

A Reader-Response Study of the Relationship between the Wayuu Peoples and Gabriel García Márquez's Literature: The Influence of Ethno-education on Language Use and Narratives of Identity in an Indigenous Bilingual Context.

The relationship between indigenous culture and neo-*indigenista* literature written by non-native authors has been studied from two general perspectives. In one corner, critics such as Ángel Rama and William Rowe argue that this type of literature is capable of transposing and expressing an indigenous *cosmovisión* through a process of transculturation.¹ Lucia Sá and Helena Usandizaga similarly examine the ways in which writers inscribe indigenous myths into the structure and stories of their Spanish and Portuguese works, although they both tend to emphasise more fully the tensions between the author's external position and the subject of their work.² In the other corner reside critics such as Mario Vargas Llosa and Antonio Cornejo Polar who are much more sceptical about the success of such inscriptions, with the latter proposing that Peruvian neo-*indigenismo* is more about class conflict than the expression of Quechua hermeneutics.³ A harsher judgement, of course, has been

¹ William Rowe, *Mito e ideología en la obra de José María Arguedas* (Lima: Instituto Nacional de Cultura, 1979); Ángel Rama, *Transculturación narrativa en América latina* (Buenos Aires: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1982). By *cosmovisión* Rowe and Rama mean the belief system of a certain community; or the discourses through which an individual or community interpret 'reality' as well as mark their identities.

² Lucia Sá, *Rain Forest Literatures: Amazonian Texts and Latin American Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004); Helena Usandizaga, 'Prólogo: los caminos del mito' in *Palimpsestos de la antigua palabra. Inventario de mitos prehispánicos en la literatura latinoamericana*, ed. Helena Usandizaga (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2013), pp. 1-15.

³ See Sá's analysis of Vargas Llosa's comments on the 'failure' of José María Arguedas' texts to 'capture' Quechua culture (*Rain Forest Literatures*, pp. 256-8); Antonio Cornejo Polar, *Literatura y sociedad en el Perú: la novela indigenista* (Lima: Lasontay, 1980).

laid at the feet of the so-called *indianismo* body of work, which imposed romanticised or derogatory images of the ‘other’ on the subject they purportedly ‘delineate’.⁴

As of yet, however, nobody has examined the relationship between indigenous readers and these types of texts. This is what this article purports to do by analysing the results of a reader-response survey (see appendix 1) carried out in September 2016 on 148 bilingual members of the Wayuu community, who were asked to read six extracts from two novels written by Gabriel García Márquez: *Cien años de soledad* (1967) and *Crónica de una muerte anunciada* (1981).⁵ The objective of this survey was to gather information about the participants’ attitudes towards expressions of the Wayuu *cosmovisión* and traditions that are articulated in these excerpts. The following study, therefore, aims to shed light on the relationship that Wayuu bilinguals have with Spanish literature and, by extension, the Spanish language, specifically in relation to the articulation of narratives of the Wayuu *cosmovisión*, which are, of course, important markers of Wayuu identity.

The Wayuu peoples are one of the largest indigenous groups in Colombia and Northern Venezuela, of over 600,000 people, around 300,000 of whom reside in the region of La Guajira, which is seen as their ancestral territory.⁶ This indigenous

⁴ For example, Ruben Bareiro Saguier opines that *indianista* literature ‘cayó en la copia servil de los modelos románticos del “buen salvaje” europeo’ (‘Encuentros de culturas’ in *América Latina en su literatura*, ed. by Cesar Fernández Moreno (México D.F.: Siglo Veintiuno Ediciones, 1972), pp. 21-40 (p. 35).

⁵ Gabriel García Márquez, *Cien años de soledad* (Barcelona: Plaza and Janes Editorial, 2000). Gabriel García Márquez, *Crónica de una muerte anunciada* (Barcelona: Plaza & Janés Editores, 1997). Henceforth the author will be referred to as GGM and the respective novels as CAS and *La crónica*. The aspects of Wayuu culture that GGM’s texts inscribe are detailed in the following pages of this article.

⁶ The figures are taken from the 2005 census published by the governmental department DANE (‘La población étnica y el Censo General 2005’, in *Colombia: una nación multicultural. Su diversidad étnica* <http://www.dane.gov.co/files/censo2005/etnias/present_etnicos.pdf> [accessed 5

community 'se ha caracterizado por su resistencia ante la colonización y por mantener su identidad y sentido de pertenencia de su cultura'.⁷ The continued use of Wayuunaiki, their native language, is emblematic of an ability to maintain their cultural traditions and ancestral practices, some of which will be outlined in this article.⁸ However, like many other indigenous groups in Latin America, centuries of contact with Spanish Christian and other European colonial and neo-colonial powers have impacted upon Wayuu society.⁹ Their longstanding relationship with mainly Spanish-speaking communities has produced high levels of bilingualism.¹⁰ More recently, the contemporary processes of urbanization and industrialisation in the region of La Guajira have led to a context in which ancestral, clan and family relationships are being recalibrated, and just as importantly 'el wayunnaiki y el español están redefiniéndose sus escenarios de uso'.¹¹ The implementation of ethno-education policies in schools, an increase of Wayuu university students, both of which have mirrored a rise in bilingualism in the community, have without doubt played a role in these social developments. This means that today the majority of Wayuu individuals encounter a daily social reality that is akin to a constant exiting

May 2016]). This article focuses on the Wayuu population in La Guajira in Colombia since, as we shall see, GGM had important familial ties with this region.

⁷ José Ceferino Nieves Orozco, *Anécdotas wayuu* (Bogotá: Editorial Nieves Orozco, 2006), p. 28.

⁸ According to Maitena Etxebarria around 280,000 members of the Wayuu community speak Wayuunaiki ('Bilingualismo y realidad sociolingüística de la lengua del grupo Wayuu en el Caribe Colombiano', *International Journal of Basque Linguistics and Philology*, XLV [2012], 271-95 [p. 280]).

⁹ See Michel Perrin, *Sükwaitpa wayuu: los guajiros, la palabra y el vivir* (Caracas: Fundación La Salle, 1979), p. 19.

¹⁰ 62.46% of the population are bilingual according to Etxebarria ('Bilingualismo y realidad', p. 290). Paola Isabel Mejía Rodríguez observes that 'la mayoría de la población wayuu es bilingüe' (*Situación del wayunnaiki: Ranchería el Pasito*, [Tesis de Magíster en Lingüística: Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 2011], p. 12).

¹¹ Francisco Perez van Leenden cited in Etxebarria ('Bilingualismo y realidad', p. 292).

and entering of the two sociolinguistic spheres, and the cultural practices and symbols attached to them.¹²

It is within this contemporary context of bilingualism and ethno-education that this article seeks to examine the relationship between GGM's texts and the Wayuu peoples. The survey focused on three groups with different levels of education: informal; ethno-education to secondary-school level; and undergraduates (the majority of whom were studying to be school teachers in ethno-educational schools). It was thus designed to investigate whether those who have been educated in ethno-educational institutions are more likely to identify Wayuu symbols and symbolic narratives in GGM's texts.¹³

¹² These economic, technological, political and demographic shifts and the Wayuu's engagement with the state, state education, the global market, and, of course, the Spanish language reflects the trends of other indigenous groups in Latin America. See, for example, James Mackenzie's study of the effect of modernity on the K'iche' Maya community in Guatemala (*Indigenous Bodies, Maya Minds: Religion and Modernity in a Transnational K'iche' Community* [Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2016]. The Andean migration to Lima in the last 40 years is another illustration of the changing face of indigeneity.

