



BENEMÉRITA UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE PUEBLA

**PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS
FROM A BILINGUAL SCHOOL ABOUT MAZATECO
IN SAN MATEO YOLOXOCHITLÁN.**

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Mexico ranks within the ten countries with most languages spoken in the world (Ethnologue, 2019). It possesses a repertoire of sixty-eight languages. One language can have different variants that diverge from its structure, intonation or sounds, word formation, grammar, lexicon and sociolinguistic identity (which is represented by sociocultural structures, social spaces and behavior based on the identity). That differs from the users of one variant to another (INALI, 2008). For example, Nahuatl spoken in North Puebla is not the same as Nahuatl spoken in Veracruz. Considering this, in Mexico there are three hundred sixty-four linguistic variants (INALI, 2008). The current situation of every language and its variations is different.

One of these sixty-eight languages that attracted my attention for a study is Mazateco because I had a personal story that got me close to the language. I was working in a restaurant where I met Mari. She is originally from Oaxaca and comes to work in Puebla. I asked her if she spoke another language and if she could teach me some words. From the beginning, I felt in love with the first sounds and tones of Mazateco. She taught me basic words like adjectives, commands, and kitchen vocabulary. We used Mazateco as a secret code to have small conversations between us. I also found fascinating the stories she shared with me such as her hometown, why she moved to Puebla, her school, etc. However, the time we spent together was not enough and my interest on her language was increasing. My commitment to learn more about Mazateco language and culture started since then. Indeed, this research project emerged from those conversations we had with my very basic Mazateco.

After meeting Mari, I decided to travel to Oaxaca to know more about her community and Mazateco. I wanted to identify where it is spoken, how it is taught in schools, whether it is used in public spaces or not, if there were monolingual speakers, how people write it, its transmission from generation to generation, etc. In December 2016, I started my first trip to her community in San Mateo Yolochochitlán as a visitor. I spent three days with Mari's family trying to learn as much Mazateco as I could. I was very surprised to see how their houses were surrounded by hills and nature, the houses were far from each other and the facilities were really basic as to live in a cold foggy area. In her family, two of them were Mazateco monolingual and four were bilingual speakers, one of them was deaf, and most of them could only write and read in Spanish. This meant for me that I found a living language that I would like to work with.

After my trip finished, I came back to Puebla very enthusiastic to learn the language in autonomous way, sadly I found that there were not materials available and the ones I found were different variants from San Mateo Yolochochitlán. I then started making a hypothesis, if there is not written language for Mazateco from San Mateo Yolochochitlán, then there should be a probability for its death. Indeed, my subsequent trips showed me that the ethnic language in San Mateo is being replaced by Spanish, however, the cause of this phenomena is not the lack of a writing system but other factors that replace Mazateco for a dominant language like Spanish. Thus, I wanted to explore and deepen into the perceptions local people have towards Mazateco.

1.2 Aim of the Study

The purpose of this research is to explore teachers' and students' perceptions towards Mazateco in a bilingual school of San Mateo Yolochochitlán in order to have a panorama of its use, students' language proficiency and the attitudes they have towards both languages. This study aims to find the status of Mazateco as an indigenous language in this community in comparison with the status of Spanish based on a sample in a bilingual school.

1.3 Research Questions

The research questions I address in this study are:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of Mazateco language in a bilingual primary school in San Mateo Yolochochitlán?
2. What are children's attitudes towards Mazateco in this educational institution?
3. In which practices and domains are Mazateco and Spanish used?
4. What is the status of Mazateco as an indigenous language in the community of San Mateo Yolochochitlan?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Indigenous languages in Mexico are an important element of our cultural diversity. The fact of having three hundred sixty-four linguistic variants means that each one symbolizes the means of communication in a particular community. Many of these languages have been remaining as they have been transmitted orally from generation to generation. As an oral tradition, many communities place their knowledge, history, experience and worldview in the language. Thus, the language is an important element of

a community's identity. These identities and different languages constitute our cultural diversity. The Mayan indigenous writer and translator Jorge Miguel (2017) exemplifies that the sixty-eight languages in Mexico are like sixty-eight nations in our territory.

The loss of one language or one linguistic variation results in the loss of one identity, culture and hundreds of years of knowledge and understandings. Then humankind impoverishes, as Nahuatl poet Miguel Portilla wrote. To prevent this, the National Institute of Indigenous Languages (Instituto Nacional de Lenguas Indigenas, INALI) and language policies promote linguistic rights for indigenous people and the research on indigenous languages. Unhappily, we still find cases of language barrier in public services for monolingual speakers and discrimination towards indigenous. The efforts of linguists, researchers, teachers, translators, cultural activists as well as the institutions have not covered all communities and linguistic variants yet, and this might be because of the multicultural dimensions of Mexico.

1.6 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is organized in five chapters. The first one presents a preliminary panorama on indigenous languages and linguistic diversity in Mexico. Mazateco language and one of its variants are introduced as well as the reasons and motivations for its study in a small community in the North of Oaxaca. Another important section is the significance of the study where I discuss the importance of this research and researching indigenous languages in Mexico. I close the chapter with a brief description of the following chapters.

The second chapter provides a theoretical framework for Mazateco language studies. It includes a general review of the literature and the studies regarding Mazateco

linguistic variations, I explain the fact of considering San Mateo Yolochochitlán as one of the Mazateco linguistic variants. Then, a brief section on policies regarding indigenous languages in Mexico is discussed. Some articles in the legislation for linguistic rights are contrasted with some examples in the practice. The importance of language maintenance is discussed too. To conclude this chapter a short section on bilingual education is presented. Here, I discuss the definition and types of bilingual education, a brief history on bilingual education in Mexico as well as some of the aspects and variables to consider in it.

Chapter Three contains the methodology used in this study. It contextualizes the study, describes the location in the community as well as the bilingual school. It gives information about the participants and their background. It also explains and justifies the method chosen for this research. It describes the instrument content and purpose. Finally, it describes how the data was collected.

Chapter Four discusses the findings on the data gathered. It describes the variables and the reasons for language shift based on teachers' opinions, to support the argument on language replacement it shows students' perceptions about their skills in both languages and the use of both languages within diverse domains. Finally, it catalogues the attitudes towards both languages with students and teachers' ideas taken from the interview and the questionnaire.

Finally, Chapter Five draws a conclusion for the study, it answers the research questions and explains their implications. It provides and describes the limitations of the research that I faced during the study. It also provides directions for further studies and calls for action taking regarding language loss and shift in this community.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss previous studies on Mazateco language and to give theoretical support for my research. The chapter is organized in three main sections. The first section provides a general description of Mazateco language, culture and its linguistic variants. I specifically focus on Mazateco from San Mateo Yolochochitlán as a linguistic variant. Then, I present a general panorama on the studies regarding Mazateco language. In section two, I mention some of the language policies that support indigenous people at the global level as well as some of the articles of the linguistic rights at the local level that defend, preserve and promote indigenous languages. I also explain the need for indigenous languages preservation. The last section includes an account on bilingual education. Since my research focuses on a bilingual school (Mazateco and Spanish), I discuss the foundations on bilingual education in Mexico, the types of bilingual education and some of the contrast with the reality and limitations of indigenous communities.

2.1 Mazateco Language.

Mazateco language belongs to the linguistic family group Otomangue spoken in the central south of Mexico (INALI, 2008). There are eleven linguistic families in Mexico, Otomangue is one of the biggest families in Mexico with fifteen languages, one of its main characteristics is that they are generally tonal with nasal and oral vowel sounds (De Ávila, 2008). The name Mazateco comes from Nahuatl “mazatecatl” meaning people from the deer land or deer people, nevertheless Mazatecos call themselves “ha shuta e Nima” meaning humble people who work in the mountains and people of traditions (Luna, 2007). Specifically, Mazateco is spoken in the North part of Oaxaca bordering with the south-

west part of Puebla and Veracruz. The communities where it is spoken are diverse and speak different Mazateco variants. Figure one below shows the location of the council towns where Mazateco is spoken.

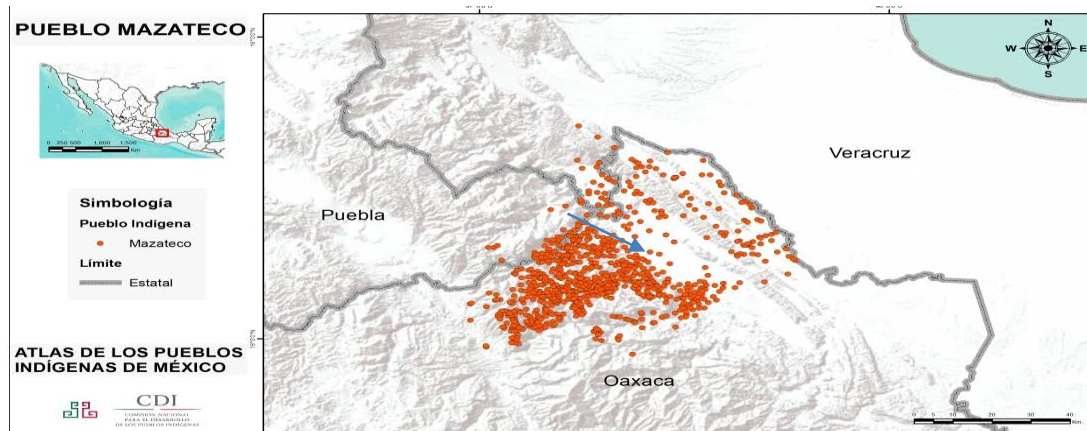


Figure 1. The Mazateco communities. Taken from Atlas de los Pueblos Indígenas de México.

As we can observe, most of the populations are concentrated in the north part of Oaxaca. The geographical zone presents a mountainous relief in most of the towns, this characteristic isolated some of the communities and led people explore the whistled language, they are able to carry on conversation with whistles and no words, this practice is based on the tonal structure of Mazateco and it is used to communicate between hills or long distances. The arrow shows the community of San Mateo Yoloxochitlán.

Mazatecos are popular since the 60's for their traditional ceremonies and their spiritual journeys made with the hallucinogenic mushrooms by Mazatec Maria Sabina (Skrobot, 2014). Some of the ceremonies are still made in Mazatec chants. They are also known for their biologic diversity and the resistance for maintaining their cultural identity (De Ávila, 2008). Each town, however, has particular characteristics.

A recent study of Mazateco dialectology proposes ten Mazateco languages considering their intelligibility and twenty linguistic variants that present particular characteristics (Chavez, Filio and Wagner, 2017). In this study, San Mateo Yolochochitlán is considered as one of those twenty linguistic variants. This research follows that grouping since participants from this study do not feel identified with the linguistic variant “Mazateco of the North” proposed by the Indigenous Languages Catalogue (Catalogo Nacional de las Lenguas Indigenas, CNLI, 2008), which proposes sixteen Mazateco variants. Each town names itself with a title in Mazateco language, for San Mateo they are said to be “én Naxotót'a” meaning people from the heart flower. Figure two presents Mazateco variants and the town councils where it is spoken.

Auto denomination	Linguistic variant	Town council
<i>án Ngichintja</i> <i>'án Xo'boó</i>	<Cuaunecuiltla and Puebla Mazateco>	San Lorenzo Cuaunecuiltla, Sta. Ma. Coyoameapan y San Sebastián Tlacotepec
<i>'án Ndeéxo</i>	<Huehuetlán Mazateco>	San Francisco Huehuetlán
<i>'án Sɔndɔŋo</i>	<Ateixtlahuaca Mazateco>	Santa Ana Ateixtlahuaca
<i>'én Ndaja</i>	<Ocopetatillo Mazateco>	San Pedro Ocopetatillo
<i>'én Naxiyanáxo</i>	<Acatepec Mazateco>	Santa Cruz Acatepec
<i>'én Ngixó</i>	< Eloxochitlán Mazateco >	Eloxochitlán de Flores Magón
<i>'én Naxi't</i>	< Tecóatl Mazateco >	San Jerónimo Tecóatl
<i>'én Naxotót'a</i>	< Yoloxochitlán Mazateco >	San Mateo Yoloxochitlán
<i>'én San Líka</i>	< Zoquiapam Mazateco >	San Lucas Zoquiapam, San Martín, Toxpalan, San Juan de los Cues
<i>'ién Chintjje</i>	< Mazatlán Mazateco>	Mazatlán Villa de Flores, Santa María Tecomavaca
<i>'én Ndáxo</i>	< Chilchotla Mazateco>	Santa María Chilchotla
<i>'én Tejao</i>	< Huautla Mazateco >	Huautla de Jiménez, San José Tenango
<i>'én Nanginnaxi</i>	<Asunción-Huatepec Mazateco >	Santa María la Asunción, San Miguel Huatepec
<i>'én Ngat'ia / 'én Naxiñdukicha</i>	< Independencia Mazateco >	San José Independencia, Acatlán de Pérez Figueroa, San Miguel Soyaltepec, San Pedro Ixcatlán, Tezonapa
<i>'én Ngífi</i>	< Ayautla Mazateco >	San Bartolomé Ayautla
<i>'né nangi</i> <i>nisin te</i>	< Chiquihuitlán Mazateco>	Chiquihuitlán de Benito Juárez
<i>'én Ntáxo</i>	< Jalapa Mazateco>	San Felipe Jalapa de Díaz, San Pedro Teutila
<i>'én Ningotsie</i>	< Ixcatlán Mazateco >	San Pedro Ixcatlán, San Miguel Soyaltepec, Playa Vicente
<i>'én Naxijeén</i>	<Acatlán-Soyaltepec Mazateco >	San Miguel Soyaltepec, Acatlán de Pérez Figueroa, Santa María Jacaltepec, Playa Vicente

Figure 2. Mazateco language variations taken from Chavez, Filio and Wagner, 2017:5

As we can appreciate, the colors in the table exemplify the level of intelligibility among the linguistic variants. The more similar colors are the less level of intelligibility they possess. We can also observe that one variation might be spoken in more than two towns. San Mateo is considered as a single linguistic variant for the reasons exposed in the following section.

