

**TERRITORIAL COMMUNITY FEMINISM: AN APPROACH  
IN THE MUSIC VIDEOS OF KAQCHIKEL SINGERS**

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Master's Thesis  
Language, Globalization, and  
Intercultural Communication  
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Communication Studies  
University of Jyväskylä  
Spring 2022

# UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

Faculty Humanities and Social Sciences	Department Language and Communication Studies
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Title Territorial community feminism: An approach in the music videos of Kaqchikel singers	
Subject Intercultural Communication	Level Master's Degree
Month and year April 2022	Number of pages 63
<p>Abstract</p> <p>This thesis examines how the territorial community feminism concept is adapted to the music videos of Kaqchikel singers, Ch'umilkaj Curruchiche Nicho and Sara Curruchich, from San Juan Comalapa, Chimaltenango, Guatemala. This concept applies the Mayan ancestral knowledge from a community point, which is intertwined with woman, body, and their territory, so it means that any harm committed to the woman, also affects the land and community. Mayan women in Guatemala have lived in violence from the colonialization period until today; thus, they used the territorial community feminism concept which is interrelated with the Maya epistemology to overcome history and weave their future.</p> <p>The data for this study were gathered from five music videos and four interviews conducted face-to-face and zoomed in Guatemala. Combined they were analyzed using Multimodal Discourse Analysis Method. The data reveal that the territorial community feminism is depicted in the five music videos through six categories: traditional practices, clothes, location, women characters, music instruments, and languages. Each one is described and analyzed separately, but also an interrelation between them is drawn. These six dimensions are used to reinforce and make a stance of Maya identity and to raise awareness for stopping violence against women. Therefore, the Kaqchikel language plays an important role for the dissemination of the message. "The territorial community feminism is not part of the decolonial theory", said one of the interviewees. Sara and Ch'umilkaj performed in their surroundings, wearing their <i>güüpil</i>, and singing in Kaqchikel language to heal the past and celebrate the present. These artists are using their ancestral knowledge to weave the history of their grandparents and building a new path.</p>	
Keywords Feminism, community, Maya, women, territory, patriarchy, epistemology, multimodality, semiotic	
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# 1 INTRODUCTION

In a conversation about my thesis topic, a friend mentioned the music videos of Guatemalan singer Sara Curruchich. Since my goal was to focus on an indigenous woman from a feminism view, I decided to dig more into her production. I got attracted to her energy as an activist and the messages she addresses to women and girls.

This thesis will examine how indigenous women singers adapt territorial community feminism to the music videos that address awareness for stopping violence against women and empower identity to Kaqchikel women and girls in Guatemala. Furthermore, I desire to find out the importance of the use of traditional practices and customs in the videos, and why the singers use a first language in their music videos production.

To achieve my goals, I have outlined the following research questions:

1. How is the the Maya ancestral epistemology from the territorial community feminism concept applied or reflected in the music videos of Sara Curruchich and Ch'umilkaj Curruchiche Nicho?
2. To what extend does the language (s) in the music videos serve as key element for the dissemination of the message to Mayan women and girls in the Kaqchikel communities?
3. How are Maya costumes and cultural practices utilized in the videos is constructing feminine identity and awareness to violence against women?

Considering the variety of indigenous languages around the world, it is importance to recognized that many are playing an important role to reinforce identity thought different arts and cultural approaches. In many indigenous communities the music field combines with the languages, and cultural practices has become pivotal to disseminating and strengthening the community that is facing rapid changes with the globalization process. Thus, this rising of indigenous singers to empower their community in their country and abroad is a good reason for including in a study, whereby, we can know more about how they are applying their cultural practices and languages in the music field, what resources they are using, and what are their reasons. Besides the academic motivation of the research, I decided to choose this topic and



context for four other reasons. First, Guatemala is one of the Latin American countries with a high percentage of indigenous population. According to a study conducted by Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), over 40% of its population is indigenous people (ECLAC, 2020). Second, Guatemala is characterized by its multiethnicity and multilingualism; however, it had one of the cruellest civil wars in the 80s in the Central American region. A large percentage of indigenous women and girls was murdered, tortured, raped, and forced disappearance and displacement.

Third, this research can be a point of contribution for singers and communities to reconfirm how they are working to overcome the painful past by using their ancestral knowledge. Fourth, I am an indigenous woman from a Central American country who knows indigenous people's struggle. In addition, as an activist and feminist myself, I am interested in continuing learning and developing my knowledge about indigenous community and feminism theories.

This study is divided into several chapters. First, is the introduction which gives all overall of the paper. Second, it has a literature review and sub-chapters that explain the historical-political context of Guatemala and today, the Maya community and culture(s), and the territorial community feminism concept. Third I lay out how the data was gathered and next how these were analyzed using Multimodal Discourse Analysis combine with social semiotics. This method was chosen because it gives a wider scope for an Intercultural Communication study. For this study two data was used: music videos and interviews.

My interviewees are Sara Curruchich and Ch'umilkaj Curruchiche Nicho are Kaqchikel singers and public figures in the music industry. They used their voice to embrace Maya identity and raise awareness of violence against women. Besides the two singers, I also interviewed two Guatemalan feminist whom I contacted through the help of a feminist friend who knows both feminists women from Guatemala. Once I established the first communication, I got the contact of the singers with the help of one of these feminists, because she knows both singers. More information about the interviewees can be read in the methodology chapter.

In the four- and fifth chapters the findings, discussion and analysis are layouts. The findings are divided into six categories, which are them interrelated to a social-political, feminism, cultural, and location context in Guatemala and between them.

Many concepts are used in this study, thus defining them is very important.

*Maya ancestral epistemology*, a proper definition was not found to describe this term, however today Mayan knowledge is based on the knowledge of their ancestors which integrates spirituality, cosmology, ceremonies, Mother nature, oral tradition, weaving, textile, music, instruments, arts, structural organization, community and so on (Pueblo Maya/PNUD, 2006).

*Othering* “is a process that identifies those that are thought to be different from oneself or the mainstream, and it can reinforce and reproduce positions of domination and subordination” (Johnson et al., 2004, p. 253).

*Machismo* interacts with misogynist to oppress a female.

“Los hombres son machista cuando se posicionan como seres superiores y magníficos (...) son machista los hombres cuando marginan, segregan, discriminan y cosifican pero, también cuando sobreprotegen a las mujeres y lo son desde luego cuando las hostilizan, maltratan, atemorizan, acosan y violentan” (Lagarde, 2017 p.147)

[“Men are sexist (chauvinist) when they position themselves as superior and magnificent human beings (...) men are sexist (chauvinist) when they marginalize, segregate, discriminate, and reify, but also when they overprotect women, and of course, when they mistreat, frighten, harass, and violate them”] (Lagarde, 2017, p. 147).

*Community feminism*,

“Es una recreación y creación de pensamiento político ideológico feminista y cosmogónico, que ha surgido para reinterpretar las realidades de la vida histórica y cotidiana de las mujeres indígenas, dentro del mundo indígena” (Cabnal, 2010, p.11-12).

[“It is a recreation and creation of feminist and cosmogonic ideological political thought, which has emerged to reinterpret the realities of the historical and daily life of indigenous women, within the indigenous world”] (Cabnal, 2010, p.11-12). This concept is weaved into the territory, the body, and its relationship; thus, it becomes territorial community feminism.

For me there is no such ‘America’ being a country, so in this study any mention of it, is a reference to the ‘continent’ as it is, since it is very common to use ‘America’ when referring to the United States of America. United States of America is a country situated in the vast continent of America.

The following first sub-chapter gives a vast explanation of the history of Guatemala, which is a key element for understanding and linking it to the findings, discussion, and analysis related to Mayan women, who are significant agents of the history of Guatemala. Overall, each element is linked to the past and related to the present. The history of the singers of the study is not only their story, but also the story of the grandparents and parents.

## **2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Brief background of Guatemala**

Guatemala is one of the seven Central American countries. Guatemala is a word from the Náhuatl language, which means “place of many trees” (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 2015). It borders with Mexico in the north and El Salvador in the south. It is a small country with a territory of 108, 889 square kilometers (Stuart, 1956; Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 2015). According to Fischer & McKenna, (1996) the territory is clustered into three main areas: the chain of highland which include the volcano and mountains, the low part of land, and the coastline.

According to the last census, the population sums to 14,901,287 inhabitants (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas Guatemala, 2018; [Guatemalan National Institute for Statistic, 2018; my translation]). It is composed of multi-ethnic people such as Indigenous, Garifuna, Ladinos, and others. The country is administrated under a president and parliament which are elected in open elections. The capital is Ciudad de Guatemala.

Guatemala’s history is divided into three parts: 1) Pre-colonial, which is before the arrival of the European colonizers. At this phase the Mayan civilization ruled and built large cities which are considered astonishing architectural works. Moreover, during this period they improved agriculture and astronomical knowledge based on the movement of the sun and moon; they created a numerical writing, a calendrical system, sculpture, and paints. The second period is the colonial (1524-1821), which describes the encounter with the Spanish conquerors. Third, is the post-colonial (1821),

period in which the country obtained its independence and faced civil war (Shea, 2001; Mata, 1969; Fischer & McKenna, 1996 ).Even though the Maya community today is delegitimize to have connection with the pre-Columbian ancestors, what distinguishes them from other civilization is that their culture and practices are vivid today (Barrett, 2016).

The history of Guatemala is “characterized by war, domination, subjugation, and military dictatorships” (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 2015, p. 24). Moreover, after the independence, Guatemala held several presidential elections, which were conducted by a minority group “extremely small, educated percentage male population; this disenfranchised the Maya, the majority of the Ladinos, and women” (Shea, 2001, p.9). Jorge Ubico was elected president in 1931; he ruled for thirteen years and applied severe policies such as labour force for the indigenous; a passbook which needed to demonstrate the days they worked per year, and other restrictions. During his presidency, he granted good conditions for foreign investors like the German Coffee Growers and the United Fruit Company from the United States of America. Thus, the economy grew significantly. However, it is important to highlight that both companies were not new in the country because they operation was establish before Ubico became president (Dosal, 1964).

Even though the country’s economy grew with Ubico years later, many sectors of the community opposed his repression which caused his resignation in 1944. (Shea, 2001). Therefore, another chapter of Guatemalan history started in 1944 and ended ten years later, in 1954. It was ruled by a provisional government for two years, and after, by an elected president named Juan José Arévalo, who changed a lot of policies. One of his first reformations was the Constitution (1945), which dictated new laws for the country, decentralization of powers, the right to vote given to illiterate men and literate women; guarantee of freedom of speech, conduction of many health reforms in villages, and others (Immerman,1980). Women were given the right to vote for the first time, which was a significant step. However, the indigenous women population was still prevented from this right.

Despite all this efforts and administration achievements Arévalo was not capable to continue his presidency. The Labor Code he enacted to manage and control worker’s contracts, conditions, and the minimum wage for the workers was not pleased for all, especially for the major companies like the United Fruit Company (Immerman,1980).

In the 1950 Jacobo Arbenz Gúzman became the new president. He engaged with the reformation of the land for the peasants by enacting in, 1952, the Decree 900, which had a strong reform for land ownership, elimination of landowners system, the pay of a percentage of production, taxes, the redistribution of lands if someone had over 223 acres, and many others. This law allowed having a diversification of crop production

on the land, to enable peasants the opportunity to improve their livelihood. These acts were seen as a threat by the United Fruit Company and the elite landowners, thus, they use it as a plot against the government and overthrew Arbenz, who was replaced by a former military named Carlos Castillo Armas (Shea, 2001; Immerman, 1980). His first act was to annul the Constitution of 1945. (Shea, 2001), which led to lose hope of progress for the country, divided it into classes, hierarchy, and power. The indigenous communities were the most discriminated against because they had lost their rights gained over the years.

Futhermore, the United States of America did not have a full understanding of the situation in Guatemala before Arbenz became president. They suspected and claimed that the government was influenced by 'Communist.' They stated that the president "talked like a communist" (Immerman, 1980, p.637). For many years the United States of America investigated and looked for evidence before the intervention in Guatemala. Even though all allegations were not clear, the USA government invaded Guatemala just before the second intervention of the United Fruit Company property. It is important to remember that the United Fruit Company had a strong relation with the White House and was looking to extend their company. Thus, the decision to overthrow the Guatemalan government was linked to protecting the investment of this transnational company. Years later this incident was a bit remembered as a 'communist allegation' but more as "banana revolt" (Immerman, 1980).

The coup marked the beginning of a cruel war. The following years were brutal periods for Guatemala since it was ruled by military dictatorships.

### **2.1.1 Military period 1970-1983**

After the overthrow of Gúzman, a good part of the population was marginalized and treated as inferior. For the government, the indigenous communities were not representative in the "new visionary country" of Spanish and Ladinos, because they were seen as inferior and dumb (Shea, 2001), this evolved into the up rise of rebels, who were against the government located in the highlands of the Maya communities.

Besides, the government decided to execute a cleaning plan named "Doctrine of National Security", which applied military power in burning villages, execution, rape as a war tool, torture, force disappearances and displacement over anyone or organization that differed from the government policies or accused of helping the rebels. This group of people were the "enemy within" (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), 2015; Inter-American Court of Human Rights, Case of Plan de Sánchez Massacre v. Guatemala, Judgment Merits ,2004).

Guatemalan indigenous women were among the population that suffered barbaric acts committed by the military. For example, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of July, 1982 around

60 military agents, paramilitaries, and members from the Patrullas de Autodefensa Civil [Civil Defense Patrols; my translation], entered the village Plan de Sánchez, municipality of Rabinal. They committed a massacre to the Mayan -Ayí people. It is estimated that 268 people were murdered. Women and girls were separated from the rest of the community and taken to a house where they were raped, tortured, and murdered. The others (elders, men, and boys) were also gathered in a house and later executed (Inter-American Commission Human Rights, Plan de Sánchez Massacre v. Guatemala, Judgment, Merits, 2004; Inter-American Commission Human Rights, Plan de Sánchez Massacre v. Guatemala, Reparations, 2004; Veritti, 2017). Other actions that the military did was to steal documents such as marriage certificate, identification, and land titles.

In the public hearing in court, Narcisa Corazón Jerónimo a victim from this village massacre stated that she “lost her mother, sister, grandmother, aunts and all her cousins, even the babies” (Inter-American Commission Human Rights, Plan de Sánchez Massacre v. Guatemala, Reparations, 2004, p. 16-17).

These acts remain vivid today for Guatemalan women; thus, many artists, activists, organizations, and other are working to overcome this brutal chapter of history by embracing their ancestral knowledge traditional practices, languages, music, and others to heal the burden from the past and face the present (Cabnal, 2010; personal communication, January 27, 2022; Monzón, personal communication, January 25, 2022).

The emerging of Mayan women singers is indeed a path created to express awareness to girls and women about their rights, violence against them, and identity. Many of the topics produced for the videos and songs are related to the country and family history mentioned above (Monzón, personal communication, January 25, 2022). For example, the song *Kizampe* by Sara Curruchich and Rebeca Lane communicates the need to stop violence committed by the State toward indigenous communities in the past and today. It proposes that this can be done by embracing women knowledge in the communities since they are the transmitters of oral cultures and the practice of local experiences.

