

# **Yucatec Maya Language on the Move**

A Cross-disciplinary Approach to Indigenous Language Maintenance

in an Age of Globalization

Inaugural-Dissertation  
zur Erlangung der Doktorwürde

der

Philosophischen Fakultät

der

Rheinischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität  
zu Bonn

von

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Osaka

Bonn 2018

Gedruckt mit der Genehmigung der Philosophischen Fakultät der Rheinischen  
Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn

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Tag der mündlichen Prüfung: 19. Dezember 2018

Erscheinungsjahr 2019

## Abstract

This dissertation discusses the language maintenance of Yucatec Maya in the contemporary world characterized by intensified global interactions. Manifested in the increased mobility of speakers and the intensive use of electronic media in majority languages, globalization is commonly considered to threaten the vitality of indigenous languages worldwide. The currently-observed language shift from Yucatec Maya to Spanish should also be seen in the context of social changes articulated with global processes. As a manifestation of transnational connections in people's everyday lives, this work focuses on the mobility of Maya speakers within the Yucatan Peninsula related to the transnational tourism development in the Mexican Caribbean. Examining the language situation of Yucatec Maya in view of internal migration framed by the global capitalist economy, this dissertation aims to contribute to theoretical debates on the vitality of indigenous languages in the present age of globalization. Despite many parallels with other shifting communities, the Yucatecan case stands out for a marked contrast between the revalorization of the indigenous language and the declining rate of its intergenerational transmission. In order to address these seemingly contradicting sociolinguistic realities, the study adopts an anthropological approach, drawing on debates on the cultural dynamics of globalization as the theoretical orientation and ethnographic fieldwork as its method. Based on the cross-disciplinary research, these apparent inconsistencies are understood as a shift in meaning attached to Yucatec Maya by speakers in view of the increased contact and communication. In the course of the language's deterritorialization, Yucatec Maya increasingly becomes the object of conscious reflection and representation away from embodied practice. For the maintenance of Yucatec Maya, metalinguistic engagement with it should go in hand in hand with its intergenerational transmission as practical mastery. The research identifies current gaps between these two modalities of cultural knowledge, which should be bridged to ensure the vitality of the indigenous language in today's globalized world.

La presente tesis doctoral discute el mantenimiento de la lengua maya en el mundo contemporáneo caracterizado por elevadas interacciones a nivel global. La globalización es comúnmente considerada como factor amenazante para la vitalidad de lenguas indígenas del mundo, manifestándose tanto en el aumento de movilidad de hablantes como en el uso intenso de medios de comunicación en lenguas mayoritarias. Asimismo, el desplazamiento del maya yucateco por el español en la península de Yucatán, en México, debe de ser visto en el contexto de cambios sociales que son cada vez más articulados con procesos globales. Entre varias maneras en que conexiones transnacionales se expresan en la vida cotidiana, el estudio se enfoca en la migración interna de maya hablantes en la península de Yucatán relacionada con el desarrollo del turismo internacional en el caribe mexicano. Investigando la situación sociolingüística del maya yucateco ante la movilidad de hablantes condicionada por la economía capitalista global, esta tesis busca aportar a debates teóricos sobre la vitalidad de lenguas indígenas en la presente época de globalización. A pesar de existentes paralelos con la situación de otras lenguas indígenas, el caso del maya yucateco se destaca por un marcado contraste entre la revaloración del idioma y la interrupción de su transmisión intergeneracional. El estudio aborda esta realidad sociolingüística desde la antropología, tomando la cuestión de dinámicas culturales de globalización como orientación teórica y la etnografía como método. Basado en la investigación transdisciplinaria, se interpreta el aparente desequilibrio mencionado arriba como resultado del cambio en significado atribuido a la lengua maya ante una intensificación de contacto y comunicación. En el transcurso de su desterritorialización, la lengua maya se vuelve más en el objeto de consciente reflexión y representación en lugar de una práctica encarnada. Para la vitalidad integral del maya yucateco, tanto el abordamiento metalingüístico como la trasmisión intergeneracional de su dominio práctico son esenciales. La tesis identifica brechas existentes entre estas dos modalidades de conocimiento cultural que urge superar para asegurar la vitalidad de la lengua indígena en el mundo globalizado de hoy.

## Acknowledgements

This project was made only possible by people the who supported me in and from different locations around the globe throughout the entire process of its development. First of all, Maya speakers from Yaxcabá, Tiholop, Mérida and Cancún receive my greatest thanks. I just cannot thank them enough for their collaboration, kindness and hospitality. They not only made this project possible, but the time I spent with them and our enduring friendship enriched my life in an indescribable way. Accordingly, this work is dedicated to them.

During my fieldwork stays, I was also in contact with scholars based in Yucatan to whom I want to express my special gratitude. Their insights into the topic have been influential for this research project. Based on his expertise on migration studies, Dr. Pedro Lewin Fischer (INAH) provided me with concrete support in designing and conducting my research project, ranging from proposing the idea of multi-sited ethnography, arranging my first visit to the municipality of Yaxcabá to helping me to develop the interview guides. Dr. Barbara Pfeiler (UNAM-CEPHCIS) was always willing to share her knowledge on the sociolinguistic situation in Yucatan, based on her long-term commitment to the topic. She also invited me to present my research project which was still in an exploratory phase in her seminar. The comments from her and her students were very inspiring for its further elaboration. Dr. Marianne Gabriel (UADY) provided me with her insights into the Yucatecan society based on her long-term research experience and community-based projects. César Can Canul shared his experience with me as an urban Maya speaker, as well as helping me to make contacts with researchers based in Mérida.

This research project, which included three fieldwork trips to Yucatan was kindly supported by the German Academic Foundation. Apart from the financial aid, the foundation also offered valuable opportunities for exchanges with other scholarship-holders from different disciplines, which provided me with new perspectives on my research topic.

Apart from Yucatan, the Department of “Altamerikanistik” at the University of Bonn was the other significant setting for this research project. First of all, I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Nikolai Grube for his support, comments and critical thoughts on my research project as supervisor. And my special thanks go to Prof. Dr. Karoline Noack. Participation in her seminars for doctoral students was crucial for the anthropological side of this project. And I am indebted to jun. Prof. Dr. Frauke Sachse, who played a significant role in my decision to initiate the doctoral study. I would also like to thank participants of the workshop on ethnography in Yucatan which took place in May 2015 at the department – Dr. Antje Gunsenheimer, Dr. Armin Hinz, Annette Kern, Dr. Catherine Letcher Lazo – for their critical comments on this study. And I would like to express my gratitude to Deutsche Altamerika-Stiftung, whose short term grants enabled me to focus exclusively on my thesis while writing theoretical chapters.

Finally, colleagues, doctoral and master students receive my thanks for the pleasant time together at the Department of “Altamerikanistik”, which was essential for getting through the otherwise lengthy and tough process of writing. In this context, I would also like to express my special gratitude to my friends, Lena and Anne Voigtländer and Dr. Nils Hein for food for thought for the research topic as well as marvelous real food, which supplied me with energy and delight necessary for completing the project. And I would like to thank Dr. Nils Hein additionally for helping me to improve the structure of the thesis.

And last but not least, my thanks go to my family in Japan. Thank you for supporting me from distance and tolerating my frequent absence during the project!

Dios bóoltik!

¡Gracias!

Danke!

ありがとう！

## Table of Contents

<b>Abstract</b> .....	i
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	iii
<b>List of Acronyms</b> .....	ix
<b>Table of Figures</b> .....	x
<b>Table of Tables</b> .....	xi
<b>1 Introduction</b> .....	1
<b>2 Theoretical Framework</b> .....	13
<b>2.1 Language Maintenance and Language Shift Studies</b> .....	13
2.1.1 Terminologies in language maintenance and language shift .....	14
2.1.2 General schemes of bilingualism and language shift .....	16
2.1.2.1 Diglossia .....	17
2.1.2.2 Process of language shift .....	22
2.1.3 Language shift and social context .....	24
2.1.4 Key concepts in a sociolinguistic analysis of language use .....	32
2.1.4.1 Language choice .....	32
2.1.4.2 Language attitudes .....	36
<b>2.2 Indigenous Community in an Age of Globalization</b> .....	49
2.2.1 Ethnography, place and culture .....	50
2.2.2 Conception of “community” in anthropology of peasantry .....	55
2.2.2.1 Community studies and the folk-urban continuum .....	56
2.2.2.2 Closed corporate peasant communities .....	62
2.2.2.3 “Post-peasant” anthropology .....	67
2.2.3 Anthropology of globalization .....	69
2.2.3.1 Deterritorialization of culture .....	70

2.2.3.2	Organization of global cultural flows .....	76
2.2.4	Reflection on culture in an age of globalization .....	83
2.2.4.1	Cultural reproduction .....	84
2.2.4.2	“New” ethnicity .....	87
<b>2.3</b>	<b>Chapter Summary .....</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Research Area .....</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Introduction to the Region.....</b>	<b>93</b>
3.1.1	Indigenous mobility and its contexts.....	93
3.1.1.1	Maize cultivation in the state of Yucatan.....	95
3.1.1.2	Tourism development in the Mexican Caribbean.....	98
3.1.2	Language situation of Yucatec Maya .....	103
3.1.2.1	Language contact from a historical perspective .....	103
3.1.2.2	General overview of the current language situation.....	105
3.1.2.3	Vitality of Yucatec Maya in a social context .....	112
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Introduction to the Research Sites.....</b>	<b>122</b>
3.2.1	The municipality of Yaxcabá.....	123
3.2.1.1	Yaxcabá .....	125
3.2.1.2	Tiholop .....	129
3.2.2	Cities.....	132
3.2.2.1	Mérida .....	132
3.2.2.2	Cancún.....	139
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Chapter Summary .....</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Methods .....</b>	<b>145</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Research Approach and Design .....</b>	<b>145</b>
4.1.1	Development of the multi-sited ethnography project.....	146
4.1.2	Rural-urban relations.....	155



4.1.3	Comparison of two rural communities.....	157
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Fieldwork</b> .....	<b>158</b>
4.2.1	Time frame .....	158
4.2.2	Spatial practice of getting and being there .....	159
4.2.2.1	The municipality of Yaxcabá.....	159
4.2.2.2	The cities .....	163
<b>4.3</b>	<b>Data Collection</b> .....	<b>166</b>
4.3.1	Participant observation .....	166
4.3.2	Qualitative interviews .....	169
4.3.3	Questionnaire-based survey .....	173
<b>4.4</b>	<b>Data Processing and Analysis</b> .....	<b>175</b>
4.4.1	Participant observation and interviews .....	175
4.4.2	Questionnaire-based survey .....	178
<b>4.5</b>	<b>Chapter Summary</b> .....	<b>180</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Results</b> .....	<b>183</b>
<b>5.1</b>	<b>Background</b> .....	<b>184</b>
5.1.1	Migrant circuit.....	184
5.1.1.1	Yaxcabá and the cities .....	184
5.1.1.2	Tiholop and the cities .....	191
5.1.2	State of bilingualism and language choice.....	195
5.1.2.1	Municipality of Yaxcabá.....	195
5.1.2.2	Cities.....	207
<b>5.2</b>	<b>Yucatec Maya and Territory: Locating the Indigenous Language</b> .....	<b>230</b>
5.2.1	Yucatec Maya and <i>pueblo</i> .....	231
5.2.2	Yucatec Maya and rural-urban opposition .....	237
5.2.3	Yucatec Maya and regional identity .....	249

<b>5.3</b>	<b>Yucatec Maya and Deterritorialization of Culture</b> .....	264
5.3.1	Yucatec Maya and “new” ethnicity .....	265
5.3.1.1	Yucatec Maya and indigenous cultural heritage .....	267
5.3.1.2	Language ideology: authenticity between nostalgia and symbolic power.....	277
5.3.2	Yucatec Maya and habitus.....	292
5.3.2.1	Yucatec Maya and mode of production: <i>milpa</i> as a way of life.....	293
5.3.2.2	Language socialization: perception of change and continuity.....	305
<b>6</b>	<b>Discussion of the Results</b> .....	325
6.1	From Anthropology to Sociolinguistics .....	325
6.2	From Sociolinguistics to Anthropology .....	332
6.3	Synthesis.....	335
6.4	Reflections and Future Research Directions.....	338
<b>7</b>	<b>Conclusion</b> .....	341
	<b>Appendices</b> .....	343
	Appendix A. Interview Guide and Questionnaire .....	343
	Appendix B. List of Interviews.....	361
	Appendix C. Data from the Questionnaire Survey .....	369
	<b>References</b> .....	373

## List of Acronyms

CDI	Comisión Nacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas.
COBAY	Colegio de Bachilleres Del Estado de Yucatán.
CONAFE	Consejo Nacional de Fomento Educativo.
CONAPO	Consejo Nacional de Población.
INAH	Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.
INDEMAYA	Instituto para el Desarrollo de la Cultura Maya del Estado de Yucatán.
INEGI	Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática.
LGDLPI	Ley General de Derechos Lingüísticos de los Pueblos Indígenas.
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement.
SIAP	Servicio de Información Agroalimentaria y Pesquera.
SNIEE	Sistema Nacional de Información Estadística Educativa.
UADY	Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán.
UNAM-CEPHCIS	Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México-Centro Peninsular en Humanidades y Ciencias Sociales.
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

## Table of Figures

Figure 1 The relationships between bilingualism and diglossia .....	19
Figure 2 Population growth 1970–2010 in the in the municipality of Benito Juárez .....	101
Figure 3 Proportion of the population born outside of the state of Quintana Roo in the municipality of Benito Juárez .....	102
Figure 4 Geographic distribution of speakers of an indigenous language in the State of Yucatan .....	107
Figure 5 Socio-productive regions of the state of Yucatan.....	108
Figure 6 Percentage of Maya speakers in relation to the general population in the state of Yucatan.....	111
Figure 7 Distribution of Maya speakers among various generations in the state of Yucatan	112
Figure 8 Distribution of monolingual speakers across age groups older than five years in the state of Yucatan .....	112
Figure 9 Patterns of language choice across three generations in Yaxcabá .....	197
Figure 10 Patterns of language choice across four generations in Tiholop.....	202
Figure 11 Responses of male students at the junior high school in Tiholop to the question “Do you like the farm work?” .....	295
Figure 12 Responses of male students at the junior high school in Tiholop to the question “Do you want to work in <i>milpa</i> when you are an adult?” .....	296
Figure 13 Students’ responses to the question “Which language would you speak to your children if you were to have children?” at the junior high school in Tiholop.....	314
Figure 14 Students’ responses to the question “Do you consider it important to learn Maya?” in the elementary schools in Yaxcabá and Tiholop .....	370
Figure 15 Students’ responses to the question “Do you consider it important to learn Maya?” in the junior high schools in Yaxcabá and Tiholop .....	371

## Table of Tables

Table 1 Cultivation of <i>milpa</i> by students' fathers.....	295
Table 2 Male students' responses to the question "Do you want to work in <i>milpa</i> when you are an adult?".....	295
Table 3 Relation of affinity for the farm work and desire to cultivate <i>milpa</i> in the future according to the responses of male students at the junior high school in Tiholop.....	296
Table 4 Overview of participants in the questionnaire survey .....	369
Table 5 Self-reported active command of Yucatec Maya.....	369
Table 6 Self-reported passive command of Yucatec Maya .....	369
Table 7 First language of students .....	370



# 1 Introduction

The present study is devoted to Yucatec Maya speakers and their language in the contemporary world. Yucatec Maya is an indigenous language spoken in the Yucatan peninsula, mainly in the Mexican states of Yucatan, Quintana Roo and Campeche, as well as northern Belize, with a total of more than 796,000 speakers in Mexico alone (INEGI 2011a.).

An inquiry into the current vitality of Yucatec Maya language well exemplifies coincidence of particularities and universality in ways indigenous cultural reproduction becomes transformed in response to increased contact and communication. This work deals with a linguistic aspect of such changes, focusing on language shift from Yucatec Maya to Spanish, as it is termed in sociolinguistic observation of the phenomenon. An extensive body of studies on language shift conducted in distinct regions of the world demonstrates a certain degree of universality, both in the general development of the process, as well as factors typically identified as its causes (see chapter 2.1). Also, the shift from Yucatec Maya to Spanish displays the characteristic pattern of a gradual change, occurring over several generations. In addition, the factors often associated with the shift from Maya, such as rapid urbanization, the language's insufficient representation in the public domains and its lower prestige in comparison to the majority language, are the circumstances commonly observed in shifting communities worldwide. Notwithstanding, a close inspection reveals peculiarities of the Yucatecan case owing to specific local circumstances, as well as a particular way Maya speakers are situated in and engage with the current world order. Above all, the language situation of Yucatec Maya seems to feature seemingly contradicting realities: High prestige internationally attached to Maya cultural heritage, for example, is in marked contrast to disadvantageous treatment Maya speakers are exposed to in everyday life. And the current language situation is characterized by the discrepancy between a recently observed improvement in attitudes towards Maya on the one hand and decline in intergenerational transmission of the language on the other hand. While

## 2 INTRODUCTION

these observations might appear contradictory, they are possibly all facets of cultural formations in today's globalized world. Taking this query as a starting point, the present study approaches the sociolinguistic topic from an anthropological perspective, drawing from insights on cultural impacts of globalization provided by the latter discipline.

Among several possibilities to track global flows significant for the Maya speaking population in Yucatan, this research project focuses on mobility of Maya speakers within the Yucatan Peninsula – either directly or indirectly – triggered by the transnational tourism development in the Mexican Caribbean. It considers the Peninsula's internal migration as a prominent example demonstrating impacts of global capitalism on the regional transformation, which also has repercussions on vitality of the indigenous language. Both indigenous migration and language situation in Yucatan have been extensively studied from respective disciplinary perspectives of anthropology and sociolinguistics. Accordingly, the following part at first examines the current state of research in the fields of anthropological migration studies in Yucatan and sociolinguistic research on vitality of Maya respectively.

The internal migration of the Maya-speaking population in the peninsula has been and continues to be a prominent topic in everyday discourse, as well as anthropological debate dealing with the recent regional developments, due to its scale and impacts on the social lives in Yucatan (e.g. Quintal et al. 2011<sup>1</sup>, Lizama Quijano 2013). The indigenous mobility has also been intensively discussed in relation with development of transnational tourism in the Mexican Caribbean, either as the central topic of the studies (Re Cruz 1996ab, 2003, Sierra Sosa 2007, Castellanos 2007, 2010ab.) or as a factor leading to changes in rural communities (e.g. Gaskins 2003, Lizama Quijano 2007, Pérez Ruíz 2015). Among the extensive research conducted on the subject, the ethnographies of Re Cruz (1996b) and Castellanos (2010a) pay special attention to connections between the countryside and the city of Cancún, the

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<sup>1</sup> The group of researchers located in Yucatan provides an extensive overview of current migration situations in and from the peninsula and their dynamics on reconfiguration of the regional landscape.



internationally famous tourist destination and discuss performance of indigenous personhood and social relations in this interconnected social space. These will be briefly reviewed below because of their particular relevance for this research project.

Alicia Re Cruz's analysis of the rural community's transformation through indigenous labor migration to Cancún (1996b) is surely one of the first in-depth ethnographies dealing with the phenomenon. Her research was conducted in the village of Chan Kom which had repeatedly been studied by several anthropologists (e.g. Goldkind 1965, Elmendorf 1976) since the first investigation of Redfield and Villa Rojas (1934). Re Cruz conceptualizes the relationship between the city and the village in terms of an "extended community" composed of urban and rural environments which are in constant and mutual interaction (1996b:31). In addition, she places the village of Chan Kom in the postmodern world order, depicting its contact with global tourism via migration to Cancún (1996b:8-10, 158). In Re Cruz's ethnography, urban influences in Chan Kom manifest themselves primarily in a clash between the two social groups, *los antiguos* (the old) and *los de Cancún* (the migrant group). Apart from their struggle for political power, these two groups are reported to compete with each other for their legitimacy as "*verdaderos Mayas*" ("true Maya") through the creation and usage of symbols (Re Cruz 1996b:6). Observing the different strategies used by the two groups for self-representation as Maya, Re Cruz concludes that "'tradition' and 'culture' are politically contested symbols in Chan Kom" (2003:498). While the tradition is conceived in terms of "the knowledge" they exercise by *los antiguos*, it becomes commodified and transformed into a "thing" for *los de Cancún* (Re Cruz 2003:499).

The aspect of local-global interactions in the indigenous migration to Cancún is even more explicitly underlined in the ethnography of Bianet M. Castellanos (2010a). Seeing Cancún as a transnational space, she investigates "the ways globalization, through migration, transnational tourism development, and neoliberal structural adjustments, influence indigenous notions of the self, family and community" (2010a:xxxif.). While her study addresses several facets of the

#### 4 INTRODUCTION

rural-urban interrelation conditioned by the tourist trade in the Mexican Caribbean, her considerations on the future of indigenous communities are especially relevant for the topic of the present work. In the introduction of her ethnography (Castellanos 2010a), she presents the fear expressed by one of her interview partners that the rural indigenous community might disappear, owing to intensive out-migration to Cancún. She relates this statement with the broader anthropological debate on impacts of globalization which threaten indigenous peoples (2010a:xixf.). However, concluding the study, she counters this understanding of globalization which equates it with world cultural homogenization, citing the revision of the assessment, expressed by the same interview partner. Castellanos (2010a) argues this in two manners. First and perhaps more directly, she points to return migration from Cancún back to the community which challenges the modernist view of rural-urban migration as one-way movement from the “less developed” countryside to the “developed” city. According to Castellanos, return migrants not only reinvigorate the village life demographically, but also bring positive attitudes towards Maya customs and practices to the community, inspired by the tourists’ fascination with their culture observed in the city of Cancún (2010a:181f.). Second, she argues that the displacement of the population and the loss of cultural practices such as dress and indigenous languages do not necessarily mean the demise of indigenous communities, but rather they require these communities to “create new forms of identification” (2010a:xx).

In sum, both Re Cruz (1996b) and Castellanos (2010a) focus on connections between the city and the countryside formed through movements of people, goods and information. Paying special attention to networks extending between the communities and the transnational locality of Cancún, they link their ethnographies to the current anthropological debates on postmodernity, transnationalism and globalization. Dealing with migration triggered by the transnational tourism development, both Re Cruz (1996ab, 2003) and Castellanos (2010a) demonstrate how migrants create new forms of identification to maintain the sense of indigeneity and community despite their move from the place of origin.

Another type of connection between a rural community and the tourist city of Cancún is presented in the study of Suzanne Gaskins (2003). Despite its slight deviation from the topic of migration and transnationalism, the research is briefly reviewed because of its intergenerational focus, which is important when considering language vitality. Dealing with Maya migration to the tourist resort since the 1970s, the two ethnographies cited above rather stressed transformations of the indigenous personhood and communities through people's participation in out-migration and cash economy. Gaskins's study on the other hand demonstrates a significant continuity in the daily lives of Yucatec Maya people in spite of socioeconomic changes. She argues that the shift in the mode of production "from corn to cash" (Gaskins 2003) does not necessarily lead to a fundamental change in cultural values, social organization and everyday family life, comparing the children's daily activities and the parents' socialization practices between 1980 and 2000 in one Yucatec Maya village<sup>2</sup>. Though facing similar economic challenges and outside pressures to change as illustrated by Re Cruz (1996b) and Castellanos (2010a), the villagers developed another type of connections to the city besides out-migration for wage labor. Selling local agricultural products as street vendors in Cancún, many men and a few older women in the community found the possibility to obtain cash income which is in keeping with the traditional lifestyle (2003:261). Apart from this locally adapted way to make money, Gaskins considers children's participation in household work to be a key factor in an observed continuity in the family life between 1980 and 2000. She points out that despite the shift in the mode of production, general patterns of socialization practices have not significantly changed as one might expect. Valuing hard work, parents continue to attach importance to children's acquisition of the skills necessary for running a rural household. And this is believed to occur by observing and participating in ongoing adult work (Gaskins 2003:265, 269). Indicating a remarkable continuity in the everyday lives of children, Gaskins'

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<sup>2</sup> Gaskins does not publish the exact location of her research site in which she had been conducting fieldwork since 1978. It is described as "one traditional, isolated, peasant village in the eastern part of the state of Yucatan" (2003:251).

## 6 INTRODUCTION

case study counters the general assumption that socioeconomic changes are always accompanied by disruption of socialization patterns. Given that change in values and beliefs naturally occurs across generations, she considers socialization practices and children's activities to be "strong predictors of the magnitude and direction of cultural change in the next generation" (2003:249).

All of the studies reviewed above are concerned with change and continuity in indigenous communities, albeit focusing on different aspects. Re Cruz's ethnography (1996b) stresses the community's transformation through out-migration which is manifested in a clash between the two social groups with their competing conceptions of "Mayaness". The Maya tradition becomes objectified and commodified by those working and/or living in Cancún, which is in opposition to the community's elders' conception of it as embodied knowledge. While Re Cruz (1996b) underlines conflictive aspect of change through migration, Castellanos' emphasis (2010a) lay on the way migrants manage to reproduce Maya social relations and notions of personhood despite their departure from the home community and incorporation into the global capitalist economy. Nevertheless, she does not assume continuity as such, but rather points to the creative way the migrants redefine the manner in which the solidarity with the community and family members can be maintained in spite of changes through out-migration. Dealing with another kind of connection that the Maya-speaking population has developed to the tourist city, Gaskins by contrast emphasizes continuity she observed in socialization practices in rural households. Based on her findings, she argues that the shift in the mode of production from "corn" to "cash" does not necessarily lead to a fundamental change in cultural values since the villagers retain their "commitment to work, their families, and to their community" (2003:271).

In sum, the three anthropological studies dealing with connections between respective rural communities and Cancún provide different perspectives on change and continuities in the contemporary Maya society in view of increased incorporation into the global capitalist economy. Concerned with language shift as a specific kind of cultural change, the present study

takes their varying views on change and continuity as a starting point – either divergence of the meaning attached to “Mayaness” (Re Cruz 1996b, 2003), redefinition of the way to maintain the sense of indigeneity and community (Castellanos 2010a) or continuity in cultural values despite socioeconomic changes (Gaskins 2003). Building upon them, the research project pays special attention to the way change and continuity manifest themselves in Maya speakers’ experiences of global interactions and investigates its implications for language maintenance of Maya.

However, as these studies reviewed above were conducted in the field of anthropology, they barely make reference to linguistic consequences of the development. Not surprisingly, the current vitality of Yucatec Maya in view of recent social changes is the topic intensively studied in sociolinguistics. Owing to the dynamic language situation of Yucatec Maya, continuity and change also represent a central matter of debate in sociolinguistic approaches to the contemporary Maya society in Yucatan (e.g. Pfeiler 2014). Based on her studies conducted in the early 1980s, Pfeiler (1988) for example, pointed to stable coexistence of Yucatec Maya and Spanish (**diglossia**; see chapter 2.1.2.1) in Cantamayec, a rural community of Yucatan. Her systematic analysis of the language situation in selected communities of Yucatan represents one of the first sociolinguistic approaches to Yucatec Maya, which meanwhile a rich body of subsequent studies on its language situation builds upon. In contrast to the notion of stability in the 1980s, recent discussions on the vitality of Yucatec Maya reflect changes in the peninsula’s sociolinguistic situation in the last decades (e.g. Briceño Chel 2009, Otto 2009, Chi Canul 2011, Pfeiler 2014, Montemayor Gracia 2017). All of these authors situate vitality of Maya in the present age between language maintenance and loss, pointing to ongoing language shift from the vernacular, either referring to the situation in their respective research sites (Otto 2009, Chi Canul 2011 for Quintana Roo) or more generally to the region (e.g. Briceño Chel 2009, Pfeiler 2014, Montemayor Gracia 2017). Agreeing on a declining tendency of Yucatec Maya in the last decades, the researchers also attribute this development to a similar set of factors which can

roughly be grouped into two categories: First, they point to traces of colonialist and nationalist ideologies in the current language contact situation in Yucatan. These are manifested in insufficient or inappropriate representation of Maya in important public domains such as public administration, education (Chi Canul 2011), mass media and biomedical health care on the one hand and in low prestige attached to the Maya language and its speakers on the other hand (e.g. Briceño Chel 2009, Chi Canul 2011, Montemayor Gracia 2017). Second, recent sociolinguistic studies consider vitality of Yucatec Maya in relation with globalization (Briceño Chel 2009, Pfeiler 2014, Montemayor Gracia 2017). Among various ways everyday lives of Yucatec Maya speakers can be articulated with global processes, rural-urban migration – either directly or indirectly – triggered by the transnational tourism development in the Mexican Caribbean surely received the most scholarly attention (Sánchez Arroba 2009, Chi Canul 2011). Evaluating the impacts of the peninsula's increased urbanization on vitality of Maya, the researchers generally underline its negative consequences for language maintenance. Both Maya speakers' orientation towards urban wage work and their experience of discrimination in the cities are cited as factors discouraging use and transmission of the vernacular (Sánchez Arroba 2009, Chi Canul 2011, Montemayor Gracia 2017). Nevertheless, several scholars also point to another face of global interconnectedness which expands the domain of language use to new media and enables Maya speakers to disseminate their language to wider audiences (Briceño Chel 2009:68, Cru 2014, Montemayor Gracia 2017:549). In this way, in accordance with the anthropological approaches to global cultural interactions, sociolinguistic considerations on vitality of Maya by no means simply assumes loss of the indigenous language through globalization, albeit pointing to threatening impacts it can have on maintenance of the vernacular.

While there is, to a certain degree, a consensus on the current state of the language situation as well as extra-linguistic factors related with it, a contested issue in sociolinguistic studies of Maya surely remains the question to which degree recent revaluation of the language

effectively contributes to its maintenance (cf. Cru 2014). In this respect, several researchers see ambivalence in the Yucatecan language situation (Pfeiler 2014:220f., Montemayor Gracia 2017:540). On the one hand, they point to a variety of initiatives – both of governmental and non-governmental nature – which address language maintenance and wider recognition of the language's cultural value observed in the peninsula, an outcome which is surely related to these efforts. On the other hand, however, the language shift is further progressing, manifested in a decline of use and transmission of Maya (Pfeiler 2014:220f.).

From a sociolinguistic perspective, this ambivalence can be explained drawing on the findings based on research on language attitudes in Yucatan. Generally, language attitudes are likely to be conceived in terms of evaluation of the language treated as a uniform entity. However, studies on the language situation in Yucatan suggest polysemy in speakers' references to the value of Yucatec Maya. The plurality of meanings attached to Maya is expressed in several discrepancies in attitudes towards Maya. Researchers so far identified a disparity in evaluation of language and its speakers (Sima Lozano, Perales Escudero and Be Ramírez 2014) as well as that of different varieties of Maya (Pfeiler 1996, 1998). And surely, the greatest contradiction lies in admiration of the ancient Maya culture on the one hand and lack of respect for Maya speakers in the contemporary world on the other hand (Cru 2014:176f., Montemayor Gracia 2017:553, see also Hervik 2003). In consideration of these discrepancies, recently observed revaluation of the language is not necessarily directed at Yucatec Maya spoken by people in everyday lives. This is one possible and also reasonable explanation for the ambivalence of the current language situation in Yucatan.

The present study builds upon the aforementioned insights provided by sociolinguistic research into various conceptions of Yucatec Maya. However, as a project situated in the discipline of anthropology, it further looks for an integrated framework for understanding the discrepancy mentioned above. It defines the ambivalence of the language situation observed in today's Yucatan as a phenomenon characteristic of current global cultural interactions and

approaches it, drawing on theories from the anthropology of globalization. In line with many sociolinguistic and anthropological studies on Yucatan concerned with Maya culture in view of the globalization processes, the present study pays special attention to mobility of Maya speakers directly or indirectly triggered by the transnational tourism development since the 1970s. The research examines how different conceptions of Yucatec Maya language are shaped in response to speakers' diverse experiences of the social space which is located in the Yucatan peninsula and at the same time is the setting for intensive transnational interactions. For this purpose, multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork was conducted both in the cities of Mérida and Cancún and in two rural communities of the municipality of Yaxcabá to approach the current spatial practice of Maya speakers which is markedly mobile.

Finally, addressing this specific research question has further, broader objectives. First, focusing on the ambivalence observed in the Yucatecan language situation – efforts towards its maintenance and revitalization on the one hand, as well as a continued or even accelerating decline in language use on the other – the research project intends to provide an anthropological perspective for considering the future vitality of the indigenous language in the present age of globalization, building on the preceding studies on the subject. Second, even though the topic of the research is rather a sociolinguistic one, it is intended as a contribution to the anthropological debate on the cultural dynamics of globalization. In this context, the current language situation of Yucatec Maya should be considered as a case, exemplifying multifaceted implications of global interactions for indigenous cultural survival. And ultimately, transcending disciplinary boundaries, this research project generally reflects on vitality of indigenous languages in the present age with its specific characteristics.

The structure of this work is as follows:

**Chapter 2** presents the theoretical framework(s) within which the present research operates. Conceptualized as a cross-disciplinary project, the investigation drew on both sociolinguistic



and anthropological theories. Accordingly, this chapter is divided into two parts, first presenting language maintenance and shift studies as a field of inquiry in sociolinguistics and then moving onto anthropological considerations on indigenous community in an age of globalization.

**Chapter 3** provides an introduction to the regional setting of the present study. In accordance with the topic of the research, its emphasis will be on internal migration, related to tourism development as well as the language situation in the Yucatan peninsula. It first presents the general tendencies in the state of Yucatan, and then introduces the respective research sites selected for the study: the cities of Mérida and Cancún and two rural communities of the municipality of Yaxcabá.

**Chapter 4** is on research methodology. The first section of the chapter presents the general research design of the project conceptualized as multi-sited ethnography and the trajectory of its development. The subsequent sections explain the concrete methods used for data collection, processing and analysis as well as the conditions under which they took place, which are essential for interpreting the findings presented in the following chapter.

**Chapter 5** presents the findings of the multi-sited research project conducted with Maya speakers in the respective sites. The chapter is structured into two parts. The first part provides contextual information based on the data obtained from the fieldwork, describing migration situations and the state of bilingualism. The second part consisting of two sections is more analytical: It first illustrates various ways Maya speakers territorialize their language, ranging from their community of origin to the broader region of Yucatan. Then, it is devoted to the main concern of the research project, namely considerations on the language's vitality in an age of globalization.

**Chapter 6** is devoted to a discussion of the results. It carefully examines the findings presented in the preceding chapter, reflecting on the objectives defined for the research project.



## 2 Theoretical Framework

The chapter is devoted to the theoretical frameworks that provided the basic structure of the research. As a project adopting a cross-disciplinary approach, it drew on both sociolinguistic and anthropological theories to investigate the vitality of Yucatec Maya in an age of globalization. The first part of the chapter introduces language maintenance and shift as a field of inquiry in sociolinguistics and explains its key terminologies and research approaches. The second part of the chapter is devoted to the anthropological debate on the cultural dynamics of globalization. The cross-disciplinary approach treats language shift as a kind of cultural change and relates the investigation of indigenous language vitality to the discussion on the implications of globalization for maintaining cultural diversity.

### 2.1 Language Maintenance and Language Shift Studies

The present study examines the language vitality of Yucatec Maya in a contact situation primarily with the Spanish language. As indicated by both the census data and several investigations conducted in Yucatan (see chapter 3.1.2), it is observed in many communities of the peninsula that Spanish is replacing Yucatec Maya in previously Maya-dominant domains. This gradual replacement of one language with another more dominant one is called **language shift**, reflecting a possible – but not necessary – outcome of language contact. Put differently, although language contact is a prerequisite for language shift to occur, it does not necessarily result in the abandonment of one of the languages. Therefore, it remains the task of researchers to consider under which circumstances a speech community abandons its language in favor of another.

To date, a series of case studies on language shift (e.g. Gal 1979, Dorian 1981, Schmidt 1985, Hill and Hill 1986, Kulick 1992) have been conducted in various speech communities across the world. Each case of language maintenance or shift is unique as speech communities can

react differently to the pressures to shift even under similar demographic, geographic and socioeconomic circumstances, which casts doubt on the comparability of the cases. Notwithstanding, across different sociolinguistic contexts there seem to be some common patterns in the process of language shift (Sercombe 2002:3f.). Accordingly, the present section is devoted to the theoretical framework of language maintenance and shift studies, dealing with the general scheme of the process identified thus far by researchers as well as rather individual observations made in respective case studies.

### 2.1.1 Terminologies in language maintenance and language shift studies

The first section of the chapter is devoted to explicating the basic terminologies from language maintenance and shift studies used in the present work.

As briefly introduced above, **language shift** is understood as a “process in which a speech community gives up a language in favour of another” (Li 2007:513), as opposed to **language maintenance**, which refers to “the continued use of a language, particularly amongst language minorities” (Li 2007:513). **Language death** refers to the state in which the language is no longer used for any purposes of regular spoken communication anywhere in the world<sup>3</sup> (cf. Thomason 2001:224). The most common cause for language death is language shift, namely the gradual abandonment of the language by its speakers in favor of another one, although there are also cases of language death caused by death of its speakers due to war, epidemic or natural disaster<sup>4</sup>. A language is considered endangered when the domains for its use are becoming reduced and/or its transmission to the next generation is interrupted (UNESCO 2003:2). In order to provide adequate support to an endangered language, the assessment of its current **vitality** presents an essential step.

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<sup>3</sup> For details on the problem of defining “language death”, see Thomason (2001:223-225).

<sup>4</sup> For example, the Yahi language in Northern California or Nicoleño language on San Nicolas Island became extinct without a language shift of its speakers due to rapid population collapse. In both cases, the last living speakers of the languages were monolinguals (Hill 1983:260f.).

In order to distinguish between the societal and psychological concepts of bilingualism, the terminological distinction by Hamers and Blanc (2000:6, 368) is applied in the present work, unless otherwise indicated. The term **bilingualism** refers to societal bilingualism, whereas **bilinguality** is used to designate the individual bilingualism describing the psychological state of a bilingual individual. By contrast, the term **language contact** foregrounds the languages that come into contact with each other and certain linguistic outcomes of bi- and multilingualism<sup>5</sup> (Riel 2009:11). It can refer to language contact either at an individual level as defined by Weinreich (1953) or at a societal level. Language contact at an individual level involves bilingual first language acquisition, second language acquisition and first language attrition. Bilingual individuals with a repertoire of both languages can alternate between two languages in the same phrase or utterance (code-switching<sup>6</sup>), transfer elements or rules of one language to the other (transference/interference<sup>7</sup>) or translate one language into the other. Outcomes of language contact at a societal level can be subsumed under three types: language maintenance, language shift and the creation of new contact languages<sup>8</sup> (Thomason and

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<sup>5</sup> As the present work is primarily concerned with the contact situation of two languages – Yucatec Maya and Spanish in Yucatan – the term “bilingualism” is preferred over “multilingualism” and “diglossia” over “polyglossia”, although it can be observed in many speech communities around the world that there are more than two languages in contact at various levels (e.g. local, regional, national, extra-national) fulfilling different functions, as – for example – is the case in the Basari community in West Africa (Grenoble and Whaley 1998:40f.).

<sup>6</sup> In the present work, code-switching is defined as the alternate use of two languages in the same phrase or utterance by bilinguals (Hamers and Blanc 2000:369, Li 2007:512) drawing on the definition of Grosjean (1982:145). The definition of the term “code-switching” has been a very controversial issue in the research and there is little consensus on what kinds of bilingual language behavior should be designated as code-switching. For details on the problem of the term “code-switching”, see Clyne (2003:70-73). Especially the distinction between code-switching and borrowing as well as code-switching and transfer are by no means clear-cut. Concerning the boundary between code-switching and borrowing, it is rather adequate to speak of a continuum according to the degree of frequency and integration of the items in the recipient language. Regarding the discussion on code-switching versus borrowing, see e.g. Winford (2003:107f.), Riehl (2009:21-23) or Matras (2011:110-114).

<sup>7</sup> Interference has been defined by Weinreich as “those instances of deviation from the norm of either language which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language” (1979[1953]:1). As the term has a negative connotation (“deviation from the norm”) and indicates an overly-static view of languages (c.f. Winford 2003:12, Riehl 2009:33), the term “transference” is preferred in the present work as suggested by Riehl (2009:33). Riehl adopts Clyne’s definition of the term: “Transference is employed for the process of bringing over any items, features or rules from one language to another, and for the results of this process” (1991:160). Clyne’s definition of the term also covers some aspects of code-switching. In the present work, despite adopting Clyne’s definition of the term, at least code-switching with a discourse function should be distinguished from transference.

<sup>8</sup> Thomason and Kaufman (1988:165f.) distinguish abrupt creolization from ordinary language shift as it is a unique process by which no language becomes changed, but rather an entirely new language without genetic affiliation is created. Winford (2003) classifies the case of creation of new contact languages into three

Kaufman 1988, Winford 2003). Even though two languages in contact remain relatively intact in the case of language maintenance, language contact can manifest itself in contact-induced language changes such as borrowing and structural convergence.

The term **speech community** is used to designate the setting in which language contact takes place, often treated as a unit of analysis in sociolinguistic investigation. The present study follows the argument of Nancy Dorian (1982)<sup>9</sup> and applies the definition of speech community based on shared “knowledge of rules for the conduct and interpretation of speech” (Hymes 1977:51) rather than usage of the same linguistic forms.<sup>10</sup>

Having introduced the relevant terminologies, the following section deals with various constellations of bilingualism as well as the process of language shift, the destabilization of societal bilingualism.

### 2.1.2 General schemes of bilingualism and language shift

Language shift is preceded by bilingualism. The co-existence of two languages in a speech community does not mean that the respective languages are used randomly; instead, they normally fulfill different functions. Accordingly, sociolinguistic research on bilingualism has been concerned with different social functions and meanings attributed to the two languages. The first part of the section introduces diglossia, the classical approach to societal bilingualism. Subsequently, the second part then deals with the general scheme of language shift as a process in which societal bilingualism gradually collapses.

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categories: bilingual mixed languages, pidgins and creoles.

<sup>9</sup> Drawn from her case study with East Sutherland Gaelic speakers, Dorian (1982) problematizes the concept of speech community, which rests on uniformity in language usage. Indeed, it would exclude semi-speakers of East Sutherland Gaelic who do not conform to the prevailing fluent speakers’ norms for language use, but they have high receptive capacity and participate in Gaelic interactions in conform with the sociolinguistic norms of the community.

<sup>10</sup> There are also several other ways to define a speech community based on uniformity in speech variety, shared “social attitudes towards language” (Labov 1972:248) or density of communication (Gumperz 1964:137, Fishman 1971:234).

### 2.1.2.1 Diglossia

One of the most classical sociolinguistic approaches associated with bilingualism is **diglossia**, developed by Ferguson (1959). In his landmark paper titled “Diglossia” (Ferguson 1959), he points to the co-existence of two or more varieties of the same language in a speech community<sup>11</sup> with a definite role attributed to each of them, which he terms “diglossia”.

Ferguson defines “diglossia” as follows:

*DIGLOSSIA is a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any section of the community for ordinary conversation* [Ferguson 1959:435].

Within the same language, Ferguson distinguishes between the superposed H(‘high’) variety and the L(‘low’) variety learned by children as first language at home, pointing to their difference in **function, prestige, literary heritage, pattern of acquisition** and **degree of standardization**, among others<sup>12</sup> (Ferguson 1959:328-336):

First of all, it is important to bear in mind that Ferguson deals with the two varieties within the same language characterized by different modes of acquisition. The L variety is learned by children at home and the H variety is acquired by means of formal education, and as such it is added later in the life course (1959:331). Ferguson points to the **functional differentiation** of these two varieties acquired differently, which constitutes the central feature of diglossia (1959:328). Typically, use of the H variety is reserved for formal situations while the L variety

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<sup>11</sup> In his later article, “Diglossia revisited” (Ferguson 1991), he refers to the concept of speech community, which was relatively unspecified in his original article. Building upon Gumperz (1962:31) and Labov (1968:251), he defines it as “a social group sharing features of language structure, use and attitudes that functions as a sociolinguistic unit for the operation of linguistic variation and/or change; it may be monolingual or multilingual” (Ferguson 1991:221).

<sup>12</sup> Among the features named by Ferguson, the description of diglossia in this section only focuses on the sociolinguistic characteristics. Ferguson also points to the distinctions of the H and L varieties with respect to grammar, lexicon and phonology (1959:328-336). However, these are not applicable to contact situations of genetically-unrelated languages, such as those studied in the present research project.

is spoken in informal activities such as conversation with family, friends or colleagues. More often than not, this functional differentiation is normative, with social importance attached to “using the right variety in the right situation” (1959:329). Different functions of the varieties are also manifested in literary heritage and the degree of standardization. The H variety is the code used in literary writing (1959:330f.) and as such it features a high degree of standardization, characterized by a well-established orthography and a tradition of grammatical study (1959:331f.). Finally, owing to their different functions, more prestige is attached to the H variety as it becomes associated with official domains such as formal education, religion and literature. It may even occur that only the H variety is treated as the real language by speakers, with the existence of the L variety being negated (1959:329f.).

Ferguson conceptualizes diglossia as a relatively stable language situation that “can last well over a thousand years” (1959:332). Stability of the constellation is attributed to the aforementioned pattern of acquisition of the two varieties, as he states that any change towards displacement of the L variety by the H variety is unlikely as long as acquisition of the L variety as the first language is ensured (1959:331). The abandonment of one variety in favor of the other is only considered possible under certain circumstances, identified as “more widespread literacy”, “broader communication among different regional and social segments of the community” and the “desire for a full-fledged standard national language” (Ferguson 1959:338).

Despite diglossia’s original focus on the contact situation of the two varieties within the same language, Ferguson’s concept was highly influential in sociolinguistic studies of bilingualism, opening the way to study the societal co-existence of two languages as a social order.

The concept of Ferguson was subsequently extended by Fishman (1967)<sup>13</sup> to encompass all kinds of linguistic repertoires that demonstrate the diglossic distribution in a society, ranging

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<sup>13</sup> Fishman builds on Gumperz (e.g. 1961, 1962, 1964) for an extension of Ferguson’s concept.



from genetically-unrelated languages to certain registers.<sup>14</sup> For Fishman, diglossia is a concept describing “the societal allocation of functions to different languages or varieties” (1972[1968]:145),<sup>15</sup> while bilingualism (otherwise called bilinguality in the present work)<sup>16</sup> is the characterization of an individual’s ability to speak more than one language. For a better differentiation of various kinds of bilingualism, he relates the psychological research tradition on bilinguality with the sociolinguistic notion of diglossia (2007[1967]:52). Based on relationships between bilinguality (called bilingualism by Fishman) and diglossia, Fishman considers four possible constellations of language situations, which can be represented as follows:

Bilingualism	Diglossia	
	+	-
+	1. Both diglossia and bilingualism	2. Bilingualism without diglossia
-	3. Diglossia without bilingualism <sup>17</sup>	4. Neither diglossia nor bilingualism <sup>18</sup>

**Figure 1 The relationships between bilingualism and diglossia (adopted from Fishman 1972[1968]:137)**

<sup>14</sup> Adopting the term of Schiffman (1997:208), Fishman’s concept of diglossia is termed as “extended diglossia” in the present work, to differentiate it from Ferguson’s original diglossia (occasionally called “classical diglossia”). For details on the terminological discussion, see Schiffman (1997:209f.).

<sup>15</sup> In his article, “Diglossia revisited” (1991), Ferguson clarifies again that the term “diglossia” should only be applied to contact situations of the closely-related varieties because the focus of his research is on the sources and outcomes of different language contact situations including lexical borrowings as well as phonological and syntactic convergence (Ferguson 1991:223). Fasoli-Wörmann (2002:177) criticizes the extension of the concept by Fishman as some parameters of Ferguson such as the degree of standardization, grammar, lexicon and phonology become meaningless in its application to genetically-unrelated languages.

<sup>16</sup> Fishman refers to individual bilingualism by the term “bilingualism” (termed “bilinguality” in the present work) and societal bilingualism by the term “diglossia”. To introduce the model of Fishman, his original terminologies are maintained, although they deviate from the definitions presented in this chapter.

<sup>17</sup> In this case, Fishman speaks of two or more socioculturally-separate speech communities that are “united politically, religiously and/or economically into a single functioning unit (1972[1968]:141),” such as a nation-state. Due to limited interaction between the speech communities involved, the functional separation of the languages is existent in the society without widespread bilinguality. Fishman cites European elites before the First World War as an example who communicated with each other in the H variety, which was not spoken by the rest of the population. According to Fishman, the constellation of diglossia without widespread bilinguality becomes problematic as soon as the society faces changes in the direction of democratization (Fishman 1972[1968]:141-145).

<sup>18</sup> According to Fishman, a community where neither diglossia nor bilingualism exists is hypothetical and difficult to find in reality as his concept of diglossia is broad, encompassing the functional differentiation of all kinds of linguistic repertoires in the society. He considers diversification and functional differentiation of linguistic repertoires inherent to all speech communities where social differentiation of any kind is to be found (Fishman 1972[1968]:149f.).

Speech communities feature **both diglossia and bilingualism** when the majority of the population is bilingual and each of the languages or varieties has specialized functions in the society. Drawn from Rubin's research (1962)<sup>19</sup>, Fishman takes Paraguay as an example where slightly over half of the population is bilingual in Spanish and Guaraní (Rubin 1962:52), with Spanish serving as H variety in formal situations and Guaraní as L variety for matters of intimacy and primary group solidarity<sup>20</sup>. From the sociolinguistic situation in Paraguay<sup>21</sup> and other examples<sup>22</sup>, he concludes that in diglossic situations with widespread bilinguality, two varieties can co-exist in a speech community without threatening the stability of L variety even if only the H variety has an official status<sup>23</sup> (Fishman 1972[1968]:136-138).

By contrast, **bilingualism without diglossia** is considered transitional. The situation of individual bilinguality without a clear role definition of the two languages in the society is likely to occur under circumstances of rapid social change or individual immigration<sup>24</sup>. In this case, the formerly-separate roles of the two languages lose validity with drastic changes in

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<sup>19</sup> Building upon Brown and Gilman's study on "the pronouns of power and solidarity" (1960), Rubin (1962) analyzes the sociolinguistic situation of Paraguay based on the principles of power and solidarity. The results of her fieldwork in the municipality of Luque show that Spanish is used with persons with greater power or those with whom they have little solidarity, while Guaraní is spoken with persons of lesser power or those with whom they have high solidarity. She concludes that "the two dimensions of power and solidarity provide a useful starting point in explaining usage in bilingual situations" (1962:57). For the case of Paraguay, she suggests that in addition to power and solidarity, the other important dimensions of rural-urban and class should be included in the analytical framework, besides other less important factors such as topic, gender and schooling.

<sup>20</sup> Quoting Paraguay as an example, Fishman (2007[1967]:48, 1972[1968]:136) presents Paraguay as if the entire nation could be characterized by both diglossia and bilingualism. However, this presentation proves to be an over-generalization based on the following two reasons: first, only about 52 percent of the population was bilingual according to the 1951 census (Rubin 1962:52); and second, Rubin's paper (1962) indicates that bilinguality is not equally distributed in the whole country, but rather competence in the respective languages and patterns of language use depend on factors such as rural-urban and class differences. As the unit of analysis is not clearly defined, it is not possible to verify this case of Paraguay.

<sup>21</sup> Since the investigation by Rubin (1962), the sociolinguistic situation of Paraguay has served as an example par excellence for stable bilingualism. However, more current research conducted by Fasoli-Wörmann (2002) in the 1990s demonstrates a rather conflictive contact situation between the two languages, Spanish and Guaraní. She estimates the bilingualism of Paraguay as instable and in transition to a Spanish monolingual society, even if she does not exclude the possibility of the revitalization of Guaraní (2002:289, 294, 297).

<sup>22</sup> Other examples that he cites for speech communities with both diglossia and bilingualism are High German as the H variety and Swiss-German as the L variety in Swiss-German cantons, as well as Hebrew as the H variety and Yiddish as the L variety in communications among traditional Eastern European Jewish males prior to the First World War (Fishman 1972[1968]:137-140).

<sup>23</sup> In Paraguay, Guaraní was recognized as an official language besides Spanish in the 1967 constitutional convention (Fishman 1972[1968]:137, Fasoli-Wörmann 2002:116).

<sup>24</sup> In the case of community building of immigrants, it is possible that the language of the immigrants can be maintained over generations in a diglossic constellation with the majority language (Lüdi and Py 1984:13f).

values and norms that previously determined the social functions of the languages. According to Fishman, without a functional separation of the two languages in the society, the language associated with “the predominant drift of social forces” (1972[1968]:149) tends to displace the other (Fishman 1972[1968]:145-149).

Fishman extended the concept of Ferguson’s diglossia to encompass the contact situation of genetically-unrelated languages. In accordance with Ferguson’s conceptualization of diglossia as a stable language situation, Fishman also considers clearly-defined function allocation between the two languages as essential for maintaining bilingualism. Moreover, he demonstrated different ways in which societal bilingualism and individual bilinguality are related with each other, as well as their implications for the stability of the language situation. Accordingly, Fishman opened the way to investigate bilingualism with respect to its susceptibility to change, which represents a crucial aspect for understanding language shift.

However, the notion of stability – the basic principle of Fishman’s diglossia – has been called into question by several researchers (e.g. Rindler Schjerve 1998:16, Fasoli-Wörmann 2002:296f.). Even bilingualism in Paraguay – which is cited as a prototypical example of stable diglossia with bilinguality – is classified as highly conflictive and instable due to the low prestige of Guaraní (Fasoli-Wörmann 2002, see also footnotes 20 and 21). For these researchers, diglossia characterized by different hierarchical positioning of the two languages represents a transitional stage to monolingualism at the expense of the low variety (e.g. Fasoli-Wörmann 2002:289, 294, 297).

Starting from this concern, the following section considers how societal bilingualism can collapse with one language gradually replaced by the other more dominant one, in a process commonly known as language shift.

## 2.1.2.2 Process of language shift

As the term “shift” already indicates, language shift is defined by Weinreich as “change from habitual use of one language to that of another” (1979[1953]:68). Although the starting and ending points of language shift are monolingualism in either of the languages involved, there are different stages of bilingualism to be found between these opposite poles, involving second language acquisition and first language attrition at a community level. The whole process undergone by the speech community can be subsumed in the following stages, which are partially overlapping (Batibo 1992:89-93, Winford 2003:258):

- I. Monolingualism in the L(language) 1
- II. Growing bilingualism through acquisition of the L2
- III. Continuing bilingualism with more speakers acquiring the L2 as their first language and the gradual breakdown of diglossia
- IV. Limited knowledge and production of the L1
- V. Monolingualism in the L2, whereby the L1 becomes replaced by the L2, only leaving some substratum influences in the L2

During the second and third stages, there are various constellations of bilingualism and bilinguality to be found. Typically, bilinguality is functional at the beginning of the second language acquisition, given that the use of the L2 is limited to certain domains such as inter-group communications (Batibo 1992:90). In the third stage, the L2 intrudes into more domains that were previously reserved for the L1. When the L1 is neither transmitted to the next generation in the family domain nor acquired in other domains at a later time, the shift is almost complete (Hamers and Blanc 2000:297).

Throughout the process of language shift, the two languages show contact-induced changes and bilingual speakers are likely to make use of code-switching as well as transfer from either

of the languages to the other. Especially in the final stages – characterized by a reduction in the number of domains for the L1 and changed transmission patterns – the L1 manifests the phenomenon of language decay as certain functions and forms of the L1 become lost and the next generation acquires – at best – only the reduced version of the L1 compared to the previous generation (Hamers and Blanc 2000:301).

The process of language shift typically endures over several generations, halted by bilinguality and bilingualism to varying degrees. Drawing from their survey of 180 families on language shift from Berber to Arabic in Morocco, Bentahila and Davies (1992:198) report that the most common pattern is language shift completed in four generations, with bilingualism retained over two generations, although a shift in three generations with only one generation effectively being bilingual is also common<sup>25</sup>. Bilingual speakers in a shifting community often differ in their language behavior and competence, spanning fluent bilinguals, semi-speakers<sup>26</sup> and passive bilinguals. As such, the ongoing process of language shift in a society can be observed in cross section with varying patterns of language use and competence dependent on generation and age. Differences in patterns of language use and competence between younger and older generations often<sup>27</sup> signalize an ongoing language shift in the community (Fasold 1984:215).

Having outlined the general course of language shift thus far, what still remains to be explained is how the process begins and proceeds until one language is completely replaced by the other. Accordingly, the following section discusses different research approaches aiming to understand the mechanism in its social context.

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<sup>25</sup> Kulick (1995:260f.) notes that the socialization of children through their older siblings can have an accelerating effect on the ongoing language shift. Based on his observation of the shifting process from Taiap to Tok Pisin in a Papua New Guinean village, he concludes that “in communities like Gapun where children play a major role in the socialization of their siblings, once language shift begins and monolingual children appear in the community, the shift will continue at an accelerating rate” (Kulick 1995:260).

<sup>26</sup> Semi-speakers are defined by Dorian as “individuals who have failed to develop full fluency and normal adult proficiency” (1982:26).

<sup>27</sup> Patterns of language use and language competence might change across the life course. In this case, the age-dependent variation in language use and language competence from a cross-sectional study does not necessarily indicate a language shift (Lieberson 1972[1965], Fasold 1984:215, Saxena 2002:37f.).

### 2.1.3 Language shift and social context

Language maintenance and shift was defined as a proper field of inquiry by Fishman (1964), calling for a more systematic study of the topic. Since then, several in-depth case studies on language shift have been conducted in various speech communities (e.g. Gal 1979<sup>28</sup>, Dorian 1981<sup>29</sup>, Schmidt 1985<sup>30</sup>, Hill and Hill 1986<sup>31</sup> and Kulick 1992<sup>32</sup>). While these studies focused on the ethnographic description of specific communities, other researchers (e.g. Haugen 1972, Edwards 1992) attempted to find universal patterns in language maintenance and shift situations across different sociolinguistic contexts.

The present section considers language shift in its social context. It first outlines the extra-linguistic factors commonly associated with the process and then demonstrates how the relation of language shift to other social processes is conceptualized in ethnographic studies of the phenomenon.

The importance of extra-linguistic factors for studies of language contact situations was highlighted as early as the 1950s by Weinreich (1979[1953]:3). Since then, studies on language maintenance and shift have paid attention to the social context of language contact. In many case studies conducted across the world, language shift is often attributed to similar sets of macro-sociological factors such as migration, industrialization, school language or the proportion of speakers in relation to the general population (Fasold 1984:217). The following part briefly introduces major external factors commonly considered to play a significant role in the language contact situations, namely **the proportion of speakers in relation to the general population, settlement form and migration, type of marriage** (endogamy or exogamy), **the**

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<sup>28</sup> Gal investigated language shift from Hungarian to German in Oberwart, Austria where Hungarian speakers became minority in the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>29</sup> Dorian documented the situation of an endangered Gaelic dialect in East Sutherland, Scotland over decades.

<sup>30</sup> Schmidt documents the speech used by young speakers of Dyirbal, a dying aboriginal language in Jumbun, Queensland, Australia.

<sup>31</sup> Hill and Hill conducted long-term studies on contact situation of Mexicano and Spanish in the Mexican states of Tlaxcala and Puebla.

<sup>32</sup> Kulick studied cultural reproduction and language shift in a Papua New Guinean village where the process of shift from Taiap to Tok Pisin was underway.

**socioeconomic status of speakers, the presence of the language in public domains** (such as religion, education, mass media, public administration and health care), **literacy** and **government policy towards the language** (cf. Romaine 1989:39f.).

### **Proportion of speakers in relation to the general population**

The absolute number of speakers alone does not offer much insight into the actual language contact situation. In order to obtain a fuller picture of the constellation, it should always be considered together with the proportion of speakers within the reference population (e.g. UNESCO 2003:8f.)<sup>33</sup>. Moreover, the question of who speaks the language is much more significant than the absolute number of speakers (Dorian 1981:39, Romaine 1989:40). Indeed, a language once widely spoken by the population can become endangered due to pressures from the language originally spoken by a smaller number of elite (Dorian 1981:39f.). Nevertheless, it can be generally stated that a language with a small number of speakers is more vulnerable. In addition, numerical strength can be useful once the speech community organizes itself to gain support for its language or change the governmental language policy (Romaine 1989:40).

### **Settlement form and migration**

Besides the number and proportion, the geographic distribution of speakers represents an important factor. Many studies (e.g. Sercombe 2002:14, 15 for the case of interior Borneo) identify a remote physical location and the concentration of speakers in a geographic area<sup>34</sup> as favorable factors for language maintenance, even if other conditions such as institutional

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<sup>33</sup> The total reference population may refer to the ethnic, religious, regional or national group with which speakers of the language identify (UNESCO 2003:9) or with which speakers are in regular interaction.

<sup>34</sup> Strictly speaking, it is not physical remoteness or concentration, but rather consequences resulting from physical separateness such as a close-knit social network or certain attitudes towards language that favor the maintenance of minority languages. Referring to the linguistic diversity in Papua New Guinea, Kulick (1995:1f.) points out that the cause for linguistic diversity in Papua New Guinea is not isolation, as had been assumed for a long time, but it is rather widespread attitudes towards language that contributed to its linguistic diversity.

support are not met. However, this implies that the break-up of a close-knit communication network through out-migration can facilitate language shift. In many cases, massive migration to urban areas occasionally combined with mixed marriage leads to a shift to the majority language by migrants. Accordingly, urbanization is often mentioned as a cause for the decline of many minority languages in favor of a lingua franca, such as Tok Pisin in Papua New Guinea (Romaine 1989:40), Amharic in Ethiopia (Cooper and Horvath 1973:237f.) and Swahili in Tanzania (Batibo 1992:87)<sup>35</sup>. However, the degree of language shift in the case of migration depends on social networks that migrants maintain. First, the nature and extent of ties with the place of origin affects the language maintenance of migrants (Romaine 1989:42) and possibly even the sociolinguistic situation in the place of origin. Second, migrants who live geographically concentrated in one area and have dense communication networks with each other may maintain their language over generations in a new environment.<sup>36</sup>

Not only the out-migration of speakers but also the in-migration of an economically-dominant group speaking another language can lead to the decline of the indigenous language.

Although migration and urbanization are frequently cited as factors leading to language shift, the case of Gapun in Papua New Guinea – investigated by Don Kulick (1995:18) – shows that language shift can also occur in a fairly isolated rural village with little in- and out-migration.

### **Type of marriage**

In several studies (e.g. David and Nambiar 2002<sup>37</sup>), linguistic exogamy is reported to have a negative effect on language maintenance, especially concerning minority languages, given

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<sup>35</sup> “Urban dwellers are more inclined to shift than rural dwellers”, it is one of the best documented generalizations in the study of language maintenance and shift according to Fishman (1972:315). However, rural-urban differential in relation to language maintenance is rather due to certain interaction patterns, network structures and attitudes that might be typical of each of the settings, but not necessarily inherent to either of them.

<sup>36</sup> Drawing from his analysis of the census data, Li (1982:118, 123) – for instance – shows that Chinatown residence has a significant effect on the language maintenance of third-generation Chinese-Americans.

<sup>37</sup> Based on their study with members of two Malayalee Catholic families in Malaysia, David and Nambiar see out-migration and exogamous marriages as playing a major role in the language shift to English (2002:141-150).



that children would possibly acquire the first language of only one of the parents or occasionally be brought up in a communication language of parents that is not the first language of neither of the parents (David and Nambiar 2002:146). Given that home domain plays a significant role for language transmission, a high percentage of exogamy in the community can be an accelerating factor for language shift, especially if institutional support or a favorable community network is lacking, which would enable acquisition of the language at least as a second language.

### **Socioeconomic status of speakers**

It has been previously mentioned that the question of who speaks the language is much more important than the bare number of speakers (Dorian 1981:39). As will be elaborated later in chapter 2.1.4.2, the evaluation of a language is closely related with the socioeconomic status of its speakers, with either prestige or stigma attached to it accordingly. However, more precisely it is not the mere prestige attached to a certain language but rather the notion of social mobility that motivates speakers to change their language behavior at the expense of less prestigious varieties, as highlighted by Dorian (1981:40): “In a country where social mobility is possible, even though difficult to achieve, the linguistic behavior of the elite can have a profound effect on the rest of the population”.

Furthermore, economic factors prove decisive in many language contact situations, as they are likely to affect other important factors for language vitality such as the presence of the language in public domains, the availability of published materials in the language or patterns of in- and out-migration. For this reason, Grenoble and Whaley (1998:38, 52f.) see economics as a key factor for language vitality, which possibly overrides all other variables.

### **Presence of the language in public domains**

Representation of the language in important public domains such as education, mass media,

public administration and religion is essential for language maintenance. It might appear to contradict the previously-discussed concept of diglossia, which assumes the co-existence of two languages based on their functional differentiation. However, domains of language use are closely connected with language attitudes (see chapter 2.1.4.2) that affect – for instance – parental decisions regarding language transmission. Therefore, it can be said that the presence of language in formal domains is perhaps not a necessary but still crucial factor for language maintenance.

Evidently, the question of which domains of language use are especially relevant for general language vitality depends on speech communities. For instance, in some communities, the importance of the language for religious activities may help to maintain the language in general, while in other communities it may rather be marginal to language maintenance (David and Nambiar 2002:149).<sup>38</sup> Schooling conducted exclusively in the dominant language often has a negative effect on the maintenance of minority languages, changing language choice (see chapter 2.1.4.1)<sup>39</sup> and language attitudes (see chapter 2.1.4.2) of the pupils in favor of the dominant language at an early age (e.g. Dorian 1981:80-84) and motivating parents concerned for children's success in school to transmit only the dominant language (e.g. Hill and Hill 1986:404). Moreover, with spread of new media including broadcast media and the internet into many parts of the world, the presence of the language in these domains becomes increasingly important owing to enhanced exposure to the language used in mass media (cf. UNESCO 2003:11). On the one hand, in the face of the dominance of majority languages – especially English – on the internet, the increased significance of these media for people's everyday lives poses “new threats” to linguistic diversity worldwide at the expense of minority languages. On

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<sup>38</sup> It may also happen that the language is only maintained for special purposes; for instance, in the religious domain after the speech community has shifted to another language for daily communication (Brenzinger 1997:277). It is the so-called “latinate pattern” of functional shifts described by Hill (1983:269) “where the language is lost first in the contexts of domestic intimacy and last in the most elevated ritual routines”.

<sup>39</sup> Dorian (1981:83f.) reports that English-only school experience led to changes in pupils' language proficiency and pattern of language use in the last bilingual generation (Gaelic/English) in East Sutherland. In the course of schooling, children's proficiency in Gaelic and English was soon reversed and a pattern of language choice based on the generation of the interlocutor was likely to appear.

the other hand, given that speech communities are equipped with necessary infrastructure and skills including literacy, internet-based media – especially social media – can provide “new opportunities” for the maintenance and revitalization of minority languages (Cunliffe 2007). Due to their participatory architecture, social media enable the exterritorial formation of communities for the use and promotion of languages not sufficiently represented in other public domains. Due to the recentness of the phenomenon, these contrasting impacts of new media is a topic that has only recently begun to be studied and urgently requires further research to consider the vitality of minority languages in the age of globalization.

### **Literacy**

The role of literacy in language maintenance is a controversial issue (Grenoble and Whaley 1998:32-37). Many linguists see the development of orthography and spread of literacy in the language as a crucial step for its maintenance and revitalization (e.g. UNESCO 2003:12), while others (e.g. Mühlhäusler 1990<sup>40</sup>) are rather critical about the introduction of literacy (Grenoble and Whaley 1998:32). On the one hand, literacy is essential for the expansion of language use into new domains and media, which often plays a crucial role in securing the future vitality of the language. On the other hand, the introduction of literacy into a previously oral speech community implies the selection of one specific variety over others as a literary language, which can trigger local conflict and lead to a reduction in the linguistic heterogeneity formerly maintained in oral communication (Mühlhäusler 1990:198). Therefore, while literacy opens up a new way of language use, its implementation should be planned carefully as writing is not a neutral medium but rather is strongly associated with power<sup>41</sup> (Mühlhäusler 1990:203).

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<sup>40</sup> Mühlhäusler (1990) – for example – emphasizes literacy’s negative effects on language vitality. Drawing from examples of the introduction of literacy into the Pacific area, Mühlhäusler argues that “literacy tends to favour single-standard languages” (1990:198) at the expense of dialectal variation and is rather an “agent of linguistic, religious and social change” (1990:203), preparing speakers for the acquisition of reading skills in no-local language and accelerating “the transition from traditional to modern (westernized) societies” (1990:203).

<sup>41</sup> As Ong (2009[1982]:8) puts it: “Writing gives a grapholect a power far exceeding that of any purely oral dialect.”

### **Government policy towards language**

In modern nation-states, the decision concerning which language is to be written and represented in public domains strongly depends on governmental attitudes towards languages, multilingualism and cultural diversity. In accordance with Gellner (1983:35-38)<sup>42</sup>, Dorian (1998:5) sees that western language ideologies favoring a single national language at the expense of others coincide to a considerable extent with the rise of nationalism in Western Europe at the beginning of the industrial age. Moreover, in the process of post-colonial nation-building, it has often been the case that a once linguistically-diverse population becomes culturally and linguistically re-defined, accompanied by less tolerant attitudes towards minority languages (see Martin 2002 for the case of Brunei<sup>43</sup>)

In many Latin American states, politics regarding cultural diversity have experienced a transformation from “subordinated segregation characteristic of colonial times”, “the forced integration of early republican liberalism” and “the later assimilationist policies of *indigenismo*” to the formal constitutional recognition of multi-ethnicity and pluri-culturalism in recent decades (Assies 2000:4), also accompanied by a change in language policy. However, it remains to be seen what impacts the reform towards multi-ethnicity and pluri-culturalism will have on the vitality of indigenous languages in Latin America since its concrete implementation by means of policies and institutional reforms often proves challenging (see for example Willem, van der Haar and Hoekema 2000).

This section thus far has listed major external factors associated with language shift. Although each of these has been presented separately above, they are not independent of each other or mutually exclusive, but rather each factor should be considered in interplay with other factors.

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<sup>42</sup> Gellner (1983:35) sees the roots of nationalism in the structural requirements of industrial society, which also includes the standardization of communications.

<sup>43</sup> Martin (2002) demonstrates the linguistic and cultural re-definition that has occurred and continues to occur in modern Brunei “in the framework of the country’s desire to define the nation in Malay terms” (2002:190), espousing “the principle of one language, one race, and one nation” (2002:182).

Notwithstanding, it has been highlighted by researchers (Fasold 1984:217, Kulick 1995:8) that none of these factors are capable of providing a satisfactory explanation of language shift.

By contrast, ethnographic studies of language shift have approached its relation to other social processes in a more detailed and integrated way. Susan Gal's study of language shift from Hungarian to German in Austria (1979) is regarded as "a harbinger of a greater ethnographic orientation in studies of language shift" (Kulick 1995:9). Recognizing the limits of macro-sociological factors in explaining how language shift occurs, Gal (1979:1f.) conducted an ethnographic study of the transformation of Hungarian-German bilingualism in Oberwart, Austria. Instead of searching for direct correlations between the macro-sociological factors such as industrialization or urbanization with language shift, Gal (1979:3) rather inquires how these changes influence "the evaluations of languages and the social statuses and meaning associated with them", thus affecting "the communicative strategies of speakers". Gal's ethnographic approach to language shift has been influential, reflected in the "ethnographic orientation" (Kulick 1995:9) of the later monographs on language shift (e.g. Dorian 1981, Schmidt 1985, Hill and Hill 1986 and Kulick 1992).

Building upon Gal (1979), Kulick (1995:9) also argues that "shift in language is caused, ultimately, by shifts in personal and group values and goals". Accordingly, social changes such as urbanization or industrialization can only influence the language contact situation indirectly by changing speakers' values and goals in such a way that speaking or transmitting their language no longer seems advantageous to them. Therefore, in order to comprehend the impacts of macro-sociological changes on language vitality, the study should examine how these are interpreted by people whereby they alter patterns of everyday language use. Indeed, understanding the social contexts of language shift is only possible if the investigation includes this level of analysis (Kulick 1995: 8f.). Therefore, Kulick (1995:9) defines the study of language shift as "the study of a people's conceptions of themselves in relation to one another and to their changing social world, and of how those conceptions are encoded by and

mediated through language.”

In sociolinguistics, the relation between social phenomena and everyday language use is above all investigated through analyzing language choice and attitudes. Accordingly, the following section introduces the two concepts widely applied to a micro level of analysis of bilingualism and language shift.

#### 2.1.4 Key concepts in a sociolinguistic analysis of language use

The analysis of **language choice** and **language attitudes** has become a standard method in sociolinguistic studies focusing on the micro level to investigate how social changes influence the language situation. Accordingly, the present section introduces each of these concepts and discusses their operationalization in studies of bilingualism and language shift in general. The presentation will finally be supplemented by a review of studies on Yucatec Maya language applying these concepts.

##### 2.1.4.1 Language choice

Language shift and maintenance can ultimately be seen as “the long-term collective results of language choice” (Fasold 1984:213, cf. Fishman 1965:73, Gal 1979:13). Accordingly, analyzing underlying patterns in individual language choice is essential for assessing language vitality.

In a bilingual community, although communication in the two languages would be possible, language choice is by no means met arbitrarily, but rather it is a social behavior subject to norms. Sociolinguistic studies of language choice have been significantly shaped by the notion of diglossia (see chapter 2.1.2.1), which demonstrated that language choice reflects social norms concerning distinct functions of the two languages in contact (Li 2007:27). The study of language choice drawing on this insight is guided by the famous question posed by Fishman: “Who speaks what language to whom and when?” (1965). In order to approach the

question, Fishman (1965) suggests the concept of “domains of language choice”. For Fishman (1965:75), a **domain** is “a socio-cultural construct abstracted from topics of communication, relationships between communicators, and locales of communication, in accord with the institutions of a society and the spheres of activity of a culture”. It is considered “a relatively uniform but flexible analytic scheme” (Fishman 1965:86) because relevant domains of language choice are likely to differ between settings. Therefore, it is a task for researchers to designate and define domains of language choice based on their insight into the particular multilingual settings (Fishman 1965:74, 1972:451).

Greenfield’s study on language choice among young Puerto Rican bilinguals (Spanish and English) in New York City (1972) illustrates the concept of domain in concrete research practice. Assuming that “domains are a higher order generalization derived from *congruent situations*”, Greenfield defined five relevant domains for language choice in the community, based on preceding participant observation, focused interviews and discussion: family, friendship, religion, education and employment (1972:21).<sup>44</sup> It was hypothesized that in the Puerto Rican community in New York, Spanish – associated with intimacy and solidarity – would be used primarily in domains such as family and friendship, whereas the use of English – associated with status differentiation – would be mainly reserved for domains such as religion, education and employment (1972:20). Based on the results of two experiments<sup>45</sup>, Greenfield concludes that the language choice of Puerto Rican young bilinguals in New York differs according to the domain of interaction: with Spanish preferred in the domain of family,

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<sup>44</sup> In order to collect self-report data on normative language choice, he selected a typical situation of each domain comprising three seemingly-congruent components, namely situational interlocutor, situational place and situational topic (Greenfield 1972).

<sup>45</sup> Greenfield’s study (1972) comprised two experiments. The first experiment was mainly conducted to validate his domain construct. In the first experiment, Greenfield presented two of the three components (interlocutor, place and topic) and requested test persons to complete the situation by selecting a suitable third component and indicate the amount of Spanish and English that they would use in this situation. The second experiment was conducted to observe the independent effect of each of the components, interlocutor, place and topic on language preference. In the second experiment, three components (interlocutor, place and topic) were provided to the test persons and they were requested to indicate how much of English or Spanish they would use in a given situation comprising the three components.

followed by the domains of friendship and religion and least in the domains of education and employment (1972:33). In view of the association of Spanish with intimacy and English with status, Greenfield sees bilingualism in the community confirming the model of normative diglossia (1972:27).

Fishman (1965:80, 86) sees strong potential in domain analysis as a conceptual and methodological tool enabling valid generalizations concerning different kinds of bilingualism as well as the language maintenance or shift consequences of particular configurations. Moreover, the concept of domain reveals interrelationships between individual language choice and widespread socio-cultural norms and expectations, successfully linking micro-sociolinguistics with macro-sociolinguistics (Fishman 1965:73, 1972:449, 453).

Domain analysis has also been applied to investigate patterns of language choice between Yucatec Maya and Spanish – for example – by Pfeiler (1988, 2012) and Otto (2009).

Following the concept of domain by Fishman, Pfeiler (1988, 2012) investigated language use in two communities in the state of Yucatan, Cantamayec and Chabihau in the 1980s. The two communities differ in main socioeconomic activities. Cantamayec in the maize cultivation zone is characterized by the traditional *milpa* agriculture, whereas Chabihau lies in the coastal region, where fishing represents the main socioeconomic activity. Based upon her analysis, Pfeiler (2012) identified different patterns of language use in the two communities. In Cantamayec, Yucatec Maya was predominantly used in the private and semi-public domains, whereas the use of Spanish was reserved for public domains. Accordingly, she classified bilingualism in Cantamayec as stable diglossia, albeit not excluding the possibility of change. By contrast, in Chabihau, the use of Yucatec Maya was often restricted to one's own family at home. Pfeiler attributes the diminished role of Yucatec Maya in Chabihau to its fishing economy, which has attracted immigrants from other communities and encouraged communication with Spanish-speaking traders (2012:112f.)

Based upon the methods applied by Fishman et al. (1971) and Greenfield (1972), Otto (2009)



investigated language choice in the municipality of Felipe Carrillo Puerto, Quintana Roo. By means of interviews with bilinguals in Yucatec Maya and Spanish, he collected self-report data on normative language choice in 34 hypothetical situations comprising different interlocutors, places and topics, which were attributed to seven domains<sup>46</sup>. The results obtained from the domain analysis demonstrate that Yucatec Maya is mostly used in the family domain, while the use of Spanish predominates in all other domains (Otto 2009:170)<sup>47</sup>. Moreover, in the family domain the use of Yucatec Maya is dependent on the age of participants, with the younger generation preferring the use of Spanish except for communication with the older generation (Otto 2009:61f.). As an intergenerational language transmission is an important prerequisite for language maintenance, he sees this age-dependent difference in language choice as an indicator for the ongoing language shift in Felipe Carrillo Puerto (Otto 2009:170).

The domain analysis has shown that language choice is usually met in accordance with norms concerning the association of languages with different social institutions. Language choice has also been studied within social psychology (Fasold 1984:183). While domain analysis emphasizes the role of social institutions on language choice, the social psychological approach focuses on the psychological processes of individual language choice in interactions (Fasold 1984:187). Giles's theory of **speech accommodation** approaches change in people's speech style (not necessarily language choice)<sup>48</sup> based on the postulate that "people are motivated to adjust their speech styles, or accommodate, as a means of expressing values, attitudes and intentions towards others" (Giles, Bourhis and Taylor 1977:321f.). According to Giles, individuals communicate social approval by means of shifting their speech style towards that of

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<sup>46</sup> These domains were: family, friends and acquaintances, work and colleagues, authority, strangers, religious activities and other daily situations.

<sup>47</sup> However, there are some situations outside the family domain in which the use of Maya prevails. Otto mentions the following situations: communication with the healer (*jmeen*), talking with the taxi driver (*combi*), forcing out their pet, communication in the traditional church and speaking with a barefooted stranger or a lady wearing traditional clothing (*ipil*) (Otto 2009:170).

<sup>48</sup> The accommodation of speech styles includes convergence in "languages, accents, speech rates, pause and utterance lengths and so forth" (Giles, Bourhis and Taylor 1977 322).

the other (convergence)<sup>49</sup>. By contrast, shifting away from the other's style of speech (divergence) is a sign of dissociation from the other, serving as a symbolic strategy for maintaining distinctiveness (Giles, Bourhis and Taylor 1977:321-324).

The approaches to language choice presented thus far have indicated that language choice in a particular situation is made in accordance with the ideas that speakers have about the languages in contact. Accordingly, the following part is concerned with the language attitudes underlying language choice.

#### 2.1.4.2 Language attitudes

Language shift is commonly attributed to discouragement felt by speakers when using their language and/or transmitting it to the next generation. Accordingly, speakers' positive attitudes towards their language are considered a key factor for its maintenance (e.g. Bradley 2002:1).

Several studies on attitudes towards linguistic varieties have been conducted in social psychology (e.g. Lambert et al. 1960), in which the concept of attitude plays a central role in theory and research (cf. Allport 1935). The study of attitudes has also gained importance in sociolinguistics since Labov's findings (e.g. 1966) that language change is influenced by prestige and stigma attached to certain linguistic features (Garrett 2010:19).

Among several ways to define the attitude, most sociolinguists agree on a mentalist view on attitudes characterized by the definition of Allport (1967). Furthermore, this widely-accepted view on attitude is also adopted in this research project, defining attitude as "a latent disposition or tendency to respond with some degree of favorableness or unfavorableness to a psychological object" (Fishbein and Ajzen 2010:76). There is a general consensus that attitudes are learned through human socialization (Garrett 2007:116).

Attitudes are often viewed in terms of three components: cognition, affect and behavior.

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<sup>49</sup> Of course, convergence at a specific level is only possible if speakers have the required repertoire (Giles, Bourhis and Taylor 1977:322). Accordingly, non-convergence is not always to be understood as an expression of social disapproval.

However, there remains much to be explained concerning the status of these three components in relation to attitudes as well as their interconnectedness. Especially the relationship between attitudes and behavior represents a strongly-disputed issue (Garrett 2010:23f). Although the value of studying attitudes was once seen in its potential for predicting behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen 2010:255), many researchers are now cautious about linking attitudes directly to the behavior. The relevance of attitudes for behavior was called into question – for instance – by Wicker (1969): reviewing the studies concerning the relationship between attitudes and actions, Wicker (1969:75) finds “little evidence to support the postulated existence of stable, underlying attitudes within the individual which influence both his verbal expressions and his actions”.

Incongruities between attitudes and behavior have also been observed in several studies on language use in shifting communities with positive attitudes towards the language not necessarily leading to its maintenance (e.g. Dorian 1981, Otto 2009). As one of the possibilities to explain the discrepancy between language attitudes and language behavior, Garrett proposes paying more attention to the intervening variables that stand between behavioral intentions and behavior itself (2010:26ff.). In addition, he highlights that the observed inconsistency might also be attributed to the failure of the research method, given that attitudes and behavior are not always investigated at similar levels of specificity<sup>50</sup> (Garrett 2010:27f.).<sup>51</sup> The following part discusses research methods applied to investigate language attitudes.

Approaches to studying language attitudes can be categorized into three broad categories: direct measures, indirect measures and “analysis of societal treatment of language varieties” (Garrett 2010:37).

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<sup>50</sup> For example, attitudes towards learning the language would be a better predictor of a person’s action of learning the language than general attitudes towards the language (Garrett 2010:27f.).

<sup>51</sup> Finally, the behavior needs to be within actual or perceived control of those acting so that attitudes can be translated into action (Garrett 2010:27f.).

In direct measurement, people are asked to report their attitudes by means of questionnaire or interviews. Even though this approach is straightforward and easy to apply, researchers should be aware of its weaknesses. The direct measurement of attitudes is subject to several biases. First, it is likely to only elicit what people think are socially-acceptable opinions about the language, which can deviate from their “private attitudes” (social desirability bias) (Garrett 2010:44).<sup>52</sup> Second, people have a tendency to agree rather than disagree with questionnaire or interview items regardless of content (acquiescence bias). It partly occurs because people tend to “accommodate” to researchers’ opinions, providing them with answers that they think are acceptable for researchers to gain approval (Garrett 2010:45). Finally, the context of data collection has considerable effects on the data obtained, which should be taken into account while interpreting the data. It ranges from modes of data collection (e.g. questionnaire, interviews), loci (e.g. at school, at home) to qualities of researchers (e.g. gender, ethnicity etc.). This aspect will be discussed in detail in the chapter on methods (chapter 4), since the present research also applied direct methods for obtaining attitudes data.

By contrast, the indirect approach of attitudes measurement makes use of more subtle techniques to study people’s attitudes with the respondents not knowing what is exactly measured by researchers. In the field of language attitudes, the matched guise technique has become standard (Fasold 1984:149f., Garrett 2010:44, 59) since it was applied by Lambert and his fellows (Lambert et al. 1960, Lambert 1967) to measure evaluational reactions to spoken languages. Although the present research does not make use of the indirect approach for attitudes measurements<sup>53</sup>, some space is devoted to the matched guise technique due to its

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<sup>52</sup> Questioning attitudes of modern Nahuatl speakers in interviews, Hill and Hill (1986:404f.) also admit that the direct questioning of attitudes is likely to elicit what speakers feel are acceptable opinions. Nevertheless, as there is not always consensus on what is considered “acceptable opinions”, Hill and Hill investigated how these “acceptable opinions” are distributed among the population, which also reveals a great deal about the language contact situation.

<sup>53</sup> This project did not make use of indirect methods of attitudes measurement such as matched guise technique in which respondents are kept uninformed of the real research purpose as mutual trust is essential in ethnographic research, which intends to build a good rapport with research collaborators and maintain it in the long term (see chapter 4 for further reflections on methods).

significance in the study of language attitudes.

In the matched guise technique, audio recordings of the same passage read out in different languages<sup>54</sup> are presented to respondents as stimuli to elicit their evaluations of spoken languages. Although the passage is read by the same bilingual speaker in different languages, respondents who are not informed of it are requested to judge the speakers according to criteria such as friendliness and intelligence. For the judgment of speakers, semantic differential scales (Osgood, Suci and Tannenbaum 1957) are often used in which bipolar adjectives are placed at either end of the scales (e.g. friendly – unfriendly, intelligent – unintelligent). The technique is based on the assumption that the variance in judgments of speakers made by respondents are owing to different evaluations of the spoken languages. The matched guise technique in original form aims to control all other variables except language, such as voice, speech rate, pauses and hesitations. With the respondents not being aware of the very purpose of research during the measurement (people think that they are judging speakers instead of the languages), the matched guise technique is considered more likely to reveal people’s “private attitudes” to the spoken languages than the direct approach, which is – especially in the case of interviews – often strongly subject to social desirability and acquiescence biases. The following part briefly deals with the study on evaluational reactions to English and French conducted in Montreal by Lambert and his associates (Lambert et al. 1960) due its seminal character in the tradition of indirect measurements of language attitudes (Garrett 2010:70).