2.1.2 San Mateo Yoloxochitlán as a Linguistic Variant

Two people from the same linguistic group (Mazateco), but speaking different linguistic variations are said to have difficulties in decoding the message as socio-linguistic backgrounds and identities of both speakers are different (CNLI, 2008). Even when two Mazateco communities have a geographical proximity like Huautla de Jimenez and San Mateo Yoloxochitlán, they are said to be different cultures and to have lexical and phonetical differences in their language. These changes respond to the fact that language is never static; as Milroy & Milroy (1997) argue, language structure is constantly changing. Filio and Estrada (2008) affirm that Mazateco communities that are located in the south or low part of the state are intelligible; meanwhile the communities located in the north part have different sounds among them which makes it difficult for them to understand each other.

San Mateo Yoloxochitlán is a city council belonging to the region la Cañada in North Oaxaca. It is characterized as many other Mazateco communities by its mountain relief, one of its neighborhoods is Huautla de Jimenez, an important economy town center in the Mazateco Sierra, it takes fifteen minutes by car to get there. The town center is appreciated on the left in figure below.



Figure 3. San Mateo Yolochochitlán town council.

We can observe a vast contact with nature which contributes to the knowledge of the community, and long distances between one town council and the others. This separation contributes to the diversification of the language caused by contacts between towns and their speakers are not so frequent. The diversification of the language has evolved significantly, Ventura (2006) reports that Spanish is used when two speakers of Mazateco do not understand each other's variant. However, they use their own Mazateco variant and try to understand the other's variant when one of the speakers does not know Spanish.

As I arrived in one of my trips before applying the first instrument I started to talk to teachers from bilingual school in Spanish; nevertheless, I could say some fillers in my speech like the word "Hō" in Mazateco meaning "yes", one of the teachers then identified my early contacts with one of the speakers from the community, she said that my "Hō" was properly from San Mateo (In Huautla it is pronounced as "Hau"). They also explained the word "nat'chà" that means banana in San Mateo but might be an offense in other communities. But more than a matter of some language changes in the words or in the pronunciation, it is a matter of belonging to the community using a common code, a

sociolinguistic identity that unifies them and differentiates them among other Mazateco communities. We can see more examples about language variation in Table 1.

Word	Linguistic variant	
	Huautla	San Mateo Yolochochitlán
atole	nyáà	nyijá
tortilla	Niô	niñô
paper	xôn	xojôn
person	Chjôtâ	chitâ
armadillo	cha'á	cho'á
mushroom	tjâin	tjên
rooster	cháxicháa	cháxáxtí/ndíchàa
you (plural)	jon	ñá
cat	chîtô	xa

Table 1. Examples of word variation in the book *Escribo mi lengua: Mazateco Alta*.

This table presents the variation of the language between San Mateo and Huautla, two towns which are fifteen minutes distanced among hills. Here, we notice that to say a word it might vary in a vowel, a syllable or it might be completely different between two variants. Therefore, the sociolinguistic identity between the two towns is different. As Skrobot (2014) states that the linguistic groups of indigenous communities are characterized by their identity fragmentation, the identity of an indigenous community is regional and residential, not only idiomatic.

2.1.3 Mazateco Language Studies

Mazateco in general has a significant repertoire of studies compared to other linguistic groups, thus as we will see, there is a gap on research for not all the twenty variants have been studied. To have an idea of the records of this language through the time, I will now discuss and summarize the previous studies and current studies of Mazateco.

In the XIX century the studies about Mazateco were concentrated on its cataloguing with other languages, researching was about ethnographical geography and the elaboration of catalogues about southern and central languages in Mexico. Mazateco was not classified at first but later it was related with languages such as Zapoteco and Chiapaneco (Orozco, 1864; Pimentel, 1865; Brinton, 1891; and Peñafiel, 1897). Also, the first research on grammar about Mazateco was made by Belmar Francisco (cited in Vielma, 2017) where he explains the grammatical cases of Mazateco.

In the beginning of XX century the works on grammar emerged and the connections and comparisons with other languages for Mazateco cataloguing continued. Some vocabularies were used as a tool for comparing numerals and pronouns, based on this comparison a relation was found with Popoloca, Chocholteco and Triqui languages. Mazateco was classified with other languages as the Mazateco group and later catalogued as Popoloca group. Researchers made the hypothesis that Otomangue languages use a monosyllabic structure and their numerals morphology are similar among them (Mechling, 1912; De Angulo, 1925; Walter and Weitlaner cited in Vielma, 2017).

In the rest of the XX century the works on Mazateco were made under the grammar and phonetic approach. The topics for grammar about Mazateco contained or explored language structure, semantics, the perception of time, prefix and suffixes analysis, the word classes of Mazateco, a pedagogical proposal for grammar instruction, the aspect and tense, as well as the morphology of verbs, and the creation of dictionaries (Agee, 1986; Guzman, 2011; Klint, 2016; Cowan, 1937; Terry, 1978; Schram, 1979; Black, 2014; and Jamienson, 1977).

There are also works that describe aspects like the whistle language, the writing system and the reconstruction of Proto-mazateco language. George Cowan (1943, 1948,

and 1952) demonstrates the existence of the whistle language as well as the importance of the pitch in discourse, he compares the whistle language of Mazateco and Tepehua. Meanwhile, Busnel (1981) describes the different techniques used for the whistle language as tongue-labial and dental-labial.

The studies on the reconstruction of Proto-Mazateco language, situate Mazateco as part of the Protopopolca language, they calculate that the diversification of the Otomangue family was around 482 a. C. and 126. A. C. It is related to other languages that are tonal with lexical and grammatical functions. Mazateco is compared with other languages such as Ixcateco that shares 40 per cent of cognates. The numerals of 12 variants are compared as well as the personal pronouns in Popolocanas languages. And there are studies on dialectology of Mazateco variants, Chiquihuitlan variant is the most different, they find that 80 percent of intelligibility makes a variant easy to understand.

Some variants of Mazateco have been studied from different approaches. And we see there is a gap for bilingual education research in Mazateco. In general, the communities where Mazateco was studied are Jalapa de Díaz, Chiquihuitlan de Juarez, San Jerónimo Teocatl, Mazatlán Villa de Flores, Huahutla, Puebla, San Miguel Soyaltepec as well as San Pedro and San Jose. Other communities where Mazateco is spoken have not been studied yet.

For instance, Mazateco from San Mateo Yoloxochitlán has a morphological study by a linguist (Léonard, 2012). As previously pointed out it is mentioned in CNLI as part of a variant called North Mazateco and in another study it is classified as a local variant. Moreover, this variant is considered in a book for writing Mazateco (see table 1 in previous section) as an example of word variation between San Mateo Yoloxochitlán and Huautla de Jimenez (Hidalgo, Torrescano & Vergara, 2014). In general, Mazateco from

San Mateo Yolochochitlán has been mentioned as a reference in other studies with little information about it.

2.2 Policies on Indigenous Languages.

Policies on indigenous languages contribute to the preservation and diffusion of ethnic languages. They also establish the rights of speakers to prevent discrimination for speaking an indigenous language in the social and institutional context. There are some international laws and agreements at the macro level that support indigenous languages. The knowledge of these rights is a first stage to avoid language replacement, stigma and discrimination.

The Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights (1998) establishes

Article 3.1

“Individuals have the right to use the language in private and public.”

Article 3.2

“Linguistic groups have the right to be taught in their own language... to be assisted in their language by official institutions.”

It was an important step to establish these articles since 1998, but currently some indigenous people prefer to speak the ethnic language only in the nuclear family or in the community for they are afraid non-native speakers point at them, as we will see later statistics on discrimination show that there is still bias and prejudice towards indigenous people in Mexico. In the institutions, we can still observe limitations of access for indigenous speakers.

At the national level, there is more promotion and stimulus for researching indigenous languages supported by Mexican institutions like INALI or article two in the

Mexican Constitution. However, these institutions and rights are the product of years of struggle and activism by indigenous groups and militants.

Indigenous language policies in Mexico have developed from an assimilation line, into integration to a more intercultural approach. In 1994, The Zapatist Army of National Liberation with the Indigenous movement claimed the executive power better social and political recognition to their rights. This, with other efforts like the San Andres agreements and the 169 convention from the International Organization of Work (Organización Internacional del Trabajo), led to the reform of the second article of the Mexican constitution (Diario Oficial, 2010).

The second article of the Mexican Constitution (2016) is dedicated to the Indigenous communities. In section A, fraction IV, it recognizes indigenous communities' rights and allows their autonomy by preserving and enriching their languages, knowledge and their culture. In section B, fraction II, it guarantees and increments the levels of education, improving bilingual and intercultural education.

This article and their fractions are the main foundations for indigenous communities' rights in Mexico. It gives them the legal protection for using and being taught in their mother tongue, and gives them the support for more access and opportunities in order to avoid inequality. Nevertheless, this Constitution has not been translated in Mazateco, consequently, monolingual indigenous speakers depend on Mazateco translators that understand the specific terminology of the Constitution.

Yet, one main legislation or institution for sixty-eight languages and their variants can be complex to manage. We have seen the case of Mazateco and discussed particularly one of its variants, San Mateo. Thus, every linguistic variant in Mexico is placed in a different situation and context. Kiliwa language in Baja California for example is an

endangered language that presents less than fifty native speakers. Other languages such as Zapoteco in Juchitan, Oaxaca are in revitalization programs, the community encourages its use and transmission to next generations. Nahuatl language, on the other hand, presents the largest population of speakers in Mexico. However, one of its variants Nahuatl from Veracruz is being lost too because the amount of people who speaks it decreases. All these multiplicity of languages have the support and protection by the same law.

In Mexico the main legislation that supports indigenous native speakers is the General Law of Indigenous Communities Linguistic Rights, LGDL (*Ley General de Derechos Lingüísticos de los Pueblos Indígenas* 2003). This regulation establishes the distribution of indigenous language speakers' rights as well as the promotion and training of public servers like teachers or translators in indigenous languages. Regarding some of the articles that have to be with the preservation of the language and the integrity of their speakers, the LGDL in its article 5 (2003) states that "The state will recognize, protect, and promote the preservation, development and use of the indigenous languages" (p. 2). However, the state lacks of mechanisms and systems for preserving them. Similarly, in the article 7, the LGDL establishes that "Indigenous languages will be valid as Spanish, for any issue or public procedure, as well as for knowing the public management, services and information" (p. 2). These are essential articles for indigenous speakers have no limitations in the access of public services, also for the use of ethnic languages in legal procedures that gives them prestige and practicality.

Regarding the education field on indigenous languages, the General Law of Education in article 7 fraction IV (2018) establishes that "The state will promote linguistic plurality of the Nation and the respect of the linguistic rights of indigenous communities" (p. 2). A more intercultural approach is encouraged in schools, yet, the success of

legislations for preserving or promoting a language is seen with long term language shift, maintenance, or loss (Gibbons, 2004).

