

Loanwords in Q'eqchi', a Mayan language of Guatemala

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1 The language and its speakers

Q'eqchi' belongs to the K'iche'an branch of Mayan languages (see Figure 1). It boasts somewhere between 360,000 and 400,000 speakers in 23 different municipalities in Guatemala (see Figure 2). The majority of Q'eqchi' speakers reside in Alta Verapaz in San Pedro Carchá, Cobán, and Chisec, with other large concentrations of speakers in Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, Santa Catalina La Tinta, Panzós, and Senahú. Outside of the Alta Verapaz region, Q'eqchi' communities exist in Baja Verapaz and El Quiché. Additional Q'eqchi' speakers are found in the Petén, primarily in San Luis and Sayaxche, and in Livingston, Izabal.

Multiple groups of Q'eqchi' have also migrated to Belize. Due to the institution of the *mandamiento* in 1877 by the Guatemalan government, a law which essentially authorized employers to pay Q'eqchi' workers little or nothing at all, land disputes in Alta Verapaz, and suffering under the hands of the German-run coffee plantations in the late 19th century, some Q'eqchi' migrated to the southern Toledo District of Belize. Most of these early immigrants to Belize came from San Pedro Carchá near Cobán (Thompson 1930:36). Today, the Q'eqchi' of Belize have established more than 30 villages, such as San Pedro, Santa Elena, San Pedro Columbia, Otoxa, Machaca, Dolores, and Mabilha. While they have successfully escaped the difficult circumstances in Guatemala, life is still a struggle for the Q'eqchi' in Belize, as they are poorest of all ethnic groups in that country (Wilk and Chapin 1990:18).

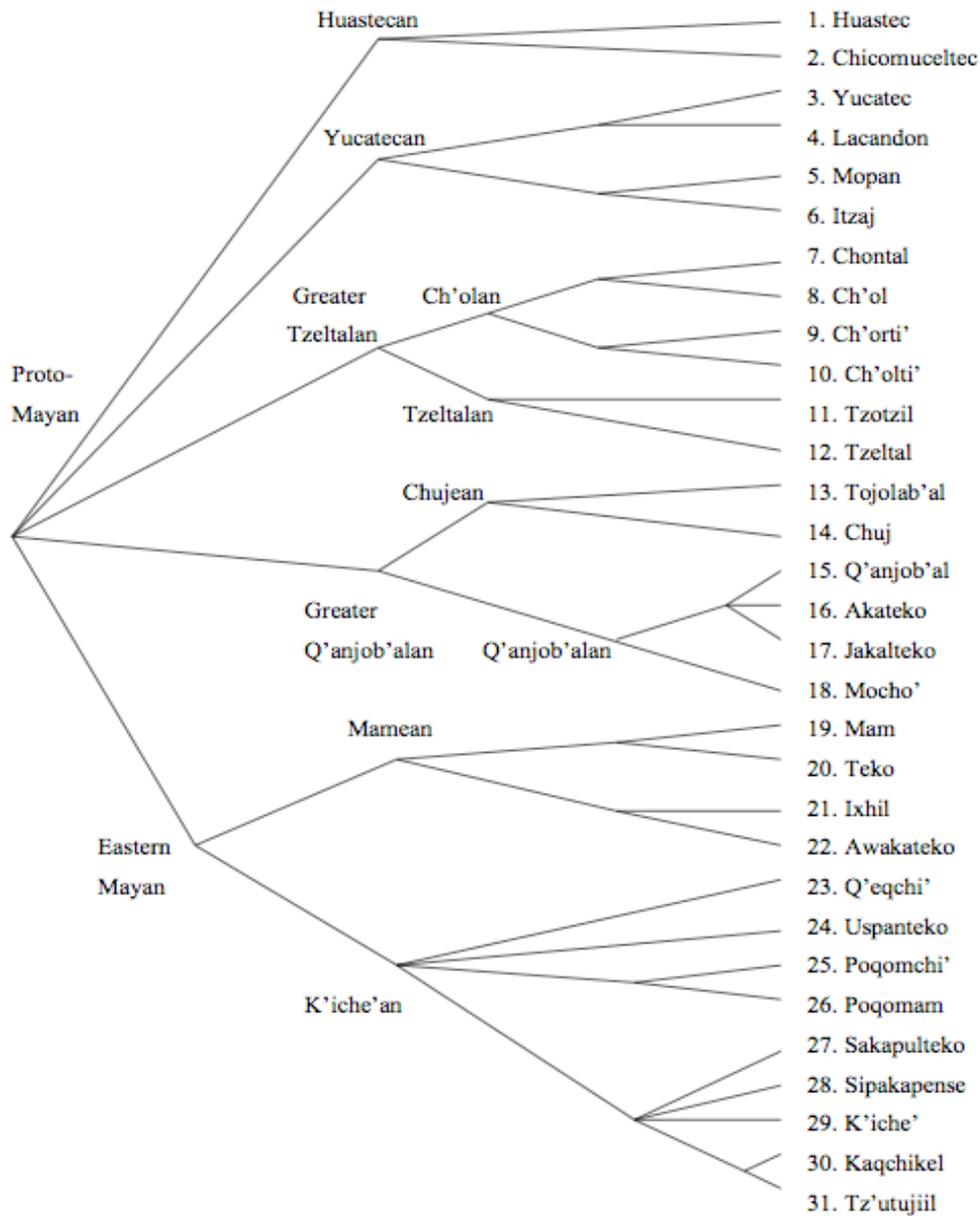


Figure 1. The classification of Mayan languages (from Wichmann and Brown [2003:fig. 1], which is adapted from Campbell and Kaufman [1985:fig. 1]).

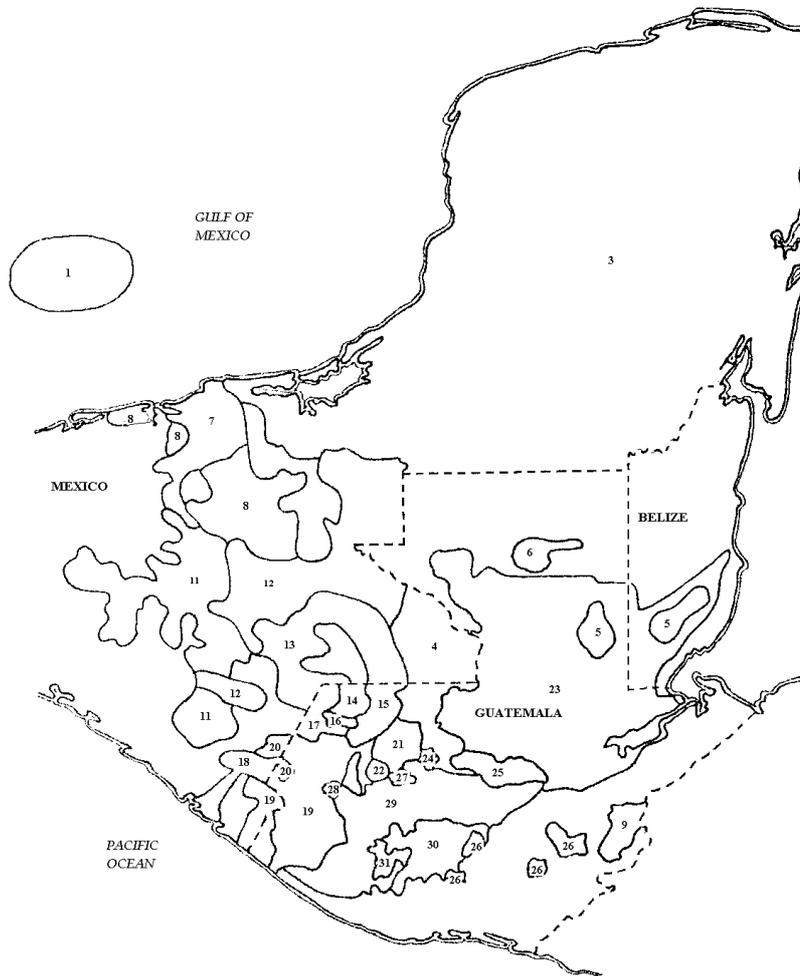


Figure 2. The distribution of extant Mayan languages (from Wichmann and Brown [2003:fig. 2], which is based on England [1994:22]). Numbers refer to the numbered language designations in Figure 1.

