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## 4

## Metapragmatic presentationals: reporting speech with quotatives in Yucatec Maya

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Many of the world's languages use special forms to mark directly quoted reports of speech. In contrast to full verbs of speaking (e.g., English *say*), such quotative forms may consist of bound affixes, free particles, or highly defective verbs. Most analyses of such forms have taken the function of the quotatives for granted and focused primarily on characterizing their morphosyntactic status – often with ambiguous results. This chapter, by contrast, will concentrate on describing the distinctive paradigmatic and syntagmatic functions of a quotative form in Yucatec Maya, an indigenous language of southeastern Mexico. The functions of the quotative will be illustrated by examining its use in a joke rich in reported speech and in commentary on native speech norms. Understanding the functions of the Yucatec quotative in comparison with regular verbs of speaking will suggest a new approach to analyzing the formal status of quotatives.

## The morphosyntactic structure of the quotative

In addition to a full array of ordinary verbs of speaking (e.g., 'á'al 'say,' t'àan 'speak,' k'áat 'ask,' núuk 'answer,' pòoch' 'insult'), Yucatec Maya includes a special form for reporting speech: *ki-*.<sup>1</sup> The *ki-* form appears in a series of six forms wherein the stem *ki-* (~ *k-* ~ *kih-*)<sup>2</sup> inflects for person and signals the following meanings when reporting speech:

|                    |                      |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| <i>k-en</i>        | I said “...”         |
| <i>k-ech</i>       | you [sg.] said “...” |
| <i>ki(h)-ø</i>     | he/she/it said “...” |
| <i>k-ø'on</i>      | we said “...”        |
| <i>k-é'ex</i>      | you [pl.] said “...” |
| <i>ki(h)-ø'ob'</i> | they said “...”      |

Morphologically, the suffixes *-en*, *-ech*, *-ø*, *-ø'on*, *-ø'ex*, and *-ø'ob'* are bound pronominal forms which occur with verbal, nominal, and other stems in Yucatec. *ki-* is not readily identifiable at present with any other root, stem, or affix, nor does it derive or inflect in any other way in contemporary Yucatec.<sup>3</sup>

Syntactically, the *ki-* forms, when they are used, follow immediately after a directly reported act of communication, usually a verbal utterance in which all the deictic and expressive forms in the reported utterance preserve their shape. The pronominals bound to *ki-* index the speaker of the quoted utterance in relation to the reporting event. The *ki-* forms can themselves be followed under certain conditions by nominal forms further characterizing the quoted speaker, by pronominal forms or prepositional phrases indexing and characterizing the addressee of the quoted speech, and by certain free particles. A simple conversation might be reported as follows:

|                          |            |            |
|--------------------------|------------|------------|
| <i>tú'ux k-a-b'in</i>    | <i>ken</i> | <i>ti'</i> |
| "where are you going?"   | I said     | to him     |
| <i>mix tú'ux</i>         | <i>ki</i>  | <i>ten</i> |
| "nowhere"                | he said    | to me      |
| <i>táan a-b'in Saki'</i> | <i>ken</i> | <i>ti'</i> |
| "are you going to Saki?" | I said     | to him     |
| <i>hahn</i>              | <i>kih</i> |            |
| "yes"                    | he said    |            |

In narrative passages containing quotations, a regular verb of speaking often occurs earlier in an utterance containing a quotative, either before the quotation or after an initial segment of the quotation.

Use of *ki-* indicates that the preceding communication act preserves its overt form, that is, that it is an icon of some purported original. The most common use of the form is to signal that the speech of another person is being directly quoted. As is usual with direct quotation, the form maximizes the integrity of the original and conveys the secondary message that the reporter is "merely" reporting the form and is not personally interpreting or predicating anything about the content of the reported speech (Banfield 1982, Vološinov 1986 [1973/1929]). The reality of this focus on the overt form of an utterance is confirmed by the fact that the *ki-* forms can also be used to report nonpropositional speech such as screams, nonhuman sounds such as animal noises, and even nonauditory communications such as someone's gesture or facial expression (e.g., by producing an icon of it and then saying *kih*).<sup>4</sup> In many such cases of quotation, it is difficult to see how an indirect report of propositional content would be possible. Finally, *ki-* in conjunction with the first and second person suffixes has some special uses. First singular *ken* can be used as an optative to express what one could or might say – for example in a joking exchange. And second singular *kech* can be used as an imperative to tell or suggest to someone exactly what to say in a certain situation – for example a child sent on an errand or someone in need of a clever reply

in a joking interaction. In light of the full range of use, a more correct general gloss of the meaning of *ki-* is 'go/went like this' where the bound pronoun serving as logical subject specifies the source of the quoted utterance in relation to the current event, where the replicated communication indicates both the communicative modality and, in conjunction with verbal and nonverbal context, the substance of the report, and where the grammatical mood is deducible from the pronoun form in context.

*ki-* is anomalous in Yucatec. No other form exhibits this morphosyntactic configuration and it is difficult to decide its status in the grammar. One source of difficulty in characterizing *ki-* lies in its restricted morphosyntactic flexibility: it has only one inflection and occurs in only one syntactic environment. Since *ki-* does not occur in other derivational, inflectional, or syntactic paradigms, evidence for its formal status as noun, verb, adverb, proposition, etc. must come from this one, relatively restricted pattern of use. Although the observed pattern is compatible with several different interpretations of the form, *ki-* does not fit decisively into any standard category of Yucatec grammar under traditional formal analysis at the propositional level (Lucy 1985). It seems most likely, however, that *ki-* is an irregular predicate form with pronominal inflection and that it predicates of or characterizes the speaker indexed by the pronoun by means of or with reference to some features of the quoted expression (e.g., 'the speaker went like this'). Further understanding of *ki-* will depend on understanding its use, that is, its paradigmatic and syntagmatic value as a specialized metalinguistic form.

## Paradigmatic functions of the quotative

Quotatives, like other linguistic forms, acquire meaning in part by virtue of their value in a paradigm of alternatives in a language. Since quotatives are used for reports of speech, they both share the general meaning of forms reporting speech and contrast with other alternatives in what they foreground. In characterizing the Yucatec quotative, therefore, it will be helpful to characterize reported speech forms as types of metalinguistic forms and then to contrast the use of quotatives with other functionally similar forms.

## Metalinguistic function of reported speech

Language can be used to refer to and predicate about anything, including language. This reflexive capacity of verbal communication is a crucial attribute of natural language. When a metalinguistic act involves two very different languages, for example when English is used to refer to Yucatec Maya, we can call the referring language the *metalinguage* and the referred-to language the *object language* (Lyons 1977: 10–11). Often, actual forms from the object language will be represented in the metalinguistic act, but the differentiation of metalinguage and object language poses no special problem since it is signaled by massive formal differences.

But when a language is used to refer to and predicate about itself, that is, when a

language functions reflexively as its *own* metalanguage, then certain forms in the language are doing metalinguistic duty. Essentially, two distinct functional modes are encompassed within a single linear stretch of speech. In such cases, where metalanguage and object language are implemented out of one and the same language, there arises the possibility of confusion in determining what portions of the utterance are serving as metalanguage (i.e., functioning metalinguistically by referring to and predicating about language) and which portions are serving as object language (i.e., functioning as object [or context] to be referred to or predicated about).

Such confusion can be (and routinely is) avoided by using special *metalinguistic signals* to indicate that portions of the utterance are serving as object language. Every language provides forms and characteristic arrangements of forms that can be used in this way and such uses constitute a large part of the formal evidence for the existence of hierarchically structured functional levels in language. However, since metalanguage and object language draw on the same formal resources, the intrinsic multifunctionality of language may not be obvious to most speakers or even to many analysts of language.<sup>5</sup>

Metalinguistic utterances can be divided into several varieties. They may refer to and predicate about the conventional nature of the object language, for example, its phonemic, morphological, or syntactic forms, or the meaning values regularly associated with the implementation of such forms. In such cases, specific forms and meanings are treated as linguistic *types*. To talk about language form and use in this way foregrounds the presupposable aspect of language and bypasses many of the significances associated with individual instances of use (Silverstein 1985a). Yet speakers also refer to particular utterance *tokens*,<sup>6</sup> their particular form, their specific values as meaningful communication, and their actual effects as social action. Forms for reporting speech such as verbs of speaking (e.g., English *say, tell, ask*) and quotatives are among the most important metalinguistic forms used to describe or report such individual utterances (cf. Jakobson 1971 [1957]). The first general characteristic of the quotative, then, is that it is one among a set of metalinguistic signals that function to frame reports of utterance tokens.

### Contrasting ways of reporting speech

Procedures for reporting speech can be subdivided by both their functional orientation and their formal approach – although these tend to be interrelated.

Individual utterances are multifunctional in the sense of achieving multiple social and communicational goals at the same time. In reporting such utterances speakers may single out certain functions for emphasis. If these reports focus on the reference-and-predicational aspect of the utterance, then the reports are fully reflexive from a functional point of view since they involve reference-and-predication about reference-and-predication. If these reports focus on the specific *form* or the *nonreferential pragmatic* (or *indexical*)<sup>7</sup> qualities of the utterance then, by comparison, the reports are only degenerately reflexive from a functional point of view in that they attempt to refer to and predicate about aspects of the reported utterance which are not themselves

reference-and-predicational (or propositional). Such forms are metapragmatic in that they are metalinguistic forms which refer to the pragmatic aspect of language (Silverstein 1985b).

There are two common, prototypical formal approaches to reporting the speech functions of particular utterances. The reporter can *characterize* (predicate about) the pragmatic presuppositions and entailments of the reported utterance in referential terms – essentially acceding to the dominant functional mode of the metalanguage and treating both referential and nonreferential material in referential terms. Or, the reporter can minimize such predication by attempting to (*re-*)*present* or replicate the reported utterance in close to its “original” form with minimal predication so that it can directly signal its own pragmatic significance. Essentially, in such metapragmatic (*re-*)presentations, one points to an icon of the reported utterance and lets the multifunctional complexity of the object language emerge intact. Between these two poles may lie a range of blended alternatives. Selection from this range of alternatives may itself be indexically meaningful, for example, in signaling the reporter’s attitude and relative sociological position (cf. Vološinov 1986 [1973/1929]). And, in general, the functional orientation of the reported speech interacts with the available formal approaches.

