The Grammatical Person in Poqomchi' Maya Ceremonial Speech

La persona gramatical en el habla ceremonial maya poqomchi'

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Abstract: This paper discusses the use of the grammatical category of person within a specific discursive genre – ceremonial speech. This kind of discourse occurs during traditional offering rituals, which form part of the common Mayan culture. The focus of this study is on the Poqomchi' Maya tradition. There are three major categories of participants in the ritual: spiritual guides, attendees and supernatural beings to whom the invocations are addressed. A linguistic analysis of the word forms that bear person marking and their referents in ceremonial discourse elucidates the specific relations between participants and provides insight into the internal structure of the ritual act.

Keywords: ceremonial discourse; offering rituals; Mayan languages; speech acts; person reference; Poqomchi'; Guatemala.

Resumen: Este artículo analiza el uso de la categoría gramatical de persona dentro de un género discursivo específico: el discurso ceremonial. Este tipo de discurso se produce durante los rituales tradicionales de ofrenda que forman parte de la cultura maya. Este estudio se centra en la tradición maya poqomchi'. Hay tres categorías principales de participantes en el ritual: guías espirituales, asistentes y seres sobrenaturales a los que se dirigen las invocaciones. El análisis lingüístico de las formas verbales que llevan la marca de persona y de sus referentes en el discurso ceremonial aclara las relaciones específicas entre los participantes y permite comprender la estructura interna del acto ritual.

Palabras clave: discurso ceremonial; rituales de ofrenda; lenguas mayas; actos de habla; referencia de persona; Poqomchi'; Guatemala.

Introduction

The ceremonial speech of the indigenous people in the Guatemalan Highlands is a particular discursive genre that is extremely important for everyday life. The rituals provide the local people with an opportunity to ask for something they desire: wealth, money, certain personal qualities, good luck in business and education, safety while traveling, etc. These appeals are directed to divine authorities, who, according to traditional beliefs, are able to fulfill human wishes in exchange for offerings. As human beings themselves are not qualified to speak directly to these supernatural authorities, the people have recourse to spiritual guides who transmit their message. If the ritual is

organized correctly and the supernatural authorities are satisfied with the offerings, the participants believe that their wishes will come true.

Three major classes of participants can be identified in the traditional Poqomchi' offering ceremony: spiritual guides, attendees and supernatural beings to whom the invocations are addressed. Several individuals usually represent each class of participant, including the supernatural beings. One spiritual guide may organize a small ceremony that is specifically dedicated to one individual person or one individual family and close friends. However, there are also large ceremonies that are intended for a great part of the whole community and in this case, there may be several spiritual guides performing at the same time.

In this paper, I deliberately avoid labels such as 'shamans' or 'priests' and prefer the more neutral wording, 'spiritual guides'; see also Bell (2012, 71-72). The term spiritual guide is an analogy of the Spanish *guía espiritual* and reflects what the ritual specialists call themselves.[1] In Poqomchi', the corresponding term is *ajq'iij*, which consists of the root *q'iij*, 'sun, day', and the agentive prefix, *aj-*, which denotes the actor. This word is translated as 'daykeeper' (Tedlock 1992), 'wise soothsayer' (Brown 1979, 212) or 'diviner' (Dobbels 2003, 24).[2] I also avoid the label 'gods' to refer to the respective class of participants and instead use terms such as 'supernatural beings' or 'divine authorities'. Other possible terms are 'pirits' (Hanks 1984) and 'ancestral deities' (Haviland 2000). See Section 4 for a detailed discussion of how to describe them precisely.

The internal structure of the participants in a ritual communicative act is not as straightforward as one may assume, especially when taking into account that the speech is monologic because the only participant really voicing is the spiritual guide (or spiritual guides if there are several). Linguistic analysis of the word forms that bear the markers of person reference (namely, independent personal pronouns, predicates and possessed nominals) in ceremonial discourse uncovers this internal structure, accounting for specific communicative interrelations between participants and highlighting the central role of the spiritual guide as an intermediary between the attendees and the supernatural beings.

There is a well-established tradition of studying ritual performance among different Mayan subgroups from linguistic and anthropological perspectives. This is especially true for languages such as K'iche', Yucatec, Tsotsil, and, to a lesser extent, for Ch'orti', Tseltal, Ixil and Kaqchikel. Nevertheless, ritual speech in Poqomchi' has received less scholarly attention (Vinogradov 2020). The major focus of previous linguistic studies has been on the semantic and syntactic aspects of the so-called phenomenon of parallelism, a very notable stylistic device that is common in Mayan languages both synchronically and

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1   The Spanish term *sacerdote maya* ('Mayan priest') is also sometimes used.
2   Note also the observation by Tedlock (1992, 199): "Daykeepers cannot be sorted out according to an anthropological distinction between priest and shaman that separates ritual acts done for the public good from those done for private interests".

diachronically (Bricker 1974; Lengyel 1988; Monod Becquelin and Becquey 2008). The works of Hanks (1984; 1990; 1996) and Haviland (2000; 2009) discuss the category of person in Mayan ritual speech at some length. However, these studies deal with Yucatec and Tsotsil, respectively – two Mayan languages that genetically and geographically are quite distant from Poqomchi'.

The objective of the present study is twofold. First, it seeks to include the Poqomchi' language into the general research tradition on Mayan ritual discourse. Second, based on linguistic data, the study attempts the anthropological analysis of participants and their roles in traditional rituals and considers the use of person markers and their referential properties in ritual discourse. The paper has the following structure. From an ethnographic perspective, Section 2 provides basic information about Poqomchi' people and their ceremonies. It also describes the material used in this study. Section 3 introduces the linguistic dimension of the study and presents the Poqomchi' verb and noun morphology responsible for person marking. An overview of person marking in Poqomchi' ceremonial speech is provided in Section 4. Special attention is paid to the choice of the referents of the person morphemes among the participants of the ritual act. Section 5 discusses the observed phenomena and, based on their roles in the ritual communicative act, attempts to explain the participant structure of the ceremony. Some conclusions are provided in the final section.

2. Poqomchi' people and their traditional ceremonies

Poqomchi' belongs to the K'iche'an branch of the Mayan linguistic family. It is spoken in Guatemala, principally in the department of Alta Verapaz, with some minor presence in the neighboring departments (Richards 2003, 72). The closest relative of Poqomchi' is the Poqomam language; other languages such as K'iche', Kaqchikel, Q'eqchi' and Tzutujil also belong to the same branch. The total population of Poqomchi' speakers today is estimated to be approximately 170 000 persons. Like every Mayan language spoken in Guatemala, the Poqomchi' linguistic community forms part of the Guatemalan Academy of Mayan Languages (ALMG), an institution that is dedicated to preserving and promoting the use of indigenous languages in Guatemala.

Ethnographic and linguistic documentation of Poqomchi' began in the second half of the 16th century with the work of Spanish missionaries. At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, European scholars continued this work. The first sources of the ethnography of the Guatemalan Highlands appeared at that time; see Stoll (1889), Sapper (1906) and Bork (1917). Despite the important advances made in the 20th century, exhaustive ethnographic analysis of Poqomchi' ceremonial traditions remains an intriguing topic for further studies.

