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INTERCULTURAL TRANSLATION IN CLASSROOM-BASED MULTILINGUAL EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Abstract:

The article presents an appraisal of instances of intercultural translation whereby different processes of cross-language interaction and interpretation take place, and through which incommensurable forms are juxtaposed. The juxtaposition resulting from these practices highlights equivalence assumptions and draws attention to what remains equivocal—mainly, how intercultural translation interrogates equivalences and acknowledges equivocation as a transformative source. Viveiros de Castro (2004) introduced the concept of equivocation to include the sorts of conceptual relations that emerge in translation offering different perspectival positions. One goal is to recognize that understandings are not the same and that mutual incommensurability is what enables comparability through a difference in perspectives. Based on a one-year ethnographic study at an intercultural university in Mexico the article presents two examples of how intercultural translation works as a means and end of language socialization in classroom interactions. The first example illustrates the juxtaposition of greeting structures in the three languages and the different meanings of the word *beel* in Yucatec Maya. The second example focuses on the use of the standardized version of the question particle *wáaj* in Yucatec Maya, contrasting it to the use of question marks in Spanish and to one of its contracted forms. Both examples demonstrate how lecturers and students engage in intercultural translation as a pedagogical practice. Findings show how the study of intercultural translation informs research practice, specifically, how we come to know other ways of doing, knowing, and being in multilingual contexts.

Keywords: Intercultural translation ♦ multilingualism ♦ writing research ♦ equivocation

Multilingual classroom-based research and translation processes are highly interconnected. However, translation issues are not always identified or discussed as instances of communication in classroom-based multilingual research. Recent studies have struggled to leave behind this omission by inquiring about translation issues in qualitative research (Larkin et al. 2007; Lopez et

al. 2008; Temple & Young 2004; van Ness et al. 2010). However, most of the work centers on understanding the effects of employing interpreters and translators when collecting data in more than one language. Little attention is given to translation as part of intercultural communication processes in the classroom and how these processes influence multilingual pedagogical practice.

Scholars who focus on translation as a communicative practice have highlighted the role of language brokers in institutional exchanges tracing the implications and dimensions of the interactional translation work (García Sánchez 2018; García Sánchez & Orellana 2006; García Sánchez et al. 2011; Orellana 2009). These studies emphasize the interactional-relational aspects of brokering practices as they examine the complexities of immigrant children's role as translators and mediators in multilingual exchanges. Outstandingly, these studies contest deficit discourses about immigrant youth and their families by highlighting the complexities of multilingual interactional contexts in which translation processes are essential, such as parent-teacher conferences and exchange practices with health caregivers. Moreover, they describe how children are socialized to a particular translation framework that prioritizes equivalence and evaluates competence through dominant views of translation that seek literal understandings.

In this article, I describe translation instances as communicative practices and examine multilingual exchanges apart from standard theories that depict translation as a univocal exercise where a source text / language / culture is translated into a target text / language / culture. I focus on a particular form of intercultural translation that functions as a multidirectional movement, through which incommensurable language forms are juxtaposed to highlight equivalence assumptions and account for what remains equivocal (Borge Janetti 2017). I argue that focusing on this type of intercultural translation brings research close to an ethic of incommensurability (Tuck & Yang 2012) that reveals universalizing tendencies of multilingual language instruction that often remain hidden. The study of intercultural translation offers a lens to depict the movement between perspectives while holding a pedagogical potential to resist assimilationist approaches to language (Flores & Rosa 2015) that cover over the relational specificities of multilingual practice.

Following studies on language socialization, both as a research methodology and a theory of language, the article examines multilingual acquisition processes that incorporate research on how students become communicatively and culturally competent (Garrett & Baquedano-López 2002; Ochs & Schieffelin 1984; Ochs 2002). The article describes two classroom examples of intercultural translation as a communicative practice. Both examples are drawn from a one-year ethnographic study at the Maya Intercultural University of Quintana Roo, known as UIMQROO. These examples illustrate how individuals are socialized *through* the use of intercultural translation and *to* use intercultural translation as language practice. Therefore intercultural translation is seen both as a means and as an end of language socialization (Baquedano-López & Kattan 2007) in

multilingual and multicultural contexts where different processes of cross-language interaction and interpretation take place: a means through which members of multilingual communities learn to recognize and function in distinct sociocultural environments; and an end, in the sense that teachers and students use intercultural translation as a pedagogical practice and come to discern between different perspectival understandings in multilingual contexts.

1. Intercultural Translation: From Equivalence to Equivocation

Standard translation theories portray translation as the processes departing from a start text, or text we translate from, to a target text, or produced text (Pym 2010). In the conventional model, translators are expected to move, from one language to another, ideas and words without altering them (García-Sánchez et al. 2011). However, thinking of translation as a straightforward process removes from its analysis the multiple negotiations and directionalities that occur while generating translations. According to Pym (2010), each interpretation is both a generative act and a selection process. Translators theorize all the time while they generate and select between possible translations. These theorizations become visible when translators write about what they do in the commentary sections of a book (i.e., translator's notes), and also, as a communicative practice, when translators speak about these processes. They arise also in the case of multilingual scholars when engaging on individual and shared reflections about multilingual research and writing.

Translation theories focus on ideas of what translation is and how translation should be carried out. Jakobson (2004) in his essay on “Linguistic aspects of translation” pointed out that *equivalence in difference* was the central problem and concern in translation, given that “any comparison of two languages implies the examination of their mutual translatability” (114). Examining how *equivalence in difference* is attained or contested opens up an opportunity to think about translation beyond equivalence and to recognize extralinguistic elements involved in translation. It is an entry point to reflect on the epistemic spaces in multilingual research—about what Hanks and Severi (2014) call the epistemological space of translation: where what is known, how it is known—and made known—are at stake.

Pym (2010) explains the notion of equivalence as the idea that what we “communicate through a language can have the same value (the same worth or function) when translated into another language” (6). Equivalence theories have considered different kinds of equivalences and portrayed them under competing conceptualizations. Since the 1980s, translation studies has suggested translation as a form of intercultural communication (Sakellariou 2017). In circumstances of contact, such as multilingual research, cross-cultural translation points to the limits of equivalence. And thus, to focus on sameness proves inadequate to capture the interrelation and movement happening between source and target texts (Sakellariou 2017).