According to a report from the Comisión para el Esclarecimiento Histórico (CEH) [Commission for Historical Clarification; my translation] in the Memory of Silence, Volume V, (n.d.) over 200,000 people were murdered in the act of political violence and 626 massacres can be attributed to the State of Guatemala by using military force. On the other hand, the report from the Proyecto Interdiociano de la Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica (REMHI), [Interdiocesan for the project for the recovery of historical memory; my translation] reports that 432 massacre occurred during the armed conflict (Garrard-Burnett, 2010). Even though there are differences of numbers, both reports reaffirm that a brutal violation of human right occurred over thirty years

of war. These actions were ordered by Carlos Arana Osorio (1970-1974), Kjell Eugenio Langerud García (1974-1978), Romero Lucas García (1978-1982), and José Efraín Ríos Montt (1982-1983), (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 2015).

From this total, it is estimated that 83% of these victims were from the Mayan population. Thousands fled as refugees to Mexico and other Central American countries (Shea, 2001; Garrard-Burnett, 2010).

The list of incidents that happened during the thirty-six years of conflict is long. Numerous reports from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, consider that these acts were committed by a “state of terror” in municipalities such as Alta and Baja Verapaz, El Quiché, San Marcos, and Huehuetenango (Garrard-Burnett, 2010). Many cases are pending, some have received a final judgment, provisional measures, or had gone unpunished. Just to mention some: Case of Tuluché, Río Negro Massacre, Case of Molina Theissen, and Los-Dos Erres Massacre all versus Guatemala State

(Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, [https://www.corteidh.or.cr/mapa\\_casos\\_pais.cfm?lang=en](https://www.corteidh.or.cr/mapa_casos_pais.cfm?lang=en)).

Guatemala history is painful and horrific. It started with the colonization period where hundreds of indigenous were murdered, evangelized, and obligated to combine cultures; however, unfortunately the violence did not end, it remained during the following decades and even today. If we ask ourselves which was the worst period of history for the indigenous women, I will argue to say all, because over the centuries they have been discriminated at diverse stages and by different actors.

Moreover, the four essential dimensions for indigenous community, which are the land, linguistic/cultural, identity, and common origin (Cruz, 2018) had and are being diminished and invisible during these centuries. However, many actions by the communities are raised to stop these actions of violation by recognizing, evaluating, and being the guardian of their knowledge.

### **2.1.2 Guatemala after and today**

After thirty-six years of internal conflict, on the 29<sup>th</sup>, December 1996 Guatemala started a process of Peace Agreement between the government and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca [National Revolution Unit of Guatemala; my translation]. The president Alvaro Arzú, who was the fourth president elected after the military dictatorship, and his cabinet oversaw this process. The non-government organizations played an important role in the agreements; however, they faced fragmentation, weakness among the organizations, uncomplimented with the financial aid, and others (Sieder et al., 2002).

The civil society formed several commissions to discuss topics like making official the indigenous languages, recognizing, and respecting the mass graves sites, women issues, and others. Women who had fled in exile returned to Guatemala and

created women organizations to fight for collective rights and to stop the violence toward indigenous people. Women like Rosalina Tuyuc and Rigoberta Menchú became leaders during this period (Sieder et al., 2002).

Alfonso Portillo was the new president in 2000. Under his administration many changes occurred in the ministries and other institutions of the government. According to journalistic investigation, his government was involved in a high level of corruption. For example, the “Guategate case” which, refers to a bill that was written to increase alcohol tax. However, when it was published just half of the original tax percentage that was approved on the bill was really implemented (idem).

Moreover, Portillo, who was chosen by the party Frente Republicano Guatemalteco [Guatemalan Republican Front, my translation] to be their candidate, was in constant competence and fight with Ríos Montt who was the founder of the party and one of the ex-militaries who committed several massacres from 1982 to 1983. Ríos Montt had the audacity to run as a candidate for the presidential election but did not prevail. On the other hand, in 2012 Otto Pérez Molina, who was one of the directors of the military intelligence during the war won the presidential election. Such incidents produced division in the Guatemalan population and mistrust toward the government because the pain of the cruel era was still vivid for many individuals, especially the indigenous communities (Idem; Monzón, personal communication, January 25, 2022; Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 2015).

Justice process is slow. Many of the cases of violation of human rights, massacre, and genocide against the State of Guatemala remain unpunished. However, during my visit to the country, on Monday the 24<sup>th</sup> of January 2022 five men were found guilty by the Tribunal de Mayor Riesgo [High-Risk Court, my translation] of Guatemala in the case of Rabinal, Baja Verapaz P (Plaza Pública, 2022).

Guatemala is living a “silent” today as part its history (Mozón, personal communication, January 25, 2022). Many grandparents and parents do not talk about the military occupation to their children, because it left a trauma and terror for them. “Nuestros padres evitan hablar de esto (conflicto) porque les causa dolor y terror”, [Our parents avoid to speak about it (the conflict), because it causes pain and terror, my translation], (Curruchiche Nicho, Ch’., personal communication, January 26, 2022). However, she uses her voice to heal the war wound and to embrace her Mayan heritage.

In Guatemala, a lot of individuals do not agree with the fact that there was a massacre against the indigenous community. Thus, injustice remains, threat against human rights activists, government corruption, exile, and a high percentage of violence that continue to be part of the Guatemalan individual’s life.



## 2.2 Indigenous Communities in Guatemala

Latin America is home of a vast indigenous population. According to a recent report from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs from the United Nations (2017), the population sums a total of 45.3 million, which is based on the 2010 census.

Guatemala is characterized to be multilingual, multiethnic, and plurinational. In the region it is the second country with a high percentage of indigenous population (Cruz, 2018; Comisión Económica para América Latina [Economic Commission for Latin America, my translation, 2018]; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, chapter IV, 2017). Its population is 14,901,286 from which 51.5% are women, 48.5% are men, and 43% are indigenous. According to the category of self-identification from the national population census the population is composed as latter: Maya descent is 41.7%, Xinka 1.8%, Garífuna 0.1%, 0.2 % Afro, and 56% Ladino (a mixture) (Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE),2018, [National Statistics Institute, 2018, my translation], XII Censo Nacional de Población y XII de Vivienda, <https://www.censopoblacion.gt/cuantosomos>).

Moreover, most of the indigenous population live in rural area and a low percentage in the urban area. Guatemala is composed by 22 departments. According to reports and the census in the departments of Alta Verapaz, Chimaltenango, Sololá, Quiché, and Totonicapán over 75% of the population is indigenous (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, (INE), 2018 [National Statistics Institute, 2018, my translation], XII Censo Nacional de Población y XII de Vivienda, <https://www.censopoblacion.gt/graficas>; Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 2015).

Indigenous communities had and are experiencing 'Othering'. This phenomenon is not new and not only occurs in Guatemala, but also in many other places. Various reports from international institutions evidence that indigenous population in Guatemala is discriminated from different structural levels such as gender, color, origin, religion, economic, cultural, and others (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 2015).

Historically, this population has been denied or they have lacked access to basic services, possession of territory, access to jobs, participation in decision-making, and others (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 2015). However, during these last past decades many individuals are shifting the path for things to be done differently, such as by letting their voices be heard, their stories to become visible, and by disseminating these lessons and knowledge to the young indigenous population.

As it was mentioned above, women in Guatemala compose a high percentage of the population. They truly face much discrimination and cope with the machismo in the communities. This patriarchal structure that defines male domination over

female is just a part of the big picture of problem that indigenous women faced and are facing today. Apart from machismo they are also “violence, beating, femicide, labor exploitation, harassment, sexual abuse, trafficking, and rape” (Cruz, 2018, p.13).

Indigenous women’s role is pivotal for the community and country, since they are re-narrating and re-appropriating their stories, practices, and traditions (Veritti, 2017) to fight for their rights to be recognized and respected. A clear example is the rise of many indigenous women singers who embrace the cultural background in their musical production.

### 2.2.1 Languages

Guatemala is a multi-ethnic and multilingual country composed by Maya, Ladinos Xinka, Afro, and Garifunas who cohabit. Linguistically it is very rich. It has 25 languages: Spanish, 22 are Mayan languages, Xinka, and Garifuna (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 2015). According, to the Guatemalan Ministry of Education web page the Maya languages are: Achi, Akateko, Chorti’, Chuj, Itza, Ixil, Jakalteko, Qánjob’al, Kaqchikel, K’iche’, Mam, Mopan, Poqomam, Poqomchi, Q’eqchi’, Sakapulteko, Sipakapense, Tektiteko, Tz’utujil y Uspanteko (<https://www.mineduc.gob.gt/digebi/mapaLinguistico.html>). Maya language is central to the Maya movement and all its livelihood (Fischer & McKenna, 1996).

The Maya linguistic family is concentrated in Mexico, Honduras, Belize, and Guatemala. The population is settled in three main regions: Yucatan and Chiapas in Mexico; and in the high lands of Guatemala (Atlas Sociolingüístico de Pueblos Indígenas en America Latina, 2009 [ Sociolinguistic Atlas of Indigenous People in Latin America, 2009, my translation]).

The linguistic map shows that K’iche’ is the largest linguistic group with 27%, followed by Q’eqchi’ 22%, Kaqchikel 17%, and Mam 14% (<https://www.mineduc.gob.gt/DIGEBI/mapaLinguistico.html>; Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 2015; <https://www.censopoblacion.gt/graficas>; Atlas Sociolingüístico de Pueblos Indígenas en America Latina, 2009 [ Sociolinguistic Atlas of Indigenous People in Latin America, 2009, my translation]).

Moreover, the Kaqchikel language is spoken in 54 municipalities of 7 departments in Guatemala, which sums up to approximately 300,000 to one million speakers located in the north and west of the Atitlán lake (Atlas Sociolingüístico de Pueblos Indígenas en America Latina, 2009 [ Sociolinguistic Atlas of Indigenous People in Latin America, 2009, my translation]; <https://www.mineduc.gob.gt/DIGEBI/mapaLinguistico.html>).

“One aspect that has been documented is the increased bilingualism of indigenous persons who speak their native language and either Spanish or Portuguese” (Cruz, 2018, p.6). The two singers of this study, Sara and Ch’umilkaj composed their

music in Spanish and Kaqchikel languages. This phenomenon gives a unique element to their production and to have a wider scope of audience.

Both singers expressed that they are proud to sing in Kaqchikel language. In their production the lyrics in Kaqchikel are not the same ones in Spanish. They are convinced that music is a path to establish linguistic identity especially when they consider the experiences of oppression and discrimination they face today, compared to the past experiences lived by their parents and grandparents during the internal conflict. For Ch'umilkaj, it is also a key element of her identity. As a child, she lived in the city, far from her cultural background; thus, her parents devoted a lot of time teaching her and her siblings the language so they would not lose the language tie (Curruchiche Nicho, Ch'., personal communication, January 26, 2022).

It is important to remember that even though Spanish is the official language in Guatemala a large percentage of the indigenous population do not necessarily speak or understand it. (Guatemalan Ministry of Education web page). For this reason, it is significant that this element be taken into consideration from every point of view in order not to violate or ignore the importance of a first language as an asset. For example, international organizations should consider translating documents when working with indigenous communities.

One of the reparations dictated by the Court in the Case of Plan de Sánchez Massacre v. Guatemala was that the final documents be translated from Spanish (Merits and Reparations) to Maya-Ayí language (Inter-American Commission Human Rights, Plan de Sánchez Massacre v. Guatemala, Reparations, 2004). This is an example of recognizing the diversity of languages and respecting the individuals of the community.

## **2.2.2 Maya Culture and practices**

The indigenous communities in Guatemala are vastly diverse, in terms of languages, tradition, and cultures. The Maya community is an old community, which dates to the Pleistocene era and it is divided in five periods: protoneolithic, pre-classic, proto-classic, classic, and post-classic. Many researchers agree that its origin is far back as 3000 to 1000 B.C. The Maya created cities in Mexico, Honduras, and Guatemala. Until today they remain to be one of the greatest civilizations in America. In Guatemala, the Mayans constructed Tikal pyramid, which means the place of voices. It is located in the valley of Holmul and it has five large constructions which are around 70 meters high (Mata, 1969; Lutz, Prieto & Sanderson, 2000; Reyes, 2017).

According to scientific research the plateau region of Guatemala is their place of origin, and it is believed, as well that this same spot is where corn crop started (Mata, 1969). The planting of corn is a significant part of the Maya livelihood and diet. Corn cultivation cycle varies according to the weather and location. For example, San Juan

Comalapa it occurs one time per year. Cropping starts in February-May and harvest starts in December-January (Curruchiche Nicho, Ch'. , personal communication, January 26, 2022).

According to the *Popul Wuj*, which describes the creation of life, expresses that after the inundation four types of trees were planted in the four corners of the earth: yellow to the south, white to the north, black to west, and red to the east. In the middle a green tree was planted to remember the destruction on the earth. Each one these corn trees gave origin to a couple, who represent the four first partners of humanity. That is the reason Maya claim, "We are origin from the corn". These four couples, as well, are related to the four powers of nature: fire, water, wind, and earth (Lutz, Prieto & Sanderson, 2000; Reyes, 2017; Curruchiche Nicho, Ch'. , personal communication, January 26, 2022).

The Maya community has a rich spiritual practice and tradition. For this study, I would focus on death, ceremonies, traditional practices, art crafts, and music, because these are frequently showed in the music video to analyze.

For the Maya, death is the last ritual action. The *shaman* (healer) or an herbalist will visit the ill individual to give them remedy and invoke the deities. When the individual died the body was prepared and their favorite items were added next to their body (Mata, 1969).

Another practice is the worship of deities which mostly are related to nature. Among the principal ones are:

*Yumkax/Ixim*, God of the corn, which is one of their favorites.

*Chac*, God of the rain, agriculture, and fertility.

*Ixchel*, goddess of the moon. She is the one in charge of fertility, fabric, and floods (Mata, 1969).

It is not an exception that the Maya community believes in healing practices and rituals. The *limpieza* [cleaning] is practiced on an individual who is struggling; it "proves to be a body technique that addresses physical discomfort in relation to social conditions" (Holliday, 2008, p. 175). The ritual and healing practices are intertwined with the four powers of nature and the four corn couples.

Over the centuries Maya cultures have prevailed to produce amazing artwork. The technique to weave fabrics and yarn has four codes known as "Dresde, Paris, Madrid, and Groiler "(Reyes, 2017, p. 12). Each one is named after the place where it is located. The Trocortesiano/Madrid code, was fund in Madrid around 1860-1870, today it is at the Museo of Archeology of Spain (Somayoa,1964; Reyes, 2017).

Moreover, Sara considers this technique as a "great mathematical knowledge". The weaving knowledge has passed from generation to generation. It is practiced by women from the communities who use different colors and figures to tell a story of their surroundings. The uniqueness of each pattern and color is that it defines the

place and community you belong too. Ch'umilkaj mentioned that the *güipil* (traditional garment) she uses in one of her videos was weaved by another woman from the community who is innovating a hybrid way of weaving traditional and modern elements. "Weaving is history" (Mata, 1969; Curruchich, S., personal communication, January 25, 2022; Curruchiche Nicho, Ch', personal communication, January 26, 2022).

Other significant element for the Maya are music and instruments. The music is very expressing, melodical, and liturgical. According, to Mata (1969, p.79), "sus instrumentos son una flauta aguda, una más baja, cañas agujeradas, serie de percusión, chirimías" ["their instruments are a high-pitched flute, a lower one, hollow reeds, a series of percussions, chirimias", my translation]. After the colonization period other instruments were introduced their repertoire such as the marimba, harps, and violins.

The ocarinas are made of pottery and have a variety. Each one has a shape of an animal and produces different sounds according to the amount of resonance chambers which can be round or globular (*in situ* Excibición de arte en el Centro de Formación de la Cooperación Española en Antigua Guatemala, 2022 [Art exhibition at the Training Centre of the Spanish Cooperation in Antigua Guatemala, 2022]). Many of these instruments are played by the singers of this study.