In any actual instance of reported speech these functional orientations and formal approaches are embodied in two structural parts. First, there are one or more explicit or implicit framing forms – usually verbs – which indicate (characterize or present) the communicative or purposive *function* of the reported utterance and perhaps something about its *general form*. Second, there is a reproduction of certain aspects of the reported utterance – its *content* and/or its *specific form*. When its specific form is more or less fully reproduced including its context-dependent aspects, it is called *direct quotation*. When the specific form is only partially reproduced and where contextually dependent portions of the utterance are adjusted to the reporting context, it is called *indirect quotation*.

In some languages, direct quotation provides the only means of reporting speech. In such cases, the use of direct quotation does not itself signal anything special within the linguistic community. Where there is an opposition between direct and indirect speech, indirect speech typically foregrounds and represents (“analyzes” – Vološinov 1986 [1973/1929]) the referential and predicational aspects of the reported speech. Other formal and functional aspects of the utterance are only partially reproduced or are characterized (insofar as these are lexicalizable or paradigmatically inferable) in the framing utterance. Direct reports too must indicate the referential and predicational aspect of an utterance (if any), but without the same special emphasis. And direct report must be used in those cases where one wishes to emphasize those forms or functions of the reported utterance which cannot be lexicalized, for example, certain expressive elements, imperatives, dialect differences, etc. Thus they tend, by contrast, to highlight these dimensions of the quoted utterance. Direct quotation tends to be less predicational and more presentational (“monumental” – Vološinov 1986 [1973/1929]). In general, there is a loose association of indirect quotation with a referential orientation and a characterizing approach.

We can illustrate these general issues using English report forms. In English the various forms for reporting speech contrast first in their specificity about the purpose (function) of the reported utterance. For example, the verb *report* as in (1) contrasts with *say* as in (2) as to how specific each is about Sally's action.

- (1) Sally reported that she ran into a wall with her car.  
 (2) Sally said that she ran into a wall with her car.

The verb *report* specifies a kind of saying, a conventional mode in English which will be understood by native speakers. It suggests that Sally provided an informational account of some event, especially one that some listener awaited or was entitled to. For example, Sally might have been explaining her late arrival to her supervisor at work or providing information to her automobile insurance company. By contrast, the verb *said* is relatively neutral (characterizes relatively less) about how or why Sally speaks. It predicates less about the communicative purpose or function of the reported utterance. In fact, it is the least specific of all the standard verbs of speaking.

Second, the various forms for reporting speech in English contrast with each other in their presentation of the meaningful referential content of the report itself. For example, the form *said that X* in (2) need not represent the speaker's actual words, but focuses on and explicitly characterizes only the referential content of the utterance. By contrast the form *said "X"*, as in (3), is usually interpreted as presenting an icon of the speaker's actual words.

- (3) Sally said "I ran into a wall with my car."<sup>8</sup>

Although (3) necessarily represents the referential content of speech, by contrast with (2) it also portrays the specific form of the reported speech. The reasons for displaying or emphasizing form in this way can be quite diverse – e.g., to indicate exact wording when a dispute arises about what was said or to capture some intonational aspect of the reported speech which cannot be referred to by segmental morphology or readily be put into referential form.

Thus by selection of an appropriate verb of speaking and either direct or indirect quotation, speakers of English can distinguish among the various communicative functions of speech. Among the verbs of speaking which can clarify the function of the reported speech, *say* is the most neutral or semantically unmarked. Further, speakers of English can focus differentially on the meaningful referential content or the specific form of the reported utterance. Use of indirect report indicates an analysis and foregrounding of referential-and-predicational content, suggesting that what is reported was intended primarily to be referential and predication. By contrast, the use of direct report emphasizes the form of the reported utterance and is more neutral about referential meaning.

Overall, *say* plus direct quotation (i.e., *say "..."*), is the most neutral of these combinations in English and characterizes the reported utterance the least. In itself (i.e., ignoring inflection) the lexical verb frame does not truly assert anything *specific* about the communication. It predicates only that a communicative utterance other

than the current one exists and it indexes the co-presence of an icon of it from which the listener is to reconstruct the function and content of the purported original. The form of the reported utterance is effectively foregrounded, but only as a particular, not as a token of a form type.<sup>9</sup> The reporting utterance can replicate pragmatic dimensions of the reported utterance (e.g., through characteristic intonation or vocabulary selection), but they are not thereby really characterized (referred to and predicated about) but rather presented.

Because *say* is so semantically neutral as a framing verb, the reported utterance carries relatively more of its own pragmatic weight and, ultimately, more of the pragmatic value of the reporting utterance as a whole. In other words, the entire reporting utterance tends to take on the pragmatic coloring of the reported utterance. By restricting the role of the reporting utterance to a minimal pragmatic anchoring (e.g., the reported utterance occurred [past] and was spoken [by Sally]), the reporting utterance and the reporting modality are minimized, and the reported utterance and its pragmatic force are maximally foregrounded. Use of *say* avoids the reduction of reported utterances to pragmatic speech event types and to referential and predication content. It foregrounds the unique or emergent qualities of the reported utterance. When coupled with appropriate scene-setting narrative, highly individualized and creative elements of a speech event can be reported with a minimum of typification or reduction to referential function. In fact, because of its neutral status, such a minimal verb of speaking can function like a metapragmatic pro-verb – it can, with appropriate modifications of the reported utterance, substitute for virtually any other verb of speaking.

### Yucatec report forms

The Yucatec verb '*á'al* 'say' behaves very similarly to its English equivalent: when coupled with direct quotation it is the unmarked full verb of speaking. In contrast with other verbs of speaking, it is neutral as to communicative or purposive function, and its value with respect to referential content and specific form is dependent on whether it is associated with direct quotation or not. But the presence of *ki-* makes it possible for this unmarked verb of speaking to enter into a new contrast. The quotative in Yucatec indicates that there is iconicity of communicative form, but it is neutral with respect to whether that form is speech or not, that is, whether it has expectable linguistic form, content, and function. By contrast, '*á'al* refers clearly to speech.

By comparison with other forms that frame communication including speech, the quotative is the *least predication*; it indexes the co-presence of an icon of the reported utterance, thereby indicating its existence – but little more. When it does convey other information, it tends to be information about the source or reliability of the report and not information about features of the reported utterance itself. Thus, it provides minimal external (i.e., reporting clause) interference with the reported utterance. It is especially useful, therefore, for reporting nonreferential communication, for presenting complicated or plurivalent discourse functions, and for sustaining long quoted



discourse sequences. By contrast, the full verb of speaking '*á'al*' typically indicates that it is in fact *meaningful speech* which is being quoted, as opposed, on the one hand, to *ki-*, which can include non-speech communication such as gestures or animal sounds, and, on the other hand, to verbs such as *t'áan* 'speak, call,' which can refer specifically to speaking or calling out in a language without any special emphasis on the conveyance of propositional information. By implication, '*á'al*' refers to speech with reference and predication at its center. When used in combination with '*á'al*', *ki-* emphasizes the *exact* form of the reported speech and thereby indicates that the specific form is significant. In short, the presence of the quotative in Yucatec shapes the paradigmatic array of reporting forms by creating the possibility of adding emphasis on specific form and its pragmatic implications.

Spoken English accomplishes acts of reference similar in sense to those of the Yucatec quotative in three ways. First, with the metapragmatic use of the verb *go*, English speakers can foreground form – especially of nonspeech sounds and nonreferential speech – as in examples (4), (5), and (6):

- (4) Tom went "Wait a minute."
- (5) The chick went "peep peep peep."
- (6) The door went "iiiiiii."

Like *ki-*, the verb *go* used in this way contrasts with other reporting forms in not being specific to speech. Using this form to report speech tends to push the central reference and predication function into the background and to foreground the available signal of the action which has occurred or the emotion which has been expressed. As such it serves as a quintessentially meta-pragmatic form perfectly suited to *presenting* spoken discourse as social action and affective expression.

Second, with the verbal combination *be like*, American English speakers can foreground the expressive value of utterances – including nonreferential ones – as in examples (7), (8), and (9):

- (7) He was like "Now I've seen everything!"
- (8) So I'm like "Oh, my god!"
- (9) I was like "Whoa!"

These forms convey speakers' subjective feelings not by describing them referentially, but by presenting verbal expressions they might be expected to utter if they felt a certain way. Listeners then infer from the utterances how the person must have felt. These uses are similar to delocutionary forms (Benveniste 1971 [1958]) in some respects, but draw on a much more open-ended array of sometimes complex alternatives for representing mental states. Yucatec *ki-* forms often seem to share the quality of communicating feeling and attitude by presenting speech rather than by direct referring, but *ki-*, by contrast with *be like*, typically does not characterize as much; it presents particular utterances for interpretation rather than stereotypic utterances.

Finally, English speakers can also combine use of a verb of speaking to indicate the function of a reported utterance and its participants with use of the least marked form *say* to emphasize the specific form of the utterance, as in (10) and (11).

- (10) She told me, she said "You do what you want."
- (11) I begged him, I said "Please come home."

Such reports both characterize and present the pragmatic qualities of the reported utterance.

### Characterization of the quotative

*ki-*, then, when used to report speech, is a metapragmatic form which marks a boundary between a stretch of object language and the metalinguistic portion of the utterance. *ki-* is specialized in metapragmatic function in that it apparently has no ordinary (i.e., nonreflexive) use. *ki-* refers to specific instances (tokens) of speech use. It does not describe some general property of the language as code, but rather indicates that the stretch of object language is a replica which draws from (or anticipates) some specific communicative event. Further, *ki-* clearly falls at the extreme end of the continuum of reporting forms along with the most semantically unmarked regular reporting verb in that it presents the form and content of the reported utterance with minimal predication about it. It contrasts with the most semantically unmarked regular verb of speaking in that it foregrounds the specific form of the reported utterance and predicates as little as possible about its form, content, or function. In so doing, it maximally foregrounds the emergent pragmatic value of the quoted utterance as action or expression. Since that pragmatic value effectively constitutes the content of what is "asserted" in such cases, we may say, interpretively, that the pragmatic value of the quoted expression is predicated of the argument indexed by the pronoun attached to *ki-*. In this view, predication value is assigned to (or extracted from) the quoted expression itself by *ki-*. Paradigmatically, then, the quotative is especially suited to presenting the nonreferential pragmatic values of individual utterance tokens: it is a metapragmatic presentational.