Sadly, after years of these legislations, there is an evident lack of practice of language policies that have repercussions. A survey to some Mazateco communities reveals that monolingual Mazateco speakers' access to public services is complicated for the employees do not know their language due to the lack of training and deficiencies in the system, this collocates their physical and legal status into risk (Ariano, Esteinou, Gómez, & Rodríguez, 2014). In other contexts, like education, the teachers know the language and linguistic variation of students, however, the materials they are given correspond to a different linguistic variant. Filio and Estrada (2008) report that the primers proposed by SEP, containing the Huautla de Jimenez variant, are not functional in Mazatlan Villa de Flores bilingual schools because the intelligibility between these two variants of Mazateco is different.

The reasons for the not congruence between law and practice include: a hegemonic conception of national unity (in which indigenous people are not considered), the unawareness of human, indigenous and linguistic rights, as well as the presence of racism and discrimination towards indigenous people. The LGDL does not establish instruments for applying the articles. For instance, INALI cannot sanction or supervise any breach (Diario Oficial, 2010). There is also a lack of inter-institutional synchronization for assisting indigenous communities (Skrobot, 2014). In other words, there is a significant gap in mechanisms and systems for supervising, operating and promoting linguistic rights in Mexico.

Indigenous people then realize that their ethnic language is not used for institutional procedures, the mass media distribute information in Spanish mainly, the

books or teachers do not use the adequate variant of students, they finally realize that their language limits them and exclude them from opportunities. Language displacement is affected then by social, institutional and jurisprudential discrimination, since there are limitations of the domains of the ethnic language use. Furthermore, this might allow the language process of death in the community. Holmes (2017) explains that the ethnic mother tongue of speakers might be reduced in terms of contexts of use, practices and complexity of their structural features when a majority group language extends into its domains.

2.2.1 The importance of Language Maintenance

The changes Mazateco communities have encountered in the recent decades have been crucial for new generations. Mazateco linguistic and cultural identity has been altered recently, particularly because their speakers have been incorporated into modernization which gives them facilities but also risk them into a process of homogenization (Carrera, 2014). This process of modernization can be seen in concerns like migration, identity hiding when asking for a job, and the attitude that Spanish will be more useful in the academic and social life of new generations than Mazateco itself. Also social changes like agroindustry and migration stop the oral transmission and reduce the sustainable consumption which might affect the collective knowledge and the relationships from young generations with old generations in indigenous communities (De Ávila, 2008).

This homogenization becomes crucial for communities that struggle in the diffusion and preservation of the ethnic mother tongue, their cultural identity and their local knowledge. The local knowledge of nature is connected with the community's language words. There is a correlation between linguistic diversity and biodiversity.

Oaxaca for instance is one of the most ecologically and linguistically diverse states in Mexico (De Ávila, 2008). Ecolinguistic balance can be threatened with the dying languages and the processes of substitution might bring consequences such as collective pathologies (Xochitl, Huerta and Osojnik, 2015). Losing the indigenous language for the community implies a slow process of displacement into homogenization. Holmes (2008) argues that the process of language death comes about gradual loss of fluency and competence by its speakers. Competence in the language does not disappear overnight. It gradually erodes over time. According to official statistics (INEGI, 2015), the amount of people that speak an indigenous language in Mexico has been decreasing progressively.

Periodo	Porcentaje
1930	16.0
1940	14.8
1950	11.2
1960	10.4
1970	7.8
1990	7.5
2000	7.1
2010	6.7
2015	6.6

Figure 5. Number of people out of one hundred that speak an indigenous language older than 5. Adapted from INEGI

As we can appreciate in figure five the difference between 2010 and 2015 is minimal in number of indigenous language speakers, but it always goes down year-by-year and this tendency might mean the loss of some indigenous languages in the future. The community must know that Mazateco is being replaced by Spanish, and their speakers need to change the paradigm of language hierarchies. Language replacement exists due to the idea that a better status as individual and community can be accessed by a dominant

language (Xochitl, Huerta, and Osojnik 2015). We also need to change the idea that Mazateco is not a language that can be written or used in legal procedures.

For gaining prestige as a language, there are projects and organizations that seek for applying a writing system and make literacy workshops in Mazateco. As an example for this kind of projects Filio & Estrada (2008) worked on a project for writing Mazateco. They affirm that writing as an intellectual improvement of a person develops his or her historical memory, social interaction and language which also gains prestige. Additionally, linguists and Mazateco speaking communities can contribute in the research about Mazateco linguistic varieties that have not yet been documented (Vielma, 2017).

In a recent interview with the director of INALI and Mazateco poet, Juan Gregorio Regino, he stated that the projects for language preservation should include the community consensuses. Indeed, one of the articles of the LGDL fosters the research and projects on indigenous languages. Yet, the first step to prevent language shift or replacement is that the community realizes that the ethnic language is in danger (Holmes, 2017).

But without the efforts and awareness of the community, without the legal support for indigenous speakers' rights, without research on indigenous languages and without practices that preserve, use and promote the ethnic language, Mazateco and other languages in Mexico will die over time. Potential bilingual populations and communities will then become pure monolingual Spanish speaking communities.

2.3 Bilingual Education

We will now focus on bilingual education regarding indigenous languages in Mexico, this with the purpose of knowing more about the context of this study. But to talk about it first,

we will look at the definition on bilingualism and some of the implications of it. Grosjean (2010) defines bilinguals are those who use two or more languages (or dialects) in their everyday lives. In this definition he focuses on the language use more than the fluency on both languages. Bilingualism in San Mateo is a big spectrum in which bilinguals who speak the indigenous language (IL) and Spanish in a balanced way exist, bilinguals who understand the IL but speak it with some difficulties (and vice versa), bilinguals who are illiterate in both languages, bilinguals who speak Spanish only for specific purposes like shopping or at work, bilinguals who speak a third language like Nahuatl or English, and etc. If we took at the rigorous definition that bilinguals are those who are competent in two languages as native like speakers, then we would not have this multidimensional spectrum, and one thing is sure, the people from the examples above are not monolinguals (Grosjean, 2010).

However, the levels of bilingualism in this community might erode. One of the participants in the interview identified a concern, she mentions that first generations of students used to start the primary school speaking Mazateco and Spanish, nevertheless, new generations (children from first generations) start school being Spanish monolinguals. This is one of the consequences of the old subtractive or Hispanization (*Castellanización*) bilingual schools in long term period.

In the past, Bilingual Education in Mexico was aimed to unify the nation with a common language and to foster the literacy in Spanish language. Ignacio Manuel Altamirano, an indigenous teacher and activist described the instruction for indigenous people as “They were divided by castas and were sat in two different sections, one for the thinking kids and the other for indios who were poorly taught spoken Spanish.” Segregation, exclusion or punishment practices were prevalent in students who spoke an

indigenous language. Nevertheless, Bilingual Education today aims to teach or instruct content in two or more languages, as well as to foster understanding and appreciation for languages, cultures and human diversity (Garcia, 2011). Due to the different contexts, historical and local needs of individuals and groups there are four types of bilingual education:

<p>Subtractive: In this model, the student speaks a first language and a second one is added while the first is subtracted. $L1 + L2 - L1 = L2$</p>	<p>Additive: A model under which the second language is added to the person's repertoire and the two languages are maintained. $L1 + L2 = L1 + L2$</p>
<p>Recursive: When a community revitalizes their language practices, the language is added in bits and pieces, as ancestral language practices are reconstituted for new functions.</p>	<p>Dynamic: Bilingualism involves a more dynamic cycle where language practices are multiple and ever adjusting to the multilingual multimodal terrain of the communicative act.</p>

Figure 6. Types of bilingual education, adapted from Garcia, O. 2011, page 42.

In this range we see different models of schools. The subtractive and additive models are about withdrawing or maintaining the student ethnic language while teaching a second language. The content in the subtractive model is transmitted mainly in the second language. The recursive model is about reviving the ethnic language; it is studied mainly with isolated words or functions. Finally, the dynamic bilingual model is a more multidimensional model where languages have more interactions among them.

Teacher participants in the interview of this study retell their experiences on the subtractive bilingual school where they were punished and told not to use their mother tongue, whereas student participants in the present bilingual school move into the additive bilingual school where they can express themselves and are allowed to use the ethnic language.

2.3.1 The Foundations on Bilingual Education in Mexico

The change between these two different types of bilingual schools in Mexico had a complex process. After the conquest in Mexico, evangelizers and the Christianity educated indigenous people by using the indigenous language to convert them and teach them European culture. Then, in 1524 the first indigenous school in Texcoco was created to hispanicize and evangelize children. Moreover, indigenous communities were seen as communities with delay that needed a development that would quit the barriers for the national integration (Xochitl, Huerta, and Osojnik, 2015). Because of that ideology education was one of the State's plans for assimilating indigenous people into the nation, its purpose was to hispanicize children through the belief of a modern country or through force (Diario Oficial, 2010).

After the independence war, education was declining for social and political disorganization. In 1868, Ignacio Ramirez formulates the curriculum with emphasis on indigenous people. (Xochitl, Huerta, and Osojnik, 2015). Since 1950's primary education fostered the use indigenous language to facilitate the alphabetization and teaching of Spanish. Even though, policies for promoting and preserving indigenous culture flourished in the 1970's with communities' efforts, in 1994 with Zapatist movement, in 1996 with San Andres Accords and in 2001 with the reform of the constitution. After these attempts, the indigenous communities obtained indigenous rights, equal status of ethnic languages with Spanish as well as the right for intercultural and bilingual education (Zabecki, 2019).

As a result, indigenous education system replaced the hispanization approach into a more bilingual and bicultural approach. In 1978 SEP created General Department for

Indigenous Education (Dirección General de Educación Indígena, DGEI) for evaluating and supervising the services in indigenous schools (Xochitl, Huerta, and Osojnik, 2015).

After this struggle and years of activism, two strategies in bilingual education were inherited and applied, the first was the linguistic and cultural assimilation through hispanization, the second, with few examples was the genuine preservation of the Indigenous Languages (Hamel, 2016). Yet, the efforts and articulation with society, the community, institutions and students' parents need to be stronger for the limitations that each community presents.

2.3.2 The Limitations for Indigenous Bilingual Education.

There are limitations for the effectiveness on Indigenous Bilingual Education that relate to institutional and social spheres. As an outsider and based on what mass media display about indigenous communities one would think that the limitations have to be the lack of electricity and infrastructure in the schools as well as poverty by indigenous communities. But regarding the Educational system as a whole, the institutions, society (non-indigenous language speakers) and each community, we will find more variables.

Indigenous bilingual education is one of the most deficient systems in Mexico. It offers insufficient multilingual and intercultural approach training for teachers, an incomplete number of indigenous language teachers with the adequate variant, a poor curriculum development for multilingual and intercultural approach and a lack of continuity after elementary school. Also the indigenous education budget is limited (Diario Oficial, 2010). This, other variables and the fact of treating 68 languages and 365 variants make Indigenous Education a complex system to manage. As a concern, a general evaluation for third grade is made in Spanish every year. This is not valid for diverse

students whose mother tongue skills are not the same as Spanish (Shmelkes, 2013). Also, the system continues rarely using the primers in native languages, following a common curriculum designed for all students in the country (despite it is a curriculum for the monolingual system), having poor conditions in the schools as well as indicators of poverty, presenting policies made top-down by the state, and reproducing the image of Spanish as the literary language. In other words, the indigenous educational system continues showing the poorest results in general (Hamel, 2016).

The boundaries also extend for teachers. A similar study made in two Spanish monolingual schools in Mexico City, where there were indigenous students Skrobot (2014), reports that teachers' attitudes towards the linguistic diversity were positive but their actions did not show any change in students' progress. They considered that they were not prepared for managing the linguistic diversity. This is a similar discourse in the indigenous Bilingual Education system, where teachers are somehow limited in the training aspect, 50% of indigenous school teachers are not graduated. The major in intercultural bilingual elementary education is limited in Mexico, there are 22 colleges offering this career apart from Escuelas Normales (Shmelkes, 2013). As another consequence, the number of teachers who are not bilingual is increasing, which allows that the instruction might be given in Spanish (Skrobot, 2014).

The general and political discourse towards the proud of linguistic and cultural diversity has not changed the teaching and the practices to promote them. The government and institutions are promoting a more intercultural education, but planning it without considering some realities in the classroom (Skrobot, 2014) and with no consensus from the communities. There is also a need for future research like the introduction of literacy for cultures with an oral tradition, the cultural significance of the books, the

multidimensional characteristic of bilingualism, the linguistic variations chosen for the textbook and the role of the bilingual teacher as an intermediary (Leon, 2016). But then again, the school does not guarantee the preservation of a language if it lacks of functions and prestige outside.