An intercultural translation may function as the contact language practice that goes beyond the pursuit of equivalence. I propose to use Viveiros de Castro's (2004) concept of *controlled equivocation* as a means to recognize that translatability does not imply ontological transparency. According to Viveiros de Castro's (2004) description of Amerindian perspectivism, translation processes may also involve the *controlled equivocation* between different perspectival positions. Instead of finding synonyms the aim of translation is that of finding what is concealed. It is about using comparative means to make visible how the world is culturally represented through different conceptual visions.

For Viveiros de Castro (2004), 'equivocation' is not seen as the failure to understand but as "a failure to understand that understandings are not the same, and that they are not related to imaginary ways of 'seeing the world' but to the real worlds that are being seen" (11). It implies moving from a negative connotation of equivocation to the examination of the conceptual relations that emerge in translation. Translation practices that address equivocation include the perspectival positions of the translated worlds. The question Viveiros de Castro asks is to know "of what world they are the point of view" (11). This recognition entails a refusal to neutralize thought from a different perspectival position. Instead of establishing knowledge relationships, we could ask: What kinds of meaning relationships does translation create? What sorts of meanings are produced? How are language forms related to social identities? The study of perspectivism in translation may provide an answer to these questions so that writing multilingual research might highlight the conceptual relations that remain obscured when concealing the equivocation.

2. Limitations of Standard Translation Practice When Writing Multilingual Research

Ethnography as translation is not merely a problem of describing a cultural form but of understanding it (Hanks 2014). This article is based on a one-year ethnographic research project about intercultural tutoring policies and practices in higher education through the analysis of language classes, tutoring activities, and events at the Maya Intercultural University of Quintana Roo (UIMQROO). The university was founded in 2007, as part of Mexico's intercultural approach for higher education (Schemelkes 2009; CGEIB 2009; UIMQROO 2010). Located in the central southern part of the Yucatán peninsula, it offers classes in three languages: Yucatec Maya, Spanish, and English. The university enables the emergence of translation as a contact language practice among students, professors, staff, and community members. Translation zones (Apter 2006) such as UIMQROO bring forth the opportunity to analyze translation as an instance of intercultural communication and contact.

While doing research, I faced translation in multiple forms, which include translation between the languages spoken and written at the University, as well as engagement in translation during multilingual interactions via descriptions, encounters, actions, and theorizations. It was during

these interactions that I became aware of a particular kind of interpretation that distinguishes between perspectives by grasping what is incommensurable among them. I realized that I was being socialized through intercultural translation to recognize how it was used as a strategic form of articulation in indigenous educational contexts. Consequently, in this article, I present two examples of intercultural translation that functioned as a means and end of language socialization. Both cases show how writing in multilingual research can be directed towards describing instances of intercultural translation in classroom interaction.

Research is not neutral to the socio-political conditions and language ideologies in multilingual contexts, mainly when framing experience through writing as part of history. There is a link that connects research and writing to the theoretical depictions of knowledge. In her book *Decolonizing Methodologies*, Smith (2012) argued how indigenous peoples' knowledge depicted by academic discourse gives the false impression of "the truth." Her work reminds us that it is precisely the act of producing knowledge that reproduces how indigenous ways of knowing are represented. Writing is fundamental to academic discourse but harmful if not critically examined.

This article is the result of the study I conducted on the indigenous land of Maya people of Yucatán. Therefore, it is essential to recognize how research and translation have participated in colonialism and the historical and epistemological fragmentation in the region. One example of this intricate relationship dates back to July 12, 1562, when the Franciscan priest Diego de Landa in charge of bringing the Catholic faith to the Maya, led one of the most violent inquisitorial processes. The *Auto de Fe* of Maní included the arrest, hanging by the wrists, whipping, and torture of many Maya noblemen, as well as the incineration of almost all their writing by deeming their content full of worship. Upon the complaints of Maya people, Landa returned to Spain for a trial. Diego de Landa wrote the *Relacion de las Cosas de Yucatán* ([1566] 2013) in his defense before the Council of the Indies. After his deposition, Landa was absolved in 1569 and appointed Bishop of Yucatán.

Despite contemporary Maya scholars' and activists' aversion to his work, Landa's written interpretation is still envisaged as one of the first historical sources of Maya history, containing catalogs of its language, culture, and writing systems. In it, Landa wrote hieroglyphs and forced them to correspond to alphabetic letters, believing that there was a one-to-one equivalence among them. Subsequent attempts to use Landa's alphabet to decipher Maya writing proved unsuccessful until the mid-20th century, when scholars confirmed that it was not an alphabet that was inscribed by the descendants of Maya rulers working for Landa. Rather, this writing system is logosyllabic and constitutes a mixed system having glyphs for whole words, logograms, and syllables that either work as the combination of a consonant and a vowel, syllabograms, or as the sound of a consonant without an accompanying vowel or phonograms (Kettunen & Helmke 2014).

Landa's description of Maya writing ends with a written example of a complete sentence in Yucatec Maya using both the Maya script and the alphabet (Figure 1, below) and its Spanish translation as "no quiero" (I do not want). Landa himself did not want to include this example as he said: "I only put it here to give a complete account of the matters of these people" ([1566] 2013: 83). Scholars believe that one of the two Maya men identified as Landa's collaborators, Juan Cocom and Gaspar Antonio Chi, wrote the sentence. The phrase in itself entails a refusal. In this regard, Tedlock (2011) argues that it constitutes a rejection in a double sense: on the one hand, a refusal to aid Landa after outlasting the destruction withstood during the *Auto de Fe* at Mani, and on the other hand, a refusal to present a sentence in a way that does not follow the orthographic conventions of Maya writing.