The specialized metapragmatic role of *ki-* helps explain the anomalous morphosyntax of the form. First, although *ki-* uses the normal phonological and morphological resources of the language, it always has reference to communication and most often speech and thus it is functionally restricted to metacommunicative uses. Note, then, that talking about *ki-* inherently involves a metametacommunicative act. Not surprisingly, native speakers find it very difficult to discuss the form or even to bring it into conscious awareness.

Second, as a metacommunicative form *ki-* does not strongly predicate about or characterize the object language, even though it is predication in form and function; its function is simply to *present*. This helps account for its very restricted morphosyntactic properties. (In essence, one never has occasion to refer to a "*ki*-type" event as one might refer to an event of "saying" or "telling.") It is as if speakers are trying to bring the reported speech into discourse without actually saying

anything about it, that is, to predicate the existence and relevance of certain communicative signals, but no more. The form is, therefore, a minimal predicate from both a formal and functional point of view.

Third, even though *ki-* in conjunction with a pronoun appears at a formal level to constitute a complete proposition, it cannot operate functionally without an appropriate context – minimally, the adjacent stretch of object language. Thus a reporting utterance using *ki-* cannot stand alone and does not convey a full message by itself, but relies on the semantic and especially the pragmatic content of the reported utterance to complete the actual substance of a report at the metalevel. Like the ordinary English presentational *here*, *ki-* depends on context for its completion. In a sense the *ki-* form constitutes or *derives* the pragmatic value of the reported material *as verbal*; it makes the pragmatic impact of the reported utterance a metapragmatic predicate – as “what was done.” (Indeed *ki-* might be thought of as a device to create utterance-specific delocutionary forms, that is, as a device to make particular utterances into delocutionary predicates.) Interestingly, Munro (1982: 316) reaches a similar conclusion with reference to ‘say’ forms in general in her attempt to account for their morphosyntactic irregularity across a wide array of languages.

### Syntagmatic functions of the quotative

The special properties of *ki-* as a meaningful form offer opportunities for systematic exploitation in the syntagmatic organization of discourse. Preliminary analysis indicates that *ki-* has both local and global discourse functions. Full analysis of the discourse functions of *ki-* is not possible here, but some of the uses and the general significance of analysis at this level will be developed and illustrated by examining in detail the use of *ki-* in one narrative text.

#### A Yucatec Maya story

The following Yucatec Maya story entitled *Máak b'in meyah* ‘Men who have gone working’ provides an account of a humorous event occurring at a wake. The central dynamic of the story is that one of three Maya-speaking brothers attending the wake, despite various attempts to keep him from doing so, gets drunk and insults the bereaved in Spanish. From the point of view of content, the text is rich in metapragmatic commentary at several levels; some of the more important metapragmatic themes will be described before presenting the text itself. From the point of view of form, the text provides an excellent example of the systematic use of the quotative in a narrative context. Following the presentation of the text, the various uses of *ki-* in the narrative will be described and analyzed with special reference to their role in highlighting the schematic structure and key themes of the story.

### Metapragmatic content of the story

#### Context of production

The first important fact about this text is that it was produced at my request since I had heard it several times but had no recording of it. Thus the entire narration might well be considered a case of reported speech. Although it is not unusual for a humorous story to be requested, it may have had some specific effects in this case. The narrator began with the knowledge that I knew the story and this led to some initial confusions about what could be presupposed and what not in a formal “retelling.” My prior knowledge of the story may also account for this rendition being somewhat shorter than other versions I have heard and for my provision of more backchannel signals (e.g., *hm*) than usual.

Secondly, although the story centers on local concerns, it exhibits characteristics common to stories told by the surrounding Spanish-speaking Mexican community. Humorous but inappropriate things said at wakes constitute an important topical subgenre in Spanish. Further, almost any utterance in Mexican Spanish containing the word *madre* can and usually does constitute an insult. (There has been speculation that this insult has its historical root in the conquest period when the first Mexicans born of Spanish fathers and Indian mothers occupied a secondary cultural status because of the racial status of their mothers.) So the inclusion of such a remark referring to *madre* in the punchline of this story is entirely expectable. The presence of these characteristics marks the story as a real story within the broader Mexican framework. And, as will be described below, the distinctiveness of the Mayan community from the surrounding Spanish-Mexican community is one underlying tension in the story.

#### Speech norms represented in the text

The story contains a number of very precise and explicit indications of important speech norms for the Maya-speaking community where the tale was collected. In this sense the entire tale provides a rich source of insight into native metapragmatics for this region of Yucatan.

The most obvious and dominant speech norm represented in this story – both described within the story and illustrated by the consequences ensuing within it (cf. Urban 1984) – is that one should not verbally insult other people.<sup>10</sup> The question of intentionality is secondary in the matter of Yucatecan insults; one can insult quite seriously by accident and righting the situation may require considerable social repair work – although, in the end, an insult cannot really be undone.

The central point of humor in the story is that despite all efforts at the outset, the older brother inevitably verbally insults the bereaved. This expresses a subsidiary cultural understanding that some persons are known to insult others very easily. In the Mayan view, these are people who speak too quickly, that is, without weighing their words. This characteristic is independent of how much a person talks, it has to do with his or her sensitivity to context. The older brother, then, represents a known, and much discussed, cultural type who habitually says insulting things. He can neither

deny the truth of the allegation that he insults easily nor can he take offense at his younger brothers' attempts to control or help him. However, some Mayans might regard the younger brothers' admonishments as a little strong, since the older brother should be entitled to considerable respect from them. This suggests the severity of the older brother's problem. However, this same high status also helps explain why his siblings cannot ultimately keep him from attending the wake.

Early on in the story a second speech norm is introduced: one must be careful what one says in public because public insults are serious business. There are, of course, different varieties of public interaction, and extremely intense joking banter and mock insults can occur in some contexts. But invitational ritual events are more serious, and a wake, in particular, is not a situation for that sort of humor. Public events of this type are characterized by a high degree of formality in speech and demeanor when one is in the presence of the bereaved.

The schemes devised to help the older brother attend the wake without causing offense highlight a number of features about the nature of public social interactions. Beyond the specific plan described here for the older brother to stay in the shadows, the more general regularity is that in any social situation there is a place one can sit and a way of sitting that signals that one is only peripherally involved. This can be because one does not want to participate or because one has a marginal status for some reason (e.g., not being well known, being young, etc.). Inversely, the calculated move to the center of activity, including being formally recognized as present and invited to drink, is also an absolutely stereotypic activity at such public events.

The evasive verbal response *'uhum*, *'ahahn* which the brother is instructed to use to avoid engaging in conversation is also highly stereotypic. This is a classic way of avoiding comment in Mayan communities – either because one isn't listening, doesn't care, doesn't agree, or whatever. The careful characterization and portrayal of such a well-known but not usually discussed mode of social interaction constitutes one of the key dimensions of humor for the Yucatec listener. Evasive interaction strategies – both verbal and nonverbal – are pegged for precisely what they are. And it is symptomatic of the severity of the older brother's problem that he is so unable to regulate the content of his speech in accordance with cultural expectations that he even proves unable to adhere correctly to the norms regarding when and how to say nothing.

Drinking behavior is a third crucial factor in the story. One must not appear to want too much liquor, so the maneuvering for a position in which one will be invited to drink is extremely delicate. Initially at such a gathering, some equity will govern who gets drinks. But as the host and his helpers get increasingly drunk themselves, they tend to re-offer drinks repeatedly to whoever comes into their field of attention. By careful self-placement one can drink a good deal or avoid drinking very much at all. As might be expected, the invitations to drink are fairly stereotyped, as are certain initial refusals.

More importantly in the present situation, strong words are most often exchanged in situations of mutual drunkenness and fights. Combative events in Yucatecan communities are almost always associated with drinking sessions and are otherwise

quite rare. A drunk man is more likely to insult someone but will not be held responsible for this the next day in the sense that he can be blamed or thought badly of, but, following the principle that intentions don't matter, the insult is no less real. If there is some margin for error in all this, it is that what normally might be taken as insulting is seen, in a drunk, as hilarious. However, in the present story, this is not the case and the bereaved is described as distressed by the drunken man's remarks and, significantly, inclined to physically beat the insulter – which suggests that the bereaved too is quite drunk.

A closely related factor is that unlike most cultural groups, where the tendency is to revert to one's native language when drinking, Maya-speaking men tend to begin speaking Spanish in such contexts. However, few of the men in the village community have real mastery of the language and their Spanish is both full of errors and very much limited to highly stereotypic phrases; when drunk, they often replicate what they see native speakers of Spanish speak in town bars – speech that is frequently insulting and combative. The effect is compounded by the more general self-understanding of the Mayans that they do not speak Spanish well. When speaking in Spanish, therefore, one always risks saying something unintended, whether it be insulting, foolish, or simply incoherent (Lucy 1989).

Within a few moments the native listener encounters these central dynamics in the story. The older brother is introduced as a person who is prone to the culturally proscribed activity of making verbal insults but who will have to take pains not to do so in certain culturally prescribed ways since he is going to attend a wake, a semi-public ritual event. Such events always involve drinking, which increases the chance of combative encounters and the use of the Spanish language. Putting these pieces together, the listener can immediately infer that the older brother, despite his good intentions, will probably say something insulting in Spanish which will lead to some sort of conflict. The only real question is how it will all happen.

The subsequent events of the story derive much of their interest and humor from these native metapragmatic understandings. Although the story develops in terms of a single individual's foibles, it is clear to any Mayan listener that the nature of speech in the community as a whole is the real target. A graphic illustration is given not only of the basic cultural value of avoiding verbal insults, but also of the dangers of being careless with words in public, of drinking too much, and of speaking Spanish. En route, a number of basic everyday interactional strategies for evading being spoken to or having to say anything substantive are simultaneously highlighted and lampooned.

### Transcript of the story

#### Transcription conventions

Line formats signify as follows: numbered lines correspond to significant breath pauses (ignoring false starts) or change of speaker (except for simple phatic forms produced by the listener [e.g., "hm"], which are affixed to the line they follow to economize space); indentation level indicates the functional level of the line or portion of the line (no indent = speech about the narration, first indent = narration, second

indent = quoted speech or thought within the narration, and third indent = speech within the speech within the narration); and, finally, free English translation is presented immediately below the Yucatec forms using the same conventions.

Special characters signify as follows: unbracketed material represents the utterances of the narrator; parenthetical material in the Yucatec forms indicates canonical phonological material which does not emerge; parenthetical material in the English translations indicates clarifying material not morphologically indicated in the Yucatec; and square bracketed material represents the utterances of the listener.