Lambert, Hodgson, Gardner and Fillenbaum (1960) applied the matched guise technique to English- and French-speaking students residing in Montreal, Canada, with the assumption that “any listener’s attitudes toward members of a particular group should generalize to the language they use” (Lambert et al. 1960:44). Accordingly, they considered that “hearing the language is likely to arouse mainly generalized or stereotyped characteristics of the group”

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<sup>54</sup> Matched guise techniques have also been applied to study attitudes towards different linguistic varieties of the same language, such as Giles’ well-known study on evaluative reactions to different accents of English (1970).

1960:44). In their study, two groups of students – English- and French-speaking, respectively – listened to audio recordings of the passage read out in English and French by the same bilingual speakers and were requested to judge the speakers (who were in fact the same speakers) based on traits such as height, good looks, intelligence and kindness<sup>55</sup>. The main findings of the study were that not only English-speaking students but also French-speaking students evaluated English guises more favorably than French voices on many of the traits<sup>56</sup>. Surprisingly, French voices were even less favorably rated by French-speaking Canadians compared with English-speaking Canadians. Only on the traits “religiousness” and “kindness” were French guises evaluated significantly more favorably by French-speaking students (1960:47). Lambert and his associates interpret these results as “evidence for a minority group reaction on the part of the French sample” (1960:51), with French-speaking Canadians regarding themselves as members of a minority group with lower socioeconomic status, which is nonetheless considered kind and religious (1960:49). Accordingly, they conclude that the devaluation of French voices on most traits by French speakers might reflect community-wide stereotypes of English- and French-speaking Canadians that have also been adopted by French speakers (1960:49, 51).

Since the seminal study of Lambert and his colleagues (Lambert et al. 1960) and its extensions (Lambert 1967), the matched guise technique – in either original or modified form – has been applied to a large number of studies in different sociolinguistic contexts, yielding comparable data on language attitudes across various language contact situations (Garrett 2010:57). Furthermore, social psychological expertise in theory and the measurement of

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<sup>55</sup> The respondents were requested to judge the guises based on fourteen traits. Each of the traits had six-point scales ranging from “very little” to “very much”. The traits used were: height, good looks, leadership, sense of humor, intelligence, religiousness, self-confidence, dependability, entertainingness, kindness, ambitious, sociability, character and general likeability (Lambert et al. 1960:44).

<sup>56</sup> English guises were evaluated significantly more favorably by English-speaking students on the following seven traits: height, good looks, intelligence, dependability, kindness, ambition and character. On the other hand, French speakers evaluated the English guises significantly more favorably for the following ten traits: height, good looks, leadership, intelligence, self-confidence, dependability, ambition, sociability, character and likeability (Lambert et al. 1960:46f.).

attitudes has also contributed to sociolinguistic research of language contact situations, which also deals with language attitudes as an important factor influencing the language situation in society (Cooper and Fishman 1974:5f.).

Despite its contribution to the field of language attitudes study, the matched guise technique has been subject to criticisms based on several reasons<sup>57</sup>. For the purpose of the present study, aside from ethical aspects, the main problem of the research method can be identified as follows: as a procedure to reveal stereotypes about speakers of different languages, the matched guise technique equates stereotypes of speakers with attitudes towards languages spoken by them (Edwards 1982:22). However, in many language contact situations (see later in the section for the case of Yucatec Maya), it would be meaningful to distinguish between attitudes towards speakers and attitudes towards languages or between the evaluation of the language as a representative of a reference group and attitudes to the characteristics of the language itself (Ryan, Giles and Sebastian 1982:8). Of course, language attitudes can never be considered independently from attitudes towards its speakers. However, for the precise analysis of the language situation, it would be better to operationalize them separately<sup>58</sup> and then investigate their interrelations.

The section has compared direct and indirect measures of attitudes thus far. Attitudes are multi-faceted and as psychological constructs they are not directly accessible. Facing these difficulties, to the extent that the research design permits, it is important to combine several methods to investigate language attitudes and compare the results, given that any method has its strengths and weaknesses and thus is only partially convincing (Garrett 2010:59).

Finally, there have been several approaches to investigate language attitudes without explicitly querying people about their language attitudes, neither directly nor indirectly. These

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<sup>57</sup> As the present project did not make use of the matched guise technique, it only discusses the problem considered relevant for the topic of research. For further details of controversies and modifications concerning the procedure, see e.g. Giles and Ryan (1982:208-223), Fasold (1984:152-158), Garrett (2010:57-59).

<sup>58</sup> Sima Lozano also proposes it for the study of attitudes towards Yucatec Maya because attitudes towards the language and attitudes towards its speakers seem to be two distinctive types of attitudes in Yucatan (2011:73). For further discussion, see later in this section.

approaches are subsumed into the category of “content analysis” or “analysis of societal treatment of language varieties” (Garrett 2010:37). Typically, the focus of this method lies in analyzing various sources in the public domain, such as language policy documents, media texts and advertisements in terms of treatment of linguistic varieties (Garrett 2010:51).<sup>59</sup> Some researchers also include ethnographic studies based on participant observation in this category (e.g. Ryan, Giles and Sebastian 1982:7).

Ethnographic studies often combine direct and – to a lesser extent – indirect queries about attitudes, with participant observation typically enabled through long-term fieldwork in a speech community. Accordingly, ethnographic approaches not only consider language attitudes that are manifested in form of responses in interviews or questionnaires, but rather they aim to comprehend the context in which language attitudes are shaped, manifested and possibly translated (or not translated) into language behavior, often comparing the data obtained from queries with that from participant observation.

Thus far, theoretical foundations and methods for investigating language attitudes have been presented. The following part deals with manifestations of language attitudes and their roles for language maintenance and shift.

Attitudes towards languages or linguistic varieties are often conceived by researchers in terms of **prestige and stigma**. In accordance with Lambert’s assumption that attitudes towards a language are a reflection of attitudes towards its speakers (Lambert et al 1960:44), it has been observed in many speech communities that languages or linguistic varieties become evaluated by speakers as prestigious or stigmatized based on the social groups with which they are associated (Gal 1979:13). As bilingual speakers with a repertoire of two languages, it is possible to make language choice according to how they want to present themselves in social interactions and with whom they wish to identify and claim group membership. Accordingly,

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<sup>59</sup> Schmied (1991:168-171) – for example – analyzed letters to the editor in African newspapers as sources revealing language attitudes towards English.



speakers can claim high prestige using a language associated with highly-valued group membership (Gal 1979:13). However, in this context it is important to note that it is not merely the prestige attached to a certain language that leads to abandonment of the language with low prestige in the language contact situation; rather, it is through the notion of social mobility that speakers' evaluation of languages in terms of prestige can have significant effects on their language behavior (Dorian 1981:40, see also pp. 27). Especially those who aspire towards upward mobility tend to dissociate themselves from the language with low prestige and values associated with it. Notwithstanding, it is also true that many people continue to speak the language despite the stigma attached to it, at least in in-group contexts. As Rubin (1962) has demonstrated for bilingualism in Paraguay (see footnote 19), **power and solidarity** represent two important dimensions in bilingual interactions. While one language in the contact situation stands for prestige and power, use of the language with low prestige is often an expression of group solidarity, evoking positive values associated with the group such as intimacy and sincerity for those who speak it (Gal 1979:13, Dorian 1981:85). Therefore, adoption of the dominant language at the expense of the language with low prestige can be resented by speakers of the minority language as it is often seen as dissociative behavior, symbolizing the break-up of solidarity (Dorian 1981:103).

Languages in contact gain social meanings not only through the socioeconomic status of their speakers but also through the association of the languages with certain spheres of activity, as demonstrated in the section on language choice (chapter 2.1.4.1). In the diglossic situation, only the high variety enjoys the official status, while the low variety often serves as an expression of intimacy and reliability, as shown in the study of Rubin on bilingualism in Paraguay (1962). This diglossic allocation of languages can manifest itself in people's perception in such a way that only the high variety counts as a "real" language, whereas the low variety is conceived as a dialect. The notion of diglossia rather emphasizes the stability of the situation: even though two varieties in contact differ in terms of prestige, as long as the

social allocation of functions between the high and low varieties exists and the low variety is acquired at home as the first language, the two varieties in contact (or languages in the case of extended diglossia) can co-exist in the society without putting the low variety at risk (see chapter 2.1.2.1 on diglossia for further information). However, if social mobility is considered only possible through the acquisition of the high variety, it is often the case that the acquisition pattern changes in favor of the high variety, especially in the case of extended diglossia, with the low variety no longer transmitted to the next generation.

Several studies on language shift (e.g. Dorian 1981:104f., Hill and Hill 1986:404) report parents struggling to speak the dominant language to their children even if they have not been socialized in the language themselves, given that they are anxious about upward mobility of children. In this context, it is important to note that language loyalty regarding use of the minority language does not necessarily mean language loyalty regarding transmission of the language, as Dorian (1981:106) observed for the case of East Sutherland Gaelic. Accordingly, speakers' positive evaluations of the language in general do not necessarily translate into language transmission to the next generation at home, albeit which is a prerequisite for the maintenance of languages that lack official support<sup>60</sup> (cf. Dorian 1981:105). Therefore, studying language attitudes in terms of language maintenance and shift it is crucial to distinguish attitudes towards language transmission from general evaluations of the language and attitudes towards language use.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> However, it is important to bear in mind that for speakers the link between language transmission and language maintenance as well as their role as parents in children's language acquisition might not be obvious, as considered by researchers. Studying the language socialization in Gapun, Papua New Guinea, Kulick (1995:13) notes that "in Gapun, parents explicitly see themselves not as acting, but as re-acting to language shift." Accordingly, the vernacular is no longer transmitted to the children by their parents without any conscious decision to stop its transmission. In addition, parents' conception of knowledge and children's socialization is another factor influencing language transmission. Kulick (1995:257) observed in Gapun that "their conception of knowledge as something generated from inside a child precludes adults from taking an active role in teaching their children language". Based on his observation in Gapun, Kulick (1995:262) concludes that "the degree to which children are considered able to be taught" can have significant effects on the speed of the language shift once it is underway.

<sup>61</sup> The explanatory power of language attitudes on transmission of the minority language is often limited. Despite being one of the most important aspects with respect to language shift and maintenance, it is perhaps also the point where most controversy lies. The discrepancy between attitudes and behavior concerning language transmission is surely partly owing to the problems inherent to the research design, such as insufficient distinction among different kinds of attitudes or social desirability biases. Moreover, certain factors can lead to an inconsistency of language

Attitudes towards Yucatec Maya and Spanish have also been a topic of investigation in several sociolinguistic studies conducted in the states of Yucatan and Quintana Roo. As early as the 1980s, language attitudes of Yucatec Maya speakers have studied by Jiménez Peraza (1982), Kummer (1982) and Pfeiler (e.g. 1993, 2012<sup>62</sup>) in various communities of the state of Yucatan.

Kummer studied attitudes towards Yucatec Maya and Spanish by means of questionnaires<sup>63</sup> making use of direct approaches to language attitudes. Summarizing the results, Kummer concludes that despite having positive attitudes towards Yucatec Maya, respondents have a realistic estimation of the position of Maya as a dominated language in the diglossia situation. Spanish is appreciated as a language of higher prestige and considered indispensable for education of children, whereas Yucatec Maya stands for cultural value that should not become lost (Kummer 1982:24, 28f.).

Applying both direct and indirect approaches, Pfeiler (e.g. 1993, 2012<sup>64</sup>) investigated language attitudes in two rural communities of Yucatan, namely Cantamayec and Chabihau. Her data obtained from the direct questioning of attitudes in interview situations<sup>65</sup> also demonstrates that residents of the two communities generally approve the maintenance of Yucatec Maya. However, despite their positive attitudes towards Yucatec Maya, Spanish is considered a language with higher prestige in the diglossia situation, which is in accordance with the results presented by Kummer (1982) (Pfeiler 2012:137). Furthermore, Pfeiler

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attitudes and language transmission, such as the existence of other conflicting attitudes (e.g. attitudes towards language maintenance vs. attitudes towards social mobility), intervening variables between behavioral intentions and behavior itself (e.g. difficulty of transmitting the language due to the linguistic exogamy) and norm conformity. Finally, as indicated in the previous footnote, it should also be taken into account if speakers are aware of the possible consequences of the behavior and whether they consider it possible and appropriate to influence children's language acquisition as parents (see footnote 60).

<sup>62</sup> The fieldwork was conducted from 1980 to 1983 in two communities in the state of Yucatan.

<sup>63</sup> The questionnaires were distributed to 104 persons in rural communities of Yucatan and in the hospitals in Mérida and Valladolid, to which many people from the rural region come for consultation. In this way, Kummer attempted to reach a broad sample of the population. As the majority of respondents were unable to read and write, the questions were read out and their responses were transferred to the sheet (1982:3).

<sup>64</sup> The fieldwork was conducted from 1980 to 1983 in Cantamayec and Chabihau in the state of Yucatan.

<sup>65</sup> Interviews were based on the standardized questionnaire comprising close and open questions (Pfeiler 2012:243-245).

(2012:137f.) observed that residents of the two communities took more pride in the old, pure form of the Maya language than the modern Maya mixed with Spanish elements (for further discussions on varieties of Yucatec Maya, see chapter 5.3.1.2).

In order to reveal more emotional and spontaneous reactions to the two languages, Pfeiler (1993, 2012) also applied the matched guise technique for studying language attitudes in Cantamayec and Chabihau. Residents in Cantamayec and Chabihau were requested to evaluate guises in Yucatec Maya and Spanish based on traits mainly belonging to three categories, namely competence, personal integrity and social attractiveness (cf. Lambert 1967). Although Pfeiler admits that her application of the matched guise technique should rather been seen as a trial (1993:90)<sup>66</sup>, the results show differences in evaluations of Maya and Spanish between gender and age groups. With some exceptions<sup>67</sup>, Spanish guises were more favorably evaluated on the traits belonging to competence and social attractiveness in Cantamayec. Remarkably, men and women older than 40 years old rated Spanish guises higher than Maya guises almost consistently throughout the traits (Pfeiler 2012:154). In Chabihau – where the use of Spanish predominates – evaluations of Spanish guises were more favorable than those of Yucatec Maya, which was in accordance with the data on language attitudes obtained from the direct questioning (Pfeiler 2012:154). However, Pfeiler observes gender differences, with women evaluating Maya guises more positively than men, thus reflecting their role in the maintenance and transmission of Yucatec Maya in Chabihau (1992:89, 2012:154).

Otto (2009) investigated language attitudes in Felipe Carrillo Puerto in the state of Quintana Roo, taking the direct approach of attitudes measurement<sup>68</sup>. Comparing his data on language attitudes with language choice (see pp. 34f.), he points to the discrepancy between the

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<sup>66</sup> Pfeiler reports some difficulties in applying the technique in rural communities of Yucatan and provides suggestions for its adaptation to the rural context of Yucatan. For further details see Pfeiler (1993:90).

<sup>67</sup> For example, women between 30 and 50 years old evaluated Maya guises more favorably on the following traits in the category of competence, braveness, intelligence and ambition.

<sup>68</sup> Attitudes data was obtained in interview situations based on the questionnaire with closed questions using Likert scale (Otto 2009:53-55).

language attitudes and language behavior of his interview partners in Felipe Carrillo Puerto: despite the overall positive evaluations of Yucatec Maya as “useful” and “pleasant (*simpático*)”, their positive attitudes were not always reflected in their language choice. Furthermore, although speaking Spanish is not considered to lend more authority than speaking Maya by the majority of his interview partners, the use of Yucatec Maya outside the family domain is reported to a much lesser degree than one would expect from this result of language attitudes (Otto 2009:171).<sup>69</sup> Facing this situation, Otto remarks that “if people would translate their positive attitudes towards Yucatec Maya into their behavior, there would be no danger of language shift”<sup>70</sup> (2009:171).

The studies presented thus far on language attitudes were conducted in rural and semi-urban contexts in the states of Yucatan and Quintana Roo. However, as indicated in the introduction, facing the rural-urban migration of Yucatec Maya speakers in recent decades, it is also essential to investigate attitudes towards Yucatec Maya in urban areas.

Sima Lozano, Perales Escudero and Be Ramírez investigated the position of Yucatec Maya in Mérida, taking into account the language attitudes of bilingual Maya speakers (Sima Lozano, Perales Escudero and Be Ramírez 2014) as well as those of monolingual Spanish speakers residing in the city (Sima Lozano 2011)<sup>71</sup>. They generally observe positive tendencies in attitudes towards Yucatec Maya in Mérida pronounced by both bilingual Maya speakers and monolingual Spanish speakers (Sima Lozano 2011:75, Sima Lozano, Perales Escudero and Be Ramírez 2014:172). Accordingly, they conclude that attitudes towards

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<sup>69</sup> Otto admits that the discrepancies observed in his data between language attitudes and language behavior might partly be owing to his research design, such as social desirability biases resulting from the direct questioning of attitudes. Therefore, he emphasizes the necessity of applying indirect approaches to language attitudes such as matched guise technique (2009:171f.). However, as indicated earlier in the section, inconsistency between attitudes and behavior does not necessarily relate to problems inherent to the research design.

<sup>70</sup> Translation by the author: “Würden die Informanten ihre Einstellungen in die Realität umsetzen, wäre die Gefahr eines Sprachenwechsels *nicht* geben” in original.

<sup>71</sup> They applied semi-structured interviews as a direct approach to language attitudes as well as the matched guise technique as an indirect method of attitudes measurement. In the papers, they only present the results obtained from the semi-structured interviews. Their interview partners were selected from the population residing in the southern, eastern, western and central parts of the city (Sima Lozano 2011, Sima Lozano, Perales Escudero and Be Ramírez 2014). For further information on social segregation in the city, see chapter 3.2.2.1.

Yucatec Maya have recently been improving in the city, mainly owing to the governmental language policy (2014:170). However, they point to the important discrepancy between attitudes towards Yucatec Maya as a language and those towards its speakers in Mérida. This aspect has not gained sufficient attention in previous studies of attitudes to Yucatec Maya and perhaps in studies of language attitudes in general (see also pp. 45), since language attitudes have traditionally been considered in terms of evaluations of the language based on its association with a social group (e.g. Lambert et al. 1960, Gal 1979:13). Obviously, also in Yucatan, evaluations of the two languages in contact – Yucatec Maya and Spanish – reflect images that people hold about the social positions of respective speakers. However, different evaluations of the Yucatec Maya language and its speakers observed by Sima Lozano, Perales Escudero and Be Ramírez demonstrate a rather complex formation of language attitudes in Mérida, which cannot be explained by a sheer dichotomy of prestige and stigma based on the association of languages with the social groups. They report that Yucatec Maya as a language is valued by monolingual Spanish speakers (Sima Lozano 2011:73) and bilingual Maya speakers alike (Sima Lozano, Perales Escudero and Be Ramírez 2014:173) in the city of Mérida, which demonstrates a high social stratification. However, when it comes to its speakers, their attitudes become somewhat ambivalent or even negative, especially those towards monolingual Maya speakers (2014:170-173). Monolingual Spanish speakers in particular tend to have a negative image of monolingual Maya speakers as poor or uneducated people residing in the countryside far away from the city (Sima Lozano 2011:69-72). Accordingly, there seems to be a general consensus on the value of Yucatec Maya as cultural heritage owing to the recent governmental language policy (2014:170) and perhaps also to tourism. However, attitudes towards its speakers have not significantly improved as they are still seen as poor peasants from the countryside not belonging to the city. This discrepancy is also manifested in different evaluations of linguistic varieties of Yucatec Maya with the modern variety spoken by the majority in daily interactions devalued as mixed with Spanish

elements and – as such – not authentic (Pfeiler 1998, 2012:137f., Sima Lozano, Perales Escudero and Be Ramírez 2014:166f., 172).<sup>72</sup> In this way, it can be argued that the prestige that Yucatec Maya is currently gaining through its association with the Maya cultural heritage does not always lead directly to acknowledgment of the spoken Maya language and its speakers (cf. Sima Lozano, Perales Escudero and Be Ramírez 2014:173, for further discussions of this issue, see chapter 6). Facing this situation, Sima Lozano, Perales Escudero and Be Ramírez (2014:173f.) propose the importance of investigating not only attitudes towards the Maya language but also those towards its speakers to ascertain whether the recent revaluation of the language through public policies can act favorably towards language maintenance and help to improve the status of Yucatec Maya speakers.

## 2.2 Indigenous Community in an Age of Globalization

Conceptualizing “indigenous community” in the current global order has been one of the central concerns in the present ethnographic research exploring language vitality of Yucatec Maya in the contemporary world. Accordingly, the second part of chapter 2 provides a critical reflection on the anthropological conception of the relationship among place, community and culture, from classic ethnography to that situated in the present. The section first illustrates how the discipline’s understanding of “culture” and “community” has long been shaped by the research practice of prototypical ethnographic fieldwork. Subsequently, it discusses how their anthropological conception has changed over time as the focus of ethnography has gradually shifted from the bounded community to global interconnections.

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<sup>72</sup> The discrepancy between language attitudes and language behavior occasionally observed in Yucatan and Quintana Roo (e.g. Otto 2009) might possibly be partly due to different evaluations of Yucatec Maya as cultural heritage and Yucatec Maya speakers considered to represent a certain social group. For discussions of the issue, see chapter 6.

### 2.2.1 Ethnography, place and culture

Ethnography has long been conceived in terms of representation of cultural “Other” mediated through the discipline’s specific research practice termed of “fieldwork”. In anthropology, “fieldwork” has not represented one research method among others, but rather the quintessential hallmark of the discipline (Amit 2000b:1).<sup>73</sup> Although the contexts in which anthropological fieldwork is conducted have diversified in recent decades<sup>74</sup>, the image of Malinowskian fieldwork has long been the prominent prototype of “real” fieldwork<sup>75</sup> (Clifford 1997:187f.) defining the “*anthropological styles of research*” (1997:191). This specific research practice has not only been decisive in demarcating disciplinary boundaries, but also in shaping the anthropological conception of culture. Accordingly, this section critically examines “a spatialized understanding of cultural difference” (Gupta and Ferguson 1992:13) immanent in anthropological fieldwork practice.

Anthropological fieldwork – especially in its prototypical form – has long drawn upon a specific localizing strategy for representation of “cultures” (Clifford 1992:97f.).

First, it begins with travel to the “field”, which is typically far away from “home”<sup>76</sup> and is considered “culturally distinct” from the ethnographer’s “own” society<sup>77</sup>. In this practice of travel, “home” and “field” are conceived of as naturally-separate places representing

<sup>73</sup> Fieldwork experience has also been the essential component in the professional socialization and training of anthropologists (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:1), serving as a kind of a “rite of passage” (Clifford 1997:193).

<sup>74</sup> As the emergence of urban anthropology, multi-sited ethnography and cyber-ethnography demonstrates, the “field” of anthropological fieldwork has been extended to incorporate urban space, communities of practice that can be multi-sited across the globe or even cyberspace (for a review on “ethnographic approaches to digital media”, see e.g. Coleman 2010).

<sup>75</sup> Clifford also refers to certain visual images that have been influential in shaping a mental image of “fieldwork” such as “a famous photograph of Malinowski’s tent pitched in the midst of a Trobriand village” or “photos of Margaret Mead leaning intently toward a Balinese mother and baby.” He further notes that the word “the field” itself evokes certain images such as “cleared space”, “cultivation”, “work” or “ground” (1997:187).

<sup>76</sup> The conceptualization of “home as a site of origin, of sameness” is immanent to “anthropological assumptions of fieldwork as travel, going *out* in search of *difference*” (Clifford 1997:213). In this way, “home” has not been conceived as a site of difference, but rather of “an unmarked white Western ‘self’ from which ‘Otherness’ is constructed (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:14-16). Like the problematic conceptualization of field as an “exotic” site of difference, this understanding of home has also been challenged by “differently positioned, politically invested scholars” such as “‘indigenous,’ ‘postcolonial,’ ‘diasporic,’ ‘border,’ ‘minority,’ ‘activist,’ and ‘community-based’ scholars” (Clifford 1997:206).

<sup>77</sup> Gupta and Ferguson note that the very distinction between “field” and “home” also results in a perceived “*hierarchy of purity* of field sites”, privileging field sites that are more distant and as such are considered more distinct from “home” (1997:13).



oppositions such as “here” and “there”, “us” and “them”, “our own” and “other” societies (Gupta and Ferguson 1992:14). This distinction is clearly manifested in the ethnographic narratives of “entry into” and “exit from” “the field” (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:12). These scenes often presented in personal narrative at the margins of ethnographic writing serve to give authenticity and authority to the otherwise impersonal ethnographic accounts, thus underlining the originality of experience in the field (Pratt 1986:33). At the same time, they evoke an image of “the field” as a fully distinct place naturally disconnected from “home” that only becomes connected through the ethnographer’s arrival. Underscoring the disjuncture between the “home” and the “field”, little attention has been paid to pre-existing and ongoing contacts between these seemingly separate worlds<sup>78</sup> in classic ethnography despite the fact that their very existence – in most cases – enabled the ethnographer’s arrival in the field (Clifford 1992:99<sup>79</sup>, Gupta and Ferguson 1997:12f. Hastrup and Olwig 1997:7). In this way, anthropological understanding and representation of cultural difference has been highly spatialized, based upon the sharp contrast between “field” and “home” partly evoked through the practice of travel to conduct “fieldwork”<sup>80</sup> (Gupta and Ferguson 1992:13, 1997:12).

While the travel practice of fieldwork has been crucial in marking the supposed separation of the two worlds of “home” and “field”, “dwelling” is the other important localizing strategy of fieldwork that has long shaped anthropological conception of culture.<sup>81</sup> Referring to Malinowski’s photographs featuring “the Ethnographer’s tent” among Trobriand dwellings, James Clifford discloses how fieldwork practice as “a special kind of localized *dwelling*” has

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<sup>78</sup> These include – for example – “colonialism, imperialism, missionization, multinational capital, global cultural flows” (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:13).

<sup>79</sup> In this context, Clifford notes that “the discourse of ethnography (“being there”) is too sharply separated from that of travel (“getting there”)” (1992:99f.).

<sup>80</sup> Of course, this “spatialized understanding of cultural difference” (Gupta and Ferguson 1992:13) has not only been shaped by anthropological fieldwork practice. Hastrup and Olwig point out that the “place-focused concept of culture” should also be seen in the context of “nationalist thinking in the Western countries where anthropology developed as a scholarly discipline” (1997:4), which surely in turn influenced the perception and conceptualization of cultural difference by fieldworkers.

<sup>81</sup> Seeing fieldwork as “a mix of institutionalized practices of dwelling and traveling” (1997:198), Clifford even remarks that “ethnography (...) has privileged relations of dwelling over relations of travel” (1992:99).

traditionally served to center “the culture” around a particular locus, “the village”<sup>82</sup> (1992:98). Given that ethnography has privileged knowledge derived from experience in the “field”, ethnographic research practice to represent cultures has focused on face-to-face relations of community (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:15)<sup>83</sup>, or – in the case of classic ethnography – “village”. Anthropological cultural representation has been based upon a specific research style that requires the fieldworker to live full time in the village, learn “the” language and “the” culture and get involved in community’s activities, in the very practice known as participant observation in the discipline (Clifford 1992:97-99). Just as fieldwork is often invoked as a defining criterion of anthropology, intensive participant observation enabled through a total immersion in the community is considered to form a critical part of anthropological fieldwork (Amit 2000b:1). Participant observation is a method requiring the very presence of the fieldworker and as such a highly-localized research practice resulting in anthropologists’ self-perception as “specialists in ‘the local’” (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:15). Accordingly, the idea of locality inherent to ethnographic fieldwork<sup>84</sup> is closely interrelated with the anthropological notion of relation between place and culture, reflected in the way in which the discipline has constructed the “field” and “natives” as the object of investigation.

Borrowing the phrase of Michel de Certeau (1984), Clifford conceives of the ethnographic “field” as “spatial practice” (1992:97, 1997:186), instead of a space that is ontologically given. In this way, he revisited the prevalent notion of “the field” as a bounded site of cultural reproduction awaiting the ethnographer’s discovery<sup>85</sup>. According to Clifford’s conception of

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<sup>82</sup> Clifford points out that “the notion of fieldwork as a special kind of localized dwelling remains”, even if fieldwork is now not merely conducted in “literal villages” (1992:98), as is the case for urban anthropology or multi-sited ethnography (cf. footnote 74).

<sup>83</sup> Gupta and Ferguson note that the emphasis on fieldwork in anthropology has contributed to yielding certain forms of knowledge, while blocking off others based on less localized relations, which is manifested – for example – in the scarcity of ethnographic treatments of mass media, transnational corporations or multilateral institutions (1997:15).

<sup>84</sup> Despite its prominence in anthropological fieldwork, Gupta and Ferguson point out that “the idea of locality in anthropology is not well thought out” (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:15). Decentering “the field” of anthropological fieldwork, Clifford also poses the question “‘local’ in whose terms?” (1992:97).

<sup>85</sup> Referring to the complex processes which determine the ethnographer’s arrival in the field (“one does not just wander onto a ‘field site’”), Gupta and Ferguson state that “in fact, it is a highly overdetermined setting for the

ethnographic field, “the village” as a seemingly manageable unit has long served for anthropologists to centralize their research practice, as he puts it: “‘Villages’ inhabited by ‘natives,’ are bounded sites particularly suitable for intensive visiting by anthropologists. They have long served as habitable, mappable centers for the community, and by extension, the ‘culture’” (1992:98). Thus, Clifford goes as far as arguing that this localizing strategy of anthropological fieldwork “has tended to become confused with ‘the culture’” (1992:98).

Appadurai approaches “the anthropological place-fixation” (Hastrup and Olwig 1997:6) from a slightly different perspective, focusing on the significance of place in the construction of anthropological theory rather than the fieldwork practice itself (1986, 1988). For Appadurai, the anthropological assumption about “the boundedness of cultural units and the confinement of the varieties of human consciousness within these boundaries” is best manifested in the idea of “natives” (1988:36). Critically examining the anthropological usage of the term “native”, he remarks that the expression has not been neutrally used to refer to people who are born in particular places, but rather to those who belong to those parts of the world distant from the metropolitan West and are considered to be “confined to, and by, their places” (1988:36f.). Even speaking of “incarceration”, Appadurai challenges anthropologists’ attribution of “nativeness” to their research subjects as it is based upon the assumption about their physical as well as ecological immobility through the adaptations to their environments, and hence the confinement of their ways of thinking (1988:37f.). Pointing out that most people studied by anthropologists have in some way been affected by the knowledge coming from elsewhere, Appadurai states that “natives” who are “truly incarcerated in a specific place and confined by a specific mode of thought” have probably never existed and thus are “creatures of the anthropological imagination” (1988:39). According to Appadurai, the anthropological construction of natives can be seen in the context of anthropological theorizing, which has

bound certain ideas and images to particular places (1986, 1988).<sup>86</sup>

Focusing on ethnographic fieldwork and anthropological theorizing, respectively, both Clifford and Appadurai consider the notion of cultures as total ways of life confined in particular places to be anthropological construction, partly resulting from its localizing strategies discussed above. Referring to transregional interactions that have always existed, they challenge the highly-localized conception of cultures treated as the object to be described (cf. Clifford 1986:19). Instead of uncritically mapping cultural difference onto distinct places (cf. Gupta and Ferguson 1992), they call for anthropological representation that aims to understand the nature of locality as a lived experience in an interconnected world (Appadurai 1991:196, Clifford 1992:101, see also Gupta and Ferguson 1992). It is true that the isolation and boundedness of local communities have always been a construction of anthropologists to a certain degree. Notwithstanding, their appeal to rethink “the naturalized association of culture with place” (Gupta and Ferguson 1992:7) seems more topical and urgent than ever in the face of large-scale interactions of a new order and intensity since the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Appadurai 1991). Meanwhile, those anthropologists “working in the present” (Fox 1991) increasingly perceive that the anthropological commitment to “the local” alone is not capable of understanding and representing the way in which many people perceive the world characterized by deterritorialization<sup>87</sup> (Appadurai 1991:191, 196, 198f.). As Appadurai puts it, “as groups migrate, regroup in new locations, reconstruct their histories, and reconfigure their ethnic ‘projects,’ the *ethno* in ethnography takes on a slippery, nonlocalized quality, to which the descriptive practices of anthropology will have to respond” (1991:191). However, this call for reconsidering the localizing strategies of traditional ethnography does not mean that the issues of space and place become obsolete in current anthropology. By contrast, Gupta and Ferguson

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<sup>86</sup> Appadurai cites the concept of hierarchy in India as an example that has long been seen as quintessential to India by anthropologists and as such has long determined anthropological discourse about the place in question (1986:357, 360, 1988:40-46).

<sup>87</sup> See chapter 2.2.3.1 for further discussion on the concept.

claim that “questions of space and place are, in this deterritorialized age, more central to anthropological representation than ever” (1992:18). With the notion that “space and place can never be ‘given’”, anthropologists are increasingly asked to pay attention to “the way spaces and places are made, imagined, contested, and enforced” (Gupta and Ferguson 1992:17f.). Building upon the insight into “location” gained from feminist scholarship (e.g. Haraway 1988), Gupta and Ferguson argue that the value of anthropological fieldwork should be seen in its “attentiveness to epistemological and political issues of location” rather than to “the detailed study of a limited area” as the archetypical fieldwork implied (1997:35-40). According to this understanding of anthropological field work, “the field” is not a bounded site awaiting the arrival of researchers but a political location that first becomes constructed by them based on their theoretical concerns, among other things (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:35, Amit 2000b:6).

This section thus far has demonstrated how the anthropological conception of cultures has been shaped through the discipline’s research practice centered on local communities often treated as ethnographic microcosm. In order to substantiate the discussion presented above, the following section deals with different ways in which indigenous peasant communities in Latin America have been conceptualized by anthropologists facing particular global historical configurations.

### 2.2.2 Conception of “community” in anthropology of peasantry

The critiques of the fieldwork tradition presented above might evoke the impression that anthropological focus has always been placed on the study of rural communities or “villages”. However, it is important to note that even this image of “village ethnography” as traditional fieldwork has become shaped and consolidated over time. Accordingly, this section is concerned with the changing conception of “community” as an object of study in anthropology. It first deals with two classic approaches to conceptualize indigenous rural communities in Latin America, namely the folk-urban continuum of Robert Redfield and the closed corporate

peasant community of Eric Wolf that foregrounded the “peasant” as a category of analysis. Subsequently, it discusses the viability of the conceptions – tied to a particular global historical configuration – in the present age.

#### 2.2.2.1 Community studies and the folk-urban continuum

While one might assume that anthropological fieldwork had always been focused on peasant societies, Robert Redfield was perhaps the first American anthropologist who devoted the ethnography to a peasant village (Silverman 2004:177). His work “Tepoztlán, A Mexican Village: A Study of Folklife” (1930) – born out of the fieldwork conducted in 1926 – pioneered the style of research generally known as “community studies”, which subsequently became “a major genre of ethnological reporting” for several decades (Wolf 2004:180). The value of community studies for understanding Mesoamerican societies was further attested by Sol Tax (1937). Tax even claims that ethnographic studies of Guatemala should start with investigating the cultures of individual *municipios*, pointing out that the *municipios* in Guatemala not only represent territorial administrative divisions but also social and cultural units with which people primarily identify themselves, (1937:425, 444). Accordingly, Tax’s observation in Guatemala validated the approach to treat communities as adequate units for ethnographic studies in Mesoamerica (Nash 2001:37f.).

The community study approach has sometimes been criticized for its failure to look beyond its boundaries. Indeed, the term “community study” already evokes a research style focused on a particular locale, which is treated as an isolated and bounded unit of study (cf. Nash 2001:38-40). However, it is important to bear in mind that Redfield – a pioneer of community studies – was already aware of the integration of the peasant village into the wider world beyond its borders. Indeed, one of the major contributions of Redfield to anthropological theory was his very insight that the peasant village should not be treated as “a self-contained cultural universe”, which marked a break from the earlier anthropological study devoted to a description

of a supposedly isolated tribe (Wilcox 2004:5f.). Despite focusing on a particular village – Tepoztlán – the community study practiced by Redfield viewed the village as “an integral component of a larger social and cultural system” (Wilcox 2004:48). Other than earlier ethnographies concerned with “preserving the record of the dying cultures”, his research interest clearly lay in capturing the social and cultural changes as they happened in Tepoztlán (Redfield 1958[1930]:12f.). Seeing Tepoztlán as a “folk community” representing “a type intermediate between the primitive tribe and the modern city” (1958[1930]:217), Redfield studied the transformation of the “folk community” through spread of urban influences, above all from Mexico City, located “no more than fifty miles from Tepoztlán” (1958[1930]:30). Redfield’s emphasis on changes in the folk culture through contact and communication with the city was exceptional at the time, clearly marked off from conventional ethnographic studies that envisaged and represented culture as a closed universe (Wolf 2004:181). As one of the first acculturation studies (Wilcox 2004:48), Redfield’s ethnography of Tepoztlán also contributed to “legitimizing” interests in acculturation that had previously been considered to be “the study of somehow inferior and not quite real ‘hybrid’ cultures” (Wolf 2004:181).

The study of Tepoztlán only represented the beginning of Redfield’s long-term commitment to analyzing the general nature of social change. Redfield further pursued his interests in the process of sociocultural change in the following extensive study in the Yucatan peninsula, conducted on behalf of the Carnegie Institution of Washington. As in the study of Tepoztlán, Redfield’s concern in Yucatan lay with the changes taking place in the folk culture<sup>88</sup> under influences of increasing mobility and communication (1934:61f.). In order to approach the culture changes of the peninsula, Redfield opted for “the simultaneous comparative observation” of several communities instead of a longitudinal study of a single community

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<sup>88</sup> Referring to the hybrid character of the contemporary Maya culture in Yucatan, Redfield defines the Yucatecan folk culture as the “integrated and unified mode of life which has been made of both Indian and Spanish elements and which characterizes the hinterland villages of the peninsula of Yucatan today”. Taking this folk culture as a point of departure for his analysis, he clarifies that the focus of the study does not lie on the historical analysis concerning the origins of culture elements (1934:61).

(1934:62f.). He justifies his approach by referring to the “the simplicity of the situation in the peninsula with reference to contact and communication”, with Mérida serving as a single important center of political, social and cultural influences (1934:62). Redfield conceived of Yucatan as “a sort of social gradient in which Spanish, modern and urban gives way to the Maya, archaic, and primitive” as “one moves from Merida southeastward into the forest hinterland” (1941:13). Based upon this assumption, four communities for study were selected, which he considered to “lie along the northwest-southeast line of diminishing communications” (1941:370, n.3). In this way, he assumed that a simultaneous comparative study of the communities exposed to influences from the city to different degrees would allow studying culture change directly, with distance from Mérida simulating the passage of time (1934:68). Finally<sup>89</sup>, the monograph “The Folk Culture of Yucatan” presents the results of the comparative study conducted in the following communities, namely “Merida, the only large city; Dzitas, a town situated on the railroad; Chan Kom, a peasant village<sup>90</sup>; and Tusik, a tribal village of semi-independent Maya in Quintana Roo” (1941:13).<sup>91</sup> Following Robert Park – the sociologist and his father-in-law – Redfield worked with polar ideal types to investigate change in Yucatan, instead of focusing on the different historical trajectories of the four communities (Wilcox 2004:51f., Wolf 2004:182). Mérida, Dzitas, Chan Kom and Tusik were

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<sup>89</sup> In Redfield’s survey proposal submitted to the Carnegie Institution of Washington in 1930, Redfield identified only two of the four sites for the comparative study, which were Mérida and Chan Kom. He did not select the other sites “until well into the third year of his investigation” (Wilcox 2004:50). The choice of Mérida was obvious, as Redfield himself puts it: “The selection of Merida was almost inevitable, as it is by far the largest city in the peninsula and the center of modern and urban influence” (1941:13). The selection of Chan Kom was partly motivated by considerations of convenience. First, Alfonso Villa Rojas – the local school teacher – showed a strong willingness to assist the project. Second, as it is close to Chichen Itza, members of the Carnegie Institution staff at the archaeological site had already established a rapport with villagers (1941:14).

<sup>90</sup> Legitimizing the selection of Chan Kom – which was made up of recent colonists instead of another long established village – Redfield again clarifies that his research object was not “the recovery of early Maya culture”, but rather “the description (...) of the differences among four communities differently situated with respect to isolation” (1941:370f, n4).

<sup>91</sup> The comparative field research in the four communities was a result of the team work. In his research, Redfield was assisted by his wife Margaret Park Redfield, Alfonso Villa Rojas, the Mérida-born school teacher of Chan Kom (see also the footnote 89) and Asael Hansen. Mérida was intensively studied by Asael Hansen. Dzitas was “studied only tangentially” by Margaret and Robert Redfield, albeit who did not reside there (Wolf 2004:181). The comprehensive study of Chan Kom was conducted collaboratively by Redfield and Villa Rojas, resulting in the co-authored monograph “Chan Kom: A Maya Village” (1934). Tusik was studied by Villa Rojas during 1935-36.



considered to represent the points of the scale of modernization with the city on one end and the tribal community on the other end of the spectrum, which is commonly referred to as the “**folk-urban continuum**”. Applying the ideal types, Redfield assumed that these four communities in Yucatan mainly differ “with respect to the degree to which each has been affected by communication with a single important center of modifying influence” (1941:338).

The most general conclusion of his study was that the degree to which certain social and cultural features were present corresponded with the communities’ distance from the city, thus confirming his hypothesis of the folk-urban continuum (1941:338). Redfield remarks that the communities become less isolated and more heterogeneous as one moves from the villages through the town to the city (1934:64, 1941:338). Furthermore – and perhaps more importantly – he concludes that lessening isolation and homogeneity are associated with disorganization of the culture<sup>92</sup>, secularization and individualization, observing that these aspects were more salient in the less-isolated and more-heterogeneous societies of the four communities investigated (1941:339, 342). Referring to the relationship between these processes, Redfield hypothesizes that “loss of isolation and increasing heterogeneity are causes of disorganization, secularization, and individualization” (1941:344). However, he is cautious in establishing a monocausal model, indicating that the differences observed in the four communities cannot simply be explained by “different degrees of diffusion” through outside communication (1941:359-361). Furthermore, consulting the data gathered by Sol Tax in the highlands of Guatemala, he personally questions the validity of his findings beyond Yucatan, admitting that

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<sup>92</sup> For Redfield, culture is “an organized body of conventional understandings” and he treats organization or disorganization of the culture as a variable according to which the communities can be classified (1941:345f.). In the article “Culture Changes in Yucatan”, Redfield already characterizes the ways of life in the village type of society as forming “a single web of interrelated meanings” contrasted with the type of society encountered in the town and the city displaying less closely interrelated ways of life (1934:68f.). In “The Folk Culture of Yucatan”, he further specifies the notion of organization of the culture, which may be investigated in terms of the following features: 1) “the unity of the culture of the society”; 2) “the extent and nature of alternative lines of thought and action, conventionally made available to the individual”; 3) “the extent to which there exist relationships of interdependency between the various elements of culture”; and 4) “the extent of relationships of conflict and inconsistency between various elements of the culture” (1941:345-352).

“there is no single necessary cause for secularization and individualization” (1941:367-369).<sup>93</sup> However, for the case of Yucatan, he proposes that “increase of contacts, bringing about heterogeneity and disorganization of culture, constitutes one sufficient cause of secularization and individualization” (1941:369). In this way, he considers the observed cultural disorganization, secularization and individualization in Yucatan to be processes associated with increased contact and communication with urbanized society (1941:364).

“The Folk Culture of Yucatan” based upon the extensive field research in the peninsula distinguished itself through the richness of the ethnographic data presented as well as its theory-guided research design involving the multi-sited comparative fieldwork conducted in a team, which was quite innovative at the time (cf. Hannerz 2009:273ff.). Furthermore, his focus on contact and communication with the city as a driving factor for sociocultural change has been influential in turning anthropologists’ attention from a community as a supposedly autonomous entity to “wider and more complex fields of interaction” beyond the community boundaries (Wolf 2004:186). Notwithstanding, several anthropologists including his contemporaries (e.g. Murdock 1943, Steward 1944) have criticized his ahistorical approach as well as his assumption of the unilineal development from folk culture to city culture (Wilcox 2004:58-60).

A fundamental critique of Redfield’s folk-urban conceptualization in general came from Oscar Lewis (1951, 1952, 1965), who conducted a restudy of Tepoztlán seventeen years after Redfield’s investigation. Based upon a comparison of their findings, Lewis calls into question Redfield’s sole attention to the city as the source of change, dismissing other significant factors of an internal or external nature (1951). Referring to the differences in the findings, he concludes that Redfield’s folk-urban classification as a guiding principle in field research had a

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<sup>93</sup> Based upon the extensive field survey of several *municipios* in the Guatemalan highlands, Sol Tax – Redfield’s junior colleague – has questioned whether Redfield’s model of sociocultural change also applies to the communities investigated in Guatemala. Tax pointed out that the Guatemalan nonliterate societies were predominantly secular and individualistic despite being characterized by isolation, homogeneity and organization of the culture. Redfield attributes the discrepancies between the data to the great regional division of labor and participation in the trade in Guatemala (Redfield 1941:358, 365-369).

highly selective role, influencing “the selection, interpretation and organization of the data in Redfield’s study of Tepoztlán” (Lewis 1951:132ff.). Furthermore, Lewis extended his understanding of urbanism and the urbanization process, conducting a follow-up study of Tepoztecs who had migrated to Mexico City (1952).<sup>94</sup> Viewing the urbanization from another perspective – namely from the urban pole – he counters the common conceptualization of urbanism or what he calls “the Simmel-Wirth-Redfield axis regarding urbanism” (1965), which equates the process of urbanization with the process of disorganization. Analyzing the changes in custom, attitudes and value system of Tepoztecs living in Mexico City, Lewis claims that peasants in Mexico adapt to the urban environment with much greater ease than generally assumed. Contrary to the negative aspects often highlighted in urban anthropological studies concerned with acculturation, he found “little evidence of disorganization and breakdown, of culture conflict, or of irreconcilable differences between generations” among the Tepoztecs in Mexico City (1952:39, 41). Lewis sees that his findings in Mexico City suggest “the possibility of urbanization without breakdown”, albeit admitting that Tepoztlán might be a special case due to its proximity to Mexico City (1952:31).

Redfield’s unilineal description of sociocultural changes in Yucatan was criticized – for example – by Wolfgang Gabbert working on the present situation in the peninsula. Focusing on ethnicity and social inequalities in Yucatan, Gabbert – for example – considers that Redfield’s concept of modernization including obsolescence of ethnicity or cultural criteria (1941:58) does not fully apply to the current situation of Yucatan more than half a century after the investigation by Redfield (Gabbert 2001:263f., 277f., 2004: xvi, 158). Based upon his own observation in the 1990s, Gabbert points out that “cultural differences such as “language, dress, and descent (...) still continue to function as important status markers” (2004:158), objecting to

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<sup>94</sup> Challenging sociological generalization about the differences between rural and urban society, Lewis carefully designed his research project to study sociopsychological aspects of urbanization. He considered an adequate research design for his study of urbanization to incorporate three phases, beginning with “a well-rounded study of a rural or peasant community”, then “locating families from this community who have gone to live in the city” and finally studying these families in the city. He claims that his study is the first of its kind to follow up migrants from a rural community that has been investigated beforehand (Lewis 1952:32).

Redfield's assumption that the society of Yucatan is developing towards "the formation of a single society in which the original racial and cultural differences disappear" (1941:58).

As a pioneer of community studies, Robert Redfield has successfully demonstrated that a peasant village should not be treated as an isolated unit, pointing to its integration into the wider world beyond its borders. His attention to contact and communication with the city as a driving factor for sociocultural change was quite innovative at his time, also manifested in his multi-sited comparative approach as well as the fieldwork conducted in a team. Notwithstanding, his folk-urban model of sociocultural change has been criticized for assuming a unilineal, inevitable transition from the "folk community" to an urban society accompanied by the disorganization of the culture.

The following section deals with Wolf's concept of closed corporate communities, which provides another perspective to approach change in indigenous peasant communities in relation with the wider world beyond their boundaries.

#### 2.2.2.2 Closed corporate peasant communities

Another influential approach to conceptualize peasant communities in relation with a larger society was presented by Eric Wolf, surely best known for his study of Latin American peasantry (e.g. 1955). For his definition of peasantry, Wolf pays attention to structural characteristics common in many highland rural communities of postcolonial Latin America. Like his predecessors Alfred Kroeber and Robert Redfield, he distinguishes "peasants" from "primitives", treating peasantry's integration into a larger sociocultural whole as its distinctive feature. His relational conceptualization of peasantry is expressed as follows: "(...) peasants are not primitives, that is, the culture of a peasant segment cannot be understood in terms of itself but is a part-culture, related to some larger integral whole" (1955:454). Accordingly, Wolf defines the term "peasant" in terms of a structural relationship instead of focusing on "particular culture content" (1955:454). For Wolf, the peasant is an agricultural producer who

retains “effective control of land” and “aims at subsistence, not at reinvestment”. In this way, the peasant is further distinguished from another type of agricultural producer – “the farmer” – who “views agriculture as a business enterprise” (1955:453f.). With respect to its relation with the outside world, the peasantry is integrated into the sociocultural whole “primarily through the structure of the community” (1955:455). Therefore, he considers the categorization of communities as essential for understanding peasantry (1955:455). Comparing Mesoamerica and Central Java<sup>95</sup>, Wolf identifies “**closed, corporate communities**” as the recurrent way in which peasant groups are organized in these two areas (Wolf 1957). According to Wolf, these peasant communities are “**corporate organizations**” characterized by communal jurisdiction over land and other possessions as well as mechanisms for redistribution of surplus wealth<sup>96</sup>. They are “**closed**” in terms of the membership and outside influences; the membership is often restricted to those born and raised within the boundaries of the community and the members are not closely engaged in the social relations of the larger society. Thus, the flow of outside goods and ideas into the community are limited (1957:2-5).

In sum, Wolf underlines the relative isolation of closed corporate peasant communities from the larger society in social and cultural terms, which resulted in “a relatively autonomous economic, social, linguistic, and politico-religious system” of each community in Mesoamerica (1957:5). Accordingly, for Wolf, the closed and corporate nature of the communities is essential for the continuance of indigenous cultural reproduction or – in his terms – the “persistence of ‘Indian’ culture content” (1955:456). In turn, the dissolution of the closed corporate structure might trigger culture change, as he puts as follows: “Where the structure collapsed, traditional cultural forms quickly gave way to new alternatives of outside derivation” (1955:456). Accordingly, similar to Redfield, Wolf also identifies the dissolution and opening of the

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<sup>95</sup> Identifying the formulation of cultural laws as one of the central aims of modern anthropology, he is concerned with common features in organization of the peasant groups in two areas, which he considers “widely separated by past history and geographic space” (1957:1).

<sup>96</sup> Wolf refers to the role of a “prestige economy” in the redistribution or destruction of surplus wealth in the closed corporate peasant communities. Typically, members are encouraged to expend surpluses for communal religious activities as the accumulation of wealth is often condemned in this type of communities (1957:4f.).

community structure as a driving factor for cultural change.

Notwithstanding, Wolf's approach to transformation of peasant communities clearly distinguishes itself from that of Redfield (see chapter 2.2.2.1) through his attention to the historical formation of the communities (cf. Kearney 1996b:87f.). As the distinction between the "corporate peasant community" and the "open community" (1955:462) implies, the community's interaction with the outside world also constitutes the major concern for Wolf. However, other than Redfield seeing outside contacts merely in terms of modern urban influences, Wolf focuses on the types of "structural relations" (1955:454) that peasants have with the market and state (1986:325). Moreover, treating "the organizational framework of communities as outcomes and determinants of historical processes" (1986:325), Wolf develops an analysis of peasants' integration into a larger sociocultural whole "without any recourse to 'tradition'" (Kearney 1996b:87). For Wolf, the observed status quo of communities in Latin America "represents the end product of a long process of reorganization which began in pre-Columbian times and was carried through under Spanish rule" (1955:456). In the case of Mesoamerica, he even considers the closed corporate peasant configuration to be "a creature of the Spanish Conquest" (1957:7).<sup>97</sup> However, mentioning the conformity of the community formation with colonial interests, Wolf does not treat the closed corporate community merely as the structure imposed upon indigenous peasants by the colonial power; instead, its development and persistence is also considered to be the result of peasants' attempt to cope with challenges experienced under colonial rule, including the supply of labor to colonist enterprises, subsistence on scarce land and the imposition of charges (1957:8, 12).<sup>98</sup> In this way, the

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<sup>97</sup> However, according to Nancy Farriss, Wolf's model does not fully apply to the rural communities in Yucatan during the first decades of colonial rule. She considers that people in the Maya communities were initially held together in a more positive way through "some internal force of attraction" than necessity due to a considerable degree of autonomy that they had under the system of indirect rule (1984:5f., 382). It was not until the last quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century that the closed corporate community structure as indicated in Wolf's model became a matter of need also in Yucatan (1984:381f.).

<sup>98</sup> In this way, Wolf contends that "the corporate peasant community is not an offspring of conquest as such, but rather of the dualization of society into a dominant entrepreneurial sector and a dominated sector of native peasants" (1957:8).

development of the closed corporate character reflects defensive mechanisms for peasant communities situated within a capitalist society to come to grips with the new forms of exploitation (Wolf 1957:12f., cf. Greenberg 1995:67). However, the boundaries of the communities developed as defensive functions are conceived of as something “under constant negotiation and renegotiation” in Wolf’s model (Greenberg 1995:79). He even concludes that “in the long run they are incapable of preventing change” in the face of pressures including population surpluses<sup>99</sup> and emerging inequalities (1957:13).

However, anticipating the disappearance of the closed corporate peasant communities in the long term, Wolf neither regards their defensive mechanisms as “simple ‘survivals’” nor as “the results of ‘culture lag’”; instead, he argues that they indeed exist, because “their functions are contemporaneous” (1957:13). Indicating the contemporaneousness of their organizational framework, Wolf’s conceptualization of peasants clearly distinguishes itself from both classical anthropological discourse<sup>100</sup> concerned with the “primitive” (Kearney 1996b:26-30) and Redfield’s modernist ideas, which located the peasants in a rural periphery “‘out there’ spatially and ‘back there’ in time” in contrast to the modern city (Kearney 1996b:51). Although Wolf embraces Redfield’s attempt to look beyond the community’s boundaries, he is critical of Redfield’s modernist approach to sociocultural changes, which conceives the modernity as an end point of a unilineal development in opposition to the tradition (Wolf 2010[1982]:11, 14). Whether it comes from the classic anthropological discourse on the “primitives” or the modern sociological and anthropological concern with the development, Wolf problematizes

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<sup>99</sup> Population surpluses – for instance – cause a dilemma to the closed corporate community, as the pressures caused by land scarcity can only be mitigated through emigration. However, the rural-urban migration of its members can trigger changes in the community as they are likely to introduce new ways and needs to the home community (Wolf 1957:13).

<sup>100</sup> Based on a “mode of conceptualizing ethnographic Others”, Kearney identifies four periods in the history of anthropology, namely *formative*, *classical*, *modern* and *global*. According to his periodization of ethnographic representation, anthropology envisioned the ethnographic Other in terms of “primitives” in contrast to “the Western anthropological Self” in the first two periods. The shift of anthropological attention from “primitives” to “peasants” marks the beginnings of *modern* anthropology in Kearney’s chronology, which coincides with the end of the formal structure of colonialism and the Cold War after World War II (1996b:23-41). For further details of the respective phases in the history of anthropology, see Kearney (1996b).

the oppositional conceptualization of modernity and tradition mapped spatially onto the core and the periphery, respectively.

In sum, Wolf demonstrated the way to focus on contact and connections beyond the community boundaries, without conceptualizing these relationships merely unidirectionally in terms of modern influences radiating from the core to the periphery, as proposed in the folk-urban continuum of Robert Redfield. While Redfield's accounts on the peasantry in terms of the "folk culture" or "folk society" appear predominantly timeless owing to his ahistorical approach (cf. Steward 1944), one of Wolf's major concerns was to comprehend the organizational framework of peasant communities as outcomes and determinants of historical processes (1955, 1957, 1986<sup>101</sup>). In this context, it is important to briefly address Wolf's concept of a global history elaborated in his work "Europe and the People Without History" (1982). Criticizing the anthropology for having studied ethnographic "Others" as "pristine survivals from a timeless past" (2010[1982]:385), Wolf proposes a historical approach in anthropology that treats the people to whom history has been denied thus far as active agents in the historical process. This perspective is already indicated in his articles on the closed corporate peasant communities in the 1950s (1955 1957), as these are not only conceived of as the structure imposed upon the peasants, but also as the outcome of their attempts to cope with the situation. His conception of history finds further elaboration in "Europe and the People Without History" (1982). Wolf argues that both "the people who claim history" and "the people to whom history has been denied" are "participants in the same historical trajectory" (2010[1982]:23). In this way, he calls for a historical approach focusing on the global conjuncture, challenging the very boundaries customarily drawn between Western and non-Western histories. Accordingly, for Wolf global interconnections are historical processes

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<sup>101</sup> Reviewing his own concept of the closed corporate peasant communities after more than a quarter of a century, Wolf himself retrospectively considers that his historical perspective represented an important step at the time "because anthropologists of the time tended to short-circuit four centuries of history, to draw a direct line from the pre-Columbian past to the Indian present" (1986:326, cf. Schneider 1995:9).



developing over time and as such they should not be treated as recent phenomena suddenly affecting people who had supposedly previously been isolated.

This section thus far has presented Wolf's concept of the closed corporate peasant communities and his historical approach to the global conjuncture, which opened the way to study communities' integration into a wider world without drawing upon the dualism of tradition and modernity. The following section further elaborates on the issue, discussing the treatment of peasant as an analytic category in global anthropology.

### 2.2.2.3 "Post-peasant" anthropology

The previous section presented two classic approaches to conceptualize indigenous rural communities in Latin America, namely the folk-urban continuum of Robert Redfield and the closed corporate peasant community of Eric Wolf. The two models foregrounded the "peasant" as a category of analysis that has become a central figure in the modern discourse of anthropology<sup>102</sup>. The present section first situates "peasant" as an analytic category in the history of anthropology and considers the need for alternative theoretical views in the present age, drawing on Michael Kearney's call for post-peasant anthropology (1996b).

In the work "Reconceptualizing the Peasantry. Anthropology in Global Perspective" (1996b), Michael Kearney presents a critical analysis of the peasant concept in anthropology. His critique of the peasantry is based on his observation of transnational formation of communities and identities by Mixtec- and Zapotec-speaking peoples moving between Oaxaca and California (1996b:9).

Similar to anthropological construction of "primitives", Kearney sees emergence of "peasants" as a subject and object of study in the context of a particular global historical configuration (1996b:39). The "primitive" discourse of classical anthropology (Kearney

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<sup>102</sup> For further information on the changing conceptualization of research objects in the history of anthropology, see the footnote 100 and Kearney (1996b:23-41).

1996b:26-30) had conceptualized the relationship between the anthropological Self and the ethnographic Other in terms of a dualism, much in the same way as colonialism categorically distinguished between the colonizer and colonized (1996b:27). Facing the decolonization and the emergence of the so-called Third World in the international political arena after World War II, the former representation of the ethnographic Other as “the primitive” in classical anthropology could no longer hold. It was in this new global configuration that a social type “the peasant” took the place of “the primitive” as “a new prototypic ethnographic Other” (Kearney 1996b:5, 31). However, the oppositional difference between the anthropological Self and the ethnographic Other in classical anthropology did not completely disappear in this new period of the anthropological representation, termed “modern anthropology” by Kearney (1996b:30-33); rather, the dualism conceived in terms of ‘civilization’ and ‘primitive’ in the early colonial discourse became translated into “a comparable opposition between ‘modern’ and ‘traditional’” (Kearney 1996b:34). Nevertheless, “the peasant” as an ambiguous category at least moderated the dualist thinking of classical anthropology, which considered the relationship between the anthropological Self and the ethnographic Other in a discontinuous manner. As is well illustrated in the folk-urban continuum of Redfield (see chapter 2.2.2.1), the type “peasant” was situated at a mid-point between the polar opposites of primitive and modern. In this way, modern anthropology drew its Other “near in time and space” in comparison to the discourse of classical anthropology, which placed its ethnographic Other “in a distant primitive (in the sense of early) time and space”. Notwithstanding, the notion of unilinear social evolutionism persisted, including in the anthropology informed by the modernist way of thinking. Again, most notably in the folk-urban continuum, the difference between the Self and the Other was then defined by a various degree of “development”. In the modern anthropological discourse, the peasant became “the significant Other of the present”, “one that will be developed out of existence in the not too distant future” (Kearney 1996b:34-37).

Pointing to the specific historical context in which the peasant category was constructed in

anthropology, he considers that just like “the primitive”, the peasant represents a transitory and disruptive category facing contemporary global processes. The conclusion is founded on his observation of fracturing the “peasant” identity among highly-mobile Mixtec- and Zapotec-speaking peoples. In this case, Kearney identifies transnational migration and agro-industrialization as powerful forces dissolving spatial, social and conceptual distinctions such as rural-urban, peasant-proletarian or traditional-modern, upon which the “peasant” as both a social identity and anthropological category depended (1996b:145).

Based on these considerations, Kearney calls for post-peasant research and theory in anthropology, prognosticating the close of the discipline’s modern phase, whose concern lay in the development and progress of presumably “traditional”, “backward” peasants (1996b:7). He identifies the succeeding discourse as “global anthropology”, which is theoretically inspired by postmodern thought and empirically engaged with the ethnography of communities in transnational contexts (1996b:130-135). Accordingly, the following section discusses how anthropology approaches transnational connections and considers cultural diversity in the interconnected world of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### 2.2.3 Anthropology of globalization

The impetus for anthropological commitments to “global flows” was provided by factors both internal and external to the discipline. Global cultural transactions are by no means a new phenomenon. Notwithstanding, facing the intensification of interactions in speed, scale and volume in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, anthropologists were increasingly called upon to deal with the flows of capital, people, goods, information and ideas across the globe (Appadurai 1990). However, anthropologists’ fascination with the global interconnectedness was not only motivated by recent changes in the world order, but also by a specific historical

trajectory of the discipline. Based on an analysis of the discourse of “globalism”<sup>103</sup> in US anthropology, Anna Tsing (2000) points out that the anthropological excitement of globalism is also closely related with a disciplinary criticism of its traditional localism, which viewed “culture” as autonomous, self-regulating and bounded entities (see chapter 2.2.1). Suggesting the move away from science of bounded cultures and societies, the anthropology of globalization<sup>104</sup> has provided different perspectives on global interconnections. This variety is exemplified by the globalisms (2000:342-345) of Ulf Hannerz (1989, 1996), Michael Kearney (1996b) and Arjun Appadurai (1996), the leading anthropologists compared by Tsing in her article “The Global Situation” (2000). In order to reflect different theoretical positions, the present section also focuses on these three authors, building upon Tsing’s comparative analysis (2000:342-345).

The following part compares these authors’ responses to the two major concerns in anthropological treatment of globalization, namely the “deterritorialization of culture” and “organization of global cultural flows” (cf. Inda and Rosaldo 2008:12-29)<sup>105</sup>.

### 2.2.3.1 Deterritorialization of culture

Concerned with the transnational mobility of people and global cultural flows, the “weakening of the ties between culture and place” (Inda and Rosaldo 2008:14) has been a central issue in an anthropological inquiry into the cultural dynamics of globalization. This process is commonly referred to as “deterritorialization”, invoking the use of the term by Deleuze and Guattari (1972). In anthropology, it is used to designate “the displacement of identities, persons, and meanings” immanent in the postmodern world system (Kaplan 1987:188).

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<sup>103</sup> By the term “globalism”, she refers to “endorsements of the importance of the global” (Tsing 2000:330).

<sup>104</sup> Taking the dialectic definition of Giddens, the globalization in the present research is understood as “the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa” (1990:64).

<sup>105</sup> The structure of the following part is inspired by Inda and Rosaldo’s outline of the section on the cultural dynamics of globalization (2008:12-29).

However, challenging the hitherto-assumed fixed relationship between culture and a particular locale, anthropologists do not assume the randomness of cultural flows floating without anchors across the globe. Generally, deterritorialization is considered to be accompanied by the process of reterritorialization, “reinsertion of culture in new time-space context” (Inda and Rosaldo 2008:14, see also Gupta and Ferguson 1992:9, 19f.), as conceptualized by Deleuze and Guattari (1972)<sup>106</sup>. For the present purpose, the notion of “reterritorialization” above all points to the fact that culture “continues to have a territorialized existence, albeit a rather unstable one” as it can no longer be treated as something naturally rooted in a fixed territory (Inda and Rosaldo 2008:14f., see also Gupta and Ferguson 1992). Accordingly, it remains the task of anthropologists to theorize how “spaces and places are made, imagined, contested, and enforced” facing cultural flows across the globe (Gupta and Ferguson 1992:17f., see also chapter 2.2.1).

As anthropologists working on global movements and linkages, Hannerz, Kearney and Appadurai pay special attention to the displacement of identities, persons and meanings, whether they directly speak of deterritorialization or not. Instead of assuming the link among culture, people and place to be naturally given, each of them calls for reconsidering the role of space and place in the formation of communities and identities in the interconnected world. All of them challenge “the ruptured landscape” of “autonomous cultures” that has been so prevalent in the common representation of the world (Gupta and Ferguson 1992:8). However, focusing on different kinds of transnational interrelations, each author develops his own notion of an interconnected space (Tsing 2000:342).

Suggesting the term “global ecumene”<sup>107</sup> to allude to the interconnectedness of the world,

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<sup>106</sup> As Deleuze and Guattari put it: “It may be all but impossible to distinguish deterritorialization from reterritorialization, since they are mutually enmeshed, or like opposite faces of one and the same process” (1977[1972]:258).

<sup>107</sup> Hannerz’s selection of the term is inspired by Alfred Kroeber’s discussion on the concept “ecumene” of the ancient Greeks (1945). Building upon the ancient use of the term referring to the entire inhabitable world imagined by them, Kroeber considers that the concept “remains a convenient designation for an interwoven set of happenings and products which are significant equally for the culture historian and the theoretical anthropologist”

Hannerz (1989) is concerned with worldwide interactions and exchanges in terms of two-way, albeit asymmetrical cultural flows between the center and the periphery. The “global ecumene” is conceptualized by Hannerz as an arena in which once-separate cultures increasingly come into contact with each other through the improved technologies of mobility as well as a growing range of media that characterizes the modern age (cf. Tsing 2000:342).<sup>108</sup>

Like Hannerz, Appadurai considers that an interactive system of the world at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is exceptional in character, manifested in the increased speed, scale and volume of exchanges (1990).<sup>109</sup> However, in contrast to Hannerz’s conception of cultural flows in terms of center-periphery relationships, Appadurai emphasizes the complexity of the new global cultural economy, which can no longer be captured based on simple binary models represented by center-periphery frameworks (1990:6). As one of the major characteristics of current global cultural interactions, Appadurai refers to growing disjunctures between the flows of people, information, technologies, finance, and ideology. In consideration of this, he argues that the theory of such global cultural formations should focus on the relationships among these five dimensions of global flows<sup>110</sup>, which he conceptualizes in terms of contested landscapes.<sup>111</sup> Given the radical disjunctures between different sorts of global flows, for Appadurai deterritorialization is one of the central forces of the modern world (1990:11). Manifested in the “the loosening of the holds between people, wealth, and territories”, it

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(1945:9). To denominate the interconnectedness of today’s world, Hannerz prefers the expression “global ecumene” over other established terms such as global village or world system, as he regards that these are already too fraught with connotations. In addition, by using the term “ecumene”, he attempts to remind anthropologists of the fact that the anthropology of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century represented by Alfred Kroeber and Robert Redfield was already concerned with interactions beyond the community boundaries (Hannerz 1996:6f.).

<sup>108</sup> Hannerz opens his seminal article “Notes on the Global Ecumene” with the following sentences: “Cultural interrelatedness reaches across the world. More than ever, there is now a global ecumene” (1989:66).

<sup>109</sup> Appadurai begins his highly-influential article “Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy” with the sentence “It takes only the merest acquaintance with the facts of the modern world to note that it is now an interactive system in a sense which is strikingly new” (1990:1). Compare Hannerz’s opening of “Notes on the Global Ecumene” (see footnote 108).

<sup>110</sup> Appadurai respectively terms the five dimensions of global cultural flows: (a) *ethnoscapes*, (b) *mediascapes*, (c) *technoscapes*, (d) *financescapes* and (e) *ideoscapes* (1990:6f.). For a description of the respective five domains, see Appadurai (1990:6-11). Some scholars criticize Appadurai’s division of global cultural flows into the five domains for being counterproductive (Tsing 2000:344f.) or arbitrary (Oonk 2000:158).

<sup>111</sup> Appadurai recurs to the metaphor of landscape to point to the fluid, irregular shapes as well as the relativity of the configurations, which he rather conceives of as perspectival constructs (1990:7).

“fundamentally alters the basis of cultural reproduction”, which becomes progressively destabilized<sup>112</sup>. As the link between space, stability and cultural reproduction can no longer be assumed as given, deterritorialization represents a challenge to the anthropological representation of culture. In view of this, anthropologists working in the present are increasingly asked to reflect upon the conception of culture in a globalized, deterritorialized world (1996:49).

In order to understand cultural dynamics of deterritorialization, Appadurai (1996) pays special attention to the role of imagination in social life. Seeing a general break with all sorts of past in the modern world<sup>113</sup> (1996:3), Appadurai considers that one of the principal shifts in the global cultural order is related to the altered role of the imagination in social life (1991:198). Despite the imagination itself not being a new phenomenon, the work of the imagination in the modern age is strongly influenced by the mutual interaction of mass migration and electronic media, whose globalization has taken on new force in the past few decades (1996:3f.). Appadurai argues that the imagination as a social fact is “central to all forms of agency” and as such it represents “the key component of the new global order” (1990:5). For “more persons in more parts of the world consider a wider set of possible lives than they ever did before”, inspired by information obtained from mass media and contacts with migrants. Accordingly, the new power of the imagination lies in affecting the life choices of people in different societies with images, ideas and opportunities coming from elsewhere (1991:198f.). Concluding that “the link between the imagination and social life” is “increasingly a global and deterritorialized one”, Appadurai calls for an ethnographic representation that focuses on the impacts of “large-scale, imagined life possibilities over

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<sup>112</sup> Concerning cultural reproduction in a deterritorialized world, Appadurai even speaks of a “hazard”, as he puts it: “As the shapes of cultures grow themselves less bounded and tacit, more fluid and politicized, the work of cultural reproduction becomes a daily hazard” (1990:19).

<sup>113</sup> Theorizing this rupture, Appadurai emphasizes that his theory of modernity should be distinguished from the framework of classical modernization theory. Identifying electronic mediation and mass migration as two major diacritics, his conception of modernity is not a teleological one. In addition, focusing on the increasingly translocal formation of the imagination, his approach to the break is explicitly transnational or even postnational (1996:9).

specific life trajectories” (1991:200).

In sum, Appadurai conceptualizes the global interconnectedness in terms of disjunctive flows that cannot be subsumed into a center-periphery model. Like Hannerz, he identifies a break with the past in the contemporary world, characterized by cultural transactions of a new order and intensity. Working on a theory of the modern globalized world, Appadurai focuses on the new power of the imagination, which has become increasingly translocal in its inspiration, influenced by migration and mass media.

Whereas Hannerz and Appadurai foreground the emergence of cosmopolitan cultural forms, Kearney discusses the deterritorialization of communities and identities with an emphasis on the global political economy. Drawing from his fieldwork experience with peasant migrant workers from Oaxaca, Kearney identifies transnational migration and agro-industrialization as two powerful forces that incorporate rural Mexican communities into transnational and global contexts (1996b:127, 145). Facing the globalization of communities and identities, he argues for the need to rethink “the bipolar imagery of time and space” expressed in modern anthropological theory,<sup>114</sup> which associates centers with modernity and peripheries with tradition, respectively (1995:549). Instead, he calls for an anthropological theory that reflects “global complexity” (1996:130). Thus, like Appadurai, Kearney refuses center-periphery frameworks, considering this opposition to dissolve under the influences of globalization. However, working with agricultural producers, Kearney deals with the relation between identity and physical territory in a more direct manner. In his case, the notion of deterritorialization is closely related with the fracturing of peasantry as a social identity and anthropological category (see chapter 2.2.2.3). According to Wolf’s definition (1955:453, see also pp. 62f.), effective control of land is one of the central characteristics of peasantry.

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<sup>114</sup> Taking an open approach, Appadurai is also critical of classical modernization theory, which relies on the teleology of development. However, Appadurai defines his undertaking as an elaboration of an alternative theory of modernity (1996:9, see also footnote 113). On the other hand, Kearney’s use of the term “modern” is rather critical as it is applied to designate the modernist discourse in anthropology. Prognosticating a shift of anthropological concern from “modern structures” to “global complexity”, he classifies “the modern” as a fading period of anthropology (1996b:130f.).



Accordingly, peasantness is an identity that is dependent on soil as a means of production and as such it is tied to a specific physical territory. However, as indigenous agricultural producers increasingly engage with the global political economy, Kearney considers that the peasant becomes a disruptive category (1996b:6). In the face of transnational migration and agro-industrialization, he assumes that the peasantness increasingly gives way to ethnicity as “an appropriate form of identity for transnational communities” (1996b:180). Unlike peasantness as an identity rooted in soil owing to its productionist nature, ethnicity represents a dimension of social identity that is relatively, independent of space. In this way, it enables a different kind of community formation than the territorially-bounded peasant community, as envisioned by Wolf (1955, 1957, see also chapter 2.2.2.2) (Kearney 1996b:180). However, pointing out that ethnicity is not necessarily based on an appropriation of physical territory, Kearney does not wholly negate its spatial dimension; instead, the value of the territory increasingly becomes symbolic. For example, more often than not, ethnic mobilization seeking territorial autonomy is not only concerned with control of land as a means of production but also with control over its symbolic value considered crucial for the construction of collective identity (1996b:180). Similarly, the case of a Mixtec peasant community analyzed by Kearney illustrates that the territorially-bounded home community in Oaxaca – which now forms only one component within a larger transnational community “*Oaxacalifornia*” – still serves as its “spiritual core” and “the primary point of common reference for its members” (1996b:182).<sup>115</sup>

In sum, although each of the three authors is concerned with the displacement of identities, persons and meanings in the age of globalization, the comparative analysis reveals their different approaches to the deterritorialization of culture. While Hannerz conceives global connections in terms of two-way, albeit asymmetrical cultural flows between the center and the periphery, Appadurai and Kearney refuse the center-periphery framework, underlining

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<sup>115</sup> According to Kearney, the nature of this greater transnational community comprising parent and offspring communities is best captured by the imagery of network as it best describes its limitless capacity to stretch out spatially as well as an active process of self-differentiation (1996b:124f.).

complexity of processes that cannot be captured based on simple binary models (Tsing 2000:342f.). For Appadurai and Kearney, the current world order is reflected in a multidimensional global space without sharp boundaries and distinct centers. Although they evoke the similar imagery of the deterritorialized world, their approaches differ from each other. Appadurai focuses on the altered role of imagination in the new global order, paying special attention to the increased globalization of migration and mass media. Despite also dealing with transnational migration, Kearney's concern with deterritorialization is a more direct one. For him, the process above all implies a gradual shift of social identity from that tied to a specific physical territory as a means of production to one that is relatively independent of space in the face of the transnational formation of communities.

This section thus far has dealt with the approaches of Hannerz, Appadurai and Kearney to the displacement of identities, persons and meanings in the age of globalization. The notion of deterritorialization was crucial in calling into question the spatial mapping of cultural differences, which had long been taken for granted in anthropology (Inda and Rosaldo 2008:12f.). Starting from the recognition of the global nature of cultural interactions discussed above, the following section presents how the organization of these flows is conceptualized by the authors Hannerz, Appadurai and Kearney.

#### 2.2.3.2 Organization of global cultural flows

Cultural dynamics of globalization are likely to be conceived of in terms of cultural homogenization through threatening impacts of "global forces" on "local cultures". Concern about the loss of cultural diversity in the course of global interconnectedness is represented in the discourse of cultural imperialism, which was especially popular in the 1970s and early-1980s. Generally, the discourse of cultural imperialism understands increasing cultural traffic through globalization as an imposition or dominance of Western culture over the rest of the world. The current world order seen from this perspective is characterized by Western

cultural domination,<sup>116</sup> leading to the progressive elimination of cultural difference in the long run. Thus, cultural flows are only assumed in one direction, namely from the center to the periphery or from the West to the remainder of the globe (Inda and Rosaldo 2008:15). Despite being aware of asymmetry in global cultural interactions, anthropologists in general are critical of the argument presented in the discourse of cultural imperialism, providing a nuanced analysis of the cultural dynamics of globalization (Tsing 2000:339, 342, Inda and Rosaldo 2008:28f.). Concerned with intricate movements of people, goods and information crossing national boundaries, Hannerz (1989, 1996), Kearney (1996b) and Appadurai (1996) also demonstrates ways to capture global interconnections without reducing them to the ubiquitous presence of “western” cultural influences.

With his notion of “global ecumene” discussed in the previous section, Hannerz explores cultural interconnections across the globe primarily based on center-periphery relationships by which the world system in political and economic terms has commonly been defined since Immanuel Wallerstein (1974). The center-periphery framework of understanding the global order assumes asymmetries in power, with the dominant center exercising influence over the periphery, as Hannerz puts it: “When the center speaks, the periphery listens, and on the whole does not talk back” (1989:67). Taking the center-periphery conceptual pair as a starting point for analyzing global cultural interactions, Hannerz considers that cultural flow across the globe is indeed affected by “a structure of asymmetrical, center/periphery, relationships” (1992:261). However, indicating asymmetries in the global social organization of meaning, he argues that the center-periphery relationships of culture are not a mere reflection of political and economic power as the discourse of cultural imperialism suggests (1989:67); instead, as a macro-anthropologist of culture, he points to a more intricate organization of world cultural flow that cannot be captured alone within a framework of a center-periphery structure “with just a handful of all-purpose centers” (1989:69). For instance, the existence of various

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<sup>116</sup> See Tomlinson (1991) for a detailed and critical analysis of discourse(s) of cultural imperialism.

influential regional centers as well as reverse cultural flows from the periphery to center just illustrate the complexity of the process, implying that the globalization of culture cannot simply be conceived of as Westernization (Hannerz 1989:68f., cf. Inda and Rosaldo 2008:20-28). In addition, Hannerz scrutinizes the widespread fear of cultural homogenization, questioning the quality of the evidence for it. From his perspective, the mere presence of foreign cultural products such as imported TV programs does not offer much insight into its cultural impacts as it tells us little about what sense the people make of it (1989:72). In the process of reading cultural texts, audiences do not remain passive consumers of imported cultural products, but rather they play an active part in the construction of meaning. As the interpretation of foreign media exemplifies, the sheer visibility of Western cultural influences around the globe alone does not attest the scenario of world cultural synchronization, as these cultural forms have a tendency to become “customized”<sup>117</sup> according to local conditions of receptions (Inda and Rosaldo 2008:18-20). Calling into question the deterministic view represented in the discourse of cultural imperialism, Hannerz proposes a metaphor of creole cultures to capture global cultural interactions with an unpredictable outcome. Borrowing creole concepts from linguistics, he conceptualizes creole cultures as “the confluence of two or more widely separate historical currents” basically interacting in a center/periphery relationship<sup>118</sup> (1992:264). The process of creolization is considered a “creative interplay” of center and periphery in which the periphery indeed “talks back” (1992:265). With his concepts of creole cultures and creolization, Hannerz emphasizes a creative and open-ended character of global cultural processes that cannot simply be understood in terms of “a constant pressure from the center toward the

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<sup>117</sup> Inda and Rosaldo use the term “customization” to refer to “the process of interpreting foreign cultural forms according to local conditions of reception”. They explain their preference of the term “customization” by stating that it is less ideologically loaded than other terms designating the process such as “creolization” (Hannerz 1992, see later in the section) or “indigenization” (Appadurai 1990, see later in the section) (2008:40).

<sup>118</sup> Although stressing the intricate organization of world cultural flow, Hannerz holds onto a center-periphery framework of culture contact. He considers “the organization of world by way of center/periphery relationships” to be unlikely to change. However, he admits that as the world order changes, the constellation in the center-periphery relationship is not necessarily stable with some peripheries becoming centers and some old centers moving in the other direction (1992:266f.).

periphery” (1992:265) as the discourse of cultural imperialism dictates.

Pointing to the highly complex order of global cultural economy, Appadurai is also critical of the simplistic view of globalization provided by the discourse of cultural imperialism. As he puts it: “The globalization of culture is not the same as its homogenization, (...)” (1990:16). As Hannerz refers to an interactive character of global cultural processes with his concept of creolization, Appadurai also considers that the reception of introduced cultural forms entails the work of reinterpretation. Analyzing the Indian appropriation of English cricket, he demonstrates how the elite sport of English origin has become detached from its Victorian value framework to finally emblemize Indian nationhood. For Appadurai, Indian passion for cricket illustrates that even “hard” cultural forms<sup>119</sup> brought by colonization can become indigenized and decolonized. Drawing from this example, Appadurai argues that indigenization should be understood as a product of “public experiments with the means of modernity” (1996:90, 113). Like Hannerz’s concept of creolization, Appadurai’s notion of indigenization underlines a creative and experimental work of reinterpretation involved in cultural interactions. However, as already addressed in the previous section, Appadurai’s approach differs from Hannerz’s idea of creole cultures, which are conceptualized as results of culture contact organized in the center-periphery relationship. It is true that – like Hannerz – Appadurai counters the common association of globalization with worldwide cultural convergence, pointing to the creative act of indigenization. However, he also refers to a highly contentious nature of the process, defining “the tension between cultural homogenization and cultural heterogenization” as “the central problem of today’s global interactions” (1990:5). In the course of globalization, “a variety of instruments of homogenization”<sup>120</sup> can be used to mobilize cultural differences for articulation

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<sup>119</sup> Appadurai makes a distinction between “hard” and “soft” cultural forms. In his definition, “hard” cultural forms are characterized by a close linkage of embodied practice to value and meaning and as such they are not easily susceptible to reinterpretation. On the other hand, “soft” cultural forms are considered to be more open to reinterpretation as embodied performance can more easily be separated from meaning and value. Representing puritan values, cricket is categorized as a “hard” cultural form by Appadurai (1996:90).

<sup>120</sup> Appadurai refers to “armaments, advertising techniques, language hegemonies, and clothing styles” as instruments of homogenization (1990:16).

of group identity (1990:16f.). According to Appadurai, this “globalized production of difference” (1996:199) might also have a negative side, having the potential to result – for example – in ethnic violence, which will be further discussed later in the section and in chapter 2.2.4.2.

The discourse of cultural imperialism can also be challenged from another perspective. The complexity of global processes is not only manifested in the above-mentioned work of customization of introduced cultural forms, but also in reverse flows from the periphery to the center. Especially in the course of “the new immigration” after 1950, it can be noted that the so-called “core” or the “West” itself becomes increasingly heterogeneous, as pointed out by urban anthropologists and sociologists working in old centers of the world economy such as New York City or London. The transformation of the Western metropolises – above all owing to transnational migration – is referred to as the “peripheralization at the core” (Sassen-Koob 1982) or “the implosion of the Third World into the first” (Rosaldo 1988:85). In these cities, the global north-south divide often translates into internal differentiation within the urban space. In a similar way, the dissolving distinction between city (center) and countryside (periphery) can be transformed into segregation within the city, which makes the conceptual opposition between rural-traditional and urban-modern increasingly obsolete. Kearney associates this compression of horizontal space with the decline of modernism and developmentalism as it dissolves the spatial distinction between the center and periphery onto which the temporal counterpart of modern and tradition has been mapped (1996b:117). Declaring the end of anthropology’s modern phase, Kearney considers that the “global implosion” (1995:553) also poses an epistemological question concerning the Self and the classification of “Others” in anthropology. As the spatial bases of the differences between the Self and “Others” gradually become destabilized, Kearney envisions global anthropology – which reflects the complex processes of production of difference in an interconnected world – to overcome the dualism between “our own society” and “the Other”. Instead of exoticizing

“Others”, global anthropological theory should depict “the intimate ways in which ‘they’ and ‘we’ are imbricated in global contexts that determine all of our identities” (1996b:119, cf. Gupta and Ferguson 1992).

Like Kearney, Appadurai also makes use of the trope of implosion to move beyond the primordialist perspective on ethnicity. However, while Kearney speaks of the “implosion” to call for the reconceptualization of anthropological representation in general, Appadurai primarily applies the concept to analyze modern ethnic movements (1996b:139-157). He suggests a model of implosion as a suitable approach to contemporary ethnic confrontations, countering the common connotations of explosion. According to Appadurai, the widespread conception of ethnic movements as an explosion of group sentiments is often related to the naturalizing view of ethnicity. In the primordialist argument, a strong sense of group identity in these movements is considered to draw upon the same kind of sentiments that bind small groups such as those based on kinship or its extensions. It is assumed that this kind of collective conscience – rooted in some distant past – can be ignited in certain historical and political circumstances, eventually to explode into explicit collective fury. Such a perspective can also be identified in the popular discourse that associates ethnic movements – especially in a destructive form – with tribalism and anachronism. In its efforts to explain ethnic violence, naturalizing the conception of ethnicity often becomes linked to the dictum of development in the modernization theory. It means that ethnic sentiment conceived in terms of primordialism is seen as a potential threat to civil society, which is to be developed out of existence by means of modernization programs (1996:140f.). However, contrary to this assumption, Appadurai observes the intensification and spread of ethnic consciousness in the contemporary world. Therefore, he argues that the primordialist thesis is incapable of capturing the emergence of “new ethnicities” that are often characterized by large size, nationalist aspirations and violence

(1996:139). Appadurai considers modern ethnicity to be “culturalist”<sup>121</sup> as it is based upon the conscious mobilization of cultural differences instead of being the sheer extension of the sentiments of family and kinship. For the concept of culture, it implies that culture seen as “the diacritics of group identity” should increasingly be conceptualized as “the process of naturalizing a subset of differences” in the era of mediation, migration and globalization. Taking the example of Indian cricket – as “a large-scale form that comes to be inscribed on the body” (see pp.79 for further information) – Appadurai argues that this process of naturalization follows the reverse order compared with the popular extensionist notion of ethnic identity assumes (1996:13-16). Applied to ethnic violence, it signifies that the sentiments leading to such events can only be understood within “large-scale formations of ideology, imagination, and discipline” (1996:149). In this way, exploring the articulation of ethnicity in the contemporary world, Appadurai emphasizes the imprinting mechanism that operates from the macro to the micro rather than the other way around (1996:148). Accordingly, his conception of modern ethnicity can rather be characterized by a top-down approach (cf. Olwig 2000:178), albeit which clearly distinguishes itself from that taken in the discourse of cultural imperialism. Instead of assuming unidirectional influences from the center, Appadurai considers the dynamics of ethnicity in terms of “the dialectics of implosion and explosion over time” (1996:157), which is supposed to result in “globalized production of difference” rather than cultural homogenization (1996:199).

