

Sources: Adapted from Tables 3 and 6 from López forthcoming (2010/2011), on the basis of official national censuses data. The demographic data for Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras and Panama have been taken from ECLAC in Del Poppolo and Oyarce 2005, and the data for the other countries from Atlas in DVD (Sichra 2009). The Paraguayan data comes from Melià forthcoming, the Bolivian linguistic one from López 2005, and the Guatemalan one from ALMG (Academia de las Lenguas Mayas de Guatemala).

NB. Other sources based on estimates and on non-official data would rather speak of 40 or even 50 million indigenous inhabitants in Latin America. See, for example, Hall and Patrinos 2004 and others quoted in López forthcoming.

From this table, we observe that the language status has three levels: the highest level means co-official with Spanish in the whole country and in all social sectors, which applies to Bolivia, Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela; the middle level means: co-official regional use, that is in the regions where the speakers live (Ecuador, Nicaragua, Peru); and the lowest level means they only have status as languages of education (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, French Guyana, Honduras and Panama). The lowest level excludes official usage in public administration, the health system, the mass media and other public spheres. Ideally, language policy should aim to upgrade language status from level III to I. Furthermore we have to underline, that the positive changes in legislation are not the results of a systematic national language planning but of mass mobilizations, protest marches and permanent demands made of governments or parliaments, on the part of indigenous movements. Changing a national language law is very difficult as there are only a few indigenous representatives in these bodies. An extraordinary exception constitutes the new linguistic legislation of Colombia of 2009 which should become a model for the continent as it defines clearly spheres of responsibility and implementation as well as conservation and modernization of the indigenous languages. A combined participatory policy, top down and bottom up, fulfilling the legal requirements, is a must for the twenty-first century.

Language cultivation, normatization and modernization of the indigenous languages for different communicative purposes are insufficient in Latin America. Local and national language academies intervene in politics but they do not have enough funds for systematic research, modernization and archiving. As indigenous populations constitute the poorest of the poor, they are often unable to make their languages visible in private mass media. The radio is their only public voice; (Bolivia, electronic communication by Walter Gutierrez, 18.09.2010, Jefe de la Unidad de Políticas de Intra-, Interculturalidad y Plurilingüismo) or results from a symposium about indigenous languages in the mass media of Bolivia (Ronald Greve and von Gleich 2001).

Survey studies which show exactly where indigenous people live and where their languages are in danger of extinction, such as the interactive atlas developed in the framework of UNESCO's Endangered Languages Programme (Moseley 2010) or the *Sociolinguistic Atlas of Indigenous People*, elaborated with the help of UNICEF and FUNPROEIB Andes are valuable instruments for the implementation of cultural and linguistic laws. Latin American government representatives display an impressive discourse on peace-making

intercultural living together, but the gaps between laws and reality are still great.

- How to close such gaps between legal support and reality?
- How to make the Declarations and Laws work?

We suggest the following steps as realistic goals for example in the context of the bicentennial festivities of independence in the respective Latin American Countries:

1. National governments to define a clear medium and/or long term language policy on the basis of full participation of indigenous people and determine the institutions (language academies, research institutions, universities, and experts) to implement the legislation. Governments to provide and coordinate the finances from national and external funds, perhaps introducing a solidarity tax ('diezmo indígena') on luxury consumer goods to feed a national indigenous fund.
2. Latin American governments to establish national goals for different needs of the indigenous population, for example, a National Plan for Indigenous Education on the occasion of the annual meeting of the Ministers of Education, - similar to the plans of the Australian Government for their indigenous people - and to provide the financing via national budgets, monitor the projects and deliver transparent public reports to the representatives of the indigenous people. Establish in every country a powerful agency to coordinate scholarships and provide diffusion in the mass media, TV and internet.
3. Indigenous Higher Education in all national and particularly indigenous universities is to be promoted in order to re- create an indigenous academic leadership class that can protect and promote their own rights as analyzed in the studies of ISEALC-UNESCO. The 'Programa de Educación Bilingüe Intercultural' (PROEIB Andes) which offered postgraduates training to indigenous people from the region, now integrated into the Postgraduate School of the Universidad Mayor de San Simón, Cochabamaba, the parallel FUNPROEIB-Andes foundation which finances projects, and the Intercultural Indigenous University (www.iuii.org) promoted by the Indigenous Fund, are good examples.
4. To promote the teaching of indigenous languages to the monolingual Spanish or Portuguese speaking majority to show the semantic and grammatical richness, the communicative capacity of indigenous languages and their ecological value. In the case of Bolivia, the newly revised State Political Constitution (2009) makes provision for this.
5. National Governments and indigenous representatives to coordinate together with the international cooperation sector and harmonize

their guidelines to the benefit of indigenous people in order to avoid administrative waste.

6. To articulate national policies in regional and continental networks.

Conclusion and recommendation

National Latin American governments must show clear commitment and use their Bicentennial festivities of Independence from Spain to return cultural self determination and dignity also to the indigenous people in their countries.

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The Changing Politics of Intercultural Education in the Amazon Region

Sheila Aikman

School of International Development, University of East Anglia

The term 'intercultural education' has become part of the general educational lexicon and is referred to in a diverse range of research and policy documents today. However, there is little consensus about what it means and what kind of practice it encapsulates. This paper asks what significance the term has today, whether it has lost its political imperative and what different critiques and analyses can be drawn on in order to ensure it meets the social and political needs and demands of indigenous peoples in the Amazon region (Aikman 2003; Trapnell 2003, Trapnell et al 2008).

It examines developments in intercultural education (IE) in the Amazon region from two perspectives. The first is IE as a political project and it explores changing political and educational agendas for indigenous Amazon peoples and the development of intercultural education as a concept. The second is IE as an educational practice and it asks whether intercultural education- through the practice of formal schooling- is a qualitative education that promotes indigenous rights and social justice for indigenous students in the changing and sometimes violent contexts of the Amazon.

The history of intercultural education in the Amazon region goes back several decades. One of the most significant developments can be traced in the work of the 'Instituto Superior Pedagógico de Loreto', and indigenous federations of the 'Asociación Interétnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana' (AIDSESP). In February 1988 these organisations initiated the 'Programa de Formación de Maestros Bilingües de la Amazonia Peruana' (PFMB) with the Ministry of Education. This training programme posed a challenge to the concept of a single uniform teacher training curriculum which was at that time standard for the whole of Peru, a culturally, linguistically and geographically heterogeneous country (ISP/AIDSESP n.d.). It was also a bold step signalling the legitimacy of the indigenous movement and its representative organisations in the design and implementation of training and curricula for government-run formal schooling. This was a radical departure from other educational initiatives for indigenous peoples in the Amazon at that time, many of which were run by small NGOs. In contrast to the cultural analysis of these NGO projects, the ISP/AIDSESP programme focused its analysis on the socio-political context of its indigenous students and communities and aimed

to develop an educational approach and model which met their needs and lives as young indigenous Peruvians (Trapnell 2003:170). An important aspect of this project, and the different project and programmes it has subsequently influenced (e.g. FORMABIAP) is the way it has engaged in continual reflection and revision of its understanding of the nature of the intercultural lives of indigenous teachers and students and the barriers, violence and exclusion which indigenous students and their communities continue to face. In 2002 the programme developed a new curriculum drawing on the learning from a decade of experience and the changing nature of the social and political environment (Aikman 2003; Trapnell 2003).

Intercultural education in Peru, then, as in other countries such as Bolivia and Ecuador, has been framed by the demands of the strong and growing indigenous Amazon movement for rights to self-determination. It was an education to counter the assimilationist state models of schooling and value indigenous knowledges, languages and ways of life- all of which were key demands of the indigenous movement, not only in the Amazon but worldwide- and today reflected in the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration, which was finally adopted by the UN in 2007, is the outcome of more than 15 years of negotiation and debate between representative indigenous organisations and governments. It recognises that indigenous peoples have the right to all forms of state education without discrimination and to establish and control their own educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.