¹³ I use these terms in reference to Clifford Geertz's work on symbolic anthropology ('Religion as a Cultural System', in *The Interpretation of Cultures* [New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1973], pp. 87-125). Symbol here refers to a sign that conveys a meaning or meanings within an inherited social and symbolic structure and/or worldview of a certain community. For example, the sign for dream 'lapü' is generally conceived as a symbol for the communication with the spiritual world in Wayuu society. For symbolic narrative I mean a text that is more extensive than a single sign and that may have a number of symbolic meanings. For example, the many myths that refer to the creation of the Wayuu are symbolic of the Wayuu's ancestral and communal identity as well as of aspects of their spirituality. However a caveat should be added here. Sherry Ortner, for example, criticised symbolic anthropology for its hermetic and ahistorical approach to culture ('Theory in Anthropology in the Sixties', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 6:

The results are analysed in reference to Esteban Ferrero Botero's works on the policy and implementation of ethno-education in La Guajira region.¹⁴ He proposes that this pedagogical approach is inextricably linked with state-sponsored promotions of ethnic identity within the neo-liberal discourses of multiculturalism and ethno-tourism. While the Wayuu have adopted these cultural and economic policies as tools of resistance and survival, Ferrero Botero also argues that the Wayuu are required to 'perform' their ethnic identity in terms that the Colombian state recognises. In ethno-educational schools anthropological studies, written mainly by Westerners in Spanish, have come to constitute an important index of Wayuu identity. According to Ferrero Botero, Wayuu students are being taught to identify and express their 'Wayuuness' in terms of a cultural identity constructed by ethnographical studies written in the Spanish language.¹⁵ Thus this article investigates the ways in which ethno-education in La Guajira is influencing the symbols and the language with which the Wayuu articulate and identify aspects of their *cosmovisión*; that is to say, narratives of identity.

[1984], 126-66). This article does not view the symbols of Wayuu culture as a hermetically sealed set of meanings. Indeed, it examines the possibility of their 'transference' into another language and context; that of Spanish literature. Neither does it view symbols as ahistorical. Rather, following Marshall Sahlins' study, symbols are conceived as responsive to historical change and political action, as we shall see in the discussion of the role of ethno-education in Wayuu culture (*Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities: Structure in the Early History of the Sandwich Islands Kingdom* [The University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor, 2004]).

¹⁴ Esteban Ferrero Botero, 'Empowerment Through Ethno-education in a Disempowering Context: "Ser alguien en la vida" and the Colombian Wayuu', in *Cases of Exclusion and Mobilization of Race and Ethnicities in Latin America*, ed. by Marc Becker (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013.), pp. 174-97; Esteban Ferrero Botero, 'Ethno-education in la Guajira, Colombia: Shaping Indigenous Subjectivities within Modernity, Neoliberal Multiculturalism, and Indigenous Struggle', *Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, 10 (2015), 288-314.

¹⁵ 'Empowerment Through Ethno-education', p. 189.

This article, therefore, also intersects with one of the most polemic debates in anthropology: the complex and frequently contradictory notion of cultural identity. The understanding of group identities, whether national, regional or ethnic in nature, as bounded and essential phenomena has, since the 1980s, been radically deconstructed. Stuart Hall and Benedict Anderson, among others, have argued persuasively that such collective identities are social, political and, above all, discursive constructs.¹⁶ Moreover, Richard Handler has challenged the relevance of the term 'cultural identity' to many non-Western communities.¹⁷ He proposes that there is ample evidence to suggest that different groups around the world do not conceive of their identity in these terms. It is, rather, anthropologists, influenced by the powerful socio-cultural construct embedded in nineteenth and twentieth century Western thought, who 'discover elsewhere what we imagine to be the universality of our own ways of thinking'.¹⁸

Handler's questioning of the term cultural identity is relevant to the Wayuu peoples. They are an indigenous group with modes of communal affiliation which do not necessarily depend on notions of 'cultural identity'. The most obvious of these is their clan identity, inherited from a matriarchal lineage. This does not, however, entail that they do not have a broader and inclusive understanding of Wayuu identity. One of the crucial factors that Handler's chapter fails to take into account is the fact that many non-western peoples employ discourses and symbols in order to differentiate themselves from other groups, who are perceived as belonging to another type of communal and cultural identity. Stuart Hall observes that, along with language,

¹⁶ Stuart Hall, 'Introduction', in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, eds. Stuart Hall, Jessica Evans and Sean Nixon (London: Sage Publications, 1997), pp. 1-11; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (Verso: London, 2006 [1983]).

¹⁷ Richard Handler, 'Is "Identity" a Useful Cross-Cultural Concept?' in *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, ed. by John R. Gills (Princeton, NJ: PUP, 1994), pp. 27-40.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 37

‘symbolic boundaries are central to all culture’.¹⁹ Like all groups, the Wayuu have traditionally marked their difference through their language and certain practices and symbols, some of which will be discussed later. The frequently used terms ‘alijuna’ (white non-Wayuu) and ‘kusina’ (indigenous non-Wayuu) is another example of the boundaries that circulate within their discourses of identity, as is the term ‘Wayuunaiki’, which literally translates as ‘our words’.²⁰

This does not, of course, mean that Wayuu identity is to be understood here as a fixed and immutable object with a particular relationship to traditions ‘locked’ in the past and bounded to a specific geographical space. Following Hall it is defined as a set of signifying systems, both symbolic and linguistic, which are fluid and historically changeable phenomena and, therefore, open to constant contestation and negotiation.²¹ This article examines the results of the survey from this perspective or, in other words, in relation to the changing and contemporary narratives of Wayuu

¹⁹ Stuart Hall, ‘The Spectacle of the “Other”’, in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, pp. 223-90 (p. 237).

²⁰ The colonial and neo-colonial history of La Guajira region has also without doubt played a role in developing a sense of communal identity among the Wayuu. They, like all indigenous groups in Latin America, have battled on physical and discursive fronts with the colonial imposition of the Spanish crown and Catholic Church, and then with the neo-colonial outlook of the Colombian state for more than 500 years. Mannfield Henningsen argues that the threatening of presence another hegemonic culture is central to the formation of a language politics and the ‘quest for identity and authenticity of a cultural self’ (‘The Politics of Purity and Exclusion’, in *The Politics of Language and Purism*, eds. Bjorn H. Jerrud and Micheal J. Shapero [Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1989], pp. 31-52). Etxebarria’s (‘Bilingüismo y realidad’, p. 287) and Mejía Rodríguez’s (*Situación del wayunnaiki*, p. 74) observations that the Wayuu tend to use Wayuunaiki in traditional contexts and practices, such as rituals or group performances of the Jayeechi (traditional Wayuu song) and the Yonna (traditional Wayuu dance), confirms that their native language is tied closely to such an ideological positioning of identity in opposition to the Spanish-speaking sphere.

²¹ ‘Introduction’, pp. 1-7.

identity. Indeed it focuses on the role that the Spanish language and the use of anthropological studies have performed in the reconstruction of concepts of Wayuu identity in ethno-educational secondary schools and university-level institutions. Yet, at the same time, it ought not to be forgotten that many Wayuu continue to employ notions of communal identity and symbolic boundaries that pre-dated the advent of anthropological studies and ethno-education, which nevertheless continue to evolve alongside and interact with these later reconstructions. This is particularly salient in traditional settings and rituals when the Wayuu express narratives of identity in Wayuunaiki.

This brings us to the second polemic with which the article intersects: the relationship between language and the *cosmovisión* of a community, both of which, of course, are important markers of identity. Language, Hall observes, 'is central to meaning and culture and has always been regarded as the repository of cultural values and meanings'.²² Many academics, influenced by the Whorf/Sapir hypothesis, propose that there is an intrinsic relationship between a people's understanding of the world and the idiosyncratic grammar of their language. For them, language encodes a cultural 'world-view' and forms of knowledge.²³

Others opine that this viewpoint is too essentialist and that language has a far more contingent relationship with such issues.²⁴ Carol Eastman goes as far as to

²² Ibid., p. 1.

