Liturgy and Language Change:
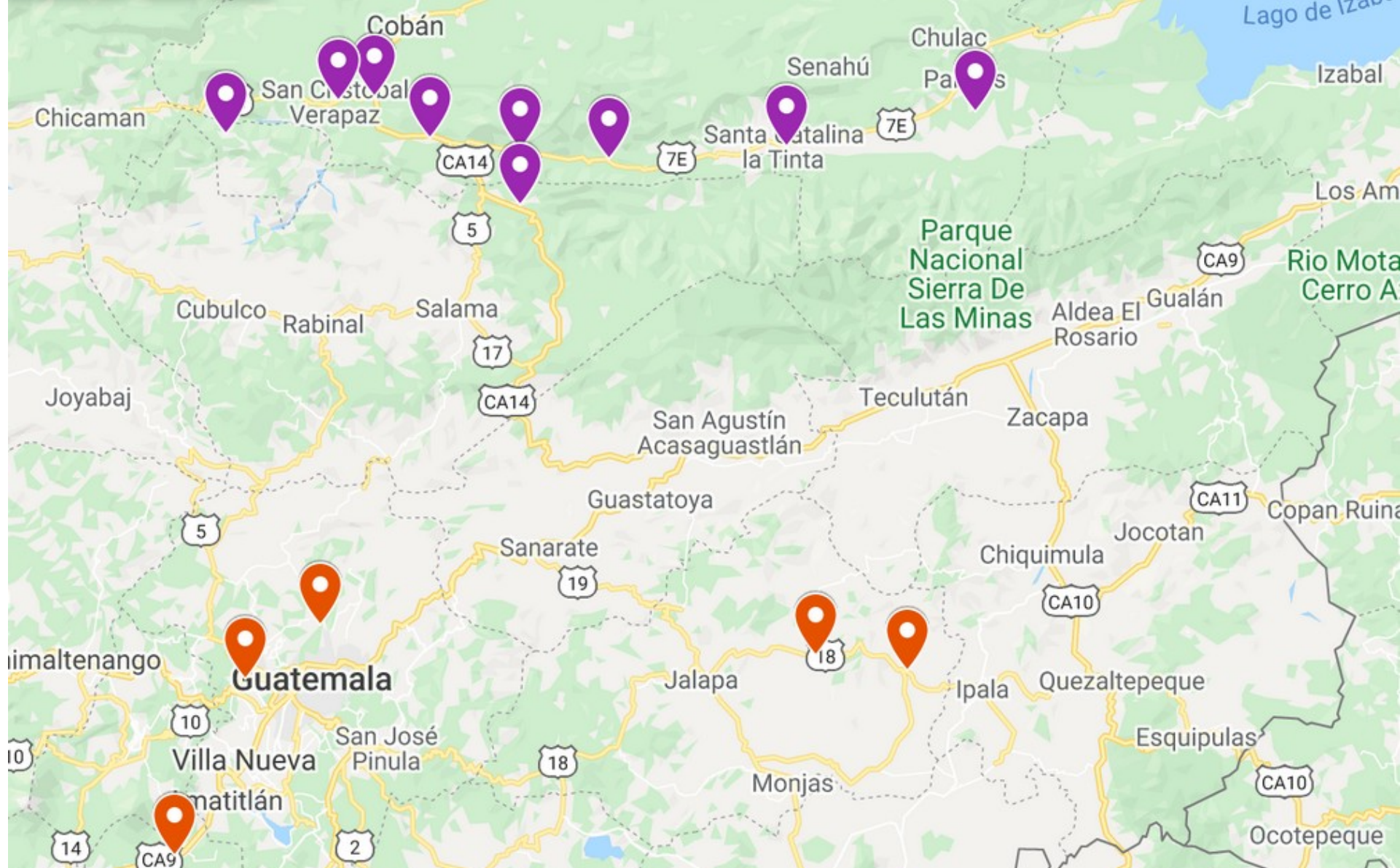## Translated ritual speech in Colonial Poqom

James Tandy
NARNiHS Research Incubator
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Overview

- Background on Colonial Poqom

- Using parallel liturgical texts to study change

- Case studies

  - Future proclitic *a*=

  - Definite article *i*

- Challenges and opportunities of using liturgy

Poqom background

- Two closely related languages:
  - Poqomchi' (central Guatemala)
  - Poqomam (southeast, around Guatemala City)

Poqom background

- Colonized by Spanish in 1530s
  - Catholic (mostly Dominican) friars learned Mayan languages to teach doctrine and stamp out heresies
  - Prolific doctrinal writing/translation into Poqom

Poqom background

- More detailed background on Colonial Poqom:
  - Vinogradov (2019)
  - My 2023 NARNiHS presentation (link)
- Available transcriptions of Colonial Poqom:
  - Colonial Poqom on my website

