Introduction

The present report describes the activities carried out during the period January 1995-December 1996 under the project "A Tzeltal Maya Dictionary", funded by FAMSI.

As described in the grant application, the aim of this project was creating an extensive computerized lexical database on Tzeltal Maya. Tzeltal is the main Mayan language of Chiapas, México, closely related to the Cholan languages of the Classic Maya Lowlands, and quite possibly the language whose ancestor is recorded in the inscriptions of the Classic Maya site of Toniná, in Chiapas. Understanding the lexicon of this language, for which no full-scale description is so far available, is essential to the study of the Classic Maya script. The project was intended as the first stage of a longer-term research plan aimed at elaborating a comprehensive dictionary of Tzeltal. It consisted in assembling, systematically organizing, and computerizing the existing lexical materials on the Tenejapa dialect of Tzeltal Maya (the Tzeltal dialect with the most extensive documentation), as well as other linguistic and cultural information contained in ethnographies of Tenejapa Tzeltal communities, as the basis on which to
build for the later extensive lexicographic research. Materials on other Tzeltal dialects were also to be entered for comparison and as aids to further research on Tenejapa Tzeltal.

The project was carried out by the PI (Maffi), then at University of California at Berkeley, in collaboration with Dr. Martha Macri of University of California at Davis. Dr. Macri freely contributed her Mayanist as well as computer database expertise in support of the project. She also provided some of the computer equipment used for the project, in particular a scanner. The project also employed two research assistants, Ms. Heidi Altman and Mr. John Whitmer, both Anthropology graduate students at UC Davis. Altman and Whitmer were involved in scanning part of the materials (see below), cleaning up the scanned files, and performing the conversion of these files to a computer database in the Panorama application for Macintosh. Additional tasks consisted in entering ethnographic information contained in the body of some of the texts listed below. The PI worked at 25% time over the 24 months of the project. She was based in Berkeley and paid monthly visits to Davis to work with the other collaborators.

Submitted 10/01/1997 by:
Luisa Maffi
maffi@terralingua.org

About the Project

The project elaborated on an initial database consisting in the electronic version of the ms. A Tenejapa Tzeltal Dictionary (Berlin and Kaufman 1963), computerized by Maffi (see Berlin and Kaufman 1988), and used for the present project by permission of the authors. The database, devised by Dr. Macri, organizes lexemes by root, while allowing for sorting of the data by lexical item; root and stem classes are indicated, followed by English and Spanish glosses, botanical or zoological scientific name (if appropriate), semantic domain, examples of the lexeme in context, comments (any additional linguistic and/or ethnographic information on the lexeme). The Berlin and Kaufman database included over 4,500 records.

To this database, the following materials were added during tenure of the FAMSI grant:

1. Glossary of Tenejapa Tzeltal medical terminology from Maffi’s doctoral research on Tzeltal ethnomedicine (Maffi 1994). About 1200 records are included in this set.
2. A list of Tenejapa Tzeltal illness names, also from Maffi (1994), consisting in almost 650 records.

3. Two glossaries of Tenejapa Tzeltal illnesses and theft definitions, again from Maffi (1994), for a total of over 380 items.

4. Two lists of Tenejapa Tzeltal anatomical terminology, from Stross (1976) and Berlin and Castro (1988), for a total of about 550 items.

5. A list of Tenejapa Tzeltal plant names, from Berlin, Breedlove, and Raven (1974). The data in the main index, including Tzeltal plant names and their botanical identifications, were scanned and converted to database format, yielding over 2,400 items.

6. A list of Tenejapa Tzeltal animal names, from Hunn (1977). The same procedure was followed as in the previous case, yielding about 1,000 items.

7. A list of Tenejapa Tzeltal numeral classifiers, from Berlin (1968), also scanned and converted, resulting in almost 530 items.

The sum of all these databases amounted to over 11,200 items including repetitions. However, no repeated forms were discarded, since glosses needed to be compared and cross-checked and dictionary entries had to be set up, synthesizing the appropriate information from the various sources. In addition, the extensive textual materials from Maffi (1994) were converted to word-by-word format, as sources of new lexical items and/or additional meanings. Once duplicates were eliminated, these texts yielded close to 1,730 items, bringing the total of entries in the database to 12,930. Each item in the database was coded as to source for easy retrieval of the original.

