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The Trilingual Ideal in Quintana Roo, Mexico:
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By

Aurora Feeney-Kleinfeldt

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

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in the

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of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Charles Briggs, Co-Chair
Professor William Hanks, Co-Chair
Professor Daniel Fisher
Professor Patricia Baquedano-López

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Abstract

The Trilingual Ideal in Quintana Roo, Mexico:
The Metapragmatics and Embodiments of Yucatec Maya, Spanish, and English

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Doctor of Philosophy in Anthropology

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In Quintana Roo, Mexico, discourses of cultural loss, linguistic revitalization, and economic opportunity exist within the context of the neoliberal tourism industry, an economic force which necessitates specific engagements with national and transnational systems of capital and governance. This region, the 'Zona Maya', is also powerfully shaped by historical narratives and acts of resistance and negotiation with colonial, assimilating forces. I argue that within this complex contemporary social world, trilingualism in Yucatec Maya, Spanish, and English has emerged as an educational and social ideal, which speaks to the political economic and social situation at hand through an embodiment of three distinct voices. Differently mediatized communicative practices, in particular the use of social media, among young people who come from communities of Maya speakers (though they may not consider themselves to be 'speakers' per se) serve to produce new political-linguistic subjectivities, intersubjectivities, and collectivities. I demonstrate that these social formations embody the seemingly distinct, if not contrary, projects of Maya language revitalization and English language promotion and teaching. Meanwhile, communicative privilege emerges as an effect of efforts to standardize and evaluate each language; this privilege marginalizes people who use language in a non-standard way, and such usages can also be targeted as illegitimate by Maya or English language education. Finally, I argue that those who embody the trilingual ideal use the voices and mediatized modalities at hand to contest neoliberal educational and political-economic paradigms and fight for new forms of emplaced and cosmopolitan belonging and participation.

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Acknowledgements

Introduction

This project is a response to a range of themes that have preoccupied me for the past decade, brought into focus for me through personal and academic experiences: questions of language shift and loss, and associated political movements and positionings; debates about postcolonial and Indigenous belonging, identity, and the possibilities of decolonization; and, theoretical perspectives on subjectivity, sociality, and communication, particularly within anthropology and phenomenologically oriented scholarship. My work is fundamentally motivated by a curiosity about what difference it makes to be speaking one language or another, how one experiences the expressive possibilities of a particular form of communication, and in what ways those differences and possibilities are consequential—socially, politically, and otherwise.

In other words, somewhere along my experiences—as a seven year old monolingual English speaker at an Italian elementary school where everyone spoke Italian and no one spoke English; as an 8, 9, 10 year old bilingual English and Italian speaker back in rural Massachusetts where speaking Italian was only a reminder of my difference from my peers; at 16 years old, as an exchange student in Naples, relearning the language that I had lost because I refused to use it; during my undergraduate years (which spanned McGill University, the University of Massachusetts, and the University of New Mexico), practicing the French I learned in high school, studying Turkish, and then Navajo; to these last seven and a half years of my graduate school life, gaining fluency in Spanish and spending many hours toiling over Yucatec Maya—I gained an unshakeable interest in what it means experientially to speak a language. This interest became fused to political concerns with the cycles of violence engendered by colonization in the Americas, an awareness of which began when my third-grade teacher in Orange, Massachusetts, decided to focus on the details of Native pre-colonial life in our same region in a way that was not prescribed, or particularly encouraged, by state educational policy.

My experiences in Quintana Roo, Mexico during my preliminary fieldwork in the summers of 2011 and 2012, and then during my 17 months of fieldwork from August 2015 to December 2016, brought my attention to silence, sociality, time, the sounds and feel of the Yucatec Maya language (widely known as, and henceforth, "Maya"), to Tulum and tourism, and hotels and restaurants. Thinking about that time in Quintana Roo brings me to friendships and conversations, interactions on social media, universities, classes, writing fieldnotes, getting sick, being frustrated, resting, and always wondering where my work would end up.

As is often the case, the focus of my doctoral research shifted and transformed, ending up in what I present here: what I hope is a nuanced, grounded portrayal of the sociolinguistic phenomenon of trilingualism in Quintana Roo—a situation which is at once fleeting, politically indicative, economically consequential, and socially constitutive. With my work here, I hope to reflect back what I have learned from my time "in the field," with the many people whose perspectives interest me and inspire me. I hope to move towards responsible scholarship, and especially towards the possibility of accountable forms of teaching and writing. This dissertation is a version of what my intuition and lines of thought have brought me to, reflections with intersubjective bases that are hidden in the embodied moments of the past.

My field site was partly chosen for me by the contingencies of graduate school, as I did not have a personal connection to Mexico or the Yucatán before starting my project. As a linguistic anthropologist, my interest in Indigenous language revitalization efforts led me to the University of California, Berkeley, and to begin studying Maya and the historical and ethnographic subtleties of the Yucatán peninsula with William Hanks. During preliminary fieldwork in the Yucatán

peninsula, I ended up in a town called XYatil, in the state of Quintana Roo, where I intended to immerse myself in a Maya speaking social world. During my first two trips I learned some amount of Maya, and I learned (Yucatecan) Spanish, and I began to relate what I had learned about the region, its language and culture, to what I saw in the lives of the people who brought me into their homes and lives.

Through this process I shifted my focus away from a concentrated consideration of language shift from Maya to Spanish and associated efforts to promote and revive Maya, which have been studied extensively, including by self-identified Maya scholars—though not using the precise tools I do here (Armstrong-Fumero 2013, Arzápalo Marín 2004, Cru 2014, Chi Canul 2011, Novelo Montejo 2015, Pfeiler & Zámišová 2006, Salinas 2018). My interest turned to the relationship Maya has to Spanish, and English as well, really the relationship between the three, given the importance of the tourism industry in the region (even in the pueblos that are considered to be still properly "Maya") and the social realities of young people who are ever more aware of transnational social practices and phenomena. Within this sociolinguistic landscape, English is increasingly an important point of connection and access to broader scales and other places, in addition to Mexican Spanish.

Histories of conflict and transformation

The robust contemporary presence of the Maya language and the distinctive social practices of the *pueblos*, meaning for my purposes meaning towns or communities, in Quintana Roo are phenomena that have deep historical roots. While this dissertation is not historical in nature, nor does it focus on "Maya culture" per se, it is important to overview the historical context of the region. The history of the Yucatán peninsula[1] and Quintana Roo can be roughly divided and chronologized using the periods of: colonization and missionization (16th- early 19th centuries); the Caste War of 1847-1901/1933, depending on how one defines the end of a war; and the process of the Mexican state's incursion in Quintana Roo through institutional and economic programs, schools, and other forms of governance and state control (starting in the early 1900s and continuing today). The period of intense tourism development, starting in the 1970s and still going strong, is distinct from what had already been underway in the 20th century as it is characterized by the increasing presence and power of transnational capital, but can also be situated as part of the same broad historical period.

The period of missionization was formulated as a project of *reducción*[2] (from the verb reducir which in 16th century Spanish meant 'convince, persuade'), which William Hanks describes as to the multidimensional process of religious conversion and social restructuring carried out by Franciscan missionaries, which involved the spatial and symbolic reorganization of communities and people, reshaping the embodied conduct of individuals and, transforming the Maya language, both in and out of explicitly religious contexts (2010). An important aspect of this early period is that there were only a handful of Spanish missionaries present throughout the pueblo, compared to the geographical area and number of people being subjugated, making the continued use of Maya practical. Thus, though the form of Maya that was used by colonizing missionaries was Christianized, with a Catholic ontology embedded in the translations, grammars,

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[1] Henceforth, "the peninsula" refers to the Yucatan peninsula and "Yucatán" refers to the Mexican state of Yucatán.

[2] In 1544, the first Franciscan missionaries arrived in the Mayab; 1547 is usually considered the endpoint of the period of military subjugated and the starting point of the project of reducción.

and teachings im Maya, these circumstances of the early period is generally accepted as a historical precedent for the contemporary vitality of the language (ibid.).

After centuries of increasing Spanish domination, a rebellion broke out in 1847 in Merida, the colonial center and current capital of Yucatán. Though there are conflicting interpretations of who started the fighting and whose interests were served by it, the war was clearly a reflection of the dire socio-political-economic situation of the time, structures of extreme exploitation and conditions of servitude that ran along racialized lines (Reed 2001). Rebels were mostly Maya speakers and the enemy were "the whites." Three years into the conflict, with the rebels in a weak state after initial victories, a miraculous event in the heart of rebel territory gave them new impetus, with a talking cross which declared that *"ya ha llegado el día y el año de que se levanten mis indios nacidos, contra los blancos de nuevo"* (Villa Rojas 1978). A newly energized religious-political movement, the so-called Cult of the Talking Cross (it's followers known in Maya as the *Cruzo'ob*, the "crosses") emerged as a force that would continue the fight against the Yucatecan elites for decades, achieving a degree of political sovereignty in the area of the peninsula that they occupied, and remaining mostly outside of state control until the beginning of the 20th century (Sullivan 1989).

From a broader perspective, though the rebellion ultimately failed it was also strikingly successful for many years, as the Cruzo'ob formed autonomous communities with ceremonial centers and distinct social practices, and had what amounted to international relations with Britain by way of Belize, as well as with México (i.e. the Federal District). This fascinating history demonstrates on the part of the Cruzo'ob resilience, creativity, and a determined skill at negotiation with the enemy. The war turned the frontier zone, the area that had been outside of Mexican control, into the territory of Quintana Roo in 1902, which after being reincorporated in Yucatán in 1915, eventually became the youngest state in the Mexican Republic in 1974. A region within the state of Quintana Roo—corresponding to this geography of rebellion and negotiation—was given the name *la Zona Maya*, an obvious reference to that history. The history of the frontier feeds the imaginary of the *Zona Maya* as somehow mysterious and ungovernable, as rebel territory, always the last remaining bastion.

The concerted involvement of the federal government in the development of Quintana Roo began in the mid 1930s and involved the building of roads, medical clinics, and other infrastructure, and the introduction of state education, along with the spread of broader scale, capitalist commerce (Villa Rojas 1978). The region saw the establishment of ejidos, a form of community land ownership which was part of agrarian land reforms in Mexico after the Mexican Revolution (1910-1917) and a brief boom of the chicle industry in the 1920s and early 1930s, which was soon hindered by the rise of artificial gum. There has also been commercial logging of valuable wood during the 20th century in the jungles of Quintana Roo, which during the 1980s began to be replaced by community forest management—a relatively successful model that continues today (Ellis et al. 2015). However, the practice of small-scale agriculture, in particular making *milpas* (corn fields), in addition to raising livestock, remained the main economic activities for most families in the region up until the widespread effects of the newly established tourism industry. The culture of the *milpa* was very central and is still at the center of the social world for some people in the *pueblos* of Quintana Roo, especially those who observe Cruzo'ob Catholic ritual and ceremonial and celebratory practices (Re Cruz 2003).

Large scale tourism development in Cancún, a state-led project with the extensive investment of transnational capital, began in the 1970s and rapidly increased in scale into the 1980s and 90s, with the past 20 years seeing the spread of tourism to other parts of the peninsula, and

increasing urbanization of tourism centers. Once development started, Cancún became hugely influential in the peninsula's economy, and migration from *pueblos* to the coast for work started immediately (Castellanos 2010, Torres & Momsen 2005). Cancún has become a point of penetration of foreign people and capital at a scale previously unseen in the region or Mexico, and movement from rural areas of the peninsula towards the eastern coast to find work has had an extensive effect socially and economically on the pueblos of Quintana Roo (Brown 2013). Alicia Re Cruz has studied such effects, arguing that "the tourist culture of Cancún embeds rules of production and consumption radically different from those encapsulated in the milpa or cornfield ideology that Maya experience in their communities" and that this has caused social fragmentation in the pueblos, while she also sees an ongoing process of the "Mayanization" of Cancún landscape[3] (2003:489; see also Re Cruz 2006). I further discuss the repercussions of tourism development in Chapter 3.

Concurrent with the burgeoning with the tourism industry was the passage of NAFTA (The North American Free Trade Agreement) in 1994, which had a severely damaging effect in the peninsula—like other parts of Mexico—lowering the price of corn and making agricultural production hardly profitable, if at all. As elsewhere, a consequence of this and other economic factors has been migration north towards the United States in search of work; this has mostly been from Yucatán but affects Quintana Roo and Campeche as well. Though the peninsula has historically had less migration north than other parts of Mexico, significant communities of Maya speakers are present in the San Francisco area, Portland, parts of Texas, and parts of Florida (Baquedano-López 2019, Worley 2010). Movement towards the Quintana Roo coast and to the north as an economic necessity has created translocalities throughout the peninsula and parts of the United States, demonstrating the error in assuming that rural pueblos are isolated and in a sense, protected. The contemporary social realities of Quintana Roo can be related to these historical transformations—from *reducción*, to the *Cruzo'ob,* to Cancún and NAFTA. As such, the dynamics of missionization and the Caste War are consequential for the contemporary social-political landscape of the peninsula. It becomes particularly notable, and potentially contradictory, that Quintana Roo encompasses both the tourism mecca of the Riviera and the Zona Maya, where we find what are said to be the most Maya Maya pueblos, and the most Maya Maya speakers. While this history does not enter explicitly into the chapters that follow, it is part of the background of what makes up the Maya speaking world.

In terms of the linguistic landscape along the way, following from what I noted above regarding the widespread use of Maya during colonization, monolingualism in Maya was the norm in the *pueblos* of Quintana Roo until state education began introducing daily Spanish use, from the 1930s onwards. Traders, teachers, and institutional actors were also instrumental in propagating Spanish in Quintana Roo. Movement between the pueblos and the coast for work helped instill Maya-Spanish bilingualism, and brought a new presence for English, as well as a Maya-English affinity. I discuss these linguistic details further in Chapter 1.

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[3] Re Cruz argues that despite the negative effects of the commercializing and commoditizing ideology of Cancún, "the multifaceted tourist industry can actually serve as a vehicle by which Maya tradition can be re-created, transformed, and manipulated as a political and ideological weapon" (2003:500).

The Maya

The question of who the Maya are, when they started being Maya, and what it means to be Maya, has been a favorite point of debate among anthropologists and historians of the Yucatán peninsula since the first archaeological work in Chichen Itza and at other sites began in earnest in the first decades of the 20th century and the imaginary of Maya civilization emerged in all its complexity. Many scholars have entered into discussions of what makes up Maya identity, or Maya ethnicity, some discussing what they call the "ethnogenesis" of the Maya (Armstrong-Fumero 2011, Castañeda 2004, Castillo Cocom & Luviano 2012, Fallaw 2004, Hervik 2003, Hostettler 2004, Restall 1997, Restall & Gabbert 2017). The Caste War is thought to be a period when a unified sense of Maya identity emerged; further along, institutionalized discourses of multiculturalism popularized in the 1990s and 2000s have certainly had on effect on how Indigenous people in the peninsula frame themselves and identify themselves.

One point that has been made but deserves being made again is that a discussion of Mayaness holds no real meaning if it only takes place within the academy (Castillo Cocom 2004; Novelo Montejo, personal communication 2018). Juan Castillo Cocom[4], in his commentary "Lost in Mayaland," calls the idea of a shared Maya ethnic identity a "self-fulfilling prophecy" and a "myth." He asks the pertinent question: "if there is no Maya ethnic group, is there a reason to keep writing about them? After all, *Por qué vender cerillos en el infierno?*"[5] (2004:182). Castillo Cocom[6] calls the people referred to as Maya, "historically relentless in politically negotiating and renegotiating their identities in relation to those with whom they interacted" (ibid.). This vision fits well with the perspective on Quintana Roo that can be gleaned from the history of rebellion and resistance, while adding an important emphasis on negotiation. Castillo Cocom's perspective is echoed by other Maya-speaking scholars, and is important to take into account for academics in positions like mine.

The salient point here is that due to the above, this dissertation is not about "the Maya" per se, as a unified, essentialized group of people—whether in historical or contemporary terms. A particular perspective might refer to some or all of the people from Quintana Roo who I met and talked to as "Mayas," however I only use the term for people who self-identify as such, and even then use it sparingly. A discourse of Maya pride and cultural importance is emergent in Quintana Roo, and for some language activists, the project of saving Maya is as much about "los mayas" (the Maya people) as the language itself. Yet others are hesitant to use the category "Maya" – for themselves, or other people, unless in an ironic way (Dzidz, personal communication, 2018). I prefer to consider this work as being about people who are many things: multilingual, multidimensional, Maya or not, Indigenous and cosmopolitan, emplaced and transnational, at once.

"Mayera/mayero" is what many people who speak Maya call people who speak Maya (Castellanos 2010). As such, I see it as an appropriate identifying category to use for my interlocutors who are Maya speakers, as one that people in Quintana Roo currently use and that

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[4] Dr. Castillo Cocom is professor of anthropology at the Universidad Intercultural Maya de Quintana Roo (UIMQroo) and was an early contact of mine in Quintana Roo. He has helped me greatly throughout my fieldwork and writing processes with thoughtful comments, advice, and provocations.

[5] "After all, *Why sell matches in hell*?" (my translation).

[6] As is his custom, Castillo Cocom also brings himself into the discussion[6]; here he self-identifies as 'post-Maya' and describes the multiple, multilingual identities at hand, "spoken as they are in heteronomous languages," a "symphony and bricolage of the uncertainty of who I am" which give him a ground from which to "sometimes act and speak as a fully endowed agent and sometimes to speak and act as a multiply fragmented subject" (ibid.).

avoids some of the complications that other categories bring up. Of course, as I discuss below, the category of "Maya speaker" is itself highly contested, and in this sense it is also useful to think of such a group in a broad sense, as including anyone who either speaks any sort or amount of Maya and/or comes from a family who does. It is also important to note that my research has focused mainly on Catholic *mayerxs[7],* which was not intentional but more by nature of the family I was first introduced to when I arrived in Quintana Roo, and then by chance with the people I met throughout my fieldwork. This is true of many anthropological studies of the peninsula, so in this sense I am contributing to the erasure of Protestant Maya voices (see O'Connor 2012).

Places, spaces, and linguistic landscapes

Having provided a historical sketch of Quintana Roo and clarified my form of referring to its people, below I describe the landscape and places where I performed my fieldwork. First, it is pertinent to note that there are specific configurations of place and locality in Quintana Roo, which historian Mathew Restall speaks to when he argues that throughout the colonial period, "the Maya maintained a sense of identity and affiliation with the communities in which they continued to live" (1997:5). These communities, called in Restall's text *cahob*—plural of *'cah,'* which is used with a quite similar meaning in contemporary Maya with the current most common spelling being *'kaj'*, plural *'kajo'ob'*—were the focus of self-identity, pride, and loyalty[8].

The *kaj* is an enduring form of collectivity that was and in some ways still is an alternative to the structures imposed by the colonial regime—not an "ethnic" formulation, nor one as proper missionized Christian subjects, or (later on) as Mexican citizens or an aggregation of consumers. An indispensable and often-asked question (in Maya) in Quintana Roo is *"tu'ux a kajal?"* meaning "where is your *kaj?*". The Spanish word *pueblo* is not easily translatable to English, since it's meanings range from "town" to "community" to "people" (as in "the people"). *Kaj* is not easily translatable either, to Spanish or English, and as such represents an emplaced notion of belonging that encapsulates physical location, historical depth, and shared experience. Taking into account Restall's description from the colonial period, the picture that emerges of the dynamism yet durability of the *kaj* resonates with its role in contemporary social life in Quintana Roo.

The primary sites that I spent time in and will refer to in this dissertation are: Tulum, XYatil, Felipe Carrillo Puerto, Muyil and Chumpom, and the Intercultural Maya University of Quintana Roo (the *Universidad Intercultural Maya de Quintana Roo*, henceforth UIMQRoo), located in José Maria Morelos (see Figure 1). Other relevant sites include Playa del Carmen and Cancún; the Sian Ka'an biosphere reserve; Merida (the largest city in the peninsula with 780,000 people, though Cancun is not far behind); Chetumal, the capital of Quintana Roo located on the border with Belize, and the location of the University of Quintana Roo; and parts of the United States where there are *mayerx* communities (see Figure 2, which excludes the United States locations).

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[7] I use the convention of replacing the -a or -o that indicates feminine or masculine words in Spanish with -x so as to not have the word be gendered. Thus I use "mayerxs" to refer to the plural group of Maya speakers, instead of the more common plural "mayeros".

[8] When reacting to the project of *reducción* through spatial reorganization, Restall argues that the ability of the Maya to "maintain independent cah identities within multi-cah relationships, combined with the mobile nature of Maya settlement patterns, undermined the ultimate impact of relocation policies" (39).

Figure 1. (Right) Primary field sites.
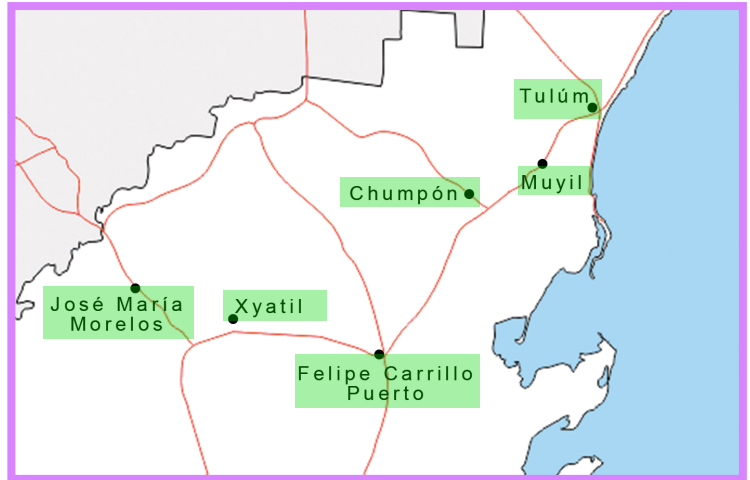
Figure 2. (Below) Yucatán peninsula.

- green box: Figure 1 area
- green dots: primary field sites
- pink area: the Riviera Maya
- blue area: the Zona Maya
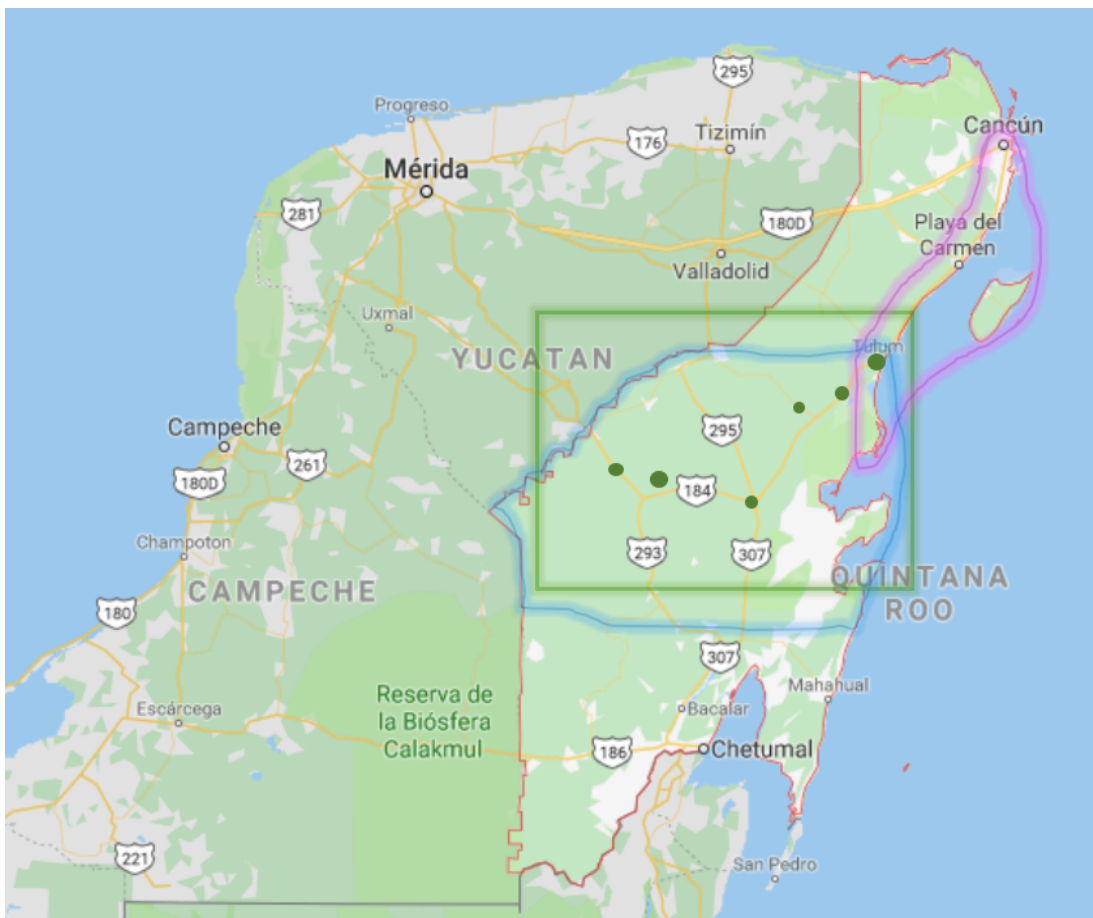
During the bulk of my fieldwork, I lived in Tulum, a town that is at the intersection of the state-deemed Zona Maya and the—also state-deemed—Riviera Maya. The latter refers to the area including Cancún moving south along the coast to Tulum, and was established officially in 1999 as part of the branding of the region (see Figure 3). Tulum[9] is significant in that it has elements representing multiple imaginaries: the ancient Maya, with the Tulum archaeological site; the Caste War era, as site of resistance and one of the five ceremonial centers which continue to hold importance for *mayerxs* around Quintana Roo; and contemporary tourism, with its ambiguous and exploitative role for communities around the state and peninsula, and the associated economic boom. Tulum is also an ostensible example of ecologically responsible tourism development, and an attraction for neo-hippies and American and European tourists looking for a more "alternative," "non-commercial"—and trendy—destination than Cancún or Playa del Carmen.

Tulum is divided between the *pueblo* and the *playa*, the former being the town center area—with tourist-oriented businesses as well as local-oriented ones, residences, schools, and the like—and the latter being the beach area, which is comprised of hotels, restaurants, boutiques, and a small number of private residences. Living in Tulum are *mayerxs* from small communities in Quintana Roo and the rest of the peninsula, people who grew up in urban and/or tourism centers in the peninsula, privileged Mexicans from cities like Guadalajara and Mexico City, and European (among other origins) migrants, or "expats"[10], who come to Tulum to visit but decide to stay. Italians and Argentinians are particularly prolific and constitute a substantial portion of tourism business ownership. Migrants from Chiapas have also flowed to the Riviera Maya area to work in construction and other underpaid jobs, as well as people from Veracruz and other more economically marginalized parts of Mexico who come to the Caribbean coast because jobs exist there. As such, Tulum is a linguistic microcosm where Spanish, English, Maya, Italian, and Tzotzil[11], among others, are present together, and sometimes isolated from one another.

Figure 3. (above) The first apartment building I lived in in Tulum, in September 2015.

Figure 4. (above) The same apartment building in January 2017.

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[9] Tulum has been visited by anthropologists since the 1980s when it first became known as a tourist destination, and before such anthropological invasions there were visits by archaeologists and explorers. It has been written about by a number of scholars and as such I am by no means producing a novel account in terms of my "field site."

[10] The term "expat" is politically weighted in that it is used for Americans, Europeans, and other privileged people who migrate and live abroad, whereas Mexicans and many others from the Global South are never termed "expats" when they travel and live in a foreign country, but rather are "immigrants".

[11] One of the primary Indigenous languages spoken in Chiapas.

Figure 5. (left) Construction in Tulum pueblo, January 2017

The image of Tulum as an environmentally friendly, quaint, alternative destination is quickly becoming less realistic, as investors flood to the area and new building projects multiply. Within the year and a half that I lived there, the average price for a one room studio apartment almost doubled. While many residents, especially of the "expat" variety, lament the growth of Tulum and the loss of its natural magic, almost everyone living there depends on the money of tourists—whether directly or indirectly. I heard many people, privileged Mexicans, Argentinians or Europeans, who worked as servers and bartenders at upscale hotels and restaurants complain about the sad direction things are moving in, speaking disdainfully of the developers who come to build condos and resorts and destroy the environment. Yet these same people also complained about how they didn't have enough clients and weren't earning enough tips, and lamented the low season when tourism lulls, as if the former and the latter sentiments were not deeply contradictory. Thus, I would characterize Tulum in particular by the tendency of those in privileged positions to profit from and exploit its ecological, aesthetic, and "spiritual" resources while simultaneously romanticizing and claiming to protect them.

Figure 6. The *colectivo* bus stop in Tulum – the only public transportation that goes from the *pueblo* to the beach, which runs every 20 mins or half an hour and is usually packed. Taken in August 2016; unless otherwise noted, all pictures were taken by the author.

Figure 7. Tulum public beach, September 2016.

Southwest inland from Tulum is Muyil, otherwise known as Chunyaxché, a tiny *kaj* (191 inhabitants in the 2010 census), which has a small archaeological site and is located on the edge of the Sian Ka'an Biosphere. Located in Muyil is the main office of a cooperative business which gives tours of the Sian Ka'an via boat, as well as tours on foot of the forest, the archaeological site, and "local culture." I spent a good deal of time at this office talking to the people who work for this cooperative, as I was giving them English classes in exchange for doing some interviews and generally spending time learning about and from them. The majority of this group come from Chumpom, which is slightly more isolated in that it is not located near a main roadway like Muyil and was until recently entirely based on a *milpa* economy. Chumpom is linguistically very Maya-dominant as is Muyil; in Muyil I heard young children speaking to each other in Maya, which was uncommon even in *pueblos* like XYatil which are considered the heart of the Zona Maya. The people from Chumpom and Muyil that I met consider Maya their first language and some described difficulty learning Spanish. In this sense they are not Maya-Spanish bilingual in the same way that someone who grew up with extensive exposure to both languages is. English is important in Muyil and for the members of the cooperative, and so in Chumpom is as well.

Continuing along the same road brings one to Felipe Carrillo Puerto, known colloquially as simply Carrillo, formerly known as Chan Santa Cruz (literally "little saint cross"), the capital of *Cruzo'ob* territory in the late 19th century. It was mainly abandoned by the *Cruzo'ob* and their descendants around 1930, when new ceremonial centers which were less central and had fewer outsiders (after the chicle boom and increase in commerce) took prominence. Carrillo is then deeply tied to the history of the Caste War, and is considered an important spiritual reference for *mayerxs* who practice *Cruzo'ob* Catholicism. At the same time, in many ways it is like a typical Mexican large town or small city, with chain stores and a central market, and no need to understand or speak an Indigenous language.

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Figure 8. The cooperative's altar for *janal pixan*, set up in the large airy *palapa* (palm-roofed structure) where tourists have their meal after their Sian Ka'an tour.

Figures 9 and 10. (above) Street art in Carrillo, October 2016.

It is easy to spend time in Carrillo (as I did often), and not encounter a discourse of Maya pride and resistance, though there are some activists and intellectuals who are now making that connection. In Carrillo many people speak Maya, but many do not; there is some movement in terms of cultural and linguistic revitalization, like Maya classes free to the public, a college which offers a program in intercultural education, and the like.

West from Carrillo one finds XYatil (pronounced roughly "shyatil" and also sometimes spelled X-Yatil or Xiatil), located ten minutes away from the main highway on a small paved road. XYatil can be considered an ethnographic base point of this dissertation in the sense that it is culturally conservative and in the heart of the Zona Maya, giving therefore a sense of "origin" to Maya and the social practices that surround it. Many people in XYatil are bilingual Maya-Spanish, with some of the older generation only speaking Maya and some of the youngest children only Spanish (see Chapter 1). Official statistics from 2010 (not entirely sure) say that 99% of the population is Indigenous, while 81% speak "an Indigenous language," this being Maya, and 2% speak an Indigenous language and but not Spanish.

Most of the residences in XYatil have electricity, and many have TVs, and antenna to receive at least a few different channels. Some families have refrigerators and washing machines, though these are seen by some as luxuries. Radio is also an important medium, like in one family's house that I stayed at frequently, where the radio was turned on every morning around 5:30am as people began to wake up and start the day. There is a popular radio station which broadcasts partly in Maya, as well as others which are only in Spanish. There is a locale where one can purchase internet time, either on a computer there or more commonly a little piece of paper with a temporary password to log onto a WIFI network. In the center of town is the *k'iiwik* (or *parque*, park), a public space where people spend time every evening—me included when I was there, which was about every other week for two days. This is a quiet activity which involves some chatting, observing one another, kids playing, some teenagers circling the parque on bikes or on foot, others using their phones.

Figure 11. (right) XYatil *k'iiwik*, this picture was posted on the "XYatil Quintana Roo Mx" Facebook page in April 2018. The bright colors are new since the last time I was in XYatil in December 2017.

In XYatil, as well as other *kajo'ob* in Quintana Roo, people mostly sleep in hammocks, and sometimes in beds during the cold months. Hammocks are handmade, often by family members or neighbors—a painstaking process that takes many hours but yields a colorful and exquisitely comfortable result. Getting used to sleeping in a hammock was a challenge for me at first, but well worth the effort. The hammock is an important and versatile element of daily life[12]: it can comfortably sleep one or two people, serves as a couch/chair for chatting in the afternoon, is a swing and a source of entertainment for children, is easily hung on one wall to free up space in the room, and it is completely portable and washable. Many people talk about missing their hammocks when they are away from home, and a fairly reliable metric of whether a person is from a rural part of the peninsula is if they prefer to sleep in a hammock over a bed. Despite this, sleeping in a hammock is stigmatized by many outsiders, including actors who are involved in development projects which base their strategies in part on such assessments, and perceived as a sign of poverty.

Figure 12. Residence of close friends, XYatil, December 2017.

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[12] One student of "alternative tourism" at UIMQRoo pointed out that many tourists come to the peninsula to relax and party, so they have no real interest in or experience of the place or the people who live there. The example that he gave of "*cómo las personas viven*" ("how people live") was, "*cómo comen la gente, cómo dormimos, las indígenas, cómo dormimos*" ("how people eat, how we sleep, Indigenous people, how we sleep") (Tsikbal 32). Identifying their sleeping practices in lieu of more commonly used cultural features—dress or language, for example—points to the importance of the hammock in Quintana Roo.

Figure 13. Hammock making in XYatil, December 2017. This was set up in the main room of the house shown above; it was an ongoing project that various family members would work on when they had some spare time.

As one example of an emplaced social practice, the *Cruzo'ob* Catholic church in XYatil is quite active and offers a *matan* ceremony about three times a week in the evenings. This is a community service which involves the distribution of a small meal, in liquid or semi-liquid form (hot or cold corn based beverages, or coffee with crackers mixed in) which fosters reciprocity and implies a lack of social hierarchy[13]. There is also an annual patron saint festival, which among other festivities, and lasting for five days, includes the ceremonial cutting of a *yaxche'* tree, an ontologically and socially significant species, in precolonial times as well as now. The festival is popular among young people from XYatil and surrounding towns, who post about the preparations and the festivities on Facebook, including (live) videos and posts from the town's Facebook page "XYatil Quintana Roo Mx".

Figure 14. (right) XYatil *iglesia*, 2016.

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[13] Though there is a particular order of serving, starting with the families of the men who perform prayers at the front of the church while the distribution happens, there is an emphasis on the quantity served always being the same, and the rule that each person (adult or child) gets one serving is strictly adhered to.

The remaining important site for this project is UIMQRoo (the aforementioned *Universidad Intercultural Maya de Quintana Roo*), located in Jose Maria Morelos, another hour west from XYatil. The town itself has some commerce but is smaller than Carrillo, and is Spanish dominant in terms of what people grow up speaking and what one hears in public spaces. The university is comprised of a few large buildings, a few minutes away from the center of Jose Maria Morelos, surrounded by jungle. Most of the students and many professors are from the peninsula, including some Carrillo, XYatil, and other surrounding *pueblos*. I visited the university about once a month, having been introduced to it via academic contacts, and got to know to various professors and students involved in the *"Lengua y Cultura"* (Language and Culture) bachelor's degree program. All students on campus are required to take Maya classes and English classes, and as such UIMQroo is one place that embodies the trilingual ideal. A few students speak Maya to one another outside of classes, but Spanish is by far the most widely used language in the sense of quotidian, copresent interaction.

Figure 15 (left) and **16** (above). UIMQRoo campus, January 2016.

The *tsikbal* and my positionality

My relationships to the people I came across during my fieldwork, whether momentarily or with whom I formed a lasting bond (or somewhere in between), is—as is always the case in ethnographic research—beneath the surface of every detail I observed, recorded, and relay here. One way to acknowledge this is through an alternative framing of the recorded material I took away from my fieldwork, what most would call interviews (or ethnographic interviews). The Maya *tsikbal* is a word for conversation, interaction, talk, speech, discourse, which Castillo Cocom has developed as an anthropological tool to replace the loaded "interview" (Briggs 1984; Castillo Cocom 2016). One description he gives of conversations with a friend in his article "Maya Scenarios" (2007) reads as: "contextually reciprocal, polyphonic, historical, and intersubjective" (17). An important element of the *tsikbal* is that it is temporally flexible, and thus more adaptive to the unpredictable elements of interaction and the contextual contingencies of social

relationships. A *tsikbal* may start one day and end days or weeks later, without a sense of significant disruption. I refer to conversations I had and recorded as *tsikbalo'ob* (plural of *tsikbal*) rather than interviews because the majority of them were with people who I already knew and had talked to before about themselves, myself, and my research (at least to some extent). Conceptualizing this dissertation as the product of *tsikbalo'ob* and many other interactions, and of places and spaces, in addition to my experiences and observations, and theories and academically legitimated knowledge, is a way to reconcile with the appearance of a piece of scholarship that is purportedly authoritative while thoroughly decontextualized—by nature of its production, authorship and style, and reception.

I also decided that one way to make my presence in the spaces in central Quintana Roo that I inhabited more useful would be to offer free English classes and workshops; I also thought that this might be a way to exchange language expertise and talk to Maya speakers about their experiences of language. I think it was useful to offer my services (regardless of what came of that offer), which along with my status as a learner, helped to problematize the anthropological practice of inhabiting the position of 'participant-observer' during fieldwork, with its long and dubious history.

Overview of the dissertation

The first of the four chapters discusses Spanish-Maya-English trilingualism as a social-educational-linguistic ideal in Quintana Roo and introduces a metapragmatic perspective as a way of understanding Maya language revitalization and English language teaching within the same frame. It demonstrates how the two seemingly distinct projects are intimately connected, and as such, prompts a shift in the way language endangerment and revival has been approached in anthropological and social linguistic literature thus far. Rather than seeing minority language revitalization as a project that only attempts to mitigate the incursions of dominant languages and their cultural correlates, it is increasingly important to understand efforts to promote minoritized and Indigenous languages as part of broader educational and social paradigms which do not position the local and the global in opposing terms.

Chapter 2 addresses communicative privilege, which I elaborate as a way to describe the advantages and possibilities that are ideologically aligned with and pragmatically ascribed to certain ways of speaking and interacting. Access to a voice—and with it a subject position—is then intrinsically connected to certain forms of privilege (or disadvantage). This chapter presents 'voice' as an analytic category that allows for a more nuanced approach to the phenomena at hand; rather than talking about being an English speaker, for example, we can talk about someone who has access to an English voice (or more precisely, one of a variety of English voices). A vocal approach within linguistic anthropology proves illuminating in part because it is indebted to semiotic, material, and phenomenological theoretical bases. In this sense, the discussion of voices draws attention to the instability of the subject and the way communicative experiences, by way of voices, provide ever emergent subject positions.

Chapter 3 turns to the political economic context of the region, in particular the spread of transnational capitalism and neoliberal reforms and governance, which are exemplified by the international tourism industry. The way communicative practices are conceptualized and employed within this situation are discussed, both in a broader sense of language under neoliberalism, and in Quintana Roo in particular where forms of communicative privilege are highlighted and exacerbated by racist and elitist practices around employment and economic development in general. Despite the fact that various inter- and transnational forces have taken on

the project of sustainable development in the peninsula as a response to the exploitation and destruction of mass tourism, these efforts often end up operating within the same paradigms and reproducing similar social relations. For example, capacity building by an NGO ends up training local people how to be well-behaved hotel employees.

Yet within this context, cosmopolitan discourses that see jobs in the tourism industry as a way to participate in global flows and have positive encounters with people from far away provide another perspective on political economic changes. Mayerxs and their families who grew up in Quintana Roo have shifting relationships to place and become connected to translocalities and transnational communities. Tri-/multilingualism affords such cosmopolitan subjectivities by opening the possibility to communicate—understand and be understood—across scales and social groups, and despite neoliberal and capitalistic ideologies of individualized competences, competition, and responsibilities.

Finally, chapter 4 addresses the way metapragmatic discourses, voices, and communicative privilege are mediatized, especially on social media. Language use and voices are transformed, can be learned or translated, becoming more or less accessible, expressive, authoritative, or political. Relating to similar phenomena in other minoritized language communities, I focus on the way young people use social media as a source of belonging, solidarity, and political-linguistic subjectivities that are simultaneously Indigenous and cosmopolitan. Artists who make music in Maya and are active on social media are an example of this sort of expression, and are among those who promote Maya and Indigenous forms of belonging in a way that is oriented towards the broader world (imagined and embodied on social media).