Throughout the different historical periods of Guatemala, Mayan women have been a crucial character in the communities. The role of Mayan women has been polarized and invisible. However, their role in the culture (s) goes beyond one narrative of being housekeeper, mother, and wife. They have used their knowledge to build culture, raise awareness, and work toward a process of reconciliation after the internal conflict. For example, in the Maya Movement, women are being active to voice out the division between culture and gender (Veritti,2017).

Mayan women are they key performers of ceremonies, leaders, midwives, healers, weavers, and so on, which are practices from the ancient Mayan. They are the core of culture preservation. Besides the above roles, Mayan women also have been Queens. Over the years, excavation in Mayan cities showed that women played an important role as figures of power by ruling cities in ancient Maya culture. The three queens discovered are Lady Six Sky from Naranjo, Lady of Tikal, and Lady K'abel (Andren,2002; <https://uchicagoanthropology.shorthandstories.com/the-role-of-maya-women/index.html>)

Lady Six Sky was sent to rule from Dos Pilas to Naranjo which was located around 150 kilometers from her hometown. According to studies she was sent there because the dynasty of Naranjo was weak, thus it needed to be strengthened by its neighbors. She is known for developing Naranjo and implementing her power skills (Andren, 2002).

According to Andren (2002), many scholars had conducted researches about Mayan women's role in society, demonstrating that Mayan women are deeply engaged with components such as the textile and food production, which is related to the economics of the community.

Mayan women also have become outstanding leaders and human rights activists at national and international level. A clear example is Rigoberta Menchú, a Quiché Maya woman, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992 after voicing out the atrocities Mayan women experienced during the war and the constant struggle and discrimination they received as individuals in Guatemala society. Menchú denounces showed the world that Mayan women are active characters of their history (Sanford, 2000).

## 2.3 Community feminism

In the late 90's, the feminist movement in several Latin American countries had an economic crisis which hampered its working continuity. Thus, many accepted the support from the World Bank and other international cooperation. However, many women did not agree with this decision, because they felt that it was a betrayal to join force with organizations that had harmed women in the society and had colonialism thoughts. Therefore, these women shifted things around to start a new way of feminism (Paredes, 2017).

In 2003, the community feminist concept emerged in Bolivia. It interfaced with a social-political context in which many women were involved because they felt that changes were needed for the feminism movement and the society. The organization *Mujeres Creando* (Women Creating), in Bolivia was pioneer for this fight. They stressed to recognize their knowledge, roots, and had an inclusive position. In summary they wanted to understand their experience of all times. "Es la lucha de cualquier mujer, nosotras en Bolivia, Latino America, Caribe, Abya Yala y de las europeas" ["It is the fight of any women; we here in Bolivia, Latin America, the Caribbean, Abya Yala (ancestral name in Kuna language to refer to America), and the Europeans"; my translation"] (Paredes, 2017, p.3).

Community feminism addressed three main points: feminism, gender, and patriarchy, which are also key elements for other models of feminism (Paredes, 2017). The founders' stresses that is necessary to re-conceptualize each one of these terms. The struggle of feminism is vast, because it should consider all types of feminisms and their fight; therefore, it should be inclusive.

Regarding the term gender, they consider that is applied wrongly thinking that it same as woman; thus, it causes to incarcerate each body into categories that causes other types of *othering*, such as discrimination, sexism, and classism for women. “Feminismo comunitario lucha para que no exista cárceles sobre los cuerpos” [“Community feminism fights that no body be incarcerated”] (Paredes, 2017, p.4). There is not such a thing as categories for individuals.

The third element is intertwined with the two previous ones. Patriarchy is more than the relation between women and men. It has a deeper way of oppression and violation not only against women, but also Mother Nature and the communities (Paredes, 2017). Patriarchy is a system that involves and oppresses all. Women, men, nature, the community are part of that all. If it affects women, it surely imitates the community because they are pivotal part of that same community.

While this was occurring in Bolivia, not far away another concept was developing in Guatemala, Central America. The struggle was similar; however, the concept was expanded by taking Mother Nature as a key element and their problems.

### **2.3.1 Territorial community feminism**

It is important to highlight that this concept does not have many references because it is oral knowledge, not written. Even though the community feminist concept was developing in Bolivia, other countries did not acknowledge it. In Guatemala a new concept emerged tittle territorial community feminism, whose roots are owed to the social-political changes occurring in the country, disagreeing with other feminism theories, mainly regarding the process of the Peace Agreement. This concept originated in a Mayan community. Most all the funds from the international cooperation were destined to peace agreement; thus, the women created a new path to cope with their struggles in the communities such as hunger, health issues, and many others. This concept was emerged from the women indignation about what occurred during the war, the resistance, and the ancestral knowledge (Cabnal, 2010, personal communication, January 27, 2022, Patiño, 2020).

Between 2003 and 2004 several women started to feel that it was necessary to shift the knowledge toward things that were occurring in the country (Guatemala), for example, femicide, sexual assault, abortion, and other issues that women and girls were encountering. Many of the feminist theories did not have an approach to this reality, or they had too many elements which were not easy to decide from one theory; it was complex. Therefore, it was decided to “hagamos como lo hacemos en la comunidad” [“let’s do as we do in the community”], include everything that occurs around it, denouncing the exploration of mining, patriarchy system, violence, etc. (Cabnal, 2010; personal communication, January 27, 2022).

In Guatemala diverse voices emerge during the post-war period. Many of the women who have migrated return with many ideas they learn from the United States of America and Europe feminism theories. As they when disseminating many women realize that the approaches and needs were not the same as theirs, thus, they disagreed, refuse to agree, or be part of these theories, concepts, or paradigm (Monzón, 2015).

The first territorial community feminism slogan was created “mi cuerpo, mi primer territorio de defensa” [“my body, my first territory of defense”]. However, the women comprehended that their natural territory were also threated and violated by the patriarchy system, thus, they realized that it was necessary to merge body and territory, which is done by weaving epistemologies and cosmology of the ancestral knowledge. Another important element of the territorial community feminism is the healing process of the territory-land and body (Cabnal, 2010; personal communication, January 27, 2022; Patiño 2020).

Cabnal (2022), confirmed that it the territorial community feminism concept is under construction and that is not part of a decolonial feminism, indigenous feminism, or eco-feminism theories, because it cannot be placed in the Gregorian calendar since is part of the Maya astronomical knowledge based on the movement of the sun and moon, which differs from the Gregorian timing. She ended by saying: “el feminismo comunitario territorial es un camino, renombrando, es un ritmo despacio, no es por un proyecto de cooperación” [“the territorial feminism community is a road, is re-naming, it is a slow rhythm, it is not a cooperation project”, my translation]. In this dimension of cycle the territory-land and body need to recover and heal (Patiño,202).

### 2.3.2 Women singers

The act of singing is an utterance sound that is produced from an individual’s lungs and throat. This act enhances emotions, reactions, and actions for singers and audience. “Listening to a singing voice as a creative act and process provokes and activates memory and perception, enabling an encounter (conscious or unconscious), with self and others” (McNeill, & Cervantes ,2013, p.3).

In America, women singers have played several roles in the music stage for centuries. Perhaps, in the beginning their voice was silent by not given them the full opportunity for performance. In the Quechua community, women’s involvement in *fiestas* [parties] was vital because they played different roles like singing or socializing “Without community members participating in these ways, there would be no music” (Pendle, 2001, p.445).

There is no doubt that women’s participation in the music tradition has always been vital. But it was in the 20<sup>th</sup> century that diverse voices of women emerged in the industry taking the music to another level. Black women were successful as singers, pianists, or both in the Blues genre (Pendle, 2001).



Moreover, in this new stage, women artists denied being secondary characters on the stage, like just participating in the chorus, having the lyrics was written by someone else, or just playing the role to be a dancer during the performance. This achievement was great for females; however, let's not forget that this was not parallel for black and indigenous singers; obviously it took more time and effort before their voices were heard and accepted (Pendle, 2001).

Once they got to this point, women shifted the music by engaging with the public and using their voice as a power to enact against political context, racism, sexuality, emotions, ethnicity, class, violence, patriarchy, and other social injustices. For female singing became a role and function in connecting with audience, they created a culture and participated in social movements such as Mahalia Jackson, who sang in the March to Washington in 1963 (Hellier, 2013; Lordi, 2013).

In the music field we can find a great list of women singers who have used the career trajectory to give voices to the voiceless in the different genres such as Pop, Blues, R&B, Jazz, Rock and Roll, Rap, Folk, and others. Pioneers like Nina Simone, Billie Holiday, Madonna, Laura Niquay, Lila Downs, and more, have turned the music industry around and prepared the floor for future singers to continue their legacy. Music-making and the roles of women have played a pivotal role in the society.

### **3 METHODOLOGY**

In this chapter, I present the data and method used for this study. In the first part, I outline the aim and research questions. In the second part, I present the data which were collected from two sources: music videos and interviews. In the third part a description of the data set is given. The fourth part introduces the method used for the study by giving a brief history of the method, the different approaches, its manner of application in other studies; and at the end, I will discuss in detail how this method was applied to this research.

#### **3.1 Aim and research questions**

This thesis will examine how indigenous women singers adapt territorial community feminism from the Maya ancestral epistemology to the music videos that address awareness against women violence and empower Kaqchikel identity to women and girls in Guatemala. Furthermore, I desire to find out the importance of the use of traditional practices and customs in the videos, and why the singers use a first language in their music videos production. My interest to research this topic is to acknowledge and make visible the production of indigenous women singers.

To achieve my goals, I have outlined the following research questions:

1. How is the Maya ancestral epistemology from the territorial community feminism concept applied or reflected in the music videos of Sara Curruchich and Ch'umilkaj Curruchiche Nicho?
2. To what extent does the language (s) in the music videos serve as key element for the dissemination of the message to Mayan women and girls in the Kaqchikel communities?

3. How are Maya costumes and cultural practices utilized in the videos is constructing feminine identity and awareness to violence against women?

### 3.2 Data collection

This study was conducted from a qualitative method of analysis. The data for this study were gathered from two sources: music videos and interviews. Five music videos were selected from the repertoire of the singers production. For this selection, two criteria were requested. The first criteria were that they were based on awareness of violence against women and the identity of the Maya community. Second, each music video needed to be sung in two or more languages.

The first criteria of the topics of the music videos were established, because as it was mentioned in the literature review Maya women had and continue to face serious violence and discrimination problems because of their Mayan identity. Therefore, the lyrics of the music and its performance play an important role in reinforcing women's about these topics.

From singer Ch'umilkaj, the two chosen are *Somos* [We] and *En honor a las mujeres Mayas* [In honour of the Mayan women]. From artist Sara, three videos were chosen *Mujer Indígena* [Indigenous Women], *La Siguanaba*, and *Kizampe*. The five videos are displayed on YouTube platform.

For the analyses of the videos, a chart was used to gather the essential information of each video. This inventory is divided into fifteen categories. This chart was adapted from one used in the Multimodal Discourse Analysis course imparted to the students from the Master's Programme Language, Globalization, and Intercultural Communication taught by Boivin (2021). See in appendix.

Once I had all the categories in the chart with the essential information, I watched the videos over and over to look for items that were connected to my literature review and frequently repeated. This helped to narrow it down and then explore those categories in a more detailed manner.

Another reason for breaking down the categories to six for my findings was based on answering my research question. Therefore, those that was not relevant was left out. For example, the numbers of viewers and duration of the songs (in the category of comments).

However, some categories were not relevant to be layouts as a finding, but they were complementary to other categories, so they were merged and used to give a better explanation in the findings chapter. For example, the category of camera shot is

combined with the location and music, the category of layout with language, and symbol, clothes, and accessories were merge as one.

For the analysis, some categories names were changed to a vaster concept, for example the signifier and signified were re-named to women character since both singers and the characters are women. But it was also re-named to give a better explanation of the content of the five music videos linked to the territorial community feminism.

In one way or the other way, most of the information was utilized in the findings and discussion; thus, it is considered that the information described in the chart is useful.

The second dataset I used for this research is based on interviews. In the following I will introduce the different structures, limitations, and compensations of this tool.

An interview is a common critical qualitative method in the intercultural communication research field. It is based on a conversation as a social interaction between the interviewer and interviewee. During this dialogue, questions and answers are posted on a topic, thus, both sides listen and learn about each one's experiences, emotions, and behaviours, which are qualitative information for research (Lamont Swidler,2014).

According to Taylor & Bogdan (1984), the interview "is modelled after a conversation between equals, rather than a formal question-and-answer exchange. Far from being a robotlike data collector, the interviewer, not an interview schedule or protocol, is the research tool. The role entails not merely obtaining answers but learning what questions to ask and how to ask them" (1984 p.77 as cited in Plat, 2012, p.14 ).

The method of interviewing "is made to secure information (...) about the informant himself, or about other persons or undertakings that he knows or is interested in" (Odum & Jocher, 1929, p.366, as cited in Plat, 2012, p.11).

A research interview can be conducted face-face or by media with individuals or groups in a structured, semi-structured, or unstructured way (Qu & Dumay, 2011). There are many types of interviews such as narrative, opinions, informant, ethnographic, respondent, etc. (Tracy, S. J., 2013).

The method of interviewing has advantages and disadvantages. One of the strong advantages of the interviewing method is subjectivity, which means that the researcher has a high percentage to increase her/his understanding of the topic by listening. It also allows the researcher to learn more about the participant's beliefs, behaviour, and perspectives (Morgan, 2014). But this subjectivity can also be a limitation because the interviewer can push for information to be heard thus the outcomes can be questionable.

A second pitfall of interviewing is that it can easily lead to slippery assumptions of individualistic explanations, for example, race or sex can be reflected in one's attribution. A third disadvantage is a coherence between the narrative and the interviewee's experiences of life, which can lead to the individual not wanting to interact the same in the interview as in real life (Lamont & Swidler, 2014). The interviewees for this study were themselves, openly, and willing to contribute for the research. Before the interview was done, each one signed a letter of consent for the interview, a constant communication to confirmed information was done, and a final consent of the excerpts use in the study.

### **3.3 Data set**

For this study, a semi-structured interview was utilized. Since the interview is an interactive participation method it was considered to be suitable in acquiring deeper information about the details of the music videos, experiences, and emotions of the interviewees; thus, it is a complementary to my other data. This semi-structure helped to obtain the information without the need to push for it and for the interviewees to share more details about their experiences and music production.

Taking into consideration the above advantages and disadvantages, a script was emailed to each interviewee before the interview was conducted, plus an explanation that this was not a fixed questionnaire because more questions could emerge during the interview, but always related to the topic.

Four interviews were conducted for this study. All the interviewees were chosen because of the knowledge they have of the topic of this study. Two of the interviewees are public figures not only in Guatemala, but also abroad. Each interview lasted approximately an hour and a half and was done in the Spanish language. The interviews were transcribed using office 365 from which, later, I choose the phrases to be utilized for the study and translated them into English. When using any phrase as a quotation I wrote it first in Spanish and then in English. I decided to use both languages because, first, this is a study from an intercultural programme and second, I did not want the interviewees to feel uncomfortable speaking another language that they are not familiar with.

Once the transcription and translation were done, I proceeded reading them, highlighted what was related to the research questions, finally a connection was draw to the six categories of the study. Regarding the information that was not clear I sent a list of questions to the interviewee to be clarified. Once I had the confirmation, I proceeded to intertwine the information of the interviews, the literature review, and the music videos for the discussion and analysis. Also, new research related to my

study and to the categories was added to the discussion chapter, making the discussion/analysis deeper and giving not only my perspective about the topic, but also from another researcher's point of view. The full transcription of the interviews was not sent to the interviewees, however, the interviews excerpts used in this study was sent to each one for their approval and consent.