Some of the realities of indigenous classroom have to be with indigenous students' limitations. Poverty and marginalization are some of the factors, in indigenous communities like San Mateo Yolochochitlán some children have to help their parents or brothers in the fields. Indigenous children speakers from 6 to 14 years old represent 9.73% of the population who does not attend elementary education. Meanwhile children who do not speak an indigenous language represent 4.45% of this sector (Xochitl, Huerta and Osojnik, 2015). Health access is another limitation for indigenous, about 80% of five years old indigenous children are undernourished. They have less access to medical treatment and some of their houses have not potable water or hygienic services (Skrobot, 2014).

Apart from marginalization, they also have to face discrimination by society. In a census about discrimination to indigenous people made by Consejo Nacional para Prevenir la Discriminación (CONAPRED) and Secretaría de Desarrollo Social (SEDESOL) in 2010, around six out of ten indigenous people prefer not to say they belong to an indigenous group when looking for a job or applying for a public service, so more than fifty percent prefer to hide their identity for these contexts. And certain percent of non-indigenous speakers prefer not share their homes with an indigenous person. Discrimination can be overcome with information through mass media, still there is a gap in programs that present topics on cultural and linguistic diversity and fewer that include an indigenous native speaker in their program. Some broadcasts present a pejorative stereotype of indigenous or show an attribute to antique indigenous civilization, this

spread the idea that indigenous communities are extinct (Skrobot, 2014). All these social and institutional limitations make indigenous people vulnerable and allow them to better choose Spanish for their lives.

2.4 Summary

To summarize this chapter a general description of Mazateco language and previous studies were presented. We identified San Mateo Yolochochitlán as a linguistic variant and the importance of considering it different from other variants. The policies regarding indigenous languages at the global and local level were discussed. We realize the importance of fostering and informing indigenous native speakers their linguistic rights, this in order to guarantee their access to public services in their languages and to consider Mazateco as valid as Spanish. Moreover, indigenous bilingual education and some of its implications were explained as well as some of the variables for its ineffectiveness.

After this discussion, we see the significance of designing projects for language preservation with the participation of the community, and the importance of promoting Mazateco uses in the community specifically in the academic context, this contributes to non-native and native speakers change their ideology about the ethnic language. Finally, we state the importance on teacher training in pedagogy, linguistics and language teaching for the systematic study of Mazateco. And we see the repercussions on the old traditional bilingual schools in the new generations that begin bilingual education as Spanish monolinguals.

Activism, language policies, language documentation and studies as well as bilingual education contribute to the preservation of indigenous languages, however,

languages rely on their people who speak it, a dead language means the death of its last speaker, and then it is a big loss for humanity (Baker, 2011). If a language is not spoken at home or in the community then large studies, books as well as multimedia sources on that language will be stored in libraries or museums forever.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

After presenting the literature review that supports this research, this chapter explains and describes the methodology used for this study. It gives a detailed explanation of the context where the research takes place, participants and their backgrounds, as well as the instrument, the data collection and the data analysis procedures. The function of this chapter is to validate the method chosen and its appropriateness for the research purpose of this study.

As this study describes the current situation on Mazateco in a bilingual school in San Mateo and identifies the factors of the language to consider it as endangered; hence, I will use descriptive methodology for it implies the description, explanation and identification of a problem or phenomena. This methodology is used to observe, report and to see the possible variables of a problem. To know this panorama and factors I will explore students and teachers' perceptions from this bilingual school. In order to collect this information from participants, the use of survey method is suitable.

There are two groups of participants in this study and subsequently two instruments applied. The first group is integrated by teachers from the bilingual school in which I used interview. And I applied questionnaires for students from the same bilingual school as the second group. The analysis contemplates students' perceptions on their Mazateco and Spanish skills, students' attitudes on what they think about Mazateco and Spanish, teachers' opinions about the use of Mazateco in the community and the domains where Mazateco is used. With this analysis and description of the data I will present a panorama on the situation of Mazateco in a small sample based on the bilingual school. I will now explain in detail each of the elements in this section.

3.1 Context

I remember that the way from Mary's house to the town center was full of nature, plants that grow up in the edge of the path, isolated houses, farms on the uphill, a smell of humid earth emanated from the path, water falling from the hills, and people passing by and saying ndalí or buenas tardes to you. This illustrates one of the characteristics around this town which is its nature. San Mateo YOLOXOCHITLÁN has the name of the representative tree of its town, called YOLOXÓCHITL. In Nahuatl language it means "heart flower" and in the Mazateco language it is referred as "yá naxó totá", this tree represents some of the legends around the community.

It has some water springs that are used for population basic supplies and for agricultural purposes. It has predominantly a sub-tropical climate with an average temperature of 25° C and abundant rains in summer as well as frequent fogs in winter. The economy for the community is agriculture, although the land is not plane, they can plant corn, beans, and other vegetables. Some houses are made of concrete or cinder block, others are made of wood and galvanized iron plate. Some families use gas lpg for cooking and heating, some others have to cut trees in order to have these goods. This is an example of some of the families' limitations in the community, their economy draws on them boundaries for having opportunities. To illustrate this, I can mention Mary's family, she did not study the secondary school for she had to take care of their brothers, their brothers did not finish high school and her sister should had to learn Mexican Sign Language since she is deaf. Here, also public programs and public services play an important role.

About public services they have access to a medical clinic that works for the town, three elementary schools, two of them are general schools (monolingual) and one of them is a bilingual school (Mazateco and Spanish are taught), one junior high school and one

high school. They only have one church and the presidency of the village. Moto-taxis, collective taxis and public trucks transport people from the village around town and to other towns. There are not linguistic landscapes or any advertisement in Mazateco, though the speaker announces important messages in both languages. As previously mentioned in chapter two, villagers might present different dimensions on bilingualism.

The specific location of this study is a bilingual elementary school named ‘Cuahutemoc’ which is located fifteen minutes from the town center by walking. It contains six classrooms and the principal’s office, four restrooms (two with water and two without water). Six female teachers work in the school, one male is the principal and another male is the domestic worker. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade classrooms are in the low level of the hill while 4th, 5th and 6th grade classrooms are in the upper level of the hill. The groups contain from 12 – 20 students approximately. After the earthquake that Oaxaca suffered on September 19th, 2017, the state was expected to afford economic support for fixing the wall near the hill edge that collapsed after the earthquake, even though such support never happened. The school had to move into a provisional building and after one month that the support did not arrive they decided to go back to the school building.

3.2 Participants

There are two groups of participants in this study, teachers and students. Teachers’ perceptions and opinions about Mazateco language are important to know their experience with bilingual students, Mazateco teaching, educational policies and the community attitudes, whereas students’ attitudes for the ethnic language are relevant for they reflect part of the phenomena on language shift. Seven teachers participated as the first group for the interview, six women and one man. They are all teachers from the bilingual primary

school in San Mateo Yolochochitlán the man that participated in this interview is the principal of the school who authorized the application of the instrument. The main characteristics of each person are summarized in the following table.

All their names have been changed to protect their privacy.

Name and Age	Hometown and place of birth	First and Second Language	Contacts with Mazateco.	Background
Daniela 45	San Mateo, originally from Huautla	L1 Spanish, L2 Mazateco	Huautla and San Mateo	Teacher of 6th grade, she learned Mazateco language with their classmates in her childhood. She married a villager from San Mateo Yoloxochitlán. She works as the sub-principal of the bilingual school. She has participated in some workshops for Mazateco language teaching and documentation.
Eleazar 35	San Mateo, originally from Huautla	L1 Mazateco, L2 Spanish	Chilchotla, San Mateo and Huautla	Teacher of the 5th grade of the primary school. Her concern about social issues that influence language transmission like family and ideologies are stated in her answers. Before starting the meetings with teachers in this interview she was one of the teachers that started to talk in Mazateco. Her volume of voice is one of the lowest from all teachers.
Julieta 38	Huautla de Jimenez	L1 Spanish, L2 Mazateco	San Mateo and San Antonio	Teacher of the 4th grade. She has acquired Mazateco as a second language through the interaction with her students. In the interview she shows a limited participation but clear when asked.
Ana 35	San Mateo, originally from Huautla	L1 Spanish, L2 Mazateco	San Lucas Z., San Antonio, San Mateo	Teacher of the 2nd grade of the primary school. She has Mazateco as her second language, she is not from San Mateo Yoloxochitlán, and she is committed with issues of language inequality and discrimination.
Leticia 35	Huautla de Jimenez	L1 Spanish, L2 Mazateco	Huautla and San Mateo	Teacher of 3rd grade, she also has a major as a lawyer. She has been in contact with other variants of Mazateco and has been in other schools where Mazateco is spoken. When talking about language and law and language policies she is the one that discuss the most about the topic.
Mónica 45	San Mateo	L1 Mazateco, L2 Spanish	Mazatlán Villa, San Lucas Z., San Mateo	1st grade teacher from the institution, she is concerned with issues of language variation and usage, as well as the language as part of village identity. She is the one that has knowledge about literature or texts in Mazateco language from San Mateo.
Octavio 50	Huautla de Jimenez	L1 Spanish L2 Mazateco	San Mateo, Chilchotla and Huautla	He is the principal from the institution. His stance like other participants is very clear about the new educative reform and the importance of preserving the language and the role of new generations and parents in the process of language maintenance.

Table 2. Participants' backgrounds and personal information.

As we can appreciate in the table, the participants show different backgrounds in their location, mother tongue, language acquisition, contacts with other variants and work experience, this gives diverse perceptions and understanding of the ethnic language. For some of them Mazateco was forbidden at schools, for others it was taught in the family and others had to learn Mazateco for work.

The second group of participants is integrated by twenty-one students who contributed in the questionnaire. The sample selected took into account the last grades of school since they are more conscious about their own bilingualism. Their ages range from eight to twelve years old, grades 4th and 6th (5th grade did not have class the day the instrument was administered), eleven boys and ten girls answered the questionnaire. One boy and one girl were handicap, in the 6th grade the boy did not take the questionnaire, the girl did. The test took around thirty minutes. It was managed on Friday 25th of May 2018. In the 6th grade it was applied at 9:45 am. (8:45 am. local area) and 10:30 am (9:30 am local area). Three people were absent in 6th grade that day while in 4th grade four students were absent, one girl arrived just at the end of the test (The questionnaire was not applied to her for not interrupting the teachers' class).

3.3 Instruments

There are two instruments used in this investigation, an interview for teachers and a questionnaire administered to the students. The interview seemed pertinent for collecting perceptions about socio-cultural issues regarding Mazateco language. There were seven teachers from the bilingual primary school of the village during the interview. The interview consisted of eleven open questions to all teachers. The dynamic for answering them was asking questions one, two and three and letting teachers respond by turns as they were in the

same interview. The first two questions addressed participants' backgrounds such as Mazateco language acquisition and whether if they studied in a bilingual or monolingual school, the purpose of this content is to know their experience with the ethnic language in their childhood and the dynamics on bilingual schools in the past. Question three addressed their contacts with other linguistic variation as well as levels of intelligibility, this was in order to see whether San Mateo is considered a single linguistic variant by participants.

Then the next questions (four to eleven) were asked and the participants were allowed to interact without turns. These questions required more complex issues as language policies, language shift and use in public places, language inequality and discrimination, the role of Mazateco in bilingual education, materials or texts available in Mazateco from San Mateo, the writing system of Mazateco, and the attitudes of the students towards the indigenous language. Questions of the interview were designed to cover as many aspects to see all the variables in the ethnic language teaching and use. Questions are available in the Appendix section.

The second instrument used in this investigation was a questionnaire for students. This questionnaire contains the following: a question of multiple choice of participants' mother tongue; a chart where they select their four skills proficiency in Mazateco and Spanish according to their perceptions; a second chart where they select what language (s) they use within certain contexts or people (this is to know the domains where Mazateco is used); one open question that asks for their Mazateco speaking relatives (for knowing the transmission of the ethnic language between generations); one question that asks whether if they know a legend or song in Mazateco, and two open questions that require students to complete an idea regarding their opinions or perceptions about Spanish and Mazateco. The questionnaire was

designed based on their ages and questions were set from easy to more complex ones. It is shown in Appendix as number 2.

With this sample it is possible to draw a general idea on the status of the ethnic language in the community since bilingual school is the core institution in promoting and preserving Mazateco in the community. It reflects new generation's attitudes towards the language and it narrates teachers' testimonies through years of experience in the field.