In this dissertation I try to follow the rule that we can only talk about social and communicative phenomena insofar as we continue to return to embodied moments in people's lives. Excerpts from *tsikbals* I recorded are found in the following chapters, with analyses that span from the linguistic and metalinguistic to the larger discourses that can be found in certain words and turns of phrase. The contextual details of those interactions—like how one time I sat in the *parque*[14] of Felipe Carrillo Puerto with an interlocutor on a warm evening with the sound of birds and the movement of people of all ages surrounding us—speak to the daily lives of the people whose voices I relay. I find truth in the idea that my understandings are intersubjective as I've built them from many conversations, a variety of social situations and interactions, time spent on social media, and a lot of listening. In this sense, I hope that the following pages will be read with the intention of learning from the experiences and expressions of others, and recognizing the alternative political-linguistic worlds imagined there as possibilities embodied in the nuances of the daily interactions that give meaning, belonging, and well-being to their lives.

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[14] All towns and cities in Quintana Roo (as is common throughout Mexico) have a central plaza/park which is a space of community activity, recreation, and informal meetings, particularly after school and work hours have ended. There are also the sites of performances, celebrations, and political action.

Chapter 1. **Trilingualism and the metapragmatics of Maya language revitalization and English language teaching**

Introduction: The trilingual ideal and metapragmatic framings

In central Quintana Roo, trilingualism is a way to configure a particular subject: educated and cosmopolitan, Indigenous and grounded, successful, centered, and secure (both socially and financially). It is within the context of neoliberal tourism development, state-led education reforms and demands, and a historically complex regional landscape, that trilingualism emerges as an ideal. A trilingual subject is pragmatically positioned to engage different worlds – a variety of social scenarios, higher education, capitalist enterprises, and social media landscapes, among others. The most consequential of these in a practical sense is the ability to get a job in the tourism industry relatively easily. The intersection of English language instruction and the necessary domination of standard Mexican Spanish, is in line with state-led education initiatives, though in the context of the trilingual ideal, English is also a way of participating in transnational (or "global") social worlds—constituted by music, shows and movies, memes and viral content, games and new media, and inclusive/"multicultural" political positionings, among other things.

On the other hand, discourses of "*orgullo maya*" (Maya pride) and the revitalization of the Maya language and situated social practices are also present in the figuring of trilingualism, and express a sense of locality that complements the transnational engagements that trilingualism ostensibly makes available. The increasing institutional legitimization of knowledge of the Maya language, such as prizes in Maya literature and ostensible support for Maya language education (Salinas 2018), gives this competency of the trilingual subject a further sense of success within the dominant educational paradigm. And Maya, though generally framed in terms of its relationship to cultural practices, a Maya worldview, and the like, is also economically valuable to certain people, as there are increasingly more jobs as Maya teachers and professional communicators[15]. Maya is more and more conceptualized by *mayerxs* and their families as valuable under the terms of neoliberal capitalism, as English is clearly thought to be (cf. Urla 2012). English is almost synonymous with economic success, as a UIMQroo student studying sustainable tourism noted when he was comparing Maya to English: *"vemos que inglés tiene más oportunidades, es más una herramienta"* ("We see that English holds more opportunities, it's more of a tool," Tsikbal 32).

Spanish is for most people the baseline—the universal mediator in the Mexican context, where nationalism may emerge in relation to this sense of having a common denominator, particularly in the light of recent youth participation in national pride and solidarity (in the face of earthquakes, Trump, and corruption, among other things). Edy Dzidz[16] describes Spanish as *la arena* (the arena/stage) of the linguistic situation in Quintana Roo—it is a stage which can be used

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[15] One Maya teacher at the Universidad Intercultural Maya de Quintana Roo (UIMQroo) explains: "*Hasta que empecé a dar clases de maya, me di cuenta de lo importante que es […] Por eso ahorita es muy importante para mi vida, y es mi trabajo; es lo que me da dinero para mantener a mi familia.*" "It wasn't until I started to give Maya classes that I realized how important it is […] That's why it's very important for me now in my life, and it's my job; it's what I make money from so I can take care of my family." (Tsikbal 22).

[16] Dzidz, a mayero linguist and translator from Quintana Roo, has been an important interlocutor since the beginnings of my fieldwork. He has provided invaluable feedback to me as I developed the conceptual and ethnographic bases of my dissertation, as well as producing his own work on Maya linguistics, revitalization, and politicization (which is mostly unpublished but which I cite in the coming chapters) which has been very useful for me.

as a place to play out emerging tensions between Maya, Spanish, and English, while also being a reference as the usual context metalinguistic and metapragmatic discussions (Personal communication, 2019).

These three languages are thus brought together in a way that bridges scaled social formulations and (inter)subjective experiences, the transnational political economy and community-centered practices (celebrations; religious ceremonies; practices of naming, healing, relating, and communicating). In heuristic or rather simplistic terms, trilingualism connects the local/Indigenous, the national, and the global (and neoliberal). Other scholars have written about complications of the local-global terms, and their dichotomy, and increasingly there has been a recognition that Indigenous and other smaller scale postcolonial identities and social practices are not oppositional to or separable from transnational social networks and ideologies (Castañeda 2009, Clifford 1992, Delugan 2010, Diaz 2017, Elbez 2017, Werbner 2008). My argument here extends and complexifies these arguments by specific attention to language use and multilingual discourses which include three linguistic layers: an Indigenous language with upwards of 700,000 speakers, a national language responsible for the obsolescence of many languages in Latin America and elsewhere, and a hugely influential language that carries capitalism and often neoliberal reforms with it as its influence increases and deepens.

A substantial body of literature addresses language shift and loss, and efforts to reverse, mitigate, or postpone such phenomena (see Section 1 below), yet a connection which has not been examined in the literature is the relationship between language shift away from local, minoritized languages, and the promotion and teaching of "global" languages, especially English. Dominant, usually national, official languages, are what do the displacing—yet linguistic landscapes in which increasing attention is given to teaching and learning a minoritized language, since ultimately any revitalization/maintenance project is framed in terms of teaching and learning, whether formalized or in family contexts, often also include the presence of another. A more dominant language in the sense of scale, economic utility, and supposed "universality," such as English. In practical terms, it seems that efforts to promote Maya would be opposed to efforts to promote English, if only due to constraints of time and resources. Yet the two projects are hardly ever framed in opposing terms; if anything, the dynamics of Maya revitalization I describe here are seen as complimentary to the less studied, less highlighted phenomenon of English teaching.

I argue that the project of maintaining, *rescatando* (rescuing or saving), the Indigenous language is now in conversation with, not isolated from—and in fact becoming co-constructed with—the introduction, teaching, and maintenance of English in Quintana Roo. Learning English is not described as a barrier to learning Maya; on the contrary, as I describe in the last section of this chapter, English and Maya are said to have a certain resonance, a similarity which is simultaneously mystifying and commonplace. The framing of these two languages is thus intimately connected, rather than separated in terms of scale ("global" and "local"), identity, usage, mode of learning, or otherwise, though these differences certainly exist. This relationship is interesting because it is increasingly common in many places that the linguistic landscape not only includes a minoritized language (or languages) and a dominant, usually state-sanctioned, institutionalized, and highly standardized, language – but a "global" language such as English, which is deemed inherently desirable and valuable in its utility and its ability to connect people across places and spaces.

An ideal inevitably creates countless opportunities to fail to achieve such forms of competency, and the social positions they afford, and of course many people in Quintana Roo do

not live up to or embody the imagined fluent trilingual subject[17]. One consequence is the exclusionary nature of the specific form of each language that is emphasized in the expertise of trilingualism. Just as we can dissect what "a language" is (Bauman & Briggs 2003; Hanks 1995), we can dissect what "bi-/tri-lingualism" or "multilingualism" mean, what they construct ideologically and experientially, how their metapragmatic elements create and enforce boundaries between communicative systems as much as communities of speakers. I discuss linguistic privilege and the marginalizing effects of the trilingual ideal in Chapter 2.

Theoretical framings in linguistic anthropology

Theoretical contributions by linguistic anthropologists in the past few decades help me in the difficult task of relating situated, embodied and mediatized language use with widely circulated metapragmatic discourses, such as the trilingual ideal, Indigenous belonging, and cosmopolitanism. At this point the paradigm of language ideology[18] is often taken for granted – a major contribution of linguistic anthropologists, popularized in the 1990s and early 2000s – and has been adopted by scholars in sociolinguistics, education, discourse analysis, and the like (Kroskrity 2000; Schieffelin, Woolard & Kroskrity 1998; Silverstein 1979). Other analytic frameworks, such as those of 'border-making' (Urciuoli 1995), 'ethnolinguistic identity' (Silverstein 2003), 'indexicality' as a general principle, or relatedly, Alexandra Jaffe's focus on 'stance' (2009), also address relationships between subject positions, linguistic systems, features of communicative practices, and categories of discourse[19]. John Gumperz's foundational work on footing and contextualization cues underlies these perspectives (1982, 1992), which also descend from Dell Hymes' innovative approach to language in context, the ethnography of speaking (1974).

Taking insights from these developments, and attending to the study of pragmatics, a metapragmatics-oriented perspective entails an analysis of broad scale processes of constructing legitimate forms of communication, and creating understandings of what language does. Charles Briggs' work on metapragmatics provides a theoretical basis for bringing various arenas of social life into the same picture; circulation and entextualization are central processes in the emergence of metapragmatic models, and provide depth to analysis due to their acknowledgement of scale and movement (2005, 2011). Metapragmatic signaling allows participants to construe what is going on in a communicative event, and are more or less fixed and influential according to the prevalence and multidimensional legitimization of metapragmatic discourses (ibid.). Analyses of language ideologies, and frameworks such as those of 'language and identity' (Bucholtz & Hall 2004, Cameron 2005, Kramsch 2009, Norton 2013), address the same general phenomena, but do not allow as easily for in depth understandings of not only how languages are perceived and used

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[17] I did not, certainly, during my time there—though my position as trilingual speaker would have been inherently different from someone who grew up in a *mayerx* community.

[18] It is unclear to what extent 'ideology' is meant to convey a coercive, implicit discourse, perhaps unknown to the community affected – but intentional in some way, not by agents necessarily but by structures of inequality. Or it is used because it captures easily the idea that certain perceptions/perspectives about language are widespread, coherent, powerful, and consequential discourses, constructing practices and affecting sociopolitical orders.

[19] For example, "Irvine (2009) shows, the stance attributed to us on the official record, consolidated over the long-term, is ultimately out of our hands. This is partly a function of the sheer temporality of interaction. But it is also shaped by larger-scale social phenomena such as institutional power, prevailing stereotypes, and even the constraints built into the media of interaction" (Keane 2011:170).

to assert speaker identities, but how they are positioned as legitimate (or not) communicative tools and as indicative of broader social and political relations.

Recent interpretations of the above lines of thinking[20] imply that fundamentally we are talking about the "semiotic underpinnings of broader social imaginaries" (Hoffmann-Dilloway 2018:284). A focus on semiotic practices complements a metapragmatic perspective by providing more detailed and fundamental descriptions of how meanings arise in the first place—from what signifying entities, with reference to which qualities, and with what forms of meaning-carrying contact. Susan Gal posits that the basic semiotic building blocks are qualia, "the embodied, conventional, and experienceable forms of abstract qualities" (2017:132) – as the units, semiotic elements, upon which stance and indexicality, linguistic borders, metapragmatic models, and the like, are built (Harkness 2015). Subject positions are characterized by experienceable forms of abstract qualities, as are linguistic forms. Phaticity—contact—is another way to formulate the more basic relation, and we can look at modes and effects of contact between sign vehicles and objects (Hoffmann-Dilloway 2018), or between socially significant subjects/forms, and their manifestations in interactions. Semiotic ideologies pertain to ontologies of signifying potential, the material vs. the symbolic, and the active capacities of subjects, intersubjects, and objects (Keane 2003).

Recognizing intersubjectivity as a fundamental element of social life and communicative interactions fits well with such a semiotic perspective as it draws attention to the way subject positions are ever in contact with, responding to, and overlapping with other subjectivities. A phenomenological perspective in general as it conveys sociality via intersubjectivity as always emergent, adaptive to scaling and mediatization, and crucial to any referential or otherwise socially constitutive language use (Duranti 2010, Fisher 2015).

It is now evident that the particular discourses that are salient in Quintana Roo, that have been introduced above, such as how English is universal, Spanish is assumed, and Maya is culturally important (in very simplified terms) are metapragmatic discourses that orient and give significance to the pragmatic processes of teaching, learning, mediatizing, and interacting in said languages. The above consideration of theory also serves as a reminder that the discourse of trilingualism, and the metapragmatic orientations that underlie Maya revitalization and English teaching, are relevant insofar as they have concrete consequences—are felt, lived, and embodied in various ways. For example, using a hashtag in English on social media is semiotically constitutive of a particular subject position and depends on an understanding of the format of the hashtag, the materiality of the English word(s) and spellings, the instance as situated in the scale of iterations of the same hashtag, and the like, as qualia that can be embodied to produce lived social positionings that form part of broader social imaginaries. I explore these mediated semiotic processes further in Chapter 4.

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[20] Also building from Agha's central argument that "semiotic acts (of whatever representational character) themselves generate various roles (stakes, stances, positions, identities), and relationships among roles (alignments, asymmetries, power, hierarchy)" (2007: 9).

Section 1: Changing linguistic landscapes and scales

The concerted interest in language endangerment and "death" that began in earnest in the 1990s and continues currently is a concern which is somewhat unusual within linguistic anthropological/sociolinguistic topics in that it successfully speaks to the popular imagination, in doing so provoking widely shared feelings of remorse for the "loss" of languages and support for the idea of "saving" them (e.g. Harrison 2007; cf. Hill 2002). There are strong correlates with environmental concerns; the loss of biodiversity can be, and often is, compared to the loss of linguistic, and cultural, diversity. This is despite the fact that this metaphorical equation invokes a problematic biological-evolutionary view of humanity, and a concurrent exoticization of human "diversity" in aesthetic and romanticized terms[21]. Here language is particularly evocative, and it seems that the image of the last speakers of an obscure, exotic (often Indigenous) language is more stirring than the last practitioners of a type of textile production, or traditional dance, or culinary art.

Language, and the idea of language as a central element of a group's identity, provide a range of actors with a seemingly tangible site of universal arguments—one can imagine the emotional connection other people feel to the way they express themselves, and the presence of diverse languages around the world is visible, audible, material, and mediated. Perhaps more importantly, the very widespread emergence of collective projects to document, maintain, promote, and revitalize minority languages implies that this concern spans the academic, the popular, and the desires of speakers themselves.

Language shifts and emerging vitalities

While the ubiquitous cases of language shift around the world—where socially, political-economically dominant languages are replacing smaller scale minoritized languages—are all unique and historically contingent, there are notable similarities across contexts in terms of structural conditions, discourses about the causes and implications of such changes, and responses from academics and local groups. On the academic side, language documentation is something that can happen in basically the same way with any language, since linguistics has constructed the domain of language such that its experts can treat any linguistic system the same way, in terms of its abstractification and reification[22].

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[21] Shaylih Muehlmann addresses the tendency towards enumeration, describing how "through the counting of people, birds, fish, water quantities, and language speakers, the habitat, culture, and language of the [Colorado River] delta's Indigenous residents have consistently been represented by NGO workers, scientists, and state officials as 'endangered'" (2012:339). Her distinctive work analyzes how "certain domains of experience, such as language, people, and water, are locally identified as being uncountable," using Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the 'rhizome' to show how "particular domains of experience become enumerable or resist enumeration in the first place" (ibid.).

[22] To complement the classic tension between linguistic anthropology (and sociolinguistics) and linguistics, the more abstract, scientific, and apolitical approaches by linguistics to situations of language obsolescence have been critiqued by linguistic anthropologists (among others) as inattentive to context, and at worst, outright ignoring or discounting the perspectives and experiences of the speakers of the languages being studied and documented. Bonnie Urciuoli puts it simply when she argues that "what matters in the end is not a pure historical continuity but what speakers do with languages" (1995:530). Leanne Hinton, an often-cited scholar in the field, makes the argument—though it is not what is usually cited from her work—that people working to revitalize their language are often more interested in the pragmatics of language use and nonverbal communication than what linguists have tended to document: vocabulary and grammar (2010:413).

Tobique[23] anthropologist Bernard Perley calls this practice "zombie linguistics," as a response to the morbid metaphors used by scholars in reference to what Perley prefers to call "sleeping" languages which are also the sites of new "emergent vitalities"[24] (2012). Another similarity is that political and economic marginalization, often the historical consequence of colonialism, underlie the displacement of minoritized languages by dominant ones. There is a large body of literature about language loss, shift, revitalization, and maintenance, which takes varying perspectives but usually emphasizes the need for academics to work together with the minoritized languages' speaker communities when undertaking projects of language documentation and/or revitalization/maintenance (Dorian 1989, Fishman 1991, Grenoble & Whaley 1998, Hinton & Hale 2001, Nettle & Romaine 2000; see Perley 2012 for a thorough overview).

Much of this literature portrays language shift, and responses to it, in simple terms in which the minoritized and dominant languages are ideologically opposed and essentially involved in a conflict, in which the latter are in most cases winning. While stable bilingualism is sometimes acknowledged as a goal of such projects, there is more emphasis put on the way minoritized languages represent identities and worldviews which are in some sense antithetical to those represented by dominant ones, the former being "local" and "traditional," and the latter "globalized" and "modern." For example, linguistic anthropologist Paja Faudree's study of Mazatec language and culture "revival"[25] in Oaxaca, Mexico, while informative and compelling, also demonstrates this tendency to emphasize the dichotomy between tradition and modernity. She frames revival simplistically as characterized by the tension between "maintaining stasis and introducing change," an example of which is the way Indigenous writers "navigate the *inherent contradictions* entailed by adapting *traditional* expressive forms to *new* (Western) genres and media" (2013:14-15, emphasis added). My approach here not only moves away from such a dichotomous, oppositional portrayal, given that Maya and Spanish are not two naturally mutually exclusive sides of an ongoing conflict. I further complicate this literature analytically by situating Indigenous language revitalization and maintenance as a multidimensional project that is in conversation with, and not opposed to, concerted efforts to promote and teach a "global" language, English.

Attention to the consequences, the meanings, of language loss often focuses on the idea of the loss of a worldview, in terms of the categories and structures through which a language describes the world and experience. Yet each person who uses the sounds, words, structures, expressions, indexicals, deictics, etc., of a language, and each instance that they use them, provides a substantiation of a language's existence. I refer to practices of scaling, which I discuss further in Chapter 3, as a way to think about the implications of the numbers that are often referenced when we talk about language shift—dwindling numbers, alarmingly small numbers, or increasing numbers, reassuring numbers (cf. Muehlmann 2012). It is a way to move away from a romanticized loss-of-worldview argument, or an abstracting quantitative argument, and attend to the fact that many performative, mediatized, or other subtle instances of language use complicate such

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[23] The Tobique First Nation, New Brunswick, Canada are seeing language shift away from their heritage language, Maliseet.

[24] With zombie linguistics, Perley also intends to "shift the focus of language experts documenting languages to include 'saving communicative practices while preserving the code" (2012:146).

[25] While similar to "revitalization," "revival" implies the resuscitation of something that is dead, whereas "revitalization" implies imbuing something with vitality; in other words, vitality is a spectrum, whereas alive vs. dead is not. Faudree uses "revival" without qualification or critical analysis, which is true of her usage of a variety of other anthropologically problematic terms and concepts, among them "modernization" and "ethnic diversity."

arguments. For example, in the case of Maya, using memes or hashtags in Maya on social media would not fit into a worldview account of language use and loss because the medium and form of expression itself would be considered foreign to the Indigenous, "authentic" perspective.

What is being used less frequently might more accurately be described in pragmatic terms as a set of communicative and semiotic practices associated with a 'language'[26]. The fact that greetings and introductions, ritual language, songs, and other less bounded or straightforward language use are often important in efforts to revitalize a language implies that communicative and semiotic practices are meaningful to a community, in terms of collective experiences and spaces. Further, such practices may be transformed in new contexts, be they educational, political, or across media and scales. This motivates my analysis here as not focused on "Maya" or "English" as transparent, uniform entities, but rather pushing the whole discussion of language shift in a more interactional, phenomenological direction.

Shifts of and in Maya, Spanish, and English

In Mexico, one version of the state of affairs I could give is to say that of the 68 Indigenous languages currently spoken, 22 have less than 1,000 speakers, and that 364 variants of these languages are in danger of disappearing[27]. José Antonio Flores Farfán's view is that "all Mexican languages are endangered, yet to extremely varying degrees"; he uses Maya as a demonstration of this, it being "still vital and viable,"[28] yet undergoing rapid language shift (2011:193). Maya, with around 800,000, has the second largest number of speakers behind Nahuatl, which has about double the number, according to the above statistics—though it is much more complex in terms of variation between dialects, whereas Maya is more similar across a large geographical area. Yet people talk about Maya the way they might talk about a much less widely spoken language.

The fact is that the shift from Maya to Spanish has been ongoing in the peninsula, since colonization in a narrow sense, and more in earnest in the second half 20th century, until today. Barbara Pfeiler describes the sociolinguistic situation of Maya, as of 20 years ago (1998), as being less and less vital, with changes in the use of Maya into increasingly restricted contexts, being private and family spheres, with the projection that the language could become a code used only in private between spouses (126). In terms of the possible loss of Maya, she notes that economic development and "the lack of ethnic awareness" in *mayerx* communities have contributed to a shifting ethnic identity and the "lack of a feeling of linguistic loyalty" (136). Yet there was a degree of institutional support at the time, mainly in the form of bilingual education and regularly scheduled radio and tv programs in Maya.

Bilingual education in the peninsula was technically first introduced in the 1950s and is currently applied in some elementary and high schools in Quintana Roo (referred to as "*educación indígena*," Indigenous education), but is by no means taken for granted or uniform in concept or application. In Yucatán there are reports of positive outcomes of bilingual "intercultural" education, though prognosis still entails the need to move towards pedagogical practices based on equality, respect, and solidarity (Güémez Pineda et al. 2008). Finding bilingual teachers has also

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[26] In a sense this does resonate with the loss of worldview argument, if we understand semiotic ideologies and practices to be ontologically constitutive, and a 'worldview' to be a description of an ontology.

[27] According to INALI statistics of 2015 (https://www.inali.gob.mx/comunicados/451-las-364-variantes-de-las-lenguas-indigenas-nacionales-con-algun-riesgo-de-desaparecer-inali.html

[28] He makes the point that an indication of Maya's vitality is the fact that it has more influence on the Spanish spoken in the region, more so than any other Mesoamerican language (194).

been a challenge in some areas, and some of these actually only speak Spanish to the children. Pedagogical materials began to be developed necessarily in the early years of bilingual schooling, but Pfeiler notes that in the late 90s the distribution of such materials was insufficient and "*con respecto a la aplicación del material didáctico, aún hay un gran camino por recorrer*[29]" (128).

At the time of my fieldwork (August 2015-December 2016), the situation was not so different than that described above, but indeed a generational shift was very evident in terms of who spoke Maya as a part of their daily lives. My very generalized observation is that in the pueblos of central Quintana Roo, people above age ~30-35 were more likely to speak to their peers and family in Maya, while those below it tended to speak in Spanish, particularly to their children. Surprisingly, I heard from several young people that their (or others') parents shifted from speaking Maya to their older children to speaking Spanish to the younger ones (Tsikbal tourism, and Oscar). One student at UIMQroo described such a situation to me: he spoke Maya, having learned it from his parents and grandparents, but his younger siblings did not—or at least were described as "*no hablan Maya*"—partly due to the fact that he spent more time with his grandparents that the other siblings. Fluidly bilingual (Maya-Spanish) people would tend to be between the ages of 20 and 60, with some older Maya dominant speakers with little Spanish usage and an increasing number of children and young people who only use Spanish (and in some cases English).

The situation in Tulum and along the coast is more complex to describe in the terms of language shift, though certainly there is a general trend towards young men traveling to work there and ending up speaking more Spanish than Maya, sometimes resulting in their no longer speaking as much Maya with their families back in the pueblos. However, there were a wide range of accounts of the presence of Maya in the tourism areas—for example, some people said Maya wasn't spoken in Tulum, while others (like myself) thought that Maya was ubiquitous in Tulum, though often in less visible spaces such as restaurant kitchens, the *iglesia maya*, and inside homes. Along with this, in the large resorts which line the highway that runs from Tulum to Cancún, communities of *mayerx* workers create multilingual spaces which are also hidden from hotel guests and often managers and bosses. In these contexts, employees with English competence are highly valued and as such many of those who may maintain the practice of speaking Maya in tourism-service spaces are also engaged with English, if not in consistent practice, as a necessary addition to their collective linguistic repertoire.

The linguistic changes in Quintana Roo can thus not be described as a simple shift from Maya to Spanish, and indeed few situations of language shift take place that way. One cannot give a fixed evaluation of Maya's vitality, in the sense of how much intergenerational transmission is occurring, how widely it is used and in what spaces, and how likely it is to continue to be spoken for years to come. The *pueblos* of central Quintana Roo—as well as some *pueblos* in the region close to the southeast border of Quintana Roo-Yucatán, and the northeastern part of Campeche closest to the other two states—can be considered the stronghold of Maya usage. The fact that these pueblos of Quintana Roo, along with those in the eastern part of Yucatán, are closest to the transnational tourism mecca that is Cancún and the Mayan Riviera, is a major fact in the production of the unique linguistic landscape that I analyze. The trilingual ideal is then one response to the less robust Maya usage described here, among other things.

Beyond the details of daily interactions, I have emphasized that of central importance to my argument are the ideological and discursive ways that the changes in language use, and the languages themselves, are perceived and socially constructed. Pfeiler introduces the idea of

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[29] "With respect to the application of pedagogical materials, there is still a long way to go."

conciencia lingüística (linguistic awareness) in relation to Maya, noting that *"la connotación social de cada una es la que determina qué lengua usar en el momento y cuando sobre o subestimarla*[30]*"* (1998:129). She argues that Spanish is associated with urban contexts and the higher status that one gains by living in a city can lead to a rejection of Maya in the rural context. Others see Maya as tied to locality, an essential element of places where people have always spoken Maya, a *"semilla"* (seed) that means there will be a future for the language (ibid.).

The current situation in the peninsula, though it shows similarities to the metalinguistic awareness Pfeiler describes, is better explained through the lens of metapragmatic discourses which invoke not only shifting contexts of use and social connotations, but the way the languages themselves are constructed as more or less coherent, legitimate, or expressive and how, where, and when they should be embodied. The excerpt below brings out the complexities of the implications and discourses that are expressed and embedded in language use, and how they may contradict each other.

Fieldnotes 7.18.16

Doña A. won't speak a word of Spanish and Fernando won't speak a word of Maya. And he looks at me like I'm crazy when I speak to him in Maya.

In this excerpt, which pertains to a family from XYatil, Doña A. is an older woman in her 70s who is a self-proclaimed monolingual Maya speaker, though she understands much spoken Spanish, if not the majority of it. Fernando is her grandson, about 10 years old at the time I wrote this, who is growing up in a household with daily Maya usage by his parents, but whose brothers in their late teens and early 20s work in the Mayan Riviera and now speak more Spanish than Maya, and whose teenage sister has a strongly negative view of Maya and prefers speaking in Spanish. My statement that Fernando won't speak "a word of Maya" is an exaggeration, and I wrote in relation to his not wanting to speak Maya with me in particular; with his parents he speaks Maya, though I can't say if it is always the case. My presence certainly seemed to make him much less likely to speak it, and as a white foreigner, there was clearly something incongruous to him about my using Maya.

Both of these people I have known for years and I can say that these practices are deeply entrenched. The boy's bemusement at me speaking Maya with his family members, and attempting to speak it with him, has become more pronounced over the years. He seemed increasingly aware that my wanting him to speak Maya to me has some metapragmatically marked aspect to it, making him even less likely to participate. Such a little rebellion may signal an embodied response to social pressures and the internalization of ideological hierarchies of communicative practices, despite adults' overt efforts to instill a different sort of discourse about Maya.

But Fernando is also clearly interested in and learning about the *iglesia* and the ceremonies that take place there which take place in Maya and which his father and grandfather are deeply connected to. Fernando's eventual language choices and competences are far from determined, and could change significantly over the years. Only time will tell. His grandmother on the other hand, is not likely to change her practice of not speaking Spanish, though she would probably be able to speak quite a bit of it if she wanted to, considering her high oral comprehension and extensive experience with the language. Not participating verbally in conversations in Spanish

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[30] "The social connotation of each one is what determines which language to use in the moment and when to over- or undervalue it."

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seems important to her, and she upholds the frequent comment by her family members that *"ella no habla español"* (she doesn't speak Spanish).

These are cases, then, that show a sentiment contrary to the trilingual ideal: a resistance to Spanish in one generation, and to Maya in the next. Pragmatically speaking, such a shift between generations means that the older generation's communicative practices can't be assumed to be shared by the younger generation, as is the case in a stable language community. As a monolingual Maya speaker, Doña A's aversion to Spanish can be read as indicative of an ideological attachment to Maya as a source of comfort, and can be related to her relatively limited experience with state-mandated education (she finished elementary school but did not continue much after that). Having spent her life in the *pueblos* working at home, her gendered experience is also a reminder of the way Maya is emplaced in rural areas and associated with domestic spaces.

Fernando's preference for Spanish, then, also implies a sort of comfort in that he wants to inhabit an unmarked position, which in the dominant ideological construction of languages in his siblings' social worlds means speaking Spanish and not speaking Maya. His older brothers' experiences working in Tulum and Playa del Carmen[31], represent a shift towards Spanish dominance and engagement with Mexican urban and peri-urban culture which places importance on the use of colloquial Mexican Spanish. English for Fernando's brothers, and probably soon for Fernando himself, was desirable though not particularly within reach given the quality of English instruction at the schools in rural Quintana Roo, and a lack of resources to take private language classes.

Discourses of loss: *"Jach máan k'as"*

How can we interpret the rhetorical insistence on loss and endangerment that permeates situations of language shift, in Mexico and the Maya case included? At a certain point during my time in Quintana Roo I made an effort to rid my ruminations, reflections, and conversations with people of the theme of loss – instead of referring to the history of the language, referring to the future, and not framing questions or thoughts in terms of loss, but of change and transformation. Discourse about the *perdida* of Maya is pervasive (in those terms) among Maya speakers and others living in the peninsula, and this is often expressed as an unfortunate, sad, or otherwise negative fact—"*jach máan k'as*" as one interlocutor put it: it's very bad (Tsikbal 1).

Alfredo is a *mayero* man in his 40s who is part owner (ejido situation) of a cenote which is a ten minute drive from the center of Tulum; he spends much of his time at the cenote, collecting a modest fee to swim there, and chatting with visitors and tourists. An outgoing interlocutor, he was immediately interested in my project when I introduced myself to him and described what I was doing. He tended to be enthusiastic and expressive when I talked to him, and so we had many long and fascinating *tsikbals,* which always took place at the cenote he was the steward of. This cenote was not on the road that goes from Tulum to Playa del Carmen and was thus less popular than some other cenotes, so Alfredo often had time to chat with me.

On a sweltering afternoon we sat in view of the cenote and the European scuba divers coming in and out of the water, and we talked about the plight of his language:

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[31] One of his brothers worked at a bakery in Tulum, where he was making $2500-3000 pesos a month ($130-$155 USD, as of March 2019), working six days a week for between 10-12 hours. This is an example of a job that didn't involve much direct interaction with tourists, as the bakery was not on a main street and was mainly frequented by non-tourists. Yet Tulum exists in its present form because of tourism and as such his daily life was permeated by the influence of tourism.

Alfredo [Tsikbal 1]

(1) *se   olvida   todo.   eso   lo he   vivido   lo he   visto. hmm.*
(passive) it forgets everything that it I have lived   it I have seen
"Everything is forgotten. I've lived it. I've seen it. Hmm.

*por eso, tú **dijistes**, que   qué, cómo veo   eso… ¡es terrible!*
            Vb-2sing
for this you you said that what how I see that it is terrible
That's why, you said, that… what, what do I think of that… It's terrible!

jach   máan   k'as.   máan   k'as. *¡es terrible!* ***máan   k'as.*** *muy   malo,*
Prt   Vb   Adj   Vb   Adj   Vb   Adj
very   happen   bad   happen   bad   it is terrible   happen bad   very   bad
It is very bad. Very bad. It's terrible! Very bad. Very bad,

*muy   feo… **máan   k'as, jach máan   k'as.** 'ta   feo 'ta   terrible,*
              Vb   Adj Prt   Vb   Adj   Vb-1sing.   Vb-1sing.
very   ugly   happen bad very happen bad   it is   bad it is   terrible
very ugly… It is bad, it is very bad. It's bad, it's terrible.

está   afuera de… digamos… de alcance porque   ves   que algo   se está
it is   out   of   we say   of reach   because you see that something (reflex.) it is
It's out of… let's say… of reach because you see that something

*yendo, en lugar de que se   quede. bueno, **uya'ala'alten**   ba'axe'*
                                                          Pro3-Prt-Vb-Psv-Prt-Pro1   N-TD
leaving in place of that (reflex.) it stays good   she/he-say-(passive)-to me   thing that
is leaving, instead of it staying. Well, they tell you something

me   pueden   decir lo que sea. pero… no   voy a olvidar, aunque
to me   they can say   it that it be but   (neg.) I go to forget   even if
They can tell me whatever they want. But I'm not going to forget, even if

me   dicen…   no   pierdo nada.   lo que sale   de   acá,
to me   they say (neg.) I lose   nothing it that it leaves from here
they tell me [something]… I won't lose anything. What leaves here [gestures to mouth],

el aire se   lo lleva. ¿o no? eso es triste. en fin, ya   acabó,
the air   (reflex.) it it takes or no   that is sad   at   end already it finished
the air takes it. Right? That is sad. So anyway, it's over,

*eso es triste. **jach   máan**… eh… en maya tristeza se   dice,*
                     Prt   Vb
that it is sad   very   happens   in Maya sad   (passive) one says
that is sad. It is very… um… in Maya for 'sad' we say,

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ku	***máan***	***yaajkunsik***	***inchanpuksi'ik'al.***	*o sea,*	*me*	*duele,*
Prt-Pro3	Vb	N-Vb-(Pro3)	Pro1-Adj-N			
it	happens	pain-it causes-to it	my-little-heart	Or it is	to me	it hurts

it causes me pain in my little heart That is, it hurts me,

esto,	*tu*	*corazón,*	*tu*	*alma,*	*te*	*duele*	*ver*	*que*	*poco a*	*poco,*
this	your	heart	your	soul	to you	it hurts	to see	that	little by	little

this, [it hurts] your heart, your soul, it hurts to see that little by little,

ya	*se*	*está*	*olvidando.*
already	(passive)	it is	forgetting

it's already being forgotten."

Alfredo expresses a certainty of loss which on a broad scale can feed back into the process of shift, which people begin to see as inevitable. The severity of this forgetting is framed and repeated multiple times, in a typical Maya narrative fashion (see Chapter 2 Section 3). The way Alfredo weaves poetically between Spanish and Maya, which was both a way of helping me learn Maya and a way to better express himself, allows for an even deeper affective communication. Using Maya to reflect on the terribleness of Maya being lost is materially powerful, poetic, establishing a ground from which he passionately asserts that he will not forget, and he will not lose his language. His agency is clear in the way he positions his stance within the context of others potentially affecting him and pushing him towards a forgetting of his language and culture. His assertion of being unshakeable in defending his own use of the language indicates that he sees the social pressure as the perpetrator in this tragedy of language loss.

Alfredo's introduction of the Maya phrase *"ku máan yaajkunsik in chan puksi'ik'al"* adds yet another emotional layer to his words. His Spanish translation is multiple, showing the way the sentiment of the Maya cannot be captured by a single Spanish expression. In this section, he also goes back and forth between the situation being in process *("poco a poco, se está olvidando"*) and the situation being already a foregone conclusion: *"ya acabó"*. This is another feature of conversations with *mayerxs*—the way that statements can have seemingly contradictory meanings, when interpreted through the frame of "what is happening." On the contrary, Alfredo's discourse expresses that fact that Maya is both already forgotten and being fought for (by himself, for one); the sad, painful experience that he has is counteracted by his determination to save Maya at least on a small scale, as we see below.

Maya in public: *"Je'en tu'uxe'"*

Fieldnotes 4.11.16

O. buying medicine for her chickens and the convo in Maya with the guy translating [from Maya to Spanish] to the other guy and then at the end them asking "ella es su hija?" [referring to me] and her saying in Maya that I study etc., I speak (or maybe just na'atik [understand]) english spanish and maya and a jab to the effect of this dude doesn't speak maya and she does [i.e., I do]
....
the kid who was doing the translating laughed, I laughed, O. laughed, and we left. and the other guy was left out, exactly as…. it could/should/O.'s point/circumstances allowed it to be.

O. is in her 40s, a *mayera* woman works at home tending to her livestock, cooking and washing, and making hammocks and crocheted bags, and a close friend of mine. What I describe here happened one afternoon in a livestock supply store in Carrillo, and was one of few occasions during the years that I've known O. that she expressed an explicit critique of someone for not being able to speak Maya. Despite the fact that she speaks Spanish (the majority of my conversations with her take place in Spanish), she preferred to explain what she needed in Maya, since there was someone there who could easily translate what she was saying to the relevant employee. Like Doña A., she feels a comfort in Maya that she chose to prioritize in this situation. The fact of that young man needing a translator was what prompted O.'s critique, and making her critique in Maya further proved her point, while also making it indirect since he wouldn't necessarily understand it. She, the translator, and I had a moment of humor and shared belonging, and the Spanish speaker was metadiscursively positioned as lacking a multilingual subjectivity—note the fact that O. mentioned my speaking English as well.

On another occasion, Alfredo, the same mayero man[32] who I quoted above with his consternation at the *"k'as"* (bad, ugly) situation of the loss of Maya, related a story to me about an acquaintance of his who came to the cenote one day:

Alfredo [Tsikbal 1]

(2) *porque viendo acá, como te dije, muchos vienen y les da*
Because seeing here like to you I said many they come and to them it gives
"Because you see here, like I told you, a lot of people come and they are

vergüenza hablar. aunque sé que hablan maya … anteayer
shame to speak even though I know that they speak Maya day before yesterday
ashamed to speak [Maya]. Even though I know that they speak Maya … day before

vino un conocido mío, ya casi cerrando a las 6 o 6:10, llegó,
he came an acquaintance mine already almost closing at the or he arrived
yesterday an acquaintance came, I was already almost closing, at 6 or 6:10, he got here,

bajó y le dije te vas a bañar 'yaan a ichkil?' no me
                                                              Prt Pro2 Vb
he got down and to him I said to you you go to bathe there is you bathe (neg.) to me
he came over and I asked him, are you going to swim, 'are you going to swim?'

contestó porque venían entre dos. ya vio que se fue la persona
he answered because they came between two already he saw that (refl.) s/he went the person
He didn't answer me because he was with someone else. When he saw that the person

por allá, se acercó conmigo, 'yaan' me dice, 'bajux' – cuánto,
                                                Prt   Q
to there (reflex.) he came close with me there is to me he says how much how much
went over there, he came up to me, 'I will' he says to me, 'how much' – how much,

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[32] Alfredo is not, to my knowledge, an academic of any kind or involved in academic circles.

*me   dice, **'ichkinen'** le   digo, o sea báñate,   le   digo. les   da*
                    Vb-Pro2
to me he says bathe-you to him I say or it is bathe yourself to him I say to them it gives
he says to me, 'take a swim' I say to him, that is, take a swim, I say to him. They are

pena hablarlo con quien   anden. si una persona habla   español o habla
shame to speak it with whoever they go if a   person   s/he speaks Spanish or s/he speaks
ashamed to speak it with whoever they're with. If someone speaks Spanish or speaks

otro,   sea de   otro lado, les   da   pena hablar lo que tenemos
another it be from another side to them it gives shame to speak it that   we have
another [language], if they're from somewhere else, they are ashamed to speak what

*como niños. **naj   tik   kanaj** - en la casa lo aprendimos- entonces*
                N   Prt-Pro1pl. Vb-Pst
as   children house we/past   learned   in the house it we learned   so
we have as children. We learned it at home- in the house we learned it- so

***ma' u   ts'ikten   su'utah**- no   me   da   vergüenza- sí lo escribiste? escríbelo*
Neg Pro3 Vb-Pro1   N
(neg.) it give-to me   shame   (neg.) to me it gives shame   yes it you wrote you write it
It doesn't make me ashamed—it doesn't make me ashamed- did you write it? Write it

porque eso está muy bueno, está muy bonito: no   me   da   vergüenza-
because that it is very good   it is very nice   (neg.) to me it gives shame
because it's really good, it's very nice: it doesn't make me ashamed-

***ma' u   ts'ikten   su'utaj in t'anik ba'ax tin   kanaj   tin   naj-**
Neg Pro3 Vb-Pro1   N   Pro1 Vb   N   Prt-Pro1 Vb-Pst Prt-Pro1 N
(neg.) it gives to me   shame my   speaking what I   learned   in my   house
my speaking that I learned in my house doesn't make me ashamed-

*algo   que aprendí en mi casa-. **ba'ax tin   kanaj desde tin   juuk'-***
                              N   Prt-Pro1 Vb-Pst Prep   Prt-Pro1 Vb
something that I learned in my house what I   learned   from I/my   crawl
something that I learned in my house- that I learned from when I started crawling-

***'juuk''** es gatear. estamos hablando, pones – gatear – bebé – cuando estábamos así*
 Vb
crawl is crawl we are speaking you put crawl   baby   when   we were   like that
'crawl' is to crawl. We're talking, so you put down – to crawl – baby – when we were

***tik   máano'on   juuk',   tik   juuk'o'on. min   tu'ubsik**.*
Prt-Pro3pl. Vb-Pro1pl.   Vb   Prt-Pro3 Vb-Pro1pl. Neg-Pro1   Vb -Prt-Pro3
we   were   crawling we   crawled   I don't   forget it
like that we … crawling, we crawled. I don't forget it.

no lo olvido. **tu'ux** *– escríbelo-* **tu'ux kin bine', kin t'aanik.** *mm?*

		N		N	Prt-Pro1	Vb-TD	Prt-Pro1	Vb-Pro3

(neg.) it I forget where write it where I go (to) I speak it

I don't forget it. Where- write it- wherever I go, I speak it. Mm?

escríbelo igual, **je'en tu'uxe'.** *donde sea.* **je'en tu'uxe',** **je'en tu'uxe'.** *donde sea.*

		Prt	N-TD		Prt	N-TD	Prt	N-TD

write it same as where-it where it is as where-it as where-it where it is

Write that too, wherever. Wherever. Wherever, wherever. Wherever.

