, cf. Burling (1967: 16), Yabu (1982: 7) and Xu & Xu (1984: 6-7).

There are two general observations to be made here, which are indicated by the canonical form of the Zaiwa syllable in Table 3.1. The first, which may seem to be quite obvious, is that only syllables containing an initial can have a post-consonantal glide. The other observation is that creaky voice can occur with every initial except the aspirated or voiceless fricative initials /p, t, c, k, f, s, h/ and the approximant /sh/.

Table 3.1 The Zaiwa syllable canonical form and all Zaiwa phonemes:
\[
\begin{array}{c}
( C ( G_1 ) )
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{V}
\end{array}
\]

\[
( G_2 / N / K )
\]

( ) indicates optionality.

( C ) is an optional initial.

/ʃ/, /ʃh/ and /r/ are loan phonemes.

Consonants which do not co-occur with creaky voice phonation type:

- Occlusives: p t c k
- Fricatives: f
- Approximants: sh

Consonants which can:

- Occlusives: b d z g
- Nasals: m n ng
- Fricative: h
- Approximants: w l (r) y

( P ) is the optional creaky voice phonation type which is analysed as a feature of the initial. Creaky syllables are marked by a letter v after the initial.

( G_1 ) A subset of the phonemes which also occur initially, viz. /y, r/, are used as optional post-consonantal glides, whereby /r/ is a loan phoneme.

\[
y \quad (r)
\]