The number of Q'eqchi' in Belize continues to rise at a slow but steady rate even today. According to Gordon (2005), there were about 9,000 Q'eqchi' speakers in Belize in 1995 though a detailed census of 30 communities by Wilk in 1984 showed a population of just 4,388 (Wilk and Chapin 1990:18). Most recently, civil war in Guatemala sent various waves of refugees into Belize seeking safety and reprieve, further increasing the Belizean Q'eqchi' population. Many of the Q'eqchi' in Belize today speak English in addition to Q'eqchi', and a considerable portion of the population can also speak the language of the Mopan Mayas, who are the neighbors of the Belizean Q'eqchi'. Bilingualism in both Mayan languages, together with their close geographic proximity, has created an environment where lexical borrowing between the two Mayan languages is not uncommon (Hull, n.d., Wichmann and Brown 2003:85).

Most Q'eqchi' speakers live in the Verapaz region of Guatemala. Today, there are over 850,000 indigenous people in Alta Verapaz, most of whom are of ethnic Q'eqchi'. Historically, the homeland of the Q'eqchi' of Guatemala has always been in the Alta Verapaz, stretching back possibly 1,700 years (Campbell 1977).

Archaeologically, the entire area encompassing El Quiche, Alta Verapaz, and Baja Verapaz has been termed the Hilly Middle Country. The archaeology of this region from the time when we can begin to reckon with the earliest form of Q'eqchi' has been summarized as follows by King (1974:13-14), based on Borhegyi (1965). The period 300-700 CE witnessed the emergence of ceremonial sites with temple structures, ball courts, and large elite tombs. Agricultural terraces and possibly irrigation begin to appear. Roughly around 400 CE influence from Central Mexico is seen in the urban centers, apparently causing changes in the nature of religious cults. Possibly there was an actual movement of people from the Teotihuacan sphere who were sent out to gain control over the cotton and cacao production. This early period is, however, not well known. During 700-1000 CE a strong influence from the lowland Maya area can be detected in the presence of the black-and-white-on-red pottery. This, as we shall see, harmonizes well with the linguistic evidence for contact. Possibly because of threats from outsiders, urban centers situated in valleys are abandoned and people retreat to defensible hilltop sites. During 1000-1524 CE major urban centers are again found in valleys, and this period sees "an accentuation of the isolated or independent quality of this area intensified again" (King 1974:14). King stresses that the key to understanding the nature of this region is its isolated character which, at times, cuts it off from "main trends of Middle American culture history."

In colonial times, unlike most other Maya groups in Guatemala, the Q'eqchi' were successful in repelling the military advances of the Spanish. As one early colonial chronicler put it, they were "*feroz y bárbara e imposible de domar y sujetar*" ["ferocious and barbarous and impossible to pacify and subjugate"] (Remesal 1966[1619]:311). Thus, after repeated attempts to conquer them, the first of which took place in 1529 (King 1974:17), a compromise agreement was reached that allowed the Q'eqchi' to remain independent but allowed Bartolomé de Las Casas and other Dominicans to proselytize in their territory (Wilk and Chapin 1990:18). Lay Spaniards, however, were prohibited from entering the Verapaz region, contributing to its previously mentioned isolation (Schackt 2000:15). Las Casas, who started his missionary campaigns in 1538 (King 1974:18), was markedly more successful in bringing the Q'eqchi' under some form of Spanish control through pacification and peaceful means than were the numerous military incursions into the region (Weeks 1997:62; Kockelman 2003:468). Following the missionary efforts, the Spaniards were able to apply their usual strategy of *reducción*, i.e. the gathering of natives in larger settlements. This led to the founding of Cobán, San Pedro Carchá, and San Juan Chamelco, to this day important Q'eqchi' towns, as well as some towns mostly populated by Poqomchi' Mayas. The region could now receive its name *Verapaz*, 'True Peace', contrasting with its previous name *Tezulutlán*, 'Land of War'.

During the 17th century there was intense contact between the Q'eqchi' and the "Manche Chol", who were speakers of Ch'olti'. The Manche Chol produced cacao, annatto, and vanilla in the region around the upper Rio Cancuen and would trade these goods in Q'eqchi' towns of Alta Verapaz (Caso Barrera and Aliphath 2006). No doubt this kind of interaction between the two ethnic groups had persisted since pre-Columbian times. The apparently peaceful coexistence changed, however. Chroniclers of the early colonial period mention that the Manche Chol would raid towns established by the Spaniards in Alta Verapaz and that Q'eqchi' speakers would serve in military expeditions to the Manche area (King 1974:23).

Dominican control of the region continued for three centuries, with only a minimum of non-clerical Spanish or other foreign settlers in the area during this period. By the time of the recognized independence of the Mexican Republic in 1821, however, the Alta Verapaz had become open to settlers from the outside. During the nineteenth century it was mainly Europeans—especially Germans—who migrated to the area, attracted by the possibility of establishing coffee plantations (King 1974:20-27). Through a new Guatemalan law of 1877 (already mentioned above) the procuring of labor and the expropriation of land that had previously belonged to the natives was made possible. Germans continued to dominate the area financially until the Second World War. Perhaps not accidentally, German scholars were also among the first to produce scientific Q'eqchi' linguistic and ethnographic studies, e.g., Stoll 1896 and Sapper 1890, 1891, 1902. The ensuing situation for the Q'eqchi' in the post-war 20th century was sketched above.

Ironically, the survival and growth of the Q'eqchi' language seems to have been furthered by the willingness of the Q'eqchi' to at least partly accept Christianity and the Spanish ways. Their neighbours to the north and east, speakers of the Ch'olan language Ch'olti' and the Yucatecan languages Mopan, Itzaj, and Lacandon, continued to be hostile towards the Dominicans and were not conquered militarily until the end of the 17th century (King 1974:23-25). After having been suppressed, the Manche Chol were transferred to the highlands near Rabinal, and Ch'olti' is now an extinct language which is only sparsely documented through a single colonial source (Moran 1695). As for the aforementioned Yucatecan languages, these are either seriously endangered or on the verge of extinction. Earlier, however, Mopan, Itzaj, and Lacandon, and Ch'olti' were more widespread, and loanwords, especially from Ch'olti', attest to the nature of interaction of their speakers with the Q'eqchi'.

Q'eqchi' holds a unique distinction among all Mayan languages in Middle America as having the highest percentage of monolingual speakers (see Kaufman 1974). Whereas bilingualism in Spanish (or simply monolingualism in Spanish) has become commonplace among many Mayan groups, the majority of indigenous Q'eqchi' of Alta Verapaz are monolingual in Q'eqchi'. Part of the retention of Q'eqchi' as their primary language of discourse likely stems from their isolation in Alta Verapaz (Stewart 1980:xx), which traces back to the times of Fray Bartolomé de las Casas. In addition, even Ladinos living in many Q'eqchi' areas are commonly bilingual in Spanish and Q'eqchi' (Campbell 1974:277). The high status of the Q'eqchi' language is also reflected in the fact that more Q'eqchi' are literate in Q'eqchi' than in Spanish, seeing the former as the most advantageous to merit their efforts (Stewart 1980:xx-xxi).