Separate databases were created for lexical items derived from existing glossaries of other dialects of Tzeltal (to be checked with Tenejapa Tzeltal speakers to assess their applicability to the Tenejapa dialect): for the Bachajón dialect, Slocum and Gerdel (1971), including almost 2,700 items; for the Oxchuc dialect, Sarles (ms. 1961), of about 1,200 items. These glossaries also required scanning and converting.

Data entry of this massive amount of materials and quality control on data entry accuracy took up most of the project’s time during the period funded by FAMSI. Each of the sources presented specific problems for conversion to database format. This was particularly the case with Berlin et al. (1974) and Hunn (1977), respectively the sources of Tenejapa Tzeltal ethnobotanical and ethnozoological terminology. The glossaries contained in these two volumes are structured in such a way as to reflect the native taxonomic organization of Tzeltal ethnobiological nomenclature (similar, although not identical to, Western systematic biological taxonomy). In other words, the information was structured along several increasingly inclusive levels of classification.

These glossaries also provide correspondences between named Tzeltal plant and animal species and equivalent Latin binomials according to systematic biological taxonomy. Such correspondences are rarely one-to-one, but most commonly one-to-
many or many-to-one (one named Tzeltal species corresponding to more than one biological taxon, or several Tzeltal taxa corresponding to one biological species). It was essential to maintain as much of this information as possible in the dictionary database, as a part of the ethnographic information on the corresponding lexical entries. However, this presented special challenges in moving from the scanned texts to database conversion. This work was completed on the ethnozoological data, while it is still in progress on the more extensive and far more complex ethnobotanical data.

Control of data entry quality was completed on the other data sets. Maffi, Altman and Whitmer also updated the transcription of lexical items according to the current Tzeltal Maya orthography. Maffi began the task of initial checking of glosses and comparison of repeated lexical items from different sources. Macri undertook the task of cross-checking or identifying roots and root classes for the items in the database.

At this stage, Maffi and Macri are seeking some additional funding for a research assistant to complete the work on the ethnobotanical database. Subsequently, they plan to elaborate a research proposal to conduct the main body of research for the compilation of a comprehensive Tzeltal dictionary. This will require further analytical work on the existing database and further data entry from ethnographic sources, as well as fieldwork to check the existing data with Mayan collaborators and to collect additional data, especially in semantic domains not well covered in the available sources.

**Tzeltal of Tenejapa: Dictionary Draft 11/97**

lajtz'apil   armpit  body part [skin: apon chakal, batz'il chakal, ixim chakal, jojtel, nelab]
lajun        lajun ten
laktz'un     lak  push through it, to (barrier)
laktz'un     lak  break through it, to (barrier)
lam          layer  body part qualifier [skin: cha'lam ejk'e'chil;???: cha'lam tzotz]
lam te'       remedy, plant
lamaj         lam  calm down, to
lamaj         calm down  illness, general; illness gravity [gint/wom: ib'un k'inal/xexjun k'in; sleep: jowil wayel]
lamal         lam  calm
lamal         lam  gathered
laman         lam  stack it, to
lap [k'u'(il)] lap  put it on, to (clothes)
lapal julu that goes from one side to the other symptom [gint/wom: yik'al ch'ujtil]
lapis lapis pencil
laso laso rope
lata lata tin can
latre latre brick
latz latz stack it evenly
latz ba form one on top of another, in heaps symptom [skin: ch'ojk]
latzal latz stacked
latzalz(il) latz wrinkles
lawux lawux nail
laxaxet feel very tingling symptom [skin: cham ch'ich'ubel andr: tzu atil]
laxaxetik okil tingling sensation before numbness in whole body
laxlajet be tingling in various places symptom [skin: ti'lajan bak'etalil]
le le
le le look for it, to
le look for [remedy] illness, general
le si' le fetch firewood
le si' looking for firewood cause of illness, collecting firewood
le'p'oj peel symptom [skin: k'a'el, sak'al ja']
lebeleb round spots [?] one next to the other symptom [skin: sak pejtz]
lebe[y] smul le slander s.o., to
leboj le hunt, to
lech lech 1 make it (thin, leaf-like object)
lech lech 2 milk
lechuka lechuka lettuce
lek lek good
lek good; well illness, general; symptom [resp: ijk'al obal]
lek ta pasel lek easy
lek' lek' lap it, to (liquid)
lek' lek' lick it, to (liquid)
lek'ubel
lek'ubel atil
lek'ubel atil      ma sna’
lek'ubel sitil      sleep in eyes
lek'ubel ti’il      secretion of the lips [pellagra?] illness name, skin; relatedness [skin: chin]
lek'ubel ti’il      cheilitis/scaly lips
lek’ubel ti’il/ijk’ ti’ubel  Chikan k’an ta ya xp’alin yilel te banti yabenal jti’tik, sok ay me sak ya
spas sba, o ya x’ijk’ub te ti’il, sok joyob nax welel lok’el yilel te yabenal jti’tik.
Se ve que parece que se pela en los labios, y a veces se ponen blancos,
o se vuelven negros los labios, y todo el tiempo esta puntado afuera el
labio. Treatment: ma’yuk spoxil 9bis.3 Grupo swenta camel te ayik
sk’uxul ta chikinil, ta sitil, ta eil. Una clase de enfermedades que tienen
dolor en los oídos, en los ojos, en los dientes: Jten camel te ya xyaxub
ti’il yu’un, sok ay ya sakub yilel.
Una clase de enfermedades que los labios se ponen verdes
obscuros/negros, y a veces se ponen blancos.