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

After the earthquake previously mentioned that damaged buildings and zones of Oaxaca some schools needed to be relocated, this was the case of the bilingual primary school. I arrived in the village of San Mateo Yoloxochitlán on 11th September, 2017 after a previous visit in 2016 but knowing little about the bilingual primary school. That day I talked about my project with the driver of the collective taxi, he told me where I could find the teachers and he left me just in the place where they were having a meeting. It was around 12pm when I talked about the purpose of the interview with the principal and the teachers, and then they decided to do the interview just in that moment. The classroom was empty only with the chairs for the teachers as it served like a provisional place for the relocation of the school. A teacher helped me by preparing some coffee for the interview while I brought some bread from Huautla de Jimenez, a village near San Mateo. The interview was divided in two parts, questions one to three were made in the first part, then we made a small break for coffee and we continued to the rest of the questions in the second part.

The questionnaire as the second instrument was administered on Friday 25th of May, 2018, eight months after the interview was done. I talked with the sub principal of the school since we exchanged telephone numbers for future research, she told me a specific date that

matched my school days and the school activities. The day I arrived to the primary school I talked with the principal to have the consent of the instrument for students, then we talked with teachers of 4th and 6th grade to administer them. Some help was needed for children to answer the last two questions about what they think of Mazateco and Spanish. One of the main reasons of administering this instrument some months after the interview was to complement the information gathered with teachers' perceptions.

Once I collected all data information, the interview was analyzed based on participants' answers and entries, I catalogued their entries by content areas, this for a better description of some of the variables that influence Mazateco status. Whereas students' answers in the questionnaires were interpreted by analyzing the charts results and the multiple-choice questions' scores. The open questions answers were classified according to the content and I found common attitudes when interpreting both languages. Particularly, the question on generational transmission shows a tendency in a graphic which we can link with teachers' interpretations.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

This chapter presents the data results and the findings from the questionnaire administered and the focus group interview. Findings and results are presented in tables and graphs. This chapter is divided in two sections, in the first part I classify and analyze the answers of teachers in the interview, questions and answers are displayed in the order they were asked in the interview, there are eleven charts that show the data analysis. In section two I explain and interpret the data gathered from students' attitudes towards the language, their answers are displayed in the same order of the instrument.

4.1 Data from teachers' interview.

Here I present what teachers' perceptions of Mazateco language are in the bilingual school. The procedure used for the interpretation was classifying their answers into positive neutral and negative statements. Their answers were grouped according to the questions stated in the interview that were eleven. The entries presenting a (x2 or x3) determine the number of times the same answer was given by other participants. The participants are described alphabetically as follows:

Ana- A 2nd grade teacher

Leticia- L 3rd grade teacher

Daniela – D 6th grade teacher

Monica- M 1st grade teacher

Eleazar- E 5th grade teacher

Octavio- O. Principal

Julieta- J 4th grade teacher

All tables are organized in the following structure:

Positive	Neutral	Negative
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Teachers' entries were classified according to the content of their answers. Positive entries had to be with beneficial, effective and enjoyable experiences for speakers. They also implied a feeling of pride in their capacities, identity and hope for other persons. Neutral statements were about participants' explanations, descriptions, definitions or actions that did not imply any positive or negative feeling. On the other hand, negative statements showed difficulties and inefficiencies in some of their activities or towards systems, expressed critiques, shame, gaps, and contained bad experiences in participants' narrative such as discrimination.

1. What is your mother tongue and how did you learn it?

Positive	Neutral	Negative
M. pues esa lengua materna sí es el mazateco, o sea sí lo domino no?	M. y E. mis papás, pues su lengua materna es el mazateco yo crecí con esa lengua (x2)	D. y L. porque en casa no nos daban permiso de de hablar (x2)
L. [...] se me ofrece una clave para poder ser perito traductor, hasta entonces le encuentro el valor a la lengua indígena que jamás le había dado ¿no?	M. a la escuela pues ya fuimos adquiriendo la segunda lengua que es el español.	D. y E. los maestros pues trataban de castellanizar más a los que hablaban el mazateco (escuela bilingüe) (x2)
O. Mis padres hablaban en Mazateco pero a nosotros nos hablaban siempre en español pensando siempre en sus hijos, en salir adelante	D. aprendí el mazateco fue a través de mis compañeros	J. yo no tuve la oportunidad de crecer con mis abuelos. Ellos eran los que este... hablaban el mazateco
	D. tiempo después nos enseñó unos tíos, nos enseñaron algunas palabras en casa (mazateco)	J. (mis padres) si lo hablaban pero nunca nos hablaron, no más ellos en mazateco
	J., O. y L. mazateco, lo fui aprendiendo en el trabajo, trabajando con los niños (x3)	L. (hablar mazateco) en la vieja escuela estaba casi como prohibido
	A. español que lo aprendí de mis padres	L. estaba así muy rezagado el aspecto de la lengua
	A. Entonces lo aprendí (Mazateco) en la escuela y después en casa también, platicábamos nos comunicábamos	L. cuantas cosas ignora la gente por no conocer el valor que tiene nuestra lengua

Table 3. Teachers' answers to mother tongue question.

Here we can observe that participants experience towards the ethnic language acquisition tends to be neutral and negative. The positive arguments are in relation to the capability to speak and value the indigenous language and to justify parents' language choosing. Neutral arguments are around the way they acquired both languages, here only two participants learned mazateco with their parents, the rest of them learned it at work with the

kids or with their classmates, but none of them received mazateco instruction directly from teachers. In fact, they lived the old subtractive approach in bilingual school where they were almost forbidden to speak the ethnic language. Unhappily most of the policies on education for indigenous people were not proposed yet. Due to the international and local language policies, as well as indigenous rights' movements, students in this bilingual school are allowed to speak the ethnic language too.

According with this table, critics or negative statements have always to be with participants' experience in learning Mazateco, their judgments are often addressed to other participants regarding language teaching and use, on the other hand participants' neutral and positive judgments are stated mostly in first person. As a result, participants' perceptions towards the ethnic language acquisition are negative involving other participants such as parents and teachers or the school. Even though, based on the discussion in Chapter II, we know that this issue involved a broader spectrum that included the institutions, government and society in general.

2. What is your profession, how were you trained and how long have you worked?

I state in brackets the number of years of service in the bilingual indigenous school area.

Positive	Neutral	Negative
	O. tengo Lic. en educación primaria, yo entré con bachillerato al magisterio, a través de cursos semiescolarizados fue como nos fuimos formando a través de la práctica y de la teoría. [34]	
	E. Yo cuento con la Lic. en primaria en educación indígena, no tengo el título pero [...] me estoy formando en la práctica. [17]	
	M. yo también tengo la Lic. en educación primaria como pasante [29]	
	D. la carrera que tengo es maestría en educación [23]	
	J. y A. también cuento con la Lic. en educación (x2) [11 and 18]	
	L. tengo... la Lic. en derecho y ciencias sociales... la Lic. en educación primaria indígena es la que culminé hace dos años estamos a espera de la convocatoria para hacer examen de titulación. [9]	

Table 4. Teachers' answers to academic background question.

All teachers in this bilingual school studied the major in bilingual primary education. Three teachers revealed that they have not the university degree yet but reported that they have the experience with the years practice. Only one teacher, who is the sub-principal, has a master degree, and another teacher has two majors. It is interesting to see that the teacher with most years of experience had the opportunity to be in service when he was in high school and then was trained along his career. Regarding teachers' training and experience in the workplace some of them might lack of pedagogical training in their area for they are not graduated, almost 50 per cent as Shmelkes asserted. Although they have years of experience that balance that, it might be a limitation for teachers in the bilingual school system.

All entries in this category reminded neutral since the content of the question only requires information about their academic training, their answers were only descriptions or

explanations that did not require of any emotion. Even though, these answers might move into the negative section in the future for the teachers who have not graduated might find difficulties. As well as some might become positive if participants added positive attributes to it or say it with a feeling of pride.

3. Are you from this community or from another? Have you been in contact with other linguistic variants of Mazateco and how much different or similar were they from San Mateo?

P.	Neutral	Negative
	O. y D. (Huahutla) es similar a esta variante, algunas palabras varían para vocales, sonidos, tono. (x2)	J. varían en algunas palabras y es cuando se presentan dificultades... es necesario ver la práctica con niños.
	E. si hay un poquito de diferencia en algunas palabras, no es mucha pero sí	E. hay palabras que no entiendo e incluso cuando pregunto a mis alumnos, tengo cuatro niños que lo hablan pero si no saben la palabra lo dicen como yo lo digo y luego surgen los problemas con los padres
	M. Sí varían... hay estas unas palabras que totalmente son diferente pero por el tono que también le dan.	
	A. encuentro más similitud entre Huautla y San Mateo.	L. el maestro cuya lengua materna es el mazateco de otra variante no puede llegar aquí y dar la clase en su variante porque no es la variante que usan

Table 5. Teachers' answers to linguistic variant question.

Regarding the intelligibility among other variants of Mazateco, most of the participants agree that there is a tiny difference in words and pitch between San Mateo and other variants. When comparing with Huautla (where five of the teachers come from), the variants are very similar; however, none of them say that it is the same.

Linguistic variation is relevant in indigenous bilingual education since this issue might bring some difficulties as stated in the negative section where teachers cannot use their variant at all when teaching children from San Mateo.

In fact, only one of the teachers is originally from San Mateo. Two teachers that come from Huautla got married in San Mateo and live there, yet one of them revealed to have taught a wrong intonation with her students and had misunderstandings with their parents, her solution when so happens is to research about that matter. Regarding teachers' mother tongue, two of them have Mazateco as their L1, and other two teachers whose mother tongue is Spanish revealed that they do not speak the ethnic language perfectly. This is also relevant since less teachers have the ethnic language as their mother tongue, this might increase the probability that the instruction be in Spanish as Skrobot stated (2014).

4. Do you write Mazateco language and what is the basis for writing it? Is there material at the library?

Positive	Neutral	Negative
O. Los jóvenes que en las redes sociales escriben Mazateco, aunque lo escriben de manera diferente, puedo interpretarlo,	E. como se pronuncia lo escribo así.	D. Aquí todavía no tenemos símbolos de escritura establecidos y es por eso que lo escribimos de acuerdo con lo que entendemos
	M. los niños trabajan como soporte... de acuerdo con la forma en que se pronuncia se escribe.	L. No hay un alfabeto establecido ni siquiera en Huautla de Jiménez... todos ellos son aproximaciones de lo que puede ser, más con variantes... Pero esa es la dificultad para los que no dominan completamente Mazateco porque no se ha establecido un alfabeto del cual se pueda decir cómo van a aprender
	O. Te puedo decir que aquí no hay un alfabeto definido del mazateco, es flexible	M. Es cierto que no hay un alfabeto establecido para enseñar con la variante de San Mateo,
	O. Se ha escrito ... pero basado y con el apoyo de algunas personas que han venido a diseñar (etnolingüistas)	D. pero los libros no se han aplicado debido a...
	E. (Hay libros) de Huautla.	

Table 6. Teachers' answer to writing Mazateco question.

Even though there is not a standardized writing system for Mazateco, participants state that they can write it and interpret it as well as their students. Negative statements relay on the gap in research for a writing system, particularly for San Mateo Yolochochitlán. One of the participants states that this becomes difficult in the instruction and learning of the ethnic language for people who don't speak it. Here we see the importance of researching in the area of indigenous languages, literacy and the agreement for a writing system with different linguistic variants.

On the other side, there have been efforts by researchers, etnolinguists and Mazatecos to write the language, there is also material for schools available in Mazateco with Huautla

variant, however they have not been used in this bilingual school. Once again, we see a deficiency between language policies and the reality.

5. Based on your experience where is Mazateco used in San Mateo

Yoloxochitlán?

P.	Neutral	Negative
	En las faenas, en las faenas, festivales, ... mayordomías (x3)	
	M. Eventos sociales, además, las personas mayores en sus conversaciones	
	O. Lugares de concentración pública, ya sea faena, ... iglesia, (...), asambleas, fiestas	

Table 7. Teachers' answers to Mazateco domains question.

According to teachers' perceptions the ethnic language is significantly used in the community. The contexts or domains of use are predominantly in social and familiar events, as well as religious festivals and labor for the community (faenas). One of the participants mentioned the older generations' conversations, which commonly use Mazateco, actually in the other instrument we will see that new generations are losing the ethnic language or prefer Spanish in their conversations.

At glance, Mazateco seems to be strongly used, yet government institutions were not mentioned here, such as the clinic, or the council. These are public places where the population makes use of their rights such as their right to be assisted in their language by official institutions, articles that are stated in the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights.