With such a large linguistic community spread over distinct geographic areas, the Q'eqchi' language has naturally developed dialectal variation, especially in the area of phonology. For instance, in the Cahabón dialect, the proto-Mayan vowel length distinction is retained in monosyllabic forms, whereas other dialects have lost the distinction in all environments; the Cobán dialect exhibits an innovation whereby vowels are lengthened before a sequence of a sonorant and another consonant; and in Cobán, Carchá, and Chamelco the loss of *h* of CV*h*C and CV*h*VC forms has been compensated for by vowel lengthening (Campbell 1977:25-26). An example of dialectal variation in the realm of morphology is found in the past tense system of the Belize variant, which

has undergone several changes such as the reinterpretation of what corresponds to non-future forms ending in *-k* in the Cobán dialect as habitatives (DeChicchis 1990:1495). However, it is highly noteworthy that despite its vast area of use and number of speakers, the dialectal variations in Q'eqchi' are relatively minor. This unity of speech, according to Stewart (1980:xiii), can be attributed to the fact that until recently the Q'eqchi' inhabited a much smaller geographic area than they do today. Additionally, the area of Baja Verapaz, which has a high concentration of Q'eqchi' speakers today, was not a Q'eqchi'-speaking area in the past. Thus, a limited geographic space and near-total isolation for centuries after the arrival of the Spanish have helped to limit the scale of dialectal proliferation in the Verapaz region.

In general, spoken Q'eqchi' can be divided into two major dialects, a western and an eastern form. The Eastern Dialect consists primarily of the areas near Lanquin, Cahabón, and Senahú, whereas the Western Dialect (also sometimes referred to as the “Cobán dialect”) centers around Cobán, San Pedro Carchá, and Chamelco (Campbell 1977:24). Perhaps the earliest notice of these dialect boundaries was made by Juarros (1936:72) in 1800 (Freeze 1975:16). Today, there is a prevailing consensus among Q'eqchi' speakers that the Cobán (Western) Dialect is the prestige form of Q'eqchi' (Campbell 1977:24, Stewart 1980:xvii).

2 Sources of data

Lexical data for this research project were taken from a variety of published linguistic sources supplemented by direct elicitation when published sources were insufficient. The default source in the dataset is constituted by the *Diccionario Q'eqchi'* by Sam Juárez et al. 1997 of the Proyecto Lingüístico Francisco Marroquín. 1575 records in the database derive from this source. Another 365 records are due to fieldwork carried out by Kerry Hull in Cobán, Guatemala in 2006. Hull's informants were all from Cobán or nearby communities and consisted of a 70 year-old male from Cobán, a 35 year-old male also from Cobán, a 32 year-old bilingual K'iche' and Q'eqchi'-speaking female, and a 72 year-old male religious expert from an outlying community in the Cobán area. Additional sources include the *Vocabulario Q'eqchi' - Xtusulal Aatin Sa' Q'eqchi'* published in 2004 by the *Academia de Lenguas Mayas de Guatemala* (28 records) and the 1955 *Nuevo diccionario de las lenguas k'ekchi' y española* by the Protestant missionary linguist William Sedat (20 records). Finally, Kaufman and Justeson's *A Preliminary Mayan Etymological Dictionary* (2003) provided data from Kaufman's own fieldwork in different Q'eqchi'-speaking areas as well as compiled resources from other publications on Q'eqchi' words (7 records), and a single record derives from Freeze's 1975 study *A Fragment of an Early K'ekchi' Vocabulary with Comments on the Cultural Content*. The general (i.e., not always strictly observed) order of preference of sources was as follows Sam Juárez et al. 1997 > Anonymous 2004 > Sedat 1955 > elicitation > other. The various sources were also used to supplement one another with information about phonological variants or alternative lexical items fitting a given meaning label; such alternative items not deriving from more preferred source were, however, not etymologized and do not constitute separate records. Additional sources for such commentary on different records include Kockelman (2007), which used almost exclusively Q'eqchi' data in his analysis, and Ponce E Hijos' 1830 publication of a large number of Q'eqchi' phrases and vocabulary in *Vocabulario Quecchi—Español*.

For the purposes of the study at hand, the vast majority of the data we used reflect the Western Dialect. Data from Belizean Q'eqchi', which show considerable innovation and variation (see DeChicchis 1989), and data from varieties outside the general Cobán-Carchá-Chamelco area of Alta Verapaz, were not used to any significant extent in order to maintain general internal consistency over the data.

Comparative data from other Mayan languages used for studying the history of individual Q'eqchi' words come from a vast repository of lexical sources feeding into Wichmann

and Brown 2000ff, a comparative dictionary database which includes 6710 cognate sets in addition to more than 40,000 entries for which etymologies have not currently been found. About half of the cognate sets include data from Kaufman and Justeson 2003, and much information also derives from Dienhart 1989.

Loanwords in Q'eqchi' from other Mayan languages have been the subject of previous studies. Justeson et al. (1985) list 24 Q'eqchi' lexical borrowings from the Lowland Mayan languages, i.e. Yucatecan and Ch'olan, and they note that the diffusion of such vocabulary from the Ch'olan languages into others, in particular Q'eqchi' and Yucatecan "has suggested to Mayan linguists over the past century that Cholan speakers were prominent in the formation of ancient Lowland Maya civilization" (Justeson et al. 1985:9). That is, the authors associate lexical borrowings into Q'eqchi' with the cultural dominance of Ch'olan, and it is assumed that Ch'olan languages are, indeed, responsible for at least most of the borrowings, even if not all of the words in question are attested or uniquely attested in Ch'olan. A more recent study, by Wichmann and Brown (2003:65-69) (similar to, but superseding, Wichmann and Brown 2002), identified 134 borrowings or possible borrowings into Q'eqchi' from other Mayan languages. Since Mayan languages have rather similar phonological inventories it is rarely evident from the phonological shape of a word that it has been borrowed. Nine of the 134 words discussed by Wichmann and Brown (2003) were identified on phonological grounds as loans since they fail to undergo sound changes that characterize inherited Q'eqchi' vocabulary; the rest were identified on distributional grounds. It was argued that if a word is found in Q'eqchi' but not in any other language of the large Eastern Mayan subgroup to which Q'eqchi' belongs, then there is a good possibility that the word has been borrowed. The authors looked at cases where the words in question, apart from their attestation in Q'eqchi', were only attested in a single subgroup of Mayan languages, and it turned out that this subgroup was Ch'olan in about 70% of all cases, with Yucatecan, Q'anjob'alan, and Chujean being represented as unique possible donors in about 10% of all cases each. These figures were assumed to be representative of the relative shares of lexical influence that languages of these different subgroups have had on Q'eqchi'. Given that the Lowland language groups Ch'olan and Yucatecan are responsible for some 80% of the borrowings that have only one subgroup as candidate for being the donor, it was assumed that Lowland languages were actually responsible for donating the item also in cases where the words were attested in subgroups other than the Lowland ones. The same strategies for identifying borrowings and assumptions concerning their origins are followed in the present paper. Wichmann and Brown (2003:68-9) make a number of inferences regarding the nature of interaction between Q'eqchi' speakers and speakers of other Mayan languages from the meaning of loanwords. We turn to these issues below.

Through the present study some additional borrowings from other Mayan languages have been identified—1 clear borrowing, 15 probable ones, and 14 for which the evidence is slim. The 'clear' and 'probable' borrowings are shown in Table 1, the rest may be sought out in the database. Of the 134 loans identified in Wichmann and Brown 2003, 44 appear in the database which was created from the meaning list of the Loanword Typology Project.