### **3.3.1 Monzón**

Monzón, a teacher, sociologist, researcher, feminist, and journalist. She self-identifies herself as a mestiza (a mixture of identities). She was president of the Central American Sociologist Association from 2018 to 2021. As a professor and researcher, she works at the gender and feminist Latin-American Faculty of Social Sciences (Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales -FLACSO-) in Guatemala.

These two roles allow her the opportunity to have a wider view of the social-political context of the region. In addition, she is one of the founders of the programme *Voces de Mujeres* [Women Voices], which she admits is a pleasure to talk and learn from different women (Unesco, n.d; Monzón, personal communication, January 25, 2022).

Moreover, Monzón herself has experienced difficult moments in the history of Guatemala, for example when she was a university student (Monzón, personal communication, January 25, 2022).

### **3.3.2 Sara Curruchich**

Raised in San Juan Comalapa, Chimaltenango, Guatemala. Sara is a Kaqchikel singer. She considers herself as an art-activist, a dreamer, believes in hope, and that music heals, and embodies. "La música es parte de mí, yo me despierto y lo primero que hago es cantar". [The music is part of me, I wake up and the first thing I do is sing", my translation] said Sara (2022). Her career started at an early age (Curruchich, S., personal communication, January 25, 2022).

Her life is surrounded by many women characters such as her mother, aunts, and other. She identifies herself with the territorial community feminism concept; because she thinks that it is integrated beyond the basic elements of society such as the political, cultural, and economic participation of women. It includes the Mother Nature, territory, body, spirit, all link to ancestral knowledge (Curruchichi, S., personal communication, January 25, 2022).

The topics of her songs are about: nature, identity, violence, women body and strength, ancestral knowledge, love in all its dimensions etc. She started to compose her songs as a way of healing from the exclusion, violence, discrimination, and aggression that she lived while studying her music career in Guatemala City. These

incidents occurred in 2015, not so long ago (Curruchich, S., personal communication, January 25, 2022).

She has joined force with other singers such as Rebeca Lane, Lila Downs, Amparo Sánchez, and so on. The lyrics of her songs are written and sung in Maya K'iche' and Spanish languages. Furthermore, in her videos she demonstrates the vivid customs and practices of Mayan roots.

Moreover, in July 2021, she won the MTV MIAW Prize in the category of gender equality. When she received the prize, she dedicated it to women and girls' who have become victims of the genocide and femicide (MTV Prize YouTube video, 2021).

Like many other Mayan communities Sara's hometown was also invaded by the military and paramilitaries in decade of the 80's. The video *Kizampe* which she sings with Rebeca Lane was shot in "Paisajes de la Memoria: Memoria de las víctimas de desaparición forzada"[Landscape of memories: Memory of the victims of forced disappearance], located in Comalapa (Youtube Video *Kizampe*, 2021).

In the month of March, 2022, Sara kicked off a tour in Guatemala to commemorate Women's Day. This tour also includes Spain, France, and Mexico to promote her album "Mujer Indígena" [Indigenous Woman].

### 3.3.3 Ch'umilkaj Curruchiche Nicho

Is a Kaqchikel singer from San Juan Comalapa, Chimaltenango, Guatemala. She is a young musician, cultural promoter of her community, composer, and music teacher, and an active individual working toward the language revitalization and with youngster.

Her passion for music started at an early age. As a child, she sang to resume a story. "Yo siempre decidí hacerlo a través del canto" [ "I always decided to do it by singing" my translation] (Curruchiche Nicho, Ch', personal communication, January 26, 2022).

She performance for the first time at her school at age six. After the show, one of the judges expressed how great she sang. After this along with other children from the community she started to rehearse every evening and to present performances in other communities with the group name Maya Aj. This was the beginning of her artistic career.

The topics of her songs and the scene in the video clips are inspired by her surroundings. She expresses that her main topics are culture, Mother Earth, and women's (Curruchiche Nicho, Ch', personal communication, January 26, 2022). For example, her video "Vamos y volvemos" [We go and we return] in collaboration with other singers last year was shot in Comalapa (AND 502, 2020).

In December of 2020, she also launched her video "Mujeres Mayas [Maya Women]. In an interview given to La Hora [The Time], 2019, she expresses that she

sings to defend the territory, ancestral knowledge, nature, and revindication of the Mayan languages.

Ch'umilkaj has performance at local, national, and international levels. As an artist in the music industry, her experiences have been a learning process. While performing she embraces this opportunity to spread her culture and knowledge. The audience plays an important role for her to continue doing presentations. On many occasions, she travelled to New York City invited to performance, talk at universities, and the opportunity to talk with the Kaqchikel community living there, who expressed that her songs make them feel close to home (Curruchiche Nicho, Ch'. personal communication, January 26, 2022; Monzón, personal communication, January 25, 2022).

### **3.3.4 Cabnal**

Is a territorial community feminist and an ancestral community healer. She considers herself a Q'qechi- Xica woman. She is a cofounder of the Sanadoras Ancestrales del Feminismo Comunitario (Ancestral healers of the community feminism). She likes to have a direct connection in the community, thus when she conducts a workshop, she presents herself as it was mentioned above.

All the interviews were done in Guatemala City and San Juan Comalapa, the municipality from where both singers are from, which is approximately 78 kilometers from Guatemala City.

Three of the interviews were done face-face in various locations such as a coffee house, office, and a particular house. In all it was an ideal environment and a connection with the interviewees. The fourth one was done by zoom because the interviewee was not in the same municipality and time was limited.

## **3.4 Method**

This study utilizes Multimodal Discourse Analysis, which is a qualitative method and a branch of Discourse Analysis. I chose this method to analyse my data because it grips each detail from the music videos to answer my research questions. This method allows having a wider scope and a closer view of each mode chosen. In addition, this method is very practical for the intercultural communication field (Lyons, 2016), because it considers not only the linguistic dimension but also the social-cultural one.

Discourse analysis is a multifaceted and inter-disciplinary method that has evolved considerably since its origin. This approach has its background in 1952, when



the structuralist Zelig Harris, from the United States of America, defined it to analyse language “beyond the sentence” (Hart, 2020 p. 12). However, Harris himself also recognized that there were two paths for this: One was the linguistic view to limit the analysis of a single sentence at a time and the other was to link the language with culture considering linguist and non-linguist modes (Hart, 2020).

The method of discourse analysis has many approaches that have enhanced through the years; thus, this makes this field complex and not easy for many when it is necessary to narrow down for a study. Another important key of this method is that it is divided into two major approaches: linguistic (Chomsky, 1965 as cited in Kress 2010; Halliday, 1978, as cited in Kress, 2010) and social semiotics (Hodge & Kress, 1993, as cited in Kress, 2010; Fowler et al, 1979, as cited in Kress, 2010). For example, an interview from a linguistic point only focuses on the text caption, not beyond that. On the other hand, the social semiotics approach sees the interview beyond by including the environment, the persons, the social context etc., which permits having a critical stance.

Moreover, van Leeuwen (2005), defines discourse analysis as “the analysis of an extended text, or type of text” (p.94), which means that discourse analysis is plural. One text can have many meanings in one context but has another meaning in a second context. This is one of the reasons why it is a complex method and challenges the researcher to narrow it by not analysing so many modes. (van Leeuwen, 2005).

From the perspective of intercultural communication studies, it may be considered important to take a stance on multimodality-critical view when utilizing it, because it allows the researcher to go beyond the meaning of linguistics; thus, it should intertwine with semiotic analysis, which embraces elements such as image, gesture, text, etc. to disseminate communication from a wider scope. For example, *gesture* has cultural differences meaning, which can be understood in one society, but in another, they can be misunderstood. Semiotics indeed plays an important role for the multimodality analysis, it is the meaning-making of each element (Kress, 2010).

The multimodal approach within discourse analysis has its origin in the rise of photography and video production, which merge the visual and textual components for its analysis depending on the context and individual that are involved (Lyons, 2016).

According to Kress (2010), social semiotics and multimodality have two parts. Social semiotics “opens the route to a clear view of evaluation/assessments in different modes” (Kress, 2010 p.16). Social semiotics main objective is the *meaning* of all the forms. The key element is *how* the resources were done to have a meaning. For example, red which is one of the primary colours in the palette signifies passion in advertising, so what is important to understand is how the red colour on the dress can invoke passion and a reaction.

Social semiotics is not a theory that can act on its own, it needs the interrelation with other fields and a specific context (van Leeuwen, 2005). Besides, investigating and analysing social semiotics also evolve the creation of a new resource and the implementation as such in a new context.

Its objective is to know the *meaning-making* of all the modes ensemble. It is pivotal to answer the question of *what*. Each item has a purpose, and it enacts a meaning. If we contextualize the same red dress in a specific community, it can mean the class, identity, status etc. the individual belongs to.

By merging multimodality and social semiotics, we have *meaning* and *making-meaning*, which improve the understanding of communication in society from many angles (Kress, 2010; van Leeuwen, 2005).

The social semiotics *mode* "is a socially shaped and culturally given semiotic resource for making meaning" (Kress, 2010 p.79). Modes are gestures, image, music, actions, facial expressions layout, speech, moving image, soundtrack, 3D, etc. In social semiotics each mode has a function or task; therefore, each one is entirely interrelated to the other. Another key element of mode is that it differs from culture to culture. However, it also can have commonalities. In the music videos of Ch'umilkaj and Sara, corn is presented as a traditional diet and icon for the Maya Kaqchikel communities, but perhaps it is not for other indigenous communities like the Bribri in Costa Rica or the Miskitu in Nicaragua.

Multimodal social semiotic integrates several modes and its relation between them, e.g. language and image. The relationship between each semiotic modes produces an interaction. A text is not only visual because combined with an imagen, or a gesture it produces a meaning and an action. Each semiotic mode interacts internally and externally for the context it was produced (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2020).

"In a social-semiotic account of meaning, individuals with their social histories, socially shaped, located in social environments, using socially made, culturally available resources, are agentive and generative in *sign-making* and communication" (Kress, 2010 p.54).

According to Leyons (2016), multimodality studies are based on three statements: First, they consider that various modes need to be involved and provide a meaning. Second, each mode has interactions among them, they do not individually. Third, modes used by individuals will evolve and shape into new meaning, which will be shared in a social-cultural context or another.

To sum up, multimodality and social semiotics methods study everything from a communication perspective. The combination of the linguistic and non-linguistic features in a context is what gives a wider dimension to use multimodal discourse analysis method.

The multimodality method has been applied in multi-fields like marketing, advertising, designing, filming, and so on, to analyse signs, clothes, colours, music, still image, and moving images.

For this study, I will be analysing the music videos from a multimodal social semiotic. I will regroup the categories I described in the chart of the five music videos into modes to be analysed from a meaning and making-meaning way. The modes that I will examine are clothes, accessories and symbols, traditional practices, location, music and instruments, languages, and women characters.

In the discussion the modes are used to answer my research questions. For this I complemented the discussion and analysis with information from the interviews, literature review, and the multimodality discourse analysis. This last one is put together by drawing of the six modes from a semiotics view, environment where each mode was produced, linguistic, historical-cultural background, and feminism. All modes have a meaning, making-meaning as separate, but indicating as well, the relation between them.

Moreover, the information to support my discussion and analyses is collected from the interviews, articles related to the topic in the study. Once each mode is described from a semiotic view, I will interrelate them with a social-historical, cultural (identity), feminism, and ancestral knowledge context for the discussion and analysis chapter.

## 4 FINDINGS

In this chapter, the findings are presented by gathering essential information related to the aims of the study. This was done by watching and analyzing each music video of the two singers, which was later linked to the information given in the interviews and literature review. The territorial community feminism is based on an oral and traditional practice from ancestral knowledge, especially the one that is passed on from grandmother to mother, then to daughters and granddaughters.

All music videos demonstrate that components from the territorial community feminist concept are present. Both singers also know about the concept and admit that even though they do not consider themselves feminists; it is one way to discover it, embody it, and strengthen the knowledge to grow (personal communication, January 2022).

The videos have a duration approximately from three to five minute each. *Mujer Indígena* [Indigenous Women], describes the knowledge that indigenous women learned from their ancestors, specialty from women who are grandmother, mother, etc. *Kizampe*, narrates how to be re-born from the past violence of the country, by learning from the ancestors' knowledge. This is the generation to make changes. *La Siguanaba*, describes the story of a woman who defend herself from her abusive partner by leaving him. These three music videos are from Sara.

From Ch'umilkaj we have *En honor a las mujeres Mayas* [In honour of the Mayan women], describes the importance of ancestral knowledge that women apply in their community. *Somos* [We], narrates the proudness of Mayan identity.

The findings are presented in six categories, which are elements from the community surroundings. Each category is described and explained on its own. Nevertheless, they cannot be separated from one another because they act as one for the discussion and analysis. Moreover, these categories present in the music videos are an illustration of the livelihood of the Mayan women in Guatemala.

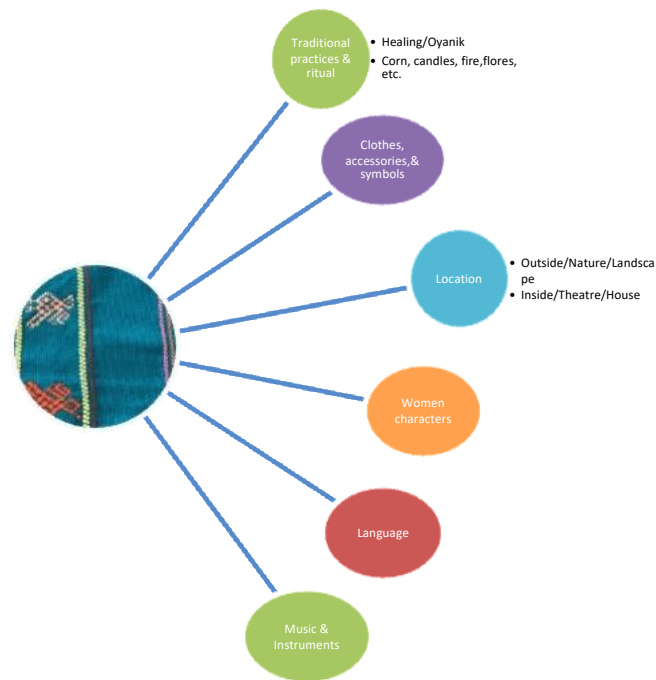


Figure 1 Six categories

In addition, each category was selected from the chart that gathered all the basic information about each music video. Once this was done, I regrouped them for the findings.

## 4.1 Traditional practices and ritual

The Mayans have a lot of beliefs and rituals, which are practiced in the communities to heal or clean an individual. There are many types of rituals and ways of conducting them, however; in the music videos these are the ones demonstrated:

### 4.1.1 Healing/Oyonik

*Oyonik* [the call] is performed on a child from the community to reclaim the energy return to them, that they lost while playing or doing mischief; consequently, many times they fall or get hurt so their energy is caught in that place, thus they wake up afraid at night. Women are in charge to arrange and execute this ritual that endures for seven days. Before the call starts the child needs to give the grandmother from the community a cloth they like the most. For the call, a container of water is mandatory to be in the location along with other items such as eggs, candles, flowers, incense, and others.

In the scenario, the caller sings the name of the child over and over. It is like a prayer asking for the lost energy to return to its body. On the final day, the practice is arranged out in nature, e.g. at a river, where the act is done again. On this day, traditional food is one of the elements present at the ceremony. Once the child eats or show being in a better mood, the caller confirms that the spirit has returned to its original place. But on the contrary another *oyonik* will need to be conducted.



