USING VIDEO FOR TEACHING MAYA LITERATURE: AN INTERCULTURAL APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

In this article, we explain the processes and outcomes of an intercultural education project on Maya literature with the support of videos by linking research and teaching practices for scholastic improvement. Videos were designed to be incorporated into the teaching and learning of contemporary Maya literature as supplementary materials to reassess the social function of Maya literary expression in intercultural education for students in two public universities in the state of Yucatan, Mexico. Throughout the study, a communication system was established that supported the insertion of educational, literature-themed videotaped interviews into the teaching of contemporary Maya literature and that, in turn, helped explore the different needs of unique educational situations. The design and implementation of these resources represent an opportunity to evaluate and revise Maya literature programs in the Latin American Literature and Maya Linguistics and Culture degree programs at Yucatan Autonomous University and the University of the East, respectively, both of which are located in Mexico.

KEYWORDS: Maya literature, intercultural education, audiovisual design.

INTRODUCTION

This work is part of a line of research and teaching contributions to the literature of native peoples. Specifically, it is situated among recent studies such as the works by Mott, Estrada, and Haladay, all of whom examined the use of technology for teaching literature written in native languages or for indigenous peoples.

In the Yucatan Peninsula, only recently have programs in literary studies begun to emerge, and few teach literature in the indigenous languages of Mexico, particularly Maya literature, in their

curriculum. However, research has shown that interest in studying the cultural knowledge and literature of indigenous peoples exists. Cocom observed that a literary movement has been developing for over three decades, led by writers from the country's indigenous peoples, especially in the Southeast region of Mexico (Cocom 1). Likewise, Leirana recognized the work being performed by three groups of authors: those associated with the Regional Unit of Popular Cultures in Mérida, the authors of the Calkiní workshop and the members of Mayáon A. C. in Valladolid (Leirana *Current Maya Literature as Seen by its Authors* 6). The Calkiní workshop has taken the name of Génali (Genre Narrative and Lyric) since 1995, and the organization Mayaón was derived from the workshop Yaajal Mayaón K'in in 1993 (Leirana *Current Maya Literature as Seen by its Authors* 42-46).

The Maya people of the Yucatan have been excluded from all levels of education because schools, for many years, have thought of education as a progressive adaptation to a model of culture or society that is defined by a single identity (Ytarte 121). Thus, it is urgent that higher education extends beyond discursive recognition of its culturally diverse context. Higher education must be devised so that one continually seeks to discover and understand diversity, including during the daily tasks of one's education.

Those facts are the reasons for promoting an intercultural educational approach in relation to the Maya people and its literature. As Hernandez noted (In tlahtoli, in ohtli 134), an intercultural education implies interpersonal dialogue, an exchange of values and knowledge and new learning that involve mutual enrichment between the distinct groups that compose a multicultural society. Exchange is possible through personal contact and experience in school, but even more so outside of school. Therefore, intercultural education, noted Altarejos (125), is not simply a mass of school programs, group activities or packages of knowledge that are taught in the classroom; rather, it is a formation of the whole person and of all people, regardless of where they are and the place they from which they came. Such training is not the exclusive task of schools or teachers; it involves the participation of all members of society.

Multiculturalism in the Mexican context is a result of the diverse origin of human groups in today's society. In particular, Martín (81-83) recognized four categories of cultural groups in Mexico.

He spoke first of groups of heirs to Mesoamerican cultures, followed by groups of European cultures, particularly the Spanish. He referred to a third category of national Mexican cultures, shaped by Spanish heritage but receiving a strong influence from various cultures of Mesoamerican origin. Finally, he considered minority groups such as those with African heritage in parts of Veracruz and Guerrero and those of Arab origin in the Yucatan Peninsula.

