UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNA

Santa Barbara

# Language Ideologies and the Intercultural Universities in Mexico: San Felipe del Progreso and Ixhuatlán de Madero

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Doctor of Philosophy

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by

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June 2021

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June 2021

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by

James Robert Musselman

**Dedication**

First and foremost, I dedicate this dissertation to the indigenous languages and peoples of the Mexican states of *el Estado Libre y Soberano de México* and *el Estado de Veracruz de Ignacio de la Llave*. This work is a token of my commitment to you, your beautiful cultures and languages, and my concern for your welfare. I sincerely hope that in some small way this work promotes more awareness of linguistic rights, helps protect cultures, and improves lives.

Secondly, I dedicate this dissertation to my ex-wife Belén, a native speaker of Mazahua, who is ashamed of her language (“son nacos”, “nobody cares about them”), who never understood what I was working on at all, which puzzled me for years and compelled me to pursue these linguistic studies.

Na jo’o bi ñ’eje, Welcome, bienvenidos, in Mazahua.

Pjiekak'joo, “We speak", the name of the critically endangered Tlahuica language.

**Epigraph**

| | |
|---|---|
| Tú has querido negar mi existencia | You have wanted to deny my existence |
| yo no niego la tuya | I don't deny yours |
| pero yo existo. ¡soy mazahua! | but I exist. I'm Mazahua! |
| Estoy hecho de esta tierra, de este aire, | I'm made from this earth, from this air |
| del agua y del sol | from the water and the sun |
| Soy un sobreviviente de mis antepasados | I'm a survivor of my ancestors |
| Al que han heredado una cultura, una lengua, | Who have left a culture, a language, |
| Una forma de respetar a sus hermanos,… | A way of respecting their brothers and sisters,… |

The first lines of the poem *Soy Mazahua,* 1980

By Julio Garduño Cervantes, 1940 – 2007

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This dissertation would not have been possible without the support of the administration of the Universidad Intercultural del Estado de México (UIEM) and also the Universidad Veracruzana Intercultural (UVI), both the administration in Xalapa and also the campus where I did research, la Huasteca (UVIH).

In the administration of UIEM, I want to especially thank Dr. Carlos Lara Cruz, the director of investigations, who managed to procure for me an office space, more like a small conference room really, that enabled me to conduct interviews on campus "in the middle of everything", the ground floor of the classroom building Tlaloc. Also, I would like to thank Maestra Yamile Carrero Mantilla, the director of academic mobility and international matters at UIEM, who made my entry into UIEM painless. Many more people helped me in my work than I could possibly mention - I am grateful to them too.

In the administration of UVI in Xalapa, Veracruz, I would like to thank the anthropologist Dr. Shantal Meseguer Galván, who I feel successfully lobbied for my permission to do research at UVI campus Huasteca (UVIH) and who gave me unwavering support. Also affiliated with the UVI administration, I was also influenced by anthropologist Dr. Gunther Dietz, who advised me to drop the quantitative part of my proposal and just do qualitative interviews, and it did turn out that the interviews greatly affected me. Also at UVI Huasteca, where I gathered data, Maestro Luis Alberto Sánchez Montejo made my time at UVIH painless and low stress. And above all else, I must also mention Dr. Lourdes Budar Jiménez, the director of UVI who kindly gave me permission to do research at UVIH.

I would also like to recognize the students, graduates, and educational service providers who participated in the qualitative interviews. I was treated extremely well at both

campuses and in both communities, although my main base was in Atlacomulco de Fabela, Estado de México.

I would be remiss not to mention my support network at the University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB), I want to thank my Ph.D. committee members Professor Aline Ferreira, Professor Erick Campbell, and Professor Stefan Gries for their support throughout this process. And I'm absolutely certain that I would never have made it through the MA/Ph.D. program without the help of my committee chair for both the MA and the Ph.D., Dr. Viola Miglio, Professor of Spanish at UCSB.

**Vita of James Robert Musselman**

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Language ideologies, linguistic rights of minority languages, educational policy in Mexico towards indigenous languages and cultures, 2015-2021

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The lexical tones of Mazahua, 2015-2017

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**Abstract**

Language Ideologies and the Intercultural Universities in Mexico: San Felipe del Progreso and Ixhuatlán de Madero

by

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In recent decades Mexico has moved to recognize the linguistic rights of its many indigenous languages and cultures. For the first time in the history of Mexico, this was enshrined in a 2001 amendment in the country's Constitution recognizing the rights of the indigenous communities 'to preserve and enrich their languages, knowledge, and every element contributing to their culture and identity'[1], then followed by the more exhaustive General Law on the Linguistic Rights of Indigenous Communities in 2003, whose article IV sets Spanish on the same level as indigenous languages as 'national languages' and having the same validity, specifically regarding the respect of human rights in the transactions with the

[1] Article 2, Section A, Subsection IV. Preservar y enriquecer sus lenguas, conocimientos y todos los elementos que constituyan su cultura e identidad. (http://www.diputados.gob.mx/LeyesBiblio/pdf_mov/Constitucion_Politica.pdf)

justice system[2]. These changes in the legal status of indigenous languages marked the end of the one language policy of the Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP) for public schools. As a partial success achieved by the Zapatista movement, bilingual schools and the intercultural universities were established. The intercultural universities are the object of this study and they represent a strategic and structural change in public education policy towards indigenous languages and cultures. The intercultural universities were built to serve indigenous communities that traditionally had their linguistic and even human rights violated. The first one was founded in 2004, the Universidad Intercultural del Estado de México (UIEM), the main site of my fieldwork for this dissertation, and, secondly, the Universidad Veracruzana Intercultural (UVI), founded in 2007. The intent of these universities is to support regional cultural and linguistic diversity and to offer higher education opportunities in underrepresented regional and indigenous communities. But, about 15 years after the founding of the first intercultural university, what impact are they having on the language ideologies of the students, in the family, and in the community? This is the key question investigated in this study. These two intercultural universities were the sites of quantitative and qualitative research into the linguistic attitudes of students and staff and surrounding families and communities and the impact the intercultural universities are having on language ideologies.

[2] Las lenguas indígenas que se reconozcan en los términos de la presente Ley y el español son lenguas nacionales por su origen histórico y tendrán la misma validez, garantizando en todo momento los derechos humanos a la no discriminación y acceso a la justicia de conformidad con la Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos y los tratados internacionales en la materia de los que el Estado Mexicano sea parte.

Keywords: Changing language ideologies, higher education for indigenous communities, reversing language shift, intercultural universities, UIEM, Universidad Veracruzana Intercultural sede Huasteca, Mazahua, Tlahuica, Nahuatl, indigenous languages, minority language educational rights, language policy, SEP, CGEIB, San Felipe del Progreso, Estado de México, Ixhuatlán del Madero, Estado de Veracruz, Mexico, INAH, INALI.

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## List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
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| AMLO | (President) Andrés Manuel López Obrador |
| CDI | Comisión Nacional Para El Desarrollo De Los Pueblos Indígenas, founded 2003 (replacing INI) |
| CIDECI-Unitierra | Centro Indígena de Capacitación Integral |
| CGEIB | Coordinación General de Educación Intercultural y Bilingüe |
| DGEI | Dirección General de Educación Indígena |
| DRAE | Diccionario de la Real Academia Española |
| ECHR | European Convention on Human Rights |
| ECtHR | European Court of Human Rights |
| EdoMéx | Estado de México |
| EU | European Union |
| EZLN | Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional |
| GIDS | Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale |
| GIS | Geographic Information System |
| HDI | Human Development Index |
| IDH | Índice de Desarrollo Humano (Human Development Index) |
| ICCPR | International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (United Nations) |
| IU | Intercultural University |
| IUs | Intercultural Universities |
| IMSS | Instituto Nacional del Seguro Social |
| INAH | Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia |
| INALI | Instituto Nacional de Lenguas Indígenas |

| | |
|---|---|
| INEGI | Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática |
| INI | Instituto Nacional Indigenista, founded 1948 |
| INSABI | Instituto de Salud para el Bienestar |
| ISIA | Instituto Superior Intercultural Ayuuk |
| ISSSTE | Instituto de Seguridad y Servicios Sociales de los Trabajadores del Estado |
| km | Kilometer, kilometers |
| LGID | Spanish acronym for the university degree in Intercultural Management for Development |
| MA, M.A. | Master of Arts |
| MXN | Mexican New Pesos (official currency of Mexico since 1994) |
| NA | Not applicable |
| NAFTA | North American Free Trade Agreement |
| *Nueva España* | New Spain |
| ORAHS | (UCSB) Office of Research Application for Human Subjects |
| PhD, Ph.D. | Doctor of Philosophy |
| PNUD | Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo |
| RAE | Real Academia Española |
| Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 | |
| or | |
| SARS-CoV-2 | The specific coronavirus that causes the disease COVID-19 |
| SEP | Secretaría de Educación Pública |
| SNTE | Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Educación |

| | |
|---|---|
| SP | Seguro Popular |
| UAEM | Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México |
| UCSB | University of California at Santa Barbara |
| UIEM | Universidad Intercultural del Estado de México |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UNHRC | United Nations Human Rights Committee |
| UNICH | Universidad Intercultural de Chiapas |
| US | United States |
| USD | United States dollars |
| UVI | Universidad Veracruzana Intercultural |
| UVIH | Universidad Veracruzana Intercultural sede Huasteca |

## Chapter 1: Introduction

The contemporary world is facing an unprecedented global decrease in language diversity. Currently, there are about 5,000 to 7,000 languages spoken in the world, with perhaps half of them at risk of extinction in the next 100 years, an estimate that resulted from a language survey conducted Suzanne Romain (2007). Accepting the higher figure of 7,000, and also that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (henceforth UNESCO) [3] estimates 2,464 languages are currently endangered, about a third or more of the total of the world's languages are endangered at the present time. According to the Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (henceforth INEGI), there are 68 indigenous languages still spoken in Mexico and these dismal world statistics are reflected in Mexico, where 53 of the 68 still-spoken indigenous languages[4] (78%) have fewer than 100,000 speakers, while 23 of the 68 still-spoken indigenous languages (34%) have fewer than 1,000 speakers[5].

Given that the most widely spoken indigenous language in Mexico is Nahuatl with about 1.4 million speakers[6], with many relatively smaller languages, the question arises as to how many speakers does a language need to be viable. The most widely spoken indigenous language in the Americas is Quechua, with about 8 to 12 million speakers concentrated in the Andean highlands of Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador and yet it is endangered (Hornberger &

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[3] *UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger*, n.d.

[4] In this dissertation "original language" has preferential use because like the word indio or Indian, the word indigenous might be considered to be a label that represents segregation.

[5] Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), 2009, p. 36

[6] Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), 2009, p. 36

King, 2001, p. 166). Fishman states "Most purely local languages (those with fewer than a million speakers) will be threatened with extinction during the next century" (1998, p. 38). In Mexico, only Nahuatl out of 68 indigenous languages has more than a million speakers. Krauss gives 100,000 as the minimum "safety-in-numbers" limit (1992, p. 7). According to Ranka Bjeljac-Babic (2000, p. 18) "Specialists reckon that no language can survive unless 100,000 people speak it". Even using this lower limit of 100,000 speakers, only 15 of the 68 indigenous languages in Mexico have more than 100,000 speakers, or about 22%[7].

However, UNESCO states that "It is impossible to provide a valid interpretation of absolute numbers, but a small speech community is always at risk" (2003, p. 8). UNESCO also defines as "severely endangered" those languages used mostly by the grandparental generation and up (2003, p. 8). This is certainly true of two of the languages studied herein, Mazahua and Tlahuica. UNESCO (2003, p. 7) states that, although "none of these factors should be used alone", the six major evaluative factors of language vitality are:

1) Intergenerational Language Transmission

2) Absolute Number of Speakers

3) Proportion of Speakers within the Total Population

4) Trends in Existing Language Domains

5) Response to New Domains and Media

6) Materials for Language Education and Literacy

As will be seen in chapter 4, the qualitative interviews, the first factor, intergenerational language transmission, had become a serious issue in Mexico, which is something the

[7] Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), 2009, p. 35

intercultural universities (henceforth IUs) are trying to reverse. Additionally, it is surprising that educational institutions are not mentioned in the list because they are important, as shall be seen in chapter 2, which covers the revolutionary rural schools in Mexico, although they can perhaps be included under item 6, materials for language education. The other "missing" item on the UNESCO list is "prestige", which perhaps is implied by all of the items, making it a meta-factor or an underlying motivation to shift away from a language. In other words, the prestige of a language, or lack thereof, is why the language is in the state it is in, as assessed by factors 1 - 6. In summary, focusing on absolute numbers as a means of determining language viability or health is an oversimplification, it is a more complex issue that involves a holistic view of the speech community and several other considerations.

Historically, one significant factor in the decline of some languages has been the privileging of the languages spoken by the former colonial powers (Spanish, Portuguese, or English in the United States, and now – as the language of globalization – also in Latin America), while minority languages in these same regions have suffered stigmatization and sometimes even outright hostility, which is certainly true in Mexico (Medrano, n.d.) where indigenous languages are routinely labelled "dialects" as if to say they are not real, fully-fledged languages. This stigmatization is not a necessary reality that exists independently out in the physical world, it is a socially constructed cultural imaginary, yet the power and influence it wields is difficult to overestimate. Sometimes employed in support of the privileging of languages at the expense of others, there exists the attitude that languages are not something that can be protected or legislated. The anthropologist Hamel (1997, p. 2) states

> Persistent biological metaphors - languages are born, grow, decline, and die contribute to a general common-sense belief that there is nothing to plan, regulate, or legislate about languages since they exist like living beings whose life cycle is largely resistant to social ordinance.

Of course, the biological metaphor does not take into account that languages are social activities that are greatly influenced by social policy and ideologies. In the most recent decades linguists have much more preferred to sound the alarm over language death (Crystal, 2000, 2002). Setting aside the question of just who is espousing biological metaphors, Hamel is describing a "common-sense" or "common wisdom" belief that is rather difficult to make sense of, given the fact that huge amounts of resources have been expended over the years to promote the Spanish language to the detriment of indigenous languages, as will be seen in chapter 2, Historical Background. This certainly represents explicit language planning, regulation and legislation, hardly an approach based on the concept conveyed by Hamel as an example of thinking that there is nothing to plan, regulate, or legislate.

Two important international legal frameworks for language rights protection are the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (henceforth ICCPR) article 27, dated December 16, 1966, which has a supposedly worldwide reach through the United Nations Human Rights Committee (henceforth UNHRC) and the second is found in the European Union (henceforth EU) in the European Convention on Human Rights (henceforth ECHR), of which Russia is also a signatory, and which operates via the European Court of Human Rights (henceforth ECtHR). Although no such explicit language exists in the ECHR, Article 27 of the ICCPR states:

> In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion, or to use their own language. (*OHCHR | International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, n.d.)

This passage seems to grant an explicit right to language use in the sense of a human right. Yet, Moria Paz (2013, p. 204), a fellow in international law at Stanford university, in her analysis of legal cases brought before both bodies, found that "At each turn both the UNHRC and the ECtHR neglect the general ideology of linguistic preservation and focus instead on accommodating the immediate pragmatic needs of the two parties." In her conclusion she recognizes that both bodies are aware of the enormous cost of preserving a minority language (on equal footing with the majority language) and she agrees with the notion that narrow, pragmatic needs, such as providing court interpreters to monolingual speakers of minority languages, are the correct solutions. This "solution" is just a tacit assimilationist policy that places the cost of minority language maintenance squarely on the speakers of the minority language, despite her vague statement that a solution must be found to protect minority languages. As she mentions, the two bodies are not doing what they think they are doing, i.e., protecting minority languages and linguistic rights, which harkens back to the notion that languages are born, live, and die and need no special protection. The ICCPR applies to Mexico and the ECtHR does not, but neither was a factor in the creation of the IUs, as will be seen in the next chapter. Countries can appeal to human or cultural rights in order to protect minoritized languages: they do not necessarily have to refer to legal instruments considering linguistic rights specifically. However, countries typically need to be signatories and ratify

specific agreements and charters, which in essence means that the protection of linguistic rights is de facto carried out on a voluntary basis. Ratifying these international legal instruments can also run afoul of the official status a language may have (this is the case of Irish, which is co-official even if it is a minoritized language in Éire), or of the country's constitution (this being, for instance, the case of France and the 1992 European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages). In Mexico's case, 68 original languages have co-official status with Spanish, but despite the legal protection, the main problem seems to be a very pragmatic lack of earmarked funds in order to make those languages equal to Spanish in education and the everyday life of their speakers. Since the legal status of at least those 68 languages in Mexico is not, at present, the main issue in their decline, this dissertation will not devote any further attention to legal instruments in this regard.

This dissertation instead explores language attitudes in a higher education setting and the influence of the Mexican IUs on language attitudes towards indigenous languages in students and in the surrounding communities, while holding that indigenous languages and cultures are part of world heritage as stated by UNESCO (2001). The route taken to study the main languages encountered in this work is via university students, administrators, and educational service providers, some of whom are speakers of Mazahua and Tlahuica (Estado de México, henceforth Mexico State), and Nahuatl (Huasteca, Veracruz state), which, according to UNESCO are "definitely endangered" (Mazahua), "severely endangered" (Tlahuica), and "vulnerable" (Nahuatl of the Huasteca)[8].

[8] *UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger*, n.d.

The structure of this dissertation is as follows. Chapter 1, this chapter, is an overview of the dissertation topics, the motivation for writing the dissertation, and why this research is important. The schools studied herein are quite different: UIEM is located in Mexico State in the small city of San Felipe del Progreso, while the other, UVIH, is much more rural and isolated and is located in Ixhuatlán de Madero, Veracruz. UIEM has a student body of about 1,400 students while UVIH has a student body of about 45, as of this writing. In meetings with administrators and research directors in December 2018 and follow-ups in March 2019, resulted in permission being granted by both schools to do research during the next academic year, 2019 - 2020.

In chapter 2, historical background, a historical review of linguistic policy in what is now Mexico is conducted, from the colonial period, through the nineteenth century, and a more detailed review of the revolutionary rural schools of the 1920s and 1930s, concluding with the contemporary changes that occurred in educational policy starting in the 1970s which paved the way for the creation of the IUs. This historical context is necessary for the understanding of current attitudes towards original languages and cultures.

The following chapters present the research results of the investigations. Chapter 3 describes and discusses the quantitative instrument results and analysis. Chapter 4 likewise presents and discusses the research results, but this time it is the qualitative research results, garnered through the interviews.

Chapter 5, the conclusion, provides a summary of key findings and conclusions, including a discussion of sustainability in the community and future research directions.

### 1.1 Some Examples of Language Ideologies

As an example of how deeply entrenched attitudes towards languages can be, in the United States (henceforth US) there has been some political support over the years for English-only laws. The ostensible reason for this support is that the US does not have an official language and therefore it has been necessary to make an effort over the last few decades to make English the official language at the national, state, or even local levels, all with varying levels of success[9]. A state-level constitutional amendment was passed in California in 1986 that ensures that the legislature "shall take all steps necessary to insure that the role of English as the common language of the State of California is preserved and enhanced". While the California amendment is largely symbolic, there have been other stronger attempts, "Some versions of the proposed English Language Amendment [to the federal constitution] would void almost all state and federal laws that require the government to provide services in languages other than English"[10]. As of this writing, the federal constitution has not been amended in regard to making English the official language, although 32 states have passed legislation to make English the official language and some states have legislated official status for indigenous languages. For instance, Alaska has legislated official status for 23 indigenous languages, albeit a largely symbolic law (*Alaska OKs Bill Making Native Languages Official*, n.d.).

The question arises as to why do so many people so strongly feel that there should be English-only or English-privileging laws in the US. Despite the great abundance of different

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[9] *English-Only Laws - Further Readings*, n.d.

[10] *English-Only Laws - Further Readings*, n.d.

first and immigrant languages in the US, the majority of the country's inhabitants remain monolingual English-speakers. There is, of course, no threat to the status of English as the main language in the country, spoken by an overwhelming majority of about 78% of US households according to the US census bureau (*Census - Search Results*, n.d.). Hence, there is no need for English-only laws on the books and again we are left pondering the nature of a socially constructed imaginary, i.e., that there is a perceived threat to English as the lingua franca, when there is no actual fact supporting this attitude. As an example of these ways of thinking about language, and at a general level in the population, one study (Frendreis & Tatalovich, 1997) found that support for English-only laws in the US was not significantly correlated with education level, political affiliation, socio-economic class, gender, or race. One exception to this was found to be the negative correlation for English-only legislation among Latinos, although the U.S. English organization, a pro-English-only group, claims that Hispanic immigrants support English as the official language (USEAdmin1, 2016a). However, this is a misleading statement in that it was based on a Pew Research poll that found 87% of Hispanics think English is necessary for success in the U.S. (NW et al., 2012). There is, however, some support by Hispanics for English-only laws. The 2000 General Social Survey found that 79.1 percent of whites, 75 percent of blacks, and 51.5 percent of Latinos favored English-only laws (Dowling et al., 2012, p. 359). Be that as it may and returning to Frendreis and Tatalovich, they found that the biggest support for English-only laws emanated from an attitude (i.e., an ideology) that Americans should speak English and concludes that "… clearly [there is] the primacy of the attitudinal variables, which alone account for nearly all of the explanatory power of the full model." (1997, p. 364).