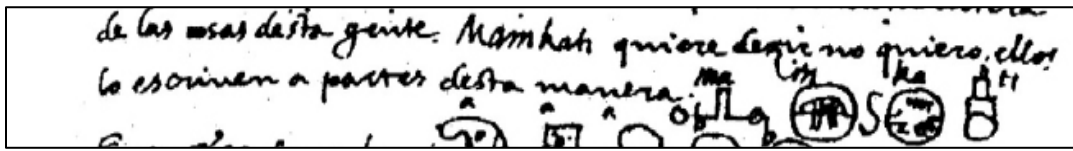


Figure 1. Excerpt from Landa's ([1566] 2013: 83) description of a sentence in Maya writing:
"de las cosas desta gente. Main kati quiere decir no quiero, ellos lo escriven a partes desta manera. ma in ka ti"
 [of the matters of these people. Main kati means I do not want, and they write it in parts this way. ma in ka ti] (my translation).

Although I grew up 90 miles away from the University, I am not Maya, and I use this example to illustrate how non-Mayan people assume to comprehend what Maya people know based on their encounters and translations, fragmenting their history and ways of knowing. And, most importantly, what happens when the sociopolitical nature of research and the history of colonialism are not addressed. Moreover, what is erased, extracted, or claimed if I fail to recognize my absences and omissions even when trying to leave behind my assumptions. I argue that writing without thinking critically about the sociohistorical position of our writing and the research methods we use could maintain and reinforce this non-innocent style of academic discourse. One of the ways I have come to think critically about my writing is to acknowledge intercultural translation as a research methodology that moves away from assuming that we can understand and represent others. Recognizing intercultural translation as a research methodology entails focusing on how we come to know other ways of knowing, doing, and being. The analysis of intercultural translation counters this colonial history, instead of imposing our meanings upon others viewpoints. This recognition implies thinking of how writing in multilingual research practice could capture the movement between these ways of seeing and understanding the world. Centering intercultural translation as a language practice allows us to describe the dynamic processes of language contact in contexts of multilingual research.

3. Intercultural Translation in the Classroom

The centering of meaning-relations is what makes of ethnography a problem of translation. Jakobson (2004) described translation as meaning-relations by saying that “the meaning of any linguistic sign is its translation into an alternative sign” (114). Hence, the description of meaning-relations in the language classroom involves inquiry into how linguistic signs are interpreted.

During my one-year ethnographic study, I focused on analyzing how translation practices were present in Spanish, English, and Yucatec Maya language classes. I was a participant observer during these classes, sometimes participating in students’ activities. These language classes were offered to students in the first and second semesters at the University as part of the standard-based curriculum that is available to all majors during the first year of instruction. However, the level and objective for each language class varied. Yucatec Maya and English are offered at an introductory level during the Fall and Spring semesters. The focus in Spanish classes was different; Spanish is used as the language of instruction for most university classes in the region and in the university, and thus introductory Spanish courses at UIMQROO focus on developing higher education literacy skills.

Translation processes varied within each language course. Translation processes in Spanish classes relied on what Jakobson called intralingual translation or rewording, that is an interpretation of the signs of a language employing other signs in the same language or metalanguage (Jakobson 2004). Therefore, in the case of Spanish language classrooms, translation instances were achieved through metalinguistic discourse, where glossing and paraphrasing make explicit reference to the language. Spanish was both the objectified language and metalanguage in these translation instances. Spanish metalinguistic discourse practices not only produced theorizations about Spanish but language theories in general.

Translation was avoided in the English classroom. It took the form of a clandestine interactional activity (Sterponi 2007), mainly when students worked in dyads or small groups solving specific language tasks. These instances relied on interlingual translation or interpretation via another language (English to Spanish or English to Yucatec Maya). Moreover, intersemiotic translation or “interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems” (Jakobson 2004: 114) masked the presence of translation in classroom activity. These processes relied on visual aids, realia, and pseudo-realialia as means to avoid using Spanish as the instructional language. For example, when introducing prepositions in English, the lecturer used pictures or classroom objects to indicate spatial relations among them. Students would repeat the names of the objects and their positions in relation to other objects even when they had no previous knowledge of the words and prepositions in English.

In the Yucatec Maya classes, translation processes relied on the objectification of Yucatec Maya via Spanish as the language of instruction. When Yucatec Maya was used as the language of instruction, translation into Spanish was provided or requested through students' questions. Translation in Yucatec Maya also took a hybrid form, relying simultaneously on interlingual and intersemiotic means. Moreover, Yucatec Maya was constantly contrasted with English and Spanish through what I am identifying as a particular type of intercultural translation instances, which identify what remains equivocal in comparison.

This paper presents two examples of intercultural translation in classrooms where Yucatec Maya is the taught language. The first example describes the juxtaposition of greeting questions in three languages. It illustrates how a multilingual person speaking Yucatec Maya, English, and Spanish makes connections between a word and a particular sociocultural identity when engaging in the intercultural translation of greeting practices. The second example focuses on the use of the question particle *wáaj* in Yucatec Maya. The case contrasts the standardized form of the particle *wáaj* in Yucatec Maya, to question marks in Spanish, to a contracted version used in different regions of the Yucatán peninsula.

Following Bakhtin's work (1986; 2011), I describe this type of intercultural translation exchange as a secondary speech genre, that is an organized form of cultural communication by which utterances come into contact through the juxtaposition of their semantic ties. This type of dialogic interchange presents semantic relationships as worldviews, viewpoints, and social voices beyond a linguistic analysis. The juxtaposition of utterances works as socialization instances through which the participants question equivalence assumptions and become aware of how incommensurable forms relate through translation. Intercultural translation understood as a meta-reflexive practice signals the equivocation between concurrent sociocultural practices.