From this perspective, cultural diversity is a result of historical and social processes in the Yucatan Peninsula. It is important to note, however, that the Maya and Mexican cultures of the Yucatan are neither defined dimensions nor mutually exclusive; instead, they are in constant interaction, which provokes their transformation. In the regional context, Martín further explained (83-84) that in the Yucatan, one can distinguish Mexican culture from that of the Maya. Mexican culture is based on Castilian Spanish, but with a profound Maya influence that is evident in various manifestations and representations of everyday life. The Maya culture remains alive in the use of the Maya language; in oral and written literature; in institutions such as collective land tenure; in medicinal practices; in customs; and so on. Indeed, language is one of the hallmarks of the Maya culture. In the state of Yucatan, there are approximately 537,618 speakers of Maya of the 1,955,577 in the total population, according to the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics, equating to just over 25% of the current total population in Yucatan.

However, even with such presence and efforts by the Mayans in different areas of social life in Yucatan, there is still a lack of knowledge on the part of the non-Maya speaking population about the Maya culture and language with which it has co-existed for over five hundred years. Prejudices further impair the valuation of Maya cultural heritage. Such prejudices have contributed in various ways to discrimination against many Maya cultural representations, including those in its literature. The problem becomes more complex when we consider that the state and school together emit a demagogic speech from an intercultural perspective that has little relation with the reality of thousands of people who, on a daily basis, are practically excluded from school by the state because of their cultural differences.

The work presented here promotes the development of innovative experiences that strengthen intercultural dialogue in an educational domain. Students, writers and teachers interact to enrich the study of the literary corpus of Maya language. The proposal includes the possibility of bringing a significant number of writers into the classroom through video interviews. In this sense, such videos have a bilingual quality because the interviews on which they are based were conducted in Maya and Spanish and could therefore be used by both Maya and Spanish-speaking college students. These resources were created with a group of professionals from the fields of communications, language and literature.

By way of the video records created in this project, we are recovering the teachings of various writers of Maya literature and preserving their testimonies with audiovisual technology. Thus, their speech will remain available as valuable informational material for further study and research projects. Similarly, videotaped interviews are a linguistic register that may contribute to further study of the Maya language. The Digital Versatile Disc (DVD) storage units on which interviews were recorded form a reusable collection that can be used and re-used by other teachers and researchers.

Therefore, this paper addresses necessities dictated by current trends in intercultural education. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), whose aim is to contribute knowledge to intercultural education issues, has summarized key aspects and has presented, as a result of the International Conference on Education, the regulatory framework and three basic principles of intercultural education. These principles guide the present work, which responds to UNESCO's call to teachers and students for the promotion of intercultural education in peace and understanding (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural 7-8). Proposals of this nature can be inserted into the curricula of higher education institutions in the Maya region to take action in the matter. Thus, this work can increase interest in learning about the Maya language and culture, based on Maya literary manifestations. As a result of this work, we seek to foster respect, tolerance and freedom for the culture and art of the Maya people of Yucatan.

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

For the purpose of this work, it is important to explain that while literary and educational communication systems differ in formal settings, they can combine to create greater interventions in the teaching and learning of Maya literature. We therefore assume the complementary and interdisciplinary nature of education, communication and literature.

Communication in the classroom

For over four decades, three basic models of pedagogical communication have been considered: 1) education that emphasizes content, corresponding to a traditional unilateral communication model; 2) education that emphasizes effects and seeks to shape the behavior of people, corresponding to a bilateral communication model; and 3) education that emphasizes process, which pertains to the transformational processes of the person in terms of the dialectical interaction between oneself and one's reality, the development of one's intellectual capabilities and social consciousness (Kaplún 18-19). Depending on the emphasis given to each element of the communicative system in the classroom, one can identify the relevance of these educational approaches to teaching and learning processes. However, in the communicative dynamic of a class session, application of the different models can be intermingled according to their objectives and the strategies employed to achieve them.

In the classroom, unexpected situations do arise, even amidst educational institutions' most rigorous planning and organization, and participants' willingness to strive to learn is a fundamental necessity to complete the tasks and activities needed to generate an efficient outcome. Therefore, the procedures with which the teacher intends to ensure the achievement of the learning objectives must consider these different levels of communication within the group and must recognize that teachers and students are both senders and receivers, dialoguing through different languages from different cultures, all with unique symbolic universes that are both evaluative and dynamic.