6. What do you think about the fact that San Mateo Yoloxochitlan variant has not been researched deeply?

Positive	Neutral	Negative
M. que hay personas interesadas en el idioma que existe el alfabeto principalmente para escribir el idioma de San Mateo	M. Para (investigar), es necesario grabar, por lo que necesitamos recursos para hacer el trabajo	M. Tal vez hay personas interesadas en hacer esta situación pero quién patrocina? Ese es el escenario que hemos encontrado cuando queremos hacer ese trabajo.
O. nuestro idioma tiene más promoción ahora que llegan los tiempos de los santos. Hay una tradición que se llama huehuentones	O. los padres esperan en sus sus aspiraciones... buscan que sus hijos vayan más lejos principalmente... la ciudad.	O. Debemos reconocer que las nuevas generaciones están perdiendo el interés,
		O. (son) los padres que no tienen el interés de dar continuidad a sus costumbres, las tradiciones del idioma
		O. pero después de... (huentones, la lengua) se vuelve estática nuevamente.

Table 8. Teachers' answers to language research question.

According to teachers' perceptions, the ethnic language is interesting for being studied and for the cultural component that has in the festivals. But even when the LGDL states that there will be institutional support by the government to research indigenous languages, there are not mechanisms or programs that foster this treaty, for researching the language it is necessary sponsor, or and financial support.

Without sponsors for research and outside of the festivities, Mazateco seems to be a passive language. Complementing the previous question, according to

teachers' perception new generations are not interested in learning the language, the effects on modernization and homogenization are seen in this issue. Also, parents justify their chose for teaching Spanish because they want a better future for them. This is one of the reasons that put Mazateco in long term period shift, new generations prefer to teach children Spanish to guarantee a better status in their lives. Here, negative statements are around the dependability of researching, and modernization.

7. Based on your experience, how do you think your students perceive Mazateco language and Spanish? Is there any change between generations that prefer to study any language?

Positive	Neutral	Negative
D. pues como lo conciben es que el idioma es importante	E. (en lugares donde hay más monolingües) allí tienes que hablar más la lengua que el español.	D. Y los padres que no tienen a sus hijos en otra escuela piensan “ahhh el idioma no es importante”
O. solía ver cómo los niños felizmente se comunicaban en Mazateco, jugaban en Mazateco, se divertían en Mazateco		E. hay algunos niños que se avergüenzan de hablarlo, no lo hacen sin importar que intenten incluirlo... hay padres que todavía no lo ven bien (practicar mazateco), hay otros que sí lo ven bien pero mientras tanto nos dejan el trabajo como maestros.
		O. la modernidad, (prefieren) hablar español, incluso los saludos se han perdido
		L, las nuevas generaciones comienzan a ser monolingües con el español como idioma, sus padres también lo han perdido

		L. (los padres) tienen dificultades para apoyar (a los niños en la lengua) ...porque no lo saben, son padres jóvenes, de diecinueve, veinte, veintiún años
		M. se está perdiendo como se mencionó anteriormente con los padres jóvenes que no lo hablan porque eso comienza en la familia donde tienen que incluir un poco el idioma indígena para que vayan a la escuela.

Table 9. Teachers' perceptions on students' attitudes towards Mazateco.

Positive and neutral statements reflect other contexts in other times or in other schools and also imply the value students from bilingual school have towards the ethnic language. In fact, in the second instrument most of participants have a positive attitude towards Mazateco as a language of inheritance, a language from their hometown. Yet, their positive attitudes do not correspond with parents' practices.

New generations stop the continuity for language transmission, the role of parents and young parents for language inheritance and children support is absent. This explains why most of students in the second instrument affirmed that they had Spanish as their mother tongue, and why the rank for Mazateco language skills is situated in the less proficient. Furthermore, some parents rely on the teachers for children learn Mazateco (still there are parents who do not see it appropriately), but they cannot support students in their tasks in Mazateco because they might not know the language or they do not speak it at home. Then we see another factor that might contribute to the gradual loss of competence in Mazateco, the lack of practice at

home. As Skrobot (2014) mentioned, education is not a guarantee for language preservation.

8. What is the last generation that receives Mazateco instruction?

Positive	Neutral	Negative
D. Jóvenes cuya lengua materna es el mazateco, ellos hasta que se conviertan en soberanos de la comunidad la aplican.	O. aunque en el estado ha habido proyectos para escuelas secundarias bilingües	D. Aunque en otras escuelas algunos dominan el Mazateco pero no les importa demasiado
	A. se ha trabajado la lengua indígena pues en el nivel preescolar que pertenece al medio de nosotros y lo que es primaria	O. Se rompe La continuidad
		A. hay otras dos escuelas que es de primaria general pues ellos no ni en la primaria ni en la secundaria... nada más aquí es donde se trabaja la lengua indígena.

Table 10. Teachers' answers to Mazateco instruction.

There is not continuity after primary school for the ethnic language. The levels that cover this matter are primary school and kinder garden, thus there is only one bilingual school in San Mateo. Teachers' opinion about other schools tends to be negative since according to them, they do not work the aspect of the indigenous language, and students who know it are ashamed of speaking it, this and the fact that there is not a consequent level of instruction in Mazateco, makes that the speakers of Mazateco who do not attend bilingual school might be absorbed into hispanization quicker.

9. Have you ever been victims of discrimination because of your language?

Positive	Neutral	Negative
		Sí (x4)
L.(los estudiantes) tienen más cosas que mostrar afuera, porque tienen un aspecto importante que los demás no tienen	L. Nos hemos visto forzados en ser irrespetuosos cuando es necesario, no permitiendo que los niños sean menospreciados	L. como nivel, como institución, como persona
A. los niños se les ha dicho que el idioma también es importante, ya que para demostrar que los estudiantes que hablan un idioma obtienen becas		A. Como persona
		L. Incluso con la población de este municipio
		O. Autoridades.
		A. Incluso nuestros compañeros de trabajo
		A. también podemos notar entre nuestros estudiantes que son discriminados, ofendidos por los estudiantes que van a otras escuelas.
D. Nosotros como maestros tenemos la intención de cubrir y valorar este lenguaje que la comunidad ha perdido.		L. Cuando se refieren a nuestra institución si ven a un niño por señalarlo, dicen –son del bilingüe– esa es la etiqueta.

Table 11. Teachers' answers about discrimination.

Here we see an evident case of discrimination. We see social discrimination (by the community), institutional discrimination (by the council, the education institution, and other schools), and personal discrimination (suffered by teachers and by students from bilingual school). Most of the teachers declared that they suffered a kind of discrimination. This might be a strong reason for new generations stop the continuity in the transmission of Mazateco and might mean a limitation for an indigenous bilingual speaker since they might be ashamed or prefer to hide their identity. And for that reason, teachers take a stance of language or identity promoters and activists when they see that their students are discriminated or when developing students' identity.

10. Is Mazateco a single subject or content is taught trough the language?

Positive	Neutral	Negative
	D. El contenido se enseña a través del idioma	D. Donde tenemos dificultades es con los primeros grados
		M. Con primer grado es un poco complicado comenzar a escribir porque hay símbolos de escritura que tienen otro sonido en español y en mazateco,
	L. Es bilingüe porque debe alternarse, eso está claro en los planes de estudio que debe alternarse.... debes hablar en español y en mazateco, no debes recargarte en ninguno de ellos.	L. Desafortunadamente, lo que más sucede en la enseñanza en general no solo aquí es la traducción

Table 12. Teachers' answers to Mazateco syllabus.

Negative statements are due to the complexity of Mazateco and how complicate it is for small children the process of literacy in early stages. Here we find two answers on the ideal of how the language should be taught and one opinion stating the reality in general for the indigenous bilingual school system. Since Mazateco is taught as a content language, this means that there is not possibility to study it in a systematic way. There are not primers where students practice the ethnic language, either instruments that measure students' progress in Mazateco. The entry "El contenido se enseña a través del idioma" does not present any adverb or adjective that modifies it into positive or negative, as opposed to the negative entries, where we find the words: difficult, complex and unfortunately. As we will see in the next section, the instruction in bilingual school is deficient for some reasons.

11. Do you receive any training in this area?

Positive	Neutral	Negative
O. uno ha tratado de usar sus propias estrategias para destacarse y, además, todavía persistir con la educación bilingüe.	L. debemos ser autodidactas	L. la cuestión educativa ha sido ...afectada por las preocupaciones políticas en el estado y a nivel nacional, porque ahí viene desquite y más en nuestro estado de Oaxaca.... desde que el proyecto de maestros de Oaxaca comenzó con el plan para la transformación de la educación que es el PTEO, todos los apoyos para la capacitación docente se detuvieron
	O. En los años diecinueve había dos etnolingüistas, en Huautla hicieron los textos "Naxini uno y dos	L. las políticas de alguna manera nos incluyen y nos excluyen de otra... acuerdos tales como convenciones en San Andres Arriza y todo lo que se estableció están en papeles
D. . maestros aquí que hablamos mazateco...		L. en la práctica, una persona que habla el idioma es discriminada en todas las áreas, comenzando en el área legal, como se visten de manera diferente, se expresan de manera

somos competentes en escritura y lectura		diferente, no tuvieron la oportunidad de ir a la universidad, entonces son discriminados
		L. ...lo que nos está sucediendo, un terremoto, ¿dónde están las autoridades para resolver esta situación? No están aquí, incluso las autoridades locales no nos prestan atención
		O. Uno de ellos (etnolingüistas) fue a una escuela para practicarlo, pero no funcionó... el proyecto no continuó porque la misma comunidad obstaculizaba.
	D. La calidad educativa tiene que ver con la búsqueda de la esencia de la educación intercultural	O. y D. reforma educativa actual en el aspecto de la evaluación tiene un problema, no encuentra una manera de evaluarnos. (x2)
		D. No nos va a entender, lo único que puede evaluar Es su programa ineficiente el que se implementa a nivel nacional, pero eso no significa calidad educativa. Miren donde enseñamos ahora (señalando el edificio provisional) ¿esto es calidad educativa?
		L. Y no hay alfabeto para decir ahhh, la maestra escribió bien
		L. Qué fácil es tomar decisiones detrás de un escritorio para otra realidad.
		D. (Instituto para la evaluación) nunca va a venir a ver el problema.

Table 13. Teachers' answers to pedagogical and institutional support.

As we can perceive, participants Leticia, Daniela and Omar criticize the veracity and effectiveness of educative policies and the law. They judge how difficult it is for the educative reform evaluation to consider teachers' context, and the accuracy of Mazateco alphabets as part of the evaluation. Most of the judgments made by participants have a negative impact, this is due to the ethical and behavioral implications in the question. Two answers complain about the temporary situation after the earthquake and the lack of

institutional support. One of their answers shows the oppressive the state has been to teachers' movements and struggle. There are not positive judgments regarding the institutional or educative sector.

On the other hand, teachers approve their own capabilities as autodidact educators and as users of the language which the educative reform does not evaluate. As previously discussed in Chapter II, there is a lack of teacher training support by institutions, more when teachers' activism is seen as an incitement.

By looking at this institutional shortage, some of the rights for indigenous languages and educational policies are not being applied according to teachers' testimony. The San Andres Accords are only stated as a theory. The fraction II of the article two of the Mexican Constitution which fosters bilingual education, seems to be deficient if we look at the negative section. We see some of the reasons for the inefficiency of the bilingual school system.

After the analysis of these discourses from teachers' experience and perspectives regarding Mazateco language we can observe in the next section reasons why students from bilingual school have stated low language skills proficiency in Mazateco and a predominant use of Spanish in institutional contexts and social contexts. Also we have seen some aspects and practices that might put Mazateco as an endangered language in the community in long term period.

In summary, teachers' perceptions of Mazateco language in the bilingual school are: linguistic variation is important in the classroom as teachers cannot use other Mazateco variant at all. There is a gap for writing system research, particularly in San Mateo, although they can write it by inference. The ethnic language is significantly used in the community as a social practice, however, new generations are not interested in learning the language. There

are people interested in researching the language, but no sponsor. New generations stop the continuity for language transmission and there is not continuity after primary school for the ethnic language. They value their efforts as the only bilingual school in the zone, although as institution they have been discriminated as well as their students. Mazateco is a complex language to study and to systematize, for this and other reasons they state that the educative policies, the law and the instruments for evaluating them are ineffective.

4.2 Data from students' questionnaires.

In this section results regarding children's response to the questionnaires are shown. The main focus was to collect children's attitudes and perceptions towards Mazateco. Attitudes and perceptions include four skills proficiency, language use and domains, perceptions towards both languages, population of bilingualism and generational transmission.

1. Spanish and Mazateco language proficiency.

Here the students' four skills of Mazateco and Spanish language are compared, the choices for students' perceptions rank from very good, good, more or less and little.