Bakhtin (1986) conceived primary and secondary speech genres as conversational-dialogical types of which the utterance is the unit of speech communication, marking the boundaries or change between speakers. Bakhtin described speech genres as models of speech communication that constitute, through a sequence of speech behaviors, a sociocultural practice. Primary genres, also referred to as speech genres, relate an individual style and function of utterances to forms. Genres are not only composed of particular discursive features but are the guiding frameworks, procedures, and held beliefs of speech practices. Secondary speech genres differ from primary ones in that they produce utterances that present primary genres and their relations. Bakhtin posits that the referential semantic element (theme) and its expressive aspect determine the style and composition of an utterance. Moreover, utterances come into contact with one another; that is, they become dialogic through semantic ties. For example, when juxtaposing two different utterances that address the same idea or subject, these utterances will enter into a dialogic relation. Bakhtin

posited that they came into contact through a common theme: “dialogic relations are relations (semantic) among any utterances in speech communication. Any two utterances, if juxtaposed on a semantic plane (...) end up in a dialogic relationship” (1986: 117). It is important to note that this juxtaposition is different from a linguistic analysis that studies the relationships between elements of a language. According to Bakhtin, this nonlinguistic approach implies transforming each semantic relationship into worldviews, viewpoints, or social voices beyond the linguistic boundaries. What is juxtaposed is not the formal definition but the utterance’s contextual meaning.

In what follows I describe three methodological movements to build a dialogical approach for the analysis of intercultural translation as a secondary speech genre. Following Bakhtin’s definition of a secondary speech genre, the first methodological movement is to identify the theme that is being addressed by the juxtaposition of primary genres and the set of relations they introduce. This involves describing the kind of theme and relationships that are introduced through the set of juxtapositions. Therefore, questions that the first movement could answer are: how are utterances juxtaposed on a semantic plane? How are semantic relations between utterances transformed into worldviews, viewpoints, and social voices? Answers to these questions can shed light on the types of speech and linguistic features ubiquitous to intercultural translation.

Consequent to Bakhtin’s description of secondary genres as ideological genres, the second methodological movement entails identifying the ideological forces at work through intercultural translation. The analysis of ideological movement in speech communication requires to note, on the one hand, how utterances contribute to unify and centralize speech genres into a common semantic referent by exercising a centripetal force, and, on the other hand, how these expressions intensify socially diverse speech types through the dynamics of decentralization and diversification by exerting a centrifugal force.

Table 1: Ideological forces in intercultural translation

Force	Dynamics	Relations
Centripetal	Unify / Centralize	Equivalence
Centrifugal	Diversify / Decentralize	Equivocation

In Bakhtin’s sense, the centripetal forces of language or “unitary language [are the] theoretical expression of the historical processes of linguistic unification and centralization [...] forces that unite and centralize verbal-ideological thought, creating within a heteroglot national language the firm, stable linguistic nucleus of an officially recognized literary language, or else defending an already formed language from the pressure of growing heteroglossia” (2011: 270-271). Moreover,

centrifugal or stratifying language forces are those that contribute to social and historical heteroglossia or social diversity of speech types ensuring dynamic processes of decentralization and diversification.

A third possible movement is to recognize that words have a dialogic orientation. Bakhtin argued that “no living word relates to its object in a singular way” (2011: 276). There is an internal dialogic inter-orientation of the word highlighted through translation. Interaction gives a specific environment for a living word. Bakhtin argues that through dialogic interaction the word finds its object and conceptualizes its socio-verbal intelligibility. The analysis of intercultural translation brings us close to the mixing of languages and social heteroglossia as it unfolds between words and objects. And thus, the analysis of intercultural translation offers a lens on the internal dialogism of the word.

Example 1: Bix a beel

The first example illustrates a multilingual communication exchange about greeting questions in Yucatec Maya, Spanish, and English that occurred during a lecture at UIMQROO. This particular talk about greeting questions was a repeated example between professors and students across first-semester English and Yucatec Maya classes at the University. This exchange occurred during the first weeks initiating the school year. The lecturer, Professor Ángel Ucan Dzul, is a multilingual speaker who self-identifies as Maya. He has taught language classes (English and Yucatec Maya), translation, and comparative grammar for the past nine years at the University and recently published a Yucatec Maya learning method (Ucan Dzul & Ballote Blanco 2017).

The passage starts with the lecturer speaking about himself as being a speaker of English, Yucatec Maya, and Spanish. The lecturer says in lines 1-4 (see page 75, below) “Let’s assume someone here says, well I am a speaker of of English, and the other, I am a speaker of Maya, and the other of Spanish.” The first lines of the passage set up the juncture for students to imagine a multilingual environment and multilingual subjects. According to Kramsch, multilingual subjects “occupy an embodied, socially and culturally inflected third space in language” (2006: 97)—a space that affords multilingual subjects the possibility to imagine and develop a multiple sense of self.

Then, the lecturer asks in line 5 “How does each one ask for things?” Here the lecturer is asking students to locate themselves among these languages and identities as multilingual subjects. That is, to use their ability to discern among scenarios based on the possibilities of cross-linguistic suggestions. The call is accentuated further when the lecturer mentions translation as the site through which speakers would find themselves in this position, in line 7.

The extract continues by juxtaposing two greeting questions: one in Spanish, “¿Cómo estás?” and one in English, “How are you?” In lines 8 and 9, the lecturer indexes a particular linguistic identity by reiterating “One says, well eh, one says ¿Cómo estás? Yes?” - “The Spanish says ¿Cómo estás?”. This association of a particular language form to an identity is then juxtaposed to a greeting question in English in line 10, “The English is going to say, *how are you?* Right?” Through these instances, the lecturer is relating greeting questions in two languages to particular linguistic identities. Ochs (1996) argued that language socialization is, in part, the process of assigning situational meaning to a specific form. Through this example, we see how greeting questions and linguistic identities are linked.

Next, the lecturer asks students for the similar greeting question in Yucatec Maya by saying in line 11 “And the Maya?” Two students in the class provide the same answer “*Bix a beel*” (lines 12 and 13). This elicitation and response sequence typical of classroom discourse (Mehan 1979) not only requires active listening on the part of students in order to follow the interactional exchange, but also some previous knowledge of greetings in the three languages.

It is important to notice that the question “And the Maya?” (line 11) is placed side-by-side with the greeting questions provided in Spanish and Maya (lines 8-10). Through this juxtaposition, the lecturer is asking students to produce a co-occurrence relationship between these greeting examples in Spanish and English by providing the similar Yucatec Maya example of a greeting question.