Alfredo expresses here a common sentiment, that many people feel ashamed or embarrassed to speak Maya, so they don't—especially in front of monolingual Spanish speakers, people not from *mayerx* communities. Like Fernando and his brothers, Alfredo's acquaintance felt a resistance to speaking Maya, because of the people present at the moment when Alfredo spoke to him in Maya expecting a reciprocal response. This sort of *vergüenza* (embarrassment, shame) is complicated to analyze because no one I talked to during my 18 months of fieldwork (plus preliminary and follow up visits) actually said they themselves felt ashamed to speak Maya. The closest that I heard was when someone said that they didn't like Maya, and didn't like to speak it. Regardless, a metapragmatic discourse is evident here that positions Spanish as a more appropriate form of communication, in social situations where there are non-Maya speakers present at least, and for some in a wider range of contexts as well.

However, Alfredo's own connection to Maya is clearly much more salient than any sense of hesitation he could have to speak it. Thus he tells me to write the quote specifically, "wherever I go, I speak it"[33]. At another point, he told me a story about being in Mexico City and speaking Maya with a friend, and overhearers being interested, asking what language they're speaking, and what they're saying. The point being: *Je'en tu'uxe', je'en tu'uxe'.* Wherever, wherever[34].

Choices and outcomes

Any analysis of a sociolinguistic discourse—of trilingualism, of loss, or economic opportunity via language—may be applicable in a general sense, but the dynamics of intersubjective, momentary language shifts as they actually play out are infinitely more complex. Despite the fact that there are striking similarities in the statements of *mayerxs* about their linguistic practices, about *vergüenza*, pride, and a sense of boundedness of their communicative practices—people's linguistic trajectories and what we may look at as "choices" are highly variable and difficult to predict. We may wonder whether the linguistic practices and choices of certain individuals have significantly more impact on a generation or community.

Pharao Hansen relates the life-histories of two families in central Mexico in terms of their experiences with Nahuatl, showing that sometimes Nahuatl is an opportunity, while in other cases it can be an obstacle to educational and professional goals (2016). Between different family members—one of whom ended up associating Nahuatl with political ideals of ethnic and class liberation—there is a "recursive process where lived experience motivates a choice of ideology, which in turn motivates a reinterpretation of one's own life as fitting into a specific narrative" (94).

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[33] Our tsikbals were then temporally unbounded in the sense that both Alfredo and I were aware that I was recording our conversations and would be listening to them and reading about them at a later time.

[34] We also see the role of traveling, movement, as proof of the subjective permanence of the language.

In another case, being Nahuatl-dominant is seen as the cause of lack of success in the educational system by the speaker herself; but not by her family, who see her difficulties as due to her own lack of motivation and initiative – a harsher, personal critique. It is perhaps telling that the daughter had this difficulty while the son did not, given expectations of how girls do in school. And in another, a young woman is denied funding from the CDI [*Comisión Nacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas,* National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Communities] for a small business she is starting, a reason given being the fact that she doesn't speak Nahuatl— i.e., an institutional evaluation of her insufficient indigeneity. After this she decides to learn Nahuatl, which Hansen interprets as possibly prompted by the incident, though she said explicitly that it wasn't related.

Similar contingencies are at work in the lives of people in Quintana Roo who use Spanish, English, and Maya in different ways. The fact that within one family there can be a shift in use of Maya in the middle of a set of siblings leads to precisely this sort of different narrative and ideological accounts of one's linguistic abilities and experiences. The woman who was denied funding for her entrepreneurial project is a classic example of the double bind that post-colonial governments put on Indigenous peoples, and one which mayerxs are subject to as well. After centuries of marginalizing, demeaning, and destroying Indigenous languages and social practices, those communities are now expected to prove their authenticity by using those same languages.

Some scholars argue that we should give more emphasis to individual speakers' roles regarding their language use – both in terms of accounting for shifts and in explaining the emergence of revitalization movements (Kroskrity 2011, Cru 2014). One interlocutor of mine, Mauricio (who I describe in detail below), provided an example of this perspective when he said that these days, some parents prefer to speak to their children in Spanish. For him, those parents *"están educando mal"* ("they are educating [their children] badly") and in this case, *"el niño no tiene la culpa si no habla maya, la culpa es de los papas"* ("the child isn't to blame if they don't speak Maya, it's the parents' fault") (Tsikbal 8). Mauricio's is a fairly strong critique, which he uses to place the responsibility and blame on the parents, rather than the children, when the latter don't end up speaking Maya. It puts the full onus on those who would be teaching, rather than those who would learn. It is clear that in a metapragmatic sense, teaching Maya is much more charged and complex than teaching English; when people talk about English, there is no sense of blame, no sense of personal responsibility being reputed, beyond a few people who emphasize the young people's need to be strongly motivated themselves—reflecting neoliberal ideas of educatedness as a result of individualized motivation and hard work.

Though these accounts are meant to bring speakers to the center of the analysis and recognize their agency, a simplified understanding of them might see them as implying a problematic assigning of responsibility for specific, isolated language choices on individuals, such that there is a sense of blame placed on those who decide not to pass their heritage languages on.

Fieldnotes 1.20.16

Laura said 4 out of 9 employees in her office [a government agency in Tulum] speak Maya. and they [her coworkers] were at her house recently, making food, and those of them that do speak it just randomly started speaking it! and it was very funny and they were laughing and remembering words that they hadn't used for a while. and they said we should do this more often..! and those that don't know it should learn it.

Laura is a gregarious woman in her 40s, a social worker and parent of three teenage children, from a pueblo in Yucatán where her grandparents spoke Maya but her parents spoke to her and her siblings in Spanish. As an adult, she decided she wanted to learn/improve her Maya, and at the time of my fieldwork was fluent and overtly enjoyed using Maya. This group of coworkers who were also friends—whose biographies I'm not familiar with besides Laura—provide an example of how a spontaneous moment of switching to speaking Maya was amusing, but also thought-provoking, providing the opportunity to reflect on their language practices. The fact that they said that they "should do it more often" implies a willingness to make an effort to create moments in which Maya would be spoken, and frames the interactions in Maya as noteworthy and enjoyable.

At the same time, the incident seems to distance the group from Maya, in the sense that it makes speaking Maya into an activity in and of itself, rather than the language being a medium which can be used to facilitate any number of interactions and activities. An interaction can be more than talk for talk's sake, but a point of pride, a form of participation in the idea of Maya as a *lengua materna*. While I do not have the space to explore this further here, I wonder what the social effect is of this shift from language as medium to language as object. The prevalence of talk about using Maya, rather than its unmarked usage, has the metapragmatic effect of making a reflection on speaking as object rather than medium almost inescapable.

We do not know how or when the Maya speakers in the group might take or create the opportunity to have such an entertaining experience again, nor do we hear the reactions of the five out of nine people who did not speak Maya. The comment that "those who don't know [Maya] should learn it" puts a degree of responsibility on that contingent, which invokes their ability to make the choice to learn Maya, like Laura did.

Section 2: *Rescatando maya* (Saving Maya)

Maya revitalization, or *rescate* (saving, rescuing, recovering) as people in Quintana Roo often describe it, is discursively emphasized within institutional and political domains, upheld by some cursory language policies, and promoted by members of *mayerx* communities (and those surrounding them) who have taken on reflexive roles as culturally engaged and proud[35]. The

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[35] Yet a common tension with projects of language revitalization derives from the fact that it is not uncommon that people from outside the community of speakers (including those who don't necessarily consider themselves to be speakers but who have family members/close social relations with people who are), in particular, academics from North American or European universities, come to support, participate in, or even direct such initiatives. With the push for trilingualism in Quintana Roo—as well as Yucatán and Campeche—there are similarly some figures that are arguably less legitimate actors in terms of their relationship to mayerx communities. Franz Bokel is a German anthropologist who promotes trilingualism in Yucatán through a particular immersive elementary and high schools (directed by José Felipe Puc Eb); his academic discourse about this project describes it as an effort to increase the students' metalinguistic awareness, in other words, make their relationships to the languages they speak more explicit and presumably positively impact their sense of developing this trilingual expertise. This project also includes the goal of "fomentando valores, como el respeto, la amistad, la honestidad y responsabilidad" (http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/articulo/estados /2017/06/24/ninos-trilingues-quieren-ayudar-al-desarrollo-de-kimbila)—which resonate with the figure of a cosmopolitan subject, as I discuss further in chapter 3.

movement is well established[36] and already has a history and a hold. It is based primarily in the peninsula, but is transnational in nature, as there are also Maya classes—or if not formal classes, discussions and organizing that address Maya cultural and linguistic conservation—taught in certain parts of the US where there are significant populations of Yucatec migrants (California and Oregon, also Florida and Texas).

One student at UIMQRoo that I heard from in a group interview with her and her classmates[37], responded to my question of whether perceptions of Maya are changing, given the situation of "vergüenza" speaking Maya and usefulness of speaking Spanish and which students cited as the reasons for their parents' generation switching to socializing children in Spanish, that yes, perceptions are changing. *"Actualmente veo mucha interés en la lengua maya, por ejemplo en mi comunidad [veo?] muchas personas que [...] buscan lugares donde pueden hablarla"* [38] (Tsikbal 34). Though it is difficult to get a sense of the scale of the interest this student observes, and we don't know whether or not her position as a UIMQRoo student means she associates more with people who are metapragmatically interested in Maya, this positive assessment of the situation in Quintana Roo is very encouraging from the perspective of *rescatando* Maya.

Spanish sociolinguist Josep Cru gives a comprehensive description of efforts to revitalize Maya in his dissertation, "From Language Revalorisation to Language Revitalisation? Discourses of Maya language promotion in Yucatán**"** (2014)[39]. His main theoretical argument is for a speaker-oriented approach using the analytic of heteroglossia, and taking into account plurilingual, adaptive practices as the norm, rather than the exception or deviation. My analysis complicates the idea of a "speaker-oriented" approach in that it focuses on collective, multi-sited and multimodal discourses in addition to emplaced interactions and speakers' metalinguistic and metapragmatic commentary about them. Heteroglossia and a plurilingual state of affairs are inherent to the trilingual linguistic landscape and ideal that I describe, and as such are not concepts which particularly help to further explicate my argument.

Leaders, strategies, and goals

Cru's ethnographic conclusion regarding the project of Maya revitalization is that "aside from rather timid and tokenistic institutional policies, it is through particular and individualistic efforts that the promotion of Maya is usually undertaken in Yucatán," these manifesting particularly through the use of media, new technologies, and music (2014:194; see Chapter 4 for more on use of media and new technologies). His emphasis on the individual, and the speaker in individualistic terms, as the primary figures in the responses to the changes in language use described above is problematic in that it does not recognize the ways that such "particular and individualistic efforts" are situated within networks of personal and professional social

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[36] Though we've seen that efforts to promote Maya haven't really emerged in tourism contexts, unlike in Louisiana, with Cajun French, for example, where the commercialization of cultural practices is abundant (D'Entremont 2001).

[37] This "focus group" of a sort took place after an English class (?), the professor having kindly offered to end the class early so that I could talk to the students. All of the students were from Quintana Roo or Yucatán and came from families with some Maya speakers.

[38] "Right now I see a lot of interest in the Maya language, for example in my town [I see] a lot of people that [...] are looking for places where they can speak it" (my translation).

[39] Cru finished his dissertation in 2014, after I had already started my project. I had not been aware of him or his work, and when I found it I was surprised and concerned by the similarities with my own project; ultimately, there isn't a lot amount of overlap, and Cru's work provides mine with valuable context.

relationships and emerge from conversations, group chats, discussions on Facebook, classrooms, and the like. The intersubjective nature of the discourses that are expressed by individuals who take on the task of *rescatando* Maya means that any one action cannot be isolated from others, and indicates that a more productive framing sees speaker agency as both shaped by and productive of the collectivities that people take part in on a range of scales and across places which are not necessarily defined by temporal linearity.

Returning to the pragmatic aspects of the Maya revitalization project, there are certainly individuals who have taken on public leadership roles, becoming language activists and sometimes positioning themselves as representatives of the Maya, i.e. a somehow-defined group of people deemed "Maya." There are a variety of conflicts and tensions between leaders and ideas about how to go about the project. The extent to which language policies or institutional support is necessary or sufficient is one topic, and that of what version of Maya to teach, and how, is another that is hotly debated. It is difficult to avoid the presence of such conflicts once one is on the ground in the peninsula.

Below, the late Ana Patricia Martínez Huchim, an esteemed *mayera* anthropologist, Maya teacher, language activist, and writer of poetry, fiction, and children's literature in Maya, points to a lack of Maya leadership in the promotion of Maya, and hints at the need for a collective political approach to revitalization. Ana Patricia was always thoughtful and precise in what she expressed, as well as being open to talking to me and generous with her time[40]. Her own leadership was grounded in her community and her family, and she read her writing aloud to children whenever she could[41]. The following conversation took place in the garden of her house in Tizimin, Yucatán, sitting on a stone wall as we watched birds flit around the trees and flowers.

Fieldnotes 4.7.17

Talking with AP about personalities and leadership in revitalization—a situation of competition, antagonism, egocentrism, asserting that "I created this approach, wrote this, coined this, can best represent this." Her observation was that,

"Mientras los líderes no son mayas, y los mayas no nos unimos, nada va cambiar.
(funcionar, …)"[42]

*"As long as the leaders aren't Maya, and we the Maya don't unite, nothing will change.
(or work, …)"*

And this is very frustrating as an outsider, since there is the possibility and temptation to give a diagnostic and a push — one could look specifically at the various efforts and personalities, and demonstrate how they are related and where they overlap and where the conflicts lie and even perhaps how to overcome those conflicts. But this isn't my place…

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[40] I first met Ana Patricia when I took Maya classes with her in San Francisco in 2013, at the Asociación Mayab, a cultural organization that offers programs and activities oriented towards the Yucatec population in the San Francisco Bay area. Though at the time I spoke limited Spanish, and she spoke limited English, I had a conversation with her then about linguistic purism and the need to engage with communities rather than the academy, which I thought back to often throughout my fieldwork. Hers was a quiet, steady sort of leadership, which inspired reflection as much as action.

[41] Ana Patricia also spoke of a future project she wanted to do with the Yucatecan queer community in the San Francisco Bay area, but was not able to undertake this important work.

[42] I wasn't sure of the exact wording she used as I didn't record this conversation.

Though there are a variety of prominent figures involved in the project that would indeed describe themselves as Maya (some of whom will appear below), Ana Patricia's comment pointed to what she perceived as a disconnect between the narcissistic debates among prominent figures in revitalization, and the community of people, the Maya for instance who she would interact with on a daily basis in Tizimin, who make the project relevant and possible. Her invocation of a united Maya leadership was echoed by other activists I talked to, and I would say is an emergent reality despite the range of tensions and difficulties, especially among younger people taking central roles in the project.

Despite the complications mentioned above, a generally agreed upon goal for the revitalization project is that of maintaining or providing the possibility of an identity that comes with speaking Maya. Those who (continue to) speak Maya have an identity they otherwise wouldn't have, is a common refrain. Rather than focusing on identity categories which people may claim to be, I would emphasize complex subjectivities which people may inhabit, enact, and use to act in the world. That being said, many people in Quintana Roo do feel a Maya identity as directly consequential—speaking a language is an identity in a sense, regardless of whether that identity has any other elements or practical implications for that person. In comparison, learning English usually does not have the same attribution of an inherent identity; English carries a sense of possibility, perhaps, and participation, but not a symbolic naming like speaking Maya and *being* Maya or a *mayerx* or *indígena*. Speaking Spanish is often associated with a Mexican identity, but such a correlation is not emphasized nearly as much as the Maya language-identity link is.

Language revitalization and language education

When most people talk about *rescatando* Maya, though, the practical matter of how people should be learning it is the most salient element—rather than some more identity-oriented observation, or a discussion of value, though these are clearly also present. Questions include: who should learn Maya, where and with what methods, and who should teach such classes? For language activists, this process of teaching and learning is sometimes abstracted from social contexts, idealized, and given the full weight of the success of the project. This is evidenced by the academic and institutional support of formal teaching of Maya in bilingual schools, and in universities, as well as the common citing of published written works in Maya and national recognition of Maya language writers as proof of effective Maya revitalization, since written Maya is almost exclusively taught in academic contexts (Ligorred Perramon 2000).

Education becomes an integral part of plans to revive minority languages, whether in a more embedded sense of socialization, or in contexts of more or less formal education, which may be institutional or community-based (yet still explicitly planned and delineated). And the methodologies, materials, planning, effectiveness, reproducibility, social and cultural embeddedness or relationship to, of language education are consequential topics to understand and produce knowledge and practices about. Additionally, many Maya classes take on the task of teaching cultural knowledge along with the language—a project which easily becomes essentializing and reductive, and may reinforce the common implicit assumption that Maya is appropriate in specifically "cultural" contexts, but not a basic medium the way Spanish is constructed to be.

I think about the differences between language socialization (Baquedano-López 2004) in Maya within the context of families, the primary, and usually seen as ideal, form of intergenerational transmission, and the way Maya is taught and socialized/socializes in formal

teaching within contexts of maintenance and *rescate*[43]. Discourses of loss, though, seem to indicate that the former is less and less realistic, since so many parents have already decided not to speak in Maya to their children, and new generations of parents are not necessarily themselves speakers. In this way, producing trilingualism is increasingly a project which can take place entirely within the sphere of public education—an ambiguous presence in Quintana Roo, in particular historically, since former *Cruzo'ob* pueblos resisted the imposition of state education well into the 20th century, but one which currently is given much prestige and legitimacy. Along with this shift in the context of learning, discussions of strategies of Maya *rescate* are more and more liable to be subject to institutional policing, and neoliberal education reforms.

Institutionalized Maya teaching is highly contested in terms of the version being taught and purist concerns about loanwords and "mixing" with Spanish. The discourses of loss described above are also usually related to a discourse of linguistic purism, since the loss is not just of the language in general, but of a more pure way of speaking it. Standardization is also a critical question in language education, and the standardization of written Maya in particular is the target of resources, debates. Forms of purism and standardization become more tangible when classes are being organized and teachers are making decisions about their pedagogy. Teaching English also involves taking a particular approach, in terms of standard language, emphasis on grammar as opposed to (maybe informal) usage, and other pedagogical questions. Yet there is little public discussion of this, and such decisions aren't usually related between the two projects.

Still, the forms of communicability instilled in the classroom—as the ideal institutional, controlled, evaluable, teaching context—are very similar when it comes to Spanish, Maya, or English. Certain subjects may be legitimate producers, disseminators, and/or receivers of standard language; competency and knowledge of standard language is valuable within schools and universities and the political economic sphere, is abstractable, ownable, and mobile. And semiotic ideology constructs standard language as semiotically productive—able to signify in clear, delineated, structured terms—in a way that nonstandard language is not.

However, at UIMQRoo—where trilingualism is one of the goals of the bachelor's degree program, and all students are required to take Maya and English classes—many students understate, or deny, their competence in Maya when they begin their Maya[44]. After some months taking Maya classes, they end up being more open in claiming knowledge of Maya, and the same students who didn't consider themselves to be speakers, claim their place in the *mayerx* community. The environment at the university seems to affect their relationships to a Maya voice which they were originally reticent to inhabit, and the classroom becomes a space that legitimizes different forms of competence in Maya.

Other visions of *rescatando maya*

Beyond the context of the family, the classroom, or state, national, and international language rights and language policy, are other ways of imagining how Maya might be saved, as we see below. This idea comes from a young *mayero* man (about 20 years old), who works as a boat captain giving tours of the Sian Ka'an and grew up in Chumpom. Mauricio grew up speaking Maya and Spanish, and speaks some English. We had a long conversation one afternoon when he

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[43] I assume the latter to be more objectifying, but Ochs and Schieffelin note that "ordinary apprenticeship into practical logic is not immune to objectifying discourse" (2011:13).

[44] I read surveys meant to evaluate the students' levels of Maya at the beginning of the class, the middle of the semester, and at the end of the semester; these also included the explicit question of "do you speak Maya?" and "do you understand Maya?"

didn't have tours scheduled, here we sat at a table by the waters of the Sian Ka'an canals, with other tour guides, boat captains, and tourists speaking Maya, English, and Spanish in the background:

Mauricio [Tsikbal 8]

(3) *si no pierden la.. si no se olviden que son católicos, sí se puede*
     if (neg.) they lose the if (neg.) (reflex.) forget that they are Catholic yes (passive) it can
     "If they don't lose the.. if they don't forget that they're Catholic, yes, it can be preserved

     conservar, porque hay allá en el libro del... él que- chilam balam, allí dice
     to conserve because there is there in the book of the one that Chilam Balam there it says
     preserved, because there in the book there's… the one that- Chilam Balam, it says

     todo lo que va pasar, el futuro. sí. y ellos, si van y escuchan
     everything it that it goes to happen the future yes and they if they go and they listen
     everything that is going to happen, the future, there. Yes. And they, if they go and listen

     lo que se va leer, se pueden tener miedo, se pueden asustar,
     it that (pass.) it goes to read (reflex.) they can to have fright (reflex.) they can to frighten
     to what is going to be read, they might be scared, they could get frightened

     porque allí dice que... por ejemplo, un castigo, por ejemplo, si no hablas
     because there it says that for example a punishment for example if (neg.) you speak
     because it says there that.. like, a punishment, for example, if you don't speak

     maya. se puede, lo pueden leer en el libro. y ya, a veces..
     Maya (passive) it can it they can to read in the book and already at times
     Maya. They could, they could read about it in the book. And then, sometimes..

     cuando ven que sí pasa, entonces, ya van a tratar de conservar la maya.
     when they see that yes it happens so already they go to to try for to conserve the Maya
     when they see that it does happen, then, they'll definitely try to preserve Maya."

Mauricio's vision was completely different and unique in the context of other conversations I had about the *rescate* of Maya, and how to go about it. The book that he refers to, the Chilam Balam, is deeply embedded in the history of the peninsula, and in the pueblo that Mauricio is from the practice of reading aloud publicly from the book continues. There are a limited number of copies of the Chilam Balam, and the fact of Chumpom having one is a surprise in and of itself (see Hanks 2010 for a thorough discussion). Mauricio is more religious than many other young people I talked to, and had a strong sense of cultural belonging associated with Catholicism, in his case referring to the *Cruzo'ob* variety. He articulated that being Maya to him means being Catholic, practicing certain rituals like *hetzmek* (performed after the birth of a child), and engaging in the prophetic oral tradition of the Chilam Balam.

The *kaj* that he is from, about half an hour inland from Tulum in central Quintana Roo, has its own copy of the Chilam Balam, this being a debated and secretive topic, since there are a limited number of original copies in existence, and they are closely guarded and considered sacred knowledge. Thus, when I brought up the topic of the future of Maya (the phrasing of which I later came to regret), Mauricio's response was rather than talking about what would be lost, to give a solution, one embedded in the sociality of his *kaj:* that the book should tell the people that the future holds a punishment for them if they fail to pass on the Maya language. And since the prophecies of the Chilam Balam hold true in Mauricio's experience—and that of many others who pay attention to such stories—they will know that what the book says would come to pass, and they would be scared, and they would then *"conserver la maya."*

Ideas like Mauricio's point to a more varied set of inspirations and strategies that may be imagined. It is difficult to say at this moment, but perhaps there is increasing agreement of the need to focus on the ultimate goal, the apparently simple idea of *rescatando* Maya, and the need to utilize a variety of strategies to do so.

The politics of language revitalization

A lingering question that underlies my research is: to what extent is the Maya revitalization project political, i.e., explicitly contesting relations of power, particularly as they manifest in scales of governance and political economic formations? This question could be asked of language reclamation projects in general, and in many cases there is an element of decolonial discourse, or resistance in other terms. Faudree argues that in the Mazatec case, what is framed as an apolitical revival project—a Day of the Dead singing contest where songs are presented in Mazatec—ends up having powerful political results (2013:10). She identifies the tension between the "overtly political agenda of revival projects" and "the need to position them as rising above political factions in order to acquire broad appeal" as one of two polarities that "haunt all revival movements" (ibid.). The second is the fact that those who lead revival movements "face the structural paradox that their authority and legitimacy are based on their 'representativeness' with respect to the community at large" while at the same time, "the practical demands of leading revival movements requires them to have skills, take part in activities, and indeed live lives that set them apart as unique." (ibid.).

My experience in Quintana Roo was that politics tended to remain in the background; except for in conversations with *mayerx* academics, I didn't get assertions that speaking Maya makes some sort of statement about postcoloniality or power dynamics, and neither national politics nor more ideological/abstract political debates come up much in conversation. On the other hand, as I explore further in Chapter 3, money and economic prosperity are often there in the background of the *tsikbals*—economics in some sense is described as dictating communication. Accordingly, we might also ask if English teaching is also political, given its role in the political economy of the region, and the potential that changing engagements with tourism might provide in terms of the political legitimacy of forming part of capitalist, neoliberal, transnational enterprises.

In academic circles, it is much more common to hear political assertions associated with the project of the *rescate* of Maya. Yazmin Novelo Montejo describes the displacement of Maya as a phenomenon that *"puede y debe entenderse como el resultado de un colonialismo que ha*

permeado en los niveles sociales, culturales y económicos del pueblo Maya"[45] (2015:iii). This perspective, articulated by a leader in the promotion of Maya, who sings in Maya in her own band based in Merida, is one which articulates a different scale and focus regarding the current state of Maya. It is one in which historical forces are present, and language shift to Spanish is not a neutral occurrence. In Novelo Montejo's frame, English might be described as part of a *neo-colonialismo*. Yet if Maya revitalization, as integral to the trilingual ideal, is a political effort, then the teaching of English might be an act of appropriation rather that capitulation.

Section 3: Learning English, a universal necessity

The presence of English in Quintana Roo and the peninsula more broadly is not just contemporary, a manifestation of political economic transformations, but historical and embedded, part of 20th century conflicts between nation-states and otherwise configured sovereign political entities (see Introduction)[46]. Some of the first "explorers" of the Eastern coast of the peninsula were British, and Maya-English interpreters played central roles in those consequential interactions. There is also a somewhat mythical figure that one hears about, the Maya-English bilingual, in more recent years due to the development of tourism—in particular the earlier years of the 80s and 90s when monolingual Maya speakers, usually men, would travel between Maya-speaking towns and English-dominated transnational economic contexts, especially Cancun. This movement laid the groundwork for the translocalities of Yucatán and Quintana Roo (and Campeche), and such migrants communicated in one place and another, voicing the words and sounds and structures of English along with those of Maya.

Due to migration between the peninsula and the United States (as described in the Introduction), English has another sort of presence in Yucatán, extending to Quintana Roo, as carried back and forth, being represented in transnational communities, and associated with the men and families that have been fortunate enough (in the eyes of many) to move in such a way (Whiteside 2006, 2009). For example, Annie Whiteside (2009) discusses multilingual *mayerx* migrants in California who routinely code switch between Maya, Spanish, and English, though they may not consider themselves properly competent in all three languages (and sometimes not any of them). These people travel back and forth to the peninsula, and will continue to socialize their families and friends into increased familiarity with English, if not language competence as a metalinguistic judgement.

Another example, further to the North and West of where my project focuses, is the internationally renowned archaeological site, Chichen Itza, which was owned by an American businessman before the major work on it began mid-20th century. The money and academic direction for the latter process came primarily from American institutions. English was spoken throughout the reconstruction of the city, and the language inhabits the complex local economy

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[45] "It can and should be understood as the result of a colonialism that has permeated the social, cultural and economic spheres of the Maya people."

[46] Belize is relatively accessible from central and southern Quintana Roo (to the extent that any person/family has the resources to travel further than a few towns away)—now with efficient roads due mostly to tourism, getting to Chetumal (on the border with Belize) is quick and easy. The linguistic landscape of Belize—in particular the northern part of the country—is outside the purview of this dissertation, but is certainly relevant, from the groups of mayerxs who escaped from Caste War violence into Belize, to the influences of pan-Caribbean cosmopolitan-reggae social practices. In some communities in northern Belize, speakers of Maya, Belizean English, Belizean Creole, and Spanish are all copresent.

that surrounds the site. Now, with neoliberal tourism development so important in the region, English's dominance is specific and standardized, one of many Englishes, spatially and temporally mobile.

English as universal

I'd like to note that my privilege of speaking and writing standard American English as my first language extends and is critically important in my ability to produce knowledge about a place and people who don't have easy access to English fluency.

The historical contingencies of English's dominance have to be left aside; it is clear though that there is a direct relationship to the United States' sweeping economic power on a very broad scale. Framed in the neutral language of "globalization," we could say that the influence of American cultural references and forms of power are ubiquitous, affecting emplaced notions of entertainment, music, consumerism, clothing, and political economy, among other things. Within any frame, the proliferation of North American media and ideologies is inextricably related to the medium of such media, i.e. standard American English.

Johnson (2006) argues that the spread of English is a tool of globalization, and notes that the fact that English is used as an instrument of imperialism and modernization doesn't mean that fluency in English provides immediate access to information and power; rather, there are institutional structures, resources, and relationships that affect such a shift in social mobility (Williams 2003). Calling the English language 'universal' or 'global' hides the fact that the use of English 'serves the interests of some much better than others' (Phillipson 2000). In Quintana Roo, English is the most privileged code in terms of the prestige it is assigned as an international, powerful language which is intimately tied to money (especially American dollars). A recognition of the increasing economic importance of English competence is much more obvious than an understanding of the deeper processes of linguistic privilege, operating most consequentially in political economic contexts.

English can alternatively be understood more as tool of neoliberalism, as reforms and agreements such as NAFTA arrived from English-speaking lands, and transnational tourism business enterprises use and expect English. But for some, within the global frame, it is a symbol of "unity" – perhaps a deceptive unity, but a connection nonetheless. The idea of a cosmopolitan subject (especially among young people) is very often related to competence in English, and we may say that the language is metapragmatically positioned as a form of cosmopolitan engagement with certain social worlds, from tourism in Tulum or Playa del Carmen, to academic discussions that happen in English, to online conversations about popular music or viral videos. In Chapter 3 I discuss the relationship between neoliberalism as a particular form of political economic organization and governance, and English as an agent of such neoliberal reforms—which are often not "optional". Then in Chapter 4, I explicate the way English represents a cosmopolitan mode of interaction on social media.

Tourism and the demands of the economy

Tourism development in Quintana Roo is a manifestation of transnational capitalism (by corporations and as adopted by the Mexican state), justified and implemented via neoliberal reforms and governance. The presence and influence of English within that development is seen by some as neutral in that English "just happens to be" the language that has gained global dominance. The need for specific communicative competences is clear and seemingly simple – not only in spoken (and to some extent written) standard (American) English, but in standard

Spanish, and in modes of interaction that fit with a model of business/costumer-oriented/economic interaction. Basically any job related to tourism that implies any amount of interaction with tourists requires at least basic English competency, and it is generally the case that the more English one speaks, the easier it will be to get better paying, and less tiring, jobs. Communicative practices are demanded, then, that align with participation in international spaces, of investors and capital, and also of NGOs, sustainable development, and multicultural education initiatives.

Throughout Mexico (and indeed internationally) the scale and depth of English language teaching, usually starting in elementary schools and continuing for as long as one continues to study, is striking in that it is so naturalized. There exist looming questions about methodology, effectiveness, accessibility; and even more difficult to address, about the socialization implicit in language education, such as the topics used, modes of interaction and mediatization taught, vocabulary and registers highlighted and legitimized, standardization, etc.. English language education becomes vitally important in terms of competence, ability, and access. The salience of planned language education within the context of Maya revitalization is reflected by this, more pressing for many, need for adequate English language instruction.

Education and experiences of English in Quintana Roo

English classes in Quintana Roo public schools begin in middle school (starting at age 11-12) at the latest, and are obligatory throughout high school. Most university programs require some English classes, which according to many students I talked to at UIMQroo and the University of Quintana Roo, their high school classes did not adequately prepare them for. The public education system in the region, especially in the pueblos, has many issues, ranging from lack of resources, to lack of commitment on the part of teachers and inadequate instruction. I heard about teachers in XYatil and surrounding pueblos who would regularly not show up to teach classes for no apparent reason, conveying to students a sense of instability and apathy towards their education. The quality of schools in Jose Maria Morelos, Carrillo, and Tulum is somewhat better, according to students and parents.

Transportation to school, middle and high schools in particular[47], is an issue for families that live in places like XYatil[48]. Sending kids to a high school in Carrillo, for example, might give them a step up in obtaining skills necessary for university or the job market, yet the cost of daily transportation or renting a room in the location of the school is prohibitive for many. Having family members in larger towns and cities thus provides youth with a better chance at a higher quality education, since staying with family members is a very common way of transitioning from living in small pueblos to centers like Tulum, Carrillo, Chetumal, Playa del Carmen, etc. Such networks, which are further extended and solidified by regular movement between translocalities, reassert the importance of learning English, while they also celebrate the culture of the pueblos and express nostalgia for rural life. In addition, spending time in such places like Tulum, Playa del Carmen, and Cancún affords exposure, and thus familiarity to English outside of classes.

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[47] High schools are more specialized in Mexico compared to the system in the United States, and there are considerably less of them than elementary and middle schools. There are fewer middle schools than elementary schools, but the system continues to be extended and is becoming somewhat more accessible for students.

[48] One solution to this problem has been a state policy in rural areas of Mexico of *telesecundarias* and *telebachilleres*, which are middle and high schools with classes given via satellite. Some students have positive experiences with these schools, while others suffer from further decontextualized education and the lack of copresent interaction with teachers.

A consequence of these circumstances, combined with the fact that few English teachers in public schools grew up speaking English, means that few students leave high school or even university with a comfortable level of English, especially spoken. Students say that understanding English in writing is easier, since classes usually focus more on reading and writing skills than oral skills (beyond presenting memorized oral presentations). This is also helped by the prevalence of memes, hashtags, and other instances of English on social media. Yet the English required for jobs in tourism is quite often precisely not written, but spoken, and here students feel the insecurity of discomfort and inexperience with interactions with fluent English speakers. They may characterize their English level as low, categorizing themselves as non-speakers, despite having spent upwards of six years (or ten for those who attend university) studying the language. This is not just a self-assessment, but a conclusion reached by employers and other more privileged Mexicans.

A friend of mine who is a professor of English at UIMQroo talked to me about her journey from her initial interest in the language, to becoming a teacher of it—which had not been her plan. Ana grew up in Jose Maria Morelos; her parents spoke to her in Spanish (they also grew up there, though were originally from Yucatán) and she grew up speaking it, with some exposure to Maya but not really learning to speak. She told me that when she was in middle school a friend gave her a tape with songs by Mexican band Molotov, who sings in Spanish and are known for their provocative, strong language. Ana's mother disapproved, and wouldn't let her listen to the tape (much less because she was a girl), so Ana traded it for a tape of English songs. Songs such as "How Deep is Your Love," "Take On Me," and "Hotel California" enchanted her: *"me enamoré de esas canciones […] y digo, quiero aprender inglés para saber qué dice en esas canciones"*[49] (Tsikbal 3). She studied hard in high school, and when she entered the University of Quintana Roo she continued studying and improving, and *"lo primero que hago, descargo las canciones en inglés, y a traducir, y a cantar, y todo."*[50] As she put it, music was her impulse, and being able to download mp3s was important to her exploration of music in English, which she always learned the lyrics to, translating them and understanding them—*"nada más por saber inglés, no?"*[51]— fulfilling her childhood dream.

Yet the process was not easy, as Ana related to me how when she arrived at university, *"me fui con un nivel de inglés aquí muy bajito, lo básico"*[52] – this was the level her high school education in Jose Maria Morelos provided her with. She found that her classmates in university English classes had a higher level, as they had had high school educations with an emphasis on English, in Chetumal. This was frustrating and she found herself at a disadvantage, prompting her to take an extra English course outside her university classes, which she would go to for ten hours a week, in addition to an additional eight hours of remedial conversation groups at the university.

Ana also went to her professors to ask for help, explaining that she was having difficulty. In addition, she borrowed books in English from the library, like Agatha Christie novels which she enjoyed, steadily improving her reading skills. By her fifth semester, she felt more confident and had reached the level of her classmates: "I try hard, yeah, I read some books, I took extra classes, some extra classes, and then I got to the same level." But the next year they were assigned an English teacher from England, which Ana explained, *"era así la muerte"* ("it was like death"). After studying American English since middle school, the dedication she had shown in extra

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[49] "I fell in love with those songs […] and I said, I want to learn English so I can know what the songs say."
[50] "the first thing I do, I download songs in English, and translate, sing, and everything."
[51] "just because you know English, you know?"
[52] I left here [i.e. left her high school] with a very low of English, just the basics."

classes and practice, suddenly she found herself in classes with a professor who she had difficulty understanding, and who considered her English to be incorrect. This applied to her classmates who had entered the program better prepared, and seems like a blatant oversight on the part of the program administrators.

Ana went to speak to the professor, explaining that she could understand American English perfectly, she could watch a movie and understand all of it, but British English was pronounced in a way she couldn't understand. The professor reassured Ana that she could pass the class, *"pero tienes que estudiar, me dice"*[53]—giving Ana extra books and audio recordings. After two months of solid studying, Ana passed the exam. After that, the rest of the program was comparatively easy, *"fue muy… este, gratificante. Me gusto mucho porque lo que quería, lo tuve"*[54][55].

This whole story bears relating because it demonstrates in detail the additional time, money, and effort that Ana had to commit to learning English, not having entered university with the communicative privilege of her peers. Then when she finally felt confident in her abilities, a British English professor arrived to assert the incorrectness of American English—even though it is overwhelmingly the version of English taught and spoken in Mexico, and justifiably so—an example of how prescriptive Standard British English proports to be the standard of all standards, the only truly proper and correct version of English. The British professor enforced her own communicative privilege in a situation in which her position was ostensibly one of responsible instruction.

In Quintana Roo, English is expected in certain places, and comes more or less naturally to certain people. A college student starting the *"Lengua y Cultura"* focused bachelor's degree in education program at the Escuela Normal[56] explains this below. At the time of this recording she was 19 years old; she was born in Cancún and later went to live in Felipe Carrillo Puerto. Her father is from a pueblo in Quintana Roo and speaks Maya, and her mother is from Chiapas and does not. Here she explains her relationship to English and Maya:

Education student A [Video tsikbal 7]

(4)   *yo no sé hablar maya, tengo una muy mala pronunciación*
       I (neg.) I know to speak Maya I have a   very bad   pronunciation
       "I don't know how to speak Maya, I pronounce Maya very badly,

       para la maya, creo que se vea como crecí en Cancún, es
       for the Maya I think that (passive) it sees as I grew up in Cancún it is
       I think that you can tell since I grew up in Cancún, it's

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[53] "but you have to study, she says."

[54] "it was very… um, gratifying. I liked it a lot because what I wanted, I got."

[55] Ana went on to do a master's degree in English education, and to teach at UIMQroo, in addition to creating a program for the study of English with a specialization in uses for technology related fields. She was prompted to work on this program because the students leaving the college only had five semesters of English, and *"nada mas saben [lo?] básico […] no pueden hacer, por ejemplo, una presentación"* – so she wanted to help them so that *"al menos que sepan hacer su curriculum, que pueden hacer un a presentación, que puedan hablar, por ejemplo, de las partes de la computadora"*.

[56] Part of a federal system of colleges that focuses on training teachers.

un contexto de hablar   en ingles. *entonces cuando intento   hablar   ingles*
a   context   of to speak in English so   when I try   to speak   English
a context where you speak English. So when I try to speak English

me   sale   bien, pero con maya, como que me   confunden   esas
to me it comes well   but with Maya   like   that to me they confuse   those
it sounds good, but with Maya, like those pronunciations confuse me,

pronunciaciones, como intento   pronunciar   en maya y   no   me   sale.
pronunciations   like   I try   to pronounce in Maya and (neg.) to me it comes
like I try to pronounce [something] in Maya and it doesn't sound good.

creo   que   entiendo   algunas palabras y   frases… con   ingles   puedo
I think that   I understand some   words   and phrases… with   English I can
I think I understand some [Maya] words and phrases… With English I can

*decir que sé   lo básico, pero no   me   di   cuenta que **ya   me***
to say that I know the basic   but (neg.) to me I gave account that already to me
say that I know the basics, but I didn't realize that I had already

había apropiado de esa lengua *más o menos hasta que entré a la normal*[57]
I had   appropriated of that language more or less   until   that I entered to the normal
appropriated the language more or less until I started at the Normal."