The material used in the present study was obtained in 2017, during a two-month period of fieldwork in the Poqomchi'-speaking zone. I collected several audio recordings

of ceremonies, which were then transcribed with the help of native speakers and morphologically annotated. After disregarding some unintelligible and inaudible fragments, the working corpus consists of three long ceremonies with a total duration of more than four hours. The ceremonies were recorded in distinct places with distinct participants and distinct spiritual guides performing. The first one was celebrated in the Convent Ramchah – a rock shelter near the village Tampo in the municipality of Tactic, Alta Verapaz. With about 15 attendants, this ceremony was delivered by a local spiritual guide from Tactic who manages his own little store selling esoteric and ritual wares. The second ceremony was organized on a sacred hill in the village of Pajuil in the Chicaman municipality, El Quiche. There were only three attendants including me. The other two attendants were a young apprentice of the spiritual guide and my local companion. The last ceremony was recorded in the place named Cuevas Chitul that is located near the town of Santa Cruz Verapaz. That was a huge ceremony with approximately 70 participants from Alta Verapaz and the neighboring departments, and with five spiritual guides performing at the same time. As some of participants were not proficient in Poqomchi', certain fragments of the ritual discourse were delivered in Spanish.

Although several phases of a traditional ceremony can be distinguished, only the communication phase is relevant for the purposes of this paper, since only this phase includes ceremonial speech. When the offerings are placed on the altar, this phase begins with the lighting of them with fire. The spiritual guide typically begins his/her speech with greetings to the divine authorities and ancestors, briefly presents the attendants and explains the reasons for celebrating the ceremony and for summoning the supernatural beings. An important part of the beginning of a ceremony is the mention of geographical places that are significant for Mayan culture. These are the names of Mayan ancient cities, such as Palenque, Waxaktun or Piedras Negras, the names of the surrounding towns, mountains and rivers, as well as the names of local sacred places.

Mayan spiritual guides improvise while delivering their speeches during the ceremony. They do not prepare a text of their prayer in advance, which could be read from a piece of paper or spoken from memory. Wheelock (1982, 58) states that "the most essential distinguishing feature of ritual utterances is that they are speech acts that convey little or no information", since "the language of ritual is based on a fixed text […] that is known or accessible to the participants before they engaged in the performance of the rite". This does not appear to be true for Poqomchi' rituals and Mayan ritual discourse in general (see Hanks 1984, for instance). For this reason, if there are several spiritual guides, each of their prayers is different. García (2014, 669) makes the same observation regarding the inhumation ceremonies of Ixil Mayas, where four priests recite "four different prayers at the same time".

In the second part of the ceremonies in my sample, the spiritual guide invokes the names of 20 'nahuals'. This is a basic concept of Mayan spirituality, being at the same

time a spirit and a calendrical index – see, for instance, De la Garza Camino (1987). Each nahual governs 13 days within the Mayan calendrical cycle of 260 days in total. For that reason, the spiritual guide invokes each nahual 13 times. This is an important component of every Poqomchiʼ ceremony in my corpus that is also present among other Mayan subgroups as well (Tedlock 1982; García 2014). Each nahual has its proper area of responsibility – see Scott's (2009, 193-199) brief description of nahuals among Kaqchikel-Mayas. Specific offerings and their respective petitions can be made to a particular nahual while it is being invoked. This is especially relevant when there are many attendants who come with their own petitions. In my sample, this part lasts more than one hour during the big ceremony in Cuevas Chitul. By contrast, the spiritual guide from Pajuil invoked all nahuals in less than seven minutes, addressing only general petitions to each of them in one or two sentences.

The communication phase of the ritual ends when all petitions to supernatural beings are spoken out. When all offerings are burned and the fire goes out, the attendees and spiritual guides conclude the ceremony with hugs and handshakes (Vinogradov 2020). They greet each other using the typical formula *kʼaleen* (see 28, 29, 31, 32 below) as an indication of the return to the ordinary non-ritual speech settings.

3. The grammatical category of person in Poqomchiʼ

There is a general lack of Poqomchiʼ linguistic descriptions in the literature on Mayan languages. This section is primarily based on the dissertations of Brown (1979) and Mó Isem (2006) and on the study of dialectal variation conducted by Malchic Nicolás *et al.* (2000). Data obtained by the author during several periods of fieldwork in the Poqomchiʼ-speaking area that begin in 2014 complement those sources of information.

A basic definition of the category of person is that it encodes speech act roles. In modern linguistic theory, the most common values of this category are traditionally labeled in a somewhat opaque way (see Plank 1985), using ordinal numbers: first person (speaker), second person (addressee) and third person (non-locutor). The first and second persons are fundamentally distinct from the third person in that they refer to speech act participants, whereas the third person does not. In what follows, the common labels of 'speaker' and 'addressee' are used to denote the roles performed by speech act participants.[3] Note that the basic concepts of speaker and addressee can be theoretically deconstructed into more elementary roles; see Goffman (1981; 1986) and Levinson (1988). Of course, the exact roles performed by the speech act participants depend on the individual speech act. An attempt at the semantic and pragmatic analysis of the roles of the speaker, the addressee and the non-locutor in Poqomchiʼ ceremonial speech is provided in Section 5.

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3   An addressee who is absent at the speech act place is sometimes labeled 'target' (Levinson 1988, 166).

In certain languages, the three-part structure of the category of person may be subject to particular complications. There is, indeed, a great deal of literature that discusses person marking from both theoretical and typological perspectives; see Plank (1985), Siewierska (2004) and Corbett (2012, 123-129), among many others. Only the most prominent features are briefly mentioned here. The person values are frequently expressed together with the values of some other grammatical category, for example, gender (agreement class), case or number. Some languages have specific forms for joint reference to the speaker and the addressee. These distinguish the 'inclusive' and 'exclusive' first-person forms; see the collective volume by Filimonova (2005). In addition, some languages (principally those of North America) have two distinct grammatical devices for referring to non-locutors, distinguishing between 'proximate' and 'obviate' third persons, see Mithun (1999, 76-78).

Poqomchi' lacks the obviation mechanisms and, unlike some other Mayan languages, does not display any grammatical distinctions with regard to inclusivity. Thus, in Poqomchi', person marking is relatively straightforward. The only complication concerns the cumulative expression of some personal values taken together with singular or plural numbers, the ergative or the absolutive case and, in the case of the second person, with the incompletive aspect.

The category of person manifests itself in Poqomchi' within three grammatical domains: nominals, predicates (both verbal and non-verbal) and independent personal pronouns. With nominals, person prefixes indicate the person of the possessor. In the case of the first and third persons, the number (singular or plural) is also indicated cumulatively, as shown in Table 1.[4] This paradigm of person markers is traditionally labeled as 'set A' in Mayan linguistics.

| Person | Number | Prefix | | Example |
		Preconsonant	Prevocalic	
1st person	sg.	*nu-* / *ni-*	*w-* / *inw-*	*nu-paat* 'my house'
	pl.	*qa-*	*q-*	*qa-paat* 'our house'
2nd person		*a-*	*aw-*	*a-paat* 'your house'
3rd person	sg.	*ru-* / *ri-*	*r-*	*ru-paat* 'his/her house'
	pl.	*ki-*	*k-*	*ki-paat* 'their house'

Table 1. Possessive (set A) prefixes in Poqomchi'.