Figure 2 The practice of Oyonik in *En honor a las mujeres Mayas, Ch'umilkaj*. (A) grandmother using an egg for the ritual. (B) In open nature the grandmother is healing the child. YouTube platform.

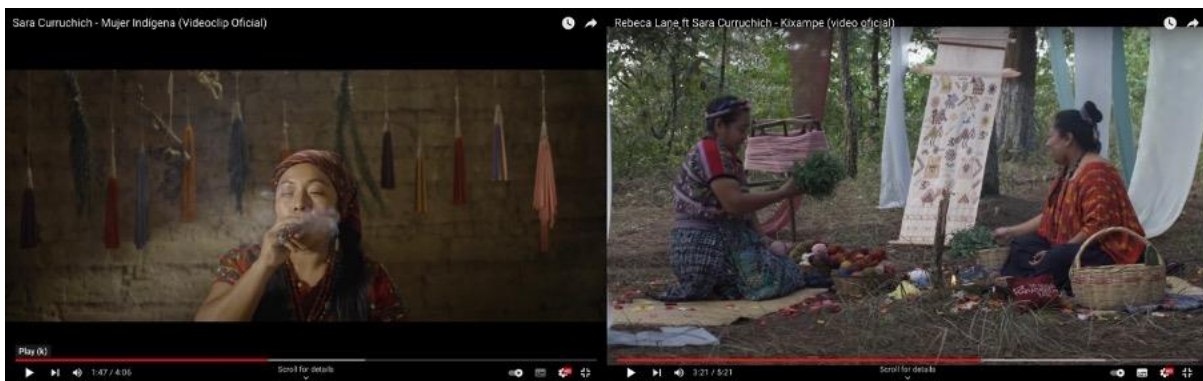


Figure 3 *Kizampe, Sara*. (A) A woman is smoking for a healing ceremony. (B) Lorena & Rosalina at Paisaje de la Memoria during a healing ceremony. YouTube platform

#### 4.1.2 Corn, candles, fire, incense, flowers

These items are indispensable in all ceremonies and traditional practices done by the Mayans. Corn is an item that is frequently presented in music videos. It is depicted in the maize field, as an item at the ceremonies, preparation for a dish, as dry corn, and as its skin. It is part of the community's livelihood.

Fire is one of the four nature powers. Thus, most of the traditions apply this item with candle and incense to withdraw negative energy, invoke positive one or clean.

Roses, chrysanthemums, and lilies are some of flowers used. These are common flowers that are seen daily in the communities. A basket is also another item that is frequently in the videos along with a flower.

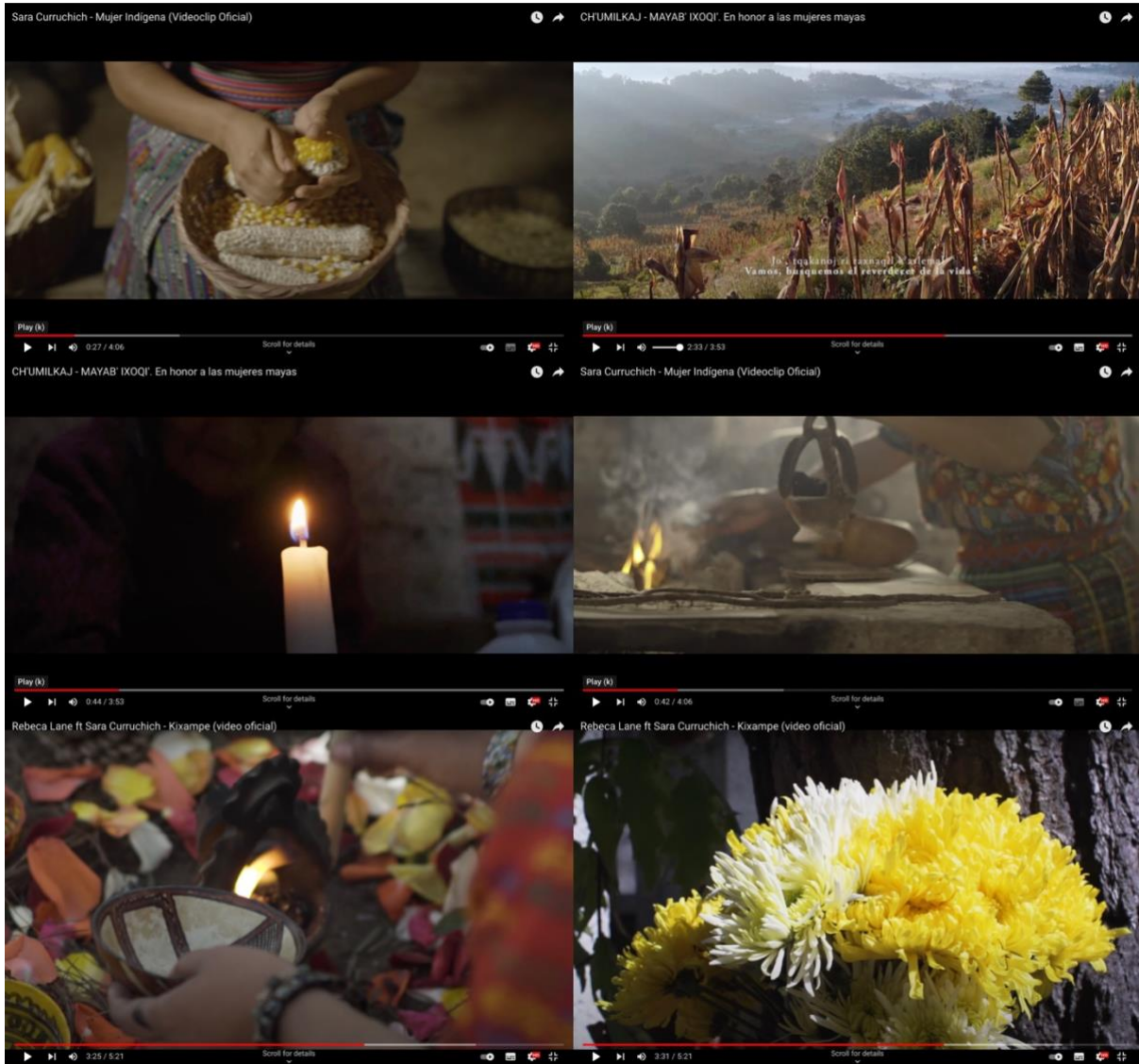


Figure 4 *En honor a las Mujeres Mayas*, Ch'umilkaj and from Sara *Mujer Indígena* and *Kizampe*. (A-B) Preparation of corn and maize field, (C-D) Fire and candles, (E-F) Ceremony preparation. YouTube platform.



## 4.2 Clothes, accessories, symbols

The five music videos of the study re-confirm the authenticity and identity of Mayan clothes used by the singers and the other women characters. The *güipil*, is one of garments used by Maya women. It is a wide and square top piece that has many colours, yarns, designs, and features from the surrounding. This beautiful and detailed masterpiece is embroidered by women from the community, who have learned this tradition from their great ancestors, is a heritage knowledge.

The second piece is a *faja*, which is also colourful and long. It functions by wrapping it around their waist to give the *güipil* a shape. The third piece is a skirt, which has fewer colors and its length is below the knee.



Figure 5 *En honor a las mujeres Mayas*, Ch'umilkaj. (A) Shows in detail the different features on the *güipil*. (B) Grandmother and child are wearing a *güipil*. (C) Ch'umilkaj wearing the *güipil*, *faja*, and skirt. YouTube platform.

These three pieces as it was mentioned above are handcrafted by women from the community. *Tejedora* (*weaver*) is a common character in all Mayan communities. The technique to produce each piece is simple. A loom, a belt, and natural items are needed. The thread is weaved by using a backstrap loom. The upper part of the loom can be tied to a higher object such as a tree or pole. The lower part has a belt that is tied around the weaver's waist (<https://www.mexicolore.co.uk/maya/teachers/what-did-the-ancient-maya-wear>).

The loom is very light and portable; thus, the weaver can take it anywhere. The loom is not a wide tool, so the whole cloth cannot be woven on it. That is the reason why pieces must be sewned to create one piece. This limitation determines that the clothes are not made to fit to the body, they freely drop on the body, however the shape is given by the belt (<https://www.mexicolore.co.uk/maya/teachers/what-did-the-ancient-maya-wear>).





Figure 6 *En honor a las mujeres Mayas*, Ch'umilkaj and *Kizampe*, Sara. (A-C) Women weaving (B)Hand weaving. YouTube.

The textile used by Maya is agave and cotton, which are mostly white. Therefore, to obtain a palette of colour they use natural resources such as plants, animals, and minerals. For example, the blue colour is from the indigo leaves, which result after it is soaked for months in water (<https://www.mexicolore.co.uk/maya/teachers/what-did-the-ancient-maya-wear>). Moreover, the textile of different colours and a white handcrafted macrame are used as background for one of the videos.



Figure 7 *Kizampe*, Sara. (A) A close-up shot of a white macrame is displayed. (B) A general shot of the different textiles in the scene. YouTube platform.

The garments use by the characters are accompanied by accessories such as sandals, earrings, necklaces, bracelets, *listones*, and others. The *sandalias* are typical flat, have a simple design, and made of leather. The earrings are overall long, colourful, and made of different materials such as beads, yarn, and others. They are handcrafted in the community. The necklace and bracelet presented are as well made of several supplies and are noticeable because of the colour.



Figure 8 *Kizampe, Sara and Somos and En honor a las mujeres Mayas, Ch'umilkaj*. (A) A leather sandalia is worn by the dancer. (B) A bead bracelet. (C) Long earring used by Ch'umilkaj. YouTube platform.

*Listones* are made of yarn, there are colourful and a bit heavy. The *listones* are used on the head or in the hair of the women, it can be used different ways. One of the common ways is that is braided into the hair and falls at the end of the hair. The second way is that is set at the ending part of the braided. The third way it is used is as a crown. This item is a Mayan traditional accessory used by ancestral great-grandmothers and remains to be used today by women.



Figure 9 *En honor a las mujeres Mayas, Ch'umilkaj and Mujer Indígena & Kizampe, Sara*. (A) A colourful liston at the end of the plait. (B) A detail of the liston braided into the hair. (C) Liston as a crown. YouTube platform.

## 4.3 Location

### 4.3.1 Outside/Nature/Landscape

The music video depicts different natural resources from Guatemala surrounding such as maize fields, highlands, volcanos, rivers, waterfall, pines trees, and cattle fields. The volcanos that appear in the background are Agua, Acatenango, and Fuego. The last one is in constant activity.

The maize fields are frequently shown in different stages such as planting, growing, and harvesting. The corn itself is a key element in the scene and has different color shades of white, yellow, and brown according to its stages.



Figure 10 *En honor a las mujeres Mayas, Ch'umilkaj* and *Mujer Indígena, Sara*. (A-D) Landscape of the nature including the volcanos Fuego, Agua, Acatenango. (B) Ch'umilkaj is walking next to the maize field with her guitar. (C) Greens. YouTube platform.

A general shot of highland, cattle field, rural areas, and community is displayed while the singers performance.



Figure 11 *Mujer Indígena, Sara*. A general camera shot of Sara singing around cattles, volcano, and nature. YouTube platform.

Water one of the natural powers, is an element present. The rivers and waterfall show crystal water running through rocks near a community and have a bridge that connects part of the community. It shows children near the river while a ceremony takes place. Many trees are framed in general and close up shots.





Figure 12 *En honor a las mujeres Mayas*, Ch'umilkaj. (A) Ch'umilkaj walking to a waterfall. (B) Rose petals in a river. (C) A grandmother and child walking in the community. YouTube platform.



Figure 13 *Kizampe*, Sara. (A) A close up shot of pine trees. (B) Trees seen from a general shot from above. YouTube platform.

The scene of Paisajes de la Memoria is an open space in nature. It is located on a hill around three kilometres before arriving the municipality of Comalapa. During the 80s it was a military camp where they massacred the Mayan individuals. Once you step in, you can observe an endless-looking list of names of the victims written on stones, pictures, graves, crosses on the wall, and more names. Also, there are paintings that describe the Maya culture, nature, and some of the ways the individuals were tortured (*In situ*, personal notes, January 26, 2022).

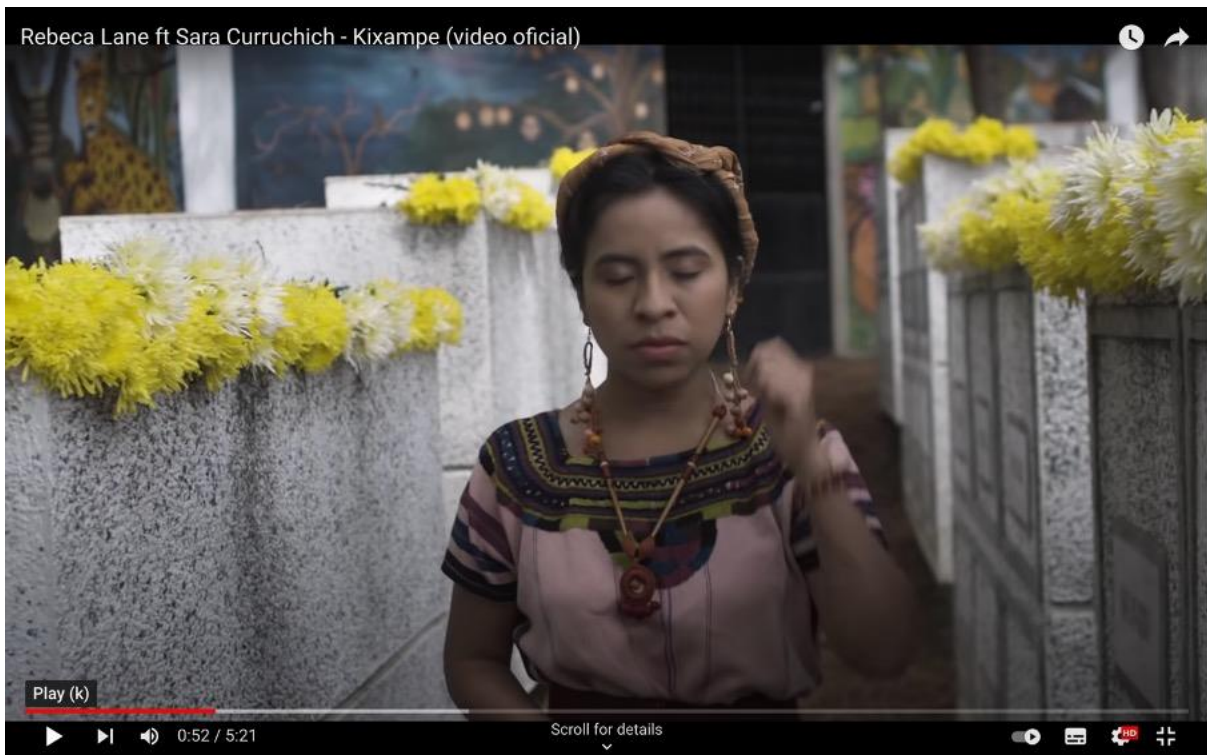


Figure 14 *Kixampe*, Sara. Sara walking between the graves. YouTube platform.



Figure 15 (A) Paisaje de la Memoria stones with an explanation and names of individuals who died. (B-C) Paintings of the wall (D) A grave. Photos: Green, S.

### 4.3.2 Inside Theatre/House

Besides, the outside spaces used as a location for the music videos, another one is the inside of a theatre and houses. One of the locations is the Municipal Theatre of Quetzaltenango. The theatre is empty from each angle that the camera shows; only Sara and her musician are seen in the theatre. At the top of the ceiling there is a large chandelier, and a lot of lights are displayed.