Though her father speaks Maya and is from a pueblo in central Quintana Roo, and her mother is from another part of Mexico where it is common for people to speak an Indigenous language, this young woman grew up in a place where she sees English to be more present, a "context where you speak English," and more inculcated in her—though she didn't even realize the extent of her knowledge of English until she entered college. For her, English *"le sale bien"* ("comes easily to her")*,* and she had a substantially easier time in the higher level English classes than other students who had grown up, like her father, in *pueblos*. This student's classmates also perceived her in a particular way because of her having grown up in Cancún; in fact, her nickname was *"la turista"* ("the tourist"). This shows how growing up in the presence of English proved effective for this young woman, in a way that English classes would likely not have been. I would compare this to someone who grows up in a *mayerx* community not realizing that *"ya se había apropiado de esa lengua"* ("they had already appropriated that language")–but the desire to claim competency of English for some would be more prestigious.

I was surprised by how uniform the desire to learn English was when I spoke to people who grew up in the *Zona Maya*, as well as Mexicans from other parts of the country. While I expected most people to want to learn it, I thought there would be exceptions, especially for young people who express anti-American and anti-neoliberal political views. I can only pinpoint one example of someone who had a resistance to learning Spanish, my interlocutor Maria, who is a

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[57] The *Normal* is how the students refer to the college they intend.

Maya advocate of linguistic and cultural rights, and a professor, filmmaker, and writer. She grew up in a pueblo near Carrillo and at a fairly young age gained institutional support for her interest in promoting her culture and language: she won a prestigious *Concurso de Oratorio* (oratory competition) in Maya competition, and joined the *Academia de la Lengua Maya.*

In a long *tsikbal* I had with Maria, she told me that when she was at university, she didn't want to learn English. In her words, *"si no es una lengua mía, para qué lo voy a aprender?"*[58]— implying an ideological rejection of the idea that English is a neutral, universal code. Later, however, she decided that it is important to learn English, *"por donde estámos"* ("because of where we are"), it being a necessity (Tsikbal 23). She worked a few jobs in tourism, and ended up staying in (anglophone) Canada for a few months, in an academic capacity, which she said she enjoyed. She mentioned continuing to use her English by maintaining friendships, which she clearly valued, with people she met there over Facebook. Maria's relationship to English shifted over the course of different ideological, education, and personal stages of her life. The fact that she ends up with a positive association with English, as a language that allows her to keep up friendships with people who are far away, speaks directly to the sense of cosmopolitanism associated with English that I discuss in Chapter 3.

Section 4: Visions of trilingualism in Quintana Roo: *"a la gente les gusta"*

I return now to the broader discourse of trilingualism that brings together Maya, Spanish, and English into one frame, positing a hopeful vision of a trilingual present and future. The perspectives I include below demonstrate how people express their versions of this vision. Additionally, one question that I asked during my tsikbals was what my interlocutor's ideal system of language education in public schools would be, that is, what languages they thought should be taught in elementary, middle, and high schools, starting at what age, in what manner.

This topic also emerged frequently in (non-recorded) conversations around language, and as such, was a productive way to elicit thoughts on trilingualism. Most people talked about children learning all three languages, the majority saying that they thought both English and Maya should be formally taught in schools, often mentioning that the earlier these classes started, the better. Some put more emphasis on the importance of English, some on Maya; while a few people didn't think it would be necessary to teach Maya in schools, unsurprisingly, no one disagreed with the idea that English should be taught in the classroom. Thus, the tsikbals cited below also demonstrate a perspective that posits a trilingual model of education, and expresses a hope for children to have access to Spanish, Maya, and English.

Mauricio, who we heard from above, responded to my question about language education, giving these thoughts:

Mauricio [Tsikbal 8]

(5) *ma'alob*   *káa*   *chúunuk*   *uka'ansa'al*   *le*   *mejen*   *paalalo'ob*
     neg-Adj   Prt   Vb   Pro3-Vb-Psv   DNOM   Adj   N-pl.
     (it is) not bad   that   begin   s/he taught-be   the   small   children
     "It would be good for them to begin to teach the small children

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desde   tuchichnilo'ob   káa   u   kano'ob   u   t'aano'ob   je'ex
Prep   Prt-Pro3-N-pl.   Prt   Pro3   Vb-pl.   Pro3 Vb-pl.   Prt
from   they-are-small   that   they   learn   the   languages   as
starting when they are little so that they learn the languages, which are

*le   maayaj,   español   yéetel   le   ingles.   **tumen**   **chéen***
DNOM   N   N   Prep   DNOM   N   Prt   Adv
the   Maya   Spanish   with   the   English   because   then
Maya, Spanish, and English. That way when

nojochlako'oobe'   ma'   toop   ken   u   yilo'ob tumen   u   kanmo'ob t'aan   je'en
Adj-Vb-pl.-TD   Neg   N   Prt   Pro3 V-pl.   Prt   Pro3 Vb-pl.   Vb   Prt
big-(future)   (neg.) difficulty when   they see   because they learn   to speak any
they grow up they won't have any difficulties and that way they can talk to

***máax   yéetele'**.   tak   yéetel   máako'ob   náach   u   taalo'obe'   ju'   kanko'ob*
N   prep-TD   Prt   Prep   N-pl.   Adv   Pro3   Vb-pl.-TD   Cert-Pro3   V-pl.
person   with-them   even with   people   far   they   come   they-will be able they speak
whoever. Even with people who come from far away, they'll be able to

t'aan   yéetele'   ju'   na'atik   ba'ax   ken   u   ya'ale'...
Vb   Prep   Cert-Pro3 V-(Pro3)   N   Prt   Pro3   Vb-TD
speak   with   they will understand   what   that they   say
talk to them because they'll understand what they say…"

In this vision, Mauricio emphasizes the fact that if children received a trilingual education from a young age, later in life they wouldn't face difficulties since they would be able to talk to "whoever". The three languages encompass any theoretical interlocutor that the next generation might have, projecting an imagined future as well. The youth would be able to communicate with people who come from far away, in particular because they would understand what is being said to them, then being able to speak.

I heard this repeated many times—when people considered potential interactions, there was first an emphasis on being able to understand English, or Maya, rather than being able to speak them. This may seem unremarkable, but it posits possible interactions in terms of the other interlocutor speaking first, and the *mayerx* being in the position to respond, implying a positionality of listener rather than speaker. In the case of English, this corresponds to jobs in the tourism industry, where they would likely be listening to a tourist rather than initiating an interaction: taking a food order, hearing a hotel guests' complaint, answering questions about a tour, and the like.

Alternatively, or additionally, the emphasis on listening and understanding demonstrates a metapragmatic understanding of interaction with unfamiliar people in which value is placed on attention to the circumstances and what is expressed by one's interlocutor before asserting oneself. This is not a passive role, but rather relates to the *mayerx* communicative practice of letting conversations emerge out of one's silence, rather than following opening utterances as would be common in Spanish or English.

Here is a comment from Diana, who is fully bilingual in Maya and Spanish and speaks some English, having grown up in Chumpom, and having a job at the tour cooperative. She said that *"le gusta a la gente de acá que hablan maya y también hablan otras idiomas. Por ejemplo acá, [two coworkers], ellos saben español, maya, ingles - a la gente les gusta"*[59] (Tsikbal 12). People have a positive reaction to the phenomenon of *mayerxs* who also speak other languages, presumably this "other" language not including Spanish, as competence in Spanish is assumed. While she could have given herself as an example, Diana gives the example of coworkers of hers that are trilingual, this being something that *"a la gente les gusta."*

Trilingualism is presented as not only practical and valuable, but an ability that is affectively pleasing. She specifies that this is true of the people *"de acá"*, so from Quintana Roo, observing an imagined community member, that would appreciate that someone can speak Maya as well as another language—note that it is not simply that they appreciate people who are multilingual. The example of the coworkers is indicative in that this is the case that is on hand, the case she refers to being people who she could literally point to (they were also at the office at the time when we were there talking, though not necessarily within earshot). The immediate surround provided an instantiation of the vision that *mayerxs* have of a trilingual speaker, a model but also, in this case, a reality.

Conclusion: Maya and English – similar but different

A further complication of the trilingual pragmatic and metapragmatic landscapes I have introduced here is the fact that English and Maya have a complex perceived affinity, one which I think resonates with a historical relationship between the two languages. I argue, with Melissa Elbez below, that this affinity is indicative of contemporary social realities, despite what some argue as the unsubstantiated nature of the similarity.

In casual conversations about Maya, as well as in *tsikbals,* it was very common for people to bring up this similarity, saying that there are words that are similar in the two languages, and/or the grammar is similar (usually referring to word order), and/or that the pronunciation is similar, and that it is easier to learn English if one speaks Maya, and vice versa. A possible instantiation of this comes from Whiteside, who notes that bilingual Maya-Spanish children in San Francisco learn English faster than monolingual Spanish speakers (2009), though this could also be attributed to the fact that multilingual children in general learn additional languages more easily than monolingual ones.

Eventually I would occasionally ask about this Maya-English similarity, since I heard it mentioned so often, but usually I would not be the one to bring it up. I would often end up giving my opinion on the matter, even though I didn't really want to—sometimes a compulsive honesty takes over me—saying that "I don't find them to be very similar, since I have been trying to learn Maya for years and still find it extremely difficult!"

Fieldnotes 5.17.17

I had an interesting conversation with the taxi driver who took me from Morelos to XYatil - he told me unsolicited that he loves the way english sounds, asked me where I'm from, said, he likes listening to music in English, in general he likes the way it sounds, and that's why he's trying to

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[59] "People here like it when [someone] speaks Maya and also other languages. For example, here, [two coworkers], they know Spanish, Maya, and English—people like that."

learn. he used it and heard it spoken in his job at Dreams (I believe) Tulum [a resort]*... he's from Peto but grew up in some other town - and next door growing up there was a church, a protestant church — and there was a family and kids that lived/were there that didn't speak Spanish, and he remembers hearing them speak English and he was fascinated by it and liked it.* […]

He speaks Maya and grew up speaking it; but doesn't write or read (though easier than writing) much - never had any support in schools. I asked if he speaks maya now with family and friends - he said "sí, igual tengo compañeros en el trabajo que me hablan en maya, y los contesto" *- which I've heard a number of times, as an alternative it seems to someone speaking to them in maya and them answering in spanish or having some other reaction - not answering?* […]

He gave me the hole – jool example [the two words having the same meaning in the two languages and being pronounced basically the same way] *of the Maya-English affinity, and some other one too. He said there are various similarities, a particular type of similarity - I wish I had a recording of that wording in particular, in addition to the many other iterations I've heard of it. but it's a topic that often comes up in those initial conversations which aren't recorded—cause there's something about the way that the two languages are similar…*

But there's no real consensus on that point [what exactly the similarity is]. *but there is consensus, among many, of there being something about the two that makes speaking of them together already a topic — it's already a thing.*

> *Would there be any similar relationship between another Indigenous language in Mexico and English? Or in Latin America in general? And what about other places where a local language is being displaced by a dominant language other than English — but English has a presence as well.*

This informal conversation with a taxi driver illustrates many of my thoughts around the Maya-English affinity. I would argue that the Maya-English similarity is socially legitimate and socially meaningful; the fact is that people must perceive the similarity in some sense, otherwise the discourse wouldn't exist, and the presumption to be able to say that that similarity doesn't exist depends on an implicit disregard for and delegitimization of the experience and perception of those people. I also see this discursive similarity as further supporting the trilingual ideal, and the construction of a trilingual subject who has a particular set of affordances for being in the world. Despite the fact that there is debate around the similarity—other people told me that they didn't believe it, especially academics—as I say, "it's already a thing."

Anthropologist Melissa Elbez has also published on this topic; she describes interactions very similar to ones I had, though she didn't speak Maya, while I spoke some. She explains that during her fieldwork in Tulum, which was only a few years before mine, *mayerxs* (my translation of the original Spanish):

> "had a theory according to which the Maya and English languages are very similar, establishing a sense of closer proximity, given my position as a foreigner.
> […]
> I wondered about the reasons for this adherence, widely shared among the 'mayeros' of Tulum, to the idea of a resemblance between Maya and English, and about the interest they have in believing it. Regarding this, I formulated two hypotheses. On one hand, from an interactional perspective, I deduced from the above observations that calling oneself 'mayero' allowed certain Maya speakers in Tulum to highlight the sociocultural capital endowed by their bilingualism in the local touristic context, and to claim a non-

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exclusive identity, simultaneously local, national and open to the world, thanks to which they were comfortably located in the cosmopolitan space of the city. On the other hand, from a historical perspective, it is possible to see this tendency to relate the Maya and Spanish languages as an inheritance from the recent epoch in which the macehualo'ob [archaic term for *"indio"* or *"maya"*] rebels wanted to be English, and a reaffirmation of the bond that ties them to their compatriots who moved to Belize." (2017:54-55)

I think this is a solid and nuanced analysis[60], and for the most part I agree with Elbez's take, which points to history, multilingualism, and cosmopolitanism as underlying the Maya-English likeness. The non-exclusive identity that she describes is similar to the emergent linguist-political positioning of the trilingual, emplaced, cosmopolitan subject that I describe here. However, historical literature and oral histories do not support the claim that the rebels "wanted to be English," but there was a clear proximity to and exposure to the English language during the Caste War, more so for those who moved further away from it across the border to Belize, which would resonate with the idea that English is similar to Maya given an association of proximity with a likeness which is oppositional to Spanish, the language of the enemy.

Utopia

Fieldnotes 4.2017
[at a café in Merida, I was having a conversation with a friend, a Yucateca scholar about Maya, English, and related topics]
An older man, tall and white looking, interrupts us to say he couldn't help but overhear. and how inspiring for the children (thinking we're teachers planning for classes, I guess) — "usted la maestra que habla español, ingles, maya y la maestra de ingles [me] *que habla español muy bien"[61], and how these children will have such immense potential with the three languages on hand.*

UTOPIA — [my friend, after the above interruption] *says and says again - realizable - we have to dream, if not nothing will change.*

Idealized trilingualism, though here framed as a realizable dream, once again emerges as a response to the contemporary political-economic-social conditions in Quintana Roo. Through interactions with academics such as myself, through the practicalities and embodied experiences of teaching and learning, through everyday translation, and through ideas of educatedness and alternative educational paradigms – the presence of Maya, Spanish, and English in the lives of mayerxs in Quintana Roo is realized. Metapragmatic models of linguistic privilege and marginalization operate on all three languages in different ways, yet each holds the promise of a voice to embody, and might provide access to political, institutional, or collective sites of inclusion and participation. In the most optimistic terms, a trilingual utopia is within reach.

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[60] Imagine my surprise when I found this article, published in 2017, after I had started writing my dissertation, and expressing things *quite* similar to what I had thought and even begun to write about myself. I appreciate the fact that my ideas are reflected in Elbez's work, since I find it to be rigorous, and it indicates that I am picking up on themes that others deem worthy of space and thought.

[61] "You, the teacher who speaks Spanish, English, and Maya and the English teacher who speaks Spanish very well."

Chapter 2: **Embodied voices and emerging forms of communicative privilege**

Having established what metapragmatic forces shape perceptions of Spanish, Maya, and English and produce the trilingual ideal, I turn now to forms of privilege and inequity that are also produced by the combination of Spanish-Maya-English voices. The marginalizing effects of the trilingual ideal can be described in terms of the political economic structures that to some extent dictate people's lives in Quintana Roo, as I discuss in Chapter 3, or as lived aspects of their day-to-day—whether as the production and circulation of such discourse, or its consequences. By attending to instantiations of various voices, we move to focus more on smaller scale interactions and experiences, though these can also always be related to the circulating metapragmatic discourses previously discussed. Further along in this chapter, I turn to the way people experience communication as a source of pride, pleasure, and connection, which comes as a counterpoint to the way that differential access and a strong sense of linguistic authority make people less likely to feel comfortable or capable in the moment when a particular voice might be desirable or necessary. Like my other work, this chapter is meant to be a critique, and a space of listening to creativity and recognizing potential. Quintana Roo, a land of contrasts, provides contradictory, simultaneous, mutually constituting arguments.

Section 1: Voices and Access

When I talk about 'voice,' I hope to access collectivity in a particular way, thinking about how sets of communicative practices—which may not line up with how a language is conceptualized—are constituted intersubjectively in immediate, emergent ways. Voice is also a way to understand what is absorbed and socialized in language education – as opposed to "English," or "Maya" per se. When the subtleties of what it means to be a speaker, what sort of Maya one speaks, what degree of competence of English one can claim, become so complex, we can turn to the analytic of the voice to describe a potential form of expression that can be described as 'Maya' or 'Spanish' (Hill 1995; Keane 2000).

That is to say, a (standard American) English voice encompasses usages like brief insertions of English words or phrases in Spanish conversation (which have an affective effect), in addition to completing English class assignments, or having a conversation with a tourist in a restaurant. Similarly with Spanish and Maya**,** voice can refer to a wide variety of usages, which are not as constrained by metapragmatic discourses that delimit legitimate language production, entextualization, mediatization and circulation. In this way, rooted trilingualism implies a form of communicability through access to voices that get detached from relations of hierarchy, and which display semiotic potential beyond the academic, institutional, standardized ideological norms.

Acquiring voices also implies the acquisition of media practices; while voice is typically understood as oral, it is actually constantly transformed and mediatized. The communicative practices that are in a broader sense the target of Maya revitalization and English teaching always incorporate certain forms of mediatization, from the obvious—writing—to less typical, more emergent forms, such as live streaming a video of a presentation or language study group. There are specificities of how the voice manifests across scales, media, and subjectivities that are simultaneously constraining and creative, liberating and enclosing.

The collectivities that distinct voices index are not fixed, nor would necessarily be recognized as such by all their members. In this sense my analysis here is meant as explanatory

and critical, but not necessarily presented in terms that my interlocutors use themselves. That being said, a consideration of collectivities as constituted by and accessible via voices is well substantiated by ethnographic material (as demonstrated below), and is useful in identifying the ways communicative practices can be liberating or marginalizing, sources of hope while they are also sources of symbolic violence.

Theories of the voice

Theories of the voice are a way to describe the embodiment of multilingualism and what it means to be a speaker, and how different voices provide different opportunities and are available to specific (inter)subjects and collectivities. I use voice as an analytic because it recalls the materiality of language, it is a way to talk about collective expressions, and it is also useful in talking about media practices and different forms of communication, without talking about 'language' per se – since there are questions about who is a speaker, like what speaking Maya means, or whether using short phrases in English means one speaks English, or using memes or making music in a particular language. These instances are better described as embodiments of voices,[62] which are inherently social and contextualized.

What I use 'voice' to mean might alternatively be described by a (socio)linguist or linguistic anthropologist as a form of language, style, or register. Michael Halliday introduced the notion of registers as emerging from speakers' 'value judgements' about linguistic form (1964), and around the same time William Labov began his foundational approach of studying variation in language use as ideologically hierarchized and indexical of social status (1966, 1972), ideas which continue to inspire. Building on this tradition, Asif Agha develops an elaborate theoretical framework which includes a definition of registers as "culture-internal models of personhood linked to speech forms" that emerge when perceptions of sameness and difference in language use are repeatedly mapped onto sameness or difference between participant roles and relations (2007:135-136). He goes on to describe "enregistered styles" as patterns of semiotic co-occurrence in interaction which are "reflexively endogenized to a register model" and "given distinctive forms of metapragmatic treatment in use" (186). Yet the multiples senses that voice carries make it more nuanced and useful, in that it encompasses the theoretical sense of expressive (inter)subjectivity; the physical, literal sounded voice (which is theoretical in its own way); and the mediatized voice, which emerges on social media and via writing, texting, audio recordings, videos, and the like.

The voice, then, is prototypically both individual and social, as Mikhail Bakhtin argued with his work on intertextuality and heteroglossia; it can sound exactly like someone else, its imitative power is insurmountable, yet it can also identify the speaker instantaneously. Linguistic anthropologist Jane Hill takes inspiration from Erving Goffman and Bakhtin—whose sense of voice she calls "a positive energy, a point of view" (1986:101)—in her influential work which posits "a system of 'voices' as the site of consciousness and subjectivity in discourse" and which links stance and stylistic variation to more stable figures or positions that manifest across interactions (109). The search for a stable subject and true self in discourse proves evasive, as Hill

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[62] In his lecture "The Voice and Modern Media," John Durham Peters identifies five central ways that the voice has been conceptualized and studied (2004). These include voice as: a metaphor of power; a medium of communication; a vehicle of aesthetic expression; a physical organ; and a site of desire. Notions of subjectivity and personhood are bound up in the ontological status of the voice. This is popularly expressed in tropes of "having a voice" as equated with having status, power, an identity, the ability to express oneself and have an individualistic position in the world (Brown xxxx).

argues that intertextuality and the polyphonic play of the voices available within a communicative setting constitute the sense of authorship that emerges in expressive subjectivity.

Webb Keane's reading of Hill focuses on the productivity of tensions between voices, where "voice forms a connection between general aspects of intersubjectivity, detailed features of interaction, and the historical specificity of moral communities" (2011:166). Part of becoming (moral) selves is the process of moving between voices; "to the extent that the self is drawing on voices or the materials for potential voices in the surround, *it may be discovering something about itself and its social context* through its encounter with the figures those voices embody" (175, emphasis added). Keane argues that focusing on voice "gives empirical substantiation to the theoretical proposition that speakers are not unified entities, and their words are not transparent expressions of subjective experience" (2000:271). Keane also reminds us that in his sense, the voice is not personal and is distributed across speakers, as opposed to heteroglossia, where multiple voices are embodied in one speaker. Further, the figures drawn upon in the play of voices do not have to be copresent; in this way he points to the possible mediatization of voices and the sites of tension between them.

Lastly, Hill, Keane, and other scholars note that we can't always control the reception of a voice—its intention is not only determined by the one doing the voicing, but rather it is subject to structures of power and authority that shape its reception and interpretation. In Bourdieu's terms, voice is a symbolic resource, which like other resources, is not equally distributed. Engaging in a field, or using a voice, means taking a position, being obligated (unconsciously) to act according to that position, and being shaped by it. Speakers must acquiesce to the standard as a way to avoid symbolic domination, themselves upholding that system (Bourdieu 1991). Social hierarchy is transposed onto "stylistic hierarchy" of styles, registers, varieties, and using authorized language reinforces the hierarchy of authority in the social field, while being legitimized as a speaker means upholding structures of power (Hanks 2005:76). In this sense, among others, the analytic of "voice" also recalls that of "stance," which Alexandra Jaffe emphasizes as being not fully controlled by the subject, but rather also continuously being attributed to them (2009).

In what follows I build from these formulations to develop a deeper understanding of how moments in which one feels, asserts, or is perceived as a "speaker" of one type or another can be seen as instantiations of a range of voices that are uniquely expressive and provide a phenomenological form of access to political-linguistic subjectivities and collectivities.

Embodiments and mediatizations of voice

There are emergent and creative ways of inhabiting and mediatizing Maya, Spanish, and English voices. Here I'm using voice in both a literal and a theoretical sense, referring to the embodied experience of speaking a language, in addition to the subjectivities and social-political positions invoked by the figure of Maya/Spanish/English voices. An example of an embodied voice would be a young person from Quintana Roo who uses urban Mexican slang as a way to momentarily participate in a collective form of expression that constitutes an intersubjective way of being—young, irreverent, relevant, funny. Also possibly macho, aggressive, disruptive. At a bar in Tulum[63], *mayero* young men sometimes used Maya with one another, though they did not all have the same level of Maya usage and some felt more comfortable than others, and also used Mexican Spanish slang, both with other Mexicans who worked there who were from Guadalajara

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[63] I observed this establishment many times, at different times of day over the course of a year and a half, and knew most of the staff personally.

and Mexico City as well as among themselves. While the other Mexican employees mostly came from more privileged backgrounds and as such would not in their daily lives use slang very often (according to what I observed in conversations among them), the use of words and expressions associated with urban Mexican culture on the part of the mayeros indicated their familiarity and participation in a social group (those who grew up using Mexican slang) that is in some ways very distance from their own upbringings and daily lives.

Another instance would be a student who studies English, who can join a collectivity of English speakers with the use of a few words, even if such a group is imagined on a very broad scale, as global. This practice is particularly salient on social media, as I lay out in chapter 4. The English voice invokes certain words that have to do with popular culture, and using a phrase or a reference to a song or tv show or meme, is also a shared experience in the grounded sense that it is learned from others in informal ways, via writing or other media.

Or by saying "thank you" in local Maya with a reasonably accurate pronunciation, I can include myself in a collectivity of people who have been socialized into using local Maya as opposed to an academic, purist version. Learning a language and set of communicative practices involves learning how to inhabit new voices, which are embodied, mediatized, and subject to standards and abstractions. Such voices are collectively semantically constituted. For me and for my interlocutors, this is an ongoing process, not least because the voice is ambiguous and impossible to pin down, as it's source is unknowable, and as it is always partly the voice of the Other (Dolar 2006).

In central Quintana Roo, then, one can identify a range of distinct voices, ways of communicating that are referenced, appropriated, taught, privileged, embodied, and employed. When I present such descriptions, they are a combination of my assessments and discursive representations which I would not use myself—in particular as regards perceptions of the "correctness" of different usages. Accordingly, Spanish may be differentiated between Standard Mexican Spanish, Youth Mexican Spanish, Yucatec Spanish, and Zona Maya Spanish. The Standard voice would be appropriate in academic, business, mass media, and political spheres, is highly standardized, and involves a specific set of correct grammar and written language.

Most conversations I had at UIMQRoo and in other academic contexts took place using this voice, and students especially when they were being recorded were highly aware of speaking in a proper way. It's use implies the prevalent usage of formalities like *"buenos días"* and *"permiso,"* and polite bodily comportment, though appropriately friendly, such as a cheek kiss as greeting between women or a woman and man; a handshake between men – even if the people do not have a close social relationship.

Youth Mexican Spanish derives in particular from marginalized populations in Mexico City and other cities in the central part of the country; it includes a wide variety of strong language and swear words, may be gendered as masculine, and is used in Quintana Roo by young people in high school and university to index a connection to pop culture and an irreverent attitude. In central Mexico, heavier use of this voice is interpreted as an indicator of lower economic status, and is regarded as uneducated and inappropriate[64]. In the peninsula, parents in *mayerx* communities are disapproving of this register when their hear their children use it, and I never heard anyone older than the age of ~30 use it. There are vocal features and different greetings and bodily comportments that go along with its usage. In the final chapter we see examples of this variety as displayed on

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[64] This is my observation after having lived in Mexico City and traveling in the surrounding areas for two years, having met people from a range of economic backgrounds and heard evaluations of different ways of speaking Spanish.

Facebook and Instagram; I do not have many recordings in which people spoke this way, since it occurs more in the context of joking with friends, drinking and eating, and the like.

Yucatec and Zona Maya Spanish are similar, but the former—as would be heard in Merida and throughout the northwest side of the peninsula—reflects generations of interplay between Maya and Spanish, incorporating certain Maya words and displaying a distinctive accent which is often the target of derision among Mexicans from other parts of the country. The latter also shows influences from Maya, and more pervasive ones, as it derives from/is the Spanish spoken as a second language by *mayerxs*. Zona Maya Spanish is considered uneducated and unsophisticated by speakers that use any of the other Spanish voices on a predominant basis. Transcripts 1-3, 5, and 7-9 are examples of this variety, while 4 and 6 are example of Yucatec Spanish —the contours of the differences between them being difficult to portray in a written transcript. Subtle differences in pronunciation, grammar, and some lexical items which were not relevant to the conversations.

Maya voices can be heuristically divided into Standard Pure Maya (*jach maaya* [true Maya]) and Local Maya (*xe'ek maaya* [mixed Maya]), where the former comes from academia and academic public institutions, like the *Instituto Nacional de Lenguas Indígenas* (National Institute of Indigenous Languages) and the *Academia de la Lengua Maya* (Academy of the Maya Language), and is enforced by teachers, writers, and public intellectuals who advocate for a truly Maya Maya, free of Spanish loanwords and influences. Given its origins, *jach maaya* is standardized—contentiously so—and the written form involves precise orthography (Cru 2014, Pfeiler 1998). A perfect example of this voice is when students would say *"ma'alob k'iin"* (good morning) to a teacher at UIMQRoo. This is a literal translation of Spanish *"buenos días"* but not a greeting used in (Local) Maya-dominant spaces in Quintana Roo. Rather, students who would normally say *buenos días* to a teacher as is inculcated in state-run educational spaces are taught to use this purely Maya greeting instead, which according to the ideology of *jach maay*a is a statement of Maya/Indigenous identity, but still conforms with the metapragmatic ideology of proper interaction between students and teachers in the context of formal public education. Further along, in Chapter 4, we see an example of jach maaya in a Facebook post by a UIMQRoo student (###).

Pueblo Maya is spoken by *mayerxs* in the pueblos of Quintana Roo and parts of Yucatán and Campeche, as well as in translocalities like Tulum and San Francisco where *mayerxs* bring ways of speaking along with them. The use of this voice is likely to be accompanied by nonlinguistic semiotic practices, such as gestures and ways of entering and exiting intimate, ceremonial, and other spaces. The Maya used in tsikbals 1, 2, 5, and 9 are examples of this voice.

Moving on to English in Quintana Roo, it is less clear how to delineate distinctions, since the presence of English is more imagined and ideological and as such it is less commonly voiced in daily interaction among *mayerxs* and their families. Still, I would point to Academic English and Standard American English as identifiable tendencies, with the English used on social media as similar to Standard American English but incorporates nonstandard acronyms and abbreviations such as "omg" and "tfw" ("that feeling when"). Academic English is taught in English classes and is useful in situations such as an ecotourism agency applying for a grant from an international NGO. Standard American English would be used in interactions with tourists and as such is learned through immersion by workers from Quintana Roo. It is appropriate for use in commercial and business settings, and can be used in an overtly friendly way as a strategy for selling services, etc. At the same time, this version ends up also being an imagined version of English, like the "hello my friend" of shop owners, which don't come across as natural to people who grew up speaking American English.

Details of social contexts, historical contingencies, educational backgrounds, racialization, and forms of mediatization all come together in allowing or restricting space for certain voices in certain spaces. Uses of certain voices may then contest these structural forces, like using Standard Maya in a context where Standard Spanish would be expected and appropriate. Creative usages, like using a hashtag in English on a Facebook post in Spanish commenting on Maya mean that there are contradictions and unexpected usages of the voices identified above. Take another example—the way Local Maya tends to emerge in informal situations, in spoken interaction, among family, contrasts with the common assumption that *la lengua maya* is appropriate in specifically "cultural" contexts, such as during ceremonies, but not a neutral medium the way Spanish is constructed to be.

The possible instantiations of the above voices, as well as how they are constituted as standard or accessible, may be through sounded embodiments of them, but also are critically influenced by different media usages. In this sense, embodiment and materiality come with copresent interaction, but also with things like writing, text messaging or posting a status, taking a video, or teaching grammar. The mediatization of voices can thus be considered central to their embodiment as well, if we consider the emergence of different forms of expression as always located in the body, whether the sounded voice, the fingers that type on a keyboard or phone, or the bodily positionings necessary to record an audio message or take a video. In Chapter 4 I will further explore the ways Maya, Spanish, and English are used on social media and in trilingual media contexts, pointing to how youth expressions in particular invoke cosmopolitanism, indigeneity, rootedness, and translocalities, to produce political-linguistic subjectivities and collectivities.

The ability to choose between voices, then, to draw from resources for potential voices and voices as semiotic forms, is part of what makes a self a self – this allows us to resolve tensions, to know ourselves, and to know others (Hill 1995). In situations of politicized or otherwise highlighted language use, contexts of revitalizing a language, or teaching/learning one, the voices available are in and of themselves in process; repetition, mediatization, metalinguistic commentary about, etc., are part of how they become known and consequential. And in the cases analyzed here, not only are voices symbolic resources and the target of ideologies, they figure into scales of political-linguistic subjectivities. They are both immediate and embodied, and instantiations of large scale socio-political discourses, as we see in the excerpt below.

Alejandra [Tsikbal 4]

(6)

Alejandra: *...hay   veces que me   llevo el   chasco   de que... se   olviden*
                    there are   times   that to me I take   the   disappointment of   that (reflex.) they forget
             "…there are times that I end up disappointed because.. [people who speak Maya] forget

             *y   me   contestan   en español, y   **como que no   saben maya**, o sea..!* [laughs]
             and   to me   they answer   in Spanish   and like   that (neg.) they know Maya or it is
             and they answer me in Spanish, as if they *don't* speak Maya, I mean..!" [laughs]

Ethnographer: [laughs]

Alejandra: *o sea! [laughs] para mi es como.. **hacer a un lado algo que tienes tú.***
　　　　or it is　　for me it is like to make to one side something that you have you
　　"Come on! [laughs] For me it's like.. putting something aside that *you have*.

o- por ejemplo, sí es cierto, yo… si estoy en la calle y pasan, no me van
or for example yes it is certain I if I am in the street and they pass (neg.) to me they go
Or- for example, it's true, I… if I'm in the street and they pass by, they won't

hablar en maya, tal vez porque no tengo la vestimenta. o porque si
to speak in Maya maybe because (neg.) I have the clothing or because if
speak to me in Maya, maybe because I don't have the clothing on. Or because

no me conocen no saben que hablo maya. y de alguna manera
(neg.) to me they know (neg.) they know that I speak Maya and in some way
if they don't know me they don't know that I speak Maya. And somehow

*yo **tengo que hacerles saber.** entonces, con una frase, con una palabra, ya! le*
I I have to that to make them know so with one phrase with one word already to them
I have to let them know. So with one phrase, with one word, done! You show them

transmites que, que te puede hablar en maya y lo vas a entender. [laughs]
you convey that that to you s/he can to speak in Maya and it you go to to understand
that, that they can talk to you in Maya and you're going to understand. [laughs]

Alejandra is a woman in her 40s who grew up speaking Spanish, hearing Maya and speaking a little bit of it, and who then went on to learn to speak Maya fluently as an adult. She is interested in learning languages in general and speaks some English, some of which she learned from me in classes that I gave her and her coworkers. She is a gregarious, friendly person, who as she put it, *"me gusta mucho comunicarme,"* that is, she really likes to communicate, to talk with people (Tsikbal 4). This conversation took place at a government social service agency office in Tulum, where she would take the time to chat with me about life as a *mayera*, a mother, and an engaged member of the community.

Alejandra explains how she can use one word in Maya to invoke the Maya voice, likely a Pueblo Maya voice (though in formal classes she has also studied *jach maya)* and establish the grounds for a particular intersubjective communicative experience. She notes how sometimes people who speak Maya respond in Spanish even if she speaks to them in Maya, acting as if they don't speak it—perhaps because, as Alfredo and others noted, they felt ashamed. We see a reference to clothing, the implication being that since Alejandra doesn't wear an *huipil*, a white embroidered dress that older generations of women in rural parts of the peninsula wear, there would be no way of someone else immediately knowing that she does speak Maya. Yet the people in question, who speak in Spanish "as if they didn't speak Maya" themselves would mostly likely not be wearing such attire; it is more a question of establishing a Maya voice in a public space, like Alfredo's acquaintance who was aware of the presence of non-*mayerxs*.

The fact that people would put aside something that they *have*, a voice they have access to, and in Alejandra's opinion, is a source of enjoyment and connection, is surprisingly to her, but not

difficult to counteract. She simply has to *"hacerles saber"* so that they will then feel comfortable speaking Maya in the street, if indeed something was impeding such an embodiment. Alejandra's view of Maya as a source of enjoyment was clear when she described the experience of speaking Maya with her family and friends this way: *"es bonito que algo nos une… como ya somos pocos, pero entre esas personas, tenemos algo en común, que es la cultura, la raíz."* Though she describes their numbers as small, Alejandra emphasizes the fact that speaking Maya is for them a source of connection, a form of collectivity based on their shared roots.

Section 2: Standards, Purism, and Privilege

Examining how a trilingual range of voices are accessed and embodied necessitates a return to the theme of linguistic purism and standardization, which was introduced in Chapter 1. Following from these considerations, I introduce communicative privilege as a way of understanding the social consequences of the access that certain people have to voices that are prestigious, authoritative, or otherwise afford their speakers some social-economic-political advantage. The projects of Maya revitalization and English teaching aim at providing access to voices, but as I argue, end up creating forms of privilege as well, when the Maya one speaks is too different from Pure Maya; when English instruction is so variable and inconsistent as to significantly impede students' progress.

In theory, being part of such projects means having opportunities to practice—to play with voices, to study the intersubjective meanings they can convey but also they themselves carry. The marginalizing force of communicative privilege limits this ability to learn and play, but also reminds us that rules and norms are deemed necessary by those who plan language education – if we can consider the latter term sufficient to encompass the work that goes into producing trilingualism.

Language purism in Maya revitalization

Linguistic purism is ambiguously a manifestation of academic discourses about language that can be traced back to Enlightenment ideas about the purification of the social from abstractable, systematize-able phenomena such as language (Bauman & Briggs 2003). Or it is simply a very common response to linguistic changes. The idea that there is a more "pure," "correct" version of a minoritized language, less tainted by loan words or changes in pronunciation or structure effected by the dominant language, is very common in situations of language shift around the world, and invokes associated arguments about the authenticity and legitimacy of social practices and expressions of identity and historical belonging (Brody 2004, Faudree 2013, Hill & Hill 1986, Vikør 2010). Purism and standardization, which get more complicated the more variations there are within a language community, are central, concrete challenges in most language revitalization projects, and they highlight tensions between different visions of the means and goals of such efforts. The latter are often political in their assertion of different social configurations, via language, that challenge dominant political-economic forces (Faudree 2013).

The situation in the Yucatán peninsula is no exception, and the dynamics of purist discourses about Maya and its standardization are highly political and have been the source of tensions and meant the divergence of (and sometimes opposition between) scholars' and activists' studies and efforts. The idea of Maya's purity goes back centuries, in *reducción* we saw "the order of speaking with propriety, purity, and *policia"*, and in the linguistic texts which were produced,

forming the basis of a long tradition of abstract corpuses of Maya, grammar is defined as speaking and writing *well* (Hanks 2010:206). Fray Pedro Beltran in his *Arte de El Idioma Maya* of 1746, was concerned about the 'mixing' of Spanish with Maya (233) and called for the recovery (*rescate*, sounds familiar) of Maya terms which already were unknown. He expressed that "it is not the same thing to speak a language and to know how to speak it well*"* (234). There is thus an ideological implication that the standard is morally superior, an idea that has accompanied linguistic purism for centuries, which we see a new iteration of in the construction of a jach maya voice, which was introduced in section 1 of this chapter.

I should note here that I generally focus on privilege in relation to a particular purist Maya voice, in addition to that of standard Spanish and English, but it is important to keep in mind that many people from the peninsula who may not be as exposed to discourses of language revitalization or cultural pride would experience or perceive Maya in general as a lesser form of communication.

Don Pedro is a Maya teacher in his 60s who has produced pedagogical materials and been part of various revitalization initiatives, some with the involvement of foreign academics. He has also taught Maya to Americans and Europeans, a fact he is proud of and mentions often, and he currently teaches Maya to high school students in Carrillo. Though he is not a linguist per se, he has a complex understanding of Maya on a technical level and has taken some linguistics courses. This fact prompted me to wonder how—in the context of his strongly purist rhetoric—he does not have the linguistics-based counter argument to purism on hand, i.e. that the typical Maya spoken *"en la calle"* ("in the street") uses completely Maya grammar and pronunciation regardless of the quantity of loanwords being used.

What I've included is only a small part of a long conversation I had with Don Pedro, who articulated his points about *la maya pura,* or *jach maya,* more assertively and definitively than any other *mayerx* I talked to. Incidentally, he also seems to have had more contact with non-Mexican academics and enthusiasts of Maya (and other lenguas indígenas) than most other Maya teachers or activists I met.

Don Pedro [Tsikbal 10]

(7)   *cuando yo enseño maya, trato que sea más   natural. que sea más puro,*
       when   I   I teach   Maya I try   that it is more natural   that   it is more pure
       "When I teach Maya, I try to make it more natural. So that it's purer and

       no españolizado. y también ensenarles todo lo que ellos actualmente no pronuncien.
       not hispanicized and also   to teach them everything it that they currently (neg.) pronounce
       not hispanicized. And also to teach them the things that they don't currently use

       como numerología, algunas palabras que no   usen   en maya… si hablamos maya,
       like numerology   some   words   that (neg.) they use in Maya   if we speak Maya
       like numerology, some words that they don't use in Maya… if we're speaking Maya,

       sólo maya, si español, solo eso, para que la lengua se   conserva   mejor.
       only Maya if Spanish   only that for   that the language (reflex.) it conserves better
       then only Maya, and if it's Spanish, only that, so that the language is preserved better.

60

la maya pura.
the Maya pure
Pure Maya."

When I asked Don Pedro whether it is difficult for young people who don't claim to be Maya speakers—but do actually use it easily and frequently—to learn this "natural" and "pure" Maya, he responded, that they still need to take classes:

...si no lo hacemos así, la gente va seguir hablando igual, como hace
  if (neg.) it we do like this the people s/he goes to follow speaking same like since
"...if we don't do it that way, people will keep speaking the same way, like how

tiempo que es mezclado.
time that it is mixed
it's been mixed now for a while."