The second person does not distinguish number values by itself but requires the enclitic *taq* to encode the plural number. The same set of person markers also occurs in verbal

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4   Some prefixes also have additional, less frequent allomorphs; see Mó Isem (2006, 66).

transitive predications to encode the person of the grammatical subject. The direct object is cross-referenced by the other set of prefixes, referred to as 'set B' (Table 2).

Person	Number	Prefix
1st person	sg.	*in-*
	pl.	*oj-*
2nd person		*at- / ti-*
3rd person		Ø-

Table 2. Person prefixes of set B.

The distribution of the prefixes of the second person depends on the presence of the aspectual marker. If there is no overt aspectual marking (the incompletive aspect is inferred in this case), the prefix *ti-* is used; the prefix *at-* is used otherwise. The plural marker for the second person is the enclitic *taq*, as in the case discussed above. For the third person that is not overtly marked, the plural particle *taqeh* is used. There are some examples of transitive predications in (1) and (2).[5]

(1) **x-in-ru-**k'am   koq   ar   pan   mama'-laj   jul
    COM-**1SG.B-3SG.A-**bring   DIR:inside   there   PREP   big-INTENS   cave
    "He brought me inside a huge cave" (Vinogradov, Juc Toc and Xol 2016, 194).[6]

(2) re'   taqeh   aw-ak'uun   x-**oj-ki-**q'o<'>r-eej   cho   chi
    DEF   PL   2A-son   COM-**1PL.B-3PL.A-**speak<TRZ>-TR   DIR:here   PREP
            k'o'-n-ik
            play-AP-NMLZ
    "Your sons called us to play" (Mó Isem 2006, 93).

Poqomchi' displays ergative-absolutive alignment. This means that the unique argument of the intransitive predication is cross-referenced in the same way as the direct object of

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5   The following abbreviations are used: 1 – first person, 2 – second person, 3 – third person, A – set
     A of person markers, ABSTR – abstract noun, AGT – agentive noun, AP – antipassive, B – set B of
     person markers, COM – completive aspect, DAT – dative, DEF – definite article, DEM – demonstrative,
     DIR – directional particle, INC – incompletive aspect, INDEF – indefinite article, INDPOSS – indefinite
     possessor, INSTR – instrumental noun, INTENS – intensifier, INTRZ – intransitivizer, IRR – irrealis
     status, NMLZ – nominalization, NUM – suffix for numerals, OPT – optative aspect, PART – particle,
     PASS – passive, PL – plural number, PN – proper name, POSS – possessive suffix, POT – potential aspect,
     PRED – predicative, PREP – preposition, PTCP – participle, REAL – realis status, REP – reportative,
     SG – singular number, STAT – stative, TR – transitive suffix, TRZ – transitivizer.
6   Here and below, if the source offers only Spanish translation, the English version is mine.

the transitive predication. In other words, a person reference in intransitive predications is conveyed by the set B markers (3, 4)[7] and not by the set A markers, as would be expected in the case of nominative-accusative alignment.

(3) x-**at**-chal-ik ayu'
COM-**2B**-come-REAL here
"You came here" (Vinogradov, Juc Toc and Xol 2016, 189).

(4) entonces x-**oj**-pon-ik ju' tinamit
then COM-**1PL.B**-come-REAL tip town
"Then we went to the outskirts of town" (Mayers 1958, 63).

When the predication is non-verbal, virtually the same person markers are used but with a prolonged vowel. In addition to the change in the vowel length, they are encliticized rather than being prefixed (compare also Mó Isem 2006, 162), as shown in Table 3.

Person	Number	Enclitic	Example
1st person	sg.	*=iin*	*ayu' wilk=iin* 'I am here'
	pl.	*=ooj*	*ayu' wilk=ooj* 'we are here'
2nd person		*=aat*	*ayu' wilk=aat* 'you are here'
3rd person	sg.	*=Ø*	*ayu' wilik=Ø* 's/he is here'
	pl.	*=eeb'*	*ayu' wilk=eeb'* 'they are here'

Table 3. Person enclitics of set B.

The encliticized third person marker displays a specific form for the plural number. The contrast of the linear position of the set B markers, depending on the type of predication (verbal vs. non-verbal), is illustrated in (5).

(5) hat chik taq tus-ulk=**aat** noq k-**in**-k'ol-oq loq
2 PART PL prepared-PRED=**2B** when INC-**1SG.B**-come-IRR DIR:here
"You (pl.) should be prepared, when I return" (Mó Isem 2006, 271).

The first predicate in (5), 'to be prepared', is based on the positional root *tus* that requires a predicative suffix to be able to function as a non-verbal predicate and the second person is encoded by the set B enclitic. In contrast, the second predicate, 'to return', is verbal and, thus, the prefixal form of the set B marker is used.

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7 The only morphological difference concerns the third person plural marker, which takes the overt form of *i-* in the case of the intransitive verbal predication.

The independent personal pronouns are presented in Table 4 (see Mó Isem 2006, 68).

Person	1st person	2nd person	3rd person
Singular	*hin*		*re' reh*
		hat	
Plural	*hoj*		*re' keh*

Table 4. Independent personal pronouns in Poqomchi'.

The pronouns of the third person are, in fact, compound forms that contain the definite article re' and the relational noun *-eh*, usually used for cross-referencing the dative (oblique) participant of an action. This relational noun takes the possessive prefixes of the third person singular *r-* and plural *k-* (see Table 1). The pronouns of the first and second person are based on the stem *h-*, which historically comes from the demonstrative pronoun (Brown 1979, 87) with the corresponding absolutive markers of set B (see Table 2 and 3) attached to it.

Personal pronouns are not obligatory in Poqomchi' and are used mostly for emphasis (6). The exception is non-verbal predicates, which are not themselves inflected by person (7); in this case, the personal pronoun cannot be omitted.

(6) yu'naak re' **hin** chik na=Ø w-oj-iik pan a-paat
    now DEF **1SG** PART POT=3SG.B 1SG.A-go-NMLZ PREP 2A-house
    "Now, it is me, who will go to your house" (Vinogradov, Juc Toc and Xol 2016, 209).

(7) q'e' **hin** kam-an-oom
    very **1SG** work-AP-AGT
    "I am a good worker" (Mó Isem 2006, 68).

Zavala Maldonado (2017) argues that Poqomchi' displays split ergativity that is motivated by aspectual distinctions; see also Mó Isem (2006) and Vinogradov, Juc Toc and Xol (2016). In progressive and potential aspects, the alignment changes from the ergative-absolutive pattern, illustrated above, to the nominative-accusative. There are examples of the verbal complex in the potential aspect below (8-10), see also (6).

(8) na=**Ø** **ni**-tz'aj-am ni-q'ab'
    POT=**3SG.B** **1SG.A**-wash-NMLZ 1SG.A-hand
    "I will wash my hands" (Mayers 1958, 84).