²³ See, for example, Robert Bunge, 'Language: The Psyche of People', in *Language Loyalties: A Source Book on the Official English Controversy*, ed. by J. Crawford (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1992), pp. 376-80; Joshua Fishman, *Reversing Language Shift: Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Assistance to Threatened Languages* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd, 1991); Daniel Nettle and Suzanne Romaine, *Vanishing Voices: The Extinction of the World's Languages* (New York: OUP, 2000); Wade Davis, *The Wayfinders: Why Ancient Wisdom Matters in the Modern World* (Toronto: House of Anasi Press, 2009).

²⁴ See, for example, John Edwards, *Language and Identity: An Introduction* (New York: CUP, 2009); Stephen May, 'Rethinking Linguistic Human Rights: Answering

propose that language is relatively superficial aspect of behavioural identity and that one language can be replaced with another without changing the underlying and important aspects of a cultural tradition and/or worldview.²⁵

As we shall see, many of the aspects articulated in GGM's texts are, according to Juan Moreno Blanco and Víctor Bravo Mendoza, related to the Wayuu *cosmovisión*.²⁶ In turn, Yolanda Rodríguez Cadena, influenced by Lee Whorf's theory, argues that there is an intrinsic relationship between the grammatical aspects of Wayuunaiki and the Wayuu's idiosyncratic 'cosmovisión mítica'.²⁷ Thus the article inevitably touches upon the issues that have arisen within this debate. The survey's results have the potential to indicate, on one level, whether or not the bilingual participants are able and willing to recognise Wayuu symbols and symbolic narratives 'transferred' into Spanish, and whether or not they are prepared to associate them with what they conceive as the Wayuu *cosmovisión* and, therefore, with Wayuu discourses of identity. However, as outlined above, in this article these issues are analysed in relation to the role of ethno-education in La Guajira. In other words, I am particularly interested in the question of whether ethno-educational students have been educated to recognise and interpret Wayuu symbols and

Question of Identity, Essentialism and Mobility' in *Language Rights and Language Survival: Sociolinguistic and Socio-cultural Perspectives*, eds. Jane Freeland and Donna Patrick (Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 2004), pp. 35-53; Stephen May, *Language and Minority Rights: Ethnicity, Nationalism and the Politics of Language* (New York: Routledge, 2008).

²⁵ Carol M. Eastman, 'Language, Diversity and Identity', in *Linguistic Minorities, Policies and Pluralism*, ed. John Edwards (London: Academic Press, 1984), pp. 259-76.

²⁶ Juan Moreno Blanco, *La cepa de las palabras: Ensayo sobre la relación entre el universo imaginario wayuu y la obra literaria de GGM* (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 2011); Víctor Bravo Mendoza, *La Guajira en la obra de GGM* (Bogotá: Icono Editorial, 2009).

²⁷ Yolanda Rodríguez Cadena, *La lengua y mito en la cultura wayuu* (Riohacha: Editorial de la universidad pedagógica y tecnológica de Colombia, 1993), p. 28.

symbolic narratives expressed in the Spanish language. Thus the survey aims to further our knowledge of the ways in which ethno-education influences the relationship between language and discourses of indigenous identity. But before we interpret the responses to the survey, we first need to take a look at the relationship between GGM, his novels and Wayuu culture.

The connection between the Colombian Nobel Prize winner and the Wayuu is intimate, familial and of a broader socio-cultural nature. The writer informs us of his early experience of Wayuu culture in his autobiography *Vivir para contarla*.²⁸ The young Gabriel, growing up in his grandfather's house in Aracataca, was cared for by two Wayuu 'mucamas' or nannies. Through his relationship with them he states that he learnt to understand Wayuunaiki, and could still remember some of the words that they had taught him. Another arguably more important conduit between Wayuu culture and the writer can be found in the relationship with his grandmother. Much has been written about Tranquilina Márquez Iguarán's contribution to the author's idiosyncratic mode of magical realism, mainly due to the comments made by GGM in the aforementioned autobiography and an interview published in *El olor de la guayaba*, in which he highlights the influence of the magical aspects of his grandmother's tales on the style and content of his writing.²⁹

However very few have attempted to link the grandmother's beliefs and upbringing with the region from where she originated: La Guajira. There are, in fact, several clues that point to the fact that Tranquilina was *mestiza*, at the very least. First, GGM tell us in his autobiography that she was able to converse in Wayuunaiki: 'La abuela se servía de ella (la lengua guajira) para despistarme sin saber que yo la entendía mejor por mis tratos directos con la servidumbre'.³⁰ This is a skill that would have

²⁸ Gabriel García Márquez, *Vivir para contarla* (New York: Vintage Español, 2003).

²⁹ Gabriel García Márquez, *El olor de guayaba* (Bogotá: Grupo Editorial Norma, 2008 [1982]), pp. 19-20 and 61.

³⁰ *Vivir para contarla*, p. 78. On other occasions GGM was strangely insistent on the Spanish cultural heritage of his grandmother. He claims in one interview, for example, that her ideas and superstitions were different to those of the Wayuu

been very unusual, and still is in today's La Guajira, for a Hispanic-educated female. Second, her surname Iguarán is the name of an important Wayuu clan.³¹ Third, at least according to the locals to whom I spoke while I was in the region of La Guajira, Tranquilina is a very popular first name among Wayuu women. Finally, both Moreno Blanco and Bravo Mendoza, while strangely overlooking the grandmother's cultural, familial and educational background, demonstrate the close relationship between the Iguarán side of the family and the Wayuu.³² Wayuu culture, therefore, shaped GGM to varying degrees at different stages of his life, being especially pronounced in his formative years. This influence, according to Moreno Blanco and Bravo Mendoza, seeped into his many novels and short stories.³³

nannies (see Matteo Cardona Vallejo and Miguel Ángel Flores, 'La edad de las palabras. Entrevista a GGM', *Gaceta*, 22 [1994], 34-8 [p.36]). This is perhaps because of author's desire to be placed in the western canon of literature. One only has to read the chapters in *Vivir para contarla* on his early attempts at writing to realise that, either at the time or in hindsight, he was eager to be associated with firstly western or westernised poets and then modernist writers, such as William Faulkner.

³¹ Azad de Jesús Ramírez Sánchez, *Mitología y cultura wayuu* (Riohacha: Gráficas Norte, 1999), p. 49; Hilario Cachin, *Lírica y narrativa desde una visión wayuu* (Barranquilla: Editorial Antillas, 2003), pp. 56-7.

³² There is also another possible connection between GGM's life, literature and Wayuu culture. It is well known that GGM was a great lover of *vallenatos*. According to Mendoza Bravo this musical genre penetrated so deeply into GGM's consciousness that he claims that *Cien años de soledad* 'no es más que un vallenato de 450 páginas, realmente eso' (*La Guajira en la obra de GGM*, p. 94) Nieves Orozco identifies several Wayuu themes and linguistic and rhythmic influences within the anecdotal style of many Vallenato songs (*Anécdotas wayuu*, pp. 3-7).

³³ Moreno Blanco, *La cepa de las palabras*; Mendoza Bravo, *La Guajira en la obra de GGM*.