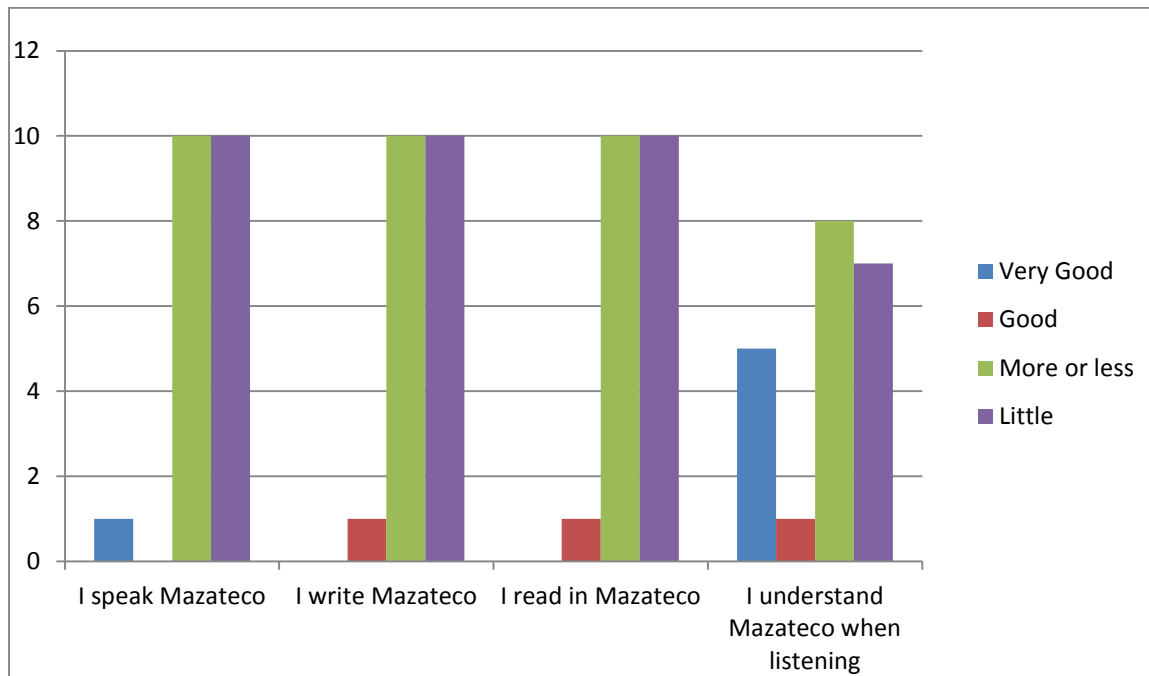


Figure 7. Students' perceptions on Mazateco language four skills.

Mazateco is the language in which participants perceived themselves as “more or less” and “little” competent where most of the participants felt identified with, even though Mazateco oral comprehension skill was the only one where a relevant number of participants felt identified as “very good.”

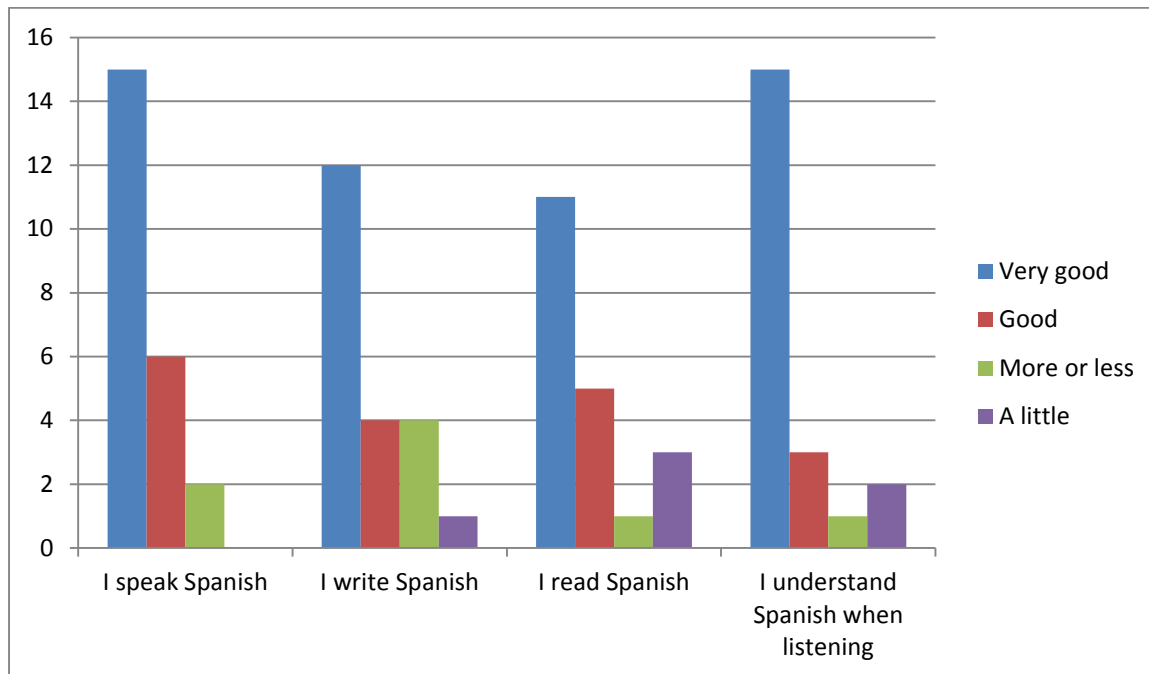


Figure 8. Students' perceptions on Spanish four skills.

As we can see in figure 8, the language which participants perceive themselves more competent in was Spanish, in which more than fifty percent chose the category of "very good", specifically the oral production skill in Spanish was the major one, a significant number in Spanish four competences was chosen in the category of "very good."

These results suggest that participants' estimation of their competence in Spanish is proficient while for Mazateco is more or less or little competent, nevertheless a small population of this sample might fairly understand when someone speaks in Mazateco. A common tendency to see in both languages is that participants perceive themselves in the reading and writing skills as less proficient, while in the speaking and listening skills the tendency is that they feel more competent. In other words, the literacy is one of weak aspects for both languages in the bilingual school.

2. Language domains.

Students elicited the people and contexts they use language with. Here they could choose among whether using one single language or both.

Domain or context	Spanish	Mazateco	Both
With your parents	17	4	0
With your siblings	18	2	2
At home	15	2	4
At school or in class	15	1	5
With your friends	18	1	1
At the store or the market	14	2	5
At the church or for worship	17	1	3
At the hospital or with the doctor	18	2	1
In the towns' celebrations	14	2	4
Outside your community –E. g. Huautla-	12	2	6

Table 14. Students' language choosing for domains.

The table 13 suggests the domains in which participants use Spanish, Mazateco or both languages. As we can see the language that participants use the most in all domains is Spanish. After that, students are likely to use both languages, and as a last choice, few of them use Mazateco. This language choosing has a relation with students' perception of their skills, in which students do not feel competent in Mazateco, and then they prefer to speak Spanish.

The domain in which Spanish is used the most is with students' same generation (classmates and siblings), as well as an institution like the clinic. This is alarming for new generations do not speak the ethnic language with their generation. Here we see another factor that puts Mazateco in risk. In contrast, the indigenous language is rarely used with participants' parents where, only four of the participants stated this. However, students might use both languages in places where linguistic diversity is present, such as at the market, in Huautla de Jimenez and at school. This gives an insight for students feel more willing to use

both languages in places where there is a interculturality. As this table suggest, Spanish is the dominant language preferred by most of the participants for communicating mostly with their own generation, while bilingualism is weakly preferred in social spaces with linguistic diversity.

3. Students' perceptions about the languages.

Participants stated their significance of both languages. They answered to the open question:

Mazateco means for me...

What Mazateco means for children	
"A language, an inheritance, so that when I have an exam, I know songs"	"To respect my language"
"Indigenous language"	"For me it means a tradition from my hometown and for me"
"a language" (x3)	"A language, an inheritance"
"It is important because if somebody speak to us in Mazateco and we do not know it then we would feel bad for not knowing the language in my town"	"To preserve the language"
"A language, it is very important because speaking it is important"	"A language from my hometown and a treasure"
"An indigenous language and inheritance so when people tell us something we can understand"	"The language from my hometown"(x2)
"Indigenous language is important for us and being able to understand what our parents are talking about"	
"A language, inheritance for me it is important to always know Mazateco for it gets practiced and never gets lost"	"A language, a legacy for it does not disappear"

Table 15. Children's significance about Mazateco.

Nine children relate Mazateco language as their local identity, as part of their legacy and their community language (words like hometown, inheritance, and legacy are related to it). Whereas the rest of participants identify it as a language, indigenous language and two of

them as an important language. Three of them see the practicality of the ethnic language for communicating with people and consider it is important to know it for they can understand others. And three see the importance of its maintenance and preservation so it does not disappear. There are not negative statements towards Mazateco.

Mazateco perceptions most of the times there is a sense of emotion, legacy and a component of their cultural identity. For example, a tradition, an inheritance, to respect the language, to preserve it, to understand people that speak it, etc. We clearly see that children’s perceptions towards the language is that of proud, legacy and identity. This is what the current bilingual education system fosters. To promote languages and their richness.

What Spanish means for children	
“Yes because it will always be used”	“To learn another language (3)
“To read and write”	“Very important because I understand it”
“A Spanish language”	---
“a language” (x3)	Yes because when you speak it feels beautiful”
“A lot for me because it is the language that we speak in my town”	“A language from my hometown too”
“It is very important, because I understand more Spanish than Mazateco” (x2)	“To communicate with people”
	“To communicate with people from my town”
“We use the language to understand what we comprehend”	“A language expressing myself words for something”

Table 16. Children’s significance about Spanish.

Here, eight participants’ answers to Spanish perceptions usually attribute its usage and the practical purposes it implies. For example, to communicate, to read and write, to express, to understand people, because it is used. Also seven participants relate it as a

language or to learn another language, as it gives an access to learn another language or the importance that is learning Spanish. Only two of them state that it is a language of their hometown too. One of them relates Spanish as a positive emotion when speaking it. We see the perception of Spanish as the practical language, as the language of everyday communication. It is clear the influence of the modernization or homogenization, maybe also the focus of Spanish in the bilingual school is the reason for the perception of children on this language as practical.

Both languages are identified as languages by participants and not as a dialect or something hierarchy superior or inferior in participants' responses. There are not negative judgments by students to diminish, blame or minimize any language. Regarding language status in students' responses, there are three answers of students that the ethnic language can be in risk or must be preserved and in Spanish there is one answer that says it will be always used. In general, students value both language, one for its practicality and the other for its legacy and cultural meaning.

4. Mazateco generational transmission and population of bilingualism at school.

This data shows from the sample of children some of the socio-cultural features identified in Mazateco from the community such as language transmission from generation to generation and children's mother tongue. There was a question asking if participants knew a legend or tale in Mazateco, nevertheless all of them stated a 'no' in their answers.

Regarding children's mother tongue, none of the participants considers Mazateco as their mother tongue. On the other hand, the number of participants' answers for both languages as their mother tongue is significant, 19% of them said they are bilinguals. These results suggest that even when the study was developed in a bilingual school for indigenous

languages the predominance and importance of Spanish language is significant. As seen in the previous instrument, the tendency of students starting bilingual school as monolinguals in Spanish is dominant. Fewer children arrive to school being bilinguals. This is a strong evidence to consider Mazateco in a process of displacement for new generations.

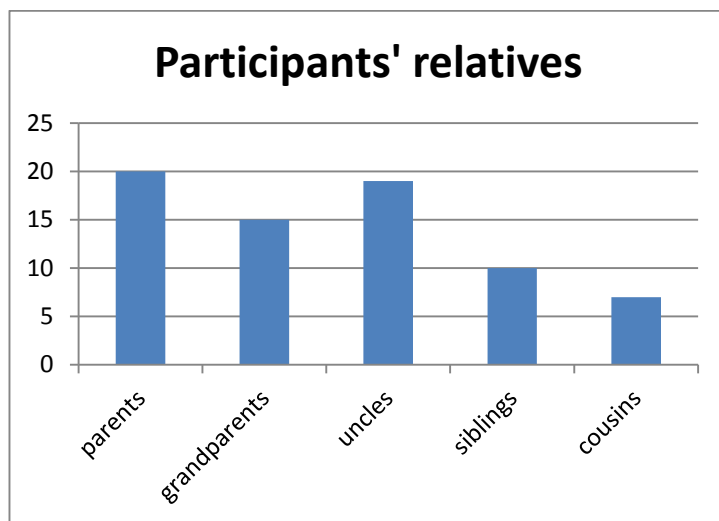


Figure 9. Participants' relatives speaking Mazateco.