Colonial Poqom Manuscript Corpus

- Spans colonial to postcolonial period
  - c. 1600 to 1875
  - Translated and original doctrinal works
  - One document (Título de Santa Ana) by native speakers
- Many monolingual texts
  - Some have Spanish interlinear translation

Colonial Poqom Manuscript Corpus

- Just over 4,500 manuscript pages

	Poqomchi'	Poqomam	Total
Grammars	4	18	22
Dictionaries	324	1223	1547
Texts	2774	212	2986
Total	3102	1453	**4555**

- Not including published grammars

Colonial Poqom Manuscript Corpus

- Transcription status
  - Grammars: **100%** transcribed
  - Dictionaries: **published** (but out of print)
    - Acuña (1991), Feldman (2004)
  - Texts: About **18%** transcribed (~550 of 2,986 pages)

Colonial Poqom Manuscript Corpus

- Subgenres of religious texts
  - Sermons
  - Saints' lives
  - Long-form doctrinal treatises
  - Devotional works
  - Liturgy

Colonial Poqom Manuscript Corpus

- Challenges
  - Transcription bottleneck
  - Mostly monolingual
  - Authorship questions
  - Limited genres

Colonial Poqom Manuscript Corpus

- Challenges → Reasons to study liturgy

  - Transcription bottleneck

  - Mostly monolingual

  - Authorship questions

  - Limited genres

Colonial Poqom Manuscript Corpus

- Challenges → Reasons to study liturgy
  - Transcription bottleneck → **Short texts**
  - Mostly monolingual
  - Authorship questions
  - Limited genres

Colonial Poqom Manuscript Corpus

- Challenges → Reasons to study liturgy
  - Transcription bottleneck → **Short texts**
  - Mostly monolingual → **Source text is known**
  - Authorship questions
  - Limited genres

Colonial Poqom Manuscript Corpus

- Challenges → Reasons to study liturgy
  - Transcription bottleneck → **Short texts**
  - Mostly monolingual → **Source text is known**
  - Authorship questions → **Fewer external factors**
  - Limited genres

Colonial Poqom Manuscript Corpus

- Challenges → Reasons to study liturgy
  - Transcription bottleneck → **Short texts**
  - Mostly monolingual → **Source text is known**
  - Authorship questions → **Fewer external factors**
  - Limited genres → **Content held constant**

Colonial Poqom Manuscript Corpus

- Challenges → Reasons to study liturgy

  – Transcription bottleneck → **Short texts**

  – Mostly monolingual → **Source text is known**

  – Authorship questions → **Fewer external factors**

  – Limited genres → **Content held constant**

- I will discuss limitations later

Colonial Poqom liturgy

- Sources used here:
  - Aguilar (1741) *Libro en pocomchi y kekchi* (BB68)
  - Anonymous (1775-1825) *Sermonario* (GG234)
  - Anonymous (1810) *Doctrina christiana* (BB66)
  - Villacorta (1875) *Doctrina christiana* (BB81)

Colonial Poqom liturgy

- Present in all four
  - Pater noster
  - Ave Maria
  - El Credo (Apostles' Creed)
- Present in all but GG234
  - Todo fiel Christiano
  - Persignare (Sign of the Cross)
  - Ten Commandments

Case studies

- Focusing on Poqomchi'
    - more examples of liturgy than in Poqomam
        - Poqomam: only one Pater noster (Gage 1648)
    - texts are more comparable

Case studies

- Future proclitic *a*=
  - Common in Colonial Poqomchi'
  - Restricted in modern Poqomchi' (Vinogradov 2021: 224)
- Definite article *i*
  - Generalization: Mayan languages innovated definite articles post-contact (Nora England, p.c.)

Case studies

- How to measure change over time
  - Raw frequency across whole corpus?
    - Usage of future (or definite) varies by topic
  - Compare across all future (or definite) contexts?
    - Requires identifying those contexts
    - Possible circularity
  - Liturgy lets us compare apples to apples
    - Multiple copies of same text

Case studies: Method

- Arranged the liturgies phrase-by-phrase

- Highlighted morphemes in question

- Coded each phrase for presence of morpheme

  - 1 for present, 0 for absent

  - N if absent for unrelated reason (changed wording)

  - x for whole phrase if none have it

- Partial table for *a=*:

```
Pater noster

x

x

1111

1111

1100

1000

x

x

1111

x
```

Future *a*=

- 20 comparison points
  - i.e. at least one manuscript used *a*= in that phrase
- 7 excluded; wording changed more drastically
  - e.g., later manuscript altogether omits the verb that *a*= attached to