Special fonts signify as follows: Yucatec forms (including Spanish loan words) are italicized; forms used by the narrator to report or describe speech or thought are in boldface; forms used by narrated characters within the narrative to describe speech are underlined; and subscripts in the English clarify pronominal referents.

### The text

#### Máak b'in meyah

#### Men who have gone working

by Sr. Gonzalo Och Yupit<sup>11</sup>

- 001 *ah ... le máak k-u-yá'al-ik*<sup>12</sup>  
uh ... the man<sub>a</sub> says
- 002 *'un-túul máak k-u-yá('al)-ik de que*  
a man<sub>a</sub> says that
- 003 *é'ó'(ok-u)-kí(i)m-il 'u-yíí' in* [hm]  
his<sub>a</sub> younger brother has died [hm]
- 004 *má' 'u-yíí' in xan*<sup>13</sup> [abuela?<sup>14</sup>]  
not his<sub>a</sub> younger brother either [grandmother?]
- 005 *máax túun ti'?*  
who then to him<sub>a</sub>? (i.e., which relation was it then?)
- 006 *um màamah* ['u-màamah?]  
um mother [his<sub>a</sub> mother?]
- 007 hm  
ych (transition back to narrative)
- 008 *é'ó'(ok-u)-kí(i)m-il 'u-mà(a)mah* [hm]  
his<sub>a</sub> mother has died [hm]
- 009 *le máak tún-o'*  
that man<sub>b</sub>, then,
- 010 *tú'ux k-u-meyah le 'óox-túul-máak-ó'(ob')o'*<sup>15</sup> [hm]  
where the three men<sub>c, d, e</sub> are working [hm]
- 011 *k-u-yá('al)-ik*  
he<sub>b</sub> says:
- 012 *yan-in-b'in in-mú'uy-ik ti' le máak-ó'(ob')o'*  
I<sub>b</sub> will go to hear from the men<sub>c, d, e</sub>
- 013 *tàal-ó'ob' meyah*  
(who have) come (pl.) to work (for me)

Tape: 006

Tape: 010

- 014 *má h(é)-ú-tàal-ó'ob'*  
whether they<sub>c, d, e</sub> will come
- 015 *'u-xíim-b'al-t-en-o'*  
visit (along) with me<sub>b</sub>,
- 016 *'u-làak'in-t-en-ó'o(b)'* [hm]  
to pass the time with me<sub>b</sub> (at the wake) [hm]
- 017 hm  
hm (transition to new conversation)
- 018 *k-u-yá('al)-ik tún le máak-o'*  
well the man<sub>c</sub> says:
- 019 *pues, má'-hach-in-k'áat*<sup>16</sup> in- in-b'in-ó'on<sup>17</sup>  
well, I<sub>c</sub> don't really want us<sub>c, d, e</sub> to go
- 020 *(t)-u-men in-sukú'un* [hm]  
because my<sub>c</sub> older brother<sub>d</sub> [hm]
- 021 *letí' hach seb'-u-yá('al)-ik b'á'ah* [hm]  
he<sub>d</sub> says bad things very easily [hm]
- 022 *k-u- k-u-pòoch'-ih*  
he<sub>d</sub> insults people  
*kíh*<sup>18</sup> [hm - chuckle]  
said-he<sub>c</sub> [hm - chuckle]
- 023 *pues, mún má(')an-tà(a)h*<sup>19</sup> *sukú'un*  
well, better you<sub>d</sub> don't come, older brother  
*kíh*  
says-he<sub>c</sub>
- 024 *yàan in-tàah*<sup>20</sup>  
I<sub>d</sub> will come  
o [hm]  
(he<sub>d</sub> says) [hm]
- 025 *má(')an-tàah*  
don't come
- 026 *matik*<sup>21</sup> *tech-e' seb'-a-wà('al)-ik b'á'ah* [hm hm]  
you<sub>d</sub> shouldn't, you<sub>d</sub> say bad things easily [hm hm]  
o  
(he<sub>c</sub> says)
- 027 *má' in-tàah*<sup>22</sup>  
(ok) I<sub>d</sub> won't come  
o  
(he<sub>d</sub> says)
- 028 *má(')an chen tàah-al-ih*<sup>23</sup>  
just don't come  
o  
(he<sub>c</sub> says)
- 029 *yàan in-tàah*  
I<sub>d</sub> will come

Tape: 015



ø

(he<sub>a</sub> says)

- 030 yàan a-tàal pero tech-e' chen ti' sombra k-a-yàan-t-ah  
you<sub>a</sub> will come but you<sub>a</sub> should stay just in the shade  
031 má(')un-hóok'-ol sáas-il  
don't come out (into) (the) light

ø

(he<sub>c</sub> says)

- 032 ah  
ah

ø

(he<sub>a</sub> says)

- 033 chen, wáah k-a-wil-á'al-e' pues,  
but, if you<sub>a</sub> are seen, well,  
034 k-a-t'á'an-al-e' k-a-wá'(al-i)k-e'  
you<sub>a</sub> are addressed, (then) you<sub>a</sub> (should) (just) say  
035 'uhum [ah]  
'uhum [ah]  
036 'ahahn [ah]  
'ahahn [ah]  
037 'uhum 'ahahn  
'uhum 'ahahn

k-en a-wa- a-núuk-t-eh<sup>24</sup>

- you<sub>a</sub> will sa- respond to him  
038 pero mik<sup>25</sup> xi'ik-ech a-wá'al h'á'al  
but don't go saying bad things  
039 t-u-mèen matik má' ti' nàah-yàan-ó'on-i'  
because you<sub>a</sub> shouldn't, we are not in our own house  
040 tàan-xeh tú'ux yàan-ó'on  
we are in another place  
041 táan-xeh lùugar-ih  
it's a different place  
042 k-u-t'àan u-láak-ó'ob' ti'  
say his<sub>a</sub> brothers to him<sub>a</sub>  
043 leti' xan-e' k-u-yú'ub-ik  
and he<sub>a</sub> hears (what they<sub>c,e</sub> say)  
044 má'a-lob'  
ok  
k-u-t'àan  
he<sub>a</sub> says  
045 kó'on-e' ex tun  
let's go then (he<sub>c</sub> says)

Tape: 020

046 k-u-b'in-ó'ob'

(so) they<sub>c,a,e</sub> go (transition to new scene)

Tape: 025

- 047 k-u-k'uch-ul-ó'ob' té'el-o' ka  
they<sub>c,a,e</sub> arrive there; then  
048 k'uch-ó'ob' leti'-ó'ob'-e' ká  
they<sub>c,a,e</sub> arrive; then  
049 'òok-ó'ob'

they<sub>c,a,e</sub> enter

050 ti' le tú'ux yan le kimen-o'

where the deceased is

051 leti' le h máak-o' k-u-hóok'-ol<sup>26</sup>he<sub>i</sub>, the man<sub>i</sub> comes out052 (k)-u-ínvitar-t-ik<sup>27</sup> le máak-ó'ob'-o' yèet-eh 'u-tràagohe<sub>i</sub> invites the men<sub>c,a,e</sub> to have the (alcoholic) drinks

053 (k-u)í'a-ik ti' le máak-ó'ob'-o'

(he<sub>i</sub>) gives to the men054 le máak túun-'á'al-á ('a)h ti' ma(')-u<sup>28</sup> 'u-b'in-e'the man<sub>a</sub> who has been told not to go

055 leti'-e' chen te' chan p'uk-á'an 'ich 'éehoch'éen-il-e' [hm]

as for him<sub>a</sub>, he just stayed there squatting in the darkness [hm]

056 hah

yes (transition to a later time)

Tape: 030

057 hu-hum-p'út-ih k-u-b'in u-naí'-(i)k u-b'ah ti' sáas-il [hm]

little by little he<sub>a</sub> goes, nearing himself to the light [hm]

058 despues k-u-kuch-ul ti' sáas-il-e'

after he<sub>a</sub> reaches the light,

059 k-u-yil-á'ah

he<sub>a</sub> is seen

060 amigo kó'ot-en

friend, come (over) here

k-u-yáal-á('a)h [hm]

it's said (i.e., he<sub>a</sub>'s called) [hm]

061 hé'el-a-chan-tràago-a'

here's your<sub>a</sub> little drink

k-(u)yá'al-á('a)h

it's said (i.e., he<sub>a</sub>'s offered)

062 ká t-u-náaf'-(i)k u-b'ah hu-hum-p'út k-u-hóok' ti' sáas-ih

then he<sub>a</sub> moves near, bit by bit he<sub>a</sub> comes out into the light

063 despues k-u-hóok'-ol ti' sáas-ih

after he<sub>a</sub> comes out into the light064 ká k'úuch hach<sup>29</sup> náaf' ti' puértah [hm]when he<sub>a</sub> arrived very near to the door (to the house) [hm]

065 k-u-kut-ah ti' puértah

he<sub>a</sub> sits down by the door

- 066 *pues, wá k-u-hóok'-ol le máax k-u-máan u-'invitar-t-ik*  
well if whoever<sub>i</sub> goes around inviting people comes out
- 067 *yéet-eh trāago*  
with drinks,
- 068 *k-u-tokar tāah le máak yāan ti' le puerta*  
from time to time the man<sub>i</sub> comes there to the door
- 069 *hach nāaf' ti' puerta*  
(there) very near to the door
- 070 *k-u-yuk'-ik u-trāago xan*  
(so) he<sub>a</sub> too drinks his<sub>a</sub> (i.e., some) drinks
- 071 *hu-hum-p' út-ih hu-hum-p' út-ih*  
little by little, little by little
- 072 *ká kuch tak 'ich le nāah-o'*  
he<sub>a</sub> arrives as far as (i.e., gets) into the house
- 073 *tú'ux yāan (l)e máak-kimen-o'*  
where the deceased person is
- 074 *'u-māama le máak-o'*  
the man's<sub>a</sub> mother
- 075 *hm*  
hm (shift of time and character)
- 076 *le m- máak túun-o'*  
that man<sub>a</sub> then
- 077 *pues f'ó'ok u-máak-á(a)n-t-ik tak 'uk'-ul [hm]*  
well he<sub>a</sub> had drinks<sup>30</sup> made too [hm]
- 078 *k-u-f'a-ik ti' le- le máax-o'*  
he<sub>a</sub> gives it (the drink) to the- the people
- 079 *tāal-ah-ā'an-ó'ob'-o'*  
the ones who have come
- 080 *le 'ú'ul-ā-(ó')ob'-o'*  
the visitors
- 081 *leti'-e' pues tun-yil-ik<sup>31</sup>*  
as for him<sub>a</sub> (the brother), well, he<sub>a</sub> sees her (the deceased)
- 082 *chen hu-hum-p' út-ih*  
just little by little
- 083 *ká hóok (l)e máak-e' káp<sup>32</sup> u-b'in u-invitar-t-e'<sup>33</sup>*  
then the man<sub>a</sub> comes out, then he<sub>a</sub> begins to invite them
- 084 *(le) máak-ó'(ob') te' táankab'-o'*  
the men there outside (to drink)
- 085 *pues le máak-o'*  
well, that man<sub>a</sub> (the older brother)
- 086 *chen kul-uk-b'ah*  
just sitting there
- 087 *ti' um-p'ē(ēh) bāanca [hm]*  
on a bench [hm]