Building upon a comparative analysis of Tsing (2000), this section thus far has presented contributions of Hannerz (1989, 1996), Kearney (1996b) and Appadurai (1996) to theories of global interconnections. Different globalisms envisioned by these authors relate to their respective focal knowledges as they are concerned with varied research subjects as well as

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<sup>121</sup> Designating a feature of modern ethnic movements, Appadurai prefers the term “culturalism” to avoid the substantial connotation of the word “culture”. As he notes, when the “culture” is used to account for violent social movements in particular, it often becomes associated with “tribalism”, which should supposedly be overcome by development (1996:15, 141). With the use of the term “culturalism”, Appadurai aims to counter this “primordialist” view, underlining the dynamic and politicized aspect of what is commonly referred to as “culture” (1996:12-15).



regions. Drawing from the comparison, Tsing concludes that these diverse perspectives on the interconnected world are all valid and can exist “whether in competition or alliance, in mutual acknowledgement or erasure” (2000:344). Pointing out that people’s experiences of globalization are in fact quite diverse, Tsing questions the assumed opposition of “local” diversity versus “global” homogenization. Arguing rather for “global” diversity, she calls for anthropological theories of globalization that take into account multiple understandings of the global, instead of representing globalization as a single transcultural process (2000:352).

The following section elaborates on the above-presented discussion and focuses on the aspects of cultural consequences of globalization that appear to be especially relevant for considering the situation of indigenous languages in the present age.

#### 2.2.4 Reflection on culture in an age of globalization

The aim of the present section is to consider the implications that the above-discussed cultural dynamics of globalization hold for language vitality.

It has been argued in the previous section that the globalization of culture is not equal to its homogenization (cf. Appadurai 1990:16). If this notion is to be applied to the language situation, it would imply that an increase in global interactions does not necessarily lead to a loss of linguistic diversity. However, despite dismissing the fear of cultural convergence, Appadurai speaks of the tension between homogenization and heterogenization as the central problem of contemporary global processes (1990:5). These seemingly contradictory facets of globalization are essential for considering the vitality of indigenous languages in today’s world. In simple terms, its contrastive effects on language vitality can be subsumed as follows: on the one hand, it is widely acknowledged that the incorporation of speech communities into the capitalist world economy can pose a serious threat to vitality of local vernacular languages; on the other hand, it is often observed that globalization is not always experienced by speakers of a minority language as the mere pressure to shift to a language of wider currency. Indeed, as manifested in

the emergence of modern ethnicity that transcends the boundaries of local communities (Appadurai 1996:139-157), transnational connections also provide a basis for the exterritorial formation of identities. Ethnic identity produced in a field of global exchanges takes cultural differences as their conscious objects (Appadurai 1996:147). Furthermore, more often than not, language forms a significant part of these differences, which become mobilized to articulate group identity commonly denominated as ethnicity. As this simplified illustration already indicates, the deterritorialization of culture in the course of globalization has complex implications for the language vitality of local vernacular languages. With the aim of exploring the sociolinguistic consequences of globalization from an anthropological perspective, the first part of the section is devoted to reflecting upon cultural reproduction in the age of deterritorialization.

#### 2.2.4.1 Cultural reproduction

According to Appadurai, cultural reproduction takes on some novel dimensions under the current global conditions (1990:17), as deterritorialization (see chapter 2.2.3.1) fundamentally alters the basis of intergenerational transmission of knowledge (1996:49).

The anthropological conception of culture – at least in its classical form – is best described by Bourdieu's concept of **habitus** (1977[1972]). The central concern of anthropologists has long been to gain access to “the holistic knowledge of ‘another society’” (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:37) through the highly-localized practice of ethnographic fieldwork (see chapter 2.2.1). What they observed “in the existential state of ‘being there’” (Nash 2001:33) was practical mastery transmitted in practice without going through discourse or consciousness (Bourdieu 1977[1972]:87). This “acquired system of generative schemes” (1977[1972]:95) is termed “habitus” by Bourdieu, which represents a useful concept to explain cultural continuity over time. According to Bourdieu, it is through the mediation of the habitus that “products of collective history, the objective structures” succeed in reproducing themselves (1977[1972]:85).

Put differently, only when structures become “embodied” in a competence (1977[1972]:81) can they be transmitted in the form of miscellaneous actions that are predominantly acquired unconsciously through imitation. As these actions are organized in accordance with the same rationale, practical mastery implies incorporation of the general principle that underlies them (1977[1972]:87f.). Ethnographic fieldwork generally intends to infer this coherent principle thorough the observation of particular actions.

As has already been argued in chapter 2.2.1, ethnography has long located the site for this kind of cultural reproduction in a geographically-situated, bounded community, which was often referred to as “the village” (cf. Clifford 1992:97f.). Although Clifford even speaks of confusion of this localizing strategy with culture (1992:98), the anthropological conception of the territorially-based community in which the habitus was contained in many cases also corresponded to people’s perception. Recalling her fieldwork experience in Chiapas in the late-1950s, June Nash – for example – reports that also in indigenous people’s sense, the town represented a bounded universe within which the ideal of harmony was constructed (2001:32f.). Drawing upon the early ethnographies, she argues that the habitus consciously confined within community boundaries provided cultural coherence over time in most highland Chiapas Mayan communities,<sup>122</sup> which was also reinforced by endogamy and distinguishing marks in dress and language (2001:32). In an attempt to conform to the ideal of harmony, people committed themselves to maintain intact “the traditions” of their “ancestors” within this habitus (2001:34). Despite being impressed by the way in which people contained the moral community within the village boundaries, she notes that its seeming integrity collapses once one considers the historical dimension as well as the wider economic and political context in which the community is located (2001:34-37). Moreover, similar to Appadurai’s estimation, Nash

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<sup>122</sup> However, it is important to note that Nash means by its coherence to “the culturally distinctive ways of incorporating Spanish colonial beliefs and practices” (2001:32). Agreeing with Wolf’s understanding of the closed corporate peasant configuration as a construction of the Spanish Conquest (see pp. 75), Nash considers that the Mayan world vision was only shrunk to the boundaries of communities after colonization.

considers that the stability of cultural reproduction in indigenous communities is threatened by globalization processes as never before. However, she also points to the other face of globalization, observing that the same processes leading to distortion of the bounded corporate structures also offer the possibility to expand the horizons of communities for ethnic reassertion (2001:77) (see chapter 2.2.4.2). In the face of global integration of communities on which ethnographic studies have been centered, Nash – like other global anthropologists – calls for a transformation of anthropological interpretations that look beyond the community boundaries. She considers the idea of habitus still useful in grounding these ethnographies in space and anchoring them in structural conditions. However, the concept of habitus that she proposes in an age of globalization is one “embracing community, but extending worldwide through networks of communication” (2001:221). Drawing upon Hannerz’s concept of the “global ecumene” to refer to the arena of these worldwide exchanges (see pp. 71f.), Nash concludes that both habitus and ecumene are “complementary ways of thinking about global interactions”. It means that an approach to the structuring principles of global cultural flows should take into account both the reproduction of cultural practices within any given habitus and their interactions and exchanges in the global ecumene (2001:221).

While Nash rather retains the idea of habitus and calls for considering its global dimension (2001:221), Appadurai is more critical of it as he discusses the work of cultural reproduction in the current world order characterized by deterritorialization. He argues that in the age of increased transnational communication, “culture becomes less what Pierre Bourdieu would have called a habitus (...) and more an arena for conscious choice, justification and representation” (Appadurai 1996:44). In the face of mass migration and electronic mediation, the stability of transgenerational knowledge – which has been assumed in most theories of enculturation – is increasingly called into question. Even in the family domain – often the primary site of socialization – the task of cultural reproduction becomes subject to negotiation or – as Appadurai puts it – “exposed to the traumas of deterritorialization” as family members

develop different understandings and aspirations according to their migratory experiences and the information obtained from the mass media (1996:43f.). Accordingly, in the deterritorialized world where social lives are increasingly influenced by images, ideas and opportunities coming from elsewhere, cultural reproduction is considered to only succeed by conscious design and political will (Appadurai 1996:54).

However, fracturing of the habitus dimension of culture in the age of globalization – as pointed out by Appadurai (1996) and Nash (2001) – does not necessarily imply a loss of global cultural diversity. On the contrary, the mobilization of cultural differences seems to be more alive than ever, as manifested – for example – in indigenous social movements seeking cultural autonomy (e.g. Warren 1998, Nash 2001) or “a worldwide rebirth of ethnic nationalisms and separatisms” (Appadurai 1996:15). Thus, instead of assuming cultural homogenization, it should rather be considered that in the era of globalization the tacit habitus dimension of culture increasingly gives way to the conscious and politicized dimension, with culture becoming an object of representation often to spatially-dislocated audiences (Appadurai 1996:44). Accordingly, the following section explores the latter side of cultural dynamics of globalization, using the concept of ethnicity.

#### 2.2.4.2 “New” ethnicity

Even though it might appear contradictory, it was Frederik Barth – best known for his conceptualization of “ethnic groups” – who challenged the primordialist understanding of ethnicity. As early as the late-1960s, he scrutinized the idea of separate societies and cultures, which had long served as a basic premise in anthropology. In his seminal introduction to “Ethnic Groups and Boundaries” (1969), Barth counters the common assumption that attributes the maintenance of cultural distinctiveness to geographical and social isolation. Pointing out that transregional contact and interaction do not necessarily lead to cultural convergence, he calls for ethnographic studies exploring the very processes involved in

generating and maintaining cultural distinctions (Barth 1970[1969]:9f.). Although Barth does not negate the role of cultural differences in the articulation of ethnicity, he is critical of linking a certain descriptive list of cultural features to a particular “ethnic unit”. In his understanding of “ethnic groups” – which is conceptualized as “a form of social organization” – the distinctiveness of these groups is not maintained through “objective differences” in “cultural content”, but rather through the very work of boundary maintenance (1970:13f.). Thus, with his contribution, Barth urges anthropologists to focus on the way in which these ethnic boundaries are constructed and maintained through social processes of incorporation and exclusion, instead of taking ethnic groupings for given. It is true that some of his ideas are subject to reconsideration nowadays, including his conceptualization of ethnicity in terms of “groups” (Brubaker 2002). Nevertheless, paying attention to the mechanisms of boundary maintenance, Barth’s work introduced a significant shift in the conception of ethnicity, which had long been defined in terms of cultural traits. The move towards a constructivist approach to ethnicity proposed by Barth is especially relevant in considering ethnic identity in the face of globalization.

The greater visibility of ethnicity in the contemporary world is often mentioned to counter the homogenization scenario of globalization. Several anthropologists concerned with indigenous social movements have demonstrated how the protagonists make use of transnational networks for ethnic reassertion (e.g. Nash 2001). Contrary to the prevalent view associating ethnic distinctiveness with an absence of contact, these scholars see the recent ascendancy of ethnicity in the context of worldwide interactions.

For example, Kearney (1996b) points out that the salience of ethnicity in the late-20<sup>th</sup> century appears to correspond to the increased mobility of populations. As ethnicity is neither tied to soil as a means of production nor to a particular nation-state, it opens up possibilities for constructions of community that even transcend national boundaries. Due to its capacity to extend itself beyond the bounded community, ethnicity has proved to be a suitable form of

social identity especially for migrants, refugees and otherwise displaced peoples (Kearney 1996b:179f).

However, mass migration is not the only factor that correlates with the spatial spread of modern ethnicity (cf. Appadurai 1996:139). Information and communications technology also provides opportunities for a new form of organization that is capable of surpassing the traditional boundaries. With her analysis of the Chiapas conflict, Nash – for example – demonstrates that the press and human rights NGOs have enabled the opening up of local indigenous protests to a worldwide audience (2001:253). Despite approaching the issue from a different perspective, Appadurai also points to the role of the mass media, which – in combination with migration – significantly informs the way in which ethnic identity is constituted in the contemporary world (1996:156). Referring to the impacts of mass media, he builds upon Anderson’s analysis of nationalism (1983), which illustrated the significance of print media in construction of national sentiment in the form of “imagined communities”. Speaking of “mass-mediated sodalities”, Appadurai considers that collective experiences of the electronic mass media have similar, yet more powerful impacts on creation of ethnic affinity as they now operate beyond the boundaries of the nation (1996:8). In sum, it can be stated that migration and electronic communications technology represent major factors in spatial spread of ethnicity in the contemporary world (cf. Appadurai 1996:156).

Discussing the effects of migration and electronic media, this section thus far has focused on the extensional dimensions of ethnicity. However, the identity formation in the globalized world is much more complex than the mere dissemination. In order to account for the intensification and spread of ethnic sentiments in today’s world, it is important to extend beyond the so-called primordialist argument, which treats modern ethnicity as some kind of extension of collective identity based on kinship or similar linkages (Appadurai 1996:139-144). With the notion of “implosions” – which has already been discussed in the previous section (see pp. 81 of chapter 2.2.3.2) – Appadurai counters the popular view of ethnicity, which conceives

its spread in terms of a movement from inner sentiments to outer displays; instead, he argues that ethnic politics rather work from the top down or from the macro to the micro, pointing out that the ethnic sentiments that have been considered primordial are in fact the product of long-term interactions of large-scale and local factors (1996:148, 153). The top-down approach suggests that the kind of group affinity that can even lead to ethnic violence is only created when macro-events are drawn into the local discourse to interpret the mundane occurrences (1996:153, 156). Appadurai primarily uses the trope of “ethnic implosions” to account for large-scale – often violent – ethnic movements, focusing on the tension between the national politics and the increased transnational mobilization of ethnicities (1996:149-157). However, this insight of Appadurai also applies to smaller, non-violent forms of articulating cultural identity, as will be explained below.

For example, researchers working on indigenous social movements in Latin America (e.g. Nash 2001) have observed that transnational civil society provides new contexts in which indigenous ethnicity can crystalize (Kearney 1995:560). Drawing from his analysis of Mixtec transnational communities, Kearney points to the role of international human rights and environmental movements in the construction of indigenous ethnicity, which integrates a variety of former local categorizations as a new, more encompassing form of identity (1996b:182-185). Transnational alliances in these fields enable the indigenous peoples to redefine their political claims in a way that reaches beyond the state boundaries to gain international support. Especially for those seeking to challenge the social domination operating through the nation-state, ethnicity represents a suitable form of identity, allowing them to act as political subjects in the global space of environmentalism and human rights (Kearney 1995:560, 1996b:182-185, Brysk 1996:53). The characteristics of indigenous ethnicity – which is informed by those globalizing and universalizing discourses such as ecopolitics and human rights – are better understood if approached as a conscious political project rather than as a sheer remnant from a distant past (Kearney 1996a:10f., cf. Appadurai 1996:14f.). Accordingly,



instead of leading to homogenization, the conditions of a globalized society and economy can stimulate “novel transnational cultural and political expressions of indigenous identity” (Kearney 1996a:8 cf. Appadurai 1996:199).

What this “new” indigenous ethnicity might look like is illustrated – for example – by Kay Warren’s analysis of Pan-Maya activism in Guatemala (1998). Warren examines the ethnic resurgence in Guatemala, which came into the public view in the late-1980s and early-1990s. In her study, she focuses on the role of Maya public intellectuals in building a sense of identification with “Mayaness” that transcends face-to-face community and encompasses the former micro-ethnicities. In agreement with the scholars challenging the primordialist view of ethnicity, Warren stresses the constructive aspect of cultural resurgence, referring to ongoing debates in the political process of authenticating Maya culture (1998:27, 203). Furthermore, as has been demonstrated by other researchers concerned with indigenous social movements, the author also points to the interplay of local, national and international flows of meaning involved in the Pan-Maya activism (1998:27) primarily seeking a recognition of cultural diversity within the nation-state. Drawing on her analysis, the present work considers how the idea of “Mayaness” is constituted in another national setting and conceived of by Maya speakers in Yucatan to investigate its implications for the language’s vitality.

### 2.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented sociolinguistic and anthropological theories on which the cross-disciplinary research project draws. The first part of the chapter introduced language maintenance and shift studies as a field of inquiry in sociolinguistics. It discussed extra-linguistic factors associated with the abandonment of one language in favor of another and research methods to investigate the relation between social changes and the language situation. In order to inquire the vitality of Yucatec Maya in view of regional developments articulated with global processes, the study drew on anthropological theories, to which the

second part of the chapter was devoted. The section began with a discussion on the relation between place and culture and anthropological conceptions of it, which are manifested in the discipline's construction of "community". Subsequently, it moved onto the anthropology of globalization and discussed its cultural dimensions, which are conceived of by Appadurai as "tension" between homogenization and heterogenization" (1990:5). Drawing on it, the section demonstrated two sides of globalization that are crucial for considering the maintenance of cultural diversity in the face of increased contact and communication. On the one hand, it fractures the basis of cultural reproduction possibly like never before, on the which intergenerational transmission of indigenous languages depends. On the other hand, global interconnections offer new possibilities for those seeking pluricultural co-existence at the regional, national and international levels, enabling the exterritorial formation of identities and the dissemination of their claims to a wider audience (e.g. Appadurai 1996, Kearney 1996b, Warren 1998, Nash 2001).

In order to substantiate the hitherto abstract discussion on globalization and language situation, the following chapter provides information on the research area, focusing on the mobility of Maya speakers and the state of bilingualism in Yucatan.

## 3 Research Area

The present chapter is structured into two parts. It first provides information concerning the broader region of Yucatan and then introduces the research sites in which ethnographic fieldwork for the present research was conducted, namely two communities of the municipality of Yaxcabá and the cities of Mérida and Cancún.

### 3.1 Introduction to the Region

Building on the theoretical discussions presented in chapter 2, the present section provides general information on the region, focusing on indigenous mobility and bilingualism. The first part of the chapter discusses the geographic mobility of the Maya-speaking population with a special emphasis on internal migration from the maize-cultivating zone in the state of Yucatan, where two of the research sites are located. The second part is devoted to the current language situation in the state of Yucatan, which should be considered in relation to the regional developments illustrated in the first part of the section.

#### 3.1.1 Indigenous mobility and its contexts

The geographic mobility of the indigenous population is not a novel phenomenon in Yucatan. For example, Nancy Farriss identifies various types of population movement away from the nucleated towns of origin during the colonial period, which partly served to circumvent the settlement organization imposed by the colonial authorities (1978, 1984:200). In addition, considering the local system of agriculture – which requires a large amount of land to sustain a household – it might not be exaggerated to claim that the mobility should have been the norm rather than the exception for the indigenous population in Yucatan. Therefore, although the impacts of the rapid urbanization in the peninsula after the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century might appear overwhelming to those conducting ethnographic fieldwork today, it is not adequate to treat the

geographic mobility of the indigenous population itself as a recent development. Instead, the treatment of the issue should begin with the question of whether there is something specific about the indigenous internal migration in recent decades, which significantly distinguishes itself from its predecessors. In consideration of this, the present section deals with the mobility of the Maya-speaking population mainly from the maize-cultivating zone of the state of Yucatan.

Among the peninsula's internal migrations, the rural-urban migration after the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century has surely attracted most academic as well as public attention. These movements are mostly directed to Mérida – the capital of the state of Yucatan – or the tourist zone along the Caribbean coast in the state of Quintana Roo. The census data demonstrates the degree of urbanization within the state of Yucatan as well as the scale of the migration from Yucatan to Quintana Roo. Since at least the 1990s, more than 40 percent of the population of the state of Yucatan is concentrated in its capital, Mérida. The extent of the migration from Yucatan to the tourist zone of Quintana Roo is reflected in the fact – for example – that those born in the state of Yucatan constitute nearly 19 percent of the population in the municipality of Benito Juárez, where the city of Cancún lies (INEGI 2011a). However, the population movement not only manifests itself in a permanent change of residence. As will be illustrated later with the case of migration patterns from the municipality of Yaxcabá (see chapter 5.1.1), many people prefer to keep their residence at the place of origin, while working and staying in the city during the week. Therefore, the impacts of the urbanization are more diverse and greater than these figures suggest.

Migration behavior is likely to be explained based on the push factors of out-migration and the pull factors of in-migration. In the discussions on the indigenous city-ward migration, these factors tend to be mapped onto the countryside and the city, respectively, in line with the folk-urban continuum. In this framework, the migration is understood as a movement of “traditional people” from the “less-developed” countryside to the “developed” cities (Kearney

1986:333-338). The socioeconomic contexts of the rural-urban migration in the Yucatan peninsula can also be considered in this manner, with the agrarian crisis in the countryside as the push factor and the tourist trade along the Caribbean coast as the pull factor. As elaborated in chapter 2.2.2.3, the present research project is in fact critical of this modernist interpretation of urbanization. However, prior to presenting a more nuanced analysis based on my own data in chapter 5.1.1, the section provides a general overview of the situation, contrasting the socioeconomic conditions in the maize-cultivating zone of Yucatan and the contexts of tourism development in Quintana Roo.

### 3.1.1.1 Maize cultivation in the state of Yucatan

*Milpa* – maize cultivation in a system of slash-and-burn agriculture – is the traditional form of production in the Maya economy, which continues to play a significant role as a means of subsistence food supply, especially in the south and south-eastern parts of the state of Yucatan. Due to the local environmental conditions, this system of agriculture is primarily suited to produce maize and other comestibles such as beans and squash for subsistence needs. However, Redfield and Villa Rojas report that in the 1930s people in Chan Kom produced approximately twice as much maize as was locally consumed and the surplus production was converted in the towns, mainly into manufactured goods. Accordingly, a certain quantity of surplus corn was essential for the economic equilibrium (Redfield and Villa Rojas 1934:52-57). This observation contrasts with today's tendency of "infrsubsistence"<sup>123</sup>, whereby at present many *milpa* peasants in Yucatan even face difficulties in producing enough for their own consumption and thus that they increasingly rely on other income sources to satisfy their minimal subsistence needs (Castellanos 2010a:6f. cf. Schüren 1997:124 for the situation in Campeche).

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<sup>123</sup> Kearney defines "communities of 'infrsubsistence' peasants" as those "do not directly produce enough of an agricultural product for their own reproduction" (1996b:110f.). According to the author, the classical peasant community types have largely evolved to the units producing less than they consume (Kearney 1996b:110f., see also chapters 2.2.2.2 and 2.2.2.3).

Several factors should be taken into account to comprehend the current situation of infrasubsistence faced by many *milpa* peasants in Yucatan. First of all, changes in agroecological and demographic conditions should be mentioned. Scholars working in distinct regions of the peninsula report a decline in soil productivity, resulting in a considerable decrease in yield per hectare<sup>124</sup> (e.g. Schüren 1997). The low productivity of the soil is primarily attributed to shortened fallow periods due to demographic pressures. In order to compensate for the reduced soil productivity, efforts have been made to increase the yields with the aid of agrochemicals such as fertilizers and herbicides, which have increased the costs of agricultural production (Re Cruz 1996b:122, Baños Ramírez 2001:107f.). In addition to expenditures for production, the demand for cash has generally increased in the peasant households, ranging from payments of electricity bills, medical and travel expenses to the purchase of consumption goods and school supplies (Schüren 1997:126, Castellanos 2010a:7-9). Apart from ecological degradation and altered consumption behavior in the peasant households, certain political and economic developments at the national and international level have had unfavorable effects on the sustainability of traditional agriculture. The national economic crisis in the early-1980s also affected the *milpa* peasants in the state of Yucatan. While the costs of production as well as the prices of consumption goods were augmented through inflation, the price of corn controlled by the government remained at a fixed low level.<sup>125</sup> In addition, the financial crisis led to the reduction in agrarian support provided by the national government (Schüren 1997:127, Baños Ramírez 2001:106f., cf. Gaskins 2003:256f.).

At the political level, significant changes for the Mexican agricultural sector were introduced during the presidential term of Carlos Salinas de Gotari from 1988 to 1994. Giving a high priority to the national development, Salinas' administration promoted neoliberal policies that

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<sup>124</sup> Redfield and Villa Rojas speak of the average productivity at 0.84 tons per hectare in Chan Kom for 1931, although the people are said to expect an average yield of 1.05 tons per hectare or “a *carga* from each *mecate*” (1934:52). For comparison, the average mean production from 2003 to 2012 in Chan Kom was 0.55 tons per hectare. The calculation is based on the data of SIAP (2016).

<sup>125</sup> Baños Ramírez notes that the increase in yield with the aid of chemical fertilizers did not compensate for rising production costs due to inflation in the 1980s (2001:107).

avored the private sector. One of his major initiatives marking a radical break with Mexico's corporatist structure was the "reform" of the agrarian reform article 27 of the 1917 constitution, which effectively ended further land entitlements and allowed the privatization of *ejido* lands (Nash 2001:81-83). In the case of Yucatan, its impacts seem to be minor compared with the rest of the nation. Until today, it has not led to a large-scale privatization of communal land in the maize-cultivating zone of the state.<sup>126</sup> However, its consequences in the future remain to be seen as the new agrarian law de facto ended the agrarian reform, thus dismantling the *ejido* system.

The government's promotion to privatize the agricultural sector was also intended to pave the way for the ratification of North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) by Canada and the United States (Castellanos 2010a:31). The passage of the NAFTA in 1994 represented another cornerstone in a market-oriented agricultural policy pursued by the Mexican government during Salinas' administration. Although its impacts on Mexican maize farmers have been quite varied, depending on regional conditions (see e.g. Eakin et al. 2014), generally speaking the low price of corn paid to producers after the NAFTA has made maize sales unprofitable for many of Mexico's smallholders (see e.g. Schüren 1997:127). As a result, several researchers have observed that non-farm wage income has become increasingly important for rural households across the country (e.g. Eakin et al. 2014). On the other hand, it is reported that these smallholder producers rarely abandon maize farming altogether, but rather they often continue the cultivation to supplement their inadequate wage opportunities (Eakin et al 2014).

The complementarity of non-farm economic activities and corn production is also quite common among the *milpa* peasants in the maize-cultivating zone of Yucatan. Indeed, the *milpa* peasants in Yucatan had been used to conducting further economic activities such as apiculture, hunting, horticulture, livestock-keeping or occasional wage work during less labor-intensive

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<sup>126</sup> According to the 2007 census, about 90 percent of the *ejido* land remained communal in this region (INEGI 2009).

periods of annual agricultural cycles, even before the development illustrated in this section. However, in line with the tendency of smallholders across the country, dependence on non-farm wages in the peasant households has considerably increased in recent decades. In the case of Yucatan, as is well known, new unparalleled economic opportunities emerged through the tourism industry along the Caribbean coast to balance the economic challenges faced by the *milpa* peasants. Accordingly, in order to understand the context of migration from the maize-cultivating zone of Yucatan, the following section provides some general information on the tourism development in the region along the east coast of the peninsula, which now forms part of the Mexican state of Quintana Roo.

### 3.1.1.2 Tourism development in the Mexican Caribbean

The tourist resort of Cancún<sup>127</sup> was established in the sparsely-populated eastern region of the Yucatan peninsula as part of a new export-oriented economic development strategy driven by the nation-state (Torres and Momsen 2005:315).

The state's commitment to the tourism industry as a model for economic development has a long history in Mexico, beginning at the latest as early as the 1920s (Berger and Wood 2010:6). The Yucatan peninsula was integrated into the nation-state's tourism plan long before the construction of the tourist resort of Cancún. With support from the federal government, the region – featuring numerous archaeological sites and colonial cities – was transformed into a site for heritage tourism. However, in order to increase the number of tourists, the focus of the state-led tourism promotion shifted from heritage tourism to beach tourism during the presidency term of Miguel Alemán Valdes in the late-1940s (Berger and Wood 2010:8). This turn has significantly shaped the currently predominant form of export-oriented and

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<sup>127</sup> The account presented in this section focuses on the city of Cancún due to its initiatory role in the international tourism development in the Mexican Caribbean, as well as its significance as a destination of out-migration for the rural sites studied (see chapters 3.2.1 and 5.1.1). However, it is important to note that the tourism development has extended to the coastline south of Cancún promoted as “Riviera Maya”, resulting in rapid coastal urbanization represented by the growth of Tulum and Playa del Carmen.



mass-based tourism in Mexico (cf. Clancy 2001:132).

The beach resort in the Mexican Caribbean was also constructed in line with this orientation. Based on a three-year study by the *Banco de México* to identify possibilities for increasing foreign exchange earnings, the tourist resort of Cancún was designed and created in the 1970s from the ground up, along with four other facilities in the nation. As a carefully-planned tourism development, the Mexican state played a central role in promoting the industry. The first stage of infrastructure construction in Cancún was financed with 21.5 million dollars from the Inter-America American Development Bank (IDB). Soon after its first hotel opened in 1974, the planned tourism development began to bear fruit. As early as 1975, the resort registered the arrival of more than 27,000 foreign tourists (Clancy 2001:131-137). As the resort was established in the sparsely-populated area, workers were recruited from the surrounding countryside of the peninsula. For its initial construction phase, more than 6,000 workers had been engaged who lived in camps or squatted in the surrounding forest without access to basic infrastructure. Since it started to attract foreign tourists in 1974, Cancún experienced dramatic population growth (see Figure 2). With an increase in skilled jobs in services and construction between 1974 and 1977<sup>128</sup>, not only people from the rural area of the peninsula but also more experienced workers from other parts of Mexico migrated to Cancún (Castellanos 2010a:82f.).<sup>129</sup> As international arrivals to the resort grew at an average annual rate of 38 percent between 1975 and 1984 (Clancy 2001:135), the demand for both high- and low-skilled labor force increased by the early-1980s (Castellanos 2010a:82). Until the early-1990s, the tourism industry also offered possibilities for social mobility for low-skilled rural immigrants. Due to a labor shortage, hotel corporations were interested in training and educating their employees. This situation gradually changed in the late-1990s as

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<sup>128</sup> Between 1975 and 1979, the number of hotels increased from 9 to 42 (Clancy 2001:135).

<sup>129</sup> In 1974, the eastern part of the peninsula – which had previously been the federal territory since 1902 – became the free and sovereign state of Quintana Roo as it met minimum population requirements for statehood, partly owing to the immigration resulting from the establishment of Cancún.

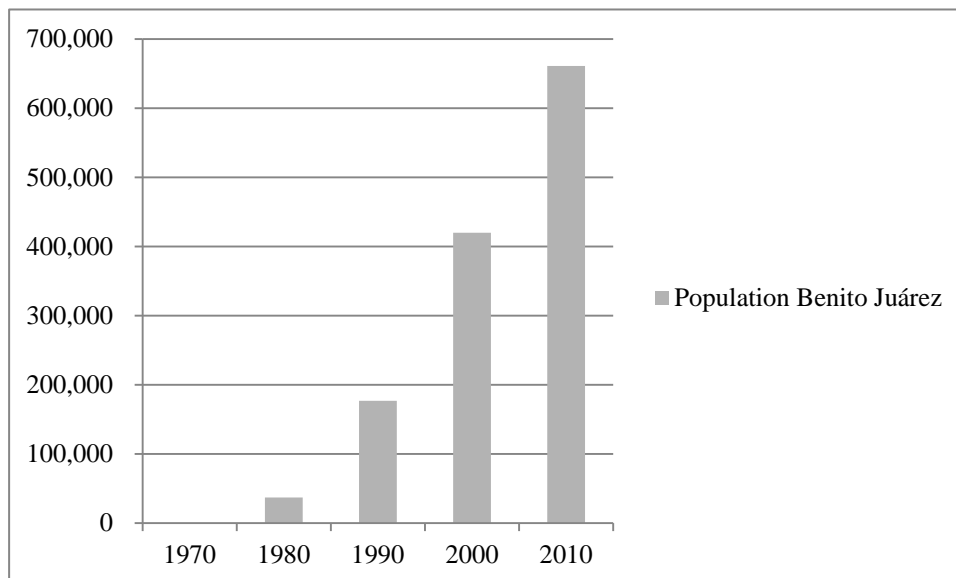
the increased immigration of workers from across the country led to a pool of surplus labor. Accordingly, while some of the early immigrants succeeded in the transition from low-skilled positions to skilled and professional jobs, those who recently arrived in Cancún from rural areas of the peninsula often found themselves stuck in low-wage jobs with a short-term contract (Castellanos 2010a:87).

From its initial construction phase, workers from rural Yucatan have played a significant part in the development of the tourist resort. According to census data, more than 35 percent of the population in the municipality of Benito Juárez in 1980 and 1990 were born in the state of Yucatan. To date, the proportion of immigrants from the state of Yucatan remains high (see Figure 3). However, the impacts of the tourist resort on rural Yucatan are much greater than these figures suggest, as a considerable proportion of the population involved in wage work in the tourist resort does not immigrate entirely to Cancún, but rather keeps residence at the place of origin. As mentioned above, *milpa* peasants have always been accustomed to making use of other production strategies to overcome the economic uncertainty of *milpa* agriculture. In this sense, wage work in the tourist resort was added to the repertoire of economic activities carried out to complement the *milpa* agriculture in the maize-cultivating zone of Yucatan (Re Cruz 1996a:299f.). Thus, out-migration and wage work conducted in this manner do not necessarily mean the abandonment of the *milpa* agriculture and hence a fundamental change in mode of production. However, it is observed that the young generation rather tend to regard wage work as a way of life without cultivating the *milpa* or even without acquiring the knowledge related to it, which indeed represents a break in tradition (cf. Re Cruz 1996a:305). In addition, increased female participation can be mentioned as a distinguishing feature of the rural-urban migration after the construction of the tourist resort, which often leads to a shift in gender roles and power relations, including in rural households (see e.g. Castellanos 2010a).

Although the tourism industry has created new income opportunities for rural households in

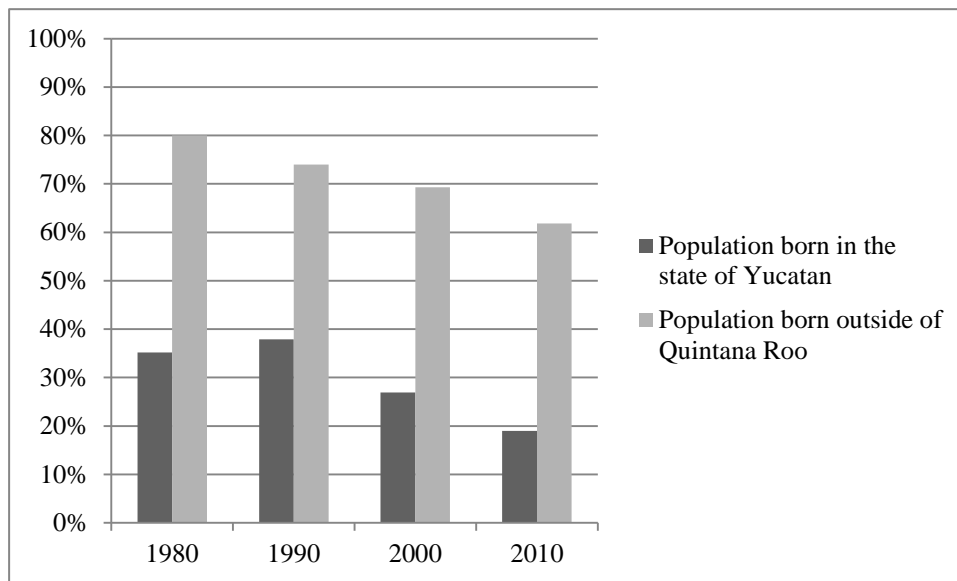
Yucatan, many of the jobs are low wage and based on seasonal short-term contracts with limited access to social mobility. Accordingly, dependence on such employment does not necessarily eliminate the economic insecurity attached to agricultural work (Castellanos 2010a:176f.). The vulnerability inherent to both the *milpa* agriculture and the tourism industry is often handled by Maya speakers through balancing the two economic activities, leading to frequent population movements between rural communities of Yucatan and Cancún.

As briefly addressed in the introduction, the recently-observed language shift from Yucatec Maya is – among other factors – often attributed to the above-presented regional developments, characterized by the increased interconnectedness of urban and rural spaces (e.g. Pfeiler 2014). The following section presents the language situation in Yucatan and discusses its articulation with the social changes partly demonstrated above.



**Figure 2 Population growth 1970–2010 in the in the municipality of Benito Juárez<sup>130</sup>**

<sup>130</sup> Based on the census data of INEGI.



**Figure 3 Proportion of the population born outside of the state of Quintana Roo in the municipality of Benito Juárez<sup>131</sup>**

<sup>131</sup> Based on the census data of INEGI.

### 3.1.2 Language situation of Yucatec Maya

The present section is devoted to the state of bilingualism in Yucatan. As the geographic mobility of the indigenous population is not a new phenomenon, the language contact has a long tradition since Yucatec Maya and Spanish came into contact with each other as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century, even before the conquest of Yucatan. Accordingly, the section first lays out the long history of language contact between Yucatec Maya and Spanish. Subsequently, it examines the current vitality of Yucatec Maya, also taking into account the socioeconomic developments described in the previous part.

#### 3.1.2.1 Language contact from a historical perspective

The language contact of Yucatec Maya and Spanish can be dated back even before the conquest of Yucatan beginning in 1527. One of the first indications of language contact can be found in the account of Bernal Díaz del Castillo. He reports the capture of natives taken to la Habana, where they learned Spanish to serve as first interpreters in the subsequent expedition of Juan de Grijalva in 1518 (Lentz 2009:140). However, it was not until the establishment of colonial rule after the conquest that the two languages came into contact with each other at a community level. Nonetheless, the contact was still limited during the colonial period. As the colonial authorities barely made an attempt to teach Spanish to the indigenous people, only a small proportion of the population had knowledge of Spanish language. Farris considers it a policy of convenience in part, since all those locally born could communicate with them without problem in Yucatec Maya (1984:111f.). In this sense, as she puts it: “More than a lingua franca, Maya was the primary language of all the colony’s native-born inhabitants of every caste” (1984:112). Mark Lentz even holds that the colonial period was characterized by the spread of Maya as the predominant language of Yucatan rather than its decline, pointing out that a surprising number of non-Mayas were in need of interpreters for legal processes in Spanish (2009). Especially in rural areas of the colony, many of the non-Maya population learned no

Spanish at all (Farriss 1984:112).<sup>132</sup>

The spread of Yucatec Maya among the non-Maya population was related to the function of the language during the colonial period. Although Spanish was introduced as the language of authority and control (Gabbert 2004:21), Yucatec Maya continued to serve as the main language in public life at the community level. In the religious domain, Yucatec Maya was the medium in which much prayer and religious practice took place. Considering the indigenous language as the vehicle for evangelization, the missionaries were not only committed to learning the language but also to producing the grammars, dictionaries and other descriptions of it (Hanks 2010:7, 10f.). On the other hand, the importance of the literal language for the community's public administration is attested by an extensive body of notarial documents written in Yucatec Maya with Latin alphabets. These documents were produced by native notaries who were integral to the local political structure<sup>133</sup> (Restall 1997). Focusing on this genre, Matthew Restall speaks of the "profound nativist implications of Maya literacy". Although the format of indigenous notarial records was largely Spanish, the Maya partly made use of them to defend the integrity and territory of the local community against colonial encroachment (1997:250). Perhaps also for this reason, while the political autonomy of the indigenous communities was severely undercut in the late-colonial period, Maya notarial activity continued into the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century after the end of colonial rule (Restall 1997:250).<sup>134</sup>

In sum, it can be stated that Yucatec Maya maintained its significance as the main language used in important domains of public life during the colonial period. Language contact through the conquest did not lead to the decline of the native language. On the contrary, Yucatec Maya

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<sup>132</sup> In this context, it is important to point to the rural-urban distinction in language competence. While a greater number of Maya in the city could speak and write Spanish compared with their rural counterparts, many of the non-Maya population in the rural areas of the colony only spoke Yucatec Maya (Lentz 2009:152).

<sup>133</sup> The political control of the community was in the hands of the *cabildo*, the town council constituted by the local Maya elites. See Restall (1997:51-83) for more information on the governing body of the indigenous local community during the colonial period.

<sup>134</sup> Restall even observes an upsurge in extant native documentation in the second half of the century (1720–1820), which is also related to the greater competition for land resulting from the expanding hacienda. The last Maya-language notarial document found so far is dated to 1851 (1997:246-250).

was also learned by the peninsula's non-Maya population, in many cases even as the first language. Despite the destruction of written Maya records by the colonizers, the Maya soon acquired the alphabet to keep records in their own language in accordance with Spanish legal practice. An extended body of extant notarial documents in Yucatec Maya suggests the continued importance of the literal language for the community's public administration as well as indigenous people's strategic use of the learned practices to protect their interests.

After independence, Yucatec Maya remained the *lingua franca*, also being spoken and even acquired as the first language by many of the non-Maya population, especially in rural areas and small towns of the peninsula (Gabbert 2004:77f.).<sup>135</sup> A significant decline in importance of the language in public life is only dated back to the 1940s by Gabbert (2004:107) and Pfeiler (2014:207), which is attributed to social developments after the Mexican Revolution, including lessening isolation of the region, official Hispanicization policies and the expansion of education in rural areas. These factors will be discussed later in the section, although first this section provides a general overview of the current sociolinguistic situation of Yucatec Maya, with a special reference to the state of Yucatan.

### 3.1.2.2 General overview of the current language situation

At present, Yucatec Maya is mainly spoken in the Mexican states of Yucatan, Quintana Roo and Campeche, as well as northern Belize. Counting more than 796,000 speakers in Mexico, it is the second most commonly-spoken indigenous language in the nation, after Nahuatl (INEGI 2011a.).<sup>136</sup> The state of Yucatan has the highest ratio of Yucatec Maya speakers among the general population in Mexico, with nearly 30 percent of the population older than five years

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<sup>135</sup> The language situation during the period from independence to revolution is a topic that has not been extensively studied to date. See Gabbert (2004:77f.) for some information on the language situation of Yucatec Maya during the period.

<sup>136</sup> Figures on language usage cited in the present work merely serve to provide a general overview of the situation. This census data on language usage should always be treated critically, as self-reports of language usage can deviate from actual language behavior and language competence, influenced by factors such as prestige, ethnicity and political affiliation (Romaine 2000:36).

speaking the language (INEGI 2011a).<sup>137</sup> Of these Maya speakers, 91.1 percent are bilingual in Spanish and Yucatec Maya, while 7.6 percent are monolingual in Maya (INEGI 2011a). In addition, 17.9 percent of non-Maya speakers older than three years in the state of Yucatan claim to have comprehension skills of the language, whereby they can be classified as passive bilinguals (INEGI 2011b).

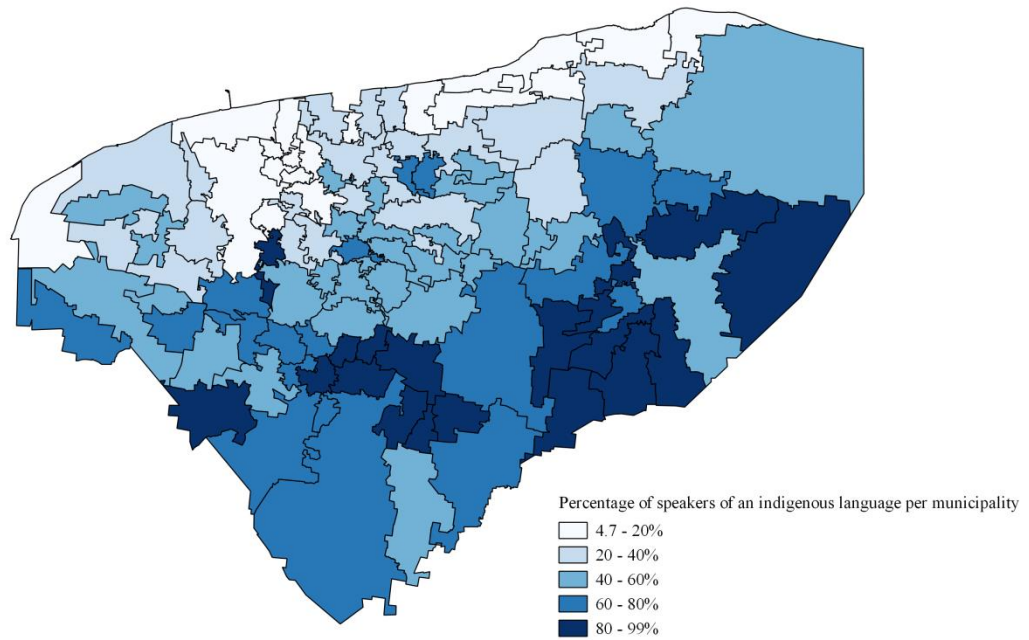
Within the state of Yucatan, the percentage of Maya speakers among the general population is the highest in the southern and south-eastern parts of the state (see Figure 4). This geographic distribution of the language is closely related to the socioeconomic activities carried out in distinctive regions (see Figure 5).<sup>138</sup> Generally, it is considered that Yucatec Maya is best maintained in the maize-cultivating zone of the state, characterized by the traditional agriculture. However, Pfeiler observes a proportional decrease in Maya speakers in the sub-region of this area compared with 1980 (2012:205).

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<sup>137</sup> The ratio of Maya speakers among the population older than five years in Mexico's main distribution area of the language are as follows: 29.9 percent in the state of Yucatan, 15.0 percent in the state of Quintana Roo and 9.6 percent in the state of Campeche (INEGI 2011a).

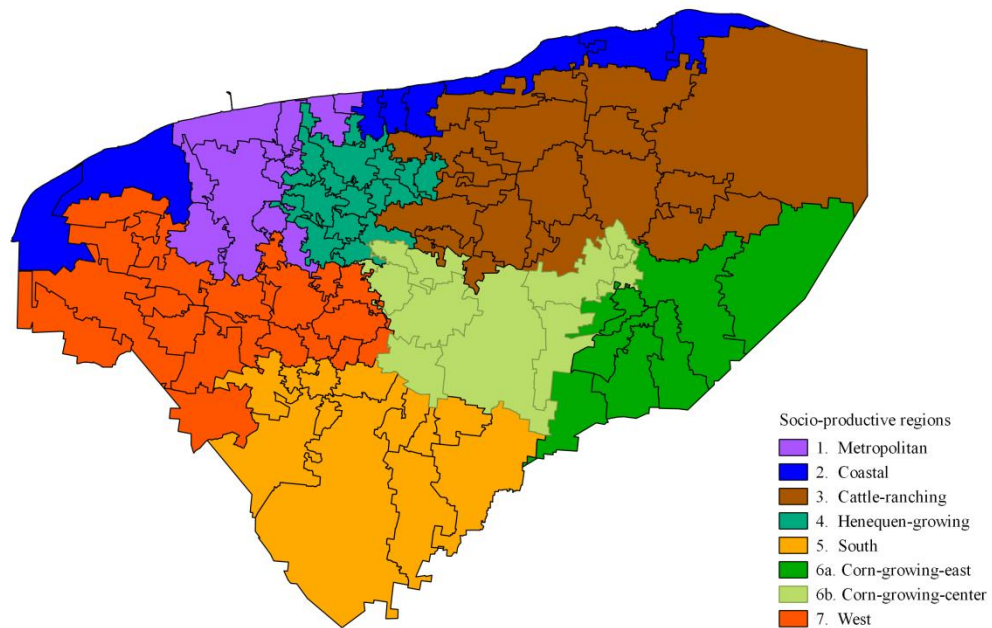
<sup>138</sup> According to García de Fuentes and Córdoba y Ordóñez (2010), the state of Yucatan can be divided into the following socio-productive regions based on demographic and agricultural characteristics: metropolitan, coast, cattle-ranching, henequen-growing, south, maize-growing and west.





**Figure 4 Geographic distribution of speakers of an indigenous language in the State of Yucatan<sup>139</sup>**

<sup>139</sup> The map represents the census data of INEGI (2011a). The map was developed by the author, based on the shapefile of INEGI (2014) with the aid of QGIS Geographic Information System.



**Figure 5 Socio-productive regions of the state of Yucatan (García de Fuentes and Córdoba y Ordóñez 2010)<sup>140</sup>**

While the absolute number of Maya speakers has not radically decreased thus far in Mexico<sup>141</sup>, several indicators of a possible language shift are found in the census data upon closer inspection. These are the proportional decline of Maya speakers in relation to the general population and the diminishment of Maya monolingualism (cf. Pfeiler and Zámešová 2006:282-284, Pfeiler 2014:210).

As has been argued in chapter 2.1.3, the proportion of speakers within the reference population offers a more precise picture of the actual language contact situation compared with the sheer number of speakers (see pp. 25). Indeed, changes in the constellation can be

<sup>140</sup> The map represents the socio-productive regions defined by García de Fuentes and Córdoba y Ordóñez (2010). See García de Fuentes and Córdoba y Ordóñez (2010) for a detailed description of each region as well as a more elaborated cartography. The map was developed by the author, based on the shapefile of INEGI (2014) with the aid of QGIS Geographic Information System.

<sup>141</sup> The absolute number of Maya speakers even continually increased until 2000 owing to high birth rates (INEGI 1980, 1990, 2000).

observed over periods of time as well as across generations. A comparison of the census data collected at different points in time reveals that the percentage of Maya speakers in relation to the general population is constantly declining in the state of Yucatan (see Figure 6). While Maya speakers represented the majority of the state's population in 1980 (INEGI 1980), the language is spoken by less than one-third of its population according to the latest census data (INEGI 2011a). The distribution of speakers among various generations suggests that the language transmission rate is possibly decreasing (see Figure 7). While more than half of people older than 55 years in the state of Yucatan claim to be speakers of an indigenous language<sup>142</sup>, among those younger than 20 years speakers constitute less than one-quarter of the population (INEGI 2011a).<sup>143</sup>

Another indicator of language shift identified from the census data is a decrease in both the number and proportion of monolingual Maya speakers over time. In 1970, monolingual Maya speakers made up 8.4 percent of the population older than five years in the state of Yucatan. After a drastic decline from 1980 to 1990, the rate amounted to 2.3 percent in 2010 (INEGI 1970, 2011a, see Figure 6). In addition, the latest census data demonstrates an uneven age distribution in Maya monolingualism in the state of Yucatan, with over one-quarter of monolingual speakers of an indigenous language<sup>144</sup> being older than 65 years<sup>145</sup> (INEGI 2011a, see Figure 8). Other than the general ratio of speakers among the reference population, the decline of monolingualism itself might not appear to threaten the vitality of minority languages. However, in the case of Yucatan, the presence of monolingual Maya speakers has

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<sup>142</sup> Due to the availability of data, this only refers to the percentage of speakers of an indigenous language (but not specifically Maya). However, in the case of the state of Yucatan, 98.7 percent of speakers of an indigenous language are Maya speakers (INEGI 2011a).

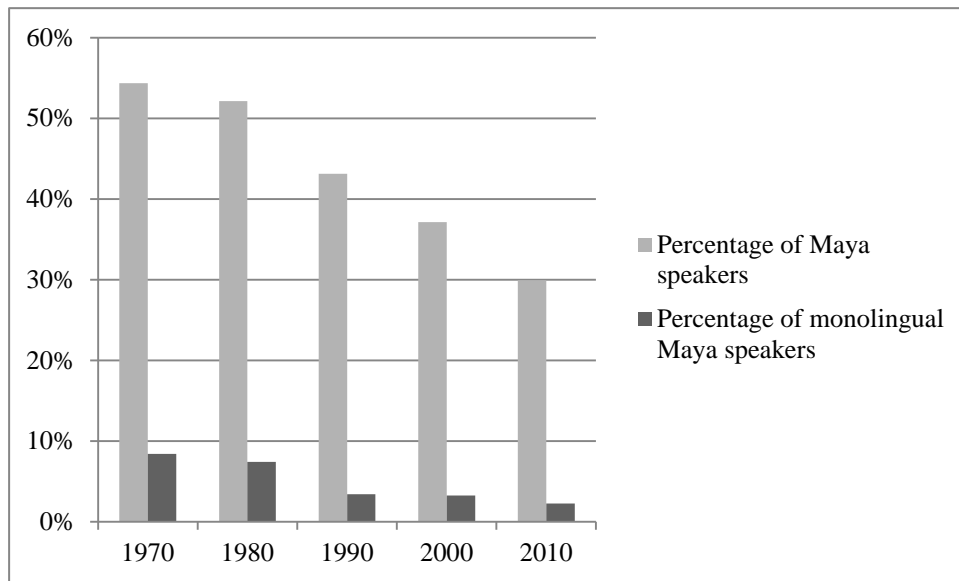
<sup>143</sup> The age-dependent variation in language use and language competence from a cross-sectional study does not necessarily indicate a language shift, given that patterns of language use and language competence might change across the life course (Fasold 1984:215, Saxena 2002:37f.). In the case of Yucatan, however, insights gained from the literature review (e.g. Pfeiler and Zámešová 2006:286) suggest that it is rather related to the declining language transmission rate.

<sup>144</sup> See footnote 142.

<sup>145</sup> This age group only makes up 6.9 percent of the total population of the state of Yucatan (INEGI 2011a, see Figure 8).

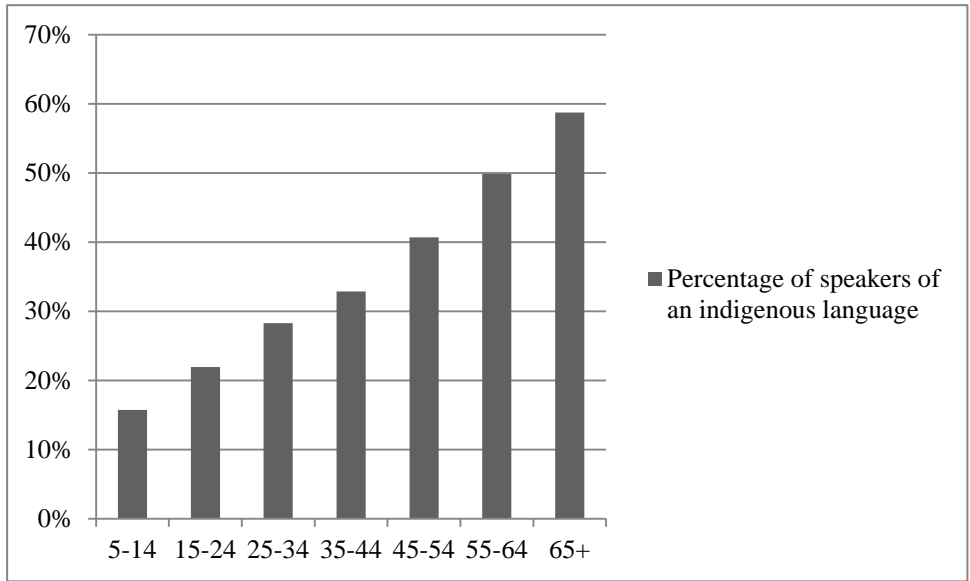
played a crucial role in language maintenance. For example, children's acquisition of Yucatec Maya usually depends on the degree of interactions that they have with monolingual speakers if they are spoken to in Spanish by their parents, which is becoming common practice today. Accordingly, as pointed out by Canché Teh, Pfeiler and Carrillo Carreón (2010), children's socialization in the extended family – which includes monolingual members – has contributed to the language maintenance of Yucatec Maya. However, this also implies that a decline of Maya monolingualism is likely to accelerate language shift, resulting in the loss of the domain that has been crucial for the acquisition of Yucatec Maya by children otherwise socialized in Spanish by their parents.

Based on the analysis of the census data, this section has presented a general overview of the current language situation. Although the absolute number of speakers remains high, the proportional decline of Maya speakers in relation to the general population and the diminishment of Maya monolingualism indicate an ongoing language shift in many communities of the state of Yucatan. In addition, the current age distribution of Maya speakers as well as monolingualism suggests that this shifting tendency is likely to continue in the future if nothing is done to arrest the progress. At the federal state level, demographic indicators of language shift can be found in the census data at the latest from 1970 onwards, although the decline in the significance of Yucatec Maya in public life possibly dates back to the 1940s (Gabbert 2004:107, Pfeiler 2014:207). Even though it is not possible to exactly determine the onset of language shift, there is a general consensus that changes in the language situation should be considered in a broader social context (see chapter 2.1.3). Accordingly, the following section considers the vitality of Yucatec Maya in relation to the regional transformations outlined at the beginning of the chapter.

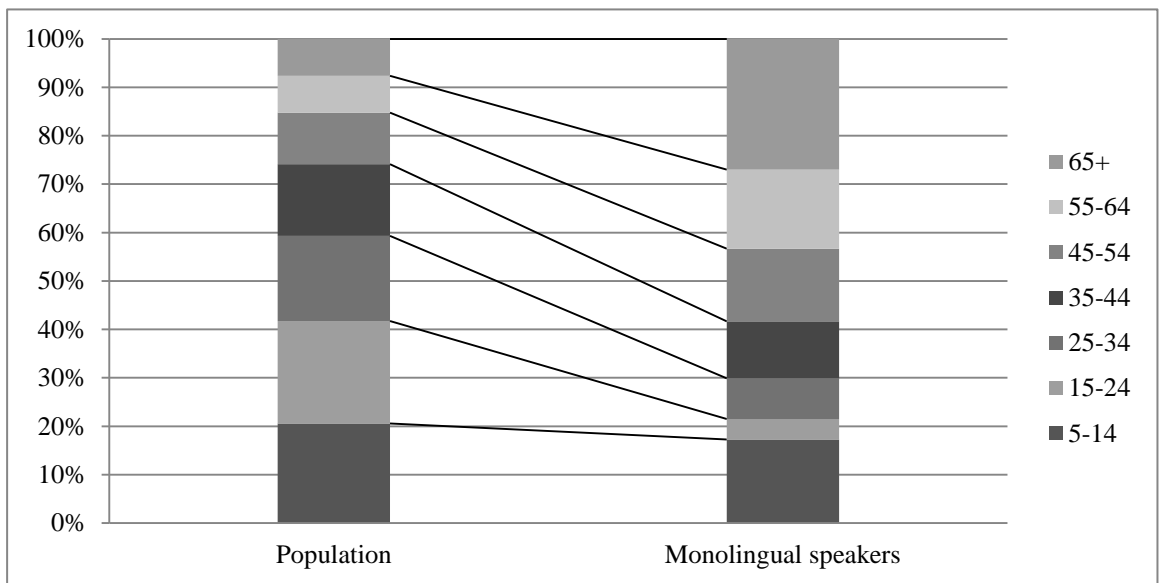


**Figure 6 Percentage of Maya speakers in relation to the general population in the state of Yucatan<sup>146</sup>**

<sup>146</sup> Based on the census date of INEGI.



**Figure 7** Distribution of Maya speakers among various generations in the state of Yucatan



**Figure 8** Distribution of monolingual speakers across age groups older than five years in the state of Yucatan

### 3.1.2.3 Vitality of Yucatec Maya in a social context

The present section discusses the current vitality of Yucatec Maya in a social context, contrasting factors considered to act in favor of language maintenance and those associated with language shift.

### **Factors favoring the maintenance of Yucatec Maya**

Pfeiler and Zámešová (2006) present factors that have long favored the vitality of Yucatec Maya from different perspectives, ranging from geography, dialectology and prescriptive linguistics to societal treatment of the language (cf. Haugen 1972).

First, they refer to the geographic distribution of Yucatec Maya speakers. As discussed in chapter 2.1.3, the concentration of speakers in a remote, isolated area is generally considered to represent a favorable condition for the maintenance of a minority language (see pp.25f.). This applied – to a certain degree – to the setting of the Yucatec Maya language until recent decades. Speakers reside geographically concentrated in the Yucatan peninsula, which has traditionally been inhabited by the same population. In addition, many rural communities were relatively isolated until the 1960s (Pfeiler and Zámešová 2006:285).

Second, they consider a small regional variation within the language and the existence of a standard norm as factors favorable for language maintenance (Pfeiler and Zámešová 2006:286). In this context, a highly-developed writing tradition of Yucatec Maya should be mentioned, which pre-dates the Spanish conquest and continues as alphabetic writing nearly through five centuries after the contact (for a discussion on the role of literacy for language maintenance, see chapter 2.1.3, pp. 29).

Finally, Pfeiler and Zámešová, point to the frequent reference made to the Maya cultural heritage in the mass media as well as foreign interest in the culture and language as factors positively influencing the language's vitality (2006:286).

Indeed, the improvement of language attitudes in favor of Yucatec Maya is observed in recent years. The importance of the language is approved not only by Maya speakers but also by many monolingual Spanish speakers (e.g. Sima Lozano 2011:75, Sima Lozano, Perales Escudero and Be Ramírez 2014:172). The reasons for their positive evaluation of the language are often twofold: first, residing in the state of Yucatan, they appreciate the practical advantages of being bilingual in Yucatec Maya and Spanish; and second, there seems to be a general consensus on

the cultural value of the language, especially if it becomes associated with the Maya cultural heritage.

The recent reevaluation of Yucatec Maya can also be seen as the outcome of the shift in the official language policy towards the recognition of the linguistic diversity (Sima Lozano, Perales Escudero and Be Ramírez 2014:172). At the national level, this new orientation is best manifested in the General Law on Linguistic Rights of Indigenous Peoples (*Ley General de Derechos Lingüísticos de los Pueblos Indígenas*), which has been in effect since March 2003. The law acknowledges the indigenous languages as “national languages” (*lenguas nacionales*) and thus places them on the same level as Spanish (LGDLPI, Chapter I, Article 4). The law stipulates the state’s commitment to the rights of speakers of national indigenous languages mainly in two areas, namely the right to obtain justice in one’s own language (Chapter II, Article 10) and the access of the indigenous population to basic bilingual and intercultural education (Chapter II, Article 11).<sup>147</sup>

Even long before the passing of the law, there were several official initiatives to promote the preservation and the use of indigenous languages. In the state of Yucatan, the institutional support manifests itself mainly in indigenous education, the Maya-speaking radio station managed by the national commission and the foundation of the state’s institute for promotion of Maya culture.

Use of the indigenous language in primary education has a long history in Yucatan, with the beginning of bilingual-bicultural education programs dating back to 1955 (Gabbert 2004:105, Pfeiler and Zámešová 2006:287). However, the instruction in Yucatec Maya was often only seen as a tool to facilitate the acquisition of the Spanish language (Pfeiler and Zámešová 2006:287). In the case of Yucatan, it was only after 1980 that importance was attached to the

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<sup>147</sup> Actually, chapter I of the law that sets down general guidelines on Mexican indigenous languages also refers to other issues to promote the languages, ranging from the acceptance of indigenous languages in public services and information to the use of the languages in the mass media. Pellicer, Cifuentes and Herrera regret that these are not covered in chapter II, which is devoted to the concrete formulation of the rights (2006:147, 149).



use, development and systematic learning of Yucatec Maya as the first language in indigenous primary education (Gabbert 2004:106), which should be seen in the context of the fundamental shift in the Mexican indigenism at the end of the 1960s. Today, indigenous primary education is implemented in two modalities in the state of Yucatan, namely Indigenous Intercultural Bilingual Education under the auspices of the *Dirección General de Educación Indígena* (DGEI) established in 1978 and the Program of Educational Assistance to the Indigenous Population initiated in 1996 under the auspices of the *Consejo Nacional de Fomento Educativo* (CONAFE).<sup>148</sup> In addition, Yucatec Maya began to be taught as the second language in urban primary and secondary schools with the “*Ko’ne’ex kanik maaya*” program in 1997 (Pfeiler and Zámešová 2006:295).

Besides its use in educational institutions, the presence of the language in the mass media is crucial for its vitality, given the current significance of broadcast media and the internet for many Maya speakers. Radio broadcasting in the Yucatec Maya language is well established in the state of Yucatan. The bilingual radio station XEPET, *La Voz de los Mayas* based in Peto<sup>149</sup> started its service in 1982. As was the case with indigenous education, the broadcasting was originally intended to support the hispanization programs of the Mexican government (Cru 2014:199). However, with the change in national indigenist policies, its objective also shifted to opening up the possibility for diverse cultural expressions of the Maya people (XEPET N.d.). To date, the service of the XEPET is used as an important information source by the Maya-speaking population, especially in rural areas of the state.

In order to promote language use, working on speakers’ attitudes is essential in addition to

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<sup>148</sup> Indigenous Intercultural Bilingual Education in Spanish and Yucatec Maya is available at bilingual pre-schools and elementary schools. In the 2013/2014 school year, 277 of 1,281 public pre-schools and 161 of 1,411 public elementary schools in the state of Yucatan belonged to the indigenous education system offering Indigenous Intercultural Bilingual Education (SNIEE 2014). The program by the CONAFE only serves communities ranging from fewer than 100 to 500 inhabitants in the state of Yucatan (Pfeiler and Zámešová 2006:289). For a comparative analysis of both modalities of the indigenous education, see Pfeiler and Zámešová (2006).

<sup>149</sup> With 20 other national radio stations transmitting their programs in indigenous languages, the XEPET belongs to the “*Sistema de Radiodifusoras Culturales Indigenistas*” network managed by the *Comisión Nacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas* (CDI).

securing the presence of the language in public domains. In this sense, the foundation of the “*Instituto para el Desarrollo de la Cultura Maya del Estado de Yucatán*” (INDEMAYA) in 2001 represents an important initiative of the federal state to encourage people to valorize the Yucatec Maya language.

This section thus far has presented the actions taken by the public authorities to secure the language’s vitality. Along with them, there have also been several civil initiatives concerned with language maintenance and revitalization (Pfeiler and Zámešová 2006:295). The first to be mentioned is the Academy of the Mayan Language (*Academia de la Lengua Maya de Yucatán, A.C.*) founded by the linguist Alfredo Barrera Vásquez in 1937. The academy worked on the elaboration of a scientifically-grounded alphabet for Yucatec Maya (Brody 2004:171) and has published two bilingual dictionaries in Yucatec Maya and Spanish. Speaking of civil initiatives, it is worth mentioning that the public institutes for promoting the Maya language and culture can also serve as a base for further civil organizations, enabling the networking of people concerned with linguistic and cultural maintenance. For example, the civil association “*Mayaón*” dedicated to Maya cultural issues is formed by a group of teachers of the indigenous education from the eastern region of the Yucatan.

Finally, there are increasing grassroots initiatives organized by speakers themselves to promote the language represented by production of the Maya-speaking soap opera “Baktun” and hip-hop and rap music in Maya, with the latter widely disseminated via social media.<sup>150</sup> Recognizing the shortcomings of institutional language policy and planning, Josep Cru considers this “horizontal planning” of language maintenance and revitalization essential in opening up new domains for language use and raising ethnolinguistic awareness especially among youngsters (2014:193, 223).

This section thus far has laid out the factors acting in favor of language maintenance. In

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<sup>150</sup> See Cru (2014:193-222) for an encompassing review of the grassroots initiatives aimed at promotion of the Yucatec Maya language.

addition to geographic and demographic conditions that have long been favorable for the vitality of Yucatec Maya, several initiatives to promote the language use have been taken by the public authorities, civil organizations and Maya speakers themselves. It is observed that the shift in the official language policy as well as several grassroots initiatives for language promotion are possibly taking effect, as manifested in improved people's attitudes towards the Yucatec Maya language (Sima Lozano, Perales Escudero and Be Ramírez 2014:172). On the other hand, the figures presented in the previous section rather indicate an ongoing language shift in many communities in the state of Yucatan. Accordingly, the following part considers the factors triggering or accelerating language shift from Yucatec Maya to Spanish.

### **Factors stimulating language shift**

As discussed in chapter 3.1.2.2, an analysis of the census data reveals a continual decline in the proportion of Maya speakers among the general population, as well as an uneven distribution of speakers across generations. Evidently, these figures alone are not reliable indicators of language shift. However, changing language transmission patterns reported by several researchers (e.g. Pfeiler and Zámešová 2006:295, Pfeiler 2014:211, 220, my own observation) indeed corroborate the shifting tendency indicated in the census data. Intergenerational language transmission is the most commonly-used factor in evaluating its vitality. The UNESCO document even categorizes a language as “definitively endangered” if it is no longer acquired as the first language by children at home (2003:8). Accordingly, the section considers factors that apparently motivate parents in the state of Yucatan to socialize their children in the Spanish language. The discussion pays special attention to two issues commonly associated with this development, namely the insufficient presence of Yucatec Maya in public domains and the rapid urbanization in the Yucatan peninsula.

As discussed in chapter 2.1.3 (see pp. 27f.), the presence of the language in important public domains is generally considered essential for language maintenance. It is true that the

functional differentiation of the languages itself does not necessarily lead to a language shift as indicated by the notion of diglossia (see chapter 2.1.2.1). However, as living conditions change, new domains for language use may emerge or the formal domains reserved for the dominant language may gain in importance, including for people's daily lives, which can lead to a collapse of the orderly co-existence of the two languages (cf. UNESCO 2003:9-12). This may partly explain the currently-observed tendency of language shift from Maya. In the case of Yucatan, the indigenous language is not sufficiently represented in public domains such as mass media and school education, which have become increasingly important for Maya speakers in urban and rural areas alike.

Meanwhile, most communities in the state of Yucatan have access to electricity and in many of them an internet connection is available. Accordingly, unlike the society documented by Redfield in the 1930s, mass media can influence people's social lives with information coming from elsewhere regardless of the distance to the city (cf. Pfeiler 2014:210f.). Despite its influences in many Maya-speaking communities, the adaptation of the language to the mass-mediated communication has been marginal thus far, with an exception of radio presented above. The television and the internet are mainly used in Spanish, which has enhanced people's exposure to the language, including in rural areas. Other than paper-based or traditional electronic media, social media can provide a new platform for the use of Yucatec Maya and open up a new form of cultural representation due to its participatory architectures (Cru 2014:205). Despite several examples of usage<sup>151</sup>, the fact that Yucatec Maya literacy is not universally spread among speakers (Brody 2004:105) is probably inhibiting the wider use<sup>152</sup> of the language in this new domain.<sup>153</sup>

The other Hispano-dominated domain to which people significantly attach more importance

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<sup>151</sup> See Cru (2014:206-214) for an analysis of the use of Maya among university students on Facebook.

<sup>152</sup> According to Cru, new electronic media is actively used in the indigenous language, especially by those Maya speakers committed to its promotion and/or concerned about its future vitality (2014:205).

<sup>153</sup> Of course, social media represented by Facebook and YouTube – probably the two most important platforms for Maya speakers – enable embedding multimedia content. As has been mentioned (see pp. 116), these are used to disseminate content in Maya such as music in which orality plays a key part (Cru 2014:214).

in recent decades is school education. Preparation for schooling is perhaps the most common motive referred to by parents to explain their language behavior of addressing their pre-school children in Spanish (my own observation). According to Pfeiler and Zámešová, more than two-thirds of Maya-speaking school-age children attend general education programs rather than bilingual ones (2006:288). Furthermore, even in the case of schools adopting the bilingual system, the implementation of this education generally depends on the teacher's initiatives (cf. Pfeiler and Zámešová 2006)<sup>154</sup>. Therefore, it is often the case that parents sending their children to this type of school are similarly concerned with their children's ability to follow teachers' instructions in Spanish. Parental decisions on language socialization patterns are closely related to the increased importance that Maya-speaking parents attach to school education. Many parents in the maize cultivation zone of Yucatan do not wish their children to continue the farm work as they do, but rather to have a profession that is less physically demanding and precarious (see chapter 5.3.2.1). In this context, school education and fluency in the Spanish language are considered as key to access such jobs. In the past, many children in the rural areas dropped out of school before completing primary education (e.g. Gaskins 2003:255). Nowadays, according to census data from 2010, over half of 19 year-olds continued education after graduating from junior high school (*secundaria*) in the state of Yucatan (INEGI 2011a). As the indigenous education has not been introduced at the level of secondary education, the extended schooling carried out exclusively in Spanish tends to further advance the hispanization of children and youth in Maya-speaking communities.

In addition to their concern for children's upward mobility, the difficulty that the parents' generation experienced in communicating with Spanish-speaking professionals such as teachers, doctors and public officers also influences their attitudes towards the transmission of

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<sup>154</sup> See e.g. Pfeiler and Zámešová (2006) for more information on challenges for Indigenous Intercultural Bilingual Education in the state of Yucatan. Pfeiler and Zámešová claim that the program has not contributed to language maintenance. By contrast, they consider its outcome to be "Hispanization through the use of linguistic centrism" in the communities they investigated (2006:289, 294).

Yucatec Maya to the next generation.

Besides the insufficient presence of Yucatec Maya in public domains, the rapid urbanization in the Yucatan peninsula is commonly referred to as a major factor stimulating language shift to Spanish (e.g. Pfeiler 1997:55, 2014:211).<sup>155</sup> Redfield already linked culture change in Yucatan to the lessening isolation of rural communities resulting from increased contact and communication with the city of Mérida (chapter 2.2.2.1). As demonstrated in the first part of the present section, the rural-urban relations nowadays are much more intensive and complex than during Redfield's time, whereby a differentiated analysis is required to examine the impacts of urbanization on the language's vitality. Above all, they are characterized by polycentrism (cf. Moßbrucker 1994:184-189) and the increased mobility of the indigenous population, enabled through the improved transport infrastructure. Immigration from the rural areas of the peninsula has led to the rapid growth of the two major urban centers, Mérida and Cancún, both counting more than 600,000 inhabitants according to census data of 2010 (INEGI 2011a). Mainly owing to the influx of the population from the formerly henequen-growing zone, the city of Mérida recorded a dramatic increase in population during the 1970s, the same decade in which the tourist center of Cancún was constructed (see chapter 3.1.1.2 for further information on the development of Cancún).

In both Mérida and Cancún, it has been observed that Maya-speaking urban immigrants tend to reduce their use of Yucatec Maya and cease transmitting the language to the next generation (Moßbrucker 1992:198, Yamasaki 2010:78f for Mérida, Sierra Sosa 2007:196-209 for Cancún). In the case of Cancún, given that over 40 percent of the population is born outside of the peninsula (INEGI 2011a)<sup>156</sup>, a high frequency of linguistic exogamy is expected, which makes the transmission of Yucatec Maya in the urban household even more difficult. On the other hand, the city of Mérida rather represents a regional center, with over 83 percent of the population

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<sup>155</sup> See Sánchez Arroba (2009) for the impacts of the tourism development and urbanization in the Mexican Caribbean on Maya-speaking communities in Quintana Roo.

<sup>156</sup> Due to the availability of the data, the figure refers to the whole municipality of Benito Juárez.

born in the state of Yucatan (INEGI 2011a)<sup>157</sup>. Notwithstanding, in most cases migration leads to the diminished use of Yucatec Maya and the failure in transmission of the language, including by Maya speakers in Mérida (Moßbrucker 1992:198, Yamasaki 2010:78f).

In consideration of the current dynamics of rural-urban migration in the peninsula (see pp. 94), the shifting tendencies of urban immigrants alone must have considerable impacts on the language vitality of Yucatec Maya. Furthermore, as argued in the first part of the present section, the rural and urban spaces of the peninsula are interconnected through frequent population movements, which are by no means limited to total immigration to the cities. Although the outcomes of the interconnection do not always have to be negative for language maintenance, the orientation of many Maya speakers to urban employment can change language transmission patterns at the expense of Yucatec Maya, including in rural households.

Evaluating the impacts of urbanization on the vitality of Yucatec Maya, it is important to pay attention to people's association of the two languages with certain forms of living. Despite the strong presence of Maya speakers in the cities (see chapter 3.2.2), Yucatec Maya is still associated with a rural way of life and peasantry, which are considered backward and inferior compared with urban life by many city dwellers (Gabbert 2001:272f). According to this way of thinking, Spanish may be considered the only adequate language in the urban environment. It has previously been highlighted that language attitudes have improved in favor of Yucatec Maya in recent years (pp. 117). However, this notion should be critically examined if one considers that the two languages are still mapped onto the city and the countryside, respectively, being valued based on their hierarchically-conceived relationship.

In order to understand this ambivalent situation, it is necessary to carefully examine the concept of language attitudes. Attitudes towards Yucatec Maya might appear predominantly positive based upon the fact that there is meanwhile a widespread consensus on the cultural value of the language. However, in order to assess the impacts on the language's vitality, it is

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<sup>157</sup> Due to the availability of the data, the figure refers to the whole municipality of Mérida.

important to know what sense people make of these positive attitudes in their daily lives, as well as how they ultimately translate them into behavior leading to language maintenance. Upon closer inspection, there are indeed several indicators of the discrepancy between the commonly-expressed attitudes toward the language and the way in which speakers deal with the language in their everyday lives. In the case of Yucatec Maya, the disparity is manifested in at least three ways, namely the distinction between the language and its speakers, between two varieties of Yucatec Maya and finally among different kinds of language behavior. It means that general attitudes towards the language – which might predominantly be positive – can deviate from those towards its speakers as a social group, a commonly-spoken variety of the language and certain kinds of language behavior. This essential issue for considering the language's vitality will be elaborated in chapter 5 based on my own data and subsequently discussed in chapter 6.

This chapter thus far has provided general information on indigenous migration and bilingualism in the broader region of Yucatan. The following section introduces the research sites of the present project and demonstrates how the above-illustrated developments manifest themselves in particular localities.

### 3.2 Introduction to the Research Sites

Following the discussion of general tendencies in the region, this section introduces the research sites in which fieldwork for the present project was conducted. The study included four research sites, namely two rural communities in the municipality of Yaxcabá and the cities of Mérida and Cancún (see chapter 4.1). Taking the approach of multi-sited ethnography, the research was concerned with the interconnectedness of the sites rather than the “holistic knowledge” of a particular location (cf. Gupta and Ferguson 1997:37). Therefore, instead of giving a comprehensive description, the presentation will focus on aspects considered especially relevant for the project.



### 3.2.1 The municipality of Yaxcabá

The municipality of Yaxcabá is located at the heart of the maize-cultivating zone of the state, bordering Sudzal, Tunkás and Dzitás in the north and Tahdziú, Peto and Chikindzonot in the south. Adjacent municipalities also include Sotuta and Cantamayec to the west and Chankom and Tinum to the east of the municipality. The municipality contains more than 50 settlements in its extensive territory of over 1,400 square kilometers. Most populated among them – with more than 1,000 inhabitants – are Yaxcabá, which is the municipal seat (*cabecera*), and the communities of Tixcacaltuyub, Tahdzibichén, Libre Unión and Tiholop, all of which are districts of the municipality (*comisaría*s). Apart from these localities and a few other districts such as Yaxunah, the municipality comprises a number of small settlements with fewer than 500 inhabitants.

In general, the localities in the municipality share the typical features of rural Maya communities, which are the *milpa* agriculture conducted as the main socioeconomic activity and the Yucatec Maya language spoken across the municipality. However, the importance of maize cultivation in the local economy as well as the degree of bilingualism differ from community to community, which is unsurprising if the geographical extension of the municipality is taken into account. Furthermore, the communities' accessibility varies to a significant degree. This is above all influenced by their distance to the federal highway 180, which connects important places in the peninsula including the cities of Mérida and Cancún. The access to the main communication route is a factor that strongly determines people's migration behavior and hence their dependence on wages from urban employment in relation to the *milpa* agriculture, the traditional mode of production. Moreover, the community's language situation seems to be roughly correlated with its accessibility. It can be observed that Yucatec Maya is rather maintained in the localities that are difficult to access from the cities, while the communities located directly along the federal highway are characterized by a relatively low percentage of Maya speakers (INEGI 2011c). If turning away from traditional

agriculture and the language shift were considered indicators of the disorganization of culture, the above-mentioned variance within the municipality seems to fit Redfield's folk-urban model of sociocultural change (see chapter 2.2.2.1). However, one should be cautious about simply adopting his ahistorical view because differences among the communities are surely not only attributed to the degree of contact and communication with the urban centers of the peninsula. This is especially the case with the geographically-extensive municipality of Yaxcabá containing settlements that once belonged to different administrative entities. For example, communities such as Tixcaltuyub, Tahdzibichén and Tiholop – all registered since the early colonial period – have historically maintained ties with distinctive regional centers (Lizama Quijano 2007:42). Until today, the network of intercommunity relations in Yaxcabá is characterized by a formation of clusters mainly based on the geographic location, which partly even cross the boundaries of the municipality. Accordingly, while the access to the federal highway seems to significantly influence the mode of production and hence cultural reproduction today, it is inadequate to assume the stasis and the homogeneity of the communities in Yaxcabá prior to the latest development.

While out-migration and turning away from traditional agriculture is one feature shared by many communities of the municipality, marginality is the other commonly-mentioned keyword to describe the current socioeconomic situation of the area. According to the estimation of CONAPO, Yaxcabá is classified as a municipality revealing a “high” (2016) or “very high” (2012) degree of marginalization. Of course, the municipality's rating in the marginalization index is partly attributed to the region's main socioeconomic activity, namely smallholder agriculture primarily aimed at subsistence. However, it is important to note that those from Yaxcabá have also integrated in the global economy, as labor forces often participate in these interactions from an unfairly disadvantaged position (Lizama Quijano 2007:52f.). In this respect, the municipality characterized by “poverty” and “marginality” is considered “like any other Maya municipality” by Jesús Lizama Quijano (2007), who

conducted ethnographic research in three communities of Yaxcabá guided by the question “How do the Maya experience and suffer from the globalization?” (2007:52). The present research concerned with language vitality builds upon this research question and examines how this specific way in which people are linked to the global economy influences cultural reproduction or – more specifically – the language maintenance of Yucatec Maya in the municipality of Yaxcabá.

In order to approach the research question, the study focused on two communities of the municipality – Yaxcabá and Tiholop – which currently feature different kinds of connections with the cities, as well as a varying degree of bilingualism. Apart from this, the communities – both registered since the early colonial period – have their own historical trajectories since they have also maintained relations with distinctive neighboring localities. The following part briefly presents each of the communities, paying special attention to their peculiarities with respect to traditional agriculture, connections and the language situation.

### 3.2.1.1 Yaxcabá

Counting slightly over 3,000 inhabitants (INEGI 2011c), Yaxcabá is the seat of the municipality bearing the same name. As the municipal seat, it is frequented by people from various smaller communities of the municipality arriving to complete formularies, attend educational institutions at secondary level, see a doctor or simply being in transit to travel to the cities.

Its public education covers from pre-primary education up to upper secondary level. It has two pre-schools, two elementary schools, one junior high school and one high school (COBAY). Of these educational institutions, only one of the two pre-schools belongs to the indigenous education system. The rest of the schools offer a regular curriculum without special attention to the indigenous language. The high school (COBAY) is attended by pupils from the whole municipality, commuting to Yaxcabá on a daily basis.

During the time of the fieldwork, internet connection was available at the community’s library,

as well as one cybercafé. In addition, a free Wi-Fi hotspot was established in and around the building of the municipal palace during the fieldwork. A few families also had an internet connection at home. The large area of the community was covered by the mobile phone network.

As previously mentioned, the distance to the federal highway 180 is an important factor determining people's migration behavior. The distance between Yaxcabá and the federal highway measures at 18 kilometers. From Yaxcabá, there is direct transportation to Mérida as well as Cancún on a daily basis. At the time of the fieldwork, there were two busses and several share taxis heading for and coming from Mérida every day, while there was one bus a day directly going to and coming from Cancún. The travel time to Mérida amounts to three hours by bus and about 90 minutes by shared taxi. By contrast, the bus ride to Cancún takes about five hours. There were frequent population movements between the community and the cities. At the time of the fieldwork, weekly commuting to Mérida was the most common pattern of out-migration. The majority of those who commuted to Cancún only returned to the community every second weekend (for further information, see chapter 5.1.1.1).

Yaxcabá is a heterogeneous community, contradicting the popular image of a peasant village characterized by homogeneity and the integrity of "culture" (cf. Redfield 1941). This is remarkable if one considers that 65 percent of those economically active in Yaxcabá continue to work in the primary sector of the economy, mainly cultivating maize in the *milpa* system of agriculture (Pérez Ruíz 2015:73). This particular way of making use of natural resources has long been and – to a certain degree – continues to be a feature that binds together the inhabitants, sharing the same ecological environment. Notwithstanding, complex patterns of social differentiation can be observed in today's Yaxcabá that are not merely of recent origin. At present, social divisions in Yaxcabá manifest themselves in multiple ways. Besides the traditional categorization, these are also represented by differences in guiding principles for agricultural production (Pérez Ruíz 2015:123f., cf. Wolf 1955:454), strategies to cope with

“change” in recent decades and patterns of language choice, to name just a few. In order to understand social inequality in present-day Yaxcabá, it is essential to consider the complex ways in which traditional categorization based on descent is interpreted by its population in the face of modern conditions. Alluding to the historical dimension of social inequality is not to mention that social categories have been static in Yaxcabá since colonization. It is true that the classification pattern established in the colonial period – albeit reduced in importance and modified in its form – still persists in society (Pérez Ruíz 2015). Especially among those members of the older generation, the descent discernible through surnames is still considered a distinguishing feature which – albeit to a lesser extent than in the past – continues to influence the social life of inhabitants ranging from daily interactions to marriage behavior (Pérez Ruíz 2015, my own observation). Today, this categorical differentiation is losing ground, especially among younger generations (Pérez Ruíz 2015, my own observation). However, the inequalities often persist in the form of socioeconomic differences, which have possibly even further developed due to new economic opportunities resulting from the intensification of global interactions. For Yaxcabeños, these implicated – above all – the export of locally-produced honey and out-migration to the tourist city of Cancún. Indeed, more often than not, it is those already privileged who benefit from these new possibilities, since access to them depends on the accumulated capital in its materialized or embodied forms (cf. Bourdieu 1986[1983]). The latter is not restricted to skills and knowledge acquired through formal education, but – as indicated above – also encompasses the general disposition towards profit-making, which is significantly transmitted in the family. Apart from material inheritance, this “hidden form of hereditary transmission” (Bourdieu 1986[1983]) seems crucial in reproducing the old social structure characterized by divisions based on descent in present-day Yaxcabá. Although descent has been mentioned as a distinguishing feature, it is important to note that social differentiation in Yaxcabá cannot be described in terms of a simple dichotomy between those bearing Spanish surnames and those with Maya counterparts. Characterized by the occurrence

of mix marriages and internal differentiation, the social structure in Yaxcabá after the conquest has always been more complex than the stratification into the two supposedly-distinct “groups”. Moreover, it has recently become further diversified through new educational and economic opportunities from which people could benefit to a varying degree. Accordingly, a view on the heterogeneous society of Yaxcabá reveals that the existing social inequalities cannot be explained merely as the remnant of the colonial structure. On the other hand, it is neither the case that the classification in present-day Yaxcabá is made solely based on individual socioeconomic achievement. Both ideologically and materially, the old social divisions are partly reproduced, which is currently manifested – for example – in the different ways in which people participate in and benefit from global interactions.