From a different perspective, even highly educated people do not escape from implicit attitudes about language. Considering a narrower demographic in the population, Valdés et al (2003) show that among professors in Departments of Spanish in the United States, there exist attitudes that rank Spanish speakers in terms of prestige. The speakers with the most prestige are native speakers from Spain (Valdés et al., 2003, p. 9). There is a middle group composed of non-native speakers from the US. The bottom group, those possessing the least prestige, are native speakers from the US and Latin America. Within this bottom group of native speakers, speakers from countries with more European oriented populations (Chile, Argentina) are considered to have higher prestige than speakers from countries with larger indigenous populations, like Mexico (Valdés et al., 2003, p. 10). It must be noted that none of these ideological rankings based on "prestige" have anything to do with a physical reality or scientific knowledge, these rankings are based on feelings and cultural attitudes (ideologies).

**1.2 The Motivation and Objective for this Study**

My interest in the issue of linguistic rights of minority languages started years ago when I married my now my ex-wife, who is ethnically Mazahua, an Otomanguean language spoken in central Mexico, and one of the central languages considered in this dissertation. She was raised by her grandparents, who were native speakers of Mazahua, she understands the language well, and she can actually speak it if she wants to, therefore I consider her native in Mazahua. However, as is common in her generation, when asked if she speaks Mazahua, she will not hesitate to respond with an emphatic "no". Her grandparents had a role in the creation of her negative attitudes towards Mazahua since they raised her inculcating in her that she should avoid speaking Mazahua, and should rather speak Spanish, as this would provide her with more opportunities during her life. This was in spite of Mazahua being the

language of the home and the first language of her grandparents. Díaz-Polanco (2006, p. 164) uses the term ethnophagy, also adopted by Despagne (2013, p. 120), to describe this method of extending an ultimately attractive invitation for people to voluntarily abandon their own language and culture (which become erased over time) and stems from the asymmetries of power relations, without having the explicit goal of promoting the dominant language over the minority language. One might even say the classical *indigenismo*[11] of, say, José Vasconcelos[12] is an example of ethnophagy, by guising a Spanish-only school curriculum as a government program to "help" and "benefit" indigenous peoples. According to Diaz-Polanco, ethnophagy is rooted in "Los 'límites de la tolerancia' neoliberal hacia lo diferente[13]" (2006, p. 164).

To know a person who could speak an indigenous language, who would deny that she had that capability, made me ask many perplexing questions about that contradiction that eventually, over the years, developed into the basis for the research questions discussed later in this chapter. Although Mazahua is a major indigenous language in Mexico State[14], officially there are about 100,000 native speakers, individual activists are few and community activism is generally at a low level, with some notable exceptions, such as Julio

[11] Classical indigenismo is widely recognized as a political tool or stance to idealize the distant past while implicitly signaling that indigenous people do not belong in the "modern" world.

[12] The founder and first director of the Federal Department of Public Education, founded in 1921. In Spanish, la Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP).

[13] The limits of neoliberal tolerance towards difference.

[14] In Spanish, *Estado de México*, commonly abbreviated EdoMéx.

Garduño Cervantes, a poet[15] that was instrumental in the creation of the Mazahua ceremonial center in Santa Ana Nichi in Mexico State. The ceremonial center is about 30 years old and is located 32 kilometers to the southeast of the Intercultural University of Mexico State[16] (henceforth UIEM) and has a small museum and display of traditional dress and other artifacts. The ceremonial center also hosts events such as traditional offerings[17].

I had the opportunity to reside on-site in Atlacomulco de Fabela, Estado de México, México for the duration of the writing of this dissertation, which unfolded over a two-year period between 2019 and 2021. Atlacomulco is 20 minutes from UIEM in the Mazahua region. This gave an opportunity to integrate into local life more thoroughly in the dominant mestizo community and also to interact with individuals in the Mazahua community. During this time, I taught English at UIEM and thus made more contacts and a few friendships and I also made trips to Ixhuatlán de Madero in Veracruz state to also teach English and to administer and collect questionnaires and conduct qualitative interviews with students, graduates, and faculty at a second IU: the Intercultural University of Veracruz – Huasteca campus[18] (henceforth UVIH). At UVIH I conducted the interviews and administered the questionnaires to students, whereas at UIEM, I as well as some of the other English instructors administered the questionnaires to their classes. This does not introduce the bias

[15] Garduño Cervantes wrote the poem *Soy Mazahua* in 1980 (the source of the epigraph for this dissertation)

[16] In Spanish, la Universidad Intercultural del Estado de México (UIEM)

[17] *CENTRO CEREMONIAL MAZAHUA*, n.d.

[18] In Spanish, la Universidad Veracruzana Intercultural, sede Huasteca (UVIH)

that a self-selected group ('students of English') would normally entail, since virtually the entire student body studies English at both universities.

As has been mentioned, UIEM is located in the Mazahua region. Over the years, I came to realize two things. First, that it is common that native speakers of Mazahua who had been raised by their parents or grandparents, who were also native speakers of Mazahua, had Mazahua as the language of the home. The whole rural area outside of the important regional cities had been monolingual in Mazahua up until about the year 1950, as will be confirmed by an interview participant in chapter 4. Around 1940, the revolutionary rural schools[19] (which will be discussed in chapter 2) started to have an effect, and so did the new highways and public transportation, as they began to be more extensive in the area. Within the general population, this enabled migration in search of work and sustenance. The second perplexing observation is that some native speakers of Mazahua do everything possible to deny and conceal that they have any knowledge of Mazahua. Moreover, in Mexican society in general, indigenous languages and cultures continue to be highly stigmatized (again, this will be discussed in chapter 2).

These were, for me, baffling observations that compelled the writing of this dissertation. Of course, speakers of stigmatized languages understand the denial of speaking the language, akin to survival. The topic is important because indigenous languages are a world heritage and a cultural bedrock of the Mexican people, memorialized in the

[19] The revolutionary rural schools were a project of the 1920s and 1930s to promote literacy among the rural populations. The founder of the federal Department of Education (SEP is the acronym in Spanish), José Vasconcelos, started the rural schools project and unfortunately he considered original languages to be an obstacle.

*indigenismo*[20] of the last century. Linguistic rights are cultural and ultimately human rights (de Varennes, 1999, 2001; de Varennes & Kuzborska, 2016; J. Leung, 2019) and this dissertation will investigate one of the most recent efforts to support regional languages and cultures, the IUs. These institutions might, in fact, be one of the best current efforts to support regional languages and cultures, in spite of their limitations and shortcomings.

Initial contact with the IUs resulted in a positive response from eight, inviting a proposal for research collaboration, and asking for more information about the proposed research. As time went on and further work was done, it became clear that the number of IUs to be investigated would need to be limited. Qualitative investigation requires involvement in the process of the university, so on-site work was done during 2019-2021, at least until the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (henceforth SARS-CoV-2)[21] pandemic closed virtually all schools. The two universities where I ultimately obtained permission to do research were UIEM and UVIH.

In this dissertation, I used employed a mixed-methods approach that includes a quantitative data collection instrument and qualitative interview guide. The quantitative data collection instrument is a questionnaire (Appendix A) that uses a Likert scale to measure language health by asking typical questions like where the language is used such as in the home, in school, etc. Also asked is how the respondent feels towards original languages. The questionnaire can be distributed over a broader population because it only takes about 15

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[20] *Indigenismo* usually is taken to mean the post-revolutionary governments and intellectuals who idealized the indigenous, distant past, while at the same time unable to imagine a place for indigenous peoples and languages in the "modern" Mexico.

[21] SARS-CoV-2 is the specific coronavirus that causes the respiratory infection COVID-19.

minutes to administer. The qualitative interviews attempt to go deeper, specifically probing into the existence of covert language ideologies and asking about quality of life. The oral qualitative interviews lasted about an hour and went into more depth about the participants' personal views. The qualitative interviews (The interview guide is shown in Appendix B) has a smaller number of participants, about ten. A protocol from the UCSB Office of Research Application for Human Subjects (ORAHS) was obtained that classified the project as exempt (Protocol number 21-19-0367, Project number 21).

### 1.3 Terminology

There are several terms used throughout the text that need to be defined beforehand in order to speak with more clarity and precision. Herein, when referring to indigenous languages, cultures, and communities, the word "original" is often used preferentially over the word "indigenous" in order to decouple the term from a possible connotation of segregation. The word *indio* is generally avoided, due to its possible pejorative meaning. Therefore, hopefully, the most neutral terms possible have been adopted. The choice of being averse to the term "indigenous" was also adopted by the Secretaría de Educación Pública[22] (henceforth SEP) as part of its educational model for the IUs as will be seen in chapter 2, in that there was a conscious decision to not incorporate the word indigenous into the names of any of the IUs. This decision of terminology is not strictly enforced, neither herein or in the IUs themselves, as there are times when the word "indigenous" seems more natural in context and also is seen in widespread use within the IUs.

[22] In English, the Federal Department of Education

Another important term, “language ideology”, has been utilized until now without an explicit definition. Woolard defines the term as:

> Representations, whether explicit or implicit, that construe the intersection of language and human beings in a social world are what we mean by "language ideology." (1998, p. 3)

Obviously, language ideologies do not refer solely to some abstract model of thought nor just some language-specific attitude. Especially in Mexico, they are tied up in many anthropological processes such as identity including a national identity and the nation-state project stemming from the revolutionary projects of the 1920s and 1930s. Again, quoting from Woolard:

> As all of the contributions to this volume point out, ideologies of language are not about language alone. Rather, they envision and enact ties of language to identity, to aesthetics, to morality, and to epistemology. Through such linkages, they underpin not only linguistic form and use but also the very notion of the person and the social group, as well as such fundamental social institutions as religious ritual, child socialization, gender relations, the nation-state, schooling, and law. (1998, p. 3)

In speaking of language attitudes within the general public, attitudes towards languages rarely are a topic of day-to-day conversation, at least not explicitly reasoned and expressed, although virtually everyone speaks at least one language and speaks constantly throughout the day. In spite of this constant use of language in day-to-day interactions, language is rarely discussed in ideological or attitudinal terms and simply taken for granted, despite the undeniable existence of possibly covert attitudes towards different language

varieties. These overt or covert attitudes are collectively called *language ideologies*. These can span the gamut of thinking of a particular language as refined or cultured, to thinking of a particular variant of a language to be incorrect or demonstrating the ignorance of the speaker, and everything in between. For many of those who have experience as a Spanish language instructor or student, they have met people who believe that standard Spanish, or even the dialects from central or northern Spain are "normative" Spanish, and that all other variants are inferior variants of the language[23]. It seems that any and all arguments to the contrary are often dismissed out of hand with no reflection or, apparently, any thought given to the matter. Linguists have long agreed that there is no such objective reality that one language should be considered more cultured, sophisticated, expressive or superior in any way to another language. On the contrary, those kinds of attitudes, such as the one expressed above about Iberian Spanish, are ideological constructs.

Another term that needs to be discussed, is the term used for the participants in the qualitative interviews. In this regard, the term "informant" has been criticised in recent decades since it can have connotations of criminality or the extraction of information. Among other researchers, I have adopted Cru's term, "participant" (Cru, 2014, p. 11) instead of the more traditional "informant". I have avoided the term "collaborator" or "colleague", trying to use a term that is as accurate and as neutral as possible in describing how I positioned myself in relation to the people interviewed.

As shall be seen, the IUs have in common the concept of supporting regional languages and culture through sustainable communities and usually offer an agriculturally

[23] Not even the Real Academia Española (RAE) supports this view.

and culturally oriented major or emphasis in sustainable development. Although the IUs' mission statements do not define "sustainable communities", according to Landorf, et. al:

> We define education for sustainable human development as educational practice that results in the enhancement of human well-being, conceived in terms of the expansion of individuals' agency, capabilities and participation in democratic dialogue, both for now and for future generations. (2008, p. 221)

A broader definition than this educational definition, according to Flint,

> …put the principles [of sustainability] into practice in a way that promotes social–environmental responsibility as a shared relationship with a community's core values, its varied membership, and the surrounding landscape for the present and future. (2013, p. 1)

which indicates that sustainability is always in the context of community and region, and consistent with the regional nature of the IUs. The definition of sustainable communities as having "social-environmental responsibility" is the most relevant for this dissertation, emphasizing not only the agricultural and rural nature of the areas of the IUs studied, but also the social component of community.

### 1.4 Current Status of Indigenous Peoples in Mexico

A brief introduction to the status of indigenous peoples in Mexico at the national level will summarize and give a sense of the overall scope to just how underserved these communities are in terms of educational resources, health, and economy. About 21.5% of the population of Mexico self-identifies as indigenous[24]. The Mexican government counts 68

[24] Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geología (INEGI), 2015, p. 73

ethno-linguistic groupings representing languages that are spoken by about 6.5% of the population[25] while the Instituto Nacional de Lenguas Indígenas (INALI) counts the same 68 languages, but additionally counts 364 language variants (2015). In spite of this diversity, many original languages are at risk of disappearing, as has been previously mentioned, 23 of the 68 original languages still spoken in Mexico today have fewer than 1,000 speakers[26]. Although small populations of speakers is only one factor in language health and do not necessarily reflect the extent of language endangerment, these very small languages are generally considered in danger of extinction, since intergenerational transmission has all but ceased.

### *1.4.1 Economic and Healthcare Status*

The overall scope of the condition of indigenous peoples in Mexico cannot be fully grasped without considering the economic and healthcare status of the communities. The United Nations has developed a composite measure of Human Development, composed of health, education, and income, called the Índice de Desarrollo Humano (IDH) . The overall score can vary between 0.000 (complete lack of development) to 1.000 (extremely well developed). Figure 14 shows the IDH for Mexico by state including a label (*Bajo, Medio, Alto, Muy Alto*) denoting the relative development of the state[27]. The less developed states[28] tend to cluster in

[25] Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geología (INEGI), 2015, p. 74

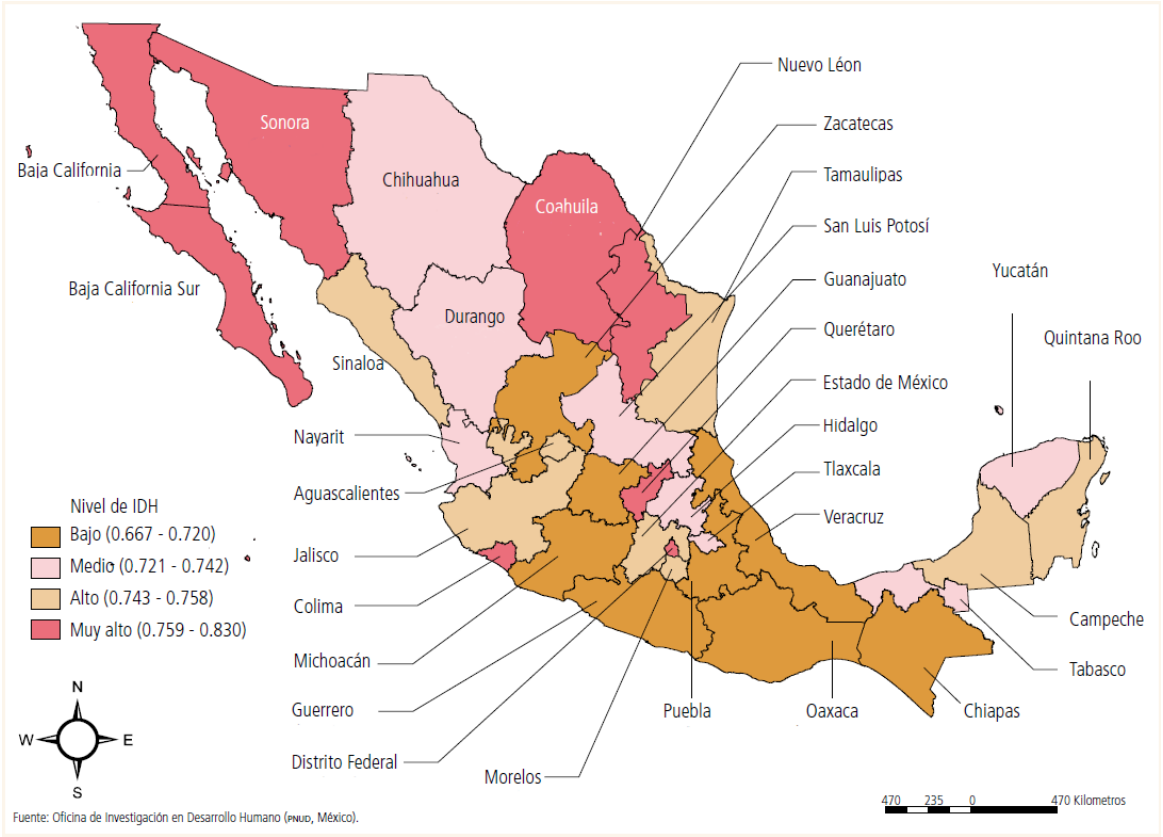
[26] Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geología (INEGI), 2015, p. 35

[27] Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (PNUD), 2015, p. 8.

[28] For the sake of clarity, I have removed the feature of the map that compares each state to an equally rated country other than Mexico.

the southern part of the country and include Chiapas, Oaxaca, Veracruz, Puebla, Guerrero, and Michoacán, these states all have high indigenous populations and an IDH score of *Bajo*. For instance, in Chiapas and Oaxaca, the southernmost states, 27.9% and 32.2% of the population speaks an original language, respectively[29]. Table 6 lists the number of states in each IDH category and the mean percentage of the population of those states that speak an original language[30].

**Figure 1** *Índice de Desarrollo Humano (IDH) by State in Mexico*




[29] Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geología (INEGI), 2015, p. 74.

[30] It is only a coincidence that there are eight states in each category.

**Table 1** *States per IDH Category and Mean Percentage of Indigenous Speakers*

| IDH category (Level of Development) | Number of States | Mean percentage of the population that speaks an original language[1] |
|---|---|---|
| Muy Alto | 8 | 0.45% |
| Alto | 8 | 0.6% |
| Medio | 8 | 1.25% |
| Bajo | 8 | 7.75% |

Table 6 indicates a greater concentration of original language speakers in less developed states in terms of IDH, most notably in the *Bajo* category. The state where UIEM is located, Mexico State, is marked as having high development, but this is undoubtedly due to the urbanization in the state around greater Mexico City, which is not the situation where the campus is located. Looking at just one of the categories, for example education, currently the average length of school attendance amongst original language speakers in all of Mexico is about 5.5 years while in the entire population it is about 9.1 years[31]. It is worth noting that the 0.45% indigenous speakers in the *Muy Alto* category in Table 6 (most highly developed) is augmented by out-migration of indigenous peoples from the less developed states to Mexico City and Baja California, otherwise the percentage would drop even lower. Turning

[31] Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geología (INEGI), 2015, p. 79

to health insurance, there are three big systems. Government workers enjoy the services of the Instituto de Seguridad y Servicios Sociales de los Trabajadores del Estado (ISSSTE), which covers about 6% of the population, individuals with jobs that pay a regular wage receive Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social (IMSS) through their employer which covers about 39% of the population, and the health care system for most others is Instituto de Salud para el Bienestar (INSABI) which covers about 50% of the population (*Derechohabiencia*, n.d.)[32]. However, looking at a low development index state like Veracruz, the state has about 2 million IMSS affiliates (*Derechohabiencia*, n.d.) and a total population of about 8 million (*Número de Habitantes. Cuéntame de México*, n.d.), or only about 25% IMSS affiliation, about two thirds of the national average. Looking at INSABI in Veracruz, there are about 3.8 million affiliates, or nearly 50% of the population. These numbers imply many more people in Veracruz are covered by default with INSABI than the other systems, INSABI being the least well-funded of the three big health care systems.

### *1.4.2 Original Language Loss*

Although it is difficult to estimate language loss due to variations in official data and the changing motivations for collecting said data, at the time of independence (1810 -1820), about 55% - 72% of the population of Mexico spoke an original language (Cifuentes & Moctezuma, 2006, p. 195). Shortly after the revolution, in 1930, the census of the revolutionary government officially recognized that 16%[33] of the population spoke an

[32] At the time of writing, on the INGEI website, the INSABI numbers are reported as "Seguro Popular" (henceforth SP). SP ceased to exist at the end of 2019 and was renamed to INSABI.

[33] Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), n.d.

original language, while today it is 6.6%[34]. In 1875, there was a linguistic estimate that 108 original languages were spoken in Mexico (Cifuentes & Moctezuma, 2006, p. 196), while today the official tally by INEGI is 68[35], which is also accepted by INALI.

The last few decades have seen changing attitudes towards original languages, at least on a legal and political level. The General Law on Linguistic Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2003, enacted by the federal government during the sexenio of Vicente Fox states in article 11:

> Federal and State educational authorities will guarantee that the indigenous population will have access to obligatory, bilingual and intercultural education and will adopt the necessary means so that within the educational system respect for the dignity and identity of persons is assured, independently of their language. (Althoff, 2006, p. 179)

It is the express purpose of the IUs to be an important and integral part of this process of guaranteeing an intercultural education.

#### 1.4.2.1 An Example: The Linguistic Situation of the Mazahua Language

As has been previously mentioned, the Mazahua language is spoken in the area around UIEM, one of the primary research sites herein. The Mazahua language is part of the Otomanguean language family. Within the Otomian subgroup of the Oto-Pamean branch of the Otomanguean family and within the Otomian subgroup there are the Mazahua, Otomí, Matlatzinca, and Tlahuica languages, which are all spoken in Mexico State. It is worth noting that Matlatzinca and Tlahuica are now moribund, each counting less than a thousand

[34] Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), n.d.