Figure 16 *La Siguanaba*, Sara. (A) Shows a general shot of Sara and the musician on the theatre stage. (B) The second floor of the theatre without audience. (C) A chandelier and lights are displayed. YouTube platform.



Figure 17 *En honor a las mujeres Mayas*, Ch'umilkaj and *Mujer Indígena*, Sara (A) The interior of a house is shown with a child kneeling. (B) A woman surrounded with hanging candles. YouTube platform.

#### 4.4 Women Characters

The characters in the music videos are mostly women and girls who are interacting based on the context and the topic of the songs. They are dressed in Mayan garments (described above) and are playing the actual role they have in the community. For example, as grandmother of the community, mothers, weavers, leaders, singers, painters, midwives, healers, and musicians. In most of the music videos layout, their names and professions are mentioned.





Figure 18 *En honor a las mujeres Mayas*, Ch'umilkaj. Shows the singer hugging her mother., who is a painter. YouTube platform.



Figure 19 Sara's cover album of *Mujer Indígena*. YouTube.

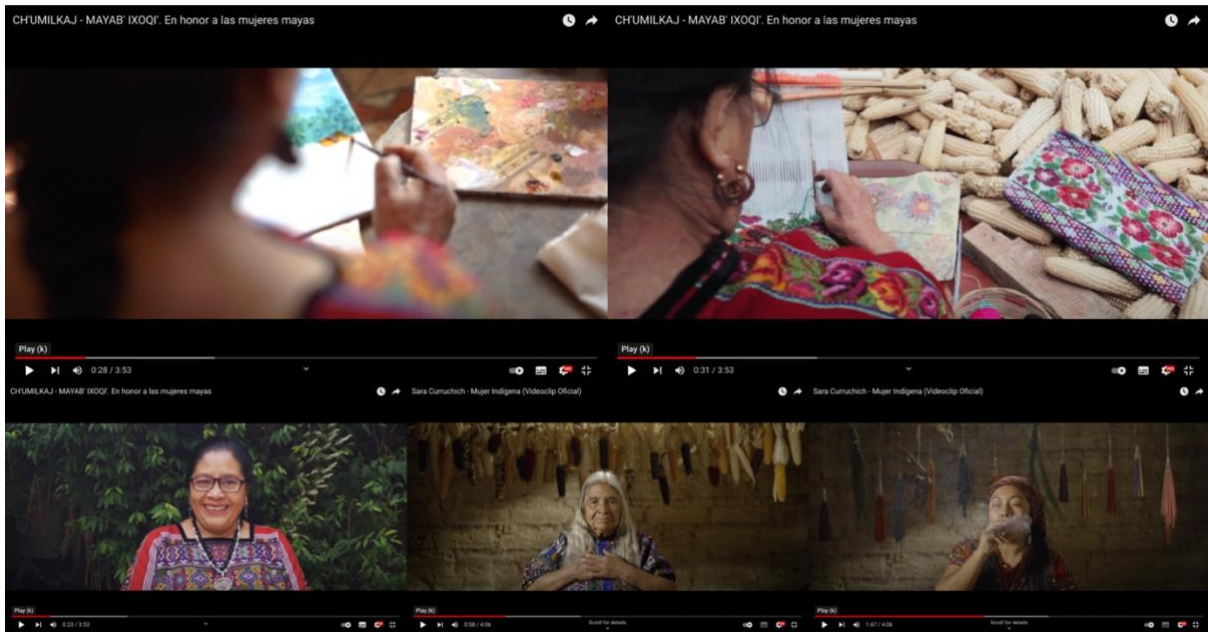


Figure 20 *Mujer Indígena & Kizampe*, Sara and *En honor a las mujeres Mayas*, Ch'umilkaj. (A) A woman painting. (B) Women weaver (C) A Mayan woman smiling. (D) A grandmother (E). A woman caller of the spirit. YouTube platform.



Figure 21 *Kizampe*, Sara. (A) Lorena Cabnal, territorial community feminism. (B) Rosalina Tuyuc, leader of CONAVIGUA. (C) Singers Rebeca Lane and Sara Curruchich. YouTube platform





Figure 22 *En honor a las mujeres Mayas, Ch'umilkaj and Mujer Indígena, Sara.* (A-B) Layout at the end of the videos showing the names and role of each woman. YouTube platform.

## 4.5 Languages

Two languages have been used in the production of the music video. Kaqchikel and Spanish. The singers code-switch while singing. One of the productions has subtitles in Spanish and Kaqchikel is used for the song lyrics while it is sung in Kaqchikel language. Other songs have lyrics in both languages in layout.

The use of both languages is emphasized in some parts of the songs. For example, in the chorus or phases that address awareness toward women and girls.



Figure 23 *En honor a las mujeres Mayas, Ch'umilkaj and Mujer Indígena, Sara.* (A) Display subtitles of the Kaqchikel language and Spanish. (B) Shows the lyrics of the song in the layout. YouTube platform.

## 4.6 Music and instruments

The tone of the music videos is harmonical and has a slow rhythm that is easy to grip to. However, at some point of the production, they have a raise of intonation which interacts with the different camera shots such as long, general, panorama, and close up, and the sound of the instruments.

In *Kizampe*, rap is also one of the genres used in one of the videos and has a lot of body movement by singers and dancers.



Figure 24 *Kizampe*, Sara. A woman dancer. YouTube platform.

A variety of instruments is demonstrated throughout the productions. Those are played by the singers or musicians who accompany them. Among the instruments, we have drum, guitar, violin, marimba, clarinet, ocarinas, flute, and other.

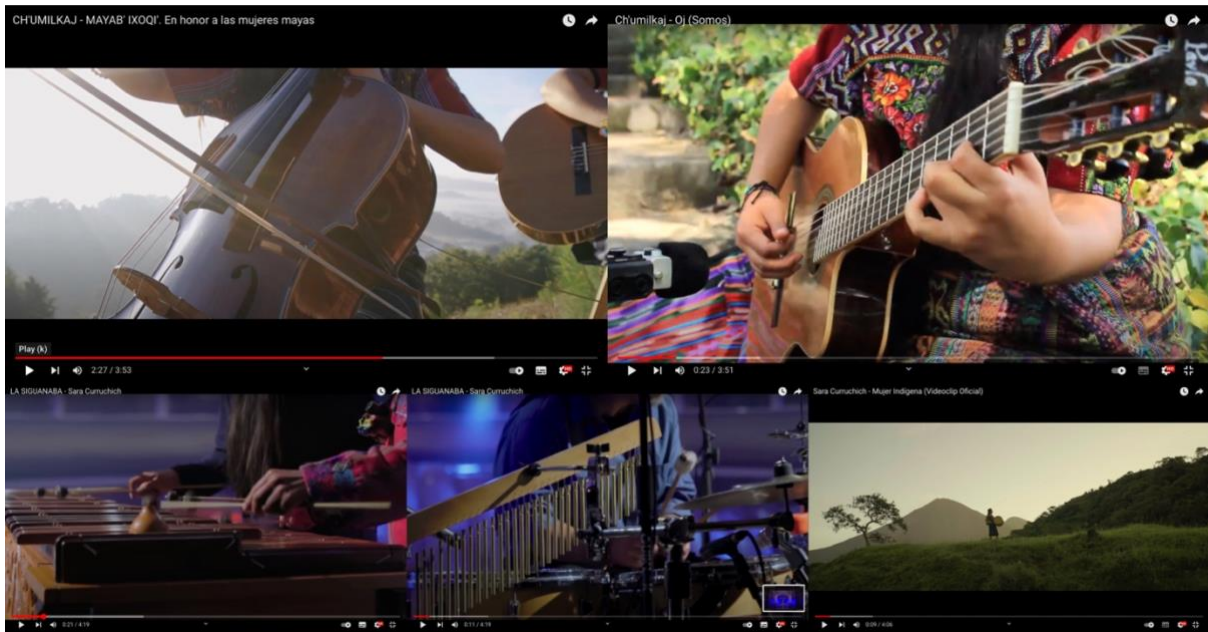


Figure 25 *En honor a las mujeres Mayas* and *Somos*, Ch'umilkaj and *Mujer Indígena* and *La Siguanaba*, Sara. (A) A Bass (B) Guitar (C) Marimba (D) Chimes (E) Drum. YouTube platform.

The guitar used by Sara in *La Siguanaba* has drawing of birds and a triangular item made of yarn hanging at the end of the guitar and has flowers as well are used for dressing the microphone in one of the music video productions.



Figure 26 *La Siguanaba*, Sara. Flowers and an item on the guitar are part of the scene. YouTube platform.

## 5 DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

This study was conducted to show what dimensions of the territorial community feminism are adapted in the music videos of Kaqchikel singers Sara Curruchich and Chu'milkaj Curruchiche Nicho. This was done by discussing and analyzing different semiotics modes from the music videos intertwined with the information given by the interviewees and the theoretical part of the literature review. To discuss the findings, each research question will be argued by combining social semiotics and multimodality drawing on each mode and interrelated with a context and between them.

RQ1: How is the the Maya ancestral epistemology from the territorial community feminism concept applied or reflected in the music videos of Sara Curruchich and Ch'umilkaj Curruchiche Nicho?

- **Women and location/nature**

Both data used for the study revealed that the territorial community feminism concept is present in the analysed music videos drawn on the Maya ancestral epistemology, which can be shown from different dimensions like nature, culture (s), traditional practices, location, individuals-women, and languages. These dimensions are part of Mayan ancestral epistemology, which is a vast historical practiced by one of the great civilizations in America, the Mayan.

The Mayan ancestral epistemology had been transmitted from generation to generation. Today the practice of their ancestors remains in practice such as their sacred ritual, artistic talent, weaving, music, instruments, oral tradition on so on (Pueblo Maya/PNUD, 2006). Therefore, it can be admitted immediately that an interviewer did not align that the concept of territorial community feminism is part of the decolonial theory, because it existed before the colonial period (Cabnal, personal communication, January 27, 2022).

One of the predominant topics that emerges from the territorial community feminism is the role of the woman in the community. Mayan women are rooted in the communities and she re-interpreted historical and today realities in the community. Each element that surrounds the communities is embodied in a woman that has many stages of life such as “grandmother, mother, daughter, and granddaughter” (Pueblo Maya/PNUD, 2006). She is the one who disseminates, is the guardians, integrates and balances the ancestral epistemology in today’s life (Cabnal, 2010).

In the five music videos analyzed, women characters are present. They are common women who are healers, grandmothers, aunts, mothers, nieces, and friends from the community. These women are not actresses or pretending to do something written on a script. On the contrary, they are individuals who have the knowledge and power to make changes in society. These moving imagines of the women in the music videos symbolize power, knowledge, evolution, healing, and protection in a society that continues changing.

Both singers emphasize the role of women in their production because they are protecting their natural resources by fighting the invasion of transnational companies interesting in exploring and exploiting their natural resources for mining, water dam, and plantation. This woman body-character is related to the location of the videos that depict nature as one of the key elements to reinforce the fact that this is part of their life, their well-being, and livelihood. Thus, by violating their land-territory also harms them as a women and the whole community. The slogan *mi cuerpo, mi territorio, mi tierra, mi territorio* [my body, my territory, my land my territory] was originated from this context (Cabnal, 2010; Verriti, 2017). The modes of women characters and location confirmed the relation of two triangle: unity-power-equality the women have over body-land-territory.

Moreover, the territorial community feminism approaches that is necessary not only to defend the territory because its resource is needed, but also to assume the responsibility, celebrate, and give thanks to the body-territory and land-territory that have been recovered. The music/dance, ceremony, and healing are interrelated, to a big picture of celebration, gratitude, and freedom which was discriminated from the Mayans over the years of internal conflict.

- **Women and languages**

The cover of Sara’s album *Mujer Indígena* (Fig.19) depicts a picture of her nude (top) cover with white arum-lilies that symbolizes purity and life and is it is also used in ritual ceremonies. This endorses that a woman has power over her body. Sara commented that it was not easy for her, because she felt afraid of the body sexualization prejudice, however, she had the support of her mother and the grandmothers of the community who were present (Curruchich, S. personal communication, January 25, 2022). While the music video plays the cover photo



becomes a moving image. A-frame shows Sara with her fist high, which portrays protest and resistance of Mayan women fight, but it also shows her feminine side.

Furthermore, women have faced oppression under the patriarchal system, which has been in the Maya culture(s) before the colonial period. However, once it was merged with the colonial patriarchy it evolves to be stronger (Cabnal 2010; personal communication, January 27, 2022; Monzón, personal communication, January 25, 2022).

Mayan women had been objectified, discriminated, and brutalized in the colonial period, during the internal conflict of the 80s, and today. However, they are aware that this violence that prevails today can be tackled in different ways. Ch'umilkaj and Sara used their voices, performances, and lyrics to tackle this violence against women. The women character mode is interrelated with the language mode of the song *En honor a las mujeres Mayas* from Ch'umilkaj, which lyrics expresses: "Fuerza de mujeres (...) tejen su historia junto a un pueblo que lucha para revivir, para resistir"[women strength (...) weave their history together with a community that fights to survive, to resist] ( YouTube, 2020, December 28 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2KEV2ys4sis>). The relation of both mode re-force resistance, fight, and being active agent of their history.

In *La Siguanaba* by Sara, is based on a legend of a women who is abuse by her husband. A sentence says: "el creía que las mujeres se deben dominar, (...) pero ella huyó porque sabía que su cuerpo solo a ella pertenecía [he thought women should be dominated (...), but she fled because she knew that her body belongs to her] (YouTube, 2020, October,16, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TtcuGxmWczU>).

Both songs portray feminism actions of sonority, fighting, and breaking the cycle of violence. *La Siguanaba* portrays any woman who is convinced that she is the owner of her body, and her life belongs to her. The text of the songs, the lyrics in the layout, plus the moving images of the women is read as hole, 'we continue our fight'.

Like in a previous study conducted by Helland (2018), she analyzes the production of Hip Hop singer Mona AKA's Sad Girl. In the video *Laugh now cry later* she dresses like Frida Kahlo who is an icon of Latinidad and feminism. A similar approach is done in the video *En honor a las mujeres Mayas* by Ch'umilkaj and *Kizampe* by Sara. Both singers include talented women who are making changes in Guatemala's history. Ch'umilkaj includes painter Paula Nicho and designer Victoria Cúmez (Fig.20). Paula is one of the artists who painted the walls in Paisaje de la Memoria from *Kizampe* video (Fig. 15). On the other hand, Victoria is a designer who merges ancestral knowledge with new ones to create figures to be weaved. She designed the *güipil* that Ch'umilkaj wears in the music video, which sketch can be seen as well in the video (Curruchiche Nicho, Ch'., personal communication, January 26, 2022).

In the case of Sara three Guatemalan feminists are part of the video Lorena Cabnal, Rosalina Tuyuc, and Rebeca Lane. The women evolve in the video by highlighting their role as feminism; Lorena is a healer and icon of the territorial community feminism concept. Rebeca is a well-known singer, who fights for women rights throughout her lyrics of her music. Rosalina is the coordinator of CONAVIGUA and one of the advocates of Mayan rights like Rigoberta Menchú, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992. The images of these women, as a moving image intertwine with the location mode are read as a political stance, leadership, and power of the Mayan women.