Tape: 035

Tape: 040

- 088 *pues chen ká t-u-yil-e' f'ó'ok u-tāal 'um-p'ēeh chan ch'o' [hm]*  
well, just then he<sub>a</sub> saw a little rat had come [hm]
- 089 *hm*  
ych (shift of focus to activities of the rat)
- 090 *ká h náak ti' le ká'an-ch'e' tú'ux yāan le ánimās-o' [hahn]*  
then it went up on the table where the deceased lay [yes]
- 091 *ká h náak-e' ká t-u-lúub'-s (l)e kib'-o'<sup>34</sup>*  
when it got up, then it knocked over the candle(s)
- 092 *ká 'èel le mantel-o' [aha]*  
which then burned the shroud [aha]
- 093 *hm*  
hm (shift to new character)
- 094 *le ká 'èel le màantel-o'*  
when the shroud burned
- 095 *ka' 'òok le m- máak le-*  
then the man<sub>a</sub> entered, the-
- 096 *le- le- le máax (l)e- u- u-māamah le le kimen-o'<sup>35</sup> [hm]*  
th- th- the man<sub>a</sub> th- wh- whose mother th- the dead one [hm]
- 097 *hm*  
hm (commencement of new conversation)
- 098 *le tún u-iho t-u-yá'al-ah b'ey-a' [hm]*  
and the son<sub>a</sub> then spoke like this [hm]
- 099 *k-u-yá'al-ik-e'*  
he<sub>a</sub> says:
- 100 *b'ix 'úuch-(u)k u- 'u-yèel-eh le difüundó-á*  
how did it happen that the dead man burned?
- kih*  
says-he<sub>a</sub>
- 101 *difüunda*  
dead woman
- k-u-yá'al-ik<sup>36</sup> [hm]*  
he<sub>a</sub> says [hm]
- 102 *b'ix 'úuch-ul ki(m)u-<sup>37</sup> 'u-yèel-eh*  
how did it happen she die- burned?
- 103 *mix tún-t'āan le máak-e' [hm]*  
the man<sub>a</sub> does not speak [hm]
- 104 *mix-b'āal k-u-yá'al-ik*  
he<sub>a</sub> says nothing
- 105 *pues le máak-o' tún-púuh-ul<sup>38</sup> t-u-molestar<sup>39</sup> [hm]*  
well the man<sub>a</sub> (the bereaved) is angry, he<sub>a</sub> is bothered
- 106 *tumen leti'-e' hach u-p'èek k-u-yú'ub'-ik m-u-núuk-t-ik [hm]*  
because he<sub>a</sub> really hates to hear he<sub>a</sub> doesn't respond to [hm]
- 107 *b'á'ax k-u-yá'al-ik [b'cyo']*  
what he<sub>a</sub> says [that's right]

Tape: 045

Tape: 050

Tape: 055

- 108 *leti'*  
exactly (response to listener's judgment)
- 109 *t-u-mèen le máak-o'*<sup>40</sup>  
because the man<sub>a</sub>
- 110 *tún-k'áat-ik ti'*  
he<sub>a</sub> is asking him<sub>a</sub>:
- 111 *b'ix 'úuch-(u)k 'u-yèel-eh le ánimàs-o'* [hàh]  
how did it happen the deceased burned? [yes]
- 112 *leti'e' mix tún-yá'(al)-ik chen k-(u)-yá'(al)-ik*  
as for him<sub>a</sub>, he<sub>a</sub> doesn't say (anything) he<sub>a</sub> only says
- 113 *'uhum*  
*'uhum*  
*kih* ['uhum]  
says-he<sub>a</sub> ['uhum]
- 114 *'ahahn*  
*'ahahn*
- 115 *chen*  
just  
*'uhum 'ahahn*  
*'uhum 'ahahn*  
*k-u-yá'(al)-ik*  
he<sub>a</sub> says
- 116 *mix tún yá'(al)-ik*  
he<sub>a</sub> won't say anything
- 117 *pues káp'*<sup>41</sup> *u-b'in u-kam t-u-t'an*  
well he<sub>a</sub> began to raise his<sub>a</sub> voice
- 118 *fuerte u-t'áan le máak*  
the man<sub>a</sub> spoke strongly
- 119 *ǫ'ók u-yil-ik ǫ'ók u-yèel-eh le ánimàs-o'*  
he<sub>a</sub> has seen (that) the deceased has burned
- 120 *b'úuk 'èel-ih*  
she is half burned,
- 121 *tak u-mantel-ih*  
even her shroud
- 122 *k-(u)-yá'(al)-ik*  
- he<sub>a</sub> says
- 123 *min yà(a)n 'a-wá'(al)-ik suku'un b'dax 'úuch-ih*  
perhaps you<sub>a</sub> better say, older brother, what happened,
- 124 *b'ix 'úuch-(u)k 'u-èel-eh le ánimàs-o'*  
how it happened that the deceased burned
- 125 *b'ix 'úuch 'u-yèel-eh le difundá-o'*  
how it happened the dead woman burned
- 126 *k-u-yá'al-á'al (t-)u-men'*<sup>42</sup> *u-láak-ó'ob'*  
- it is said by his<sub>a</sub> brothers<sub>e,e</sub>

Tape: 065

- 127 *'uhum*  
*'uhum*  
*kih*  
says-he<sub>a</sub>
- 128 *suku'un tó'on d'(al)-ik tech*  
older brother, we<sub>e,e</sub> are saying to you<sub>a</sub>
- 129 *'á'al b'ix 'úuch-(u)k 'u-yúuch-ul*  
tell how it came to pass (that) it happened
- 130 *b'ix t-a-wil-ih*  
how you<sub>a</sub> saw it
- ø  
(he<sub>a</sub> says)
- 131 *uhum*  
*uhum*  
ø  
(he<sub>a</sub> says)
- 132 *suku'un k-in-favor-ik k-in-wá'(a)l(-i)k-ó'on tech*  
older brother, do us<sub>e,e</sub> the favor, we are telling you<sub>a</sub>
- 133 *táan in-ǫ'áa-ik-ó'on tech permiso ti'al a-wá'(al)-ik*  
we<sub>e,e</sub> are (now) giving you<sub>a</sub> permission to tell
- 134 *'á'al b'ix 'úuch-ik*  
say how it happened
- ø [hm]  
(he<sub>e</sub> says) [hm]
- 135 *ká t-u-núuk-ah le máak-o'*  
then the man<sub>a</sub> (the older brother) answered
- 136 *(es)tabien*  
ok  
*k-u-chen-á'(al)-ik*  
he<sub>a</sub> (finally) just says
- 137 *primero vinieron (sic) 'un ratón*  
first came (plural<sup>43</sup>) a rat  
*k-u-t'áan'*<sup>44</sup> *'ich 'español* [hm]  
he<sub>a</sub> speaks in Spanish<sup>45</sup> [hm]
- 138 *y luego subió de la mèsah hu'*<sup>46</sup> [hm]  
and later it went up on the table [hm]
- 139 *cundo subió de la mesah*  
when it went up on the table,
- 140 *pisó la vela*  
it knocked over the candle
- 141 *cundo pisó la vela*  
when the candle fell
- 142 *quemó el mantel*  
it burned the shroud

Tape: 070

- 143 *cuando quemó el mantel*  
when the shroud burned
- 144 *quemó la madre*  
the mother burned  
*ki b'in*<sup>47</sup>  
says-he<sub>d</sub> it-is-said
- 145 *é'ó'ok leti' u-màam-il {laugh} (l)e máak-e'*  
(thus) ended the man's mother<sup>48</sup> {laugh}
- 146 *'u-mama- [hàh] (l)e máak-kimen-o' [kimen-o']*  
his<sub>a</sub> mother- [yes] the deceased one [dead one]
- 147 *ka' t-(u)yá'al-ah le máak-(e')*  
when the man<sub>a</sub> spoke
- 148 *yéet-el tun-púuh-ul tun-lá'ach-ik u-póol*  
and he<sub>a</sub> is complaining angrily and pulling his<sub>a</sub> hair
- 149 *t-u-men u-yoh-el ti' u-màama k-u-<sup>49</sup> ti' u-màama kimen [hm]*  
because he<sub>a</sub> knows about his<sub>a</sub> mother about his<sub>a</sub> dead mother [hm]
- 150 *leti'-e' pues tun-púuh-u- tun-púuh-ul [uhm]*  
as for him<sub>a</sub>, well, he's<sub>a</sub> angr- he's<sub>a</sub> angry [uhm]
- 151 *t-u-yá'al-al tàak u-*  
he<sub>a</sub> says he<sub>a</sub> wants
- 152 *t-(u)-yá'al tàak u-haf'-ik l máak-o' [uhm]*  
he<sub>a</sub> wants to beat the man<sub>a</sub> [uhm]
- 153 *le ma-t-u-é'(a)' áaviso-e' [hm]*  
the man<sub>a</sub> who didn't advise him<sub>a</sub> [hm]
- 154 *ti(')-ah ká u-tok le k'á'ak' tóok-ik le animas-o' [b'eyo']*  
so that he could put out the fire burning the deceased [yes]
- 155 *hm*  
hm (shift of perspective)
- 156 *pero leti'-e' (pues?) mix tún-yá'(al)-ik*  
but as for him<sub>a</sub>, (well?) he<sub>a</sub> isn't saying anything
- 157 *t-u-men ma k-u-yá'(al)-ik séb-u-yá'(al)-ik b'á'al [b'ey-o']*  
because if he<sub>a</sub> speaks, he<sub>a</sub> easily says bad things [that's right]
- 158 *háhn*  
true (return to the narrative)
- 159 *hach- pues, hach ki'imak u-yóol le máak-o'*  
very- well, the man<sub>a</sub> was (became) very happy
- 160 *ká t-u-yú'ub'-ah é'óok u-yá'al-á'(a)h ti'*  
when he<sub>a</sub> heard, what was told to him<sub>a</sub>
- 161 *b'ix 'úuch u-y-úuch-ul*  
how it happened what happened
- 162 *leti'-e' t-u-túuk-(u)l-ah b'ey-o'<sup>50</sup>*  
as for him<sub>a</sub> he thought that (i.e., this) way
- 163 *pues chen 'um-p'é(éh)-desgracia t-u-men*  
well (it is) just a (minor) disgrace (misfortune) because