Over the decades, the social and political space for the development and practice of intercultural education and alternative curricula for indigenous peoples has been supported by different constituencies and in different fora. The Mayor Project, a programme of UNESCO-Orealc, the regional UNESCO body, noted in 1982 that education for indigenous peoples needed to 'escape from its straightjacket of integration and adopt a linguistically, culturally and ethnically plural character'. There was growing concern that indigenous communities had little or no access to schooling and, where they did, had high rates of dropout. But today, some two decades later, these concerns continue as economic analyses indicate that indigenous children in Latin America have some of the lowest rates of educational attendance and that globally indigenous groups are over-represented among learners that are excluded and under-addressed in policy agendas (UNESCO 2010).

Alongside longstanding claims and demands by Amazon indigenous organisations, then, is a global reawakening of the realisation that education for indigenous children excludes and marginalises. Through the twenty-first century anti-poverty/pro-poor emphasis of the Millennium Development Goals and Education for All (EFA), indigenous peoples' low achievement in national homogenous schooling systems and curricula is being 'rediscovered'. In 2004 only 55% of indigenous children aged 11-13 who attended school in

Peru (and not all did) completed primary schooling (Government of Peru 2007). The Global Monitoring Report for Education for All 2010 (UNESCO *ibid.*) notes that "incentives for the development of intercultural and bilingual education are high priorities for improving the relevance of education for marginalised groups and helping overcome social stigmatisation" (p.273). However, this call by the GMR for intercultural bilingual education as a panacea for indigenous learners offers no analysis of the political factors which have ensured indigenous learners have continued to be 'marginalised' or specificities of what this intercultural education might look like in the classroom. It seems, instead, to be a 21st century rhetorical call for something to be done about the 'indigenous problem'.

What is intercultural education?

The GMR's call for prioritising intercultural education as a means of overcoming marginalisation and social stigma is worrying for several reasons, not least that it does not recognise the intensely political nature of such a project and seems to imply, on the contrary, that this is a technical challenge. If this were so, would it not have been possible to make more headway with the development and implementation of intercultural education over the past two decades than has been the case? In 2002, the Peruvian Ministry of Education, promoting intercultural education at a time of education reform and renewal, claimed it "an education which will promote respect for cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and awareness of indigenous rights" (Working Document 2002). It noted, however, that with regard to the practice of IE, there were difficulties in applying the notion of 'interculturalism' as a classroom practice (*ibid.*).

Peru is one of three countries- the others being Bolivia and Ecuador- involved in a donor-funded programme for intercultural education in the Amazon from 2005-2008 (Government of Finland 2005). Rather confusingly entitled 'Intercultural Bilingual Education in the Andean Region', this is a three country project of UNICEF and respective Ministries of Education with research being carried out by three national universities. While other bilateral donors have moved on to new agendas or switched their support to other regions of the world and to countries with lower GDPs, the Finnish Ministry of the Exterior has been funding this programme in the Amazon region of Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru. What emerges from the experience of this programme as significant for this paper is the diversity of and the difference between the intercultural education practices being carried out. Across the three countries the IE programmes reflect the different political and policy contexts and their changes over time. They offer insights into different conceptualisations of interculturalism and histories of struggle and recognition of the indigenous movement as well as different levels, degrees and forms of Ministry of Education and government support and the nature of

organisational and institutional relationships. This is a far cry from the GMR's simplistic call for IE to overcome marginalisation.

Each country has engaged at the national level with intercultural education in a different way. While Peru forged new paths for intercultural education in the 1980s and early 1990s, later government policies have proven more fickle. In 2007, the García government's 'Proyecto Educativo Nacional al 2021: La Educación que Queremos para el Peru' (National Education Project for 2021: the Education we Want for Peru) reverberates with references to interculturalism and states that an education which is pertinent and of quality requires a national curriculum that is intercultural, inclusive, integrating and has regional versions (p.15). For the Peruvian Ministry of Education, its policy emphasises that relevance and quality involve

having teachers who have been trained with an intercultural perspective, which means with the capacity to relate to diverse socio-cultural configurations but not only in terms of understanding and valuing them but organising their teaching on the basis of this diversity in the classroom, starting from the cultural capital of the students and the communities, promoting dialogue between distinct visions and representations of the world" (2007:44).

Yet the discourse of 'The Education We Want for Peru' collides with the realities in many indigenous communities today where attacks against indigenous peoples have grown in number and intensity and policies aimed at opening up the Amazon's resources to transnational capital have been at the expense of indigenous rights established in law. President Alan García's articles published in daily newspapers on the theme of the 'dog in a manger' indicated a complete disdain for indigenous communities and intention to exploit their lands and resources (Chirif and Garcia 2008). The massacre at Bagua in Northern Peru in June 2009 during indigenous resistance to oil exploitation followed by the national blockade spearheaded by AIDSEP is indicative of the kind of interculturalism experienced by indigenous peoples in many parts of the country.

In Peru today intercultural education for Amazon indigenous peoples is seen in some political quarters to be divisive and a kind of 'special treatment' that flies in the face of efforts to raise educational standards nationally. Indeed, intercultural education can be seen to be marginalised within and by the Ministry of Education at national level. In Ecuador the situation is different and there the parallel indigenous education system has embraced the programme and the openings it affords to develop their ongoing programme of intercultural schooling in the Amazon region. In Bolivia, meanwhile, the new Education Reform Law of the Morales government was delayed and stalled for much of the operational period of EIBAMAZ, but the programme has worked with the new opportunities afforded by the notion of intra- and intercultural plurilingualism that is embedded in the Constitution and informs the government's deliberations on education:

The concepts of intra and interculturality are not limited to the education field or to the 'indigenous problem' but they are concerned with a crises of ethical values in the world today (Delgado y Mariscal 2006).

In all three countries, IE is being developed as a schooled model of education and one that critiques and reframes the understandings of what institutionalised schooling can be. In all three countries the work of the EIBAMAZ programme was concerned with building on and taking forward the learning and gains made over previous decades. What a longitudinal perspective on IE in these three countries provides, however, is a sense of the struggle and contestation between 'mainstream' and alternative intercultural models of education. They offer insights into changing understandings of interculturalism and intercultural education in response to change in wider social, cultural and physical environments and how intercultural schooling needs to be responsive to what are often dramatic and violent changes in indigenous peoples' lives.

The changes in indigenous peoples lives in the Amazon is a very pertinent issue. Indigenous peoples lives are woven in complex ways with national and global dynamics and communications and interactions through for example, engagement in the political struggle for indigenous rights, daily livelihoods activities which may involve engagement with timber, oil, gas and other resource extraction activities in their territories by companies and/or illegal groups and engagement with public service providers and institutions etc. In the context of rapid social change and intensification of interaction, expectation has grown for schools to be spaces for the reinvigoration and revitalisation of indigenous cultural practices, knowledges and ways of life. In some cases this also includes the reintroduction of languages that are not longer spoken or only spoken only by a few of the oldest members of a community. Given that the IE that has emerged in the Amazon is a schooled and institutionalised form of education Trapnell (2003) offers a warning: Schooling has a role to play; it is a process and a space that can be used to transform young lives in many different ways. It has been a place of cultural and linguistic eradication, it can be a place of cultural and linguistic revitalisation but it has its limits.

Does intercultural schooling offer a quality education?

What kind of intercultural education can be developed and practiced in the school classroom? What kind of quality education can intercultural schooling offer indigenous children and youth? Indigenous organisations have called for intercultural education as a right and as a means of strengthening indigenous identities within the national and global society and, as noted above, the Ministry of Education of Peru states that an intercultural curriculum is a key component of a 'relevant and quality education' (2007). Drawing on current

research and writing from other regions, this section examines what 'quality education' might mean and assesses the extent to which it might fulfil indigenous demands for an education which recognises their rights and promotes equity.