Literary communication

Literary communication includes particular features in its production and interpretation, and it is essential to recognize these unique characteristics when proposing a scheme to represent a

communication system for teaching literature. One of these features, explained Segre (12), is that the sender and receiver in a literary communication are not present together at the same time. Therefore, contrary to what typically happens with the triad of sender-message-receiver, literary communication operates on two fronts: sender-message and message-receiver.

In the foreground, the sender intentionally produces a message through a linguistic expression at a given time, either orally or in writing (Escandell 31), and the author's use of language is the primary condition for understanding the author's role as sender. The sender is essentially a distant subject whose potential readers are largely unknown at the time. The sender can also originate a message from a context and historical horizon different from that of the receivers. That is, a message is not born subject to a context. On the contrary, its projection is possible to other times and spaces, as the sender's communicative intentions seek a host rather than a response (Escandell 239).

The message-receiver relationship is different because the reader must usually take the initiative to come into contact with the author-sender's message. It is possible, therefore, that the author and the receiver never coincide in time and place; thus, the work, or message, is presented to the reader as a closed and conclusive reality (Escandell 238). A fundamental principle of reception theory is that the text comes alive only when it is read (Acosta 163). In this sense, literary communication is characterized by the relationship that is established from the text, and the message relates to the reader's aesthetic experience and the artistic component configured by the author.

In this way, the nature of the message can be recognized from different levels or forms of presentation. The message can then be considered a carrier of cultural and social discourse, a linguistic construction with formal symbolic value and a factual or fictional representation of reality.

Literary education in the classroom is understood from a variety of cognitive and pedagogical processes for the development of students' skills. Among these processes, reading, writing, speaking and active listening skills are practical and necessary aspects that influence knowledge construction, as it is from the development of these experiences that students and teacher communicate their perspectives on literary discourse. In this sense, it is possible that the educational and literary

discourse in the classroom emphasizes a certain element of literary communication.

The effective convergence of communication systems in the classroom can be understood from the development of written and oral competencies, reading and communication skills that enable students to internalize their aesthetic, artistic and didactic experiences.

Thus, learning literature involves the development of various skills, including reading, that enable the generation of new knowledge, as well as cognitive and imaginative prowess for building a world of fiction that can be presented in a particular work. Thus, the student must figure out who the sender is, who the receiver is and in what context each one exists (Escandell 243). It is the reader, then, who recreates and gives meaning to the message, reading from his or her own experiences and reality. Therefore, if the educational communication system for teaching Maya literature can provide students, through the use of video, information that will uncover the perceptions, beliefs and motivations that led a particular author to send that message, then the sender's message can be re-created with more contextual elements than those that their own experience could make available to them.

Discrimination and Maya literature

The teaching and study of the literature of native peoples from an intercultural approach face several challenges. The most important issue, discrimination, arises in all areas of cultural life. Hernandez (In tlahtoli 116) denounced discrimination as a result of colonialism and, consequentially, the process of conquest. Education cannot be excluded from this problem because teaching and learning are first and foremost communicative processes, and school is a place where the most varied cultural phenomena, including colonization and discrimination, can be reproduced. It is worth noting here that recent research has shown that Yucatecan Maya speakers perceive discrimination by the Yucatecan society and in the educational system (Lizama).

This issue expands further to the field of literary diffusion, as shown by related studies in the Yucatan Peninsula that have long been characterized by the exclusion of literature that does not conform to the Eurocentric literary canon. For example, in *The History of Literature in Yucatan* edited

by Esquivel, not one of his twelve volumes references works or topics of Maya literature.

Additionally, there are practices that undermine the teaching of literature of native peoples, specifically the Maya. One example includes the exclusion of Contemporary Maya Literature as a compulsory course for the Bachelor of Latin American Literature at the University of Yucatan. This exclusion caused a decrease in credits in the area of indigenous literature study in light of changes to the curriculum that were implemented by the Educational and Academic Model in 2006 (Ortega, Rosado and Cortés 19-20). The proposal claimed to boost research and interdisciplinary study but did not warn that this boost would occur at the expense of education in knowledge of regional culture and literature in the Maya language.