I pressed this point, explaining that there were young people I had met in Tulum who speak a more "mixed" variety, asking Don Fernando if he doesn't think it would be better for them to speak Maya like that, rather than not speak it at all. I went on, *"cree que es mejor, o hablar la versión así pura, o no tratar de hablarla [maya]?"[65]* His response was that it's okay for them to speak that way, because it's what is used now, but:

podemos ensenarlos lo más original para que ellos vayan cambiando su forma
we can teach them the more original for that they they go changing their form
"We can teach them the more original version so that they can be changing their way

de hablar, usando términos mayas, aunque muchos no van a entender.
of to speak using terms Maya even though many (neg.) they go to to understand
of speaking, using Maya words, even though many won't understand [them].

van a decir, así lo aprendí, así lo sé.
they go to to say this way it I learned this way it I know
They'll say, I learned it this way, this is how I know it."

The idea being, *"que cada vez que hables, que digas una palabra que la gente no va entender, van a querer saber cómo lo aprendistes [...] así muchos van a querer aprenderlo más natural"[66]*. Indeed, he asserted that if we want everyone to speak Maya pura, which indeed he seemed to want, then anyone who hasn't already taken classes would need to take them, even though the Maya they learned in the classes wouldn't necessarily be understandable.

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[65] "Do you think it's better to either speak the pure version, or not try to speak Maya?"
[66] "That every time you speak, you'll say a word that people won't understand, and they'll want to know how you learned it [...] that way many people will want to learn [Maya] in a more natural way."

The basic arguments that Don Pedro makes in this *tsikbal* are:

1. The Maya that *should* be taught and spoken is the most "pure" and "natural" version, which uses only Maya terms;
2. Speaking only one language at a time—only Spanish, or only Maya—is a way to preserve Maya;
3. Numerology and other specific domains of the lexicon (terms for household objects, terms for telling time, etc.) are the most important targets for correction and purification of the "street" Maya that most people speak;
4. Formalized classes are necessary to change the way most people speak Maya into *jach pura*;
5. *Jach maya* will not always be understood by speakers of street Maya;
6. Hearing unfamiliar terms (such as numbers above three in *jach maya*, a classic example) will prompt other Maya speakers to wonder about them and want to learn maya pura themselves.

This is the most vivid example I have of the way that the new/old, real, pure, worthy Maya is being constructed as something that must be taught, formally (and probably institutionally), and is already out of the hands of people who grew up speaking Maya. I would highlight 4 and 5 because I see these as the most extreme articulations of this purist perspective. Point 4 creates a form of linguistic privilege for anyone who speaks maya pura and inherently discredits the communicative practices of any native Maya speaker, positioning them as inferior and in need of remediation. Where does the time, motivation, energy, and money for taking classes come from, in this ideal world in which anyone who doesn't speak maya pura is supposed to learn it? The effect of the discourse expressed in the excerpt above is to tell people who are trying to make a living, working long hours, already living like outsiders on what should be their land – that the only way they could be legitimate Maya speakers would be to study, to go learn (explicitly through formalized instruction in a setting which might be the opposite of conducive to actual learning) a version of the language which Don Pedro himself admits that other Maya speakers might not understand.

Point 5 was the most surprising for me to hear in this conversation, since it is precisely a critique that people make *of* purism—that the *maya pura* being taught is different enough in terms of lexicon that it may impede communication with people who actually grew up speaking Maya. This seems like an unavoidable problem: there is the implied moral superiority of *maya pura* and those who speak it, despite it making people less likely to understand each other; and, there is the practical matter that in the interests of maintaining Maya, there should perhaps be a focus on making it *easier* rather than *harder* for people to communicate in Maya.

What is expressed in this discourse is also the desire to reinforce a boundary between languages, the implication being that there should be a clear difference, the difference being valued and upheld. At another point in the conversation Don Pedro said, very disapprovingly, that someone who doesn't speak Maya but is listening to a conversation taking place in "mixed" Maya, would "be able to understand" a lot of what's being said because of the presence of loanwords. I heard this same sentiment from other people, always a negative judgement of the sad state of impure Maya. The intelligibility of the true Maya voice is at stake—in its pure form it should not be intelligible to non-Maya speakers, and doesn't even need to be intelligible to speakers of street Maya. As I reflected the first time I listened back on the above conversation: "so speaking Hispanicized Maya means everyone understands you, which is bad (?) and speaking Pure Maya means no one understands you, but you have your heritage, your true Mayaness, which is good."

Despite my critiques and discomfort with Maya purist discourses and practices, many people are explicitly supportive of it, as Cru relates as well: "purism commonly appears in the early stages of standardisation and particularly in language cultivation, a task that should be developed by academies, according to my interviewees" (2014:171). Cru had one conversation with an older man, someone experienced in the field of Indigenous education, who portrayed his views on *maya pura* this way: *"si tú tuvieras dinero, si fueras rico, ¿pedirías prestado? Eso no… nosotros por ejemplo, no tenemos por qué pedir prestado, las palabras por ejemplo"* [67](174). This is an especially explicit elaboration of the idea that the Maya language should be valued and is comparable to monetary wealth. For Cru's interlocutor, Maya is a source of prosperity, and its words are complete and enough, so one has no need to "borrow" from Spanish, and there is no social debt necessary.   In this understanding, loans from Spanish—which are commonplace in Pueblo Maya usage—indicate a lack of wealth, and the man's intention seems to be that mayerxs should recognize the complexity and richness of the Maya words they do have.

I do not claim the authority to determine which approach is more appropriate when it comes to the revitalization of Maya or the teaching of English, yet I cannot avoid the conclusion that purism is generally not a useful force, and can often be a marginalizing one. I argue that as regards Maya, linguistic purism—valuing and insisting on the teaching of a version of Maya which is neither historically "authentic" nor commonly used, or even understood, is exactly what produces new forms of linguistic privilege which work alongside the privileging of competence in English and certain modes of Spanish speaking and particular ways of communicating. Maya speakers from Quintana Roo, and the rest of the Maya speaking world, may be particularly susceptible to this convergence of oppressive discourses—neither speaking "real" Maya, nor standard Mexican "educated" Spanish, nor having a solid command of English.

On the other hand, there is widening awareness of the need to overcome differences in opinion when it comes to questions of standardizing Maya and policing the vocabularies and orthographic practices of its speakers. Young people in particular are less likely to be committed purists, and the emergence of multilingual practices on social media and in music points towards a more flexible form of language activism. Students who are learning Maya and engaged in academic spheres, as well as taking part in Maya speakers' communities and social worlds, are particularly positioned to put revitalization discourses into practice, which may be more or less purist. The promotion and revitalization of Maya, as is the case in many places, thus has a complicated relationship with the ostensible target of the project—the actual linguistic and communicative practices, how conversations proceed in quotidian contexts, and how people talk to one another in spheres of comfort, intimacy, and informal social relations.

Standardization and linguistic authority

A recurring and fraught issue that emerges in language education, and in a particular way within situations of language maintenance and revitalization, is that of standardization, which is often preceded or accompanied by discourses of linguistic purism. Purism and standardization are major challenges in efforts to promote Maya and its use, and work as metapragmatic discourses that attribute linguistic authority in a particular way and construct limited legitimate voices, thus producing new forms of linguistic privilege. Enforced language standardization also applies to Spanish and English, with Standard Mexican Spanish particularly strongly asserted as inherently

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[67] "If you had money, if you were rich, would you ask for a loan? No you wouldn't… take us for example, we don't have to ask to borrow, words for example."

superior to Yucatec and Zona Maya Spanish. The importance of standard language is salient in the trilingual ideal as it is constituted by competence in three distinct linguistic systems. Thus, though questions of purism and ongoing standardization are more obvious when it comes to the Maya side of the project, standardized versions of Spanish and English are clearly voices that hold their own power.

Ana, whose story of learning English I related in chapter 1, also encountered disciplining of her Spanish when she arrived in Chetumal at the University of Quintana Roo. She told me that the Spanish she speaks, which she specified as having learning from her Yucateca mother and grandmother, has structural influences from Maya which *"ahorita me he dado cuento que no es la forma adecuada, pero no lo puedes cambiar cuando es cultural"*[68] (Tsikbal 3). These are *"expresiones que yo he visto que yo tengo, aunque no hable maya."*[69] As a professor, Ana has "realized" (in her wording) that she grew up speaking a maya-inflected Spanish and she has tried to change such usages, but finds in difficult, in addition to understanding such differences as "cultural." In this sense the judgement of correctness is less pointed, yet, she did emphasize multiple times that her Spanish is "incorrect", like when she says that something she might say would be *"me voy en Merida"* ("I'm going at Merida") when ***"realmente es 'a'*** [as in, *'me voy a Merida',* 'I'm going *to* Merida']" ("really it's 'a'," emphasis added). Ana gives an example of such a usage where the form *"tiene ido a comprar,"* that is, "s/he went shopping," is a Maya-inflected Spanish version of the Standard Mexican Spanish *"se fue a comprar"*:

Ana [Tsikbal 3]

(8)   *por   ejemplo, si vas   a   la casa   de alguien, y   le   dices, 'oye!*
       for   example if you go to the house of someone and to her/him you say listen
       "For example, if you go to someone's house and you say, 'Hey!

       está,   este Fulanito?' lo primero que te   van a decir,'no! ***tiene ido a comprar****'*
       he stays this Fulanito   the first   that to you they go to to say no he has went to to buy
       Is Fulanito here?', the first thing they'll say to you is, 'No! He went shopping.'

       eso te   dicen.   entonces, eh... no. si tu le   dices   eso a un profesor
       that to you they say   so   no if you to her/him you say that to a professor
       That's what they'll say. So, um… no. If you say that to a professor who

       *que no   es   de   aquí, **no   lo   comprende**.*
       that (neg.) s/he is from here   (neg.)   it   s/he understands
       isn't from here, they won't understand."

The extent of the error in this case is demonstrated by the hypothetical situation of someone who this sort of Spanish saying this sentence to a professor who is not from Quintana Roo, and not being able to understand what is being said as a result of its non-standardness. Ana also gave the example of having a friend from Chetumal at university with whom *"había que no nos*

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[68] "I've realized now that it's not the correct form, but you can't change it when it's cultural."
[69] … "expressions that I've noticed I use, even though I don't speak Maya."

comunicábamos porque no entiende lo que digo" [70]. The extent of the difference of her Spanish is highlighted—it goes so far as to impede communication. She told this story in a light-hearted way, as did others who spoke of "weird" or "funny" usages in Yucatec and Zona Maya Spanish, yet when this sort of situation plays out in educational, professional, or institutional settings, the effect can be more consequential and lasting: not being taken seriously in a classroom, not being accepted to a program, not getting a job, not being considered a properly educated citizen.

Associations between linguistic standards, promoted by purism, and educatedness, are deeply implicated in language education, where the teaching of any language requires pedagogical decisions which affect how important grammatical, orthographic and other linguistic norms are, and how strictly they should be adhered to. Questions of pedagogy—which I was forced to negotiate in an immediate sense during my fieldwork when I was a language teacher myself—are deeply embroiled with questions of linguistic authority. Teachers embody authoritative language, whether in state education, or in independent language classes. And the teaching materials available, of which there are a huge variety for English as opposed to a relatively small number for Maya, are also clearly a source of authority in the classroom (or other learning space). As such, the ideological and material entextualization of a voice in language teaching materials is naturalized such that the form present in the book or online text seems indisputably "correct" (Guerrattaz 2015).

Costa (2015) describes interactions between students and teachers in Scottish elementary schools where Scots is recognized and academically validated in its nonstandard form, such that students are theoretically allowed to use Scots and/or English freely, as they will. He argues that "linguistic authority does not simply wane when the teacher is divested of it. It circulates, moving to unexpected loci" (38). Still, he frames the question of the source of authority in institutional terms and relates it to the nation-state and citizenship, and while he mentions that there could be other sources of authority, it seems that the "unexpected loci" are still related directly to the context of the school. In the case he relates, rather than enforcing linguistic standards, the teacher (likely unwittingly) enforces a standard of linguistic difference between herself and the students, and interpellates them with a particular, essentialized Scots identity.

Neither teaching Maya nor English is quite as ambiguous as the case described by Costa, where the proximity of Scots and English makes the definition of linguistic boundaries more immediate and complex. But how to teach Maya, and what Maya to teach, and similarly with English—what variety, register, genres, etc., and how—entail similarly complicated, and potentially quite consequential, processes. One study of Maya classes given to elementary school teachers in Yucatán, after 2003 legislation and pushes towards more comprehensive bilingual education in the peninsula, describes how despite the recognition of communicative (i.e. practical, interaction-based) and oral objectives, in the classroom most of the time was devoted to grammar activities and written language (Guerrattaz 2015:175). Guerrattaz notes that the teacher implicitly "equates language learning to the learning of standard Maya orthography" – and essentially, "learning Maya orthography means learning pure Maya" (181). More telling yet is the fact that though various of the teacher-students in the class were native Maya speakers or had some degree of fluency with the language, the standardness of and their written ability in the language were more highly valued than nativeness and oral competence.

Though there is not much scholarship on the topic, it seems that alternative sources of linguistic authority would be a worthy focus for academics and activists who have an interest in facilitating accessible, practical language learning and combatting linguistic discrimination.

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[70] "It sometimes happened that we couldn't communicate because she wouldn't understand what I said."

Communicative genres that have origins outside neoliberal and/or state-institutional contexts, or are situated more firmly in social practices beyond the purview of formal, standardized education, might be a potential source of such authority. As a genre of discourse, the tsikbal, like other oral traditions, provides a framework in which a metapragmatics of standardization and referential fixity is not salient, and linguistic authority is situated in the vividness, complexity, and humor of the narrative being co-constructed. Similarly, rap as a communicative genre (which originally was based in American English and AAVE, but has been taken up in many languages around the world) offers a version of linguistic authority which values pointed critique (or in some cases, insults), linguistic cleverness, and conciseness – in addition to more aesthetic poetic elements. What would it mean to commit to giving space for a range of nonstandard communicative practices within (and outside of) educational institutions - to not see them as threats, contamination or degradation?

In an example of a positive shift in metapragmatic discourse, Jaffe describes how teachers at a bilingual school in Corsica opened space for "students with multiple levels and kinds of Corsican competence to be counted as legitimate participants and, by extension, as legitimate speakers and authors. This involved a shift in the locus of the experience, display, and evaluation of Corsican competence from the individual to the collectivity, and defined that collectivity as a linguistically heterogeneous one (2009:143)". This approach could be helpful in Quintana Roo—maybe idealized in and of itself, but the attributing of legitimacy to communicative practices of young people, a focus on the collectivity rather than the individual, and an understanding of multilingualism as variable – there being different histories of learning and socialization, even within small scale contexts.

Thus, standard (or non-) forms of Maya, or English, or Spanish, that are voiced in more or less institutional, educational, political contexts – take on a sense of authority depending on the expectations of competence within the particular context they emerge. The collectivity of participants in that space may create the intersubjective basis for certain forms of authority that would otherwise be difficult to assert. The embodiment and mediatization of the legitimized voice is not chronotopically determined, then, nor are they equally accessible to any participant in a space. Emergent contexts of use allow for more creativity and playful forms of semiotic contact between qualities of subjectivities and qualities of communication. Voices, through media and scale, are modalities where such semiotic contact is created.

Access and opportunity

As we have seen, voices are not simply floating around, available for anyone to use, if temporarily, at any time. Access to a way of speaking may be a momentary imitation, a repetition in the most basic sense that all sounds, words, phrases, are acquired through mimesis and repetition. It may be the product of long-term socialization, or formalized language instruction, or a response to metalinguistic commentaries and metapragmatic discourses. And the fact that picking up on a particular instance of a voice, like a Maya swear word used in Yucatec Spanish, can mean then putting it into to use immediately oneself, says something about the way such forms can be appropriated, despite being situated, racialized, and otherwise restricted.

Semiotic ideologies can shape perceived access in terms of whether a person feels the language has semiotic potential *for them,* that they could make it *mean* the way it does for others. This helps explain how restrictions on who can speak how, where, and when, are both structurally imposed (as other scholars have noted), and felt in an immediate, semiotically inflected way. The tension in the way a speaker has apparent freedom and agency to speak, but also feels unable to in some sense, is clearer when we see a deeper relationship between a subject's understandings of

communication as a semiotic process and voices as necessarily embodied and inhabited by a speaker who is spatiotemporally located and also accountable for the way their bodies, actions, and voices are perceived intersubjectively.

An example of this is when I felt unable to speak Maya in certain situations, moments when I felt that using an Academic Maya voice would be a performance of authority with a limited range of possible receptions, and alternatively, using a Local Maya voice would be a claim to group membership which I did not feel appropriate at the moment given my having recently entered the space as an outsider. In either case, speaking would not be semiotically effective as the performative/metapragmatic significance of the voice being used would eclipse the message itself. As such, I chose to speak in Spanish because it felt more neutral and my semiotic ideology about it assumed it to be more transparently meaningful within the social context.

Taking another case, a friend of mine from XYatil, in her 40s, said that she could not send me a message using one of her children's phones, though she would like to, because she didn't know how to use it—not only in a technical sense, but I think in a deeper sense, that such mediatization would not allow her words to signify in the way she intended it to. Access to technologies and comfort using them is critical in shaping people's opportunities to use certain voices. And there are moments of hesitations in the experience of speaking when a voice isn't as on hand, where the (inter)subjective semiotic potential seems to be lost.

Fundamentally, the experiences of children and youth in home, community, and school contexts in terms of what voices they observe and experience, which are directed at them and elicited from them, and which they are formally taught and evaluated on, will have a large impact on the access they will have to different voices throughout their lives[71]. The changes in language use that are widely discussed in the peninsula (as discussed in Chapter 1), as well as many other places where language shift is underway, have the effect of changing younger generations' future access to voices that were part of their parents and grandparents' daily lives. When we talk about access, there are clearly considerations of the educational system, in addition to more immediate, practical aspects of learning. The voices teachers use in classrooms are considered authoritative (at least to some extent) by students, as well as their parents. The effectiveness of language education, including what training students receive regarding Standard Mexican Spanish, is a critical factor in the comfort young people will end up feeling with different voices, where comfort often determines one's willingness to use a language.

Later in life, economic circumstances often shape people's access to voices, like how job in tourism might give someone from Quintana Roo the opportunity to interact and gain a voice. Meanwhile, such a worker is seen by the neoliberal capitalist system in which they are inserted as a less-than-human unit with productive capacity, and their poverty and ignorance will be assumed; or they might be seen as closed and distrustful. In such contexts, the potential to learn a new voice

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[71] Some situations that we might consider include: Entering a home, or another community space—a church, school, government building; a business, store, restaurant, or hotel. Being a friend, family, neighbor, guest, member of the community, a citizen, student, costumer, client, worker, or hotel guest. Social situations in which writing is required, or talking on the phone, texting, participating through watching videos, listening to songs. As noted, there is a consequential privilege in access to media, and the privilege of practice – in commercial spaces, places with a variety of languages and styles happening. Entering the space of social media—a group chat, a profile—embodied in the phone, a place with signal or internet, some amount of focus, using a phone with people around or not – how, when, how often, what kind of environment allows for frequent participation and more of a subjective presence. And developing a different presence with very possibly different communicative practices. Access and experience will make one more comfortable and successful in each.

might be one of the few positive and useful experiences available to workers. Yet again, it is important to remember that the possibility of securing a job in tourism in the first place will be affected by one's educational background and communicative practices.

Bodies and voices

A further important elements to consider in the access and availability to acquiring voices in Quintana Roo are racializing processes make some bodies into more or less valid producers of forms of Spanish, English, or Maya. The fact that in the peninsula racism is not a salient way of describing structures of privilege and exclusion needs to be contextualized within the enduring power of the discourse of *mestizaje* in Mexico. This post-revolutionary ideology was coined by elites as a way to create a sense of unity without the of need for political recognition of Indigenous and Afro-Mexican peoples (Saldívar 2014), and continues to be expressed through a general Mexican post-racial discourse, which Mónica Moreno Figueroa and Emiko Saldívar describe as functioning to "conceal racial privilege and exclusion under the banner of racial mixing and multicultural recognition" (2016:515). Indeed, scholarly writing on Indigenous peoples' in Mexico also tends to reinforce a post-racial discourse by not discussing race, and rather referring to different groups in the terms of 'ethnicity' and 'identity'. I further discuss racialization and communicative practices further in chapter 3.

Similarly, there are gendered elements of access to voices, where girls are sometimes thought to be less likely to do well in their English classes at school. This is likely related to the fact that men have usually been the ones to travel towards the coast to work in tourism related jobs, where they would learn English, competence in English thus becoming associated with masculinity (Castellanos 2010, Re Cruz 1996). Differences in access, and forms of privilege (racialized, gendered, and so on) are the result of these circumstances. Such constraints feed into hierarchies of voices and the construction of more or less legitimate communicative subjects. Yet, girls and young women are not afraid to draw from voices at hand to fashion their own interpretations of what it means to be part of a collectivity.

In response to such circumstances, linguistic anthropologists have produced and continue to contribute a range of important work about language and racism (Baugh 2003; Hill 1995b, 2008; Meek 2006; Rosa 2016; Roth-Gordon 2011; Skutnabb-Kangas 1988; Urciuoli 2003). Jonathan Rosa and Nelson Flores relate what they call "raciolinguistic ideologies" to personhood as a whole, when such ideologies frame racialized language usages as deficient "regardless of how closely they follow supposed rules of appropriateness" (2015:149). This highlighting of the way "language-minoritized students" are forced to model their language use after the "white speaking subject" despite continued racialization of their ways of speaking is critical in challenging discourses of appropriateness and denaturalizing standardized language use (ibid.), and is a widely applicable argument when it comes to hierarchies created by communicative privilege.

This work is productive to consider, although the context in Mexico is distinct in terms of the pervasive post-racial ideology, despite the way Indigenous bodies are racialized and the way "traditional cultures" have a particular historically motivated position within those structures of racialization. Additionally, it is the presence of an Indigenous, minoritized language and the project to reclaim, which includes an ideology of purism and standardization, that makes a discussion of linguistic racism in Quintana Roo more difficult to relate. Rosa and Flores' argument applies well to perceptions of *mayerxs* ways of speaking Spanish, and English, but the case of Pure Maya complicates the field. Accordingly, I introduce the framework of communicative privilege

below, as a way to describe the combined effects of language standardization, differential access to voices, and naturalized perceptions of communicative practices.

Communicative privilege

Communicative privilege is an embodied capacity and competence; an experience of advantage; and a privilege inherent to a subject in the sense that it is assumed and naturalized. Such privilege operates on the level of apparent language proficiency, which is ambiguous and unstable in itself, and on the level of communicative practices and normative expectations of interactions and social relationships. In the latter case, the issue is one of the perception of a group of people as mediated by their communicative practices. In this naturalized attribution of legitimacy and authority, there are concurrent (social, economic, political) opportunities that are ostensibly equally accessible to all citizens, but in fact depend on competence in certain communicative practices. A Standard Mexican Spanish voice, an Academic English voice, and within discourses of revitalization and the trilingual ideal, a Standard Pure Maya voice are the most privileged in central Quintana Roo, and I would tentatively argue, the rest of the peninsula as well. Urban Mexican Spanish and Pop Culture English are also privileged in their own way, but this is within the sphere of youth social practices primarily, and has different consequences than the forms of privilege conferred by the voices mentioned above.

Communicative privilege in terms of competence in forms of English manifests for example in the automatic understanding of media, music, memes, references, and in the case of tourists and some privileged Mexicans, expecting others to accommodate to your language use. And using a Standard Mexican Spanish voice means not having to worry about sounding "educated," and having the associated accessibility of economic and educational mobility. In contrast, the standardized, Pure Maya that is being privileged here is in fact not widely used—so the privilege one enjoys for being competent in its use does not have all the advantageous of standard English and Spanish voices. Rather, it is related to cultural pride and discourses of Maya-ness and indigeneity, and provides the privilege to teach, speak, and write authoritatively.

Communicative privilege, like racial privilege, is inherent to people who occupy particular elite social positions in Mexican society (and in spaces of corporate transnational capitalism), with those same people being the basis of the standard of a properly educated, polite, and responsible citizen. People not situated as such may go, study, and spend their resources in an effort to change their linguistic capital, a process which is part of the illusion of capitalist competition – and neoliberal education – where people only have to apply themselves in order to succeed. But even the possibility of going out and studying, of improving one's communicative competences, is often dependent on forms of privilege: economic resources necessary for those classes, time away from work and family, and access to physical or mediatized spaces where such learning takes place. And language classes do not usually address the intersubjective aspects of communication besides explicitly referential language that are part of what confers privilege, like ways of occupying space and establishing and ending interactions, the use of facial expressions and eye contact, and the use and meanings of silence, to name a few.

Perceptions of people in terms of their ways of communicating and establishing social relations affect their opportunities for education and work, and the ways that they are included or taken seriously as participants in professional, institutional, or governmental spaces. Practices of racism and oppression, and of privilege and access, manifest based on subtle moments of interaction; the opportunities people have of living well, with health and stability, can come and go depending on established hegemonic ideas about what communication and sociality should look

like. Along these lines, Tricia Gallagher-Geurtsen—one of very few scholars who use a framework of 'linguistic privilege' specifically—describes how in the context of multicultural education in the United States, "even a student's human worth may be inadvertently measured by how much standard English they can produce" (2007:41). Communicative privilege, then, is conferred based on an ideology of what makes a properly intelligent, social, communicative person.

We can take Ana, with her experiences learning English and speaking non-standard Spanish as an example of someone who has been affected by others' multiple forms of communicative privilege: when she didn't have the same level of English as her university peers, then when the British English teacher delegitimized the American English she had learned; when she moved to a different part of Quintana Roo and discovered that the Spanish she spoke was "incorrect"; and by not speaking Maya, which she implies that she *should* speak, and is making an effort to learn. From the perspective of a standard language ideology, none of her language competences were appropriate or valid, and the trilingual ideal and discourses of cultural pride assert that she should also speak Maya, making her inability to do so a downfall. Despite all of this, Ana has become successful as a professor of English, and whether or not her communicative practices are legitimized by metapragmatic ideologies of standardness, she can enjoy music in English and sing along.

A focus on privilege rather than discrimination is a way to bring attention to those who benefit from access to voices and the metapragmatic discourses at work, rather than an analysis which focuses on those who are marginalized. I think the latter approach—though most of my dissertation falls into it—can have the effect of giving a fetishized attention to disadvantaged communities, rather than highlighting the way the privileged gain their position. When we think about what could change, the onus could be placed first and foremost on those in advantageous positions to recognize that privilege for what it is—an approach which has increasingly been taken up by discourses of racial justice in the United States. Accordingly, people who are communicatively privileged (in Quintana Roo as elsewhere) don't often recognize that their ways of speaking are prestigious and advantageous because of historical, neocolonial, and neoliberal structures. The recognition of this is a step which falls to those in positions of power. In this sense, I hope that the analysis I provide here might be appropriated or employed by communities of speakers and learners to assert the decolonizing power of this step.

As we have seen, metapragmatic discourses construct Maya, Spanish, and English as structured domains that may be studied, taught, and evaluated, these processes depending on authoritative, objective academic linguistic knowledge. Knowledge of a language, in this sense, is mobile and can be integral to a subject's sense of self or a collective's sense of groupness. The voices which are the target of such knowledge become tied to certain legitimate producers, receivers, and circulators of them. From there, both the forms of language and those who can (and do) embody and mediatize them gain a privileged ability to signify in clear, appropriate, correct ways. The correctness of certain forms may also relate to their metapragmatically constructed representativeness of cultural knowledge and pride—they allow one to belong in a way that is also appropriate and clear. Standardization and linguistic purism are a way to describe these processes, insofar as we are focusing on forms of language that are prestigious in academic, institutional contexts, as opposed to some alternative sites of production—informal/intimate family or community spaces, youth social worlds, and social media.

Now that we have explored voices; questions of standardization, access, and linguistic authority; and, established emerging forms of communicative privilege, I can ask again: what does it mean to be an (ideally trilingual) speaker? It would imply having access to a voice or voices, using it or them, abiding by standards, and/or taking a position against them, and feeling confident in one's ability to communicate. In this section, I demonstrate further the formulations I've presented in this chapter, from speakers' perspectives, both about their own usages as well as others'. Being a speaker also means having particular communicative experiences: subjective, intersubjective, and phenomenologically specific.

In my conversations with people in Quintana Roo, being (theoretically or actually) multilingual was often described as an inherently positive experience—the *tsikbals* that I present below demonstrate this sense of positive affect that is associated with communication in a basic way. A Maya phrase, "*ki'imak in wóol*" (in the first person), expresses this, with '*óol*' representing a not easily translatable concept like heart or spirit, and the phrase being commonly used to describe a state of happiness, contentedness, and connection. Attending to such experiences of voices, then, adds a complimentary element to the marginalizing discourses and systems I've discussed. There is hope in communication—positive sociality is fostered by multilingualism, and people assert their role in creating their own social, linguistic, political worlds.

One time I was having a conversation with two friends, who I had gotten to know through the tourism collective in Muyil; they worked in the office in Tulum, and were close to me in age (both around 30 years old). Here we hear from Monica, who is from Chumpom, had teachers from Carrillo who spoke Maya in her elementary and middle school, though homework and things were in Spanish; then in high school in Spanish and when she but went to university in Yucatan, she learned written Maya, and English at the university (must have had classes before too). She described Maya, Spanish and English as *"lo más básico"* ("the most basic ones). The cooperative employees were a group that included younger people (late 20s to 30s) and used exclusively Maya with each other, all of them having grown up speaking it—in the office, in front of tourists, wherever. In my fieldwork I didn't experience another context that included people in that age group that didn't involve at least some Spanish usage.

We were in the air conditioned cooperative office in Tulum, with the powerful afternoon sun straining through the glass door, looking perhaps like I was a tourist asking them about the tours they offers. We had a long *tsikbal* about language, interrupted as some points by actual tourists entering the office, in which Monica told a story about how one time, after she finished giving an introduction about the cooperative—describing how all the members come from a rural community and speak Maya and Spanish, and also learn English—one of the tourists began asking Monica to say things in Maya (tsikbal 20a). As she said, "*todo eso me hizo decir en maya para ver si realmente hablo maya*"[72]; and, of course, as Monica said, she wasn't just making it up.

This story shows how Monica had to prove her competence in Maya to these tourists, whose impetus may have been more or less out of curiosity or suspicion, it's hard to know. Regardless, they were not satisfied with the explanation that the employees speak Maya and Spanish, and in addition learn English, and felt it justified and appropriate to test Monica, implying she was either dishonest or exaggerating, and in any case, that the cooperative members were representing themselves unfaithfully. The entitlement to make someone show their competence

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[72] "She made me say all of that in Maya to see if I really speak Maya."

perfectly demonstrates: 1. the exoticization of the Maya voice, from the tourists' position of communicative (among other forms of) privilege in which one would never be quizzed by a random stranger to prove one's speakerhood; 2. the way the cooperative presents itself to tourists in a trilingual frame, this point being a central element of their experience of their workplace; 3. the way a few phrases can be assumed to prove competence; and 4. that someone like Monica are in a position to not be believed when they assert their trilingual skills.

Though she went along and answered the tourists' questions, proving *"pues sí, no es sólo que estás diciendo,"* [73] she clearly felt the questioning was inappropriate, and brought it up in our tsikbal (it wasn't in response to something I asked along those lines). The outsider comes with a form of linguistic authority that makes them feel able to question and then judge the veracity and competences of Indigenous language speakers simply on the basis of a statement such as Monica saying "I speak Maya".

We now turn to Roberto, a man in his late 30s-early 40s from Chumpom who works as a boat captain, giving tours of the Sian Ka'an to Europeans, North Americans, and other visitors from more or less distant lands. He self-identifies as Maya, he considers Maya his first language and speaks Pueblo Maya. Roberto also speaks Zona Maya Spanish which he learned at school, and speaks a bit of English (some of which he learned from me). His English vocabulary is mostly limited to topics that are covered during the tours—though he himself isn't a tour guide per se as he's in charge of transportation and safety—and brief conversations with tourists regarding where they're from, where he's from, and the like. When we had this conversation, Roberto and I had known each other for a few months in the context of English classes and my hanging around his workplace, but this was the first in depth *tsikbal* that we had.

The excerpt below starts with Roberto's response to my question about whether his experiences of speaking Spanish, Maya, or English are different, a question which sometimes ended up being vague and unclear, since people usually don't often refer to their "experiences of speaking" in those metalinguistic terms (in Spanish or Maya, or English). However, Roberto was someone who clearly identified with the idea, responding with a definite affirmation of difference. He mentions presenting oneself, this ability to constitute oneself as a subject, and one's "face"—which could refer to one's facial expressions, or something more like one's attitude. Following this response, he elaborates on the feeling of being a speaker; then I ask him to answer the same question in Maya, to which he gives a similar but more in depth version than the Spanish. The emphasis on difference moves then to a description of a positive feeling associated with and the ability to talk to more people and understand more people.

Roberto [Tsikbal 7]

(9a)

Roberto: *sí, es totalmente diferente porque es otra idioma. para nosotros, español*
        yes it is completely different because it is another language for us Spanish
        "Yes, it's completely different because it's a different language. For us, Spanish

    es otra idioma, y inglés también. este.. bueno, al momento de hablar en español
    it is another language and English also well good at the moment of to speak in Spanish
    is a different language, and English is too. So.. well, once you start speaking in Spanish

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o   inglés, pues.. la   forma en   que te   presentas, la cara, todo,   es diferente,
or English well   the   form   in   that you   you present the face everything it is different
or English, well.. the way that you present yourself, your face, everything, it's different,

te   sientes   diferente
you   you feel   different
you feel different."

Aurora: *sí. mhm. hay algo que.. te sientes que algo cambia, en ti?...*
     "Yes. Hmm. Is there something.. do you feel like something changes, in you?..."

Roberto: *especialmente en ingles, este.. pues nada, te   sientes como afortunado de aprender*
       especially   in English this   well nothing (reflex.) you feel like lucky   for to learn
     "Especially with English, so.. well that's it, you feel lucky to have learned

otra   idioma, de poder   presentarte   en otra   idioma.
another language for to be able to present you   in   another   language
a different language, to be able to introduce yourself in a different language."

Aurora: *sí. ich maaya?*
     "Yes. In Maya?"

Roberto: *bueno, in   t'aano'on to'on como maayaj… kin   sentirkinbajo'on   jach   jats'utsi*
       Adj   Pro1 Vb-pl.   Pro1-pl. Prt   N   Prt-Pro1 Vb-Prt-Pro1-N-pl.   Prt   Adj-TD
       well   our language   us   as   Maya   We   feel-our-self   very   nice
     "Well, when we speak, for us as Maya [people]… We feel really good

tumen in   lenguaje'on, in   t'aanilo'on.. chéen jo'ok in   t'aano'on español yaanal
Prt   Pro1 N-pl.   Pro1 N-pl.   Adv   Prt   Pro1 Vb-pl.   N   Prt
because our language   our   word   as   …   we   speak   Spanish there is
because it's our language, our word.. like when we speak in Spanish, there's this

forma ka   sentirkabaj   xan.. jats'uts' tumen ta   kanaj ulaak' idioma,
 N   Prt-Pro2 Vb-Prt-Pro2-N Adv   Adj   Prt   Prt-Pro2 Vb-Pst Adj   N
 form   you   feel-your-way also   nice   because you   learned other language
way you feel too.. It's nice because you learned another language

ta   kanaj   uláak' t'aan.. tak xan   ich ingles ka   sentirkabaj   utsil tumen
Prt-Pro2 Vb-Pst Adj   N   Prt Adv   Prep N   Prt-Pro2 Vb-Prt-Pro2-N Adj   Prt
you   learned another language as also in   English you   feel-your-self nice   because
you learned another word.. And also with English you feel good because

ju'   páajtal   a   tsikbal yéetel uláak' máako'ob, ju'   páajtal   a
Cert-Pro3 Vb   Pro2   Vb   Prep   Adj   N-pl.   Cert-Pro3 Vb   Pro2
it will   be able   you   speak   with   other   people   it will   be able   you
you will be able to talk to other people, you will be able to

na'atkabaj   yéet   uláak'   winko'ob,   uláak'   máako'ob.   ka   sentirkabaj   jats'utsi
Vb-Pro2-N   Prep   Adj   N-pl.   Adj   N-pl.   Prt-Pro2   Vb-Prt-Pro2-N   Adj-TD
understand-you   with   other   people   other   people   you   feel-your-self   nice
be understood by other people, other folks. You feel nice."

This excerpt demonstrates the thick expressiveness of Maya in the way Roberto uses rhetorical, semiotic devices such as parallelism and repetition (Vapnarsky 2013) to describe in a nuanced way his experiences as a trilingual *mayero*. The text shows a shifting perspective; intersubjective communication in the context of one's *own* shared world ("*to'on…*"), in addition to that of others *("ulaak'…")*. In the Maya answer, Roberto first situations himself in a collective of Mayas, a collective characterized here in the ownership of *their* language, Maya, and this being the position from which he explains the good feeling of speaking one's language.

We see a rich variety in how Roberto refers to speaking and language. He mentions *"t'aanilo'on"* – our language, then uses the Spanish loan with Maya grammar— *"in lenguaje'on"* our language, which is similar in meaning but *"t'aan"* but slightly different; *"t'aan"* is the root of the verb to speak, and means language and word, and also tongue, as in *"uts' tin t'aan"* ("it is nice/good to my tongue"), for when something tastes good. Further along Roberto uses the loan *"idioma"* in emphasizing that it feels nice to speak Spanish because it means having learned *another* language *("ulaak' idioma")*, and then repeats this idea again but using *"t'aan" ("ulaak' t'aan")*. The fact that Spanish has multiple words for what in English we refer to simply as "language" (or occasionally "tongue," though this usage is becoming more archaic)—*idioma, lengua,* and *lenguaje*—makes this semiotic and poetic variety more complicated[74]. Through the framing of their language and a different language, a complex web of references to talking-language-speech-words-tongues is constructed.

Roberto's description of his feeling—actually their feeling, as he's speaking from a collective position—uses the loans *"sentir"* (to feel) and *"forma"* (form, way), the first being the way I phrased the question in Spanish, his usage mirroring mine. In the last sentence, he expands on the positive feeling, here he explains "you feel good/nice" *"tumen ju' páajtal a tsikbal yéetel uláak' máako'ob,"* because you can talk (or converse, discuss, have a conversation, dialogue) with other people. I have already introduced the verb *"tsikbal,"* this being an example of a usage that encapsulates a metapragmatic relationship between interlocutors, like how a Maya translator friend would usually translate *"tsikbal"* as *"dialogar,"* to have a dialogue, to discuss. Then we see *"ju' páajtal a na'atkabaj yéet uláak' winko'ob, ulaak' máako'ob":* you can be understood by other humans, other people. Being able to *tsikbal* with other people is associated with being able to be understood, and we see the emphasis on felicitous communication.

In a shift in framing of the position from which he's speaking and the experience he's speaking to, Roberto switches from the first person plural to second person singular midway through the second phrase ("**in** t'aan**o'on**" -> "**ka** sentir**ka**baj"), which he maintains under the end of the excerpt. Referring to "you"—or in a way me, the author, since he was talking to me at the time—is a way of abstracting the sentiment and making it theoretical or applicable, a way to make it a shared feeling, a way to understand others' experiences as comparable to one's own (or that of the collective); from we feel about our language, to you feel about not your language, but another

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[74] Some people use these interchangeably, while other people give them different connotations – *lenguaje* being more formal, *idioma* being closer to *"dialecto"* or dialect, which in Mexico was (and still is occasionally) used to refer to Indigenous languages, as they were not considered full, complex, *lenguajes* like Spanish.

language. From the switch to another language, he moves to referring to other people, and in describing how he feels good about his voices, his intersubjective experiences of communication, his attachment to his language, Roberto asserts that you too can feel good about acquiring another voice, experiencing communication, connecting.

Finally, there are certain repetitions and parallels that occur throughout Roberto's statements, both in the Spanish and the Maya. Focusing on the Maya, where this rhetorical style is ubiquitous in *tsikbals*, it can be understood as an ongoing expansion of expression, usually using the same structure but with a slight different in wording, e.g. "*ta kanaj ulaak' **idioma**, ta kanaj uláak' **t'aan**.*" Some of the changes in wording in Roberto's usage also mean a change in the root being Maya or Spanish derived: *t'aan* to *lenguaje*, back to *t'aan*; idioma to *t'aan*. Sometimes it is a change in degree: "ka sentirkabaj **utsil**, to ka sentirkabaj **jats'utsi**." Other times the change is in meaning, a complementary meaning: "a **tsikbal** yéetel uláak'…" to, "a **na'atkabaj** yéet uláak'…". I include below a copy of Roberto's Maya text, illustrating the structures I have outlined: underlining indicates changes in person (first person plural to second person singular), and the contrast between the "us" and the "other"; bold is used to highlight the words that refer to communication—speaking, languages, being understood; and italics is used to show parallels and repetitions, which covers a lot of the text.