(9) nak=**iin** **aw**-oq'om-em
    POT=**1SG.B** **2A**-cure-NMLZ
    "You will cure me" (Mó Isem 2006, 174).

(10) peet na=**Ø**   **ki**-pon-iik   re'   ox-laj   chi kaway
     first POT=**3SG.B** **3PL.A**-come-NMLZ DEF three-ten PREP horse
     "First, thirteen horses will come" (Vinogradov, Juc Toc and Xol 2016, 191).

The subject of the transitive predication is expressed by the set A markers in (8) and (9), and the object is expressed by the set B markers. However, in (10), where the verb is intransitive, its unique argument is cross-referenced by the set A markers. This syntactic complication of the verbal system does not affect the referential properties of the person markers that are relevant to this study.

4. Person reference in ceremonial discourse

This section discusses the use of word forms with person marking and their referential characteristics in the ceremonial discourse of Poqomchi'. As illustrated in the previous section, every predicate in Poqomchi' necessarily bears a person marker, although it may not be overt in the case of the third person. In addition to the predicates, possessive nominal forms and independent pronouns can convey person reference. This means that a discourse without person markers is impossible; the grammatical rules require the speaker to make a person reference.

4.1. First person forms

By definition, the first person refers to the speaker. Since it is the spiritual guide who speaks during the ceremony, the first person singular forms usually refer to the spiritual guide. The spiritual guide explains who s/he is, what s/he is doing and the reason for doing so (11-13).

(11) **hin** aw-ak'uun waq-iib'   Keej
     1SG 2A-son   six-NUM   Keej
     "I am your son 6 Keej".

(12) ayu' wi-lk=**iin**   pan aw-ooq   ayu' wi-lk=**iin**   pan a-q'ab'
     here exist-PRED=**1SG.B** PREP 2A-foot here exist-PRED=**1SG.B** PREP 2A-hand
          q-ajaaw   Iiq'
          1PL.A-father   Iiq'
     "I am here at your feet, I am here in your hands, our father Iiq'".

(13) i-Ø-**nu**-t'yos-ej   aw-eh   **nu**-k'ach-ar-iik
     INC-3SG.B-**1SG.A**-thank-TR   2A-DAT   **1SG.A**-alive-INTRZ-NMLZ
          i-Ø-**nu**-t'yos-ej   aw-eh   **nu**-kow-iil
          INC-3SG.B-**1SG.A**-thank-TR   2A-DAT   **1SG.A**-strong-NMLZ
     "I thank you for my life, I thank you for my strength".

In (11), the spiritual guide presents himself not by his real name but as a person who was born on day 6 Keej of the Mayan calendar (see Section 2). In (12) and (13), the guide is also the speaker and the referent of the first person forms.

The first person singular forms also appear in direct quotations. In this case, the spiritual guide speaks on behalf of one of the attendees and the referent of the person morpheme is not the guide but the petitioner (14-16). These constructions usually bear the explicit marker of reported speech, *inkih*. About 13 % of first person singular references in my corpus are of the quotative kind.

(14) tij-in-ik   ingles   i-Ø-**nu**-b'an   inkih
     learn-AP-NMLZ   English   INC-3SG.B-**1SG.A**-make   REP
     "I am learning English – s/he says".

(15) ch-Ø-aw-is-aj   **w**-eh   **nu**-ch'i'k   chi   **w**-iij   inkih
     OPT-3SG.B-2A-take.away-TR   **1SG.A**-DAT   **1SG.A**-bother   PREP   **1SG.A**-back   REP
     "Liberate me from my bother (lit., 'take away my bother from my back')—s/he says".

(16) k-**in**-a-toob'-ej   r-uuk'   i   **nu**-b'eeh   r-uuk'
     OPT-**1SG.B**-2A-help-TR   3SG.A-with   DEF   **1SG.A**-road   3SG.A-with
            nu-ho'-oob'   r-uuk'   **nu**-laj-eeb'   jaaw   inkih
            1SG.A-five-NUM   3SG.A-with   **1SG.A**-ten-NUM   sir   REP
     "Help me with my road, with my five, with my ten, sir – s/he says".

The person who is learning English in (14) and who has a bother in (15) is not the spiritual guide but one of the ceremony's attendees. This referential shift is a well-known device of monologic discourse (Urban 1989). The wordings, "my five" and "my ten", in (16) refer to the bills of five and ten quetzals, respectively. The petitioner in (16) is asking for money.

The reportative marker, *inkih*, is widely used in Poqomchiʼ outside of the ritual context. In narrative discourse, some speakers tend to use it for quoting the direct speech of a character (17).

(17) xtil   aha'   wo'   ti-pon-ik   re'   **inkih**   x-Ø-q'or-ar-ik
     INTENS   where   PART   2B.INC-come-REAL   then   **REP**   COM-3SG.B-say-PASS-REAL
            r-eh
            3SG.A-DAT
     "How far did you come then? – she was told" (Vinogradov, Juc Toc and Xol 2016, 193).

In ceremonies, the first person plural forms are used more frequently than the singular forms. The proportion of the first person singular morphemes to the first person plural in my sample is about 28/72 %. Using the first person plural markers, the guide includes him/herself in the group of petitioners, together with the attendees of the ceremony (18). This group of referents normally does not receive an explicit definition in the guide's speech, except for a universal formula like "we are your sons, we are your daughters".

(18) ayu' x-**oj**-k'u'loq   r-uuk'   ru-suq-kiil   **qa**-k'uxl
     here COM-**1PL.B**-come 3SG.A-with 3SG.A-nice-NMLZ **1PL.A**-heart
         r-uuk'   ru-suq-kiil   **q**-anima
         3SG.A-with 3SG.A-nice-NMLZ **1PL.A**-soul
     "We came here with happiness of our hearts, with happiness of our souls".

Although the first person plural does not distinguish the inclusive and exclusive forms in Poqomchi' (see Section 3), the supernatural addressees are not included in the scope of referents of the first person plural forms. A good confirmation of this is the co-occurrence of the first and second person forms within the same sentence (19, 20) that makes this opposition between the petitioners and the addressees of their petitions especially pronounced.

(19) ch-Ø-a-ye-ew   chaloq   **q**-eh   **qa**-noj-b'al
     OPT-3SG.B-2A-give-TR DIR:here **1PL.A**-DAT **1PL.A**-know-INSTR
         ch-Ø-a-ye-ew   chaloq   **q**-eh   **qa**-kape'-b'al
         OPT-3SG.B-2A-give-TR DIR:here **1PL.A**-DAT **1PL.A**-think-INSTR
     "Give us our knowledge, give us our thought".

(20) ayu' na=Ø   **qa**-q'or-iik   ayu' na=Ø   **qa**-pahq-an-iik
     here POT=3SG.B **1PL.A**-speak-NMLZ here POT=3SG.B **1PL.A**-ask-AP-NMLZ
         chi   a-chii'   chi   a-wach   jaaw
         PREP 2A-edge PREP 2A-front sir
     "Here we will speak, here we will ask in front of you, sir".