Recent research and analysis in low-income contexts in Africa has influenced a critical approach to quality education, developed through the work of a DFID-funded Research Consortium based at the University of Bristol (www.Edqual.org). Researchers there have been asking to what extent education and schooling can and does promote equity and social justice and asks about the ways in which schooling and teachers, education officials, policy makers, students engaged with the practices and processes of schooling. Taking the position that no schooling or education is value free, they stress the need to be explicit and aware of the values embedded in the design, practice and experience of education (Tikly and Barrett 2007). Applying this approach to intercultural education means interrogating its ability to promote equality, justice and indigenous rights. An intercultural education that is qualitative in this ethical and moral sense means it has to be grounded in the realities and histories of the learners, their communities and the teachers. It must be developed on the awareness that education can perpetuate as well as help to overcome inequalities and it should empower learners to be able to realise their rights and extend their capabilities.

In the Amazon context being considered in this paper, this means that intercultural education should be developed by as well as for indigenous peoples and, more specifically, that it be based on the realities of indigenous peoples, responding to the violent, conflictive and hegemonic relations that many experience today. It demands that a qualitative and relevant intercultural education is built on the understanding of the historical trajectory of assimilation and marginalisation that characterises indigenous lives and educational experiences and ensures that IE is not simply a guise behind which inequalities and injustices are perpetuated. It demands that it empowers learners to realise their rights as indigenous individuals, as members of indigenous societies and as national and global citizens and that it offers and provides an education which they value and have reason to value as indigenous individuals, peoples and citizens.

Drawing on work by Fraser (2008) on social justice, we can argue that an intercultural education that promotes social justice and 'indigenous justice' is one which ensures fairness of opportunities for indigenous learners, so that their experience of schooling is fair, equitable and of equal worth as those of all citizens. It is also an education which recognises and acknowledges diversity and their indigenous peoples' different identities and histories, and schooling which respects and promotes different indigenous languages, cultural practices, knowledges and ways of being. And it achieves these through the active participation and representation of indigenous peoples themselves in educational decision-making and curriculum development, and

that they are not merely voicing their opinions of the status quo but are redefining and reframing the fundamentals of education to ensure a quality intercultural education.

Changing policies and changing times

The EIBAMAZ project has illustrated something of the diversity of political contexts in which intercultural education is flourishing and the diversity of educational approaches, institutional arrangements and experiences. The lives of indigenous peoples of the Amazon are influenced by rapid and often violent change- social, cultural, economic and environmental. Intercultural education is one strategy for strengthening indigenous' peoples capabilities and capacities to be decision makers over their lives in these fluid times.

Indigenous peoples of the Amazon are redefining intercultural education and shaping it for the achievement of their demands, rights and for just societies. The model of intercultural education being used is a formal schooled one. The school has an important role to play but the challenges are significant too if it is to offer a qualitative education which is relevant to the intercultural lives of its indigenous students and their societies. Can intercultural education as schooling respond to all their demands and needs? In the Amazon intercultural education is an ongoing endeavour and struggle for recognition of rights and for more just societies.

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Discourses of language revalorisation in the Yucatecan press¹

Josep Cru
Newcastle University

Introduction

Yucatec Maya, simply known locally as Maya, is the main indigenous language spoken in the south eastern Mexican states of Yucatan, Campeche and Quintana Roo and also in the neighbouring country of Belize. Yucatec Maya belongs to the Mayan language family which includes several indigenous languages of southern Mexico and Guatemala.² According to the last census carried out in 2000 by the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI 2000), Yucatan was the Mexican state with the highest proportion of speakers of an indigenous language (37.3 %), followed by Oaxaca (37.1 %) and Chiapas (35.3).³ The main difference between these three states, however, is the enormous linguistic diversity of both Oaxaca and Chiapas compared to Yucatan, where Maya speakers make 99.5% of the indigenous population (INEGI 2000). More than half a million people declared themselves speakers of Maya in that census in Yucatan (exactly 549,532 people) with a total of 816,889 speakers in the three states that form the Peninsula.

In a highly diverse country such as Mexico, concern about the future of indigenous languages in Mexico has lately become more apparent as a consequence of cultural homogenisation and rapid language loss (Garza Cuarón and Lastra 1991; Hidalgo 2006). This focus on indigenous languages has arguably been reinforced by a growing international awareness of language endangerment. In the last decades, and especially after the Zapatista uprising of 1994, significant legislative changes have been introduced in Mexico, such as the amendment of the National Constitution in

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² See Campbell (1997: 163) for a complete genealogical relationship of the Mayan language family, also Suárez (1983) for a grammatical overview of Maya and other Mesoamerican languages.

³ INEGI only counts speakers over five years of age.
<http://www.inegi.org.mx/est/contenidos/Proyectos/ccpv/cpv2000/default.aspx>

2001, which includes an article that explicitly refers to language. Other modifications have been the passing of a Law on the Linguistic Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2003 with an additional reform of the Education Law, and the subsequent creation of a federal institution based in Mexico City to deal with indigenous languages called INALI (Instituto Nacional de Lenguas Indígenas). Although there is no specific governmental institution in charge of implementing language policy in Yucatan, INDEMAYA (Instituto para el Desarrollo de la Cultura Maya), which was created in the year 2000, has among its aims the promotion of the Maya language.

Considering the press as a relevant and privileged public site where language debates take place (DiGiacomo 1999), this paper looks at the discourses produced by two main newspapers published in Yucatan to better understand how the promotion of Maya is played out. Specifically, it analyses how these discourses both create and reflect an ideological debate about the maintenance and loss of the Maya language and how they unveil the ideological foundations of the process of language promotion in the region. After the presentation of the theoretical framework and the corpus used, the relation between language and nationalist discourses and language to biological discourses will be dealt with in some detail. I argue that efforts to revalorise Maya, which is usually linked to concepts such as pride, dignity and respect, need to be understood as a response to historical marginalisation of the Maya people.

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of the following analysis is based on the tools and methods provided by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), especially the work of Fairclough (1992, 1995), Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) and also on the research carried out by, mainly North American, linguistic anthropologists on language ideologies (see e.g. the collection of essays in Schieffelin, Woolard and Kroskrity 1998; also in Kroskrity 2000). On the one hand, CDA has been a powerful analytical tool to uncover unequal power relationships in different kinds of texts, with particular interest in those produced by the mass media. The aim of CDA is to make explicit the underlying ideological foundations of discourses, highlighting the key role that language plays as a medium through which, as Richardson (2007: 26) puts it "relationships of disempowerment, dominance, prejudice and/or discrimination" in society are structured and maintained. Researchers using CDA analysis have focused on issues such as gender, ethnicity and class, therefore linking the use of language with the wider sociocultural context. Likewise, the work of the North American linguistic anthropologists mentioned above is especially appropriate for this research because it focuses on how language ideologies are played out in specific contexts of language contact and conflict, and, specifically, on how ensuing processes of language shift or minorisation are ideologically driven. It

is this latter focus on ideologies in multilingual settings which is of special interest for our research. In sum, both approaches may be used complementarily to better understand the sociolinguistic situation under analysis, since despite the focus from slightly different angles, concepts such as ideology, discourse, hegemony and power do figure centrally in both perspectives.