Q'EQCHI' FORM	MEANING LABEL	LANGUAGE OR SUBGROUP OF ORIGIN
<i>aj-</i>	to wake up	Yucatecan
<i>ch'ajom</i>	the boy; the young man	Ch'olan or Yucatecan
<i>hoy-</i>	to pour	Yucatecan
<i>job'nil</i>	the stomach	Ch'olan or Yucatecan
<i>k'ams</i>	the termites	Ch'olan or Yucatecan
<i>lak'am ~ lakam</i>	the shield	Ch'olan or Yucatecan
<i>mi'</i>	the vagina	Q'anjob'alan

<i>mukuy</i>	the dove	Ch'olan or Yucatecan
<i>pak'-</i>	to mold/mould	Ch'olan or Yucatecan
<i>pech'-</i>	to thresh	Ch'olan
<i>pik-</i>	to dig	Ch'olan
<i>po'lem</i>	the hut	Ch'olti'
<i>tz'ul-</i>	to plait/braid	Ch'olti'
<i>xuxb'-</i>	to whistle	Ch'olan or Yucatecan
<i>xaal che'</i>	the forked branch	Ch'olan or Yucatecan
<i>yajel</i>	the disease	Ch'olan or Yucatecan

Table 1: Clear or probable borrowings from other Mayan languages not previously identified in Wichmann and Brown (2003)

Regarding Spanish borrowings, there is a paper by Campbell (1976) on native perceptions of the origins of lexical borrowings. Consultants from Cobán were asked their opinions about the origins of different words, consisting mostly of loanwords from Spanish, in addition to a few Mayan words that have been borrowed into the regional variety of Spanish. Speakers' judgments were based on a mixture of phonological, semantic, and culture historical criteria and were analyzed by Campbell with a view to the possible insights into the psychological reality of different phonological phenomena and folk taxonomies that they provide. Brown (1994, 1999) investigated words for a sample of 77 objects and concepts that are prone to get acculturated in Native American languages and his findings show that Middle American languages on average borrow 54% of the items in the list (Brown 1999:89). The average for Mayan languages is 59%. The median is 67%, and Q'eqchi' is close to this, having 69% (Brown 1999:86). Thus, Q'eqchi' may be considered representative of the languages of its region when it comes to Spanish lexical influence. It stands out, however, as the Mayan language which appears to have borrowed the most from its linguistic relatives, and it therefore represents a relatively rare case where the data is sufficient to gain good insights into contact among indigenous Mesoamerican languages, which is why we have selected Q'eqchi' for the present contribution.

3 Number of loanwords

Although other chapters in this book describe contact situations before they describe loanwords, we have chosen to do it the other way around since the contact situations must in a large measure be inferred from the loanwords themselves.

Apart from Spanish, the main donor languages belong to the Ch'olan and Yucatecan subgroups of Mayan languages, and in many cases it is not possible to establish which individual language donated a given form. For the purposes of the statistics in Table 2, then, we only operate with 'Ch'olan' and 'Yucatecan' as donors, not with individual members of these language groups. Since Ch'olan lexical influence is far greater than Yucatecan influence, it may be hypothesized that words which could theoretically have been donated by either, come from Ch'olan, but it should be cautioned that this hypothesis will likely be wrong in some 10% of the cases. Therefore we do not merge the donor categories 'Ch'olan' and 'Ch'olan or Yucatecan.' Loanwords which theoretically could have come from either Ch'olan or other Western Mayan languages, however, are simply considered to be Ch'olan in origin for the purpose of the statistics. The database may be consulted for more precise information. In addition to the loanwords there are two clear calques from Spanish, and respectively two and one probable ones from Ch'olan and Q'anjob'alan.

Source language	Spanish		Ch'olan		Ch'olan or Yucatecan		Yucatecan		Nahuatl		Q'anjob'alán		Unknown		Nonloanwords	Total
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%		
	4.4	100	1.5	100	4.4	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	89.7	100
	1.2	100	3.5	100	2.4	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	92.9	100
	19.1	100	2.2	100	2.9	100	0.7	100	0.7	100	0	0	0	0	74.3	100
	0.5	100	1	100	2.1	100	0.5	100	0	0	0.5	100	0	0	95.3	100
	19.6	100	3.1	100	0	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	77.3	100
	28	100	4	100	2	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	66	100
	24.1	100	5.2	100	0	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	70.7	100
	17.1	100	4.9	100	1.2	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	76.8	100
	9	100	4.5	100	1.8	100	0.9	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	83.8	100
	6	100	2.6	100	0.9	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	90.6	100
	3.8	100	0	100	1.9	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	92.3	100
	1.7	100	3.4	100	2.6	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	92.3	100
	3.3	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	96.7	100
	20.5	100	2.7	100	1.4	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	75.3	100
	1.4	100	1.4	100	1.4	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	95.7	100
	0	100	0	100	1.6	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	98.4	100
	3.7	100	1.9	100	0	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	94.4	100
	7.5	100	0	100	7.5	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	85	100
	7.3	100	2.4	100	0	100	0	100	2.4	100	0	0	0	0	87.8	100
	17.6	100	0	100	2	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	80.4	100
	10	100	0	100	3.3	100	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	86.7	100

Table 2: Loanwords in Q'eqchi' by semantic field (percentages)

From the statistics it emerges that 15% of the Q'eqchi' vocabulary has been borrowed from other languages. Since the Spaniards introduced a host of new material items and concepts it is not surprising that the majority of these loanwords are from Spanish. It is more surprising, perhaps, that the Lowland languages are responsible for over 4% of the Q'eqchi' vocabulary. In the following sections we will try to characterize this interesting impact further. Q'anjob'alan languages have donated a single vocabulary item. The only other language for which there is clear evidence of donorship is Nahuatl, with two words donated.

4 Kinds of loanwords

We shall first provide an overview of the kinds loanwords found from the perspective of the Loanword Typology Project, using our database sample and referring to the semantic categories according to which it is organized. We then broaden the outlook, taking into account also previous work on loanwords from other Mayan languages into Q'eqchi'.

Spanish loanwords dominate in all semantic areas except the physical world etc., mankind etc., body parts etc., spatial relations, sense perception, temperamental etc. notions, and vocal utterance etc. In each of those areas the collective influence from Lowland languages is greater than or equal to Spanish influence. In some areas Spanish influence account for more than one fifth of the Q'eqchi' vocabulary: the modern world, clothing etc., dwelling etc., religion and belief, and time.

		<i>Nouns</i>	<i>Verbs</i>	<i>Adjectives</i>	<i>Adverbs</i>	<i>Function words</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Source language</i>	Spanish	18.5	0.2	1	0	2.5	10.6
	Ch'olan	2.2	2.4	4.4	0	0.8	2.4
	Ch'olan or Yucatecan	1.9	1.5	2	0	0	1.7
	Yucatecan	0.1	0.4	0	0	0	0.2
	Nahuatl	0.2	0	0	0	0	0.1
	Q'anjob'alan	0.1	0	0	0	0	0.1
	Unknown	0	0.2	0	0	0	0.1
<i>Nonloanwords</i>		77	95.3	92.6	100	96.7	84.9
<i>Total</i>		100	100	100	100	100	100.1

Table 3: Loanwords in Q'eqchi' by semantic word class (percentages)

In Table 3 we provide statistics on the percentages of loanwords in different semantic word classes supplied by different donor languages.¹ These statistics should be taken with a grain of salt, remembering that we are dealing with semantic word classes, not grammatical ones. Nevertheless, the statistics do reflect the fact that other Mayan languages have been more prolific than Spanish in supplying words that grammatically function as verbs and adjectives in both donor and recipient languages to the Q'eqchi' lexicon. In absolute figures, Lowland Mayan languages have supplied 21 such verbs and 8 adjectives or participles, where Spanish has not supplied a single verb and just one adjective.

