Evaluating Mayan perfect *-b'il* as a Lowland diffusion

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Summary

- *-b'il* is perfect participle in many Mayan languages
- Kaufman (2015) reconstructs **-b'il* to proto-Mayan
- I argue that *-b'il* was a Lowland diffusion
- Reconstruct **-Vm*
- Evidence:
  - Distribution
  - Internal evidence
  - Inevitability of contact

Background

- Assuming Kaufman (2017) subgrouping

Proto-Mayan
      Wastekan
      Late Proto-Mayan
            Yucatecan
            Core Mayan
                  Western Mayan
                        Q'anjob'alan
                        Ch'olan-Tseltalan
                  Eastern Mayan
                      Mamean
                      K'iche'an

Background

- Lowland contact area (Justeson et al. 1985, Law 2014)
- Heavy influence among Ch'olan-Tseltalan and Yucatecan languages
- Lowland features appear in Q'anjob'alan, Wastekan, some K'iche'an

Basic facts

- All Mayan languages express perfect aspect
- Always as a suffix
  - Other aspect categories: prefixes or proclitics
- Focusing here on transitive verbs

Basic facts

- In some languages, different suffix in active and passive voice
  - **Perfect status** vs. **perfect participle** (Kaufman)

Itzaj (Hofling 2000: 16, 171)

(1)   *u-tz'a-**m**-aj*   (2)   *ch'äk-**b'il***

A3S-give-PERF-COM   cut-PERF.PART

's/he has given'   '[has been] cut'

Basic facts

- In other languages, *-Vm* in both active and passive

K'iche' (Larsen 1988: 236)

(3)   *at*   *nu-ch'ay-**oom***

B2s   A1S-hit-PERF

'I have hit you'

(4)   *e'*   *mok-**oom***

B3P   bury-PERF

'They have been buried'

Two possible reconstructions

- Hypothesis 1: *-Vm* active, *-b'il* passive
  - Like Yucatecan

- Hypothesis 2: *-Vm* active and passive
  - Like K'iche'an and Wastekan

*-Vm active

- *-Vm* as the **active voice** perfect is not controversial
- Present in:
  - Wastekan
  - Yucatecan
  - K'iche'an
- No real alternative
  - Tseltalan *-ooj* is innovative
- The real question is about the passive perfect

Clearly innovative suffixes

- Other perfect participle suffixes are clearly innovations
- *-Vl*
    - Ch'olan, Ixil, Uspanteko

- *-maj*
    - Sakapultek, Sipakapense, Poqomam, Poqomchi'
    - Probably derived from *-Vm*

- *-o(o)j*
    - Tseltal, Tsotsil, Poqomam, Poqomchi'
    - From *-ooj* nominalization

The case for *-b'il

- Kaufman (2015) reconstructs perfect participle *-b'il
- Present in 15 out of ~31 Mayan languages
  - 17 if -Vb'al in Mocho' and Tojolab'al are included
- Multiple subgroups
  - Q'anjob'alan (all)
  - Ch'olan-Tseltalan (all)
  - Yucatecan (all)
  - K'iche'an (Q'eqchi')
- De facto interpretation: it is a shared retention

The case for *-Vm*

- Despite the predominance of *-b'il*, I think it is an innovation
- I reconstruct *-Vm* in both active and passive voice