(9b) bueno, in **t'aan**o'on to'on como maayaj… *kin sentirkinbajo'on jach jats'utsi* tumen *in*
"Well, when we speak, for us as Maya [people]… We feel really good because it's our

***lenguaje'on**, in **t'aan**ilo'on*.. chéen jo'ok in **t'aan**o'on español yaanal forma *ka*
language, our word.. like when we speak in Spanish, there's this way you

sentirkabaj xan.. jats' uts' tumen *ta kanaj ulaak' **idioma**, ta kanaj uláak' **t'aan***.. tak xan
feel too.. It's nice because you learned another language, you learned another word..

ich ingles *ka sentirkabaj utsil* tumen *ju' páajtal a **tsikbal** yéetel uláak' máako'ob, ju'*
And also with English you feel good because you will be able to talk to other people,

*páajtal a **na'atkabaj** yéet uláak' winko'ob, uláak' máako'ob. ka sentirkabaj jats'utsi.*
you will be able to be understood by other people, other folks. You feel nice."

What is expressed here resonates with statements I heard from various other people in Quintana Roo—there is a sense of belonging and connection when talking about Maya, it being integral to their rootedness, and this is abstracted to apply to how anyone would feel about *their* There is a pride in the ability to speak multiple languages, and a sense that knowledge of more that one's first language is socially valued in a basic sense. This combines with the social desirability being attributed to Maya, and the significance of knowing English.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored how trilingual voices (varieties of English, Spanish, or Maya; standard and nonstandard, academic, emplaced, etc.) are legitimized, or not, through education and public institutions; are a source of privilege and opportunity; and are an embodied and mediatized experience. Communicative privilege operates to produce certain subjects whose ways of communicating are more appropriate, respectable, and which identify them as properly educated, sociable social actors. Building from the work of linguistic anthropologists such as Briggs (2005), Urciuoli (1995), and Rosa (2016), I introduce this analytic as an approach that would be useful in other studies of changing language use and metapragmatic discourses. Analyzing communicative privilege ties together layers of differently weighted interactions, which take place using a variety of voices, with evaluations of communicative practices according to dominant ideologies, and the real life effects of those perceptions and evaluations.

In the worst case, language standardization and ideologies of educatedness and competence can construct those who speak a particularly Quintana Rooense Spanish, a non-pure Maya, and an incomplete and academically unviable English as essentially 'languageless' (Rosa 2016). This dilemma has not been emphasized in the literature in relation to Indigenous language teaching (often in the context of language reclamation and revival) as part of a linguistic landscape that also includes a national language (or languages) *and* a "global" language. In this sense my argument contributes an important qualification to considerations of purism and standardization of minoritized languages.

Yet, it is the possibility of learning, interacting, and connecting via a variety of voices that many people point to when they reflect on their own and others' experiences of being multilingual. The pleasure of being able to *mean* and be understood, to be able to understand and help, to be able to joke and feel solidarity—is part of the ambiguous push and pull of being a speaker and having a voice. Ambiguous in that the boundaries that separate and enforce what counts or not as speaking English, or Maya, or Spanish, are constitutive of the projects to teach and learn them, as they simultaneously produce new structures of privilege or even domination. Ultimately though, we might hope, as many people in Quintana Roo do, that the voices at hand will become increasingly accessible for those who should want to embody them.

Chapter 3. **Neoliberalism, cosmopolitanism, and the affordances of trilingualism**

This chapter is about political economy and language, visions of the "global," and what communication looks like in overarching structures of social-political-economic domination—in Quintana Roo manifesting as neoliberalism through settler colonialism. This broader context is discussed in section 1. Within this complex sphere of shifting political economic conditions, in section 2 I briefly touch on discourses of development, which relate closely to racism and linguistic discrimination; movement, transnationalism, and translocalities; and the way these processes are usefully thought through from the perspective of scaling. Changes in communicative practices are better understood within this frame, which allows us to think about how transnational movement, of people and capital, also relates to emplaced interactions and education. The impressive change in the intensity of the economy in Quintana Roo is evident in the way "globalization" has made English so critical and present, while also affecting the possibilities of work for young people that is dependent on language competences, and can be observed in hiring practices and people's experiences of working in the tourism industry.

Section 3 is about how cosmopolitanism provides a more hopeful side to the phenomenon of increasing "connectedness" that many people emphasize, and how that discourse is appropriated, including in Quintana Roo. Combined with a discourse of rooted cosmopolitanism, trilingualism provides affordances that allow people to deal with, participate in, negotiate with, question, subvert, and confront transnational capital and its agents, and the Mexican state with its neoliberal policies and mandated multiculturalism. I thus move from the destructive, oppressive effects of settler colonialist tourism and how it interacts with language, to the ambiguities of globalization, the violence of racism, and the realities of hiring practices and discrimination. Then I turn to the phenomenon of movement and emerging translocal and differently scaled sites of living and belonging, to the cosmopolitan position and the hope of trilingualism, ways of participating, and ways of enacting new possibilities in the lives of *mayerxs*.

Section 1: Neoliberalism, tourism, and language

The imposition of capitalism as political-economic-social ideology and practice is inherent to economic development as undertaken by nation-states, international financial institutions, and NGOs, among others. European colonialism created the conditions of accumulation of capital in colonialist and now imperialist nation-states, which were the basis of what we now know as transnational capitalism. Neoliberalism, first emerging as an economic model in the 1980s in the US and Europe, takes this state of affairs then, as given, and effectively erases the historical-social dimensions of contemporary capitalism by making "the market" into an independent and rational force – a market which only exists because of the extent and success of Western capitalism[75]. David Harvey describes the neoliberal world as one in which "free markets in both commodities and capital contain all that is necessary to deliver freedom and well-being to all and sundry" (2003:201). He also describes neoliberalism as "a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial

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[75] Bourdieu also talked about neoliberalism: as "destroying collective structures which may impede the pure market logic" and as gaining the status of scientific theory – a "strong discourse" and an "infernal machine" (1998); he also emphasized political role of academics in standing against false equation of economic liberalism and political liberty (serves dominant class) (2003).

freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade" (Harvey 2005:2).

Neoliberal ideology—viewed by some as an extension of lasting Enlightenment-era Western notions of individualistic personhood—makes people into isolated individuals who are solely responsible for their circumstances, including their lack or possession of capital, though there is some recognition that certain groups may be disadvantaged and there are structures that give those people the illusion of equal opportunity by loaning them capital. The widespread acceptance and promotion of the market as the primary source of international authority gives transnational corporations and financial institutions the power of governance, which leads to the weakening of the political control of nation-states, and critically, more local scales of government (Mattei & Nader 2008). This is the state of affairs that we find ourselves in, which applied and politically oriented anthropologists often take as a target of critique, a force to fight against. To what extent neoliberalism is as unified and with such clear-cut effects as the descriptions I am using make it out to be, is debatable. Yet there is enough widespread dialogue about the destructiveness of privatization, individualism, and the rampant free market, particularly by leaders of political organizing in postcolonial regions, that I am inclined to see this system—along with the settler colonial legacy and reality, and impositions of the Mexican state—as to blame in Quintana Roo as well.

Neoliberalism and tourism in Mexico

Mexico is (and has been for some time) in a position to be particularly affected by the US-led neoliberal turn in ideology and economic policy. The Reagan administration, in tandem with the IMF's increasingly neoliberal strategies of the 1980s, forced Mexico into implementing reforms that conformed to these strategies, in return for debt rescheduling. Part of the Mexican state's economic plan, then, beginning in the late 1970s and gaining steam in the 80s, has been to develop rural regions of the country through the creation and development of tourism centers, with the result that the massive national tourism industry has become a site of privileged private investment in the country (Campos, Sierra & Balam 2009). Patricia Baquedano-López also argues that "in less than a decade, these changes transformed landowning Indigenous farmers into subsistence works of the Global South, forcing a reterritorialization movement to the North … as both response and resistance to economic and land dispossession" (2019:4). In section 3 I discuss further the movement of people from rural parts of the peninsula, both to the coast to work in tourism and to the United States in search of jobs.

As a state-led project, and intimately related to development in other countries, Mexican anthropologist Ángel López Santillán states that the tourism industry in Mexico is based on a "specific geopolitics determined by supranational organizations and their marching orders, namely, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and whose logic remains evident through the UNWTO's former slogan: 'tourism is wealth'" (2017:728). The tourism project "uses a logic of modernization that many social groups relate to and focuses on the development of tourism as a type of realization of the country's potential"; but, "the problem is the reproduction of inequality in the type of extraction of goods and in the different groups' conditions of possibility of reproduction itself … regional oligarchs and national political elites continue to benefit from tourism" (ibid.).

Tourist spaces are created through a combination of political economic articulations and discursive representations**,** including "the market-driven dispossession of ejidos, the commodification of images and experiences, social and economic changes due to local production

yielding to the Tertiary Sector, and the coordination of state institutions that reproduce discursive formations like 'ecosystem protection' and 'wildlife management' that favor businesses and capital connected to tourism" (López Santillán 2017). In Quintana Roo, all of these articulations are quite evident; the beaches, with their white sand, imaginary-worthy palm trees and dazzlingly clear water; cenotes, natural sink-holes throughout the jungle; and general environment evocative of paradise (in the words of many tourists and locals), are the product, possibility, and creation of tourism[76].

In the literature relating political economy and tourism in Quintana Roo,[77] scholars tend to focus on themes of: the perpetuation of economic and social inequality; the structures leading to outside influence and profit; the failures of sustainable development and ecotourism, and generally the presence of hypocrisy and corruption; the exploitation and theft of land; the destructiveness of neoliberal reforms; and the commercialization and exploitation of Indigenous culture and people (Ambrosie 2015; Azcárate 2011; Carte et al. 2010; Castañeda 2005, 2009; Cruz Coria et al. 2013; Daltabuit & Oriol 1990; Elbez 2017; Litka 2013; Medina 2003; Oriol & Thomas 2015; Re Cruz 2006; Taylor 2014; Torres & Momsen 2005). This is my phrasing—much of this work does not necessarily address these issues in such strong terms. These are interconnected phenomena, and though most of this work taken on its own proves rather simplistic and insufficiently ethnographically grounded, taken together these accounts help in formulating a picture of the larger processes at work here: settler colonialism, transnational capitalism, and neoliberalism.

Tourism as settler colonialism and its relationship to English

Following geographer Denise Fay Brown (2013), I see tourism as a form of settler colonialism**[78]** in the peninsula. Brown's article, "Tourists as colonizers in Quintana Roo, Mexico"—the only work I've found which addresses the topic in those explicit terms—argues that relationships of power underlying tourism development parallel those of colonialism, which are characterized fundamentally by the extraction of wealth from the local context; the tourist can be seen as an unwitting colonizer, and a pawn in a larger political project (186). In this frame, the settler requires space, which are "extracted through acts of "exclusion," whereby the local "Other," by necessity and by definition, is relegated to the margins" (Krautwurst 2003; Brown 2013:190).

Brown lays out the argument of tourist as colonizer as follows:
1) Establishing the motive, imposing new structures of power, and replacing existing spatial logic which is consolidated through 2) the influx of a settler population, accompanying the spatial dispossession of the local people followed by 3) the creation of an ideology constructing local people as the inferior Other, culminating in 4) reterritorialization[79] through which structural

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[76] Creation in the sense that going to the beach was not a recreational activity for people living in the area before Europeans, Americans, and later wealthy Mexicans and other Latin Americans, came to inhabit the idyllic landscape with their practices of lounging on the beach and burning themselves in the sun, and of course their vacation ideology fueled need for alcohol and drugs.

[77] My reading here is mainly of anthropological literature, in addition to some work by geographers, economists, sociologists, political scientists, and cultural studiers.

[78] 'Settler colonization' is "a strategy of colonialism by which the imperialist state sends its own people to set up permanent residence in the target locality" (Brown 2013:190).

[79] The tourists' relationship to the local context becomes one in which they "assume that the spaces available to visit and inhabit are unproblematic and uncontested. They are led to feel entitlement to these spaces, a feeling reinforced by official structures of government and authority" (200). Brown concludes that "it is crucial that tourists become more self-conscious, socially aware, and politicized"; they should "problematize their agency in

changes manifest in power relations together with imposed hierarchies and social institutions (such as those relating to resource tenure) (196).

I lay out here some of the shifting dynamics in metapragmatic discourses and communicative practices and usages in the face of neoliberalism and tourism. The role that English plays within the political economic landscape of the Riviera Maya[80], for example, can be related to the above argument about settler colonialism. Colonial languages played large roles in the first centuries of colonization—the processes of domination, extraction, and destruction effected by European powers. More recently, American imperialism and the settler presence of agents from the North in spaces of the South, demonstrate a similar role of language as a form of dominance that transforms the possibilities of people's lives.

The tourist as colonizer carries with them their assumed communicative superiority, and English is most commonly the sound of this semiotic reterritorialization. English is representative of many things for people in Quintana Roo, but one of these things which seems pertinent to me, is English as an agent of a colonization which has never stopped. When a tourist enters a business in Tulum and speaks to the people working there in English, without any attempt at interaction in Spanish or prefacing their usage of English in any way, expecting to be understood and served—they are participating in the project of tourism as neocolonialism. Such moments feed directly into the communicative privilege of English speakers in Quintana Roo, in this case a form of privilege which is especially pointed in tourist spaces.

Understanding the above arguments means that when my interlocutors talk about work in tourism and the effect it has on people's lives, it can be understood in a way that doesn't treat it as a neutral economic activity, but rather recognizing the deep similarities the situation shares with the colonial landscape of the peninsula. For example, in a conversation I had with a group of students at UIMQRoo studying alternative tourism, some of them described having witnessed tourists who didn't want to associate with locals and positioned themselves as superior to those who were serving them.

We can also critically talk about tourism in a way that situates it within the spread of neoliberal governance, and how it reflects a particular form of capitalism which is specific to the 1980s and 90s and which we are dealing with now: dealing with the inequalities and crises and distortions of the rule of law; and ideas of politics and citizenship, ownership, and positionality of locals and outsiders.

Language and communication in tourism

With the influx of tourism, we see a critical shift in terms of language use, the prevalence of new voices, and the effect of new demands for particular language skills. There are emerging demands of the tourism industry in terms of specialized preparation, language competences, and education in general. There is also the non-neutral presence of the English language (and to some extent others including Italian and French) in a more diffuse way—signs, names of businesses, advertisements, and generally the common sight and sound of English words. The success of a business or locale can depend on the comfort of tourists regarding the language use available, and expected of them. Accordingly, how are different voices part of new forced engagements with transnational capital and neoliberal economic reforms?

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contributing to inequalities and injustices provoked by their unwitting spatial appropriation. They have been instilled with the 'power to dispossess' (Harris 2004, 168) and should be held responsible for their actions" (203).

[80] And soon the Costa Maya, the area south of the Sian Ka'an that is the target of the next wave of development— again framed as ecologically sensitive and responsible, but again most likely not either of those things.

Along with this, one of my initial curiosities about Maya in the context of the tourism industry in Quintana Roo was the question of whether the language might start to be packaged for consumption by tourists, the way other forms of intangible cultural heritage sometimes are[81]. In such a case, we might expect to see more clearly how, as Bonnie Urciuoli and La Douse describe, "semiotic work is … evident in the production of discursive constructions of experience, especially touristic experiences of ethnic authenticity, a business in which it is advantageous to interpret linguistic elements ironically and to erase variability" (Irvine & Gal 2000). This would mean a changing relationship to communication as potentially profitable within the neoliberal economic regime, and it brings up questions about what transnational capital and neoliberalism do to language, which I address below.

I did not observe such a commodification process during my fieldwork, and of course tourism could never truly give access to language as a diachronic formation, with the material and affective realities that make it such an important and yet little tangible social form. And as Monica Heller notes, "without evidence of tourists who seek to consume tourist services because of the language in which those services are delivered, claims for tourism as an important nexus of the commodification of language (2010:108) should be treated with some skepticism" (McGill 2013:86).

Thinking about the relation between tourism and language seems like it would be commonplace—both in terms of "hosts" and "visitors"—yet the topic has been little theorized or reflected on in a rigorous anthropological way. One earlier work on language and tourism by Cohen and Cooper (1986) attempts to provide an overview of potential approaches to a study of the intersection of the two realms; they argue that interactions in tourist situations take place under unusual circumstances and are thus productive as sites of study—the primary circumstances being a high degree of temporariness and substantial linguistic accommodation of locals to tourists (533). They ultimately argue that linguistic practice covaries with the type of tourism being practiced, drawing from a typology developed by Cohen which is not entirely useful due to the changes in tourism in the past 30 years. They also introduce the concept of 'language brokerage.' This is described as a "sociolinguistically important type, distinct in outlook and function from translators and interpreters" whose role includes linguistic interpretation as "only incidental to a wider range of tasks" such as "social mediation with the local population and the dissemination of information, explanation and interpretation of the sites visited" (556). This concept is narrowly focused on one role within tourism interactions, and what Cohen and Cooper offer (along with other scholarship such as Stasch [2014]) does not address broader changes in the place and effects of language within a tourism economy.

The commodification of language

Another approach taken in a theoretical consideration of the relationship between language and political economy is that of certain sociolinguists and linguistic anthropologists who focus on the dynamics of language under neoliberalism. Bonnie Urciuoli and Chaise LaDousa's overview of language as labor and the commodification of language[82] is very useful in this sense. They

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[81] An example of language as packaged for tourists explored by Duchene (2009) is when "operators in the Swiss multilingual tourist industry are valued for their capacity to handle standardized major languages and to add authenticity in nonstandardized local languages" (Urciuoli & La Dousa 2013:185).

[82] Heller makes the argument that "the "commodification of language" (1999:336) has been an important part of the "economic shifts of high modernity" (1999:337) and that "new market conditions turn both identity and language into commodities that can be traded together, but also separately" (2011:112)."

describe how "language work, particularly in neoliberal regimes, presupposes the channeling of employee sociality and (in varying degrees) subjectivity into company interests" and how (knowledge of) linguistic practices may be considered commodified depending on if they are performed as social interaction or a job skill, and importantly, on the degree of agency the speaker has in when, where and how they are produced (2013:176). This applies to the way language competences are valued and potentially commodified in the context of the tourism economy, and how language education prepares people to become workers whose sociality and agency, in terms of their communicative practices, are subject to the interests of capital and the market (by way of governmental and non-governmental organizations, companies and corporations). Businesses have also taken the role of standardizing speech (Cameron 2002), which works alongside processes of standardization within education in the production of trilingualism in Quintana Roo. These neoliberal standardizations of language work "involve considerable entextualization (Silverstein & Urban 1996) of performance scripts, manuals, source books, websites, etc" (Urciuoli & LaDousa 2013:177) – which we can see again as parallel to the ways language is abstracted and entextualized in language education.

Yet, some argue against a strong emphasis on language as a commodity because it "overlooks the dependence of the system on real products for its profits" (Holborow 2007:6). Another contrasting exploration of the question of language becoming a commodity is undertaken by Kenneth McGill (2013), who argues that in the technical understanding of 'commodity' as an item of exchange embedded in a capitalist economy using money as a universal equivalent, there have been few persuasive demonstrations of language functioning *as* commodity[83]. For language to be a commodity there would need to be some sort of language market, but the markets we see are actually in things like translation, he argues[84] (85). This is a seemingly clear delineation – but one actually resting on suspect divisions of what "language itself" is, as opposed to objects which are partly constituted by language.

McGill says language is "rarely measured as a skill in any direct way," since "in order for language to achieve the status of a commodity, specific instances of its use must be commensurated with other forms of economic value" (86-87). One of his examples is hiring practices for call centers, involving standards of language competence; he argues that such standards tend to be inconsistent, ad hoc, and pretextual, and thus not constitutive of language use as commodity (87). In order to argue for language as functioning like an economic resource, it would have to be shown that one person or group had special access to it, and "the basic fact that linguistic codes are shared tends to mitigate against this sort of special access" (97). But they are not in fact shared equally, an obvious point which could be built on and developed in the terms McGill's using.

Since communicative competences aren't evenly distributed or accessible, the state often plays a role in shaping which competences are present within a given labor market. Language policy becomes an important point of juncture between these questions of labor, language, and education. The exploitation of communicative competences as economic resources originates with

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[83] An example of the argument for language as commodity: "When the exchange of information becomes a primary form of production in globalized networks that link many different linguistic markets, language practices gain new status as exchangeable resources (usually understood as a set of measurable 'skills' whose value on the market can be calculated in the same way as that of other goods or services)" (Budach, Roy and Heller 2003:604).

[84] McGill argues that Bourdieu "was overtly committed to what he described as the performance of reconversion strategies— i.e., a set of social actions which involve the ability to convert linguistic resources into monetized economic values and vice versa (Bourdieu 1984:125ff)" (2013:E89), McGill makes an argument to the contrary; he doesn't see evidence in scholarly work on the topic that shows that language is a full-fledged resource which can be exchanged like a commodity — or at least can have a monetized economic value.

the role of the state as the main provider of education (ibid:91). McGill further discusses how language skills are always part of the set of general capacities of workers, and how state actors' continued attempts to improve second-language skills of the population "should almost certainly be presumed to continuously erode even those minimal wage premiums which are available based on linguistic competence—the result being a steady *de*-commodification of language use achieved as the result of linguistic homogenization" (88). In Quintana Roo, this would imply that more people gaining English competence (or even becoming trilingual) would lower wages given that it would be easier to find workers who have the set of skills that are desired. Whether or not we see language as commodified or de-commodified, this eventuality of the neoliberal tourism economy would be completely contrary to the promise of the trilingual ideal.

Further explorations of neoliberalism and language

The various studies of neoliberalism and language can be quite different but are referred to in the same way—on the one hand, they can look at the ways neoliberal discourse or ideology is evident in language and to what extent linguistic forms and practices enforce or constitute neoliberal structures of power and dominance. On the other, there is work which looks at language under neoliberalism—how forms of language are treated as products, commodities, or otherwise active in the market; how work/labor that explicitly involves linguistic competences and practices is conceptualized and plays out within neoliberal political economic conditions; and how changes effected by neoliberal policies and reforms in social organization and practices (from small to broad scales) include changes in communication and media usage insofar as they involve changes in interaction, intersubjective production of meaning, and the willingness to acknowledge the collective and constantly transforming nature of all language.

I am interested more in the latter perspective, in particular in how changing ideas and practices in labor and education are shifting the way communication is reified, valued, and evaluated; and how neoliberal political economic development—like tourism in Quintana Roo—relate to the way language knowledge and use (via embodied and mediatized interactions) become a monetizable skill, an accountable facet of individual's personality and/or intelligence, as they are also often naturalized as correct, appropriate, entrepreneurial, strategic, or not. As Urciuoli and LaDousa remind us, "under neoliberal regimes and conditions of globalization, and depending on the language worker's job description and status as managed or managing, ethnicity/race, gender, and affiliation with national or nonnational language practices are conceptualized as skills subject to Taylorization, as natural abilities for employers' occasional use, or as indexes of authenticity" (2013:175). I have addressed the former of these themes above, and below address the latter. First, however, I will touch briefly on the first of the two trends in work on neoliberalism and language that I note above.

Marnie Holborow is a prominent voice in such studies currently; she discusses topics such as to what extent language practice is an immaterial commodity under contemporary capitalism, in addition to analyzing, from an applied linguistics perspective, phenomena such as the prevalence of the "costumer metaphor" in increasingly diverse spheres of life. She argues that neoliberal ideology manifests *in* language, not *as* language, and that there are tensions in the imposition and enforcement of said ideology, due to the fact that "language is neither a straitjacket nor a settled ideological product" (2007:1). This debate is more about the relationship between language and ideology, and whether or not an ideology like neoliberalism can become hegemonic via language

as directly controlled by and reflective of ideology[85]. It is pertinent to mention this here because my work tends to be somewhat difficult to fit in common discussions in sociolinguistics of themes such as 'language and neoliberalism,' so I want to demonstrate why what I'm doing fits better with the line of thinking of linguistic anthropology in the United States. I would also add that there is room and need for studies that address the above themes but that also take on the project of relating the complexities of embodied and mediatized language (or voices) to larger political economic structures—a difficult task, but one which could provide those in positions of power with different ways to approach daily interactions so as to be aware of nuanced ways that communicative practices become objectified, commodified, policed, and privileged under neoliberalism.

Section 2: Development, work, and hiring practices

An understanding of the effects of a tourism-based economy and the invasion of transnational capital in Quintana Roo should be complemented by a brief discussion of the paradigm of development—often qualified and marketed as "sustainable development"—that affects much political economic theory and practice in Quintana Roo (and the rest of Mexico, Latin America, and the world). I am referring to this as a single identifiable paradigm because the term 'development' is used widely by many different actors, be they academic, state, or non-governmental, among others—and is naturalized and assumed to be a moral project, in addition to being the only way for countries in the Global South to effectively integrate into global markets.

Changing opportunities for work and strategies for education[86] relate in direct and indirect ways to this context of ostensibly ethically-minded people and organizations who take on the task of "helping" the disadvantaged in places like rural Quintana Roo (Iturriaga & Rodríguez 2015, Taylor 2016). When we think about the way trilingualism is constructed as economically advantageous, and the way Maya revitalization and English teaching are supported by international sources which value linguistic diversity and/or the economic empowerment of local communities, there are consequences for people from Quintana Roo as subjects who are already lacking, in need of guidance and benevolent support, and inherently less civilized.

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[85] I would define ideology as: a paradigm of naturalized socially-applied ideas that upholds structures of power and dominance. Ideologies often hold up those in power precisely because those in power have the influence to have their ideologies be prevalent. An ideology holding great sway in a place and time could go so far as to be considered an ontological framework, a perspective which is implied in sociolinguistic/discourse analysis work that worries about ideological language shaping people's realities, like Holborow does. Taking her work as an example, we see a problematic way of describing "meaning in language" as being susceptible to ideology and manipulation, which implies that there is an objective, true meaning, and ignores the fact that meaning is continuously negotiated, emergent, is intersubjective in the most profound sense, and always constituted by context, such that something like the costumer metaphor could be used in an ironic way, or potentially without all the negative effects of it as fundamentally encompassing and instating the neoliberal ideology. The semiotic ideology which sees words and phrases as having a true meaning which is evaluable as true or false is one which does not sit well with more linguistic anthropological perspectives[85], as Susan Gal pointed out early on: "they [critical discourse analysis perspective, currently, 'language as ideology'] sometimes seem to assume that there is an unproblematical reality that it is the linguist's responsibility to reveal, but, as a means of social action and representation, language cannot be contrasted with reality, since it partially constructs what is real in society" (1989:360).

[86] Education and work are closely tied, but are distinct in that the latter is controlled in large part by transnational capital and large scale flows, while the former is more dependent on state policy, funding, initiatives, and the like—though it is also affected by international development projects and small scale activism, and work also affected by state policy. One could argue though that the discourses and institutions that shape education in Mexico and Quintana Roo in particular are generally structured to precisely allow for the increasing influence and control of capital.

Underdevelopment and racism

The way that rural Quintana Roo and Yucatán, and Indigenous people throughout the region, are constructed as poor—not just economically but also "lacking" in terms of cultural practices and racialized as the figure of the helpless victim—and underdeveloped is central to the perspective that much Mexican public discourse, as well as some scholarship, takes regarding the need for political-economic intervention in some sense, which though it may now be termed 'sustainable' or 'community oriented,' still almost always functions within the traditional frame of development (Litka 2013, Taylor 2016). The paradigm of development that emerged in the 1950s, largely as an American imperialist project, ended up creating the the opposite of the abundance and progress that it had promised, producing "massive underdevelopment and impoverishment, untold exploitation and oppression" (Escobar 1995:4).

Currently, environmentalist concerns are often part of ongoing development projects; a consideration of academic literature on the topic and the programs already in place soon demonstrates that conservation is not in fact a service conceptualized to be *with* or *for* the people whose land is being "conserved". Nor does ecotourism have anything particularly to do with an ontological commitment to nonhuman life, and sustainable development proves similar to any other paradigm of development, but with the addition of a moral superiority allowing for difficult-to-critique justifications for interventions (Araújo-Santana et al. 2013, Daltabuit & Pi-Sunyer 1990, Tolentino et al. 2015).

The widespread international agreement on the need for development of the so-called Third World makes for a complex and naturalized discourse of what political, economic, and social changes are involved in such a process. This is despite the obvious detrimental effects of many development projects, proving that the status development had gained as a "certainty in the social imaginary" by the 1970s continues today: reality, in Arturo Escobar's words, "had been colonized by the development discourse" (1995:5). The application and ideological backing of this paradigm entail racist, neocolonial discourses, disguised in terms of the North's benevolent insistence on providing "aid." As Eugenia Iturriaga and Yassir Rodríguez put it, "the idea of development is an aura that disguises a series of power relations that express, implement, and promote a discourse where racism is present" (2015:49). As such, development often results in exacerbated inequalities and the erasure of Indigenous and emplaced ontologies and forms of sociality.

An undervaluing of the problem of development as a focus of analysis thus implies the uncontested writing from a hegemonic position (López Santillán 2017). As such, critical studies of development and tourism will continue to be important and may "[lead] us closer to a direct transformation of the local through analyses of power relations, the real conditions of relations, articulation, and the displacement of particular social groups" (ibid:728). In this sense, this dissertation contributes an ethnographically based argument for the fact that tourism cannot be framed in neutral terms: settler colonialism and underdevelopment are two productive, necessary ways of understanding the political economic changes and growth that we see in Quintana Roo.

Thus there are forms of racism that are embedded in development processes in Quintana Roo that are tied to and complement the implicit racialization that constructs certain bodies as natural producers of legitimized forms of language, and which affects *mayerx* people in the peninsula in similar ways to Indigenous peoples throughout Mexico (Barabas 1979). Iturriagea and Rodríguez explain that in Mexico, racism towards Indigenous peoples is a subordinating

product of the colonial period, and is *"una discriminación racial y cultural que se ha matizado en el discurso, pero ha persistido en las prácticas cotidianas"*[87] (2015:51).

An example of this is the usage of the term *"mayita,"* a pejorative word– though some would argue on the contrary, including some people who would more or less jokingly refer to themselves that way – that derives from (Spanish) *"maya"* and refers to *mayerxs* and rural, Indigenous people form the peninsula. The diminutive ending *'–ita/ito'* applied to a racialized term also happens with *'negro'* becoming *'negrito,'* which is common in México when referring to people of African descent and is justified by many privileged Mexican as being "endearing" but the usage of in my experience is much closer to belittling and patronizing. There is a wide range of opinions about the degree to which these terms are racist and demeaning, speaking to the point about mestizaje, and demonstrating the way racist language can be ambiguous and affectively inflected as negative or positive, depending on one's position (Moreno & Saldívar 2016).

The growth of the tourism economy combined with state and international interest in developing the region has meant that racism, while disavowed by governmental and other liberalizing agents, takes a mediating role in their interactions between people racialized as Indigenous, especially *mayerxs* and those from rural areas. An example of this from the literature relates attitudes of agents involved in a project contracted by the Commission for the Development of Indigenous People (CDI) to assist a pueblo in rural Yucatán[88] establish ecotourism services and attract tourists (Iturriagea & Rodríguez 2015). Based on interviews and observations, Iturriagea and Rodríguez assert that all of the agents saw the pueblo as suffering economic and cultural poverty, incapable of thinking outside of their limited local/cultural mindset, and not able to generate the necessary changes to improve their lives themselves (59). The assumption that the community would accept and thus have the same understanding of what changes were desirable or necessary, and how to go about them, is part of the same impulse from colonization to state imposition, that the outsider understands the needs of Indigenous people in a way that they themselves cannot.

Demonstrating this, one CDI official stated that Indigenous people were hard to work with because *"es difícil que te entiendan que es una responsabilidad y compromiso que tienen hacia nosotros CDI"* (60), a frequent complaint among promotors of social programs around the country: that rural communities are closed and don't realize that the programs are designed to help them (Iturriaga 2012). Despite the historical destructiveness of state-led "civilizing" projects, community members are supposed to feel a "responsibility" and "commitment" to the CDI, and attend meetings, workshops, and lectures meant to "help" them. There is no consideration of people's daily lives, their existing commitments and schedules and if these mandatory are not to, the community members are considered ungrateful and lazy, and not committed to the "improvement" the project purports to bring.

New employment opportunities in tourism prove similar in terms of the construction of Indigenous people in these racist terms if they do not eagerly and enthusiastically discipline themselves to be obedient, productive members of the transnational capitalist system. This was perfectly demonstrated by an acquaintance of mine in Tulum who one night went on an unprompted rant about the *"mayitas"* working for him (he was the manager at an upscale hotel

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[87] "…it is a racial and cultural discrimination that has been tempered in discourse, but has persisted in quotidian practices."

[88] This was a pueblo of about 300 inhabitants, 281 of which spoke Maya (INEGI 2010); while agriculture was the main economic activity, a considerable contingent of young men were working as tour guides at a nearby archaeological site, taxi drivers and the like in Valladolid, or as masons and construction workers in Quintana Roo.

restaurant) being lazy, uneducated, and lacking initiative or commitment to their jobs. While such statements were not often shared in such explicit terms among the enlightened neohippies and liberal subjects of the Riviera Maya, the predictability of and exact reproduction of racist statements about Indigenous peoples in Mexico and across Latin America that have historical roots in colonization and only serve to remind us that resistance to colonial/neocolonial violence has not always taken the form of outright conflict, like in the Caste War, but is also enacted in silence, noncompliance, and the distrust of outsiders.

Hiring and communicative practices

There are subtle, and not so subtle, ways that the racialization and oppression described above are situated in perceptions of communicative practices and emerge in the context of hiring in the tourism industry in Quintana Roo. Forms of communicative privilege that I described in chapter 2 are complemented by and inextricably linked to processes of Othering and racism disguised in the form of economic and cultural development projects. A blatant manifestation of this is when minority languages are sometimes be banned in work spaces; I heard from several people that Maya was not permitted at work in hotels and restaurants, particularly at the large resorts, and one acquaintance of a friend was fired for violating this rule. Though many others spoke Maya with their coworkers without an explicit disciplinary consequence, the fact that speaking Maya could conceivably be considered a reason to get fired points to a refusal to acknowledge the historical, emplaced context of the business, with its own complex, shifting linguistic terrain.

Accordingly, details of communicative practices and competences are part of the precarious position of those looking for work – even more so because language competence is somewhat unstable due to its emergent, intersubjective nature. If a hiring decision, or getting a raise, or generally improving one's working conditions, depends in part on some sort of evaluation, it's possible to have one's interactional competence misconstrued due to the contingencies of an accent, vocabulary used, or other contextual conditions (Urciuoli & LaDousa 2013). In this vein, Urciuoli and LaDousa note that "people whose accents index racialized social categories may be considered 'unintelligible' and denied jobs as teachers or broadcasters without legal recourse because 'clear' communication may be legally ruled as part of the job" (180). While I am not discussing such professions here, the point that accents and other embodied communicative practices index subordinated social categories and as such are perceived as less intelligible, like Rosa and Flores also argued, stands as a clear example of the way forms of language are consequential far beyond a simplistic distinction between, for example, someone who "speaks English" and someone who "does not."

Thus, beyond the evaluation of someone's apparent English level (in the most common case), there are implicit judgements made by those in positions of power based on perceptions of (potential) employees' communicative style, their amiability, politeness, appropriateness in interacting with costumers or tourists. These elements of communicative practices are often understood in individualistic terms, as one's personality—or in generalized, racist terms, where shyness is a pejorative characteristic of *"mayitas,"* who supposedly lack the self-confidence and initiative to rise in the labor hierarchy.

As Susan Gal pointed out in her review of anthropological studies of language and political economy, in work-related interactions such as job interviews, simply sharing a "common language" does not mean that contextualization cues and other embodied communicative practices are necessarily shared. "With such cues speakers signal assumptions about background knowledge,

expectations about participant structure, and the sequencing of information for argument and persuasion. Misunderstandings are heard by those in control of the institutions not as linguistic differences but as indications of personal qualities, and thus as objective grounds for rejection and devaluation of those attempting access" (1989:352). Further, the pool of potential workers can be blamed for their lack of skills, as a way to deflect attention from the structural conditions that are the actual source of problematic labor recruiting and relations (Urciuoli & LaDousa 2013).

The primary elements of *mayerx* communicative practices that are perceived and metapragmatically framed by outsiders in the terms of shyness, unfriendliness, and apathy, then, involve: subtle embodied ways of establishing and concluding copresent interactions; fewer verbal expressions of affect and states such as gratitude, interest, and affection; non-linearly structured interactions, i.e. not answering a question immediately after it was asked and answering later in the same conversation or in a subsequent non-chronotopically defined interaction; the use of silence for a range of semiotic effects, including patience, comfort, and focusing attention; and, making sometimes critical observations about others directly to them or in their presence. These are identified in comparison to my experience and usage of Mexican Spanish norms and expectations of communicative events, as well as my own communicative practices acquired throughout my life.

Such communicative specificities can be situated in a relation to Hanks' study of deictics (indexical words that are inherently contextually specific, such "here" or "you") as a sociocentric referential practice in Maya, which points to a denaturalization of how we understand "space," rather understanding the body and its interactional relation to other agents, events, objects, places, etc. as resting on a stock of social knowledge (1990). If this social knowledge is not shared, then, the complex way people refer to one another, their social relations, and previous/future aspects of interactions in Maya can be obscure to non-speakers. This applies not just to deictics, but to phenomena such as embodied expressions of affect, like in demonstrating gratitude, and the semiotic establishing of social relationships, like performing a greeting. Further, it appears that such specific elements of Maya communication extend to interactions not taking place in Maya, and are employed by people who rather than considering themselves Maya speakers per se, come from families and communities of *mayerxs*.

Returning to the issue of how such communicative practices are sometimes perceived by non-*mayerxs*, Melissa Elbez demonstrates this perception at work in Tulum, where those seen as "Mayas" by Mexicans from other parts of the country (who wouldn't identify themselves as Maya) are thought to be *"cerrados"* (closed, reserved) (2017). She relates accounts from *"numerosos interlocutores, entre los cuales una vendedora de tours veracruzana señala: 'no te hablan, no saludan. A veces te hablan y tú no les quieres hablar'"* [89] (49). It is clear how different modes of establishing social relationships, conveying affective states, and the like are misidentified and misinterpreted.

In another example, someone working on the CDI development project cited in the previous section[90] said in an interview that in the pueblos of Yucatán, the *jóvenes* (young people) don't go out: *"hay que cambiar eso… timidez, no te dicen las cosas, no te contestan, no se comunican … muchas veces no sé qué hacer porque no sé qué tanto les interesa o qué tanto no*

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[89] "numerous interlocutors, among whom one woman from Veracruz who sells tours noted: 'they don't talk to you, they don't say hi to you. Sometimes they talk to you and you don't want to talk to them'."

[90] It is also worth noting that the development agents did not speak Maya and did not consider that even for people who are bilingual, there have different levels of comfort in Spanish, and the like.

saben"[91] (Iturriagea & Rodríguez 2015:61). The young people in the region are by no means uncommunicative as a general rule, as evidenced by this dissertation, and beyond making an ill-informed and power-laden assertion of the need to change the young people's ways, the development workers do not consider the fact that the dynamic between themselves and the *jóvenes* may affect what the latter want to share, what they understand the goals of the project to be, and the agency they feel they have in engaging with it or not. Furthermore, their interpretation of the way the young people communicated, when they were thought to be doing so, was not in line with emplaced norms for interaction and expression which give silence a semiotically important place and use more subtly and quietness which outsiders do not pay attention to or understand.

Rather than teaching administration, management, or commercialization skills, the development project[92] ended up teaching the community members essentially how to be good employees in the tourism industry: how to be well-behaved servers, provide friendly room service, etc. Accordingly, they were taught that *"tenían que saludar a cada turista que pasara, que tenían que acostumbrarse a hacerlo, ya que a los turistas les agrada el buen trato"* (ibid:64); another woman teaching training workshops also emphasized: *"no dejo de insistir en que su deber era ser muy amables y respetuosos con los turistas"* (65). Evaluations of mayerx communicative practices are thus seen as an appropriate object of outsider intervention. The assumption here that a local, Indigenous person needs to be explicitly taught and disciplined to be nice, polite, and respectful is a rationalized, normalized, and (symbolically) violent manifestation of communicative privilege and the hegemony of Mexican Spanish and internationally authoritative Northern standards of communicative practices.

We see how under neoliberal capitalism, the racism of settler colonial tourism works with discourses of lack and underdevelopment to produce situations where communicative practices (in addition to more narrowly defined competences) are particularly consequential to people's livelihoods. Metapragmatic standards affect who may work where and how much they may earn, and communicative privilege is fomented by neoliberal structures just as it is instilled through state education. This insight is not often discussed in the literature on language and tourism, or in discussions of political economic changes in Quintana Roo, which tend to explain relations between those being hired and those doing the hiring in simplistic terms of the former's strategic selling of the Maya culture and the latter as well-intentioned and/or exploitative. Further research could further examine the consequences of perceptions about embodied communicative practices of minoritized language populations in hiring contexts, especially where being bilingual is not enough and trilingualism in standardized forms of local, national, and global languages is demanded (though Maya not necessarily demanded).

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[91] "This has to be changed… they're shy, they don't say anything to you, they don't answer you, they don't communicate … a lot of the time I don't know what to do because I don't know what they're interested in or what it is they don't know." (My translation)

[92] Ultimately, the courses the trainees received "eran por cuestiones relacionadas con la atención a los turistas" and "se enfocaron en *formar buenos empleados para la industria hotelera*" (my emphasis) – hospitality, cooking, primeros auxilios and inglés básico (2015:68). The final result of this community-based development project was to prepare people to enter the tourism work force at the lowest level, perpetuating the precise exploitative dynamics that such projects are supposed to be working against.

