Lowland Chontal
How I Became a Midwife (Wañipaya laypiñik partera)

This is a narrative by Adelaida Espinoza, recorded in June 2006, speaking Lowland Chontal. It described how she became a midwife by a twist of fate.

Note: The first line of every unit (blue text with a line number) is a hyperlink that will play an audio file.

1 Pues yo este iya’, jle’ saya’ ‘ipa viente años laypityñe,
Well I, when I was 20 years old

2 pues iya’sa simpa laka’no’ pafl’ma sa jojnawa laka’no’.
well I saw a woman about to give birth, the woman was crying

3 Jweduy sa nee naasa tyux’ma
She was wanting someone to help with the birth (to grab her)

4 maypa saya’.
and I went there.

5 Kwaygota saya’ kwa laka’no’, tyuxwayjla’!
When I got there, the woman says, come and grab!

6 Maaya’ panga mipaya’ porque iya’maane ‘intyay’.
I can’t, I said, because I’m pregnant my self.

7 Ja’ñi ligero fa mayuujla’!
No, quickly, get in here!

8 Jaana mipa saya’.
Alright, I told her.

9 Jaape saya’, fa’a. fa’a saya’ ‘eepa laymane’ jaape liku’u.
Where I, here, I put my hands here on her abdomen.

10 F’inchijpa saya’ liku’u,
I squeezed her abdomen,
kon jaa’le amasaya’ f’inchijpa laka’no’ como saya’ kasa, and with that small pressure on the woman, because I was standing (above her)

poypa la’wa. out came the child.

Joypa maane sage la’wa paf’pa. Just like that she gave birth to her baby.

Joypa kaj’miposi It arrived by itself.

Pangta sa la’wa, la’wamulyi. The child was born, a little boy.

Leñipa saya’ la’wa, I received the baby,

joypa spoypaya’ liñe’wich’ale, I spread out its little blanket,

tyijpe saya’ ñoypa. and I lay it there.

Joypa saya’ ñoypa la’wa, Once I had lain the baby down,

iya chasa pasepa saya’ laykwenta. I really started thinking about it.

Kopaya’ tonjka’masa ‘eeday’ lakajl’no’ paf’kilya’. I said to myself, so that’s how women do it, giving birth.

Komo sa ja’ñi ayxiñak’. Because I didn’t know.

Iya’ joypa maane sa ‘eelya’ ‘intyay’, ‘ipa mage muutl’a layku’u. I myself was pregnant, five months along.

Joypa sa mayñaypa saya’ So then I was about to leave,

‘wi’kopa kway’ma, kwaytya sal partero. and I saw the midwife arriving.

Aaaj, kwa el partero, fa’amasa laka’no’. Oh, says the midwife, here’s the woman now.

Fa’amasal partera, aytya ima’ joy’kixpa. The midwife is here, yet you sent for me.
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28 Ja’ñi taata mipaya’,
No sir, I said to him,

29 maaya’ taata partera.
I’m not a midwife, sir.

30 Kway’ma ñiya’ ‘wi’kuy laka’no’.
I just came to visit the woman.

31 Tonjsa’le mayñaypaya’, mayñaypa saya’ layñejetl’.
And then I just took off, I went home.