For the aforementioned reasons, the teaching of contemporary Maya literature in higher education should be strengthened, as it can promote intercultural training that is manifested in the professional performance of students and graduates of public universities in Yucatan. The approach of considering the thoughts of literary writers complements communicative interaction among the works, the student and the teacher within the teaching and learning process. This process may generate more interest and become a reflective exercise on knowledge and appreciation of the literary and cultural representations of the Maya people of Yucatan.

Instructional Design: Implementing video

The integration of audiovisual resources in teaching and learning in higher education requires the development of skills that allow the student to properly use these tools. The incorporation of videotaped interviews and the use of a learning management system for teaching that supports Maya literature classes involve the consideration of objectives and strategies aimed toward critical training in audiovisual media.

Video is a resource that can be used to generate discussion and reflection directly related to the literary works of Yucatec Maya authors. Therefore, the teacher's role as a designer of audiovisual material and as a promoter of organizational and formality criteria is of paramount importance, as are the various evaluations of students who will be the focus of the strategies employed. According to

Cabero (Las TIC 82), technologies, independent of their instrumental potential, can only be teaching resources when they can enhance communication or enable the creation of a more conducive learning environment. Students do not learn simply by use of the media but rather by the way in which these media are presented to them (Suárez 112).

From this perspective, it is important to note that the proposed videos present a message that should be questioned. Educational, literary and visual communications come together in the classroom to guide the construction of knowledge of literary discourse. It is therefore important to guide the planning and development of every class project with respect to the subjects, resources and processes aimed at achieving the educational objectives.

Thus, before proceeding, it is important to clarify the difference between the use of educational videos and the instructional use of videos. Cabero (New Technologies 130) noted that an educational video is one that has been designed to convey some combination of content, skills and activities that, according to its symbolic system, structure and use, fosters student learning. On the contrary, Cabero continued that when we talk about the instructional use of videos, we imply a broader view of the various ways that video can be used in education. Thus, a video, even without meeting the inherent characteristics of an instructional video, can be employed to improve learning. For example, because the contents of the videotaped interviews generated in this research serve a specific purpose, other recorded information must be selected in a particular way according to the educational environment in which it is to be used because these educational areas respond to different curricular goals and different, varied types of students. Henceforth, this study does not discuss the design of instructional videos for teaching Maya literature. However, the educational use of video interviews with Maya writers is possible in the two contexts studied.

The videos can be used at different times during class sessions: in introductory activities, as a framing device or as material to raise discussion topics or issues. They can also be utilized as the central theme of a class, at the close of a class session, or as a supplement to or continuation of a discussion, among other potential uses.

In the next section, strategies are discussed for teaching Maya literature in the contexts of the two public universities. First, it is important to note that the implementation of video requires certain conditions. Cabero (New Technologies 134-135) indicated that the teacher is required to perform a range of activities before, during and after the viewing of a video for teaching purposes. For example, before viewing, it is recommended to make a general assessment of the video and of the objectives to be attained with its use, as well as to consider the time and resources needed. During the viewing, it is important to see the reactions of students so that the teacher will be prepared to answer questions. After viewing, the video must be analyzed; the analysis can be performed using various activities.

In this study, the insight into the thinking of Maya writers that is achieved through the use of video complements the communication system between the student, the teacher and the corpus of Maya literature in the teaching and learning process. This complementary relationship can result in increased student interest and a reflective exercise on knowledge and appreciation of literary and cultural representations of the region and of the Yucatecan Maya people. We therefore propose the design of two programs studying Maya Literature that correspond to the curricula for the degree programs in *Linguistics and Maya Culture* and *Latin American Literature*.

Dialogue between people represents the core of the literary-educational communication model proposed in this work. This form of teaching arises as a reaction to the passive character of earlier lecture-style teaching and uses dialogue and conversation as the main resource for the teacher, regardless of the specific resources used; the teacher discusses and engages in conversations with students to exchange opinions and clarify concepts (Dictionary of Educational Sciences 383). Dialogue, then, is the medium through which students, authors and the professor contribute from their different perspectives and roles in the construction of a better knowledge of contemporary Yucatecan Maya literature. Thus, dialogue underlies the methodology, serving as a guideline for the development of learning, which occurs as the result of a set of strategies employed to achieve educational objectives.