lekil        lek  good
lem          lem  ignite it (flammable materials)
lem          lem  shine, to
lem          lem  glitter
lem          lem  glow, to
lem          lem  gleam, to
lememet      burn intensely  symptom [gint: k’ajk’al nuk’;???: lemlun o’tanil]
lemlajan      see lemlun o’tanil; [‘the heart burns in various places’?] Illness
name,???
lemlun        burn every now and then  symptom [gint: k’ajk’al nuk’; skin: schuyel
akanil; urinary: k’ux chuxil]
lemlun        ‘the heart burns repeatedly’  illness name,???
o’tanil      o’tanil
lemlun        o’tanil
lemlun        o’tanil
lemlun        o’tanil
lemlun        Chikan xlememet ya xlijk ta ko’tantik ta mero sbakel sni’ ko’tantik, sok
o’tanil/     ay me ya xbajt ta joltik te sti’awe sok ta kakantik, ja’ te me ya xlijk
lemlajan      jk’ajk’altike.
lemlun        Se siente que empieza a arder bastante en el pecho en el [abajo del]
o’tanil      mero esternón, y a veces el dolor se va a la cabeza y a los pies, es
cuando nos enojamos. Treatment: yakan k’ulub wamal (spisil) sok yak’
tz’i’ wamal (spisil) sok inójo wamal (yabenal) 1.9 Grupo swenta puro
schamel ch’ujtil. Grupo de puras enfermedades de barriga/estómago:
Jten chamel lom k’ux ta o’tanil sok bayel ta kum sti’aw.
Una clase de enfermedades que dan mucho dolor de corazón/estómago y hay muchos diferentes dolores.

leon choj leon mountain lion
leon choj leon puma
leon choj leon panther
leon choj leon cougar
leon choj leon catamount

lep lep carry it, to (loads on the back)
lep’ajtik that are spotted symptom [skin: sak pejtz]
les ba develop, spread [in round shape?] symptom [skin; ch’ojk;???: chamel ta eil]
lesla ba develop, spread thickly [in round shape?] symptom [skin; ch’ujch’ul chin, sak pejtz;???: chamel ta eil]
lew lew open it, to (esp.legs)
lich lich flutter it in the wind, to
lich’ lich’ spread it (clothing in the sun)
lijk lik 1 begin, to
lujch Treatment; chik’il ta k’ajk’ sok kusbil ta yach’il tzeke 1 [quemado con fuego y limpiado con enagua nueva] 9.2 Grupo swenta chamel te ayik sk’uxul ta chikinil, ta sitil, ta eil. Una clase de enfermedades que tienen dolor en los oídos, en los ojos, en los dientes: Jten chamel te ay bayel sk’uxul ta chikinil sok ay sk’alel. Una clase de enfermedades que tiene mucho dolor en los oídos y tiene calentura.
lujtaj lut 1 be joined together, to
lujtaj lut 1 be joined together, to
luk luk use it, to (hook-like instrument)
luk chay luk fish, to
lukum lukum earthworm
lukum worms illness name, gint; cause of illness, animal
lukum intestinal worms
lukum Chikan puro k’ux ch’ujtil, sok ma’yuk sbujtz’ jwe’eltik yu’un, ay me ya xburaj tal jch’ujtitk yu’un, sok chikan ya sakubotik yu’un. Se siente puro dolor de barriga, y la comida no tiene sabor por eso, a veces se abulta la barriga por eso, y se ve que nos enflaquecemos por
eso. Treatment -axux (ye’tal) sok kajk’an (spisil) sok alwéna (spisil) mayil (sbak) [sok nantzin sok salpat te’] nantzin (spat) salpat te’ (spat) elemonex (sbak) sok lula (yabenal) 1.5 Grupo swenta puro schamel ch’ujtil. Grupo de puras enfermedades de barriga/estómago: Jten chamel ya yak’ k’ux ch’ujtil, sok ayik schanul ta ch’ujtil, ya stojkes bayel chamel te ch’ujtil.
Una clase de enfermedad que da dolor de vientre, y hay animalitos en la barriga, produce muchas enfermedades en la barriga.