Future *a*=

- 9 of 13: all manuscripts have *a*=

BB68   **a**<u>chaloh</u> avihauric,

GG234   **A**<u>chaloƐ</u>tah avihauric,

BB66   **a**<u> chaloc</u>tah auihauric

BB81   **a**<u> chaloc</u>tah aui hauric

    ***a**=chal-oq (taj) aw-ijaawriik*

    FUT=come-IRR (IRR) ERG.2S-kingdom

    'Thy kingdom <u>come</u>'

Future *a*=

- 3 of 13: BB66 and BB81 lack *a*=

BB68   **A**<u>chayeutah</u> yunac ycal ical ca va

GG234   **A**<u>chayeutah</u> Ɛque yunac eƐal eƐal Ɛava,

BB66   <u>chayeutah</u> qui yunac ecal ecal Caua

BB81   Ca ua ecal ecal <u>cha yeu tah</u> que yunac

     (***a=***)<u>*ch-a-yeew taj*</u> *...*

     (**FUT=**)IMP-ERG.2S-give IRR ...

     '<u>Give</u> us this day our daily bread'

Future *a*=

- 3 of 13: BB66 and BB81 lack *a*=

BB68   **A**chazachtah camac,

GG234   chazach tah Ɛamac

BB66   chazachtah camac

BB81   chazach tah ca mac

(**a=)**ch-a-sach taj qa-mahk

FUT=IMP-ERG.2S-lose IRR ERG.1P-fault

'Forgive us our trespasses'

Future *a=*

- 3 of 13: BB66 and BB81 lack *a=*

BB68 in ptiano, **A**quin quioc naquin cha Ɛuoℇ,

GG234   (no copy)

BB66 Yn Christiano quin cooc na quinChac uoc,

BB81 in cristiano quin cok naquin chacuoc

    *... (**a=**)k-in-k(i)-oq ...*

    ... (**FUT=**)INC-ABS.1S-say-IRR ...

    '"I am a Christian," I will say when I answer'

Future *a*=

- 1 of 13: Only GG234 lacks *a*=

BB68 **A**chazil cah̲tah Dios chi cana, oh ahmac

GG234   chazilcah tah Dios chiɛana oh ahmac.

BB66 **a** chazilcah tah y Dios chi cana oh ahmac

BB81 **a** elazilcah [*sic*] tac y Dios chica na oh ah mac

   (a=)ch-a-silk-aj tah ...

   (**FUT=**)IMP-Erg.2s-pray-TR IRR ...

   'Pray to God for us sinners'

Future *a*=

- *a*= becomes less common after 1741

- Does not disappear – still frequent in 1875

  - Today, restricted to first person optative (Vinogradov 2021: 224)

Definite article *i*

- 22 comparison points

- 1 excluded; wording changed more drastically

Definite article *i*

- 16 of 21: BB66 and BB81 both have *i*

BB68   riparic chiuach <u>Crus</u>

    GG234   xriparic chi vach <u>Cruz</u>,

    BB66   Yx riparic chuach **y** <u>Cruz</u>,

    BB81   ix riparic chuach **y** <u>Santa Crus</u>.

    *(x-)rip-ar-ik ch(i)-wach (**i**) Cruz*

    (COM-)stretch-PAS-IND to-face (**DET**<u>) Cross</u>

    'He was stretched out upon <u>the Cross</u>'

Definite article *i*

- 5 of 21: Only BB81 has *i*

BB68   Nanucohom <u>Dios Ahaubes</u>

   GG234   Nanucohom xahinah <u>Dios Ahaubez</u>

   BB66   Nanucohom <u>Dios Ahabez</u>,

   BB81   Nanucohom **y** <u>Dios Ahabez</u>

   *na-nu-koj-om (**i**) Dios Ajaaw-b'ees*

   FUT-ERG.1S-believe-NOM (**DET**) God father-ABS

   'I believe in <u>God the Father</u>'

Definite article *i*

- Very consistent pattern
  - Oldest manuscripts (BB68, GG234) never use *i*
  - Frequent in later manuscripts
  - Ubiquitous in modern day

Challenges, revisited

- Several limitations of using liturgy as data
    - Unknown authorship
    - Possibility of archaisms
    - Limited variation by author/genre
    - Constrained sample size

Challenges, revisited

- Authorship questions

  - How fluent were the translators?

  - Do these all belong to the same manuscript tradition?

  - Could they be independent re-translations?