The teacher seeks the most suitable methods to facilitate their students' expression of their opinions and perspectives on Maya literature authors as a factor to contribute in the teaching of Maya

literature. The design and creation of videos for didactic use represent the first part of the intercultural dialogue that this project aims to promote.

In this phase, the teacher makes contact with the writers to inquire about their values and attitudes regarding the current Maya literary movement, considering their personal characteristics, interests and concerns, as well as those of the students. Every interview with a Maya author was a meaningful experience that allowed for interaction in some way between the reality of each of the writers and that of the project participants. This activity revealed the underlying meanings that the subjects had assigned to their actions (Massot, Dorio and Sabariego 294). Maya literature served as the central point at which the perspectives of each of the writers converge, as well as a point of departure for the design of audiovisual resources.

METHOD

Participants

The design of the proposal arose from a desire to learn more about the perspectives and experiences of writers from the Yucatecan Maya literary movement. It was also important to understand their attitudes about issues relevant to their artistic and social commitments. Finally, we elaborated on the experiences that led them to take certain positions on different social or cultural issues, expressed or not, in their literary works.

The writers interviewed were from the Mexican state of Yucatan and have been highlighted as professors dedicated to the teaching, research and promotion of Maya language, literature and culture, at different academic levels. They stand out as a group for their literary production in different genres and styles, each having a long artistic career or having worked to promote their culture, as well as for their contributions to linguistic and ethnographic research. Each writer was selected for his or her outstanding participation and recognition in literary contests and prizes. The authors presented in the videos have all been published, as seen in the following biographical notes.

Ana Patricia Martínez Huchim was born in the city of Tizimín, Yucatan on July 26, 1964. She has a degree in Anthropology with a specialization in Linguistics and Literature, and she completed

postgraduate studies in Ethnohistory at the Autonomous University of Yucatán. She has taught Maya Language Arts in various institutions of higher education. In 2005, she won the National Indigenous Literature Prize "Enedino Jimenez" for her book *U k'a'ajsajil u ts'u 'noj K'aax / Memories of the heart of the forest*. In 2006, she founded, and has since managed, K'aaylay / *The Song of memory*, an electronic journal. She has also published narratives of oral tradition: the story books *U tsikbaloób mejen paalal / Children's Stories*. Another highlighted work is her text in Maya narrative, *Chen kolel / Only Women*, in the fourth edition of the University of Yucatan Literary Games. In December 2011, her first theater script written in Maya and Spanish, *El Caballo de piedra/The Stone Horse,* was performed in the city of Tizimín.

Wildernain Villegas Carrillo was born on April 20, 1981 in Peto, Yucatan. He has a degree in secondary education, with an emphasis on tele-education, from the Center for Teaching of Chetumal, Quintana Roo. In 2005, he won the State Prize for Indigenous Youth in the area of preservation and cultural development. He has translated scientific textbooks and poetry into the Maya language. He is an author of poetry in Maya and the winner of the Nezahualcoyotl Prize for Literature in Mexican Languages in 2008 for the poetry collection *U K'aay Ch'i'ibal / The Clan's Song.* Currently, he is a professor and researcher at the Maya Intercultural University of Quintana Roo (UIMQROO).

Isaac Esaú Carrillo Can was born in Peto, Yucatan on May 31, 1983. He has a degree in Art Education from the Teaching Institute of Yucatan. He is a professor in the Municipal Academy of Maya Language in Mérida. He has been the recipient of several awards for his literary work. In 2010, he received the Nezahualcoyotl Prize for Literature in Mexican Languages for his work *U Yook 'otilo'ob áak'ab / Dances of the night*. Other highlighted works include the stories *U ts'ook juntúul Balaam / The last jaguar* and *U jool Metnal / Entrance to the underworld*, winners of the second and third place awards of the Literary Games at the Autonomous University of Yucatan in 2009. In 2012, his theatrical production *U kíimil yuum k'iin/The death of the sun* was presented on several stages.