lukum akanil
lukum ta
lum lum town
lum lum earth
lumil tokal lum fog
lumilal lum soil
lumilal lum earth
lumilal lum ground
luna luna (clan name)
luna tzu tzu 1 (surname)
lunaj ch’ajkax (surname)
ch’ajkax
lunex(tik) lunex Monday
lup lup take it out of container, to
lup (ja’) lup dip it out (water with dipper)
lura lura rue (Ruta graveolens)
lut grab by biting; put in mouth remedy administration
lut’ lut’ close it (opening, by sewing it shut)
lut (il) lut 2 back of knee
lutil knee, back
lutil back of knee body part [skin: jojtel]
lutlun sitil twitching of eyelid
Tzeltal of Tenejapa: Published Vocabulary Hunn (1977)

p'ajsum chan 'cut at slanted angle snake’ Tropidodipsas fischeri [fauna]
p'ejel nujkul chan cat-eyed snake, ‘round, solid skin snake’ Leptodeira septentrionalis not observed locally [fauna]
p'ejel nujkul lyre snake, ‘round, solid skin snake’ Trimorphodon biscutatus [fauna]
p'ejel nujkul 'round, solid skin snake’ Xenodon rabdocephalus ethnographer’s invented association [fauna]
p'ilich small, short-horned grasshopper Acrididae sp., immature [fauna]
p'ilich small, short-horned grasshopper Acridinae spp. [fauna]
p'ilich small, short-horned grasshopper Cyrtacanthacridinae spp. [fauna]
p'ilich small, short-horned grasshopper Oedipodinae spp. [fauna]
p'ilich small, short-horned grasshopper Pygromorphia: Spenarium sp. [fauna]
p'ilich small, short-horned grasshoppers Acrididae in part [fauna]
p'ilich small, short-horned grasshoppers Acrididae in part Residual category [Fauna: grasshopper]
p'itp’it White-throated Flycatcher Empidonax albigularis naming variation [fauna]
p'itp’it Empidonax Flycatchers Empidonax naming variation [fauna]
p'itp’it Pine Flycatcher Empidonax affinis naming variation [fauna]
p'itp’it Yellowish Flycatchers Empidonax flavescens naming variation [fauna]
p'itp’it Buff-breasted Flycatcher Empidonax fulvifrons naming variation [fauna]
p'o'ch'in us flit flies, 'swarming small fly’ Chloropidae said to swarm open wounds [fauna]
p'um te’ treehoppers, 'tree chewer’ Homoptera: Membracoideae [fauna]
p'um te’ leafhoppers, 'tree chewers’ Homoptera: Cicadellidae [fauna]
pa’ka roof of the mouth stem refers primarily to animal anatomy [anatomical term]
pajal matz' Boat-billed Flycatcher, 'sour corn gruel’ Megarynchus pitangua ethnographer’s putative category, not elicited from locals [fauna]
pajal matz’ Social Flycatcher, 'sour corn gruel’ Myiozetetes similis [fauna]
pajal matz’ Great Kiskadee, 'sour corn gruel’ Pitangus sulphuratus [fauna]
pajch'am  palm, sole  stem refers primarily to animal anatomy  [anatomical term]
palomax  domestic pigeon, Rock Dove  Columba livia (domestic)  introduced, borrowed word [fauna]
pan  Keel-billed Toucan  Ramphastos sulfuratus  [fauna]
pan  toucans  CHORDATA: Ramphastidae  [fauna]
pan  Emerald Toucanet  Aulacorhynchus prasinus  [fauna]
pan  Collared Aracari  Pteroglossus torquatus  [fauna]
pat  back (plant: nonleathery bark, underside of leaf)  stem refers primarily to animal anatomy  [anatomical term]
patzan sijk'  Ninia diademata  [fauna]