The case for *-Vm*

- Distribution
- Internal evidence
- Complexity of reflexes
- Plausible origin for *-b'il*
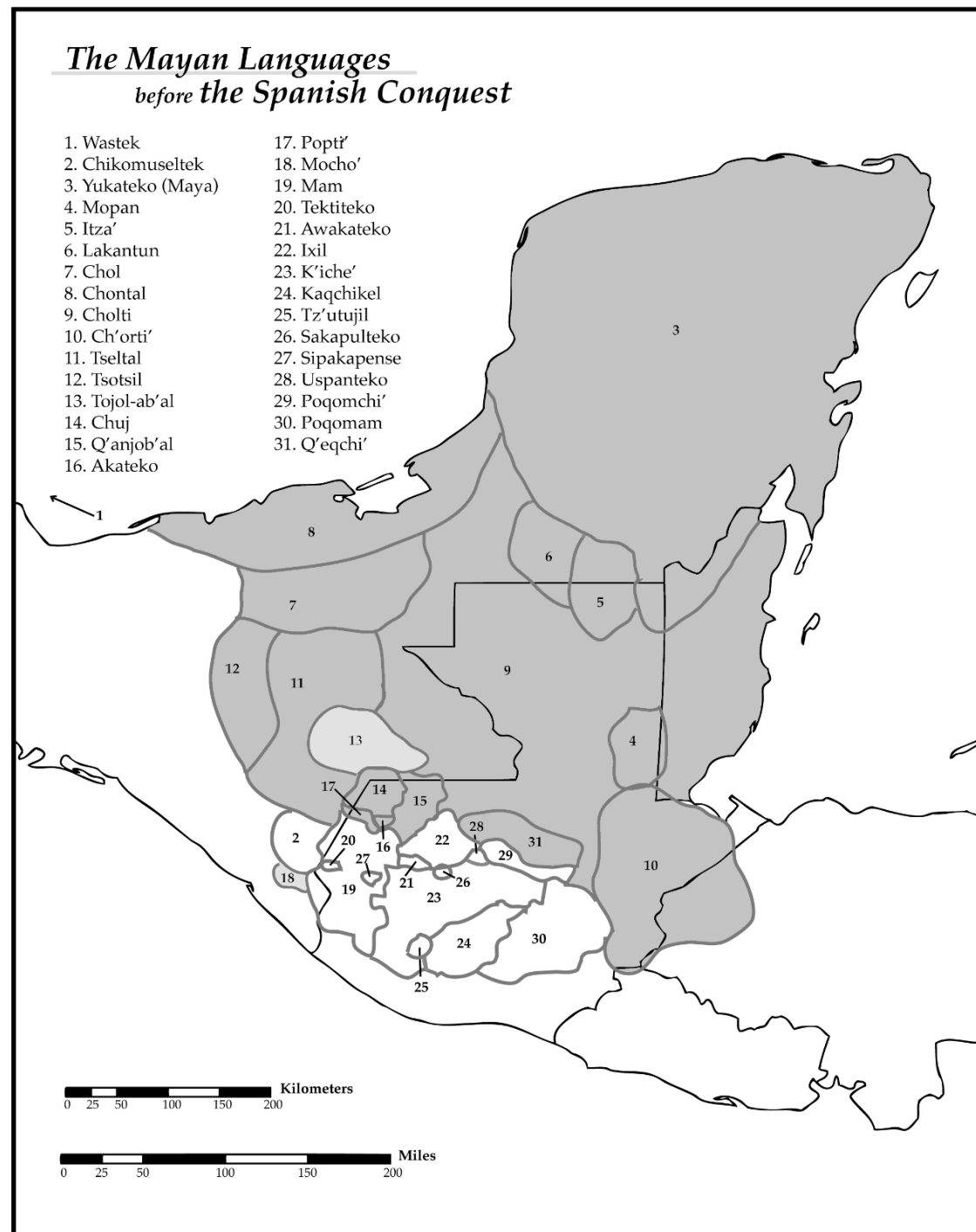- Inevitability of contact