- **Location and languages**

The location of the video *Kizampe* is “Paisajes de la Memoria: Memoria de las víctimas de desaparición forzada” [Landscape of memories: Memory of the victims of forced disappearance], is one of the many graves that exists in Guatemala, product of the internal conflict. This space highlights the importance of historical-social justice that Mayan communities are still fighting today, since many of the crimes committed by the government remains unpunished. Paisaje de la Memoria is one of those many places that represents the resilience of the Maya community. The lyrics/language reinforce the message by expressing: “Renaceremos desde la ceniza somos el fuego que quema la historia crecemos alto como la milpa” [we will be reborn from ashes, we are the fire that burns the history, we will grow as high as the maize field] (YouTube platform, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uo6joQ8IsF0>). The tone of the music, the gesture of the singers and dancer, and the camera shots move in coordination with the emphasis of the lyrics. All stresses that women are ready to overcome the past to continue in the present.

This historical place is directed by CONAVIGUA an association composed of widows. Their aim is to make this place visible in memory of all the loving ones and give them a peaceful rest since for the Mayans dead is the last cycle and ritual action (Mata, 1969). The open space in nature describes what occurred during the 80s.

The moving images and lyrics of the songs are strong messages of feminism, resistance, solidarity, and reborn of women in Guatemala, who were targeted of the war, massacre, femicide, patriarchal system, and others. Another component of the music videos is that it does not only depicts the history of Guatemala but also represent today context where women rights are violated by the government.

In addition, *Kizampe* shows solidarity with women from other Latin American countries like Chile, Venezuela, and Nicaragua; where human rights had being violated by the government, such as murdered, raped, and incarcerated, (YouTube platform; Reports from the Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos 2018, 2019). Thus, it reinforces a key practice of territorial community feminism which is unity in the community.



The concept of interactive meaning refers to the “relationship between the represented participants and the viewers”, (Tehseem, Sibtain, & Obaid, 2018 p.160). One of its dimensions is the horizontal and vertical angle of the camera. If a moving image has a vertical angle, it can be read as a power relation of big or small. On the other hand, the horizontal frame indicates inclusion and involvement. This tool has been using in studies for advertisement, such as the one done about gender stereotyping in media by the authors mentioned above.

The five music videos of this study use the horizontal angle to portray women characters, which are not superior or inferior to another. They are women from the community who have the same level regardless of their profession, age, knowledge, and relation with the singers. This action is portrayed not only by the position of the camera but also by the actions they are doing e.g. healing, posing, and wearing of clothes. All put together symbolize equality and unity.

As it was mentioned before both singers are from San Juan Comalapa, which is known for being an artistic place. Therefore, many of the items, individuals, and locations are linked or the same. For example, the landscape of volcanos and maize fields. The painter in a video of Ch’umilkaj, Paula Nicho is one of the artists of the wall painting in Paisaje de la Memoria, where Sara’s video *Kizampe* was filmed. The location and language used in these videos depict their proudness of Mayan identity. They sing in Kaqchikel to reinforce their identity, heal their wound, and celebrate their life and of the loved ones they lost.

- **Traditional practices, women, location, fire, corn, candles**

The ancestral knowledge of traditional practices, and rituals applied by women embraces how things are done in the community, they are the one who plant the corn, used to it prepare food and for ceremonies, thus the practices are link to many elements such as location (maize field), language, symbols and natural power (water, fire).

The video *Kizampe* illustrates this process first by the simple fact that Lorena Cabnal is present and doing a healing process with a woman. Healing is aligned with the historical-social and current context in Guatemala, which is a timeline to continue the fight that prevailed for the Maya community. The images of women, the healing practice and the place are interpreted as resilience for the women and the Maya community.

Grandmothers like the one in the *En honor a las mujeres Mayas* from Ch’umilkaj, portray guiding and preparing the way for a new life on Mother Earth (Pueblo Maya/PNUD, 2006). These ritual practices are related to the stages of the moon and women’s cycle of life. It is believed that everything has its time, thus, is not good to rush or go ahead, which is part of the concept of territorial community feminism

embraces “is slow rhythm” which is weaving the history, the present, and the future (Cabnal, personal communication, January 27, 2022).

My second research question is related to the use of languages in the music videos. RQ2: To what extent does the language (s) in the music videos serve as a key element for the dissemination of message to Mayan women and girls in the Mayan Kaqchikel communities?

- **Languages**

For this study the languages analyzed are Kaqchikel and Spanish. The Kaqchikel is one of the 22 Mayan languages spoken in Guatemala and is the third largest population with 17% according to linguistic map of the Ministry of Education of Guatemala (<https://www.mineduc.gob.gt/digebi/mapaLinguistico.html>).

Guatemala is a multilingual county; however languages discrimination prevailed in society. The ‘superior group’ tends to assume that Mayan languages are inferior and insignificant to use in society interaction by claiming that they are dialects and not languages. Another, statement is that the Mayans are not descendants from the pre-Columbian ancestors. It is a myth because the civilization does not exist anymore. “Es muy complicado decir en este tiempo que soy Maya, prefieren que digan que soy indígena (...) Mayas ya no están, se murieron” [“It is complicated to state today that I am Mayan, they prefer that I say I am indigenous (...) Mayans are not here, they died”, my translation (Barrett, 2016; Curruchiche Nicho, Ch’, personal communication, January 26, 2022).

Therefore, singing in Kaqchikel is pivotal for the construction of a Mayan identity and the dissemination of awareness of violence towards women. According to the participants ‘accounts, the use of Kaqchikel language in their music production reconfirms their identity, contributes to the revitalization work, and helps ‘decolonize’ the idea that Mayan languages would be inferior to Spanish. According to Sara , “Cantar en Kaqchikel es una forma de conectarme con mis abuelos (...) tiene una estructura lingüística, tiene toda su gramática (...) pues aquí está y no tiene un valor menor [“Singing in Kaqchikel is a way to connect with my grandparents (...) it has a linguistic structure, grammar. Here it is and it does not have a lesser value”, my translation] (Curruchich, S., personal communication, January 25, 2022). This position illustrate her stance that Kaqchikel is a language and not a dialect.

This re-narration of identity is not only from both singer’s experiences, but also from their parents and grandparents who lived the civil war in the 80s, when Mayan identity was strongly targeted by the government. This is part of their history, thus, they feel responsibility to dig into the language revitalization which is a task being done by other artists, organizations, and movements. For example, for the Mayan Movement, the language revitalization is a keystone. They are working toward

preserving much of the ancestral knowledge of the Mayans including the languages (Barrett, 2016).

Performing in Kaqchikel plus having the lyrics in the layout is a political stance to reconfirm to the government and other entities that Mayan languages are used by 41.7% of the country's population (ECLAC, 2020). For decades they have tried to diminish the languages. Consequently, today, many grandparents, parents, and individuals from the communities are establishing it as the primary language. The singers play an important role by performing, subtitling, and writing the lyrics in the layout of their production.

Moreover, the lyrics of the music are written in both languages. The lyrics of the songs are mix. The phrases written in the native language are not translated to Spanish or vice versa. This way, the message of music reaches the communities that speak Kaqchikel and beyond. The combination of language and music emphasizes local identity, which eventually transcends to be global with the mobility of individual and technology.

The tactic of blending two languages in a conversation is called code-switching (Auer & Wei, 2007). Sara and Ch'umilkaj applied this linguistic style to their performance, which gives the production a local and global style, but also it reinforces the use of Kaqchikel language. This technique had been applied by Mona AKA Sad Girl, who shifted her lyrics between Spanish, Japanese, and English (Helland, 2017).

Ch'umilkaj videos use subtitles, which allows to have a wider audience such as Kaqchikel, Spanish speakers, and individuals with hearing illness. Her songs have gone beyond Guatemala by using the package of languages asset. Language is part of globalization; thus, it was not a surprise for Monzón, while she was on a trip in Argentina, to hear a friend mentioned about Ch'umilkaj's music (Monzón, personal communication, January 25, 2022).

The Kaqchikel population that lives abroad help the spreading and hearing of the music videos. In more than one occasion Ch'umilkaj had been invited to perform and talk at universities in New York City. This invitation was arranged by the Kaqchikel community who expressed that her music makes them feel close to home, because her music describes the community such as the maize fields, weaving, river, etc. (Curruchiche Nicho, Ch'., personal communication, January 26, 2022).

- **Language revitalization and location**

In addition to singing in Kaqchikel language for the revitalization process, both singers also participate in other projects. Ch'umilkaj is a cultural promoter in the municipality of San Juan Comalapa where she teaches the language, gives workshops, and re-evaluates the cultural work done by other women. Sara recently published on her Twitter account that she was proud to be part of the group which worked on the Kaqchikel keyboard design (Curruchiche Nicho, Ch'., personal communication,

January 26, 2022; Curruchich, S., [@SaraCurrichich]. 2022, January 19 *Yalan niim ruq'ij re jun samaj re'*

[https://twitter.com/saracurruchich/status/1483583826643275779?s=11&t=sNX8QX6nRJokh9i\\_-OsKIA](https://twitter.com/saracurruchich/status/1483583826643275779?s=11&t=sNX8QX6nRJokh9i_-OsKIA)). This action of language revitalization is also done by another artist group like B'alam Ajpu. They are a Hip Hop group that mixes Spanish and three Mayan languages Tz'utujil, Kaqchikel, and K'iche' in San Pedro la Laguna, Lake Atitlán, Guatemala (Barrett, 2016).

The lyrics of Sara's and Ch'umilkaj's songs emphasize Maya ancestral epistemology influence and the revitalization of the language. Both singers do not use the language in a playful way by mixing the two languages in one line or paragraph. On the contrary, they apply it separately by paragraph. In the following examples of lyrics excerpt we can see the link of language with location and practices. The lyrics are related to natural power, ancestors, and nature, all related to Maya identity.

1) *Röj Öj (Somos/We) Ch'umilkaj (2019)*

Röj Q'aq'	Somos fuego	We are fire
Röj Ulew,	Somos tierra	We are earth
Röj Ya'.	Somos agua	We are water
Röj Kaq'eq'.	Somos viento.	We are wind.

2) *Mujer Indígena (Indigenous Women) Sara (2021)*

Ri wati	Mis abuelas	My grandmothers
Juyu'	Montaña	Mountain
Q'aq'	Fuego	Fire
Kem	Tejido	Weave

3) *Mujer Indígena Sara, (2021)*

Ruma' ri manjun xtin xib'ijta wi', manjun xkisilanta  
Por eso no tengo miedo, no voy a callar.  
That is why I am not afraid, I am not going to shut up.

4) *Siguanaba, Sara (2020)*

La llaman bruja  
Porque lucha contra las violencias del sistema patriarcal  
They call her witch  
Because she fights against the patriarchal system violence

The mode of language as a linguistic element stresses its importance in the music videos; however, it cannot be separated from the context where it occurs, and which gives it a richer meaning. The extract 4, which lyrics refer to awareness of women against violence and manner of tackling it, is sung in a Municipal Theatre of Quetzaltenango, magnificent place to portray empowerment and stance for the right

that indigenous women have to perform in these types of location which are usually just offered to the mainstream individuals.

The use of two languages perhaps is good for the marketing but considering the history of Guatemala and interrelated with modes depicts a stance of freedom to use the Mayan languages today, nor only for those in the country but also for those abroad. The battle to embody their identity is a task that continues.

My third and last research question, as well includes more of Mayan culture (s).

RQ3: How are Maya costumes and cultural practices utilized in the videos is constructing feminine identity and awareness to violence against women?

Maya culture (s) involves many components that were originated back as 3000 to 1000 B.C. This epistemological background includes architectural works, agricultural, artistic, and astronomical knowledge, based on the movement of the sun and moon (Mata, 1969; Reyes, 2017).

Even though the Maya civilization is considered one of the greatest in America, today, the Mayans are being disconnected from their pre-Columbian roots (Barrett, 2016). The image of Maya is frozen in the mind of many individuals by considering them as ignorant and backward. Thus, a lot of cultural revitalization work is taking place in Guatemala by organizations, artists, individuals, and so on (Barrett, 2016; Macleod, 2004).

For this study, both singers reinforce their Maya identity by showing in their performances' significant places, clothes, musical instruments, languages, and traditional practices with are all related.

- **Location, women, clothes**

The music videos are recorded in a maize field, cattle fields, natural landscape of volcanos in the background, memorial places, houses, and a theatre. The Mayans, live in the highlands call Cordillera that has active and dormant volcanos. Music is a natural way of communication and social interaction action; therefore, the contextualization is a key element to understand it meaning (Voutsinas, 2016). Moreover, these places are part of Mayan women environment who are producer of food, healer in nature, and weaver of the textiles for the clothes they used.

In the video *La Siguanabana* by Sara, wich lyrics raise awareness against women violence is performed with her band in the Municipal Theatre of Quetzaltenango, which is complete empty. One of the reasons why it is empty is, because it was filmed during the Covid pandemic, which is demonstrated by the musicians using the mask. However, Sara mentioned is also a stance that in 'well known' place, like the theatre, Mayans also have the right to use these spaces as protagonist and not folklorize (Curruchich, S., personal communication, January 25, 2022). Along with the language, location, they traditional clothes also interaction to disseminate the message of identity and awareness of violence against women.

- **Clothes, accessories, symbols, and women**

The Mayan women wear colourful and beautiful garments which are handmade, woven or embroidered called *güipil*, *faja*, and *a skirt*. The weaving is based on an ancestral “mathematical vigesimal system” (Macleod, 2004, p. 682), which is reproduce today in the communities by women. Each figure like animal, geometrical form, flora, and fauna uses this technique. Each Maya community has a unique *güipil* and wearing it expresses their identity. Sara mentioned that she weaves her *güipil* inspired from her surroundings.

Wearing a *güipil* symbolizes that I am a Maya woman, proud to wear it, and it is made by hand. However, for some individuals in Guatemala society, a *güipil* is stereotype to a domestic service person (Macleod, 2004). Once at a performance, Sara recall that she was ready to go on stage with her *güipil* when a woman asked her, “are you going to change?” (Curruchich, S., personal communication, January 25, 2022). This last assumption makes it clear how their *güipil* is viewed inferior by an ‘individual’ considered superior’. Thus, Mayan women need to continue using their vivid clothes which is one of their identity assets.

Besides the garments used by women; accessories are also part of the clothing. They are also colourful and handmade. *Listones*, which is used in their hair, has its origin from the deities *Q’ugumati*, grandmother of the moon. In many drawings a women image can be seen with a *liston* which changes into a snake. The snake “simboliza (...) el movimiento del tiempo y los ciclos cambiantes” [ simbolizes the movement of time and the changing cycles”, my translation] (Curruchiche Nicho, Ch’., personal communication, January 26, 2022). The *listones* also represent beauty.

In the music videos the women who are knitting signifies re-doing. They are healing the past and building a future. It is a bridge not only of knowledge but also cycles of time and unification (Veritti, 2017). Mayan women are re-narrating and re-storytelling their history by weaving each colour of yard, they “re/narrativize” to demand their rights in public and domestic scenes. This act is not only done by Guatemalan Mayan women but also by other indigenous women in Latin America (Choque & Delgado, 2007).

It is important to highlight that during the 80s many women fled to Mexico and had to disguise so they would be capture by the government (Macleod, 2004). This garment is powerful not only in colours, design, and textiles, but most of all in its stance for resilience and resistance of Maya identity by women.

Women are the one who weave the *güipil* and used it. This clothes in a Guatemala context have a powerful meaning of identity, but as well out of the country. It also represents the mathematical ancestral knowledge and Mayan identity.