For the purpose of the survey six excerpts were chosen from *CAS* and *La crónica* which correspond with five categories of the Wayuu belief system and culture. These five, as we shall see, are interrelated in both GGM's work and in Wayuu culture:

1. The concept of time/ancestral relationship
2. Dreams
3. Predictions
4. Death
5. The real and oneiric (magical realism)

Let us first take a look at the function and meanings of these categories in Wayuu culture. The concept of time and ancestral relationships are very important features of their *cosmovisión*. According to Wayuu writer Ramón Paz Ipuana, the Wayuu cultivate 'la memoria comenzando por los ancestros que relatan orígenes primordiales; su espíritu se refleja en los espejos del tiempo para retroceder en el pasado, fluirlo en el presente y proyectarlo al futuro'.³⁴ José Ángel Fernández confirms this: 'para los Wayuu existe un tiempo-espacio relativo y continuo, por lo tanto el pasado, el presente y el futuro están fusionados y relacionados armónicamente'.³⁵ In the Wayuu's *cosmovisión* the past constantly interweaves with the future and the present, which reflects the fundamental relationship they have with their ancestors.

This fundamental relationship with ancestral roots is expressed clearly in the vital role that dreams play in Wayuu society. Dreams are so central to the Wayuu way of life that that they greet each other with the phrase 'jamaya pū'lapüin?' [how was your dream?]. These are 'la vía de acceso o el vaso comunicante a través del cual el espíritu del muerto viene a establecer un contacto espiritual con sus familiares, amigos y enemigos'.³⁶ Through this conduit ancestors or deceased family members

³⁴ Ramón Paz Ipuana, 'La literatura wayuu en el contexto de su cultura', *Revista de la literatura hispanoamericana*, Universidad de Zulia 28-9 (1987), 71-80 (p. 71).

³⁵ Cited in Jayariyu Ojeda Guillermo, *Sainrulüü wayuu* (Maicao: Alcaldía Municipal de Maicao, 2007), p. 59.

³⁶ Beatriz Sánchez Pirela, *El pensamiento filosófico wayuu* (Marcaibo: Ediciones del Vice Rectorado Académico de Zulia, 2008), p. 96.

give warnings/advice about the future: 'El alma se revela a través de los sueños. Estos son fuente de premoniciones o relevaciones que sucederán a la familia o la comunidad'.³⁷ These messages are normally interpreted by the outsü or piachi, a female shaman, who is expert in conversing with 'los buenos espíritus de los antepasados' who communicate what rites or acts must be performed in order to avoid any possible tragic outcomes.³⁸ Dreams and death alongside predictions and ancestral ties thereby have a complex interrelation in the Wayuu belief system.³⁹

Similar to the traditions of many Latin American indigenous peoples, death is also an intrinsic part of life and daily living for the Wayuu. The concept of the 'woumain' reveals this aspect clearly. 'Woumain'; the term for 'our land' is related to the burial ground of their ancestors, which is 'el ícono más importante de marcación territorial. Cada clan tiene el cementerio en su territorio, siempre será un sitio sagrado, como el lugar de reposo de los muertos, de los ancestros'.⁴⁰ Their sense of place, their territory and their clan identity are marked by such burial grounds.

The Wayuu also practice another tradition central to their identity that interlinks death and ancestral relations. When a member of their clan passes away they perform two burials. The first is a rather parse and quick affair. Due to the necessity of expediency of living in a very warm climate, the body is usually buried with little ceremony in the place where the death occurred. Then, some years later, when the message communicated by the deceased loved-one is deciphered, the clan calls the outsü to enact a second burial, the anajawaa jipuu. Here, the female shaman disinters the remains and overseas transportation to the clan's communal cemetery,

³⁷ Ibid., p. 96.

³⁸ Guillermo, *Sainrulüü wayuu*, p. 69.

³⁹ See Michel Perrin, *El camino de los indios muertos* (Caracas: Monte Ávila Editores, 1980), pp. 190-203.

⁴⁰ Fernanda Acosta Convers, 'Caracterización cultural de la etnia wayúu y el territorio indígena en la Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta' <<http://www.palabraguajira.net/caracterizacion-cultural-de-la-etnia-wayuu-con-enfasis-en-el-area-de-influencia-de-la-mina-de-carbon-concesionada-a-mpx>>

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where they are reburied alongside the bones of fellow ancestors.⁴¹ According to Wayuu beliefs, during the period between the two ceremonies, a deceased Wayuu ‘se convierte en yolu’ja (spirit)’. They retain this form, visiting the living in their dreams, until the second burial is completed, after which ‘su alma regresa a la tierra en forma de lluvia’; understandably, in a desert-like environment, this is a symbol of life, fertility and cultivation. If, however, the community fails to respect the customs of the second burial, it is possible that ‘se convierten en wanulu, en seres portadores de enfermedades y pestes a lo que se agrega la pérdida de su identidad’.⁴²

These traditions have given birth, unsurprisingly, to a specific and complex understanding and representation of the physical and spiritual world. The modern western mentality tends to separate the mythical and religious from ‘real’ or ‘rational’ categories of thought. The Wayuu, in contrast, do not place these modes of thought into different groupings: ‘lo mítico permanece latente en su devenir cotidiano’.⁴³ According to Wayuu José Ángel Fernández ‘el wayuu se nutre de una cultura altamente simbólica y surrealista, lo que explica el uso cotidiano de mucho simbolismo en plano real y onírico. Vivimos soñando y ritualizando, lo que nos permite expresar conductas y actitudes que nutrían día a día el mundo mágico religioso wayuu’.⁴⁴ The Wayuu constantly intertwine the quotidian with the non-real, the magical, we might say, with realism.

To briefly summarise what has been expressed over the preceding pages, I have introduced five different yet interrelated categories that belong to Wayuu culture and hermeneutics. As Sánchez Pirela states, the themes of ‘el sueño, la muerte, el alma son elementos centrales del pensamiento filosófico wayuu’.⁴⁵ These important aspects are intrinsically related to the art of predicting the future and ancestral relations and Wayuu identity in general. In the reader-response survey I gave the

⁴¹ See Nieve Orozco, *Anécdotas wayuu*, p. 103.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 103.

⁴³ Sánchez Pirela, *El pensamiento*, p. 96.

⁴⁴ Cited in Guillermo, *Sainrulüü wayuu*, p. 59.

⁴⁵ *El pensamiento*, p. 89.

participants six paragraphs from GGM's literature, which combined the following Wayuu symbols and symbolic narratives.

1. Death, place and ancestral identity.
2. The relationship between death and life and predictions.
3. The relationship between death and life.
4. Death, predictions, dreams and ancestral identity, and place.
5. Death, dreams and predictions.
6. Dreams, ancestral identity, place, and death.

I shall now identify the elements in the paragraphs that the participants could potentially associate with Wayuu practices and beliefs. The following paragraph, the fourth text in the survey form, taken from CAS (pp. 97-8), will be discussed in detail, while the Wayuu elements in extracts one, two, and five are outlined more briefly below. Texts three and six which coincide, respectively, with the relationship between death and life and death, dreams, and ancestral identity, are discussed in more depth in the section which analyses the participants' responses.

En busca de un alivio a la zozobra llamó a Pilar Ternera para que **le leyera el porvenir**. Después de un sartal de imprecisiones convencionales, Pilar Ternera pronosticó: '**No serás feliz mientras tus padres permanezcan insepultos.**' Rebecca se estremeció. Como en **el recuerdo de un sueño** se vio a sí misma entrando a la casa, muy niña, con el baúl y el mecedorcito de madera y un talego cuyo contenido no conoció jamás [...] Rebeca quedó tan preocupada con el enigma, que se le contó a José Arcadio Buendía y éste la reprendió por dar crédito a pronósticos de barajas, pero se dio a la silenciosa tarea de registrar armarios y baúles, remover muebles y voltear camas y entablados buscando el talego de huesos [...] Después de días de auscultaciones, con la oreja pegada a las paredes, percibieron el cloc cloc profundo. Perforaron el muro y allí **estaban los huesos en el talego intacto**. Ese mismo día **lo sepultaron en una tumba sin lápida**, improvisada junto a la de Melquíades, y José Arcadio Buendía

regresó a la casa liberado de una carga que por un momento pesó tanto en su conciencia como el recaudo de Prudencia Aguilar.