The heterogeneity of society is also indicated by its language situation. According to the census data, Yucatec Maya<sup>158</sup> is spoken by about 62 percent of the population older than five years in the municipal seat of Yaxcabá (INEGI 2011c). As is generally the case with communities experiencing language shift, the variance among the population is primarily age-dependent. While both Yucatec Maya and Spanish are used for communication within the community, the use of Spanish predominates in generations aged under 30. When it comes to adolescents and children, the majority have either only passive or no command of Yucatec Maya (my own observation). However, the variance in language competence and behavior can also be observed in the same age groups, suggesting varying patterns of language transmission in the families. At present, Yucatec Maya is best maintained in those households continuing the cultivation of *milpa*, while in some other families typically not dedicated to the *milpa* agriculture in the present the transmission of Yucatec Maya seems to have stopped a long time ago. Although the latter families are more likely to have Spanish surnames, ethnic

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<sup>158</sup> The census only refers to the percentage of speakers of an indigenous language (but not specifically Maya). However, as mentioned in footnote 142, in the case of the state of Yucatan more than 98 percent of speakers of an indigenous language are Maya speakers (INEGI 2011a). Furthermore, based upon my own observation, hardly any speakers of other indigenous languages can be found in Yaxcabá.

division – understood in a primordial sense – is not an adequate way to explain the current sociolinguistic situation in Yaxcabá for the following reasons. First, as has been generally the case in the Yucatan peninsula after the conquest (see chapter 3.1.2.1), Yucatec Maya has long been the language used for communication among those born in Yaxcabá regardless of descent, although some of them might have acquired it as their second language. Second, there seems to be – at least roughly speaking – a broad consensus on the cultural value of the language. Yucatec Maya is appreciated as a diacritic of the regional identity by many of the inhabitants, regardless in which family they have been socialized. Therefore, in order to understand the current state of bilingualism in Yaxcabá, it seems important to pay special attention to subtle variances in the meaning and function attached to the two languages among the population, instead of insisting on rigid ethnic division.

### 3.2.1.2 Tiholop

Tiholop – a district (*comisaría*) of the municipality – is located about 33 kilometers south of the municipal seat of Yaxcabá (*cabecera*). With nearly 1,500 residents, its population is approximately half as large as the municipal seat (INEGI 2011c). Although there is an asphalted road that connects the two sites and other localities on the way, its conditions were so poor during the time of the fieldwork that bus ride from one place to the other could take over an hour.

Since recently, its public education also covers from pre-primary education up to the upper secondary education. It has one pre-school, one elementary school, one junior high school and one high school (COBAY), officially inaugurated in 2016.<sup>159</sup> The elementary school of Tiholop belongs to the system of indigenous education, with a part of the teaching staff being bilingual in Maya and Spanish.

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<sup>159</sup> At the time of the fieldwork, the junior high school – without its proper building at that time – was requesting an official acknowledgment. The school building was officially inaugurated in 2016.

With respect to the telecommunication infrastructure, mobile phone coverage was restricted to some particular points in the community and the majority of households were not equipped with a landline at the time of the fieldwork. Indeed, it was not until recently – in fact, during the fieldwork – that an internet connection became available for the general public through a free Wi-Fi hotspot in and around the building of the *comisaría*.

The distance between the community and the federal highway is over 50 kilometers. At the time of the fieldwork, there were two busses heading for and returning from Mérida on a daily basis, with a travel time of about four hours. There was no direct transportation to Cancún. However, at least on the way to the city, there was a smooth connection in Yaxcabá between the bus from Tiholop heading for Mérida and the one leaving Yaxcabá for Cancún every day early in the morning. The travel time was about seven hours overall.

As Tiholop belongs administratively to the municipality of Yaxcabá, there is also regular traffic between the community and the municipal seat. People from Tiholop occasionally have to travel to Yaxcabá to complete formalities and some even commute on a daily basis, usually being students visiting the high school (COBAY) in Yaxcabá or those holding public office in the municipal council. However, Tiholop is also affiliated with other neighboring localities in the south. Although it might seem like an out-of-the-way place seen from the municipal seat, it serves as a local center for surrounding smaller settlements. In addition, it also maintains close relations with communities outside of the municipality of Yaxcabá. Its current affiliation with Chikindzonot, Peto and Tahdziú – which are today the seats of respective municipal governments – can possibly be traced back to the historical political geography of the region (Lizama Quijano 2007:15, 42).

The above-indicated geographic location and accessibility have also significantly determined migration patterns and kinds of connections that people have developed with the cities. As in Yaxcabá, male labor migration to Mérida is quite common and normally occurs on a weekly basis, whereby the impacts are especially noticeable on the weekend when the



migrants return to Tiholop with their wages. Owing to the distance and lack of direct transportation, regular commute to Cancún is barely possible from Tiholop. For the same reason, visits of those who have immigrated to the city are much less frequent than in Yaxcabá. Moreover, unlike the situation in the municipal seat, return migration from the cities is rather rarely observed, with the exception of some individual cases. In sum, the migrant circuit between Tiholop and the cities shows less intensity and complexity of population movement compared with Yaxcabá, which can surely be partly attributed to its location and transportation system (see chapter 5.1.1.2). In addition, for those in Tiholop, at the time of my fieldwork it was more difficult to keep in regular contact with emigrants in the cities, owing to the relatively meager telecommunication infrastructure in the community. Thus, with respect to both the transportation system and telecommunication infrastructure, the community of Tiholop is characterized by a higher degree of isolation. If Redfield's line of argument were to be adopted, one would also expect a homogeneity and organization of culture there.

Indeed, the centrality of the traditional agriculture is maintained to a greater extent in Tiholop compared with Yaxcabá, which will be discussed in chapter 5.3.2.1. Furthermore, the language situation seems much more homogeneous in Tiholop, with Yucatec Maya spoken by over 96 percent of the population older than five years according to the census data (INEGI 2011c).<sup>160</sup> The homogeneity indicated in the figures also corresponds with the impression that one gains upon arrival in the community. Yucatec Maya is the language used for overall communication and Spanish is hardly heard, except in interactions with small children (my own observation). The continuity in these and other aspects of everyday life is also recognized as a distinguishing feature by the inhabitants of the municipality, as reflected in their conception of Tiholop as one of the most traditional communities (Lizama Quijano 2007:15,

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<sup>160</sup> The census only refers to the percentage of speakers of an indigenous language (but not specifically Maya). However, as mentioned in footnote 142, in the case of the state of Yucatan, more than 98 percent of speakers of an indigenous language are Maya speakers (INEGI 2011a). Furthermore, based upon my own observation, hardly any speakers of other indigenous languages can be found in Tiholop.

my own observation). Although all of this seems to corroborate Redfield's explanation of sociocultural change, there are several factors to be considered before reducing the differences between the communities to the extent of urban influence. As his ahistorical approach has generally been criticized, it would be important to take into account the community's historical formation as well as long-standing network that extends beyond the contacts with the urban center(s). Moreover, another important point of consideration to understand the situation of Tiholop is the subtleness of changes and the way in which they are perceived by the population, which will be discussed in chapter 5.

### 3.2.2 Cities

Concerned with indigenous migration, the research project also included the urban sites of Mérida and Cancún, the two major urban centers in the Yucatan peninsula (see chapter 4.1). The two cities are similar in scale, regional importance and even the numerical presence of Maya speakers. They both owe their population growth to a considerable degree to immigration from rural communities of the peninsula. Nevertheless, perhaps unsurprisingly, Maya speakers' experiences of the urban life considerably differ in the two cities, with Mérida being the traditional administrative and commercial center of the region and Cancún the tourist city constructed in the 1970s. The present section provides an introduction to the respective urban settings, with a special emphasis on immigration from the countryside as well as the language situation.

#### 3.2.2.1 Mérida

Mérida – or *jo'* in Yucatec Maya – is the capital of the state of Yucatan, with its urban center<sup>161</sup> counting more than 777,000 inhabitants according to the census data of 2010 (INEGI 2011c). Since its foundation in 1542, Mérida has served as an administrative and later

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<sup>161</sup> The population of Mérida as a municipality is 830,732 (INEGI 2011a).

also a commercial center in the peninsula. The founding of the Spanish city of Mérida on the ruins of the Maya city of Tihó has long been seen as a symbol representing the conquest and colonization of Yucatan (Restall 1997:2). However, Restall counters this image of destruction and construction by the conquest, pointing to a certain continuity in urban layout as well as the sociopolitical organization of colonial era-Tihó (1997:2, 31). While the preconquest ceremonial center was replaced by Spanish Mérida, the five surrounding communities – just a short walk from the center inhabited by the Spaniards – continued to function as Maya communities. These are classified as *barrios* in the Spanish-language sources and as *cahob* (in the singular *cah*) in Maya-language material (Restall 1997:31-33). Drawing from Maya-language documents, Restall concludes that these communities maintained their social organization and identity as *cahob* to the very end of the colonial period, despite the expansion of the urban center and the resulting intrusion of the Spanish world in these areas (1997:35f.). In addition to the persistence of these Maya communities, the indigenous rural-urban migration is already documented for the colonial period (Farriss 1984:202-206). In sum, although Mérida was the chief place of residence of the Spaniards, its indigenous side was manifested in the survival of the Maya communities “just minutes’ walk from the very heart of the Spanish province” (Restall 1997:31), as well as the immigration from the countryside (cf. Moßbrucker 1994:55).

Concerning the language situation of the urban Maya residents, Lentz highlights that especially towards the end of the colonial period Maya in the urban area were capable of writing and speaking Spanish to a much stronger degree than their rural counterparts (2009:152f.). Notwithstanding, Yucatec Maya continued to be used for the notarial business of the urban *barrios*, apparently until the end of the colonial period, with the last extant sale bill in Yucatec Maya language dated to 1809 (Restall 1997:36).

The formal distinction between the Spanish urban center and the indigenous *barrios* was abolished around 1870 as the *barrios* ceased to have their own local officials (Redfield 1941:27, 34). Despite the end of the political segregation, Redfield reports that they still

remained separate communities to a considerable degree in the early-20<sup>th</sup> century, divided by upper and lower class (1941:27-29). At the same time, he observed a certain degree of social and spatial mobility, which had blurred the center-*barrio* division reminiscent of the colonial period (1941:31f.).

While the population movement towards the urban area has a long tradition in the Yucatan peninsula (Farriss 1984:202-206), the massive influxes of the rural population into the city began in the last century. The dynamics of the rural-urban migration are manifested in the rate of population growth in the city, which reached its peak in the 1970s after the intensification of the crisis in the *henequen* industry. Even after this most explosive decade, with an average annual growth rate of over 6 percent, the city keeps growing whereby more than 40 percent of the state's population is concentrated in its capital today. While Mérida is the thirteenth largest city in the nation – counting more than 777,000 inhabitants – it retains its predominantly regional character, with more than 83 percent of the population born in the state of Yucatan (INEGI 2011a). The recent population growth in Mérida is largely due to the immigration from the formerly *henequen*-growing zone of the state surrounding the city. Being the capital of the state of Yucatan, the city offers diversified economic as well as educational opportunities. Accordingly, although the decline in *henequen* production has been an important incentive for the rural exodus to Mérida, migration motivations are generally quite varied, and thus likewise the social and educational backgrounds of the immigrants.

The rural-urban variation in language situation has a long history in the Yucatan peninsula, beginning since at least the founding of the Spanish city, Mérida. As previously mentioned, Lentz notes a comparatively high degree of bilinguality among the urban indigenous residents during the colonial period, while Yucatec Maya monolingualism was widespread in the rural areas of the colony even among the non-Maya population (2009:152f.). Despite this rural-urban distinction in language use after the conquest, Yucatec Maya has never been entirely eradicated from Mérida and its surroundings. For example, a brief description

provided by Redfield (1941) illuminates this point: referring to the language situation of Mérida in the early-20<sup>th</sup> century, he states that “Maya remains an important secondary language”, while considering that “Spanish is the chief and the favored language of the city”. His assessment is partly drawn from the census of 1930, which records 6 percent of Mérida’s population<sup>162</sup> “as entirely dependent on Maya” and 24 per cent as “bilingual” (Redfield 1941:23). In order to interpret the variance within the city, Redfield points to social class variation in language competence, manifested in the tendency of lower-class residents to acquire Yucatec Maya as their first language<sup>163</sup> (Redfield 1941:23f.).

To date, Mérida is a multilingual city, above all characterized by societal bilingualism of Yucatec Maya and Spanish, albeit with a minor representation of the indigenous language compared with most rural communities of the state. According to the census data of 2005, Yucatec Maya is spoken by slightly over 10 percent of the population older than five years in Mérida<sup>164</sup> (INEGI 2005). In fact, the language is more present in the city than this figure suggests, given the daily or weekly commuting of Maya speakers from the countryside who are not included in the census data as urban residents. Barbara Pfeiler – a linguist working for decades in Yucatan – also notes that Maya is heard more frequently than previously in public spaces of Mérida (pers. comm.), which can be primarily attributed to an increase in rural-urban migration, as well as the recent revaluation of the language (see chapter 3.1.2.3). Furthermore, the written form of the language is visible in prominent areas of the urban space; for example, as explanations on history and art in the old town of Mérida or as names of restaurants and shops (Sima Lozano 2011:73f., my own observation). Since Mérida remains an urban center being predominantly Yucatecan in its character (see pp. 120f.), the vernacular language is also valued as a marker of the regional identity, among other things including

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<sup>162</sup> Redfield explains in the end note that these figures refer to Mérida as the municipality (1941:372, n.11). At that time, 87.7 per cent of its population was concentrated in the city of Mérida (1941:372, n.10).

<sup>163</sup> As he describes, these individuals “are not really ‘at home’ in Spanish” and they “often lapse into Maya in emotional situations” (Redfield 1941:23f.).

<sup>164</sup> Due to the availability of the data, the figure refers to the whole municipality of Mérida.

dress and the folkloric dance, *jarana* (Yamasaki 2010:75f.). Finally, being the capital of the state of Yucatan, Mérida is the place in which many of the activities for language maintenance and revitalization are planned and organized (López Santillán 2011:167). In sum, it can be stated that although Mérida was traditionally seen as the residential area of the Spaniards after the conquest, Yucatec Maya language has always been a part of its urban landscape, recently even enhancing its ubiquity through the intensive rural-urban connections.

However, close inspection of people's language attitudes and behavior also displays the other side of the city, namely Mérida as a site of hispanization of the indigenous population. As already discussed in chapter 3.1.2.3, an increase in rural-urban migration is commonly considered a factor triggering language shift (e.g. Pfeiler 1997:55, 2014:211) since the immigration of Maya speakers to the city often implies a diminished use of the language and an interruption of its transmission to the next generation (Moßbrucker 1992:198, Yamasaki 2010:78f). In this context, it is important to take into account people's spatial mapping of the two languages onto the countryside and the city, respectively. Owing to this still-persistent image associating Yucatec Maya with rurality, Spanish is likely to be regarded as the only appropriate language in the city by Maya speakers and Spanish monolinguals alike, despite the continuous presence of the vernacular in the urban area. Like Redfield's folk-urban continuum, the countryside and the city are still often conceived in terms of oppositional points on the scale of development, with the former considered inferior to the latter (Gabbert 2001:272f). Accordingly, some of the aspiring rural immigrants might be keen to dissociate themselves from the stereotypical image of Maya speakers, partly also based on their own experience of disparaging treatment in the city.

Regarding the hierarchical positioning of Yucatec Maya and Spanish, it is important to consider the association between language and socioeconomic status in more general terms. Of course, this is especially salient in the state's capital, with a long history of colonial segregation of the Spaniards and the *indios*. Referring to the situation in the 1930s, Redfield

points to the correlation between social class and individual bilinguality in Mérida, with the tendency of the lower class to feel more comfortable in Yucatec Maya (1941:23f.). It is true that the spatial division between the Spaniards and the *indios* – as was the case in the colonial period – no longer applies to the urban geography of present-day Mérida. Notwithstanding, it remains a segregated city in which social inequalities are clearly manifested in residential differentiation (Reyes Domínguez 2003:175-177). Today, as reflected in the relationship between incomes and location of residence (Reyes Domínguez 2003:176), the urban divide is primarily perceived in terms of socioeconomic segregation. Upon first glance, it seems to conform with Redfield's observation made already in the 1930s. Regarding the end of the colonial partition into the center and the *barrios*, he states that “the distinction between Spaniards and Indians had become a distinction between upper- and lower-class Yucatecans” (Redfield 1941:27f.). Redfield even goes as far as claiming that “a status classification based on ethnic considerations is not to be seen” in Mérida at his time (1941:83). Comparing the finding with the situations in the other three communities studied (see chapter 2.2.2.1), Redfield hypothesizes for Yucatan that ethnic differences become less important and subordinated to class differences in the course of history (1941:58-85). However, as touched on in chapter 2.2.2.1, this view does not fully explain the situation in present-day Mérida as the distinction is still made based on language, among other things including dress and surname, which continue to serve as important status markers in Yucatan (Gabbert 2004:158). Therefore, instead of assuming its subordination to class, the study sensible to the formation of social identities in today's Yucatan should focus on the very interplay of socioeconomic and cultural forms of differentiation (cf. Kearney 1996a). One aspect of its interaction is the above-mentioned association of the languages with social status (Gabbert 2004:158). Higher prestige attached to Spanish and its impacts on the language situation in Mérida can be illuminated by Bourdieu's notion of “symbolic power”, the power of the dominant to impose their own way of existence (1979[1977], 1984[1979]:272, see López Santillán 2011 for the

case of Mérida). According to Bourdieu, anyone of the dominated classes seeking to “succeed in life” has to pay for his upward mobility through a change of nature, which means dissociation from “everything he was bound to, his roots, his family, his peers, sometimes even his mother tongue” (1984:251). Dorian also makes reference to this point from a linguistic perspective. The linguistic behavior of the elite is seemingly especially influential once the possibility of social mobility is recognized by the rest of the population (1981:40). Accordingly, the behavior of the rural immigrants abandoning Yucatec Maya in the city can be explained by their aspirations for upward mobility on the one hand and the power of the dominant in struggles over the definition of the legitimate speech style on the other (cf. Bourdieu 1984[1979]). However, the dissociation from the vernacular in eagerness to participate in the dominant values is only one side of the interaction between socioeconomic and cultural forms of differentiation in Mérida.

Perhaps as a characteristic trait of the state’s capital, it is also important to taken into account a considerable number of indigenous professionals who have achieved middle-class status in the city (Gabbert 2004:158-160, López Santillán 2011). These individuals – often engaged in cultural politics – partly succeeded in “capitalizing” on their knowledge of Yucatec Maya (López Santillán 2011:174-176) and they play an important role in stimulating novel expressions of indigenous identity, which is no longer linked to the subalternity (cf. Kearney 1996a:8). This is the other side of the city, in a certain sense, opposed to the face of the state’s capital as the site of hispanization. Due to its privileged position in the region especially with respect to education and employment, Mérida offers possibilities for upward mobility to Maya speakers of rural origin. Some of them directly commit themselves to the promotion of Maya culture and language in the city. Perhaps even more importantly, the social mobility of the indigenous population can contribute to altering the association of the language with lower social status, dissolving the modernist opposition as implied in the folk-urban continuum.



Focusing on the indigenous immigration as well as the language situation, this section has demonstrated the two seemingly-contrasting sides of the state's capital with a long history of language contact. On the one hand, as its foundation on the ruins of the Maya city has long been seen to symbolize the conquest of Yucatan (Restall 1997:2), Mérida continues to serve as a reference point for a modern, Spanish-speaking way of life (cf. Redfield 1941). The prestige attached to this urban lifestyle has influenced the language behavior of many Maya speakers at the expense of the vernacular, both within and outside of the city. In this sense, Mérida can be considered the site of hispanization of the indigenous population. On the other hand, Mérida is not only the center diffusing a Spanish-speaking way of life, but also the hub in which many activities for the promotion of the Yucatec Maya language are planned and organized. In addition, a considerable number of Maya speakers from rural areas could meanwhile take advantage of the urban educational infrastructure, providing them with opportunities for social mobility.

With the description of Mérida, this section has presented one urban setting for language contact of Yucatec Maya and Spanish. The following section provides a brief introduction to the city of Cancún to discuss the implications of its specific urban context for language maintenance of Maya, given that it differs from that of Mérida to a considerable degree.

### 3.2.2.2 Cancún

Counting more than 628,000 inhabitants today (INEGI 2011c), Cancún has grown to become the second-largest urban center in the peninsula, with its scale almost paralleling that of Mérida.<sup>165</sup> The proportional representation of Maya speakers in the city is also similar to that in the capital of Yucatan, with Yucatec Maya spoken by slightly over 10 percent of the

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<sup>165</sup> The figure refers to the urban center of Cancún, which is the municipal seat of the municipality Benito Juárez. The population of the municipality as a whole amounts to 661,176 (INEGI 2011a). See Figure 2 (chapter 3.1.1.2) for the demographic development of the municipality.

population older than five years (INEGI 2005).<sup>166</sup> With respect to the economic opportunities that it offers to Maya-speaking migrant workers, Cancún's importance can also be considered – at least nowadays – comparable with that of Mérida. However, having been conceived as the cornerstone of Mexican tourism policy, the development of the tourist city has doubtlessly had something of an unprecedented nature. Its uniqueness is reflected above all in demography, spatial differentiation and the transnational character of today's Cancún. Accordingly, the following part briefly touches on these issues as they significantly shape Maya speakers' experiences of the urban space.

The current demography of the city is determined by its tourism development outlined in chapter 3.1.1.2. As the resort was built from the ground up, the state-driven tourism project strongly depended on the workforce from outside. As migrant workers, Maya-speaking peasants from the surrounding countryside played a crucial role in establishing the basic infrastructure of the tourism industry from the beginning onwards. In its initial stages, the tourist center generated many low-skilled jobs in construction and services, which were often filled by the Maya-speaking population from rural areas of the peninsula. Since the resort began operation in the mid-1970s, the demand for skilled workforce increased, which was rather covered through the migration of experienced personnel from other parts of Mexico (Hiernaux-Nicolas 1999:136, Castellanos 2010a:82). In the course of its rapid growth between 1975 and 1984, the recruitment of both high- and low-skilled workers increased. By 1989, Cancún had grown to become the single-most popular Mexican destination for international tourists within the nation (Clancy 2001:135). Due to its outstanding role in Mexican tourism, migrant workers continue to arrive in the tourist city from all regions of the republic, as reflected in the extraordinarily high percentage of the population coming from other federal states (cf. Wilson 2008:45). According to the latest census data, over 60 percent of

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<sup>166</sup> Due to the availability of the data, the figure refers to the whole municipality of Benito Juárez.

the population in the municipality of Benito Juárez<sup>167</sup> were born outside of Quintana Roo (INEGI 2011a). The variety with respect to sending areas of immigrants is also manifested in Cancún's linguistic diversity. Even though Yucatec Maya is by far the most represented among more than 35 indigenous languages spoken in the city<sup>168</sup>, Tzotzil, Chol, Tzeltal and Nahuatl also count more than 500 speakers, respectively (INEGI 2005).<sup>169</sup> By creating employment, the tourist resort serves as a magnet, not only attracting foreign tourists but also migrant workers from various regions of the republic, thus rendering the city culturally diverse. However, for many of these people arriving in Cancún, possibilities for social mobility in the tourism industry are rather limited. As part of the global capitalist economy, tourism relies on low-waged workforce in the interest of profit-making, and as such it manufactures lots of poorly-paid, seasonal jobs (Wilson 2008:48f., Castellanos 2010a:84). Accordingly, many of the migrant workers remain in low-waged employment with little access to more secure and profitable positions.

Indeed, the “marginalization” of great numbers of the domestic population is considered “the other face of the ‘success story’ for Mexican tourism” (Wilson 2008:46). In the case of Cancún, this side of the tourism development is clearly manifested in its organization of urban space, which is even referred to as “de facto socioeconomic apartheid” by Tamar D. Wilson (2008:47). Being a top-down planned tourist resort, the separation was intended from the beginning onwards (Wilson 2008:47). Danuel Hiernaux-Nicolas also reports that “the designers of Cancún were very strict about segregation” in accordance with the classical tourism model expressed in “a total division between labor and leisure, workers and tourists” (1999:129, 131). Accordingly, the tourist city of Cancún has always contained built-in spatial hierarchies represented by the separation of the tourist space from the living space of local residents. Apart

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<sup>167</sup> Due to the availability of the data, the figure refers to the whole municipality.

<sup>168</sup> Due to the availability of the data, the figure refers to the municipality of Benito Juárez.

<sup>169</sup> In the case of Mérida, the second-largest indigenous language spoken in the municipality is Chol, with slightly over 400 speakers (INEGI 2005).

from this designed segregation, the extraordinary growth of the resort has also generated an increasing divide within those providing labor and service to the tourism industry, leading to more a complex manifestation of inequalities in its physical spatial morphology (Torres and Momsen 2005:316-319). On the one hand, there has been an expansion of upper-middle-class neighborhoods in the course of Cancún's maturation. However, on the other hand, the uneven development of the resort has led to "the explosive and chaotic growth" of urban squatter settlements on the Cancún periphery, which are inhabited by low-paid laborers and recent immigrants (Torres and Momsen 2005:318f.). These neighborhoods sometimes even lack basic urban infrastructure such as paved roads, running water, sewerage or electricity, marking a total contrast to the glamorous tourist zone, which has the very best facilities, amenities and infrastructure. Although the urban periphery is home to many tourism industry workers critical to the construction, production and reproduction of the resort, this side of the city – termed the "lost city" by Fernando Martí – is rarely known to tourists enjoying its service and facilities (Torres and Momsen 2005:317, Castellanos 2010a:xv).

Comparing Mérida and Cancún –both of which feature a high degree of socioeconomic segregation – it is obvious that the geographic landscape in the Mexican Caribbean additionally reflects inequitable power relations that are specific to the uneven development of the resort (cf. Torres and Momsen 2005:316f.). In the case of Mérida, the distinction is made based on those status markers, which – albeit in a modified form – persist from the colonial past and still often continue to function in a dualistic manner, such as the Spanish versus the indigenous, urbanity as opposed to rurality, modernity in contrast to tradition, and so forth (see chapter 3.2.2.1). As the above-mentioned divisions of the city already indicate, social inequalities in Cancún are shaped in a more hybrid and transnational way through the interaction between the various forces and actors, including tourists, foreign and domestic investors, entrepreneurs and workers. Accordingly, Cancún's transnational economic landscape can be considered a salient example of the globalized (re)production of inequity. Global capitalism combined with the national

development paradigm has partly exacerbated the existing regional historical inequalities and additionally created new hierarchical power relations (Torres and Momsen 2005:332). Ultimately, every level of daily life and social interactions in the tourist city is shaped by these uneven configurations of power at multiple scales (Torres and Momsen 2005:326). The social identities of indigenous migrant workers are significantly informed by their experiences in this transnational hybrid space, with unpredictable impacts on their language behavior and attitudes.

Obviously, as is the case with migration to Mérida, a move to the urban area with a proportionally minor presence of Maya speakers generally implies a diminished use of the language. However, in order to understand the language situation in Cancún, it is also important to take into account several peculiarities of the tourist city. First, owing to the above-mentioned in-migration from all regions of the republic (see pp.140f.), a high frequency of linguistic exogamy is to be expected, which generally renders the intergenerational transmission of the indigenous language in the household less probable (cf. Sierra Sosa 2007:196-209). Second, Cancún's "linguistic market" (Bourdieu 1977[1974]) also includes English, which becomes highly valued by many Maya-speaking migrant workers since a command of it is essential for mobility within the city's service industry, primarily targeted at foreign tourists (e.g. Sierra Sosa 2007:198f, Castellanos 2010a:72f.). These factors suggest less favorable conditions for the urban language maintenance of Yucatec Maya even in comparison to Mérida. On the other hand, Castellanos' account on "Kuchmil"<sup>170</sup> return migrants from Cancún reveals that the observation of tourists' fascination with the "Maya culture" can lead to the revaluation of customs and practices associated with it (2010a:181f.). In this "globalized production of difference" (Appadurai 1996:199), the Yucatec Maya language also plays a crucial role as a diacritic of the "new" ethnicity constructed in the transnational hybrid space of Cancún. As this

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<sup>170</sup> "Kuchmil" is the pseudonym used by Castellanos (2007, 2010a) for her field site, a Maya-speaking rural community located in Yucatan.

brief sketch already indicates, the immigration to the tourist city influences cultural reproduction and social identities of Maya speakers in multiple ways, which can by no means be captured based on simple oppositions as indicated in the folk-urban continuum.

### 3.3 Chapter Summary

The aim of the chapter was to provide information on the setting of the study, introducing the region as well as the respective research sites. The first part of the chapter provided general information on the situation of current internal migration and the state of bilingualism in the Yucatan peninsula. It identified the increased interconnectedness of rural and urban spaces and the declining tendency of traditional agriculture as a regional development with significant repercussions for the language situation of Yucatec Maya. Discussing the current state of bilingualism in Yucatan, the section focused on its ambivalence: on the one hand, the census data as well as observations made by other researchers point to an ongoing language shift from the vernacular in many communities of Yucatan; and on the other hand, there are meanwhile numerous governmental as well as civil initiatives taken for language maintenance and revitalization and – possibly related to them – signs of improvement of language attitudes. After the regional tendencies were presented, the second part of the chapter introduced the respective research sites, two communities of the municipality of Yaxcabá and the cities of Mérida and Cancún, between which frequent mobility of Maya speakers is observed. Apart from migration situations, the section presented differences in the language situation as well as the meaning and function attached to Yucatec Maya in the respective places. This information should serve as a basis for considering how Maya speakers develop ideas about their language in the interconnected social space of the migrant circuit, which is one of the main concerns of this research project. Before presenting its findings, the following section deals with the research methods applied for the present ethnography.

## 4 Methods

The research project adopted an ethnographic approach, applying fieldwork as a method to study language shift. Meanwhile, there is a general consensus that ethnographic knowledge is inherently “partial” (Clifford 1986) and “situated” (Haraway 1988). Scrutinizing ethnographic writing, Clifford dismisses the conception of culture as an object to be described, underlining its contested, temporal and emergent nature (1986:19). Accordingly, the data obtained in the ethnographic fieldwork should be considered the product of communicative processes between subjects in relations of power that took place in a specific time-space context (Clifford 1986:15). As the product of such a research practice, the results presented in chapter 5 have also been significantly shaped by my own positionality, my research interests and design, as well as the concrete methods applied to approach my research questions. Accordingly, the aim of the chapter is to make the process of ethnographic knowledge production as transparent as possible, since this information is essential for readers to interpret the findings of the research.

The chapter is structured as follows: the first section presents the development process of the research design and its guiding principles. The second section is concerned with my spatial practice of getting and being there as fieldworker in respective research sites. The final two sections of the chapter explain the concrete methods used for data collection, processing and analysis in the present research project.

### 4.1 Research Approach and Design

The basic principle that guided the present research project derives from the ethnographically-oriented studies of language shift most notably represented by Gal (1979) and Kulick (1992). Considering that language shift is ultimately caused by the transformation of people’s goals and values (Kulick 1995:9), these studies underlined the necessity of paying attention to speakers’ interpretation of social changes to examine their possible impacts on the

language contact situation (see chapter 2.1.3). In accordance with this notion, the present research adopted an ethnographic approach to see how Maya speakers make sense of the regional transformations illustrated in chapter 3 and how these conceptions are possibly reflected in the meanings that they attach to the two languages in contact.

While this basic orientation was settled from the beginning of the research, the challenge was to design the ethnography project sensitive to local circumstances. In the case of Yucatan, among other things, the rapid urbanization in recent decades has significantly changed everyday lives in many rural communities, manifested in migration and turning away from traditional agriculture (see chapter 3). Nowadays, a considerable proportion of Yucatec Maya speakers work or live outside the community of origin. Through the movements of people, goods and information, the cities and the countryside are increasingly interconnected. In view of this situation, the development of the present research project was guided by the idea that the language vitality of Yucatec Maya should be considered beyond the boundaries of rural communities. As briefly discussed in the introduction, the ethnographies concerned with indigenous migration to the tourist resort of Cancún (Re Cruz 1996b, Castellanos 2010a) demonstrated that a move from the place of origin can lead to a redefinition of indigenous identities and communities by migrants. The present research intends to build upon this insight and inquires its implications for language vitality. As a project focusing on hybrid experiences of Maya-speaking migrants rather than rooted native ones (cf. Clifford 1992:101), it was inevitably concerned with finding an adequate manner to approach such ways of life. Accordingly, the following chapter is devoted to the development process of the multi-sited ethnography project, which began with the task of “constructing the field” (Amit 2000a, see also chapter 2.2.1).

#### 4.1.1 Development of the multi-sited ethnography project

The fieldwork for the present research project was ultimately conducted in four sites, focusing



on connections between two rural communities and the cities of Mérida and Cancún. It was conceptualized as a multi-sited ethnography (Marcus 1995), designed around paths of locations considered relevant for the research question. The research design – ranging from its conceptualization as multi-sited ethnography to the selection of respective field sites – was developed in the course of research in accordance with the insights gained in Yucatan. Accordingly, the section presents its trajectory from the initial point of the inquiry to its final elaboration.

My interest in Yucatec Maya language was aroused and nurtured in an academic context. I first visited Yucatan in 2007, participating in an excursion of the Yucatec Maya language course organized by the university department. As a part of the program, I had the opportunity to practice a short-term fieldwork in Maní, Yucatan, where I became interested in the language contact situation between Yucatec Maya and Spanish. In the community, Yucatec Maya was spoken by a large part of the population. However, even in the short term, I observed differentiated patterns of language use dependent on age and interlocutors. As was often the case, Yucatec Maya was no longer transmitted to the youngest members of the family and the use of Spanish dominated in communications among adolescents. This observation was interpreted afterwards based on the theoretical knowledge on language death and endangerment gained at the university. Generally, a language is considered endangered if it is no longer acquired as the first language by children at home (UNESCO 2003:8). Applying this assessment to the observed situation, I began to question the long-term stability of bilingualism in Yucatan, which retrospectively marked the beginning of my years-long commitment to the topic as a researcher.

The inquiry into the language vitality of Yucatec Maya started with two basic, general questions: first, I was concerned with obtaining a broader picture of the language situation in the peninsula than one based on the observation in one particular community; and second, I was interested in identifying factors responsible for the observed variation in language use.

Approaching these questions, I became aware of the uneven geographical distribution of the language within the state of Yucatan, manifested in a low percentage of Maya speakers among the general population in the metropolitan zone encompassing Mérida and its surroundings (see chapter 3.1.2.2). The minor representation of Yucatec Maya in the urban environment might not seem surprising upon first glance. Based on research conducted in the 1930s, Redfield already remarked that “Spanish is the chief and the favored language of the city” (1941:23). However, nowadays it should be borne in mind that the city and the countryside are closely interconnected, especially through the population movement. The rural-urban migration has led to a rapid growth of the capital – Mérida – in which more than 40 percent of the state’s population currently resides (INEGI 2011a, see also chapter 3.1.1). In view of these dynamics, an adequate assessment of the language vitality only seemed possible if the language situation in the urban areas is taken into account.

Building on my initial research interest in the topic as well as my M.A. research project on the language behavior and attitudes of Maya-speaking immigrants in Mérida (Yamasaki 2010), I developed the present research project to have a broader and more differentiated view of the language situation in Yucatan. For this purpose, I considered incorporating the language situation in Cancún – another urban center in the peninsula of comparable importance – into the new project as well as conducting further research in another district of Mérida to complement the findings from the preceding study. Accordingly, the present research project was originally designed as a comparative study of two urban neighborhoods in Mérida and Cancún.

I started fieldwork for the present project in Mérida, which was scheduled from August until December 2012. After the initial phase of finding a suited neighborhood for the research, I started to interview immigrated Maya speakers in a district located in the south-western part of the city from September to November 2012. The fieldwork experience in another district of Mérida was valuable as it demonstrated the variety of urban language situations. However, while caught up in the routine of fieldwork including finding collaborators and conducting

interviews, I began to perceive a mismatch between my research objective and the research design. With the aim of investigating the impacts of rural-urban migration on language vitality, I was primarily concerned with changes in speakers' language behavior and attitudes through their move to the city. However, I increasingly became aware of the limitation of the research design, resulting from the very trivial fact that it is hardly possible to investigate changes without knowing the state of things prior to the immigration. Indeed, although I only interviewed those with an active command of Maya, the collaborators coming from different communities of Yucatan were quite diverse in terms of their language biographies. Confronted with this variance, I became increasingly convinced of the necessity to become familiar with the language situation in the place of origin to identify changes in language behavior through the immigration. Based upon these considerations, I made up my mind to radically change my research design in November 2012, almost at the end of the planned research period in Mérida.

As an alternative to the original plan of comparing two urban neighborhoods, I decided to start the research in the place of origin and then trace the movement of people from there to the cities of Mérida and Cancún (cf. Marcus 1995:106). Planning an extensive study in the community of origin prior to the fieldwork in the cities, I hoped to better comprehend changes in people's language behavior through the rural-urban migration.

In order to realize the new research plan, I was again confronted with the task of finding an adequate community to carry out the study. In this context, it is important to mention the valuable assistance provided by the local researcher, Pedro Lewin Fischer. As a scholar working on various types of migration within and from the state of Yucatan, he encouraged me to incorporate a community of origin into the research design and suggested the municipality of Yaxcabá as a suitable place for what I was planning. With respect to migration studies, I considered the following aspects as important for the selection of the research site. As I was interested in the impacts of internal migration on the language vitality, an ideal research site for this purpose was a community with minor presence of international migration. Moreover, since

I did not want to abandon the idea of a comparison between the two cities, it was desirable to find a community in which migrations to both Mérida and Cancún could be observed. According to the figures presented by Lewin Fischer (2012), the municipality of Yaxcabá appeared to be such a place, characterized by a negligible role of international migration and a similar degree of importance of intrastate and interstate migrations from the municipality. Accordingly, I began to contemplate the possibility of (re)starting my research in the municipality of Yaxcabá. However, as this idea rather came from “the armchair”, I considered it essential to visit Yaxcabá and see the situation with my own eyes before finalizing the decision. Lewin Fischer kindly supported my plan, arranging an appointment with the municipal president for me.

Besides introducing myself to the municipal president, I was also interested in establishing contacts during my first visit to Yaxcabá. Since I casually knew a woman who had migrated from the municipality of Yaxcabá to Mérida, I decided to ask her for support in this respect. Accordingly, I made up my mind and told her about my planned visit to Yaxcabá, albeit after some hesitation – to be honest – as it was an abrupt request. While I explained my concern with a slight feeling of discomfort, doña Diana<sup>171</sup> readily accepted my desire to visit her *pueblo* and even kindly offered me the possibility to stay with her uncle. As it turned out during the conversation, she is from Tiholop, a district (*comisaría*) of the municipality and her uncle continues to live there with his family. Appreciating doña Diana’s incredibly generous offer, I decided to stay at her uncle’s house in Tiholop during the entire period of the visit and travel to the municipal seat to meet the president. In this way, with invaluable support from Lewin Fischer and doña Diana, I organized a short trip of an exploratory nature to the municipality of Yaxcabá from November 28 to December 3, 2012. To be honest, I figured out on the map only several days after the conversation with doña Diana that despite belonging to the same municipality, Tiholop was over 30 kilometers away from the municipal seat. However, apart

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<sup>171</sup> Pseudonym.

from this surprise, my trip was perfectly arranged thanks to doña Diana. Informed of my visit via phone, her uncle don Efraín<sup>172</sup> even promised to pick me up at the square of Tiholop.

On November 28, I headed for Tiholop, taking a direct bus leaving Mérida in the afternoon. Although everything was settled, I felt excited and nervous at the same time during the journey, which took about four hours in total. Especially after the stop in the municipal seat of Yaxcabá, it took unexpectedly long until we arrived in Tiholop, owing to poor road conditions. The passengers had thinned out and as it was the end of November, it began to get dark on the way. Despite my knowledge that Tiholop was the final stop, I could not help asking other passengers to confirm that we had not passed the village. Of course, my worry was in vain and the bus arrived in Tiholop with a few passengers left. As I got off at the square of Tiholop, don Efraín waited for me with his *triciclo*. He immediately recognized me, told me to put my luggage on his *triciclo* and took me to his home not far from the square, where he lived with his wife, their daughter and their son's nuclear family. Although I was surely an unconventional visitor, his family cordially welcomed me into their home. The main concrete house sat on a fairly generous plot on which the kitchen and other small thatched and concrete houses were also located. Besides the trip to the municipal seat of Yaxcabá, I spent most of my time there with don Efraín's family, first simply observing and participating in the daily routine and family interactions. As I felt that the family members gradually became familiar with the unconventional visitor, I also began to ask questions about their migration experiences.

What already struck me on the day of my arrival was the high vitality of Yucatec Maya in the family. Yucatec Maya was used almost exclusively by all family members for daily conversations and women in the family were rather reluctant to speak Spanish. Only a four-year-old child – the youngest family member – was addressed in Spanish. In addition to patterns of language use in the family, I also gained first insights into the migration situations in Tiholop. For example, don Efraín has one son living in Cancún and most male members of

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<sup>172</sup> Pseudonym.

the family have worked at least temporarily in Cancún. However, they told me that people from Tiholop currently commuted to Mérida rather than Cancún due to better accessibility.

Despite being for a short period, a stay with don Efraín's family in Tiholop was inspiring in several ways, far exceeding the information that I obtained on the state of bilingualism and migration situations. Scientifically, the experience convinced me of the importance of looking at the circumstances in rural communities to adequately approach my research questions.

Besides gaining first impressions of the rural family life, the other intention of the trip was to meet the municipal president. One day, I traveled to the municipal seat of Yaxcabá and introduced myself and my project to the president. She showed understanding for my research proposal and kindly assured me of the municipality's collaboration.

After returning home – first to Mérida, then to Germany – I was again concerned with developing the research design based on the insights gained during the short trip to the municipality of Yaxcabá. Conceptualizing the project henceforth as a multi-sited ethnography (Marcus 1995), I planned extensive research in the municipality of Yaxcabá on bilingualism and migration situations, which was to be followed by studies in Mérida and Cancún focusing on the immigrants from the community. As Yaxcabá is a large municipality, which I – to my embarrassment – only first noticed through the travel, I still had to specify a community in which to conduct my research. Concretely, I was pondering the possibility to do it in the municipal seat of Yaxcabá or the district of Tiholop, where I had already gained contacts. After consultation with Lewin Fischer as well as my supervisor in Germany, I decided to begin my research first in the municipal seat and then – if necessary – extend it to the surrounding districts (*comisaría*s). In this way, the decision to start the research in the municipal seat of Yaxcabá was again rather made from “the armchair”.

After a few months of preparation in Germany, I started my main fieldwork research in

April 2013 in the municipal seat of Yaxcabá.<sup>173</sup> In the first days in Yaxcabá, I had to realize that I barely knew anything about the community since I had spent most of my time in Tiholop during the last trip to the municipality. Despite belonging to the same municipality, the communities considerably differed from each other in many respects. Above all, I quickly became aware of the variance in the language situation. Other than in Tiholop, it could be noticed that the use of Spanish predominated in younger generations, especially those under 30 years old in Yaxcabá. Besides the differences between the communities, I also had to recognize that the migration situations in Yaxcabá were much more complex than the view from the city had suggested. People's movements were by no means restricted to one-off emigration from the community to the cities, but rather they ranged from total immigration to the cities, commuting on a weekly or biweekly basis, to return migration. Accordingly, during the first months of the fieldwork, I was concerned with obtaining a detailed picture of the community's bilingualism as well as that of the migration situations through interviews and participant observation. In this phase, I also learned plenty about the *milpa* agriculture on which the community's rural life has been and – to a certain degree – continues to be centered. What I learned in Yaxcabá might be the basic knowledge for all Mayanists. However, as I had mainly been working with urban Maya speakers so far, it was in Yaxcabá that I caught up the knowledge on such a central aspect of the Maya culture. In this way, I truly enjoyed conducting – for the first time – rather archetypical fieldwork in the maize cultivating zone of Yucatan.

However, after having gained an overview of the situations, I began to feel the same kind of mismatch that I had perceived during the previous fieldwork in Mérida (see pp.149). This time, the doubt resulted from the fact that the language shift was already advanced in Yaxcabá. In many families, the intergenerational transmission of the language seemed to have ceased years or even decades ago. Accordingly, it was only possible to retrospectively reconstruct

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<sup>173</sup> The “arrival story” as well as my spatial practice of being there will be presented later in the chapter.

how the migration might have affected the language vitality in the community, which was – in my opinion – still meaningful work to be done. Nevertheless, I also felt the necessity to work in a community characterized by the higher vitality of Yucatec Maya, in which I hoped to more clearly observe the impacts of the migration on people’s language behavior. Based on this consideration, I decided to extend the research to include the district of Tiholop, whose language situation I was familiar with (see pp. 151). Moreover, during the fieldwork stay in Yaxcabá, I kept in contact with don Efraín’s family through occasional visits to Tiholop. However, to gain more detailed insights into the community life, I considered it important to dwell there for a particular period of time. Accordingly, I moved to Tiholop in November 2013 and stayed with don Efraín’s family until I headed for Cancún in mid-December to interview the immigrants from Yaxcabá and Tiholop in the city.

In this way, my multi-sited ethnography ultimately included four sites: Mérida, Cancún, Yaxcabá and Tiholop in the Yucatan peninsula. As the above-narrated long history of “being there, there, and there” (Hannerz 2003) demonstrates, my fieldwork for the present research project was accompanied by an enduring process of “constructing the field” (Amit 2000a). As argued by Amit (2000b:6), the ethnographic field supposedly “awaiting discovery” by the researcher never existed in my case, but rather it had to be first constructed based on analytical considerations. Accordingly, starting from an urban anthropological research, I tested different approaches to define the “field” in a way that seemed most adequate to answer my research questions. In sum, the development of the research design followed a cyclical pattern in accordance with Spradley’s notion of the “ethnographic research cycle” (1980:28f.). Although it started with a set of hypotheses and a fairly elaborate research design, they had to be adapted based on the observations made during the fieldwork.

Ultimately, the multi-sited research served two major purposes: first, the approach of following people from the municipality of Yaxcabá to the cities (cf. Marcus 1995:106) was applied with the aim of capturing the rural-urban connections as they were perceived and



experienced by Maya speakers; and second, the fieldwork carried out in both the municipal seat and the district remote from it enabled a comparison between the two rural communities characterized by different stages of language shift. Accordingly, the following part briefly explains each of these two central ideas in the present multi-sited ethnography project.

#### 4.1.2 Rural-urban relations

Drawing upon Marcus' formulation of the multi-sited ethnography, the present research was designed around the paths between the municipality of Yaxcabá and the cities, applying the technique of "following the people" to construct the connections (1995:106). As described in the previous section, the idea of conducting multi-sited ethnography was first born during the urban anthropological fieldwork in Mérida. From the city, I tracked the path back to the places of origin, and from there I again moved to the cities, reconstructing the movement of Maya-speaking urban immigrants from the communities. This trajectory of the research – which first started from the opposite direction<sup>174</sup> – might appear somewhat circuitous. Retrospectively, however, approaching the migration both from the cities and the rural communities indeed helped to consider its manifold implications for the language vitality.

Although the project began with the inquiry into the language maintenance in the cities, it became increasingly clear during the research that the impacts of the migration on the language vitality were much more extensive than a possible abandonment of Yucatec Maya by urban immigrants. Indeed, the multi-sited ethnography revealed that migratory flows were complex and by no means restricted to one-off rural-urban migration, giving rise to multiplex interconnections between the rural communities and the cities. Thus, increased mobility and communication not only affect the language behavior of those who migrate to the cities, but they also possibly influence the language transmission patterns in the rural households as they

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<sup>174</sup> The common multi-sited approach to rural-urban migration begins with the study of the migrants' community of origin and then follows them into the city (e.g. Lewis 1952, Castellanos 2010a).

lead to a transformation of people's goals and values, including in the communities of origin. In this sense, as Redfield associated the disorganization of culture with increasing outside communication (chapter 2.2.2.1), urban influences reaching the rural communities can be seen as forces threatening the language maintenance of Yucatec Maya. On the other hand, several studies concerned with cultural dynamics of global interconnectedness – for example – have pointed out that the intensification of global interactions does not necessarily lead to the loss of cultural diversity (see chapters 2.2.3 and 2.2.4). Its outcomes are rather considered multifaceted as well as open-ended, as Appadurai's expression of "globalized production of difference" (1996:199) indicates. For the case of Yucatan, Castellanos' study on Maya migration to Cancún demonstrates that indigenous people manage to maintain "their sense of indigeneity and community across a deterritorialized social space"<sup>175</sup> (2010a:xxvii, see also chapter 1). She refers to return migrants from Cancún as an example as they bring new ideas about Maya customs and practices to the rural community, inspired by the contacts with international tourists in the city (2010a:181f.). If this notion may be applied to the language vitality, increased contact and communication do not necessarily signify the abandonment of a minority language in favor of the language of wider currency, as the folk-urban continuum or the discourse of cultural imperialism dictates. Bearing this in mind, the present research project took an open approach to inquire what the deterritorialization of culture implies for vitality of the indigenous language in particular (see chapter 2.2.4). Moreover, employing multi-sited ethnography as a method enabled me to investigate how Maya speakers' ideas about the two languages become shaped in this interconnected social space of the migrant circuit (Rouse 1991) between the municipality of Yaxcabá and the cities.

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<sup>175</sup> Drawing upon Appadurai's use of deterritorialization (1990), Castellanos defines the "deterritorialized social space" as the place where the flows of goods, money, people and ideas from disparate place come into contact as they circulate globally (2010a:186, n.9).

### 4.1.3 Comparison of two rural communities

Apart from capturing the migrant circuit, the multi-sited ethnography also had a comparative dimension. Although I had not originally planned to conduct fieldwork in two rural sites, (see chapter 4.1.1), observation in Yaxcabá and Tiholop characterized by different stages of language shift considerably extended my understanding of the phenomenon. In order to gain a more encompassing understanding of language shift, researchers should deal with various phases of the process. For example, Kulick stresses the importance of documenting the earlier phases of language shift, pointing out that most studies on language shift have tended to focus on its terminal stages (1995:12). Obviously, a comparison of the two communities involved in different stages of the development does not replace a long-term observation of a speech community undergoing various phases of language shift, since the variance may also be attributed to other factors. Notwithstanding, observed difference between Yaxcabá and Tiholop with respect to meaning and function attached to Maya as well as the way in which language shift is perceived may be considered to exemplify speakers' distinctive experiences of the process in its various phases.

The two communities featuring various degrees of shift from Maya are differently accessible. Higher language vitality is observed in Tiholop, located farther away from the federal highway and characterized by a less frequency of out-migration compared to Yaxcabá. To a certain extent, the research makes a similar kind of comparison between rural communities in Yucatan to that presented by Redfield (1941). Notwithstanding, its aim is not to establish a simple correlation between lessening isolation and disorganization of culture in accordance with his model of the folk-urban continuum (see chapter 2.2.2.1); rather, as has been argued in the previous section, it takes an open approach to investigate the manifold implications of contact and communication for the indigenous language vitality.

The section has hitherto been concerned with presenting the guiding principles of this project, including its basic approach and the process of developing the research design. After

the general framework of the research has been demonstrated, the following three sections of the chapter are devoted to the time frame of the fieldwork, my access to the respective field sites as well as the concrete methods applied for data collection, processing and analysis.

## 4.2 Fieldwork

The present section provides general information concerning the fieldwork, including its time frame and my access to the respective field sites. The concrete methods applied for data collection will be presented in chapter 4.3.

### 4.2.1 Time frame

The fieldwork was carried out in the following four sites of the Yucatan peninsula: Yaxcabá, Tiholop, Mérida and Cancún. The project included three fieldwork trips to the Yucatan peninsula, which were conducted in 2012, 2013 and 2014.

The first fieldwork period from August to December 2012 was mostly spent in Mérida. Retrospectively, this initial stay rather served an exploratory purpose. In this phase, I reconsidered my previous research design and prepared myself to realize the newly-developed idea of the multi-sited ethnography through establishing first contacts in the municipality of Yaxcabá (see chapter 4.1.1).

After a few months of planning, extensive multi-sited fieldwork was carried out during the period from April 2013 to January 2014, in which the major part of the data for the present research project was collected. As described in the previous chapter, the fieldwork began in April in the municipal seat of Yaxcabá, where I spent most of my second research period, encompassing almost seven months. Although I occasionally visited Tiholop during my stay in Yaxcabá, the village was intensively studied from November to mid-December after moving to the house of don Efraín's family (see chapter 4.1.1 and 4.2.2.1). The last six weeks from mid-December to January were mainly spent in the cities of Cancún and Mérida, interviewing

the immigrants from Yaxcabá and Tiholop.

The data collection for the present research project was ultimately completed with a short stay from June to July 2014 in the Yucatan peninsula, which had a follow-up character. During one month, I visited each of the four research sites again to conduct some pending interviews and clarify further questions from the second research period with the interview partners.

Having presented the general time frame of the fieldwork, the following section describes my access to the respective field sites.

#### 4.2.2 Spatial practice of getting and being there

Applying a multi-sited research strategy, the ethnography conducted for the present project had more than one point of focus. As indicated in chapter 4.1.1, I had different access to the four research sites, which were quite diverse in themselves. The way in which I arrived and lived there significantly framed fieldwork encounters and hence the insights I gained on the topic of investigation in the respective localities, both rural and urban. Accordingly, the present section describes in which kind of social relationships I carried out fieldwork in each of the four research sites, whereby this information is essential for interpreting the data presented in chapter 5.

##### 4.2.2.1 The municipality of Yaxcabá

Despite the project's focus on multiple localities, the municipality of Yaxcabá can be considered a kind of center in this multi-sited research. With respect to the implementation of the research design, it was the setting where the multi-sited ethnography started and from which the connections to the cities of Mérida and Cancún were established. Indeed, perhaps more importantly, the municipality of Yaxcabá was also the site in which an essential part of my socialization as "Mayanist" or anthropologist specializing in the Maya lowlands took place. It was there where I learned about the *milpa* mode of production *in situ* (cf. Re Cruz 2003:494f.)

and significantly improved my language skills in Yucatec Maya. Accordingly, my view on the everyday lives of the Maya-speaking population in rural Yucatan is significantly shaped by my fieldwork experience there, even though the decision on the site was rather made from the armchair (see chapter 4.1.1).

The present section provides information on the rural setting in which the multi-sited ethnography was carried out. The research focused on the two communities Yaxcabá and Tiholop within the administrative unit of Yaxcabá. Accordingly, the following part describes how I arrived and lived there respectively.

### **Yaxcabá**

The research site that represented the (re)starting point of my multi-sited research was selected based on mere scientific considerations. Accordingly, my access to the “field” was rather of a formal nature at the beginning. I visited Yaxcabá for the first time in 2012 to introduce myself and the research proposal to the municipal president (see chapter 4.1.1) and I returned there in April 2013 to conduct my fieldwork.

Upon my arrival in April 2013, I notified my return to the municipal authorities and looked for housing to establish myself in the community. This time, the “localized dwelling” (Clifford 1992:98) – an essential part of ethnographic fieldwork – was enabled through renting a room in Yaxcabá. It meant that “the ethnographer’s tent” in my case was one of the three compartments of a concrete house that was constructed by a well-off family to rent it out to non-native workers, mainly the staff of educational and medical facilities in the community. In this way, I somehow managed to settle down at the place, but still I hardly knew anybody in Yaxcabá to begin with the research. However, it was ultimately this particular condition of “localized dwelling” that significantly influenced the course of my fieldwork in Yaxcabá. My first intensive contact with local residents was indeed with neighbors living in a thatched house on the opposite side of the street, when the young mother inhabiting it with her husband and two children approached me

while I was leaving my rented room. Her openness and curiosity were partly owing to the extraordinarily positive experience that the family had with a foreign fieldworker who had occupied the room in the past. Therefore, in this case, it can be said that I did not “just arrive” there, but rather my fieldwork encounter was significantly conditioned by “connections” already established thorough preceding work of other researchers (cf. chapter 2.2.1). Farbiola<sup>176</sup> soon invited me to her home and introduced her husband and children to me. At that time, her husband was cultivating corn on his own *milpa* and working additionally on others’ *milpas* in Yaxcabá to obtain cash income. However, he had also been a laborer in various cities including Mérida and Cancún, as a construction worker in the widest sense. Since the couple and I were all of a similar age, we soon formed a close friendship with each other. As a result, I spent a significant part of my day at their place during the fieldwork, having almost every meal together with them, washing my clothes in their *patio* and conversing with them about anything and everything. In this way, apart from the emotional support that it provided to me, Farbiola’s home was also an important site for my professional socialization, where I became acquainted with the *milpa* mode of production from cultivation, processing to final consumption (cf. Re Cruz 2003:495). Participating in their everyday family life revealed a great deal about the daily concerns of the young family living on *milpa(s)* and gave me an idea about what it implies to continue traditional agriculture in Yucatan today. The circumstances that made the subsistence farming increasingly difficult are similarly experienced in many households of rural Yucatan (see chapter 3.1.1.1). Spending time with Farbiola’s family demonstrated how these conditions influence everyday practices at home, including the way in which cultural values are transmitted to the next generation. Given that home is the primary site of children’s socialization, participant observation of the family life proved a suited method to investigate the link between external conditions and cultural reproduction across generations.

Moreover, Farbiola and her family not only shared their knowledge and experience with me

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<sup>176</sup> Pseudonym.

but also provided practical support during the fieldwork, helping me to make contact and localize interview partners. In this way, it can be stated that my view on everyday life in Yaxcabá is significantly shaped through the network that extended from Farbiola's house as a focal point.

### **Tiholop**

In the case of Tiholop, both arriving and dwelling in the field were enabled through my rapport with don Efraín and his kin, which had been established beforehand (see chapter 4.1.1). Accordingly, even in comparison to my experience in Yaxcabá, the fieldwork in Tiholop was more centered on one extended family. This particular access to the field not only shaped my view on the locality but also my interest in a particular research topic.

Since I stayed with don Efraín's family during the whole research period, I spent a considerable amount of time at their home. Besides the original focus on migrants' language behavior, an intensive participant observation of their everyday family life drew my attention to the patterns of language socialization and intergenerational communication in the household. Tiholop is characterized by a high vitality of Yucatec Maya (see chapter 3.2.1.2). Moreover, in the family of don Efraín, Maya was almost the only language used for communication among the adults and adolescents. Only small children were often addressed in Spanish by elder family members. As result of this language socialization practice, children – especially those who do not live with their grandparents – were being brought up as Spanish speakers without actively using Maya. On the the other hand, the generation of grandparents felt much more comfortable with Maya, being less fluent in the Spanish language. At least in the eyes of a stranger, this disparity in their favored languages seemed like a break that could cause communication gaps among the generations within the same family. In view of the situation, I began to ask how the difference in language competence and behavior in three generations is perceived by Maya speakers, and perhaps in the first place whether it is considered a significant change at all.



While an intensive observation of intergenerational communication was only made in one particular household, a similar pattern of language socialization could also be observed in other families in Tiholop, with parents more fluent in Maya addressing their small children in Spanish. Retrospectively, it can be stated that the research's special emphasis on perception of change and continuity in language shift (see chapter 5.3.2.2) was the outcome of my particular access to Tiholop, characterized by its specific language situation at the time of my fieldwork.

#### 4.2.2.2 The cities

In urban anthropological research, selecting and delineating the population segment to be studied often proves challenging (Foster and van Kemper 2010:12). The present project studied the cities only from one particular angle: it applied a network approach to define the urban sample (cf. van Kemper 2010), focusing only on those who immigrated to the cities from the communities of Yaxcabá and Tiholop. The same sampling method was used both in Mérida and Cancún. Notwithstanding, my access to “the field” significantly differed in each of the sites, owing to my previous research experiences as well as the way of connections that people from Yaxcabá and Tiholop had with respective cities. Accordingly, the following part illustrates my fieldwork practice in Mérida and Cancún.

#### **Mérida**

For the purpose of the present research project, Mérida was rather tangentially studied, which was related to the kind of the connections that people from Yaxcabá and Tiholop had with the city. Although Mérida is an important destination for Maya-speaking migrants from the communities, the majority of them prefer to travel on a weekly basis over a total immigration to the city (see chapter 5.1.1 for further information).

Interviews were carried out with six Maya urban residents from Yaxcabá and Tiholop in

January and June 2014 in various urban districts, since the interview partners lived scattered around the city, although in most cases in its southern part. I stayed in the northern part of the city and traveled by bus to see the interview partners with the help of the addresses I had obtained from their relatives living in the municipality of Yaxcabá. I considered this pointed research style used this time in Mérida to be justifiable due to my previous research experiences in the city. Despite not specifically dealing with the immigrants from the municipality of Yaxcabá, my earlier studies in Mérida had provided me with insights into the everyday lives of Maya-speaking immigrants in two districts of the city, including their language behavior and attitudes (see chapter 4.1.1).<sup>177</sup> Thus, the research in Mérida conducted as a part of the multi-sited ethnography was intended to elaborate on the knowledge gained from the previous urban studies.

### **Cancún**

While Mérida has been studied from different perspectives through various preceding stays (see chapters 4.1.1), Cancún was investigated only from one particular angle, focusing on the experiences of Maya-speaking immigrants from Yaxcabá and Tiholop in the city.

Aside from my arrival at the airport, I visited Cancún for the first time in December 2013, towards the end of my main fieldwork period. However, during my preceding fieldwork in the municipality of Yaxcabá I had already begun to develop an idea of the urban life based on the information gained from interviews and informal daily conversations with people in the communities. Since one of the objectives of the research was to depict the rural-urban relations, I paid special attention to first-hand accounts of those who had lived or worked in the city as well as gossip about the urban life (cf. Re Cruz 1996b) exchanged in the two rural sites. What

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<sup>177</sup> The previous studies in Mérida applied a neighborhood approach, focusing on particular districts of the city. As such, they made an intensive use of participant observation of Maya speakers' everyday lives in the urban environment. During the fieldwork conducted for my M.A. research project, I stayed with a family whose father was a Maya speaker, having immigrated from a rural community located in the henequen-growing zone of the state.

was striking about their everyday discourse on Cancún was the frequent mention of crime and insecurity in the city, which even motivated some of the urban immigrants to return to their place of origin. In their view, Cancún was associated with urban danger, in contrast to the tranquility (*tranquilidad*) that they appreciated in the rural communities.

The preceding stay in the municipality of Yaxcabá not only provided me with insights into people's perspectives on the urban life, but also significantly shaped the way in which I entered the city. Indeed, my first trip to Cancún was made from Tiholop, which implied a bus ride of over six hours with a transfer in the municipal seat of Yaxcabá. The arrangements for the fieldwork in the city were also made in this rural community. In this context, again I owe a great deal to don Efraín and his family as they kindly suggested contacting their relatives who rent out an apartment in Cancún. The couple from Tiholop had immigrated to Cancún over 20 years ago and all of their children were born in the city. While I was acquainted with their son studying in Mérida, I talked to doña María<sup>178</sup> – his mother living in Cancún with her family – for the first time by phone. During our first phone call, I introduced myself and dared to ask for the apartment that they let in Cancún. While I only hoped to be able to rent the apartment, things turned out even better: they showed great generosity and even invited me to stay at their home. Thanks to their incredible kindness, I had the fortune to stay with the family from Tiholop during my whole research period in Cancún, which was both scientifically and personally a marvelous experience. With respect to the research project, it provided me with an insight into the everyday family life of Maya-speaking immigrants in the city, as well as valuable opportunities for participant observation of their language behavior. After having arranged with doña María, I took a trip from Tiholop to Cancún in the middle of December 2013. On the way, I was also accompanied by don Efraín's daughter residing in Cancún, who had been visiting her family in Tiholop.

The fieldwork in the city was scheduled to run for about three weeks from December 2013 to

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<sup>178</sup> Pseudonym.

January 2014. Although it was a short period, the invaluable support of doña María and her family considerably facilitated my entry into the urban “field”. Above all, making use of their network with the “fellow villagers”, they assisted me with localization of potential interview partners, which otherwise would not have been an easy task given that they were dispersed in different parts of the city. In addition, through living with the family in a block of the *regiones* area, I could also gain an impression of this particular neighborhood of Cancún, which was also home to many other immigrants from rural areas of the peninsula. Accordingly, the urban life of Maya speakers in Cancún was approached in two ways: on the one hand, through interviews conducted with those from Yaxcabá and Tiholop; and on the other hand, by means of participant observation enabled through dwelling in the neighborhood.

### 4.3 Data Collection

Taking an ethnographic approach to investigate the language shift (see chapter 4.1), the research principally drew on **participant observation** and **qualitative interviews** as methods for the data collection. In order to obtain information on children and youth in the rural communities, the research also made use of a **questionnaire-based survey** administered at the schools in Yaxcabá and Tiholop. Structured into three parts, the following part explains each of these methods with a special emphasis on the way in which they were applied in the present research.

#### 4.3.1 Participant observation

Intensive participant observation is commonly regarded as the quintessence of anthropological fieldwork (Amit 2000b:1). In anthropology, a prolonged physical presence in “the field” is generally considered essential for gaining insights into a tacit knowledge of the people studied (see also chapter 2.2.1). In the course of the debates on a representational practice in anthropology, this archetype of the fieldwork has become deconstructed to a certain degree (e.g.

Clifford and Marcus 1986, Clifford 1992, 1997, Gupta and Ferguson 1997). Nowadays, fieldwork experience is no longer conceived in terms of the total immersion providing access to “holistic knowledge of ‘another society’” (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:37). Although participant observation continues to be a major part of anthropological methodologies, “it is ceasing to be fetishized”, as Gupta and Ferguson put it (1997:37). Drawing on this general debate in anthropology (e.g. Gupta and Ferguson 1997:36f.), the present research project made use of participant observation as one of the strategies to develop an understanding of the topic, without granting an unquestionable epistemological privilege to it.<sup>179</sup>

In the research field of bilingualism and multilingualism, participant observation has proved a suitable method to investigate the ways in which language practices are socially embedded (Heller 2008). First – and most obviously – an observation of bilingual interactions is the most direct method to study the patterns of language choice (cf. chapter 2.1.4.1). However, more than this, intensive participant observation enables researchers to be attentive to a subtle social meaning assigned to use of a particular language in bilingual interactions. This step is especially important in the study of language shift, which is concerned with the way in which people’s interpretation of social change affects their everyday language behavior (cf. Gal 1979, Kulick 1992). According to Kulick, this issue can be best approached through paying special attention to the way in which “people’s conceptions of themselves in relation to one another and to their changing social world” are “encoded by and mediated through language” (1995:9).

As a project taking an ethnographic approach to the study of language shift, the present research drew on the method of participant observation to meet the following objectives in particular. First, with the method that enables developing a close relationship with people, I intended to ascertain how Maya speakers make sense of the intensive rural-urban

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<sup>179</sup> However, a decentering of the participant observation fieldwork by no means signifies the attenuation of its value. The importance of paying attention to social routines and informal knowledge is meanwhile recognized beyond the disciplines, whereby the method is now increasingly incorporated into other social sciences (e.g. see Krings 2013:274 for the situation in German academia).

interconnections. Indeed, without active questioning, participant observation alone revealed a lot about people's daily concerns, which were crucial for understanding migration patterns and a certain language behavior. The method also had an explicitly sociolinguistic focus. As presented in chapter 2.1.4.1, patterns of language choice are a good indicator of the language contact situation. In this context, participant observation proved a suitable method for analyzing a domain of language choice. Although the interview guide also included several questions on the language choice, the direct observation of bilingual interactions evidently produces more reliable data. Accordingly, whenever possible, I attempted to verify the data from the interviews with my observation. In addition, the observation of interactions also reveals more information on the context, which is essential for understanding the social meaning assigned to the choice of a particular language. Although people's ideas about the languages are not directly observable like their behavior, the method also proved useful in the study of language attitudes, complementing the data obtained from the interviews. First of all, the knowledge of their everyday lives provided valuable information for interpreting people's statements, which were produced in an overdetermined setting of interviews. In addition, participant observation in some cases also revealed the inconsistency between the attitudes expressed in interviews and their actual behavior, which should be taken seriously if we are to assess the validity of the data on language attitudes for evaluating the language's vitality. Finally, by spending time with people outside of interviews, I could also pick up their conversations on the languages in less controlled situations, which illuminated the way in which the two languages were treated in everyday life situations by Maya speakers.

As is often the case with ethnographic fieldwork, participant observation for the present research was also conducted while dwelling in the local communities. Overall, I spent more than eight months in the municipality of Yaxcabá, participating in the daily routine and listening to people's everyday conversations, which helped me to gain insights into the *milpa* agriculture, the peasant household organization, migration patterns and not to mention the language

situation in the rural communities. As the present research deals with language shift – which is so to speak a particular kind of intergenerational change – observation also focused on parents' socialization practices in everyday family life (cf. Gaskins 2003), with a special emphasis on language transmission. Especially a stay with the Maya-speaking family in Tiholop allowed me to observe caregiver-child interactions without even leaving the house (see chapter 4.2.2.1).

Participant observation also came into use in the urban research, albeit reduced in intensity given that this time the research did not focus on a particular urban neighborhood, but rather on the connections between the municipality of Yaxcabá and the cities (see chapter 4.1.1). Accordingly, the interview partners coming from Yaxcabá and Tiholop were scattered around the cities, which made it difficult to spend much time with them outside of interviews. However, in the case of Cancún, I had the fortunate opportunity to stay with a Maya-speaking family from Tiholop during the research period, whereby I could observe everyday family life as well as language behavior of the Maya-speaking immigrants at close hand (see chapter 4.2.2.2).

The impressions gained from participant observation in the four research sites were written up on a daily basis and recorded as a dated entry in a fieldwork journal, which was saved as a Microsoft Word document on a computer.

#### 4.3.2 Qualitative interviews

Besides participant observation, the research project drew on interviewing as a main method for the data collection. Apart from innumerable informal conversations that I had during the fieldwork, I conducted interviews with 70 Maya speakers in the four research sites overall. In addition, I consulted local authorities in the municipality of Yaxcabá to learn their view of the situations in the communities.

For all of the interviews in the project, the technique of **semi-structured interviewing** was applied. The conversations were carried on with the aid of an **interview guide** prepared in advance (see Appendix A. Interview Guide and Questionnaire ). The method was chosen as it

seemed well balanced for the purpose of the present research. On the one hand, I was concerned with hearing about people's interpretations of social change expressed in their own terms. On the other hand, I was interested in covering a certain set of topics, including migration experience, language choice and language attitudes. The technique of semi-structured interviewing allowed me to address all of these issues without exercising too much control over their responses, as would have been the case with fully-structured interviews (cf. Bernard 2011). I developed two types of the interview guide, one used in the municipality of Yaxcabá and the other for the urban research, although the interviews covered the same topics in the rural and urban sites. In each case, a draft was made before the fieldwork based on the information that I had from my previous stays as well as the investigations conducted by other researchers in the state of Yucatan<sup>180</sup>. Since an initial interview with the preliminary version worked well in both the municipality and the cities, the draft was adopted in both cases with only minor adaptations.

The language of interviewing was Spanish in most cases. Although I was aware of several disadvantages of it, I decided to conduct it in the language in which I was capable of maintaining a better control over the conversations. Working on the topic of migration, I mostly talked with people who had acquired a good command of Spanish. Accordingly, at least with respect to mutual communication, the obstacles resulting from interviewing in their second language were rather limited. In case the interview partners felt more comfortable conversing in Yucatec Maya, I tried to ask questions as much as I could in Yucatec Maya and posed the rest of the questions in Spanish, while they answered me in Yucatec Maya as they had a good passive command of Spanish. Other shortcomings of conducting interviews in Spanish will be discussed later in the section.

All of the scheduled interviews were audio-recorded, using a voice recorder. The recording

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<sup>180</sup> In order to develop the interview guides, I consulted the list of questions used by Lewin Fischer (2012:343-347) and Pfeiler (2012:243ff.) for their investigations in the state of Yucatan.



was saved as a file in MP3 format<sup>181</sup> on a computer. Every interview was preceded by a conversation in which I explained the purpose of my research and asked permission for audio-recording. Having outlined the general conditions, the section explains the concrete procedures taken for conducting interviews in the municipality of Yaxcabá and the cities respectively, as the process slightly differed in each case.

In the municipality of Yaxcabá, I was first concerned with gaining an overview of the migration situation in the communities. Therefore, I used **purposive sampling** and began to interview those who had a personal connection to the cities. After having conducted several interviews, I could identify common migration patterns in the communities, which could be subsumed under three categories: total immigration to the cities, commuting on a weekly or biweekly basis and return migration to the municipality of Yaxcabá. The rural-urban connections seen from the municipality of Yaxcabá were above all manifested in the absence of family men during the week, their return on weekends and – in case of the municipal seat – increasing return migration from Cancún. Accordingly, during the fieldwork in the municipality of Yaxcabá, I mainly focused on those who commuted or had commuted to the cities, who stayed put and those who had returned from Cancún. The inquiry was divided into two parts: the first round of interviews covered the topics concerning the migration such as their current as well as past migration behavior and their general attitudes towards it, while the second interviews dealt with their language behavior including their language biography, language choice and attitudes towards Yucatec Maya and Spanish. Although the interviews were carried out with individuals, I intended to keep an eye on households as a site of cultural reproduction. Therefore, I was not only concerned with experience of migrating individuals, but also of those who stayed put, typically the women who maintained the household during the absence of their husbands. Since the interviews were conducted at their home, in most cases I visited my interview partners at least twice, which helped me to gain insights into their family lives. With

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<sup>181</sup> This format was chosen because the research did not include linguistic analysis of the material.

some of the families, I maintained especially close contact through regular visits. Towards the end of the fieldwork, I also consulted local authorities in the municipality including the head of the district of Tiholop (*comisario*) and the school principals to complement the information on the communities.

The interviewing procedure in Mérida and Cancún slightly differed from that taken in the municipality of Yaxcabá. Applying the technique of “following the people” to capture the rural-urban relations (cf. Marcus 1995:106, see chapter 4.1.2), I only interviewed those coming from the communities of Yaxcabá and Tiholop in the cities. Accordingly, in this case **network sampling** was used to find the interview partners. The first contacts were established beforehand in the municipality of Yaxcabá. The interviews in the communities included information on the networks that people had in the cities. Accordingly, I asked those interview partners who claimed to have relatives in Mérida or Cancún if they could give me the contact details of their kin so that I could visit them to conduct an interview. In this way, I had a handful of contacts in each city to begin with. The sample was then extended in the course of the urban research through the **snowball** method. Accordingly, some of my interview partners in Mérida and Cancún also recommended other fellow villagers residing in the city whom I could interview. As was the case in the municipality of Yaxcabá, I visited my interview partners at their home. However, since the research did not focus on a particular neighborhood, my interview partners were scattered around the cities. Therefore, in most cases I only consulted them once, covering the topics of migration and language behavior in one interview. This research style had the disadvantage of barely providing me insights into their everyday lives outside of interviews, as would have been possible in an urban neighborhood study (see also chapter 4.2.2.2). However, it can be argued that the information on the context was rather gained in another way in this case, through the preceding fieldwork in the municipality of Yaxcabá. While not serving to produce a “thick description” of immigrants’ urban life, the method of “following the people” (Marcus 1995:106) had a clear advantage for the present

research project. One of the objectives of the urban research was to understand the impacts of the immigration on language behavior. In this sense, the knowledge of the language situation in their communities of origin was crucial for contextualizing the data obtained through interviewing the immigrants in the cities.

To conclude the section on interviewing, it is important to mention that the data collected with this method ultimately reflects specific instances of discourse that arose in a setting highly determined by the researcher. Therefore, a critical reflection on the contexts is essential for interpreting the findings gained from such a research procedure. As has been previously discussed, this is especially true for the data on language attitudes obtained through direct questioning that are influenced in different ways, above all through the social desirability effect (see chapter 2.1.4.2). Apart from general response effects, I am also aware of the fact that the language of interviews – which was determined for a practical reason – possibly affected the results of the present research concerned with people's conception of the two languages in contact. Despite these limitations, I opted for in-depth interviews since the method had the advantage of enabling me to collect the data on language attitudes in a discursive context. This was indeed essential for understanding the meanings the speakers assign to Yucatec Maya and Spanish in relation to their interpretation of social change. Through participant observation (chapter 4.3.1), I could also listen to people's everyday conversations on the languages, which served to complement the data obtained in interview situations.

#### 4.3.3 Questionnaire-based survey

The research made use of the above-presented participant observation and qualitative interviews as the main methods for data collection. In addition, the questionnaire-based survey was conducted at the elementary schools (*primaria*) and junior high schools (*secundaria*) in Yaxcabá and Tiholop. The study was intended to supplement the ethnographic fieldwork with more encompassing information on the language situation of children and youth in the

communities. Since the survey was carried out towards the end of my main fieldwork, the questionnaire was developed based upon insights into the topic gained from preceding participant observation and semi-structured interviews in the municipality of Yaxcabá. In the course of the fieldwork, I became aware that a shift from Yucatec Maya should be seen in relation with a broader change in the rural habitus represented by young people turning away from the traditional agriculture. Accordingly, the questionnaire intended to approach the issue, inquiring about future orientation, attitudes towards the *milpa* agriculture, language competence, language behavior and language attitudes.

The questionnaire – which contained both **open-ended** and **fixed-choice** questions – was administered in December 2013 and January 2014 during regular class times to a total of 177 students in the municipal seat of Yaxcabá and the district of Tiholop (see Appendix A for samples of the questionnaire and Appendix C Table 4 for an overview of participants in the questionnaire survey). The survey covered all elementary schools and junior high schools in the two communities and targeted students in the sixth grade at the elementary schools and the third grade at the junior high schools.

In each school, the survey was preceded by a conversation with the school principal and the class teachers in which I gave an account of my research objective and asked for their collaboration. The administration of the questionnaire always followed the same procedure. I distributed the paper-based questionnaires with the kind assistance of the class teacher. Before handing out the sheets, I briefly introduced myself to the class, explained the procedure and highlighted the irrelevance of the questionnaire for their grades. While the students completed the questionnaires, I remained in the class room to answer their questions and ensure that they were filled out individually. In order to complement the data obtained from the questionnaires, I also conducted a semi-structured interview (see the previous section) with the school principal of each school to hear about their opinions about the students and the situation of the communities in general. In case of the elementary school in Tiholop that offers the Indigenous

Intercultural Bilingual Education (see chapter 3.2.1.2), the interview also focused on this issue, inquiring about its objectives from the principal's perspective, its concrete implementation at the school and possible challenges faced by the teachers to comply with the goals.

#### 4.4 Data Processing and Analysis

The step of data processing and analysis might be the most hidden part in ethnographic writing. As is often the case, ethnography makes little reference to the way in which the data obtained from the “embodied activity of fieldwork” (Clifford 1997:202) was eventually turned into the ethnographic text presenting its findings. This lack of transparency is partly owing to the discipline's tradition, which privileged or even mystified the experiential knowledge gained from the often solitary practice of fieldwork (Gupta and Ferguson 1997, see also chapter 2.2.1). Moreover, it is generally not perceived as an easy task to communicate one's mental process in which information and ideas coming from different sources ultimately become organized into a coherent text. Notwithstanding, it goes without saying that this step forms a significant part of ethnographic knowledge production and as such it should be made transparent like the other research procedures. Accordingly, the section intends to delineate the path from the data to the text as explicitly as possible with the purpose of providing readers with information necessary to interpret the results presented in chapter 5. The section is divided into two parts: the first part deals with processing and analysis of the data gained from participant observation and interviews, the research methods that predominantly produced the qualitative data, while the second part describes the procedure of processing and analyzing the data obtained from the questionnaire-based survey.

##### 4.4.1 Participant observation and interviews

The present research was predominantly qualitative in nature, making use of participant observation and interviews as two main methods for the data collection. These research

techniques yielded **text materials** as the basis for analysis, which comprised field notes written down during the fieldwork and transcripts of the recorded interviews. Since the project's main concern was to explore the meanings people attached to the two languages in contact, the research paid special attention to the interview material, which contained language attitudes expressed in verbal forms.<sup>182</sup> For a detailed analysis of the data, audio-recorded interviews were **transcribed** into written form with the software f4 and the transcripts were subsequently **coded**.<sup>183</sup> In accordance with the general aim of the research project, the transcription primarily focused on the verbal **content** of talk. Notwithstanding, other features of communication have also been taken into account for interpreting the data. These included general settings of conversation, interactions before and after the interview as well as non-verbal cues, which were documented during the research as field notes. In this context, it is important to keep in mind that the transcripts are never a direct representation of the original discourse, but subject to – among other things – the researcher's interpretive and representational decisions (Bucholtz 2000). Evidently, this also applies to the written texts used as the basis for analysis in the present research project.

For the data analysis, the transcripts were carefully revised and coded for concepts with the software MAXQDA. As is often the case with research in social sciences, the coding process for the present project represented a mix of inductive and deductive approaches. Conducting qualitative research, I sought to be as open and flexible as possible, including with respect to the data analysis. Instead of searching for pre-defined categories in the data, first of all I intended to identify concepts<sup>184</sup> in very dialog with the data, which subsequently became organized into categories (cf. Corbin and Strauss 2015:76f.). Notwithstanding, it should be noted that my view on the data was significantly influenced by assumptions that I had

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<sup>182</sup> Although the focus of the analysis lay on language attitudes, the data from participant observation and interviews on migration experience provided contextual information that was essential for interpreting the utterances produced in a specific time-space context.

<sup>183</sup> I personally conducted all of the procedures from audio-recording, transcription to coding.

<sup>184</sup> These concepts were occasionally coded **in vivo**, using the actual words of interview partners, as termed by Corbin and Strauss (2015:85).

developed based on my previous research experience as well as knowledge obtained from the literature. Accordingly, despite employing an open approach, I was inevitably more sensitive to certain topics than others while going through the data. These included conception of language attitudes in terms of prestige and stigma (see chapter 2.1.4.2), rural-urban association of the languages and parental decision on language transmission. In this way, the research program by no means had degrees of openness as is required by the grounded theory approach, especially in its original form (Glaser and Strauss 1967). However, a close look at the data indeed revealed ideas that I had not come up with previously. These were – for example – differentiation of language attitudes in terms of various kinds of linguistic performance and parents’ assumptions about children’s language acquisition, which will be discussed later in chapter 5.3.2.2. In addition, a review of anthropological theories as well as studies from linguistic anthropology at this stage of research also gave me further inputs for interpretation of the data. On the one hand, Appadurai’s discussion on “cultural dimensions of globalization” (1996) provided me a clue to understanding the discrepancy between expressed positive attitudes towards Maya and language behavior. On the other hand, Kulick’s study of language socialization (1992) demonstrated the importance of paying special attention to the perception of change and continuity at the onset of language shift. It was also in this phase of analysis that rather theory-driven concepts of “habitus” and “new ethnicity” were drawn upon to explain apparent inconsistencies in the data. Ultimately, these two concepts have become central ideas in the research project as they served to integrate the findings, which had been considered fragmentary or contradictory at the beginning. In sum, it can be said that as with the development of the research design, the process of the data analysis also followed a cyclical pattern, represented by a mixture of inductive and deductive approaches. In this sense, the text presented in chapter 5 is not a neutral record of intersubjective interactions, but rather the results of my interpretation, which took place in dialog with both the data and theories and as such was influenced by further factors including theoretical orientations in the related

disciplines.

#### 4.4.2 Questionnaire-based survey

The questionnaire-based survey contained both **open-ended** and **fixed-choice** items. They produced different kinds of data, thus requiring respective procedures of processing and analysis. The responses from the open-ended questions were analyzed in a similar way to the interview transcripts. First, the handwritten replies were typed into a computer and the digital text was then coded with the software MAXQDA. As with the interview data, I applied the method of **open coding** (Corbin and Strauss 2015:220) to analyze the responses, instead of sorting them into pre-defined categories. It means that I went through the replies one by one, identified concepts and gradually developed the code list. Once it was fixed, I revised the data again to complete the coding process. Although it might appear to be an unusual way to deal with this kind of the data, the procedure enabled me to be attentive to subtle differences that extend beyond the simple categorization of language attitudes into positive or negative.<sup>185</sup> For example, a closer look at the responses revealed that students referred to different kinds of linguistic performance, while arguing for the acquisition of Yucatec Maya. Since the students were exposed to the same set of questions under similar conditions, the questionnaire data also enabled a comparison between the two communities characterized by a different degree of bilingualism. In the case of the open-ended items, the comparison was made based on the frequency with which the concepts were represented in the students' responses. As will be discussed in chapter 5, the uneven distribution of certain codes suggested that the students attached distinct meanings and functions to Yucatec Maya and Spanish in respective communities.

Most responses to the fixed-choice questions represented **nominal variables**. These were

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<sup>185</sup> The focus of the analysis lay on language attitudes. The responses from other open-ended questions were mainly used to verify the data obtained from the fixed-choice questions.



turned into values and processed with the software SPSS statistics for the purpose of a **descriptive analysis**. As a first step, I looked at the **frequency distribution** of variables and made a comparison between the communities as well as between the age groups. A comparison of the survey data revealed difference between the communities with respect to the language situation and the centrality of the traditional agriculture, which was largely in accordance with the impression that I had gained through participant observation. What was rather unexpected was a remarkable variance between the age groups in Tiholop: while the students at the junior high school represented a quite homogenous group regarding the language situation, there was a notable variability in students' first language and active command of Yucatec Maya at the elementary school. Since an age-dependent difference in bilinguality is generally an indicator of the ongoing language shift, these figures deserve special attention to assess the language situation in Tiholop. Chapter 5 will elaborate on this aspect, including taking into account the common pattern of language socialization observed during the fieldwork.