- **Music instruments and location**

Furthermore, musical instruments are essential components in the music videos to embody identity. Mayan traditional instruments are showed in the music videos. According, to Voutsinas, the Mayan instruments can be divided into two categories “aerophones and membranophones” (2016, p.97), which refers to the sounds that it produce, it can be melodic, timbral, and rhythmic. Among these instruments we can mentioned, conch shell, trumpet, and clay whistle.

Both singers play the guitar and mention that they feel confident to perform with it. But also, other prehistorical instruments such as drum, ocarinas, piano, and marimba, were learned to play at the music school and are used to composed music. While interviewing they referred to their guitar as being a friend. This instrument has a textile bag, symbols, or drawing on it to express more of their community. For example, in *La Siguanaba* Sara’s guitar has an item from the Wajuu community of Colombia, which represents ‘strength and integrity. It also has drawings of birds, which are the guardian of her hometown (Curruchi, S., personal communication, January 25, 2022; Curruchiche Nicho, Ch’., personal communication, January 26, 2022). This Wajuu item is not Guatemalan, however connected to the location (Municipal Theatre of Quetzaltenango) it is a symbol that portrays a strong message of indigenous communities unity.

Since the Classic period three types of drum are used of drum: “turtle shell drum, huehuetl, and pax”. In the music video *Mujer Indigena* [Indigenous Women], by Sara she plays a huehuetl drum at the beginning of the music clip. This drum body is wood, and it is cover with animal skin, which gives it a richer sound once it is beaten with the hooves and antlers (Voutsinas, 2016, p.99). The sound that it produces and the landscape of the volcanos imply the vast land-territory Mayan women possess and its used for economic benefit, healing, and gratitude.

Marimba which is one of the instruments in the video *La Siguanaba* (Figure 25 C) is a renown Mayan instruments that can be heard in many places such as parks, communities, in ceremonies, restaurants, and hotels. This iconic instrument has a debated conversation about its origin. Some scholars claims that it was originated in Africa and was brought with the transatlantic slave trade. On the other hand, other are persuasive that it originated from the contact with Spanish conquers (Clark, 2017).

Through other Latin American like Mexico and Nicaragua the marimba is also an instrument that is part of indigenous communities. In Nicaragua, is very popular in Masaya and other municipalities with indigenous background. The world marimba has it root in the Ki-Mbundu language (*kimbundo*), which is from the *bantú* family spoke in Angola. The *ma* syllable connotes an instrumental music and in many countries of Africa is play today (Ramírez,2007 ).

In Guatemala two types of marimba are used: *sencilla* [simple] has one row of key and the *doble* has two rows of keys[double]. In Guatemala the *sencilla* es very

popular and can see mostly in the communities, festivals, rituals and other. On the hand, the double is mostly used for a formal concert level. It was originated in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala in 1890 (Clark, 2017). In the music video *La Siguanaba* a double one is play at the Musical Theatre of Quetzaltenango; thus, it reinforces that is part of this municipality identity as well it is used in a notorious place as the theatre. Both modes interacting expresses a strong stance of Mayan identity value and capacity.

- **Traditional practices, candles, fire, location**

The artists in this study align from many angles to embody Maya identity. One is the practice of ceremonies and rituals in the communities by healers. Ceremonial fire emerges to give thanks, healing, cleaning and so on. An element that is present in the ceremony is corn, which is an icon of the Maya's diet, ritual, and livelihood, which is a key ingredient for the tortillas and tamales. Corn intertwines with the four natural powers, and it is the cornerstone of Maya ancestral epistemology. Thus, it is a practice that the territorial community feminism has present in their concept (Voutsinas, 2016).

In *Kizampe* the singing and dancing are actions of healing. Body movement and the rhythmic of the music are embodied as one. In the Mayan culture (s) the dance is it resulting of ceramics depictions of ritual, which can be Tikal, Holmul, and Ik' (Looper, 2009 as cited in Clark, 2017, p. 100). On the ceramic poetry the dances are doing acrobatic move with one foot in the air and the other one on the ground, which represents a tempo of fast music. The dancer (Figure 24) is doing these same movement and with a *güipil* lose on her body to help her move fluently. The movement of her body, the *güipil*, and the location portrays the freedom of Maya women body, the release of finding the bodies of the loves one, and the process of healing.

The dance is for the dead and force-disappearance individuals of the war. After the war, many bodies were exhumated from clandestine graves, finding them have been a process done by the community to give their loved ones an honorable burial and performance of a ceremony, which is one of the most common Maya traditions. The whole video is a celebration and freedom of Mayan women and their body (Curruchi, S., personal communication, January 25, 2022; Inter-American Court of Human Rights Case of the Plan de Sánchez Massacre v. Guatemala/Reparations, 2014).



## 6 CONCLUSION

This study was conducted to demonstrate a holistic approach of territorial feminism community concept in the music videos of Mayan singers Ch'umilkaj Curruchiche Nicho and Sara Curruchich both from San Juan Comalapa, Chimaltenango, Guatemala. The two-dataset used revealed that their production has many dimensions of the territorial community feminism. In the music videos this influence is viewed from six categories which are drawn on the livelihood of women from the community, who are the guardians and fighters of the Maya identity and awareness of violence against women. Both topics are displayed by the used of their clothes, ceremonials practices, languages, places, and musical instruments.

The territorial community feminism concept embodies Maya identity and awareness of violence against Maya women. Patriarchal systems have been present in the Maya civilization before colonialization period. However, it got stronger by blending into a new partner. I would also like to stress that the territorial community feminism is much more oral and of application than written, thus there are limitation of sources when a study is uses this concept.

I consider that Mayan women have a long path of deep violence. I argued that their suffering was not only during the colonialization period, because it continued during the 36 years of war, and it remains today. Thus, they are living in long violence that had being silence. However, they are young women artists who are weaving the history of their parents and theirs into a new pattern.

Sara and Ch'umilkaj are doing it by performing in their Kaqchikel language, using their *güipil*, *listones*, earring, bracelets, etc, evoking ceremonies and filming at locations that have strong meaning for the community. Being from the same community gives their music videos similarities and differences. Nevertheless, the message is the same: Reinforce the Maya identity, awareness of violence against women, and embody the territorial community feminism concept.

Their music evokes proudness, identity, feminism, local and global style, fight of rights, awareness of violence. But more so, it evokes building together a bridge that can change the current situation in Guatemala.

I consider that one of the main limitations of the study is not applying an indigenous methodology to analyze my data. Even though the concept of the study is not considered to be part of the indigenous feminism, perhaps it would have been a very good input to apply one.

A second pitfall is that one of Ch'umilkaj's songs chosen for the study did not have a video clip, just a filming of her singing. Thus, there was not many elements to analyze from this video. However, the lyrics and images are a strong stance of Maya identity.

The research process, which includes several stages, was not similar during the entire process. I felt that after writing my literature review, a big part of the work was done. Ironically, it is the part I like the less, because you need to read a lot, and at times you end up writing just a paragraph. However, the collection of data was a stage that I experienced with more pleasure because I had the opportunity to see and experience part of the findings. In addition, it allowed me to encounter individuals and learn new things which I like.

Moreover, being passionate about the study can have advantages and disadvantages. I sense that it helps me to understand the topic better and to be motivated during the process. However, sometimes it was hard to separate my knowledge as an individual and woman from that of being a researcher. Another example is separating my emotions from my study. This happened when I visited Paisaje de Memoria, which is one of the many mass graves in Guatemala.

I found it challenging when I had to discuss the findings applying the methodology, since in academia it is still a discussion about the use of 'research methodologies', when conducting an indigenous study. Drawing on the stories of researchers who became indigenous because they felt discriminated as indigenous women or not supported from academia, are just some examples that I can connect to my topic. However, it shows, that in order to break this stigma, it is necessary to have collaboration between researchers, acceptance of decolonized methodologies, and that language plays an important element for the research process (Sylvester, O. et al., 2020).

"The Maya have long been denied a voice in academic representations of their culture and history, and Maya scholars are resentful of the manner in which their culture and history have been appropriated by the non-Maya academy" (Fischer & McKenna, 1996, p.2). This feeling I encountered with one of my interviewees at the begging, however after explaining to her my background and motivation about the

topic, she was more open to collaborate with the research. At the end, it was a good interview and I got a lot of cooperation from her.

For future studies I would suggest continuing researching about Mayan women artist in terms of how their songs and performance are gripped in the European context, how are their audience at the performances, and who invites them, and for what reasons. To follow it with this topic I would also suggest studying how do the songs and performance re-enforce the audience identity of the Kaqchikel community living abroad.

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## **APPENDIX**

See the table below.

**Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Videos**

#	Date	# of Viewers	Title of the video	Platform	Singer's name	Abstract
1	15.10.2021	335,229	Mujer Indígena/ Indigenous Woman <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwUnFHA3XKQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwUnFHA3XKQ</a>	YouTube	Sara Curruchich	This video describes the knowledge that indigenous women learned from their ancestors, speciality from women who are grandmother, mother, etc.
2	19.3.2021	313,917	Kixampe <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uo6joQ8IsFO">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uo6joQ8IsFO</a>	YouTube	Sara Curuchich ft Rebeca Lane	It describes how to be re-born from the past violence of the country, by learning from the ancestors' knowledge. This is the generation to make changes.
3	1 year ago	196,408	La Siguanaba <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TtcuGxmWczU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TtcuGxmWczU</a>	YouTube	Sara Curruchich	It describes the story of a woman who defent herself from her abusive partner by leaving him.
4	9 months ago	8,504	En honor a las mujeres Mayas / In honour of the Mayan Women <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2KEV2ys4sis">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2KEV2ys4sis</a>	YouTube	Ch'umilkaj	The video describes the importance of ancestral knowledge that women apply in their community.
5	2 years ago	16,445	Somos/We <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kve4RXBdR5w">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kve4RXBdR5w</a>	YouTube	Ch'umilkaj	Proud of Mayan identity.

\* The number of viewers are as of May 6 2022.

Signifier/Signified	Clothes/Accessories
<p>The singer is the signifier performing in the video. The signified (s) are the indigenous women who identified with the message. Also it (they) can be the different viewers to whom she is transmitting the message.</p>	<p>The clothing are traditional güipil, which have a lot of colours and details embroidered by women from the community.</p>
<p>Both singers, dancers, and characters in the music video are the signifiers. The signifieds are the government and society.</p>	<p>The clothing are traditional with a lot of colours and details embroidered by women from the community. Rebeca Lane, the guest singer, has a simple dress with a big red necklace as centre piece. The dancer has a long white textile braided in to her plait and uses a typical leather sandal. Long earrings are part of the accessories.</p>
<p>Singer and musician are the signifiers. The society, specially women are the signified.</p>	<p>She wears a güipil which has a lot of details. She wears earring and a long red ribbon in her hair.</p>
<p>The singer and the musician are the signifier. On the other hand, the Mayan women and ancestors are the signified.</p>	<p>The Mayan clothing is used by the singer and the different characters of the video, which are colourful and have many details. One of the accessories used by the singer is a colourful yarn tied at the end of her braid. She also used earrings and a necklace. Elements like corn, yarns used for the embroidered process, candle, fire, rose petals, and egg are present. These are used for the preparation of a spiritual healing or cleaning ceremony.</p>
<p>Singer is the signifier and the community the signified.</p>	<p>She uses long earrings that are not colourful. A colourful bracelet made of beads. Her clothing is a traditional Mayan güipil.</p>

Signs/Symbols/ Instruments	Context
<p>The singer plays a drum and the guitar. Yarn is used for the clothing. Dry plants, flowers, and corn skin, are used as decoration in the scenes. Different types of corn are displayed in the video. This is one of the Mayan main food. The video shows an altar which is used as part of spiritual ceremony with items such as fire, smoke, etc.</p>	<p>It is outdoors surrounded by the landscape of nature e.g. volcanos, cattles, rural area, etc. It's Guatemala nature.</p>
<p>There is a lot of flowers in the scene, specially yellow and white chrisantimus, which are use at the cemeteries for the dead ones. Yarn of differents colours that are being knitted by the women in the video, which can be interpreted as re-doing or building something new. Candles, dry plants, fire, incense, rose petals, baskets, cushion with message "for life.." are items used for the altar. Hands gesture from both singers as well as the dancer, can mean re-doing- re-born. In the background of the scene there is a lot of cloths of different colours. There is also a white macrame handcraft work as part of the scene decoration. One of the singers has tatoes on both arms.</p>	<p>This video was shot at the Landscapes Memories (Paisajes de la Memoria) which is located in the municipality of San Juan Comalapa, home of the singer. This place is in remembrance of all the indigenous people who were massacred and disappeared during the internal conflict in Guatemala during the 80s.</p>
<p>Guitara, marimba, percussion, and clarinet. The marimba is an instrument from Africa, but is was brought by the colonizers to America. On her guitara, there is an item (triangular shape) with colourful threads. Chandelier in the theater.</p>	<p>Is a inside the Municipal Theater of Quetzaltenango whit no audience.</p>
<p>The instruments that are used are guitar and bass.</p>	<p>This video is shot outdoor. Nature is the main scene, where mountains, landscape, water falls, river, communities houses, corn field and others are displayed.</p>
<p>A guitar is used.</p>	<p>Outdoor. Surrounded by nature.</p>

Language	Music/Sound	Camera/Shot
The lyrics are in Spanish and Kaqchikel languages.	The tone is soft but at some point of the video it has a raise of entonation. The instruments also change according to the voice and lyrics of the song.	A lot of shots are used: Panorama; apply to contextualizing the nature and its surrounding. Close up; e.g. the details of her braid, hands of a woman peeling the corn, yarn, and faces of the women.
Both languages are used for the lyrics of the video.	Is has rap tone, which make it dandy.	The general shot are use to re-contextualize the place. Close up of hands gestures and hands knitting are often seen in the video to enhance the communty practices. The camera also does zoom from a general frame as the music changes from rhythm.
Both languages are used in the video.	It's a soft music.	General shots, medium shot, and close up.
It is sung in both languages with Spanish subtitle when using the Kaqchikel language.	Is a neutral music/flat, does not have many changes.	It has two main shots: General, to demonstrate the appreciation of nature. Close-up to re-inforce the ancestral knowlegde e.g. the hands of a grandmother.
Both languages are used to trasmit the message.	It's a soft and easy to grasp the song.	Close up: Hands of the singer playing the guitar. General shot, that shows the landscape of nature. The video also uses two frames, one where the singer is seen at medium shot and the other frame is a close- up of her hands playing the guitar.

Layout	Observations/Comments
<p>The video has many layouts:  It has the lyrics of the song in both languages.  The names of participants. The singer social media platforms.  A list of sponsors.</p>	<p>The duration of the video is 4:06 minutes.  The sponsors for these videos are non-governmental organization and a coffee cooperative that works with different topics and countries.</p>
<p>It was also sponsored by organizations e.g. Central American Women Foundation. Credits of the production team.  Special thanks.  There are links to social media platforms to follow both singers' productions.  A brief description of the video location and the association who take care of the place.  In addition, there is also a phone number if you are interested in starting a process to look for a love one who was disappeared during the inter conflict.</p>	<p>The duration of the video is 5:21 minutes.</p>
<p>It has a description of the place where the video was shot.  Lyrics of the music.  The singer's social media platforms.  Names of the musicians and the instruments they play.</p>	<p>Is 4:19 duration</p>
<p>At the end of the video there are the characters' and production team's names.  The singer's different social media platform.</p>	<p>It has similar items as Sara's .  The duration is 3:53 minutes.</p>
<p>Credits of the team production is displayed at the beginning of the video.</p>	<p>This song does not have a music video, it is just a recording of her singing in the outdoors.  3:51 is the duration.</p>
	<p>No extra makeup is used for all the videos. The characters are from the community, they are not actresses.</p>