In this extract, the Buendías are searching for the bones of Rebecca's parents in the family house. We can see that there is an indirect association between Pilar Ternera's reading of the future and the theme of dreams. Rebecca remembers as if in the memory of a dream the bones of her parents. The scenario of the bones also displays parallels with Wayuu traditions of ancestral relationships, place and identity. Rebecca is told that she must bury the bones of her parents, which, according to Moreno Blanco and Bravo Mendoza, is a reference to the Wayuus' tradition of the second burial: 'anajawaa jipuu'.⁴⁶ As we have seen, if the rite is disregarded or, in more general terms, the ancestors are forgotten about, then they may return as a 'wanuluu' (evil spirit), which symbolises illness, future catastrophes, and loss of identity. So we can see that the divination of Pilar, advising the importance of the burial of parents/ancestors in order to avoid unhappiness and/or future disaster, displays parallels with several interrelated Wayuu traditional beliefs and practices, which are central markers of Wayuu identity.

Text one (see appendix 1) is taken from a passage of *CAS* in which José Arcadio Buendía and Úrsula argue over whether they should leave Macondo in order to contact the modern world. The former's response that '[u]no es de ninguna parte mientras no tenga un muerto bajo de la tierra' (p. 24) alludes to the aforementioned relationship between Wayuu clan identity and their burial grounds. Text two was chosen because it contains potential references to the symbolic narratives of the quotidian relationship between death and life, and predictions. Again, an episode from *CAS*, it centres on the premonition that Amaranta receives about the preparations she should make for her own death, and the community's belief that she will deliver letters to dead loved ones (pp. 332-6). The 'mortaja' (p. 333) that she produces, on the orders of death or a spirit, also resonates with the tradition in which

⁴⁶ Moreno Blanco, *La cepa de las palabras*, p. 84; Mendoza Bravo, *La Guajira en la obra de GGM*, pp. 57-9.

Wayuu women knit a 'manta funeraria' or 'kanasü' for their own funeral.⁴⁷ In the excerpt from *La crónica*, text five in the survey form, Santiago's dream and his mother's ability to divine the meaning of dreams, and her failure to foresee the protagonist's death, resonate with the symbolic narratives of dreams, predictions and death in Wayuu culture.

On the survey form the Wayuu were given the following question: ¿Asocia usted los temas de los párrafos siguientes con creencias o tradiciones que conoce o practica? ⁴⁸ The question was designed to be as open as possible so as to obtain as direct as possible responses from the participants. It was specifically important not to refer to Wayuu traditions in the question in order not to influence the type of dialogues that the extracts elicited in the Wayuu readers. Given that many Wayuu also practise Hispanic and western traditions and some of them combine the Catholic faith with Wayuu beliefs, the question could be interpreted as referring to either. The participants were also given ample space to provide an answer to the question, with room for at least fifty words. The idea here was to give those who participated in the survey as much freedom as possible to express their opinions.

In order to examine the influence of ethno-education on the relationship between the Spanish language and expressions of the Wayuu *cosmovisión* three different groups were surveyed. The first group I surveyed were those who work daily on the *malecón* of Riohacha (the capital of La Guajira), selling their artisanal goods to tourists and urban dwellers. The second group were secondary-school students. Thanks to the help of Miledy Rocío Jusayu, a Wayuu teacher, I had the good fortune of gaining access to three different ethno-education and bilingual secondary schools: the Institución Etnoeducativa Internado Indígena San José in Uribia, the Institución Etnoeducativa Técnica Eusebio Séptimo in Manure, and the Escuela Indígena de Promoción Social Madre Laura in Maicao. Here, the very kind heads of school allowed me to survey the students of sixteen years of age and above. Finally, Margarita Piñeta Pimiento, a Wayuu teacher and researcher at La Universidad de la

⁴⁷ See Eden Vizcaino, *Sociología del derecho y cultura wayuu* (Barranquilla: Editorial Antillas, 1999), p. 46.

⁴⁸ See appendix 1 for a copy of the survey form.

Guajira, was gracious enough to lend me her university students for the survey, the majority of whom were studying a teaching degree in ethno-education. Thus, in table one, found at the end of the article, I have broken down the results into the following categories: low/informal education, secondary and university.⁴⁹

In table one the six extracts that the participants read are listed vertically. They are accompanied by initials that represent the themes that the participants could potentially associate with aspects of the Wayuu culture and *cosmovisión*: DT = death, DR= dreams, PL = place, AD = ancestral identity, PR = predictions, DL = the quotidian relationship between death and life. The superior horizontal row marks the groups of different levels of education in three columns, with the numbers surveyed in each box. The figures below these three categories of education pertain to the percentages of affirmative responses (i.e., those who identified Wayuu aspects in the texts) given within the respective educational groupings. The far right column contains the overall percentage of total affirmative responses to these passages from GGM's novels (i.e., disregarding the different levels of education). Finally, the lowest row informs us about the total percentages of positive responses given by the three separate groups to all extracts. The figure in the bottom right-hand corner refers to the total percentage of all affirmative responses to every paragraph presented in the survey. In all cases the percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number.

Firstly in general terms the data confirm that the participants with superior levels of education identified a higher percentage of Wayuu aspects in the extracts, with undergraduates recognising 60% of them in total; the secondary-school students 49%; and those with an informal level of education 43%. The participants surveyed in the institutions of education also gave comprehensive replies, as the following two examples illustrate. The first is a response to text four by a student from the Institución Etnoeducativa Técnica Eusebio Séptimo:

⁴⁹ I included the responses from Wayuu writers, such as Estercilia Simanca Pushaina and Vicenta Siosi Pino, and Wayuu anthropologist, Weilder Guerra Curvelo, and various Wayuu educators at the University of La Guajira and the schools already mentioned in the data group of superior level of education.

Después de que nuestros ancestros mueren pasan varios años y volvemos a donde lo sepultamos y recogemos los restos. Hacemos un ritual y lo volvemos sepultar. Ese es como el penúltimo acto porque nos volvemos a ver cuándo morimos.

The second is the answer that a university student articulated after reading text five from *La crónica*:

Sí hay wayuu que sueñan sobre otras personas que pasan por alguna calamidad y tratan de dar aviso para que no suceda algo trágico.

The figures in the chart and these two extensive responses, as well the many others like them, reveal a marked difference in the reception of the texts in the different groups surveyed. They suggest that those who are involved in the process of ethno-education are more inclined to associate the Spanish texts they were asked to read with Wayuu practices and beliefs, which, according to Etxebarria and Mejía Rodríguez, are predominately and traditionally performed in Wayuunaiki.⁵⁰ An explanation of this trend can be found in the implementation of ethno-education in secondary schools, and in the training of ethno-educational teachers at the Universidad de La Guajira. Ferrero Botero claims that ethno-education in La Guajira functions akin to a contract between the state and local groups, in which the logic of the neo-liberal market and modernity plays an important role. In this network ethno-education and ethno-tourism commodify Wayuu culture as a homogenised 'other' who the States views, via the interrelated policies of neo-liberalism and multiculturalism, as a productive element within the national economy; while, at the local level, these narratives serve 'as a strategy to employ identity politics to ensure indigenous rights'.⁵¹ Ethnographic studies, according to Ferrero Botero, are essential

⁵⁰ Etxebarria, 'Bilingüismo y realidad', p. 287; Mejía Rodríguez, *Situación del wayunnaiki*, pp. 30-5; also see Yolanda Rodríguez Cadena, *Los semihablantes bilingües: habilidad e interacción* (Bogotá: Instituto Caro y Cuevo, 1996), and María Luz Domínguez, Javier Labarca and Luis Oquendo, 'Actitudes lingüísticas de los estudiantes wayuu', Ponencia presentada en el XXV *Encuentro de Docentes e Investigadores de Lingüística* (Maracaibo: Universidad de Zulia, 2006).