The newspapers

The basis for this analysis is a corpus of 437 newspaper articles that were published from 2000 to 2008 in the Yucatecan dailies 'Por Esto!' and 'Diario de Yucatán'. Both are among the most important newspapers in Yucatan as regards circulation figures.⁴ It must also be noted that 'Diario de Yucatán', founded in 1925, is the oldest surviving newspaper in Yucatan and belongs to what is considered the quality press. 'Por Esto!' is, instead, a clear example of sensationalist press. Their physical formats closely correspond to a British broadsheet, the former, and a tabloid paper, the latter. Both dailies have their headquarters in Mérida, capital city of Yucatán state, a city where the use of Spanish is dominant and where almost half of the population of the state lives.⁵ Also, both newspapers, in spite of the ideological and political differences, conservative 'Diario de Yucatán' and leftist and populist 'Por Esto!', use exclusively Spanish in their contents. What is more, Maya is not used in the mainstream printed press in Yucatan and has only occasionally been included in a tokenistic way in the past (Ligorred 1997: 35). This is ironic if we consider that literacy in Maya stands out among the main policies to preserve the use of Maya, and, as Castells-Talens (2004: 9) has noted, the fact that many newspaper employees are Maya speakers. Literacy and its relationship with orality is without a doubt at the core of the ideological underpinnings in the efforts to revalorise the use of Maya and deserves specific and detailed analysis on its own.

The articles

The articles used for this analysis are part of an electronic archive which can be accessed on line.⁶ The archive is administered by the Autonomous

⁴ According to the official institution 'Padrón Nacional de Medios Impresos', the average number of copies of 'Diario de Yucatán' is 48,689 from Monday to Saturday and 62,879 on Sunday, the highest of all newspapers in Yucatan, whereas 'Por Esto!' figures are 28,383 and 31,955 respectively. Only the sensationalist newspaper 'De Peso' created in 2004 has reached similar figures to 'Diario de Yucatán'. http://www.gobernacion.gob.mx/PNMI/PNMP_home.php

⁵ Exactly 40.2 % of the population of Yucatan lives in Merida according to INEGI (2000).

⁶ http://www.mayas.uady.mx/breves/index_01.html

University of Yucatan (UADY is the acronym in Spanish) and gathers articles related to Maya culture and society since 1999. The selection used in this paper belongs to a subgroup of news items where language as an object of news comment plays an essential role. A complete semiotic analysis including the layout, photographs, type of font, colour, etc. of the news is not possible owing to the nature of the archive, which only reproduces the text that was originally published in the newspaper.

Most of the articles related to the Maya language fall into one of the following broad categories: education and literacy, socio-political issues, media, religion and folklore. Another set of articles forms a category which report events which have to do with public presentations and different kinds of meetings (symposia, workshops, conferences, etc.) linked in some way or another to the Maya language. A significant number of articles (74) refer specifically to concerns about the 'health' of the language, a small representative number of which will be analysed in detail in this paper. This taxonomy, however, does not imply that there exists a clear-cut delimitation of topics in the news. On the contrary, we often find examples of interdiscursivity, that is, the shaping of discourses with reference to other discourses.⁷

After reviewing the corpus, we claim, following Blommaert's (1999: 1) definition of language debate, that an ongoing ideological public debate about the maintenance and loss of Yucatec Maya is taking place in Yucatan.⁸ While targeting different readerships and coming from different political stances, both dailies consider newsworthy to report the current situation of Maya and regularly include news on the topic. Interestingly, this regional phenomenon stands in stark contrast with a similar study carried out by Carbó and Salgado (2006) about the invisibility of indigenous languages in thirteen Mexican newspapers from 1989 to 1995. Finding very few examples of articles that focus on indigenous languages out of a corpus of 657 pieces of news, the authors conclude that, in spite of much vaunted pride in the indigenous heritage of Mexico, indigenous languages as a topic of discussion are invisible in the Mexican national press (2006: 555).⁹ They also argue that, on the few occasions when the topic is touched upon, a paternalistic approach is adopted. Even though awareness of indigenous issues has been growing in the media (Warren and Jackson 2002: 2), it is safe to say that we are still far from seeing indigenous 'self-representation', as these two authors put it, in

⁷ Chouliraki and Fairclough (1999: 16) use the term 'the order of discourse' and 'interdiscursivity', which are defined as "the social structuring of semiotic hybridity".

⁸ Blommaert (1999:1) defines language debate as that "in which language is a central topic, a motif, a target, and in which language ideologies are being articulated, formed, amended, enforced".

⁹ The authors examine thirteen Mexican newspapers from 1989 to 1995. About 60% of the news items were found in three newspapers: La Jornada (36.53%), El Día (12.48%) and El Nacional (12.02%)

the two newspapers under analysis, let alone an example of mainstream media controlled by an indigenous group. Indigenous peoples of Mexico are, at least in our corpus, objects of media discourse rather than producers of their own discourses. This is not surprising since, as Fairclough (1995: 40) puts it, "in general it is those who already have other forms of economic, political and cultural power that have the best access to the media". This situation also applies to Yucatan in spite of the relative significant size of the indigenous population. As researched by Castells-Talens (2004), even the exceptional case of XEPET 'The voice of the Mayas', an indigenist radio where the use of Maya is predominant, issues of power and control need to be constantly negotiated since the station belongs to a governmental institution (CDI).¹⁰

The discursive construction of languages and nations

Following the narrow definition of discourse as 'a social construction of reality and a form of knowledge' (Fairclough 1995: 18), we will look first at how the Yucatecan press in particular creates discourses of language revitalisation in a specific sociopolitical framework. Research has shown that the mass media have become fundamental sites for the construction of the nation and of national identities (Anderson 2006, Billig 1995, Gal and Woolard 2001). The following analysis is based on the idea that the media is not just an objective and neutral mirror of reality but an interested and politically positioned institution that both constructs and reflects a specific version of the social reality (Richardson: 2007:13).

I will first look at Benedict Anderson's idea of "imagined communities", since it is particularly relevant here because his analysis is based on the novel and newspapers in the era of print-capitalism and language standardisation to present and represent the nation (2006: 26). While Anderson's idea of the nation as an 'imagined community' has been very influential in sociopolitical thinking, his general view on language has also been criticised by anthropological linguists. Thus, his arguably Eurocentric idea that the "then and now bulk of mankind is monoglot" (2006: 38) is surprising, considering that Anderson's area of expertise is a country as linguistically diverse and populated as Indonesia. Irvine and Gal (2000: 76), for instance, underline that "homogenous language is as much imagined as is community". Similarly, Michael Billig (1995: 10), referring to the work of Anderson among other scholars interested in how nationalism is constructed, calls attention to the fact that "national languages also have to be imagined, and this lies at the root of today's common-sense belief that discrete languages 'naturally' exist". That languages, and specifically certain varieties of languages such as the 'standard', are ideologically created has also been noted by Bourdieu, who

¹⁰ CDI is the 'Comisión para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas', formerly the 'Instituto Nacional Indigenista' (INI), a governmental body that controls a network of indigenous stations all over Mexico.

criticises structural linguists who "merely incorporate into their theory a pre-constructed object, ignoring its *social laws of construction* and masking its social genesis" (1991: 44, emphasis in original). The reification of language is a critique that anthropological linguists have made not only of Anderson but also of other prominent scholars who have written about language and nationalism. In this regard, it is worth quoting Paul Kroskrity who states:

Like Gellner, Benedict Anderson too naturalizes the process of linguistic standardization by assuming that such state-supported language policies produce a uniform linguistic product and a concomitant homogenizing influence on citizens through their consumption of newspapers and novels [...]. Further work on language and nationalism would certainly benefit from problematizing linguistic homogeneity as an issue of how language ideologies operate. (2000: 26)

Further to these critiques, we may add Anderson's conception of languages as fundamentally inclusive instruments:

Language is not an instrument of exclusion: in principle, anyone can learn a language. On the contrary, it is fundamentally inclusive, limited only by the fatality of Babel: no one lives long enough to learn *all* languages. (Anderson 2006: 134, emphasis in original)

Leaving aside the biblical metaphor as a powerful source of negative associations with language diversity,¹¹ what can be questioned is the fact that learning a language necessarily leads to social inclusion. Although it is true that languages are transmissible and cumulative, Anderson's view does not take into account the fact that access to languages is not tantamount to access to other kinds of resources, be it political, economic or sociocultural. This access may depend more on relations of power rather than simply on the language people speak, especially in the postcolonial context with relation to Anderson's observation. Moreover, research has shown that learning the dominant language does not always mean avoiding discrimination since the stigma can then be passed onto the accent indigenous speakers have when using the dominant language. This is, according to my own fieldwork, what happens with Spanish spoken in Yucatan, which is often considered divergent, because of its conspicuous deviations from Standard Mexican Spanish.¹²

In sum, we claim that this discussion about language and nation is better understood in terms of Cameron's 'verbal hygiene' which "is not about

¹¹ The reason why Babel, representing language diversity as a curse, has been such a successful metaphor but why the parable of Pentecost, which carries exactly the contrary meaning, is instead fairly unknown is a worthy topic of research.