[35] Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), 2009

speakers[36]. As an example of just how dire the situation is, Mazahua is still spoken by about 100,000 speakers, yet Margarita Hidalgo, a professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at San Diego State University, in her introduction to *Mexican Indigenous Languages at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century*, after reviewing the linguistic data on Mazahua, concludes that "The data on Mazahua appear so disturbing that some scholars would be tempted to consider it nearly extinct." (2006, p. 24). In the 1930 census there is no data available for the total number of Mazahua speakers, but the number of monolingual speakers of the language in 1930 was about 30,000 (Rojas González, 1939, p. 100). By 1960, after the rural schools had been in existence for a few decades, and the number of monolingual Mazahua speakers had declined by half, to 15,000 (Uribe Villegas, 1973, p. 590), all in Mexico State. While the Mazahua traditionally have inhabited Mexico State and parts of Michoacán, some Mazahua can also be found today in Mexico City and the United States due to out-migration. Today there are 111,840 speakers of Mazahua five years of age or older[37].

At first glance it might appear that Mazahua is not an endangered language at all based on these numbers and statistics. However, if we look a little closer at the linguistics data, a different picture emerges. Rebeca Barriga's research on a multi-generational Mazahua family clearly demonstrates the effects of the rural schools on the language and identity of this indigenous group. Barriga in 2006 found that the previous generation's first language was Mazahua and second language was Spanish, while the younger generations had this

[36] Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), 2009, p. 35

[37] Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), 2009, p. 35

relationship swapped around with the first language being Spanish and the second Mazahua. This will also be seen in the qualitative interviews which will moreover confirm that the rural area around UIEM was monolingual in Mazahua up until about 1950, while in spite of that fact, the schools at that time were conducted in Spanish. Though it is impossible to separate out the social impact of the schools from other changes occurring at the same time, the arrival of the schools in relation to shifts in language skills is striking and will be discussed in greater depth in the next chapter.

Barriga's research helps shed light on the findings of Dora Pellicer, who made a more formal linguistic study of the Mazahua language and found that the language has experienced a marked shift since the arrival of the schools. Using the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) (Fishman, 1991, Chapter 4), Pellicer conducted a two-year field project studying the Mazahua people and language. The GIDS scale is an empirical measure of the health of a language and ranges between a value of 1 (language is used in all contexts including professional and educational) to 8 (only vestigial remnants of the language remain). Pellicer found that for Mazahua individuals under 35 years of age even in the context of Intimate Community (Home and locality), Mazahua language skills were at level 8 on the GIDS (Pellicer, 2006, p. 359). In other words, even in the heart of Mazahua country this generation is not fluent or literate in the language and has limited knowledge of the language (Said generation is currently about 50 years of age and under). In the context of Impersonal Society (here referring to Mexico City) this same demographic group had no GIDS measurement value, meaning they had no remaining Mazahua skills, or, in other words, the Mazahua language is unknown to ethnically Mazahua individuals under 35 years of age who live in Mexico City.

Once again using the Mazahua language as an example to show the current state of academic research, it is interesting to note that little social science research has been done in the Mazahua language outside of language documentation. That is an indication of the subordination of the language as an object of study and there are few speakers of Mazahua conducting research. There have been activists over the years, such as Julio Garduño Cervantes (Scheinman & Cordero, 2011) who is quoted in the epigraph of this dissertation, but the lack of stature as a language is seen in its status as a subordinate object of study when it should be considered an equal participant. Two early linguists, Pike (1951) writing about the tones of Mazahua and Spotts (1953) writing about vowel and consonant sequences, where clearly documenting the language. Likewise, Mildred Muro (1975) authored a dictionary in Mazahua as part of an evangelical Christian translation of the bible into Mazahua. Muro's dictionary and some of the earlier works were done from an ideology of Christian proselytizing or in conjunction with the translation of the bible into Mazahua. In more recent years, there has been an increasing emphasis on scientific language documentation. Michael Knapp Ring, now a researcher at the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia (henceforth INAH), extensively documented the phonology of Mazahua (Knapp Ring, 2008), likewise Romero Hernández (2013), who is a speaker of Mazahua, who chose to document the language, or tonal typology research (Arellanes et al., No Date). A recent and prolific author, Mora-Bustos (2018; 2017) has also concentrated on documentation. While language documentation is a valid and important undertaking, this dissertation rather aims to assess how attitudes about original languages are being influenced by the IUs. As Fishman (1991) has pointed out, language revitalization can only be achieved if the local community values the local language, an essentially ideological argument. The foregoing is why so much of the

investigation herein is oriented toward language ideology and the impact the IUs are having on language ideology in the hope that original languages can be preserved and strengthened.

### 1.5 The Intercultural Universities

The purpose of this study is to assess the successes and achievements of the IUs as well as identify areas for improvement, now that about 15 years have passed since their founding. Considering the widespread stigmatization of original languages in Mexico[38], the assessment of achievements will focus on attitudinal changes, as well as community and the students' employment opportunities after graduation. The assessments of achievement will be qualitative and quantitative, the first focusing on attitudinal shifts regarding language and culture, and the second on human development in terms of income, reduction of out-migration, and community development.

Dr. Gunter Dietz, an anthropologist and former chancellor for the Universidad Veracruzana Intercultural (henceforth UVI) and currently a researcher in the Universidad Veracruzana (henceforth UV) Instituto de Investigaciones en Educación, Universidad Veracruzana, Campus Sur, Xalapa, México, has published many articles over the last few decades in which he acknowledges and affirms that *indigenismo* has come under heavy critique for its inability to support and sustain original languages and cultures, among increasing calls for more autonomy in indigenous communities. Concerning intercultural education, Dietz claims:

[38] *Las Lenguas Indígenas No Son Dialectos: INALI*, n.d.

> En América Latina, por su parte, la educación intercultural aparece como un discurso propio en una fase posindigenista de redefinición de relaciones entre el Estado y los pueblos indígenas[39] (2012c, p. 15).

The above quote shows that the intercultural conversation is an important one, part of a change in the State's relationship with indigenous communities. This change in policy, if successful, would reverse the revolutionary project of assimilationist *indigenismo* that was in force for much of the twentieth century.

This "new relationship between the State and indigenous peoples" is highlighted by the relatively new concept of intercultural education. One definition of intercultural education as the basis of the IUs is, according to Sylvia Schmelkes, a former General Coordinator of Intercultural and Bilingual Education (henceforth CGEIB from the Spanish) in the SEP in Mexico City and a prominent investigator and author on intercultural education:

> […] a basic approach to education for the whole of the population that contributes to the construction of a society in which the members of different cultures establish mutual enriching relationships on an equal footing, based on respect. (2011, p. 102)

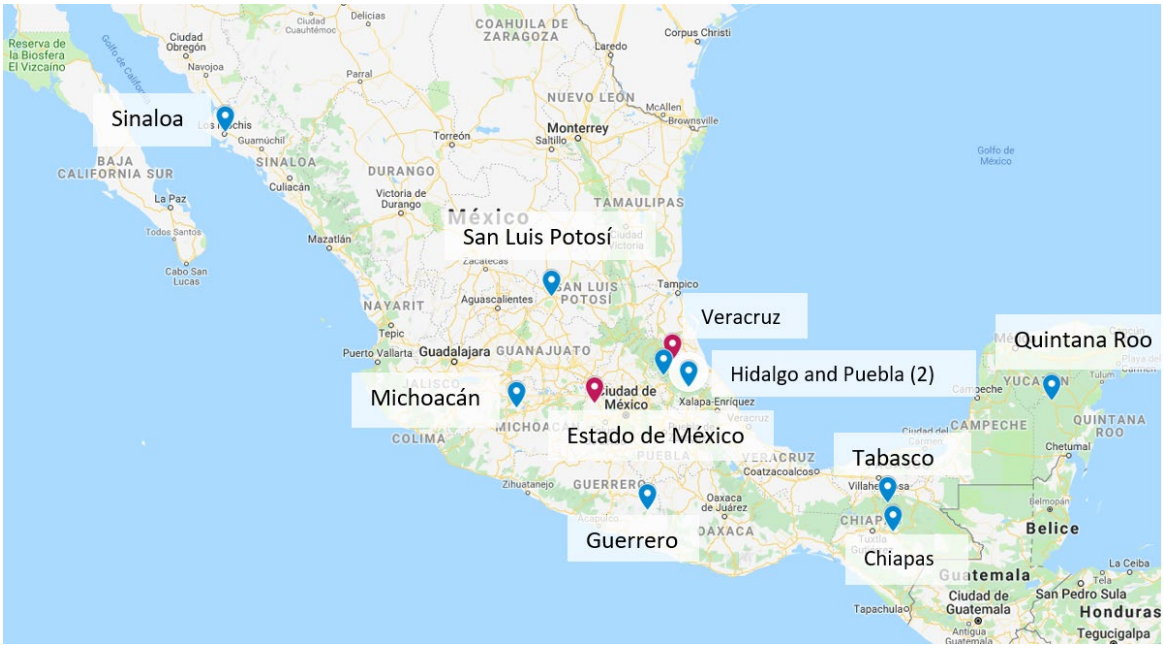
This is the fundamental policy of the IUs in Mexico, to establish mutual respect and put all languages and cultures on an equal footing, including the mainstream mestizo culture and the Spanish language. This principle of equality implies that anyone can attend an IU in Mexico, whether they are a speaker of original languages from the region where the university is located, to a Spanish-speaking mestizo from a distant city, to international exchange students.

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[39] In Latin America, meanwhile, intercultural education is conducting its own discourse in a post-indigenist phase where the relationship between the State and indigenous peoples is being redefined.

Although data is hard to come by, it shall be seen in chapter 4, the qualitative interviews, that in the 1,400 students at UIEM, probably only about 10 – 20 students are native in Mazahua (that is, their first language learned as an infant), while at UVIH, within the student body of about 45, the majority are native in the Nahuatl of the Huasteca. The other languages of both areas, such as Otomí, Tlahuica, Matlatzinca, Tepehua, Totonaco, and others are minimally represented in both universities, often only a few students. There are eleven IUs in operation today, excluding the IU in Nayarit that was built in 2011, but never went into operation

**Figure 2** *Map of the Locations of the Intercultural Universities in Mexico*




*Note*. Research locations in red.

because the state government failed to fund it. See Figure 1 for locations and Table 1 for the names of the universities[40].

[40] Created in Google maps with data from (*Subsecretaría de Educación Superior*, n.d.)

There are a few other IUs that operate independently of the SEP sponsored system in conjunction with state governments, such as the Ayuuk Intercultural University (Instituto Superior Intercultural Ayuuk, or ISIA), which was created and operates within the Jesuit University system and was founded in 2006 in the state of Oaxaca. The two IUs studied in herein were created under the auspices of the collaboration between state and the federal government, through agencies within the SEP, principally the CGEIB.

**Table 2** *List of intercultural universities in Mexico*

| |
|---|
| Universidad Autónoma Indígena de Sinaloa |
| Universidad Intercultural de Chiapas |
| Universidad Intercultural del Estado de Tabasco |
| Universidad Intercultural del Estado de Guerrero |
| Universidad Intercultural del Estado de México (research site) |
| Universidad Intercultural del Estado de Puebla |
| Universidad Intercultural Indígena de Michoacán |
| Universidad Intercultural Maya de Quintana Roo |
| Universidad Veracruzana (Intercultural) (research site, campus Huasteca) |
| Universidad Intercultural de San Luis Potosí |
| Universidad Intercultural de Hidalgo |

The concept of the IUs represents an historical crossroads in language ideology in Mexico. Mexico has never had an official language and no official language has ever been mentioned in its constitution. Starting in 2004, each IU that followed was a joint project of the federal and state governments and attempted to address the needs of regional cultures, languages, and communities. One of the research sites of this dissertation is UIEM[41], located in San Felipe del Progreso, Mexico State, which commenced operation in a storefront in San Felipe del Progreso in 2004 because the permanent campus was still under construction. It is one of two research sites (see Figure 2) for this investigation and the only IU in Mexico State, although there are traditional universities and *tecnológicos* in the area. These include a

**Figure 3** *A View of the Campus of the Universidad Intercultural del Estado de México*



[41] In Spanish, la Universidad Intercultural del Estado de México

*tecnológico* in San Felipe del Progreso a few km. from UIEM, the Universidad de Atlacomulco 15 km. distant, a branch campus of the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México 15 km. distant in Atlacomulco, the Universidad Intercultural Ejecutiva de México in Atlacomulco, the Universidad de Ixtlahuaca 40 km. distant and, of course, the Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México (henceforth UAEM) located in Toluca about 80 km. distant from UIEM. All of these schools, with the exception of UAEM and the Universidad de Ixtlahuaca, are professional or trade skill oriented. UAEM and the Universidad de Ixtlahuaca, because of their large size have many departments and degree offerings including language departments that include indigenous languages.

The other research site, UVIH (see Figure 3) located in Ixhuatlán de Madero, Veracruz, is in a much more isolated setting with no institutions of higher education at a

**Figure 4** *Photo of la Universidad Veracruzana Intercultural – La Huasteca*



*Note*. Most of the student body is present in the photo.

closer distance than the town of Cerro Azul, at about 100 km., the Instituto Tecnológico Cerro Azul, and Poza Rica, a city about 120 kilometers away, which is particularly inconvenient to reach via public transportation.

UIEM was the first IU to be created under the CGEIG and SEP in Mexico, and was founded relatively recently, during the administration of President Vicente Fox and went into

**Figure 5** *Map of Intercultural Universities Research Sites*




*Note*. The distance between UIEM and UVIH is approximately 350 kilometers.

operation in 2004 in an area where, principally amongst original languages, the Mazahua and Otomí languages are spoken. The second research site at UVIH opened its doors in 2007 and is one of four campuses of the UVI, which has administrative headquarters in the state capital, Xalapa-Enríquez, a few hours away. Figure 4 shows the two research sites.

At UIEM, five regional languages are taught, four of which are Otomanguean: Mazahua, Otomí, Tlahuica, and Matlatzinca, and one is Uto-Azteca: Nahuatl. The principal language in the region is Mazahua, most students study Mazahua as a study subject with few who are native speakers. There are virtually no native speakers of the other languages. As an example, at the time of writing, there were six students in the Tlahuica program, all of them studying the language as a study subject.

At UVIH, there are four languages in four distinct language families: Nahuatl, Tének or Huasteco (Language family Maya), Otomí (Otomanguean), and Tepehua (family Totonaco-Tepehua). The majority of the student body is native in Nahuatl (the Huasteca variant) and the other languages are little represented, at least at the time of writing.

### *1.5.1 Research Questions*

In connection with the IUs' missions and visions to support regional languages and cultures, which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, the research questions which arise are:

**Research Question 1: What language ideologies have been inculcated in students and educational service providers by families and communities?**

This question represents the assessment of the baseline of ideologies in the community, the background from where the IUs have commenced their mission. The colonial practice of suppressing linguistic diversity (Migge & Léglise, 2007) that was carried forward for most of the twentieth century within educational policy (Knight, 1990) has resulted in the suppression of linguistic rights in Mexico by marginalizing not only the speakers of original languages, but by marginalizing the languages themselves and associating them with lesser social prestige. As will be made clear in the qualitative interviews in chapter 4, some of the

participants feel that the language ideologies instilled by families and communities, especially families, have also had personal pejorative ideological dimensions. According to Norman Fairclough, this question represents the first of the four steps of his sociolinguistic methodology highlighting the "focus upon a social wrong, in its semiotic aspect" (2013, p. 235). From this perspective, the "social wrong" is the stigmatization of original languages and cultures, not only within the community as a whole, but oftentimes from *within the family itself*.

**Research Question 2: What are the overt and covert language ideologies in the IUs?**

This question ascertains the current state of the implementation of the IUs' missions and visions regarding original languages. The IUs have institutionalized language ideologies in their mission statements and in their educational policies that have the intent of changing language ideologies in the individual and in the community. In Fairclough's methodology, the second step of analysis is to "identify obstacles to addressing the social wrong" (2013, p. 235). In other words, it is one thing to overtly assert in a mission statement that the changing of language ideologies is a priority and quite another to actually make progress in the covert thinking of individuals. This research question relates to the effectiveness of the institutionalization of language ideologies. Have students and others actually changed their way of thinking about original languages or is the status quo of stigmatization still lurking strongly in the background of their thinking?

The IUs are generally well-ordered and calm places of study. As is common at universities, there are also presentations, awards, conferences, and graduation ceremonies continuously taking place throughout the year. Some of the conferences are about interculturality or hosting a visiting group from a different IU. These events demonstrate an

outward intent to change language ideologies, but, on the other hand, certainly the office of the rector exercises power and prestige, as do the professors in their classrooms. Could the respect for the institution overshadow the intent to change language ideologies? Do the mission statements and vision statements represent a real change in underlying language ideologies? The students often work in their communities in a social capacity. At UIEM, this includes health clinics as the nursing program is a large part of the student body. At UVIH, there are three "*semanas de campo*"[42] per 15-week semester, so 3 out of 15 weeks the students are working in the local communities. Is the community affected or are the students grounded in the status quo due to this experience within the community?

**Research Question 3: Do students want a structural change in the community or do they merely want a viable route to a university education?**

This question represents the assessment of the ideological orientation of the students, not specifically only about language, but how they view the possible impact of the university education on their communities, in other words, the desired greater impact of the IUs on the regional community or, alternatively, the simple desire to obtain a university degree, which would be more consistent with maintaining the status quo. The IUs were originally founded based on principles of social justice and social change, as shall be seen in chapter 2, but what is the actual environment of the institutions, as a matter of ongoing policy and reality? Do students want a radical, transformational experience or are they merely at the university to earn a college degree? Or is the environment somewhere in between? Stage 3 of 4 in the methodology of Fairclough is to "consider whether the social order 'needs' the social wrong"

[42] In English, weeks in the field.

(2013, p. 235). If students are only interested in merely earning a university degree, then one could make the case that a structural change is not being sought since the sole objective is the degree and therefore the social order "needs" the social wrong in that the students are accepting the social status quo. Of course, this question most likely will have a spectrum of responses, not necessarily either extreme. After all, some of the students are not ethnically connected to their regions and/or do not speak a regional language, which could mitigate their interest in social change.

**Research Question 4: What effect have the IUs had on shaping language ideologies?**

Question 4 represents the assessment of what effect have the IUs had on language ideologies from their inception until now. It is the precursor to the last two research questions which will address the future possibilities of the IUs and how they might affect their students and their regions. This question and the next two questions address the fourth and last stage in the methodology of Fairclough, which is to "identify possible ways past the obstacles" (2013, p. 235). The obstacles envisioned are several, usually involving, in general, the status quo versus change. There is both an overt language policy that is institutionalized in the IUs and an overt one that every person carries in their thoughts and attitudes. Question 4 and the next two questions are the crux of the research, both qualitative and quantitative, herein.

**Research Question 5: Are the IUs creating sustainable communities attuned to regional languages, cultures, and sustainable development?**

**Research Question 6: Are the IUs creating a group of graduates that have been able to find employment related to their education while staying in their region?**

These questions together represent the assessment of how the IUs are changing language ideologies and, especially, what are the possibilities that can be expected continuing

into the future. As has just been said, these questions address the fourth and last stage in the methodology of Fairclough, which is to "identify possible ways past the obstacles" (2013, p. 235), but in this case in regard to the future. Questions 5 and 6 have to do with community and creating a sustainable community including a change in language, culture, and development. Question 5 is concerned with the difficulty in creating sustainable regional communities and focuses on broad regional development in terms of sustainable community including language and culture. A subset of question 5, question 6 asks whether graduates have been able to find employment in their field once they leave the university. It is difficult to imagine any kind of sustainable community without considering the practical aspect of employment.

These last three questions taken as a group ask if the presence of the IUs has, indeed, improved lives through changes in language ideologies and concomitant sustainable community development. This is mostly covered in the qualitative interviews which include graduates and educational service providers, whereas the questionnaire was only given to current students, and therefore it only addresses the question of change in language ideology since the majority of students are not yet regularly employed.

### 1.6 Description of the Communities where the campuses are located

Most states in Mexico are divided into municipalities[43], which are the governmental entities between the state-level and the city-level. Consequently, the political and administrative organization at the top level is the federal government headquartered in

[43] Mexico is divided into 32 states. Municipalities in Spanish are *municipios*, although the state of Mexico City is the lone exception, where there are 16 political units called *alcaldías* or mayoral districts (they previously were called *delegaciones* before statehood in 2016).

Mexico City, followed by 32 state governments, and then further subdivided into 2,448 municipalities (16 *alcaldías* in the case of Mexico City), and lastly cities and towns[44]. Like many governmental organizations in Mexico, public education is highly centralized in Mexico City and responsibility for designing and administering public schools resides with the SEP.

### *1.6.1 San Felipe del Progreso*

UIEM is located in San Felipe del Progreso, a small town of 4,350 residents in northwest Mexico State located in the municipality of the same name (*México (Mexico): Municipalities & Localities - San Felipe Del Progreso*, n.d.). Although in the surrounding countryside around UIEM and in San Felipe del Progreso itself there is little industry, in Atlacomulco 15 km. away there is an industrial area with businesses including assembly plants and maquiladoras. Generally speaking, the area around UIEM has electricity and water, although both services are not always reliable (personal observation, November 2019). The municipality has a population of 121,396 of which 33,517 residents speak an original language (27%) and average schooling is 6.9 years (about one year beyond elementary school) compared to 9.2 years for the country as a whole (about a middle school education), with the literacy rate being 86.7[45]. Economically, the municipality of San Felipe mostly produces agricultural products, livestock, and services, with a much smaller amount of

[44] This is analogous to the US concepts of the federal government, then state governments, counties, and finally cities and towns.

[45] Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geología (INEGI), 2016

manufacturing[46]. San Felipe del Progreso was founded as San Felipe del Obraje in 1821, although Mazahua settlements in the area were conquered by the Aztecs in 1379 CE and have been inhabited continuously at least since then[47]. The town is about 15 kilometers (km) from the border with Michoacán.