⁵¹ 'Empowerment Through Ethno-education', p. 188.

to this process since it is the 'anthropological reality' produced in these texts 'that serves to conserve indigenous culture'.⁵² He also argues that such representations of Wayuu identity are 'objectified' and 'reified' because they are written to be legible and 'marketable to the Western public'. Therefore, when the Wayuu 'use ethnographic books in their classes, they are merely reproducing a knowledge that, inevitably, has been commoditized'.⁵³

These ethnographies, then, contribute to the reproduction of Wayuu identity within the realms of Western concepts of cultural identities, as discussed by Handler.⁵⁴ It is also logical to presume that, since these texts are produced in Spanish, the internalisation of them by students in ethno-educational schools or those studying ethno-educational degrees has created a context in which Wayuu individuals articulate, discuss and identify narratives of 'Wayuu identity' in and with the Spanish language. The emergence of Wayuu literature has undoubtedly also played a role in this adoption. Many Wayuu writers, such as Miguel Ángel Jusayu, Estercilia Simanca Pushaina and Vicenta Siosi Pino and many more, publish Wayuu stories in Spanish, which are marketed as Wayuu/ethno-literature.⁵⁵

The survey results also display a difference in the responses to the different texts. Text five received a total percentage of 71%, text four 68%, text two 63% and text one 57%, while texts three and six received 8% and 21% of affirmative responses. The figures reveal that a high percentage of the Wayuu surveyed were capable and willing to identify the extracts that include references to dreams, death and

⁵² Ibid., p. 189.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 189. Ferrero Botero's argument is based on his observations of the ethnographical material used in 'culture' classes on Wayuu identity in the school in Siapana. I witnessed a similar situation in the schools I visited. The great majority of the libraries hold anthropological studies of Wayuu identity, which are, I was informed, employed in the classes on Wayuu culture.

⁵⁴ See page 5.

⁵⁵ See, for example, the anthology of Wayuu literature compiled by Juan Duchesne Winter, *Hermosos invisibles que nos protegen: Antología wayuu* (Pittsburgh: Literatura Iberoamericana, 2015).

predictions and ancestral identity in relation to Wayuu culture. However, there is still a marked difference between the groups concerning the reception data of texts one, two, four and five. In the university-level category these texts received 76%, 72%, 80% and 80% positive response rates respectively. At secondary level they received 64%, 61%, 69% and 72%, while in the informal education cohort the corresponding figures are: 33%, 60%, 60% and 63%. Again, this data strongly suggest that the ethno-educational systems have not only played a role in informing the types of practices and beliefs that symbolise Wayuu culture; they have also influenced the relationship between these narratives of identity and the Spanish language.

The low percentages of affirmative responses to paragraphs three and six also merit attention. In text three the trend of higher percentages in the categories of secondary and university education persists. Here we see affirmative responses of 0% in the informal cohort, 6% amongst secondary-school students and 28% in the University-level group. However the percentages in general are very low in comparison to the results for the other extracts examined thus far. The more exhaustive answers given by the University and secondary-school students, in which they explain why they failed to see a connection between Wayuu culture and the excerpt in text three, are particular revealing in relation to another facet of the relationship between the Wayuu and the Hispanic social and linguistic spheres.

The paragraph is taken from the chapter in *CAS* in which José Arcadio (hijo) and Rebecca's conjugal practices are comically described:

La noche de bodas a Rebeca le mordió el pie un alacrán que se había metido en su pantufla. Se le adormeció la lengua, pero eso no impidió que pasaran una luna de miel escandalosa. Los vecinos se asustaban con los gritos que despertaban a todo el barrio hasta ocho veces en la siesta, y rogaban que una pasión tan desaforada no fuera a perturbar la paz de los muertos (pp. 118-9).

This scene was included because, according to Moreno Blanco, it expresses strong parallels with the Wayuu's traditional vision of the quotidian relationship between life and death.⁵⁶ However many of the Wayuu from the University and secondary-school

⁵⁶ Moreno Blanco, *La cepa de las palabras*, p. 124.

groups did not identify such aspects. Many focused on the sexual behaviour of Rebecca, 'los gritos' to be more precise, that they identified as strictly *alijuna*, as something typical of the lack of decorum of Hispanic women. These responses could be due to a mistake on my part of including material that might be considered culturally taboo for the participants. However, carnivalesque and bawdy humour is an important part of Wayuu cultural practices and literature,⁵⁷ and might not necessarily therefore be construed as offensive.

There is another possible explanation for the nature of their responses. The ethno-education schools I visited have strong Catholic influences. What we may be witnessing here, then, is evidence of a policy in ethno-educational schools, in which materials are employed to teach Wayuu discourses of identity in parallel with classes on Catholic values, specifically in relation to how Wayuu women 'should behave'. In other words, students may have learnt to equate Catholic ideals with narratives of Wayuu identity. In any case, the majority of the participants interpreted this theme in GGM's text as a marker for the 'other'; that is, of the *alijuna* or Hispanic society.⁵⁸

In text six we see an outlier in the general trend mentioned above. In this specific case, the informal education group responded to the text affirmatively at a rate of 40%, while the other two groups responded at 22% and 24%. This passage was chosen because its themes of insomnia and amnesia allude to the relationship

⁵⁷ Perrin, *El camino de los indios muertos*, p. 75; Nieves Orozco, *Anécdotas wayuu*, pp. 33-7. Also see Olga Mejía, *Conceptos de la sexualidad wayuu expresados en los mitos, leyendas y tradiciones* (Bogotá: Imprenta Nacional de Colombia, 2001), pp. 85-6; and Gabriel Ferrer and Yolanda Rodríguez Cadena, *Etnoliteratura wayuu: estudios críticos y selección de textos* (Bogotá: Editorial Gente Nueva, 1998), p. 7.

⁵⁸ It should also be noted here that, according to Mejía, the expression of sexual desire, humorous or otherwise, is an accepted facet of masculine but not of female behaviour in traditional Wayuu society (*Conceptos de la sexualidad*, pp. 61-2). Thus the very low percentages of affirmative response, especially those of the informal educated group, could also have been influenced by existing traditional narratives of Wayuu female identity and sexuality

between memory, dreams and ancestral identity that exist in Wayuu thought. Given that dreams are a channel through which individuals communicate with their ancestors and/or deceased family members, the inability to sleep is something to be taken seriously. It is interpreted as a loss of identity and even death: 'quien no sueña es como si estuviera muerto, porque ha desaparecido con el sueño la prueba de la existencia de su alma'.⁵⁹ Thus the link between insomnia and the eventual loss of a social and individual identity in the text resonates with this Wayuu vision. Ethnographical works have not tended to be alert to this association, tending to focus instead on the function of interpreting dreams in Wayuu society, and/or the role of the outsü in combating illness or future calamities.⁶⁰ Therefore it could be that the university and secondary-school students have not had this particular aspect 'confirmed' or 'reproduced' in their classes. This context may also explain the fact that, on this one occasion, the participants with informal levels of education gave a higher percentage of affirmative responses than the other groups.⁶¹

This outlier aside, the overall figures clearly reveal that a high percentage of students in ethno-educational institutions were more willing to identify Wayuu cultural aspects in GGM's texts. This data suggest that they view Spanish as a language in which they are willing to recognise Wayuu philosophical aspects and symbols. In this particular survey, then, the answers of these participants indicate that, for them, Wayuu narratives of identity and *cosmovisión* are not necessarily dependent on the use of Wayuunaiki nor uniquely associated with their native language. These figures coincide with the arguments of Edwards, May and Eastman who propose that the relationship between language and concepts of identity is not fundamental but

⁵⁹ Nelly García Gavidia and Carlos Valbuena, 'Cuando cambian los sueños. La cultura wayuu frente a las iglesias evangélicas', *Opción*, 20 (2004), 9-28 (p. 17).