Once I had an overview of the data, I looked at relations between variables, using a **bivariate analysis**. Of several themes covered in the questionnaire, I was especially interested in the relationship between the traditional agriculture and language maintenance of Yucatec Maya. Accordingly, through conducting analysis I tested relations between the pairs of variables for which I hypothesized a correlation based on my observation in the field. The relation was examined on two levels, namely socialization and attitudes. For the former, I considered the variables such as the father's occupation and cultivation of *milpa* on the one hand, and children's bilinguality on the other hand. For the latter, I tested a correlation between children's attitudes towards the traditional agriculture and those towards Yucatec Maya. Since they were nominal variables, **the phi coefficient** was mostly<sup>186</sup> used to assess the strength of association. However, these calculations do not tell us about the existence of a causal

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<sup>186</sup> Only with the items containing information on attitudes were **the Kendall rank correlations** calculated. In this case, students' responses were transformed into three ranks, which were treated as **ordinal variables** (more information in chapter 5).

relationship between the variables. For interpreting the data, the information from participant observation and interviews was drawn upon to understand the way in which these items can be correlated with each other. Accordingly, chapter 5 will illustrate the relationship between the traditional agriculture and language maintenance manifested at multiple levels, taking into account various kinds of the data obtained during the fieldwork.

#### 4.5 Chapter Summary

The aim of the chapter was to make the process of knowledge-making for this project as transparent as possible, given that this information is essential for interpreting its outcomes presented as “results” in the following chapter. The inquiry into the research topic followed a cyclical pattern, represented by a mixture of inductive and deductive approaches from the initial stage of designing the project to the phases of data collection, processing and analysis. Even though the research started with a set of hypotheses and a developed research design, they became adjusted based on the observation made in the “field”. Originally, the project was conceptualized as an urban anthropological one questioning how urbanization affects the language vitality of Yucatec Maya in rather a modernist way. However, the initial fieldwork demonstrated the importance of looking at connections between the rural communities and the cities and the social space created through the population movements. Furthermore, during the second fieldwork, I realized the diversity of meanings attached to Yucatec Maya language in this interconnected social space of the migrant circuit, which can by no means be reduced to “threatening urban influences on the indigenous language maintenance”. Therefore, instead of falling back on a monocausal argumentation, I aimed to be as open and sensitive as possible to reflect this complexity in my research. Another important impetus for the research project came from a review of anthropological theories as well as studies from linguistic anthropology during the phase of data analysis. Especially Appadurai’s discussion on “cultural dimensions of globalization” (1996) and Kulick’s study of language socialization (1992) provided new

perspectives to interpret some inconsistencies perceived in the data regarding language behavior and attitudes. Accordingly, the “results” of the study presented in the following chapter reflect ethnographic knowledge co-produced both in dialogue with Maya speakers in the field and with numerous written works of predecessors in the related research fields.



## 5 Results

The final part of the work presents an analysis of meanings attached to Yucatec Maya and Spanish drawn based upon the fieldwork research conducted in the municipality of Yaxcabá and the cities. The objective of this ethnography is not to provide a representation of culture conceived in terms of a “unified corpus of symbols and meanings” (Clifford 1986:19); instead, it pays attention to contested, temporal and emergent aspects of culture (cf. Clifford 1986:19), depicting the variability in the ideas that people have developed about the Yucatec Maya language. In addition, designed as multi-sited research, the project focuses on hybrid experiences rather than rooted, native ones (cf. Clifford 1992:101). In view of the loosening of the link between space, stability and cultural reproduction in the contemporary world (Appadurai 1996:49), this ethnography examines what the deterritorialization of culture (see chapter 2.2.3) specifically implies for maintaining the indigenous language. For this purpose, the research draws upon Appadurai’s considerations on cultural dimensions of globalization, which highlight the transition of culture from habitus to “conscious choice, justification and representation” in a globalized, deterritorialized world (1996:44).

This chapter is structured into three sections. The first section is devoted to describing migration patterns and language choice to provide contextual information for the subsequent sections. The latter two sections are more analytical and form the main part of this chapter. The first part examines different ways in which the Yucatec Maya language becomes territorialized by speakers from Yaxcabá and Tiholop constituting the migrant circuit. The second part subsequently adds another dimension to the analysis to deal with current complex cultural differentiation extending beyond territorialization of the language discussed in the previous sections. Introducing the concepts of habitus and “new” ethnicity, it addresses the project’s main research question, namely the implications of the deterritorialization of culture for the vitality of Yucatec Maya. Finally, these findings will be discussed in chapter 6 with the

objective of demonstrating multiple ways in which the conception of the indigenous language is shaped in the contemporary globalized world.

## 5.1 Background

The present section provides information on migration behavior and language choice in the localities studied. The focus on these two aspects of people's daily lives results from the project's objective of investigating deterritorialization of culture with an emphasis on language contact. The section delineates Maya speakers' connections to the cities and their language behavior in respective research sites, which are essential for understanding how the ideas about the languages become shaped in the interconnected social space of the migrant circuit (Rouse 1991).

### 5.1.1 Migrant circuit

While out-migration to the cities is observed in both Yaxcabá and Tiholop, the kinds of connections that people have developed with the cities differ in the two communities, lying at varying distances from the federal highway (see chapters 3.2.1 and 2.2.2.1). The present section depicts complex population movements from and to Yaxcabá and Tiholop, which are better captured with the image of a circuit than that a unidirectional shift from one environment to another (cf. Rouse 1991).

#### 5.1.1.1 Yaxcabá and the cities

Yaxcabá and the cities are connected through multidirectional population movements of various intensity and participants. Unlike the view from Mérida had suggested (see chapter 4.1.1), the migration was by no means a one-way movement from countryside to cities. Common patterns of migration that I could observe during the fieldwork encompassed weekly or bi-weekly commuting to Mérida and Cancún, total immigration to the cities and return

migration from the tourist city to Yaxcabá. This observation indeed calls into question the modernist conception of space, which postulates a polar distinction between city and countryside. Although power hierarchies of these spaces remain, the variety in migration behaviors of those from Yaxcabá attests their agency through which the imposed spatial arrangements can be challenged (cf. Rouse 1991:11). In addition, a closer look at migration patterns from and to Yaxcabá also suggests the importance of historical sensibility in terms of understanding the population movements today. If the migrant circuit is to be seen as social space created and reproduced through collective human agency (Rouse 1991:11), its analysis should also take into account the long-term formation of migrant networks. Accordingly, the following presentation of the migrant circuit between Yaxcabá and the cities pays special attention to people's agency in the migration processes and the historical development of the connections.

At present, the most common pattern of migration from Yaxcabá is surely weekly commuting to the state's capital, Mérida. However, the onset of today's large-scale rural-urban migration should rather be seen in the tourism development in the Mexican Caribbean (see chapter 3.1.1.2). As early as the 1970s, several people from Yaxcabá migrated to Cancún when the tourist resort was still at its initial stage. The migration of some young males in this early phase of Cancún's development was crucial for the formation of the migrant circuit between Yaxcabá and the city, which is today characterized by highly-intensive contact and communication in both directions. The move had a venturesome character for those young men, who in many cases migrated to Cancún with their peers, scarcely having any contacts in the place, which was still under construction. Arriving in Cancún at its initial stage of development, this generation of ambitious migrants were often successful in finding employment and climbing up the ladder in the tourism industry without having higher education. The fact that some of them had settled down in Cancún facilitated the arrival of other immigrants in the 1980s and 1990s, during which greater waves of immigration from Yaxcabá occurred. More often than not, these

newcomers could count on the existing networks of their close relatives in the city. Moreover, in many cases, it was those kin members who had already settled down in Cancún who either directly encouraged them to migrate or served as a role model for more recent immigrants. The scale of the immigration is expressed in the statement of a man from Yaxcabá who lived in Cancún during these decades: “Every moment you see someone [from Yaxcabá in the city center]. [You see that] ‘There walks a man from Yaxcabá!’” (Y15\_MIG)<sup>187</sup>.

However, in the course of the tourism development, the conditions became less favorable for many rural immigrants entering the labor market as low-skilled workers. By the late-1990s, the social mobility of those with a lower level of school education significantly declined once labor shortages were solved by the immigration of both skilled and unskilled workers from across the country (Castellanos 2010a:87f., see also chapter 3.1.1.2). In view of the situation, the migrants from Yaxcabá developed some other kinds of connection with the cities, which are more suited to their needs. These include return migration from Cancún and weekly commuting to Mérida, which were much more common than migration to the tourist city at the time of my fieldwork.

Return migration – which was quite noticeable during my fieldwork stay in 2013 – perhaps most clearly exemplifies the interdependent relationship between Cancún and Yaxcabá (cf. Castellanos 2010b). Unlike the modernist interpretation of urbanization suggests, for those from Yaxcabá the migration to Cancún was by no means an inevitable and irreversible transition from one environment to another; rather, as active agents, both migrants and non-migrants are in constant search of a way of living in this interconnected space of the migrant circuit, which is in keeping with their concept of life. As it changes along the life course, so does their migration behavior, which is manifested in different patterns of return migration. Return migration observed during the fieldwork in Yaxcabá can be roughly categorized into two types, which mostly correlate with distinct moments in life.

As a first category, I refer to those who completely center their life again in Yaxcabá upon

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<sup>187</sup> This is a code used for the identification of interviews. See Appendix B for details of respective interviews.



their return. Typically, they are middle-aged men from Yaxcabá who migrated to Cancún as youths in the early phase of the tourism development. Having been successful in the tourist city, they return to Yaxcabá with their savings to pass the rest of their life in tranquility. They are mostly accompanied by their spouses – partly coming from other parts of the country – and their non-adult children, while older children rather tend to stay in Cancún. Due to the relative recentness of the phenomenon at the time of my fieldwork, it was yet not possible to ascertain their long-term economic strategies to make ends meet in the community. As far as I could observe during my fieldwork, their main activities after return were agriculture (primarily the cultivation of fruits in parcels and to a lesser degree the *milpa* agriculture) and municipal politics (cf. Re Cruz 2003:496 for the case of Chan Kom). Moreover, some of them were planning to set up a small business such as a restaurant in the community. In any case, those who had spent more than a decade in Cancún have become influential figures not only in local politics but also in other domains of social life in Yaxcabá. Based on their urban experience, they introduce different lifestyles, concepts of life and even new ideas about Maya language and culture to the community. As will be discussed later (see for example chapter 5.3.1), the dynamics are much more complex than the mere introduction of elements conceived in terms of urban influences in the model of the folk-urban continuum.

The other common pattern of return migration that I could observe during the fieldwork was that of young families. In this case, male migrants as heads of family often continue to work in Cancún with only their family members completely moving back to the community. The reason often given for their return is the convenience of enrolling their children in Yaxcabá, since schooling in the city implies higher expenses for parents. However, in more general terms, they also consider Yaxcabá to be a more adequate place to raise children in view of escalating violence in the *regiones* area of Cancún where most of them reside (cf. Castellanos 2010b:256f.). In order to keep obtaining cash income while protecting family members from the negative aspect of the urban life, they decide for organization of family life over distance,

with only heads of families working in the city and returning to the community for the weekend. The prevalence of return migration from Cancún among young families is also corroborated by the fact that over 13 percent of students in the sixth grade at the elementary school are born in the tourist city.

Apart from this particular type of return migration, the pattern of organizing family life over distance has generally become common in Yaxcabá. Many households are meanwhile strongly dependent on wage income earned by heads of families in the cities who migrate on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, leaving their family members behind the community. This pattern of regular migration is said to have been triggered by labor migration to the tourist city during its construction phase. Since then, wage work in the cities has become a widespread way of earning a living, even though Cancún is no longer the primary destination today. Nowadays, many people in Yaxcabá see it more convenient to commute to Mérida rather than Cancún, as for the majority of migrants the tourist city no longer offers economic advantages, which would make up for a longer travel route. Such flexible adjustments in migration behavior again demonstrate the agency of the people who make conscious choices in search of their way of living in the interconnected social space. In addition, those taking advantage of work opportunities in the cities do not necessarily abandon traditional farming in the community altogether. Many families consider it important to keep cultivating maize for their household food needs, even in case male family members are absent during the week, working for wages in the cities. Of course, this practice is partly economically motivated, providing food security and thus serving to supplement precarious wage work in the household economy (cf. Lizama Quijano 2007:122f., see Eakin et al. 2014 for the national context).<sup>188</sup> However, the economic advantage alone does not explain why many people continue to cultivate maize in their *milpa* despite a regular commute to the cities. Indeed, since migrants usually have to pay other

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<sup>188</sup> In addition, for those who are *ejido* members, the cultivation of land also serves to maintain their claim for farm subsidies.

people to support them in agricultural work, it is often – at least economically – no more effective than purchasing maize. Notwithstanding, many people in Yaxcabá attach strong importance to having maize from their own *milpa*, even though it may be cultivated with the help of paid work force. This underlines the point made by Re Cruz (2003) on the centrality of the *milpa* mode of production in people's life, which is to be understood symbolically as much as economically. The fact that many migrant workers attempt to continue the cultivation of maize demonstrates that migration does not necessarily imply a radical transformation from one social identity to another, such as from peasant to proletarian; rather, while taking advantage of economic opportunities in the cities and even spending more time there, these migrants maintain the practice of *milpa* agriculture, a quite territorialized system of production and consumption. Accordingly, the migrants from Yaxcabá are active agents not only in deciding where and how to migrate, but also in balancing their dependence on wage work with more autonomous modes of production. This kind of socio-spatial arrangements highlights the interdependence of the city and the countryside, as highlighted by Castellanos (2010ab), calling into question the modernist understanding of rural-urban relations. While these observations warn against the automatic linking of out-migration with the radical transformation of people's values and lifestyle (cf. Gaskins 2003), there are several changes related to recent regional developments that warrant attention.

As highlighted in a more general manner in chapter 3.1.1.1, what indeed can be considered a fundamental change is the loss of cultural knowledge associated with the *milpa* agriculture among the young generation. Extended schooling and out-migration directly after graduation prevent many young boys from learning skills related to the traditional agriculture (see also chapter 5.3.2.1). This means that while the older generation of migrants are often capable of balancing it with farming, for the younger generation wage work in the cities has become their way of living, on which they completely rely (cf. Gaskins 2003:265, Lizama Quijano 2007:119f.).

Another distinguishing feature of the recent migration movements is increased female participation. The usual moment of female out-migration is the life stage between graduation and marriage, while the migration of married women is much less common (cf. Lizama Quijano 2007:120). Nevertheless, many young mothers – especially those who had worked in the cities in adolescence – expressed a desire to migrate to contribute to the household economy, which suggests the changing perception of gender roles, including in the rural community.

The brief overview of migration behaviors presented above demonstrates a complex formation of the migrant circuit between Yaxcabá and the cities, which cannot be captured by the modernist oppositional conception of rural and urban spaces. In sum, the following two points already indicated above seem especially important to understand the social space of the migrant circuit constituted by those from Yaxcabá. First, migrants' experiences at different stages of Cancún's development highlight the historical construction of the urban space and their participation in the processes. Since Cancún is a large city counting more than 600,000 inhabitants, researchers might be tempted to assume a primordial opposition of the rural and urban spaces while considering the relation between Yaxcabá and Cancún. It is true that the oppositional conception of the spaces is also pronounced by those forming part of the migrant circuit today, manifested – for example – in discourses that contrast urban opportunities with rural scarcity or urban danger with rural tranquility. However, the accounts of those having arrived in Cancún at its initial stage demonstrate that the current spatial arrangements of Yaxcabá and the tourist city are outcomes of recent historical processes that have always been susceptible to change (cf. Rouse 1991:11). The other crucial aspect for understanding the nature of the social space is the agency of those constituting the migrant circuit. As already stressed, their multiple subsistence strategies as well as flexible adjustments in migration behavior underline the meanwhile accepted view of migrants as active agents who consciously change their situation rather than automatically responding to large structural forces (cf. Gmelch, Van Kemper and Zenner 2010:281f.).

### 5.1.1.2 Tiholop and the cities

Similar to the migrant circuit illustrated above, the state's capital Mérida and the tourist city of Cancún also constitute the main nodes in the network of connections extending from the community of Tiholop. However, compared with that of Yaxcabá, the migrant circuit between Tiholop and the cities shows less intensity and complexity of population movements, for the following two reasons. As mentioned in chapter 3.2.1.2, due to a lack of direct transportation, commuting to Cancún on a bi-weekly basis – as it occurs in Yaxcabá – is hardly possible from Tiholop. In addition, at the time of my fieldwork, for those in Tiholop it was more difficult to keep in regular contact with their relatives residing in the cities, since access to communication technology was quite limited.

Today, by far the most common pattern of migration from Tiholop is weekly commuting to Mérida, which is especially noticeable in the community every Saturday, when migrant workers return from the city to spend the weekend with their families. This practice of regular migration to the cities is a relatively recent phenomenon, which roughly coincides with the tourism development in the Mexican Caribbean. In this respect, the trajectory of migration movements is quite similar to that of Yaxcabá (see the previous section). Notwithstanding, a comparison with Yaxcabá also reveals several peculiarities of Tiholop's migration situation, which will be the focus of the present section.

As is the case with Yaxcabá, it is true that population movements from Tiholop have – to a certain degree – been correlated with the development of the tourism industry along the Caribbean coast. During its initial stage, several people from Tiholop migrated eastwards to work in the construction of hotels and other facilities of the tourist resort. As jobs in construction became scarce in the course of the development, those who had acquired the skills through migration transferred to Mérida to keep working in the sector. Accordingly, the migration of construction workers seems to have similar trajectories in both Yaxcabá and Tiholop. However, in the case of Tiholop, while the establishment of the tourist resort has been

a factor influencing the population movements, the onset of large-scale out-migration is above all associated with severe subsistence crisis experienced approximately 40 years ago in the community. Crop failure owing to climate instability and plague represented a real existential threat in Tiholop, especially at that time, since the supply of goods from outside was limited due to the lack of asphalted roads. Accordingly, the crisis caused a massive depopulation of the community. Looking for ways to make a living, some migrated to Mérida, Cancún or other urban environments, while others moved to the southern part of today's Quintana Roo to work the land. Accordingly, although these population movements roughly coincide with the construction boom of the tourism industry, it seems that in Tiholop out-migration during this period was motivated by need to a greater extent than was the case in Yaxcabá.

As is the case in Yaxcabá, nowadays many households are dependent on wage income earned by heads of families commuting to the state's capital on a weekly basis. Nevertheless, as presented above, many of them continue the cultivation of their *milpa* despite regular out-migration. This practice is still much more prevalent in Tiholop (see chapter 5.3.2.1, especially Table 1). Unlike in Yaxcabá, many of the young generation in Tiholop are capable of working the land. Accordingly, it was also observed that young adult sons were taking care of *milpa* while the father was migrating to the city. Discussing the balancing act between migration and farm work, the previous section pointed to the role of traditional agriculture in supplementing the precarious wage work in the household economy. However, it can also be argued the other way around in view of the centrality of the *milpa* agriculture in Tiholop's community, namely that the out-migration of family members is possibly the very strategy applied in the rural households to maintain the traditional system of production (Lizama Quijano 2007:123f.). Accordingly, as has been highlighted for the case of Yaxcabá, wage work in the cities does not necessarily imply a transformation of the rural society in terms of a unilineal development; rather, supporting rural subsistence, it may also serve as a means for cultural reproduction under today's socioeconomic and ecological conditions.

While acknowledging a certain degree of continuity, the previous section briefly dealt with female out-migration as a possible indicator of changes in cultural values. In comparison with Yaxcabá, the migration of women is much less common in Tiholop and participation is generally restricted to young unmarried women. The pattern observed in Tiholop strongly corresponds with the female adolescent migration from “Kuchmil”<sup>189</sup> illustrated by Castellanos (2007). In Tiholop, out-migration for women almost exclusively occurs at the life stage between graduation and marriage, with the exception of spouses accompanying their husbands to the cities. As in many rural communities of Yucatan (e.g. Castellanos 2007:7), the idealized understanding of gender roles in Tiholop allocates women’s activities to the domestic sphere. Until they marry and form their own household, they are obliged to fulfill their responsibilities to their natal family in accordance with the gendered division of labor. As unmarried women are to a certain degree perceived as adolescents by their parents regardless of their age, both girls and unmarried women remain under constant supervision, which normally leads to a restriction of their mobility (Castellanos 2007:8-10). Upon first glance, female adolescent migration observed in Tiholop does not seem to fit with the local conceptions of adolescence and gender. However, as demonstrated by Castellanos with the case of “Kuchmil” (2007), it mostly occurs in a way that conforms to expected gender roles as well as the required responsibilities of adolescents towards their natal household. Furthermore, in Tiholop, the economic hardship experienced in the rural households seems to be an important factor permitting the mobility of unmarried women (cf. Castellanos 2007). However, out-migration motivated in this manner did not radically transform the role of adolescent children as their responsibilities to the natal family remained: instead of physical labor at home, these were then predominantly fulfilled through economic contributions in the form of remittances (cf. Castellanos 2007:15f). In addition, as highlighted by Castellanos (2007:11f.), the existence of kin networks in the cities facilitated female out-migration. More

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<sup>189</sup> See footnote 170.

often than not, the migration of young women from Tiholop to Cancún at the end of the 1990s was motivated by older siblings living in the city. Accordingly, in most cases, the female mobility was framed through family solidarity, which enhanced the acceptability of the formerly-unconventional practice in the community (cf. Castellanos 2007:12). Finally, the rural gendered division of labor is often reproduced in the cities. As reported by Castellanos with the case of female migrants from “Kuchmil” (2007), the majority of unmarried women from Tiholop work as domestic servants in the cities. Besides their education level, this practice is also closely related to the conventional conception of gender roles in rural communities, according to which it is more acceptable for female migrants to work in the private sphere of the household than in the public domain (cf. Castellanos 2007:15). In sum, female participation in out-migration as a relatively recent phenomenon can indeed be interpreted as the indicator and engine of shifting expectations regarding gender roles in Tiholop. However, as illustrated by Castellanos (2007), closer inspection reveals that the practice is framed through the local conceptions of gender and adolescence. Accordingly, it is not adequate to speak of a radical transformation of values and beliefs merely based on the increased physical mobility of young women. On the other hand, as highlighted by scholars (e.g. Castellanos 2007), it is true that women’s access to wages increases their decision-making power within their household, which empowers them to negotiate the established gender relations. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to a complex formation of gender roles in the social space of the migrant circuit. Instead of being a transition from one opposite pole to the other, they are the outcome of an intricate interplay among the increased economic autonomy of women, the local conception of femininities and gender-differentiated labor forms of the global economy (cf. Castellanos 2007:21).



### 5.1.2 State of bilingualism and language choice

The present section deals with the language situation in each of the places forming part of the network to discuss how the ideas about the two languages become shaped in the above-illustrated social space of the migrant circuit. Generally speaking, the proportion of Maya speakers among the general population is highest in the maize-cultivating areas characterized by the continuance of traditional agriculture, and lowest in the metropolitan and coastal regions (cf. Pfeiler 2012:205, chapter 3.1.2.2). While the census data provides schematic information on the geographic distribution of Maya speakers, more detailed analysis is required to ascertain its implications for those moving between these places characterized by different sociolinguistic situations. Accordingly, apart from the general state of bilingualism in the respective sites, the section devotes special attention to patterns of language choice, which are indicative of the functions and meanings assigned to the languages. Especially the presentation of the language situation in the cities focuses on experiences of those from the municipality of Yaxcabá to see how their spatial practices are reflected in language use.

#### 5.1.2.1 Municipality of Yaxcabá

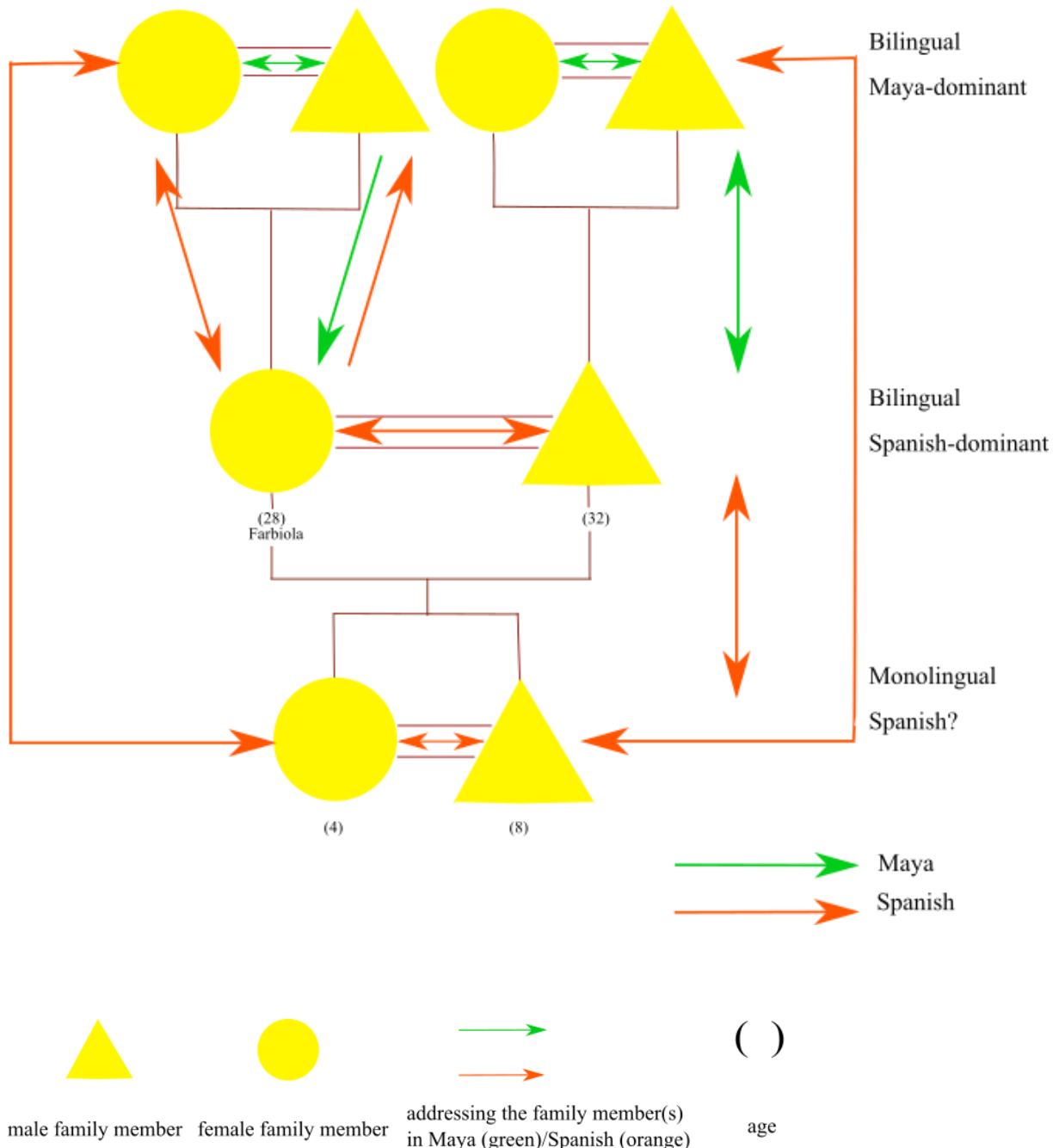
The municipality of Yaxcabá is located at the heart of the maize-cultivating zone of the state of Yucatan, which is generally characterized by a high vitality of the Maya language in comparison with the regions dedicated to other socioeconomic activities (see chapter 3.1.2.2, especially Figure 4 and Figure 5). However, according to Pfeiler, the sub-region of this area – to which also the municipality belongs – recorded a proportional decrease in Maya speakers compared to 1980 (2012:205). In addition, the language situation can vary to a considerable degree within the municipality covering the large area (see chapter 3.2.1), as exemplified by the significant difference between the localities of Yaxcabá and Tiholop, which are over 30 kilometers away from each other. As chapter 3.1.2.2 already presented the general state of

bilingualism based on the census data, this section focuses on the micro level, looking at patterns of individual language choice in the respective research sites. In the case of the rural communities, the largest variance in language behavior is observed among generations. As explained in chapter 2.1.2.2, differences in patterns of language use between younger and older generations are an important indicator of an ongoing language shift. Considering the household domain to be the primary site of cultural reproduction, the present section devotes special attention to patterns of language choice in family interactions across generations.

### **Yaxcabá**

Considering language shift to be “the long term collective results of language choice” (Fasold 1984:213), the present section discusses individual language behavior with a special emphasis on intergenerational interactions in the family domain. It has been argued in chapter 3.2.1.1 that patterns of language choice in today’s Yaxcabá are – among other factors – primarily dependent on age cohorts. This means that the process of language shift can be observed by varying patterns of language use across generations. Notwithstanding, as has been indicated in the chapter, it should be kept in mind that neither age cohort nor age grade can serve as a sole indicator of individual language behavior in Yaxcabá; rather, in some families, the intergenerational transmission of Yucatec Maya stopped much earlier than in others. Moreover, patterns of language acquisition and use at a later stage may depend to a significant degree on individual trajectories of life. Since there is considerable variance within the same age groups in contemporary Yaxcabá, the state of individual bilinguality cannot be explained only in terms of generation- or age-specific language behaviors. Accordingly, changing patterns of language use in one family do not necessarily reflect the state of the community’s bilingualism at the given moment. Notwithstanding, the section begins by illustrating language choice across three generations of one family to exemplify the process of language shift as it typically occurs in Yaxcabá.

The following part discusses patterns of language choice in the nuclear and extended family of Farbiola, whose interactions I could observe on a daily basis (see chapter 4.2.2.1). For an overview, the observation is summarized in the following chart demonstrating the language most commonly used for communication between respective family members.



**Figure 9 Patterns of language choice across three generations in Yaxcabá**

*Note. Only the ages of those family members whose age is known to the researcher are provided.*

The patterns of language choice observed across three generations in Farbiola's family correspond to the stages of language shift presented in chapter 2.1.2.2. Bilingualism is retained at least over two generations, albeit with varying preference for respective languages. In the case of Farbiola's parents (both birth parents and in-law), bilingualism is functional with a clear dominance of the Maya language. Their use of Spanish within the community is reserved for communication with a certain group of persons, above all those of younger generations. However, their children – despite having also been raised in Maya-speaking households – demonstrate completely different patterns of language use. Although both Farbiola and her husband have productive skills in Yucatec Maya, most communication with their peers takes place in the Spanish language, including the couple's daily conversations at home. Contrary to their parents, they rather have a selective group of persons with whom they speak Yucatec Maya, while their main language of communication is Spanish. Generally, Maya is only used in interactions with elder persons, either kin or acquaintances who feel more comfortable in the language. Farbiola's husband speaks Maya with his parents and Farbiola's kin including her parents and elder brothers. All male members of the extended family with whom he speaks Maya cultivate *milpa*. On the other hand, Farbiola seldom uses her productive skills in Maya, even though she participates in conversations mainly conducted in the language on almost a daily basis, given that her husband speaks Maya with her closest kin. In such interactions, her comments are mainly made in Spanish. Furthermore, while she is addressed in Maya by her father and her mother-in-law, she mostly responds to them in Spanish. Notwithstanding, both Farbiola and her husband have the custom of speaking Maya with some elder friends and acquaintances on the street. In addition, with both of them having been raised in the Maya-speaking households, even though the couple is used to speaking in Spanish with each other, they often draw on terms and concepts in Maya. They also switch to Maya during the conversation otherwise conducted in Spanish, while quoting other people's utterances in the language.

In sum, judged merely on the frequency of language use, the bilingualism of Farbiola and her husband might be considered Spanish-dominant. It is true that they have a much smaller group of persons with whom they habitually speak Maya in comparison with the generation of their parents. However, it is noticeable that being socialized in the Maya-speaking households and continuing the *milpa* system of production, they often draw on knowledge encoded by the Yucatec Maya language in their everyday conversations in Spanish.

While Farbiola and her husband have access to symbolic resources of both Maya and Spanish, the degree to which their knowledge of Maya will be transmitted to the generation of their children – who were four and eight years old at the time of my fieldwork – remains to be seen. Since Farbiola and her husband spoke with each other and their children in Spanish, at least at the time of my fieldwork, the children's knowledge of Yucatec Maya was quite limited. Having active command of Spanish, their grandparents also spoke to them in Spanish, whereby the children were not directly confronted with understanding utterances made to them in Maya and – even to a lesser degree – actively speaking the language. Notwithstanding, they were exposed to Yucatec Maya on almost a daily basis, as many conversations of adults – either at home with visitors or at the places of their grandparents – take place in the language. In addition, having grown up in the household continuing the *milpa* system of production, the children of Farbiola and her husband learned a similar set of skills that their parents had been expected to acquire in their childhood (cf. Gaskins 2003). For example, the eight-year-old son helped their parents to feed the domestic animals and weed the yard. Moreover, the daughter usually saw her mother doing daily chores, among which processing of the corn including making tortillas by hand plays a significant part. Accordingly, apart from the fact that the nuclear family's main language of communication is Spanish, there seems to be a certain degree of continuity in childhood socialization between the generations (cf. Gaskins 2003). In view of these factors, it is to be assumed that some of the linguistic knowledge will be transmitted to the children socialized in the Maya-speaking extended family and acquiring the skills related to the traditional household

organization. However, it remains a matter of discussion what this pattern of language acquisition implies for the future vitality of Yucatec Maya.

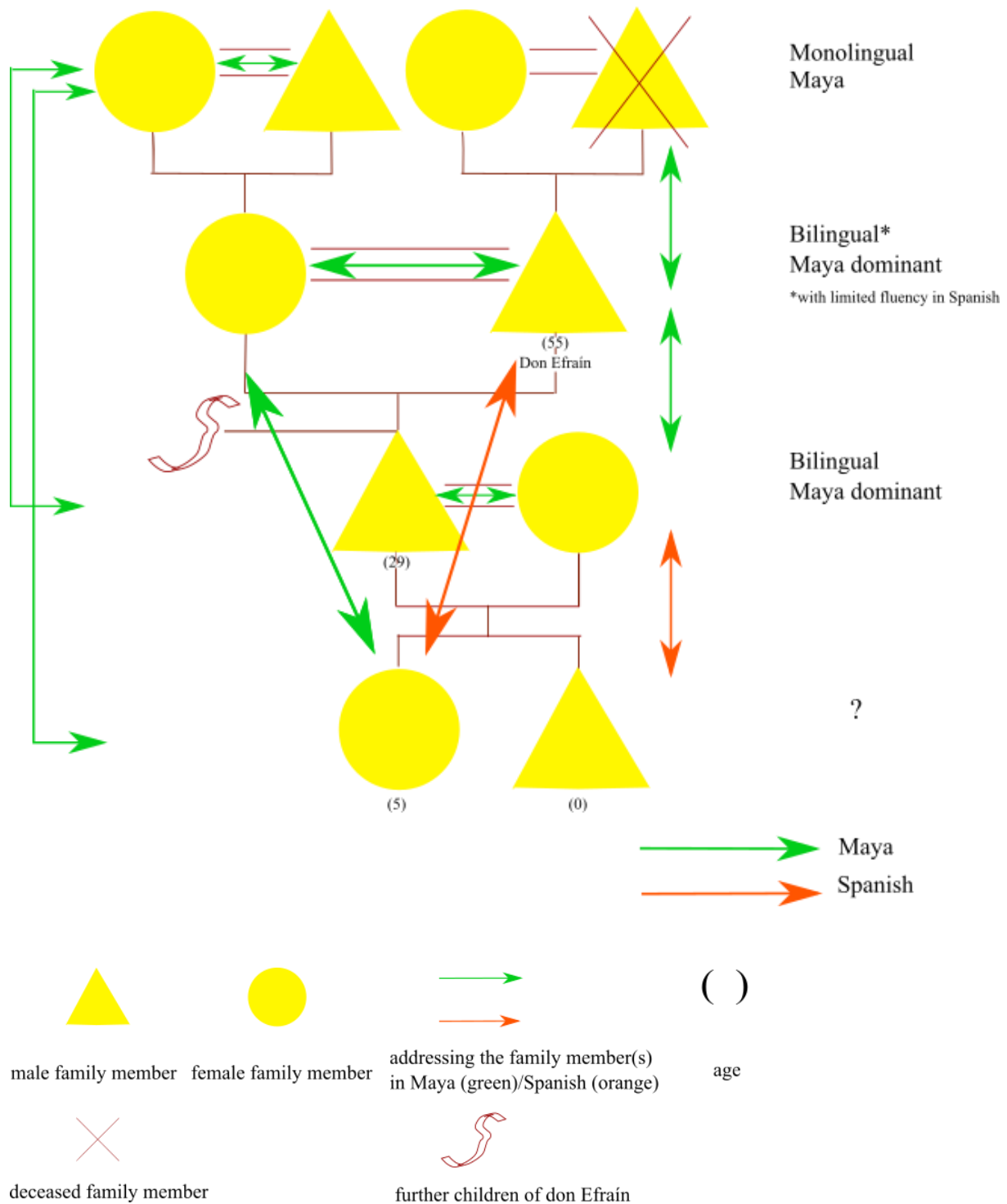
The presentation of language choice in Yaxcabá thus far has focused on the situation in Farbiola's family, since it illustrates well how the language shift gradually advances over generations. However, it should be noted that their behavior might not be considered typical of families of this age in current Yaxcabá. As indicated above, in some families the intergenerational transmission of Maya stopped earlier and many fathers of school children no longer cultivate the *milpa*. Despite the difference within each generation, the age cohort seems decisive for individual bilinguality, especially with respect to the command of Maya. Many of those over 40 years old who had been socialized in Spanish by their parents recalled that they acquired Yucatec Maya as a second language on the street or at school, interacting with other children. This possibility of language acquisition is no longer given in today's Yaxcabá. Even though children and youth might be socialized in Yucatec Maya at home, they would scarcely be able to communicate with their peers in the language. Accordingly, the moment at which the language of communication among children and youth gradually shifted to Spanish seems to have been a crucial turning point in the societal bilingualism of Yaxcabá. As language shift is already advanced in Yaxcabá, it is not possible to reconstruct the moment, which surely dates back several decades. However, it can be assumed that at some point the increase in the number of children socialized in Spanish led to a gradual replacement of Maya as the language of communication among young peers. Given that language shift is "the long term collective results of language choice" (Fasold 1984:213), it seems to have become a process with its own dynamics at a community level once Spanish-dominant communication patterns were established among them.

The section thus far has dealt with the state of bilingualism in Yaxcabá, which reflects an advanced stage of language shift. The following part will present patterns of language choice in the community of Tiholop, which can rather be considered to be at the onset of the process.

## **Tiholop**

Generally speaking, there is much less variability in patterns of language choice in Tiholop compared with Yaxcabá. As far as I could observe, Maya was almost the only language used for communication among adult members of the community (see also chapter 3.2.1.2). However, it should be noted that despite the dominance of Maya language in interactions, there is considerable variance in individual bilinguality, especially with respect to speakers' command of Spanish. As school education has long been the first domain in which speakers came into contact with the Spanish language within the community of Tiholop, conditions for the acquisition of Spanish language depend on access to schooling and – as such – often on the age cohort to which speakers belong.

In order to discuss the subtle differences in bilinguality that are often age-dependent in Tiholop, the section again demonstrates language choice across different generations of one family, using a chart. The following figure demonstrates the language most commonly used for communication between respective family members in the nuclear and extended family of don Efraín, whose interactions I could observe on a daily basis during the fieldwork (cf. chapter 4.2.2.1).



**Figure 10 Patterns of language choice across four generations in Tiholop**

*Note.* Only the ages of those family members whose age is known to the researcher are provided.

Don Efraín lives with his wife, their youngest daughter and their son’s nuclear family in the same house. At the time of the fieldwork, don Efraín and his son Antonio were working four hectares of *milpa* together. However, both of them also have experience of out-migration. Presenting the patterns of language choice, the section places special emphasis on



intergenerational communication of this extended family living together, which I could observe on a daily basis. Moreover, the chart also included the parents of don Efraín and his wife, respectively, with whom they maintained regular contact through visits. In addition, despite not being presented in the chart, the section also deals with the language situation in nuclear families of don Efraín's children not living on the same plot.

As is generally the case in Tiholop, Yucatec Maya is the language of communication among all adult members of the family. Furthermore, the youngest daughter of don Efraín – who was fifteen years old at the time of the fieldwork – communicated with her parents and all of her older siblings in Yucatec Maya. In the family, Spanish was only used to address Antonio's children, the five-year-old daughter and the son who had not reached one year at that time. They were spoken to by their parents and other extended family members of the generation in Spanish. This practice of socializing small children in Spanish has generally become common or is even becoming the norm in Tiholop. As long as parents have command of Spanish, it is considered desirable to address their children in the language to prepare them for school. Moreover, don Efraín – who acquired the language as an adult – spoke to his grandchildren in Spanish. However, through growing up in the Maya-speaking extended family, Antonio's five-year-old daughter had already developed patterns of language choice corresponding to interlocutors. She used Spanish while speaking with her parents, kin of the generation and don Efraín. Maya was chosen to converse with her grandmother and great-grandparents. Accordingly, living with her grandmother who prefers the use of Yucatec Maya, the child seemed to be developing high active fluency in both languages, even though she was addressed almost exclusively in Spanish by her parents at the time of the fieldwork.

Generally, due to the current state of bilingualism in Tiholop, children are growing up in an environment in which acquisition of some language skills in Maya is probable regardless of the language chosen by parents for their socialization. However, with respect to active language use, children's bilinguality can vary to a significant degree. While Antonio's daughter spoke

Yucatec Maya with her grandmother on a daily basis, those grandchildren of don Efraín not living in the same house were not actively encouraged to speak the language in their respective nuclear families. Accordingly, Spanish was the language of choice for them to communicate with their grandparents. However, since their parents spoke in Maya with each other at home, all of them living in Tiholop had good passive command of the language, which made their language behavior acceptable to grandparents. As will be elaborated later in chapter 5.3.2.2, the language behavior of the youngest generation – which deviates from elder members of the society – is not necessarily perceived as a radical change nor seen negatively in Tiholop. By contrast, people generally approve of parents socializing children in Spanish, partly recalling negative experiences that they also had at school or wider Yucatecan society due to a poor command of Spanish. While underlining the importance of Spanish fluency for children, they seem to consider the acquisition of Maya to be naturally occurring without interventions. Moreover, for the time being, it is indeed true that children are very likely to acquire at least passive command of the language due to the Maya-speaking environment, regardless whether they are spoken to in Maya or not.

In addition, the language used in caregiver-child communication can change as children grow older. One family in Tiholop reported that while now communicating predominantly in Maya with their 14-year-old daughter, they used to speak Spanish to her as she was a child, which she acquired as her first language. This practice seems relatively common in Tiholop. Although many parents ensure that their children learn Spanish as their first language to be prepared for school, Maya is often acquired at a later moment in childhood, which can then replace Spanish as the language of communication between the parents and child. Accordingly, the socialization of pre-school children in Spanish does not necessarily rule out the possibility of them later acquiring and actively using Maya.

Notwithstanding, the increase in the number of children primarily socialized in Spanish is possibly affecting the language choice among the peers. Indeed, a difference in interaction

patterns could be observed in the classrooms in Tiholop that I visited to administer the questionnaire (see chapter 4.3.3). While communication among the students in the third-grade classrooms at the junior high school was exclusively carried out in Yucatec Maya, the use of both languages could be observed in the sixth-grade classrooms at the elementary school.

The data obtained from the questionnaire also revealed that there was a considerable variance between these two groups with respect to their first language. While over 80 percent of the students at the junior high school learned Maya as a first language, the percentage declines to under 55 percent at the elementary school (see Table 7). These variations with respect to both observed interaction patterns and students' first language are remarkable if one considers that these two groups only differ in mean age by about three years.<sup>190</sup> Of course, the observed difference in language choice between the two groups is perhaps not only to be attributed to age cohorts. Indeed, it should also be noted that although they might not have acquired it as first language, the majority of the students in the sixth grade at the elementary school claimed active command of Maya (see Table 5). Accordingly, it might be short-sighted to interpret these variances as signals of a unidirectional change towards Spanish monolingualism. However, if Maya is in fact to be replaced by Spanish in communication between peers, it would imply a significant change in the sociolinguistic environment in which children will be socialized in the future, namely if communication language between parents becomes Spanish, unlike at present, children's acquisition of Maya in the family domain would no longer be ensured. Subsequently, even in Tiholop, the language shift could take its own course, which is difficult to intercept.

In sum, the case of Tiholop demonstrates the importance of devoting special attention to subtle variation in individual bilinguality among different generations to assess the long-term vitality of Maya in the locality. Upon first glance, the language situation in Tiholop appears stable as Maya is almost the only language used for communication among adult members of

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<sup>190</sup> In the elementary school of Tiholop, the age range of the students was from 10 to 14 with a mean age of 11.5 and in the junior high school from 14 to 17 with a mean age of 14.8.

the community. However, the socialization of small children in Spanish – which has meanwhile become common practice among parents – seems to be gradually changing the previously Maya-dominant patterns of language choice among young peers. This subtle deviation including the diminished use of Maya among children in general is not necessarily perceived as a significant change in the community. It is true that most children today are acquiring some skills of the language due to the Maya-speaking environment. However, the conditions for acquisition of the vernacular might significantly change in the future when the generation characterized by Spanish-dominant patterns of communication become parents.

The section thus far has dealt with the state of bilingualism in the two localities of the municipality of Yaxcabá, with a special emphasis on the patterns of language choice among various generations in the family domain. This micro perspective on societal bilingualism has demonstrated that the language situation within the rural communities is neither homogenous nor static. In the case of the two localities, the parental socialization of small children in Spanish and the gradual replacement of Maya in communication among young peers can be identified as decisive moments in language shift. However, as the intergenerational comparison of language behavior has demonstrated, more often than not these do not represent abrupt changes, but rather they mostly occur in accordance with the “received cultural scheme” (Sahlins 1987:151f.). Therefore, in the case of the local communities, the language shift can be conceived as a kind of transformation, which is – drawing on Sahlins (1985) – to be understood as a mode of cultural reproduction (see chapter 5.3.2.2 for further discussion).

While this section has not placed particular emphasis on migration, the multi-sited research project as a whole is concerned with the language maintenance of Yucatec Maya in “the deterritorialized social space of the migrant circuit” (Castellanos 2010a: xviii). According to Appadurai, cultural reproduction in such a social space only succeeds by “conscious design and political will” (1996:54), since the loosening of the holds between people, capital and territories fundamentally alters its basis (1996:49). As has been demonstrated in chapter 5.1.1,

the networks from the communities of Yaxcabá and Tiholop extend far beyond their boundaries to encompass the urban arena. The following section deals with cultural reproduction in the urban settings of Mérida and Cancún, which can be considered to form part of the extended communities (cf. Re Cruz 1996b:8). In accordance with the research's general emphasis on language vitality, it focuses on the language behavior of Maya speakers from Yaxcabá and Tiholop in the cities.

#### 5.1.2.2 Cities

In the case of the rural communities, the language behavior of individuals is significantly determined by age cohorts and the family in which they have been socialized. In the urban environment, the patterns of language choice are more variable, including among Maya-speaking immigrants from the municipality of Yaxcabá.

Generally, the percentage of Maya speakers among the total population is much lower in the cities compared with rural communities. According to the census data (INEGI 2005), in both Mérida and Cancún Maya is spoken by slightly over 10 percent of the inhabitants (see also chapter 3.2.2). However, since the two cities are – albeit in a different manner – characterized by internal social boundaries, such general figures reveal little about people's perceptions and experiences of the urban linguistic scenery. In addition, it is hardly possible to make a general statement about patterns of interaction in the cities. While urban social relationships are commonly considered superficial, transitory and segmental (cf. Wirth 1938), anthropological studies working with immigrants have pointed to the prevalence of close-knit social networks in urban neighborhoods (e.g. Lewis 1952, Lomnitz 1977). Accordingly, the immigrants' experience of the urban environment depends to a significant degree on the social contacts that they maintain. The role of social networks for urban residents' language behavior has also been highlighted in several sociolinguistic studies (e.g. Milroy 1980, Bortoni-Ricardo 1985). As will be presented below, the variability in patterns of language use observed among Maya-speaking

immigrants with a similar language biography may also be attributed to social contacts that they maintain in the cities.

Another important factor to be considered is the conception of the urban space held by Maya speakers regarding the presence of the language in respective cities. While Mérida and Cancún have a similar quantitative representation of Maya speakers, the language is valued in a slightly different way in the two cities, with distinct histories of formation and development.

Accordingly, the following part deals with the language behavior of the immigrants from Yaxcabá and Tiholop in the cities, devoting special attention to their social networks and conceptions of the urban space.

### **Mérida**

The city of Mérida has two seemingly contradicting sides regarding the language maintenance of Yucatec Maya. On the one hand, the state's capital serves as the hub in which many activities for promoting the language are organized. On the other hand, as an important destination of rural immigrants, it is the site of hispanization, where many Maya speakers become accustomed to Spanish-dominant patterns of communication (see chapter 3.2.2.1). Such a multi-faceted urban space is experienced in different ways by Maya speakers from the municipality of Yaxcabá. Indeed, their perception of the linguistic scenery in Mérida is as diverse as their urban experiences. Their estimation of the language situation can vary to a considerable degree, depending on their ties to and within the city.

As has been illustrated in chapter 5.1.1, the most common pattern of migration observed in the two communities studied is weekly commuting to Mérida, which often begins at a young age. Especially for many migrant workers from Tiholop, entry into wage labor in the city represents the first occasion on which they have to count on Spanish to “defend themselves” outside of school. In most cases, the bilinguality of those Maya speakers remains instrumental as they barely change their Maya-dominant patterns of language use in the community,

allocating Spanish to the domain of urban wage work. However, the fluency in Spanish language gained through migration is often used to talk to small children, either their own children or grandchildren at home. As has been discussed above, in the long term this practice – albeit not exclusively owing to out-migration – can trigger a shift of societal bilingualism in Tiholop.

Unsurprisingly, more radical change in individual language behavior is observed in the case of total immigration to the city. Since weekly commuting to Mérida is possible from both Yaxcabá and Tiholop today, this kind of migration is not very common. In the majority of cases, those who move their place of residence to the city do so as they get married in the city or have a professional or vocational job there. Generally, immigration to the city is considered to favor the shift to Spanish at the individual and family levels; indeed, many Maya speakers feel obliged to speak Spanish in Mérida as it is the language mostly used in urban public life. However, individual language use in the city depends to a significant degree on the social networks that they maintain. In order to consider the implications of urban relationships for immigrants' language behavior, it is important to take into account certain characteristics of the state's capital, as already discussed in chapter 3.2.2.1.

Mérida is an urban center that has grown dramatically through immigration from surrounding rural communities. Accordingly, despite its population size, it retains a predominantly regional character, with the majority of the inhabitants born in the state of Yucatan. At the same time, it is a divided city characterized by socioeconomic segregation. Generally, a higher concentration of people of rural origin is observed in neighborhoods mostly located in the southern part of Mérida. This residential differentiation – although primarily not to be understood as an ethnic division – often results in a much higher representation of Maya speakers in these areas compared with the rest of the city.

In accordance with this general tendency, the immigrants from Yaxcabá and Tiholop are also likely to reside in such neighborhoods. Furthermore, their perception of the urban language

situation depends to a considerable degree on their place of residence within the city and the contacts they have there. Close relationships with Maya-speaking neighbors are maintained by women rather than men, who are more likely to spend most of the day in a non-Maya-speaking workplace. Since communication with strangers is mostly conducted in Spanish, such friendships in their neighborhoods are crucial for immigrants' language maintenance in the city. Although a more precise analysis would be needed to corroborate the point, their estimation of the urban language situation seems to be significantly influenced by the social relationships that they maintain in the city.

The following part compares different views on the representation of Yucatec Maya in the city expressed by siblings. Both doña Rita and don Juan<sup>191</sup> were born in Tiholop and have lived in Mérida for over twenty years. Doña Rita continues to reside in a neighborhood located in the southern part of Mérida. Don Juan had returned to Tiholop one year before the interview was conducted. Prior to his return to the community, he lived in the northern part of the city. Both acquired Maya as first language and are bilingual in Maya and Spanish.

Doña Rita (M2)<sup>192</sup>:

Language situation and communication in the neighborhood	
Interviewer: ¿Y usted habla maya acá en Mérida? Rita: Sí, con las que conozco. I: Sí, habla, ¿sí? ¿Las que viven por acá? ¿Las vecinas así que hablan en maya? R: Sí, hay muchas como la del frente, es de Mamita. Ah, sí sabe maya y hablo con ella en maya. Hm, a veces con esa mi hermanita hablamos en maya (...).	I: And do you speak Maya here in Mérida? R: Yes, with those I know. I: Yes, you speak [Maya], yes? [You mean] those who live near here? Neighbors who speak in Maya? R: Yes, there are many, for example, the neighbor [living] in front of [us] is from Mama. She can speak Maya and I talk with her in Maya. Sometimes with my younger sister, we talk in Maya (...).
Do you consider that Maya is necessary for those living in the city?	
Sí, porque tienen que aprender, si viene uno de, de	Yes, because they have to learn [Maya] in case

<sup>191</sup> Pseudonym.

<sup>192</sup> This is a code used for the identification of interviews. See Appendix B for details of respective interviews.



pueblo y no sabe, porque hay unos que no saben, no saben el español y solo hablan maya y tienen que buscar quien lo traduzca (...).	somebody comes from the countryside and can't speak [Spanish], because there are some who can't speak Spanish, they only speak Maya and they have to look for somebody who translates it (...).
Do you consider that Maya is important for those living in the city?	
Hm, sí, tiene que aprender para que así con cualquier persona puede hablar. Sí, es bonito y es muy necesario. Es como el inglés (...).	Yes, they have to learn [it] so that they can speak with anybody. Yes, it is beautiful and very necessary. It is like English (...).

Don Juan (T11\_LAN):

Language situation and communication in the neighborhood	
(...) mis hermanas vivían en el sur y nosotros vivíamos en el norte. Entonces, en esta parte donde estamos, nadie hablaba la maya. Era español, español, español, español. Nada más cuando yo venía acá al pueblo, hablaba con mi difunta mamá, con mis hermanitos (...).	(...) my sisters lived in the south and we lived in the north [of Mérida]. And in this zone where we were, nobody spoke Maya. It was Spanish, Spanish, Spanish, Spanish. Only when I came here to the <i>pueblo</i> , I spoke [Maya] with my now-deceased mother and my younger siblings (...).
Do you consider that Maya is necessary for those living in the city?	
Yo creo que no. Yo creo que no porque realmente en la ciudad es muy diferente el tipo la vida que se lleva, a, al tipo de vida que se lleva acá.	I don't think so. I don't think so because actually in the city, the lifestyle you have is very different from that you have here [in Tiholop].
Do you consider that Maya is important for those living in the city?	
Juan: (...), pero en la ciudad, no lo creo. Interviewer: ¿Entonces para, para la gente que vive en la ciudad, pues la maya no es importante? J: No, no es importante para ellos. Para ellos no, porque yo viví allá y no, no se preocupan por que sus hijos aprendan la maya.	J: (...) but in the city, I don't think so. I: Then, for those living in the city, Maya is not important? J: No, it is not important for them. Not for them because I lived there and no, they do not see to it that their children learn Maya.

As these responses show, Maya speakers can develop divergent opinions about the city's language situation, depending on the neighborhoods in which they live and the social relations that they maintain in Mérida. It is true that both migrated to Mérida at fairly young age and spent more than half of their lives in Mérida. However, the stages in life during which the

migration occurred might have had decisive impacts on their distinct urban experiences. Doña Rita migrated to Mérida with her partner from Yaxcabá and their two children at the age of 24. She and her partner continue to speak with each other in Maya. Don Juan left the community to learn the profession of a tailor at the age of fifteen and got married in the city to his wife, who is from San Luis Potosí. Both of their children were born there. Unsurprisingly, Spanish was the only language spoken in the family as they lived in Mérida. Obviously, besides friendships with other Maya speakers, frequent interactions with Maya-speaking family members and kin are crucial for immigrants' language maintenance. Indeed, among immigrants from the formerly *henequen* growing zone, it could be observed that the existence of strong kin networks from the community of origin was favoring their continued use of Maya in Mérida (Yamasaki 2010). However, those from Yaxcabá and Tiholop seldom count on such large kin networks in the city, owing to the lower frequency of total immigration. This means a lack of the important domain in which their Mérida-born children could be exposed to Maya, thus rendering their acquisition of the language in the urban environment even less probable. Spanish monolingualism of the children sometimes leads to a communication gap in families from Tiholop, since grandparents living in the community are not used to speaking the language. In such cases, the grandparents' generation rather accommodates their speech to monolingual grandchildren than the other way around, trying to address them in Spanish (see chapter 5.3.2.2). The radical break in language transmission through out-migration can be considered an example of "the traumas of deterritorialization" to which – according to Appadurai – the work of cultural reproduction is exposed in the new locale (1996:44). This aspect will be discussed in a later section of the chapter dealing with intergenerational transmission of Maya (see chapter 5.3.2.2).

The section thus far has examined language use in the predominantly private sphere of urban life, manifested in family and kinship relations as well as friendships in the neighborhoods. As mentioned above, since Yucatec Maya is used differently in diverse social

networks, it is hardly possible to speak of the urban language situation in general terms. Nevertheless, certain associations of place and the language seem to be more collectively shared, which are crucial for understanding the specificity of meanings attached to the Yucatec Maya language in the city of Mérida. Indeed, the above-mentioned contrasting faces of the state's capital are closely related with people's ideas about the territoriality of the language. While this topic will be the focus of analysis in the following section, the present part briefly introduces two aspects that are perhaps most prominently manifested in the city of Mérida and thus especially relevant for considering its language situation.

In the capital of the state of Yucatan, the two seemingly contradictory ways of spatial mapping the language seem to co-exist side by side, manifested in citizens' ambivalent attitudes to the vernacular. On the one hand, Yucatec Maya is considered as constituting part of the regional identity and promoted as such, partly in prominent public places of the city, which contributes to collective acknowledgment of its cultural value. On the other hand, Mérida is perhaps the place in which the stereotype of Maya speakers informed by the conceptual opposition of rural-traditional and urban-modern is most clearly discernible, having strong impacts on people's everyday interactions. Given that one important component of language choice is "linguistic presentation of self" (Gal 1979), the association of Maya with lower social status is a factor leading to the preferred use of Spanish for communication with other Maya speakers in the city.

Urban Maya speakers develop ideas about the social meaning of the language through their interactions in the city featuring the above-mentioned contrasts. The following segments of interviews exemplify such multiple experiences.

*"If you can't speak Maya, you are not a Yucatecan!"*

Doña Diana immigrated from Tiholop to the state's capital as a teenager, where she got married to her husband from Veracruz. She and her family continue to live in the metropolitan

area of Mérida. Working at a juice bar in the city center, she interacts with many people on a daily basis. She answers the question of whether she likes to speak Maya in the following way:

<p>(...) de hecho, muchas personas me preguntan: “¿sabes maya?” “¡Sí!” Y lo dices con orgullo porque si no, eres, si no sabes maya, no eres Yucateca (...). (M5)</p>	<p>(...) actually, many people ask me: “Can you speak Maya?” [And I answer] “Yes.” And You say it with pride because if not, you are, if you can’t speak Maya, you are not a Yucatecan (...).</p>
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At another point in the interview, she refers again to the identity as Yucatecan as a reason why Maya is necessary for her personally after explaining the necessity of language for communication with her mother living in Tiholop and her neighbors.

<p>(...) Que a veces conoces a una persona y le dices que eres de Yucatán o que eres yucateco, lo primero que te pregunta: “¿cómo se dice esto en maya?” Y si no lo sabes (...). (M5)</p>	<p>(...) since sometimes you get to know a person and you say to him or her that you are from Yucatan or you are a Yucatecan, the first thing the person asks you [is]: “How do you say this in Maya?” And what if you don’t know (...).</p>
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These statements demonstrate that the language is recognized as an important part of the regional identity. As will be discussed later in the chapter, this idea is indeed shared by many Maya speakers with whom I spoke in rural and urban areas alike. Accordingly, on the one hand, Yucatec Maya is considered something characterizing Yucatan as a region, which also includes the capital of the state. On the other hand, it is important to take into account the social meaning of being and being regarded as a Maya speaker in the city with a long history of colonial segregation. Even today, Maya speaker as a social category is often associated with rural origin and lower social status in Mérida, contrasting with the above-mentioned regional identity that is supposed to extend across social classes. Generally, stereotypes can influence everyday interactions even without conscious awareness of the participants. The following episode from the interview exemplifies a manifestation of such a stereotype about Maya speakers in the city, which is sometimes expressed with no intention of offending

anyone. In this interview segment, doña Rita from Tiholop talks about her encounter with a Maya-speaking flower vendor from Ticul in Mérida.

*“I thought that such a beautiful woman could not speak Maya.”*

<p>(...) una vez pasó un señor de Ticul. Vendía flores y habla así en español. Y ya luego me dice:  “¿Usted, doña, si sabe la maya? ¿Entiende la maya?”  “Sí”, le digo. “Sí, yo soy de Tiholop.”  “¿Es usted de allá?”  “Sí”  “Ah, yo pensé que una señora tan bonita no sabe maya.”  Le digo, “sí lo sé”, le digo, y empezamos a hablar en maya entonces y se empozó a reir.  “Pensé que no sabía.”  Le digo: “no, sí yo vengo de un pueblo”, le digo, “ese es mi pueblo”, le digo.  “Ah, yo soy de Ticul.”  “Qué bueno”, le digo (...).  (M2)</p>	<p>(...) one time, a man from Ticul came by. He sold flowers and spoke this way in Spanish. And then, he says to me:  “Lady, can you speak Maya? Do you understand Maya?”  “Yes” I say to him. “Yes, I am from Tiholop.”  “Are you from there?”  “Yes.”  “Ah, I thought that such a beautiful woman could not speak Maya.”  I say to him, “Yes, I can speak it”, I say to him, and then we started to talk in Maya and he started to laugh.  “I thought that you could not speak [it].”  I say to him: “No, I come from a <i>pueblo</i>”, I say to him, “That is my origin”, I say to him.  “Ah, I am from Ticul.”  “Fine”, I say to him (...).</p>
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This dialog between doña Rita and the flower vendor from Ticul addresses three aspects that can be considered characteristic of the immigrants’ language behavior in the city.

First, the remark of the flower vendor demonstrates that the judgment of whether a stranger speaks Maya or not is made based on her physical appearance. The existence of a negative stereotype about Maya speakers in the city is indicated by the fact that he assumes doña Rita’s lacking command of Maya based on a positive attribute of “beauty”, expressed in the phrase “*una señora tan bonita* (such a beautiful women)”.

The second characteristic aspect addressed in the dialog is the linking of the language to the place of origin typically referred to as “*pueblo*”. Being a Maya speaker is closely associated

with a form of upbringing to which certain qualities such as rurality and humility are attributed. Moreover, in the dialog doña Rita explains her command of Maya – which was unexpected for the interlocutor – by her rural origin. Accordingly, in this context, the ability to speak Maya is considered a kind of territorialized skill that can only be acquired in a certain habitus, as will be discussed in detail later in chapter 5.2.1.

Finally, this episode reveals much about interactions between Maya-speaking strangers in the city. In the present case, it was possibly also a kind of courtesy that kept the flower vendor from assuming doña Rita's knowledge of the Maya language. As has been pointed out, especially in the city with a long tradition of colonial segregation, being Maya speakers can represent a subaltern identity. Accordingly, the vendor possibly avoided attributing such an identity to doña Rita at the beginning to show respect to the stranger. In such a conversation, language choice not only reflects the linguistic presentation of the self on one side, but also – and perhaps more importantly – a mutual effort to communicate social approval that occurs through the act of speech accommodation (Giles, Bourhis and Taylor 1977). Possibly also for this reason, more often than not Maya speakers in the city only use the vernacular to talk to people with whom they already have *confianza* (trust), while Spanish is preferred for communication with Maya-speaking strangers.

To conclude, besides their social networks, the language behavior of Maya speakers in Mérida is significantly shaped by the social meanings attached to the language in this specific place. On the one hand, Yucatec Maya is recognized as something definitely belonging to Yucatan and constituting an important part of the regional identity. Indeed, it is in Mérida – the capital of the state – that the identity politics calling for appreciation of the language are designed and perhaps made most visible. Surely partly owing to these efforts, there is meanwhile widespread consensus on the cultural value of the language in the city. On the other hand, Mérida is the place in which classification struggle depending on the postcolonial class structure (cf. Bourdieu 1984[1979]) is extraordinarily present in everyday interactions.

In such an environment, those aspiring to achieve upward mobility might dissociate themselves from the language, which is associated with qualities such as rurality and humility.

In sum, while Mérida is not the only large city in the region, it continues to be an important regional center with special significance for the language vitality of Maya in general. The role of Mérida in the regional linguistic scenery can no longer be considered merely in terms of the urban center diffusing “Spanish and modern elements of culture” to the rural periphery, as formulated by Redfield (1941). As has been discussed above, at the same time, Mérida also serves as the hub in which many activities for promoting the Yucatec Maya language are organized and from which the notion of the language as a diacritic of the regional identity is disseminated. Accordingly, while the interconnectedness of places remains important for considering the vitality of Maya, an open approach is required to investigate how the ideas about the language are shaped and become connected to social identities in such a space. In the case of the state’s capital, the complexity of the situation is manifested in appreciation of the language as a diacritic of the regional identity on the one hand and its devaluation informed by the postcolonial system of classification on the other. Before elaborating on these issues in chapter 5.2 concerned with the territoriality of the language, the following part deals with the language situation in Cancún. Despite having a similar quantitative representation of Maya speakers, the social meanings attached to Maya significantly vary in the young tourist city compared with the capital of the state of Yucatan with a long history of language contact.

### **Cancún**

If the foundation of Mérida in the 16<sup>th</sup> century symbolizes the colonial encounter of the Maya and the Spaniards, the construction of Cancún in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century represents an articulation of national modernization projects with the global economy. As the core of the state-driven tourism project, the city was built literally from the ground up by Maya-speaking migrant workers. Fernando Martí describes the encounter between the engineer and the

workers as follows:

On the second week, a group of workers arrived; they were 80 chicleros. They are strong men, used to hard work, then, I was very happy. But among those 80, only three spoke Spanish. The other 77 spoke Maya. Thus, in order to understand me – they were *desmontando* (clearing the forest) and a specific area was assigned to every worker – I had to tie a cord to the tree and explain with gestures what they should do (Re Cruz 1996a:301).

As represented by the episode, during the initial construction phase of Cancún the workers were mainly recruited from the surrounding countryside of the peninsula and as such they were often speakers of the Maya language. Several middle-aged men from Tiholop who have worked in Cancún also report that they barely spoke Spanish prior to the out-migration. In such a case, it was in Cancún that they felt obliged to speak Spanish to satisfy their daily needs for the first time. A 47-year-old man from Tiholop who migrated to Cancún in the 1980s also tells that he started to speak Spanish as he left the community for wage work. He answers the question of whether it was difficult for him to get used to speaking Spanish in Cancún as follows:

<p>Sí, porque la verdad, aquí este toda la gente habla la maya y pues así cuando uno nace, le hablan este en maya. Pues para salir uno en este o sea así en un, un pueblo grande así pues para ir a comprar uno, a comprar la tortilla o, o sea algo en la tienda pues, tiene que uno pedirlo este su compra en español porque allá no, casi nadie habla la maya. Sí, así empecé a hablar este un poco de español. (T2_MIG)</p>	<p>Yes, because honestly speaking, here [in Tiholop], all people speak Maya and when you are born, you are addressed in Maya. Well, going out in such a large village [as Cancún], going shopping to buy <i>tortilla</i> or something in the shop, you have to order it in Spanish, because there, hardly anyone speaks Maya. Yes, in this way, I started to speak a bit of Spanish.</p>
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Furthermore, another 44-year-old man from Tiholop who worked in Cancún at that time recalls that communication with those who did not understand Maya was very troublesome (*jach trabajo*) (T8\_MIG). For example, contractors and engineers did not understand Maya,



whereby he was obliged to speak Spanish with these people in Cancún (“*mu' beytal a t'aan maaya, mu' na'ata'al, pues, yaan u obligar máak u t'aan español*”) (T8\_MIG).<sup>193</sup> In this way, many Maya speakers from rural Yucatan became exposed to Spanish-dominant patterns of communication through out-migration triggered by the tourism development in the Mexican Caribbean.

Meanwhile, Yucatec Maya is spoken by slightly over 10 percent of the population older than five years in Cancún, which parallels the proportional representation in Mérida (INEGI 2005). Nevertheless, the language situation of the city seems to be experienced by speakers in a quite different way than in the Yucatecan capital, owing to several peculiarities of the place dominated by the tourism industry.

First of all, the city’s population is very diverse with respect to place of origin due to increased immigration from other regions of Mexico in the course of the tourism development. Indeed, this is also reflected in its language situation (see also chapter 3.2.2.2). Accordingly, in Cancún, Maya speakers from Yucatan not only come into contact with the Spanish language, but also – more often than is the case in Mérida – with speakers of other indigenous languages. For example, don Efraín recalls the encounter with Tzotzil speakers in Cancún in the following way. After speaking of urban danger, he tells the experience of a misunderstanding that almost ended in a quarrel:

<p>Una vez estamos platicando así como estamos platicando así. Porque pues cada persona está hablando su idioma, pues ese señor se molestó, nos dijo así, “¿y porque me están burlando?” Porque yo así pues allá cuando fui en [Cancún], allí aprendí un poco[de español], porque de antes no sé [hablar en español]. Así no sé hablar muy bien, pero más o menos puedo defenderme un poco. Entonces yo pues contesté</p>	<p>One day we were talking as we are talking [now]. Because everybody was speaking his language, that man got upset, saying to us “And why are you making fun of me?”. I learnt a bit [of Spanish] there as I went [to Cancún], as I couldn’t speak it before. This way, I can’t speak it very well, but I can defend myself [in Spanish] more or less. So I talked back as well. I said to him, “Let’s see. We are not making fun [of you]. As</p>
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<sup>193</sup> While these middle-aged men from Tiholop gained some Spanish language fluency through out-migration in adolescence, it seems that meanwhile, based in the community, they have not radically changed their language behavior. They socialized their children in Maya and continue to speak Maya with other fellow community members.

<p>también. Le digo, “mira, nosotros no estamos burlando. Así como ustedes también están platicando, nosotros también no entendemos qué, qué están diciendo. Nosotros estamos riendo porque hay cosas chistosos que están diciendo.” “Ah, bueno, pensé que me están burlando.” “No, es que nosotros, no estamos burlando a nadie, estamos platicando también en el idioma de nosotros. Así como ustedes están platicando, pues nosotros no sabemos qué.” Así parece, oigo como el maya, pero es Tzotzil, es otro. Es otro idioma. Jaaj. Dicen que es maya también (...).</p> <p>(T1_MIG)</p>	<p>you are talking [with each other], we neither understand what you are saying. We are laughing because there is something funny about what they are saying.” “Ah, OK, I thought that you were making fun of me.” “No, we are not making fun of anybody. We are talking in our language as well. Like, as you are talking, we don’t understand what [you are saying].” It seems like, I hear it as if it was [Yucatec] Maya, but it’s Tzotzil. It’s different. It’s another language. People say that it’s Maya as well (...).</p>
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This episode not only points to the fact that speakers of different indigenous languages can come into contact with each other in Cancún, but it also reveals a specific aspect of urban interactions characterized by uncertainty and fear. Indeed, our preceding conversation on urban danger served as a cue for don Efraín to tell this episode to me. Just shortly before, he had made the following statement, answering my question of whether Cancún was already dangerous when he first arrived there:

<p>Interviewer: ¿De antes ya era peligroso Cancún? Efraín: Pues, no tanto. Pero pues es medio peligroso porque, ¿sabes porqué? Porque diferentes personas vienen, vienen chia, chiapanecos, vienen otras personas. Por eso hay también, son, son buenas personas también, pero así como te digo, pues es un poco peligroso.</p> <p>(T1_MIG)</p>	<p>Interviewer: Was Cancún already dangerous at that time? Efraín: Well, not that much. But it is pretty dangerous because, do you know why? Because different people come, Chiapanecans come, other people come. Therefore, there are as well, they are good persons as well, but as I say to you, it is a bit dangerous.</p>
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According to Sally Engle Merry, the sense of urban danger “is rooted in feelings of uncertainty, helplessness and vulnerability triggered by encounters with strangers”. More often than not, fear and anxiety in urban social life result to a significant degree from a lack of interaction between different social worlds co-existing in one place. In such situations,

stereotypes tend to structure social interaction as they serve to place strangers in social categories associated with certain expected behavior (2010:128). As mentioned above, the co-existence of immigrants from different places of origin characterizes the young city of Cancún. In the urban environment – which is experienced as dangerous by residents – stereotyping seems to be a very common practice in social interactions among populations. Indeed, Maya speakers living or having lived in Cancún occasionally expressed negative stereotypes towards those coming from other regions of Mexico. At the same time, they pointed out that Maya speakers themselves could become the target of stereotyping and discrimination in the city.

Presenting the state of bilingualism in Mérida, it has been pointed out that a negative stereotype about Maya speakers is also present in the Yucatecan capital. As discussed above, the stereotype of Maya speakers in Mérida is still informed to a significant degree by the postcolonial dualistic conception of the contact situation between the dominant and the dominated. Accordingly, it is above all manifested in an association of Maya cultural attributes with lower social class. In the translocality of Cancún where people from various regions of the nation co-exist, the stereotype about Maya speakers is formed, shared and expressed in a quite different way than in Mérida. Encountering strangers in the city, people tend to draw on observable cues including the mode of speaking to categorize the “others”. In this context, the use of Maya indicates the speaker’s Yucatecan origin. “*Mayita*” is the pejorative term used in Cancún to designate people from Yucatan who are distinguishable as such, mainly due to their dress or language. A man from Yaxcabá who had lived for 25 years in Cancún points to a discriminatory character of social interactions in the city, which makes Maya speakers less willing to speak the language. After he had confirmed that some are ashamed of speaking Maya in Cancún, I asked him whether people are sometimes looked down upon in the city due to speaking the language, whereby he responded as follows:

Sí. Es que a veces la gente es muy, muy racista, de, de,	Yes. For people are sometimes very, very racist,
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<p>de a veces de, del, de qué pueblo vienes o de qué raza eres, de, te ma, te empiezan a, a señalar: “No, ese es mayita, ese es chiapaneco, de, ese es, no, es chapita, de”, te dicen cosas. Por eso la gente a veces tiene miedo a hablar [maya]. (Y15_LAN)</p>	<p>sometimes with respect to where you are from or which people you belong to and they start to label: “No, that [person] is <i>mayita</i>, that [person] is Chiapanecan, that [person] is, no, is <i>chapita</i>”, they say things to you. That’s why people are sometimes afraid of speaking [maya].</p>
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Doña Berta<sup>194</sup> – a 73-year-old woman who had lived for 18 years in Cancún – gives the following reply to the same question concerning judgments made about Maya speakers in the city.

<p>Allá en Cancún pues pueda ser que sí, porque hay mucha gente que no es de, de nuestro país, de otros lugares de México, de todo. Pues ellos recriminan mucho a la gente mayita Sí, tuve un yerno que así nunca pega a mi hija, pero lo recrimina mucho porque es mayita. Sí, dice él que es mayita que así, la maltratan en muchas cosas así, porque somos yucatecas. (...) (...) es del D.F. Pero él así rebaja mucho a la gente así este yucatecos porque dice que son mayas. (Y3_LAN)</p>	<p>There in Cancún, it is possible because there are many people who are not from our land, who are from other places of Mexico, from everywhere. And well, they criticize the “<i>mayita</i>” people a lot. Yes, I had a son-in-law who never hits my daughter, but he criticizes her a lot because she is “<i>mayita</i>”. Yes, he says that she is “<i>mayita</i>” and in this way he mistreats her in many respects because we are Yucatecans. (...) he is from Mexico City. But he humiliates such people, namely Yucatecans, a lot, saying that they are Mayas.</p>
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This episode reveals a lot about the construction of the ascribed identity of “*mayita*”, the term commonly used in Cancún to humiliate people from the Yucatan peninsula. First, it points to mapping of certain traits that are – although not specified in the interview – negatively seen onto the territory of “Yucatan”. Second – and perhaps most importantly – what seemingly underlies the man’s disrespect for Yucatecans is ethnic discrimination against the indigenous population, as suggested by the last part of the interview segment cited: the man from Mexico City is said to humiliate Yucatecans “because they are Mayas”. While the episode does not refer to the language issue, it is apparent that such a view on the indigenous

<sup>194</sup> Pseudonym.

population in the city can influence the language behavior of Maya speakers.

A woman from Tiholop who has lived for 20 years in Cancún also confirms that people are sometimes looked down upon due to speaking Maya in the city. After her statement, I asked her whether she was ashamed of speaking Maya when she had arrived in Cancún. Her answer to the question also indicates the pejorative connotation of the term “*mayita*” and her desire at that time not to be labeled as such.

<p>Sí, porque la gente te dice que eres una mayita y pues a mí me da pena. Pero ya después dije: “¿porque me va a dar pena si es mi origen, no?”.</p> <p>(C2)</p>	<p>Yes, because people say to you that you are a “<i>mayita</i>” and then, I get humiliated. But then I said: “Why should I feel ashamed of if it is my origin, right?”</p>
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In sum, the urban social life in Cancún is characterized by the diversity of the population with respect to their place of origin. Owing to the precarious conditions experienced by many of the immigrants, these encounters can also result in mutual stigmatization as suggested by the episodes presented above. The adscription “*mayita*” used to degrade people from Yucatan with recognizable traits is one example of discriminatory practices in Cancún, which – through its ethnic dimension – severely affects common attitudes towards the Maya language in the urban space and beyond.

The diverse character of the city’s population not only shapes social interactions in the public arenas of urban life, but also Maya speakers’ private lives including language socialization at home. According to Appadurai, the task of cultural reproduction in a transnational setting becomes exposed to “the traumas of deterritorialization”, even in its most intimate arenas (1996:44). While his commentary rather refers to global diasporas, a similar situation can also be observed when considering the intergenerational language transmission of Maya-speaking families in the translocality of Cancún. First, due to the city’s diverse population, marriage with a spouse of non-Yucatecan origin is also fairly common among the immigrants from Yaxcabá and Tiholop, which makes the transmission of Maya in the family domain difficult in the new

setting.

A woman from Tiholop married to a man from Oaxaca reports that her Cancún-born children do not even have passive knowledge of Maya, since evidently she does not communicate with her husband, the father of the children in Maya at home. While this represents an obvious case, the interruption of language transmission also occurs in linguistically “endogamous” families with both spouses speaking Maya. In the family with whom I stayed during my research in Cancún, the parents – both coming from Tiholop – spoke to all of their children in Spanish, while they communicated with each other in Maya, especially in the absence of the children. In an interview (C5), the father of the family attributed their children’s sparse knowledge of Maya to his language behavior, saying that he only spoke Maya with the mother of children at home, whereby the children understood a little Maya but they barely spoke it. This pattern of language choice was in fact frequently observed among the families with both of the parents speaking Maya in Cancún, implying that their children at best became passive bilinguals in Maya.

It is true that the socialization of children in Spanish is meanwhile a common practice even in the community of Tiholop, characterized to date by the strong vitality of Maya (see chapter 5.1.2.1). However, more often than not, in families who have moved to Cancún, language transmission ceased at an earlier date. Indeed, a shift to Spanish seems almost inevitable in the case of total immigration to the city. Accordingly, in order to understand the above-mentioned language behavior of parents in Cancún, one should also take into account the specific urban context in which they socialize children. Again, Apaadurai’s commentary rather referring to global diasporas can illuminate the point. According to him, “the work of cultural reproduction in new settings is profoundly complicated by the politics of representing a family as normal (...) to neighbors and peers in the new locale” (1996:44). In the case of Maya speakers in Cancún, the linguistic manifestation of such politics is the socialization of children in the Spanish language, which seems to be motivated by their conception of the urban language situation structured in multiple ways.

First of all, similar to the case of Mérida, the modernist dichotomous understanding of rural and urban spaces also shapes the idea about the two languages in contact, which locates the Yucatec Maya language out of the city. Not only in Mérida but also in Cancún, Maya speakers often told me about people – including their close relatives – who do not speak Maya or socialize their children in Maya “just because they are in the city”. In the following segment of the interview, doña Rosalia<sup>195</sup> – living for over 20 years in Cancún – talks about the consequences of socialization practice in Spanish, referring to her brother’s children residing in the city as an example. The woman was born in a settlement near Yaxcabá and acquired Spanish language fluency through immigration to Cancún. She speaks to all of her children raised in Cancún in Maya, so that they have – according to her account – a good passive command of Maya, in contrast to her brother’s children seemingly lacking knowledge of the language. The episode was told after she referred to language shift in Yaxcabá and questioned how children would learn Maya if they are spoken to in Spanish.

<p>Rosalia: Como mi hermano que se, que falleció él sabe maya, pero a sus hijos nunca los habló en maya.</p> <p>I: ¿No?</p> <p>R: Puro español. En que pasé a vivir con, con ellos, hablo a sus hijos en maya, solo me ven.</p> <p>I: Sí, ah, no lo entienden.</p> <p>R: No lo, no lo entienden. Solo me ven y le digo a él, “¿porqué?, le digo, “¿sí tú”, le digo, “sabes hablar, es hablar maya, porqué no hablaste a tus hijos en maya?”</p> <p>“No, no estoy en el pueblo, estoy en su (?) ciudad”, me dice. “Ah, sí” le digo. “Sí”, me dice. “Por eso ahorita a tus hijos, lo[s] hablo en maya, solo me ven”, le digo jaaj, “solo me ven”, digo. Pues él nunca este habló a sus hijos en maya, puro español, puro español habló a sus hijos. Ahorita en que voy así, tengo que hablar con ellos en español.</p>	<p>Rosalia: Like my brother who passed away, he can speak Maya, but he never spoke to his children in Maya.</p> <p>I: No?</p> <p>R: Only Spanish. As I began to live with them, I speak to his children in Maya, they only look at me.</p> <p>I: Yes, ah, they do not understand it.</p> <p>R: No, they do not understand it. Only they look at me and I say to him [(my brother)], “why?”, I say to him, “If you can speak Maya, why didn’t you speak to your children in Maya?”. “No, I am not in the <i>pueblo</i>, I am in their (?) city”, he says to me. “Ah, yes”, I say to him. “Yes”, he says to me. “That’s why [when] I speak to your children nowadays in Maya and they only look at me”, I say to him. Yes, “they only look at me”, I say to him. Well, he never spoke to his children in Maya, only in Spanish, he spoke to his children only in</p>
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<sup>195</sup> Pseudonym.

<p>(...)</p> <p>R: Jaaj, y ahorita en que voy así cuando yo quiera platicar con ellos, español, jaaj, sí (...?), sí, da trabajo así. En cambio mis hijos no. Si viene una persona a platicar en maya, ellos sí lo entienden. Sí lo entienden, pero mis sobrinos no.</p> <p>(C12)</p>	<p>Spanish. Today as I go [to visit them], I have to speak with them in Spanish.</p> <p>(...)</p> <p>R: Yes, as I go [to visit them], when I want to talk with them, [in] Spanish, yes, (...?), it's troublesome this way. On the contrary, my children are different. If someone comes to talk in Maya, they understand it. They understand it, but my nephews/nieces don't.</p>
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The episode addresses several issues that hold importance for considering the language vitality of Maya in general. Concerning the topic of the present section, the answer given by doña Rosalia's brother to the question "why didn't you speak Maya to your children?" reveals a lot about his spatial mapping of the languages in contact. He justifies his hispanophone socialization practice, saying that "he is not in the *pueblo*". In this way, Yucatec Maya is confined to the *pueblo* – the natal village – and the "city" is not considered an adequate place for intergenerational reproduction of this cultural knowledge. As will be further discussed in chapter 5.2.2, this kind of spatial mapping of the languages is shared by many Maya speakers and non-Maya speakers alike. Indeed, the "city" and the "countryside" understood in general terms can be contrasted and associated with the languages in a similar way in both Mérida and Cancún. Nevertheless, there are several specific features of the tourist city that make the experience of the language situation significantly different from that of Mérida.

First, in the young tourist city of Cancún, the link of the Maya language to its territoriality is not simply defined as in the case in Mérida. While the language is clearly recognized as an important part of the regional identity in the Yucatecan capital, this connection is uncertain in the translocality of Cancún, characterized by high immigration from other regions of Mexico. The section has already discussed the notion that fear, misunderstanding and mutual stigmatization can be part of social interactions among diverse populations in Cancún. This aspect of urban social life also influences the evaluation of the Maya language, which is



seemingly not familiar to everybody in the city. In order to examine the meaning of the term “*mayita*”, a statement of the woman from Tiholop was cited in the section, who admitted that she used to be ashamed of speaking Maya in Cancún because she did not want to be identified as “*mayita*”. Indeed, the same woman had answered to the preceding question of whether there are people in Cancún who are ashamed of speaking Maya in the following way:

<p>Sí, le da pena hablar en maya. Porque hay, hay, sí hay gente que que viene de lejos y no saben hablar en maya, van a pensar que los están insultando y toda esa cosa. Sí entonces le da pena hablarlo. (C2)</p>	<p>Yes, they are ashamed of speaking in Maya. Because there are, yes, there are people who come from far away and cannot speak in Maya, they’re gonna think that they are offending them and everything. Then, they are ashamed of speaking it.</p>
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The above-mentioned fear of being misunderstood is one indicator suggesting a weaker establishment of the Maya language in the tourist city compared to Mérida. The following statement of a man from Yaxcabá offers a further insight into territorialization of the Maya language in the city, seen from a Yucatecan perspective. The man – living for over 30 years in Cancún – answers the question of whether he considers Maya necessary for those residing in the city as follows:

<p>Pues sí porque pues como estamos pegados a Yucatán, pues, no debemos olvidarlo, claro. (C13)</p>	<p>Well, yes, because we are adjacent to Yucatan, well, we should not forget it, sure.</p>
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In this way, he explains the necessity of Maya in Cancún by its adjacency to Yucatan. As observed in Mérida, the regional identity as Yucatecan is mentioned to account for the necessity of the language in Cancún. However, as the above-cited expression “*como estamos pegados a Yucatán*” (as we are adjacent to Yucatan) indicates, this territorialized form of identification does not directly encompass the young tourist city. Indeed, it rather operates as an identity in diaspora there, as the following statement of doña Rosalia – born in a settlement near Yaxcabá – further indicates. The woman – living for over 20 years in Cancún – answers

the question of whether she considers Maya necessary for those from Yaxcabá as follows:

<p>Pues sí porque porque de allá [Yaxcabá], somos, somos yucatecos. Somos yuctecos, pura maya aunque digan que tiene uno, uno vein, más, más de 20 años aquí en Cancún, que no, que no es de Yucatán, pero sí es, sí es, aunque hagamos 50 años aquí en Cancún, pero somos yucatecos. Sí, somos yucatecos. (C12)</p>	<p>Well, yes because those from there [Yaxcabá], we are Yucatecans. We are Yucatecans, pure Maya, even though people might say that you have lived for over 20 years in Cancún and you are not from Yucatan, but you are, even though we would live for 50 years in Cancún, but we are Yucatecans. Yes, we are Yucatecans.</p>
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The answer of the woman illuminates a peculiar way in which Maya speakers from Yucatan link the language to the territory in Cancún. First, she explains the necessity of Maya for those from Yaxcabá by their Yucatecan origin. Subsequently, she moves on to the Yucatecan regional identity in diaspora, underlining that its foundation does not become affected by urban residence in Cancún. Accordingly, while emphasizing the stability of the origin-based identity, her answer reveals that Cancún – their current place of residence – is not considered to form part of the territory on which they draw the significance of the Maya language.