The case for *-Vm*

- **Distribution**
- Internal evidence
- Complexity of reflexes
- Plausible origin for *-b'il*
- Inevitability of contact
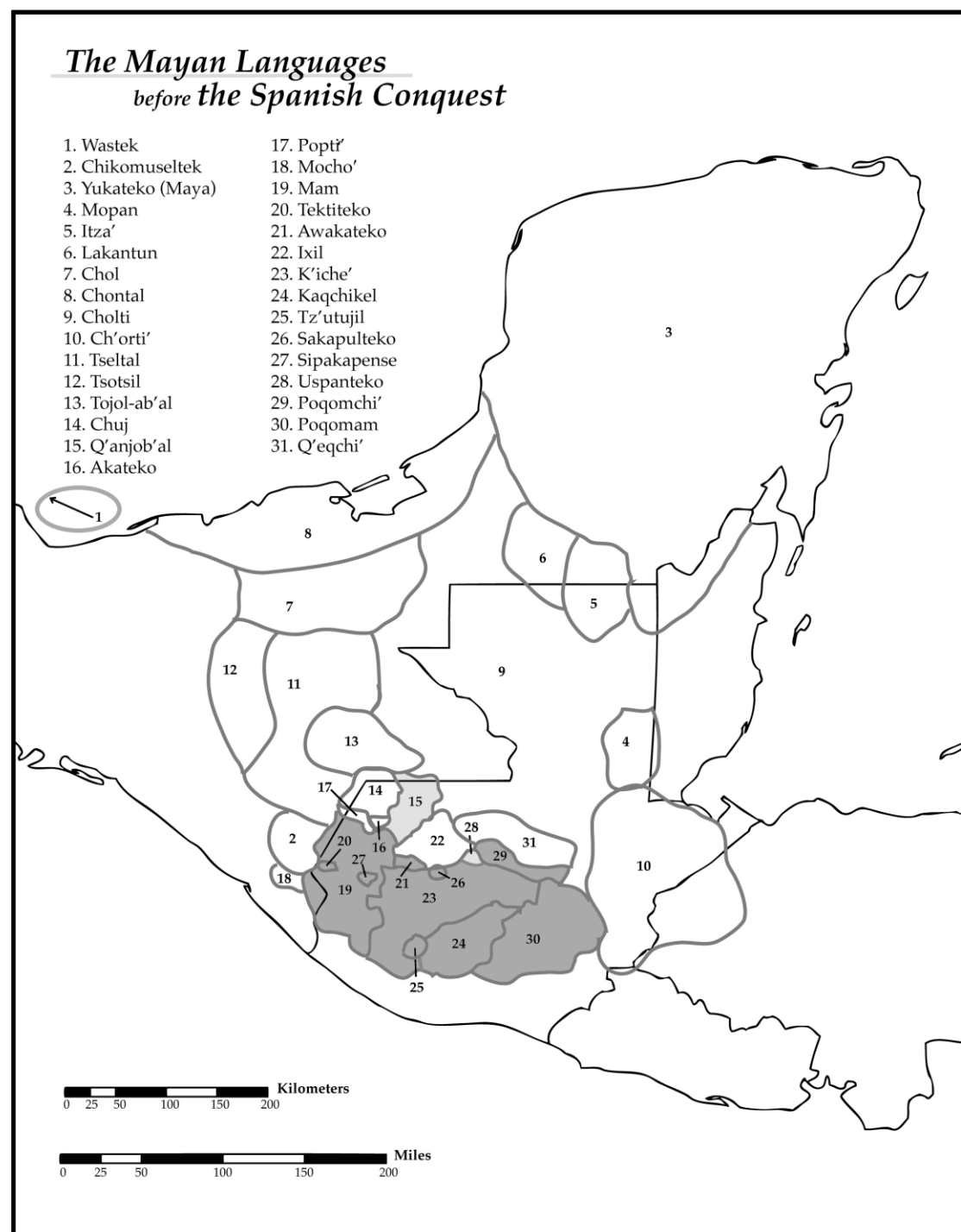
Geographic distribution

Base map: Law (2014)