⁶⁰ See, for example, Sánchez Pirela's *El pensamiento* and Perrin's aforementioned anthropological works.

⁶¹ It also true that texts three and six contain less concrete symbols than those of texts one, two, four and five. As such, the time limit that the students were given to read all texts (on average 40 minutes) may also have affected the participants' responses to extracts three and six since it is obviously more difficult to identify and interpret more abstruse symbols in a restricted period of time.

dependent upon particular contexts.⁶² My empirical findings thereby corroborate their claims that cultural elements can be ‘carried over’ into Spanish language and literature for some members of the Wayuu community.

As we have seen, these responses need to be understood within the context of the growing influence of ethno-education in which students are taught to identify Wayuu philosophy and symbolic narratives in Spanish. The results correspond, to a certain extent, with Ferrero Botero’s argument that Wayuu narratives of identity are being reconstructed in ethno-educational classes via the use anthropological works, written mainly in Spanish. Thus the survey indicates that many of Wayuu students surveyed have come to index their cultural identity and *cosmovisión* with and through the Spanish language and, just as importantly, the written word.

This situation also points to a possible language shift in the younger generation for whom Spanish has assumed a more prominent role. However these assumptions do not adequately explain the entire picture. The figures also indicate that 51% of the secondary-school group and 40% of the university cohort view the relationship between the Spanish language and expressions of the Wayuu *cosmovisión* as problematic or non-existent. In this case, it would be erroneous to claim that we are dealing with one type of interpretation of the texts among the participants; that is, a generic ‘Wayuu’ one. Rather, we see evidence of what Stanley Fish defined as different interpretive communities, or in Stuart Hall’s terms different decodings of the texts.⁶³

Moreover, it is not certain that the affirmative answers are solely the product of a ‘reification’ of Wayuu identity via an ‘anthropological reality’ propagated in Spanish and, concomitantly, of a language shift and the demise of Wayuunaiki. As Ferrero Botero admits many students in the school in which he worked also return to their *rancherías* and learn Wayuu culture through a more direct ‘traditional’

⁶² See footnotes 24 and 25.

⁶³ Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in this Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge, MA: HUP, 1990 [1980]); Stuart Hall, ‘Encoding/Decoding’, in *Culture, Media, Language*, eds. Stuart Hall, Dorothy Hobson, Andrew Lowe, and Paul Willis (London: Hutchinson, 1980), pp. 34-50.

enculturation.⁶⁴ I was informed by Míledy Rocío Jusayu, the Wayuu teacher who assisted me in collecting the data, that this was the case for many students in the schools we visited. Thus some of their education about what it means to be Wayuu occurs in a place where the influences of ethno-education and anthropological commodification of Wayuu identity are very likely minimal.

Extebarria, Domínguez, Labarca and Oquendo, Rodríguez Cadena and Mejía Rodríguez have observed that the Wayuu predominately use Wayuunaiki in this kind of context.⁶⁵ Their conclusions are based on the sociolinguistic theory of diglossia, in which bilinguals are thought to separately employ the different languages they speak in response to the demands of particular social contexts. These studies confirm that Wayuunaiki is not being replaced by the Spanish language.⁶⁶ The relationship between them is simply changing within the socio-linguistic contexts of bilingualism.⁶⁷ Another fruitful way of analysing the participants' responses, then, is

⁶⁴ 'Empowerment Through Ethno-education', p. 192. Rancherías are the dwellings for wayuu familial communities, which are associated with the clan lineage of a matriarch.

⁶⁵ See footnote 52.

⁶⁶ See footnotes 8 and 10 for the figures of Wayuunaiki speakers and Wayuu bilinguals. It is interesting to note here that the results of Extebarria's survey indicate that 86% of those surveyed prefer to speak Wayuunaiki and 70% use their native language in all contexts and events ('Bilingualismo y realidad sociolingüística', p. 291). Interestingly Domínguez *et al* found that the majority of university students who they surveyed expressed a favourable attitude towards Wayuunaiki when used in traditional Wayuu contexts and to written forms of the language ('Actitudes lingüísticas de los estudiantes wayuu'). These studies show that the younger members of the generation surveyed view their native language in prestigious terms and as 'un instrumento de resistencia étnica' (Extebarria, 'Bilingualismo y realidad sociolingüística', p. 285). However, the results concerning students' attitudes towards written expressions of Wayuunaiki were contradicted by Extebarria's survey (p. 285), which indicates that attitudes vary in different contexts.

⁶⁷ See Van Leenden's observation cited in Exteberría 'Bilingualismo y realidad sociolingüística', p. 292.

through theories of bilingualism. Code-switching, for example, proposes that bilinguals often make ‘use of more than one language in the course of a single episode’.⁶⁸ Luis Oquendo has observed cases of code-switching between Spanish and Wayuunaiki.⁶⁹ Evidence of this type of bilingual employment can be found in the poetry of Wayuu writers, such as Miguel Ángel López Hernández and José Ángel Fernández Silva Wuliana among others.⁷⁰ It was also a relatively regular feature of the responses to the survey. Some Wayuu participants responded, partially, with Wayuunaiki phrases, such as ‘lapü’ (dream) and ‘anajawaa jipuu’ (second burial). The survey itself also became part of this vibrant toing and froing between the sociolinguistic spheres of Spanish and Wayuunaiki. On the malecón of Riohacha, for example, I often approached whole families who were selling their artisanal goods, which included three to four generations. The survey generally sparked interest in the younger members of the group (from 6 to 20 years of age), perhaps due to the fact I offered a basic English class in exchange for their participation. There soon ensued a debate and conversation between the older and younger generations (both of whom employed Wayuunaiki and Spanish) until they decided on their collective answer. This social dynamic demonstrated that the Wayuu in certain contexts communicate with each other via combinations of both languages.

It is beyond the remit of this article to examine different variants of code-switching, which have been theorised in complex and frequently contradictory ways. I would instead like to emphasise the fact that code-switching describes a situation in which bilinguals combine grammatical and lexical aspects of two languages, and that it is extremely difficult, according to many studies, to separate the internal or psychic

⁶⁸ Monica Heller, ‘Introduction’ in *Codeswitching: Anthropological and Sociolinguistic Perspectives*, ed. by Monica Heller (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 1988.), pp. 1-24 (p. 1).

⁶⁹ Luis Oquendo, ‘La pragmática del code-switching: guajiro-español’, *Lingua Americana*, Año IV N° 7 (2000), 25-51.

⁷⁰ See poems in Duchesne Winter, *Hermosos invisibles*.

source of the two languages.⁷¹ These observations are emphasised and expounded in new a relatively new subset of code-switching: translanguaging.