Vicente Canché Moo was born on February 5, 1975 in Halachó, Yucatan. He has a degree in Elementary Education from the Teaching Institute of Yucatan. He has taught Maya language, and in 2012, he launched the School of Maya Language and Culture "Oxlajuntikú" in his native Halachó. He

has participated in several workshops and conferences, and in 2003, he was awarded the State Prize for Indigenous Youth. In the same year, he created the first interactive compact disc for Maya language teaching. In 1996, he won first place in the State Prize for Literature in the Maya Language for his work *U Tuukul wíinik / The Wisdom of the Maya*. His works of Maya narrative include *U tsikbalilo'ob mayab / Stories of the Mayab* and *Ma 'Cheen tsikbalo'obi /They're not just stories.*

Data collection

Data were collected via two research techniques; the principal technique was semi-structured interviews, which were videotaped for the subsequent design of audiovisual resources. For this process, a review of the life history and work of each author was necessary. It was important to recognize the themes that constructed the literary discourse of each author and the perspectives and attitudes that influenced their works. It is important to note that these techniques are viewed, together, as the articulation of strategies that contribute to a better understanding of the authors' perspectives and beliefs. McMillan and Schumacher (441) argued that such strategies are techniques used to collect examples and information that are constantly refined throughout the process of data acquisition to increase validity.

The interviews were conducted in bilingual format, with the first part in Maya and the second in Spanish. The interviews in Maya were conducted by Rosana Ek Chable and Jazmín Novelo Montejo, both native speakers of the language. Interviews were recorded using two sets of professional video equipment to facilitate more dynamic editing. Panasonic P2 HD cameras were used. The recordings were conducted by three cameramen: Iran Sanchez Ruiz, Felipe Gómez Cahun and Cesar Erosa Camacho. The interviews occurred on several dates between August and October 2011, and each interview lasted an average of 1 hour and 30 minutes.

Subsequently, the recorded interviews were transcribed and translated with partial help from a team of young linguists who are graduates of the *Maya Linguistics and Culture* program at the University of the East: Gloria Tun Tuz, Ana Tuz Dzib, Didier Chan Quijano, Adriana Sanchez Tuz Gregorio Hau Caamal, Joseph Hau Caamal, Dulce Ku Un and Suemy Nahuat Ay.

After translating specific parts of the interviews, videos were captioned with subtitles in Spanish by Didier Chan Quijano and Adriana Sanchez Tuz, who were also part of the team of transcribers and translators and were responsible for proofreading in Maya and Spanish.

Finally, the videos were stored on two DVDs, organized by author. The first disc contained interviews with Martinez Huchim and Villegas Carrillo, and the second contained those with Canché Moo and Carrillo Can. Each disc had a submenu of themes from which one could access corresponding fragments of each video interview. The work included a brief biography of each writer as well as the credits for the production team. Each DVD has an average duration of 45 minutes.

CONCLUSION

A collaborative and interdisciplinary effort was required to design and create videos that could be incorporated into the teaching of contemporary Maya literature; these videos are intended to contribute to the revaluation of the social function of Maya literature as part of the intercultural education of students in two degree programs. The preparation and use of these materials correspond to the learning conditions and requirements of the socio-cultural contexts of the students at the two public universities to which the content of the DVDs are principally directed. As such, to achieve the learning objectives, the teaching of contemporary Maya literature must recognize the diversity of students' skills and abilities to design educational materials that are effective in the formation of literary, intercultural and technological competencies.

Among the objectives achieved with this work, the recorded interviews provided access to information on the perspectives of four writers of Maya literature. Each author discussed and emphasized various topics and issues relevant to the teaching of Maya literature, language and culture, sharing opinions that complemented, supported and differed from one another. The following comments summarize some of the topics covered in each interview, not as conclusions of their arguments, but rather as an example of the opinions that shaped them.

Patricia Martinez Huchim stated, from her experience as a teacher of Maya language and recognizing the conditions that this implies, that teacher training is needed to help consolidate the

methodology used to teach literature in the Yucatecan Maya language. She emphasized that observation of one's surroundings, as well as reading and active listening, are relevant practices for the development of ethnographic skills that facilitate the collection of oral and written literature in both Maya and Spanish. She also stated that in her own collection of oral traditions, she has found different versions of people, although their topics and perspectives have not been revealed. Thus, she seeks in her creative work to give a voice and explanation to what has remained untold.