Tape: 075

Tape: 080

- 164 *chen (l)e ch'o'*  
just the rat
- 165 *tàal-o'*  
came
- 166 *ká t-u-lúub'-s(-ah) (l)e k'ib-o'*  
then it felled the candle  
*ká 'eel tak (l)e animas-o'*  
which burned the deceased
- 167 *má'a wá -*  
its not like -
- 168 *má' wa leti' le máak t-u-tóok-ah-ó*  
it's not like the man<sub>a</sub> burned her
- 169 *sino que*  
but that
- 170 *chen 'um-p'é(éh) chan-b'à'al-che' tàal-eh*  
a little animal just came
- 171 *ká t-u-lúub'-s(-ah) le kib'-o' [hm]*  
then felled the candle [hm]
- 172 *ká t-u-tóok (l)e mantel-o'*  
which burned the shroud
- 173 *ká 'eel tak (l)e [hm] (l)e kimen-o' [hm]<sup>51</sup>*  
(and) then burned the [hm] the deceased [hm]

Tape: 085

### Analysis of the use of *ki-*

The discourse use of the *ki-* forms in the story can be analyzed at two levels: local, for their individual value in contrast to and in conjunction with other paradigmatically possible forms for reporting speech; and global, for their cumulative signal value in the story. Ideally, these uses would be contrasted with all the other forms used for reporting speech in the story. Such a full analysis is too lengthy and complex to be undertaken here. But to indicate what would be involved in such an analysis and to give some perspective on the specific uses of *ki-*, the full verbs of speaking involved in the passages containing each *ki-* form will also be discussed briefly.

#### Local discourse functions of *ki-*

For the purposes of discussing local effects, the story can be broken into five main sections. These divisions have been imposed for convenience and should not be assigned any special theoretical status.

Section 1 (lines 001–46) sets out the main parameters of tension in the story. The first use of *ki-* occurs during the initial discussion of whether or not the older brother should attend the wake. In a speech beginning at line 018, one brother explains their hesitancy to accept the invitation. Don Gonzalo introduces this passage with *k-u-yá'(al)-ik* 'he says it' followed by direct quotation (as indicated both by content and

by pronominal shift) – the maximally neutral way of reporting speech with a regular verb of speaking. There is, in fact, no special lexical term in Yucatec which could succinctly describe a speech function of the type in this passage – it is not really an answer to the invitation, but a representation of a discussion of whether to accept.

The quoted speech is straightforward enough until line 022, which repeats or glosses the previous line. Such semantic couplets are common in Mayan languages. At first, the use of the quotative seems unnecessary since direct quotation has already clearly been indicated. However, the use of the *ki-* form at this point appears to serve several local functions. The use of *kih* further foregrounds the exact words uttered, especially the last fragment of the utterance: *k-u-pòoch'-ih* 'he (habitually) insults people.' This focus on specific form suggests, first, that the listener is to draw from the utterance the pragmatic entailments such a characterization of someone might suggest – for example, the chronic nature of the brother's problem and how serious it must be if his younger brother will make such a blunt claim about him. Second, the form clarifies that the last two verbs of speaking within the quoted speech (*letí' hach seb'-u-yá'al*) *ik b'á'ah* 'he says bad things very easily' and *k-u-pòoch'-ih* 'he insults people') are in fact inside the dialogue and do not represent claims by the narrator. Finally, *kih* may also delimit the end of brother's response to the invitation before the shift in the next line to the conversation among the brothers.

The following line 023 contains the second *ki-* form. This utterance is directly addressed to the older brother and re-expresses his sibling's reluctance to take him to the wake. *kih* in this context signals that the continuing discussion is being directly quoted, although the use of a vocative in this line would also indicate that the line is direct quotation. *kih* also helps bound the change of addressee from the inviter to the older brother since one would not typically repeat the *kih* for the same speaker. Again, however, pronoun and mood shifts also serve to indicate that a new speaker is involved. In this case then, from a local point of view, *kih* appears to be reinforcing or clarifying shifts that are marked in other ways.

The conversation in section 1 continues but with no other verbs of speaking framing the argument among the brothers until the discussion draws to a close when the brothers have settled on a course of action. In the intervening lines, Don Gonzalo differentiates the characters by voice tone, pronoun shifts, and semantic content. At lines 042 and 044 he uses the form *k-u-t'áan* 'he says, he speaks' to signal the conclusion of the conversation. This verb form is functionally very close to *kih*<sup>52</sup> and continues to keep the narrator's views out of the picture.

Section 2 (lines 047–93) describes the events at the wake culminating in the burning of the corpse. There are no *ki-* forms in the second section, which is essentially descriptive stage-setting.

Section 3 (lines 094–134) recounts the attempts to convince the older brother to explain what happened. A *ki-* form occurs in line 100 when the bereaved son, having discovered the burned body, asks the older brother how it got burned. This utterance consisting of direct quotation is introduced with two verbs of speaking *t-u-yá'al-ah b'ey-a* 'said/spoke like this' and *k-u-yá'al-ik-e* 'he says.' Again, this is the maximally neutral way of reporting discourse function with a full verb in Yucatec and

is relatively neutral with respect to referential content or specific form. However, the purposive function of the quoted utterance as a question is indicated both by intonation and by the form *b'ix* 'how.' The use of *b'ey-a* with the first framing verb also indicates some focus on form. This emphasis on form is then reinforced by the use of *kih*, which indicates that these are the brother's exact words. From a semantic point of view, however, *kih* again seems redundant here since it is one of three forms introducing the direct quotation and one of two forms stressing that the report is in exact form.

*ki-* forms occur twice more in this section to frame the evasive '*uhum*' response of the older brother in lines 113 and 127. We have already been told in lines 103 and 104 that the older brother is not speaking. In line 113 we get the first quotable response to the question posed earlier in this third section with the *kih* form. The response is introduced by the phrase *letí-e' mix tún-yá'al-ik chen k-(u)-yá'al-ik* 'as for him, he doesn't say (anything), he just says,' a wonderful double use of the verb *-á'al* – first in its normal usage to refer to referential content and second in its special (residual) usage to refer to the form of a vocal utterance regardless of content. The complete phrase clearly indicates that what follows is not referential in nature. The postposed *kih* in line 113 indicates that what precedes is exactly what he said even if it has no referential content. Although *kih* is again redundant here given the preceding double use of *-á'al* and the necessarily direct nature of the report, this is a prototypical usage of the quotative to frame pure vocal output without any concern for its specific function or referential value. Line 115 following again uses *-á'al* in conjunction with *chen* 'just' to indicate that the evasive sound combination is the only response.

Line 127, which contains the third *kih* in this section, is very similar in structure. Here the brothers have joined in the attempt to get their sibling to speak. The laconic evasive response '*uhum*' serves to create a new level of humor as listeners suddenly realize that the brother will use the evasive response on his own brothers, who promoted the evasive speech pattern in the first place. For this effect to work, it is crucial that there be no warning about the response. In this case, then, there is no introductory full verb of speaking; *kih* bears the full weight of the report and takes us right into the dialogue with minimal narrator intrusion. Thus, besides continuing the emphasis on form, *kih* both signals the shift of speaker and facilitates the effective enactment of the story's humorous twist.

Section 4 (lines 135–46) contains the older brother's Spanish response describing the events and culminating in the insult to the bereaved. The introduction to this Spanish response is very complex. The first introduction is with the reporting verb *t-u-niuk-ah* in line 135, which describes the function of this utterance, it is the long-awaited answer.<sup>53</sup> The *k-u-chen-á'al-ik* 'he (finally) just says' in line 136 follows the first fragment of the utterance and introduces the direct quotation.<sup>54</sup> Again it is the most neutral reporting form but in the present context can be construed to frame the content (even though the first word, *estabien*, is itself almost devoid of referential content), because the passage has just been described as a "response." The *k-u-t'áan 'ich 'español* 'he speaks in Spanish' in line 137 makes explicit that the Spanish form of the utterance is significant. The use of *t'áan* 'speak, speech, language' here instead



of *ki-* seems appropriate since it is a language shift that is at issue and *ki-* is not specific to speech whereas with human agents *t'ään* is. (However, including *'ich 'español* in the verb phrase suggests that *k-u-t'ään* alone may not be sufficient to indicate that the older brother actually used Spanish in this passage.) Thus three separate verbs of speaking are used to introduce this crucial passage, each indicating a specific piece of relevant information.

The *ki* in line 144, the last line of the Spanish speech, immediately follows the critical words of the whole story, whose representation in this exact form essentially makes the story a story. Besides emphasizing the form of this particular utterance, this *ki* serves to bound the ending of the older brother's speech and to indicate that all the preceding has been direct quote. Interestingly, the *b'in* 'they say, it is said'<sup>55</sup> indicating hearsay is introduced for the only time in this story to put some extra distance between the statement of the insult and the narrator's voice. Don Gonzalo does not want the insult attributed to him and, in this case, the use of *ki* alone does not seem to provide sufficient distance.

Section 5 (lines 147–73) describes the final reaction by the bereaved and his coming to terms with the event. There are no direct reports of speech in this section unless we count the case of reported thought commencing on line 162, which, in effect, recaps (in Maya) the crucial segment of the story. This section does, however, make clear a second line of humor in the story. It emphasizes that the man couldn't report on the burning corpse because he had been told not to say anything. That is, his brothers inadvertently led him into making precisely the sort of social blunder they wanted him to avoid.

In summary, in addition to its paradigmatic meaning value which foregrounds the form of a quoted utterance, the *ki-* form can serve a variety of other local discourse functions in a narrative. *ki-* can mark the terminal boundary of a quotation, signal a shift of speaker, provide a reminder that the report is direct where the original framing verb might be somewhat distant, clarify the functional levels of speech where they might be ambiguous (e.g., if there is a verb of speaking within a quotation), and serve various rhetorical ends less readily served by initial framing verbs (e.g., presenting a quoted utterance without prior framing). Nonetheless, in many cases in this story, the use of *ki-* seems redundant from both a propositional and local discourse point of view because other signals are available in the narration to signal much the same information. This suggests that *ki-* also serves other discourse functions in the story.