The specific experience of Cancún's language situation not only results from the diversity of its population but also from the tourist trade as its fundamental economic activity. First of all, it manifests itself in the prominence of the English language in Cancún, compared to Mérida. Obviously, English fluency is essential for service jobs in the tourism industry and its importance seems to be generally recognized by the city's residents. Indeed, two men from Yaxcabá living in Cancún consider Spanish and English to be the languages required there, clearly denying the necessity of Maya in the tourist city (C6, C11). Since the acquisition pattern and function of the two languages are completely different for Maya speakers in Cancún, it is not the English language that would directly replace Maya. However, the prominence given to English over Maya again demonstrates the translocal character of the young city in which the territorial belonging of the Maya language is not clearly defined.

Linguistic experiences in the translocality not only imply contact with the foreign language,

but also encounters with different ideas about the Maya language coming from elsewhere. This aspect has already been indicated by Castellanos (2010a), who concluded her ethnography on Maya migration and the tourist trade with the notion that the indigenous community does not disappear in view of its intensified contact and communication with the city. She points out that by living in Cancún and learning tourists' fascination with their culture, migrants are reminded of the "beauty and importance of Maya customs and practices" (2010a:181f.). This tendency could also be observed among some migrants from Yaxcabá and Tiholop living or having lived in Cancún.

For example, a man from Yaxcabá residing for over 30 years in the city recalls his interactions with the tourists interested in Maya culture, comparing it to the interviewer's attention to the Maya language. After making a positive comment about my interest in the language towards the end of the interview, he continues in the following way:

<p>Qué bonito que a usted le interesa la maya. Yo he conocido en transcurso de acá, de que vivo acá en Cancún, como, pues trabajé muchos años así en, en los restaurantes y venían así gente como usted. Y me da mucho gusto que sabían más maya ellos que nosotros. Tenían su libro de maya, sí. Así sus paisanos de usted, creo (?), les gusta mucho la maya y sí como que aprenden más maya que español. Sí, de verdad, sí. Sí. Porque yo así, a veces así nos hacemos amigos así de los, este, los turistas y pues se acercan así a contarte algo y sí les conté (?) así, dicen y yo creo que sí, tienen, sacan su libro y empiezan a preguntar cómo es la cultura maya, cómo, es este, están muy interesados, sus paisanos de usted.</p> <p>(C13)</p>	<p>How nice it is that you are interested in Maya. I have got to know in the course of my life here in Cancún, as I worked for many years in restaurants, people like you came there. And I am very glad that they had a better knowledge of Maya than us. They had a book on Maya, yes. In this way, your countrymen, I think (?) they like Maya very much and it seems that they learn more Maya than Spanish. Yes, it is true. Because I sometimes made friends with the tourists. They came closer to tell you something and I told them (?). They say, I think so, they have, they take out their book and begin to ask how the Maya culture is, how that is, they are very interested, your countrymen.</p>
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Finally, he concludes by saying that hopefully it (the Maya language) will not become lost. The conversation exemplifies the emergence of a new type of cultural reflexivity that is increasingly global in scope (cf. Tilley 2006:11). The man from Yaxcabá expresses his hope

for language maintenance after referring to the tourists' fascination with Maya culture as well as the foreign interviewer's interest in the language. The Maya language understood in this term is objectified and disembedded from social life. For those Maya speakers living in the deterritorialized social space, the indigenous language increasingly become "part and parcel of life-style choices", instead of being the way of life imperatively defining their identity (cf. Tilley 2006:11). While they express their appreciation for the language, their connection to it is rather partial. For example, a man from Yaxcabá who has lived for over 30 years in Cancún places an emphasis on the "cultural" side when approving the importance of Maya, saying that "culturally, it is important" (Y7\_LAN). This particular stance in relation to the language exemplifies a transformation of culture from a habitus to "conscious choice, justification and representation", as highlighted by Appadurai (1996:44), which will be elaborated in chapter 5.3.1.1.

In sum, while Cancún is characterized by a similar percentage of Maya speakers compared with Mérida, its language situation is perceived and experienced in a quite different way. The diversity of its population and the centrality of the tourism industry generate other kinds of encounters in which the social meaning of the language becomes shaped. According to Castellanos, "a growing disconnection with the region" and "a pronounced articulation with a global economy" are typical features of translocalities like Cancún (2010a:81). Seen in this way, the specific language situation in Cancún illustrated above can be considered as an example demonstrating what the vitality of an indigenous language may look like in a transnational, deterritorialized setting characteristic of today's world.

## 5.2 Yucatec Maya and Territory: Locating the Indigenous Language

Dealing with spatial experiences of Maya speakers as well as the state of bilingualism in the four research sites, the first part of the chapter has already indicated variability in meanings attached to the Yucatec Maya language within the peninsula. The present section provides an

analysis of ways in which the territoriality of Maya is conceived by speakers, before the subsequent section discusses the language's vitality in the face of its deterritorialization.

### 5.2.1 Yucatec Maya and *pueblo*

In contemporary Yucatec Maya, the question about one's origin is asked using the phrase “*Tu'ux a kaajal?*”, which literally means “Where is your village?”. Restall underlines the importance of affiliation with one's *kaaj* (village) for the Maya during the colonial period, saying that “more than just a geographical or organizational unit, it was the focus of Maya self-identity” (1997:315). In the present day, the identification with one's place of origin remains central to the social identity of the Maya-speaking population in Yucatan. The territorially-based community is not merely an important reference point regarding self-identity. Drawing upon Nash, it can be considered a habitus in which Maya speakers cultivate practices and beliefs that reproduce their culture including the indigenous language (2001:31). It is true that the containment of culture within community boundaries has always been an anthropological construction to a certain degree (see chapter 2.2.1). Moreover, the cultural integrity of the community has even become increasingly fractured in the face of intensified contact and communication today. Nevertheless, it was notable during my fieldwork in Yucatan that reference to one's *pueblo* (village) was very likely to evoke a certain set of related cultural practices, which included speaking the Maya language. Accordingly, the present section examines the link of the Yucatec Maya language to the community of origin, which can be considered the most discernible manifestation of its territoriality.

Unsurprisingly, the rootedness of the language is especially noticeable in the community of Tiholop characterized by a strong vitality of Maya (see chapter 3.2.1.2). In the locality where adult communication is almost exclusively conducted in Maya, the language's significance is primarily defined by the here and now of the community. Yucatec Maya is considered “our language” or “the” language of the community among adults in Tiholop, since the use of

Spanish is mainly restricted to communication with outsiders. Accordingly, for those living in Tiholop, the importance of Maya in the first instance results from their residence in the community.

As already pointed out in this chapter, it is true that patterns of language choice have become more heterogeneous in younger generations due to a change in the language socialization process (see chapter 5.1.2.1). Notwithstanding, the students' replies to the questionnaire (see chapters 4.3.3 and 4.4.2 for the methodology of the survey) suggest that the centrality of the Maya language in the community is also recognized by adolescents. In an open response explaining the importance of learning Maya<sup>196</sup>, four students used the term "*nuestra lengua*" (our language) to designate Maya and three students pointed to the strong vitality of Maya in the community, represented by the answer "*Porque en este pueblo todos [h]ablan maya*" (because in this village, everybody speaks Maya). On the other hand, the acquisition of Spanish is strongly associated with wage work in the cities and communication outside of Tiholop by students (Yamasaki 2016:472f.). In view of the current language socialization practice of children, this clearly Maya-dominant bilingualism in the community is likely to change in the years to come. However, at least for the time being, the disuse of Maya among small children does not seem to decidedly affect people's perception of the centrality of the language in the community. As will be elaborated later in chapter 5.3.2.2, more often than not, adults tend to assume continuity in the language situation despite the change, since these children are expected to acquire active command of Maya at their later stage of life.

Compared to the almost unquestioned centrality of Maya in Tiholop, the language situation in Yaxcabá is more heterogeneous and is also perceived as such by the residents. It is true that Yucatec Maya is also recognized as something definitely belonging to the community in

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<sup>196</sup> At the elementary school and the junior high school in Tiholop, 66 students had approved the importance of learning Maya in the previous item. Within this group, 63 students responded to this open-ended question.

Yaxcabá. However, in view of advanced language shift, the here and now of the *pueblo* is no longer what makes Maya indispensable for everyone in Yaxcabá. Accordingly, the vitality of Maya within the community is perceived in more relative terms in comparison to Tiholop. “Many people speak Maya” or “the majority speaks Maya” is the expression commonly used to describe its language situation, instead of “everybody speaks Maya” as is often heard in Tiholop. In Yaxcabá, the state in which “(almost) everybody spoke Maya” already represents the past. For example, a 53-year-old man from Yaxcabá recalls that “in those days as we grew up, people spoke more Maya, practically, the whole village spoke Maya” (Y34\_LAN). As is typical of a shifting community, the change is perceived in terms of young people’s language behavior, characterized by their preference for Spanish or even a lack of competence in Maya. Indeed, when it comes to school children, those with active command of Maya seem to represent a minority in Yaxcabá (see Table 5) and only very few acquired it as first language (see Table 7), as the questionnaire study revealed. For the majority of this generation, Yucatec Maya is neither their mother tongue nor their everyday language of communication. Accordingly, students in Yaxcabá make more frequent use of concepts such as “tradition” and “heritage” or refer to the regional identity as Yucatecan to explain the importance of learning Maya. Indeed, if functional reasons are given, students place more emphasis on understanding Maya and to a lesser degree responding in Maya, which suggests their rather passive approach to the language (Yamasaki 2016:472). In sum, it can be stated that in the present Yaxcabá, cultural reproduction within its habitus has changed in such a way that it no longer includes imperative acquisition of Maya for the novice generation. Notwithstanding, the language continues to be appreciated, including by many of the younger population beyond the here and now of the community. Drawing on concepts such as tradition and heritage or referring to the regional identity, they derive the significance of Maya in the present from a much broader time-space context. This transition of the meaning attached to Maya will be discussed later in chapter 5.3, using the concepts of habitus and new ethnicity.

Finally, the *pueblo* as a habitus not only determines the conditions of language acquisition and the meaning attached to it within community boundaries. Furthermore, for Maya speakers living in the cities, the *pueblo* of origin often continues to be an important part of their personal identity and the primary point of reference with respect to cultural practices, including speaking the language. In the urban context, speaking Maya is closely associated with one's rural origin. For many Maya speakers in the cities, the personal value of the language derives from its very link to their *pueblo* as a site of socialization. Accordingly, they often draw on emotional attachment to their *pueblo* to explain their appreciation of the Maya language. While many Maya-speaking immigrants consider it important to maintain ties with one's *pueblo* and the cultural practices associated with it in the cities, this affiliation can represent a subaltern identity in both Mérida and Cancún. As highlighted in the previous section, it is true that the stereotyping of Maya speakers occurs in a slightly different way in the two cities. Notwithstanding, Maya-speaking immigrants in Mérida and Cancún seem to draw on similar arguments and strategies to make sense of and cope with the situations. Generally, they are aware of the existence of a negative stereotype about Maya speakers in the urban environment, which prompts some Maya-speaking immigrants to dissociate themselves from their rural origin and related cultural practices to avoid being discriminated. However, in the opinion of the Maya speakers with whom I spoke, this behavior is to be condemned because one should not forget his/her *pueblo*, the origin and the way in which one was brought up. Accordingly, despite the risk of stigmatization, they insist on continued attachment to the *pueblo* and the language, including in the urban context, which reflects the solidarity dimension of language attitudes (see chapter 2.1.4.2). The two interview segments already cited in the previous section exemplify the way in which Maya speakers come to terms with this discrepancy in the social meaning attached to the language in the cities: a marker of the subaltern identity on the one hand and the personal value associated with the *pueblo* of origin on the other hand.



## 1. A 53-year-old woman from Tiholop living in Mérida:

<p>(...) una vez pasó un señor de Ticul. Vendía flores y habla así en español. Y ya luego me dice:  “¿Usted, doña, si sabe la maya? ¿Entiende la maya?”  “Sí”, le digo. “Sí, yo soy de Tiholop.”  “¿Es usted de allá?”  “Sí”  “Ah, yo pensé que una señora tan bonita no sabe maya.”  Le digo, “sí lo sé”, le digo, y empezamos a hablar en maya entonces y se empozó a reir.  “Pensé que no sabía.”  Le digo: “no, sí yo vengo de un pueblo”, le digo, “ese es mi pueblo”, le digo.  “Ah, yo soy de Ticul.”  “Qué bueno”, le digo (...).  (M2)</p>	<p>(...) one time, a man from Ticul came by. He sold flowers and spoke this way in Spanish. And then, he says to me:  “Lady, can you speak Maya? Do you understand Maya?”  “Yes” I say to him. “Yes, I am from Tiholop.”  “Are you from there?”  “Yes.”  “Ah, I thought that such a beautiful woman could not speak Maya.”  I say to him, “Yes, I can speak it”, I say to him, and then we started to talk in Maya and he started to laugh.  “I thought that you could not speak [it].”  I say to him: “No, I come from a <i>pueblo</i>”, I say to him, “That is my origin”, I say to him.  “Ah, I am from Ticul.”  “Fine”, I say to him (...).</p>
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## 2. A 44-year-old woman from Tiholop living in Cancún:

<p>Sí, porque la gente te dice que eres una mayita y pues a mí me da pena. Pero ya después dije, “¿porque me va a dar pena si es mi origen, no?”.  (C2)</p>	<p>Yes, because people say to you that you are a “<i>mayita</i>” and then, I get humiliated. But then I said: “Why should I feel ashamed of if it is my origin, right?”</p>
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In the first interview, the woman living in Mérida refers to her place of origin, Tiholop, explaining her command of Maya, which was – due to her elegant appearance – unexpected for the interlocutor (see pp. 215f. for a more detailed analysis of the interview segment). Subsequently, she uses the word “*pueblo*” twice, once in the sense of a “rural place” and the other time in the meaning of “one’s origin”. Her reasoning is that she is from a rural village that she considers her very roots and this is why she speaks Maya, even though it might not match her present physical appearance.

The statement of the woman living in Cancún in the second interview more explicitly addresses the dilemma between the negative stereotyping and solidarity faced by Maya-speaking immigrants in the urban environment. Admitting that she used to be ashamed of speaking Maya, she contrasts her fear of being classified as “*mayita*” in the past and her changing attitude in the present expressed with the phrase “Why should I feel ashamed of it if it is my origin?” (for a discussion of the term “*mayita*” as well as a more detailed analysis of the interview segment, see pp. 222f.).

In sum, for those Maya speakers living in the cities, the personal value of the language often derives from its very link to the *pueblo*, conceived of as their origin and site of socialization. However, the expression of this attachment is not always unproblematic in the places such as Mérida and Cancún due to the assumed hierarchy of rural and urban spaces influencing everyday social interactions (see chapter 5.1.2.2).

The present section has examined the link of the Yucatec Maya language to the *pueblo*, the site of cultural reproduction and the focal point of Maya self-identity. The multi-sited ethnography has revealed that Maya speakers from Yaxcabá and Tiholop strongly associate the indigenous language with the concept of *pueblo* in both their communities of origin and the cities that have become their new home in the case of out-migration. However, the link of the language to the *pueblo* is conceived in slightly different ways in the four places, depending on the language situation of the communities as well as speakers’ current positionalities. In Tiholop – characterized by a strong vitality of Maya – residents derive the importance of the language from the here and now of the *pueblo* representing their habitus. The link between the language and the community is hardly questioned also in Yaxcabá where the shift is already advanced. However, since the current language situation no longer implies the imperative acquisition of Maya for everyone, the residents rather draw on concepts such as tradition and heritage or regional identity to express their appreciation of the language. Finally, for those Maya speakers living in the cities, the personal value of the language derives from

its very link to the *pueblo*, their place of origin and the site of socialization. However, in expressing this affiliation in their new home, Maya speakers can become the target of stereotyping and discrimination due to the hierarchical way in which the rural and urban spaces are commonly conceived. Accordingly, the following section will elaborate on this issue, examining how the two languages in contact become mapped onto these hierarchically-interconnected spaces in Yucatan.

### 5.2.2 Yucatec Maya and rural-urban opposition

The spatial dimension of language contact in the Yucatan peninsula is perhaps most typically understood based on the conceptual opposition of rural and urban. On the scientific side, Redfield's approach to sociocultural change in Yucatan (see chapter 2.2.2.1) is surely the best-known example, drawing on an assumed polar distinction between countryside and city. In his model, the rural-urban dualism becomes associated with other pairs of opposites such as traditional versus modern and indigenous versus Spanish. While this interpretation of cultural landscape in the peninsula is based on his observation in the 1930s, it is notable that even today the two languages in contact are likely to be mapped onto the rural and urban spaces in a quite similar way by people in Yucatan. Furthermore, this dualistic understanding of the language contact situation has more than a spatial dimension, encompassing the association of the languages with entire social orders, which are considered distinct and evaluated in a hierarchical manner. Accordingly, the present section examines this discursive system including several themes organized principally in a dichotomous way.

Dealing with the urban language situation, chapter 5.1.2.2 demonstrated the peculiarities of the cities of Mérida and Cancún. However, the importance of Maya in the two distinct places can be assessed in a similar way by speakers from Yaxcabá and Tiholop drawing on the general distinction between city and countryside. The following statements of two men from Yaxcabá having lived in the respective cities illuminate the point:

1. A 36-year-old man from Yaxcabá having lived in Mérida for over ten years:

The following segment is a part of his answer to the question of whether he considers Maya important for people in the village:

<p>Es importante, es importante se comunican más rápido. Se entienden mejor en maya en un pueblo. En un pueblo sí se necesita la maya porque eso se habla, en la ciudad no. Sí es más, uno, un indígena, uno que habla maya, llegue en la ciudad, va a tener un problema porque no se va a saber así expresar como debe de ser (...).</p> <p>(Y28_LAN)</p>	<p>It's important, it's important. You communicate with each other more quickly [in Maya]. You understand each other better in Maya in a <i>pueblo</i>. In a <i>pueblo</i>, you need the Maya language because that is spoken, in the city not. Rather, if an indigenous person, a person who speaks Maya arrives in the city, he will have a problem because he won't be able to express himself as it should be (...).</p>
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2. A 34-year-old man from Yaxcabá living in Cancún for 18 years:

He answers the question of whether he considers Maya important for those living in Cancún as follows:

<p>Yo creo, aquí no. La maya no es tan importante, pues, los que vi, vinieron antiguamente sí saben maya, pero pues eh, la mayoría se comunica en español, y pues ¿la maya no se debe de olvidar, no? La maya se supone que es un lengua, dicen que la maya es un lenguaje, muy bonita, que, que vale, vale mucho, sí, entonces. Pero acá, acá no creo que sea necesario, sí porque es una ciudad y en una ciudad, no, no vas a ir en un digamos un centro comercial y pura maya, no? (...).</p> <p>(C11)</p>	<p>I think, here [in Cancún] not. Maya is not so important, well those who came here long ago can speak Maya, but well, the majority communicates with each other in Spanish, and well, you should not forget the Maya language, right? It is supposed that Maya is a language, it is said that Maya is a very beautiful language that is very valuable, yes. But here, here, I don't think that it is necessary because it is a city and in a city, it does not happen that you go, say, to a shopping center and only Maya [is spoken], right? (...).</p>
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While referring to distinctive cities, the two men contrast the urban language situation with that of *pueblo* in a quite similar way. Both negate the necessity and importance of Maya in the respective cities based on rather generalized understanding of rural and urban spaces. This is – for example – manifested in the statements such as “In a *pueblo*, you need Maya” from the first interview and “I don't think that Maya is necessary in Cancún because it is a city” from the second interview. Accordingly, the two interview segments cited above reveal that “*pueblo*”

and “city” represent categories that are capable of dictating how the language situation should be in a certain place, thus blurring local particularities. In addition, as previously mentioned, the association of the two languages with *pueblo* and city goes further beyond the mere spatial mapping of Yucatec Maya and Spanish, calling up distinct ways of life of which respective languages form a significant part. This section analyzes the discursive system manifested in this way of contrasting, identifying further themes related with the rural-urban association of the languages. Since Redfield’s model demonstrates a way in which such a discursive system can be organized, the following part briefly deals with his folk-urban continuum before discussing the data obtained from the fieldwork.

The rural-urban opposition is the very foundation of Redfield’s model to explain sociocultural change in the Yucatan peninsula (see chapter 2.2.2.1 for more details). For him, the city and countryside represent two conceptual poles featuring Spanish and indigenous elements of culture, respectively. Since it is based on the assumption of development, his model also has a temporal dimension, with Spanish-urban being considered modern and Maya-rural archaic. In addition, Redfield discusses the relation of ethnicity and social class in Yucatan, to which an entire chapter of his work “The Folk Culture of Yucatan” (1941) is devoted. On the one hand, he points out that linking cultural attributes to social status is a common practice in Yucatan, as he puts as follows:

*Everywhere it is understood that there is a dominant or socially superior urban group of people tending to be light in color, associated with the Spanish language and Spanish surnames, and a subordinated or socially inferior rural or peripheral group of people with darker skins, associated with the Maya language and Maya surnames [Redfield 1941:75].*

In this way, the social dimension of the folk-urban opposition manifests itself above all in higher prestige attached to the Spanish-urban way, resulting in the attribution of lower social status to those identified as indigenous-rural. On the other hand, while referring to the

interrelation between cultural attributes and social status, Redfield suggests that ethnic differences are gradually becoming obsolete in the city as status increasingly becomes a matter of individual effort rather than belonging. These temporal and social dimensions indicated by Redfield continue to be part of the dualistic conception of the linguistic scenery structured through the rural-urban opposition also in the present Yucatan.

With respect to the temporal dimension, urban-centric understanding of modernization as presented by Redfield still seems to be prevalent among Maya speakers from Yaxcabá and Tiholop. Regardless whether in Mérida or Cancún, those who have lived in a city tend to consider its lifestyle completely distinct from that of *pueblo*. Furthermore, the attributes that they use to describe the urban distinctness often correspond with aspects of social change that are – according to speakers – causing language shift in the Yucatan peninsula. These are mainly wage work, (higher) school education and technological development.

For example, don Juan – having lived for over 20 years in Mérida – contrasts the urban way of life with that of Tiholop, linking urbanites' aspiration for higher education to their lack of interest in Maya and early school leaving in the *pueblo* to the dominance of Maya, respectively. The following interview segment is a continuation of his answer to the question of whether he considers Maya necessary for those living in the city, which has been cited above (see pp. 211):

<p>Yo creo que no. Yo creo que no porque realmente en la ciudad es muy diferente el tipo la vida que se lleva a, al tipo de vida que se lleva acá. No es lo mismo que ellos no, ellos no se, no o sea, no van a obligar a sus hijos a que aprendan la maya, ellos van a obligar a sus hijos a que estudien una carrera, que tengan alguna profesión. En cambio aquí ya viste que a veces ni terminan la secundaria. Entonces ya, pero siguen hablando la maya y para ellos es importante. Pero en la ciudad, no lo creo.</p> <p>(T11_LAN)</p>	<p>I don't think so. I don't think so because actually in the city, the lifestyle you have is very different from that you have here [in Tiholop]. It is not the same so that they will not oblige their children to learn Maya, they will oblige their children to study a degree, to have a profession. By contrast, here [in Tiholop] you already saw that they sometimes do not even finish the junior high school. Then, but they continue to speak Maya and for them it is important. But in the city, I don't think so.</p>
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On the other hand, the man from Yaxcabá cited above – who has lived for 18 years in

Cancún – refers to technological advancement to explain the reduced significance of Maya in the city. He answers the question of why he thinks that Yucatec Maya is getting lost as follows:

<p>Yo creo que por, por lo mismo por las este, como va saliendo muchas, muchas tecnologías. Va saliendo otras cosas. Entonces por eso la maya, ya no es lo mismo que antes. Ahorita pues en la ciudad, abundan las computadoras, abundan otros métodos de estudio (...). (C11)</p>	<p>I think that equally, as many technologies are coming out, other things are coming out, then, the Maya language is not as same as before. Now in the city, there are plenty of computers, other methods of study (...).</p>
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It is true that the two interview segments cited above do not directly associate the rural and urban spaces with the opposite poles of modernization. However, it seems that the features considered typically urban correspond with aspects of social life that are generally perceived as recent change in the communities. These are the increased importance attached to school education, wage work replacing the traditional agriculture and the development of – above all – communication technology, which are at the same time the factors frequently mentioned to explain the language shift. As has been previously argued, these spaces conceived in terms of oppositional poles are in fact interconnected. Indeed, in this migrant circuit, more often than not, the future of the coming generation is seen in cities, even though it does not necessarily imply total migration. For example, the above-cited man from Yaxcabá who has lived in Mérida (see pp. 238) foresees the replacement of Maya in the future and attributes it to the urban orientation of the young generation. He answers the question of what he thinks about the future of the Maya language as follows:

<p>Sí, más adelante, sí se pierde así como se dan las cosas. No por completo, va a tardar. Acá, por ejemplo, sí, por ejemplo, acá mis hijos pueden aprender maya porque nosotros lo hablamos, pero por ejemplo, aquí mis hijos crecen, el día de mañana que quieran estudiar una carrera, pues lógico se van a ir en una</p>	<p>Yes, later on, it gets lost as things stand. Not completely, it will take a while. Here for example, my children can learn Maya because we speak it, but for example, my children grow up here and they want to study a degree in the future, logically, they will go to a city and there is no [Maya]. Well, nobody will speak</p>
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<p>ciudad y allá no hay. Pues, pues es así, nadie va a hablar maya allá, pues, allá el español. El día de mañana terminan su carrera, se ponen a trabajar, ¿la maya? Sí, pues ojalá y no se pierda. (Y28_LAN)</p>	<p>Maya there, there, [they will speak] Spanish. When they finish their degrees in the future and start to work, [what happens with] Maya? Well, hopefully, it does not get lost.</p>
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As exemplified by the interview segment, the temporal dimension of the rural-urban opposition is perhaps most clearly manifested in the discourse on the future orientation of children and youths. While projections of their future are oriented towards cities, the *pueblo* stands for waning *costumbre*, including the practice of speaking Maya, in which – according to parents – young people are not interested. Especially in Yaxcabá, where the language shift is already advanced and noticeable, sociocultural change in the community is commonly conceived in terms of urban-centric modernization, which seems very similar to that conceptualized by Redfield. In his work “The Folk Culture of Yucatan” (1941), Redfield explains the change by simple diffusion from the urban center, barely taking into account the agency of individuals in this process. It is true that the temporal connotation of the rural-urban hierarchy indicated by Redfield remains important for understanding how Maya speakers from Yaxcabá and Tiholop make sense of change through the spatial mapping of cultural attributes. However, in order to study sociocultural change in today’s Yucatan characterized by increased mobility, it seems essential to devote more attention to the way in which this spatial arrangement is related to the transformation of indigenous subjects constituting the migrant circuit. While the topic will also be discussed from another perspective in chapter 5.3.2, the following part deals with the social dimension of the rural-urban opposition as one of the approaches to this relation.

As has already been addressed several times, in everyday interactions the hierarchy of the spatial arrangement manifests itself in higher social status ascribed to urbanites, while having a rural origin is associated with a humble upbringing. The interrelation of space, language and



social class is – for example – indicated in the following interview segment. The man from Yaxcabá who has lived in Mérida – who has already been cited several times – explains his out-migration at a very early age by his humble upbringing. Accordingly, he incidentally chains several elements. The following passage is part of his response to my remark on the young age at which he migrated to Mérida:

<p>Sí, la verdad sí. En aquel tiempo, los que estudiaban pues bien, los que no, pues a esa edad, ya pueden trabajar. Muchos no salen también porque pues no, hay gente que no. Pero yo sí, yo, yo a partir de esa edad, yo me acuerdo muy bien, porque nosotros vivíamos en una casita de paja. Estamos así, somos muy humildes por eso nosotros hablamos la maya. Como lo que es un pueblito, nosotros crecimos muy humildes y (...). (Y28_LAN)</p>	<p>Yes, it's true. At that time, those who studied, well, OK, those who don't, can already work at that age. Many people do not migrate either because well, there are people who do not [migrate]. But as for me, yes from that age on I [began to migrate]. I remember very well, because we lived in a small thatched house. We are like, we are very humble, that's why we speak Maya. As how it is a small village, we grew up in a very humble way and (...).</p>
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In this interview segment, the Maya speaker from Yaxcabá mentions several elements and connects them in a single argument without being guided by the interviewer. The humble upbringing mentioned to explain his early out-migration calls up the items of thatched house, the Maya language and *pueblo*, which for him are all part of the social order, the habitus in which he grew up. While humility and rural origin form a pair as indicated in the interview segment, city seen from *pueblo* is a place where rich people are. A marked social stratification perceived as a typical urban feature is what interview partners from Yaxcabá and Tiholop consider the factor responsible for the discrimination of Maya speakers in the cities.

In view of the social stratification, Redfield assumes that cultural attributes become negligible as indicia of social status in the peninsula's urban area, exemplified by the capital of Mérida (1941:83). However, the experience of Maya speakers in the cities counters this view. As has already been indicated, it is rather the very interrelation of socioeconomic and cultural forms of differentiation that determines the social identities of speakers and hence the societal treatment of the languages, especially in the urban area. Again, the chaining of

elements in the narrative demonstrates the fact that these two forms of differentiation are closely interconnected in people's minds.

For example, Doña Berta – having lived for 18 years in Cancún – addresses discrimination based on social class in Mérida, after having told episodes related to use of the term *mayita* in the tourist city. Almost directly after the interview segment cited in pp. 222, she responds to my inquiry about the term *mayita* – which I learned for the first time during the fieldwork – as follows:

<p>Interviewer: Entonces así se dice, "mayita" se dice.</p> <p>Berta: Ah, sí.</p> <p>I: Y es una palabra que utiliza para discriminar a las personas.</p> <p>B: Ándale, para discriminar, sí. Y eso no puede, no debe ser. Sí, así como en Mérida, en Mérida hay gentes muy, muy, este como muy orgullosos, los ricos. Los ricos no se pueden casar sus hijos con una persona pobre, lo recrimina, sí. Y pues ellos son de alta sociedad así, mmm, así es.</p> <p>I: ¿Pero en Cancún también igual, ...</p> <p>B: También igual hay gente así.</p> <p>I: ...hay discriminación aunque es una ciudad nueva?</p> <p>B: Sí aunque es una ciudad nueva, pero hay gente así, hay gente de dinero allá (...).</p> <p>(Y3_LAN)</p>	<p>Interviewer: Then, it is called like that, people say "mayita".</p> <p>Berta: Ah, yes.</p> <p>I: And it is a word used to discriminate persons.</p> <p>B: Exactly, to discriminate, yes. And it can't, it shouldn't happen. Yes, as in Mérida, in Mérida, there are people who are very, very, well, very proud, the rich. The rich can't marry their children to a poor person, they condemn such a person, yes. And well, they are of upper society, hm, that's the way it is.</p> <p>I: But in Cancún, as well, ...</p> <p>B: There are such people, as well.</p> <p>I: ...is there discrimination even though it is a young city?</p> <p>B: Yes, even though it is a young city, but there are such people, there are people with money there (...).</p>
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Prior to this interview segment, doña Berta was talking about the stereotyping of Maya speakers in Cancún manifested in their designation as "*mayita*" as she responded to my question of whether people are sometimes looked down upon in the city due to speaking the language. Referring to social interactions between Yucatecans and those from other regions of Mexico, she first attributed the discriminatory practice in Cancún to its diverse population (see pp. 222). However, triggered by my inquiry about the term "*mayita*", she then suddenly

addresses the marriage practice of the upper class in Mérida, characterized by economic segregation. It is true that she does not directly link discrimination based on cultural attributes to that based on social class in a single coherent argument. Nonetheless, marriage practice in Mérida is mentioned to illustrate the discriminatory character of the term “*mayita*”, which indicates the close interrelation between cultural and social forms of differentiation in her minds. This link is expressed in the very concept of “conceit” by which Maya speakers explain other people’s humiliating behavior against them. Those putting down Maya speakers are considered to do so because they are conceited.

For example, a 24-year-old woman from Tiholop – living for five years in Cancún – answers my question of whether people are looked down upon in the city because they speak Maya as follows:

<p>Sí, hay personas que así dicen no saber maya y cuando escuchan que hablan la gente así en maya pues como que ellos se sienten un poquito mejor que los que hablan en maya, o sea como que se dice “creída”. (C8)</p>	<p>Yes, there are persons saying that they can’t speak Maya and when they hear that people speak like this in Maya, it’s like, they feel that they are a bit better than those who speak Maya, in other words, as you say “conceited”.</p>
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In the case of Cancún, on the one hand, the diversity of its population is considered responsible for stereotypical discrimination of Maya speakers. On the other hand, “conceit” is rather a manifestation of the interplay between cultural and social forms of differentiation within the regional classification system.

The following interview segment most directly addresses the link of Maya language to lower socioeconomic status expressed in the word “poor”. It is part of the answer to the same question provided by a 40-year-old woman from Yaxcabá, having lived for five years in Cancún:

<p>Te tratan mejor si tú hablas español porque ya más o menos ya te como que tu familia, ya sea de, el, el... ellos piensan de que no eres muy pobre porque ellos</p>	<p>People treat you better if you speak Spanish because more or less, it’s like, your family is...they think that you are not very poor because they say that speaking</p>
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<p>dicen que hablar maya pues estás muy, estás muy, muy pobre y en cambio hay gente que tiene dinero ahí pues no habla maya. (Y23_Y24_LAN)</p>	<p>Maya, you are very poor and, on the other hand, there are people with money there [in Cancún] and well, they do not speak Maya.</p>
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Of course, the association of language behavior with possession of economic capital not only occurs in the cities. Cultural forms of differentiation including language have also traditionally been status indicators in the stratified rural communities. Nevertheless, people's increased participation in out-migration has added another dimension to social differentiation in Yaxcabá and Tiholop, which is more in accordance with the urban capitalist form of classification. According to the logic presented above, more often than not, presentation of the self as an economically-successful individual implies a dissociation from cultural practices that are considered incongruent with this ideal. In the interconnected social space of the migrant circuit, such behavior is not only observed in the urban area.

For example, a 32-year-old man from Tiholop notes transformation in this respect among migrant workers commuting between the *pueblo* and the city, which can even include a change in the language used with fellow villagers. Among other places, he has worked in Mérida and Cancún as a construction worker. First, he rather incidentally addresses the topic while listing a few persons with whom he speaks Spanish in Tiholop:

<p>(...) porque a veces hay, hay, hay personas como por ejemplo aquí del pueblo que salen a trabajar en Mérida, les da pena hablar en maya. Pero no, ¿para qué me va a dar pena? Pues, pues es mi, es mi lenguaje. Pero no, pues a otros no, es que van a decir que somos de pueblo que, pues no le importa, pues yo soy de pueblo y me siento orgulloso. Sí, porque a veces las personas en (?) que vienen de la ciudad, se creen y porque tienen dinero. No, pues yo digo yo me siento igual. (T6_LAN)</p>	<p>(...) because sometimes, there are people, for example, here from the village who migrate to work in Mérida and are ashamed of speaking Maya. But no, [it does not apply to me]. Why should I be ashamed? It's my language. But no, other people [think differently]. [They think that] people are going to say that we are from <i>pueblo</i>, well it's not important, I'm from <i>pueblo</i> and I feel proud. Yes, because sometimes, coming from the city, people get conceited because they have money. No, [it's not my case]. Well, I say that I feel the same way [as I did before].</p>
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Later in the same interview, he again refers to the change in language behavior of migrant

workers, this time answering my question of whether there are people in Mérida or Cancún who are ashamed of speaking Maya:

<p>Eh... sí, pues, sí, la verdad que cuando, cuando ellos salen a trabajar, si llevan mucho tiempo trabajando en la ciudad, cuando los veas, no quieren hablar en maya, de repente, te hablan en español. Pues, como por ejemplo, yo sí los llevo a ver como sí son parientes o son, son este del mismo pueblo, como me hablan, si me hablan en español, pues platicamos en español, si no, en maya, en maya. Pero sí, la verdad que hay, hay personas que así son. Llegan en la ciudad de repente, un año, dos años cuando lleguen puro en español hablan y no quieren hablar en maya. No pues para mí eso es, es algo que, que no se debía.</p> <p>(T6_LAN)</p>	<p>Eh... yes, well, the truth is, when they migrate to work, if they have been working in the city for a long time, when you see them [again], they do not want to speak in Maya, suddenly they speak to you in Spanish. Well, for example, I get to see them since they are relatives or are from the same village, [depending on] how they talk to me, if they speak to me in Spanish, we talk with each other in Spanish, if not, in Maya. But the truth is that there are persons who are like this. They arrive in the city, and suddenly after one year, two years, when they come [here], they only speak in Spanish and they do not want to speak in Maya. No, for me, it is something that should not happen.</p>
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Moreover, in these two segments from the interview, the themes are organized in a similar way to those previously cited referring to urban social interactions. He also mentions the association of Maya with rural origin, which keeps some migrant workers from speaking the language. Indeed, such behavior is attributed to the conceit that the migrants develop by earning money in the city. While these topics have already been discussed, what seems important in his account is the aspect of transformation. Even encompassing their way of interacting with fellow villagers, the change is a more radical one that extends far beyond their adaptation to the urban environment; rather, shifting to Spanish, the migrant workers mentioned in the interview seem to enjoy the right of self-expression as autonomous individuals, including in the *pueblo*. However, such a presentation of the self in accordance with the liberal individualism is in tension with the local concept of personhood as manifested in the interview partner's negative judgment on the behavior (see also Castellanos 2010a).

In sum, the interview demonstrates how Maya speakers deal with different expectations on their personhood in the rural and urban spaces, which are – despite their interconnection – often

conceived as being in opposition. First, referring to transformation of the self observed among migrant workers, the interview partner attributes the change in language behavior to their increased incorporation into the capitalist economy through urban wage work. Migrant workers' preference for Spanish is linked to the city as a concept associated with economic capital, expressed in the phrase "*porque tienen dinero* (because they have money)". Second, the segments from the interview also indicate the contradictions experienced by Maya speakers inhabiting the interconnected social space of the migrant circuit.

This section has presented the rural-urban dichotomy that structures the common conception of the linguistic scenery in the Yucatan peninsula. While it is based on the conceptual opposition of rural and urban, this dualistic understanding of the language contact situation includes more than the spatial mapping of Spanish and Yucatec Maya onto the city and countryside, respectively; rather, it encompasses entire social orders with which the categories "rural" and "urban" are associated in the regional context. An analysis of this discursive system above all provides insights into the way in which Maya speakers from Yaxcabá and Tiholop make sense of change in the interconnected social space of the migrant circuit. It is true that even nowadays sociocultural change including language shift is often conceived in terms of urban-centric modernization by the population, which to a considerable degree parallels the folk-urban model conceptualized by Redfield. However, in order to provide a more nuanced analysis of the process, the section has devoted special attention to the experiences of those moving between the places charged with contrasting attributes, instead of explaining it by simple diffusion from the urban center(s). The above-cited accounts of Maya speakers point to difficulties that migrants can face in balancing different expectations on their personhood in the *pueblo* and the cities. In both Mérida and Cancún, socioeconomic and cultural forms of differentiation are interrelated in a way that can lead to stereotypical discrimination against Maya speakers. According to the urban classification system, presentation of the self as an economically-successful individual can imply dissociation from cultural practice, including

speaking Maya. However, as has been argued above, such self-expression based on liberal individualism can be in tension with the conception of personhood in the *pueblo*. Finally, especially for the coming generation, projections of the future are often oriented towards the city, understood as a general category with its distinctive lifestyle, of which the Maya language is not considered to form a part. Accordingly, by examining the rural-urban association of the languages, the present section has depicted the conflict often involved in being and being identified as a Maya speaker on the one hand and embodying the modern citizen on the other hand.

The previous and present sections have underlined the strong link of Yucatec Maya to *pueblo* and discussed its social implications. However, the language can also serve as an identity marker in much broader contexts, as will be demonstrated in the following sections.

### 5.2.3 Yucatec Maya and regional identity

The previous two sections discussed the territoriality of the Yucatec Maya language centered on *pueblo*. The link to the community as a site of socialization is surely the most immediate way in which the language is territorialized by Maya speakers. Additionally, the fieldwork conducted in four different localities of the peninsula revealed that the vernacular also becomes related to a sense of belonging that transcends the community boundaries and the rural-urban division discussed above. As one form of such an articulation, the present section examines the link of the language to the regional identity as Yucatecan, which is still territory-based, albeit much more extensive than a face-to-face community.

As has been argued in chapter 5.2.1, the *pueblo* is often the primary point of reference from which Maya speakers from Yaxcabá and Tiholop draw significance of the language for them. However, explaining the importance of the Maya language, some link it to a larger construct, namely Yucatan. This is – for example – manifested in the students' responses to the questionnaire administered at the elementary schools and the junior high schools in the two

communities (see chapters 4.3.3 and 4.4.2 for more details on the methodology). Answering the open question of why they consider it important to learn Maya, five students refer to Yucatan in their reasoning, exemplified by the statements “*porque vivo en Yucatan*” (because I live in Yucatan) and “*porque asi aprendo el idioma de el estado*” (because in this way I learn the language of the state). Moreover, in interviews, Maya speakers occasionally draw upon the link of the language to the territory of Yucatan while explaining its value.

For example, a 20-year-old man from Tiholop having worked at festivals in different places in the state mentions Yucatan as a territorial base on which the identification with the language occurs. The following segment is a part of his response to the question of why he considers the Maya language important:

<p>Es una forma de identificarnos, de que en donde estamos en Yucatán, pues es maya. (T12_LAN)</p>	<p>It [Maya] is a way of identifying ourselves, where we are in Yucatan, well it's Maya.</p>
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Furthermore, a retired pre-school teacher from Yaxcabá indicates this territorial link, considering the Maya language to constitute their identity as Yucatecan. He worked at pre-schools belonging to the indigenous education system in two districts (*comisaría*s) of the same municipality. Answering my question about language situation in Yaxcabá, he first addresses negative attitudes of parents towards bilingual education observed in the district in which he had worked. Subsequently, he illustrates his perspective as follows:

<p>Y yo, yo no me avergüenzo de, de hablar la maya. Yo en la ciudad si me encuentro con alguien que sabe hablar maya, en maya platicamos, en maya, pues, porque sí es nuestra, nuestra identidad, como, como yucateco y no, no, yo no me avergüenzo de, de hablar la maya (...). (EXP_1)</p>	<p>And I don't feel ashamed of speaking Maya. As for me, if I meet someone who can speak Maya in the city, we speak in Maya, in Maya, well, because it is our identity as Yucatecan and I don't feel ashamed of speaking Maya (...).</p>
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In this way, while this kind of territorial link was not always explicitly mentioned in all of the



interviews, the above-cited responses demonstrate that the idea is shared by people of different age groups in both Yaxcabá and Tiholop. In addition, as has been touched upon in chapter 5.1.2.2, Maya speakers residing in Mérida and Cancún also locate the language on the territory designated as “Yucatan”, albeit from their respective perspectives, which will be elaborated below. Accordingly, the present section examines this particular linkage between the language and the territory, devoting special attention to the following two issues. First, as already indicated, not all interview partners explicitly linked the language to the larger territory of Yucatan; rather, as the previous sections have demonstrated, people tend to contain the language within the rural area in one way or another, emphasizing its rootedness in the *pueblo*. In view of this, the section devotes special attention to specific contexts in which the language becomes associated with a more integrating regional identity as Yucatecan. Second, conversations especially with those living in Cancún have revealed that their conception of the term “Yucatan” does not necessarily correspond with the geographic area that the fieldworker has in mind. Accordingly, the section examines what people exactly refer to when they speak of the regional identity as Yucatecan, which can give some clues for understanding its formation. As I did not explicitly address the topic in the interviews, the data obtained from the fieldwork is surely not exhaustive in this respect. Notwithstanding, it provides insights into one of the multiple ways in which the territoriality of the language is conceived in today’s Yucatan. In order to understand this particular way of territorializing the language, the concept of regional identities discussed by Altamirano and Hirabayashi (1997a) has been inspiring, even though the cases presented in the work differ from the Yucatecan context. Accordingly, the following part lays out some aspects of their considerations on regional identities in Latin America that are considered relevant for the present study.

As editors of the volume “Migrants, Regional Identities and Latin American Cities” (1997a), Altamirano and Hirabayashi underscore the importance of regional identities in urban migrants’ lives in Latin America. Since most of the contributions in the book focus on experiences in

Latin American capitals characterized by much greater diversity, they rather present regional identities as coping strategies of rural-urban migrants in these new settings. It is true that dealing with the two cities located in the Yucatan peninsula, the context of this research project significantly differs from the backgrounds in which regional identities in Latin America are discussed in these papers. Notwithstanding, they provide insights for understanding the present case since several aspects addressed in the volume are highly relevant for examining the way in which the Maya language is linked to a larger geographic area designated as “Yucatan”. These include their multidimensional approach to the concept of “region”, the role of urbanization for construction of regional identities and the interplay of cultural and economic dynamics inherent in the process. Before discussing the data, the section briefly touches on their reflections on the definition of a “region”.

Besides the conventional conception of “region” as a territorially-circumscribed physical locale, Altamirano and Hirabayashi (1997c:8) consider three further dimensions essential for understanding regional identities in Latin American cities, which are personal, microsocial and macrostructural, namely a region as a “personalized sense of place”, a setting for social interaction and relations and an “imposed political and administrative unit”, respectively. These three dimensions are also helpful for examining the Yucatecan case: the association of the language with the region conceived of as a focus of identification by speakers is also shaped through specific kinds of localized social interaction as well as the discursive and political power of macrostructural institutions (cf. Altamirano and Hirabayashi 1997c:8). As will be demonstrated below, certain conditions at microsocial and macrostructural levels are associated with identification with the region at a personal experiential level. Accordingly, the following part deals with specific social encounters at a microsocial level and school education at a macrostructural level, which play a significant role in stimulating the particular kind of regional sentiment observed among Maya speakers.

As illustrated in chapter 3.1.2, the main area of the language covers the Yucatan peninsula,

the states of Yucatan, Quintana Roo and Campeche in Mexico and in the case of the first it is spoken in all 106 of its municipalities (Pfeiler 2014:207). However, whether and how this wide distribution of the language is perceived by speakers depends to a considerable degree on the social relations that they have in this geographic space. Altamirano and Hirabayashi (1997bc) consider intensive rural-urban relations maintained by migrants and the interplay of cultural and economic dynamics crucial for the formation of regional identities in Latin American cities. While their focus differs from the present case, in Yucatan intercommunity economic interactions – albeit not exclusively rural-urban in nature – also seem to promote a more region-based perception of the linguistic scenery instead of a community-based one. Indeed, among the interview partners it was mainly those engaged in trade beyond the community boundaries who linked the Maya language to the broader region of Yucatan.

For example, don Pablo<sup>197</sup> – a 44-year-old man from Yaxcabá trading swine and honey for a living – refers to the ubiquity of Maya in the state of Yucatan, explaining why the language is necessary and important for him. In the case of honey, he buys it from beekeepers in the communities nearby and sells it to a company located in Mérida dedicated to the global marketing of honey products. He answers the question of whether Maya is necessary for him personally as follows:

<p>Es muy necesaria porque me desenvuelvo en cualquier lugar., porque pues donde hacemos negocio, es en Yucatán, donde vamos a trabajar, donde vamos a comprar, es en Yucatán. Entonces en Yucatán, podríamos decir que en todo el estado de Yucatán, todavía existe puedo decir el 60 por ciento de todos los yucatecos hablamos la maya. Entonces es muy importante porque a veces tú vas en un pueblito, hacer negocio, pura ma, puro español hablas, a veces te entienden, pero no te entienden bien. Entonces al hablarles maya, la maya para mí es muy importante</p>	<p>It's very necessary because [with Maya] I can get along anywhere, because where we do business, it's in Yucatan, where we go to work, where we go to buy, it's in Yucatan. Then, in Yucatan, we could say that in the whole state of Yucatan, there is still, I can say, 60 percent of all the Yucatecans, we speak Maya. Then, [Maya] is very important because [if] you sometimes go to a small village to do business and you only speak Spanish, people sometimes understand you, but they don't understand you well. Then, to speak Maya to them, Maya is very important for me because [with]</p>
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<sup>197</sup> Pseudonym.

<p>porque la gente, los señores que saben hablar maya, prefiero hablar en maya con ellos, los entiendo bien y ellos me entienden bien. De eso me sirve a mí. Que es, que es muy importante para mí la maya. (Y27_LAN)</p>	<p>people, older men who can speak Maya, I prefer to speak in Maya with them, [in this way] I understand them well and they understand me well. Because of this, it [Maya] is useful for me. It means that Maya is very important for me.</p>
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Don Pablo who uses Maya for negotiations with agricultural producers beyond the community boundaries points to Yucatan as his area of operation to explain why Yucatec Maya is indispensable for him. As indicated in the utterance directly following it, speaking of Yucatan, he refers to the state of Yucatan within which his economic activities take place instead of the whole peninsula.

Reference to a wider linguistic scenery is also made by don Felipe<sup>198</sup>, another merchant from Yaxcabá who has been traveling between the community and the cities of Mérida and Cancún for over 20 years on a regular basis, trading food. At the time of the interview, he traveled from Yaxcabá to Cancún two days a week to sell fruits and vegetables, which he bought from producers in communities of the municipality. It is notable that he explicitly speaks of the whole peninsula (“*toda la península*”) as a reference point while addressing the importance of Maya in the interview (Y30\_LAN). In one instance, answering the question of whether he also considers Maya important for those in the city, he argues in the following way after a moment’s consideration: “in the whole peninsula, we need to speak Maya (*en toda la península necesitamos hablar maya*)” (Y30\_LAN). Shortly afterwards, he again speaks of the whole peninsula, saying that “the whole peninsula should speak Maya (*toda la península debe de, debe hablar maya*)”, while indicating the need for a government program to assure the future vitality of the language (Y30\_LAN). Accordingly, arguing for the importance of the language, don Felipe tends to refer to the peninsula, a broader geographic area extending beyond boundaries of the community and the federal entity. Moreover, as the first example

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<sup>198</sup> Pseudonym.

demonstrates, his answer also transcends the rural-urban dualism commonly applied by Maya speakers to explain the geographic dimension of the language contact situation in Yucatan (see pp. 237f.). His broader conception of the linguistic scenery is possibly shaped through the extraordinarily extensive trade network that he maintains in the peninsula. Indeed, like don Pablo cited above, don Felipe also refers to communication with agricultural producers while explaining that Yucatec is necessary for him personally. Moreover, as the following interview segment indicates, he seems to make strategic use of the language to establish a rapport with them. He replies to the same question posed to don Pablo – namely Maya is necessary for him personally – as follows:

<p>La maya es necesaria para mí. Claro. Para que yo pueda entablar una compañía con los productores. Se necesita, se necesita la maya. Y cuando hablas maya, es como te vean que eres muy sencillo. Como sé que van (a decir que?): “Oye, ¿sabes, ka t’áan maaya?” Bueno, te van a decir que “¿sabes maya? Qué bueno”. y te saludan. Te familiarizas también con ellos. (Y30_LAN)</p>	<p>Maya is necessary for me. Of course. So that I can build rapport with the producers. You need, you need the Maya language. And when you speak Maya, it’s like, they consider that you are very modest. As I know that they are going to (say?), “Hey, can you, do you speak Maya?”. Well, they are going to say to you, “Can you speak Maya? That’s good” and they greet you. You get familiar with them as well.</p>
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As he explains in the interview segment, his use of Maya with agricultural producers might be strategic speech accommodation (cf. Giles, Bourhis and Taylor 1977) to achieve his goal in business. Nevertheless, it seems that it is positively evaluated by the interlocutors, namely as an expression of group solidarity, which helps him to establish a close relationship with his associates within and outside Yaxcabá. Indeed, at another point in the interview, he reports that he also speaks Maya with some of those buying his merchandize in Cancún, who are often immigrants from the community and surroundings. In this way, owing to trade relations, the communication network in which he uses Maya also encompasses the urban area of the neighboring state, which possibly explains his reference to the broader territory with respect to language maintenance.

In sum, in accordance with Altamirano and Hirabayashi pointing to the economic dynamics entailed in the formation of regional identities (1997bc), intercommunity trade relations – albeit not exclusively rural-urban in the present case – seem to have favorable effects on such a process. As the accounts of the two merchants from Yaxcabá demonstrate, this specific kind of communication networks extending beyond the community boundaries leads to the perception of a broader linguistic scenery based on the region, referring to either the federal entity of Yucatan or the whole peninsula.

While the section thus far has dealt with the role of economic ties extending from the community, the fact is that in proposing regional identities as an analytic framework, Altamirano and Hirabayashi (1997bc) rather focus on experience of urban immigrants. Despite acknowledging their rural origin, the authors consider regional identities “also distinctly urban” since “they develop in response to social, cultural and economic conditions generated in and by the urban setting” (1997c:17). However, contrary to expectations, this dimension of self-identity was rather rarely brought up in relation to the language by Maya speakers from Yaxcabá and Tiholop living in the cities. As indicated by the two preceding sections, it is much more commonly observed that people map the language onto *pueblo(s)* in the sense of either their community of origin (chapter 5.2.1) or the rural area in general (chapter 5.2.2). Even in the state’s capital Mérida – where Maya is widely recognized as a part of Yucatecan identity – the conceptual opposition between rural and urban spaces seems to dominate the way in which the languages are linked to social identities in everyday interactions (see chapter 5.1.2.2). In the case of Cancún, it is true that the urban presence of Maya is often attributed to immigration from Yucatan by Maya speakers from Yaxcabá and Tiholop. However, when affirming the importance of Maya for them personally, they rather draw on *pueblo* – their community of origin – than their Yucatecan provenience. While it might simply be a coincidence, the link of the language to Yucatecan identity is mentioned by two women working as vendors in Mérida and Cancún, respectively, and having regular interactions with customers.

Section 5.1.2.2 already cited doña Diana from Tiholop working at a juice bar in the city center of Mérida, who explains her pride in the language, saying: “If you can’t speak Maya, you are not a Yucatecan!” (see pp. 213f.).

Knowledge of Maya is also linked to Yucatecan origin by doña Silvia from Yaxcabá, selling *tamales* at her home in Cancún. As she reports in the following interview segment, she explains her command of Maya by the fact that “she is a Yucatecan” in interaction with neighbors buying her *tamales*. She answers the question of whether she speaks Maya with neighbors on the street in Cancún as follows:

<p>Sí, sí hablo en maya. Hay muchos que van a comprar mis tamales así, saben maya. Yo les, cómo me hable, yo les contesto. Me hablan español, le contesto, me hablan en maya, también. Me dicen, pues: “¿sabes maya así, vecina?” dicen. “Claro que sí. Soy yucateca”, le digo así.</p> <p>(C4)</p>	<p>Yes, I speak in Maya. There are many people who go to buy my <i>tamales</i> and can speak Maya. I, how they talk to me, I reply to them. If they speak to me in Spanish, I answer them [in Spanish], if they speak to me in Maya, [I answer them in Maya] as well. Then, they say to me, “As I see, can you speak Maya, my neighbor?” they say. “Of course. I am a Yucatecan”, I say to them.</p>
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Of course, these two cases do not suffice to make a general statement on the issue. However, they suggest that the link of self-identity, the language and the region becomes especially relevant in these kinds of urban commercial relations, which are often – although not exclusively – composed of transitory and segmental interactions with diverse populations. These two women associate the language with Yucatan – their region of origin – for positive self-identification. As highlighted in chapter 5.1.2.2, especially in Cancún, this connection also represents a categorization that forms a fundamental part of stereotypical discrimination against Maya speakers in urban social life. This issue will be taken up again in the later part discussing the geographic coverage of the term “Yucatan” and Cancún’s position in relation to it.

In sum, inspired by observations presented in Altamirano and Hirabayashi (1997a), the present part has dealt with the role of economic ties and urbanization in region-based

territorialization of the Maya language. An inspection of the data in this light has – albeit rather tentatively – demonstrated that the language becomes linked to a broader region especially by those commercially interacting beyond the community boundaries, either from the place of origin or in the cities.

For Maya speakers from Yaxcabá and Tiholop, school education can represent another context in which the link of the language to Yucatecan regional identity is verbalized. Even though it did not take place in one of these communities, the following episode illustrates what such an interaction at school may look like. A retired elementary school teacher from Yaxcabá living in Mérida recalls a conversation that she had with one of her students, while responding to the question of whether she thinks that Maya is spoken only by old people or also by young people:

<p>Pues ahora los jóvenes no quieren hablar así en maya. No quieren. Sí, hasta, hasta yo les decía a los que fueron mis alumnos, le preguntaba: “¿cómo te llamas?” “Yo me llamo Abril”. Porque me dice la niña: “yo no, yo no sé hablar maya, yo no sé hablar maya, yo estoy estudiando inglés”. “¿Cómo te vas a poner a estudiar inglés si nosotros estamos en Yucatán? Hay que hablar en maya para que así este aprendas más”.          (...)          (M3)</p>	<p>Well, today, young people don’t want to speak in Maya. They do not want it. Yes, even I said to those who were my students, I asked to one of them, “What is your name?” “My name is Abril”. For, the girl says to me, “I can’t speak Maya, I can’t speak Maya, I am studying English”. “How are you starting to study English if we are in Yucatan? You have to speak in Maya so that you would learn more this way”.          (...)</p>
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Similar to some of the interview partners cited in the present section, she draws on the notion that “we are in Yucatan” to explain the importance of Maya to the student. Moreover, in her argument, this localization of “being in Yucatan” is also what gives priority to the Maya language over the acquisition of English.

As briefly addressed at the beginning of the section, several students in Yaxcabá and Tiholop also drew on this territorial link to explain the importance of acquiring Maya in the



questionnaire survey. Overall, the reference was made by five out of 164 students<sup>199</sup> in their responses to the open-ended question of why they (do not) consider it important to learn Maya. Three linked the language to the identity as Yucatecan, one explained it by his residence in Yucatan and one considers Maya to be the language of the federal entity. Four of these five participants referring to such a link were students at the junior high school in Yaxcabá.<sup>200</sup> Besides “tradition”, which was mentioned by six students, this “regionalism” was the second most frequently-reason given to explain the symbolic importance of learning Maya at the junior high school in Yaxcabá.

Applying a multidimensional definition of the term “region”, Altamirano and Hirabayashi point out that “the region and regional sentiment are also the product of macrostructural institutions and dynamics” (1997c:8). Generally, it is not difficult to imagine that educational institutions can have strong discursive power in this process, indicating students’ positionality in a wider geographic area. However, in the present case, it cannot be determined whether the specific conception of the region mentioned by the students is to be attributed to the institutionalized discursive authority of schools. Indeed, an association of the language with the region was mainly made by students at the junior high school in Yaxcabá, whose curriculum does not pay any special attention to the indigenous language, as is generally the case with secondary education in Yucatan. Of course, since it is up to teachers to adapt the national teaching materials to the local context, it is possible that some of them address this issue in interaction with students, as exemplified by the episode told by the retired teacher from Yaxcabá. Indeed, among the Maya speakers from the community with whom I spoke, it was – besides the merchants cited above – retired school teachers who explicitly associated the language with the wider region of Yucatan in interviews. Similar to the case of the merchants, their region-based conception of the language’s distribution is possibly partly

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<sup>199</sup> The rest of the participants left this item unanswered.

<sup>200</sup> At the junior high school in Yaxcabá, 39 students overall responded to this open-ended question. 29 students had approved the importance of learning Maya in the previous item.

shaped through their experience as Maya speakers working in different places, making use of their linguistic knowledge. Within the scope of the present investigation, it was not possible to ascertain whether and to what degree this applies to teachers currently working in Yaxcabá and Tiholop coming from distinct localities. In order to elaborate on the issue of identity formation in educational contexts, further analysis of teacher-student interactions also taking into account teachers' biographies is required.

Another way to explain the relatively frequent reference to regional sentiment at the junior high school in Yaxcabá is a combination of different factors, namely students' age, the state of their individual bilinguality and the language situation of the community. Generally, it could be observed in both Yaxcabá and Tiholop that students at the junior high schools were more likely to give symbolic reasons for the importance of learning Maya compared to their counterparts at the elementary schools. Moreover, if we compare the groups of junior high school students between Yaxcabá and Tiholop, their ways of territorializing the language clearly differ from each other, probably owing to considerable variation in the state of bilingualism at both the individual and community levels. Linguistically, the students at the junior high school in Tiholop represent a quite homogenous group, with all of them reporting active command of Maya and communicating with their peers in the language. For them, the importance of Maya does not result from its link to the wider region of Yucatan, but rather from its immediate presence. As discussed in chapter 5.2.1, for junior high school students in Yaxcabá with 33 percent claiming active command of Maya (see Table 5), their proximal social environment is not what defines the significance of the language in such a categorical way as in Tiholop; instead, they rather draw on abstract ideas represented by the regional identity to argue for the importance of Maya. This transition of meaning attached to the language in different stages of bilingualism will be discussed again in chapter 5.3.

Before concluding the section, some remarks are made on the geographic coverage of the term "Yucatan" as it is used in everyday conversations by Maya speakers from Yaxcabá and

Tiholop. Speaking of Yucatan, especially foreign researchers tend to refer to a wider area of the peninsula where they see cultural continuity from the precolonial past, which is perhaps most clearly manifested in the persistence of the indigenous language (cf. Moseley and Terry 1980). On the other hand, the conception of Yucatan as expressed by Maya speakers during the fieldwork is rather bound to the federal entity and as such it does not include – for instance – the tourist city of Cancún. It is also true that Maya speakers living in Cancún occasionally mention the link of the language to the territory designated as Yucatan. However, in their use of the term, Yucatan is considered apart from Cancún, the place from which they territorialize the language. For example, a woman from Tiholop having lived in the city attributes the presence of Maya in Cancún to immigration from Yucatan, saying that “it’s just that in Cancún, there are many people from Yucatan who go to live there” (T13\_LAN). As has been discussed in chapter 5.1.2.2, when interview partners living in Cancún drew on “Yucatan” to argue for the indispensability of Maya, they referred to their place of origin lying outside of where they were, manifested in their statements such as “as we are adjacent to Yucatan” (C13) or “even though we would live for 50 years in Cancún, but we are Yucatecans” (C12) (see pp. 227f.). This particular way in which the territoriality of the language is conceived in Cancún also manifests itself in urban social interactions. For example, after giving a negative response to the question of whether there are people who are ashamed of speaking Maya in the city, a 32-year-old man from Yaxcabá recalls his encounter with Maya-speaking strangers in the tourist city as follows. He has worked in different places in the peninsula including Cancún and Mérida as a worker in construction and surveying with other fellows from Yaxcabá:

<p>Pues, hasta donde yo he andado, no, no. Hablan maya. Algunos allá de, hasta en Cancún hay algunos que sí saben la maya igual y sí lo hablan, sí lo hablan ahorita cuando nos ven así en la forma que somos nosotros, ahorita: “Ah, ¿tú vienes de Yucatán, verdad?” “Ah, sí, somos de Yucatán”, “¿Sabes la maya?” “Sí”. Cuando ya preguntó, ya platicamos de, con él, en, de maya con</p>	<p>Well, where I have been, no. They speak Maya. Some people there, even in Cancún, there are some who can speak Maya as well and they speak it, they speak it immediately when they see us as we are, immediately, “Ah, you are from Yucatan, right?” “Ah, yes, we are from Yucatan”, “Can you speak Maya?” “Yes”. When he has already asked, we at once speak with him in</p>
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él. (Y2_LAN)	Maya.
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In this episode, the stranger assumes the Yucatecan origin of the interview partner based on physical appearance, which then helps him to make further inferences about the interlocutor's command of Maya. As they end up speaking Maya with each other, this incident demonstrates that Yucatecan regional identity as it manifests itself in Cancún can strengthen affinity among Maya speakers coming from different localities of Yucatan. Such encounters between Maya-speaking strangers in the urban context can also promote their perception of the language's wide geographic distribution reaching far beyond their respective places of origin. Indeed, such an estimation of the linguistic scenery is made by a man from Yaxcabá having lived for 25 years in Cancún, stating that “since Yucatecans, the majority can speak Maya who come from villages (*pueblos*)” (Y15\_LAN). While the particular urban context of Cancún can strengthen the sentiment of region-based solidarity among Maya speakers, this identity can also be the target of stereotypical discrimination in everyday interactions, as manifested in the use of the term *mayita*. In the interview segment referring to the term “*mayita*”, doña Berta from Yaxcabá – cited in chapter 5.1.2.2 (see pp. 222) – points out that Yucatecans can be humiliated in Cancún because “they are [considered] Mayas”(Y3\_LAN). In this way, Yucatecan regional identity can be closely connected with ethnic discrimination against the indigenous population under the specific conditions of the young tourist city of Cancún characterized by diversity and inequality at the same time.

Drawing on Altamirano and Hirabayashi's reflections on regional identities (1997a), the present section has examined the way in which the Maya language becomes linked to the broader region, which transcends the community boundaries and occasionally even the rural-urban division. Applying their multidimensional definition of a “region” (Altamirano and Hirabayashi 1997c:8), it has considered how social interactions at a microsocial level and

the discursive power of macrostructural institutions influence identification with the region at a personal experiential level. At a microsocial level, inspection of the fieldwork data has demonstrated the role of intercommunity commercial relations – both from the community of origin and in the cities – in promoting a more region-based perception of the linguistic scenery. Regarding the macrostructural authority, the section has devoted attention to educational institutions. Although further investigation is needed to make a more substantiated claim, Maya-speaking school teachers having worked in different places were more likely to explain the value of the indigenous language with the regional sentiment as Yucatecan, which may also be transmitted to students in classroom interactions. In addition, a comparison of the questionnaire responses between Yaxcabá and Tiholop has demonstrated that the link of the language to the regional identity was mainly mentioned by students at the junior high school in Yaxcabá. A further review of different factors is necessary to explain this variance. However, it is possible that more frequent association of the language to the regional sentiment in Yaxcabá is to be attributed to its stage of bilingualism. This aspect will be elaborated later in chapter 5.3. Finally, the section has discussed the geographic coverage of the term Yucatan as used by Maya speakers with whom I spoke, as well as Cancún's position in relation to it. Since Maya speakers from Yaxcabá and Tiholop refer to the federal entity by the term Yucatan, in the tourist city the identification with it rather operates as identity in diaspora with multiple implications in urban social interactions. On the one hand, it can strengthen the sentiment of region-based solidarity among Maya speakers coming from different places of Yucatan. On the other hand, the same identity can also become the target of stereotypical discrimination in the specific urban context of Cancún.

To conclude the section, a brief remark is made on the social dimension of this region-based identity for Maya speakers. It is notable that the Maya language becomes linked to the broader region of Yucatan mainly by those Maya speakers who are in a position of power. As the speech accommodation of the two merchants from Yaxcabá exemplifies, being fluent in Spanish, they

rather make conscious and strategic use of Maya in social interactions. For them, command of Maya is not their way of life defining their position in the postcolonial society, but rather cultural capital and an object of conscious reflection. Dealing with the deterritorialization of culture, chapter 5.3 will discuss in further detail this transition of meaning and function attached to Yucatec Maya and its social implications as the language becomes linked to more encompassing collective identities.

### 5.3 Yucatec Maya and Deterritorialization of Culture

This part of the chapter is devoted to reflections on the language vitality of Yucatec Maya in view of loosening the link between space, stability and cultural reproduction (Appadurai 1996:49), which is the main subject of the present work. In order to consider the implications of the deterritorialization of culture for language maintenance, the present section presents two contrasting ways in which the meaning and the function of Yucatec Maya are understood by speakers. The previous section on Yucatecan regional identity already addressed the association of the language to a more encompassing sense of self-identification that transcends former divisions represented by community boundaries, the rural-urban opposition or the postcolonial system of classification. Following up on this discussion, the section first examines how the language becomes related to the relatively recent form of self-identification as Maya, which is not imperatively based on an appropriation of physical territory as a means of production. If ethnicity is considered as a dimension of social identity comparatively independent of space (Kearney 1996b:180), its potential for dissemination may also apply to the language associated with it. However, in order to assess its concrete implications for linguistic vitality of Yucatec Maya, it is important to see which aspect of the language is exactly mobilized to articulate this identity. As a comparison with the subsequent part on habitus will demonstrate, if people speak of value of Yucatec Maya in this context, they do not necessarily refer to the language transmitted in practice and its speakers to whom a certain position in the class structure can be

ascribed. Drawn on Appadurai, this incongruence can be understood as the transition of culture from habitus to “conscious choice, justification and representation” in a globalized world (1996:44). According to him, although the globalization of culture is by no means to be equated with its homogenization, the work of cultural reproduction in traditional anthropological terms is increasingly jeopardized by this development (1996:32, 43-45). Similar to Appadurai, Nash stresses the importance of taking into account the “global ecumene”, the setting for cultural interactions and exchanges in addition to anthropologists’ conventional focus on habitus as the minimal unit for cultural reproduction (2001:221). However, unlike Appadurai speaking of threatening of habitus, Nash dealing with the internationalizing of the Zapatista Movement considers the indigenous habitus capable of “extending worldwide through networks of communication” (2001:221). This very point on which Appadurai and Nash differ is indeed significant for considering the future vitality of Maya since its continued transmission in the habitus is indispensable for its maintenance as everyday language. In order to elaborate on this discussion, the section – divided into respective parts – first presents two different faces of the indigenous language, Yucatec Maya as an object of representation to an international audience and Yucatec Maya as the way of life transmitted in the habitus. Finally, these two divergent modalities of Maya will be compared in chapter 6 to consider language maintenance in contemporary Yucatan.

### 5.3.1 Yucatec Maya and “new” ethnicity

In anthropological literature, the Maya-speaking population in contemporary Yucatan is commonly referred to as “Maya”. Use of this ethnic category underlines cultural continuity from the prehispanic past (Hervik 2003:93) globally known in the form of splendid archaeological structures. However, in contrast to its popularity in the external discourse on Maya culture, until recently the people in Yucatan rarely drew on the term “Maya” for self-description, as pointed out by several anthropologists and historians (e.g. Restall 1997,

Hervik 2003, Gabbert 2004, Castellanos 2010a). Rather, as Castellanos observes among the residents in “Kuchmil”<sup>201</sup>, social identities in Yucatan are “fluid, localized and situational” (2010a:xxxvi). In place of a coherent ethnic identity as “Maya”, people in Yucatan handle multiple forms of categorization and self-identification to refer to differences regarded as significant in everyday interactions, which can be based on either social class, dress, language or place of origin (cf. Castellanos 2010a:xxxvi). In a primordialist conception of ethnicity, the shared language and territory is generally considered an essential part of it. It is true that the link of the indigenous language to the territory is also addressed by Maya speakers. However, as the previous section has demonstrated, it occurs in multiple ways, resulting in its articulation with diverse identities based on either place of origin and residence, social class or broader region of Yucatan. None of them corresponds to the common external view of Maya ethnicity as something homogeneous and stable. Observing such an incongruence between the external categorization and the lived identity in Yucatan, Hervik speaks of two different worlds that are not “necessarily geographically separate but belong to different social spaces” (2003:92). Indeed, as external conceptions of being Maya become localized, the divergence also seems to reflect internal social differentiation among Maya speakers. Although rather infrequently, some Maya speakers from Yaxcabá and Tiholop also drew on Maya cultural heritage to explain the importance of the indigenous language.

The aim of the present section is to consider what implications this new conception of Maya identity – largely informed through external sources – can hold for the language’s vitality. The section is structured into two parts, the first of which examines the link of Yucatec Maya to indigenous cultural heritage pronounced by some Maya speakers from Yaxcabá and Tiholop and discusses the formation of their ideas about the language and identity. As has been indicated above (cf. Hervik 2003:101-103), this way of associating the language with cultural heritage is not equally distributed among Maya speakers. Accordingly, the second part of the section

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<sup>201</sup> See footnote 170.



discusses its social dimension, using the concept of language ideology.

#### 5.3.1.1 Yucatec Maya and indigenous cultural heritage

In accordance with the above-mentioned general tendency in Yucatan, “Maya” rarely serves as a term for self-description in Yaxcabá and Tiholop (see Pérez Ruíz 2015 for the former). It is true that several Maya speakers from the communities are aware of the conception of ethnicity formed in a larger arena, which identifies “contemporary Maya” as bearers of cultural heritage, of which the famous archaeological structures form a prominent part (cf. Hervik 2003). However, to date, this large-scale identity is rarely drawn into the local discourse and narratives in the way that influences categorization practice in daily, face-to-face relations (cf. Appadurai 1996:153, see Pérez Ruíz 2015 for Yaxcabá). Correspondingly, the link between language and identity manifests itself in a much more heterogeneous way than the generic term “Maya” might suggest, which is used as both auto-denomination of the language and an external categorization of the population. As discussed in the previous section, in everyday interactions, Maya speakers rather experience it in the form of the language’s association with rural habitus and class, regionalism and if it becomes connected with indigeneity, its connotation is often pejorative as represented by the use of the term “*mayita*”. Similarly, while addressing the symbolic value of the language, Maya speakers from the communities were more likely to draw on custom and tradition of their *pueblo* or Yucatecan regional identity than indigenous cultural heritage popularly conceived in terms of material remains of ancient Maya society. Accordingly, only a few made reference to ancient Maya culture in the interviews. However, some indeed expressed admiration for the achievements of the ancient Maya perceived in terms of architecture as well as mathematical and astronomical knowledge, arguing for the necessity and importance of the indigenous language in the present. They are all male speakers with Spanish language fluency who have lived and/or worked in Cancún. Moreover, their perspectives on the Maya culture in *longue durée* are often inspired by both information obtained from the mass

media and their own observation of foreigners' fascination with it in either tourist encounters or research collaboration (cf. Castellanos 2010a:181f.).

For example, don Pablo<sup>202</sup> – the merchant from Yaxcabá cited in chapter 5.2.3 – considers that the achievements of the ancient Maya represented by their precise arithmetic substantiate the importance of the Maya language and people today. He was brought up bilingually in Maya and Spanish by his parents. Among other places in the peninsula, don Pablo was mainly working in Cancún as a construction worker and he has also been to Canada for six months with the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program. As part of his extensive response to my question of why he considers that young people in Yaxcabá are not interested in the Maya language, he explains the importance of instilling values at an early age. According to him, these would help children to “defend” the Maya language and people when they are adults. Furthermore, as the following interview segment demonstrates, the argument “defending” the language and people of today is supposed to draw on achievements of the ancient Maya:

<p>(...) cuando hay alguien que yo escuche que estén hablando mal, de la lengua maya y de los mayas, yo lo defiendo. Oye, ¿qué te pasa? Los mayas fueron astrónomos, astrólogos. Fueron tan exactos los mayas en sus cálculos matemáticos, en la luna, en la tierra, en el sol, en la siembra. Fueron tan exactos en sus dibujos, en el calendario maya. Fueron tan exactos, ¿hum? Que por eso lo defiendo, que por eso tenemos una raza, somos una raza. ¿Hum? Y somos una raza y no solo venimos a comer, venimos a construir porque tenemos con, mis antepasados, no sé quién es, hicieron Chichen Itza, hicieron templos, buscaron la semilla, el maíz. De los mayas proviene todo eso.</p> <p>(Y27_LAN)</p>	<p>(...) [a person who was taught about values at an early age would say that] when I hear that someone is speaking ill of the Maya language and people, I defend them [in the following manner]: Hey, what's the matter? The Maya were astronomers, astrologers. They were so precise in mathematical calculations concerning the moon, the earth, the sun and planting. They were so precise in their drawings, in the Maya calendar. They were so precise, um? [The person would say that] that's why I defend them, that's why we have a “<i>raza</i>”, we are a “<i>raza</i>”, um? And we are a “<i>raza</i>” and we not only came to eat, but also came to construct because, we have with, my ancestors, though I don't know who it is, made Chichen Itza, made temples, found the seed, the maize. All that originates from the Maya.</p>
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<sup>202</sup> Pseudonym.

The interview segment demonstrates a typical way in which the reconstructed past becomes connected with identity questions in the present. Accordingly, it is worth devoting closer attention to both the process of identity construction and particularities of its product, as indicated in don Pablo's response. First of all, the interview segment points to selective and imaginative aspects of the relationship between identity and indigenous heritage. Don Pablo refers to astronomy, astrology, mathematics, the calendar system and monumental architecture as achievements of the ancient Maya, which to a considerable degree overlaps the emphasis placed in popular external representations of Maya culture. It is the attractiveness of the past perceived in the form of the reconstructed knowledge systems and preserved monuments that gives significance to the contemporary Maya language and people. This way of using selective aspects of the past for legitimation in the present is in accordance with Appadurai's notion of culture in the modern age as "an arena for conscious choice, justification and representation" (1996:44). Moreover, the identity constructed in this manner is imaginative, as most clearly manifested in the part in which he says "my ancestors, though I don't know who it is, made Chichen Itza, made temples, found the seed, the maize". What is further notable in the interview segment is don Pablo's use of the term "*raza*" (race) to refer to the Maya identity produced through this particular way of engaging with the indigenous past. It should be kept in mind that the term is commonly used in local Spanish to distinguish peoples of different origins and it rather has the connotation of "people" or "ethnic group" than its German equivalence. On the one hand, drawing on the cultural achievements of Maya people in the distant past who are considered one's ancestors, including in this context, the term "*raza*" refers to the identity conceived in terms of extension of the primordial idea of kinship (cf. Appadurai 1996:14). On the other hand, Maya ethnicity designated as "*raza*" by some of my interview partners is more open and flexible than the term suggests, which is commonly tied with coherence in lineage, language, religion and memory.

This is exemplified by a claim to this identity expressed in an interview with another man

from Yaxcabá who made reference to the ancient Maya culture to argue for the importance of the indigenous language today.

Don Rogelio<sup>203</sup> – a 53-year-old man with Spanish surnames learnt Castellano as his first language at home and Yucatec Maya as a second language through interactions with his peers during childhood. He had lived in Cancún for over 30 years and returned to Yaxcabá about two years ago, seeking tranquility of the *pueblo* like some others having migrated to the tourist city (see chapter 5.1.1.1). Unlike his natal family, he is evangelical Christian. At another point in the interview, he mentioned that his grandmother was “racist” because she discriminated against persons with Maya surnames. However, he uses the first-person plural, speaking of belonging to “*raza maya*” in response to the interview question of whether he considers Yucatec Maya as important for people in Yaxcabá:

<p>Yo siento que sí. Eso, sí, es importante de lo cultural, de lado cultural, sí, es importante. Es nuestra identidad, es lo que nos dice de lo que nosotros somos, de dónde venimos. Venimos de una raza maya, somos de una raza maya (...)</p> <p>(Y7_LAN)</p>	<p>I feel so. That, yes, is culturally important, from cultural side, yes, it is important. It’s our identity, it is what tells us what we are, where we are from. We come from a “<i>raza maya</i>” we are a “<i>raza maya</i>” (...)</p>
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In this way, he directly connects the importance of the indigenous language with identity questions in the present, considering “*raza maya*” to be their roots. Other segments from the same interview that will be presented below further demonstrate how the global, national and local become related to each other in this form of self-identification.

First of all, this sentiment of belonging is the result of “the global production of locality” (Appadurai 1996:188), through which the link of territory, people and cultural continuity is assumed in a way transcending the experience of social space in mundane life. As don Rogelio points out at another point in the interview, for his contemporaries, an affinity to the Yucatec Maya language should come from their very existence in the locality of Yucatan,

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<sup>203</sup> Pseudonym.

globally recognized as “birthplace of the Maya civilization”. His comment on identity, place and heritage in the interview was triggered by his account of a particular episode. After having confirmed that quite a lot of people in Cancún are ashamed of speaking Maya, he starts to tell a story about his encounter with a woman (albeit in Campeche) who hesitated to speak to him in the language despite her limited fluency in Spanish. In this episode, he says to the woman that she should not be ashamed of speaking Maya. The following interview segment presents part of the explanation provided to her as well as his further reflections on the topic:

<p>(...) “Debemos de ser orgullosos de nuestros orígenes”, le digo porque pues aunque yo quiera, no se puede borrar. Si yo pregunto, cualquiera que me pregunten en el extranjero: “¿De dónde eres?” “De Yucatán.” Yucatán es la cuna de, de los antiguos mayas y también de los que están ahora. Fue la cuna de la civilización maya, todo esta zona, entonces quiera o yo no quiera, estoy comiendo, bebiendo y pisando tierra maya y no me puedo avergonzar.</p> <p>(Y7_LAN)</p>	<p>(...) I say to her, “we should be proud of our origins” because even if I want to, you can’t wipe it off. If I ask, if anyone asks me abroad, “Where are you?”, [the answer would be], “From Yucatan”. Yucatan is the birthplace of the ancient Maya as well as of those who live now. This whole zone was the birthplace of the Maya civilization, so no matter if I want it or not, I am eating, drinking and stepping on the Maya soil and I can’t be ashamed of it.</p>
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Similar to the link of the language to the Yucatecan regional identity (see chapter 5.2.3), according to don Rogelio it is being from and in Yucatan that gives significance to the indigenous language for him and his contemporaries. However, his use of the term “Yucatan” is distinctive in this context since it does not refer to Yucatan conceived in terms of the current administrative unit or setting for localized social interaction, as was the case with the regional identity. Instead, in his argument, Yucatan is “the birthplace of the Maya civilization” and inhabiting it relates the contemporaries to the prehispanic indigenous past, regardless whether they wish it or not. Accordingly, don Rogelio draws on Yucatan as a worldly known place for the location of Maya heritage sites to establish a link between “the ancient civilization” and the significance of the indigenous language spoken in the area today. This form of Maya self-identity grounded in the past and mediated through the discourse on the place is oriented

towards representation to international audiences in the global ecumene. In this context, Yucatan as a place is primarily associated with its Maya heritage sites attracting the attention of both researchers and tourists, rather than its role as an administrative unit within the nation state or setting for regional interactions. Assuming the naturalized link of place, people and heritage, Maya identity – as illustrated in the interview segment – to a considerable degree corresponds to the way in which especially non-Western national identities are often perceived in the international arena. Indeed, at another point in the interview, don Rogelio compares this indigenous identity rooted in Yucatan with the national identity of the researcher to explain the personal value of the Maya language. The following interview segment is part of his response to my interview question of whether Yucatec Maya is important for him personally. After having said that traditions should not become lost, he transfers his image of “authentic Japanese” to considerations on the collective identity in Yucatan:

<p>(...) Sí, hay muchas cosas muy bonitas, te digo que deben prevalecer, no se deben de perder porque son nuestra identidad, nuestras raíces, sí. Por eso es que una vez yo te pregunté si usas <i>kimono</i>. Y me dijiste que en ocasiones especiales como año nuevo, ¿porqué?, porque es parte de tu identidad como japonesa, es, eres tú misma, cuando tú pones una ropa, un <i>kimono</i>, dices: "y este es verdadero japonés". Cuando ves una ropa así oriental, no oriental, sino occidental, esto pues ves a un japonés vestido de occidental, pero cuando ves a un japonés con su <i>kimono</i>, este es un verdadero japonés y te sientes orgulloso de portar un traje que es netamente de tu tierra. Sí así estamos nosotros aquí. Cuando hablamos maya, cuando portamos los zapatos, el traje regional, es parte de nosotros mismos, sí.</p> <p>(Y7_LAN)</p>	<p>(...) Yes, there are many very beautiful things, I say to you, which should thrive, which should not get lost because they are our identity, our roots, yes. That's why I asked you once if you use <i>kimono</i>. And you told me that [you use it] on special occasions such as new year. Why? Because it is part of your identity as Japanese, it is, you are yourself, when you put on a costume, <i>kimono</i>, you say, "And this is authentic Japanese". When you see Eastern clothes like this, not Eastern, but Western, well, you see a Japanese dressed in Western-style clothes, but when you see a Japanese with his or her <i>kimono</i>, this is an authentic Japanese and you feel proud of wearing costume which is purely from your land. Yes, so are we here. When we speak Maya, when we wear the sandals, the regional costume, it's part of ourselves, yes.</p>
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Comparing it with the researcher's national identity, don Rogelio draws on his imagination of being “authentic Japanese” to explain what it means to speak Maya and wear regional clothes

for him and his contemporaries. Through the parallelism, this interview segment reveals how cultural identity in the present Yucatan can be considered in relation to other, in this case non-Western national identities. His notion of identity – both that of being Japanese and that of being “ourselves” – is based on the essentialist view of culture discernible through his emphasis on its purity and naturalized link to the land, which is most clearly manifested in the phrase “purely from your land”. Juxtaposed with wearing the traditional clothes, speaking Maya is associated with sentiment of belonging, constituting part of “ourselves”. What deserves attention in this context is his focus on embodied performance, which neither he nor the researcher practices on a daily basis. Accordingly, speaking the language and wearing the costume as referred to in the interview segment are separated from habitus (see chapter 5.3.2) and its specific social connotations in the local context; rather, though its visibility (and audibility), they are objectified as cultural diacritics to be represented to multiple audiences in the global ecumene. In sum, although it might appear like primordial sentiment rooted in the place, his notion of Maya identity is in fact the result of a complex interplay among his socialization in the *pueblo*, the global discourse on Yucatan and reflexivity in relation to other cultural identities.

