

“Yucatec Maya Sign Language [msd] (A language of Mexico)

- **Alternate Names:** Chican Sign Language, Lengua de Señas Chicana, LSChicana, Nohya Sign Language
- **Population:** 100% monolingual in deaf population. L2 users: 400 (1999 H. Smith). 17 deaf people out of a village of 720 (approximately 2.4%) in Chican, the primary location for which information is available. (Escobedo 2012, Zeshan et al 2013) Numbers elsewhere unknown.
- **Location:** South central Yucatán, many in north Quintana Roo; signing is widespread throughout Yucatán peninsula but degree of variation has not been assessed. The primary village, Chican, Tixméhuac, Yucatán was formerly called ‘Nohya’ in some publications (a pseudonym thought necessary at first to protect the deaf population). Also in other isolated villages, at least 2 in Oxkutzcab, 4 in Xyatil, and 1 in Carillo Puerto. (1999 H. Smith, Zeshan et al. 2013).
- **Language Status:** 6a (Vigorous).
- **Dialects:** Dialect variation outside of Chican has not been assessed. Distinct from Mexican Sign Language [mfs] used elsewhere in Mexico (1998 R. Johnson, Zeshan et al 2013).
- **Language Use:** Widely used by hearing people as well as deaf. Hearing people speak Yucatec Maya Sign Language and Spanish [spa]. Reportedly well integrated into local society, so presumably used in all domains in which deaf people participate. All ages.
- **Language Development:** Literacy rate in L2: 0%. Some Deaf children from Chican attend a nearby special education school, which makes little use of signs.
- **Writing:** Unwritten [Qaax].
- **Other Comments:** Hereditary deafness.”

Lewis, M. Paul, Gary F. Simons, and Charles D. Fennig (eds.)

2015. Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Eighteenth edition. Dallas, Texas: SIL International. Online version: <http://www.ethnologue.com>.

Related Reading

Johnson, Robert E.

1991 Sign Language, Culture and Community in a Traditional Yucatec Maya Village. Sign Language Studies 461.

Le Guen, Olivier

2012 An Exploration in the Domain of Time: From Yucatec Maya Time Gestures to Yucatec Maya Sign Language Time Signs. Sign Languages in Village Communities 4: 209-250.

Escobedo Delgado, Cesar Ernesto

2012 Chican Sign Language: A Sociolinguistic Sketch. Sign Languages in Village Communities 4: 377-380.

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