Vicente Canché Moo emphasized, from his point of view as a teacher and cultural promoter, that Maya language learning and the dissemination of cultural knowledge made possible through language are indispensable to halting cultural and linguistic discrimination. He noted that as a writer, he seeks to preserve and raise awareness of the ways of thinking expressed by the Maya culture so that future generations can learn and understand these ways of thinking. In this sense, the writer attributed a teaching and pedagogical function to his work that may serve both children and adults. He also considers the use of new information and communication technologies to be tools for spreading Maya culture.

Wildernaín Villegas Carrillo indicated the need to train young readers and writers in Maya who can discover and exercise attitudes and values that result in a more just cultural appreciation of their literary and other representations. In teaching Maya literature, it is not enough to simply understand the language. A development of literary skills is also necessary in relation to the use of *suyua* (specialized or artistic Maya language, which is characterized by its highly metaphorical meanings. He also explained the importance of community and family to his work as a writer; for him, his cultural practices, and the knowledge that support them, are infused by community and family.

Isaac Carrillo Can explained how his teaching experience has allowed him to recognize the different abilities of Maya speakers and Spanish speakers to learn to read and write the Maya language. He noted that in his artistic work, he prefers pre-Hispanic themes that relate to current ways of life. He characterized writing as a discipline that requires time and dedication for the development of literacy skills, issues that have been part of the continuous Maya literary movement

for centuries.

In order for this and other information to reach students in an organized fashion, the didactic use of the videos was framed within a referential review on literary and educational communication. This approach allowed for the design of a literary and educational communication system that incorporates the voice of these writers as part of the educational dialogue between students and teachers, with the aim of critical appreciation of literary discourse. Conversely, the design and articulated conception of the communication system permitted the proposal and implementation of modifications to the two study programs to which this work refers. Thus, the analyses of the objectives and the content of the Maya literature programs as well as the proposal to use video as a teaching method were useful in redesigning the programs proposed for the degrees in Latin American Literature and Maya Linguistics and Culture.

The development of this work combines different disciplines and coordinates the participation of several people who work in diverse knowledge areas. The following four points identify the qualities that reflect the intercultural and interdisciplinary character of the processes that led to the realization of this effort. First, the problem and conceptual framework of the project involved the combination of three study areas: literature, education and communication. These different areas were developed specifically to teach Maya literature and intercultural education through the didactic use of videotaped interviews. Second, the videos were designed according to two study profiles corresponding to the characteristics of literature students, Maya and Spanish speakers; therefore, visual aids were produced bilingually (Maya- Spanish and Spanish-Maya). Third, the production of the videos relied on the participation of various people with different profiles who are professionals in the areas of communication, language and literature. Finally, audiovisual resources were produced that will help incorporate the perspectives of writers (four thus far) on subjects related to the literary experience in teaching Maya literature.

The DVDs resulting from this work include video-graphic resources designed for educational purposes, which serve as tangible evidence of the coordinated work of a group of professionals and articulate their different practices in a process of educational, communicative and literary research.

The work presented here opens a wide horizon of possibilities, considering the objective, which was to design useful videos to help teach Maya literature. In the next stages of curriculum planning outlined here, guidelines will be created to help those instructors who decide to use the videotaped interviews. These resources are relevant to the teaching of other literary discursive forms and at other levels of study, such as secondary and high school education in the regional context of the Yucatan peninsula and in other locations where the objective is to revalue literature in a native language. The videos can also be used for teaching the Maya language, as they can trigger both auditory reception and reading reception (with the use of subtitles). In addition, they could be used to teach appreciation of interpretation and translation, which we believe would serve for a more advanced level of language learning.

Finally, this study represents yet another effort, among others already underway in various parts of the Americas, to make use of technology as a tool for teaching literature in native languages and to foster appreciation and identity recovery of the native peoples who created such literature.

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