Returning to semantic fields, the overall impression is that Ch'olan influence provided the Q'eqchi' with new ways to dominate nature, whereas Spanish influence is similar, but is seen

¹ In a few cases one and the same word belongs to different semantic parts of speech (e.g., *saqen* with means both 'light' as an adjective and as a noun). For the purposes of the statistics in Table 3 such words are counted twice or more (in the example given, twice).

mostly in human-made objects. Selections of loanwords that support this general impression are listed in (1)-(3).²

(1) Spanish loanwords in the database relating to material and culinary culture (excluding very recent ones relating to 20th century technology)

poos ‘match’, *oorn* ‘oven’, *xartin* ‘pan’, *xaar* ‘jug, pitcher’, *taas* ‘cup’, *platiij* ‘saucer’, *ariin* ‘flour’, *salchiich* ~ *salchicha* ‘sausage’, *kaalt* ‘soup’, *aseet* ‘oil’, *asuukr* ‘sugar’, *leech* ‘milk’, *kees* ‘cheese’, *manteek* ‘butter’, *laan* ‘wool’, *seda* ‘silk’, *akuux* ~ *kuus* ‘needle’, *koton* ‘coat’, *kamiis* ‘shirt’, *b’otonx*, *alpiler* ‘pin’, *pulseer* ‘bracelet’, *tuwaay* ‘towel’, *sepiij* ‘brush’, *nawaaj* ‘knife’, *xab’on* ‘soap’, *kwaart* ‘room’, *pwerta* ‘door, gate’, *champa* ‘doorpost’, *kantaaw* ‘lock’, *laaw* ‘key’, *estuuf* ‘stove’, *eskaleer* ‘ladder’, *siiy* ‘chair’, *meex* ‘table’, *kandeel* ~ *kanteel* ‘candle’, *kareen* ‘chain’, *tixeer* ‘scissors’, *xeer* ‘saw’, *klaawx* ‘nail’, *plaat* ‘silver’, *almul* ‘basket’, *tumin* ‘money’, *liib’r* ‘book’, *tamb’or* ‘drum’, *trompeet* ‘trumpet’, *ont* ‘sling’, *makaan* ‘sword’, *yooy* ‘fishnet’, *maak* ‘machine’, *anyooj* ‘spectacles, glasses’, *laat* ‘tin, can’, *meet* ‘bottle’, *te* ‘tea’, *kape* ‘coffee’.

(2) Spanish loanwords in the database relating to domesticated animals and agriculture

potreer ~ *potrero* ‘pasture’, *wakax* ‘cattle’, *b’ooyx* ‘ox’, *b’aak* ‘cow’, *karneer* ‘sheep, ewe’, *b’orego* / *kordero* / *ob’eja* ‘lamb’, *chib’aat* ‘he-goat’, *kawaay* ‘horse’, *granyon* ‘stallion’, *b’uro* ~ *b’uur* ‘donkey’, *muul* ‘mule’, *kaxlan* ‘chicken’, *seer* ‘bee’, *paaps* ‘potato’, *suurk* ‘furrow’, *paal* ‘shovel’, *asaron* ‘hoe’, *orkeet* ‘fork, pitchfork’, *rastiyo* ‘rake’, *aros* ‘rice’, *kachimp* ‘pipe’, *lamunx* ‘citrus fruit’, *yunta* ‘yoke’.

(3) Ch’olan loanwords relating to man’s domination of nature

k’ak’naab ‘spring, well’, *b’ook* ‘steam’, *pak’-* ‘to mold’, *waal* ‘the fan’, *pyte’* ‘the raft’, *xuk* ‘corner’, *tz’ak* ‘wall’, *eeb’* ‘ladder’, *pik-* ‘to dig’, *pech’-* ‘to thresh’, *aq* ‘hay’, *b’it-* ‘to carry on head’, *juj-* ‘to row’, *nub’aal* ~ *rub’ajl* ‘boundary’, *po’lem* ‘hut’.

Many of the loanwords coming from Spanish and Ch’olan are similar in the sense that they represent cultural innovations. The fact that both languages donated a word for ‘ladder’ (Ch’olan *eeb’*, Spanish *eskaleer*) is characteristic of this larger trend. If we also consider Ch’olan and Yucatecan borrowings identified in the much larger list of Wichmann and Brown (2003:86), it becomes even clearer that the nature of interaction between Q’eqchi’ and the Lowland Mayan languages is in some sense a Pre-Columbian parallel to that of Q’eqchi’-Spanish interaction. This list includes several items of materials and culinary culture as well as many pertaining to domesticated animals and agriculture. These items, displayed in (4) and (5) may be compared to the Spanish loanwords in (1) and (2).

² The orthography used for rendering Q’eqchi’ is the one which is recommended by the Academia de las Lenguas Mayas de Guatemala and is employed by most Mayanists these days. While most symbols roughly have the same phonetic values as similarly shaped IPA symbols, the following deviate: “tz” = □, “ch” = □, “x” = □, “j” = x. Following a vowel, an apostrophe represents a glottal stop; following a consonant symbol it indicated glottalization or, in the case of “b’”, implosion. Vowel doubling (“ii”, “ee”, etc.) is a way of indicating vowel length. We use angle brackets to indicate the rendition of an original orthographic form deviating from the conventions otherwise used.

(4) Ch'olan and Yucatecan loanwords from Wichmann and Brown (2003:68) relating to material and culinary culture

aq 'plant or straw used for roof construction', *q'a* 'bridge', *saklun* 'clay', *pan* 'big spoon', *k'aan* 'wedge', *kookom* 'twiner used for tying', *peteet* 'spindlewhorl', *t'upuy* 'braid of red wool', *mukuk* 'peel from a certain fruit used for condiment in drinks made from cornstarch', *ob'en* 'tamale (a kind of corn bread wrapped in leaves)', *xep* 'bean tamale'.

(5) Ch'olan and Yucatecan loanwords from Wichmann and Brown (2003:68) relating to edible animals and production or provision of food

chi 'nanche (an edible fruit), *isk'i'ij* 'spearmint', *lol* 'a kind of bean', *ox* 'breadnut', *pata* 'guava', *tz'uumuuy* 'sweet apple (*anona*), *pu* 'wild turkey', *tzak* 'to hunt', */x/k'anjel* 'work', *k'al* 'cleared field, cornfield', *kololte* 'cage'.

Moreover, pertaining to the area of religion there are both Lowland borrowings (*k'ab'a* 'name', *musiq* 'spirit', *ch'ool* 'heart') and Spanish ones (*krus* ~ *kurus* 'cross', *yos* ~ *tyos* 'god', *ermit* and *kapiiy* 'temple', *iglees* 'church', *artal* 'altar', *payr* 'Catholic father').

While the nature of interaction between speaker of Q'eqchi' and Spanish is well known, we know much less about how and when the Q'eqchi' interacted with Lowland Mayas. A few leads are found in the archaeological records, but much must be inferred from loanwords. In the next section we turn to this issue.