Previous research on the nature and purpose of question-answer sequences in classroom activity has distinguished between “known information” and “information-seeking” questions. Mehan (1979) argued, “when a known information question is being asked, the questioner already has the answer” (285). In contrast, in information-seeking questions, the questioner does not have the answer. According to Mehan, question-answer sequences have a three-part structure that may be extended when not followed by an immediate response. It follows that the teacher may employ a series of strategies to prompt a reply, such as eliciting the reply, repeating the question, or simplifying it. Mehan argued that when asking a known information question, the interaction continues until someone produces the expected answer. A significant component of the question-answer instructional interaction is the evaluation, whereby participants in the conversation arrive at an acceptable reply. However, even when we might think that “*Bix a beel*” was the answer that the lecturer was seeking, in this particular example the lecturer does not provide an evaluation of the students’ response. Instead, the lecturer makes a series of meta-commentaries about the compared greeting questions. Through these meta-commentaries, the lecturer contrasts their meanings, exposing the equivocation.

Example 1: <i>Bix a beel</i>			
Interactant	Transcription	Translation to English	Dialogic Movements
Lecturer	Supongamos que alguien de aquí diga No pues yo soy el, yo soy hablante de de inglés, y el otro, ah yo soy hablante de maya y el otro de español. Bien tienen tres ¿Cómo piden las cosas cada quién? El el como se llama Una traducción se va a encontrar con esto uno dice, bueno eh, uno dice, ¿ <i>Cómo estás?</i> ¿Sí? El español dice, ¿ <i>Cómo estás?</i> El el inglés va a decir, <i>How are you?</i> ¿No? ¿Y el maya? <i>Bix a beel</i>	1 Let's assume someone here says 2 well I am a speaker of of English 3 and the other, ah I am a speaker of Maya 4 and the other of Spanish. Good you have three 5 How does each one ask for things? 6 The the what is the name 7 A translation will deal with this 8 one says, well eh, one says ¿ <i>Cómo estás?</i> Yes? 9 The Spanish says, ¿ <i>Cómo estás?</i> 10 The English is going to say, <i>How are you?</i> Right? 11 And the Maya? 12 <i>Bix a beel</i>	Juxtaposition of social identities English, Yucatec Maya, and Spanish Centripetal Forces Monoglossic language ideology Juxtaposition of speech genres Greetings questions in Spanish, Yucatec Maya, and English
Student 1	<i>Bix a beel</i>	13 <i>Bix a beel</i>	
Student 2	<i>Bix a beel</i>	14 <i>Bix a beel</i>	
Lecturer	Ahora si, si vamos en ¿ <i>Cómo estás?</i> Dices, bueno estoy bien, ¿no? <i>How are you?</i> ¿no? Es el el I am	15 You say, well I am ok, right? 16 <i>How are you?</i> ¿right? 17 Is the the I am	
Student 3	Tiene equivalencia en en en español ¿y en Maya? <i>Bix a beel</i> , dicen	18 It has equivalence in in in Spanish 19 And in Maya? <i>Bix a beel</i> , you say	Monoglossic Language Ideology Spanish/English Equivalence
Lecturer	<i>Bix a beel</i> Si se dan cuenta el, uno es el estar en en como dice, en español pues vamos a trabajar el cómo estás en tu, en tu persona En maya te va a decir cómo está pero tu camino, dice, ¿no? Aunque <i>beel</i> tiene dos significados <i>Beel</i> le tienen puesto toro ¿no? ¿no? ¿ <i>Cómo está tu toro?</i> Me dice, ¿no? Que (...) ¿ <i>Cómo está tu toro?</i> Pues mi toro yo no soy, no soy vaquero, ¿no? Bien	20 <i>Bix a beel</i> 21 If you notice the, one is to be in in 22 how do you say, in Spanish, because we are going to work 23 how are you in your, in your person 24 In Maya it will say how is 25 but your path, says, right? 26 Although <i>beel</i> has two meanings 27 <i>Beel</i> has been put as bull right? right? 28 <i>How is your bull?</i> It tells me, right? 29 What (...) <i>How is your bull?</i> Well my bull 30 I am not, I am not a cowboy, right? Good	Centrifugal Forces Heteroglossic language ideology Centrifugal Forces Word Dialogism (<i>Beel</i> as <i>bull</i>) Juxtaposition of Word Dialogism to the Discursive Genre
Student 4	<i>Beel</i> es cochino	31 <i>Beel</i> is pig	Word Dialogism (<i>Beel</i> as <i>pig</i>)
Lecturer	Dicen <i>beel</i> ¿No? Ah no <i>beel</i> es verraco, ¿no? No es verraco, cochino	32 You say <i>beel</i> , right? 33 Ah no <i>Beel</i> is boar, right? 34 Is not boar, pig	Word Dialogism (<i>Beel</i> as <i>boar</i>)
Student 4	Ah ¿ <i>Cómo está tu cochino?</i> No pues no, ni cochino soy, ¿no? Bien entonces si se dan cuenta son distintas las formas de comunicación pero todas llevan hacia una idea preguntar el estado de ánimo de la persona uno es de la persona y el otro se enfoca en lo que es el camino quizás espiritual o quizás que corre el humano	35 Ah, <i>how is your pig?</i> 36 No well no, I am not a pig, right? 37 Well then if you notice 38 the communication forms are different 39 but they all lead to one idea 40 to ask about a person's mood 41 one is about the person and the other focuses 42 on what is maybe spiritual path 43 or maybe what the human goes through	Juxtaposition of Word Dialogism to the Speech Genre Centrifugal Forces Heteroglossic language ideology Centrifugal Forces Heteroglossic language ideology Word Dialogism (<i>Beel</i> as <i>spiritual path</i> or <i>what the human goes through</i>)

Looking at the excerpt we see how the lecturer contrasts the meaning of Spanish and Yucatec Maya greeting questions by saying in lines 21 to 25: “if you notice the, one is to be in in, how do you say, in Spanish, well we are going to work how are you in your, in your person, in Maya it will say how is but your path...” Through these meta-commentaries, the lecturer initiates a dialogic exploration of the different perspectives and understandings of these greeting questions. These meta-commentaries also denote possible connotations of actual worlds and move away from assuming a coincidence of these greeting questions. I argue that these meta-commentaries are dialogic because of how they disrupt an assumed equivalence and function as thinking devices that generate new meanings and understandings between speech genres.