Section 3: Translocalities, cosmopolitanism, and the affordances of trilingualism

Moving from the hegemony of neoliberalism, to the tensions of grounded interactions in contexts of labor, hiring, and development projects, leads us to a consideration of other social processes that are a consequence and response to these changing circumstances. The scope of transnational capital at work in tourism is difficult to convey, as it infiltrates the Mexican state's functioning and exacerbates corruption, and shapes the subjects who work within its structures. One way of coming to terms with these extensively scaled processes is to look at the migrations and translocal/transnational belongings that result from it and help deal with it. The movement of people, in search of jobs and the possibility of safer, healthier lives, is a widespread phenomenon that I discuss briefly here as it relates to the emergence of the cosmopolitan discourse, and the emergence of spatially unbounded communication.

Cosmopolitanism, or the idea that there are a set of global ethical values and a global form of citizenship, is a positive figuring of changing circumstances—one which can be traced to the privileged travelers whose cross-cultural experiences are a voluntary luxury, but which is also increasingly present in post-colonial communities, and alternatively, can be argued as being fundamentally shaped by these subjugated peoples (Clifford 1997, Graeber 2008). In this section I trace mobility, changing scales and scaling practices, and cosmopolitanism, then return to trilingualism, which can be understood as an amalgamation of voices that represent a cosmopolitan belonging in Quintana Roo, and (theoretically) afford to speakers new possibilities of engaging in social and political economic worlds.

Migration, translocalities, and the scaling of social configurations

There are many similarities between processes of internal migration in Yucatán, Campeche, and Quintana Roo, and the social consequences that are discussed in relation to them, and migration to the United States—a phenomenon which takes different forms throughout Mexico and Latin America, and which also increasingly affects the peninsula. This applies perfectly to people who move between pueblos in rural areas and the Riviera. Baquedano-López describes such migration of Indigenous peoples as "both response and resistance to the settler [colonial] state" (2019:2). In addition to this critical understanding of movement, the situation of migration between pueblos and the Riviera is important in understanding the spread of cosmopolitan discourses, communicative practices, and social attitudes; we might ask what happens to relations to place and locality in this context, and how people reconcile the vastly different embodied and social positions they find themselves in in the contrasting places they inhabit[93][94] (Clifford 1997).

The idea of translocality has been introduced in the context of tourism-affected places, in addition to migration, as a consequential phenomenon. Translocality as conceptual framework

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[93] From the beginnings of the development of Cancun, men's participation as unskilled wage laborers has had various instantiations; Re Cruz (1996**)** noted the contrast between men who spoke Spanish better than others, as Gaskins reiterates: "they did not like having to work in a world where Spanish is the dominant language and where their assumptions about the world were not shared" (2003:260). There was a preference to go look for work with a family member, working from established networks. A 1999 article looking at differences in living conditions, nutrition, health, between families living in Tulum, Chemuyil, and pueblos de Yucatán – found that migrants did have an improved quality of life; they had less malnutrition than in the pueblos (Balam Pereira et al. 1999).

[94] In the context of migration between Mexico and the United States, Indigenous migrants have "the capacity to simultaneously be seen as a low-profile, low-status worker in one context while playing major leadership roles in other arenas" (Fox and Rivera-Salgado 2004:35).

speaks to the complex networks between social groups as constituted by home community, place of work, social relations in places migrated to, and in the process of movement itself—and how those networks are located spatially such that a place, a locality, acquires horizontal ties to other places. This is a formulation that looks at place as socially constituted such that the 'local' is a horizontal phenomenon, and mobility is already inherent to the lived experience of one place or another (Ayora Diaz 2017).

Relatedly, transnationalism refers to the quality of movement (whether of people, discourses, capital, goods) between countries, and practices operating on a scale conceived as beyond that of the nation state. Understanding transnationalism as a framing of political economic changes and incursions is important because of the crucial influence of transnational capital in Quintana Roo. And while transnational communities signal a form of belonging that still recognizes nation-states as the salient location of citizenship, the framework of translocalities speaks to the sense that localities and social groups are the more basic element of belonging and that this is what migrant forms of belonging transcend. Both ideas help with a shift in our understanding of the scaling of communities and social practices, and help conceptualize an emerging cosmopolitan discourse in Quintana Roo that sees the creation of communities beyond the constraints of space as a goal and possibility (Baquedano-Lopez 2019).

Below I include a map of movements that some of the people I met during my fieldwork make and have made, color coded by the languages known and used by each person. This is not meant to be a comprehensive map encompassing all trends of migration in the region, but rather a visual complement to the theoretical discussion of emerging translocalities.
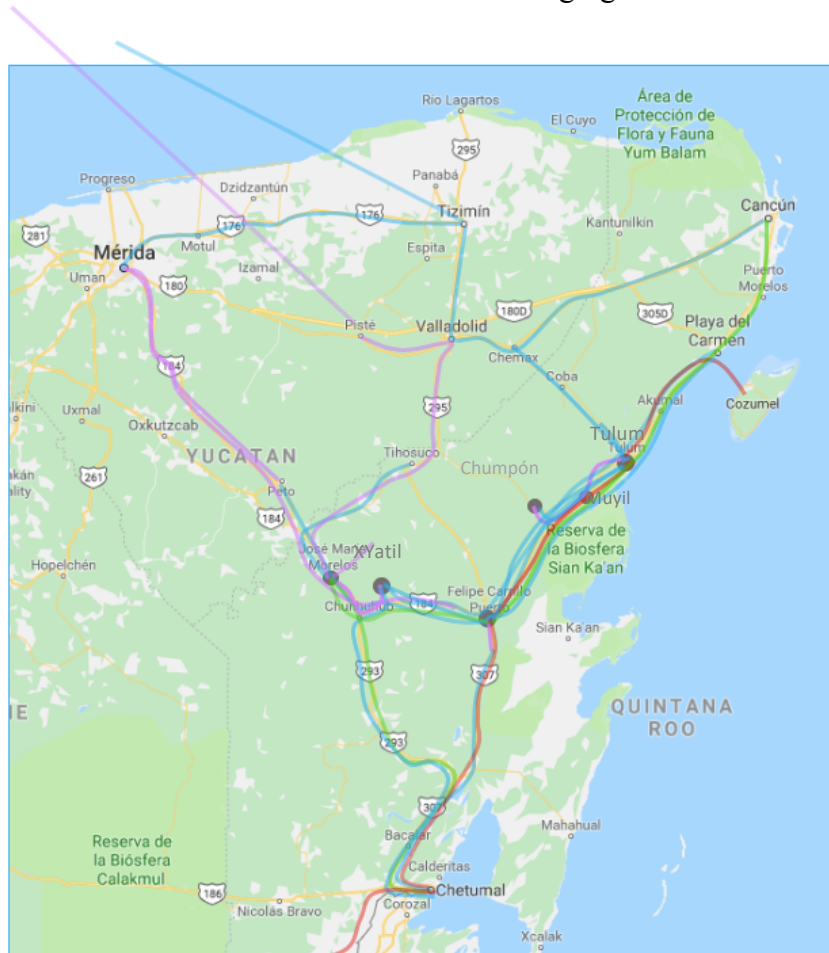
Figure 17 (previous page). Map of interlocutors' movements, between where they grew up and where they have or do now work, study, have family, etc. Colors represent: pink – trilingual; blue – Maya and Spanish; red – Spanish; green – Spanish and English.

With these formulations of place and movement, the notion of scale is clearly invoked as some places are more or less important in political economic terms; some are central and others are secondary. As a response, E. Summerson Carr and Michael Lempert remind us that social actors rely on scales to "organize, interpret, orient, and act" and these scales are not given but made with semiotic labor; further, "scaled hierarchies are the effects of efforts to sort, group, and categorize many things, people, and qualities in terms of relative degrees of elevation or centrality" (2016:3). This prompts a more careful perspective when it comes to how migrations of people and language are conceptualized. Locating what I refer to as transnational discourses implies a different scale than emplaced interactions, but this difference should be denaturalized by an understanding of scaling as a non-neutral process which privileges some spheres over other. In terms of language use, Carr and Lempert use a linguistic anthropological sensibility in recognizing that social actors "habitually point to, cite, reanimate, and repurpose text and talk that they understand to be located 'elsewhere' in time and space" (7). Such communicative practices help in the denaturalization of conventional temporal and spatial scales, which must also include the way standard language is seen to enable scalar mobility in a way that delegitimized language use is not.

Cosmopolitanism and rooted forms of belonging

The theoretical framework of cosmopolitanism I find very useful in trying to understand changing the social worlds of people from Quintana Roo. It is not a discourse that I heard people use often in those specific terms, yet I think my usage of it is justifiable—the idea of participation in cosmopolitan social practices also applies to language revitalization and its counterpoint, English language teaching[95]. The way people talk about the universality of being human, and intentionally taking part in a globalized world, is what I refer to in a grounded sense when I talk about the discourse of cosmopolitanism (as well as using it in a more theoretical sense).

The implications of this widespread discourse, and associated changes in governance and political economy, are also complex yet critical context in an understanding of the paradigm of development that underlies the Mexican state's planning of the tourism industry in Quintana Roo, as well as the justification for the presence of trans/multi-national corporations and foreign investment. The shift towards neoliberal economic models during the same time have a less direct relationship to the somewhat innocuous discourse of normative cosmopolitanism, however, following Baquedano-Lopez, I'd like to draw a more direct relation between politicized versions of cosmopolitanism and the oppressive conditions of contemporary neoliberal capitalism (2019).

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[95] It should be noted as well that there is a particular relationship between cosmopolitanism and anthropology itself – a simplified understanding of the discipline can be seen as backing discourses of cosmopolitanism, and indeed, as an anthropologist and as someone who values travel and intercultural understanding, it is difficult not to recognize myself in Werbner's descriptions. Even Durkheim pointed to an anti-nationalist cosmopolitan sociology: 'while anthropology was the study of Man, its exploration of difference produced a science of men, or the local in the global. Sociology, as a science of the social, has retained a stronger sense of the universality of its moral field, of the global in the local. In this sense, sociology points towards a cosmopolitan epistemology of a shared reality' (quoted in Werbner 2008:6-7). Yet it is critical to keep in mind, as Werbner notes, that cosmopolitan-justified interventions in the affairs of other states "continuously risk being construed as Western hegemonic expansion in disguise. The same accusation of false (hegemonic) cosmopolitanism has been applied to anthropology's claims as a discipline" (7).

There have been a variety of qualifications that frame mainstream cosmopolitanism, given what Werbner describes as normative cosmopolitanism that emerged in the 1990s which invoked the interpellation of globalization and democracy[96], and saw cosmopolitanism as an ethical response to the negative aspects of globalization (2008). She describes the general discourse of cosmopolitanism as a "reaching out across cultural differences through dialogue, aesthetic enjoyment, and respect; of living together with difference" – it is an ethical horizon, "an aspirational outlook and mode of practice," and a "product of creativity and communication in the context of diversity" (2). Yet the practice of this discourse, especially as it was first emerging, did not necessarily conform to this vision—nor did the vision take a perspective outside of the elite and privileged who conceived it.

Discourses of cosmopolitanism(s), then, may seem inherently elitist, and the practice of a cosmopolitan lifestyle in its idealized form is certainly one which is not equally accessible to all. Clifford first challenged the automatic association of cosmopolitanism with the elite, describing displacements and forced relocations that create 'discrepant' cosmopolitanisms (1992)**.** Further, scholars have focused on the emergence of what is called a rooted, pragmatic (or vernacular, local, public, working class) cosmopolitanism – Appiah (1997) proposed rooted cosmopolitanism as embodied by "morally and emotionally significant communities… espousing notions of toleration and openness to the world, the transcendence of ethnic difference, [and] moral responsibility for the other" (Werbner 2008:17). This form of socially responsible moral community may be contrasted to the "false" cosmopolitanism characterized by faux "hybridity" which fits a Western liberal aesthetics and novelty-dominated market (12).

Making a move beyond the liberal individual, a *public* cosmopolitanism, like rooted or worker cosmopolitanism, is necessarily socially inclusive and involves a political project of creating alliances[97] (ibid:17). It also raises questions about the coexistence of local, specific loyalties with transnational, elitist, universalist ones; and whether demotic [vernacular] migrations can be compared to globe-trotting, "sophisticated cultural knowledge and moral worldview of deracinated [uprooted] intellectuals" (14). Relatedly, Kalpana Ram describes a "local cosmopolitanism" as a developing of "the emotional, embodied, phenomenological groundings of cosmopolitanism in the flow of feelings of unboundedness in relation to an Other" (cited in Werbner 2008:21).

Finally, Walter Mignolo introduces the paradigm of "critical cosmopolitanism" as a refiguring of the discourse using the perspective of coloniality, meaning the exteriority of modernity- the borderland – it another option beyond benevolent recognition or humanitarian inclusion; they are projects "located in the exteriority and issuing forth from the colonial difference" (2000:724); "the colonial difference should be identified as the location for the critical

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[96] David Graeber, in contrast, argues that cosmopolitanism's fundamental values aren't necessarily 'Western'[96] (2008:14). In a hope-inducing argument about democratic creativity, he states that "democratic *practice*, whether defined as procedures of egalitarian decision-making, or government by public discussion, tends … to emerge from situations in which communities of one sort or another manage their own affairs outside the purview of the state, while democratic innovation, and the emergence of what might be called democratic values, has a tendency to spring from what he calls 'zones of cultural improvisation… in which diverse sorts of people with different traditions and experiences are obliged to figure out some way to get on with one another.'" He concludes that in the contemporary world 'the endless elaboration of new cosmopolitan spaces, and the retreat of states in so many parts of the globe, suggest that there is the potential at least for a vast outpouring of new democratic creativity'" (3). We have seen that the retreat of states may be closely related to the encroachment of neoliberal forms of governance, yet I think it is useful to to look towards the possibilities of the emergence of different political formations that we have yet to imagine.

[97] As such, it also creates the need to redefine 'indigeneity' as the basis for making universalist claims, since it provides an alternative framework for wide-ranging alliances between highly varied social groups (8).

and dialogic cosmopolitanism that confronts managerial global designs of ideologues and executives of the network society." (741) Zapatistas move as a form of "border thinking" where they make the concept of democracy a "connector" between liberal democracy and Indigenous reciprocity; "the entire planet could … endorse a democratic, just, and cosmopolitan project as far as democracy and justice are detached from their 'fundamental' European heritage, from Greece onward, and they are taken as connectors around which critical cosmopolitanism would be articulated. Epistemic diversality shall be the ground for political and ethical cosmopolitan projects" (743) – diversality is diversity as a universal project, and the horizon of critical and dialogic cosmopolitanism, and presupposes border thinking/border epistemology "grounded on the critique of all possible fundamentalism … and on the faith in accumulation at any cost that sustains capitalist organizations of the economy." (ibid.) Critical cosmopolitanism demands "yielding generously … toward diversity as a universal and cosmopolitan project, in which everyone participates instead of 'being participated'" (a "regulative principle") (744). Diversality "will be the project that connects the diverse subaltern satellites appropriating and transforming Western global designs." (745). This all-encompassing, decolonial framework posits universality itself, and is based on a conception of 'diversity' which is not entirely clear; using the Zapatistas as an example is resonant, as is the description of a yielding towards diversity – as we see in the emplaced cosmopolitanism of Quintana Roo below.

Cosmopolitanism, and specifically a public, local, rooted, or critical one, is an effective way of relating to the politics of indigeneity, the presence of universalist discourses (in [neoliberal] education and [capitalistic] development – but not only in those terms), and the ways that people engage with structures and changes imposed in a way that works against marginalization and exploitation – rather recognizing, as David Graeber does - the ways that the values we (and they) see as cosmopolitan, also have their own stories which may invoke resistance, resilience, negotiation (2008). Universalist discourses might not originate in occidental themes, though they have been taken up and framed as such, and used as such; we can, and people do, see other origins of those universalist ideas, as coming from other traditions of thought.

Following from these critiques, qualifications, and reframings, I identify a cosmopolitan attitude is very relevant in Quintana Roo – for one, because in my experience in Tulum a mainstream cosmopolitan discourse was commonly expressed by both tourists and locals of the less local variety. Additionally, for people from the peninsula working in tourism, who are meeting people who travel and gaining a sense of the movement of social practices and language, a distinct \cosmopolitan discourse is also emergent. As Werbner notes, "for anthropologists, cosmopolitanism is as much a local engagement *within* postcolonial states – with cultural pluralism, global rights movements, ideas about democracy and the right to dissent – as beyond their borders" (6). For *mayerxs* and those they relate to, referring to a cosmopolitan perspective is a way to deal with contradictions, a way of manifesting mobility[98] and relationships to work and consumption and participation in transnational social practices. The cosmopolitan lifestyle is

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[98] On a concrete level, people are more worried about getting to school or the doctor or shopping for necessities, and of course getting to their jobs, than any sort of recreational movement. Is getting to work travel? Or is it just movement? When does movement become travel? When does going to beach or going to the ruins or going to the city become a 'trip'? (What is the instantiation of their cosmopolitan-ness if the traveling itself is conceptualized in negative terms?) This is a grounded, lived aspect of migration, which contributes to the marginalization of local communities, as well as creating other types of community through the spaces people inhabit in their movement. Beyond the details of daily movements, and the differences in how such movement is conceptualized, the fact of the necessity of migration for work in Quintana Roo emerged with the beginnings of the development of Cancun. Migration from rural areas of the peninsula to the coast is a constituting social experience that underlies much of the phenomena I describe in this chapter.

usually understood as involving degrees of mobility, which is present in the value young people from the region put on travel as an inherently positive experience and an integral part of a cosmopolitan mindset.

What is this particular version of cosmopolitanism? It involves the desire, ideal, idea, for (young) people to:

- o engage in global/transnational/translocal media phenomena: music, movies, tv shows (more and more commonly accessible online as well as by watching tv), sports; memes, games, and other Facebook, Instagram, social media practices.
- o engage in global/transnational aesthetic trends (some associated with the above media phenomena): clothing, makeup, grooming; materiality of technology used; types of pictures and visuals that are favored on social media, as profile pictures, etc.
- o recognize themselves as having particular roots/a history/social practices *in relation to* many others across the country and world—and an appreciation of that difference.
- o identify with discourses of universality—humanism, affective vulnerability, positive sociality, gender equality, human rights.
- o maybe be able to speak English and understand certain cultural references that relate to American culture.
- o maybe be able to speak Maya (not seen as a necessity), and definitely able to participate in local Maya social events and practices, if not being part of the reproduction of them.

We can see the ways this fits in with what is presented by Mignolo, Werbner, Appiah, and others – as a particular conception of an interrelated, responsible, affectively open world.

A particularly "local" version of cosmopolitanism in the peninsula has also been discussed by a few scholars, including Sarah Taylor's work on what she calls **'Maya cosmopolitanisms'** (2014), which she posits as a form of intercultural awareness, a knowledge of what tourists expect to see and experience – a "(re)defining themselves as sufficiently 'Maya' for consumption by the 'Other-tourist'" – and a way of adapting to dominant forces such as globalization and nationalism (225). Reappropriating academic discourses about culture and place, or playing with the academic representations created by such discourses, are ways that communities contend with the ways that they are positioned by the demand for commercialized "cultural" experiences[99] (Elbez 2017, Medina 2003, Castañeda 2009). At the same time, Taylor argues that the Maya conceal their cosmopolitanism as a strategy to fit within discourses of indigeneity, which provide for certain relationships to the state, NGOs, and funding agencies, as well as allowing for the legitimized performance of Mayaness[100]. They end up being "uncosmopolitan cosmopolitans" – in a rather unconvincing final argument, given the lack of references to the elements of a cosmopolitan perspective which are noted above, and in contrast to my argument here. While Taylor makes relevant points about the way people re-appropriate academic discourses and representations of "the Maya," her argument also implies that cosmopolitanism and indigeneity are contrary, and that people can only be one or the other, whereas I follow Delugan (2010) and see them as complementary and even mutually constituting discourses. This can be related to the relationship

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[99] These contentions may be accompanied by the assertion of new subjectivities, like Paul Worley describes as Maya nationalism in his work on the transnational Maya experience, as I discuss below (2010). An unresolved question I have of these latter approaches is how they address the more concrete economic conditions in which these creative processes occur.

[100] In a very different deployment of the analytic, Melissa Elbez argues that "by making the Maya a concept defined by specific practices and aesthetics, heritage discourse opens access to this identity to people from outside the Yucatan Peninsula" … "Mayan identity is cosmopolitanized in that it enters into the register of alterities that can then be appropriated by people from all over the world" (2017:35).

between the goals and discourses of English teaching and Maya revitalization, and I expand upon further in Chapter 4.

Questions of language use and communication in cosmopolitan discourse, spaces, and for people and communities who relate in cosmopolitan ways, are rarely addressed in the anthropological literature on the topic. While more responsible expats, "travelers," and locally-based agents of NGOs and development initiatives may recognize the need to practice linguistic sensitivity and adapt to the context at hand, in terms of the imagined global public sphere and the possibilities of cross-cultural exchanges, English plays a hugely important role and could easily be argued as the language of cosmopolitanism. The positive connotations of English as universal, a common language, a tool to be able to connect with many more people in many parts of the world—are also present in a cosmopolitan perspective on communication.

English and Maya can be understood as associated with cosmopolitanism and indigeneity respectively, though this is a blunt characterization; what is implied by my ethnographic material is that these two discourses, and the imaginaries of English and Maya associated with them, are not contrary but rather are complementary (Delugan 2010). But such an association is not necessarily produced by or representative of *mayerxs* and their families, young people in Quintana Roo who use voices not as ideological, oppositional, or in conflict, but as expressive, adaptable, connectable. And perhaps the desirability of Maya and an Indigenous subjectivity is valid only with the combination of English and a multicultural perspective. Yet there is a collective, emplaced, often youthful version of cosmopolitanism in Quintana Roo that goes beyond a neoliberal multicultural ideology that delimits and erases more than it recognizes and gives space to.

Trilingualism and its affordances

While cosmopolitan discourse represents an optimistic response to the spread of transnational capital, there is also some more overt political engagement regarding the changes wrought by neoliberalism and tourism; much of this focuses on environmental issues. There are Maya activists who fight for Indigenous presence, vitality, and representation, but as other scholars have discussed, this has not been as widespread or explicitly political as compared to places like Guatemala and Chiapas. At this moment, the combination of certain outspoken language activists and a new generation of young people (especially university students) who are being exposed to discussions of discrimination and inequality mean that a stronger sense of political momentum may soon be seen.

Still, the conversations I observed and took part in tended to focus on discourses of cultural pride as a way to fight back against the forces of homogenization. In this sense, using language as a site to imagine ways of belonging and participating means that trilingualism (as a discourse, an ideal, and a practice) becomes a tool that can still address neocolonialism and oppression, while not being explicitly oppositional or political. Trilingualism, then, can be seen as an expression that incorporates this sense of cultural pride and a particularly emplaced, Maya-oriented form of cosmopolitanism. The fact that the rooted discourse of this humanistic perspective is overly idealistic and not easily achievable is not the important point for those who embody it. For some people it is just about education and language, but for others there is a definite sense that being able to speak and post and comment and interact in Spanish, English, and Maya is more profoundly meaningful as affording subjectivities that are distinct and progressive.

The phenomenologically-derived concept of 'affordance' is useful here as a way of describing the different possibilities offered by certain modalities, in a deeper sense than just the

sorts of situations or interactions that are made possible. It draws attention to the subjective and intersubjective aspects of shifts in communicative or media modalities, and posits that these shifts can mean changes in the perceptual and experiential capacities of subjects. For example, Daniel Fisher discusses self-abstraction as a facet of the production of voices on an Aboriginal radio station, where media has particular affordances that affect perception—of the subjectivity of producers and listeners, as an "expanded sense of capacity" entailing "new professional kinds of voices" and "successful assertions of Indigenous identity" (2015:161). I relate this argument to the way the voices of trilingualism in Quintana Roo are imagined to afford an expanded sense of expressive and successful selfhood to speakers.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided additional context to the arguments I developed in chapters one and two, which focused on the discourses, practices, privileges, and experiences that are emergent as trilingualism in Quintana Roo becomes more of an aspiration, a possibility, and sometimes, a reality. A look at how language and communication are conceived of, commodified, and evaluated under the conditions of contemporary capitalism and neoliberalism points to the way language knowledge and use are becoming not only an economic resource, but part of a worker's personal attributes (friendliness, politeness, intelligence, among others) and thus indicative of how well suited a person may be to work in—or simple be in—tourism spaces.

Understanding the broader frame of political economic aspects of life in the region reminds us that communicative phenomena are always embedded in and scaled by consequential processes such as the spread of transnational capitalism that supports tourism. These topics have been widely discussed in recent years; it is common to wonder what effects tourism has on local communities, and what social changes result—a frequent question in the literature on tourism, and often related to questions posed in terms of globalization. Without getting mired in simplistic evaluations of the extent of the retention or loss of cultural practices, I see the presence of cosmopolitan discourses; shifting relationships to place (the emergence of translocalities), enjoyment, and travel; and new practices of mobility, migration, and scaled social relations – as closely related to the influx of the tourism industry. These are of course in addition to blatant and naturalized inequalities and forms of symbolic violence that pervade the Riviera Maya and the places connected to it through the movement of people, money, and meanings.

The fact that young people are responding to their circumstances in different ways, via creative communicative practices and mediatized manifestations of community, is also scarcely addressed in the many studies of tourism in Quintana Roo—such responses go beyond the simple terms that most scholars write in. These new perspectives also speak to the tension between being exploited by capitalism and profiting from it, since they are generally empowering interpretations, rather than marginalizing ones. The negotiations with transnational capitalism seen in Quintana Roo, along with discourses of cosmopolitanism and indigeneity are provide alternative visions of the conditions of possibility of the new political economic order.

The following and final chapter expands on the themes discussed already and adds a deeper discussion of how new and pervasive media practices relate to the projects of Maya revitalization and English teaching—and with them, trilingualism. I aim to show how young people are creating

new subjectivities, afforded by creative, critical and emplaced cosmopolitan, media-oriented communicative practices. The voices that are privileged, or not, in economic and educational spheres are also present in various forms in social media, where minority languages are increasingly finding new expressions and support.

Chapter 4. **Social media practices, Indigenous belonging, and emerging political-linguistic subjectivities**

This final chapter aims to tie together the metapragmatic, voiced, political economic aspects of what I identify as a consequential sociolinguistic phenomenon in the Yucatán peninsula of Mexico, adding a more in-depth discussion of media practices, in particular the usage of social media, to develop the conversation between the scaled social and linguistic relations and the political implications of what I have provided thus far. I also argue, as an ultimate takeaway from this chapter and the dissertation as a whole, that there are new forms of belonging that are seen in and experienced as provided by trilingualism and the mediatization and embodiment of it; specifically, there are grounded cosmopolitan (inter)subjectivities and collectivities, which I call "political-linguistic" in the sense that they embed the idea and practice of language use in a political stance of pride and inclusion, and vice versa.

This conclusion is thus a response to the various forces I have discussed: communicative privilege, access to education and other important institutional paces, neoliberal policies and transnational capital brought with tourism, and settler colonialism. As such, the arguments I present here are relatable to the pressing concerns of "developing" countries/places/communities, given the common themes of cultural and linguistic erasure, reclamation, promotion and prioritization—and the way statements on social media can become socially and politically relevant sites of debate and action, forms of solidarity can reach across space and scaled social worlds, and young people grow into the interactional spaces they are actively reacting to and shaping.

New media and minoritized languages

Minoritized languages are and have been present across media technologies and the internet, and social media is increasingly a resource used by those invested in language promotion and revitalization. The relative openness of certain platforms and the ability to create new apps and language services facilitates this, though the presence of such Indigenous and otherwise minoritized languages remains notable in such contexts insofar as the latter are seen as "modern," global phenomenon and the former are often associated with locality and tradition. As we will see, using a language like Maya in a visible, public social media space where it is not expected is, then, an example of an embodied political-linguistic subjectivity.

The way young people use social media in the peninsula to express multilingual identities and participate in different imaginaries and social worlds is reflected by similar phenomena in other minoritized language communities[101] (Coleman 2010, Hillewaert 2015, Kral 2014, Wachowich & Scobie 2010). For example, Sarah Hillewaert discusses social media practices of youth in Kenya who use features of Swahili dialects in their Facebook discussions, features which would otherwise be stigmatized but which she argues in this context are "a simultaneous appeal to local rootedness and a transcendence of that rootedness" (2015:195). She argues that "analyzing the strategic indeterminacy of such orthographic 'accents' provides insight in the renegotiations of belonging that social media enable" (ibid.). Hillewaert uses the frame of 'rooted cosmopolitanism'

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[101] Here I refer to these communities in a similar fashion to when I talk about Maya speaking communities in Quintana Roo; younger generation may not be fluent in the minority language, but most have some exposure to it and likely have family members who speak it.

(as discussed in the previous chapter), which she combines with Jaffe's concept of 'strategic indeterminacy' to discuss this situated and transcendent nature of belonging.

Ilana Gershon also points to the expression of rooted cosmopolitanism as emerging in multilingual practices which include English and local languages in her review of language and new media: "when people are texting, rapid and deliberate switches between English and local languages can signal a new cosmopolitan identity—someone conversant with both global circuits and local strategies for construing" (2017:24). This is quite similar to the trilingual ideal I describe, though fluency in Spanish would more likely make it the language that would be switched to and from, while English, the connection to "global circuits," is an additional aspirational element of media practices. I follow Hillewaert and Gershon's descriptions of differently mediated communicative practices that speak to both emplaced forms of belonging and cosmopolitan participation, and attempt to develop a more theoretically nuanced account here, using mediatization and a semiotic framework to analyze trilingual social media practices.

Section 1: Theorizing mediatization and the emergence of new media practices

In the last few decades of studies of media within (linguistic) anthropology, communication and media theory, and related fields, 'mediatization' has become popular as a framework for denaturalizing and problematizing a range of phenomena: mediation technologies, tools, and processes; media ideologies that posit transparency (or lack thereof) in how, where, and when media convey content; and the larger social effects, affective resonances, potential audiences, and political implications, among other aspects, of changing forms of communicative mediation. This perspective reminds us of the multimodal nature of communication as mediated and remediated in a variety of ways (Bolter & Grusin 1999), and is particularly useful in examining how language use is transformed across media, with voices becoming more or less accessible, expressive, authoritative, creative, political, or otherwise differently inflected.

Three central conversations around mediatization can be identified, beginning with a perspective that draws from the inherited social and literary theory of the Frankfurt school (Jameson 1990, Morris 2000). This can be described as an ongoing concern with the presence of the aura, the ontological implications of changing mediation technologies, often focused on mass media, especially in terms of replications, translations, and transformations of what Walter Benjamin described as a unique presence in time and place (1968 [1936]). Along with this, the concept of remediation emerges, explicating how "any act of mediation is dependent on another, indeed many other, acts of mediation," and as part of this, "there is nothing prior to or outside the act of mediation" (Bolter & Grusin 1999:56-58). An oblique connection can be drawn here to linguistic anthropological uses of intertextuality, in the sense that any "text" is an act of communicative mediation (Bakhtin 1981, Bauman 2004), and we can understand meaning-making, including mediatized communicative practices, as always dialogic and intersubjective.

This philosophical framing provokes a consideration of how media interact with one another that implies a certain reflexivity, highlighted by Fisher in his usage of mediatization, which derives mainly from this genealogy (Jameson 1991; Fisher 2016, 2019). Fisher focuses on the mediatization of voice and explores how media technologies make the voice "a site of reflexive consideration, manipulation, and judgement" as they give the voice different forms and agencies, in the context of Aboriginal Australian media production (2016:12-13). This first perspective, then, is certainly useful in approaching social media as a highly self-aware platform for (often multimodal) mediations, with formats such as viral videos and memes that are constantly,

intentionally playing with their own forms and possibilities. Further, it helps identify how social media platforms and formats have relational capacities and meanings, as they mediate and remediate multilingual language use, in this process providing the opportunity for multimodal expressivity, scaling of layered subject positions and collectivities, and the challenging of communicative standards and privileged forms.

A second usage of mediatization, coming from within linguistic anthropology, is proposed in Asif Agha's definition that describes it as "institutional practices that reflexively link processes of communication to processes of commoditization" (2011:163). Similar to the totality of mediation within the discussion of remediation, Agha sees mediation as fundamental to all communicative social life, which I would argue includes all social life. His move to a specific alignment of mediatization with commoditization is where he takes the concept in a different direction, which is not as useful for my purposes since commoditization is not one a central concern in this dissertation.

The third line of thinking, which primarily originated in Europe in the 2000s and early 2010s, includes a similar focus on media institutions, but is a broader theoretical formulation in which mediatization refers to "how changes occur when communication patterns are transformed due to new communication tools and technologies" (Lundby 2014), or to put it another way, "the long-term structural transformations of media's role in contemporary culture and society" (Hjarvard 2013). One main topic of study under this umbrella is the mediatization of politics, involving the way "the media" (in the more conventional sense) shape political processes and the production and reception of political messages. The above perspective relies on understandings of "communication" and "culture" that are less anthropological, and as such, less nuanced in the way they construct the social worlds that media institutions and technologies interact with.

Charles Briggs' use of mediatization is related to Agha's definition and the European conversation, while it is clear in challenging any conception of the existence of a pre-media world that shifted to one defined by media technologies, which are simply ways of transferring meaningful content (2011). As Fisher puts it, in Briggs' perspective "objects of media attention … are in important ways made by, for, and through their mediatized circulation, taking shape in relation to media technologies, institutions, and modes of circulation as 'communicable'" (2016:12). This usage is relevant here in the way it connects a metapragmatic framework to that of mediatization, where institutional metapragmatic discourses shape forms of mediatization, thus controlling what (news) stories, events, ideas, or phenomena are communicable, that is, legitimate to signify normatively and be circulated.

My usage of mediatization, then, follows Fisher in that I use it to denaturalize the affordances and social usages of various forms of media. In particular I examine the mediatization of multilingualism in terms of how social media platforms and formats allow both standardized and creative, non-standard language use to take on different expressive possibilities, which relate to how they are otherwise mediated and used in copresent interaction—though clearly such social media practices are by no means representative of "offline" interactions. My usage of a metapragmatic framework also intersects with a study of mediatization in that metapragmatic discourses about trilingualism can be understood as making certain mediatized usages more or less communicable in the sense that they are legitimately produced and conform to a normative semiotic ideology of delineated, categorically separated language use. Accordingly, youth social media practices can be understood through the former process of mediatized multilingualism, while the mediatization of communicative privilege is evident in the latter account of the effects of (institutional) metapragmatic ideologies.

Media practices, mimesis, and scaled intersubjectivity

There are possibilities for translation, mutation, and transformation that are complexly embedded in the different social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and more) and participant frameworks (group messages, live videos, tweets, among many others) that have become ubiquitous worldwide in the span of the past decade. Through social media, an expressive instance can be multiplied, disseminated, and iterated—in a seemingly unprecedented, unpredictable way. As mentioned above, the repetitions, copies, imitations, and disseminations inherent to social media speak to a continued sense of ontological tension between the loss and the proliferation of an original, ineffable expressive aura. While social media usages that involve large audiences are seemingly similar to mass media in the simple structure of one producer to many receivers, there are crucial differences in that: the producer is less clearly located; the process of scaled circulation is more collective in that momentum has to be gained through share/likes/etc.; they are at least to some extent more open, and there is thus more potential for alternative, subversive views; they are less hierarchical; and they are much less predictable.

Thus, as an important communicative phenomenon, new media practices are transformative of our understanding of scale, as individual messages and posts' reach and influence can theoretically be measured quantitatively. Number of likes, followers, shares, and the like, are new scaling processes that become consequential if only in terms of the exposure that a statement, story, idea, image, video, meme, joke, etc., gains—received by people in what spaces, translocalities, in relation to what other mediatized content, on what platform, temporally close or further from the moment of creation of the "original" version of the content. This can be related to the genres or formats of social media content that become viral, whether hashtags or memes, posts, or articles. There are always questions of audience—known or imagined interlocutors, and potential new ones. Privacy on the internet in general is a looming, insidious problem, but for my purposes I focus on instances of social media use that are intentionally public, either within a certain group of contacts, "friends," or "followers," or intended for a broader undefined audience.

With these processes of imitation, replication, and repetition, the centrality of mimesis to communication gains new significance, where imitations on social media have produced entirely new genres (the hashtag for example), and replication is so easy as to be constituted by a click or touch—a share or re-post. Mimetic communicative experiences enable shifts in scale that are notable in terms of the connections (if fleeting and superficial) that they established between subjects. Mediatized mimesis can be thought of as enabling the emergence of new collectivities that express difference differently and establish sameness through emplaced and embodied repetitions of text (messages, posts, articles, stories), images, memes (image with text), videos, hashtags, emojis, etc. Scaling is then a modality that shapes the possibility of collectively expressing political-linguistic (and generally social) subjectivities.

The phenomenological aspects of mimesis in different modes, modalities, media, mediations, and mediatizations are a subject that would benefit from further investigation. For now I will say that mimesis might be a way to figure the phaticity of such semiotic processes, in the additional sense of the social contact that they establish as well—an intersubjective incorporation of Others in selves.

Emergent media practices in Quintana Roo

The conditions of possibility for these new forms of belonging have to do with the particular features of social media platforms and the formats they require. In this chapter I use "social media" to collectively refer to the platforms that the term usually refers to in Mexico:

primarily Facebook, Facebook Messenger (subsequently Messenger), WhatsApp, Instagram, Youtube, and Twitter, and including others like Snapchat and Skype[102]. Messenger, WhatsApp, and Skype are somewhat different in that their original primary usage was to send and receive individual messages or place calls, and thus are more similar in concept to email, simple text messaging, or a phone call. However, the prevalence of group chats—which often include people who are not personal contacts—and the possibility of also posting a status or sharing a "story" make them increasingly similar to other social media, in the sense that the audience and potential interlocutors become more anonymous and collective. The interlocutor/audience of a group message or post (a status update; sharing another status, meme, video, article, picture, etc.; a tweet) is simultaneously anonymous and specific. In Quintana Roo, the *redes sociales* (social networks), in order of importance, are WhatsApp, Facebook and Messenger (the latter necessitates an account on the former), and Instagram. It is common for businesses to include social media icons as part of advertisements or directly on signs and buildings, the WhatsApp icon and Facebook icon being most common.

A range of newly mediated communicative practices have emerged on social media in recent years in Quintana Roo, including: language classes and learning via WhatsApp, Facebook, and youtube; multilingual posts on social media and discussions via comments about language use and/or displaying a particular variety, style of writing, etc; music and music videos in Maya (and Spanish often, and English sometimes), mainly posted on youtube and Facebook; the sharing of videos (and audio recordings) of presentations, performances, conversations in and/or about Maya (or English); different ways of writing Maya, primarily in the context of WhatsApp, messenger, and Facebook, some "correct" or "official," and others emerging spontaneously between speakers who haven't been formally taught how to read and write; among others.

These are in addition to many other practices which aren't explicitly related to language learning or trilingualism, including: group chats in WhatsApp; use of hashtags on Facebook and Instagram (and of course twitter, the originator of the hashtag, though the platform is not used as much in Quintana Roo); emoji use integrated in much online written communication or as a replacement for written words or phrases; stories on Instagram, messenger, and Facebook (a feature deriving from the original functionality of Snapchat); and live videos on Facebook and Instagram. Emojis[103] have locally inflected meanings and uses—the degree of seriousness with which they are used, the number of times they are repeated, the ubiquitous use of hearts and other affectionate emojis in a nonromantic way, are examples of such specificities.

Next, stories are images or videos which are temporarily and only displayed for about six seconds, unless one touches and holds so as to keep seeing the story until released. The fact that they are less permanent than a post which stays on one's Facebook or Instagram profile means that they tend to be details of daily life or informative in some way but not important enough to post. They can also be images and quotes taken from other sources, a way to share a sentiment rather than personal content. There are also aesthetic considerations for Instagram; stories let one share additional images, text and videos without messing up the cohesive look of one's profile.

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[102] The fact that Facebook owns the first four of these platforms is indicative of transnational capitalism at its most insidious, and the company will apparently be merging the chat features of Messenger, WhatsApp, and Instagram into one new product soon.

[103] Emoji comes from the Japanese "picture" + "character", so the resonance with English "emotion" is just a delightful contingency that we might contemplate through Taussig's simultaneous embracing and rejection of a mimetic theory of language.

Lastly among the phenomena I'm highlighting here are live videos, which are an antidote to the popular sense that social media representations are superficial and staged—a live video is still a performance, but one in which it is more likely to see elements of a person's daily life, the way they speak, and the interactions they take part in. For young people who may consciously post in English and/or Maya in addition to Spanish, live videos are another differently mediated point of access to their communicative practices. Some examples of this practice include live videos being used at parties or other deliberately fun social events, to share one's experiences or brag about one's life, depending on how it is interpreted. Or they are a way to pass the time while hanging out with friends, or when one is alone and wants to share some thoughts. They are also used at presentations or conferences to share academic experiences and promote a sense of participation in conversations one has a stake in.

The above social media practices are important to take into account in understanding the current sociolinguistic situation as one which is changing quickly, and in which young people are creatively engaging with subject positions, educational ideals, ways of taking part in popular culture (conceived of at varying scales), and political debates and action.