According to Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (INEGI), and using the age range of 40-44 to represent the parents of students, in the municipality of San Felipe del Progreso the population that is inactive economically is about 5.7%[48] (2016), so over 90% of this demographic is economically active. Also according to INEGI, only about 20% of the adult population of San Felipe has completed high school[49] (2016). Clearly this suggests that many of the students of UIEM are surpassing their parents' level of education, as will be supported by the qualitative interviews in chapter 4. Most students at UIEM have cellphones and make use of social media, such as Facebook. This level of personal technology is a noteworthy change in light of the historically low educational development levels in the area and the still existing limited fixed phone service. In San Felipe del Progreso, where UIEM is located, there are fixed telephones, but in most areas outside of major towns or nearby small cities, fixed telephone service is not available. Interestingly, this implies that before the era of cell phones a lot of residents had no phone service in their homes at all. Cell system access and internet availability is good, although there are marginal

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[46] Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geología (INEGI), 2016

[47] *Estado de México - San Felipe Del Progreso*, n.d.

[48] 187 out of 3282 people in the demographic of 40-44 years old.

[49] 12,525 out of 65,323 people total.

areas and some students do not have internet access at home, while at the UIEM campus the school provided Wi-Fi internet is usually overwhelmed and slow. Also, at UIEM the cell signal is often weak and, although this is typical for rural areas in the region, UIEM is only a few km. from downtown San Felipe del Progreso. The nearest other city, Atlacomulco de Fabela, is about 15 km. away. The usual method of travel to Atlacomulco for students is by collective (taxi carrying multiple passengers) or bus. Most students do not have a car or motorcycle and almost all do not have driver's licenses. San Felipe del Progreso and Atlacomulco are connected by a four-lane, paved rural highway.

#### 1.6.1.1 The Language Situation Around UIEM

Using data from the INEGI database (*Población de 3 Años y Más*, n.d.), Table 2 shows the total number of speakers for languages spoken in Mexico State. Some languages, notably Otomí and Nahuatl, are widely spoken in many states and in several variants.

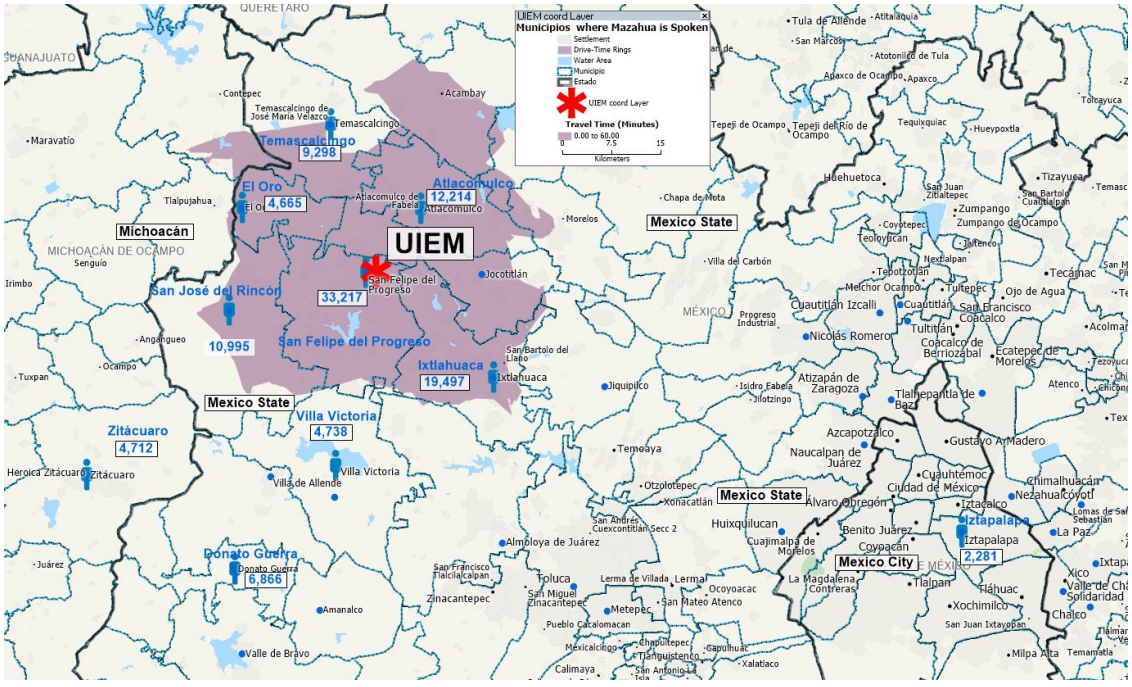
**Table 3** *Principal Original Languages of Mexico State*

| Language | Number of Speakers in Mexico State | Number of Speakers Total in Mexico |
|---|---|---|
| Mazahua | 116,240 | 136,717 |
| Otomí | 97,820 | 288,052 |
| Nahuatl | 61,670 | 1,586,844 |
| Matlatzinca | 909 | 1,106 |
| Tlahuica | 719 | 745 |

Unfortunately, the data that this study is based on is from the 2010 census, the 2020 census was suspended in March 2020 due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic shortly after it had broken out. It is also worth pointing out that every survey including some summaries of the same data have varying numbers.

Using detailed data from the 2010 census using INEGI data (*Población de 3 Años y Más*, n.d.), Figure 5 shows the ten municipalities that have the most Mazahua speakers. Some of these municipalities have as their administrative centers a city or town of the same name, shown in black while the blue of the same name is the municipality. The location of

**Figure 6** *Map of where Mazahua is spoken in the area of UIEM*



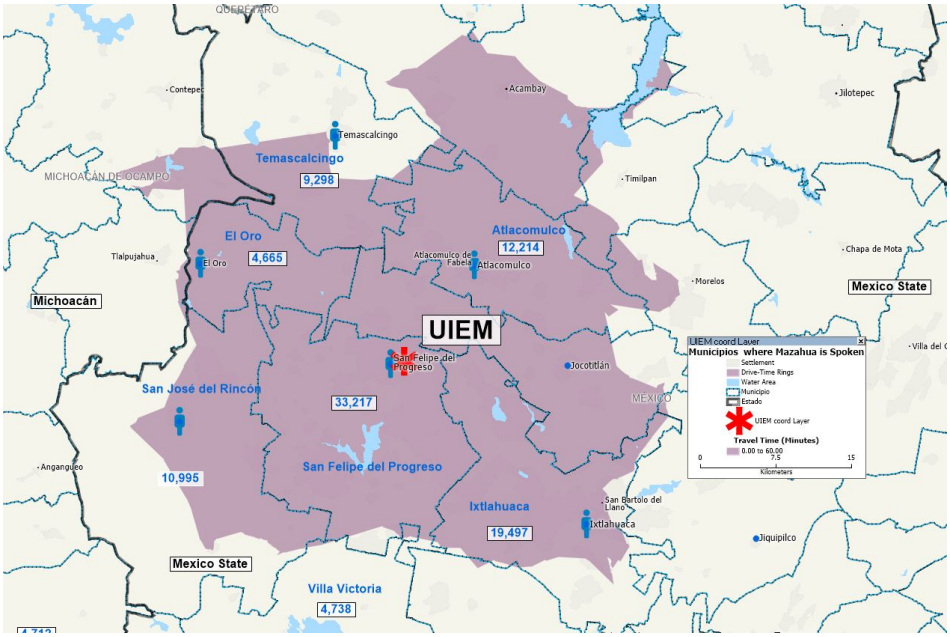

*Note:* The red star is the location of UIEM. The blue figures represent the ten municipalities with the most Mazahua speakers. Blue dots represent municipalities with more than 100 speakers of Mazahua. The mauve area represents a radius of one-hour drive drive time from UIEM.

UIEM is shown with a red star. The working class *alcaldías* of Iztapalapa in Mexico City has 2,205 speakers of Mazahua due to out-migration from other areas and is the tenth municipality by number of speakers after the other locations shown, although Mexico City as a whole has a total of 7,723 speakers including parts of Mexico State which forms the Mexico City greater metropolitan area. It is worth noting that Mexico State borders Mexico City on three sides, while to the south of the city lies the state of Morelos. The blue figures in Figure 5 account for about 79% of the speakers of Mazahua. Adding in the additional numbers from Mexico City account for a total of about 83% of the speakers. The other 17% are mostly contained in surrounding municipalities in Mexico State like Jocotitlán with 1,524 speakers and 21 other municipalities with over 100 speakers (blue dots in Figure 5), for a total of 13,346 speakers, which brings the number of speakers accounted for to about 93% of the total. Mazahua is spoken in other states due to migration, accounting for the remaining 7% of speakers with most Mexican states counting under 1,000 speakers except for Jalisco with 1,009. There is undoubtedly some out-migration to the United States, which would not be counted in the INEGI census database. Starting with Figure 5, the maps in this section include a one-hour drive radius to provide a sense of the scale of the area, which is based on a private vehicle driving at average speeds[50].

[50] The drive time radii and associated maps were created using a Geographic Information System (GIS) made by the company Maptitude. According to Maptitude technical support, the average speeds are calculated using average travel times from noon to 1PM on Wednesday on each individual segment of the road. However, many students utilize public transportation, which undoubtedly adds to their travel time.

Figure 6 shows a close-up of the area around UIEM including the boundaries of the municipalities. The mauve area is a one-hour travel time ring around UIEM, however,

**Figure 7** *Close-up of area around UIEM showing speakers of Mazahua*




*Note*: The mauve shaded area covers an area within a one-hour drive time radius from UIEM which touches municipalities that contain approximately 65% of all Mazahua speakers (89,886 speakers).

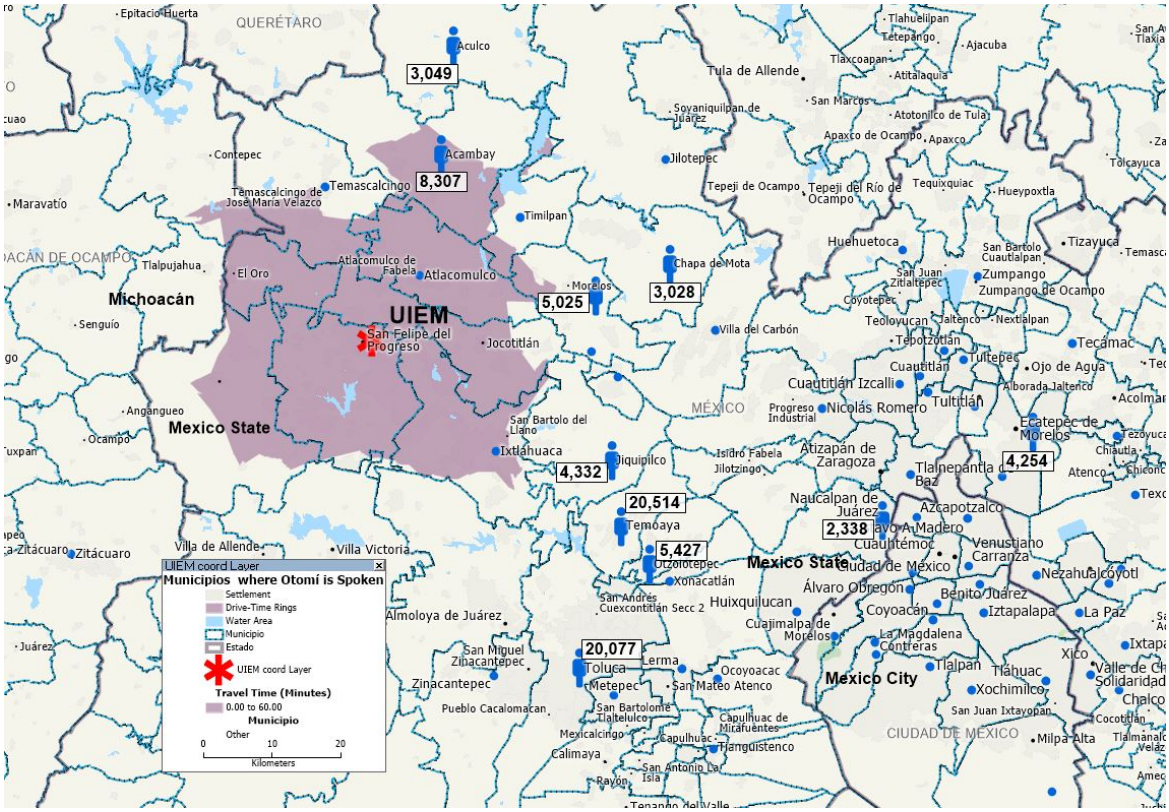
travel time also depends on the conditions and type of road. For example, Temascalcingo, to the north of UIEM, is about an hour away from UIEM, while Atlacomulco, which appears on the map to be about the same distance away from UIEM, is only about 20 minutes because a rural highway connects the two towns. Some of the English students class were from El Oro and took public transportation back and forth from their homes daily, over an hour of total travel time each way. San Felipe del Progreso where UIEM is located is the municipality with the most Mazahua speakers at 33,217 and it is this municipality, surrounding

municipalities, and Zitácuaro in Michoacán that make up the historical Mazahua settlements (*Localidades con asentamientos históricos*, n.d.).

Many of the villages where an original language is autochthonous are of small populations and relatively undeveloped areas. As was mentioned earlier, eroding and ultimately eliminating minority languages and cultures by making an attractive offer to entice the voluntary abandonment of them is called ethnophagy (Díaz-Polanco, 2006). Ethnophagy in Mexico has been a top-down process driven by the central governments in Mexico City and slowly has moved from Mexico City to smaller cities and then even smaller cities, and so on, over decades. A possible exception to this phenomenon is Nahuatl, which was so widely spoken, including the former center of Aztec power, now Mexico City, that it is still spoken in widespread pockets in many different states with different variants. Not much is known with certainty about the origins of the Mazahua people, but according to the Comisión Nacional Para El Desarrollo De Los Pueblos Indígenas (henceforth CDI) they were living in this same area when Gonzalo de Sandoval conquered them on behalf of the Spanish crown in the sixteenth century ("Mazahuas - Etnografía," n.d.).

Whereas Mazahua is traditionally spoken in 498 localities in the states of Mexico and Michoacán, Otomí is traditionally spoken in 3,223 localities in the states of Puebla, Veracruz, Hidalgo, Querétaro, Michoacán, Guanajuato, and Mexico State (*Localidades con asentamientos históricos*, n.d.). Unlike Mazahua, Otomí is indigenous to the immediate surroundings of Mexico City, for instance Naucalpan de Juárez (which is in Mexico State, but is part of the Mexico City metropolitan area) is among the top ten municipalities in terms of number of speakers of Otomí. However, currently the language is centered in the states of Hidalgo and neighboring Veracruz. Figure 7 shows where Otomí is spoken in the area of

**Figure 8** *Map of where Otomí is Spoken in the Area of UIEM*



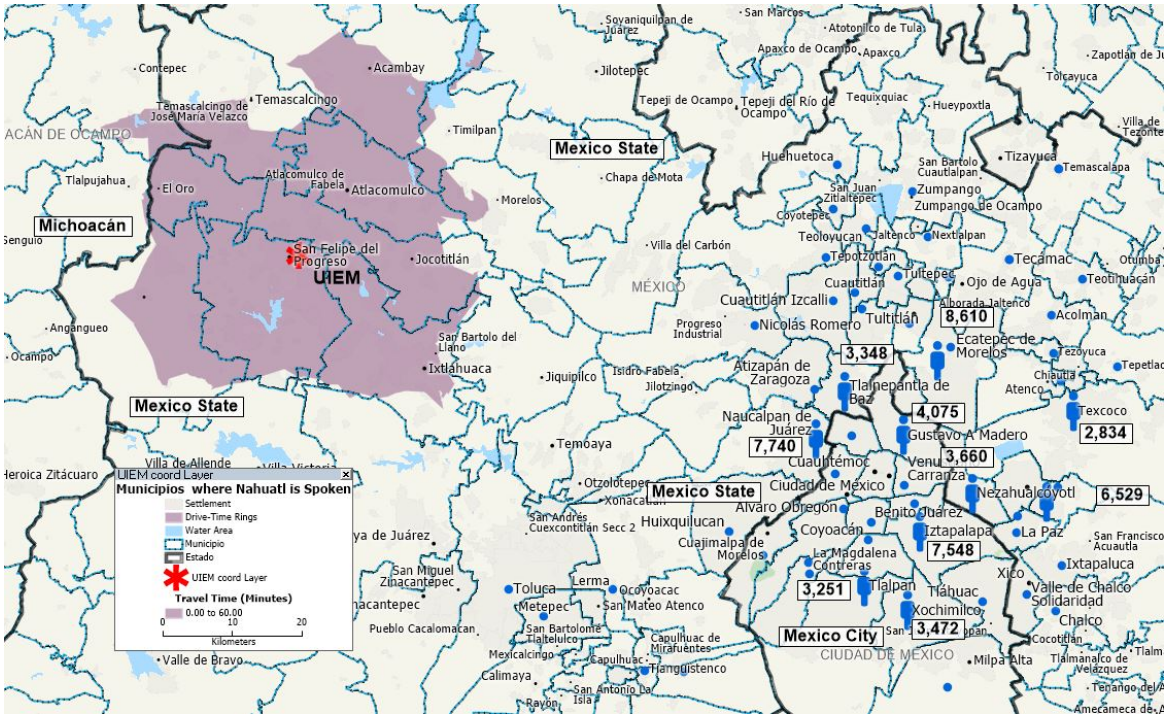

*Note*. The blue figures are the top 10 municipalities in number of speakers, totaling 76,351 speakers. The blue dots are municipalities with more than 100 speakers, totaling 17,308 in Mexico State, 12,623 in Mexico City, and 263 in Zitácuaro, Michoacán. The mauve shaded area is a one-hour drive time radius around UIEM which touches municipalities that contain about 3% of all Otomí speakers (8,637 speakers).

UIEM. There are 10,021 speakers in Mexico City, 3.4% of total speakers. In Mexico State there are 97,820 speakers or about 34% of the total number of speakers of 288,052. In Michoacán, there are no municipalities with more than 500 speakers, even though the language is indigenous to Zitácuaro, which now only has 260 speakers. There are concentrations of Otomí speakers in communities one hour distant or more from UIEM, such as the nearby municipality of Acambay with 8,307 speakers of Otomí (*Población de 3*

*Años y Más*, n.d.). The large population of Otomí speakers in Toluca is indigenous to that area, it is not a consequence of migration. Notwithstanding, there are few students at UIEM from Toluca, which is about two hours away by car.

Out of the five original languages of Mexico State, the only non-Otomanguean language is Nahuatl (from the Uto-Aztecan family) the distribution of which around UIEM is shown in Figure 8. Nahuatl is the most frequently spoken original language in Mexico with 1,376,026 speakers[51] whose distribution spans from the Pacific coast to the Gulf of Mexico,

**Figure 9** *Map of where Nahuatl is Spoken in the Area of UIEM*



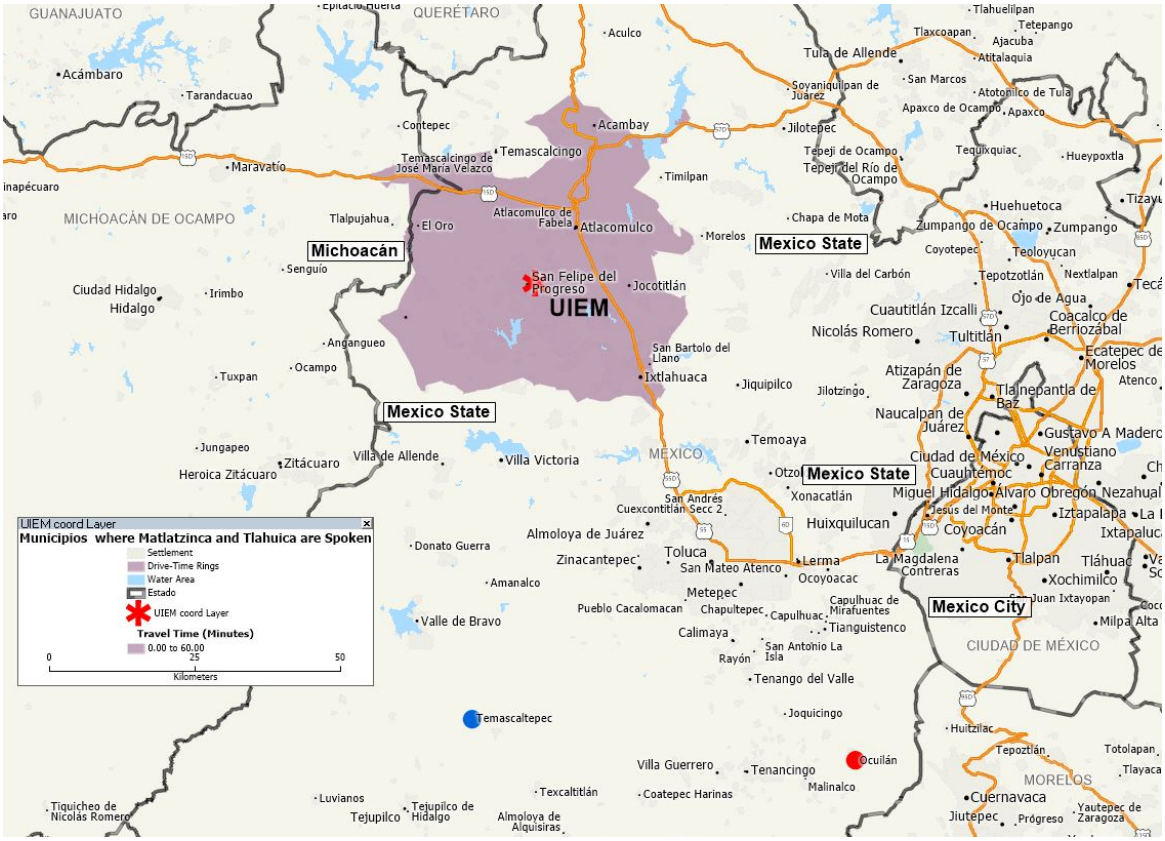

*Note*. The mauve shaded area is a one-hour drive time radius around UIEM and contains no communities of speakers of Nahuatl. The blue figures are the 10 areas with the most Nahuatl speakers in the area of UIEM. The area around Toluca containing speakers of Nahuatl is over an hour UIEM. The area in and around Mexico City is two hours or more

[51] Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), 2009, p. 35

covering the entire country. It is spoken in all 32 Mexican states. Once the lingua franca of Mesoamerica, it was slowly displaced by Spanish after the conquest. In Mexico State, it is mostly spoken around Mexico City. There are no significant numbers of Nahuatl speakers in the area withing one-hour drive time radius from UIEM, but there are areas of Nahuatl speakers nearer to the Pacific Ocean, which are not included in the map due to their being outside of the area of UIEM.