¹² Yucatec Spanish is often negatively portrayed as 'aporreado' (literally 'beaten') probably because of Maya phonological influence (especially, suprasegmental features such as tone and stress). See Martín Briceño (1997) for discussion.

ordering language itself, but also exploits the powerful symbolism in which language stands for other kinds of order- moral, social and political" (1995: 25).

Let us turn now to Mexico, since it is essential to look at how the press depicts the sociopolitical framework where the language ideological debate takes place. Administratively, the 'Estados Unidos Mexicanos', the official name of the country, is a federation of thirty-one states and a federal district, which are in turn divided into municipalities. In spite of this division, Mexico is an example of a highly centralised nation-state, with much power concentrated in Mexico City, where, unsurprisingly, the INALI ('Instituto Nacional de Lenguas Indígenas') is based.¹³ Although the noun 'federation' and the adjective 'federal' might as well be used, the terms nation and national are, without exception, reserved for Mexico as a whole. There is only one nation and that is, according to the press, the taken for granted Mexican nation-state. In our corpus, we contend that Yucatan is continuously presented and represented as a region. The ubiquitous 'language-culture-nation ideological nexus', as Heller and Duchêne (2007: 7) put it, which is often used for nation-states, could be paraphrased into a 'language-culture-region ideological nexus' in the case of Yucatan. In this regard, it is not uncommon to find the collocation 'regional identity' in the corpus.

Michael Billig's (1995: 6) concept of 'banal nationalism' which he describes as "the ideological habits which enable the established nations of the West to be reproduced" is a useful idea for our analysis. A close look at the corpus shows that we can undoubtedly include Mexico as a nation that continuously 'flags' its nationhood in the press.

Against the backdrop of a discursive project whose goal is to acknowledge diversity, Mexicans need to be reminded of their Mexicanness. In a country where the use of Spanish is hegemonic, the promotion of linguistic diversity necessarily creates ideological tensions. As Debra Spitulnik has noted "one of the fundamental problems faced by virtually every nation state in the world today [is] the challenging of forging a unified national identity while simultaneously giving some recognition to national diversity" (1998: 165).

In this vein, one of the recent projects of INALI has been the translation of the Mexican anthem into several indigenous languages. Not only has the anthem been translated into several indigenous languages, but also the 'bando solemne' or presidential edict, which so far can be found in 24 indigenous linguistic variants, as INALI calls them.¹⁴ These translations raise purist controversies, since more often than not it is only a few members of

¹³ This does not mean, however, that there are not tensions between centripetal power of the capital and centrifugal federalism of the states (see e.g. Anna 1998: 29).

¹⁴ On line at: <http://www.inali.gob.mx/web/portal/ind-bando>

the indigenous intellectual elite who can use the variety and know the neologisms used in the translation of such formal documents (Flores Farfán 2009: 34). We have found a significant number of articles that reflect this project and, therefore, we will deal with them in some detail. Most of the articles that cover this topic are published in 'Por Esto!', a newspaper that clearly flags its nationalist ideology with the motto 'dignidad, identidad y soberanía (sic)' under its letterhead. This argumentation can be illustrated with a close look at some articles which focus on the anthem as a key symbol of national identity:

29/02/00. **Interpretan el Himno Nacional en Maya.** El pasado 23 de febrero **se llevó a cabo** el IX encuentro de demostración de escoltas e interpretación de Himno Nacional Mexicano en lengua maya del nivel preescolar en la localidad de Tabi, comisaría de Sotuta, Yucatán. La inauguración del evento estuvo a cargo del munícipe Roger Castillo Ruiz, quien agradeció al **consejo técnico consultivo** de la Zona Escolar 310 con sede en Huhí, por haber escogido a esta comunidad para **llevar a efecto el evento** y, sobre todo, "**inculcar a nuestros hijos desde pequeños a reconocer nuestro símbolos patrios que nos identifican como mexicanos** y que esto sea para el **bienestar** de la educación del municipio, la región y el estado de Yucatán". En este evento los niños demostraron sus habilidades en la entonación, dicción, fluidez y ritmo al momento de cantar el Himno en lengua maya, en donde sobresalieron las escuelas de Tixcaltuyub y Seyé. 'Por Esto!' (My emphasis)

From the linguistic point of view, it is worth noting the use of the verb 'inculcar' (to inculcate), which has both in Spanish, and its English cognate, a sense of repetition, obedience and discipline. The national symbols, thus, need to be inculcated in the children from an early age (the ones mentioned in the article attend kindergarten!) so that they can identify themselves as Mexican. What better place to do so than in the school, one of the official national institutions par excellence that, as Gellner (1983: 34) puts it, is 'at the crux of the state's sociosymbolic power'? It is of interest to note as well how a formal style is used throughout the article. This is achieved through both the use of formal vocabulary, e.g. 'se llevó a cabo', 'llevar a efecto el evento' (to carry out the event) and of long subordinate clauses (there are just three sentences in the article). This formal style reinforces the solemnity and significance of an activity which is related to patriotic symbols. We also find in this article an example of intertextuality, namely, the introduction of a text within a text through direct reported speech.¹⁵ It is the local politician, whose words are reproduced, the person who is given voice in this article. While the children are the alleged protagonists of the event, what we really see is a dialogue between the local politician and the consultative committee. Notice also that the subject of 'interpretan' has been elided in the headline: rather

¹⁵ See Fairclough (1999: 49) for the origins of the concept of intertextuality in Bakhtin's (1986) dialogical view of language.

than the actors of the event, the children seem to be the recipients of a top down official policy of nationalist propaganda.

The following article elaborates on the significance of singing the anthem in Maya and its introduction in bilingual schools in Yucatan through the organisation of contests. This policy is seen as an example of intercultural education:

27/05/2006. **Concurso sobre el Himno Nacional.** Con el **objetivo de difundir la lengua maya**, la Secretaría de Educación Pública, a través de la Subdirección de Educación Indígena, realizó el V Concurso Estatal de Interpretación del Himno Nacional Mexicano en Lengua Maya. En este encuentro participan escuelas regulares que promueven el programa 'Ko'one'ex Kanik Maaya' (aprendamos maya), que la SEP implementó a partir del ciclo escolar 1991-1992, **con el fin de fomentar la enseñanza del idioma**, desarrollando las habilidades básicas de comprensión auditiva, expresión oral, comprensión de la lectura y expresión escrita. El Prof. Edgar Peraza Estañol, subdirector de Educación Indígena, señaló que **impulsar la educación 'intercultural bilingüe' es para mejorar la calidad de la educación que se ofrece a la población maya**. Añadió que **los acordes del himno nacional se interpretan con toda naturalidad en el idioma del Mayab**, como una muestra del alcance de la interculturalidad en el ámbito escolar del estado. (...)'Por Esto!' (My emphasis)