The lecturer continues by recognizing that words like “*beel*” in Yucatec Maya have a dialogic orientation. The lecturer addresses the dialogic inter-orientation of the word *beel* when he says in lines 26 and 27, “although *beel* has two meanings *beel* has been put as bull right? Right?” He then accepts the other meanings of the word *beel* given by student 4 in lines 31 and 34. He then actually contrasts the meaning of the word *beel* to bull by translating the greeting question in Maya provided by students “*Bix a beel*” (lines 12 and 13) to Spanish “¿*Cómo está tu toro?*” (line 28). Further, he contends that “Well my bull I am not, I am not a cowboy, right?” (lines 29 and 30). Through this passage (lines 18-21) the lecturer recognizes that interaction creates a specific

environment for a living word. Bakhtin argues that, through dialogic interaction, the word finds its object and conceptualizes its socio-verbal intelligibility.

This dialogic process implies that each object has its history of acts of recognition, or what he describes as “the socially heteroglot multiplicity of names, definitions and value judgments” (Bakhtin 2011: 278). The analysis of intercultural translation brings us up close to the mixing of languages and social heteroglossia as it unfolds between words and objects, casting light into the shadows of the dialogic inter-orientation *through* and *to* the internal dialogism of a word. Moreover, it points to the expressive factors of the words and greeting questions. Emotion, as a situated activity, is embodied through the practices adopted by participants to take up stances toward the activity—in this case, the translation of each greeting question. However, not all affective displays take the form of emotional words. Emotion, without vocabulary, is displayed through emphatic speech styles such as the one included in the translation “How is your bull?” (line 20), and through the statement “Well my bull I am not, I am not a cowboy.”

In their review of language socialization research, Garrett and Baquedano-López (2002) posited that through the processes of socialization, cultural knowledge is communicated, instantiated, and reproduced, but also negotiated, contested, and transformed. What happens next is related to this claim, as one of the students in the classroom produces a clarifying statement regarding the meaning of the Yucatec Maya word *beel*. The student says, “*Beel* is pig” (line 31) and “Is not boar, pig” (line 34) during the interaction. The student’s clarification is accompanied by a turn from the lecturer, recognizing that in effect the other meaning of the word “*beel*” is not bull but boar (lines 32 and 33), but after the student’s insistence in line 25, the lecturer transforms his translation of the greeting question in Yucatec Maya from “*how is your bull?*” (line 28) to “*ah how is your pig?*” (line 35). These moment-to-moment responses are considered by language socialization literature as adaptation sequences and are part of the inter-dialogical orientation of the word. Baquedano-López, Solís and Kattan define adaptation sequences as the “set of improvisational and strategic processes carried out by teachers and students as they negotiate tensions arising from ongoing activity” (2005: 2). In the example, the lecturer adapts his translation to include the understanding of the word *beel* provided by the student.

The lecturer returns to signal the dialogic nature of language by commenting how each greeting question has a particular meaning, in lines 37 and 38, “well then if you notice the communication forms are different.” Despite making this distinction, the lecturer connects all greeting questions to a theme by stating in lines 39-40 that “but they all lead to one idea to ask about a person’s mood.” However, in the case of Spanish and Yucatec Maya this state has a different object. In the case of Spanish or English, the focus is on the person (line 41), and in the case of Yucatec Maya,

he argues, it is perhaps related more to the spiritual path or what the human goes through (lines 42 and 43).

Example 2: Question Particle *Wáaj*

The next communication exchange also focuses on a question form in Yucatec Maya. The particle *wáaj* is one of the forms used to mark questions. The standard norms for writing the Yucatec Maya language, published in 2014 by the *Instituto Nacional de Lenguas Indígenas* (National Indigenous Languages Institute, better known by its acronym INALI), include the question particle *wáaj* along with three other question forms. Yucatec Maya does not use question marks for writing questions. There are specific words used to formulate questions. One of the words used to express questions is the word *bix* (for *how*), included in Example 1: *Bix a beel*. Now I turn to another question form exemplified through the use of the question particle *wáaj*. According to the standard norm for Yucatec Maya, *wáaj* can be situated in the middle or at the end, but never at the beginning when articulating a question.

The communication exchange occurred during the conversation section of a second level Yucatec Maya class. The lecturer, Hilario Poot Cahun, studied for his Bachelor's degree in Language and Culture at the University from 2008-2012 and finished the core courses of the Master's degree in Intercultural Education offered by the University. He started to work as a language teacher three months after his graduation, in Spring 2013, and has taught Yucatec Maya, translation, and interpretation courses for the past five years. He is from Tihosuco, one of the communities mentioned in the example.

The whole class exchange on the question particle *wáaj* lasted for over nine minutes, followed by an exercise where students had to work in pairs using the expressions that were previously learned. The focus on the question particle *wáaj* emerged when the lecturer explained to students how to transform a statement into a question by adding the question particle *wáaj*.

The excerpt starts with the lecturer clarifying that there is no rule of where the question particle *wáaj* should go in a sentence (lines 1 and 2, see page 78, below). His remarks were followed by a meaning-seeking question from a student: "Does *wáaj* have any meaning or is it just to mark a question?" (lines 3 and 4). The student's question is already providing an answer. That is, that the particle *wáaj* is used to mark a question. In the next turn (line 5), the lecturer's first impulse is to repeat the last part of the student's question. However, he rephrases his statement to say that *wáaj* is used so as not to put a question mark (line 5 and 6).

The exchange between the lecturer and the student reveals that the question particle *wáaj* has no equivalent translation in Spanish. However, the juxtaposition of literacy practice in Yucatec Maya,

the use of the question particle *wáaj*, and one particular literacy practice in Spanish, the use of question marks, shapes a relationship between the two literacy practices. A relation that does not rely on having an equivalent meaning of *wáaj* in Spanish but on the function the question particle has when compared to the use of question marks. Translation processes transform the equivocation between the forms into a commensurable relationship by examining the unique functions of these literacy practices for writing questions in two languages.