The two remaining original languages spoken in Mexico State are Matlatzinca and Tlahuica, shown in Figure 9. Tlahuica is also known by the name Ocuilteco and INEGI seems to prefer Ocuilteco, but the Tlahuica instructor at UIEM, who was interviewed for this dissertation, uses Tlahuica to refer to her language, which is what is used herein. Both languages are critically endangered. Tlahuica has only one municipality with more than 100 speakers, which is in Mexico State. There are 745 speakers of Tlahuica and 708 are in the locality of San Juan Atzingo in the municipality of Ocuilan in southern Mexico State with few reported in other locations; no other municipality of Mexico State or any other Mexican state have more than 10 speakers with most reporting none or low single digits. There are a total of 1,106 speakers of Matlatzinca: 909 live in Mexico State and many of the remaining 200 ca. speakers are scattered throughout Mexico City.

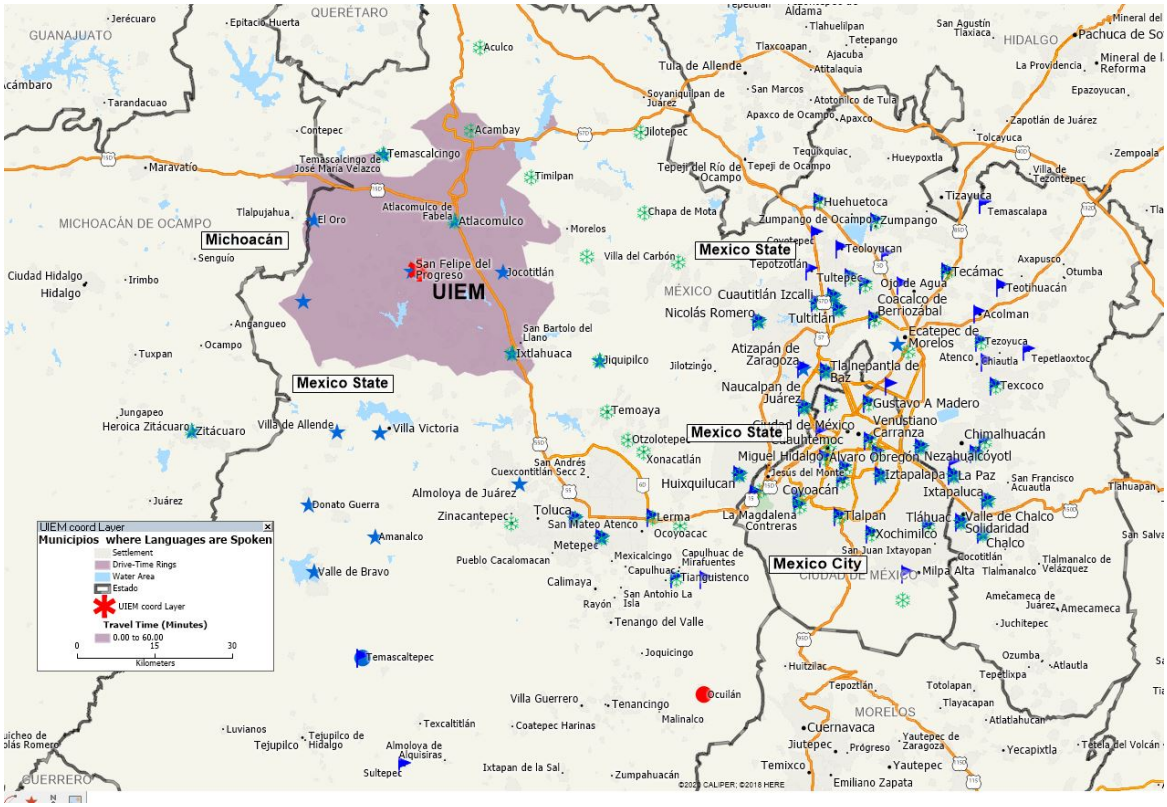
**Figure 10** *Map of where Matlatzinca and Tlahuica are Spoken in the Area of UIEM*




*Note*. The large blue dot is where Matlatzinca is spoken and the large red dot is the home to Tlahuica. The mauve shaded area is a one-hour drive time radius around UIEM and contains no communities of either language.

A composite map is shown in Figure 10 with the map legend in Table 3 to give an overall sense of the situation of original languages in the area of UIEM.

**Figure 11** *Composite Map of Original Languages in the Area of UIEM*




*Note*. Some municipalities have more than one symbol, which overlap.

**Table 4** *Legend for figure 11 - Map of Original Languages around UIEM*

| Color and Symbol | Language | Number of Speakers in Mexico State | Number of Speakers Total in Mexico |
|---|---|---|---|
| Blue Stars | Mazahua | 116,240 | 136,717 |
| Green Snowflake | Otomí | 97,820 | 288,052 |
| Blue Flag | Nahuatl | 61,670 | 1,586,884 |
| Large Blue Dot | Matlatzinca | 909 | 1,106 |
| Large Red Dot | Tlahuica | 719 | 745 |

### *1.6.2 Ixhuatlán de Madero, Veracruz*

UVIH is located in the small town of Ixhuatlán de Madero, which is located in the municipality of the same name, in the Huasteca Veracruzana close to the Gulf of Mexico and not far from Tamaulipas state to the north. The town has a population of 1,275[52]. Ixhuatlán de Madero was founded around 1615 with some of the main economic activities being agriculture and cattle (*Veracruz - Ixhuatlán de Madero*, n.d.). The municipality of Ixhuatlán de Madero has a population of 49,820 of which 32,745 speak an original language or almost two thirds of the population (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geología (INEGI), 2016). By another measure, the economy is service and agriculture based[53]. There are many orange

**Figure 12** *Map of the Municipality of Ixhuatlán de Madero*



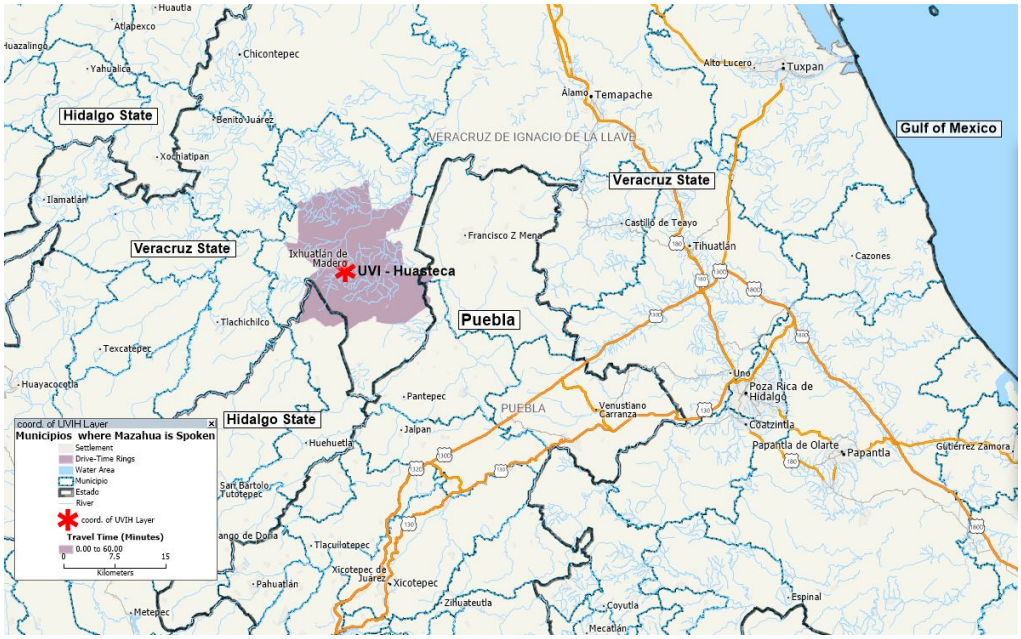

*Note:* Slice of Eastern Mexico with the Municipality of Ixhuatlán de Madero shown.

[52] *Veracruz de Ignacio de La Llave (Mexico): Municipalities & Localities - Ixhuatlán de Madero*, n.d.

[53] Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geología (INEGI), 2016

groves in the area. Figure 11 shows the municipality of Ixhuatlán de Madero in the larger context of Eastern Mexico and Figure 12 shows a close up of the municipality with the

**Figure 13** *Location of UVIH in the town of Ixhuatlán de Madero*




Note. State boundaries in heavy black, municipality boundaries in ligh blue. The mauve highlighted area is a one-hour drive time radius centered on UVIH.

location of UVIH.

Cell system access and internet availability is generally poor in the area of UVIH and many students do not have internet access at home, while at the UVIH campus the school-provided Wi-Fi internet is usually overwhelmed and slow. As an illustration of this, the school turns off the Wi-Fi service during conference calls with the administration in Xalapa in order to have enough bandwidth for the call. Also, at UVIH the cell signal is often weak or non-existent. Much of the surrounding area does not have cell signal or internet availability.

In Ixhuatlán de Madero where UVIH is located, there is currently no fixed telephone service available, which is true throughout the surrounding region and makes for an isolated area, albeit before cell phones there was limited phone service. Even so, in general, electricity is available in the areas surrounding UVIH, but, apart from that, the availability of running water can be unreliable. In spite of these limitations, most students have cellphones and make use of social media, such as Facebook. This is a notable change from the past, as Veracruz has a low development index, as will be seen in the next chapter sections. As a result of these various limitations in the infrastructure, many students will take advantage of the limited Wi-Fi on campus and download whatever material they need for their studies, then make use of it at home while off-line.

In general, the area surrounding UVIH is more rural and has fewer services than the area surrounding UIEM. For instance, the nearest city, Poza Rica, is more than two hours away by car and there is no direct bus service. People wishing to travel out of the Sierra usually go by a combination of taxis and buses. The road connecting Ixhuatlán de Madero with Poza Rica is mostly a two-lane, paved country highway with a few km that are virtually unpaved and the trip of 120 km. takes about three hours. An alternate route, directly through the Sierra, has about 10 km of unpaved road out of 100 km. total (as of 2020) and takes a little less than two and a half hours, in spite of this more direct route, most people take the other, almost entirely paved, route. Students and others reported that before the 1990s, the road into Ixhuatlán de Madero had long unpaved sections.

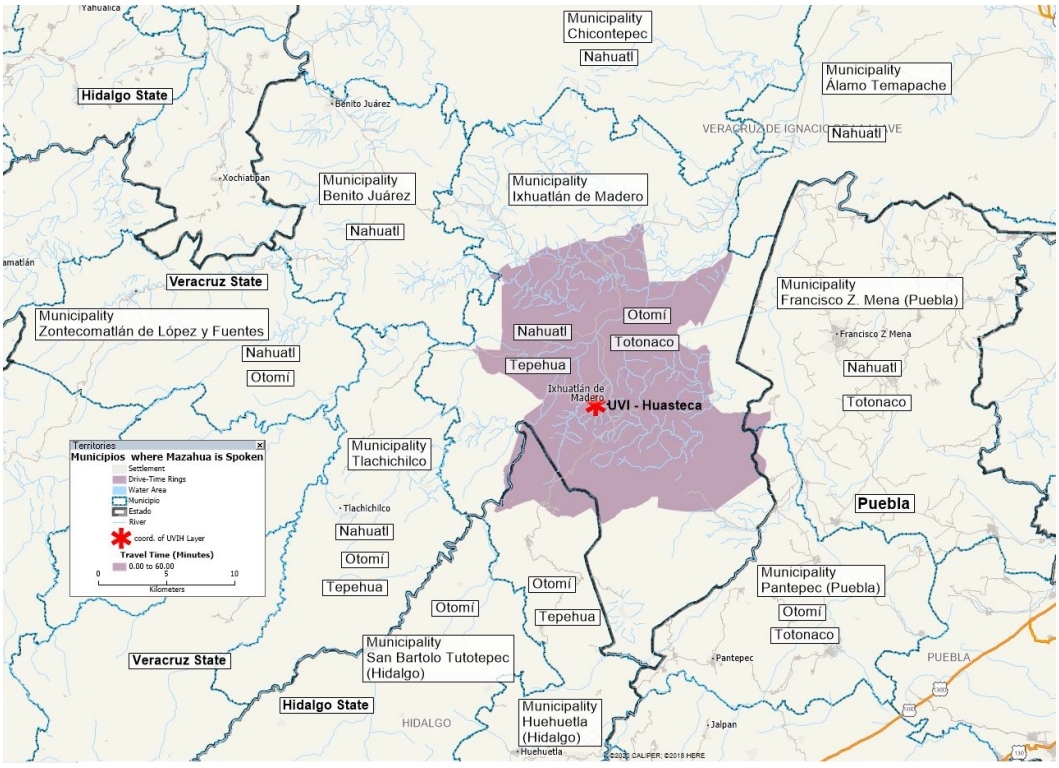
#### 1.6.2.1 The Language Situation Around UVIH

UVIH is located in the Huasteca Veracruzana in the coastal sierra, although the Huasteca as a region extends into Hidalgo, San Luis Potosí, and a small area of Puebla in the

Northeast of Mexico. It is home to one third of the speakers of Nahuatl or about 500,000, making the Huasteca the geographic region with the largest group of indigenous language speakers in Mexico (Flores Farfán, 2009, p. 20). Nahuatl is the most southeastern example of the Uto-Aztecan family which extends through the United States and up into Canada.

The available INEGI language data is by municipality and in the case of UIEM, there are about eight municipalities within the one hour drive radius, yielding some geographic area data around the campus. However, the one hour drive radius around UVIH barely reaches out of the municipality of Ixhuatlán de Madero, making for less geographic area granularity in the data around the campus, as can be seen in Figure 13.

**Figure 14** *Composite Map of Municipalities around UVIH showing Languages Spoken*



Furthermore, the one-hour drive radius encroaches into the neighboring states of Hidalgo and Puebla, however, there are no students at UVIH from those states, all students are from Veracruz state[54] but since the UVIH website states that it serves neighboring states, those municipalities were included in the composite map of languages spoken in the area (*Sede Huasteca – UV-Intercultural*, n.d.). It is worth noting that the one-hour drive ring around UIEM reached about twice the physical distance than the maps of UVIH, which highlights the more rural nature of Ixhuatlán de Madero including poorer road conditions. Veracruz is a state of low Human Development Index and around Ixhuatlán de Madero the roads are not always well maintained. Moreover, many small villages have numerous speed bumps in the roads even on the main roads, further complicating travel. The UVIH website lists a number of municipalities that it serves, many of which are over two hours away by car. Most students use public transportation, which increases travel time, and entails an additional 15-20 minutes walking each way to campus to cover the distance from the town of Ixhuatlán de Madero, where public transportation is found. Among the closer municipalities is Tlachichilco, over an hour away and also shown on Figure 13 to the southwest of Ixhuatlán de Madero. In this municipality of 10,659 residents, a total of 5,439 speak an original language, i.e. almost 50% of the inhabitants. Among the languages spoken in Tlachichilco are Nahuatl (1,120 or ca. 10% of the population), Otomí (1,906 or ca. 18%), and Tepehua (2,392 or ca. 22%). Zontecomatlán, to the west of Ixhuatlán de Madero about two hours away has 10,491 speakers of an original language out of 12,995 residents, or about 80% of

[54] Academic affairs coordinator Luis Alberto Montejo Sánchez, MA. (p.c. 2020).

the population. Table 4 has the number of speakers per municipality in the area around UVIH. Tének (Huasteco) is a language included because it is served by UVIH (*Sede Huasteca – UV-Intercultural*, n.d.), but it is spoken in distant municipalities such as Tantoyuca, which is several hours away to the north of UVIH and is not shown on the map, but is included in Table 4. It is also worth noting that the areas with more speakers of original languages, like Chicontepec where 99.5% of the residents speak Nahuatl, tend to be more

**Table 5** *Languages Spoken around UVIH by Municipality*

| State | Municipality | Language | Number of Speakers | Percentage of Population (Municipality) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Veracruz | Ixhuatlán de Madero (UVIH is located here) | Nahuatl | 22,442 | 47.4% |
| | | Otomí | 5,538 | 11.7 |
| | | Tepehua | 2,393 | 5.0 |
| | | Totonaco | 2,953 | 6.2 |
| Veracruz | Tlachichilco | Nahuatl | 1,120 | 10.5 |
| | | Otomí | 1,906 | 17.9 |
| | | Tepehua | 2,392 | 22.4 |
| Veracruz | Zontecomatlán de López y Fuentes | Nahuatl | 8,575 | 81.7 |
| | | Otomí | 1,287 | 12.3 |
| Veracruz | Benito Juárez | Nahuatl | 13,629 | 86.0 |
| Veracruz | Chicontepec | Nahuatl | 36,807 | 99.5 |
| Veracruz | Álamo Temapache | Nahuatl | 7,571 | 7.7 |
| Veracruz | Tantoyuca (Not on map) | Tének (Huasteco) | 44,375 | 46.5 |
| | | Nahuatl | 3,643 | 3.8 |
| Hidalgo | Huehuetla | Otomí | 10,738 | 48.3 |
| | | Tepehua | 1,680 | 7.6 |
| Hidalgo | San Bartolo Tutotepec | Otomí | 5,922 | 34.9 |
| Puebla | Francisco Z. Mena | Nahuatl | 646 | 4.2 |
| | | Totonaco | 271 | 1.7 |
| Puebla | Pantepec | Otomí | 1,891 | 10.8 |
| | | Totonaco | 4,673 | 26.6 |

rural and isolated, as opposed to areas like Álamo Temapache where only 7.7% of the population speaks Nahuatl and which is much more closely connected by road to the city Poza Rica.

According to Luis Alberto Montejo Sánchez, the coordinator of academic affairs at UVIH, there are four original language spoken around the UVIH campus in Ixhuatlán de Madero, Veracruz. The four languages spoken in the area of UVIH are shown in Table 5 (*Población de 3 Años y Más*, n.d.), which summarizes the language situation in the municipality of Ixhuatlan de Madero. Both Otomí and Nahuatl are also spoken in the area of the other research site, UIEM in Mexico State.

**Table 6** *Languages Spoken in the Municipality of Ixhuatlán de Madero*

| Language | Language Family | Number of Speakers in Veracruz State | Number of Speakers Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Nahuatl<br><br>(By far the most common language at UVIH) | Uto-Aztecan | 355,785 | 1,586,884 |
| Huasteco (Tének)<br><br>(Several hours away by car) | Mayan | 52,660 | 166,952 |
| Otomí | Otomanguean | 18,078 | 288,052 |
| Tepehua | Totonaco-Tepehua | 5,605 | 8,968 |

In the municipality of Ixhuatlán de Madero, there are 22,402 speakers of Nahuatl out of a population of 47,406, in other words almost one half of the population speaks Nahuatl (47%). There are 5,538 speakers of Otomí or about 11.7% of the population, while 2,393 speak Tepehua, which represents about 5% of the population.

## 1.7 Conclusion

This introductory chapter has taken the first steps with a discussion of the motivation for this dissertation and its structure. The motivation is based on an historical and ongoing denial of legitimacy of original languages, in the past institutionalized in powerful organizations like the SEP and in generalized attitudes within Mexican society. Also introduced was the topic of the IUs and their role in changing attitudes and bestowing legitimacy to original languages. An overview of the current state of economic and health care status of indigenous communities throughout Mexico served to illustrate the legacy of the illegitimacy of original languages. Also the topic of language loss at a national level served this same purpose including a more in-depth introduction to the Mazahua language situation. The two communities that were researched for this dissertation were described, especially in regard to their linguistic situations. The preliminary conclusions of this introductory chapter are: the attempt being made in Mexico to change traditional, negative language ideologies, the overt role of the IUs in this struggle, and two of the campuses where this change is being attempted. These factors should be kept in mind during the next chapter, which describes the historical background of institutionalized language marginalization and eradication and the contemporary attempt to change that policy. In later chapters, a quantitative and qualitative assessment conducted mostly at the two IUs under consideration, will also be presented.