Singing along the national anthem in Maya is, thus, considered by the deputy director of Indigenous Education as an example of interculturality and promotion of the indigenous language. Although this initiative might have some impact as a sign of institutional recognition for the indigenous language, one wonders whether this is basically or merely an example of the nation 'flagging' one of its most essential symbols. The anthem in Maya is not sung, though, in schools that do not offer Intercultural Bilingual Education, a policy which would be more truly 'intercultural'. As the deputy director states (again it is a civil servant who is given voice) 'intercultural bilingual education' has been designed to improve the quality of the education the Maya population receives. It is also worth noting that in this case, in contrast with the previous article, the quotation is indirect, which inevitably entails a more interpretive stance of the journalist (Richardson 2007: 106). The reason why the words 'intercultural and bilingual' are used in inverted commas is not clear, but one can guess that they signal the kind of education which is still exceptional, marked and not owned by Maya speakers in Yucatan. The use of the word Mayab is also worth commenting upon, since that name stands for the historical geographical area of the Maya culture and language. It should also be noted that the use of Mayab does not seem to have, however, any contemporary relation to an active Pan-Mayan movement and is not, to my knowledge, politically nuanced.¹⁶ One interesting avenue for further research

¹⁶ I have in mind here the dissimilar cases of the use of 'Països Catalans' (Catalan Countries) and 'Euskal Herria' (Basque Land) in Europe. Both names are politically used by Catalan and Basque activists to

would be a comparative study of the significance of Pan-Maya movements (Warren 1998, Warren and Jackson 2002) as a basis for sociopolitical struggles and the seemingly contrasting situation in southern Mexico. Let us concentrate now on a third article which touches on the same subject but linked now with concerns about the use of the Maya.

19/05/2007. **Participación de 250 alumnos de primaria. Cantan el Himno Nacional en Maya.** Con la participación de 8 escuelas de nivel primaria se llevó a cabo el VI Concurso Estatal de Interpretación del Himno Nacional Mexicano en Lengua Maya en el que destacó la afluencia de al menos 250 alumnos que, ataviados con **trajes típicos de la región**, entonaron la traducción de la letra de Francisco González Bocanegra, al ritmo de los acordes de Jaime Nunó. Aunque uno de los objetivos del programa es el de **propiciar que los infantes y la misma población revaloren la lengua maya**, Amílcar Pacab Alcocer, coordinador estatal del programa Ko'one'ex Kanik Maaya (Aprendamos Maya) explicó que uno de los principales factores a los que se enfrentan en dicha tarea es **la falta de interés de la sociedad por preservar dicho lenguaje**, ya que el entorno en el que se desenvuelven los estudiantes después de clases no contribuye a **la conservación del lenguaje heredado por los antepasados del Mayab**, es decir, **no hay seguimiento fuera del aula**. Agregó que además **es parte de la formación de valores cívicos el inculcar el respeto por los símbolos patrios**. 'Por Esto!' (My emphasis)

This article uses both interdiscursivity (various topics are intertwined in the discourses about the maintenance of Maya) and intertextuality, with the inclusion of a voice other than the reporter's. Through indirect quotation we see in this article a smooth transition between the reporter's and the state coordinator's voice. This is how the argument is deployed: firstly, as we have seen above, singing the national anthem is considered a way of revalorising the Maya language (reporter's voice) but, at the same time, is a form of inculcating (notice again the use of the same verb) civic values and respect for patriotic symbols (state coordinator's voice). The choice of the term 'patrios' (patriotic) reminds us of Billig's (1995: 55) distinction between the ideological use of patriotism and nationalism, the former with positive connotations and the latter with negative connotations and which entail a juxtaposition between 'us' and 'them'. Within this discussion about the anthem as a patriotic symbol it is important to highlight that the lyrics of the anthem, as those of many other national anthems around the world, are anything but a source of positive 'civic values'.¹⁷ Secondly, we also find the argument that Maya needs to be preserved since it embodies the essential link with the ancestors (antepasados) and, therefore, with cultural continuity in the region. This is an example of a usual discursive strategy which draws on concepts related to a glorious pre-Hispanic Maya civilisation to enhance the 'pedigree' of the language. It is also worth noting

foreground the cultural and linguistic unity of territories which are administratively divided between different nation-states.

¹⁷ The lyrics of the Mexican anthem can be found in an appendix at the end of this paper.

the fact that students, on this special occasion, wear typical regional dresses. Spivak's 'strategic essentialism' (1993) may be recalled here, and following Warren and Jackson's (2002: 8) discussion of that concept, this specific case seems more an example of essentialism fostered by the authorities, as an attempt to bind up the language with folklore, rather than a form of indigenous empowerment and resistance.¹⁸ The article also highlights one of the basic problems of programmes of Intercultural Bilingual Education in Yucatan and beyond: too often there is no use of the language outside the school setting. The problem arises, then, because there is a lack of interest in the society at large to preserve Maya. There seems to be, eventually, an ambivalent attitude to the revalorisation of Maya. On the one hand, it is fundamental to maintain the use of the indigenous language for the sake of the cultural identity of the region. On the other hand, however, Maya is not valued by the society at large (and by many of its speakers) since it is not useful for socioeconomic betterment, or to use Bourdieu's terms (1991: 14), it does not represent cultural or symbolic capital in the linguistic market. After this review of the nation, let us now turn to a critique of how languages are discursively constructed and reified in the press.

Discourses on language vitality in Yucatan

Discourses that use metaphors drawn from the biological sciences have burgeoned not only in the sociolinguistics literature but also in the press,¹⁹ as can be seen by the significant number of articles in the corpus that deal with this topic.

Within a context of growing concern about the future of Maya, the idea that languages exist independently of speakers seems to be deeply ingrained both in folk and professional linguistics discourses. Let us look first at some examples of the conceptualisation of languages as living species and then at some of their implications:

24/10/2001. Pese a 'contaminaciones' de otros idiomas. La maya, de las lenguas que gozan de 'mayor salud'. 'Por Esto!'

11/03/2005. Lengua maya puede morir en 40 años. Lingüista invita a estudiantes a no avergonzarse al hablarla. 'Por Esto!'

13/05/2005. Lengua maya aún viva. 'Por Esto!'

03/07/2005. La lengua maya, 'idioma vivo del pueblo'. 'Diario de Yucatán'.

22/02/2007. La lengua maya lucha por sobrevivir. Logros y retos en un encuentro estatal de educación indígena. 'Diario de Yucatán'.

¹⁸ See Howard (2009: 27) for the use of 'strategic essentialism' à la Spivak (1993) in the construction of identities in the Andes.

¹⁹ Language endangerment, language vitality, language revitalisation, language extinction, language survival are some of the common terms used in the specialised literature. See Pennycook (2004) for a critique of the 'biomorphic metaphor'.

Based on these headlines and other articles we have found in the corpus, we argue that an abundant use of biological tropes helps conceiving of languages as natural species. In these examples, Maya is presented as an organic entity which can be 'healthy' or 'polluted', which can die in forty years, which is still alive, etc. Although, as Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) classic book shows, metaphors are indispensable linguistic devices we live by, these headlines, through metonymic replacement (Richardson 2007: 68), foreground languages and background speakers. From a linguistic point of view, the last example is particularly telling: the structure of the headline is an active sentence in which the language is the agent, who is struggling to survive, consequently erasing the real agency that can only come from the speaker. This conception of languages as if they had life of their own has been critically analysed by scholars, such as Heller and Duchêne (2008: 7), who note that this kind of discourse "displaces concerns with speakers on to a concern with languages". Linking, then, the threats that biological species face with processes of language abandonment may result in the essentialisation not only of languages but also indigenous peoples (Muehlmann 2007: 15). It is worth quoting Deborah Cameron again, since she emphasises the fact that the 'biologised' discourse of language endangerment is but an ideological choice among many other possibilities. She argues that

Moral indignation about the plight of endangered languages is generated by linking the issue to ecological concerns about biodiversity and the conservation of the earth's resources (which are seen in this context as including its arrays of human cultures), rather than – as would also be possible – to political concerns about human rights, social justice and the distribution of resources among more and less powerful groups (2007: 270).