Although there may be several spiritual guides performing at the same time, I was not able to find any context in which the first person plural forms would clearly refer to the group of spiritual guides and would exclude the attendees. This fact is consistent with the idea that in cases where multiple guides participate, each guide acts independently as if the others were not there (see Section 2). It is also possible to imagine the use of the first person plural forms in direct quotations to refer to a specific group of attendees; however, there are no examples of such a referential use in the analyzed corpus of recordings.

4.2. Second person forms

The referents of the second person forms in the ceremonial discourse are the supernatural authorities. They are the addressees of the ceremonial offerings and they are also the addressees of the petitions delivered by the spiritual guides (21, 22).

(21) ch-Ø-**a**-puhb'-aaj   i   ti'   ch-Ø-**a**-puhb'-aaj   i
     OPT-3SG.B-**2A**-shoot-TR DEF pain OPT-3SG.B-**2A**-shoot-TR DEF
         k'ax-kil-al   ch-Ø-**a**-puhb'-aaj   i   problema
         difficult-NMLZ-ABSTR OPT-3SG.B-**2A**-shoot-TR DEF problem
     "Shoot the pain, shoot the difficulties, shoot the problems".

(22) nak=ooj   **a**-b'ees-am   nak=ooj   **aw**-il-om   cho
    POT=1PL.B **2A**-guide-NMLZ   POT=1PL.B **2A**-see-NMLZ   DIR:here
        na=Ø   **a**-ye-em   cho   q-eh   suq-kiil   i
        POT=3SG.B **2A**-give-NMLZ DIR:here 1PL.A-DAT nice-NMLZ DEF
            qa-k'uxl   suq-kiil   i   q-anima
            1PL.A-heart   nice-NMLZ DEF   1PL.A-soul
"You will guide us, you will see us, you will give us happiness [in] our hearts, happiness [in] our souls".

In invocations, the exact names of the supernatural addressees are usually not explicitly mentioned and cannot be retrieved from an earlier context. At times, the addressees are masked under general labels such as *jaaw* ('sir, lord'), *tuut* ('lady, madam') and *dios* ('God'), see (23, 24) below.

(23) yu'naak **tuut** yu'naak **jaaw** na=Ø   nu-q'or-om   a-b'ihn-aal
    now   l**ady**   now   **sir**   POT=3SG.B 1SG.A-say-NMLZ   2A-name-ABSTR
"Now, lady, now, sir, I will pronounce your names".

(24) na'-lik   ta   naq   k-eh   **jaaw** na'-lik   ta   naq
    awaken-PRED PART PART 3PL.A-DAT **sir**   awaken-PRED PART PART
        k-eh   **dios**
        3PL.A-DAT **God**
"Let them be awaken, sir, let them be awaken, God".

The words *jaaw* and *tuut* are common terms in the vocative constructions in Poqomchi' and do not encode any divine nature by themselves. It is notable that these terms are commonly paired: *tuut* and *jaaw* in (23), *jaaw* and *dios* in (24). However, this does not mean that the Poqomchi' divine authorities are necessarily double-natured. Rather, this is an instance of semantic and syntactic parallelism, typical of Mesoamerican ritual speech in general (see Section 1).

There are also several contexts in the corpus where the personal pronoun referring to the addressee is accompanied by some descriptive words that can provide a clue to the nature of these divine authorities. Indeed, there is a huge set of heterogeneous deities. Some of the addressees are part of the natural environment: hills and valleys in (25, 27) and the four cardinal points in (26). Some of the addressees are nameless ancestral human beings: mother and Mayas in (25) and grandfathers and grandmothers in (27). Finally, some geographical places can also serve as addressees of a ceremonial message (28).

(25) ch-Ø-a-kuy   ch-Ø-a-sa<h>ch   nu-mahk **hat**
    OPT-3SG.B-2A-forgive OPT-3SG.B-2A-lose<TRZ>   1SG.A-sin **2**
        nu-tuut   **hat** nu-mayaab'   **hat** nu-yuq'-ul   **hat**
        1SG.A-mother   **2**   1SG.A-Maya.PL **2**   1SG.A-hill-POSS **2**
            nu-k'ixkab'-al
            1SG.A-valley-POSS
"Forgive, lose my sins, you, my mother, you, my ancestors, you, my hill, you, my valley".

(26) ch-Ø-a-kuy   chaloq   qa-mahk **hat** cuatro   puntos   cardinales
OPT-3SG.B-2A-forgive   DIR:here 1PL.A-sin **2**   four   point.PL cardinal.PL
"Forgive our sins, you, four cardinal points".

(27) hat qa-maam   **hat** q-ati't   **hat** ajaw-al
2   1PL.A-grandfather **2**   1PL.A-grandmother **2**   father-ABSTR
yuuq' **hat** ajaw-al   k'ixkaab'
hill **2**   father-ABSTR valley
"You are our grandfather, you are our grandmother, you are Lord hill, you are Lord valley".

(28) k'aleen **aw**-eh Chojol yuuq' Chojol k'ixkaab' k'aleen **aw**-eh
hello   **2A**-DAT PN   hill   PN   valley   hello   **2A**-DAT
Paat_Ab'aj Chi_Ixim Chi_Ixim yuuq' Chi_Ixim k'ixkaab'
PN   PN   PN   hill   PN   valley
"Hello hill Chojol valley Chojol, hello Paat Ab'aj Chi Ixim, hill Chi Ixim, valley Chi Ixim".

This diversity of addressees corresponds well with the Mayan traditional beliefs that all surrounding objects and environmental phenomena have a soul (see Wilson 1995). This anthropomorphic ascription apparently contributes to the conception that they can act in a human-like way, being able to respond to the petitions.

The multiplicity of addressees also manifests itself in the abundant use of the plural marker *taq*, which accompanies the second person word forms (29, 30).

(29) k'aleen **taq** **aw**-eh nu-maam   k'aleen **taq** **aw**-eh
hello   **PL**   **2A**-DAT 1SG.A-grandfather hello   **PL**   **2A**-DAT
nu-k'een
1SG.A-grandmother
"Hello my grandfathers, hello my grandmothers".

(30) **hat** **taq** ajaw-b'ees   tut-b'ees   **hat** **taq**
2   **PL**   father-INDPOSS mother-INDPOSS **2**   **PL**
aj-tiq'-in-eel   aj-man-in-eel
AGT-adorn-AP-AGT AGT-attach-AP-AGT
"You (pl.) are fathers [and] mothers, you (pl.) are who adorn [and] who attach".

Other divine addressees are not universal in my sample and suggest a particular kind of spiritual guide. The spiritual guide from Tactic appeals to the legendary personages whose names were picked up from the text of the Popol Wuj (31, 32).[8] This guide, having its own small business in the municipal centre, is apparently the one in my sample who is more engaged with non-local cultural activists and new-age tourists.

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8   Bell (2012, 80) also reports the importance of the Popol Wuj for some of the modern Kaqchikel spiritual guides.