#### Global discourse function of *ki-*

When we examine the use of the *ki-* forms over the entire narrative, we find that collectively they serve to mark the crucial elements of the plot and key themes of the narrative as a whole. This global marking pattern can best be seen by reviewing the segments containing the *ki-* forms in isolation from the rest of the narrative. The first use of *ki-* lays out the crucial character trait of the older brother:

*k-u- k-u-pòoch'-ih kih*  
he<sub>a</sub> insults people said-he<sub>c</sub>

This is followed immediately by a quotation in which one of the younger brothers admonishes the older brother not to attend the wake:

*pues, m'ín má(')an-tà(a)h sukú'un kih*  
well better you<sub>a</sub> don't come older brother says-he<sub>c</sub>

Thus the first two uses of *kih* effectively set up the story's central tension, namely, the older brother's propensity to make verbal insults and his siblings' concern that he not violate the important cultural norm against verbal insults while attending the wake.<sup>56</sup>

The *ki-* form does not then recur until the conversations at the climax of the story where the bereaved questions the older brother as the witness to the fire:

*b'ix 'úuch-(u)k u- 'u-yèel-eh le difüundó-a' kih*  
how did it happen that the dead man burned? says-he<sub>a</sub>

This sets up the crucial interaction wherein the older brother is now the center of attention and is expected to speak. But given his prior agreement with his brothers, he has to evade answering. We are told first in line 103 that he does not respond at all<sup>57</sup> and then we are given his propositionally meaningless reply using the *ki-* form:

*'uhum kih*  
'uhum says-he<sub>a</sub>

The questioner grows angry (see line 118) and the man's brothers now ask him to speak. But the older brother answers them with the evasive *'uhum*, which is again presented with *ki-*:

*'uhum kih*  
'uhum says-he<sub>a</sub>

Thus both the question and the initial evasive replies are marked by the use of *ki-*. This use of *ki-* effectively portrays the older brother being careful in a public setting by using stereotypic evasive tactics.

It remains to bring the story to some sort of resolution. This begins on line 135 and climaxes with the insult in line 144, the climactic punchline of the story which is marked with the final *ki-* form:

*quemó la madre ki b'in*  
the mother burned says-he<sub>a</sub> it-is-said

Thus, the older brother, prone to making insults, intoxicated, and speaking in Spanish, unwittingly insults the bereaved.

At the level of the narrative, eleven different forms are used to frame fifty-five instances of speech.<sup>58</sup> Yet the crucial passages in this story – the initial problematic, the tension-building conversation, and the humorous resolution – are all framed by the six uses of *ki-*.<sup>59</sup> Further, the key metapragmatic themes of the story, the desirability of avoiding verbal insults, the necessity of watching one's words and even using evasive tactics in public settings, and the complex interrelationship between drinking, speaking Spanish, and making insults are also all indexed by the *ki-* form. In short, *ki-* serves two global discourse functions in this story: highlighting the crucial plot

dynamic, the core around which the descriptive passages are built, and foregrounding the main metapragmatic themes. Why there should be these correspondences should be clear from the earlier discussion of the paradigmatic potential of *ki-*. At the crucial points of the story, where a creative effect is to be achieved, the narrator invokes the most metapragmatically transparent technique of presentation in an attempt to allow the pragmatic power of the quoted utterance to emerge. At the same time, in this story, the quoted forms effectively present vivid examples of the central metapragmatic themes of the story. The global discourse functions of *ki-* stem directly from its paradigmatic and local discourse values, but collectively these achieve a second order effect, providing the listener with a guide to the schematic structure and key themes of the narrative.

### Significance of quotative forms

In sum, the Yucatec quotative provides a means for framing a report of one communication within another – especially speech within speech. Use of *ki-* indicates that the *specific form* of the reported communication has been reproduced and thus, with regard to speech, it constitutes a form of direct quotation. By preserving the form of an utterance, direct quotation effectively conveys its expressive qualities along with its referential and predication value. In contrast to indirect quotation, which alters the specific form but preserves referential and predication content, direct quotation effectively foregrounds the expressive qualities of an utterance. This accounts for the quality of perceived “vividness” so often associated with direct quotation.

*ki-* contrasts with other frames for direct quotation. When regular verbs of speaking are used in direct quotation, the verb characterizes the form and/or the function of the reported speech; even the most neutral verb of speaking *’a’al* indicates that the reported utterance is in fact speech with propositional content. All such verbs effectively characterize the reported speech in terms of cultural types. By contrast, *ki-* does not typify the reported communication but simply presents it for listener interpretation. (Herein lies the source of its anomalous morphosyntax.) Compared with regular verbs of speaking, use of *ki-* foregrounds the uniqueness and individuality of the communicative event. This makes *ki-* especially useful for conveying the creative or emergent quality of ongoing discourse. In this sense, it is the most vivid reporting form – it directly presents the reported event as “an event.”

In the course of narrating a story, speakers can take advantage of the paradigmatic value of *ki-* to shape the structure and content of it. Although from a paradigmatic point of view the quotative minimizes the narrator’s interpretation of the reported speech, from a discourse syntagmatic point of view the quotative can be used by narrators to foreground certain aspects of the narration. Material framed by *ki-* will be presented as direct and vivid re-creations of emergent action – free of narrator typification and evaluation. And these segments will contrast stylistically both with the referential and predicating framing narrative and with the more typifying forms of reporting speech which could have been used instead. Ironically, however, the very technique of

standing back and letting characters in the story “speak (and act) for themselves” can be used by narrators to foreground rhetorically what *they* wish to emphasize as the crucial turns in the plot and the larger themes of the story. In short, use of the quotative maximizes those functions widely associated with the use of directly quoted speech in narratives, namely, the signaling of structural and thematic salience.

It remains to be seen whether other languages with quotatives show similar patterns of use and whether languages without quotatives have means to achieve the same or similar ends. At an empirical level, the use in English of *go* to report speech, of *be like* to report thought and feeling, and of double verbs of speaking to frame quotations suggests that similar dynamics may be operating. The widespread presence of quotatives in the world’s languages and the often noted irregularity of ‘say’ verbs also suggest the presence of similar patterns elsewhere.

At a theoretical level we should expect to find similar patterns in many languages. To the extent that metapragmatic discourse refers to and predicates about events of speaking, it will tend to reduce speech events to cultural types. Yet speakers talk about speech most often precisely because the speech at issue made a difference, transformed a situation. There is no reason to expect that all such events will conform to established cultural types. In trying to capture the emergent qualities of such utterances and speech events, characterization in terms of cultural types will often seem to be inadequate. Narratives that re-create more fully the complexity of events for listeners represent one response of speakers to such restrictions. But if the devices used to effect such narrations themselves continue to typify at a lower level of structure, then there will be an inconsistency of means and ends, and speakers can be expected to seek routes around such structural contradiction. Presentation of the exact form of speech in direct quotation helps by foregrounding its pragmatic values. Presentation of the exact form of speech with a quotative of the Yucatec type helps still more by foregrounding its emergent effects as communicative action.

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### Notes

- 1 Another special form for reporting speech is a free particle *b’in* ‘it is said (that)’ which does not derive or inflect in any way. Syntactically, like other free particles, it follows the principle verb in a reported clause (e.g., *t-u-tàas-ah b’in* ‘they say he brought it’; *yàan b’in u-tàal* ‘they say he will come’). Semantically, it indicates that the report is not exact in some way for some reason. Pragmatically it signals, positively, that the propositional

content of what was said is being reproduced (if not the exact form), or, negatively, that the reporter is not willing to vouch for the veracity or likelihood of the reported content because it is only hearsay.

- 2 For readability, the form will be written as *ki-* even though *k-*, *ki-*, and *kih-* emerge as contextual variants.
- 3 *ki-* may have been more widely derived and inflected in Colonial Yucatec (Lucy 1983, 1985).
- 4 *ki-* can be used to report significant signals that might not even be regarded as communicative, for example, in the utterance of *aiii kih* to report the sound of a squeaky nail.
- 5 Attempts to account for the syntactic and semantic structure of reported speech forms frequently have ignored the need to recognize the existence of multiple purposive functions in language – including a distinguishable metalinguistic functional level. However, reported speech presents difficulties for traditional unifunctional analyses and only in recent years has it become widely recognized that new approaches are needed. For the syntactic problems posed by traditional analyses for direct report, see Partee (1973). For some of the problems of treating indirect reports in terms of traditional complement structure rules, see Li (1986), who draws on data in Munro (1982). By the introduction of “expressions” – a new theoretical entity superordinate to the sentence and denoting nonembeddable utterances – Banfield (1982) attempts to account for many of the regularities of reported speech within traditional unifunctional terms. However, once it is recognized that the reported speech (or some aspect of it such as its referential content) is functioning as an *object* of reference for the reporting clause, then the underlying source of the formal anomalies becomes obvious.
- 6 A unique utterance is not, by definition, a token because there is no corresponding type. (The sign is only a *sin*sign in Peirce’s 1932 framework). However, the moment a second utterance is produced which purports to copy or replicate that original utterance, it is no longer unique; a type has been created (the original utterance has been typified) and the original and its replicas must be regarded thereafter as tokens of a type – even though the reporter may be striving to articulate their contextual specificity and ultimately deny their status as tokens of types.
- 7 Silverstein (1985b: 217) clarifies some of the different meanings of the term *pragmatic*. The term is used here to refer especially to the nonreferential, context-linked qualities of utterances. Some indexical forms may, of course, also have referential value.
- 8 Since, in written form, the omission of the complementizer *that* from a reporting utterance will produce direct and indirect reports that are morphologically identical, I have included quotation marks in this example to indicate that the direct quotation would be intonationally distinct.
- 9 See Note 6.
- 10 I have had great difficulty getting informants to discuss the notion of nonverbal insults. I believe they exist, but they are not as culturally salient as verbal ones. Notice in the present story that the insult is what is *said* to the bereaved, not the event of burning itself.
- 11 The informant, hereafter Don Gonzalo, is a native of the Chemax district in eastern Yucatan, Mexico, and his speech is characteristic of that area. I asked Don Gonzalo to retell a story he had once told me wherein someone said *’uhum ’ahan* in response to a series of questions. The current version which is relatively short lasts about six and half minutes. Some longer versions of the story make it explicit that three brothers have gone away from home to work – a commonly used background feature of many Yucatecan