## Chapter 2: Historical Background and Current Language Policy

### 2.1 Introduction

The history of public policy towards indigenous peoples in Mexico is a long one that extends over about five centuries. The current ideologies of language in Mexico cannot be fully comprehended without a knowledge of this historical background. Over the course of the colonial period, roughly 1520 to 1810, or about three centuries, language policy oscillated from an early laissez-faire acceptance of Nahuatl as the lingua franca to royal decrees from Spain insisting on, and commanding, the extermination of indigenous languages. During the nineteenth century there was little explicit policy in regard to language, but immediately after the revolution the situation changed to one of nation-state building that viewed indigenous languages as an impediment to a unified nation. It was only in the last few decades that the linguistic landscape has begun to change, this more recent history is what laid the groundwork for the IUs' creation and existence.

### 2.2 Colonial Times

During colonial times the Spanish government's seat of power was centralized in the greater valley of Mexico, in other words, roughly where Mexico City is located today and, before the conquest, where the Aztec empire was also established. In the first century after the conquest the population of the greater valley of Mexico declined about 90% from 1.59 million to 180,000 due largely to disease and famine and mostly occurring in the first 50 years after the conquest (Whitmore, 1991). During the colonial period the priests and Spanish catholic church often tried to protect native populations while the Spanish Crown worked to keep settlers from having too much power, which inadvertently helped native populations, but pragmatic outcomes often involving the need for labor and the need for economic activity

often resulted in loss of native lands and resulted in native servitude (Haake, 2007, pp. 88–89). Counterpoised against the backdrop of this decimation, for the first century after the conquest of *Nueva España*, Nahuatl, the language of the dominant Mexica people (Aztecs), continued in its role as the lingua franca of Mesoamerica, albeit with misgivings on the part of the Spanish. One important example of this acceptance was the Real Colegio de Santa Cruz in Tlatelolco, Mexico (now part of Mexico City), founded in 1536 and representing the initial colonial period during which the Crown desired, but lacked the resources, to spread the Spanish language among the population[55]. In Tlatelolco, there was only a single school and the indigenous students and priests together learned Spanish, Nahuatl, and Latin. However, the Spanish Crown ceased its support of the Colegio in 1605. Philip II declared Nahuatl as a lingua franca in 1578, but it was not considered on a par with Spanish. In 1634 this policy ended with Philip IV's new policy of Castilianization that continued until the ostensible end of the colonial period almost 200 years later (Zimmermann & Kellermeier-Rehbein, 2015, p. 178).

Shifting to the historical topic of one of the central languages of the regions studied herein, about 100 km. from the valley of Mexico, there have been Mazahua researchers over the years, perhaps starting in the year 1637 when a bilingual Mazahua/Spanish catechism by Diego de Nágera Yanguas titled *Doctrina, y enseñança  en la lengua maçahua*, which was primarily linguistic notes about the Mazahua language was published posthumously (Burkhart, 2014, p. 174; Knapp Ring, 2013).  Diego de Nágera was a parish priest in

[55] See, for instance, Ferreira, Miglio, & Schwieter in "Minority language learning and acculturation" in The Cambridge Handbook of Language Learning (2019, pp. 696–726).

Jocotitlán (Burkhart, 2014, p. 177), which still exists as a town and a municipality and is about 10 km from where UIEM is located. It is the hometown of one of the qualitative interview participants, Adelina, who speaks Mazahua. The original can be viewed online (Yanguas, 1637) and it contains many descriptive texts discussing the Mazahua language. This was one of the early catechisms in New Spain (henceforth *Nueva España*), but not the earliest, that would go to a Nahuatl work of 1547 CE (Burkhart, 2014, p. 171).

The initial period of uncertainty regarding the treatment of original languages came to a definitive end in all of *Nueva España*, at least in terms of the attitude (ideology) of the Spanish crown, by the declaration of Philip IV in 1634 which codified the institutionalization of a Spanish-dominant colonial relationship between the central governments in Mexico City and original languages:

> We pray and give the duty to the Archbishops and Bishops, that they provide order in their Dioceses, that the Priests and Parish Priests of Indians, using the most gentle means, are willing to put into motion, that all the Indians are taught the Spanish language, and through it Christian doctrine[56]. (Wasserman-Soler, 2016, p. 690)

Over a hundred years later, towards the late colonial period, in 1770, Carlos III of Spain, in a royal decree, declared the elimination of original languages:

> …in order to instruct the Indians in the Dogmas of our Religion in Castellano, and in order to teach them how to read, and write in this Language…

The royal decree continues:

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[56] Rogamos y encargamos á los Arzobispos y Obispos, que provean y dèn orden en sus Diocesis, que los Curas y Doctrineros de Indios, usando de los medios mas suaves, dispongan y encaminen, que á todos los Indios sea enseñada la lengua Española, y en el ella la doctrina Christiana.

> … in order that, once and for all, the goal of the extinction of all the different languages spoken in our colonies will be achieved, and only Castellano will be spoken as commanded by *repeated* Royal Law Decrees[57]

Italics are mine, emphasizing the ongoing hostility of the Spanish crown towards original languages. So, starting in 1634 and continuing from 1770 until independence in 1810, the colonial central governments in Mexico City had an explicit policy that called for the eradication of original languages. This mimics closely what was occurring in Spain and France at the time, both countries then containing numerous languages and a splintered linguistic situation. Calafat Vila states:

> Prohibiting the use of any language other than Spanish, via Royal Decree of June 23, 1763, signed by Charles III [Carlos III above] of Spain in Aranjuez; the persecution of schools that used any language other than Spanish; and Spain's interference in linguistic matters in all aspects of life was carried out over the three following centuries. (Calafat Vila, n.d., p. 6)

[57] A more complete passage of the text of the Royal Decree of Carlos III, 10 May, 1770, with the text cited above in bold: "Por quanto el Muy reverendo Arzobispo de México me ha representado, en Carta de veinte y cinco de Junio del año próximo pasado, que desde que en los vastos Dominios de la América se propago la Fe Catholica, todo mi desvelo, y el de los señores reyes, mis gloriosos predecesores, y de mi Consejo de las Indias, ha sido publicar Leyes, y dirigir Reales Cedulas a los Virreyes, y Prelados diocesanos**, a fin de que se instruya a los indios en los Dogmas de nuestra Religión en Castellano, y se les enseñe a leer, y escribir en este Idioma**, que se debe estender, y hacer único, y universal en los mismos Dominios, por ser el propio de los Monarcas, y conquistadores [...] que cada uno en la parte que respectivamente le tocare, guarden, cumplan y executen, y hagan guardar, cumplir, y executar puntual, y efectivamente la enunciada mi real resolución, disponiendo, que desde luego se pongan en practica, y observen los medios, que van expresados, y ha propuesto el mencionado muy reverendo Arzobispo de México, **para que de una vez se llegue a conseguir el que se extingan los diferentes idiomas, de que se usa en los mismos dominios, y solo se hable el Castellano como esta mandado por repetidas Leyes Reales Cedulas**, y ordenes expedidas en el asunto, estando advertidos de que en los parages en que se hallen inconvenientes en su practica deberán representármelo con justificación, a fin de que en su inteligecia, resuelva lo que fuere de mi Real agrado, por ser assi mi voluntad." (Fernand de Varennes, 2012, p. 7)

This was a time when Enlightenment-era nation-state building in Europe was seen in Spain as strictly demanding that all citizens speak only Spanish, which spilled over into the management of the colonies.

Against the backdrop of royal decrees about language, the catholic missionaries who were working actively on the ground must be mentioned. Within the Spanish Catholic church, there was a secular, more centralized organization, and then there were the mendicant orders, which operated more autonomously and distinct from one another. The mendicant orders whose friars acted as missionaries and who received their authority indirectly from the pope, who through *patronato real* (in English, royal patronage), had granted extraordinary powers to the king of Spain, who was appointed to be the spiritual guardian of the new subjects in the Americas. The first missionaries to arrive were the Franciscans, sent by Carlos V at Hernán Cortés request, in 1523 and 1524. They were followed by the Dominicans shortly thereafter in 1525, the Augustinians in 1533, and finally, the Jesuits in 1571.

### *2.2.1 The Missionaries and the Mendicant Orders*

The Spanish Inquisition was in operation during the colonial period, having been founded before the conquest in 1478. Although punishment and trials of indigenous peoples were sporadic during the early years after the conquest of 1521, in the years 1536 – 1543 there was an inquisition authorized by the Spanish Crown and carried out by the first archbishop of Mexico, the Franciscan Fray Juan de Zumárraga. In spite of Zumárraga having the title of Protector of the Indians and being well thought of in this regard by conventional thought (Chauvet, 1949), as well as the Franciscans in general being considered the more pro-Indian of the early orders in *Nueva España*, he presided over an inquisition that resulted

in one person being burned at the stake. However, only 19 trials were held during this span of seven years.

The different mendicant orders attempted to cover different geographical areas in order to avoid each other and during the sixteenth century the differences between the Dominican and Franciscan orders degenerated into an argument questioning the "capacity" of indigenous peoples and whether the methods of the Franciscans were correct. (The Franciscans in the early years practiced mass baptisms without much meaningful religious instruction.) According to Lopes, professor of history including early Latin American history, "Most famously, Dominicans Fray Tomás de Ortiz and Fray Domingo de Betanzos made statements to the Spanish Council of the Indies that the "capacity" of the Indians was highly doubtful" (2006, p. 31).

An important early written descriptive work that included a great deal of ethnography was the Franciscan Fray Bernardino de Sahagún's *Historia universal de las cosas de Nueva España*, which was completed in Spanish in 1577 in twelve volumes, but was originally written in Nahuatl. Sahagún had taught Latin at the Real Colegio de Santa Cruz in Tlatelolco and used his former students as consultants, among other extensive interviews over a period of years. The *Historia's* original purpose in Nahuatl "… sought to supply his [Sahagún's] fellow missionaries with a linguistic and cultural tool to extirpate what was considered indigenous idolatry" (Castaño, 2009, p. 211) and "…his [Sahagún's] main purpose was to use the collected information for the evangelization of the native population (Gareis, 2017, p. 23). Of course, Sahagún was not alone in this manner of thought. Jumping ahead to the beginning of the seventeenth century regarding the Jesuits in Peru, "A special institution was created in Peru, the so-called "extirpation of idolatry. (ibid, p. 28)" The *Historia* also was

flawed in that ".. it [the *Historia*] reproduced the vision of the Aztec elites, that implies only a small portion of precolonial Mexican society" (ibid., p.23). The *Historia* was an encyclopedic description of many aspects of preconquest Nahua life covering topics such as religion, astronomy, flora and fauna, precious stones, and, as was often the case in colonial times, "offers several examples of his [Sahagún's] culturally-charged interpretation of Nahua religion" (Castaño, 2009, p. 212).

As one example of how Spaniards in Mesoamerica thought at the time, Sahagún, in his *General History of the Things of New Spain, Book 1 - The Gods*[58], wrote a section at the end without title after he has described in detail the Nahua Gods and beliefs, in this untitled section he writes several pages discussing religion. A typical passage reads[59]:

> …Tlaltecutli [lord of the earth] is no god; the water of the sea, the ocean, is no god. And here in New Spain all were in times past worshipped as gods, [though] none are gods. For they are all devils and demons, as the word of God [stateth]. Omnes dii gentium demonia; that is to say [in Nahuatl], "All whom the idolaters worship as idols are devils, demons, evil spirits." (de Sahagún, 1558/1950, p. 35)

It can be seen in this same section of the *Historia* how Sahagún overlays his Catholic ideologies onto Nahua religion by asserting that a Nahua deity is, in fact, the devil, "Behold another madness of your forefathers. For they worshipped as a god a devil representing a woman, named Ciuacoatl[60]" (de Sahagún, 1829/2011, p. 40).

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[58] Of course the first book would be about the Gods, the divine would be the most important topic to a sixteenth century Catholic missionary, all other topics would be subordinate within a rigid hierarchy.

[59] This is an English translation of the original Nahuatl text. The comments in between brackets are not mine, they are translator's additions for clarity.

[60] Ciuacoatl was the snake-woman, goddess of unfortunate omens.

The Council of Trent[61] created a problem for the Franciscans in Mexico with the command to confiscate all religious texts in indigenous languages as a result of the Council of Trent's decision to only permit a Latin language bible. According to the French anthropologist and historian Baudot, in 1576 there were severe confiscations of all religious documents written in indigenous languages, these confiscations were carried out in Texcoco (1995, p. 101). In 1577 the preeminent Franciscans with knowledge of indigenous languages, Sahagún and Molina, offered a compromise solution to the dilemma whereby the priests could continue to use bilingual Spanish/indigenous language documents as a religious tool while not allowing Indians to possess them. It is worth noting that the "Indians" were the ones who suffered loss of access to the bible in this compromise. Their concern was that without these documents the missionaries would simply not be able to communicate with indigenous peoples. The compromise was rejected by the General Council of the Inquisition in Madrid and this debate continued until the end of the 16th century (Baudot, 1995, pp. 103–104).

The foregoing delineates the ideological battles going on within the church and between the mendicant orders on one hand and the Spanish Crown and the Spanish Inquisition on the other hand during the early decades of *Nueva España*. The actual behavior of the more pro-indigenous missionaries towards the rapidly declining population of the valley of Mexico was however heavily imbued with the Catholic/Spanish worldview that indigenous beliefs were idolatrous and uncivilized. It must be kept in mind that in spite of

[61] The Council of Trent was a Catholic response to the reformation and Protestantism and, among other things, dictated that the official bible be written only in Latin and that Mass be held in Latin. The Latin bible and Mass continued for the next 400 years until 1962.

Sahagún's extraordinary ethnographic texts, he steadfastly believed in this view that indigenous people's religious beliefs were idolatrous.

Upon the Jesuit's belated arrival in 1571, the order found that the central part of what is now Mexico had already been occupied by the Franciscans, Dominicans, and the Augustinians. In fact, the Jesuits could not possibly have been among the first wave of missionaries in the 1520s and 1530s, as Pope Paul III approved the first Jesuit organizational charter on September 27, 1540, bringing the order into existence for the first time. As a consequence of their late arrival, the Jesuits opted instead for expanding to the Northwest and into Baja California, which was an area less covered by the other orders at the time.

One of the regions where the Jesuits established themselves that lasted until their expulsion from all Spanish colonies in 1767[62] was the Yaqui region of southern Sonora. The Yaquis have managed to define themselves first and foremost as "the Yaqui nation" as opposed to describing themselves primarily as "Mexicans". This development had as its foundation the Jesuit's concept of the mission system. According to Hu-Dehart:

> The profound impact of the long, intense Jesuit missionary experience must be judged decisive in explaining the survival of the Yaqui people as a culturally intact and politically autonomous people at the end of the colonial period. Jesuits never intended their directed cultural change to prepare Yaquis for assimilation into the larger, exploitative Spanish social structure. (1981b, The Influence of the Jesuits section, para. 1)

[62] The expulsion of the Jesuits was a result of complicated political intrigue in Bourbon Spain. Among other things, the Jesuits did not pay the tithe of their income to the Crown and were thought to be a source of weakening of the Crown's authority.

The Jesuits had a different idea of what would serve their purposes in the Northwest part of what is now Mexico. They perceived that the dominant system in use in central Mexico did not fit the culturally disparate Yaquis.

> Instead of using the traditional terms of pacification, reduction, or congregation to describe their plan, they spoke rather of establishing "permanent missions among savages[63] (infieles)." This expression embodied succinctly the paternalistic philosophy for which Jesuits were famous: that they were to define and assume responsibility for not only the spiritual, but also the social, political, and material needs of their Indian wards for an indefinite period of time. (Hu-DeHart, 1981a, Enter the Jesuits section, para. 6)

Somewhat incongruently, the Jesuits seem to have provided an infrastructure that preserved Yaqui identity by protecting their lands and community from outside interference, although some of the early Spanish incursions into Yaqui territory had resulted in a strong Spanish admiration for their fighting abilities, which obviously helped to maintain their cultural identity as a nation.

In conclusion, the presence of the Catholic orders in *Nueva España* had a overarching influence on religious, cultural, and political events in the colony. While some of the missionaries and some of the orders at times tried to protect the indigenous population from the worst abuses, they also had an inflexible and strong ideological orientation that prevented them from seeing indigenous peoples from any perspective other than a paternalistic Catholic and Spanish view that, culturally,

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[63] As a comment on the translation by Hu-DeHart, the Spanish word "infieles" is better translated as "infidels", not "savages".

recognized and empowered the metropole as civilized and religious and the peoples of *Nueva España* as uncivilized and idolatrous.

### 2.3 The Nineteenth Century

The reform constitution of 1857 of Comonfort and Benito Juárez did not mention indigenous peoples, or Indians, or the Spanish language. The third article of the constitution declared schooling to be free of charge. After 1867, Gabino Barreda, Benito Juárez's private doctor, headed the commission to modernize educational institutions. All this activity was centralized in Mexico City, just the same as during the Spanish colonial governments. Barreda had studied medicine in Paris where he took classes from the positivist philosopher Auguste Comte, which had a profound influence on his thinking and philosophy. What was taking place in France at the time was telling for the direction of educational policy in Mexico. According to Irujo and Miglio:

> The nation-state-building process of the modern era sought to create its own legitimacy. Before the eighteenth century, religion was one of the main factors that expressed community identity in European monarchies; after the eighteenth century and especially in the nineteenth century, language started emerging as the symbolic factor of uniformity of the new nation states. In this, post-Revolutionary France was no different… (2013b, p. 14)

Barreda, in his book titled *Opúsculos, discusiones y discursos*[64], anticipated the national goals of José Vasconcelos, the founder of the SEP in 1921, of amalgamating all

[64] In English, Minor works, discussions and speeches

peoples into the Hispanic mold of being "Mexican" that would be revealed in the wake of the Mexican Revolution:

> Another social influence of the highest importance that can result from this fusion of all the students in a single school is to rapidly erase all distinctions of race and origin among Mexicans, educating all in the same way and in the same establishment. By this means there will be created ties of intimate fraternity between all students which will promote new links between families, which is the only means of achieving the elimination of the disastrous divisions of race.[65] (*Biblioteca Digital - Vista Completa Del Registro*, n.d., p. 65)

The above passage of Barreda's echos a quintessential Mexican concept seen that does indeed anticipate the twentieth century – the concept that race doesn't exist, that the population is one of "Mexicans" that completely discounts race. Unfortunately, as expressed by Barreda, the "erasure" of "origins" implied a covert one-language policy of education taking place only in Spanish. Of course, the schools were centralized in Mexico City, from early colonial days the bastion of the Spanish language. The National High School had an inflexible schedule of classes with an orientation towards science that were taught exclusively in Spanish. In speaking of the notion of the modern nation-state, Irujo and Miglio say that "Unity is only possible if there are no language or cultural differences between citizens" (2013b, p. 15). Miglio (2013, p. 64) adds "Clearly a certain degree of legal representation (officiality or co-officiality) is the only way to avoid further attrition or at least to limit the damages for minority languages." As was stated at the beginning of this section,

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[65] The original Spanish, Otra influencia social de la más alta importancia que podrá sacarse de esta fusion de todos los alumnos en una sola escuela, será la de borrar rápidamente toda distincion de razas y de orígenes entre los mexicanos, educándolos á todos de una misma manera y en un mismo establecmiento, con lo cual se crearán lazos de fraternidad íntima entre todos ellos, y se promoverán nuevos enlaces de familias; único medio con que podrán llegar á extinguirse las funestas divisiones de razas.

however, the Mexican constitutions of the nineteenth century completely ignored original languages, cultures, and peoples. Apparently, the idea as expressed, for example typically by Barreda above, was to declare everyone "Mexican" by ignoring and erasing differences of culture, race, and language.

**2.4 Indigenous Peoples during the Mexican Revolution**

To set the stage for the post-revolution political environment and resulting federal school policy that had such a deleterious impact on original languages, a brief summary of the Mexican revolution must be understood including the participation of original peoples. President Porfirio Díaz had been in uninterrupted power as the president for 33 years starting in 1877 until the Mexican revolution erupted in 1910. The armed-conflict phase of the revolution lasted about a decade. The initial reasons for the revolution were calls for land reform in the face of the continued feudal-like system of powerful owners of vast tracts of land, while coincidentally there were many people living in poverty. Also ostensibly involved in the initial reasons for the revolution was the blatant disregard for the 1857 Mexican constitution on the part of President Díaz, with article 78 of that constitution stating that the president "shall serve six years and shall never be reelected". Although announcing in 1908 that he would retire, Porfirio Díaz subsequently provoked a crisis by announcing he would not retire and at the same time had rival presidential candidate, Francisco I. Madero, jailed prior to the 1910 election. These events provided the spark that ignited the revolution. Francisco I. Madero managed to publish his Plan of San Luis Potosí which called for the nullification of the election and proclaimed a provisional government to replace the Porfirio Díaz administration. Francisco I. Madero did become president, winning the election in October 1911, but Victoriano Huerta, a high ranking general, took the presidency by coup

d'état in February 1913 and shortly thereafter Madero was assassinated. The US Ambassador to Mexico at the time, Henry Lane Wilson, was also implicated in support of the coup. The Huerta administration heavily focused on militarization of the country, but Huerta's presidency was likewise short-lived as he resigned in July 1914 due to the continued successes of the rebel generals Álvaro Obregón and Francisco (Pancho) Villa. In spite of the bloodshed up until this juncture in the revolution, the bloodiest fighting occurred after 1914 when the various revolutionary factions started fighting amongst themselves; the eventually victorious Constitutionalists led by Venustiano Carranza, the Villistas led by Pancho Villa, and the Zapatistas led by Emiliano Zapata. By the end of the revolution, the country was in a shambles and according to McCaa, quoting Gamio, (2003, p. 371) the actual number of "disappeared" people was about two million out of a population of 15 million, or about 13% of the population; 550,000 battle casualties, 700,000 immigrating to the US, with lost births being the remainder.