5 Contact situations

The major contact languages include Spanish and the Ch'olan and Yucatecan languages. Nahuatl was a lingua franca for around two centuries preceding and two centuries following Spanish conquest, and has donated a few loanwords without, however, apparently having had much direct influence on Q'eqchi'. It is possible that several Spanish borrowings passed through Nahuatl, a borrowing scenario which is hypothesized by Brown 1994, 1999 to apply to many languages of Mesoamerica (see Brown, this volume, for a summary of the arguments). While the hypothesis may well also apply to the case of Q'eqchi', there is little direct evidence by way of actual Nahuatl borrowings to sustain it. Quite possibly, Spanish loanwords may also have travelled via other Mayan languages, but again we are left with speculations and have no concrete evidence. Possibly Q'eqchi' has donated a few words to Mopan Maya (Wichmann and Brown 2003:69), but in its contact with other languages Q'eqchi' has the role of the recipient whenever directions of borrowing can be detected. A contact language not hitherto mentioned is Poqomchi', spoken to the immediate south of the Q'eqchi' area. Like Q'eqchi', Poqomchi' belongs to the K'iche'an branch of the Mayan family. In Wichmann and Brown 2000ff there are a number of cognate words which are found only in Q'eqchi' and the sister languages Poqomchi' and Poqomam. Thus we do possess some evidence of Q'eqchi'-Poqomchi' contact, even if it is not possible to establish the directions of loanwords in question. This contact, however, would seem to have a more local and perhaps also more recent character than the interaction with Ch'olan and Yucatecan. It is the latter contact situation which is the most interesting, because it permits us to make some inferences about pre-Columbian culture history. We therefore devote the remainder of this section to this topic.

According to the estimate cited earlier, Q'eqchi' branches off from its proto-K'iche'an mother around 300 CE. This coincides with the beginning of the Classic Period in Lowland Mayan civilization, a period characterized by large urban centers, complex architecture,

monumental inscriptions, social stratification, intensive agriculture, and interregional competition within an area stretching from the peninsula of Yucatan to regions to the south of this area. The Q'eqchi' area borders on the eastern part of the Lowlands, and, as mentioned earlier, some of the cultural innovations, such as temple structures, tombs, ballcourts, and agricultural terraces are also found in the general area within which Q'eqchi' is currently spoken. The ceramic record also provides evidence of cultural diffusion, particularly after 700 CE. The archaeological and the linguistic evidence complement each other nicely. The archaeological evidence permits us to infer that much of the interaction accounting for the borrowings from Lowland languages is quite early, probably dating to the Classic period of 300-900 CE, and the linguistic evidence helps us to flesh out the nature of the interaction. As already noted by Wichmann and Brown (2003:68-9) the Ch'olans and Yucatecans were evidently culturally dominant, since they influenced their Q'eqchi' neighbors in such diverse and important areas as religion, architecture, economy (cf. loanwords such as *maatan*, which means 'gift' and earlier would have referred to a kind of tax, or *ch'uy* 'eight thousand'), food provision, and technical implements. Hieroglyphic evidence shows that Ch'olan was minimally differentiated in the beginning of the Classic period, begins to split up a few hundred years into this period, and became differentiated into its four descendants towards its end (see Wichmann 2006 for an overview as well as discussion of the somewhat different scenario of Houston et al. 2000). Thus, it is not surprising that we are often not able to identify Ch'olan borrowings as coming from one particular Ch'olan language. Nevertheless, one of these languages does stand out as having had more importance than the rest. This was observed by Wichmann and Brown (2003:69) in a passage worth citing *in extenso* (we change the spelling <Q'eqchii'> to <Q'eqchi'>, since the latter is more current):

Among all the possible Ch'olan donors, the Eastern Ch'olan language Ch'olti', now extinct and known only from seventeenth-century documents, seems to have contributed a disproportionately large number of loans to Q'eqchi'. This large proportion is especially remarkable in light of the fact that we possess only very limited lexical data for the language. Ch'olti' forms appear fifty-nine times in the list of candidates for the origins of the 134 possible Mayan-language loans into Q'eqchi'. Speakers of Q'eqchi' and of Ch'olti' would have been linguistic neighbours before the latter language became extinct, so the apparently great contribution of Ch'olti' is not surprising.

While this observation in itself was unsurprising, it was surprising that it was possible to make it, given the nature of the data. Since Ch'olti' would not have become crystallized as an individual language until the end of the Classic Period, we may assume that much of the interaction between Ch'olti' and Q'eqchi' speakers took place in the Postclassic, but prior to the arrival of the Spaniards. Thus the 59 loanwords in question, some of which would have been donated directly from Ch'olti', testify to the continued importance of Ch'olti' in the Postclassic, even after the so-called "collapse" of Classic Maya civilization (Wichmann, in press).

Regarding the contact with speakers of Spanish, enough has been said throughout this chapter already, and the loanwords speak for themselves.

6 Integration of loanwords

Since Q'eqchi' has all the phonemes of Ch'olan and Yucatecan (and in addition *q* and *q'*, which the Lowland Languages do not have), and since the phonotactic patterns are also similar, there is little phonological adaptation to be observed in loanwords from the Lowland Languages. If *aq* 'hay' is borrowed from Ch'olan or Yucatecan *ak*, then this would imply a shift in pronunciation, and the

same goes for *choq* ‘cloud’ from Ch’olan *tokal* and *q’a* ‘bridge’ from Ch’olan *k’ah-te*. It seems unlikely that all three of these forms should have been misidentified as borrowings, so this occasional shift from a velar to a uvular place of articulation of the stop sounds in question is well supported. The Ch’olan velar stops could well have a somewhat wider range of allophones than the Q’eqchi’ velar stops, coming close to a Q’eqchi’ uvular stop, so no phonetic adaptation need be involved.

Since the works of Houston et al. (1998) and Lacadena and Wichmann (2004) many students of Maya writing agree that Ch’olan languages retained vowel length throughout most of the Classic period and that the orthographic conventions of the logosyllabic inscriptions included a means to indicate this distinction, even if current Ch’olan languages have lost the distinction and only indirectly (within the Western branch) show a former *a* : *aa* contrast through schwa vs. full *a* reflexes. Unfortunately, this paper cannot provide further support for the hypothesis of the late retention of vowel length in Ch’olan, since there are no loanwords uniquely identifiable as Ch’olan which happen to have long vowels in Q’eqchi’, and which can be shown by comparative or hieroglyphic evidence to also have had long vowels in Ch’olan. In instances where such comparative evidence is available, it comes from Yucatecan, and if a form is also attested in Yucatecan, this is where it could theoretically have originated, and it would then not longer be uniquely identifiable as Ch’olan. Some long vowels in loanwords are the result of either phonetic adaptation from a *Vh* sequence or a later phonological development from such a sequence; examples are: *ch’ool* ‘heart’ (Ch’ol *ch’ujlel* ‘spirit, pulse’, Chontal *chu’ul* ‘sacred’, Ch’olti’ <chu> ‘idol’, Ch’orti’ *ch’u’r*, ‘god, saint’); *kaalam e* ‘chin, jaw’ (Ch’olti’ <kahlam ti> ‘beard, chin’, Ch’orti’ *kajram*); *teelom* ‘man, male’ (Ch’olti’ <tehlom>, Ch’orti’ *tejrom*). We have not been able to identify other phonological adaptations or possible adaptations in borrowings from other Mayan languages.

When we turn to Spanish, we can observe many such adaptations, however. In (6)-(8) we provide examples of adaptation phenomena relating to phoneme inventories and phonotactics.

(6) The replacement of foreign phonemes with related native ones (not necessarily in a one-to-one fashion):

poos < *fósforo* ‘match’, *pereera* < *fé de edad*, *kape* < *café* ‘coffee’, *kaalt* < *caldo* ‘soup’, *ont* < *honda* ‘sling’, *almul* < *almud* ‘basket’, *kareen* < *cadena* ‘chain’, *payr* < *padre* ‘Catholic father’, *ray* < *radio*, *yos* ~ *tyox* < *dios* ‘god’, *tumink* ~ *romink* < *domingo* ‘Sunday’.

(7) The dropping of final vowels to satisfy the preference for closed syllables

b’aak < *vaca* ‘cow’, *muul* < *mula* ‘mule’, *seer* < *cera* ‘bee’s wax’, *taas* < *taza* ‘cup’, *suurk* < *zurco* ‘furrow’, *room* < *romo* ‘blunt’, etc.