Nevertheless, despite concurring with these critiques and being wary of the caveats, borrowing metaphors from the ecological paradigm has also been very productive for sociolinguistic research. Since the seventies, but especially in the last decade, many connections have been established between the fields of sociolinguistics and ecology, and new concepts such as linguistic sustainability have emerged in the literature (Bastardas 2005). Einar Haugen's seminal article ([1972] 2001) on the ecology of language and the later development by William Mackey ([1980] 2001), have been influential for subsequent elaboration of a subfield known as ecolinguistics, which is based on the principles of interaction and diversity (Fill and Mühlhäusler 2001: 2). Peter Mühlhäusler has precisely adopted an ecological framework while working with languages of the Pacific region emphasising "the view that diversity reflects adaptation to specific environmental conditions" (Fill and Mühlhäusler 2001: 6). To summarise a rather complex and manifold issue, in our view, the ecological approach has contributed from different angles to expand sociolinguistic research. First, it has emphasised the need to adopt a

more holistic, interdependent and dynamic approach in the study of sociolinguistic phenomena. This new broader approach, then, which supersedes the structuralist positions that had dominated the field of linguistics in the twentieth century, has become a much more complex but, at the same time, a more powerful heuristic tool to look at the multiplicity of factors that need to be considered in situations of language contact. Second, it has highlighted the role that language can play as the main adaptive tool to the social and natural environment. Third, the connection between language and ecology has undoubtedly helped raise awareness of current trends of cultural, and particularly linguistic, homogenisation worldwide.²⁰

Closely related to the development of metaphors that conceive of languages as natural entities, the first article brings to the surface the prominent issue of linguistic purism, stating that despite its 'polluting' contact with Spanish, the language is still in good 'health'. Purism is one of the most frequent (and contentious) ideological issues present not only in the official discourses of language policy and planning but also in the discourses of the speakers themselves, who are well aware of the value attached to different linguistic varieties.

Conclusion

Using the methods and tools of Critical Discourse Analysis and drawing on the literature of language ideologies, we have analysed in this paper news articles that focus on the concerns about the future of Yucatec Maya. First, this critical analysis has focused on how the two newspapers selected discursively create and recreate a hierarchical sociopolitical framework, divided into region and nation, in which the debate about the revalorisation of Maya takes place. It is almost a truism in the specialised literature that nations, and also nation-states, are 'imagined' and that the press is a central institution involved in the process of recreating national images. As shown above, in the Yucatecan context singing the anthem in Maya is used as an essential building block to reinforce the national Mexican identity, although the goal is supposedly the promotion of the indigenous language. We have also seen how the press gives voice to either authorities or experts, who are both reported directly or indirectly in the articles, reflecting power structures of the wider society. While this analysis has centred upon the representation of the Maya language in the press and its implications in the wider sociocultural context, we are aware that this investigation needs to take into account as well processes of text production and consumption, which is an avenue for further research. For the former, it will be necessary to look in some depth at how different political ideologies are embedded in the newspaper discourses. For the latter,

²⁰ See Crystal (2004: 3) for a brief historical comparison between the development of awareness of language loss and other social movements.

it will be important to include reception theory as a part of our future research, with ethnographic work as an essential part to assess the impact that the linguistic ideologies represented in the press may have on the speakers.

The second part of the paper has dealt with the discourses of language vitality in Yucatan. The representation of the current situation of Maya often draws on biological metaphors that easily pave the way for an essentialised view of languages. Thus, the tropes used refer to languages as organic entities that can be, to a greater or lesser extent, pure or polluted. In this regard, language purism becomes a key ideological debate which critically emerges in processes of language revitalisation, although it can be found as well in other sociolinguistic contexts since value judgements on language use seem to be a ubiquitous phenomenon. Whereas a monolithic concept of identity has been put into question and deconstructed in postmodern theory, being now described as hybrid, multilayered, contingent and fluid, language, at least in language policy and planning, is still too often seen as a fixed and bounded object. In fact, similar adjectives to those used to define identity could be applied to languages. It is essential to note, however, that many sociolinguists have attempted to critically deconstruct language or, as Makoni and Pennycook (2007) put it, to 'disinvent' languages. In our corpus, for example, a reified concept of mother tongue is widespread, which I will examine in subsequent papers.

After analysing the corpus of the two newspapers, we can summarise the argument about the language debate with a few terms that often crop up in the news items. The Maya language is at the core of Yucatan's regional identity, it is part of that region's roots and epitomises a glorious past that has been handed down from the ancestors. However, speaking the indigenous language is still often associated with marginalisation, discrimination, backwardness, poverty, stigma and shame. Therefore, Maya should be valorised, preserved, dignified, rescued, respected and revitalised. Finally, going back to Cameron's key issue, namely, that language provides a 'symbolic way of addressing conflicts about race, class, culture and gender' (1995: 216), we argue that the ongoing sociolinguistic debate in Yucatan is more than just a concern about the reproduction or loss of the Maya language. It is, in a nutshell, a process of regaining self-esteem, respect and pride as a response to historical marginalisation. In the news, the emphasis is often put on the need to give value to the indigenous language, and, it is, therefore, not only a process of revitalising Maya, but also, and perhaps more importantly, about giving value metonymically to the Maya people. Whether this endeavour of revalorisation is a deciding factor for the future of the Maya language or will mainly remain a symbolic component in the process is, however, an open question.

Appendix

Mexican National Anthem

On line at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Himno_Nacional_Mexicano

Music: Jaime Nunó

Lyrics: Francisco González Bocanegra

Coro:

Mexicanos, al grito de guerra
el acero aprestad y el bridón.
Y retiemble en sus centros la Tierra,
al sonoro rugir del cañón.
¡Y retiemble en sus centros la Tierra,
al sonoro rugir del cañón!

Chorus:

Mexicans, at the cry of war,
make ready the steel and the bridle,
and the earth trembles at its centers
at the resounding roar of the cannon.
and the earth trembles at its centers
at the resounding roar of the cannon!

Estrofa I:

Ciña ¡oh Patria! tus sienes de oliva
de la paz el arcángel divino,
que en el cielo tu eterno destino
por el dedo de Dios se escribió.
Mas si osare un extraño enemigo
profanar con su planta tu suelo,
piensa ¡oh Patria querida! que el cielo
un soldado en cada hijo te dio.

First Stanza:

Let gird, oh Fatherland, your brow with olive
by the divine archangel of peace,
for in heaven your eternal destiny
was written by the finger of God.
But if some enemy outlander should dare
to profane your ground with his step,
think, oh beloved Fatherland, that heaven
has given you a soldier in every son.

Estrofa V:

¡Guerra, guerra sin tregua al que intente
De la patria manchar los blasones!
¡Guerra, guerra! Los patrios pendones
En las olas de sangre empapad.
¡Guerra, guerra! En el monte, en el valle
Los cañones horrísonos truenen,
Y los ecos sonoros resuenen
Con las voces de ¡Unión! ¡Libertad!

Stanza V:

War, war without quarter to any who dare
to tarnish the coat of arms!
War, war! Let the national banners
be soaked in waves of blood.
War, war! In the mountain, in the valley,
let the cannons thunder in horrid unison
and may the sonorous echoes resound
with cries of Union! Liberty!

Estrofa VI:

Antes, patria, que inermes tus hijos
Bajo el yugo su cuello dobleguen,
Tus campiñas con sangre se rieguen,
Sobre sangre se estampe su pie.
Y tus templos, palacios y torres
Se derrumben con hórrido estruendo,
Y sus ruinas existan diciendo:
De mil héroes la patria aquí fue.