Dark gray: *-b'il*
Light gray: *-Vb'al*

The Mayan Languages before the Spanish Conquest

1. Wastek
2. Chikomuseltek
3. Yukateko (Maya)
4. Mopan
5. Itza'
6. Lakantun
7. Chol
8. Chontal
9. Cholti
10. Ch'orti'
11. Tseltal
12. Tsotsil
13. Tojol-ab'al
14. Chuj
15. Q'anjob'al
16. Akateko
17. Popti'
18. Mocho'
19. Mam
20. Tektiteko
21. Awakateko
22. Ixil
23. K'iche'
24. Kaqchikel
25. Tz'utujil
26. Sakapulteko
27. Sipakapense
28. Uspanteko
29. Poqomchi'
30. Poqomam
31. Q'eqchi'

Geographic distribution

Base map: Law (2014)

Dark gray: -*Vm* participle
Light gray: -*Vm* passive

The Mayan Languages *before* the Spanish Conquest

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Distribution

- Though *-b'il* is widespread, it is in a contiguous region
  - Consistent with Lowland contact
- Passive perfect *-Vm* is present in both Eastern Mayan and Wastek
  - Extremities of the region
  - No other known contact

Distribution

- **Assume** active *-Vm*, passive *-b'il*
- Requires independent innovation

Wastek (Kondić 2012)

Active: **-aam**-al   Passive: **-aam**-ej

K'iche' (Larsen 1988)

Active: **-oom/-uum**   Passive: **-oom/-uum**

Distribution

- Solomá Q'anjob'al has a passive -*Vm* reflex

(5)   *Max*   *uqtej-***om**   *no tx'i'*
        COM   chase-PAS   CLS dog
        y-uj   *naq winaq*
        A3-RN.by   CLS man
        'The dog was chased by the man.'
        (Mateo Toledo 1998: 137)

- Possible relic feature; no other Q'anjob'al variety has it
- No other obvious source besides *-Vm

The case for *-Vm

- Distribution
- **Internal evidence**
- Complexity of reflexes
- Plausible origin for *-b'il*
- Inevitability of contact

Internal evidence

- Kaufman (2015) assumes active *-Vm*, passive *-b'il*
- Requires that EM and Wastek extended *-Vm* from active to passive

pM: active *-Vm*   passive *-b'il*

>

Wastek/EM: active *-Vm*   passive ***-Vm***

- Is this plausible as a process?

Internal evidence

- **The passive perfect is the more basic form**
- All Mayan languages have a passive perfect participle
- Many lack active voice perfect altogether
  - Q'anjob'alan (Q'anjob'al, Popti')
    - Active: ?   Passive: *-b'il*
  - Mamean
    - Active: ?   Passive: *-V'n (< *-Vm)*
  - Ch'olan
    - Active: ?   Passive: *-Vl, -b'il*

Internal evidence

- Active perfect form is often based on passive perfect
- Probably as possessed patient noun (Larsen 1988)

K'iche'

(6a)   *mok-**oom***

         ask.for.the.services.of-PERF

         '(one who has been) asked for the services of; servant'

(6b)   *nu-mok-**oom***

         A1S-ask.for.the.services.of-PERF

         'my servant'

Internal evidence

- Compare the following (Larsen 1988: 236, 238):

(7) *at*   *nu-ch'ay-**oom***

B3S   A1S-hit-PERF

'I have hit you'/'You are my one-who-has-been-hit'

(8) *at*   *nu-k'ajool*

B3S   A1S-man's.son

'You are my son'

Internal evidence

- More evidence: Poqom **-ooj/-uuj** participle
- From a nominalization *-ooj*
  - Kaufman (2015) and my ongoing research
- All varieties of Poqom use it as perfect participle
- Colonial varieties turned it into active perfect

Internal evidence

Colonial Poqomam (Moran 1720: 14)

oj	*ru-b'an-**ooj***	*Dios*
B1P	A3S-make-PERF	God

'we are the creation of God'

Poqomchi' (Stoll 1888: 87)

*nu-ch'ab-**uj***

A1S-shoot-PERF

'it is my shot; i.e. I have shot'