Section 2: Trilingual posts, social media qualia, and communicative privilege

In this section I share examples of social media posts that speak to the ways the platforms and formats I describe above are used, and how these usages demonstrates processes of mediation and mediatization that prompt a shift in how we understand what "language use" is to begin with. In this sense, though these posts do not make direct references to the projects of Maya revitalization or English language education, they help denaturalize the *language* of language revitalization and language learning. Additionally, I relate these social media practices and what they imply about subject positions and forms of belonging, to the structures of communicative privilege that I introduced in Chapter 2.

Jach true: trilingual humor

Below is a post shared by Alex, a student at UIMQRoo who rarely uses Maya on social media, being more interested in English himself, as he told me one time in casual conversation on campus. Here he shares a relatively viral post about untranslatability which refers to a phrase with a typical Mexican Spanish swear. Alex's caption "*jach* true" is a combination of Maya *jach* or "very" and English "true," on a commentary in English about the indispensability of Spanish—in particular Mexican Spanish—despite the love of English. I include only my rough translation of the Spanish phrase, as it is explicit and I believe not necessary to analyze in grammatical terms.

(10) [Screenshot of Facebook post by UIMQRoo student, February 2019]

(10. caption text)

> *jach*   true
> Adj
> "very   true"

(10. shared post text)

> I love English but Spanish has some indispensable expressions like
> "I love English but Spanish has some indispensable expressions like
>
> *ah bueno chinga tu madre.*
> well f*** you then."

     While brief, this example demonstrates a complexly mediated trilingual metalinguistic statement, in which English, Spanish, and Maya each take on a different role, and the combined effect speaks to a humorous expression of linguistic incommensurability. Alex's usage of one Maya word, *jach*, as quite basic vocabulary, makes the post—in terms its Maya usage—accessible to those with some exposure to Maya but who don't use it much themselves. The central point of the post, that Spanish has some "indispensable expressions," in this case a colorful insulting phrase, which English doesn't have, is put in English, implying the more dominant language of the original poster being English. The poster also states that they "love English," which could be interpreted as a more or less affectively potent statement, but provides another layer to the content of the post that one may or may not agree with. So despite pointing to a colloquial and comfortable usage of Spanish, the slightly more semantically substantive part of the post is formulated in

English, which is common to viral social media posts, which though they may contain localized, emplaced, content specific to certain social groups, use English as a semiotic medium.

Alex's statement that the original post is "very true" indicates his agreement with the joking assertion of complementarity between Spanish and English—where one fails, the other picks up the expressive slack. But for him, Maya complements English as a way to give emphasis to his appreciation of the post. Finally, the eight official "reactions" (in Facebook's terms) to the shared post, all of them being the "funny" laughing face which is seen in the bottom left of the screenshot image, imply a unanimous understanding and collective validation of the message as funny and relevant.

The format of the shared post means that the original message is clearly delineated from the additional commentary which the person sharing it can optionally add, and its pragmatic usage is implicitly supportive of the shared content by the one sharing it—unless added commentary makes it clear that it is being shared as a contrast to one's own perspective. The Facebook platform means that Alex's friends and their friends can see this post in their newsfeed, if they have a special status given to Alex's posts such that they get a notification whenever he posts anything, or by going directly to his Facebook profile page. They can follow it to the original post, to see where/who it was posted by, how many reactions and shares it has, and what comments people have made on it; they can also share the original post, or share Alex's posts, which would mean sharing his commentary as well. All of these specificities are what make this sort of mediated trilingual expression an embodiment of a particular subjectivity, and an example of how mediatization affords unique combinations of voices and social implications.

#mayas #chill: Multilingual poetics and hashtags

The hashtag, which was introduced on Twitter in 2007, is an enigma: trendy and self-promoting, ironic and humorous, searchable and inherently collective, unless you are literally the only person to use one, which is a statement in and of itself. A Maya language activist, scholar, and professional musician (who I also cite in Chapter 1) usually accompanies her posts on Facebook and Instagram with hashtags in Maya, which are often playful and simultaneously indicate a sense of community with those who understand them and a sense of irony as they subvert the dominance of Spanish and English social media spaces. Below is an Instagram post by this friend and activist, which includes hashtags in Maya, English, and Portuguese. I use underlining to indicate words that are hyperlinked, which is a feature inherent to hashtags but also applies to the usage "@____", which also originated on Twitter and is a way to "mention" another user, so that they will get a notification about the post or comment. In this transcript and following ones, I textualize emojis by placing them between tildes and describing them.

(11) [Screenshot from Instagram, January 2019]

(11. caption text)
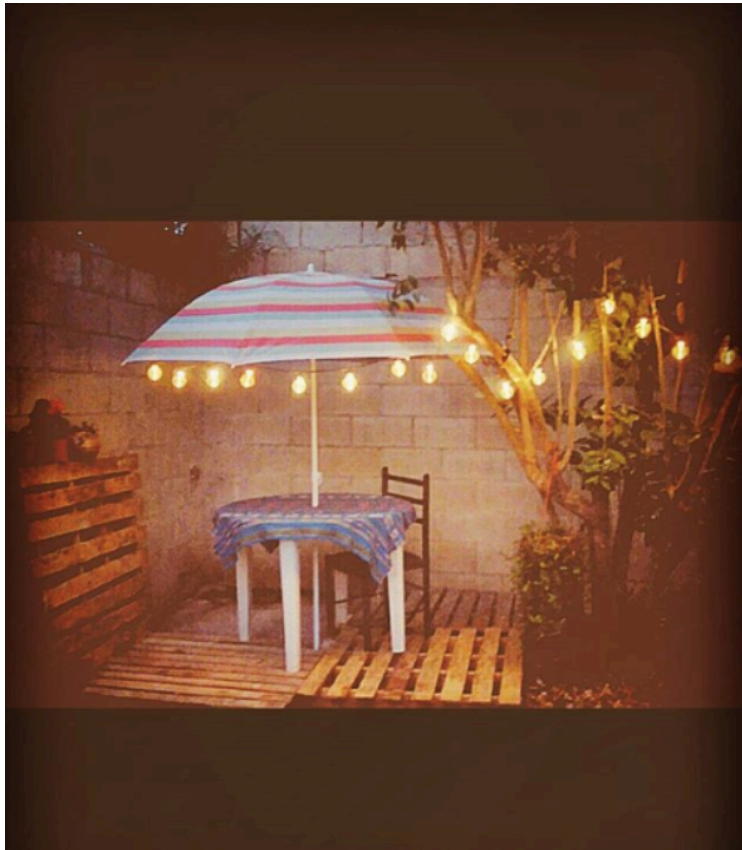
       "Ma' in wojeli' wa le iik'o' u yuumil le t'aan ma' tin wa'alaj"
       Neg Pro1 Vb-(Pro3) Q DNOM N-TD Pro3 N   DNOM N   Neg Prt-Pro1 V-Pst
       (neg.) I   know-it if the   wind is owner the word (neg.) I   said
       I don't know if the wind is owner of the word I didn't say

       No   sé   si el   viento es   dueño de la   palabra que no   dije
       (neg.) I know if the wind   is owner of the word   that (neg.) I said
       I don't know if the wind is the owner of the word that I didn't say

       #péepeno'ob #mayas #chill #sweethome *#naaj*   *#saudade* *#juumilmoots*
       #butterflies   #Mayas #chill #sweethome #house #comfort #juumilmoots

(11. comments text)

commenter 1:   ~upside down smiley face~ ~green heart~

original poster: @commenter 1 *ko'oten   yuk' vino* [name]
                                 Imper-Pro2   Vb   N   N
                                 Come   drink wine [name]
                                 come drink wine [name]

commenter 2:   [name]*!!! ? Es tu   jardín de tu   patio trasero?*
                              it is your garden of your patio backyard
                    [name]!!! ? Is that the garden in your backyard patio?

                    Que bonito está quedando, quiero más fotos!
                    that pretty it is becoming   I want more pictures
                    It's looking so pretty, I want more pictures!

commenter 1:   @original poster *dale, dale… jach ma'alob*
                                                    Prt   Neg-Adj
                                       give it give it very not bad
                                       cool, cool… great

original poster: @commenter 2 *siii* [name]*, un proyecto jardinero entre*
                                 yes   a   project garden   between
                                 yesssss [name], it's a garden project I'm doing

                    [name] *y   yo, poquito a   poquito vamos dándole forma.*
                             and I   little by little   we go giving it shape
                    with [name], little by little we're shaping it up.

                    Ven!   ~glass of wine~ ~glass of wine ~
                    Come!

    This post, in addition to the picture (which is the essential element of the Instagram platform) includes a poetic phrase in Maya, with a translation in Spanish; and hashtags using Maya, English, and Portuguese words, most of which have complementary somewhat nostalgic meanings, associated with intimacy and home. The comments are in emoji, Maya, and Spanish, and are clearly authored by people that the poster knows personally—which would not necessarily be the case given the way she is using this media platform. While it is public and thus oriented towards an undefined audience, its multilingual nature invokes a similarly multilingual audience. Among the variety of hashtags that are added to this post, are #chill, which has 35.5 million linked posts; #naaj, which means house or home in Maya, and is also the name of a clothing brand in India, and has 963 posts (more because of the latter meaning than the former); and #juumilmoots is the name of her band, in Maya, and has 19 posts. The use of these hashtags evidences multiple links between expressive instances which are afforded by such a social media format, combined with utterly random, highly specific, and scaled connections like that of #naaj—in addition to the

artistic and personal affective elements of this post, including the evocative photo, which are indeed its primary expression.

The phenomenal quality of a tri- or multilingual subjectivity is thus experienceable through the production and reception of multi-voiced posts like the ones included above. Whether a joking statement in English about swearing in Spanish, or the pairing of Maya poetry and its Spanish translation with an intimate portrait of home, these creative usages demonstrate that being a speaker means much more than possessing a standardized, abstract language competence.

Qué bueno que sabes maya :)

Following is a Facebook post by another student at UIMQRoo who sometimes posts in Maya, being clearly interested and invested in speaking and writing her heritage language. In this case she expresses frustration with some emotional interpersonal issues she's facing; note that she also used the status update feature of adding an "activity or emotion", but with the unusual use of a phrase in Maya. Her orthography is importantly standard and "correct." In the transcription below I do not include a close gloss of the main Maya text because what is more of note here is the way Pure Maya is being mediatized, including the way emojis are used as humorous and affective intensifiers, and the translation and subsequent comment that the post prompts.

(12) [Screenshot from Facebook, October 2016]

(12. contextualizing text)

[name] was ~sleeping face~ feeling *kíisin   k'as!* ~broken heart~ .
                                                N   Adj
                                          devil ugly
[name] was [tired/bored] feeling really bad! [heartbroken].

(12. post text)

> ***Teche' ts'o'ok a jaca nojochtal! A ka'aka' yéetel ba'ax ka meentik!***
> You're already an adult! Whatever you do is your problem!

> ~disappointed/tired/sad face~ ***Chen ma' júulikene'ex ti' ba'axo'ob***
>   Just don't involve me in something

> ***mina'n mixba'al in wili'!! Ts'o'ok a jach naksike'ex in wóol!*** ~bee~ ~bee~
> I don't have anything to do with!! You have me super annoyed!

(12. comments text)

1:     *Tu   ya   estas   grande es   tu   problema con lo q   haces solo q   no   me*
      you already you are big   it is your problem with it that you do only that (neg.) me
      You're an adult it's your problem whatever you do just don't

    involucren en algo   q   no   tengo nada   q   ver   ya   me tienen fastidiado.
    you involve in something that (neg.) I have nothing that to see already me to have annoyed
    involve me in something that I have nothing to do with I'm already mad.

>   Reply to 1:   *Vaya, que   bueno que sabes   maya* ~smiley face~
>   go   what good   that you know Maya
>   Wow, it's great that you know maya ~smiley face~

A friend comments a translation of the post into Spanish (nonstandard spelling), apparently unprovoked, though I don't know the particular relationship he has to the friend who posted the update, and my interlocutor responds with a congratulatory acknowledgement of his knowledge of Maya[104]. Whether the intention of the translation was to help people who don't understand Maya, demonstrate (or show off) his knowledge and translation skills, or some other reason, is hard to say—but there would be no comparable interaction as this one if the post had originally been written in Spanish. The poster, in her encouraging statement "*Vaya, qué bueno que sabes maya* :)" highlights the fact that this knowledge would not necessarily be assumed, since "*vaya*" implies usually positively-inflected surprise. Her metapragmatic statement about a friend's demonstration of his own bilingualism fosters Maya rescate in that it is a public (at least within their group of Facebook friends) expression of support for the fact of knowing Maya—apart from any other considerations of how, where, why, and when one might use it.

The mediatization of communicative privilege

There is a perceived accessibility in who may participate in and use social media, joining any number of platforms, witnessing and adding on to ongoing conversations. It seems that there is an openness in who can share, post, comment, and the like, and there is an essentially

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[104] There were further comments on this post, most in Spanish and a few in Maya, which I haven't included here.

inexhaustible amount of content. The apparent freedoms of the internet and new media are however constrained by forms of privilege, the most critical one being access to the material technology necessary to use them, but also crucially involving the language and language varieties used for any type of content, platform, application, or service available. A degree of competence in dominant languages is usually a prerequisite for use and participation, and the reality of which languages are used and what translation possibilities exist is naturalized and not often the subject of widely circulated metapragmatic discourses about new media.

Additionally, questions of standardness of orthography and linguistic structure, as discussed in Chapter 2, are far more complicated when we take into account social media, where posts and messages are often written in a nonstandard style and may involve many individual messages with short phrases, rather than complete sentences/longer utterances. While some use social media to make Maya and trilingualism visible, others may have a different sense of legitimate use of media. Some people who speak Maya to each other in person use Spanish on Facebook, presumably as a way to follow social conventions of that particular platform's mediation. The necessity of writing may also be a reason not to use Maya, since many people do not feel confident in their ability to write it correctly, if at all. Maya on social media is still certainly a novelty—otherwise a post in Maya would not merit a translation, as seen above—and it is not clear to what extent it will spread or continue to be used primarily by certain academic, activist, and particularly invested people or groups.

In his analysis of variation in written Maya, Michal Brody argues that "orthographic variation in written Yucatec Maya is not seriously problematic for its readers and writers and may even contribute positively to the development of literacy and literature" (2004:264). While Brody's view seems maybe overly optimistic, I do think that social media is a place where orthographic variation is particularly salient, and despite hesitations and academic debates over standardization, some people are developing and engaging in shared nonstandard media practices. As Hillewaert notes, "the semi-public nature of social network sites like Facebook gives digital writing a performative quality (e.g., Androutsopoulos 2015; Lee 2011; Tsiplakou 2009; Vaisman 2011); the awareness that a broad audience can read our online contributions encourages us to 'write ourselves into being' through a display of our linguistic repertoires" (2015:196). She also argues that "Facebook as a semiotic site … has the potential to frame the user as making orthographic choices (not 'errors') and as being a particular kind of (cosmopolitan) consumer" (198). Thus, while some people feel constrained by normative communicative standards which validate social media usage of Standard Mexican Spanish or Youth Mexican Spanish and relegate Maya to the status of embarrassing dialect, or only appropriate among family in the pueblo, others take semiotic sites like Instagram and Facebook to inhabit subject positions characterized by delegitimized language use.

In Quintana Roo practices such as alternative, nonstandard spellings occur within communities of multilingual speakers, along with other social media forms of expression like emoji, hashtag, and meme usage—manifesting differently according to the language being used. And importantly, possible combinations of and switches between (Spanish, Maya, English, and other) voices, and common or uncommon (loan) words, become part of the expressive resources available to young people. Communicative privilege takes on new expression on social media, as it is also challenged and subverted.

Semiotic practices and mediated qualia

Following from the theory laid out in Section 1 of this chapter, on the mediation of communicative practices and the proliferation of expressive possibility through mediatization, I would also draw attention here to vocal anthropologist Aaron Fox's focus on mediation as a semiotic mechanism that discursively produces "conceptual and intuitive links between domains of social experience" (2004:35). The voice is transformed as expression takes on new features and forms, and the self and its social relations use the voice (in its broader sense) across media to establish phaticity between social experiences that are differently embodied, mediatized, and perceived through qualia.

Therefore, as a continuation of the theoretical discussion offered in Chapter 1, we can look here at an example of a quale of a media platform: in the modality of the scale of mediated interaction—take an Instagram post—an abstract quality is the breadth of interaction and the experienced quale is the number of likes of a particular picture or video, meaning that a scaled collective reaction (which is in fact quantified) is perceived. For an Instagram post that uses a language form like Pueblo Maya and includes hashtags in English and Spanish, this quality of communicative scope and quale of quantified reactions establishes a phaticity between the experience of embodying a trilingual subjectivity, and that of feeling the broad scaled positive reception and shared positioning (whether actively embodied or imagined) by a range of other social actors. This sort of semiotic process contributes to what I describe as emerging political-linguistic positions which assert a particular belonging that is emplaced and cosmopolitan: the belonging is experienced in scaled shared reception of a post, and the features of that belonging are tied to the way one enacts multilingual speakerhood.

In addition, we can identify qualia evidenced in an instance of mediatization, with the example of sending a voice message on WhatsApp, where an abstract quality is the "correctness" of the spoken linguistic form, and the experienced qualia are specific pronunciations, grammatical nuances, and socially appropriate communicative cues. These qualia could contribute to the constitution of a subject position, in the first case by constituting a subject who is socially validated on a certain scale, and in the second by constituting a subject perceived in the moment as educated and intelligent. Using Standard Mexican Spanish in a voice message means linking the experience of being a proper speaker of a standardized, national language with that of being perceived as such through the qualia of one's pronunciation, grammatical structures, and the like.

The embodiment of such qualia, then, link domains of social experience in the form of subjectivities, which in turn are part of collectivities and social imaginaries. Some definitions of qualia also emphasize that they are non-referential, in the sense that they can vary without affecting the content of an experience—in this case, communicative experience. In both cases we see this, like how the number of likes is a phenomenal quality that is independent of the content of the post, and a pronunciation is not referential and must be embodied in a word/expression, whose content is independent of the pronunciation (or at least could be).

Section 3: Emplaced belonging and Indigenous music: Maya rap, Maya reggae

How do the social media practices and communicative phenomena described above come together to produce new forms of belonging? And how does trilingualism inform subject positions that are powerful in the social relationships and collectivities they invoke? Further, what do Indigenous media, in particular music production, have to contribute to these positionings and

belongings? I focused on cosmopolitanism in Chapter 3 as a way to describe the sense of connectedness and embracing of cultural differences that can be seen expressed on social media[105], especially with the use of English in combination with locally-inflected Spanish and sometimes Maya. Here, Indigenous belonging is considered as another possible layer in what is expressed in trilingual (inter)subjectivities, and certain expressions by young people in Quintana Roo can be situated within the politics of shared histories of colonialism. Music performed in Indigenous languages, especially as inspired by the tradition of hip hop, is another phenomenon which transcends specific language communities and is often part of language and cultural reclamation efforts. I describe some instances of this in the Maya revitalization community below (Cru 2014, Novelo Montejo 2015, Salinas 2018), as they take in part in the constitution of Indigenous trilingual speakerhood.

It is pertinent to note that the use of the word *indígena* ("Indigenous") in Mexico is complex and varied; some *mayerx* language activists I know think it synonymous with *indio* (similar to the way Indian is used in the United States) and offensive, while others—perhaps a larger proportion— use it to describe themselves and others in other places that they relate to politically and as a community. My usage of the term Indigenous, then, cannot be understood as a direct translation of *indígena*.

Shared histories and Indigenous subjectivities

What it means to be Indigenous is specifically emergent at this moment because we are at a power juncture of neoliberal and imperialist political-economic formations, like what is brought by the tourism industry in Quintana Roo. Marisol de la Cadena and Orin Starn describe Indigenous peoples' contemporary experiences as characterized by "mixture, eclecticism, and dynamism" which make up "the essence of indigeneity"—rather than some theoretical pure or authentic Indigenous culture (2007:3). We must be aware of indigeneity as "a relational field of governance, subjectivities, and knowledges that involves us all—indigenous and nonindigenous—in the making and remaking of its structures of power and imagination" (ibid.). The emergence of widespread, translocal and transnational Indigenous politics can be seen as an essentialization of an Indigenous identity implying an erasure of people's particular lived experiences and a manifestation of neoliberal multicultural politics, or, as an assertion of shared history, postcolonial and settler colonial contexts, and embodied difference, and the demand that political-economic structures be transformed so as to reflect that history and context, and those different ways of being in the world. As Anna Tsing puts it, the "global indigenous movement is alive with promising contradictions … it promises unity based on plurality: diversity without assimilation" (2007:33). Trilingualism—in its relatively standardized, idealized version—is just such a manifestation of plurality existing within unity: English, Maya, and Spanish are the diversity that need not be assimilated, but can exist side by side in the unity of trilingualism.

Along these lines and related to Werbner's work (2008) on public cosmopolitanism—an inclusive project of recognizing the Other and working to create alliances that work towards alternative worlds—Robin Delugan identifies an "indigenous cosmopolitanism," which "offers an

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[105] There are many examples of posts of this kind which I have not included here due to lack of space, like when a *mayero* friend shared a video on Facebook of an interaction between an apparently destitute man and a more privileged passerby, the moral of which was to be kind to those in need; the video was from India as far as I could tell by the language used and where it was originally posted, but had subtitles added in English, and though my friend grew up speaking Maya, his sympathetic commentary when sharing the video was in Spanish (spoken by almost all of his Facebook contacts).

alternative source for a worldly social imaginary" that is similar to cosmopolitanism in that it promotes humanistic values—"care, respect, peace, tolerance, and love" (2010:86). And as we saw in Hillewaert's work above (2015), and substantiated by others, different modalities and forms of mediatization can then be included in this conception, as a way to recognize the fact that emplaced cosmopolitan subjectivities, or Indigenous cosmopolitan ones for Delugan, can be constituted as much via social media as in other contexts. My intention here is to contribute to these conversations by adding a particular attention to embodied and mediatized language use and metapragmatic discourses of trilingual, complementary expressivity that substantiate the sense of mixture and dynamism that de la Cadena and Starn identify.

Indigenous media and music in Maya: *"Rap Maya nacional e internacional"*

Music is another rich site of voicing, expression, and multilingual experience; singing (or rapping) is a particular form of mediatization which involves layers of artistic elements beyond the semiotic processes captured by the verbal expression itself[106] (Faudree 2013, Fisher 2019). In Faudree's ethnography of a Mazatec revival project, musical practices "not only bolster the use of Mazatec, but they also expand its use into new realms while recruiting new speakers" (2013:5). Singing, rapping, or other vocal performances in Indigenous languages are a creative and relevant manifestation of language maintenance, and an opportunity to engage with Indigenous, cosmopolitan, or otherwise scaled, socially meaningful, politically inflected, musical forms.

The most obvious example of this is the widespread popularity of rap and hip-hop, as appropriated and transformed by communities of young people around the world. Sometimes this includes and highlights the use of minoritized languages, the combined use of local/minoritized and dominant languages, or other communicative practices that are contrastive to the original Black forms of rap and hip-hop emerging in the United States beginning in the 1980s and 90s—though hip-hop and rap have always worked outside of hegemonic standards of proper communication and correct English. Linguistic anthropologist Samy Alim even proposes a "critical hip-hop language pedagogy" that works towards students' (in his case high school students in the United States) "celebrating, highlighting, and consciously manipulating diverse language varieties," in the place of the dominant pedagogical practice of producing homogenous academic language (2007:164). In this sense, the anti-hegemonic communicative practices of hip-hop work with the decolonial impulse of Indigenous language promotion, manifesting music like the "Rap Maya" that I describe below.

Along with other Indigenous languages in Mexico, Maya is no exception to this musical trend, with a vibrant community of young people who are producing music—especially rap and reggae—and positioning themselves in reference to their Maya heritage. Some of this music uses Maya, some also or alternatively uses English, and all use some degree of Spanish. This musical community is translocal and transnational, with a particularly salient connection to the *mayerx* communities in California (Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay area especially).

Cru discusses this in his work, social media and musical usages of Maya being part of his argument that "unlike the formal education system and the emphasis on normative literacy, the use

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[106] Fox defines song as "a defamiliarizing shifting between the sense and sound of language" (2004:216). Singing as phatic communication "may even eclipse the referential content of expression" and such 'vocal movements' "mark the embodied and emplaced sociality of language, which may even achieve temporary dominance over referential sense" (272). This insight is a productive reframing of theories of language and meaning — perhaps particularly if we revoke the 'evens' and posit this state of excess beyond the referential as the norm, rather than the exception.

of Maya in these [alternative] domains not only shun the purism fetish which so often emerges in institutional language promotion but also put forward entertaining, ludic, fashionable and creative ways to extend and strengthen its use while complexifying monolithic and reified notions of language and identity" (2014:219). He notes that "an emotional attachment and an entertaining, even playful, component are pre-eminent features of the inclusion of Maya in these alternative domains" (221). *Mayera* Yazmín Novelo Montejo's work on *túumben maaya k'aay* [contemporary Maya music] adds to this, describing how *"las formas de pensar y actuar pueden moverse y dar lugar a nuevas formas de significar y usar la lengua; esto se observa en la emergencia de la música en lengua maya, que rompe con las funciones usuales que se destinan para la lengua maya"*[107] (2015:iii). Alicia Salinas describes this dynamic as well in her quite recent dissertation on Maya-Spanish literature and "cultural production," identifying musical production in Maya, especially rap and hip hop, as "an extremely popular manifestation of linguistic and cultural revitalization on the peninsula that has achieved positive results among people of all ages" (2018:271).

Maya rappers such as Pat Boy[108] (one of the earliest and the most well-known and who often travels to perform in California) inhabit positions simultaneously rebellious and respectful of emplaced Maya speaking communities. They use imagery which combines styles of dress and gesture deriving from international hip-hop culture, and local landscapes, architecture, and "traditional" styles of dress. In addition to self-promotional pictures and pictures of events and colleagues, Pat Boy posts pictures on social media of everyday activities, with his family and in his pueblo or other rural locations, this rootedness and lack of pretention being part of his persona (and his political-linguistic subjectivity). Below are two of his posts, the first of which invites his community of Instagram followers to come to his hometown in Quintana Roo for the celebration of *janal pixan* (which is ambiguously and contentiously related to Día de los Muertos). The second shows a scene common to the Catholic Cruzo'ob *iglesias* in Maya speaking areas, with the ceremonial food in the foreground. These posts assert an Indigenous subjectivity, are inclusive, and grounded in the places, foods, and practices that Pat Boy grew up with.

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[107] "Ways of thinking and acting can move and give place to new forms of making meaning and using the language; this can be seen in the emergence of music in Maya, which breaks away from the normal functions that are attributed to the Maya language."

[108] Cru and Salinas both discuss Pat Boy as well; he is clearly a prominent figure in the Maya revitalization landscape, and having met him myself I can guess that this is in part due to his very approachable, friendly, and charismatic nature.

(13) and (14) [Instagram screenshots of patboy_rap_mayaoficial, November, 2018]

patboy_rap_mayaoficial • Following

patboy_rap_mayaoficial Estan cordialmente invitados para el reso de hoy para los pixan aqui en Quinatana Roo se come el pib estas fechas. Hoy en mi casa 8 de la noche Jose Maria Pino Suarez

Esperó en diciembre que ande en QRop pueda probarlos donde los venden

patboy_rap_mayaoficial Mercado de Felipe Carrillo Puerto

81 likes

NOVEMBER 17, 2018

patboy_rap_mayaoficial • Following

patboy_rap_mayaoficial Ya listo para comer pib

21 likes

NOVEMBER 17, 2018

Add a comment…

(13. caption text)

> *Están   cordialmente invitados para el reso de hoy para los **pixan** aquí en Quintana Roo*
> you (pl.) are cordially invited   for the prayer of today for the dead here in Quintana Roo
> You are cordially invited to the prayer today for the dead here in Quintana Roo
>
> *se come   el **pib** estas fechas. Hoy en mi casa 8 de la noche Jose Maria Pino Suarez*
> (pass.) s/he eats the pib these dates today in my house of the night Jose Maria Pino Suarez
> we eat *pib* at this time of year. Today at my house 8 pm Jose Maria Pino Suarez

(13. comments text)

1. *Espero en diciembre que ande en QRoo   pueda probarlos donde los venden*
    I hope   in December that I go in   Quintana Roo I can   try them   where them they sell
    I hope when I'm in QRoo in December I can try them where do they sell them

2. [original poster]   *Mercado de Felipe Carrillo Puerto*
                        Felipe Carrillo Puerto Market

 (14. caption text)

> *Ya listo para comer **pib***
> All ready to eat *pib*

These posts assert an Indigenous way of being in the world, are inclusive, and grounded in the places, foods, and practices that Pat Boy grew up with. The audience of the posts potentially includes people who know where his house is, otherwise he would not include *"en mi casa"*; the name of his *kaj* and the naming of his house are highly spatially specific to anyone familiar with him, showing a pointed emplacement of a social media post that is also directed to the widest audience possible (i.e. posted on a public Instagram profile which anyone can follow and whose posts can been accessed by anyone, even someone not on Instagram). The scale of address is vastly broad, while the scale of actual engagement with the content of the post is seemingly narrow. Additionally, the aesthetic of the pictures is striking: they are well composed—rich in texture and shape, but not fetishizing a particularly racialized face or body, and based my experiences in Quintana Roo, they are also ordinary scenes—i.e. not performative in an explicit sense.

Another post by Pat Boy is a strikingly literal demonstration of a liberal multicultural valuing of cultural preservation, as the City of San Francisco honors Pat Boy for his "innovative musical approach combining hip hop with the Maya language":

(15) [screenshot of Instagram post by patboy_rap_mayaoficial, October 2018]

(15. caption text)

Estoy muy orgulloso y contento de poner mi granito de arena, sembrando el rap maya.
I'm very proud and happy to put my little grain of sand, planting Maya rap.

Y muy agradecido de ser reconocido por hacer esta labor que tanto me apasiona
And very grateful to be recognized for doing this work which I'm so passionate about

al recibir este certificado me hace sentir que todo mi trabajo y esfuerzo a valido la pena.
receiving this certificate makes me feel like all of my work and effort has been worth it.

Muchas gracias a todas y todos los que creen en mí y en lo que hago.
Thank you so much to everyone [fem.] and everyone [masc.] who believe in me and in what I do.

Rap Maya nacional e internacional.
National and international Maya Rap.

(15. comments text)

1.   *Merecidisssssssssssimo!* ~hands in the air~
        You deserve ittttttttttt!

(15. image text)

<div align="center">

Certificate of Honor
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
City and County of San Francisco

</div>

The Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco hereby issues, and authorizes the execution of, this Certificate of Honor in appreciative public recognition of distinction and merit for outstanding service to a significant portion of the people of the City and County of San Francisco by:

<div align="center">

Jesús Pat Chablé

</div>

The San Francisco Board of Supervisors congratulates Jesús Pat Chablé on your innovative musical approach combining hip hop with the Maya language. You have supported your audience to take pride in their native Maya culture and language while focusing your art on the struggles and traditions of Maya life. Your support for other artists via ADN Maya films and recordings is also exemplary. We are very proud to welcome you to the City of San Francisco.

<div align="center">

[Signature]

Supervisor Hillary Ronen
October 1, 2018

</div>

Pat Boy's dedication to the cause of Maya Rap, which is not—as the structure would imply—semiotically equivalent to any musical/artistic genre (rap) modified by a language being used (Maya), inspires his audiences in California to "take pride in their native Maya culture and language." This establishes Maya Rap as *"nacional e internacional"* in Pat Boy's words—a point of pride, effort, work, and one indebted to community support, here validated with recognition by an institution of American local government.

Another less discussed musical phenomenon is the emergence of reggae bands that sing in Maya, in addition to Spanish and sometimes English; this is especially happening in Quintana Roo, and Carrillo is a center of musical movement, both of Maya rappers and reggae musicians. Two reggae groups in particular are fascinating examples of intersecting aesthetic, musical, and communicative sensibilities: Chan Santa Roots and VibraZion Natural. The band names themselves are complex semiotic constructions.

Chan Santa Roots is an amalgamation of Maya and English that references through wordplay *Chan Santa Cruz*, the original name of Carrillo when it was the center of Cruzo'ob rebel territory and meaning "small saint cross," and the English "roots," a word that is both loosely associated with reggae and part of the name of a subgenre, "roots reggae". The "roots" can also be interpreted as a reference to Maya cultural roots, their *raíces* which ground them and from which they grow. As such, the playful multilingual name invokes historical resistance, both by the Cruzo'ob and through the Rastafarian legacy, as much as it references a grounded Maya social

world, and contemporary reggae culture. The band has an album with songs in Spanish, Maya, and English, which is available in its entirety on Youtube[109]. VibraZion Natural, similarly, combines Spanish and English, incorporating the Rastafari promised land "Zion" into a differently spelled *"vibración,"* and invoking the "natural vibration" of environmentally-minded discourses associated with reggae, and more broadly a marijuana-centric social world.

Figure 17. Chan Santa Roots album cover.

The proximity of Quintana Roo to Belize and its Caribbean location make the connection to reggae especially pertinent, as musical and social practices deriving from the African diaspora that emerged in Jamaica in particular are present throughout the region. A public figure that substantiates this is a man some call a "Maya hippie," who is known because he always sells food at the central market in Carrillo, and has a distinctively Rasta style: he has long dreadlocks, wears t-shirts featuring Bob Marley, and his aesthetic often features black, yellow, and green (the colors of the Jamaican flag), or green, yellow, and red (the colors of the Rastafari flag). Maya reggae can be understood as another facet of trilingualism in Quintana Roo, which like Maya rap finds an outlet on social media, where its mediatized presence is shared, reacted to, supported, and inspiring of further creative Indigenous work.

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[109] The album can be found at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vBxpMVmb71Y.

A post from the VibraZion Natural Facebook page states the group's position clearly:

(16) [Screenshot of VibraZion Natural Facebook post, February 2017]

(16. caption text)

> *Desde las selvas del Corazón de la Zona Maya seguimos resistiendo, conservando*
> "From the jungles of the Heart of the Zona Maya we keep resisting, preserving
>
> *nuestro lengua materna en cada acorde, en cada latido de nuestros corazones…*
> our mother tongue with each chord, with each beat of our hearts…"
>
> *!La música independiente no muere!*
> "!Independent music doesn't die!"
>
> #LaVibraZionNaturalPresente
> #VibraZionNaturalisHere

Again, history manifests in the *"seguimos"* of the group's resistance: this is a resistance that has been happening and will continue to happen, though the past version of resistance may have been violent, the current form involves the sounding of Maya in their music, which is independent music, located firmly in not only the Zona Maya, but the jungles of its Heart. Comments on this post include statements such as: *"así debe de ser, conservar nuestro lengua materna y darla a conocer por medio de la música"* and *"éxito en su trayectoria musical y mas x rescatar nuestro cultura,"* with a response from one of the band members, *"Gracias, siempre, es nuestra raíz, hasta la muerte!!"*. Metapragmatic commentary on language and culture preservation

and *rescate* demonstrate the positive responses that VibraZion Natural receive—responses to their Indigenous linguistic-political intersubjectivity expressed and embodied through the quality of the jungle and the qualia of the appearance of the leaves and branches of the trees, among other significant aesthetic, affective, and communicative elements.

Conclusion

It is evident that social media allows us to see emerging subjectivities in the sense of expressions of trilingual experiences and metapragmatic positionings, elements of a person's sense of individual selfhood, lived social relationships, embodied capacities, and shared intersubjective qualities. Within the precarious, shifting terrain of contemporary social-political-economic realities in Quintana Roo, and in cosmopolitan-Indigenous transnational communities, there is power and meaning in having voices, using media to express them, and having the possibility to experience associations of pride, connection, resistance, and respect. Social media is a place to imagine alternative worlds, as the examples I've shared demonstrate.

Conclusion

We have seen that how the widespread occurrence of certain discourses (trilingualism; importance of Maya revitalization; value of English teaching; cosmopolitanism; Indigenous/Maya belonging) signals the mimesis of positive sociality in the face of neoliberalism (affecting education, work, and governance), nationalism (though this is sometimes affirmed), and neocolonialism. The codes themselves—languages, modes, voices—are qualitatively experienced, while making up semiotic systems that are abstracted, studied, taught, standardized. From the perspective of collectivity, belonging, and sociality, modalities make up the qualia of experiences which decide how people respond to circumstances. These qualitative meanings are consequential. They are not themselves health or jobs or the lack of violence. But subjectivities and collectivities do things, and they matter. Belonging matters, languages matter, and gestures matter. Posting on social media matters, group chats matter, voices matter. Representation matters.

Language learning, teaching, and translation are central to multi- and trilingualism, as the promise, the pragmatic challenge, the result of educational and political efforts. Where, when, how, and from who one learns to use a language, a style, form, medium, continues to transform, and as community and sociality matter (and education and participation and voices), such changes also matter.

New forms of communicative privilege emerge as the counterpart to creative communicative practices. We feel the need for rules, a sense of standardization, and see the necessity of being able to contend within metapragmatic models upholding dominant languages and voices. These and other points apply to other Indigenous languages in Mexico and Latin America; while Maya has been widely studied and has a lot of resources, other situations of minoritized language use, promotion, refiguring, mediatization – are closely related.

Asserting a reciprocity between Maya and English is a form of resistance, in that while I can point out that clearly speaking Maya is not "equivalent" to speaking English in the broader context of life in Yucatán in general, some say that on the contrary, it is. A particular form of equivalence is asserted which has implications for the future of communicative practices in Quintana Roo. This place with such historical complexity and vibrant debates and movement around language and what it means to speak Maya, English, and Spanish, will continue to transform and be a site of new, creative discourse and practices.

This dissertation is consequential because these are broader questions: like the question of how the ways that we communicate are particularly ours, such that we feel connected, sometimes defined by, or restricted by, the potential registers, dialects, accents, lexicons available to us. Thus, metapragmatic forces such as linguistic purism, be it old school English prescriptive grammarians, or new school Maya ideological language activists, taps into the same unique power that the ways we communicate hold in our social lives. This takes the form of the delight of a speaker community's inside jokes, or the comfort of speaking freely (not [only] in content, but in form), or the way knowledge of a language can provide an identity in and of itself.

I contribute to the existing literature in linguistic anthropology and related fields with theoretical and ethnographic details which help make things more complex, because this is the challenge of any research on social phenomena (and what phenomenon is not social in some way). I hope to inspire further research of the sort I have provided here, and help current related research to broaden its scope, not essentialize and simplify, to be grounded and no shy away from politics (in a broad understanding of the term, not necessarily institutionalized politics).

We can't look at just language revitalization as if it were a unified project that works the same way or has the same meanings everywhere, or just language teaching and classrooms, as if a communicative system can be taught as an entity separate from social life, or be evaluated as such. We can't study tourism and political economy as if such processes fall under some universal paradigm of development, or as if local actors are not always aware, negotiating, and reacting to such changes. Studying identity as a definition of a person or a group that guides their feelings and actions leaves out the ambiguities of subjectivity and the ways someone may be pressured to take on roles in certain contexts that appear contradictory (which we academics still have a hard time accepting). There are no political currents without the social meanings produced by collectivities and the histories of place and community. Education always comes with some sort of privilege, and students are always being socialized into particular ways of being.

I hope for this work to take part in the trend within linguistic anthropology to produce scholarship which speaks to larger questions of language policy and activism, especially as regards education and phenomena like linguistic racism. This is work that takes into account forms of privilege, and at the same time recognizes possibilities for the future. What I have presented here would be useful for community leaders, policy makers, and educators to consider when planning educational and political initiatives.

Understanding that linguistic purism and standardization produce forms of communicative privilege could lead to more expressive and interaction-oriented language teaching which values rather than delegitimizes the range of embodied communicative practices. Seeing the consequences of ineffective English teaching in Quintana Roo might lead to a focus on how to prepare youth according to their own rooted cosmopolitan ideals, rather than as a path to exploitation by neoliberal transnational capitalism. While places like the Universidad Intercultural Maya de Quintana Roo have undertaken such trilingual educational efforts, there are pointed political tensions that plague them.

Looking to the way the internet and social media are being used to debate, express, learn, translate, and transform Maya, Spanish, and English might lead to a deeper embracing of these resources by leaders and educators. Additionally, understanding the dominance of English (in addition to Spanish and other broad-scale languages) on social media and in communicative technology in general could denaturalize this state of affairs and encourage funding and efforts to give minoritized languages a presence and create more appealing and accessible tools to use, translate, and learn them. All of these points have correlates in many other speaker communities around the world, and as such my work is applicable to any number of situations in which Indigenous and other limited-scale languages are being transformed alongside national and global languages, which are important and focused on in their own ways.

Shortly after finalizing this dissertation in May of 2019, I will be sharing my research: translating it, transforming it, mediatizing it. I will make my work as accessible as possible, part of this effort being producing a shorter and less theoretical version of this dissertation which I will translate into Spanish and Maya (the latter with help from colleagues). I will try to balance my perceived academic authority with my desire to repeat, in a sense, rather than claim. I will publish about themes I've shared here in addition to a variety of other topics that I did not have the space to cover here. I plan on traveling in Quintana Roo and the rest of the peninsula to give talks and workshops on my work, to teach and share what I can with as broad an audience as possible. The relationships I have with the communities and people represented here will continue, and I will continue to share the further iterations of this work with them, and hopefully make space for further conversations.

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