(31) k'aleen **aw**-eh   q'iij Junajpuh k'aleen **aw**-eh Xb'alanke
hello   **2A**-DAT day   PN   hello   **2A**-DAT PN
          loq'-laj   poh   k'aleen **aw**-eh Mo'saj loq'-laj   ch'umiil
          saint-INTENS moon hello   **2A**-DAT PN   saint-INTENS star
"Hello day Junajpuh, hello Xb'alanke sacred moon, hello Mo'saj sacred star".

(32) k'aleen **aw**-eh   ajaw   Tz'aq-ol   B'it-ol
hello   **2A**-DAT father construct-AGT build-AGT
"Hello father, Creator [and] Shaper".

The spiritual guide from Pajuil, a small outlying village, uses Catholic notions in his ritual speech. He is the only guide in my sample who mentions Jesus Christ, together with several Catholic saints (33, 34). His ceremonial discourse also incorporates fragments of Catholic prayers, pronounced in Spanish.

(33) r-i'sil   **aw**-ooq r-i'sil   **a**-q'ab'   jaaw San_Sebastián
3SG.A-under **2A**-foot 3SG.A-under **2A**-hand sir   PN
"[We are] under your feet under your hands, sir San Sebastian".

(34) jenaj mixa   n-**aw**-aaj   Cristo ar   wi-lk=**aat**   **hat** jaaw
INDEF worship INC-**2A**-want PN   there exist-PRED=**2B** **2**   sir
          hat il-ool   cha'j-in-eel   jaaw q-ajaaw   Jesus
          2   see-AGT defend-AP-AGT sir   1PL.A-father PN
"You want a worship, Christ, there you are, you, sir, you, observer [and] defender, sir, our father, Jesus".

As noted in Section 2, the Poqomchi' offering ceremonies are composed of several thematically different fragments. In each fragment, the exact referents of the second person word forms are different, although they all belong to the same semantic class, which can be described as 'divine authorities'. When the spiritual guide invokes the names of geographic objects, s/he appeals, for example, to Tikal, Piedras Negras or Palenque but these geographic places do not play the role of addressees in other parts of the ceremony. When the spiritual guide invokes the names of the nahuals, the addressee is evidently the corresponding nahual, which is no longer the addressee when the spiritual guide passes to another nahual. This becomes evident when considering petitions that are specific to each nahual (see Section 2). For example, nahual No'j is the right addressee to ask for knowledge and wisdom, as in (19) above, but this nahual is unlikely to help if the request concerns financial well-being, as it is believed that nahual Tz'ikin complies with monetary petitions, as in (16).

It seems as though there is a hierarchy of divine authorities; see also Stuart (2017) for a broader Mayanist perspective. The nahuals and geographical objects are at a lower level of this hierarchy since they only appear as addressees of the spiritual guide's invocations in some local fragments of the ceremony. In contrast, the ancestral spirits and natural phenomena are addressed throughout the ceremony, which leads to the possibility that

they are at a higher level of the hierarchy. The general labels such as *jaaw*, *tuut* and *dios* discussed above probably refer to the whole set of divine authorities together, without further specification.

4.3. Third person forms

The grammatical third person refers to non-locutors, that is to say, it encodes persons (and objects) that do not participate in the speech act, although they may participate in the ceremony. In Poqomchi' ceremonial speech, in contrast to the first and second person forms, the third person forms predictably have the largest set of potential referents. The most common referents of the third person are the attendees (35-37).

(35) ayu' in-**Ø**-chal-ik   San_Pablo k'isa ak'un
    here INC-**3SG.B**-come-REAL PN   little boy
    "[This] little boy comes here from San Pablo".

(36) wilih=Ø   a-wa'   wilih=Ø   a-haa'   x-Ø-**ki**-k'am
    DEM=3SG.B 2A-meal DEM=3SG.B 2A-beverage COM-3SG.B-**3PL.A**-bring
        chaloq   taqeh aw-ixq'uun
        DIR:here PL   2A-daughter
    "This is your meal, this is your beverage that your daughters brought".

(37) tij-in-ik   in-Ø-**ki**-b'an   sik'-ooj   b'eeh
    learn-AP-NMLZ INC-3SG.B-**3PL.A**-make   search-PTCP road
        in-Ø-**ki**-b'an   mol-ooj   na'oj-b'al
        INC-3SG.B-**3PL.A**-make collect-PTCP know-NMLZ
          in-Ø-**ki**-b'an
          INC-3SG.B-**3PL.A**-make
    "They are learning, they are searching for a road, they are collecting knowledge".

The "little boy" in (35), "your daughters" in (36) and the nameless "they" in (37) refer to the local people who came to attend the ceremony. The spiritual guides introduce them to the supernatural beings. In order to assign a certain personal touch to the presentation, the guides frequently add some characteristic details, such as "he comes from San Pablo" in (35). They also usually mention the real names of the petitioners, probably for the same reason (38, 39).

(38) ch-Ø-a-toob'-ej   wiin   jaaw aw-ak'uun **Mateo_Jalal**
    OPT-3SG.B-2A-help-TR 1SG.A.DAT sir   2A-son   **PN**
    "Help your son Mateo Jalal, sir".

(39) wilih=Ø   aw-ixq'uun **Rosalia_Sánchez**
    DEM=3SG.B 2A-daughter **PN**
    "This is your daughter Rosalia Sanchez".

The attendees are referred to using the third person word forms, with direct quotations being the only exception (see Section 4.1). This means that they do not participate in the ceremonial speech act but they do participate in the ceremony. Together with the spiritual guides, the attendees invoke the names of the nahuals, walk around the fire, throw sesame seeds and undertake other ritual non-verbal actions.[9]

Interestingly, the third person sometimes also refers to the divine authorities (40, 41).

(40) ayu' x-**Ø**-k'u'loq   i   aj-nawal   No'j   ayu'   x-**Ø**-k'u'loq
       here   COM-**3SG.B**-come   DEF   AGT-nahual   No'j   here   COM-**3SG.B**-come
           i   nawal   Aaj
           DEF   nahual   Aaj
       "Here nahual No'j came, here nahual Aaj came".

(41) r-i'sil   aw-ooq   r-i'sil   a-q'ab'   aha'
       3SG.A-under   2A-foot   3SG.A-under   2A-hand   where
           k-**i**-hi'l-ik   wii'   qa-maam   k-**i**-hi'l-ik   wii'
           INC-**3PL.B**-rest-REAL   STAT   1PL.A-grandfather   INC-**3PL.B**-rest-REAL   STAT
              q-ati't
              1PL.A-grandmother
       "…under your feet, under your hands, where our grandfathers rest, our grand-mothers rest".

In (40), the referents of the zero-marked third person singular are the individual nahuals, No'j and Aaj. In (41), the third person plural forms explicitly refer to the ancestral spirits of deceased relatives. The heterogeneity of the class of divine authorities (see Section 4.2) is apparently the reason why it is possible to encode some in the second person and others in the third person, depending on the context and the particular stage of the ceremony. In view of this, example (41) is especially notable since it illustrates the co-occurrence of the second and the third person word forms referring to different classes of divine authorities within the same sentence ("*your* feet" and "*your* hands" *vs.* "*they* rest").