Internal evidence

- Akateko uses *-b'il* in active and passive perfect contexts (Zavala 1992: 59)
- Extended from passive to active

Internal evidence (summary)

- EM and Wastek have passive perfect *-Vm*

- If we reconstruct *-b'il*, then:
  - passive *-Vm* comes from active *-Vm*

- However, the opposite is expected in Mayan
  - passive perfect is basic form
  - active perfect usually comes from passive perfect

Internal evidence (summary)

- Passive perfect *-Vm* was probably the original form in pre-proto-Mayan

- Active perfect *-Vm* in proto-Mayan came from passive form

- Consistent with normal grammaticalization pathway in Mayan

The case for *-Vm*

- Distribution
- Internal evidence
- **Complexity of reflexes**
- Plausible origin for *-b'il*
- Inevitability of contact

Complexity of reflexes

- Passive -*Vm* reflexes vary widely in form and function
  - -*oom/-uum* perfect participle (Kch)
  - -*oon/-uun* perfect participle (Kaq/Tz'u)
  - -*maj* perfect participle (Sip/Sak/Pqm/Pch)
  - -*V'n* perfect participle (Mam, Teko, Awk)
  - -*aam-ej* passive perfect (Was)
  - -*mal* stative resultative (Ixil)
  - -*maj* verbal passive (Usp)
  - -*om* verbal passive (Q'an)
- Suggests passive -*Vm* is old

Complexity of reflexes

- Passive *-b'il* reflexes are comparatively uniform
  - *-b'il* passive perfect participle (Most)
  - > *b'ir* by regular sound change (Ch'orti')
  - *-oob'al* perfect participle (Mocho')
  - *-ub'al* perfect participle (Tojolab'al)
- Other languages have *-b'il* or *-b'al* instrument nominalization - unclear if this is cognate
- Relative similarity suggests recent spread

The case for *-Vm*

- Distribution
- Internal evidence
- Complexity of reflexes
- **Plausible origin for *-b'il***
- Inevitability of contact

Plausible origin for *-b'il*

- *-b'il* looks morphologically complex
- Exact source not clear
- Lots of *-b'* and *-Vl* suffixes with related meanings
- Kaufman (2015: 320) suggests **-b'il* is **(-a)-b'* passive plus *-Vl* nominalization

The case for *-Vm*

- Distribution
- Internal evidence
- Complexity of reflexes
- Plausible origin for *-b'il*
- **Inevitability of contact**

Inevitability of contact

- Reconstructing **-Vm* participle means that *-b'il* spread through contact

- Typologically strange
  - Borrowing tense/aspect markers is uncommon (Matras and Sakel 2007)
  - Direct affix borrowing (without loanwords) is difficult, but possible between similar languages (Winford 2005, Seifart 2015, Thomason 2015)

- However, **every scenario** involves direct affix borrowing

Inevitability of contact

- Scenario 1 (my hypothesis)
  - *-Vm* is original
  - *-b'il* innovated in Lowlands
  - **-b'il borrowed into other Lowland languages**

Inevitability of contact

- Scenario 2 (Kaufman 2015)
  - *-b'il* is original
  - *-Vm* innovated in Wastek and Eastern Mayan
  - **Q'eqchi' later re-borrows *-b'il* from Ch'olan**

Inevitability of contact

- Scenario 3 (unlikely; nobody proposes this)
  - *-b'il* is original
  - Proto-EM and Proto-K'iche'an retained *-b'il*
    - Q'eqchi' *-b'il* is a retention
  - **-Vm spreads through all other K'iche'an and Mamean languages by contact**

Conclusions

- Proto-Mayan: **$*$-*Vm* was active and passive perfect**

- *-b'il* was a recent innovation
  - Spread through Lowland contact
  - Similar distribution to other Lowland features

References

- Detailed citations for grammatical forms available upon request

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Thank you!