At the time of the beginning of the revolution, 1910, according to the national census, about 30% of the Mexican population spoke an indigenous language. The anthropologist Manuel Gamio, using cultural criteria (not language), estimated the indigenous population at two thirds of the population, or double the official census figure (1916, pp. 9, 171–181). Of course, the definition of "indigenous" is somewhat subjective. Regardless of whichever figure is more accurate, obviously indigenous peoples participated in the revolution simply due to their sheer numbers. According to Knight "Plenty of Indians had fought [in the revolution], but not qua Indians (the same could be said, for example, of Catholics, or even of women)" (1990, sec. The "Reality" of Race, para. 12). However, there was a complete lack of "Indian policy" during the revolution, not even a single plank in the political platforms of

any of the warring factions' policies or proposals that specifically addressed original peoples and languages. The embodiment of this attitude is enshrined in the Mexican constitutions of the time including the 1917 revolutionary constitution which considered all Mexicans to be citizens of Mexico and did not recognize race, ethnicity, or language. And although there were important demands for agrarian reform from the likes of Emiliano Zapata, it was not expressly an indigenous issue, it was a social justice issue for peasants and involved radical land-use policy, which certainly involved indigenous peoples, however obliquely. Zapata's campaign was for campesinos, not indigenous peoples, and not expressly for particular communities that associated themselves with an original language.

One exception to the absence of an "Indian plank" in any of the competing factions were the Yaquis of Sonora, who had been horribly persecuted during the Porfiriato because they did not want to assimilate into mainstream mestizo culture and they did not want to join the Mexican nation-state. This can readily be seen in the crusade against the Yaqui in Sonora, which was carried out so aggressively that any Yaqui was declared a belligerent on sight and deported to the Yucatan henequen plantations (Hu-Dehart, 1974, p. 83), if not murdered. Lázaro Cárdenas, the leader of the winning Constitutionalist faction, who was from Sonora and purportedly spoke some Yaqui, managed to recruit some Yaquis into the Constitutionalist army by promising them that their ancestral lands would be returned to them after the revolution. Tellingly and grievously, the promise of Cárdenas was not kept by any of the federal governments that followed the revolution, including his own administration of 1934 - 1940.

In the aftermath of the revolution, in retrospect and hindsight, the revolution was proclaimed to be original peoples answer to the abuses of the Porfiriato and the past. The

resulting *indigenismo*, or a glorification of the distant past while planning to assimilate original peoples into the modern nation-state, was a concept and policy that did not arise from any indigenous group. Original peoples did not participate in its design or creation, nor did original communities demand it. *Indigenismo*, just like revolutionary anticlericism, came from elites in Mexico City and not from any grassroots support. The political elites thought that original languages should die for the sake of unifying the Mexican nation-state (echoing Spanish colonial policy). Knight makes the pertinent point that the revolution resulted in an *official* proclamation of the elimination of racial prejudice against original peoples, and even the superiority of original peoples (enshrined in *indigenismo*), while in practice prejudice was alive and well (1990, sec. Postrevolutionary Race Relations, para. 11), not only often expressed in attitudes, but in policies as well.

**2.5 The Revolutionary Rural Schools**

As a consequence of the revolution and its disturbing events, the central government in Mexico City seriously undertook policies of nation-building throughout the entire Mexican republic. One of the policy decisions at the federal level was the founding of the Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP) that took place in 1921 following a federal congressional lobbying campaign for its establishment by José Vasconcelos, author of the book *The Cosmic Race*, and the SEP's first director. The SEP subsequently undertook a systematic program of creating rural schools throughout the entire country, something that no central Mexican government had previously undertaken in earnest.

Language changes usually occur over multiple generations, so to discern the causes of the current state of language loss in Mexico one must turn to history. One of the most significant factors contributing to the erosion of original languages in the twentieth century

were the rural schools that were planned and built between 1920 and 1940. Even though the Mexican revolutionary governments during that period incorporated effulgent pro-indigenous rhetoric into their policies, and incidentally into some of the most famous murals of the time, the rural schools project ultimately reflects the revolutionary governments' inability to imagine a place or role for indigenous groups and languages within the nation's future. The federal government not only considered original languages disposable, but actually considered them anti-national and actively sought, through the rural schools project, to absorb indigenous peoples and languages into the Spanish-speaking mestizo mainstream. Mesegeur Galván, in her anthropology dissertation about UVI – Grandes Montañas in Veracruz, devoted an entire chapter section to the past sins of Mexican anthropology (2012), which included such important figures as the anthropologist Manuel Gamio, who thought applied anthropology should be used to enable the assimilation of indigenous peoples into the mestizo mainstream by making an attractive proposition to original communities to trade cultures and languages in order to have a "better" life, which is called by some authors ethnophagy as mentioned in chapter1.

Lewis, in a work devoted to the rural schools and their effect in Chiapas, writes:

> As is only natural, Spanish would be the only language in the "melting pot" of education in Mexico. In this, the *indigenistas* of the SEP followed the example of their Porfirian predecessors. Justo Sierra had maintained that the destruction of indigenous languages was a necessary step toward national integration. More so, the educators of the SEP were afraid that the bilingual teachers would turn into "indios"[66]. (Lewis, 2015, p. 102).

[66] In original Spanish, Como es natural, el español sería la única lengua en el «crisol» de la educación en México. En esto, los indigenistas de la SEP seguían el ejemplo de sus predecesores porfirianos. Justo Sierra

In the preceding Lewis quote, the fear that the bilingual teachers would revert to being *indios* is far-reaching in its implication. It borders on something akin to xenophobia as there was little chance of indigenous languages and cultures being spread and enlarged upon considering the thinking summarized in the citation and what had been going on over the previous few decades, which was continued by the SEP. Justo Sierra is has the honor of being recognized as founding the university that is now called UNAM in Mexico City, the best university in Latin America[67], but he also thought indigenous languages should be destroyed. The reference to *indigenistas* is an oblique reference to Gamio, a well-known Mexican anthropologist and student of Franz Boas, who sought policies that would destroy languages and cultures in the name of nation-state building. Summing up Gamio's 1916 vision for Mexico in his well-known book *Forjando patria*:

> Fusion of races, convergence and fusion of manifestations of culture, linguistic unification, and the economic equilibrium of social elements are concepts that are summarized in this book. They indicate conditions that must be established in the Mexican population, so that it may constitute and incarnate a powerful patria and a coherent and defined nationality. (Gamio, 1916/2010, p. 164)

Although Gamio is professing in the above a desire for the "fusion" of culture (note this is singular not plural), his appetency for "linguistic unification" leaves little doubt that he is espousing a Spanish-only strategy. Within the *indigenismo* of revolutionary times, the *indio*

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había mantenido que la destrucción de las lenguas indígenas era un paso necesario hacia la integración nacional. Esta posición la suscribió en 1916 Gamio en su clásico llamado a la nacionalidad mexicana, Forjando patria. Es más, los pedagogos de la SEP temían que los maestros bilingües se «volvieran indios».

[67] *ARWU World University Rankings 2020 | Academic Ranking of World Universities*, n.d.

was an object of study, not the author of the policy, this paternalistic top-down policy being a recurrent theme during much of the twentieth century.

It is worth pointing out that the use of the public school system as a tool to systematically weaken, suppress and then eradicate non-mainstream languages is not unique to Mexico and is contained in the annals of many other countries. For instance, in France:

> Teachers and public education were the main instrument of repression: despite the fact that systematic linguistic discrimination in France is still a taboo topic, and many people refuse to accept that it ever existed, there are clear proofs of the role of schooling in the demise of regional languages, such as the following official statement by a sub-prefect to public school teachers in Finistere, Brittany, in 1845: "And remember, Gents: you were given your position in order to kill the Breton language." (Irujo & Miglio, 2013a, p. 19)

The revolutionary rural schools of the 1920s and 1930s, with their associated cultural missions, were also given the mandate of teaching solely in Spanish, although there are a lack of smoking guns as in the above citation, probably a result of the taboos instituted by *indigenismo*. With 30% or more of the population being speakers of original languages, with at least some of population monolingual in an original language, this raises the question of what exactly took place in settings where the students did not speak Spanish. The following quote by Rafael Ramírez, who was the SEP Director of Rural Education, regarding the Spanish language and instruction:

> For that I consider it very important that you know to teach Castellano like God commands, that's to say, do not translate into the language of the children (students)[68]. (Ramírez, 1933, pp. 5–6) as cited by Lewis (2015, p. 102).

The above quote of Rafael Ramírez is his exhortation to speak only Spanish "like God commands" and not to use the language of the students, i.e., an original language. This is indeed reminiscent of colonial times not to mention a colonialist, as if we could know that God would favor one language over another, which of course is a tyrannical and extreme example of language ideology. This typical attitude in the revolutionary rural schools of the 1920s and 1930s had a profound effect on indigenous languages in Mexico because of the inherent asymmetry of student-teacher interactions, although this asymmetry is often employed for pedagogic reasons, it can also serve disciplinary and even ideological purposes. According to the Education professor Razfar, "Teachers use repair[69] to regulate the rules of participation as well as disciplinary and ideological purposes." (2005, p. 4).

The presence of the schools in indigenous communities was sometimes contested as the teachers were seen as distrusted political envoys, who were often monolingual Spanish speakers from outside the indigenous community, group, or region. Therefore, the rural schools in indigenous communities had varying levels of success depending on the environment of the local community. Many scholars have evaluated the rural schools project's success in terms of physically building schools, promoting Spanish language

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[68] Por eso yo considero como cosa muy importante el que tú sepas enseñar el castellano como Dios manda, es decir, sin traducirlo al idioma de los niños

[69] Repair is one of the most pervasive discursive practices, which is the practice of either correcting one's own speech ("self-repair"), such as by a student, or the speech of others ("other repair"), such as by a teacher.

literacy, and assimilating indigenous groups into the larger culture. Few evaluations, however, have actually looked at the effect of these schools on original languages and cultures. The aftereffect of the great melting pot of the rural schools resulted in a loss of indigenous cultural identity and a continual decline across generations in the number of speakers of original languages.[70] As a concrete example in the introduction of the previous chapter, the impact the schools had on language and cultural identity among the Mazahua people was reviewed in terms of some prior research. While obviously the rural schools were not the only factor in the erosion of original languages and cultures in Mexico, the timing of the rapid decline in linguistic diversity is striking.

### *2.5.1 The Inspiration Behind the Secretaría de Educación Pública*

In order to understand the revolutionary ideology behind the rural schools project and the schools' effect on indigenous culture, one must first look at the attitudes toward and the state of indigenous groups under the preceding dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz. Although Porfirio Díaz came from Oaxaca, a state with a high percentage of indigenous people, and was reportedly indigenous himself, he clearly identified more with white Europeans than with his indigenous heritage. As is often the case in countries with a colonial or slavery past, this can be seen in his portraits over the course of his dictatorship, which portray him with a whiter and whiter complexion. According to the Latin American historian Alan Knight:

[70] The Chiapas Zapatista rebellion that started in 1993 shows that, even today, there are contested relationships between indigenous peoples and the federal government and by proxy Mexican society.

> Upwardly mobile individuals were "whitened": the dictator Díaz ("an almost pure Mixtec" Indian, according to one historian) was, to a contemporary, "of supposed [sic] only one-eighth Indian blood" and, in fact, "probably all white." Social mobility thus created an optical illusion, in Mexico as elsewhere in Latin America. (1990, sec. The "Reality" of Race, para. 2)

The decades-long rule of Porfirio Diaz, the *Porfiriato*, placed an emphasis on positivistic economic growth, which resulted in the dispossession of indigenous lands and the conversion of indigenous people into a supply of cheap manual labor. In mainstream society and amongst the ruling elites, the Spanish language was the only nationally recognized language and was the language of power and prestige. Sociolinguistically, the original languages were labeled as "dialects"[71] and denigrated, as if to say they were not "real" or "complete" languages simply because they were not of European origin. There were few schools at the time that served the monolingual or near monolingual indigenous groups which were still sizeable. In the republic as a whole, the literacy rate was low, even by nineteenth century standards, and although education budgets increased significantly, especially at the provincial level, between 1895 and 1910, "national literacy rates improved only modestly from 14.4 per cent to 19.7 per cent between 1895 and 1910" (Gonzales, 2007, p. 526). For indigenous groups it was undoubtedly lower.

After the end of the armed conflict phase of the revolution and using the 1917 constitution as a loose blueprint, there was a radical social movement that proceeded top-down from the new ruling elites at the federal level and that shaped the government's vision

[71] This is still true today.

of public education and educational policies during the period. One of the architects of the revolutionary rural schools project was its first director, José Vasconcelos. Vasconcelos, an energetic administrator of the SEP for the first three years of its existence, from 1921-1924, expressed his inspiration for the rural schools project in *The Cosmic Race* (Vasconcelos, 1997). *The Cosmic Race* delivered the message that the mestizo individual represented the best of European and indigenous peoples and that racial mixing was continuous in the modern world. On the surface, the concept of "the cosmic race" appeared to reject Porfirian era racism since it put *mestizaje* on a pedestal, albeit in a non-scientific, philosophical set of personal musings. It was an attempt to define a Mexican-ness that encompassed a shared racial, cultural, and linguistic background, in spite of the fact that Mesoamerica had never enjoyed such homogeneity. The book did not, however, contain a message of hope or validation of indigenous cultures and languages since the notion of the "cosmic race" sought to fold indigenous peoples into the Spanish speaking mestizo mainstream at the expense of original languages and cultures. In spite of the chaotic and embryonic state of post-revolutionary Mexico, Vasconcelos was able to organize the rural schools project, which was often staffed by zealous teachers who were sent out on "cultural missions" akin to the old Spanish missionaries' crusade to proselytize the Indians.

### *2.5.2 Rural Schools Project Formation*

Rafael Ramirez, the head of the rural schools under José Vasconcelos, wrote in 1930, "The rural school of Mexico is revolutionary in its origin, as it is also in its structure and methods of work. It works deeply, tenaciously and constantly for the cultural, social and economic *rehabilitation* of the *peasant*" (Ramírez, 1931, p. 23) (italics mine). The word "rehabilitation" shows the paternalistic thinking of one of the highest-ranking members of the

rural schools project, in other words, in his view the deficient peasant needs to be restored to a useful member of society. His use of the word "peasant" also shows the official policy of making no distinction between a poor rural mestizo and an indigenous person. As was previously noted, this distinction is a difficult and somewhat subjective one to make given the wide variation in the different estimates of size of the indigenous population. However, in regard to language preservation this distinction is critical. According to Savannah:

> Vasconcelos includes components such as classes on nutrition, hygiene, and acceptable cultural practices that are reminiscent of Spanish missionary principles, which suggest that "heathen" people can achieve spiritual redemption through instruction in living a proper religious life. (2013, p. 78)

However the "religious life" in this case was not Catholicism, but rather the wisdom of the paternalistic federal rural schools program.

Even though Ramirez confidently proclaims his own department's unified and selfless service, there had been a debate at the highest ranks of the revolutionary government over how indigenous peoples should fit into federal school policy. Vasconcelos thought that indigenous peoples were not biologically inferior to mestizos; rather he believed that they were in a deprived economic state due to abuse and ignorance and that those things could be ameliorated through education. He further reasoned that there should be no special treatment of any particular indigenous group on the grounds that it would be exclusionary and not inclusionary and therefore contrary to his vision of nation-state building through socialist education, i.e., he was pro-assimilation and against support of regional languages. Previously, popular artists like Dr. Atl had made a cult of *indigenismo* and promoted the idea that foreign European influences should be eradicated because they were deleterious to

"pure" indigenous peoples. As idealistic as this sounds, it is again ultimately making indigenous peoples the object of study by Mexico City elites. Ultimately, however, Vasconcelos won the argument within the federal government and implemented an almost completely monolingual, mestizo and Mexico City inspired rural schools project. The top-heavy federal program, although proclaiming the rhetoric of *indigenismo*, in practice often treated the indigenous peoples paternalistically and more like children who were in need of basic education than of equal citizens. At a time when print material was out of the reach of the rural poor, Vasconcelos sought to place European classical literature in the schools, including such works as by Plato, in order to bring "culture" to the masses. Thus, the early SEP delivered "culture" in the form of European classical literature without regard to indigenous culture or needs.

In his autobiography, *A Mexican Ulysses*, Vasconcelos[72], speaking of his years as the director of the SEP (1921 – 1924), makes the following comments:

> I also set up auxiliary and provisional departments, to supervise teachers who would follow closely the methods of the Catholic missionaries of the Colony among Indians who still do not know Spanish, and to attack illiteracy in densely populated Spanish-speaking areas. Deliberately, I insisted that the Indian Department should have no other purpose than to prepare the native to enter the common school by giving him the fundamental tools in Spanish, since I proposed to go contrary to the North American Protestant practice of

[72] José Vasconcelos died in 1958 in Mexico City.

> approaching the problem of teaching the native as something special and separate from the rest of the population. (1963, p. 162)

Thereupon, the one-language, one-nation, one people (mainstream mestizo) policy was adopted in 1921 and would be in effect for most of the remainder of the twentieth century. Besides parroting the Mexican constitutions that did not recognize race or culture, during this period the percentage of original language speakers dropped to 7.1% of the population according to the 2000 census (Instituto de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), n.d.). According to the sociologist Hamel (2008, p. 1), Mexico was, in all of Latin America, the most vertical, centralized, and all-embracing example of nation-building, however, it did not achieve its goal of creating a homogenous nation seeing as that Mexico recently numerically had the highest indigenous population[73] in Latin America. Summing up, the net result of colonialism that continued on within the revolutionary governments' nation-state building resulted in a stigmatization of indigenous peoples in Mexico that persists to this day.

### *2.5.3 Outcome of the Rural Schools Project*

Post-revolutionary Mexico was an extremely varied landscape with more than 60 original languages spoken by at least 30% of the population. In some areas, particularly areas where the indigenous population had a history of close interaction with the mestizo mainstream, the schools were well-received. According to Elsie Rockwell, in Tlaxcala, a community centrally located in the middle of the country with a long history of contact with the mestizo mainstream, the missionary teachers from Mexico City were welcomed because

[73] In the case of Mexico, the number of indigenous people is self-reported on official census. For example, Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), 2009.

the establishment of a federally funded school was seen as progress. Her thorough evaluation of primary sources, including local letters and communication between different members of the community, shows how the new rural schools could be successful given the right local conditions. As a consequence of the historic close contact with the mestizo mainstream, she was mostly writing about poor *campesinos* and only partially about peoples who spoke an original language.

Stephen E. Lewis, in a study dedicated to the "Indian Problem", 1920-1940, argues that in areas where the indigenous groups were less connected to the mestizo community and had less contact with the Spanish language, the rural schools often failed. In the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries, indigenous communities at times were virtually monolingual pockets of isolated populations, which we will see confirmed in the qualitative interviews. The school's representatives would sometimes spar with the communities instead of negotiating with them. Lewis states

> Hampered by an official Spanish-only language policy, and unable to control some of its teachers and live down its own urban, Western bias, the SEP had little to offer most indigenous people. Triumphant SEP proclamations could barely mask the failure of the missionaries and rural schools in indigenous Mexico. (2006, p. 181)

Lewis, using both primary and secondary sources, notes that prior to the Cárdenas years (the Cárdenas administration was in the years 1934 – 1940), the schools were primarily cultural and linguistic efforts. After 1934, however, they attempted to tackle economic and political issues by portraying indigenous groups as actors in a socialist class struggle. The SEP had a particularly hard time in highland Chiapas, where the local economy had been built on the

backs of the Maya which had a strong tradition of maintaining their culture and language. The SEP's education inspector, Manuel Castellanos, in his initial report about highland Chiapas in 1935 writes:

> Until now the Indian problem remains intact and irresolute…which is shameful for our country, and represents a negation of revolutionary principles. Federal education has done nothing to incorporate the Indian into civilization (Lewis, 2006, p. 186)

In the above citation, apparently Castellanos is equating civilization with the Mestizo mainstream, and by implication the lack of civilization with the indigenous of Chiapas. With the Chiapas Maya there was also a major roadblock in the form of mestizo resistance to change as it represented not only a cultural, but an economic, shift. Castellanos attacked the local mestizo power structure:

> Ladinos[74] responded vigorously, using every means- legal and illegal, passive and violent- at their disposal. Schools were burned to the ground, and teachers were threatened and shot at with such frequency that they were forced to carry firearms and convert their homes into bunkers. (Lewis, 2006, p. 187)

Unfortunately, some critics' evaluations of the rural schools project have relied on an uncritical adoption of Vasconcelos' own criteria for success. Louise Schoenhals writing in 1964 and using primary source data generated by the SEP itself, concluded that the rural schools project was for the most part a successful program that was based on a common

[74] Lewis' use of the term "ladino" is common in Chiapas and Central America to refer to Spanish-speaking mestizos.

community spirit to bring basic education to the peasants in order to integrate them into the Mexican "family". By 1928 more than 3,000 rural schools had been established by the federal government (Schoenhals, 1964, p. 43). Schoenhals does note some problems with local authorities, which are not clearly enunciated or connected with her main thesis. Schoenhals is in the camp of historians who define success as the building of schoolhouses. She provides little evidence of why the schools were successful, offering little beyond a tabulation of the number of new schools constructed during the period and a few reports quoted from within the school programs themselves, even though it has been seen that sometimes those internal reports were far from objective. Finally, her assessment is conspicuous for its failure to mention the indigenous population.