The theory of translanguaging is influenced by Fernando Ortriz's concept of transculturation, which profiles the product of the meeting of two cultures as a dynamic, conflictive and constant fusion of elements from both sides, in contrast to the theory of acculturation which tends to emphasise a greater loss through adaptation of the 'weaker' or colonised peoples.⁷² In this vision of bilingualism the

⁷¹ See for example François Grosjean, 'The Bilingual's Language Modes', in *One Mind, Two Languages: Bilingual Language Processing*, ed. by J. Nicol (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), pp. 1-22; Michel Paradis, *A Neurolinguistic Theory of Bilingualism* (Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2004.); Kees de Bot, 'A Bilingual Production Model: Levelt's 'Speaking' Model Adapted', *Applied Linguistics*, 13 (1992), 1-24; Ton Dijkstra, 'Bilingual Word Recognition and Lexical Access' in *Handbook of Bilingualism: Psycholinguistic Approaches*, eds. Judith F. Kroll and Anna M.B. De Groot (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.), pp. 179-201.

⁷² Fernando Ortiz, *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar* ed. by Enrico Mario Santí (Madrid: Ediciones Cátedra, 2002 [1940]). Ortiz's text challenged the concept of acculturation: a term designated by North American anthropologist Melville Herskovits to describe the process of contact between different cultural groups that leads to the acquisition of certain cultural traditions. For Ortiz Herskovits' concept was too static because it described the cultural syncretisms as final products and, moreover, as a process in which the uncultured peoples of the world assimilate and adapt to Western cultural values. In contrast, Ortiz argues that indigenous and regional cultures are more resilient than this model allows and that a more accurate picture of the impact between internal and external cultures is one of mutual and dynamic metamorphoses resulting in a fusion or syncretisation of the two traditions, in which features of the indigenous/regional tradition persist strongly (pp. 254-60). Ángel Rama adapts Ortiz's theory in order to study examples of transculturation between western/Hispanic literary traditions and Quechua oral traditions in the novels of the Peruvian José María Arguedas (*Transculturación narrativa en América latina*). His study focuses on the ways in which Arguedas inscribes aspects of the Quechua's *cosmovisión* and other cultural elements into the Western genre of the

two or more languages exist as a dynamic, interconnected, holistic repertoire.⁷³ The model proposes a linguistic reality in which bilingual communities live in and between the languages they speak. Moreover, in such bilingual contexts, according to Mignolo and Schiwy, 'language in translation can also become the means of transport for other knowledges and memories'.⁷⁴ These linguistic theories reflect the social reality of a great many Wayuu bilinguals today who enter and exit (i.e. exist in and between) the 'two spheres' of Wayuu and Hispanic societies, whose intricate and myriad nodes of contact have created and continue to create different types of transcultural fusions, losses, as well as conflicts.

It is in this context, then, that we should also view the results of the survey and the role of ethno-education. Ethno-education is, undoubtedly, part of a process in which Wayuu identity is 'recreated' via an anthropological reality that the Wayuu internalise and perform in return for recognition by the state and economic benefits, as Ferrero Botero observes. For this reason it is conceived by many in La Guajira 'as one of the main mechanisms to achieve local self-determination' and to ensure the survival of Wayuu practices and traditions.⁷⁵ It is also partially implicated, therefore, in extending the influence of Spanish in the Wayuu community. Yet, as we have seen, many Wayuu students have the opportunity to learn about Wayuu traditions in a sociolinguistic context in which Wayuunaiki predominates. Ethno-educational schools and universities can, therefore, be understood via the related theories of transculturation and translanguaging. They are sites in which in different linguistic

novel in order to produce a culturally hybrid text. Recently Walter Mignolo and Freya Schiwy have adapted the theory of transculturation to challenge one of the most important tenets of Western translation studies: the separation and incommensurability between languages, which they view as a product of colonial thought and the neo-colonial global order ('Double Translation: Transculturation and the Colonial Difference', *Información y Comunicación, Revista Científica*, 4 [2008], 12-34).

⁷³ Ofelia García and Li Wei, *Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2014).

⁷⁴ 'Double Translation', p. 31.

⁷⁵ Botero, 'Empowerment Through Ethno-education', p. 175.

realities or versions of Wayuu identity compete, come into conflict, exist in parallel and without doubt combine or fuse in and in between Spanish and Wayuunaiki.

As such, the data from the reader-response survey should also be interpreted from this perspective, especially in relation to the informal educational group cohort who have had very little, if any, contact with ethno-education. Here a reasonably high percentage recognised Wayuu symbolic narratives in the texts, especially in two, four and five, which received 60%, 60% and 63% of affirmative responses. These results show that ethno-education is not the only influential factor.

If, as the theories of translinguaging and code switching suggest, bilinguals not only regularly combine different linguistic aspects, but also, as García and Wei propose, constantly produce and interpret signs and symbols in between the languages they speak, and across different modalities (i.e. textual and oral utterances),⁷⁶ then it is possible that some participants experienced the texts in this way and responded accordingly. In other words, the responses of the participants are not necessarily solely an indication of the inscription of an 'anthropological reality' produced mainly in Spanish textbooks and, therefore, of a language shift, but also of the way in which Wayuu bilinguals are accustomed to articulate and interpret signs and symbols across the sociolinguistic spheres of Wayuunaiki and Spanish.

In conclusion, the objective of this article was to examine the relationship between GGM's texts, and, therefore, the Spanish language, and narratives of Wayuu cultural identity. The data of the survey strongly suggest that the Spanish language, as much as Wayuunaiki, plays an important role in the production and maintenance of a sense of 'Wayuness' among many of those who were surveyed. Yet we have also seen that Wayuu identity is in reality a network of different narratives. It is the political strategies, state and local, that 'recreate' Wayuu identity via discourses of ethno-education, ethno-tourism and indigenous rights and autonomy. It is also the signifying customs that Wayuu individuals and groups practise that lie outside of the discursive operations of the state and local political movements and educational policies. Finally, it is the syncretism and the conflicts that exist between these

⁷⁶ *Translinguaging*, p. 22 and p. 28.

different versions, and the different ways in which those who define themselves (and those who are defined as Wayuu) interact with and express these narratives of cultural identity. It is within this web of discourses that Spanish and Wayuunaiki function as markers of Wayuu identity and linguistic vehicles to express and interpret symbolic narratives associated with that identity. GGM's texts, as we have seen, are in part the product of these multifaceted processes. According to Moreno Blanco, the writer's novels are literary examples of transculturation, thanks mainly to the fact that he was brought up with two Wayuu nannies as a young boy, but also, as I have argued, due to the influence of his grandmother. Seen in this light, some of the most canonical novels ostensibly published in the language of Cervantes, can be profitably construed as being yet another expression of the multiple and dynamic pathways that exist in and between the sociolinguistic networks of Spanish and Wayuunaiki.

Table 1:

	Low Level 40	Secondary Level 83	University Level 25	TOTAL % RESPONSES INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS OF TO
1 DT, PL, AD	13/40 = 33%	53/83 = 64%	19/25 = 76%	85/148 = 57%
2 DT, DL, DR, PR	24/40 = 60%	51/83 = 61%	18/25 = 72%	93/148 = 63%
3 DL	0/40 = 0%	5/83 = 6%	7/25 = 28%	12/148 = 8%
4 DT, DR, PL, PR, AD	24/40 = 60%	57/83 = 69%	20/25 = 80%	101/148 = 68%
5 DT, DR, PR	25/40 = 63%	60/83 = 72%	20/25 = 80%	105/148 = 71%
6 DT, DR, AD	16/40 = 40%	18/83 = 22%	6/25 = 24%	40/148 = 27%
% of all questions answered per group	Total = 43%	Total = 49%	Total = 60%	Total 436/888 = 49%

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