Hanks (1984, 142) makes a somewhat similar observation regarding the ritual speech in Yucatec Maya. However, the distribution of the divine authorities, which can be encoded by the second and third person, appears to be different in Yucatec. According to Hanks, the only 'spirit' referred to in the second person in Yucatec ritual discourse is the spirit of Christ. As noted in the previous section, only one Poqomchi' ceremony from my corpus mentions Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, there is no evidence that 'Catholic' divine authorities are encoded in a different way to 'authentic' deities.

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9   Offering sesame seeds is a common practice on the Tz'ikin ('bird') day, see Bell (2012, 105). The seeds are supposed to be the food of this nahual.

5. Discussion

The participants in a Poqomchi' offering ceremony belong to one of three major classes: spiritual guides, divine supernatural authorities and attendees or petitioners. Nevertheless, the ceremonial speech act is held between only two (groups of) participants, whose roles can be defined as speaker and addressee. Let us now look at how these three classes of the ceremony's participants are mapped onto two speech act roles and what kind of contribution to the ceremonial act is made by the participants who remain outside of the speech act.

In the default scenario, the roles are distributed as illustrated in Scheme 1. The spiritual guide is the speaker, the divine authorities are the addressees and the ceremony's attendants are the non-locutors, i.e., they do not participate in the speech act; see also a similar pattern in Tsotsil curative rituals, as described by Haviland (2000).

When several spiritual guides direct the ceremony, the scheme does not change. There is no communication between the spiritual guides but each of them acts individually as if the others were not present. The number of speech acts increases according to the number of spiritual guides but the speech act roles remain the same. At each moment the real addressee may be represented by the whole class of divine authorities or, alternatively, by a certain subgroup within this class or by a certain individual element.

When the spiritual guide uses the first person plural marking, the distribution of the roles undergoes a little change. In this case, the set of referents integrates the spiritual guide and the petitioners that accompany him/her (see Scheme 2).

The role of the speaker may be questioned in this case. The spiritual guide continues to be the only person who really voices (the 'animator', in terms of Goffman 1981). When the guide uses the first person plural forms this does not mean that the attendees also speak but, rather, s/he explicitly assigns them the role of petitioners by referring to them in the first person. This conforms to the well-known observation, which originated in the work of Benveniste (1971), that "in the first and second persons, […] 'plural' forms are not really plural at all but, instead, are 'amplified' persons, enlarging the personal I or you by annexing some non-I, or non-you – some possibly impersonal Other" (cited by Irvine 1996, 144).

The only case in which the pattern of mapping the ceremony's participants onto the speech act participants significantly changes occurs when the spiritual guide uses a direct quotation. One of the petitioners becomes the referent of the first person forms (once more, they do not become speakers in the literal sense as they do not speak) and the spiritual guide formally removes him/herself from the speech act participants (see Scheme 3).

Irvine (1996, 148) analyzes this kind of reference shift in reported speech in terms of the intersecting frames of two communicative acts: "With reported speech forms, […] the speaker constructs or represents a projective relation among dialogues: a projecting
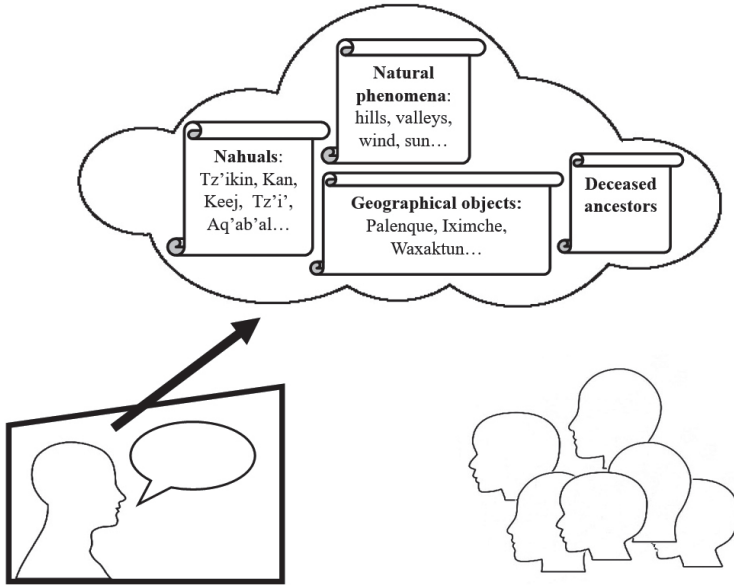
Scheme 1. Spiritual guide => Divine authorities.
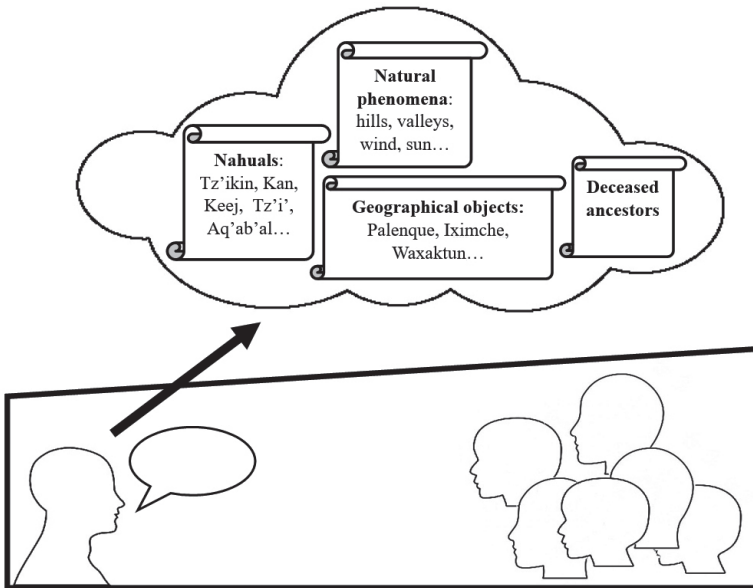
Scheme 2. Spiritual guide and Petitioners => Divine authorities.
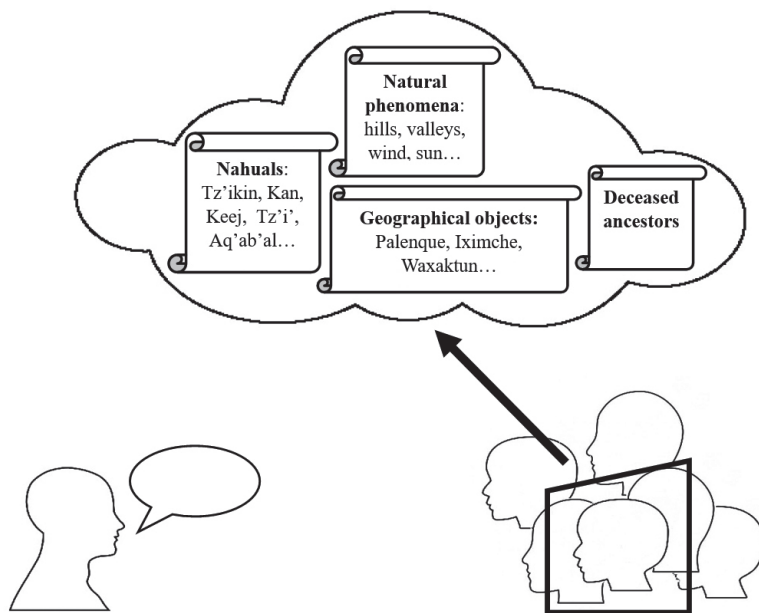
Scheme 3. Petitioner => Divine authorities.

one (i.e., the pragmatic present) and a projected or implicated one, whose utterance is quoted". Scheme 3 represents the latter communicative act; the former communicative act continues to follow Scheme 1, with the spiritual guide as speaker.