As we can see in this graphic most of the participants' uncles speak Mazateco, whereas siblings and cousins are the generations that speak less Mazateco than their parents. From this sample we can infer that there was a maintenance stage in language speaking from first generation (participants' grandparents) to second generation (parents and uncles' participants); however, from second generation to third generation (participants' siblings and cousins) there is a decreasing amount of people speaking Mazateco. The lack of continuity in generational transmission provokes a language shift in next generations making a predominant use of Spanish.

In summary students' perceptions and attitudes are revealing for drawing an idea on the panorama of Mazateco status in the bilingual school. The language which participants

perceive themselves as competent is Spanish, it is also preferred by most of the participants for communicating mostly with their own generation. In general students value both languages, Spanish for its practicality and Mazateco for its legacy and cultural meaning. Nevertheless, fewer children start school being bilinguals, the reason is that there is a lack of continuity in generational transmission for Mazateco language.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to review the findings of the investigation and to draw conclusions. Here I answer the research questions proposed at the beginning of this research. I analyze the findings in relation to the variables stated in the literature review. Some of the limitations on the data collection procedures, the method, as well as the implications on the instrument and the participants are explained. Finally, I give directions and proposals for further research.

5.1 Summary of the Results.

The results of the questionnaire administered to students offer a little panorama of the current situation of Mazateco and Spanish in San Mateo Yoloxochitlán. The findings of both language skills and their uses in different contexts show the process of language shift into Spanish which puts Mazateco in a situation of loss. The findings on teachers' interview give us an idea of some of the reasons in the school and in the community that might cause language replacement and low proficiency in the ethnic language. Thus participants' positive judgments give us some insights for language maintenance and preservation.

The purpose of this study was to answer the following research questions:

- 1. What are teachers' perceptions of Mazateco language in a bilingual primary school in San Mateo Yoloxochitlán?**

They make positive judgments on the importance of the ethnic language. They praise their own and students' capacity for Mazateco proficiency. Even though there is not a standardized writing system for Mazateco, participants state that they can write it. Regarding the intelligibility among other variants of Mazateco, most of the participants agree that there is a tiny difference in words and pitch between San Mateo and Huautla, these two variants

are very similar. Few are the positive comments regarding ethics that are related to the community efforts, student's capacities and teacher practices; for instance, they justify their attitudes towards language policies in education as a way to struggle and claim their rights. Regarding teachers' training and experience in the workplace some of them might lack of pedagogical training in their area for almost 50% of them are not graduated.

Negative statements relay on the gap of research for a writing system in San Mateo, the language complexity of Mazateco, they critic or question the lack of support and sponsor for language research and the existence of a standardized Mazateco alphabet. They judge the ineffectiveness of language policies in education like the educative reform or the general evaluation, they question the veracity of the rights and the ethics of institutions. Their perceptions are mostly negative when talking about their old school experiences, the entities (community, institutions and horologers) that discriminate participants and children from the bilingual school, and the oppressive the state has been for teacher's strikes and demonstrations. Finally, they perceive that new generations stop the continuity for language transmission and are absorbed by modernity.

We observe the consequence of the lack of application of language policies in the bilingual education system as well as the incongruence between the articles stated and the real practice. We can observe the repercussions of the old indigenous bilingual school that aimed to hispanicize Mazateco speakers and the marginalization and institutional repression that they face by the system. The social stigma and discrimination towards indigenous people is one of the multiple factors for children to learn Spanish. Teacher's attitudes and practices towards the ethnic language are mostly positive for contributing to language maintenance; however, they have no pedagogical support, institutional funding for research and nor the

instruments or materials for working the ethnic language, these aspects have a negative component in teachers' perceptions.

2. What are children's attitudes towards Mazateco in this educational institution?

They perceive that their skills in Mazateco are not proficient like in Spanish itself. Mazateco was the language in which participants perceived themselves as "more or less" and "little" competent, though they might be competent in the oral comprehension in the ethnic language since some of them fairly understand it when it is spoken. They perceive the ethnic language as something valuable, important and part of their identity, whereas they see Spanish as the practical and communicative language. This perception is reflected in the domains or contexts where the ethnic language is used, they tend to use Mazateco for the nuclear family and multilingual contexts such as at home, with parents, in the market, at school and in Huautla neighborhood.

Here we observe the ineffectiveness of the indigenous bilingual system for indigenous language maintenance. The way children perceive Spanish as the practical language might motivate them to learn it. It is important then to spread projects and texts that encourage Mazateco reading and writing in order to change the paradigm. According to this sample, students are being homogenized into Spanish and losing part of the local knowledge and identity as Mazatecos.

3. In which practices and domains are Mazateco and Spanish used?

Teachers' answers showed that the ethnic language is significantly used in the community, predominantly in social and family events, as well as religious festivals and

collective labors for the community (faenas). Particularly older generations' conversations use Mazateco. The speaker of the community gives messages in both languages. Government institutions were not mentioned here, such as the clinic, or the council since the use is Spanish predominantly.

Students' answer showed that the domains where only Mazateco is spoken are lacking, the only domain in which 19% of children use Mazateco only is with parents. Spanish is the dominant language preferred by most participants for communicating mostly with their own generation, while bilingualism is weakly preferred in social spaces with linguistic diversity, less than the 40% of students decide to speak both languages. This language choosing has a relation with students' perception of their skills.

New generations are becoming more Spanish monolinguals and less competent in the indigenous language, so their choices to use Mazateco are limited. The data analyzed suggests that participants are passing through a transition between the less use of bilingualism into a total use of Spanish. Although the community presents a significant use of Mazateco in different domains, new generations do not use it because they are not competent in it.

4. What is the status of Mazateco as an indigenous language in the community of San Mateo Yolochochitlan?

According to teachers' perceptions, new generations do not use the ethnic language because they are not interested, they are ashamed of speaking it or they are more motivated towards modernity which implies speaking Spanish. Also, the tendency of students arriving at bilingual school speaking only Spanish as opposed in the past is a very alarming variable, in fact, five out of twenty-one students consider themselves as bilinguals. These results

suggest that the predominance and importance of Spanish language in the community is significant.

Regarding generational transmission and language use among generations there is a preference to choose Spanish as the competent language or the inheritance language, this is clearly seen in the results on generational transmission where from second generation (participants' parents) to third generation (participants' siblings and cousins) there is a decreasing amount of people speaking Mazateco. This phenomenon is palpable for Mazateco is almost not used by participants with their friends and siblings. The lack of oral transmission in the ethnic language between old generations and students is evident since none of participants know any legend or song in Mazateco.

Institutional and social discrimination as well mass media motivate parents to teach their children the dominant language. It is seen as a positive practice because parents want to protect children against future discrimination or marginalization. The lack of knowledge and practice of the linguistic rights in the institutions cause that they might see Spanish as the language of prestige and the language of access to public services. In fact, only four children stated to speak Mazateco with their parents. This ideology is reflected also in children where they see Spanish as the practical and useful language and Mazateco as the inheritance language. This motivates them to speak Spanish more and although they appreciate the ethnic language they don't use it because they do not perceive themselves competent in it.

Finally, this information let us draw a panorama in which both languages are still used in the community, though Spanish tends to be predominantly used by new generations showing a process of language shift from tiny bilingualism to only Spanish in most of children, this replaces Mazateco in most of its domains. The community might not realize that Mazateco is being replaced by new generations since both languages are still used by older generations.

5.2 Limitations

The limitations faced during this research were the geographical location for the data collection which was a town ten hours away by bus from my hometown. The fact that I do not know Mazateco language was another constraint. There was not a test to prove student's proficiency in Mazateco, so the data regarding language skills depends on their perceptions. The sample of students which took the questionnaire does not represent the whole community, but it gives an idea of that generation particularly. Fifth grade was absent the day the instrument was applied, so it could have been interesting to see whether there was a relation or tendency between the school grade and the language proficiency. Students with disabilities could not take the instrument.

The original purpose of this research was doing an alphabet or a sociolinguistic profile of Mazateco in that community; nevertheless, due to the complexity of the language and time I decided to explore students and teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards the ethnic language. Considering parent's attitudes about the ethnic language would have been significant to see if it influenced student's proficiency or attitudes as well. Other aspects like participants' socioeconomic status or discrimination suffered were not taken into account. Finally, all what we know about teachers' opinions on the instruction of Mazateco in the bilingual school is based in their perceptions, there was not class observation, so the context on how the instruction is given in both languages is unknown.

5.3 Directions for further research.

A connection with the community is necessary in order to know more deeply the contexts where Mazateco is used or not, also to know the community's attitudes towards both languages and see if there are negative attitudes towards Mazateco that imply the stop of its

use, diffusion or transmission to next generations. Another important aspect to know in the community is if they have suffered any institutional or social discrimination for being indigenous or speaking an indigenous language and whether if they know their rights as indigenous language speakers or not. To have a broader panorama of the community outside of the bilingual school it is necessary to make a survey for the situation of bilingualism and education in San Mateo, because not all children in the community have access to the bilingual education system. 5.4 Implications of the Study

Diverse factors that are inside the community (such as the community, family, and teachers, public services) and outside of it (for instance language policies, mass media, non-indigenous speakers' society, organizations, government and institutions) are relevant to consider for developing an action plan for Mazateco language preservation and promotion.

Knowing the language deeply helps to know its complexity and their possibilities for having a larger sample of participants (monolingual Mazateco speakers) and developing projects like literacy workshops or promoting social language practices as well as encouraging the community to create and register their local knowledge on plants, literature, information and history in the ethnic language. A social action approach is necessary to improve the current situation of the community where the language of prestige is replacing the indigenous language.

As a first step I propose to make a workshop for informing parents this situation in the community. As an initial topic I recommend to address in the workshop information about the General Law of Linguistic Rights, to discuss some of the articles that are important for indigenous people, as well as to inform them about the institutions where they can go and claim the violations of their rights. To change the perception that Mazateco is an archaic and useless language by presenting them the current works made in Mazateco such as literature,

and showing them the articles that state that Mazateco is as valid as Spanish for institutional services procedures. As a second topic in this workshop I suggest to address the findings of this investigation to parents in order to show them that there is a process of language shift in the bilingual school into Spanish according to students' perceptions. Also, a third topic consists on propose teachers about the elaboration and design of materials and games in the ethnic language with San Mateo variant as a step to promote the language use in school. Finally, we must coordinate the community with institutions, experts on the field and existing research on bilingual education and linguistics in Mazateco language, this with the purpose to develop a methodology and didactic for teaching the ethnic language. The reason is that there is a gap of indigenous bilingual schools' investigation for all languages in Mexico. The coordination with the community is important for future studies might not be helpful if the population does not recognize the value Mazateco language has and the process of language that is happening.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Questions for teachers' interview.

1. What is your mother tongue and how did you learn it?
2. What is your profession, how were you trained and how long have you worked?
3. Are you from this community or from another? If you have been in contact with other linguistic variants and how much different or similar was it? Was it from the variant of San Mateo Yoloxochitlán?
4. Do you write Mazateco language and what is the basis for writing it? Is there material at the library?
5. Based on your experience where Mazateco is used in San Mateo Yoloxochitlán particularly in public institutions such as the church...?
6. What do you think about the fact that San Mateo Yoloxochitlan variant has not been researched deeply?
7. Based on your experience, how do you think your students perceive Mazateco language and Spanish language? Do they show interest in learning, do they show interest for Spanish? What perceptions have your students towards Mazateco? Have you seen an evolution between generations for example from the point you started to nowadays in wanting to preserve the language or is it the same?
8. What generation is the last that receives Mazateco instruction here in San Mateo Yoloxochitlán. Is there any difference in other places where they continue in junior high?
9. Have you ever been victims of discrimination regarding language?
10. I don't know the program, is Mazateco a single subject or content is taught through the language?
11. Do you receive any training in the area of Mazateco language teaching?

En la clínica o con el doctor.		
En las fiestas del pueblo.		
Fuera de tu comunidad – en Huautla por ejemplo-.		

3. Contesta las siguientes preguntas.

¿Quién en tu familia habla mazateco? -papá, mamá, hermanos, tíos, abuelos, primos, etc.-

¿Conoces alguna leyenda o cuento en mazateco? ¿Cuál?

4. Completa las siguientes ideas con tus palabras.

Hablar mazateco para mí significa -----

Hablar español para mí significa -----