Stanza VI:

O, Motherland, ere your children, defenseless
bend their neck beneath the yoke,
may your fields be watered with blood,
may their foot be printed in blood.
And may your temples, palaces and towers
collapse with horrid clamor,
and may their ruins continue on, saying:
Of one thousand heroes, here the Motherland began.

Estrofa X:

¡Patria! ¡Patria! Tus hijos te juran
Exhalar en tus aras su aliento,
Si el clarín con su bélico acento
los convoca a lidiar con valor.
¡Para ti las guirnaldas de oliva!
¡Un recuerdo para ellos de gloria!
¡Un laurel para ti de victoria!
¡Un sepulcro para ellos de honor!

Stanza X:

Motherland! Motherland! your children swear to you
to breathe their last for your sake,
if the bugle with its warlike accent
persuades them to battle with courage.
For you, olive wreathes!
A memory for them of glory!
For you, a laurel of victory!
A tomb for them of honor!

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Epilogue

Jane Freeland,
University of Southampton

The four contributions to this seminar treat a common theme, the efforts made in Spain and Latin America in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries to recognise the 'linguistic rights' of speakers of minority or minoritized indigenous languages. Utta von Gleich's thorough overview of Latin American developments and the three contrasting case studies create a useful prism through which we glimpse some important general issues about language revitalization.

Von Gleich's paper gives a clear sense of the slow but steady development first of international and then of national legal frameworks in support of these rights. Yet, as the individual case studies show, whilst linguistic rights are conceived as a special chapter of universal human rights, realizing them in specific contexts generates very particular tensions. Perhaps the single clearest message from the cases studied in all these papers is that we can extrapolate from one to another only with great caution.

In every case examined, we see nation states at different conjunctures of their history, facing the challenge of "forging a unified national identity while simultaneously giving some recognition to national diversity" (Spitulnik 1998:165, cited in Cru). Necessarily then, these states and their several governments interpret the legal framework differently. Besides, since the ethnogenesis of minoritized groups varies from state to state and region to region, so does the nature of the diversity they must deal with. Yet, possibly prompted by the seeming universality of linguistic rights, states tend to develop a single, one-size-fits-all language policy.

The seminar opened with Miquel A. Essomba's account of Catalan revival, a very useful starting point. Although Catalan is often cited as one of the success stories of language revival (e.g. Fishman 1991), Essomba's account illustrates vividly that revival has no clear endpoint; it is an unending Sisyphean task. What is more, the boulder Sisyphus pushes and the hill up which he pushes it keep changing. Initially, Catalan seemed to have all the advantages, certainly by comparison with Latin American indigenous languages. Firstly, it competed with only one other language, and although the cultures they express do differ, they have enough in common to co-exist relatively easily in a bilingual society. Secondly, since Catalan first re-emerged through its literate forms, internal variation has not been a serious problem.

So it has been relatively straightforward to revitalize it through the formal education system. Perhaps most importantly, Catalunya has disposed of sufficient financial resources to be able to determine its own model and pace of language development, and even to help others generously.

Yet today, as Catalunya becomes increasingly multilingual through internal and external migration, Catalan faces a new struggle to maintain its strength. Perhaps one reason why the Catalan model worked so well is that its underlying ideology resonated with the "ubiquitous 'language-culture-nation nexus'" of European nation-building (Duchêne and Heller 2007, cited in Cru's paper); certainly Catalan became the focus first for regional cultural revival, and eventually for political resistance at a national level. Perhaps significantly, its most fervent promoters today are those who favour Catalan independence, which for many Catalans is a step too far. In a globalizing world of more complex identifications, it seems, this model begins to break down; Catalan may have to find a new, less exclusive social *raison d'être*.

As the following three papers show, the contrast with Latin America could not be more stark. Latin America's indigenous peoples have been so long marginalized that their cultures and languages now carry little economic or social prestige, but rather have become associated with backwardness and poverty. This is why, as Cru shows, Yucatecan Maya needs to be revalorized before it can be revitalized. However, this raises the important question: can revalorizing the language metonymically revalorize the Mayan identity, or will it merely promote an empty symbolism that enhances Mexican rather than Mayan identities?

As Cru's introduction indicates, the very multiplicity of Mexico's indigenous languages puzzled the Spanish, with their urge to unify, standardize and homogenize. Sheila Aikman's paper shows that the tendency to reduce and homogenize still persists in the IBE model currently hegemonic in Latin America. Significantly, it is IBE - 'intercultural *bilingual* education' - as though all languages were in competition with only one other, the national language. Though this is true of Yucatecan Maya, it is clearly not the case in the Amazon regions, where individual multilingualism is common. The concept of *interculturalidad* itself seems also to lump all indigenous cultures into one cultural 'other'. Yet, as Aikman points out, Amazonian indigenous people find the concept to have a Guatemalan bias that does not fit their own perceptions.

There is, too, a real danger, as Cru shows in the case of Yucatecan Maya, that *language* becomes the focus, to be reified, purified, even turned into some kind of totem, so that we lose sight of the speakers themselves. Although the declared aim of *interculturalidad* is to recognise 'culture', its point of departure is language; culture is brought in almost secondarily. This is possibly no product of the historical development of IBE from earlier bilingual education programmes whose goal was to facilitate the teaching of Spanish.

As Aikman emphasises, since IBE is schooled and institutionalized, it can often decouple language from its cultural base in the community. Indeed, attempting language revitalization through the formal education system, which served Catalan so well (and other minority languages in the western world) is not necessarily the best first step for revitalizing indigenous languages. There may be a certain justice in using education to revitalize them, since it has been a key instrument in their repression. Yet that repression has seriously limited their range, and many are still alive thanks to strong oral traditions, for which internal variation may be important. Consequently, these are not the already homogenized or standardized languages that the ubiquitous 'language-culture-nation/region/ethnic group nexus', and much of the linguistic rights discourse, tend to imagine (Pratt 1987: 49). Making them so to fit them for formal education may actually distract from reviving them in the community.

Finally, and crucially, von Gleich shows how Latin American revitalization efforts take place in conditions of often extreme poverty. Unlike the Catalans, Latin American governments are dependent on external agencies and NGOs, and so must adopt, or at best adapt, imported models imposed top-down. Yet responding to local needs ought to be a two-way, bottom-up process, which takes account of indigenous perceptions and ideologies of language, and puts at least a degree of financial control in local hands. Instead, she identifies a great gap between legal and policy frameworks and their implementation on the ground. This gap originates in the distance between the policy makers - many of whom still originate in the monolingual elites, or are strongly influenced by Western linguists and their ideologies - and the communities at whom policies are targeted.

This may all seem impossibly depressing- if the Catalans, with their economic status, their literacy and their rich resources, are finding language maintenance difficult, what hope is there for Latin American indigenous peoples? Yet wherever indigenous people do gain some control over their own education, they are beginning to develop the bottom-up systems von Gleich advocates. Aikman mentions the 'indigenous education system' - as opposed to 'education for indigenous peoples'- now being developed in Evo Morales's Bolivia. In Colombia too, indigenous communities are developing local models of *educación propia*, related to a wider *Plan de vida* (life-plan) established by each community (López, 2008:52). As López suggests, these new models arise from indigenous peoples' own critical analysis of their experience of applying and developing IBE (op.cit.: 60). Progress by trial and error is slow, but apparently inevitable. There will be much to learn from these critiques, about identities and languages and how these interact in today's shifting, multilingual and multicultural contexts.

Towards the end of his paper, Cru highlights the use by the Yucatán regional press articles of an ecological discourse that compares Maya to endangered animal species, and reminds us of some pertinent criticisms of

this metaphor. Nevertheless, he defends the 'ecological approach' to language diversity, for its potential to become the basis of a more holistic approach to sociolinguistic phenomena which takes account of the many factors that influence each multilingual situation. This, of course, depends on proper finance for the necessary research, but it certainly seems the way forward, for both Latin America and Catalunya.

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