(8) Reduction of a polysyllabic word to the preferred monosyllabicity of Q’eqchi’ morphemes
poos < *fósforo* ‘match’, *saaw* < *sábado* ‘Saturday’, *maak* < *máquina* ‘machine’, *meet* < *limeta* ‘bottle’.

These are the most frequent phonological adaptation phenomena observed. Some more sporadic ones include the addition of a final consonant to satisfy the preference for closed syllables (*chib’aat* < *chivo* ‘goat’), the addition of a vowel to break up a consonant cluster (*kurus* < *cruz* ‘cross’), the replacement of a diphthong by a long monothong (*pleet* < *pleito* ‘fight’), and the replacement of the Colonial Spanish *β* sound by *l* (*laaw* < *llave* ‘lock’, contrasting with the later borrowing *yaaw* < *llave* ‘tap, faucet’).

We now look at ways in which some Q'eqchi' borrowings reflect features of colonial Spanish. The Spanish *s* sound was perceived as having a more palatal pronunciation and is reflected as such in early loanwords. But only a minority of Spanish forms in *s* behave in this way. In (9)-(10) we provide examples where *s* is either reflected as *x* (i.e., a palatal sibilant) or as *s*. The referents of these words support the interpretation that the loanwords reflecting a palatal pronunciation entered the Q'eqchi' earlier than others. This phenomenon is then to be regarded as the reflection of an earlier Spanish pronunciation rather than as adaptation. Following the Canfield's 1952 chronology of Spanish sibilants, we assign such borrowings to the period preceding 1600.

(9) Early treatment of Spanish *s* (add to these, the plural forms in [12] below)
xartin < *sartén* 'pan', *meex* < *mesa* 'table', *b'axton* < *bastón* 'walking stick', *preex* < *preso* 'captive', *tyox* < *dios* 'god' (alternant: *yos*)

(10) Later treatment of Spanish *s*
estuuf < *estufa* 'stove', *eskaleer* < *escalera* 'ladder', *iglees* < *iglesia* 'church', *kamiis* < *camisa* 'shirt', *kees* < *queso* 'cheese', *laas* < *lazo* 'lasso', *moos* < *mozo* 'servant', *oos* < *oso* 'bear', *poos* < *fósforo* 'match', *pulseer* < *pulsera* 'bracelet', *seer* < *cera* 'bee's wax', *sepiiy* < *cepillo* 'brush', *serwees* < *cerveza* 'beer', *siiy* < *silla* 'chair', *suurk* < *zurco* 'furrow', *taas* < *taza* 'cup', *yos* < *dios* 'god' (alternant: *tyox*)

The sound corresponding to the Spanish "j" (*jota*) was pronounced as a palatal sibilant during the first half of the sixteenth century and then began to change to a velar fricative. This change had perpetuated throughout Spanish of the Americas by the end of the 16th century (Canfield 1952). Loanwords reflecting the early pronunciation are given in (11).

(11) Loanwords reflecting the colonial Spanish palatal sibilant
xaar < *jarro* 'jug, pitcher', *akuux* < *aguja* 'needle', *xab'on* < *jabón* 'soap'.

Q'eqchi' speakers often borrow nouns whose referents are often encountered as conglomerates in the plural of the Spanish form, cf. (13).

(12) Reflection of non-functional Spanish plural -s
wakax < *vaca* 'cattle', *b'ooyx* < *buey* 'ox', *patux* < *pato* 'duck', *b'otonx* < *botón* 'button', *klaawx* < *clavo* 'nail'.

We have not detected any special means by which verbs from other Mayan languages are integrated. That is, they seem to "plugged" directly into Q'eqchi' morphology without further ado, using the strategy called "direct insertion" in the typological study of loanverbs of Wichmann and Wohlgemuth (in press). The Spanish borrowings in the sample are all imported nouns, except two function words (*algo* < *algo* 'some', *si'* < *si* 'if') and two adjectives (*room* < *romo* 'blunt', *look* < *loco* 'mad'). There is single form which in Q'eqchi' functions as a verbal form *ayunink rix* 'to fast'. Data recorded by Hull in Belize contain an additional such form, *peleetik* 'fighting' and a text published by Ac and Pinkerton (1976:104) exhibits the verbal form *trab'axik* 'working'. But all three of these are nominal in origin, coming from respectively *ayuna* 'fast', *pelea* 'fight', and *trabajo* 'work', and thus do not offer insights into the way that verbs get borrowed.

The literature does not provide good information on Q'eqchi' attitudes towards Spanish borrowings. Campbell's 1976 study gives a little insight, however, showing that many Spanish borrowings are actually regarded as in some sense being native to Q'eqchi'. Speakers tend

to view borrowings that are adapted phonologically or which refer to native or nativized cultural items as Q'eqchi' words. Among the linguistically trained activists, who are responsible for several of the sources which we have used for this study, there is a heavily puristic attitude. This is generally shared among activists belonging to the *Academia de Lenguas Mayas de Guatemala* and other organizations struggling to promote Mayan languages.

7 Grammatical borrowing

This study has focused on loanwords, and we are not yet prepared to provide much information on grammatical borrowing. There is no doubt that a comparative study of K'iche'an languages would reveal many cases where Q'eqchi' behaves in a deviant way which could be accounted for through influence from other Mayan languages, but this must remain a topic for future studies, as must the general impact of Spanish grammar. It is likely that Ch'olan has influenced Q'eqchi' both in morphology and syntax, whereas Spanish grammatical influence is largely restricted to syntax.³

8 Conclusions

In this chapter we have presented a case of a Mesoamerican language which, in spite of being spoken in a relatively remote and isolated region, shows evidence of interaction with Spanish typical of many other Mesoamerican languages. The impact on this language from related Mayan languages, however, is extraordinary. From its birth as an emerging dialect, the language appears to have received a significant number of loanwords from neighbouring speakers of Lowland Mayan languages who were instrumental in developing Classic Maya civilization, famed for its impressive architectural remains and elaborate writing system. The "civilizing" impact of the lowlanders is clearly felt in borrowed vocabulary. No doubt, much of the interaction responsible for these loanwords was at least initially of an unfriendly nature, but would eventually result in sociopolitical ties under which Q'eqchi' speakers could continue to thrive. Aspects of this situation would repeat themselves when Spaniards arrived and failed to conquer the Q'eqchi' militarily but succeeded in implanting their designs for religious and social organization. Thus, the story of the Q'eqchi', as revealed through archaeological, historical, and linguistic sources, is one of development through negotiation with and adaptation to powerful foreign influences.

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³ The earliest comparative linguistic study involving Q'eqchi' includes a mentioning of possible Western Mayan (more specifically Tzeltalan) influence in the pronominal system (Stoll 1896: 19) and Pinkerton (1976: 56), citing personal communication from Marlys Bacon, observes that "Mayan languages can be roughly divided into three groups whose geographical location correlates with the prefixing or suffixing of the absolute pronouns to the verb. The lowland languages suffix the absolute pronouns to the verb and the highland languages prefix them to the verb. There are also a group of 'buffer zone' languages which both prefix and suffix the absolute pronouns to the verb. K'ekchi seems to fall into the 'buffer zone' group."