The excerpt continues with the lecturer contrasting the use of *wáaj* as part of the academic standard for Yucatec Maya to the contracted form that questions take for different speakers and regions of the Yucatán peninsula. By stating “There is, for example, if you go with a grandpa [elder], for example; you will hear him say here, that he would contract it with just one *a*” (lines 9-11). In this manner, the lecturer opens up space for students to valorize the nonstandard varieties of Yucatec Maya and the practices that occur outside the university context. This critical examination on the part of the lecturer is further accentuated when he juxtaposes the use of *wáaj* to its contracted form in lines 13-16 and again in lines 18-21.

It is important to note that with the juxtaposition of utterances, *ka báaxtik wáaj basquet* (Do you play basketball?), and *ka báatika basquet tuláakal miercoles* (Do you play basketball every Wednesday?), in lines 19 and 21, the lecturer is relating the utterance to what a Maya speaker would or would not say.

Example 2: Question Particle <i>Wáaj</i>			
Participant	Transcription	Translation to English	Dialogic Movements
Lecturer	Como les dije no hay una regla que nos diga dónde tiene que ir <i>wáaj</i> en la norma	1 As I told you there is no rule that says where <i>wáaj</i> goes in the norm	Centripetal Forces Monoglossic language ideology Translation
Student	¿Tiene algún significado <i>wáaj</i> o sólo es para marcar que es pregunta?	2 <i>wáaj</i> goes in the norm 3 Does <i>wáaj</i> have any meaning or is it just to mark a question?	
Lecturer	es para mar es para no poner el	4	
Student	<i>signo de interrogación</i>	5 Is to mar is for not to put the	
Lecturer	<i>de interrogación</i> pero también en Maya se contrae esto se contrae absolutamente	6 <i>signo de interrogación</i> 7 <i>de interrogación</i> but also in Maya it contracts this is contracted absolutely	Juxtaposition of literacy practices In Spanish and Yucatec Maya
	Hay, por ejemplo, si vas con un abuelito, por ejemplo: lo vas a escuchar que va a decir aquí, que lo va a contraer con sólo una <i>a</i>	8 9 There is, for example, if you go with a grandpa, for example; you will hear him say here, that he would contract it with just one <i>a</i>	
	Así nada más lo va a decir	10 11 just like that he would say it	
	<i>Ka báaxtika basquet tuláakal miercoles</i>	12 13 <i>Ka báaxtika basquet tuláakal miercoles</i>	
	así se lo van a escribir que tenga la <i>a</i> ,	14 that is how are going to write it having an <i>a</i> ,	Juxtaposition of speech genres in Yucatec Maya The use of <i>wáaj</i> or its contracted form with an <i>a</i>
	<i>Ka báaxtika</i> en lugar de que diga	15 <i>Ka báaxtika</i> instead of saying it	
	van a escuchar la <i>a</i> que es el <i>wáaj</i> contraído no sé si han escuchado a algún mayahablante	16 You will hear the <i>a</i> that is the contracted <i>wáaj</i> 17 I do not know if you have heard any Maya speaker	
	En lugar que diga	18 Instead of saying	
	<i>Ka báaxtik wáaj basquet</i>	19 <i>Ka báaxtik wáaj basquet</i>	Maya speakers Juxtaposition of social identities
	pues va a decir	20 well is going to say	
	<i>ka báaxtika basquet tuláakal miercoles</i>	21 <i>ka báaxtika basquet tuláakal miercoles</i>	
	Van a escuchar la <i>a</i> y les van a decir	22 You will hear the <i>a</i> and they will tell you	
	¿Pero de dónde salió?	23 But where did it come from?	Use of <i>wáaj</i> in Central Yucatán and Campeche
	Es el <i>wáaj</i> que se contrae	24 Is the <i>wáaj</i> that is contracted	
	se contrae porque los mayahablantes nunca lo dicen	25 it is contracted because Maya speakers never say it	
	Creo que por ahí de Yucatán, en el centro de Yucatán y en Campeche	26 I believe out there in Yucatán, in the center of Yucatán and in Campeche	
	si se escucha mucho el <i>wáaj</i> .	27 yes you hear a lot the <i>wáaj</i>	Use of <i>wáaj</i> in Morelos
	Yo aquí en Morelos aprendí a decir por las clases.	28 I learned here in Morelos to say it because of the classes.	
	En Tihosuco no decimos el <i>wáaj</i>	29 In Tihosuco we do not say the <i>wáaj</i>	
	y de ahí lo empezamos a usar también con mis compañeros de cuarto	30 and from there we started using it with my roommates	
	como de broma pero se nos quedó.	31 as a joke but it stayed with us.	Centrifugal Forces Heteroglossic language ideology
	Ahora sí lo digo cuando hablo con mis compañeros mayahablantes.	32 Now I say it when I speak with my Maya speaker comrades	
	En Tihosuco, en Tepich, incluso aquí en Morelos.	33 In Tihosuco, in Tepich, even here in Morelos.	
	No, aquí en Morelos sí se usa mucho el <i>wáaj</i> .	34 No, here in Morelos the <i>wáaj</i> is used a lot	
	Digo porque mis vecinos ahí donde rento hablan Maya y lo dicen cuando me preguntan algo dicen el	35 I say it because of my neighbors from where I rent who speak Maya and say it when they ask me	Juxtaposition of speech genres in Yucatec Maya from Morelos and Tihosuco
	<i>wáaj</i> , <i>jbinech wáaj</i> , <i>jbinech wáaj k'i'iwik</i>	36 something they say the <i>wáaj</i> , <i>jbinech wáaj</i> , <i>jbinech wáaj k'i'iwik</i> and in Maya in Tihosuco they would say <i>jbinecha k'i'iwik</i> , you would just hear the <i>a</i> , <i>jbinecha k'i'iwik</i> .	
	y en Maya en Tihosuco van a decir	37	
	<i>jbinecha k'i'iwik</i> , solo van a escuchar el <i>a</i> , <i>jbinecha k'i'iwik</i> .	38	

After contrasting these two forms the lecturer states in lines 24 and 25, “Is the *wáaj* that is contracted it is contracted because Maya speakers never say it.” This statement inquires about what a Maya speaker does not do in relation to the standard form of *wáaj* taught in university classrooms. Moreover, it engages a pedagogic dynamic that does not conform to monoglossic norms and opens up the space for fluid linguistic practices.