pay  skunk Mustelidae: Mephitinae spp.  edible, flesh 'hot'  [fauna]
pay sit mut  Common Bush-Tanager, 'skunk-faced bird'  Chlorospingus ophthalmicus (Thraupidae)  [fauna]
pech'  Mallard  Anser sp. (domestic)  [fauna]
pech'  Muscovy  Cairina moschata (domestic)  [fauna]
pech'  Domestic Mallard  Anas platyrhynchos (domestic)  [fauna]
pech'ul ja'  Black-bellied Tree-Duck, 'water duck'  Anatidae: Dendrocygna autumnalis  [fauna]
pech'ul ja'  Blue-winged Teal (female), 'water duck'  Anas discors  [fauna]
pech'ul ja'  'water duck'  Anas acuta  [fauna]
pech'ul ja'  'water duck'  Anas americana  [fauna]
pech'ul ja'  grebes, 'water duck'  Podicipedidae  [fauna]
pech'ul ja'  American Coot, 'water duck'  Rallidae: Fulica americana  [fauna]
pech'ul ja'  wild duck, 'water duck'  Anatidae  [fauna]
pech'ul ja'  Ruddy Duck, 'water duck'  Anatidae: Oxyura jamaicensis  [fauna]
pech'ul ja'  'water duck'  Ceryle torquata  [fauna]
pech'ul ja'  Belted Kingfisher, 'water duck'  Alcedinidae: Ceryle alcyon  [fauna]
pech'ul ja'  'water duck'  Chloroceryle amazona  [fauna]
pech'ul ja'  Least Grebe, 'water duck'  Podicipedidae: Podiceps dominicus  [fauna]
pech'ul ja'  Pied-billed Grebe, 'water duck'  Podicipedidae: Podilymbus podiceps  [fauna]
pech'ul ja'  American Coot  Rallidae, Fulica americana  [fauna]
péchu   breast  (anatomical term)
pejpen  swallowtailed butterfly Papilionoidea: Papilio polyxenes [fauna]
pejpen  swallowtailed butterfly Papilionoidea: Parides iphidamas [fauna]
pejpen  butterfly Macrolepidoptera residual category, unnamed residual classified by phenotypic descriptors of color, size, pattern and texture [fauna]
pejpen  Sister butterfly Nymphalidae: Anartia fatima [fauna]
pejpen  butterfly Diaethria anna [fauna]
pejpen  butterfly Dynamine sp. [fauna]
pejpen  Checkerspot butterfly Nymphalidae: Euphydryas sp. [fauna]
pejpen  butterfly Hamadryas feronia [fauna]
pejpen  Buckeye butterfly Nymphalidae: Junonia lavinia [fauna]
pejpen  Mourning cloak butterfly Nymphalidae: Nymphalis antiopa (adult) [fauna]
pejpen  butterfly Prepona laertes [fauna]
pejpen  Lady butterfly Nymphalidae: Vanessa carye [fauna]
pejpen  Gulf fritillary butterfly Nymphalidae: Dione vanillae [fauna]
pejpen  monarch butterfly Danaidae: Danaus plexippus [fauna]
pejpen  sulphur butterfly Colias sp. [fauna]
pejpen  butterfly Eurema lisa [fauna]
pejpen  butterfly Phoebis eubule [fauna]
pejpen  white butterfly Pieris sp. [fauna]
pejpen  butterfly Synchloe callidice [fauna]
pejpen  satyr butterfly Satyridae: Taygetis sp. [fauna]
pejpen  butterfly [fauna]
pejpen  butterfly Lymnas alena [fauna]
pejpen  butterfly [fauna]
pejpen  butterfly [fauna]
pejpen  moth residual category [fauna]
pejpen  butterfly Plebiinae [fauna]
Sources Cited

Berlin, Brent

Berlin, Brent, and Terrence Kaufman

Berlin, Brent, and Terrence Kaufman, with Luisa Maffi

Berlin, Brent, Dennis E. Breedlove, and Peter H. Raven

Berlin, Elois Ann, and Enrique Castro

Hunn, Eugene S.

Maffi, Luisa

Sarles, Harvey
1961  Monosyllable Dictionary of the Tzeltal Language (ms.)

Slocum, Marianna C., and Florence Gerdel

Stross, Brian