While the two interview segments cited above rather indicate an essentialist view on Maya ethnicity, it goes without saying that don Rogelio is conscious of ruptures in the history of Yucatan as well as change in the form of self-identification over generations within his own family. As the following interview segment demonstrates, he bridges this gap by localizing the national *mestizaje* narrative. Discussing ethnic discrimination in Cancún – which was addressed prior to the interview segments cited above – don Rogelio criticizes such behavior, arguing that “we as Mexicans have indigenous blood”:

<p>(...) No debe de ser si nosotros como mexicanos tenemos sangre indígena y es el colmo si nosotros nos quejamos de que en el extranjero se nos racea y en nuestra tierra adentro de nuestra tierra nosotros</p>	<p>(...) [ethnic discrimination as it happens in Cancún] should not happen when we as Mexicans have indigenous blood and it's the last straw if we complain that we are racially discriminated abroad and in our</p>
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<p>hacemos razias a otros, es el colmo, ¿no crees? No debe de ser. Porque nuestro origen es indígena, sea quien sea, algún, alguien se cruzó entre nuestros antiguos antepasados, pero hay sangre indígena, sí entonces pues no debe de ser, pero acá en Yaxcabá no, no se racea (...)</p> <p>(Y7_LAN)</p>	<p>land, inside of our land, we carry out raid on others, it's the last straw, don't you think so? It should not happen. Because our origin is indigenous, whoever he or she is, some, someone crossed among our ancient ancestors, but there is indigenous blood, yes so it should not happen, but here in Yaxcabá, people do not racially discriminate (...)</p>
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In this interview segment, don Rogelio counters ethnic discrimination as it occurs in Cancún (see chapter 5.1.2.2), drawing on national identity as *mestizos* with Mexicans considered to have “indigenous blood”. Historically, the *mestizaje* narrative was applied in post-independence Mexico to form national unity through acculturation of the indigenous populations into the *mestizo* mainstream regarded as superior (Franco Mendoza 2000:59f.). However, in this context, it is used to claim equal treatment of all Mexican citizens in everyday social interactions. Moreover, in comparison with other statements of don Rogelio, it appears that in the local context this *mestizaje* narrative is what provides access to the prehispanic indigenous heritage, at least theoretically for all contemporary inhabitants of the *pueblo(s)*. Not necessarily tied with habitus or traditional local system of classification, Maya identity conceived in this way has the potential to encompass a broader population. In this form of self-identification, above all consciousness of Maya cultural heritage plays a central role, which becomes linked to people’s attachment to the landscape on which it is mapped on and affinity with contemporary local practices associated with it.

Notwithstanding, as has been indicated at the beginning of the section, this link of the language to Maya cultural heritage was mentioned by only a few people in interviews, all of whom were fluent in the Spanish language. Accordingly, while Maya identity as a “new” ethnicity might appear to be disembedded from socioeconomic condition in its representation, it clearly has social dimensions manifested – for example – in language ideology, which will be discussed in the following section.



As the results of the questionnaire survey indicate, besides social aspects, the stage of bilingualism seems to be a factor determining how the value of the indigenous language is substantiated in the communities. An analysis of open responses to the questionnaire item reveals that in explaining the importance of acquiring the indigenous language, students in Yaxcabá make more frequent reference to the “Maya” conceived of as population in comparison with those in Tiholop, outnumbering them by four to one.<sup>204</sup> Moreover, it is notable that half of the students in Yaxcabá who made a direct association between the language and “Maya” people use the past tense, as represented by the answer “*era el lenguaje de los mayas*” (it was the language of the Maya). These findings are in accordance with the previously-mentioned tendency of students in Yaxcabá to see the symbolic value of the language outside of their immediate surroundings both temporally and spatially (see chapters 5.2.1 and 5.2.3). Accordingly, in order to explain the importance of learning the vernacular, they are more likely to draw on ethnic category of Maya as it is conceived in a broader world with an emphasis on indigenous cultural heritage mapped on the territory of Yucatan.

In this context, it is also notable that in Yaxcabá, self-identification with the language occurs – if at all – in a rather indirect manner. While Maya is more frequently designated as “our language” by students in Tiholop, in Yaxcabá, it is more likely to be considered (part of) one’s “culture”. These observations underline that the link among language, self-identity and ethnicity is neither natural nor lineal, as often assumed by popular conception of ethnic identity: the language is more frequently associated with Maya ethnicity by students in Yaxcabá growing up in the environment that does not require imperative acquisition of the vernacular for this generation. Therefore, it seems more reasonable to argue in this way: it is possibly the very detachment from the language as embodied everyday practice that prompts people to substantiate its value through the mediation of more abstract concepts including Maya

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<sup>204</sup> Moreover, in response to the same questionnaire item, the designation of Yucatec Maya as “indigenous language” is more frequent in Yaxcabá than in Tiholop, with the former outnumbering the latter by three to one.

ethnicity.

It is important to note that the above-mentioned way of appreciating the language is not what is naturally occurring, but rather it requires conscious acquisition of knowledge as it is mainly informed by the discourse external to habitus. Don Pablo emphasizes this point in the continuation of the interview segment cited previously in the section (see pp. 268f.). According to him, interest in one's culture and roots is essential, so that people can attach value to the Maya language and associated cultural practices:

<p>Entonces el alumno si no se interesa en su cultura, en su civilización, de cómo vino, de cómo nació la semilla, de cómo nació la, la, la, la raza maya, si no se interesa por eso, no le puede dar un valor. ¿Hum? Son esas personas que nada más viven por vivir, “hoy un día y mañana otro día y mañana es mi cumpleaños, cumplí tantos años” y, y solo deja pasar la vida, los años, la viven como venga a su manera, pero no leen, no se enteran. Cuando, cuando una lectura te interesa, le prestas mucho interés. No lo entiendes, lo vuelvo a leer y lo voy entendiendo y si hay alguien de que yo le pregunte “oye, ¿qué quiere decir esto?” y me lo explica y lo entiendo, le voy dando un interés, un valor a ese libro. (...) Entonces si yo me involucro bastante en un libro que el maestro me explique de cómo, creo que si le daríamos un valor y lo cuidaríamos y lo defenderíamos y lo enseñaríamos a nuestro hijos y así se iría conservando las tradiciones, culturas, costumbres de, de lo que nosotros [tenemos?] (...) (Y27_LAN)</p>	<p>So if the student is not interested in his culture, in his civilization, in how it came, how the seed was born, how the <i>raza</i> maya was born, if he is not interested in it, he can't attach value to it. Um? They are these persons who only live for living, [like] “today, one day, tomorrow, another day and tomorrow is my birthday, I turned so many years old” and they just let life and the years pass them by. They live life as it comes, but they do not read, they do not inform themselves. When a book interests you, you pay much attention to it. If you [I] don't understand it, I read it again and I gradually gain an understanding of it and if there is somebody whom I can ask “hey, what does it mean?” and he or she explains it to me and I understand it, I gradually take interest in this book, attach value to this book. (...) So if I engage with a book which the teacher explains to me how, I think that we would attach importance to it [our culture], we would defend it, we would teach it to our children, and in this way the traditions, cultures, practices would be preserved that we [have?] (...)</p>
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In this interview segment, interest is seen as key for the appreciation and transmission of culture. Indeed, as his emphasis on “book” suggests, inquiry into one's heritage means consulting knowledge that is produced elsewhere and detached from everyday embodied

practice. Accordingly, from his perspective as presented in the interview segment, it is not unreflected practical mastery but rather conscious acquisition of metacultural knowledge that is essential for Maya cultural survival, including language maintenance in the future. With the transition of culture from habitus to an arena for representation (Appadurai 1996:44), its authenticity becomes a topic of continuous debate. As has been touched upon above, such metacultural discourse can be considered socially restrictive due to unequal access to the cultural knowledge as well as the power of the socioeconomically dominant in this symbolic struggle (cf. Bourdieu 1977[1974]). The relation between conceptions of Maya culture and socioeconomic positions is – for example – manifested in the local discourse on “authentic” Maya language, which will be the focus of the following section.

#### 5.3.1.2 Language ideology: authenticity between nostalgia and symbolic power

As has already been observed by Pfeiler (1996, 1998), discussion on the authenticity of spoken Maya language is one of the most popular ways in which metalinguistic awareness is verbalized among Maya speakers in the peninsula.<sup>205</sup> For example, this is manifested in speakers’ partly negative estimation of the variety that they speak. Indeed, when I asked people in Yucatan using Maya language on a daily basis whether they consider themselves good speakers, the most common answer was no, often followed by a sentence such as “*la maya que nosotros hablamos no es la verdadera maya*” (the Maya variety we speak is not the authentic Maya). When I further asked “then, whom do you consider a good speaker?”, the responses revealed specific forms of social belonging with which people associate a good Maya speaker. Similar to varying representations on indigenous cultural heritage discussed above, this discourse on authentic Maya language has markedly social dimensions. Accordingly, the present section examines how Maya speakers conceive of the links between linguistic forms and social phenomena,

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<sup>205</sup> See also Cru (2014) and Pool Balam and Le Guen (2015) for further discussions of the issue.

relating the inquiry to language ideology as an area of investigation<sup>206</sup>.

Drawn on this research tradition, the way in which Maya speakers map their understanding of “authentic” language to social identities is considered ideological in two respects. First, it is ideological due to the social derivation of the thoughts. As will be demonstrated below, speakers’ view on the language is closely related with their experience of particular social positions. Second, it can also be regarded as ideological in the critical sense of the term (Woolard and Schieffelin 1994:57). Referring to the existence of an “authentic Maya”, speakers – either consciously or unconsciously – devalue the variety of the language spoken on an everyday basis. Indeed, what counts as “authentic” in this context is determined in social relations of domination (cf. Bourdieu 1979[1977]). In this way, as pointed out by Bourdieu, the notion of the legitimate language is closely related to the speaker’s position in the social structure (1977[1974]:646). However, in the case of Yucatec Maya, the ownership of good or correct language is not necessarily seen in possessors of economic and political capital (cf. Bourdieu 1979[1977]). Accordingly, in order to investigate the link between authenticity and social belonging as envisioned by Yucatec Maya language ideologies, it is essential to take into account particularities of the postcolonial language contact situation.

Indeed, the observation during the fieldwork revealed that the authority on “authentic Maya” was associated with at least two contrasting social identities by speakers. On the one hand, the notion of “authentic Maya” is temporarily mapped onto the past and – with respect to social identity – it is attributed to old people living a traditional lifestyle. On the other hand, it can also become associated with institutions and persons with economic and political capital. The present section approaches these seemingly contradictory ways in which linguistic forms are linked to social belonging in Yucatec Maya language ideologies, drawing on two concepts, namely the discourse of nostalgia (Hill 1998) and symbolic power (Bourdieu 1979[1977]) respectively. Before contrasting the two different images of “legitimate speakers”, it briefly

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<sup>206</sup> For an overview of this research field, see Woolard and Schieffelin (1994) and Woolard (1998).

deals with the conception of “authentic Maya” held by Maya speakers in general.

In interviews, the discussion on the authenticity of the spoken Maya language was mainly triggered by a set of questions asking whether the interview partners consider themselves as good speakers and – if not – who they regard as a good speaker of the language. In the four research sites, 60 percent of those responding to the interview questions pointed to the existence of “authentic” Maya apart from the variety of the language spoken on an everyday basis. The following interview segment demonstrates how the topic was typically brought up in interview responses. A 36-year-old man from Yaxcabá having acquired Yucatec Maya as his first language replies to my question of whether he considers that he can speak Maya very well as follows:

<p>No, no la maya, la verdadera maya no es la que hablamos, bueno eso tengo entendido. Nosotros acá, eh, lo que hablamos acá en Yaxcabá así lo, lo sabemos, sabemos que es maya, nos podemos comunicar por Kancabdzonot, Libre Unión, es la maya que sabemos, pero (...) (Y28_LAN)</p>	<p>No, the Maya language, the authentic Maya language is not the one we speak, well, that’s my understanding. We here, eh, what we speak here in Yaxcabá, we know it in this way, we know that it is Maya, we can communicate [in the language] around Kancabdzonot, Libre Unión, it’s the Maya language we know, but (...)</p>
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The line of argument as presented above was a quite common way in which the issue of “authentic Maya” was addressed by Maya speakers both within and outside of interview situations. Even though they may have acquired Maya as a first language, speakers tend to deny their good command of the language, claiming that they do not speak the “*verdadera*” (real) Maya. “*Verdadera maya*” (real Maya) in Spanish or “*jach maaya*” (very maya) in Maya (Pfeiler 1998) was the most popular way to designate this superposed variety considered authentic and correct, in contrast to that spoken in everyday life. However, a range of other terms were also used to refer to the same variety. Besides the adjectives, *legítima* (legitimate), *real* (real) and *original* (original) – which can be considered synonyms of “*verdadera*” – the attributes such as “*antigua*” (old) or “*pura*” (pure) were used to specify the variety of the Maya language. The

latter terms already suggest how authenticity of the language is mapped temporally and associated with a certain linguistic feature by Maya speakers. As the use of the term “*maya pura*” as an alternative designation of “*verdadera maya*” indicates, lexical purism features prominently in the conception of authenticity. In contrast to “*maya pura*” as an idealized variety, speakers from Yaxcabá and Tiholop pointed to the high frequency of Spanish loanwords in contemporary everyday language, calling it “*maya mestiza*” or “*maya amestizada*”, which is in accordance with the observation made by Pfeiler (1998) in other communities. While the widespread purist language ideology denounces this variety as language mixing, it is obvious that such demands made on the language are quite unrealistic, especially if one considers the long history of intensive language contact, as is the case in the Yucatan peninsula (see chapter 3.1.2.1). Accordingly, the debate on the “authenticity” of the language carried out by Maya speakers has strong extra-linguistic dimensions, which will be examined below drawing on two concepts, the discourse of nostalgia (Hill 1998) and symbolic power (Bourdieu 1979[1977]).

In a conversation like the one cited above, the term “*maya antigua*” (old Maya) could be used synonymously for “*verdadera maya*” to designate the variety of Maya language to which higher prestige is attached as it is considered “authentic”, “pure” and “correct”. As has been highlighted generally for Yucatan by other researchers (e.g. Pfeiler 1998), perhaps most typically the notion of “authentic Maya” is temporally associated with the past. Moreover, with respect to ownership of its knowledge, it is likely to be attributed to either old people (*antiguos* or *ancianos* in local Spanish) or those who have already passed away, as – for example – expressed by the term *antepasados* (ancestors). Seen in this way, the discourse on authenticity can be characterized as nostalgic, since – referring to good Maya of earlier time – speakers seem to long for what is considered lost in a changed present, in this case the pure Maya, as exemplified by the following interview segments. Similar to the response cited above, don

José<sup>207</sup> – a 48-year-old man from Yaxcabá having acquired Maya as first language – denies being a good speaker, arguing that the variety they speak is not the “very original” one. The following segments are part of his response to the question of whether he considers that he speaks Maya very well:

<p>José: No.  Interviewer: ¿No?  J: No, eh porque pues este la maya que estamos hablando ahora no es una maya este muy, muy original que digamos. Está mezclado con el español y no sé si alguna vez le han dicho de que el, la maya actual está muy mezclado con el español porque anteriormente era pura maya, no había nada de español.  (...)  Porque la maya antigua de, ahora unos 50 años atrás sí era maya buena, era maya pues más o menos y casi pura, casi pura por decir porque pues ahora no, no es, no es una este, no es una maya al 100.  (Y33_LAN)</p>	<p>José: No.  Interviewer: No?  J: No because Maya we are speaking today is not a very, very original Maya, we could say. It's mixed with Spanish and I don't know if somebody has told you that contemporary Maya is very mixed with Spanish because in the past, it was pure Maya, there was nothing of Spanish.  (...)  Because <i>maya antigua</i> (old Maya) of about 50 years ago was good Maya, it was well, more or less, and almost pure, almost pure, so to speak, because now it isn't, it isn't Maya of 100 [percent].</p>
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Don José presents the same line of argument as the previously-cited interview response. His low estimation of his own language competence is attributed to shortcomings perceived in the variety of Maya language used for everyday communication. It is considered to lack authenticity or – in his terms – it “is not very, very original” due to language mixing with Spanish. Thus, in accordance with the general tendency mentioned above, his notion of “authenticity” is puristic and nostalgic at the same time, with supposedly “pure” Maya in the past regarded as “good” Maya. In the same part of the interview, he explains why he considers that this “good old” Maya has already been lost in the present, pointing to several tokens of “mixing” in the current language use. A comparison of these examples demonstrates how purism in the past becomes reconstructed or even invented to serve as an idealized standard to

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<sup>207</sup> Pseudonym.

define “authenticity” of the contemporary language.

On the one hand, don José’s criticism is targeted at **core borrowings** (Myers-Scotton 2002). It means the use of Spanish loanwords for the terms of which the Maya equivalents already exist and are known to most of the speakers. The examples brought up by him are the use of *banquillo* for *k’áanche’* (low stool), *música* for *paax* (music), *abuela* for *chiich* (grandmother) and *abuelo* for *nool* (grandfather). When they are used in Maya speech, all of these words are phonologically integrated into the recipient’s language. According to him, Maya utterances characterized by such borrowings are “half Maya and half Spanish”, being neither one thing nor the other, as he explains in the following interview segment on the same topic:

<p>José: No hay, no hay gente que hable maya pura. Cuando dicen eh “<i>ko'ox xümbal yiknal a <u>abuela</u></i>”, no.</p> <p>Interviewer: Ah, no, ya no se dice “<i>chiich</i>”.</p> <p>J: Ya, exactamente, ya no es maya, ya no es maya porque para decir “<i>ko'ox xümbal yiknal a chiich</i>” “Vamos a pasear con tu abuela chamaco, vamos a pasear con tu abuela”, “<i>ko'ox xümbal yiknal a chiich</i>”, no.</p> <p>Cuando venga el chamaco, le pregunta “<i>ba'ax ku meentik a nool?</i>” “¿Qué hace tu abuelo?”. Pero ahora ya no, ahora ya no. Cuando vengan los chamacos, cuando regresaron chamacos de pasear, le preguntan “<i>ba'ax ku meentik a <u>abuela</u></i>?” o “<i>ba'ax ku meentik a <u>abuelo</u></i>?”. Ya no es español, (luego) ya no es maya. Es la mitad maya y la mitad español.</p> <p>(...)</p> <p>(Y33_LAN)</p>	<p>José: There is nobody who speaks pure maya. When they say, “<i>ko'ox xümbal yiknal a <u>abuela</u></i>” (let’s go to grandma’s place), no, [they are not speaking pure Maya].</p> <p>Interviewer: Ah, no, you no longer say “<i>chiich</i>”.</p> <p>J: No longer, exactly, it’s not Maya anymore, it’s not Maya anymore because to say “<i>ko'ox xümbal yiknal a chiich</i>”, “<i>Vamos a pasear con tu abuela chamaco, vamos a pasear con tu abuela</i>”, “<i>ko'ox xümbal yiknal a chiich</i>”, no, [they do not say it anymore?].</p> <p>When the kid comes back, you ask him “<i>ba'ax ku meentik a nool?</i>” “¿<i>Qué hace tu abuelo?</i>” (What does your grandpa do?) “. But not anymore today, not anymore today. When the kids come back, the kids come back from visiting grandparents, people ask him [them] like this: “<i>ba'ax ku meentik a <u>abuela</u></i>?” (what does your grandma do?) or “<i>ba'ax ku meentik a <u>abuelo</u></i>?” (what does your grandpa do?). It’s no longer Spanish, it’s no longer Maya. It’s half Maya and half Spanish.</p> <p>(...)</p>
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The loanwords mentioned in the interview segment more or less duplicate the Maya words that have already existed and their use can be considered a relatively recent phenomenon.



However, in the same part of the interview, don José also points to loanwords such as “*camión*” (bus) and “*avión*” (airplane), which can be categorized as **cultural borrowings** (Myers-Scotton 2002), as those elements threatening the integrity of Maya language. After having explained the current use of the word “*música*” instead of “*paax*” in Maya speech, he moves on to other examples of the borrowings “*camión*” and “*avión*”, as the following interview segment demonstrates:

<p>Interviewer: Sí, ah, no se, ya no se dice “<i>paax</i>”.</p> <p>José: Ya no, ah, pues ya, ya no es este, ya no es maya pura o si no dice “<i>je'e ku taale' camiono'</i> “. Ah, no es maya pura, la mitad en español, la mitad en maya. El <i>camión</i> anteriormente le dicen “<i>kisbutz</i>”.</p> <p>Anteriormente mucha gente sabía, a decir “<i>kisbutz</i>” ya saben qué es. Porque pues este tiene su, este su escape donde este sale el humo del vehículo. Entonces le dicen “<i>kisbutz</i>”. Lo que eh el <i>avión</i> que yo sepa pues le decían “<i>pepen k'áak</i>”. Entonces pues ahora este los <i>chamacos</i> de 6, 8 años hasta 10 años o hasta los que van a, a la <i>secundaria</i>, no lo saben (...)</p> <p>(Y33_LAN)</p>	<p>Interviewer: Yes, ah, no longer, you no longer say “<i>paax</i>”.</p> <p>José: Not anymore, well, not anymore, um, Maya is no longer pure or otherwise, you say “<i>je'e ku taale' camiono'</i>” (here comes the bus). Ah, it's not pure Maya, half in Spanish and half in Maya. In the past, bus is called “<i>kisbutz</i>”. In the past many people knew, when they say “<i>kisbutz</i>”, they know what it is.</p> <p>Because this [a bus] has an exhaust pipe from which the gases of the vehicle come out. So it is called “<i>kisbutz</i>”. With respect to airplane, as far as I know, well, it was called “<i>pepen k'áak</i>”. Then, today, six, eight year-old children, or even ten year-old children or even those who go to the junior high school don't know it (...)</p>
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The terms “*kisbutz*” for bus and “*pepen k'áak*” for airplane are neologisms created through combination of existing Maya words to designate new objects and they have barely entered common use in everyday conversation. Nonetheless, those Maya speakers familiar with them are likely to bring them up in a metalinguistic discussion concerned with authenticity and purism of the language. What deserves attention in this interview segment is the mapping of these Maya neologisms onto the past, as expressed by phrases such as “*anteriormente le dicen “kisbutz”*” (in the past, it is called “*kisbutz*”). Furthermore, as the phrase “*ahora ... no lo saben*” (today ... they don't know it) at the end of the interview indicates, don José contrasts this imagined and idealized state of pure Maya language in the past with supposed loss of

such knowledge in the present, which for him is exemplified by unfamiliarity of the young generation with the Maya terms. In this way, pure Maya and language mixing are mapped onto the temporal oppositions of past and present, respectively. Moreover, as the interview segment demonstrates, based on this logic Maya words of recent creation can also stand for the past, which purists nostalgically look upon. However, don José is anything but sure whether he may regard the past state of the language reconstructed this way as original or not. Following the discussion above, he indeed mentions that there are “invented” words that are not authentic from his perspective. Moreover, he supposes that there is a school (“*colegio*”) in Mérida where Maya courses are given, but neither is he certain about the authenticity of the variety taught there. Like several other Maya speakers with whom I spoke, the only thing he is certain about is that “authentic Maya” is not to be found in the “here and now” of the *pueblo*. At the beginning of our conversation on the topic, he indeed responded to my standard question “well, then, who speaks Maya very well?” with a sigh, saying that “not here in the *pueblo*, hm, it is difficult [to find a good Maya speaker here]” (Y33\_LAN). In accordance with the center-periphery model of cultural change, don José supposes that speakers of pure, authentic Maya might be found in the community of Tiholop, which is generally considered conservative and traditional from the perspective of Yaxcabá (see chapter 3.2.1.2).

However, contradicting with his assumption, people in Tiholop seem to evaluate the state of Maya language in their *pueblo* in a similar way. Indeed, in both communities, several speakers explicitly mentioned in interviews that nobody in their *pueblo* spoke authentic Maya language. Knowledge of authentic Maya is likely to be attributed to ancestors (*antepasados*) or old people (*antiguos*) also in Tiholop, whereby it is rather mapped onto the past. However, such nostalgic discourse like the one presented above was barely found among the interview partners in Tiholop. If they referred to the current absence of authentic Maya in the *pueblo* as change, their remarks were rather neutral, represented by phrases such as “Maya changes”

(T10\_LAN) or “Maya is a bit modernized as well” (T9\_LAN).

Jane Hill’s analysis of the discourse of nostalgia among Nahuatl speakers (1998) provides a perspective that is helpful for understanding the Yucatecan debate on authentic Maya. According to her observation, whether speakers engage in nostalgic discourse on the (reconstructed) past state of the language or not is highly dependent on their bilinguality as well as social positions. In this context, Hill points to the paradoxical feature of the language ideology: nostalgic purism is most likely to be supported by successful men who speak Nahuatl in a very hispanicized way, while women and low-status men speaking the least hispanicized Nahuatl tend to reject it, seeing the bilingualism of “today” as an improvement in contrast to early monolingualism (1998:76, 83). Apart from the social aspect – which will be discussed later in the section – different degrees of bilinguality indicated by Hill are important for considering the way in which nostalgia for the supposedly-pure language in the past becomes shaped. Within the scope of the present research project, it was not possible to analyze Maya speech of individual interview partners. However, a comparison of the two rural communities characterized by different stages of bilingualism suggests that the nostalgic view on the past state of the language is more likely to be expressed in the environment in which language shift is already advanced. In contrast to Tiholop – where Yucatec Maya remains central to the community life – in Yaxcabá, this prominence of the language – whether its “authentic” variety or not – is no longer given today. Nonetheless, the times in which “almost everybody spoke Maya” in the *pueblo* are the recent past, which is remembered by old and middle-aged people in the community. According to Atia and Davies, nostalgia serves as “a negotiation between continuity and discontinuity” (2010:184). Seen in this way, speakers’ idealization of old Maya might reflect their nostalgia for vitality of the language in the past and as such this sentiment is likely to arise in a setting in which speakers perceive change in the community’s language situation compared to that in their early stages of life.

Indeed, similar to the discourse of nostalgia among Nahuatl speakers (Hill 1998), the

perception of linguistic change in terms of vitality or purity of Maya often forms part of a more integral way in which speakers contrast between past and present, mapping distinct social orders upon them. This aspect will be further discussed in the final section of the chapter, dealing with the transformation of the rural habitus and the vitality of Yucatec Maya language.

In the above-presented discourse of nostalgia, authenticity of the language variety is considered to derive from its antiquity. In this case, the knowledge of good Maya language is likely to be attributed to *antiguos* (old people) or *antepasados* (ancestors) by speakers. However, some responded to the interview question “then, who speaks Maya very well?” differently, considering the variety associated with institutional authority and power to be authentic Maya language. For them, the variety found in media in the widest sense such as books or radio represents legitimate Maya language and good Maya speakers are those who acquired it through conscious study. Accordingly, in contrast to the discourse of nostalgia, the knowledge of authentic Maya is often linked to persons in positions of institutional authority – for example, teachers at bilingual schools – or those who have skills in the language that are not widespread, such as reading, writing, singing or praying. In this judgment of good speakers, nativeness, communicative competence and patterns of everyday language use play a secondary role, whereby the knowledge of “authentic Maya” can also be attributed to those who did not acquire it as a first language or do not use it intensively for daily communication.

For example, parents from Tiholop in their thirties believe that their 14-year-old son has command of *maya antigua* because he learned it at school. As is usual for this generation in Tiholop, both parents acquired Maya as their first language. The father responded to my standard question of whether he considers that he speaks Maya very well with “*pues, casi no*” (well, hardly) (T6\_LAN). He continues, claiming that he speaks contemporary Maya (called our Maya “*maya de nosotros*”) well, but not the *maya antigua* (T6\_LAN). By contrast, the son has been socialized in Spanish since his parents – having lived in Cancún – decided to speak to him in the majority language. Nevertheless, he acquired Maya as a second language, which he –

according to his parents – speaks fairly well nowadays due to the linguistic environment of Tiholop (see chapter 5.1.2.1). His mother recalls that when he was about 7 years old, he used to mix it with Spanish. Meanwhile, however, both parents consider that he speaks Maya as well as they do and they admire his knowledge of the language learnt at school, including reading and writing in Maya, which they claim not to have. This is exemplified by the mother’s answer to my interview question of whether the Maya language spoken by her son is the same as the one that the parents speak:

<p>Sí, sí a veces si no sabemos cómo se dice en maya, él lo dice, él nos dice. Porque pues aunque somos mayores que él, pero como a él lo están enseñando en la escuela, como los libros también ya aparecieron de, de la maya. Y pues sí nos corrige también. Muchas cosas nos enseña (...)</p> <p>(T13_LAN)</p>	<p>Yes, yes, sometimes if we do not know how it is called in Maya, he (our son) says it, he tells it to us. Because, even though we are older than he, it’s because it (Maya) is taught to him at the school, the books on Maya already came out. And well, he corrects us as well. He teaches us many things (...)</p>
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In this interview segment, the knowledge of good Maya is attributed to the children’s generation. Thus, as is most prominently manifested in the phrase “*aunque somos mayores que él*” (even though we are older than he), temporal mapping of expertise occurs exactly in a reverse way compared with the discourse of nostalgia presented above. Moreover, showing respect for her son’s command of Maya – which was acquired as a second language – she seems to attach the same importance to or even prioritize the institutionalized knowledge of the language over that learnt in early socialization at home. In this line of argument, “authentic Maya” is the variety found in “books” and taught at “school” and not the one “transmitted in practice” (cf. Bourdieu1977[1972]:87).

Furthermore, don Mario<sup>208</sup> – a 61-year-old man from Yaxcabá having lived for over 30 years in Cancún – contrasts the Maya language learnt at home with that acquired at educational institutions. He is non-Catholic. The following interview segment is part of his response

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<sup>208</sup> Pseudonym.

confirming that he learnt Maya as his “mother tongue (*lengua materna*)” as it was the language spoken at home:

<p>(...) Pero no es lo mismo hablarlo que se habla en casa a lo que se enseña en las escuelas. En la academia, en la universidad, ese, es más profesional, pues aunque la maya no lo crea, pero tiene su gramática, entonces lo refiné por decir (...)</p> <p>(Y22_LAN)</p>	<p>(...) But it’s not the same speaking what is spoken at home as [speaking] what is taught at schools. At the academy, at the university, well, it is more professional. Believe it or not, but Maya has its grammar, so I improved it (Maya) [later], so to speak (...)</p>
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In this interview segment, don Mario points to the existence of two varieties of the Maya language and positions them in a hierarchy, which corresponds to Ferguson’s notion of diglossia (see chapter 2.1.2.1). As is the case with high and low varieties in diglossia, he seems to attach more prestige to the Maya language taught at educational institutions than the one learnt at home, manifested in the phrases “*más profesional*” (more professional) and “*lo refiné*” (I improved). Indeed, it is probably recognition of the high variety that prompts him to believe that Maya has a grammar, the fact which he puts as something unexpected. Seen in this way, don Mario treats Maya like any other languages, endowed with a grammar and an internal division into the high and low varieties. Such a view on the Maya language has not previously been self-evident and acknowledgment of its prestigious variety has the potential to modify the postcolonial dualistic conception of the language situation with Spanish as the high variety and Maya as the low variety. However, as will be demonstrated below, more often than not, preference for the superposed variety often leads to devaluation of the language actually spoken by people on a daily basis.

At another point in the interview, don Mario refers to deficiencies of the Maya language spoken by people. He considers that he speaks only “80 or 90 percent” of Maya instead of “100 percent”, stating that many elements of the language have already become lost and it is not possible to reconstruct how the terms were originally pronounced. As I posed the standard question “who then speaks Maya very well?”, he replied with “*muy poquita*” (very few) and

explained it in the following manner:

<p>(...) Por ejemplo la gente dice que habla maya, pero muchas veces no le da la pronunciación correcta. Entonces sí lo entiende y sí lo habla, pero no lo pronuncia bien. Entonces hay, es, ciertas deficiencias. Por eso yo pienso que una muy mínima parte sí acaso lo hay. Porque pues como no tiene mucho interés también la gente, se interesa más en el español entonces, pierden. Por eso es que se ve la di, deficiencia, sí. (Y22_LAN)</p>	<p>(...) For example, people say that they speak Maya, but many times, they do not have the correct pronunciation. Then, they understand it and speak it, but they do not pronounce it well. Accordingly, there are certain deficiencies. That's why I think that a fraction [speaks Maya very well] if there is any. Because people do not have much interest, either, they are more interested in Spanish, then, it (Maya) gets lost. That's why you see the deficiency.</p>
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In this interview segment, as expressed by the word “deficiency”, don Mario negatively evaluates the Maya language spoken by people, considering it as incorrect. Moreover, he attributes this “deficiency” to people’s lack of interest in the language. According to him, this is why the Maya language in its supposedly complete form is becoming lost. Don Mario’s explanation indeed parallels the argument of don Pablo cited in the previous section (see pp. 276), stating that the interest and conscious acquisition of cultural knowledge are essential for Maya cultural survival. Similar to don Pablo’s conception of Maya culture as expressed in the interview segment (see pp. 276), good Maya language seems to be conceived of as something separated from everyday embodied practice. As “culture” is considered to be found in a book, in this understanding of expertise the possession of metalinguistic knowledge is used as the criterion qualifying someone as a good speaker.

For example, don Rogelio from Yaxcabá – who has already been cited in the previous section – considers his elder brother – a retired teacher of bilingual elementary school – to be a good speaker due to his knowledge of grammar. Both he and his brother acquired Spanish as their first language at home. He responds to my standard question “who speaks Maya very well?” as follows:

<p>¿Quién sabe? Pues hay muchas personas, yo te podría decir aquí en Yaxcabá hay mucha gente que habla maya. Pero entre los que hablan maya, te podría decir, bien bien es ese mi hermano José. ¿Porqué te lo digo? Porque él te puede conjugar, te puede sacar verbos, te puede sacar gerundios, te puede y la gente que te habla maya, lo sabe porque se lo enseñaron sus papás, es de boca en boca. Y él más que nada lo tiene por estudio y también de boca en boca porque no sé porqué, mis papás le hablaron mucho en maya a él ya grande, ya grande, mi papá platicaba mucho en maya (...)</p> <p>(Y7_LAN)</p>	<p>Who knows? Well, there are many persons, I could tell you that there are many people who speak Maya here in Yaxcabá. But among those who speak Maya, I could tell you, [who speaks it] very well is my brother, José. Why do I say it to you? Because he can conjugate, he can get verbs for you, he can get gerunds for you, he can for you and people who speak Maya to you can speak it because their parents taught it to them, it's from mouth to mouth. And he has it (language skills) above all through studying and from mouth to mouth as well because I don't know why, my parents spoke a lot in Maya to him [once he was] already older, [as he was] already older, my father spoke a lot in Maya [to him] (...)</p>
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For don Rogelio, among many Maya speakers in Yaxcabá, his brother qualifies as a good speaker more than anything through his metalinguistic knowledge acquired through “studying” (*estudio*) the language. In this interview segment, he contrasts two different ways of gaining competence in the language, namely mastery through socialization (“*de boca en boca*”) and conscious study of it (“*por estudio*”). However, these are considered complementary rather than mutually exclusive since his brother is regarded as a good speaker precisely because he combines both. He learnt Maya – albeit not as his first language – through socialization at home, brought up by parents who communicated with each other in Maya. Afterwards, he consciously studied Maya due to his previous profession as bilingual school teacher. It is generally acknowledged that the combination of both explicit and implicit learning is important for attaining language proficiency in an efficient way. In this sense, it is unsurprising that don Rogelio attributes a high degree of language competence to his brother who acquired Maya in these two ways. Indeed, similar to the internal differentiation of Maya in the form of diglossia discussed above, the fact that conscious study of the language and metalinguistic knowledge are acknowledged indicates that the Yucatec May language is



treated like any other majority languages.

While it can be understood as a sign of the recent revaluation of Yucatec Maya, in order to assess its impacts on the future vitality of the language, social dimensions of the knowledge should be taken into account. Above all, it is important to note that good Maya conceived in the aforementioned manner is not the embodied everyday practice that determines the speaker's way of life. Similar to metacultural discourse discussed in the previous section, this conception of good or authentic Maya language is socially restrictive in two ways: first, access to this kind of linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge is not equally distributed; and second, as the notion of Bourdieu's symbolic power (1979[1977]) indicates, good competence in Maya language understood in this manner is likely to be attributed to those speakers who are socially recognized due to their possession of economic and political capital. Furthermore, more often than not, it is those socioeconomically powerful Maya speakers who are also capable of exercising power in the definition of legitimacy in the language.

Examining Yucatec Maya language ideologies, this section has presented the discourse of nostalgia and symbolic power as two different ways in which the "authenticity" of the language is conceived by Maya speakers. As demonstrated above, these language ideologies seem to be contrasting with each other, since "authentic Maya" is mapped onto different social groups and occasionally also to distinct times in these two conceptions. However, these two understandings share in common the notion that authentic Maya is considered not to be found in everyday language of the *pueblos*. In one conception, authority on the language is often given to those who do not speak it on a daily basis and for whom speaking Maya is not the way of life that defines their social position. By contrast, in the other – the nostalgic view on authenticity – it is true that command of good or pure Maya is understood as an embodied culture that forms an integral part of the habitus. However, the social order with which this variety of the language is associated is considered to belong to the past. In this way, while many Maya speakers from Yaxcabá and Tiholop recognize the existence of a prestigious variety of Maya, from their

perspective it is not what is spoken and transmitted in their *pueblos* today. However, this habitus dimension is essential for the continued vitality of Yucatec Maya as everyday language, which will be the topic of the following section.

### 5.3.2 Yucatec Maya and habitus

The previous section dealt with Maya speakers' active engagement with their culture and language manifested in Maya identity and language ideologies. Such metacultural discourse demonstrates the increased attention devoted to the language and as such it can be seen as a positive indicator for its future vitality. However, it should be kept in mind that the continued use of Yucatec Maya as an everyday language ultimately depends on its actual intergenerational transmission. Indeed, the latter is not necessarily related to the former, drawn on Bourdieu's conception of cultural reproduction (1977[1972]). According to Bourdieu, it is through habitus that the objective structures including those of language succeed in reproducing themselves in an embodied form "without attaining the level of discourse" (1977[1972]:87). In this process, inquiry into the objective intention of practices – as represented by the aforementioned metacultural discourse – has nothing to do with their reproduction (1977[1972]:80).

The present section approaches language maintenance from the perspective of cultural reproduction and devotes attention to the immanent law, the habitus as "the principle of continuity and regularity" (Bourdieu 1977[1972]:82) to inquire the future vitality of Maya. Drawing on Bourdieu's reference to **orchestration** of habitus (Bourdieu 1977[1972]), the first part of the section treats Yucatec Maya as part of the harmonized cultural practices and discusses in particular the relation between language maintenance and traditional agriculture. The second part deals with language shift as a gradual **transformation** of cultural practices reproduced through habitus and devotes special attention to the way in which change and continuity of the language situation are perceived by Maya speakers in the two rural communities.

### 5.3.2.1 Yucatec Maya and mode of production: *milpa* as a way of life

The present section treats Yucatec Maya language as part of the social order reproduced by means of practical mastery from generation to generation. Drawing on Nash's view on indigenous communities as sites for cultural reproduction (2001:31f.), it focuses on the integrity of cultural practices that have been and partly continue to be transmitted in the rural habitus of Yaxcabá and Tiholop. If speaking Maya is to be conceived as a competence that is primarily transmitted in practice, it is essential to devote attention to "a whole symbolically structured environment" (Bourdieu 1977[1972]:87) in which its acquisition occurs. This aspect is eloquently addressed by don Wilberto<sup>209</sup> – a 43-year-old man from Yaxcabá working in the government department of indigenous education in Mérida – who states that "the language, we cannot separate it from the culture" (M4). In the communities of Yaxcabá and Tiholop – located in the maize-cultivating zone of Yucatan – it is the *milpa* mode of production on which cultural practices within the rural habitus have been and partly continue to be centered. Nevertheless, as touched upon in chapter 3.2.1, this integrating power of the traditional agriculture is now – albeit to a different degree – fracturing in the two *pueblos*. Accordingly, the present section discusses how this change in mode of production alters the basis of cultural reproduction and hence affects the future vitality of Maya, focusing on the relation between the maintenance of agricultural practices and language transmission.

In a comparison of the two research sites, the declining tendency of the traditional agriculture is especially noticeable in Yaxcabá, where many of the adult population no longer cultivate *milpa*. For example, a 54-year-old retired pre-school teacher from Yaxcabá recalls that prior to the onset of out-migration to Cancún (see chapter 5.1.1.1), people used to cultivate a lot of *milpa* there, whereas today few people work the field ("*se hacía mucha, mucha milpa, mucha milpa, mucha gente trabajaba el campo, ahora muy poca gente trabaja el campo*") (EXP\_1). Despite underlining a long tradition of out-migration in the maize-cultivating zone (see also

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<sup>209</sup> Pseudonym.

chapter 3.1.1.1), don Wilberto – cited above – also relates the turning away from the traditional agriculture observed in Yaxcabá with people’s integration into the capitalist economy through labor migration (M4).

While wage work in the cities has also become a common practice in Tiholop – especially among adolescents and fathers of school children (see chapter 5.1.1.2) – the centrality of *milpa* has been challenged to a minor degree there in comparison with Yaxcabá. In the questionnaire survey conducted at the schools (see chapter 4.3.3 for its methodology), cultivation of the *milpa* by one’s father is claimed slightly over half of the students in Yaxcabá, while in Tiholop this figure amounts to over 80 percent (see Table 1), which is in accordance with the observed tendencies in the communities. Nevertheless, there are also several indicators of possible intergenerational change in Tiholop with respect to the continuance of the agricultural practices. A comparison between the percentage of students’ fathers cultivating *milpa* (Table 1) and that of the students desiring to do so in the future (Table 2) demonstrates a discrepancy, which can be interpreted as a sign of intergenerational decline in the traditional agriculture. Even in Tiholop – where over 80 percent of students’ fathers cultivate *milpa* – those students who clearly expressed their desire to work the field in the future represent the minority (Table 2). A divergence between socialization and future projections can be most prominently observed among the male students at the junior high school in Tiholop (n=18), who represent a quite homogeneous group with respect to language questions, with all students reporting both active and passive command of Maya (see Table 5 and Table 6). Moreover, concerning traditional agriculture, all but one student had been to the *milpa* and all but two students expressed an affinity with the farm work (Figure 11). Nevertheless, the percentage of the students who desire to cultivate the *milpa* in the future only amounts to 38.9 percent (Figure 12). 12.5 percent of the students who claimed to like the farm work responded with “no” and 43.8 percent with “I don’t know” to the question of whether they want to work in the *milpa* when they are adults (see Table 3). The two students who do not consider working in the *milpa* in

the future – even though they like the farm work – explain it by the economic advantage of wage work outside the community, represented by the answer “*Porque no ganas lo mismo en la milpa que en la ciudad*” (because you do not earn the same in the *milpa* as in the city).

**Table 1 Cultivation of *milpa* by students’ fathers**

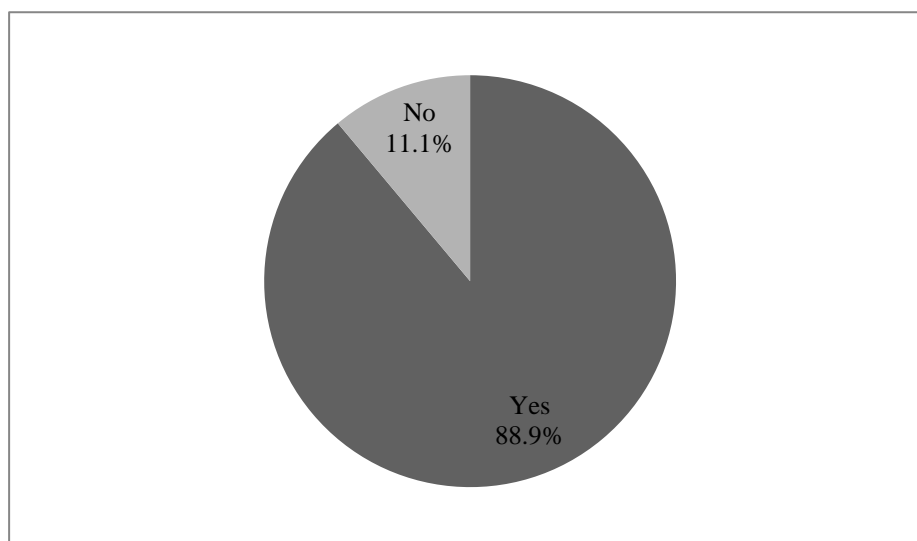
Community	Cultivation of <i>milpa</i> by father	
	Yes	No
Yaxcabá	54.0%	46.0%
Tiholop	83.8%	16.2%

*Note.* From Yamasaki (2016:475).

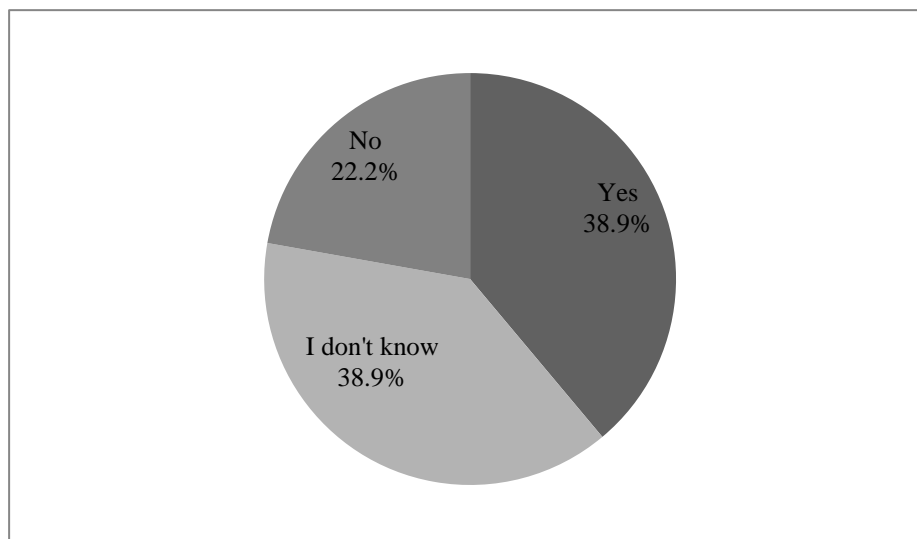
**Table 2 Male students’ responses to the question “Do you want to work in *milpa* when you are an adult?”**

Community	Desire to cultivate the <i>milpa</i> in the future		
	Yes	No	I don’t know
Yaxcabá	8.0%	34.0%	58.0%
Tiholop	45.2%	23.8%	31.0%

*Note.* Although the question was addressed to both male and female students, only responses of the male students are analyzed as *milpa* cultivation is traditionally seen as a male domain in the society. From Yamasaki (2016:475).



**Figure 11 Responses of male students at the junior high school in Tiholop to the question “Do you like the farm work?”**



**Figure 12** Responses of male students at the junior high school in Tiholop to the question “Do you want to work in *milpa* when you are an adult?”

**Table 3** Relation of affinity for the farm work and desire to cultivate *milpa* in the future according to the responses of male students at the junior high school in Tiholop

			<i>Milpa</i> affinity		Total
			Yes	No	
Desire to cultivate <i>milpa</i> in the future	Yes	Count	7	0	7
		% within <i>Milpa</i> affinity	43.8%	0.0%	38.9%
	No	Count	2	2	4
		% within <i>Milpa</i> affinity	12.5%	100.0%	22.2%
	I don't know	Count	7	0	7
		% within <i>Milpa</i> affinity	43.8%	0.0%	38.9%
Total	Count	16	2	18	

In this way, many male students at the junior high school in Tiholop are rather critical of the *milpa* agriculture conceived as an economic activity in their future, even though most of them are socialized in peasant households and have an affinity for the farm work. Such an attitude among youths towards traditional agriculture is closely related to progressive narratives (cf.

Castellanos 2010a:142f.) manifested in adults' expectations on the coming generation. In the school context, more often than not, cultivation of *milpa* is not regarded as a legitimate profession towards which students should aim (my own observation, see also Rieth 1986 for the situation in Quintana Roo in the 1980s).

This idea of progress dictating turning away from the traditional agriculture is also shared by students' parents who themselves make *milpa*. Partly drawing on their own experience of hardship as a cultivator and migrant worker in the current global economy, they recognize the importance of school education for their own children so that they can "get ahead in life", which is expressed by phrases such as "*salir adelante*", "*superarse*" or "*ser alguien en la vida*".

As demonstrated by the following interview segment, the mother of a 14-year-old son from Tiholop positively evaluates the fact that her son does not like the farm work, emphasizing the importance of his success at school. The child's father cultivates two hectares of *milpa* among other economic activities, including playing in a band at festivals. Both parents worked in Cancún in their youth. As I addressed her son's bilinguality in an interview, the mother expressed her pride in his competence in the two languages and attributed it to school education. Subsequently, she started to talk about the benefits of school education for her son and parents' responsibility in it. The following interview segment is part of her account on the topic:

<p>Yo siempre eso le digo, "no, no te debe de pasar así (reprobar)", le digo porque aquí en la casa no lo pongo a trabajar. Primero es la tarea. "Si tienes tiempo de ayudarme pues sí, vas a hacer algo también" le digo porque si no, va a quedar flojo porque no le gusta el monte. No le gusta el monte y le digo "así pues qué bueno que no te gusta el monte, así vas a estudiar a ver qué tal si vas a ser maestro o doctor o lo que sea como no te gusta el monte", le digo. Y este veo que sí se está aplicando (...)</p>	<p>I always say that to him, "No, it (failing the class) should not happen to you", I say to him because here at home, I don't make him work. The first priority is the homework. "If you have time to help me, well you are going to do something as well" I say to him because if not, he will become lazy because he does not like the forest (<i>milpa</i>). He does not like the forest (<i>milpa</i>) and I say to him "Well, how good that you don't like the forest (<i>milpa</i>), in this way you will study and let us see what if you become a teacher or a doctor or whatever, as you don't like the forest (<i>milpa</i>)", I say to him. And I see that yes, he is applying himself (...)</p>
<p>(T13_LAN)</p>	

The mother's positive evaluation of her son's disinclination for farm work is in accordance with common attitudes of parents in rural Yucatan, whereby parents placed increased emphasis on school education, wishing that their children will have professions associated with higher economic security and social status than traditional agriculture. However, the interview segment also reveals uncertainties experienced by parents concerning the socialization of children in the face of social change. Traditionally, children's participation in household work forms an essential part of their socialization process in rural family lives. The phrase in the interview segment "if not (if he does not help in the household), he will become lazy" indicates that the mother – although insisting on the priority of school education – continues to hold the traditional value appreciating hard work and considering it important for children to learn how to work. Ambivalence about the way in which young generations are nowadays socialized in Tiholop is also expressed by the father, who himself cultivates *milpa*. On the one hand, he is critical of changes in socialization patterns among Tiholop's youths, which he attributes to their out-migration at an early age. According to him, it can have negative effects on their personality including alcoholism and drug consumption, as well as preventing them from acquiring skills in traditional agriculture.

First, after mentioning the negative effects that urban wage work can have on adolescents from Tiholop, he expresses his wish to protect his son from such an influence. The following interview segment is part of his response to the question of whether he thinks that increasing out-migration changes the community:

<p>Por eso pues yo por ejemplo con, con el único hijo que tengo, yo hasta llego a pensar que no, no quiero ir a, no quiero que él vaya a trabajar en Mérida. Yo prefiero que él se quede conmigo a trabajar. Porque de repente aunque lo ves un, un muchacho muy noble, ya cuando empiezan a salir a trabajar, bueno, cambian, cambian (...)</p> <p>(T6_MIG)</p>	<p>That's why I, for example, with the only son I have, I even start to think that no, I don't want to go, I don't want him to go to work in Mérida. I prefer him to stay to work with me. Because suddenly, even though you see a noble boy when they start to go to work, well they change, they change (...)</p>
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Second, upon my inquiry about the topic, he points to young people’s tendency of turning away from traditional agriculture owing to their out-migration at an early age, albeit which contradicts his beliefs about the way in which youths in Tiholop should be socialized. After answering my question of whether young people in Tiholop are capable of making *milpa* with “*muy pocos*” (few), he explains his perspective on the matter, referring to his own socialization practice. He considers it important for his son to learn the skill of the farm work so that he can “defend himself”, as he puts it in the following interview segment:

<p>Pero no, pues yo con mi hijo, aunque, aunque muy poco porque él como está estudiando. Solo para los sábados, lo, le bueno lo llevo en la milpa. le digo, “Tienes que aprender lo que es la milpa”. Porque el día de mañana que yo me enferme o que pues que digamos que pues yo me muera, pues mi hijo tiene donde defenderse, en la milpa. En cambio si le digo a mi hijo “No quédate a dormir, yo voy solo”. ¿Cuándo va a aprender? Y si el estudio no le echa ganas, tampoco va a superar. Sí y pues la verdad que muy poco, los muchachos de hoy, muy pocos les gusta la milpa, les gusta más la ciudad. Si y a veces cuando, cuando ya se vayan a casar, prefieren ir en Mérida, prefieren vivir ahí en la ciudad. Pues por lo mismo porque desde pequeños, debemos de enseñarles lo que es el trabajo del monte, la milpa porque pues cuando ya sean grandes, como por ejemplo, se lleguen a los 15, 16 años ya saben trabajar. Sí, así es.</p> <p>(T6_MIG)</p>	<p>But no, well I with my son, even though it (what I teach him) is very little because he is going to school. Only on Saturdays, well, I take him to the <i>milpa</i>. I say to him, “You have to learn what is the <i>milpa</i> agriculture”. Because if I were to get sick one day or well let’s say if I were to die one day, this way, my son has something with which he can defend himself, the <i>milpa</i>. Instead, if I say to my son “No [you don’t have to go], keep sleeping, I go alone”. When will he learn? And if he does not study hard, neither will he prosper. Yes and well, it is true that few of young people of today, few like the <i>milpa</i>. They prefer the city. Yes and sometimes, when they marry, they prefer to go to Mérida, prefer to live there in the city. Well, from the same reason, we should teach them what is the farm work, the <i>milpa</i> agriculture from an early age on because then when they are old, for example when they reach 15, 16 years old, they already can work. Yes, that’s the way it is.</p>
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The two interview segments suggest that the father continues to hold traditional values concerning children’s socialization: he negatively evaluates changes associated with adolescent migration and insists on the importance of transmitting knowledge of *milpa* agriculture to the coming generation.

However, on the other hand, while answering my question about what he wishes for the

future of his son – which directly followed the interview segments – he draws on a narrative of progress commonly also articulated by parents in rural communities of Yucatan. Wishing prominence and prosperity for his son’s future, in the interview segment below he underscores the importance of school education, which is considered essential for a successful life understood in accordance with progressive narratives:

<p>Pues yo por mi hijo, mi hijo yo le digo que, que le eche ganas al estudio porque como yo no tuve la oportunidad de estudiar porque pues mi difunto papá tomaba mucho. Sí, tomaba mucho. A veces él tomaba casi tres días, tres días a la semana. Y pues yo “¿de dónde?”, digo “¿cómo me va, va este costear lo que es mis, mis estudios?”. Y pues le digo a mi hijo “No, pues tú tienes que estudiar. Yo quiero que pues seas alguien en la vida, que te superes”. Y pues veo que mi hijo, sí, le echa ganas, le echa ganas lo que es el estudio. (T6_MIG)</p>	<p>Well, I, regarding my son, [to] my son, I say to him that he should study hard because I did not have the opportunity to study because my late father drank a lot. Yes, he drank a lot. He sometimes drank almost three days, three days a week. And well, I “Where [should I get money for my education]?”, I say “How will he finance what is my education?”. Accordingly, I say to my son “Not [like I], you have to study. I want you to become a somebody in life, to become successful”. And I see that my son is working hard on, working hard on what is the study.</p>
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It is notable that whereas change was rather conceived in terms of decay in the previous part of the conversation, in this interview segment the father expresses his outlook for his son’s future in a way that corresponds with the modernist conception of development and progress. The father wants him to get ahead in life through the making most of educational opportunities today, which he did not have in his own youth.

Of course, an emphasis on school education and the transmission of (agri)cultural knowledge do not necessarily have to be mutually exclusive in children’s socialization. Notwithstanding, they are often attributed to different habitus and progress is likely to be conceived in terms of a transition from one social order to the other in postcolonial Yucatan.

Don Wilberto – cited at the beginning of the section – considers this way of thinking to be a remnant of colonial oppression. As part of his response to my question about the current language situation in Yucatan, he illuminates the popular oppositional conception of tradition

and modernity, which – according to him – underlies current patterns of language socialization preferring Spanish.

<p>(...) “si vas a mejorar, tienes que estudiar, ah, pero si vas a estudiar, tienes que dejar de hablar la lengua maya. Si eres estudiado, no debes de, de ir a la milpa, debes de vestir diferente, es decir, ya no platiques tus tradiciones y costumbres porque porque es para gente ignorante”, ¿no? Hay esa, esa creencia todavía. (M4)</p>	<p>(...) “if you are to improve, you have to study, ah, but if you are to study, you have to stop speaking Maya. If you are a graduate, you should not go to the <i>milpa</i>, you should dress differently, it means, don’t practice your traditions and customs anymore because it is for ignorant people”, [this way] right? This belief still exists.</p>
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In this interview segment, it is notable that cultivating *milpa*, dressing in a certain way and speaking Maya are treated as related cultural practices forming part of “a whole symbolically structured environment” (Bourdieu 1977[1972]:87). Indeed, according to the postcolonial system of classification illustrated by don Wilberto, this habitus in which the language and agricultural knowledge are transmitted is considered to be opposed to that associated with education and social progress. In this dualistic understanding, parents’ socialization values oriented towards the latter inevitably imply children’s dissociation from the former environment in which cultural repertoires have traditionally been reproduced. Drawn on Bourdieu’s conception of orchestration of habitus (1977[1972]:79f.), cultivating *milpa* and speaking Maya can be regarded as part of cultural practices adjusted to each other to form a common-sense world. Seen in this way, it is to be assumed that the above-presented declining tendency of the traditional agriculture also has implications for the language maintenance of Yucatec Maya. Indeed, the data from the questionnaire survey conducted at the schools in Yaxcabá and Tiholop indicates a correlation between the two, at the levels of both students’ socialization and future orientation.

First of all, the data revealed a correlation between the practice of traditional agriculture by students’ fathers and students’ bilinguality, suggesting that growing up in a *milpa* peasantry household is a factor favoring their socialization in Yucatec Maya. Especially in Yaxcabá –

where greater variation in the young generation's bilinguality is observed – there is a correlation between fathers' occupation and students' command of language. Among the students at the elementary schools and the junior high school in Yaxcabá, both active and passive command of Yucatec Maya is more likely to be claimed by those whose father is a *milpa* peasant<sup>210</sup> ( $\phi=.333$  and  $\phi=.350$ , respectively) (Yamasaki 2016:476). The data obtained in Tiholop also indicates the relation between the household's agricultural activity and children's bilinguality, albeit in a slightly different way. Unlike in Yaxcabá, among the students at the elementary school<sup>211</sup> in Tiholop, a stronger correlation is observed between cultivation of *milpa* by fathers and students' bilinguality. It is true that also in Tiholop designation of the father's occupation as a *milpa* peasant positively correlates with students' active command of Maya ( $\phi=.250$ )<sup>212</sup> as well as acquisition of it as a first language ( $\phi=.302$ ). However, in the case of the elementary school in Tiholop, whether the father cultivates *milpa* or not has more explanatory power concerning students' bilinguality. Students whose father cultivates *milpa* – regardless whether this activity is identified as his occupation or not – are more likely to claim both active command of Maya ( $\phi=.386$ ) and acquisition of it as a first language ( $\phi=.393$ ) than those whose father does not practice traditional agriculture (Yamasaki 2016:476). Accordingly, there seems to be a subtle difference between Yaxcabá and Tiholop in terms of how the household's economic activity is reflected in children's bilinguality. A possible explanation for the above-presented variance between the communities is as follows: in the case of Yaxcabá, where Maya-speaking students are the minority, growing up in the peasantry household is a factor favoring children's acquisition of both active and passive competence in Maya, whereas

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<sup>210</sup> It is based on students' responses concerning the occupation of their fathers, obtained from an open question. Only responses of the students who clearly identify their father's occupation as a peasant (such as *campesino*, *en la milpa*) are counted. It is important to note that many people cultivate *milpa* while mainly carrying out other activities. These people tend to identify themselves with the main economic activity that they are conducting.

<sup>211</sup> Correlations are not calculated for the junior high school in Tiholop as there is little variance in the language situation, with all students claiming active and passive command of Maya (see Table 5 and Table 6)

<sup>212</sup> Correlations for passive command of Maya are not calculated for Tiholop since passive command of the language was only negated by two students. The fathers of these two students are non-*milpa* peasants working outside of the community.

in Tiholop, where the majority of the students speak Maya, non-cultivation of *milpa* by fathers is a factor enhancing the probability of children's socialization in Spanish language (Yamasaki 2016:476). Drawing on these results, it is to be assumed that the declining tendency of *milpa* agriculture observed in the two communities fractures the base for the transmission of Maya from generation to generation, which has traditionally occurred in the orchestrated habitus of the rural household.

Moreover, the data from the questionnaire survey indicates that speaking Maya and cultivating *milpa* are perceived by students as coherent cultural practices representing a particular way of life. This is reflected in the interrelation between their language attitudes and future orientation. In Yaxcabá, where there is greater variation in language attitudes<sup>213</sup> (see Figure 14 and Figure 15), students' positive attitudes towards the acquisition of Maya correlate with their inclination to cultivate *milpa* in the future ( $\tau_b=.433$ )<sup>214</sup>. While the importance of learning Maya is affirmed by 84.8 percent of the students who responded "yes" or "I don't know" to the question of whether they want to cultivate the *milpa* when they are adults<sup>215</sup>, the percentage drops to 41.2 percent among the students who clearly refused the traditional agriculture as a future option. In Tiholop, variation in youth's future orientation is not reflected in their estimation of the importance of learning Maya. Possibly due to high vitality of Maya in the community, its current significance of the language is barely questioned by students there.

Notwithstanding, similar to variation observed in youth's attitudes towards *milpa* agriculture as a future option, what divides even the linguistically very homogenous group of junior high school students in Tiholop is their vision concerning children's language socialization in the future. While this issue will be further elaborated in the following section, the correlation between the variables is briefly explained here due to its relevance for the topic of the present

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<sup>213</sup> By contrast, in Tiholop, the correlation between the two variables was negligible since there is little variation in language attitudes, with all but four students clearly affirming the importance of learning Maya.

<sup>214</sup> To calculate the Kendall rank correlations, students' responses concerning language attitudes and attitudes towards *milpa* agriculture as a future option were transformed into three scores (1 = No, 2 = I don't know, 3 = Yes), respectively.

<sup>215</sup> All four students who clearly expressed desire to work the field consider it important to learn Maya.

section.

The data obtained from the junior high school in Tiholop indicates a moderate relationship between the cultivation of *milpa* and language socialization conceived of as their future plans. The percentage of those students who would socialize children only in Spanish is much higher in the group of students who clearly refuses traditional agriculture as a future option (50 percent) compared with those students who responded “yes” or “I don’t know” to the question of whether they want to cultivate *milpa* when they are adults (15.4 percent) ( $\phi=.346$ ). This correlation is not to be overestimated since those who would only speak to Spanish to children are a minority among the junior high school students in Tiholop (see chapter 5.3.2.2 for more information). Nevertheless, the findings suggest that in a community such as Tiholop currently characterized by a strong vitality of Maya, diversification of youth’s future orientation does not affect their estimation of the language’s value for themselves, but possibly that for the coming generation.

Drawing on Bourdieu’s conception of orchestration of habitus, the present section has dealt with Yucatec Maya language as the product of a practical mastery transmitted in “a whole symbolically structured environment” (1977[1972]:87) and explored its relation to traditional agriculture. The data obtained from interviews with adults as well as the questionnaire survey administered to students revealed a close interrelation of the two cultural practices. On the one hand, it is manifested in the way in which children and youth are socialized today, and on the other hand in the way in which the future way of life is projected by them. The above-presented correlations suggest that the observed declining tendency of traditional agriculture implies a fracture of the basis for Maya cultural reproduction, which includes transmission of the vernacular. In the community of Tiholop, the language situation looks stable upon first glance. The majority of the students have active command of Maya and they barely seem to question the importance of Maya in the here and now of the *pueblo*. Notwithstanding, even the linguistically very homogeneous group of junior high school

students in Tiholop demonstrate uncertainties about their own future when it comes to either their desire to cultivate *milpa* or to socialize children in Maya. This can indeed be interpreted as an indirect sign for language shift, whose onset within the rural habitus can be so subtle – in accordance with Bourdieu’s notion of lack of a radical transformation (1977[1972]:78) – that it is barely noticeable at the surface level. The following section examines how the language situation gradually alters as it reproduces itself and how this synthesis of stability and change is perceived by Maya speakers (cf. Sahlins 1985).

### 5.3.2.2 Language socialization: perception of change and continuity

The present section dealing with language socialization intends to approach speakers’ perspective on language shift, contrasting it with that of investigators, given that researchers’ understanding of language shift is likely to be shaped through observation made for a limited time period, which only reflects a certain segment of the long process developing over several generations. Moreover, applying their theoretical knowledge to interpret what they see, researchers are tempted to assume that language shift conceived of as a unilineal development to abandonment of the vernacular must also be experienced as such by speakers. Especially speakers’ intention in the process tends to be overestimated in scientific treatment of the phenomenon. However, as will be demonstrated below, during earlier phases of shift, changes in the language situation are often so subtle that they are not always regarded as something notable or associated with loss by speakers (cf. Kulick 1992<sup>216</sup>). This discrepancy suggests that the research aiming at a profound understanding of the phenomenon should be more sensitive to the way in which speakers perceive the change at different phases of language shift.

Given its limited time frame, this investigation – like many other research projects – is merely capable of representing segments of the long process. Notwithstanding, a comparison of two rural communities characterized by various degrees of bilingualism reveals differences in

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<sup>216</sup> Kulick’s study (1992) in Papua New Guinea focuses on the onset of language shift.

speakers' perception and experience of language shift at its distinct phases. Especially the observation of language socialization practice at the onset of shift has demonstrated that significant changes may be introduced in the language situation while speakers are engaged in reproducing the cultural order from generation to generation. Drawing on these insights, this section devotes special attention to "the element of continuity in change" to understand why the shift can occur and proceed without speakers' explicit intention of abandoning the vernacular, as highlighted by Kulick (1995:24). It discusses the practice of language socialization in relation to speakers' perception of change and continuity. To begin with, the following part briefly presents how the vitality of Maya is estimated by speakers in the communities characterized by different degrees of bilingualism.

As is to be expected, the vitality of Yucatec Maya language is differently evaluated in the rural communities of Yaxcabá and Tiholop, characterized by various degrees of bilingualism. Unsurprisingly, in Yaxcabá – where Maya is no longer spoken by many of children, youths and young adults – most interview partners remarked on the diminished use of the language in the community. Moreover, similar to researchers' understanding of language shift, the change is often conceived in terms of a unilineal development leading to the loss of Maya in the future as its terminal point. In response to the interview question "what do you think of the future of Maya?", more than one-third of the interview partners (n=27) drew on the linearity of the process to assess the future vitality of the language, represented by answers such as "*ya se está perdiendo* (it's already getting lost)" (Y5\_LAN) and "*se está acabando* (it's dying)" (Y29\_LAN). Some of them even clearly mentioned that Maya would/could disappear someday provided that no intervention is made in the current course of the shift.

By contrast, in Tiholop – where communication among adult members of the community is almost exclusively conducted in Maya – the majority of the interview partners do not seem to see notable change in the community's language situation today in comparison with the past. Correspondingly, they seem to be more optimistic about the future of the language, with four of



the ten interview partners clearly expressing their assumption of the continued vitality of Maya in the future, as represented by the answers such as “*no se va a perder* (it will not get lost)” (T11\_LAN) or “*va a seguir* (it will continue)” (T5\_LAN). It is true that some remarked on small children’s dominant use of Spanish language nowadays. However, this observation does not seem to drastically affect their estimation of the future vitality of Maya as these children are considered to acquire Maya at a later stage in life. Since language shift – as it occurs in Yaxcabá and Tiholop – is an intergenerational process, change in patterns of child language socialization can be treated as an important turning point, after which the shift begins to take its own course. Accordingly, drawing on Kulick (1992) identifying the socialization of the first generation of non-vernacular speaking children as a critical moment in language shift, the following part devotes special attention to adults’ perception of this change in the rural communities of Yaxcabá and Tiholop.

In his case study of language shift from Taiap to Tok Pisin in Papua New Guinea with an emphasis on the language socialization of children, Kulick points to several cultural characteristics that should be taken into account to assess the susceptibility of the community to shift (see 1995:261-267). Among the features that he lists, two elements seem especially relevant for comprehending how Maya-speaking adults make sense of “deviant” language behavior of the young generation in the communities, namely “the degree to which children are considered able to be taught” and “the way change is conceptualized” (Kulick 1995:261-267). Accordingly, the discussion on language socialization in rural Yucatan presented below is organized by these two points made by Kulick, which are briefly explained at the beginning of the respective parts.

In order to understand how change and continuity become balanced in the language socialization of the new generation, it is essential to take into account the local conception of children’s learning process. For example, observing socialization of the first generation of non-vernacular-speaking children in Gapun, Papua New Guinea, Kulick notes that parents –

despite predominantly addressing their children in the majority language – “explicitly see themselves not as acting, but as *re-acting* to language shift” (1995:13). They wonder why children do not speak the vernacular and explain the new generation’s unwillingness to learn the language by the general nature of children, being considered autonomous and stubborn. Finally, the very idea that “knowledge is something generated from inside a child” prevents adults from playing an active role in transmission of the vernacular (Kulick 1995:257). While regional specificities should be taken into account, consideration of the point made by Kulick could also help to have more nuanced understanding of the way in which the transmission of Maya ceases in rural Yucatan.

Upon first glance, the socialization of children in Spanish language as it happens in Yucatan appears like a conscious decision of parents wishing them a “better” future. Indeed, the common reason for this practice given by parents is the preparation of children for Spanish-speaking school. Seen in this way, it is true that this language choice of parents reflects their attitudes, preferring Spanish as the language to be acquired by the coming generation. However, as will be demonstrated below, this does not necessarily mean a conscious decision against the transmission of Maya to the next generation. What possibly also underlies the child socialization practice in Spanish is parents’ belief that the acquisition of Maya is something naturally occurring without interventions.

This view is – for example – expressed by Farbiola’s husband, a 32-year-old father of a four-year-old daughter and an eight-year-old son from Yaxcabá (see Figure 9 for patterns of language use in the family). At the time of the fieldwork, his two children were almost monolingual Spanish speakers with limited comprehension skills in Maya, as the former was the language used for communication among all the members of the nuclear family. However, Farbiola’s husband speaks Maya with many of the extended family, whereby the children are regularly exposed to the vernacular. He had been socialized in Spanish by his parents at first and learnt Maya as a second language through communication with his grandparents, who were

monolingual Maya speakers. Today, he and his parents communicate with each other in Maya (see chapter 5.1.2.1). The following interview segment is his answer given to my question “but you didn’t teach Maya to your children, did you?”. The question was posed after he had answered “yes” to the interview question “Do you want your children to learn Maya?”.

<p>Si nosotros, nosotros nunca le, o sea nunca le, le enseñamos la maya, nada más en, en que escucha. Y a veces con, va con su abuelo su abuelo ya, él pura maya habla, los habla en maya y así van aprendiendo. De que as, que se dedique a aprender maya o que le enseñemos la maya, no. Así como, como va con su abuelo, va creciendo, va entendiendo y así. Yo así lo aprendí. Sí, me iba con mi abuelo, escucha, yo entendía y trataba de decir, de platicar con él en maya y sólo cuando me di cuenta, ya, ya sé hablar en maya. Así aprendí. No, no, no me dediqué a aprenderlo y nadie me, se dedicó a enseñármelo, sí.</p> <p>(Y2_LAN)</p>	<p>We never teach him (his son?), we never teach him the Maya language, only hearing it [he learns it]. And sometimes, he goes to his grandfather’s place, he (the grandfather) only speaks Maya, he speaks to them (children) in Maya and in this way, they are beginning to learn. It’s not like, he (his son) dedicates himself to acquisition of Maya or we teach him the Maya language, no [it’s not like this]. As he goes to his grandfather’s place, he will grow up and he will begin to understand and so forth. I learned it (Maya) this way. Yes, I went to my grandfather’s place and I listen, I understood and I tried to say, to talk with him in Maya and only as I realized, I am already able to speak in Maya. I learned [Maya] this way. I didn’t dedicate myself to acquisition of it and nobody dedicated time to teaching it to me.</p>
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This interview segment demonstrates how the researcher’s understanding of language acquisition deviates from the interview partner’s view on the matter. Reacting to the word “teach” (*enseñar*) in the question, he clarifies that for him Maya language is not what is consciously learnt or taught (cf. chapter 5.3.1), but rather the practical mastery that the child automatically acquires through growing up in the Maya-speaking environment. He gained fluency in Maya himself despite parental socialization in Spanish, communicating with his monolingual grandparents. Accordingly, in his case, acquisition of Maya occurred neither through his active effort to learn the language nor through somebody’s intentional attempt to teach it to him. Indeed, he assumes that this *modus operandi* (Bourdieu 1977[1972]) must also apply to his children’s acquisition of Maya. As he explains in the interview segment, he

believes that his children will also learn Maya without adults' active intervention in the process as they grow up. However, it should be kept in mind that there are several differences in the sociolinguistic environment in which his children are socialized nowadays compared to that in his own childhood: he and his wife do not speak Maya with each other as his parents did at home and the grandparents of his children are not monolingual Maya speakers, unlike his own grandparents. It is true that the bilinguality of children's grandparents is Maya-dominant. However, as far as I could observe in the interactions, the grandparents systematically code-switched to Spanish as they addressed their grandchildren. In this way, the verbal inputs in Maya that his children receive are much more limited in comparison to those to which the parents' generation was exposed. Moreover, today it seems that it is not expected of the novices to learn the vernacular since Maya-speaking grandparents accommodate their speech to that of their grandchildren rather than the other way around.

In sum, this interview segment demonstrates that continuity in the *modus operandi* for children's acquisition of Maya can be assumed even though there might possibly be none. In many families of Yaxcabá, the sociolinguistic constellation has altered over time, whereby the habitus no longer provides conditions for the intergenerational transmission of Maya in practice, which is considered a natural way for children to gain competence in the vernacular.

Moreover, in the case of Tiholop – where children are likely to acquire competence in Maya despite parental socialization in Spanish (see chapter 5.1.2.1) – the above-mentioned assumption of continuity even corresponds with the current state of affairs. This surely underlies the common evaluation of the community's language situation as stable. For example, a 32-year-old father from Tiholop answers the interview question of whether he thinks that people speak more or less Maya today in comparison with the past as follows:

<p>Eh, ahorita, ahorita, ahorita como estamos veo que este por ejemplo los niños de ahorita hablan, ya empezaron a hablar lo que es en español, sí, pero cuando son niños. Ya cuando veo que ya son muchachos,</p>	<p>Eh, now, now, now, as we are, I see that well, for example, the kids of today speak, already begin to speak what is in Spanish, yes, but when they are kids. But when I see that they are already adolescents, they</p>
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empiezan a hablar igual en maya (...) (T6_LAN)	begin to speak in Maya as well (...)
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As this interview segment indicates, some people in Tiholop indeed notice use of Spanish by children as a change in the community's language situation. However, assuming that these Spanish-speaking children become Maya speakers at a later stage in life – for example, when they are “*muchachos* (adolescents)” – they do not consider this development to affect the future vitality of Maya in a notable manner. In the case of Tiholop, even this assumption is in accordance with the way in which it is today for two reasons: first, children often acquire at least passive competence in the vernacular as they grow up even though they might be addressed completely in Spanish by their parents, due to the Maya-speaking environment in the community; and second, parents in Tiholop sometimes change the language of communication with children during the socialization process. For example, a 34-year-old father from Tiholop with a 14-year-old daughter reveals in the interview that even though he and his wife currently communicate with their daughter predominantly in Maya, they initially started speaking Spanish to her. In this way, according to the father, the daughter first began to speak in Spanish and then started to learn Maya when she was from five to eight years old. This was indeed in accordance with his intention of wanting her to learn Spanish well and then the Maya language (“*me gustaría que aprenda bien el español y ya después aprenda la maya*”) (T9\_LAN). Moreover, the decision for this socialization practice seems to have been of a pragmatic nature rather than being rooted in the ideology concerning the general hierarchy of the two symbolic forms: he wanted his daughter to learn Spanish at first so that she would have a smooth start at the Spanish-speaking school, as he explains “*la maya también pues es bueno, no digamos que no es bueno, pero eh para ir en la escuela, para aprender es un poco difícil. Sí, porque los maestros a veces no entienden también la maya*” (Maya, well, is good as well. We would not say that it is not good, but to go to the school, to learn, it is a bit difficult. Yes, because the

teachers sometimes do not understand Maya either.) (T9\_LAN). As he indicates in the interview, some other families in Tiholop also proceed similarly with the language socialization of children, supposedly for the same reason.

In view of the above-mentioned changes in children's language competence and even behavior in their life course, as it is today in Tiholop, nothing seems to be truly becoming lost through the increasingly common parental practice of socializing their children in Spanish. In the case of Yaxcabá, it has been argued that continuity in the habitus for children's language socialization can be assumed even though there might be none. By contrast, in Tiholop, it should rather be seen in the way that continuity in the language situation is assumed because there is practically one for the time being: as it stands now, the change in children's language socialization process does not seem to be affecting the vitality of Maya in the community in a notable manner. Seen in this way, it is no surprise that the use of Spanish by children is not necessarily considered a significant change by adults.

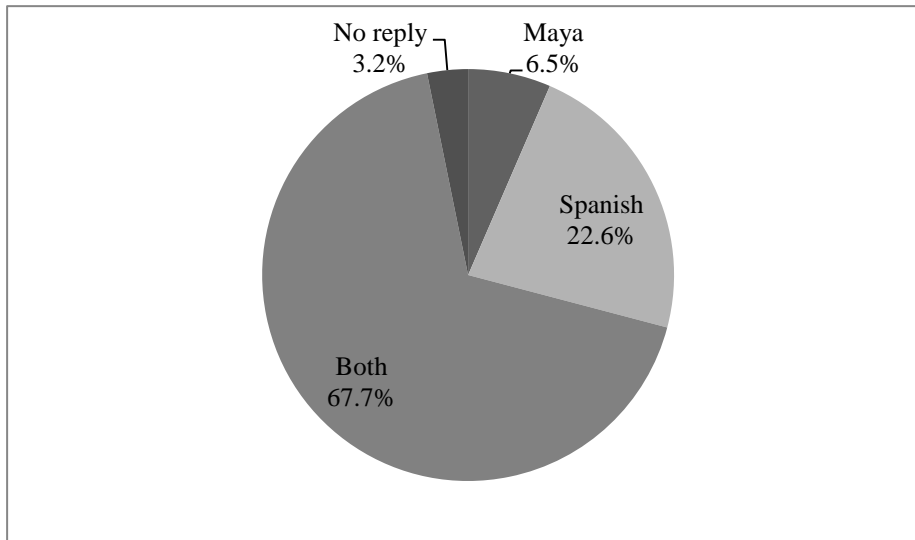
However, parental socialization in Spanish can influence children's language choice for communication among peers, which can indeed trigger a long-term transformation of the language situation. Indeed, observation of peer interactions at the schools revealed a difference between the sixth-grade students at the elementary school and the third-grade students at the junior high school in Tiholop, the two groups varying in their first language (see Table 7). Peer communication was only carried out in Yucatec Maya in the third-grade classrooms at the junior high school, where 83.9 percent of students claimed Maya as their first language. By contrast, in the sixth-grade classrooms at the elementary school – where the percentage drops to 53.5 percent – the use of both languages could be observed (Yamasaki 2016:473). This relation between children's first language and observed interaction patterns at school indicates that the way in which children are socialized at home has an influence on the language used for

communication with peers.<sup>217</sup> Furthermore, if those students now using Spanish for communication with peers are to continue this practice along their life course, the sociolinguistic environment in which children become socialized will dramatically change in the future, whereby the *modus operandi* for intergenerational transmission of Maya may no longer be assumed.

Moreover, it is to be expected that the currently-observed tendency of socializing children in Spanish will continue or rather increase in the years to come, as junior high school students' responses to the question concerning language transmission indicate. Answering the question "Which language would you speak to your children if you were to have children?", students who claimed to speak Spanish to their children outnumber those who would speak Maya by about three to one. It is true that this deviation should be put into perspective in consideration of the fact that still 67 percent of the students claimed to speak both languages to their children. Notwithstanding, the figures suggest that the students possibly would not follow the language transmission patterns of their parents if they were to have children themselves (Yamasaki 2016:473f.).

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<sup>217</sup> Of course, difference in interaction patterns between the two groups may also be attributed to change in children's language behavior along the life course. In order to exclude this possibility, a longitudinal study of child socialization process and peer interaction would be necessary.



*Note.* From Yamasaki (2016:474).

**Figure 13** Students' responses to the question "Which language would you speak to your children if you were to have children?" at the junior high school in Tiholop

Similar to what has been observed in the case of youth's attitudes towards *milpa* agriculture as a future option (see chapter 5.3.2.1), this variation in their vision concerning children's language socialization is indeed remarkable since the students otherwise represent a quite homogenous group with respect to their bilinguality. As has been argued in chapter 5.3.2.1, the divergence among the group in the question of future orientation could be interpreted as a possible indicator of change, which will be only tangible in the years to come.

The section thus far has dealt with speakers' perception of change and continuity in language shift and discussed how their assumption of continuity is related to the local conception of the way in which children acquire the vernacular. As has been argued above, the question of whether and to what degree the change is perceived is key to comprehending how the language shift is put in motion and proceeds without the speaker's explicit intention of abandoning the language. However, the element of continuity in change can also be approached in another way than the above-discussed assumption of stability concerning linguistic reproduction in the future.

Another aspect that is essential to consider is the way in which speakers conceptualize and



negotiate change in their daily task of cultural reproduction. Drawing on Hill and Hill's observation among Nahuatl speakers in Mexico (1986), Kulick points out that language shift might not be considered "especially dramatic or upsetting" by speakers since the change of language can be regarded as something superficial that does not affect the basis of their in-group solidarity (1995:263). This is another dimension of continuity in change essential for understanding how language shift is perceived and experienced by speakers. For example, children's use of the majority language may not be treated as a radical break by adults in a shifting community as long as their in-group solidarity can be expressed otherwise than through the common language. As observed by Kulick in the case of Gapun, a village in Papua New Guinea where children no longer speak the vernacular, Taiap, villagers handle this intergenerational change, shifting an important basis of their in-group solidarity from "*a language*" to "*the culturally correct use of language in interaction*". Accordingly, as he puts it: "Being a villager is no longer so much a matter of speaking Taiap as it is one of knowing how to use language appropriately in verbal interactions" (Kulick 1995:264). This point made by Kulick (1992) is also insightful for understanding language shift as it happens in rural communities in Yucatan. Accordingly, the following part discusses how continuity is perceived or established by Maya speakers in view of the intergenerational change in language choice.

When I addressed children's lack of active competence in Maya in interview situations or casual conversations, the common answer provided by caregivers was "*pero sí lo entienden* (but they understand it)", sometimes in a slightly defensive tone. As presented in chapter 5.1.2.1, the language shift as it occurs in the communities of Yaxcabá and Tiholop is a gradual process with bilingualism often retained at least over two generations. It means that the change in the language situation proceeds in a way that intergenerational communication of most family members still remains possible at least by means of passive language skills. Given these circumstances, Maya-dominant bilinguals in the roles of parents and grandparents seem to attach more importance to the fact that children understand adults' utterances and

react to them in a culturally-appropriate way than the coherence of the language in which the interactions occur.

Don Efraín – a Maya-dominant bilingual from Tiholop – does not seem to negatively evaluate the fact that his grandchildren not living with him do not speak Maya, even though communication in the family almost exclusively takes place in the language (see chapter 5.1.2.1). Stressing the importance of bilingualism in contrast to the dominance of Maya in his generation, he approves the way in which the children are linguistically socialized because they are learning Spanish, at the same time having passive competence in Maya. The following interview segment is part of his answer to the question “which language would you like your grandchildren to learn who are growing up now?”. He initially answers “both”, pointing to the importance of Spanish for school education because not all teachers speak Maya, before he continues as follows:

<p>(...) Por eso yo pues me gusta también los dos que sabe, que sepa un poco de, de español que habla un poco de maya porque pura maya hablamos. Pues los dos. Pues así como están mis nietos también allá con mi hijo, sí, sí este ellos no hablan la maya, pero sí lo entienden. Cuando digas algo que lo haga, sí lo hacen, pero no lo hablan (...)</p> <p>(T1_LAN)</p>	<p>That’s why I would like them to know the two [languages] as well, to know a bit of Spanish, to speak a bit of Maya because we only speak Maya. Well, the two [languages]. Well, like my grandchildren living there with my son, too, it’s true that they do not speak Maya, but they understand it. When you tell them to do something, they do it, but they do not speak it.</p>
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In this interview segment, the importance of Maya is not denied by don Efraín. However, the value of the language is seen in its use for the proper accomplishment of the relationship between Maya-speaking caregivers and children rather than its structure itself. It means that what matters more is the fact that children understand adults’ orders given in Maya and act in obedience with them rather than the language that they speak to execute them.

The interview segment below demonstrates what such a bilingual interaction between caregivers and children with varying competence in Maya might look like. A 48-year-old man

from Yaxcabá – the father of 16- and 13-year-old children – provides an example of their dialog to illustrate that his children understand Maya but do not speak it. He stated at another point in the interview that Maya was mainly spoken at home as he and his wife communicated with each other in the language. With respect to his children’s bilinguality, he mentioned that even though he addressed them in Maya, they were used to answering him in Spanish:

<p>Sí, entienden. Cuando le digo: “Ko'oten weye!”, le digo, me contestan: “¿qué es?”, “Ko'oten weye”, “Ahorita!”, me dicen. Sí hablan, sí entienden. Luego: “Xeen maan!”, “¿Qué voy a comprar?”, me dicen.</p> <p>(Y33_LAN)</p>	<p>Yes, they understand [Maya]. When I say to them, “Come here!”, I say to them, they answer me: “What’s the matter?”, “Come here!”, “Right now!”, they say to me. Yes, they speak [Maya], they understand [Maya]. Afterwards: “Go shopping!”, “What am I going to buy?”, they say to me.</p>
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In the dialog cited by the interview partner, the caregiver and the children successfully communicate with each other using the two languages. Perhaps more importantly, the example demonstrates that child-caregiver relationships in accordance with local traditional values expecting respect and obedience of children may be reproduced in an interaction despite their switching to Spanish.