This metapragmatic practice on the part of the lecturer is then contextualized by spatially locating the regions in the Yucatán Peninsula where Maya speakers use the question particle *wáaj* or its contracted form. The lecturer says, “I believe out there in Yucatán, in the center of Yucatán and in Campeche yes you hear a lot the *wáaj*” (lines 26-28). By stating “out there,” the lecturer makes the use of question particle *wáaj* a remote practice from another Maya region in the Yucatán: a literacy practice that he learned to use because of the university classes (lines 29-30), a practice that is not used in his hometown as he says, “In Tihosuco we do not say *wáaj*” (line 31). It is a practice that stayed with him after making jokes with his roommates (lines 32-34), a new form of asking questions that he now uses with his colleagues at the University (lines 35-36).

With these statements, the lecturer raises critical awareness of different locations for speech and literacy practices. Moreover, he draws attention to how these practices redefine the linguistic identity of a Maya speaker who uses the standard and non-standard form when asking a question. In closing, the lecturer juxtaposes these communicative behaviors and locations by presenting how the same question is asked in Morelos (the location of the University), and his hometown Tihosuco. He comments: “I say it because of my neighbors from where I rent who speak Maya and say it when they ask me something they say the *wáaj*, *jbinech wáaj*, *jbinech wáaj k’íiwik*” (lines 39-41). He then adds what people in his hometown would say, stating “and in Maya in Tihosuco they would say *jbinecha k’íiwik* you would just hear the *a*, *jbinecha k’íiwik*” (lines 49-52).

Developing critical language awareness about the different locations where Yucatec Maya is spoken is of paramount importance, as the University is located in the central southern part of the Yucatán peninsula, Mexico. In the academic year 2017-2018, students migrated from more than 116 Maya communities distributed across five states. Migration contexts such as UIMQROO bring the opportunity to analyze translation as part of critical language awareness. In general, intercultural translation was a constant pedagogical practice for communication in Yucatec Maya classes. Examples focused on different cultural forms and their relationship to Maya literacy practice. Students’ participation and responses to intercultural translation varied in the extent to which they gave space for multiple understandings to be part of their lives. For example, in the exercise that followed the introduction of the question particle *wáaj*, the student whom I worked with decided to use the contracted version of *wáaj* as she was from a neighboring community

where this variant is used, at the same time that she became aware of the standard form taught at the University.

Conclusion

In this article, I described intercultural translation as a contact language practice that is present in multilingual research. Intercultural translation is still an understudied contact art (Pratt 1991), because of how the processes of living interaction in language discourse are studied focusing on linguistic aspects, more than the dialogical inter-communication processes encountered in translation. The study of intercultural translation brings forth an emphasis on how we come to know other ways of doing, understanding, and being, and centers on the dynamic processes of language contact in multilingual contexts. The article introduced a particular form of intercultural translation that functions as a contact language practice where different means of cross-language interaction and interpretation take place.

I revised Mikhail Bakhtin's reflection on discourse in the novel to unpack the dialogized nature of this type of intercultural translation. Following his work, I proposed to consider these instances as secondary speech genres. A secondary speech genre is a form of organized cultural communication by which utterances come into contact through the juxtaposition of their semantic ties. This dialogic interchange presents semantic relationships as worldviews, viewpoints, and social voices beyond a linguistic analysis. Moreover, the article highlighted how centripetal and centrifugal ideological forces are linked to the recognition of the dialogic inter-orientation of words, themes, and literacy practices in translation.

The study, grounded in a one-year ethnographic research endeavor, is the result of the sustained observation and analysis of language classes (Yucatec Maya, Spanish, and English) at the Maya Intercultural University of Quintana Roo (UIMQROO). In this article, I have presented two examples to envisage a way to approach this dialogic genre and to show how students are socialized through, and into the use of intercultural translation as communicative practice. The first example describes a communication exchange about greetings in Yucatec Maya, Spanish, and English. The study examined the juxtaposition of greeting structures in the three languages and the different meanings of the word *beel* in Yucatec Maya. The analysis showed how students learn to recognize and function in distinct language domains and how translation is used to differentiate Yucatec Maya from the two hegemonic languages spoken at the University. The second example focused on the use of the question particle *wáaj* in Yucatec Maya. It contrasted the use of question marks in Spanish to the standardized form and a contracted version in Yucatec Maya. The second example described translation instances that focus on the particularities of Yucatec Maya in their communities. Takeaways from this example are essential to critical language awareness and

language revitalization design, but are sometimes set aside by standard processes of language normalization and institutionalization.

The implications of the analysis of intercultural translation for classroom-based multilingual educational research are manifold. Overall the dialogic nature of intercultural translation facilitates a space within multilingual research through which the researcher may capture the movement between different ways of seeing and understanding the word and the world (Freire & Macedo 1987). It is an ethical practice against representing others. Centering intercultural translation as a unit of analysis in multilingual research practice within classrooms and institutions facilitates describing the processes of language contact that are present in educational contexts. The analysis of cross-cultural interpretation processes like intercultural translation may contribute to the study of referential meanings by identifying how communicative practices indicate or abstract them. Intercultural translation as a discursive contact practice is full of diverse rhetorical forms of social dialogue that remain overshadowed each time we do not attend to living diversity and dialogic quality.

Finally, intercultural translation is also a form of pedagogic communication that opens up space for critical awareness and engagement as a learning experience—a form of theoretical practice that focuses on interpretation processes without seeking to own speech. Instead, intercultural translation offers the possibility to recognize the varied forms of expression that coexist in multilingual contexts. As a pedagogical process, intercultural communication goes beyond linguistic description to promote dialogue about speech as part of classroom communication. The incorporation of intercultural translation in pedagogy forges a space to learn about alternative cultural forms and understandings of language.

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