- stories. Although Don Gonzalo neglects to mention these facts explicitly in the course of his narrative, he clearly has this framework in mind when he names the story and in the presuppositions he makes in lines 010, 012, 013, and 020.
- 12 The definite form *le máak* ‘the man’ both begins the narration and presupposes our conversation before the narration began. It is thus ambiguously inside and outside the narration. Don Gonzalo realizes the anomaly and corrects it in line 002 with the indefinite form *’un túul máak* ‘a man,’ which properly signals the beginning of the narrative. Don Gonzalo does not further describe who this man is. In other versions he is identified as a neighbor of the man for whom the three brothers have come to work (see Note 11).
  - 13 Don Gonzalo recognizes that he has misidentified the dead person as the younger brother. The hardly-begun narrative is suspended as we discuss the identity of the dead person in lines 004–011.
  - 14 This remark by me temporally overlaps *máax*, which follows in line 005.
  - 15 Don Gonzalo’s use of the definite form here presupposes unstated background material (see Notes 11 and 12).
  - 16 *k’áat* ‘to want, to ask’ can be used as a verb of speaking, but here refers to general desire or wanting.
  - 17 *’in-...-ó’ on* is an alternate first person plural form used in the Chemax area.
  - 18 This line may be at level one as an aside, a gloss for me. However, under subsequent questioning, Don Gonzalo insisted it was part of the story and would be said to any listener. In this later discussion, Don Gonzalo emphasized that the older brother just habitually said bad things.
  - 19 Possibly a contraction of *má’ táan a-tàah* ‘not you are coming’ (cf. Blair 1964: 39). The form *ma’ Vn* typically means ‘(still) not’ and is especially used in continued dialogue. See also lines 025, 028, and 031.
  - 20 Don Gonzalo uses different voice quality to help distinguish the different speakers through this section of the narrative. The zero mark *ø* has been used to indicate the implicit change of speaker.
  - 21 This form was not clear on the tape (sounded like *te-ik*) and I have not previously encountered it. However, I am fairly confident of the gloss. Cf. line 039.
  - 22 In a later discussion of the text Don Gonzalo explained that the brother just said this, it didn’t represent any real commitment. Cf. line 029.
  - 23 Don Gonzalo claimed later that the *-al-* was an “error.”
  - 24 The presence of the transitive marker *-t-* on this stem is unexpected. One would expect instead either *núuk-ø* ‘respond’ or *nú’uk-t-* ‘explain.’ Cf. Pó’ot and Bricker (1981: 22) and lines 106 and 135.
  - 25 Don Gonzalo’s variant of *b’ik* ‘don’t.’
  - 26 The man, distributing drinks is known as a *k’uleb* and is engaged by the host of any festivity to perform this chore.
  - 27 From the Spanish *invitar* ‘to invite,’ this form indicates a formal, often stylized oral invitation to attend an event or to have food or drink at an event. In this case the men would be offered *aguardiente*, an inexpensive Mexican liquor.
  - 28 This adverbial is not clear on the tape; may be *ma(’) w(a) u-*.
  - 29 Phonologically closer to *k’úuch-ech*.
  - 30 The reference to *’uk’-ul* ‘drinks’ here is not to alcoholic drinks but to other refreshments served at ritual events. Prototypical in the present case would be *café* ‘coffee’ but chocolate, rice gruel, or corn gruel could also be served. Typically these refreshments are prepared and distributed to guests by the host’s female kin.

- 31 The shift of protagonist here is very weakly marked.
- 32 Bill Hanks (personal communication) suggested this might be a contraction of *ká hóop* 'when' + preverbal auxiliary 'begins.' Don Gonzalo later confirmed that the two expressions mean the same thing. However, preverbal *hóop* is not in common use as a preverbal form in the Chemax area. Don Gonzalo would only produce *káp* within the expression *káp u-b'in* although other informants use it more widely. Cf. line 117.
- 33 The terminal *-e* here may result from a transitive object marker *-e* (*h*) followed by a slight hesitation because of the underlying *le* (or even *te*) in line 084 following. Either terminal marker, *-e* or *-eh*, is a bit odd given that the complement follows in line 084.
- 34 There would always be candles on the pallet holding a deceased person during a wake, hence the definite article is culturally appropriate.
- 35 This passage was said very haltingly. Don Gonzalo was struggling to avoid saying at this point that the mother burned, which in the Spanish of line 145 constitutes the climactic insult of the story. Cf. lines 149 and 173.
- 36 Ironically, given the theme of the story, Don Gonzalo has to correct an error in his Spanish gender marking. It appears in lines 100 and 102 that he is avoiding saying *madre* at this point in the story.
- 37 Apparently a simple error as indicated in the gloss.
- 38 The prototypical application of this verb is to a pouting or complaining child. It refers more to the mode of expression than to the mood as such.
- 39 This verb based on the Spanish *molestar* used in the sense of 'to be bothered' usually refers to an emotional state, but in this context it may refer to a mode of affective expression.
- 40 It is possible that lines 109–11 continue the remark in line 108 and are also outside the narrative.
- 41 See Note 32.
- 42 Phonologically closer to *yàan*.
- 43 Instead of a singular verb, the Spanish plural *vinieron* is used. Note the unintended irony given that a central message of the story is the risks of saying the wrong thing when one uses Spanish.
- 44 Palatalized to sound like *k-u-ch'àan*.
- 45 It is crucial to the story that in his drunken state he tells the story in Spanish rather than in Yucatec. Don Gonzalo signals this shift by overtly describing the language shift and by reciting lines 148–54 in a heavily cadenced Spanish.
- 46 Unidentifiable form.
- 47 Although this Spanish insult is the punchline of the story, notice how Don Gonzalo distances himself from the remark by placing *b'in* 'it is said' after the quotative *ki*.
- 48 I have coded this as an aside directed to me explaining the story. On relistening to the tape and discussing the status of these two lines, Don Gonzalo claimed this was part of the story – its ending. Only after seeing that the story continued did he acknowledge that it might be present primarily for my benefit. What he meant to clarify at this point is that the expression *la madre* 'the mother' has been used here by the older brother as a general referential expression for an old woman but that in fact she really was the mother of the man listening to the story, hence the insult. Don Gonzalo asserts that if the son had not been listening, the remark would not have been an insult. This seems doubtful however given Don Gonzalo's repeated attempts to avoid saying the insult in lines 95, 96, 149, and 173 and given his attempt to distance himself from uttering it in line 144 by using *b'in*.

- 49 Again Don Gonzalo hesitates apparently to avoid saying that the mother burned (see Notes 47 and 48).
- 50 The following thoughts in lines 163–73 have been indented in the same manner as the quoted speech since they appear to gloss the Spanish passage presented above. They also clarify the grieved man's reaction to it.
- 51 Again, notice that Don Gonzalo never directly glosses the Spanish insult into Yucatec.
- 52 In Mopan, a related language, *k-u-t'an* forms the third person of the *ki*- series (Lucy 1983).
- 53 This verb does not technically "frame" the direct quote, but only describes its function. Don Gonzalo does not tend to use the perfective form of the verb (*t*-[verb]-*ah*) to introduce direct quotations of speech (cf. lines 098, 099, 147, 151, 162).
- 54 This is a good example of where a form other than *ki*- can be postposed to the quoted utterance to yield a more dramatic narrative effect.
- 55 See Note 1 for a description of *b'in*.
- 56 However, in the intervening segment of the story, the form *k-u-t'àan*, which is closely related in function to *ki*- (see Note 52), but restricted with humans to reporting speech, is used to describe the advice given by the younger brothers to the older brother (lines 033–42) as to how to handle himself while at a public event and to describe the older brother's assent to their suggestions that he avoid conversation:
  - 038 *pero mix xi'ik-ech a-wá'al b'á'al*  
but don't go saying bad things
  - 039 *t-u-mèen matik ma' ti' nàah-yàan-ó'on-i'*  
because you<sub>d</sub> shouldn't, we are not in our own house
  - 040 *tàan-xeh tú'ux yàan-ó'on*  
we are in another place
  - 041 *tàan-xeh lùugar-ih*  
it's a different place
  - 042 *k-u-t'àan u-láak-ó'ob' ti'*  
say his<sub>d</sub> brothers to him<sub>d</sub>
  - 043 *leti' xan-e' k-u-yú'ub'-ik*  
and he<sub>d</sub> hears (what they<sub>e,e</sub> say)
  - 044 *má'a-lob' k-u-t'àan*  
ok he<sub>d</sub> says
  - 045 *kó'on-é'ex tun*  
let's go then (he<sub>e</sub> says)
 Thus the *k-u-t'àan* form is used to fill in some of the subsidiary details of the interaction.
- 57 Line 103 uses *t'àan*: *mix tun-t'àan le máak-e* 'the man<sub>d</sub> does not speak.'
- 58 Table 4.1 indicates the distribution of reporting forms. See Tannen (1986: 315) for similar tabulations for English and Greek narrations.
- 59 If we include the closely related *k-u-t'àan* form, we capture even more of the central elements of the story. Cf. Notes 52 and 56.

Table 4.1 *Frequency distribution of forms for reporting speech in a Yucatec narrative*

| Verb         | Narrative level |           |        | Total |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------|--------|-------|
|              | Frame           | Narrative | Inside |       |
| 'á'al        | 4               | 22        | 10     | 36    |
| Ø*           |                 | 11        |        | 11    |
| t'áan        |                 | 6         | 1      | 7     |
| kih          |                 | 6         |        | 6     |
| 'iinvtar     |                 | 3         |        | 3     |
| múuk         |                 | 2         | 1      | 3     |
| k'áat        |                 | 1         |        | 1     |
| púuh         |                 | 1         |        | 1     |
| 'áaviso      |                 | 1         |        | 1     |
| b'in         |                 | 1         |        | 1     |
| túuk         |                 | 1         |        | 1     |
| póoch'       |                 |           | 1      | 1     |
| permiso      |                 |           | 1      | 1     |
| Total tokens | 4               | 55        | 14     | 73    |
| Total types  | 1               | 11        | 5      | 13    |

\* A "zero" form was counted when no overt verb appeared but change of speaker in direct quotation was indicated by shift of pronoun, intonation, etc. (see lines 024–32 and 130–4).

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