Manuscript traditions

- Other versions of Pater noster
  - Poqomam version in Gage (1648)
    - Closely related language, but different convent
  - Modern Poqomchi' translations
    - 2009 Nazarene version
    - 2012 Wycliffe Bible Translators
    - 2013 Catholic version

Manuscript traditions

- (BB 68) Achazachtah camac
- (GG 234) chazach tah Ɛamac
- (BB 66) chazachtah camac
- (BB 81) Chazach tah ca mac
- (Poqomam - Gage) Naçachta camac
- (Catholic) Chakuy chasach ta i qamahk
- (Nazarene) Chakuy ta naq i qamahk ruuk' i ma' holohik taj inqa'an
- (Wycliffe) qAjaaw Dios, chakuy wo' cho qamahk

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- (Wycliffe) qAjaaw Dios, chakuy wo' cho qamahk

2016 Catholic translation is similar to colonial texts; both Protestant translations are very different

Challenges, revisited

- Authorship questions
  - The Poqomchi' colonial documents do seem to be in the same manuscript tradition
  - Nearly word-for-word consistency among colonial documents compared to modern translations
  - May not be able to answer the question of fluency

Challenges, revisited

- Archaisms?
  - Common for liturgy to contain archaisms
    - "Our Father, which art in heaven..."
  - Text may be copied from earlier source without updating its wording
  - May not reflect vernacular

Challenges, revisited

- Archaisms?
  - The four versions **do** show consistent change over time
  - Shows translator's awareness of language change

Challenges, revisited

- Constrained sample size/limited genres

  – Whole corpus search is more robust

  – Liturgy minimizes inter-speaker variation (by definition)

  – Hard to generalize from few data points

  – "Use all the data" (Lauersdorf 2018)

Liturgy *before* and *with* a corpus

- Hypothesis generation/testing
  - Quickly see change over time
  - Later test that pattern in the whole corpus
- Comparing subgenre to broader corpus
  - use of specific features/vocabulary?
  - rates of change – predict slower change in liturgy

Liturgy *before* and *with* a corpus

- Liturgy itself raises sociolinguistic questions
  - Role of translated liturgies in the community
    - Which documents were translated?
    - How (much) were these actually used in the community?
    - Primarily oral or written transmission?
    - Used alongside Latin/Spanish original?
  - Linguistic decisions in translating from Latin to Poqomchi'
    - Evidence for (their perceptions of) the structure of the language

Summary

- Poqomchi' liturgy reveals change over time
  - Liturgy allows quick direct comparison
  - Can then compare to more robust full corpus search

- Sociocultural aspects of liturgy complement study of linguistic change
  - Historical sociolinguistics as interdisciplinary science (Lauersdorf 2021)

Intyox taq aweh!

Thank you!

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Manuscript traditions

- (BB 68) Cahau tazah uilcat otolᵇtah rucoraric abi
- (BB 81) Ca hau uilic at pam taxah, atobtah ru coraric abi
- (Gage) Catat taxah vilcat; Nimta incaharçihi avi
- (Catholic) Qajaaw wilkaat pan taxaaj, loq'imaj ta ab'ihnaal
- (Nazarene) QaJaaw Dios wilkaat cho pan taxaaj: Loq'imaj ta naq ab'ihnaal.
- (Wycliffe) Loq' laj qAjaaw Dios wilkaat cho pan taxaaj, q'ee' wo' chik nqaaj chi loq'omaj oq johtoq ab'ihnal ku'um taqe k'acharel ayu' wach ak'al.

Manuscript traditions

- (BB 68) he in ca zach, quimac ximacunic que
- (GG 234) heoh ncazach quimac ximacunic chiƐquih
- (BB 66) heoh in casach qui mac xi macunic que
- (BB 81) ge oh in casach qui mac ximacunic qué.
- (Gage) he incaçachve quimac ximacquivi chiquih;
- (Catholic) je' wo' i hoj xqakuy kimahk i ximahkunik qeh.
- (Nazarene) je' rukab' noq xqakuy kimahk i hoj i kib'anik qeh i yiib' wach na'ojb'al.
- (Wycliffe) je' rikab' noq re' hoj nqakuy kimahk taqe kimahkanik chi qawach.

Manuscript traditions

- (BB 68) Achazachtah camac, he in ca zach, quimac ximacunic que
- (GG 234) chazach tah Ɛamac heoh ncazach quimac ximacunic chiƐquih
- (BB 66) chazachtah camac heoh in casach qui mac xi macunic que
- (BB 81) Chazach tah ca mac ge oh in casach qui mac ximacunic qué.
- (Gage) Naçachtacamac, he incaçachve quimac ximacquivi chiquih;
- (Catholic) Chakuy chasach ta i qamahk je' wo' i hoj xqakuy kimahk i ximahkunik qeh.
- (Nazarene) Chakuy ta naq i qamahk ruuk' i ma' holohik taj inqa'an, je' rukab' noq xqakuy kimahk i hoj i kib'anik qeh i yiib' wach na'ojb'al.
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