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Loanword Appendix

Ch'olan plus Ch'olan or Yucatecan

- k'ak'naab' 'spring, well'
- aak'ab' 'darkness'
- b'ook 'steam'
- ch'ajom 'boy'
- lut 'twins'
- so'sol 'vulture'
- mukuy 'dove'
- k'ams 'termites'
- kuluk 'worm'
- ko 'cheek'
- job'nil 'stomach'
- mus-iq'-ak 'to breathe'
- yajel 'disease'
- kalajenaq 'drunk'

- sek' 'plate'
- b'oox 'pocket'
- xaal che' 'forked branch'
- xEEK' 'palm tree'
- pak'ok 'to mould/mold'
- waal 'fan'
- poyte' 'raft'
- jek'ok 'to share'
- jay 'thin'
- b'ech' 'crooked'
- xuk 'corner'
- jochok 'to pinch'
- xeb'ok 'to pinch'
- mek'onk 'to embrace'
- xuxb'ak 'to whistle'
- k'ab'a'ej 'name'
- xolb' 'flute'
- lak'am ~ lakam 'shield'
- ch'anaak 'calm'
- teelom 'man'
- alal 'son'
- ko' 'daughter'
- tiix 'old woman'
- suk 'nest'
- motzo' 'worm'
- xukub' 'horn'
- yax 'claw'
- tz'ak 'wall'
- eeb' 'ladder'
- pikok 'to dig'
- pech'ok 'to thresh'
- aq 'hay'
- b'asok 'to bend'
- tenok 'to strike or hit or beat'
- xeq'ok 'to stab'
- kelonk 'to pull'
- k'onok 'to twist'
- sub'e'k 'to sink'
- b'itonk 'to carry on head'
- juyuk 'to row'
- sa' tz'e 'left'
- tz'e 'left'
- tach'to 'flat'
- k'onk'o 'crooked'
- k'urux 'rough(1)'
- nub'aal, rub'ajl 'boundary'
- hob'ok 'to curse'
- t'upuy 'headband or headdress'

- tz'uluk 'plait/braid'
- po'lem 'hut'
- wax ru 'mad'
- paachach 'cockroach'

Yucatecan

- yuk 'goat'
- ajk 'to wake up'
- hoyok 'to pour'

Nahuatl

- tolokok 'lizard'
- tenamit 'village'

Q'anjob'alan

- mi' 'vagina'

Spanish

- kontineent 'mainland'
- sabana 'savanna'
- poos 'match'
- komon 'relatives'
- potreer ~ potrero 'pasture'
- wakax 'cattle'
- b'ooyx 'ox'
- b'aak 'cow'
- karneer 'sheep'
- karneer 'ewe'
- b'orego 'lamb'
- kordero 'lamb'
- ob'eja 'lamb'
- chib'aat 'he-goat'
- kawaay 'horse'
- granyon 'stallion'
- b'uro ~ b'uur 'donkey'
- muul 'mule'
- kaxlan 'chicken'
- ganso 'goose'
- patux 'duck'
- loor 'parrot'
- tiburon 'shark'
- b'ayeen 'whale'
- lob'o 'wolf'
- oos 'bear'

- elefaant ‘elephant’
- kameey ‘camel’
- insekto ‘insect’
- seer ‘bee’
- kanguru ‘kangaroo’
- loktor ‘physician’
- oorn ‘oven’
- xartin ‘pan’
- xaar ‘jug/pitcher’
- taas ‘cup’
- platiy ‘saucer’
- ariin ‘flour’
- salchiich ~ salchicha ‘sausage’
- kaalt ‘soup’
- paaps ‘potato’
- igo ‘fig’
- nwes ‘nut’
- asetuna ‘olive’
- aset ‘oil’
- asuukr ‘sugar’
- leech ‘milk’
- kees ‘cheese’
- manteek ‘butter’
- b’iin ‘wine’
- serwees ‘beer’
- laan ‘wool’
- seda ‘silk’
- akuux ~ kuus ‘needle(1)’
- koton ‘coat’
- kamiis ‘shirt’
- b’oot ‘boot’
- b’elo, b’eel ‘veil’
- b’otonx ‘button’
- alpiler ‘pin’
- pulseer ‘bracelet’
- tuwaay ‘towel’
- sepiiy ‘brush’
- nawaaj ‘razor’
- xab’on ‘soap’
- kvaart ‘room’
- pwerta ‘door or gate’
- champa ‘doorpost’
- kantaaw ‘lock’
- laaw ‘key’
- b’entaan ‘window’
- estuuf ‘stove’
- eskaleer ‘ladder’
- siiy ‘chair’

- meex ‘table’
- lampr ‘lamp or torch’
- kandeel, kanteel ‘candle’
- arko ‘arch’
- kampameent ‘camp’
- koral ‘fence’
- suurk ‘furrow’
- paal ‘shovel’
- asaron ‘hoe’
- orkeet ‘fork/pitchfork’
- rastriyo ‘fork/pitchfork’
- rastriyo ‘rake’
- laas ‘lasso’
- triiw ‘wheat’
- seb’aad ‘barley’
- aros ‘rice’
- kachimp ‘pipe’
- kook ‘coconut’
- lamunx ‘citrus fruit’
- panchola ‘nettle’
- kareen ‘chain’
- tixeer ‘scissors or shears’
- xeer ‘saw’
- klaawx ‘nail’
- plaat ‘silver’
- almul ‘basket’
- alfombra ‘rug’
- formon ‘chisel’
- kapoteer ‘peg’
- kareton ‘cart or wagon’
- rueda ‘wheel’
- yunta ‘yoke’
- b’arko ‘ship’
- kanaleta ‘oar’
- paleta ‘paddle’
- b’ela ‘sail’
- tumin ‘money’
- kwenta ‘bill’
- krus, kurus ‘cross’
- linea ‘line’
- sero ‘zero’
- algo ‘some’
- priim ‘dawn’
- hoonal ‘hour’
- oor ‘hour’
- reloj ‘clock’
- xamaan ‘week’
- domiin, tumink, romink ‘Sunday’

- luuns ‘Monday’
- marts ‘Tuesday’
- miercools, myers ‘Wednesday’
- jwees, jweb’es ‘Thursday’
- b’yers, b’iernes ‘Friday’
- saaw ‘Saturday’
- primab’era ‘spring’
- otonyo ‘autumn/fall’
- estasion ‘season’
- room ‘blunt’
- look ‘mad’
- si’ ‘if’
- liib’r ‘book’
- tamb’or ‘drum’
- trompeet ‘horn or trumpet’
- triiw ‘clan’
- b’axton ‘walking stick’
- moos ‘servant’
- pleet ‘war or battle’
- soldaa ~ sola ‘soldier’
- ont ‘sling’
- makaan ‘sword’
- tore ‘tower’
- preex ‘captive or prisoner’
- kordel ‘fishing line’
- yooy ‘fishnet’
- traamp ‘fish trap’
- ley ‘law’
- testiig ‘witness’
- muult ‘fine’
- yos, tyox ‘god’
- ermiit ‘temple’
- kapiiy ‘temple’
- iglees ‘church’
- artal ‘altar’
- payr ‘priest’
- ayuunink rix ‘to fast’
- ray ‘radio’
- teleb’ision ‘television’
- teleef ‘telephone’
- b’isikleet ‘bicycle’
- moot ‘motorcycle’
- kamyon ‘bus’
- tren ‘train’
- ab’yon ‘airplane’
- elektrisidad ‘electricity’
- b’ateriiy ‘battery’
- motor ‘motor’

- maak ‘machine’
- petrool ‘petroleum’
- pastiiy ‘pill or tablet’
- b’akuun ‘injection’
- inyeksion ‘injection’
- anyooj ‘spectacles/glasses’
- lisens ‘driver’s license’
- papelseya ‘birth certificate’
- pereera ‘birth certificate’
- b’oot ‘election’
- tiimbr ‘postage stamp’
- tarjeet postal ‘postcard’
- yaaw ‘tap/faucet’
- laat ‘tin/can’
- torniiy ‘screw’
- meet ‘bottle’
- plastiik ~ plaas ‘plastic’
- b’oom ‘bomb’
- period ‘newspaper’
- son ‘music’
- te ‘tea’
- kape ‘coffee’