However, unlike don Efraín, the father from Yaxcabá explicitly expressed the wish that his children would learn more Maya. Criticizing some of his adult nephews and nieces who do not speak Maya even though they understand it, he hopes that this will not apply to his own children in the future. This emphasis placed by the father from Yaxcabá may be related to the already-advanced stage of language shift in the community, where a gradual loss of Maya is widely recognized and the future language situation is predicted accordingly in contrast to Tiholop.

Despite the difference in this respect, the two examples cited above suggest that intergenerational change in language choice might not be considered a radical break by adults as long as children are able to communicate with caregivers in accordance with their traditionally-accepted role. Seen in this way, for Maya-speaking adults in the communities, a

significant continuity may lie in the reproduction of social relations through the culturally-appropriate use of language rather than coherence of the language in interaction (cf. Kulick 1995:264).

As presented above, within the rural habitus, language shift is a gradual process normally proceeding at a pace that does not undermine mutual understanding among most of the family members belonging to different generations. However, in the case of out-migration of some of the family members and child socialization in another environment, this line of intergenerational communication may be disrupted since urban-raised children do not always acquire passive competence in Maya. In its apparent absence, the continuity seems to be established through grandparents' accommodation towards children's speech rather than the other way round. It means that grandparents are more likely to intend to speak Spanish than expect their grandchildren to learn Maya. Two interview partners commented on such a change in language behavior of their parents, which is in accordance with the general tendency observed in the communities. In the two examples below, the use of Spanish by their parents otherwise speaking Maya came as a surprise for the interview partners.

For example, a 32-year-old woman from Tiholop observes that her mother started to speak Spanish since she went to Mérida to see her grandson living in the city. The interview segment below is a part of her answer to the interview question of whether there are people who are ashamed of speaking Spanish when arriving in the city. After negating the question, she refers to her mother as an example:

<p>(...) Sí, ya se acostumbraron en Mérida. Como mi mamá, no decía para nada en español, pero nada decía. Pero en que se fue a Mérida, se acostumbró, con, claro que con mi hermanita, con su hija, en maya habla, aunque está en Mérida, pero en maya habla. Pero el niño, su nieto como no entiende la maya, pues a la fuerza tiene que hablar en maya (error; meaning español). Cuando no se había ido en Mérida, no decía</p>	<p>(...) Yes [they speak Spanish], they already adapted in Mérida. Like my mother, she used to say nothing in Spanish, but she said nothing [in Spanish]. But as she went to Mérida, she adapted, of course, with my younger sister, with her daughter, she speaks in Maya even though she is in Mérida, but she speaks in Maya. But the child, her grandson, since he does not understand Maya, well she has to speak in Maya</p>
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<p>para nada en español, te digo. Pero cuando regresó, veo que aunque muy poco, pero sí, sí se refuerza para hablar en español. Y sí lo, sí lo dice bien. (...)</p> <p>(T13_LAN)</p>	<p>(error; meaning Spanish) of necessity. As she had not been to Mérida, she said nothing in Spanish, I say to you. But when she returned, I see that even though it is not much, but she dares to speak in Spanish. And she says it, she says it well. (...)</p>
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This example addresses several aspects concerning speech accommodation. First, her statement “they already adapted in Mérida” to explain her negative answer to the interview question suggests that she considers speaking Spanish part of Maya speakers’ adaptation to the urban way of life. Second – and more relevant to the topic of the present section – the fact that the urban-raised grandson does not understand Maya is referred to as the reason that requires her mother to speak Spanish (“*a la fuerza tiene que hablar...*”). A similar line of argument could also be heard in an interview conducted with a couple from Yaxcabá.

Describing her mother’s bilinguality, a 57-year-old man from Yaxcabá reveals in the interview that he recently heard his mother speaking in Spanish, which was a surprise for him. Prior to the interview segment cited below, he mentioned that his mother spoke no Spanish when he was about 15 years old. After the episode, his wife tries to explain the change in language behavior of her mother-in-law.

<p>Husband: Últimamente me sorprendió eso que te digo este como tres días ahorita, cuando llegué allá, vi que sonó el celular y lo agarró y oí que está, habló en español. Después le digo así: “esa mi mamá ya sabe hablar más (ahorita?)”. Porque sé que de antes no.</p> <p>Interviewer: ¿De antes no sabía?</p> <p>H: De antes no. Porque lo hablaba así, yo lo oigo, pura maya, lo contesta, pero sí entiende el español así porque ella lo contesta.</p> <p>(...)</p> <p>Wife: A veces habla con su, con sus nietas, a veces con sus nietas no habla en maya.</p>	<p>Husband: Recently I was surprised by that I will tell you, like three days ago, when I arrived there (at my parents’ place) I saw that the cell phone rang and [my mother] picket it up and I heard that she spoke in Spanish. Afterwards I say to her like this, “my mom can already speak more [Spanish] (now?)”. Because I know that she couldn’t [speak it like this] before.</p> <p>Interviewer: She couldn’t speak it before?</p> <p>H: Not before. Because she spoke like, I hear it, she answers only in Maya, but she understands Spanish because she responds to [utterances in Spanish].</p> <p>(...)</p> <p>Wife: Sometimes, she speaks with her grandchildren, sometimes, with her grandchildren, she does not speak</p>
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H: No, sí. W: Se obliga contestarlo en español porque si no, la nieta también no va a entenderlo qué le va a contestar. H: Sí W: Por (esta razón?) se obliga a, a hablar así en español.  (Y23_Y24_LAN)	in Maya. H: No, it's true. W: She forces herself to answer in Spanish because the granddaughter will not understand as well what [the grandmother] will say to answer her. H: Yes. W: That's why she forces herself to speak like this in Spanish.
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Similar to the previously-cited interview segment, the couple argues that the Maya-dominant grandmother started to speak Spanish at a later age and feels “obliged” to do so because the grandchild “will not understand” Maya.

Accordingly, in the two episodes presented, the interview partners speak of the requirement for Maya-dominant grandparents to speak Spanish, assuming that grandchildren would not understand utterances in Maya. As the expressions “*a la fuerza* (of necessity)” and “*se obliga* (obliged to)” indicate, grandparents’ choice of speaking Spanish to their grandchildren represents their communicative accommodation, which is highly “child-centered” (Schieffelin and Ochs 1986:174f.). While speaking Spanish with children is often an educational decision for parents, grandparents’ language behavior seems to derive from their conception of the new generation socialized in the majority language: the young children are per se considered hispanophone and adults have to accommodate themselves to it rather than the other way round. Moreover, as far as the interview partners cited above are concerned, their own parents’ efforts to begin to speak Spanish at a later age are positively evaluated.

As indicated by the positive attitudes of the interview partners towards Spanish-speaking parents, the final essential point that should be considered for a more detailed understanding of language shift is the way in which change is conceptualized in general by speakers (Kulick 1995:263f.). Relating people’s attitudes towards a gradual loss of the vernacular with the way in which change is generally interpreted and discussed in Gapun, Kulick points out that in such a

context where change is accepted and even conceived as something meaningful, language shift – once underway – can easily take root and spread (Kulick 1995:263f.). Although the millenarian conception of societal transformation as is the case in Gapun does not apply to the current situation in the two rural communities of Yucatan, it is worth devoting attention to Maya speakers' general attitudes towards change and the way in which they relate language shift to extra-linguistic processes in the society.

Unlike Gapuners' anticipation of change in the direction of white people reported by Kulick (1992), more often than not the loss of Maya is lamented by speakers given that language change is recognized as such. This tendency was observed – among the communities studied – mainly in Yaxcabá and the cities. Nevertheless, it can happen that speakers evaluate changes – of both linguistic and extra-linguistic nature – closely related to the shift from Maya in a predominantly positive manner. As discussed in chapter 5.2.2, the shift from Maya is likely to be attributed to social changes, above all urbanization, technological development and higher school education, which are generally considered features of modernization. It might be true that the loss of Maya itself is negatively evaluated by the majority of speakers as there is increasingly widespread consensus on the cultural value of the language. However, social changes associated with abandonment of Maya are not necessarily seen in a negative light; rather, as the occasional use of the term “modernization” by Maya speakers to describe the process indicates, change in this direction is often positively understood as progress. Furthermore, in such a context, the gradual loss of Maya can be considered – although regrettable – an inevitable outcome of the development that is by and large accepted by speakers.

For example, responding to my interview questions, don Mario – a 61-year-old man from Yaxcabá cited in chapter 5.3.1.2 – states that his adult children raised and living in Cancún do not have command in Maya and neither would they be interested in learning it. By contrast, he learnt Maya as his first language. Don Mario explains his children's lack of competence

and interest in Maya in a rather neutral way, pointing to the different environment in which they are operating today: “*su trabajo es otro, su medio de vida, su desenvolvimiento es otro*” (their work is different, their way of living, their development is different) (Y22\_LAN).

Speaking about children’s lack of competence and interest in Maya, don Pablo – a 44-year-old from Yaxcabá – stresses the otherness of today’s world in which his daughters in their twenties are socialized, even though they were born and raised in the rural community. He considers that Maya would not draw the attention of his Spanish-speaking daughters “because technology is evolving, everything evolves (*porque pues la tecnología como va evolucionando pues todo evoluciona*)” (Y27\_LAN). He continues: if he told his daughters that he would teach them Maya, “the first thing they would say is ‘I have a lot of homework’ (*lo primero que dicen: ‘tengo mucha tarrea’*)” (Y27\_LAN). Finally, in a concluding way, he attributes his daughters’ lack of interest in Maya to modern individualistic society in which everybody is focusing on his/her stuff and always running out of time (Y27\_LAN).

It is notable that both don Mario and don Pablo explain their children’s disinterest in Maya by the peculiarities of today’s world in which the new generation has been socialized and is operating now. In their understanding of social change, the modernity characterized by urban wage work, higher school education and technological development is not always compatible with the language maintenance of Maya. Accordingly, even though they generally approve of the language’s importance, a gradual intergenerational loss of Maya is tolerated as a corollary of the societal development that is commonly associated with progress.

Finally, how change is conceptualized by Maya speakers is closely related to their agency and struggle in the process. If change is something that they had to work hard for, it would barely be reasonable for them to see it in a negative light. For those speakers having been completely socialized in Maya, speaking Spanish and adapting to urban wage work has been a difficult challenge that they met for the sake of “defending” themselves and their family as the situation required. Accordingly, it is no surprise that the change in this direction is conceived as an



achievement and evaluated correspondingly due to the effort that Maya-speaking individuals had to make.

For example, don Efraín – a 55 year-old-man from Tiholop – did not receive formal school education and it was not until adulthood that he started to speak Spanish. For him, acquisition of the majority language was out of necessity. He reveals in the interview that he had learnt a little Spanish through wage work in the cities, but above all he was forced to learn it to communicate with the Spanish-speaking doctor as his second son became severely sick and had to be treated in Mérida. Nowadays, he speaks to his grandchildren in Spanish and he does not hesitate to speak it with Spanish-speaking outsiders. Don Efraín describes the necessity to learn Spanish at that time as follows: “... *a la fuerza tengo que aprender un poco. Jaaj, porque si no, pues no puedo defenderme, no puedo hablar ...* (Out of necessity, I have to learn a little. Yes, because if not, I can’t defend myself, I can’t speak)” (T1\_LAN). His competence in Spanish today is estimated as follows: “... *así hasta hoy no, no, casi no sé hablar muy bien, pero más o menos pues puedo defenderme* (in this way, to date, I can barely speak it very well, but I can defend myself more or less)” (T1\_LAN).

Don Efraín uses the expression “*defenderme*” (defending myself) to both explain the motive for learning Spanish in the past and describe his competence in the language today. Based on his own experience, he underlines the importance of being bilingual to get by in the present world. In his case, it was essential for maintaining himself and his family through urban wage work in case of need, including seeing to it that his son was treated properly by the Spanish-speaking doctor. As he indicates at another point of the interview, this kind of change is by no means an easy step for those Maya speakers who have been completely socialized in the vernacular. Don Efraín illuminates the point when answering my interview question “What do you think of those parents who only speak Maya to their children?”:

Pues así como digo pues como que está acostumbrado uno, está difícil para cambiar. Hay personas también	Well, as I say, because the person is used to [speaking Maya], it’s difficult to change. There are people as
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<p>tienen vergüenza. Porque hay veces hablamos, no así, pero él que quiere aprender, pues aunque tratamuda(n?) que no así, pero tienes que luchar para que poco a poco va a aprender un poco uno así. (T1_LAN)</p>	<p>well who are ashamed of [speaking Spanish]. Because sometimes, we do not speak [Spanish] in a right way, but the one who wants to learn, even though stuttering, [speaking] incorrectly, has to struggle so that he or she will learn little by little this way.</p>
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As don Efraín clearly explains in the interview segment, for Maya speakers like him, learning and speaking Spanish means stepping out of one's *costumbre* (habit), which requires a lot of courage, effort and struggle. He further elaborates on the point later in the interview, narrating an episode of his deceased sister who lived in Mérida with her adult children without speaking Spanish. According to him, in order to shop in the city, she took a list of the merchandize she needed and showed it to the clerk, saying “*letie’elo’, letie’elo’, letie’elo’* (it’s that, that, and that)” (T1\_LAN). Don Efraín concludes the episode, returning to the previous point by saying “*Y por eso te digo, pues hay cosas que está difícil cambiar* (and that’s why I say to you, well, there are things which are difficult to change)” (T1\_LAN).

As the example of don Efraín’s sister further illuminates, becoming bilingual was a difficult change that some Maya speakers had to make to “defend” themselves and their families in the present world. Taking into account the courage, effort and struggle implied in the process, it is comprehensible that those bilingual Maya speakers apply the acquired skill to socialize the coming generation, even though this act might negatively affect the vitality of Maya in the future, which albeit remains unforeseeable at present.

## 6 Discussion of the Results

The aim of the present study was to provide an anthropological perspective on the inquiry into the language vitality of Yucatec Maya, the topic to which a valuable contribution has already been made from the discipline of sociolinguistics (see chapter 1). In accordance with this objective, the research paid special attention to language use and metalinguistic discourse in everyday life, apart from the data obtained in interview situations. Furthermore, despite the investigation's main focus on the language situation, it examined patterns of language use and language attitudes in relation to speakers' life histories and their ideas about personal and social transformation.

The present chapter discusses the results obtained from this research approach from two disciplinary perspectives. The first part of the discussion is targeted at the methodology for investigating language shift which is generally determined as the field of inquiry in sociolinguistics. Drawing on the insights gained from the anthropological approach taken in the present research project, the section critically reviews the relation between "language choice" and "language attitudes", which is crucial for understanding language shift. The second part of the chapter, on the other hand, discusses which implications the findings from the present research project focusing on "language" have for the discipline of anthropology. Its focus will lie on the study's contributions to the debate on deterritorialization of culture. Finally, the chapter compares these two perspectives and discusses future research directions for considering language vitality of the indigenous language in the present age characterized by mass migration and electronic mediation.

### 6.1 From Anthropology to Sociolinguistics

An analysis of language choice and language attitudes often plays a central role in the sociolinguistic approach to language shift, based on the following premises: Language

maintenance and shift is “the long-term collective results of language choice” (Fasold 1984:213). And language choice as an “orderly” social behavior (Li 2007:27) reflects shared norms concerning distinct functions of the languages in the society, which can be studied, using the concept of language attitudes (see chapter 2.1). Generally speaking, there is nothing to criticize about this framework. However, as will be discussed below, the way language choice and language attitudes are conceptualized and operationalized in research may require modification to reflect the complexity of meanings attached to the languages in the society.

The present research project collected the data on language attitudes primarily in semi-structured, qualitative interviews. As has been discussed in chapter 2.1, from a sociolinguistic perspective, the great weakness of such direct questioning is its susceptibility to biases resulting from interview situations. However, for the present research purpose, obtaining the data on language attitudes in a discursive context rather revealed as an advantage. Accompanied by reflection on situatedness of the interactions as well as extensive participant observation in the communities, the method enabled me to see how ideas about the two languages in contact are shaped in response to speakers’ social experiences in a more nuanced manner. One of the significant insights gained through the approach was a multiplicity of meanings attached to the vernacular by Maya speakers, which points to the problem inherent in conceptualization of language attitudes as evaluation of “the” language.

In classical sociolinguistic research conducted in bilingual settings, investigations of language attitudes tended to focus on different evaluations of the two languages in terms of semantic oppositions. Putting an emphasis on a comparison of attitudes between the languages in contact, such research often neglected the plurality of meanings speakers can attach to each of the languages. For example, the matched guise technique, an established method for studying language attitudes (see chapter 2.1.4.2) is even founded on the assumption that stereotypes of speakers must be synonymous with attitudes towards the language spoken by them. However, in Yucatan and possibly in other language contact situations as well, people’s evaluation of the

language as such may deviate from their stereotypical image of speakers. In the case of Yucatec Maya, Sima Lozano, Perales Escudero and Be Ramírez (2014), for instance, pointed out that a predominantly positive evaluation of Yucatec Maya as a language did not necessarily translate into favorable attitudes towards its speakers as a social group. Also, the observation made in the present investigation demonstrated the necessity of distinguishing between evaluation of the language as such and attitudes towards the language treated as an indicator for a certain way of upbringing in the postcolonial Yucatan; On the one hand, both in the rural communities and the cities, most of the Maya speakers interviewed agreed on the importance of the language, suggesting their predominantly positive attitudes towards it. On the other hand, there was also widespread consensus on the social meaning of being a Maya speaker in the socially and linguistically differentiated environment. Many of those speakers who have worked or lived in the cities were aware of the existence of the negative stereotype about Maya speakers which assigned them a lower socioeconomic status especially in the urban area. Indeed, positive attitudes towards the language expressed by Maya speakers were often the outcomes of different ways they handle this contradiction in response to their social experiences. For example, the discrepancy might be of minor importance for those relatively well-off speakers who learnt Spanish as first language and currently do not live on the traditional agriculture. If they express their appreciation for Maya, they tend to stress the language's cultural value, relatively detached from the social context because, for them, speaking Maya is not the way of life which crucially influences how they are treated in the society. By contrast, those Maya speakers who are aware of or have even been subject to unfavorable treatment because of their language tend to argue for the importance of Maya, insisting on adherence to the way one was brought up despite the disadvantage it can have in specific encounters. Complexity in the way the expressed language attitudes are formed demonstrates the importance of examining more carefully what speakers exactly refer to if they speak of the value of the language and how their ideas about the language are related with their experience of social positions.

Another example which points to the difficulty in speaking of attitudes towards “the” language is different conceptions of “authentic Maya” found in language ideologies discussed in chapter 5.3.1.2. Building on Pfeiler’s observation of the discourse on authentic Maya (1996, 1998), the present investigation further analyzed its social dimensions, paying special attention to the way speakers map their understanding of authenticity to social identities. An analysis of interview responses revealed that Maya speakers from Yaxcabá and Tiholop conceived “authenticity” of the language in two different ways, which I categorized as “discourse of nostalgia” and “symbolic power” respectively (see chapter 5.3.1.2). Even though “authentic Maya” is mapped onto different social identities and occasionally to distinct times in these conceptions, what the two understandings have in common is that this variety of Maya is considered not to be found in everyday language in the places they live; In the discourse of nostalgia, the “authentic” Maya is regarded as something belonging to the past and already lost (or almost lost) in the present. In the other conception of linguistic legitimacy, command of good Maya is attributed to those who consciously studied it, but do not necessarily communicate in the language on a daily basis. Both approaches devalue everyday language of speakers which is considered mixed and incorrect. These contested ideas about “authentic” Maya again underline the importance of carefully examining what speakers exactly refer to when they speak of the value of the language. Seen in this light, the currently observed improvement of language attitudes does not necessarily mean that people’s evaluation of the same variety and its speakers has changed, but it rather suggests diversification of meanings attached to the language.

The section so far referred to discrepancy in attitudes towards the language and its speakers and internal differentiation of the language as two examples demonstrating the need of more differentiated study of attitudes towards Maya. However, these miscellaneous inconsistencies in language attitudes can also be approached from anthropology which provides a more integrated framework for understanding them. From an anthropological perspective, these

different conceptions of Yucatec Maya can eventually be subsumed into two, namely, the language seen as embodied practice opposed to evaluation of its objectified state disembodied from social life. The recent improvement of language attitudes pointed out by researchers (e.g. Sima Lozano 2011, Sima Lozano, Perales Escudero and Be Ramírez 2014) seems to be accompanied by several contradictions, as already mentioned above. To understand the discrepancies, sensible research should be more attentive to a shift in meaning attached to the language by speakers instead of merely speaking of the improvement of attitudes towards “the” language. Drawing from insights of anthropology of globalization, this development can be interpreted as a transition of culture from a habitus to “an arena for conscious choice, justification and representation” pointed out by Appadurai (1996:44) in face of its deterritorialization. More often than not, favorable attitudes towards Maya verbalized by speakers in interviews and informal conversations can be regarded as a manifestation of culture, or, in this case, language in the latter term. In a sociolinguistic approach to language shift, positive attitudes towards the language are considered a key factor for its maintenance given that abandonment of the vernacular is understood as the outcome of the conscious choice made by its speakers. Seen this way, the recent improvement of attitudes towards Maya can be interpreted as a positive indicator for its future vitality. However, it should be noted that in accordance with Bourdieu’s notion of habitus (1977[1972]:87), linguistic reproduction of Maya as it has traditionally occurred in rural Yucatan is by and large transmission in practice which barely enters the level of discourse. Therefore, to consider the future vitality of Maya as everyday language, it is essential to examine what the above mentioned transition of culture away from a habitus implies for the way linguistic knowledge is transmitted from generation to generation.

To explore this dimension, the present investigation paid special attention to language choice in intergenerational communication in the family domain. A close inspection of caregivers’ language choice to address their children in two rural communities challenged another common

assumption concerning the role of language attitudes in the process of language shift. Given that intergenerational transmission is the prerequisite for language maintenance, the cause of shift is commonly seen in parents' attitudes preventing them from transmitting the vernacular to the next generation. In case this does not apply, it is often argued in the way that parents do not transmit the vernacular despite their positive attitudes towards it. Researchers intend to explain this discrepancy either by methodological errors in measurement of private attitudes (see chapter 2.1.4.2) or difference in attitudes towards the use of the language and those towards its transmission (Dorian 1981:106). However, observation of language socialization practice especially in Tiholop points to another aspect which is rarely taken into account in an attempt to understand why intergenerational transmission of the vernacular stops. It is true that also in Tiholop, choice of Spanish for socialization of children is parents' conscious decision based on their belief in the utility of the language for the coming generation. Seen this way, parental behavior of socializing children in Spanish can be regarded as reflection of their language attitudes prioritizing the majority language over the vernacular. However, what should be considered before coming to this conclusion is the degree to which caregivers addressing children in Spanish link their language behavior to loss of the Maya language in the future. For, as has been presented in chapters 5.1.2.1 and 5.3.2.2, language shift as it occurs in the rural habitus of Yucatan is such a subtle process that possible change in the future language situation is barely conceivable at the moment when the first generation starts to socialize children in the majority language. Accordingly, at this stage of the development, parents' choice of Spanish as language for socialization of children is not necessarily what contradicts with their language attitudes. Indeed, as could be observed during the fieldwork, positive attitudes towards Maya were rather rarely explicitly verbalized in the environment in which the *modus operandi* for linguistic reproduction of Maya was working until recently; Children's acquisition of Maya is considered something naturally occurring without adults' intervention, and as such barely attains the level of discourse (cf. Bourdieu 1977[1972]:87). Moreover, in accordance with the



above discussed transition of culture away from a habitus, more often than not, it is not until loss of this base for linguistic reproduction that language maintenance of Maya becomes the object of conscious reflection, leading to verbalization of positive language attitudes. Drawn on this observation, an alternative explanation for the discrepancy between parents' socialization practice and language attitudes could be the gap, often of a temporal nature, between two modalities of culture, which is overlooked by researchers. It means that the importance of language maintenance is more likely to be emphasized by those speakers for whom Maya is no longer the habituality. Indeed, this can be regarded as the very reason for the deviation of their language behavior with respect to child socialization from the verbalized attitudes. The observed gap between the two modalities of culture or in the present case, stop of intergenerational language transmission and verbalization of language loyalty demonstrates the limitations of the focus on language attitudes if we wish to gain a more detailed understanding of language shift as a process. For at the onset of the development, an important change seems to be introduced in the language situation without speakers' explicit intention of abandoning the vernacular. In consideration of this, to assess the future language vitality, it is essential to carefully examine what the transition of culture away from a habitus concretely implies for reproduction of the linguistic structure, which will be elaborated in the following section, applying the perspectives from anthropology of globalization.

In addition to the above mentioned change in modality of culture, another aspect which should be considered to understand the mechanism of shift is how the cultural order can be transformed also within the habitus. As observation of intergenerational interaction patterns in the two rural communities demonstrated (see chapters 5.1.2.1 and 5.3.2.2), it is perhaps not only speakers' unawareness of language loss, but also their perception of continuity in other domains, which makes the change in the language situation more acceptable for them. Logically, researchers concerned with shifts from one language to the other focus on intergenerational change in use of the two languages treated as separate entities. However, from

speakers' perspective, the fact that social relations can be mediated through the language(s) might be much more important than consistency of the language used in interactions. Indeed within the rural habitus of Yucatan, it was observed in the research for this project that a language shift often advances in a way that does not substantially affect the basis of intergenerational solidarity among the family members sharing the certain period of the process. Possibly, this element of continuity despite the change in the language used for communication (cf. Kulick 1995:24) is another reason why the shift can progress without being perceived as a radical break by speakers of the vernacular.

In sum, applying an anthropological approach to the sociolinguistic problem, the present study pointed to two aspects which deserve more attention in language maintenance and shift studies. These are linguistic implications of the transition of culture away from a habitus (Appadurai 1996:44) on the one hand and transformation of the cultural order within the habitus as a mode of its reproduction (Sahlins 1987:138) on the other hand. In many language contact situations, a close inspection of these elements would provide new insights into the process of language shift which could not be wholly captured through the conventional conception of the relationship between language attitudes and choice. These aspects are especially relevant for considering the vitality of the indigenous language in an age of globalization, which will be the topic of the following section dealing with contributions of this study to the discipline of anthropology.

## 6.2 From Sociolinguistics to Anthropology

This research project drew on anthropological theories to inquire the language vitality of Yucatec Maya in the present age characterized by increased deterritorialization of culture (Appadurai 1996). Although its main concern lay in a specific language contact situation, the findings of this study provides insights which are of general relevance for considering cultural diversity in the interconnected world. Contrary to the popular discourse of cultural imperialism,

anthropologists generally agree that globalization of culture is not to be equated with its homogenization (e.g. Appadurai 1990:16). Instead, they speak of “global diversity” (Tsing 2000:352) or “globalized production of difference” (Appadurai 1996:199), pointing to a heterogeneous and open-ended character of global cultural processes. Even though their outcome is not to be seen as inevitable loss of cultural diversity, neither would it be adequate to assume unproblematic maintenance of the status quo. Rather, as Appadurai defines “the tension between cultural homogenization and cultural heterogenization” as “the central problem of today’s global interactions” (1990:5), it is important to pay attention to their multifaceted implications.

The ambivalence of cultural dimensions of globalization pointed out by Appadurai (1996) also represents a key for considering language vitality of Yucatec Maya in mobility, directly or indirectly triggered by the transnational tourism development in the Mexican Caribbean. In this study, this “tension” was above all manifested in expansion of the perceived territoriality of the indigenous language beyond the community boundaries on the one hand and fracture of the habitus for linguistic reproduction on the other hand. Generally, migration of speakers to the environment where the majority language dominates is seen as one of the main causes for language shift. Also, observation made in the present research suggests the relation between intensification of population movements – either directly or indirectly triggered by the transnational tourism development – and turning away from the vernacular; Total immigration to the cities, even though they are both located in the Yucatan peninsula, in most cases leads to diminished use of Maya and interruption of intergenerational transmission of the language. In addition, in the interconnected social space of the migrant circuit, also language attitudes and behavior of those living in the rural communities can be transformed in favor of the majority language through their experience of or orientation to urban wage work. At the same time, mobility enables contact and communication beyond community boundaries through which Maya speakers develop new perspectives on the language and its territoriality. Primarily,

speakers are likely to associate Yucatec Maya with the *pueblo*, in the sense of their immediate environment and/or their place of origin and site of socialization. Among the Maya speakers interviewed, broader conceptions of the language's territoriality were often expressed by those who have lived in the cities or maintain extensive network in the peninsula. It was those who were more likely to draw on the regional identity as Yucatecan or indigenous cultural heritage to argue for the importance of Maya. While association of the language with the *pueblo* links its speakers to a certain form of upbringing with its established social meaning, the latter, either Yucatecan identity or new ethnicity as "Maya" represents a more encompassing sense of self-identification. Disembedded from the habitus in its narrowest definition, these identities are capable of transcending former divisions represented by community boundaries, the rural-urban opposition or even the postcolonial system of classification. Nevertheless, also these forms of associating Maya language with identities have social dimensions, already indicated by the fact that the links were only mentioned by a specific group of speakers. Especially, in the case of association of the language with Maya cultural heritage, identification with this relatively new, externally informed conception of ethnicity remains socially restrictive; Access to this kind of metacultural knowledge is unequally distributed and it is often those social-economically dominant who define what counts as "legitimate culture" worth preserving. Thus, it is true that through this link of language and heritage, cultural value of Yucatec Maya can be evaluated independently of current social classification of its speakers. However, more often than not, the language conceived in this way is also detached from its manifestation as embodied practice in daily life. Accordingly, appreciation of Maya treated as a cultural diacritic might not necessarily translate into its maintenance as everyday language. For, as has been illustrated in chapter 5.3.1.2 on language ideology, according to this conception of Maya language, the variety spoken by speakers in daily life is often considered mixed and incorrect and as such can be disqualified as legitimate Maya worth preserving.

And while Yucatec Maya language detached from everyday practice is increasingly

operating as a cultural diacritic in the global ecumene, at the level of habitus, the *modus operandi* essential for reproduction of its linguistic structure is fracturing, often without receiving deserved attention. As has been discussed in the previous section, this process can be transformed in a significant way without being noticed by speakers precisely because of its mode of reproduction. However, language maintenance of Maya is highly dependent on this form of intergenerational knowledge transmission in its practical state since institutionalized education in Maya, at least as it stands today, is anything but sufficient to ensure the next generation's acquisition of the vernacular. Accordingly, in the case of Yucatec Maya, this is the ambivalence of cultural dimensions of globalization which should be taken into account to consider the language's vitality in face of its increased deterritorialization. Starting from this premise, the following section focuses on the very relation between the two modalities of culture discussed above to provide a future-oriented perspective on language vitality of Yucatec Maya.

### 6.3 Synthesis

Appadurai's notion of "the tension between cultural homogenization and heterogenization" (1990:5) in an age of globalization is based on his assumption of transition of culture from a "habitus" to "an arena for conscious choice, justification and representation" (1996:44) through deterritorialization. Accordingly, he presents a rather pessimistic outlook on transgenerational stability of cultural knowledge in an age of globalization, stating that the work of cultural reproduction would only succeed by conscious design and political will in the world order characterized by deterritorialization (1990:19). Nash (2001) by contrast speaks of "pluricultural survival in the global ecumene", drawing on her analysis of internationalization of the Zapatista movement. She rather underscores the potential globalization provides for dissemination of indigenous concerns to a worldwide audience. While Appadurai emphasizes the facture of the basis for cultural reproduction through globalization, Nash treats both "habitus" and "global

ecumene” as “complementary ways of thinking global interactions” (2001:221). As has been discussed above, Appadurai’s point applies to the observation made in the present study; Failure of intergenerational transmission of Maya in the research sites should be seen, among other important factors, in relation with the regional transformation closely related with the transnational tourism development. And more importantly, even though increased contact and communication can endow Maya speakers with new perspectives on the indigenous heritage, this way of appreciating the language and culture does not necessarily translates into the behavior contributing to language maintenance. Indeed, if language maintenance is understood as cultural reproduction in the sense of Bourdieu (1977[1972]), the role of the globally informed reflection on the language and culture can be considered negligible for the future vitality of Maya. However, it might also be argued in the following way, drawing on Nash’s notion of complementarity (2001:221): Perhaps, exactly because of threatening impacts of globalizing processes, the capacity of disseminating claims for pluricultural coexistence is essential for ensuring the language’s “survival” in the global ecumene. For this purpose, ideally, speakers are aware of the language’s richness and are capable of communicating the value to their next generation as well as to wider audiences in order to “defend” the language in the face of homogenizing pressures. In this sense, conscious reflection and active interest in the indigenous language and heritage are, without question crucial for its vitality even though it might have initially nothing to do with the mode of its reproduction. However, as Nash’s notion of complementarity already indicates, for maintenance of Yucatec Maya as everyday language, this way of engaging with the language should always be accompanied by the practice in the habitus and by no means lead to devaluation of the latter.

Indeed, the importance of these two modalities of culture for language maintenance was also addressed by a Maya speaker from Yaxcabá in an interview. In the interview segment cited in chapter 5.3.1.1, don Pablo refers to active interest in inquiring one’s culture and roots as key for Maya cultural survival and attributes neglect of it to those “only live for living”. However, prior

to the interview segment, he had also stressed the importance of family habitus for inculcating appreciation of Maya language and culture on children. After referring to young people's lack of interest in Maya in his remarks on the future vitality of Maya, he adds that not all the people think this way and explains it as follows:

<p>También aquí hay muchos padres de familia que dicen: “No, la maya, lo tienes que aprender porque por tu abuelo, tu tatarabuelo, fueron mayeros y yo sé la maya también y tú lo tienes que aprender. No te avergüences de hablar maya. El hablar maya, el ser un indio, es, es con dignidad, es tu raíz, es tu raza. ¡Defiéndela!”. Hay muchos papás que se, se enfocan a eso y y cuando uno, uno se lo inculca desde muy temprana edad, cuando yo crezca, tengo un valor, tengo este valor que me inculcaron (...)</p> <p>(Y27_LAN)</p>	<p>There are a lot of parents in family who say, “No, you have to learn it (Maya) because of your grandfather, your great-great grandfather, they were Maya speakers and I can speak Maya as well and you have to learn it. Don't be ashamed of speaking Maya. Speaking Maya, being an <i>indio</i> is with dignity, it's your roots, it's your ethnicity. Defend it!”. There are a lot of parents who focus on it and when you inculcate it from an early age, when I grow up, I have values, these values inculcated on me (...)</p>
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As both Nash's and don Pablo's visions of “pluricultural survival” suggest, ideally, language transmission in the habitus and conscious reflection on the indigenous heritage should go in hand in hand to ensure the future vitality of Yucatec Maya in an interconnected world. However, as has been briefly mentioned, similar to “the floating gap” between “communicative and cultural memory” pointed out by Assmann (2000[1992]:48ff.), for the time being, there are often gaps, above all, of temporal and social nature, acting as obstacles to a coincidence of these two modalities of culture. These are manifested in the discrepancies discussed above which include lag in perception of language shift and verbalization of positive language attitudes as well as differences between evaluation of the language and the stereotypical image of speakers. Accordingly, based on the results from the present research, I identify bridging these gaps as a key for survival of the Yucatec Maya in the global ecumene.

#### 6.4 Reflections and Future Research Directions

The final section of the chapter is devoted to concluding reflections on the research project and perspectives for future research. In line with the subject of research, it rather focused on mobile forms of life than rooted ones (cf. Clifford 1992:101) and the approach taken to investigate them was also a rather deterritorialized one: fieldwork was conducted at four research sites instead of an extensive study of one. Interviews and fieldwork involved speaking with those Maya speakers with experiences of migration and their spouses. And these interviews were conducted in Spanish because of their fluency in the language partly acquired through urban wage work. It is true that this practice was based on conscious decisions made in accordance with the focus of the research. However, what has obviously been missed out through this research procedure is the profound, territorialized perspective.

The last section of the chapter 5 (chapter 5.3.2) dealt with the rural habitus as basis for Maya cultural reproduction. Participant observation of rural family lives provided insights into patterns of language choice in intergenerational communication (chapter 5.1.2.1) as well as parents' socialization practice and attitudes regarding transmission of agricultural knowledge (chapter 5.3.2.1). Based on the findings obtained through the research practice, it has been argued that language shift in the rural communities as an intergenerational change is closely related with gradual disintegration of the habitus represented by turning-away from the traditional agriculture. And the subtlety of the process was identified as the key for understanding why language shift can advance without speakers' intention of abandoning the vernacular.

Drawn on Sahlins (1985), the gradual intergenerational loss of knowledge in Maya observed in rural communities can be considered part of transformation of the culture closely related with its mode of reproduction. The present research project could only indicate that synthesis of continuity and change in transformation of habitus is an essential aspect for understanding language shift. However, for a more precise determination of the way continuity and change are



interwoven in indigenous cultural reproduction, a more detailed analysis of intergenerational knowledge transmission would be necessary to identify what is reproduced and what becomes transformed between the generations. With Yucatec Maya language and other cultural practices considered to be part of the orchestrated habitus (Bourdieu 1977[1972]), the future research might put a more emphasis on intergenerational transmission of cultural knowledge in different domains and their interrelations. For this purpose, a more territorialized research approach would be needed which also includes an analysis and comparison of speech in Yucatec Maya produced by different generations to determine the intergenerational change in the language itself, which is normally an essential part of sociolinguistic studies of language shift.

Moreover, dealing with deterritorialization of culture, this research project only addressed mobility, which is only one facet of it. However, many Maya speakers are exposed to information coming from elsewhere without moving from their communities in view of spread of electronic media and digital technologies to the rural area. Language's response to new media is generally considered a key for its vitality (UNESCO 2003:11). In the case of Yucatec Maya, increase in media consumption including broadcast media and the internet is commonly treated as a factor provoking language shift (e.g. Pfeiler 2012:205-207) since these media are mainly used in Spanish. Indeed, some of my interview partners directly related decline of Maya with popularity of Spanish speaking TV programs in the rural communities. On the other hand, Cru (2014) for example points to the potential especially of social media represented by Facebook and YouTube for opening up new space for use of the indigenous language and fostering a deterritorialized form of sodality among Maya speakers. In this way, it might be tentatively stated that also in this respect, the implications of increased contact and communication seem to be multifaceted in accordance with the argument presented above. However, further investigation in this field is required to have more precise estimation of the impacts of new media on vitality of the indigenous language.

Finally, the research project which investigated mobile, less rooted forms of living was itself

deterritorialized with respect to disciplines, switching between sociolinguistics and anthropology. Through this approach, some aspects of each discipline might be missed out or could not be sufficiently taken into account, seen from respective disciplinary perspectives. These may include for example analysis of code-switching for sociolinguistics and more elaborate discussion on identities for anthropology, just to name the most obvious. Despite these shortcomings, drawing on the findings of the research, I consider that a cross-disciplinary or transdisciplinary approach can provide a new perspective on the study of language vitality of Yucatec Maya and perhaps, that of vitality of indigenous languages in general, which has rather been a traditional research field of sociolinguistics. As a project conducted only by a sole researcher, it was only feasible to take a cross-disciplinary approach, investigating the sociolinguistic topic from an anthropological perspective. To have more multidisciplinary views on the issue, however, it would be desirable to design a project which includes researchers from various disciplines collaborating with each other to work on a particular research problem. It has been argued that coincidence of two different modalities of cultural knowledge is essential for indigenous language maintenance today. Similarly, transdisciplinarity based on mutual acknowledgement of knowledge produced in various scientific traditions is surely a key for approaching such a complex phenomenon as indigenous language vitality in the contemporary world.

## 7 Conclusion

In taking a cross-disciplinary approach to vitality of Yucatec Maya in the present age, this research project demonstrated multifaceted implications of global interconnectedness for indigenous language maintenance. Cultural dimensions of globalization do not necessarily imply loss of cultural diversity (Appadurai 1990:16). This notion also applies to vitality of indigenous languages in the present age. In the social space of the migrant circuit, which can be considered transnational despite its location in the Yucatan peninsula, Maya speakers develop a new globally informed form of identification with the language (see chapter 5.3.1.1). Moreover, transnational connections and networks can be used by indigenous communities to disseminate their language and claims for its maintenance to wider audiences, transcending local, regional and national boundaries (Briceño Chel 2009:68, Cru 2014, Montemayor Gracia 2017:549). However, the other, perhaps more widely-known face of the increased contact and communication with its threatening impacts on vitality of the vernacular also continues to be part of reality in Yucatan. Disconnection between space, stability and cultural reproduction which is becoming the norm than exception poses challenge for intergenerational transmission of Yucatec Maya more than ever before.

Drawn on the statement of the interview partner, chapter 6 argued for complementarity of the two modalities of culture, habitus and object of conscious reflection and representation so that the indigenous language can survive in the global ecumene (Nash 2001). At the same time, it pointed to existing gaps preventing their coincidence, which are above all of temporal and social nature. In consideration of this, the key for future vitality of Yucatec Maya in a globalized world would be bridging these gaps through local, regional, national and transnational actions. Socially, permeability of the two modalities of culture might be enhanced through a combat against social inequalities and wider acknowledgement of the way of living practiced by contemporary Maya speakers above all in regional and national contexts. With respect to the

temporal gap, it is also the responsibility of researchers working on ancient, as well as contemporary Maya culture, to work on connecting the two worlds through developing more collaborative research practice based on co-production and sharing of knowledge.

Thus, the case of vitality of Yucatec Maya demonstrates that “pluricultural survival in the global ecumene” (Nash 2001) is, above all, dependent on combatting against social inequalities and bridging gaps between different modalities of knowledge in the hierarchically interconnected world. Through presenting the case study, I sought to illustrate that this is what concerns all of us, including Maya speakers in the Yucatan peninsula and people in different parts of the world engaging with the “global” in a variety of ways.

# Appendices

## Appendix A. Interview Guide and Questionnaire

Interview guides used in the municipality of Yaxcabá

### Migration

#### Personal details

- ¿Cuántos años tiene usted?
- ¿Dónde nació?
- ¿Qué grado de escolaridad tiene usted?
- ¿Cuántos hijos tiene usted?
- ¿Cuántos años tienen ellos?
- ¿A qué religión pertenece usted?
- ¿En qué trabaja?
- ¿Usted hace milpa?
- ¿Cuántos mecates tiene su milpa?
- ¿Tiene avejas?
- ¿Cría animales?
- ¿Dónde y cuándo aprendió maya/español?
- ¿Con quién vive?
- ¿Trabaja alguien en la familia en la ciudad?

#### Migration experience

##### *Current migration situation*

¿Sale de la comunidad para trabajar en otro lugar actualmente?

SI:

- ¿A dónde va y con qué frecuencia regresa a la comunidad (diario, semanal o quincenal)?
- ¿Dónde (Con quién) se queda, cuando está en la ciudad?
- ¿Porqué sale de la comunidad para trabajar?
- ¿Porqué se va a la ciudad X y no a otras ciudades de la península?
- ¿Está contento con su situación económica?
- ¿Dónde vive su familia?
- ¿Está contento con su vida familiar?
- ¿Cómo consiguió su trabajo en la ciudad?
- ¿Le gusta su trabajo en la ciudad?
- ¿Cómo ve la vida en la ciudad?

NO:

- ¿Le gustaría trabajar en otro lugar? ¿Dónde?

- ¿Está contento con su situación económica?
- ¿Qué sabe de la vida en la ciudad?

*Current migration situation of the partner and family life*

- ¿Sale su esposo/a de la comunidad para trabajar en otro lugar actualmente?
- ¿A dónde va y con qué frecuencia regresa a la comunidad (diario, semanal o quincenal)?
- ¿Sale de la comunidad para trabajar?
- ¿Quién lo decidió?
- ¿Está contento con su situación económica?
- ¿Está contento con su vida familiar?
- ¿Tiene dificultades, cuando no este su esposo/a?
- ¿Dónde busca apoyo en el caso de problemas?
- ¿Tiene más responsabilidades que antes?
- ¿Se ha encargado de tareas que antes hacía su esposo/a?
- ¿Cómo afecta la ausencia del papá/mamá a sus hijos?

*Past migration experience*

¿Ha salido de la comunidad para trabajar en otro lugar?

- ¿A dónde iba y con qué frecuencia regresaba?
- ¿Dónde quedaba, cuando estaba en la ciudad?
- ¿Por qué salió de la comunidad para trabajar afuera?
- ¿Por qué decidió trabajar en la ciudad X (y no en otra ciudad de la península?)
- ¿Cómo fue la experiencia cuando empezó a trabajar en la ciudad por primera vez?
- ¿Cómo consiguió su trabajo en la ciudad?
- ¿Le gustó su trabajo en la ciudad?
- ¿Fue difícil aprender a trabajar en la ciudad?

¿Ha salido de la comunidad para vivir en otro lugar?

- ¿Dónde ha vivido?
- ¿Cuánto tiempo hizo allá?
- ¿Le gustó la vida en la ciudad?
- ¿Cuál fue el motivo de salir de la comunidad para vivir en la ciudad X?
- ¿Por qué decidió vivir en la ciudad X (y no en otra ciudad de la península?)
- ¿Dónde (con quién) vivía, cuando llegó a la ciudad?
- ¿Cómo consiguió su trabajo?
- ¿Cómo se sentía, cuando llegó a la ciudad?
- ¿Cuando llegó, conocía a alguien en la ciudad?
- ¿Fue difícil acostumbrarse a la vida en la ciudad?
- ¿Cuál fue el motivo de retorno?

- ¿Fue difícil acostumbrarse a la vida en la comunidad?
- ¿Está contento con su situación actual en la comunidad?
- ¿Cómo ve la vida en la comunidad?

*Past migration experience of the partner and family life*

¿Ha salido de la comunidad para trabajar en otro lugar?

¿A dónde iba y con qué frecuencia regresaba?

- ¿Porqué salió de la comunidad para trabajar afuera?
- ¿Porqué decidió trabajar en la ciudad X (y no en otra ciudad de la península?)
- ¿Cómo fue la experiencia, cuando él/ella trabajaba afuera?
- ¿Estaba contento con su situación económica?
- ¿Estaba contento con su vida familiar?
- ¿Tenía dificultades, cuando no estaba su esposo/a?
- ¿Dónde buscaba apoyo en el caso de problemas?
- ¿Tenía más responsabilidades?
- ¿Se había encargado de tareas de su esposo/a?
- ¿Cómo afectó la ausencia del papá a sus hijos?

Future plan

¿Saldría de la comunidad para vivir en una ciudad? ¿Dónde? ¿Volvería a la ciudad para vivir?

¿Qué haría, si tiene necesidades económicas?

¿Quiere que su esposo/a vuelva a trabajar en la comunidad/deje de viajar?

Attitudes

¿Cuál es la gran diferencia que usted percibe entre la vida en su comunidad y en la ciudad?

¿Hay mucha gente que sale de la comunidad para trabajar en otro lugar? ¿A dónde van ellos?

¿Tiene parientes que viven en otro lugar?

SI:

- ¿Dónde viven ellos?
- ¿Cómo mantienen el contacto?

¿Piensa que la vida en una ciudad cambia la personalidad?

¿Piensa que es necesario salir de su comunidad para superarse?

¿Qué desean para el futuro de sus hijos?

¿Qué piensa usted sobre la gente que nunca ha salido de la comunidad para trabajar en otro lugar?

¿Qué piensa usted sobre la gente que salió de la comunidad para vivir en una ciudad?

## Language

Acquisition

¿Dónde y cuándo aprendió maya y español?

¿En qué lengua le hablaban sus papas?

Language behavior*In the community*

¿Habla maya aquí en la comunidad?

¿Con quién habla maya?

¿En qué lengua habla con su esposo/a?

¿En qué lengua habla con sus hijos?

(¿Con sus nietos?)

(¿con sus abuelos?)

¿En qué lengua habla con sus hermanos?

¿En qué lengua habla con sus tios?

¿En qué lengua habla con sus sobrinos?

¿En qué lengua habla con sus compadres?

¿En qué lengua habla con sus vecinos?

¿En qué lengua habla en la calle con sus vecinos?

¿En qué lengua habla en la calle a un desconicido?

¿En qué lengua habla , cuando va a comprar? Por ejemplo en la tienda con el dueño/a de la tienda?

¿En qué lengua habla en su trabajo?

¿En qué lengua habla en la escuela con los maestros?

¿En qué lengua habla en la escuela con otros padres?

¿En qué lengua habla en la iglesia?

¿En qué lengua habla con la gente de la presidencia en Yaxcabá?

¿En qué lengua habla en el centro de salud con el doctor?

¿En qué lengua habla con jmen?

*City*

¿Habla/hablaba maya en la ciudad?

¿Con quién habla/hablaba maya en la ciudad?

¿En qué lengua habla con los colegas en el trabajo?

Competence

¿Cuál es más fácil para usted, hablar en maya o hablar en español?

¿Piensa que usted sabe hablar maya muy bien?

¿Quién sabe hablar maya muy bien?



¿Hay cosas que sólo puede hablar en maya?

¿Hay cosas que sólo puede hablar en español?

¿Sobre qué habla más en maya?

¿Sobre qué habla más en español?

#### Language attitudes

¿Le gusta hablar en maya?

¿Le gustaría aprender a leer y escribir en maya?

¿Qué lengua le gustaría que aprendan sus hijos?

¿Cuál escuela visitan sus hijos?

¿En qué lengua hablan a sus hijos?

#### ESPAÑOL:

- ¿Sus hijos entienden maya?

- ¿Quiere que sus hijos aprendan maya?

- ¿Porqué no enseñaron maya a sus hijos?

#### MAYA:

- ¿Piensa que sus hijos hablan maya muy bien?

- ¿La maya que hablan sus hijos es igual que la maya que hablan ustedes?

- ¿Sus hijos saben leer y escribir en maya?

- ¿Qué piensa sobre los papas que no hablan en maya a sus hijos?

¿Usted cree que la maya es hablada solamente por la gente de mayor edad o también por los jóvenes?

¿En qué lengua le gusta más conversar?

¿Hay gente en la comunidad que le da pena hablar maya?

¿Hay gente en la comunidad que le da pena hablar español?

¿Hay gente en la ciudad que le da pena hablar maya?

¿Hay gente en la ciudad que le da pena hablar español?

¿Usted cree que malmiran a la gente por hablar maya acá en la comunidad?

¿Usted cree que malmiran a la gente por hablar maya en la ciudad?

¿Piensa que la lengua maya es necesaria para la gente de acá?

¿La lengua maya es necesaria para usted?

¿Piensa que la lengua maya es necesaria para la gente en la ciudad?

¿Piensa que para la gente de acá la lengua maya es importante?

¿La lengua maya es importante para usted?

¿Piensa que la lengua maya es importante para la gente en la ciudad?

¿Usted cree que ahora se habla más maya que antes? o menos?

¿Qué piensa sobre el futuro de la lengua maya (Se va a perder, mantener igual o se va hablar más)?

Other related topics

Use of ípil

Practice of janal pixan

Practice of home gardening (*solar*)

## Interview guide used in the cities

Personal details

¿Cuántos años tiene usted?

¿nació?

¿Qué grado de escolaridad tiene usted?

¿Cuántos hijos tiene usted?

¿Cuántos años tienen ellos?

¿A qué religión pertenece usted?

¿En qué trabaja?

¿Dónde y cuándo aprendió maya/español?

Para hombres: ¿Ha trabajado en la milpa?/ ¿Sabe trabajar en la milpa?

Migration experience

¿En qué trabajaba después de salir de la escuela?

¿Había trabajado/vivido en otros lugares antes de llegar a Cancún/Mérida?

¿Porqué decidió salir de su pueblo?

¿Dónde y en qué trabajaba?

¿Con qué frecuencia regresaba a su pueblo?

¿Cuánto tiempo hizo allá?

¿Cómo fue la experiencia cuando salió de su pueblo por primera vez?

¿Cuánto tiempo tiene viviendo en Cancún/Mérida?

¿Con quién llegó aquí a Cancún/Mérida?

¿Cómo consiguió el trabajo?

¿En qué lugares de Cancún/Mérida había vivido antes?

¿Porqué decidió vernir aquí a Cancún/Mérida para vivir (y no a otras ciudades de la península como Mérida/Cancún o Valladolid?)

¿Porqué decidió quedarse en Cancún/Mérida a vivir?

¿Cuando llegó, conocía a alguien en Cancún/Mérida?

¿Con quién vive?

¿Tiene parientes en Cancún/Mérida?

¿Cómo se sentía, cuando llegó aquí?

¿Cómo ve la situación ahora?

¿Fue difícil acostumbrarse a la vida en la ciudad?

¿Fue difícil acostumbrarse a hablar en español acá?

#### Attitudes

¿Cuál es la gran diferencia que usted percibe entre la vida en su pueblo y en la ciudad?

¿Notó un cambio en su personalidad/su forma de ser desde que vive en Cancún/Mérida?

¿Le gusta la vida en Cancún/Mérida?

¿Qué es lo que más le gusta de Cancún/Mérida?

¿Qué es lo que menos le gusta de Cancún/Mérida?

¿Con qué frecuencia usted regresa a su pueblo?

¿Cuando regresa, cómo ve la vida en su pueblo?

¿Hay mucha gente en su pueblo que va a una ciudad para trabajar?

¿Hay mucha gente en su pueblo que va a una ciudad para vivir?

¿A dónde van ellos para trabajar/vivir?

¿Puede imaginarse que regresaría a su pueblo para vivir?

¿Hay mucha gente de su pueblo que regresa a su pueblo para vivir?

¿Piensa que es necesario salir del pueblo para superarse?

¿Qué piensa usted sobre la gente que se queda en su pueblo?

#### Language behavior

##### *Cancún/Mérida*

¿Habla maya aquí en Cancún/Mérida?

¿Con quién habla maya?

¿Con su esposo/a?

¿Con sus hijos?

(¿Con sus nietos?)

¿Con sus parientes que viven en Cancún/Mérida?

¿Con sus compadres?

¿Con sus vecinos?

¿Habla maya en la calle?

¿Habla maya, cuando va a comprar? Por ejemplo en la tienda aquí en la colonia?

¿Habla maya en el mercado?

¿Habla maya en su trabajo?

¿Habla maya en la iglesia/el templo?

##### *Pueblo*

¿Hablabas más maya, antes de venir a Cancún/Mérida?

¿Cuando regresa a su pueblo, con quién habla maya?

Competence

¿Cuál es más fácil para usted, hablar en maya o hablar en español?

¿Piensa que usted sabe hablar maya muy bien?

¿Quién sabe hablar maya muy bien?

¿A usted no se le olvida la maya?

¿Hay cosas que sólo puede hablar en maya?

¿Hay cosas que sólo puede hablar en español?

¿Sobre qué habla más en maya?

¿Sobre qué habla más en español?

Language attitudes

*Cancún/Mérida*

¿Le gusta hablar en maya?

¿Le gustaría aprender a leer y escribir en maya?

¿Sus hijos saben hablar maya?

¿Sus hijos entienden maya?

¿Quiere que sus hijos aprendan maya?

¿Porqué no enseñaron maya a sus hijos?

¿Usted cree que la maya es hablada solamente por la gente de mayor edad o también por los jóvenes?

¿Hay gente aquí en Cancún/Mérida que le da pena hablar maya?

(¿A usted le da pena hablar maya?)

¿Usted cree que malmiran a la gente por hablar maya acá en Cancún/Mérida?

¿Llegando acá, le daba pena hablar maya?

¿Llegando acá, le daba pena hablar español?

*Pueblo*

¿Le da pena hablar maya en su pueblo?

¿Hay gente en su pueblo que le da pena hablar maya?

¿Piensa que la lengua maya es necesaria para la gente de acá?

¿La lengua maya es necesaria para usted?

¿La lengua maya es necesaria para la gente del pueblo?

¿Piensa que para la gente de acá la lengua maya es importante?

¿La lengua maya es importante para usted?

¿La lengua maya es importante para la gente del pueblo?

¿Porqué?

¿Usted cree que ahora se habla más maya que antes o menos?

¿Qué piensa sobre el futuro de la lengua maya (Se va a perder, mantener igual o se va hablar más) ?

Other related topics

Use of ípil

Practice of janal pixan

Practice of home gardening (*solar*)

## Questionnaire administered at elementary schools (sample used in Tiholop)

**1. Datos generales**

1.1. Apellidos:

1.2. Edad:            años

1.3. Sexo: hombre  mujer 

1.4. ¿En qué pueblo naciste?

**2. Ocupación de padres**

2.1. ¿En qué trabaja tu papá?

2.2. ¿Dónde trabaja tu papá?

Tiholop  Yaxcabá  Mérida Cancún  Tulum  Playa del Carmen  Cozumel Puerto aventuras  Peto  Valladolid Otro  ¿Dónde? \_\_\_\_\_2.3. ¿Tu papá hace la milpa? Sí  No 2.4. ¿Tu mamá sale a trabajar? Sí  No 

2.5. ¿En qué trabaja tu mamá?

2.6. ¿Dónde trabaja tu mamá?

Tiholop  Yaxcabá  Mérida Cancún  Tulum  Playa del Carmen  Cozumel Puerto aventuras  Peto  Valladolid Otro  Dónde? \_\_\_\_\_**3. Futuro**

3.1. Quieres estudiar hasta:

primaria  secundaria  bachillerato  carrera  No sé

3.2. ¿En qué quieres trabajar cuando seas adulto?

3.2.1. ¿Porqué?

3.3. ¿Dónde quieres trabajar cuando seas adulto?

Tiholop  Yaxcabá  Mérida

Cancún  Tulum  Playa del Carmen  Cozumel

Puerto aventuras  Peto  Valladolid  Estados Unidos

No sé  Otro  ¿Dónde? \_\_\_\_\_

3.3.1. ¿Porqué?

#### 4. Milpa/Trabajo de la casa

4.1. ¿Has ido a la milpa? Sí  No

4.2. ¿Sabes el trabajo de la milpa? Sí  No

4.3. ¿Te gusta el trabajo de la milpa? Sí  No

4.3.1. ¿Porqué?

4.4. ¿Quieres trabajar en la milpa cuando seas adulto?

Sí  No  No sé

4.4.1. ¿Porqué?
4.5. ¿Ayudas a tu mamá en la casa? Sí <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
4.5.1. ¿En qué le ayudas? tortear <input type="checkbox"/> lavar <input type="checkbox"/> poner nixtamal <input type="checkbox"/> lavar nixtamal <input type="checkbox"/> barrer <input type="checkbox"/> moler <input type="checkbox"/> cocinar <input type="checkbox"/> criar animales <input type="checkbox"/> otro <input type="checkbox"/> ¿En qué? _____
4.6. ¿Quieres salir a trabajar cuando seas adulta? Sí <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No sé <input type="checkbox"/>
4.6.1. ¿Porqué?

**5. Lengua**

5.1. ¿Sabes hablar maya? Sí <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.2. ¿Entiendes la maya? Sí <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
5.3. ¿Qué lengua aprendiste primero? maya <input type="checkbox"/> español <input type="checkbox"/>
5.4. Tu papá te habla en: maya <input type="checkbox"/> español <input type="checkbox"/> los dos <input type="checkbox"/>
5.5. Tu mamá te habla en: maya <input type="checkbox"/> español <input type="checkbox"/> los dos <input type="checkbox"/>
5.6. Con tus amigos hablas en: maya <input type="checkbox"/> español <input type="checkbox"/> los dos <input type="checkbox"/>
5.7. Con tus hermanos hablas en: maya <input type="checkbox"/> español <input type="checkbox"/> los dos <input type="checkbox"/> no tengo hermanos <input type="checkbox"/>



5.8. Con tus hermanitos hablas en:	
maya <input type="checkbox"/> español <input type="checkbox"/> los dos <input type="checkbox"/> no tengo hermanitos <input type="checkbox"/>	
5.9. ¿Cuántos años tenías cuando aprendiste el español?	años
5.10. ¿Cuántos años tenías cuando aprendiste la maya?	años
5.11. ¿En qué lengua te gusta más platicar?	
maya <input type="checkbox"/> español <input type="checkbox"/> los dos <input type="checkbox"/> No sé <input type="checkbox"/>	
5.11.1. ¿Porqué?	
5.12. ¿Piensas que es importante aprender la maya?	
Sí <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No sé <input type="checkbox"/>	
5.12.1. ¿Porqué?	
5.13. ¿Piensas que es importante aprender el español?	
Sí <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No sé <input type="checkbox"/>	
5.13.1. ¿Porqué?	
5.14. Los que no saben hablar en maya: ¿Te gustaría aprender la maya?	
Sí <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No sé <input type="checkbox"/>	
5.15. Te gustaría aprender a leer y escribir en maya?	
Sí <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No sé <input type="checkbox"/> Ya sé leer y escribir en maya <input type="checkbox"/>	

## Questionnaire administered at junior high schools (sample used in Tiholop)

**1. Datos generales**

1.1. Apellidos

1.2. Edad:                    años

1.3. Sexo: hombre  mujer 

1.4. ¿En qué pueblo naciste?

**2. Ocupación de padres**

2.1. ¿En qué trabaja tu papá?

2.2. ¿Dónde trabaja tu papá?

Tiholop  Yaxcabá  Mérida Cancún  Tulum  Playa del Carmen  Cozumel Puerto aventuras  Peto  Valladolid Otro  ¿Dónde? \_\_\_\_\_2.3. ¿Tu papá hace la milpa? Sí  No 2.4. ¿Tu mamá sale a trabajar? Sí  No 

2.5. ¿En qué trabaja tu mamá?

2.6. ¿Dónde trabaja tu mamá?

Tiholop  Yaxcabá  Mérida Cancún  Tulum  Playa del Carmen  Cozumel Puerto aventuras  Peto  Valladolid Otro  ¿Dónde? \_\_\_\_\_**3. Futuro**

3.1. Quieres estudiar hasta:

secundaria  bachillerato  carrera  No sé

3.2. ¿Qué quieres hacer cuando termines la secundaria?

trabajar  estudiar  No sé

3.2.1. ¿Porqué?

3.2.2. Los que quieren trabajar: ¿En qué quieres trabajar?

3.2.3. ¿Dónde quieres trabajar?

Tiholop  Yaxcabá  Mérida

Cancún  Tulum  Playa del Carmen  Cozumel

Puerto aventuras  Peto  Valladolid  Estados Unidos

No sé  Otro  ¿Dónde? \_\_\_\_\_

3.2.4. Los que quieren estudiar: ¿Dónde quieres estudiar el bachillerato?

Tiholop  Yaxcabá  Mérida  No sé

Otro  ¿Dónde? \_\_\_\_\_

3.3. ¿En qué quieres trabajar cuando seas adulto?

3.3.1. ¿Porqué?

3.4. ¿Dónde quieres trabajar cuando seas adulto?

Tiholop  Yaxcabá  Mérida

Cancún  Tulum  Playa del Carmen  Cozumel

Puerto aventuras  Peto  Valladolid  Estados Unidos

No sé <input type="checkbox"/> Otro <input type="checkbox"/> ¿Dónde? _____
3.4.1. ¿Porqué?

**4. Milpa/Trabajo de la casa**

4.1. ¿Has ido a la milpa? Sí <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
4.2. ¿Sabes el trabajo de la milpa? Sí <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
4.3. ¿Te gusta el trabajo de la milpa? Sí <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No sé <input type="checkbox"/>
4.3.1. ¿Porqué?
4.4. ¿Quieres trabajar en la milpa cuando seas adulto? Sí <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No sé <input type="checkbox"/>
4.4.1. ¿Porqué?
4.5. ¿Ayudas a tu mamá en la casa? Sí <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
4.5.1. ¿En qué le ayudas? tortear <input type="checkbox"/> lavar <input type="checkbox"/> poner nixtamal <input type="checkbox"/> lavar nixtamal <input type="checkbox"/> barrer <input type="checkbox"/> moler <input type="checkbox"/> cocinar <input type="checkbox"/> criar animales <input type="checkbox"/> otro <input type="checkbox"/> ¿En qué? _____

4.6. Sabes:

tortear  poner nixtamal  ir a moler  criar animals

tejer  hilo contado  bordar  pintar  urdir

4.7. ¿Quieres salir a trabajar cuando seas adulta?

Sí  No  No sé

4.7.1. ¿Porqué?

## 5. Lengua

5.1. ¿Sabes hablar maya? Sí  No

5.2. ¿Entiendes la maya? Sí  No

5.3. ¿Qué lengua aprendiste primero? maya  español

5.4. Tu papá te habla en: maya  español  los dos

5.5. Tu mamá te habla en: maya  español  los dos

5.6. Con tus amigos hablas en: maya  español  los dos

5.7. Con tus hermanos hablas en:

maya  español  los dos  no tengo hermanos

5.8. Con tus hermanitos hablas en:

maya  español  los dos  no tengo hermanos

5.9. Cuántos años tenías cuando aprendiste el español? años

5.10. Cuántos años tenías cuando aprendiste la maya? años

5.11. ¿En qué lengua te gusta más platicar?

maya  español  los dos  No sé

5.11.1. ¿Porqué?

5.12. ¿Piensas que es importante aprender la maya?

Sí  No  No sé

5.12.1. ¿Porqué?

5.13. ¿Piensas que es importante aprender el español?

Sí  No  No sé

5.13.1. ¿Porqué?

5.14. Los que no saben hablar en maya: ¿Te gustaría aprender la maya?

Sí  No  No sé

5.15. Te gustaría aprender a leer y escribir en maya?

Sí  No  No sé  Ya sé leer y escribir en maya

5.16. ¿En qué lengua hablarías a tus hijos cuando tengas hijos?

maya  español  los dos  no sé

5.16.1. ¿Porqué?

## Appendix B. List of Interviews

### Interviews Yaxcabá Migration

ID	Age	Gender	Origin	Date	Beginning	Length	Language	First language
Y1_MIG	28	F	Kanakom	25.04.2013	ca. 16:00	0:19	Spanish	both
Y2_MIG	32	M	Yaxcabá	25.04.2013	ca. 17:00	0:30	Spanish	Spanish
Y3_MIG	73	F	Yaxcabá	29.04.2013	ca. 13:00	0:27	Spanish	Spanish
Y4_MIG	54	F	Zuma	30.04.2013	ca. 17:00	0:39	Spanish	unknown
Y5_MIG	45	F	Yaxcabá	01.05.2013	ca. 18:00	0:23	Spanish	Maya
Y6_MIG	34	F	Yaxcabá	02.05.2013	ca. 15:00	0:23	Spanish	Maya
Y7_MIG	53	M	Yaxcabá	09.05.2013	ca. 12:00	0:50	Spanish	Spanish
Y8_MIG	42	F	Yaxcabá	14.05.2013	ca. 16:00	0:12	Spanish	Spanish
Y9_MIG	56	M	Yaxcabá	14.05.2013	ca. 19:00	0:39	Spanish	Maya
Y10_MIG	25	F	Yaxcabá	15.05.2013	ca. 18:40	0:14	Spanish	both
Y11_MIG	36	F	Yaxcabá	15.05.2013	ca. 19:00	0:20	Spanish	Spanish
Y12_MIG	31	F	Yaxcabá	16.05.2013	ca. 10:00	0:14	Spanish	Maya
Y13_MIG	27	F	Yaxcabá	28.05.2013	ca. 17:00	0:51	Spanish	both
Y14_MIG	30	F	Yaxcabá	28.05.2013	ca. 20:00	0:17	Spanish	Spanish
Y15_MIG	42	M	Yaxcabá	10.06.2013	ca. 18:00	0:31	Spanish	Spanish
Y16_MIG	26	M	Tinunah	16.06.2013	ca. 18:00	0:17	Spanish	Maya
Y17_MIG	28	F	Yaxcabá	04.07.2013	ca. 11:00	0:19	Spanish	Spanish
Y18_MIG	57	F	Yaxcabá	04.07.2013	ca. 11:00	0:15	Spanish	Spanish
Y19_MIG	47	M	Yaxcabá	05.07.2013	ca. 17:00	0:41	Spanish	Maya
Y20_MIG	35	M	Yaxcabá	08.07.2013	ca. 18:30	0:33	Spanish	Maya

ID	Age	Gender	Origin	Date	Beginning	Length	Language	First language
Y21_MIG	31	F	Yaxcabá	10.07.2013	ca. 09:00	0:16	Spanish	Spanish
Y22_MIG	61	M	Yaxcabá	10.07.2013	ca. 15:30	0:24	Spanish	Maya
Y23_Y24_MIG	57, 40	M, F	Yaxcabá	11.07.2013	ca. 17:00	0:59	Spanish	Maya, Maya
Y25_MIG	39	F	Yaxcabá	16.08.2013	ca. 10:00	0:21	Spanish	Spanish
Y26_MIG	35	F	Yaxcabá	04.09.2013	ca. 18:00	0:36	Spanish	Spanish
Y27_MIG	44	M	Yaxcabá	06.09.2013	ca. 11:00	1:12	Spanish	both
Y28_MIG	36	M	Yaxcabá	09.09.2013	ca. 10:00	0:35	Spanish	both
Y29_MIG	38	M	Yaxcabá	09.09.2013	ca. 19:00	0:23	Spanish	Spanish
Y30_MIG	47	M	Yaxcabá	14.09.2013	ca. 16:30	0:44	Spanish	both
Y32_Y31_MIG	48, 31	F, F	Yaxcabá	15.09.2013	ca. 17:00	0:25	Spanish	Maya, Spanish
Y33_MIG_1	48	M	Yaxcabá	24.09.2013	ca. 17:00	0:54	Spanish	Maya
Y34_MIG	53	M	Yaxcabá	28.09.2013	ca. 17:00	0:25	Spanish	Spanish
Y33_MIG_2	48	M	Yaxcabá	29.09.2013	ca. 17:30	0:05	Spanish	Maya
Y35_MIG	37	F	Chimay	30.09.2013	ca. 18:00	0:27	Spanish	Maya
Y36_MIG	36	F	Yaxcabá	02.10.2013	ca. 18:00	0:23	Spanish	Spanish
Y37_MIG	54	M	Yaxcabá	15.10.2013	ca. 17:30	0:38	Spanish	Spanish
Y38_MIG	62	M	Yaxcabá	21.10.2013	ca. 15:30	0:59	Spanish	Maya

*Note.* The identification code (ID) comprises an initial of the place, an identification number of the interviewee and the content of the interview. In the municipality of Yaxcabá, most interview partners were interviewed twice. The “Language” column refers to the language in which the interviews were conducted, whereas the “First language” column refers to the claimed first language of the interviewees.



## Interviews Yaxcabá Language

ID	Age	Gender	Origin	Date	Beginning	Length	Language	First language
Y8_LAN	42	F	Yaxcabá	23.05.2013	ca. 18:00	0:15	Spanish	Spanish
Y12_LAN	31	F	Yaxcabá	24.05.2013	ca. 18:00	0:12	Spanish	Maya
Y2_LAN	32	M	Yaxcabá	24.05.2013	ca. 20:00	0:16	Spanish	Spanish
Y10_LAN	25	F	Yaxcabá	29.05.2013	ca. 18:00	0:18	Spanish	both
Y5_LAN	45	F	Yaxcabá	04.06.2013	ca. 18:00	0:30	Spanish	Maya
Y6_LAN	34	F	Yaxcabá	05.06.2013	ca. 18:00	0:38	Spanish	Maya
Y16_LAN	26	M	Tinuncah	16.06.2013	ca. 18:30	0:17	Spanish	Maya
Y15_LAN	42	M	Yaxcabá	03.07.2013	ca. 10:00	0:21	Spanish	Spanish
Y21_LAN	31	F	Yaxcabá	12.07.2013	ca. 11:00	0:11	Spanish	Spanish
Y19_LAN	47	M	Yaxcabá	15.07.2013	ca. 15:00	0:28	Spanish	Maya
Y23_Y24_LAN	57, 40	M, F	Yaxcabá	16.07.2013	ca. 17:00	0:45	Spanish	Maya, Maya
Y22_LAN	61	M	Yaxcabá	24.07.2013	ca. 13:00	0:32	Spanish	Maya
Y7_LAN	53	M	Yaxcabá	24.07.2013	ca. 17:00	0:56	Spanish	Spanish
Y18_LAN	57	F	Yaxcabá	04.09.2013	ca. 17:00	0:25	Spanish	Spanish
Y3_LAN	73	F	Yaxcabá	05.09.2013	ca. 11:00	0:32	Spanish	Spanish
Y27_LAN	44	M	Yaxcabá	13.09.2013	ca. 11:00	0:41	Spanish	both
Y29_LAN	38	M	Yaxcabá	13.09.2013	ca. 20:00	0:17	Spanish	Spanish
Y32_LAN	48	F	Yaxcabá	17.09.2013	ca. 19:00	0:24	Spanish	Maya
Y30_LAN	47	M	Yaxcabá	26.09.2013	ca. 11:30	0:19	Spanish	both
Y33_LAN	48	M	Yaxcabá	29.09.2013	ca. 17:30	1:20	Spanish	Maya

ID	Age	Gender	Origin	Date	Beginning	Length	Language	First language
Y35_LAN	37	F	Chimay	02.10.2013	ca. 12:30	0:20	Spanish	Maya
Y36_LAN	36	F	Yaxcabá	16.10.2013	ca. 15:00	0:17	Spanish	Spanish
Y28_LAN	36	M	Yaxcabá	18.10.2013	ca. 10:30	0:26	Spanish	both
Y38_LAN	62	M	Yaxcabá	03.11.2013	ca. 17:00	0:36	Spanish	Maya
Y34_LAN	53	M	Yaxcabá	05.11.2013	ca. 17:30	0:11	Spanish	Spanish
Y37_LAN	54	M	Yaxcabá	16.11.2013	ca. 18:30	0:26	Spanish	Spanish
Y9_LAN	56	M	Yaxcabá	08.12.2013	ca. 16:30	0:44	Spanish	Maya

## Interviews Tiholop Migration

ID	Age	Gender	Origin	Date	Beginning	Length	Language	First language
T1_MIG	55	M	Tiholop	12.11.2013	ca. 18:30	0:52	Spanish	Maya
T2_MIG	47	M	Tiholop	15.11.2013	ca. 18:00	0:27	Spanish	Maya
T3_MIG	32	F	Tiholop	22.11.2013	ca. 17:30	0:18	Spanish	Spanish
T4_MIG	42	F	Tiholop	22.11.2013	ca. 18:00	0:26	Spanish	Maya
T5_MIG	29	M	Tiholop	29.11.2013	ca. 19:00	0:22	Spanish	Maya
T6_MIG	32	M	Tiholop	30.11.2013	ca. 15:30	0:39	Spanish	Maya
T7_MIG	46	M	Tiholop	01.12.2013	ca. 18:00	0:44	Spanish	Maya
T8_MIG	44	M	Tiholop	05.12.2013	ca. 16:30	0:50	Maya/Spanish	Maya
T9_MIG	34	M	Tiholop	06.12.2013	ca. 13:00	0:23	Spanish	Maya
T10_MIG	42	M	Tiholop	06.12.2013	ca. 17:00	0:25	Spanish	Maya
T11_MIG	42	M	Tiholop	06.12.2013	ca. 19:30	0:55	Spanish	Maya
T12_MIG	20	M	Tiholop	09.12.2013	ca. 16:00	0:54	Spanish	Maya
T13_MIG	32	F	Tiholop	13.12.2013	ca. 15:00	1:24	Spanish	Maya

## Interviews Tiholop Language

ID	Age	Gender	Origin	Date	Beginning	Length	Language	First language
T6_LAN	32	M	Tiholop	03.12.2013	ca. 19:00	0:30	Spanish	Maya
T3_LAN	32	F	Tiholop	08.01.2014	ca. 17:30	0:10	Spanish	Spanish
T10_LAN	42	M	Tiholop	09.01.2014	ca. 18:00	0:12	Spanish	Maya
T11_LAN	42	M	Tiholop	09.01.2014	ca. 20:00	0:27	Spanish	Maya
T9_LAN	34	M	Tiholop	10.01.2014	ca. 18:00	0:18	Spanish	Maya
T2_LAN	47	M	Tiholop	11.01.2014	ca. 19:00	0:11	Spanish	Maya
T12_LAN	20	M	Tiholop	12.01.2014	ca. 08:00	0:13	Spanish	Maya
T5_LAN	29	M	Tiholop	02.07.2014	ca. 17:00	0:11	Spanish	Maya
T1_LAN	55	M	Tiholop	02.07.2014	ca. 17:30	0:21	Spanish	Maya
T13_LAN	32	F	Tiholop	04.07.2014	ca. 15:30	1:08	Spanish	Maya

## Interviews Cancún

ID	Age	Gender	Origin	Date	Beginning	Length	Language	First language
C1	60	F	Tiholop	16.12.2013	ca. 13:00	0:33	Maya/Spanish	Maya
C2	44	F	Tiholop	19.12.2013	ca. 17:30	0:34	Spanish	Maya
C3	42	M	Tiholop	21.12.2013	ca. 10:30	1:00	Spanish/Maya	Maya
C4	47	F	Yaxcabá	24.12.2013	ca. 16:00	0:28	Spanish	Maya
C5	44	M	Tiholop	28.12.2013	ca. 21:00	0:48	Spanish	Maya
C6	46	M	Yaxcabá	29.12.2013	ca. 11:00	0:32	Spanish	Spanish
C7	36	F	Tiholop	30.12.2013	ca. 18:30	0:22	Spanish	Maya
C8	24	F	Tiholop	31.12.2013	ca. 13:00	0:21	Spanish	Spanish
C9_C10	24, 20	M, F	Tiholop	31.12.2013	ca. 16:00	0:21	Spanish	Maya, Maya
C11	34	M	Yaxcabá	01.01.2014	ca. 18:00	0:33	Spanish	Spanish
C12	51	F	Yaxcabá	04.01.2014	ca. 18:00	0:44	Spanish	Maya
C13	54	M	Yaxcabá	05.01.2014	ca. 13:30	0:35	Spanish	Spanish

## Interviews Mérida

ID	Age	Gender	Origin	Date	Beginning	Length	Language	First language
M1	54	F	Yaxcabá	19.01.2014	ca. 17:00	0:44	Spanish	Spanish
M2	53	F	Tiholop	21.01.2014	ca. 11:00	1:04	Spanish	Maya
M3	60	F	Yaxcabá	23.01.2014	ca. 16:00	0:38	Spanish	Spanish
M4	43	M	Yaxcabá	10.07.2014	ca. 13:00	0:52	Spanish	Spanish
M5	40	F	Tiholop	15.07.2014	ca. 16:00	0:41	Spanish	Maya
M6	50	M	Yaxcabá	16.07.2014	ca. 17:30	0:51	Spanish	both

## Other interviews

ID	Age	Gender	Origin	Function	Place	Date	Beginning	Length	Language
EXP_1	54	M	Yaxcabá	retired pre-school teacher	Yaxcabá	02.11.2013	ca. 19:00	0:44	Spanish
EXP_2	33	M	Tiholop	head of the district of Tiholop	Tiholop	05.12.2013	ca. 18:30	0:14	Spanish
EXP_3	38	F	Valladolid	school principal (elementary school Tiholop)	Tiholop	08.01.2014	ca. 07:30	0:39	Spanish
EXP_4	36	M	Chiapas	school principal (junior high school Tiholop)	Tiholop	09.01.2014	ca. 08:00	0:12	Spanish
EXP_5	24	M	Tiholop	principal ( <i>albergue</i> Tiholop)	Tiholop	10.01.2014	ca. 10:00	0:19	Spanish
EXP_6	56	M	Cenotillo	school principal (junior high school Yaxcabá)	Yaxcabá	15.01.2014	ca. 12:30	0:21	Spanish
EXP_7	25	F	Mérida	school principal (elementary Yaxcabá, <i>estatal</i> )	Yaxcabá	16.01.2014	ca. 09:00	0:05	Spanish
EXP_8	40	M	Campeche	school principal (elementary Yaxcabá, <i>federal</i> )	Yaxcabá	17.01.2014	ca. 08:30	0:18	Spanish

## Appendix C. Data from the Questionnaire Survey

**Table 4 Overview of participants in the questionnaire survey**

Elementary school		
	Yaxcabá	Tiholop
n	61 (m=29, f=32)	43 (m=24, f=19)
Age range	11–13	10–14
Junior high school		
	Yaxcabá	Tiholop
n	42 (m=21, f=21)	31 (m=18, f=13)
Age range	14–15	14–17

*Note.* n = sample size, m = male, f = female.

**Table 5 Self-reported active command of Yucatec Maya**

Community	School	Maya competence active	
		Yes	No
Yaxcabá	Elementary school	25.0%	75.0%
	Junior high school	33.3%	66.7%
Tiholop	Elementary school	81.4%	18.6%
	Junior high school	100%	0.0%

*Note.* From Yamasaki (2016:470).

**Table 6 Self-reported passive command of Yucatec Maya**

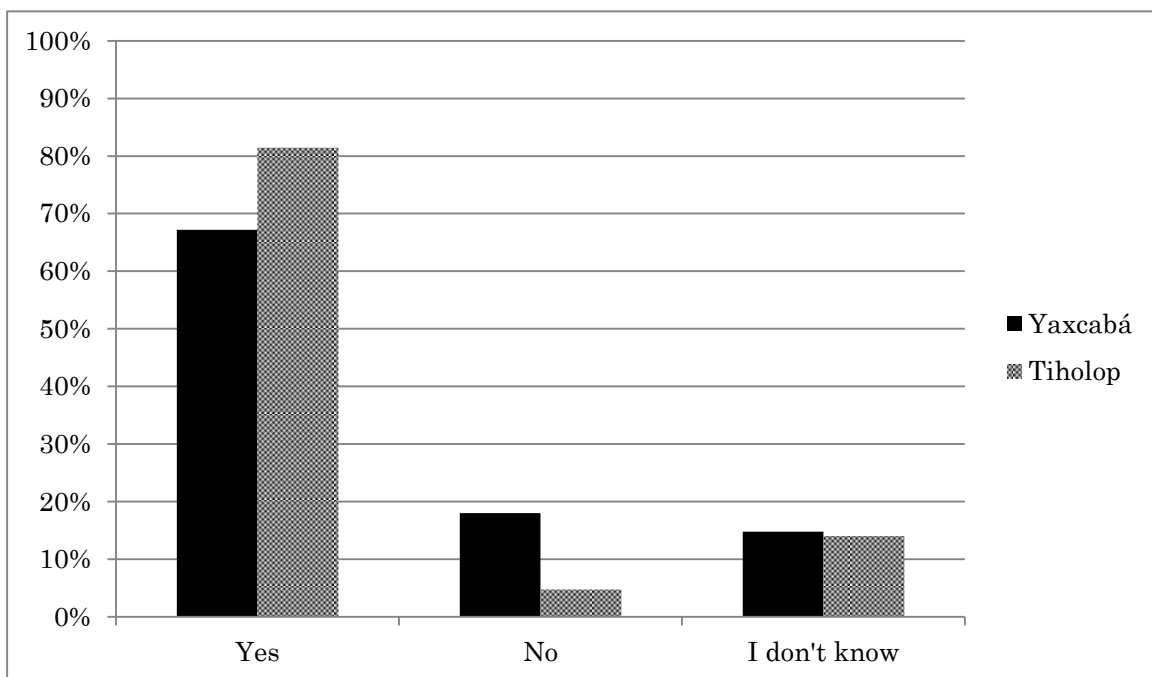
Community	School	Maya competence passive	
		Yes	No
Yaxcabá	Elementary school	58.3%	41.7%
	Junior high school	66.7%	33.3%
Tiholop	Elementary school	95.3%	4.7%
	Junior high school	100%	0.0%

*Note.* From Yamasaki (2016:470).

**Table 7 First language of students**

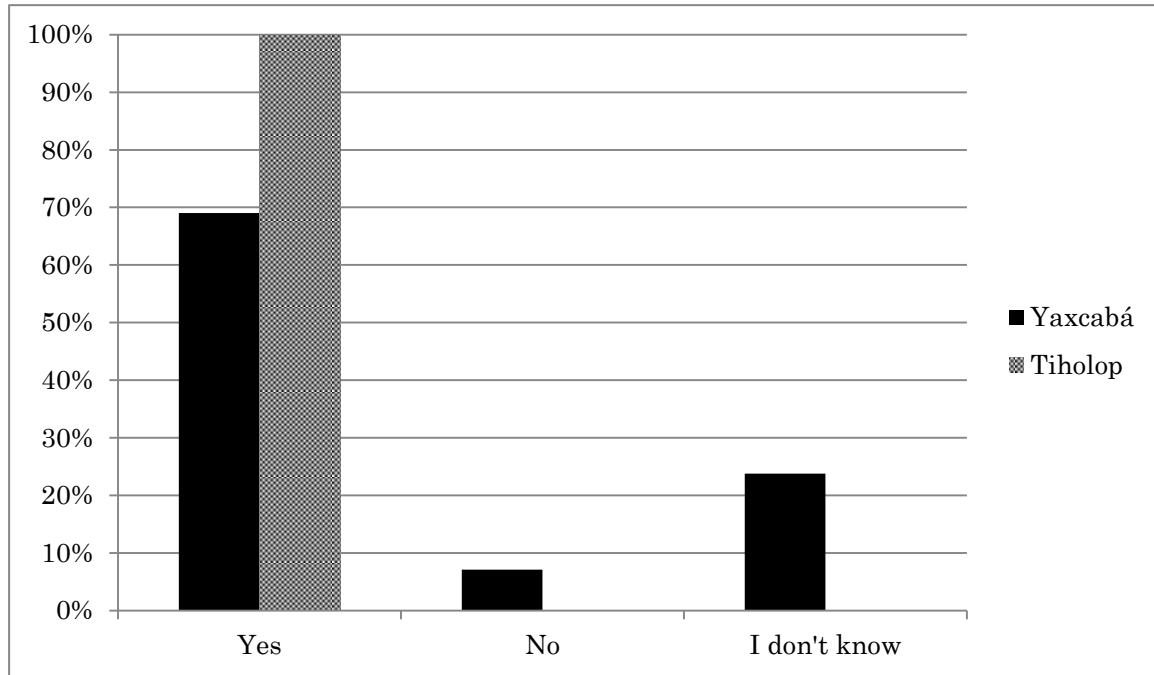
Community	School	First language	
		Maya	Spanish
Yaxcabá	Elementary school	3.3%	96.7%
	Junior high school	2.4%	97.6%
Tiholop	Elementary school	53.5%	46.5%
	Junior high school	83.9%	16.1%

*Note.* From Yamasaki (2016:470).



**Figure 14 Students' responses to the question "Do you consider it important to learn Maya?" in the elementary schools in Yaxcabá and Tiholop**





**Figure 15** Students' responses to the question "Do you consider it important to learn Maya?" in the junior high schools in Yaxcabá and Tiholop

*Note.* From Yamasaki (2016:472).



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