An important feature of the ceremonial speech act is that the roles of speaker and addressee do not interchange. The ritual discourse is entirely monologic. Unlike conversational discourse, the speaker cannot become the addressee and the addressee cannot become the speaker. Although it is normal for ritual speech act to have "very little of the characteristics of a dialogue" (Wheelock 1982, 57), there are some linguistic features that are typical of a conversation in the Poqomchi' ceremonial discourse. Spiritual guides abundantly use greetings (28, 29, 31 and 32), thanksgivings (13) and optative/imperative verbal forms in the second person (15, 16, 19, 21, 25, 26 and 38).

According to my Poqomchi' consultants, invocations to the divine authorities and appropriate offerings make them present at the ceremonial place; see also Scott (2009, 106) for Kaqchikel. Their response to the petitions is not verbal but can appear in form of spurts of flame that ascend in a helical manner enwinding the staff of the spiritual guide as s/he uses it to stir the fire (see also Bell 2012, 109). The higher the flames and the more whorls there are in the spiral, the happier the supernatural spirits.

The co-occurrence of different person markers within the same phrase or sentence clarifies the hierarchical nature of the relationship between speaker and addressee. The

indirect reference, especially via possessive prefixes (12, 25, 27), performs the same function. The addressee is at the top of the hierarchy, which is manifested in the meaning of lexemes used in the possessive form. The first person possessive prefixes are typically combined with kinship terms ('mother', 'father', 'ancestor'), while the second person prefixes are abundantly employed with terms for body parts ('hand', 'foot').

The unidirectionality of the verbal communication during the ceremony seems to be an important characteristic for the ethnological description of Poqomchi' spiritual guides and their 'shamanistic' nature. The spiritual guides only transmit messages from human petitioners to the supernatural beings; they do not transmit the responses of the supernatural beings to the petitioners. The spiritual guides cite petitioners and refer to them in the first person plural, as if they were full-fledged speakers like the spiritual guides, but they never cite the divine authorities and never place them among the referents of the first person plural forms. Thus, being intermediaries between human beings and supernatural authorities, the Poqomchi' spiritual guides are not equidistant from these two 'points'. The fact that a first person plural reference always groups the guides with petitioners and not with deities demonstrates that the place of the spiritual guides on this imaginary continuum is closer to the human beings than to the divine authorities.

Unlike the divine addressees, the attendees of the ceremony are theoretically able to become speakers. There is no prohibition on their speech and they sometimes try to imitate the discourse of the spiritual guides, speaking to the supernatural beings or, indeed, just speaking among themselves. Irvine (1996, 147) points out that among the third parties it may be useful to distinguish those participants that can be aligned with the speaker or the addressee as extra first or second persons ('alignable parties') and those that cannot ('excluded parties'). The petitioners in the Poqomchi' ceremonies are mostly within the group of excluded parties. The words pronounced by them do not form part of the ritual speech act since the spiritual guides alone are responsible for the ritual communication. When the petitioners become speakers, they automatically become speakers in another, non-ritual speech act. Examples of this kind of unaligned speech are small conversations between participants when they explain to each other some details of the ritual or ask permission to move closer to the fire, because they are cold.

The human petitioners mostly perform in the ceremony as hearers. Clark and Carlson (1982, 333) define this kind of communicative act as an 'informative' participant-directed illocutionary act since "the speaker jointly informs all the participants fully of the illocutionary act that he is simultaneously performing toward the addressee or addressees". Goffman (1981, 9-10) notes the difference between the two types of "ratified participants" of a speech act: those who are specifically addressed by the speaker and those who are not. Linguistic data makes it clear that the only class of specifically addressed participants is the class of divine authorities since they (and only they) are referred to in the second person during the ceremony. Nevertheless, they lack some of

the prototypical characteristics of addressees: they are not present physically in the speech act place, they are not expected to give a verbal response and it is questionable whether they really hear the words pronounced by the speaker. In contrast, the attendees do have some of these characteristics. Namely, they are physically present at the ceremonial place and they are real hearers of the spiritual guide. In addition, they are the final beneficiaries of the ceremony since the goal of every ceremony is to "effect an encounter between spirit forces and human beings" (Hanks 1984, 139). The ceremony is performed for the humans and it is they who expect to receive amenities from the supernatural spirits.

6. Conclusions

The ceremonial discourse is monologic and, therefore, the most common referent of the first person forms is the spiritual guide since s/he is the speaker. The first person plural forms are used more commonly than the singular forms and, in addition to the spiritual guide, their set of referents also includes the attendees of the ceremony. A particular attendee can also be referred to by means of the first person but only in direct quotations. The role of the spiritual guide in the offering ceremony can be described as an intermediary that is responsible for the communication between the petitioners and the supernatural authorities. However, this communication is unidirectional in that it is only directed from petitioners to the supernatural authorities. In my sample of Poqomchi' ceremonial speech, the divine authorities are not referred to by means of the first person.

The abundant use of the second person morphemes in Poqomchi' ceremonial discourse highlights the heterogeneity of the class of divine authorities, to whom the speech of the spiritual guides is addressed. At least four subclasses of supernatural addressees can be identified: natural phenomena, such as the sun, the moon, wind, cold, hills and valleys; deceased ancestors and their spirits; nahuals; and some important geographical objects of the region, including archaeological sites, towns, mountains, volcanoes, lakes and rivers. Depending on the experience and biography of a particular spiritual guide, the set of supernatural addressees may also include either Jesus Christ and Catholic saints or pan-Mayan deities and legendary personages. The multitude of potential addressees of ceremonial discourse reflects several important characteristics of the Poqomchi' worldview. First, all of these objects and spirits are culturally represented in an anthropomorphic way since they are addressed in a discourse and are expected to respond and to have a positive impact on people's daily lives. As noted by Hanks (1984, 143), "spirits have distinct locations from which they can be brought down to the altar, and that once lowered, they can intervene in human experience". Second, the Poqomchi' identity is naturally located within the general Mayan identity. During the offering ceremonies, the Poqomchi' spiritual guides appeal to the geographical and cultural environment that is shared with other Mayan groups. Third, the deceased ancestors are represented as a part of the natural environment, which is still able to have an effect on the lives of living people.

The set of non-locutors referred to by the third person forms is relatively small and almost closed. This property differs considerably the ritual discourse from an ordinary everyday speech in which almost everything and everyone can be referred to by means of the third person forms (see Allen 1998, for example). The ceremonial act is represented as a closed sphere of persons and objects in which there is no place for any additional external item.

Acknowledgements

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