In spite of official proclamations of the end of racism, common attitudes are not so easy to change overnight. Thus, even some of the *maestros rurales* looked down upon their students in the rural schools with an arrogant, big city attitude. The *indigenismo* federal policy was itself a creation of European and American educated elites exemplified by José Vasconcelos. With the possible exception of the Yaqui in the north and the Maya in the south there was no indigenous groundswell requiring the solution to the "Indian problem" which itself was an elitist construct of the central government. In the case of the Yaqui, the efficiency of the repression and the false dealings of the revolutionary federal governments would have made Porfirio Díaz proud and led to a fierce Yaqui resistance to attending school that lasted for many years. But in many of the other sixty odd indigenous groups this overt rebellion or even demands for reform was conspicuously absent. Many of the intellectuals who formulated both the cause and the solution to the indigenous problem were elite Mexican thinkers who had been educated abroad. For instance, Manuel Gamio, an

anthropologist, had been trained under Franz Boas in the United States. As has been seen, the SEP had a rough time in Chiapas from the very start. Not only were the indigenous people hermetically protective of their culture and language, the local economy was so interconnected with the Maya that the business owners and elites were also militantly resistant to the rural schools.

Although starting long after the formation of the SEP (1921), the Chiapas Zapatista rebellion (1994) is worth mentioning. The Zapatista rebellion started as an armed rebellion in Chiapas which was anti-globalization and opposed to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) which commenced armed resistance on January 1, 1994, but quickly became associated with indigenous rights. Nicholas Higgins in his comprehensive monograph about highland Chiapas and the armed Zapatista rebellion looks back through history and sees the rural schools as one more central government effort to co-opt local indigenous power structures using the *Maestros Rurales* as cultural zealots. He did this through research in secondary sources and also face-to-face interviews with Zapatistas. His finding is that the indigenous peoples of Chiapas never were considered equal citizens and suffered different kinds of abuses over the last five centuries. Higgins viewed revolutionary government efforts like the rural schools as political schemes to place central government allies within Maya communities to co-opt the cultural integrity of the Maya and their traditional power structures (Higgins, 2004, p. 106).

Although the rural schools project is considered by some authors to have been a success since schools were physically built and no overt brute force was used, the program was nonetheless oppressive in terms of its attempts to suppress indigenous cultural and linguistic autonomy. The result of the rural schools was an undeniable eroding of cultural

identity and language among the indigenous population as the younger generations were swept into the Spanish language and mestizo society. Today, only about 6% of the population of Mexico speaks an original language, and almost a third of those languages spoken are moribund. Undoubtedly there were and are other factors that have contributed to the erosion of original languages. But placing children in a monolingual school environment that discouraged original language use and surrounding them with paternalistic teachers whose revolutionary zeal aimed at bringing the students into the mestizo mainstream is not the way to preserve heritage languages and indigenous identity.

### 2.6 The Late Twentieth Century, from Paternalism to New Ideological Possibilities

Throughout the twentieth century there were political and ideological changes that set the stage in the late twentieth century for the emergence of the IUs that took place in the early twenty-first century. Starting with the revolutionary governments of the 1920s and 1930s, the SEP was just a single aspect of the monumental social and economic changes that were attempted to varying degrees of success in the aftermath of the Mexican Revolution. Those political projects for change primarily were initiated starting with the presidency of Venustiano Carranza, who entered office in 1917, through the term of Lázaro Cárdenas, who left office in 1940. The rural schools project being one of the programs that would unequivocally have a long-term deleterious impact on the health of original languages and cultures as a consequence of its Spanish-only emphasis and its mono-cultural mestizo mainstream notion of "inclusion" and nation-state building. As was seen in the previous sections concerning the rural schools, the SEP's original idea of "inclusion", beginning a hundred years ago, was more akin to the contemporary notion of "assimilation" and even "linguistic rights abuses".

Venustiano Carranza, the general in charge of the constitutionalist army that prevailed in the revolution, was the first elected president under the then-new 1917 constitution. However, in 1920 there was a coup against him lead by other revolutionary generals, notably Plutarco Elías Calles and Álvaro Obregón, that resulted in his assassination in the state of Puebla while trying to flee from Mexico City. Subsequently, Obregón won the 1920 presidential election and served as president from 1920 to 1924. Following the term of Obregón, Plutarco Elías Calles won the presidential election of 1924 and served from 1924 to 1928. Calles vigorously implemented the 1917 constitution's anti-clerical provisions, severely reducing the number of priests, nuns, and monks in Mexico. This resulted in a bloody Catholic uprising known as the *Cristeros* war, 1926-1929. According to Julia Young, professor of history at the Catholic University of America, regarding the *Cristeros* war there were around one hundred thousand casualties:

> Although there were outbreaks of violence throughout Mexico, the fighting was most intense in the densely populated, agriculturally productive west-central region, which included the states of Jalisco, Guanajuato, Michoacán, and others. As a result, the conflict ravaged the Mexican heartland, destroying villages, disrupting agriculture, and claiming the lives of an estimated hundred thousand people. (2015, p. 6)

Starting in 1928 and continuing until today, the presidential term became 6 years, known as the *sexenio*. Obregón came back and ran again and won the 1928 election, but was assassinated by a Catholic fanatic. This resulted in Calles founding the *Partido Nacional Revolucionario* (PNR) which, after two name changes, became the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI) that had an uninterrupted grip on the presidency and congress from 1929 until 2000. The 1928 - 1934 presidential term was filled by three different presidents and it is widely considered that Calles yielded a great controlling influence on them during those

years (Clayton et al., 2017, p. 361). The 1934 election was won by Lázaro Cárdenas who eventually exiled Calles in 1936. Lázaro Cárdenas distributed twice as much communal *ejido* land to communities and *campesinos* as all his predecessors combined (Weston, 1983, p. 387), although Carranza had previously ordered the land-reform leader Emiliano Zapata assassinated in 1919 (Jowett & Quesada, 2006, p. 9). In 1938, in perhaps the most notable nationalization, Cárdenas nationalized the petroleum industry via expropriation and founded Pemex, *Petroleos Mexicanos* (Clayton et al., 2017, p. 367).

All of the aforementioned events that occurred in the two decades after the revolution were instigated by elites in Mexico City, largely men who had been revolutionary generals. It must be noted that no indigenous peoples were explicitly involved in, or even consulted, before the programs were instituted, but undoubtedly these massive social policies had a great impact on indigenous peoples. The *Cristeros* war assuredly had indigenous people in its ranks due to the size of the rebellion and the significant indigenous populations in the states most involved in the fighting. Moreover, the land redistribution that created thousands of *ejidos* ostensibly helped indigenous peoples. But as in virtually all policies and actions of the time, neither the *Cristeros* war nor the redistribution of land were explicitly aimed at indigenous communities, it is better said that indigenous peoples were invisible during this time, except for paternalistic programs like the rural schools, which themselves were overtly intended for all rural populations and *campesinos*.

Shifting attention from the political arena to the intellectual, continuously throughout the course of the twentieth century there was an evolution in thinking in anthropology and then latter in the century slowly in political and educational thinking that would have a profound impact on indigenous peoples and cultures and the government's relationship to

them. In some of the early decades of the century, as has been noted, the driving ideas were assimilation and elimination of original languages, always couched in terms of inclusion and *indigenismo*. This attitude eventually, in the last few decades of the twentieth century, evolved into something quite different and resulted in a demand for greater recognition and autonomy in indigenous regions. An excellent, yet radical, example is the armed Zapatista uprising that overtly commenced in 1994. This and other events were inaugurated in the context of a nascent linguistic anthropology and awareness early in the century that evolved and was reinforced in the later part of the century when the attendant discipline of sociolinguistics was born.

### *2.6.1 The Birth of Sociolinguistics and Evolving Language Ideologies*

Starting from early in the twentieth century, the general idea of language ideology received a boost when the anthropologist Franz Boas published his *Handbook of North American Indian Languages* (1911) which itself is a linguistic publication of language documentation, but in the introduction, Boas wrote concerning the relationship between language, race, and customs, "An attempt to correlate the numerous classifications [of language, race, and customs] that have been proposed shows clearly a condition of utter confusion and contradiction." (1911b, p. 7). Later in the introduction he wrote:

> We recognize thus that every classification of mankind must be more or less artificial, according to the point of view selected, and here, even more than in the domain of biology, we find that classification can only be a substitute for the genesis and history of the now existing types. (1911b, p. 14)

Boas is expressing a relativistic viewpoint almost explicitly stating the importance of ideology quite different from the hierarchical constructions common 100 years ago. In his *Mind of Primitive Man* (1938), Boas had begun the deconstruction of the myth that the White

race is superior to other races. Near the end of his life, writing in the 1938 revised edition, Boas stated:

> I may perhaps restate in briefest form the errors which underlie the theory that racial descent determines mental and social behavior. The term race, as applied to human types, is vague. … Investigations of morphological traits show that the extreme genetic lines represented in a so-called pure population are so different, that if found in different localities they would be counted as separate races,… (1938, p. 254)

Boas is engaged here in deconstructing and questioning the then popular beliefs and even "scientific" beliefs about the term "race" by claiming the concepts were vague and arbitrary.

In more recent decades, sociolinguistics has only become a significant discipline in the United States since the 1960s and 1970s, however, in a 1929 article the linguistic anthropologist Edward Sapir wrote:

> For the more fundamental problems of the student of human culture, therefore, a knowledge of linguistic mechanisms and historical developments is certain to become more and more important as our analysis of social behavior becomes more refined. From this standpoint we may think of language as the symbolic guide to culture. (1929, p. 210)

Sapir was anticipating the link between linguistics and other social sciences such as anthropology and sociology whereby language becomes a legitimate component of social and cultural studies. He was, in a sense, anticipating sociolinguistics. Minderhout, an anthropologist, writing in 1974, states:

> While the term sociolinguistics has been in use for quite a while, sociolinguistics as a separate area of study is generally accepted to have begun with William Labov' s 1966 publication, The Social Stratification of English in New York City. (1974, p. 168)

The cited study of New York City English is in a well-known, groundbreaking study in the area of sociolinguistics, namely in the subfield of dialectology. In the introduction to the first edition of the linguist Labov's book published in 1966, he wrote that if the term *sociolinguistics* means the use of community speech data to solve problems in "linguistic theory", then the term applies to his research. However, he then went on to say:

> But sociolinguistics [the term] is more frequently used to suggest a new interdisciplinary field – the comprehensive description of the relations of language and society. This seems to me an unfortunate notion, foreshadowing a long series of purely descriptive studies with little bearing on the central theoretical problems of linguistics or of sociology. (2006, p. viii)

Demonstrating that, although considered a pioneer in American sociolinguistics, in 1966 he preferably saw it as a tool to obtain and use community speech data to solve linguistic academic and theoretical questions. Although in the preface to the second addition, published 40 years later in 2006, Labov writes:

> It [his book quoted above from 1966] also introduced a number of procedures that were new to linguistic studies: the creation of a representative sample; the sociolinguistic interview and the control of style shifting within it; subjective reaction tests to measure the effect of particular linguistic variables; self-report and linguistic insecurity tests. (2006, p. xi)

In this more recent passage Labov is acknowledging the importance and newness (at the time) of the sociolinguistic (qualitative) interview and subjective reactions. This has in contemporary times emerged as a large subfield in sociolinguistics.

Dell Hymes, also one of the foundational sociolinguists of the late twentieth century, wrote about the relationship between sociolinguists and other social sciences, such as sociology and anthropology:

> As a problem area, sociolinguistics is not likely to become the possession of any one discipline, and it may indeed be the case that it will emerge as a generically social-science mode of linguistic description and explanation, without respect to individual disciplines. (2001, p. 80)

Gumperz and Cook-Gumperz, additionally questioned the distinction between linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics:

> … the study of language, culture, and society has, and always will have, multiple disciplinary roots. In this commentary, we argue that what we may now regard as two traditions, sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology, are in fact historically interrelated approaches. This raises the question as to whether we should really draw a distinction between the two at all. (2008, p. 532)

They go on to draw some distinctions between the two disciplines, noting, for example, that anthropology has often focused on small, remote cultures whereas sociolinguists often focuses on mainstream western cultures (such as Labov studying English varieties in New York City). Also in this passage, Gumperz is questioning whether there is a significant difference between the *socio* side of sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology, since, for example, the herein sociolinguistic approach has as the emphasis the cultural and societal reality of language ideologies and how the intercultural universities are affecting them. On the other hand, the dialectology of Labov is an example of a sociolinguistic discipline more on the linguistic side of sociolinguistics, focusing more on such topics as the phonetics and phonology of different dialects.

Recently, Kroskrity in his *Some Recent Trends in the Linguistic Anthropology of Native North America* (2016), while curiously disregarding that Mexico is geographically part of North America, describes the interlocking relationship between language ideologies and linguistic anthropology over the last few decades. Linguistic anthropology, however,

usually highlights a more community and culture oriented emphasis including such concepts as identity and issues such as racism in its studies.

## 2.7 Reversing Assimilationist Policy

### *2.7.1 An Overview of SEP Policy in Recent Decades*

The magnitude of change cannot be overstated when discussing language policy for public education that started in the 1970s, a slow trickle at first that had profound implications in comparison to the preceding SEP policy of assimilation and one language that had existed continuously since the SEP's founding in 1921. During the 1970s, the SEP began to slowly replace the policy of assimilation and integration with the policy of protecting original languages that eventually led, 20 years later, to the concept and then the reality of the IUs. The SEP has, in recent decades, upheld the policy of intercultural and bilingual schools coexisting alongside the rural schools. In Mexico currently there is a federal system of "bilingual schools" which are primary schools designed to assimilate children into Spanish-speaking culture and in which it is common that teachers speak an original language different from the students. Hamel found that, in general in Mexico, schools serving indigenous students have "…submersion or fast transitional programs which impose Spanish in a subtractive manner and assign no relevant curricular function to the indigenous languages" (2017, p. 396). This is what makes the IUs so different, they are endeavoring to overturn the implementations and effects of these types of policies. Unfortunately, as will be seen in chapter 4, qualitative interviews, just how deficient the bilingual schools can be. The SEP through the CGEIB also has the ambitious responsibility of educating all of Mexican society that original peoples deserve respect in conformance with the principles of interculturality. Again, as will be seen in the qualitative interviews, where several participants, even those

from communities where the majority of residents speak an original language, report a paucity of bilingual schools which, notwithstanding, they maintain are bilingual in name only. Thereupon, the SEP tentatively initiated the intercultural project in policy terms while concurrently having uncertain commitment and insufficient resources for its implementation.

### *2.7.2 Language Ideologies and the Intercultural Universities*

> The colonial era ended two generations ago, but colonialism has not really gone away. Its afterlife has been all too clear in global north-south inequalities; in bloody politics from Timor to Iraq to Rwanda; in critical identity politics where former colonial powers now are homes to former colonial subjects and their children (Errington, 2008, p. 1)

The above quote by the anthropologist Joseph Errington is an acknowledgement that colonial times continue having a profound impact on contemporary thought. This colonial ideology has emerged in the literature of language ideology over the last few decades and evolved into a huge and varied area of inquiry, including educational settings.

Mexico is not alone in the world of former colonies in terms of this lingering colonial mentality, which at times can become politicized into public policy. As was seen earlier in this chapter, the revolutionary rural schools were exhorted to speak Spanish "like God commands", but this kind of attitude is seen in other countries as well, it is pervasive. If we look at the US, one of Mexico's neighbors, this attitude emerged in the 1980s with the English-only movement, which was briefly mentioned in chapter 1, has actually at times been a powerful national-level political force, for example in 1982, Senator S.I. Hayakawa of California introduced an amendment to immigration legislation (S. 2222) in support of English as the official language of the United States.

Hayakawa's amendment stated:

> It is the sense of the Congress that-
>
> (1) the English language is the official language of the United States, and
>
> (2) no language other than the English language is recognized as the official language of the United States. (USEAdmin1, 2016b)

In the speech that Senator Hayakawa gave in support of the amendment he cited language as a "unifying instrument which binds people together" and continued with a biblical reference to Genesis and that God (the colonial connection of language to God) wanted humankind to speak a universal language. Moreover, in the 1980s the organizations *English First* and *U.S. English* were founded to promote English as the official language of the US. This grassroots political movement became known as the English Only movement, or as it self-refers Official English in order to distinguish that there is no objection to other languages being used at home. The term "English Only" is an accurate characterization of the movement as we have seen in previous sections of this chapter since the public restriction of language use tends to enable the dominant language to replace minority languages. The English Only movement also has an anti-immigrant agenda that is hidden by the English Only propaganda that the exclusive use of English in public promotes national unity and more opportunities for immigrants. According to the anthro-political linguist and a central figure in the research of Spanish in the US, A.C. Zentella:

> The human rights of all 32 million Speakers of other languages in the US may be violated by the English-only movement, but the 17 million Speakers of Spanish are the principal target. Blatant Hispanophobia is rampant in the Propaganda of the movement. Spanish, Spanish Speakers, and Latino leaders are characterized as the antithesis of their lofty

English-speaking/US American counterparts. (1997, p. 74)

Although the English Only movement in the US is an example of an explicit political movement with language ideology at its center, often it is taken for granted that national languages are necessary or at least beneficial to the wellbeing of the nation (Blommaert & Verschueren, 1992, p. 358) with Mexico being no exception to this concept.

Language ideology has come to be seen as a bridge between individual communicative activities and sociopolitical and economic considerations of power and social inequalities (Kathryn A. Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994, p. 72). The lens of language ideology lies at the intersection of sociolinguistics, linguistic anthropology, sociology, and the linguistic rights of minority languages. According to Woolard:

> …they [language ideologies] underpin not only linguistic form and use but also the very notion of the person and the social group, as well as such fundamental social institutions as religious ritual, child socialization, gender relations, the nation-state, schooling, and law.. (1998, p. 3)

So the notion of language ideologies touches on many areas of life represented by many academic disciplines, language ideologies connect individual communicative activities to many ideological aspects of life. Within this context, the IUs are designed to play a role in societal change regarding attitudes towards original languages, peoples, the surrounding community, and achieving all this in a manner that is sustainable.

The IUs are a relatively new educational paradigm in Mexico. This new model for schooling represents a redress of the centuries-old practice of privileging Spanish and stigmatizing original languages. During the nearly 200 years of federal educational policy, Mexico has not been at the forefront of linguistic rights. Navarrete-Cazales y Alcántara

Santuario note that even today half of indigenous people in Mexico have not completed primary education (2015, p. 152). This violates article 26 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, which begins "Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory" (*Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 2015). Although this is stating a "right", the use of the word "compulsory" makes it sound more like a duty. Certainly, the government in the Declaration is given the duty to enforce primary education. It is assuredly strong wording, which, in the case of Mexico's indigenous population, is being violated. It is worth noting that Mexico was one of the original signatories to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights when it was enacted in 1948 and yet seven decades later is still not in compliance. However, the Universal Declaration has repeatedly been declared a non-legal, unenforceable declaration (Dolinger, 2016, p. 183), so undoubtedly Mexico is not the only country that has ignored its provisions. World Watch Monitor has reported countries in all regions routinely ignore the declaration[75]. Nevertheless, the lack of access to primary and higher education will also be echoed in chapter 4, where some of the participants in the interviews report that they are the first generation of their family to attend university and that their parents have a limited education, not to mention the scarcity and low quality of bilingual schools.

### *2.7.3 Establishment of the Intercultural Universities*

According to Antonio Muñoz Sedano, a professor of intercultural education, the principles of interculturality are:

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[75] "70 Years since Universal Declaration, Human Rights 'Ignored and Abused All over the World,'" 2018

- The formation and the strengthening in schools and society of the human values of equality, respect, tolerance, pluralism, cooperation and joint responsibility
- Recognition of the personal rights of each student to receive the best education, respecting their personal identity
- Attention to diversity and respect of differences
- No segregation of groups
- Fight against racism and discrimination
- Try to get beyond prejudices and stereotypes
- Active communication and inter-relation between all students (1999)

These elevated objectives were made into the concrete reality of the IUs by their founding which started from a "policy window" or "political opportunity window" involving the then-candidate Vicente Fox's presidential run. Presidential candidate Vicente Fox's campaign in the late nineties[76] occurred during a time when the federal government was balking at the implementation of the San Andrés peace accords that had been reached with the Zapatistas[77] (Haar, 2004, pp. 101–102) and, in fact, the peace accords subsequently were thwarted by never being ratified by congress[78]. During his campaign in the late 1990s,

[76] His party is the Partido Acción Nacional (PAN), center-conservative and pro-business, and he won the 2000 presidential election ushering out 70 years of the post-revolution PRI party

[77] The Zapatista rebellion in Chiapas, Mexico is best known as an armed uprising which commenced January 1, 1994 in protest of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which went into effect that same day. The Zapatistas quickly became associated with indigenous rights.

[78] Although current president Andrés Manuel López Obrador of the leftist Morena Party, founded by himself in 2011 as a social movement, has been reported to be interested in implementing the San Andrés Peace Accords (*AMLO to Implement San Andres Agreements Signed With Zapatistas*, n.d.), in that same article it reports that the Zapatistas announced they did not support him.

candidate Fox made populist campaign statements such as that he could solve the problem of the Zapatista rebellion in Chiapas in 15 minutes (Weiner, 2000). Accordingly, during this "political opportunity window", candidate Fox made a deal with Mazahua activists, promising to build UIEM in exchange for political support (Gorman, 2016, pp. 29, 57).

Coincidently, the policy of the SEP for teaching indigenous peoples in Mexico monolingually in Spanish had come to an end in the late seventies, although throughout the twentieth century the SEP was aware of original languages and sometimes employed bilingual teachers (Skrobot, 2014, p. 265), but with an assimilationist agenda. In 1978 the General Directorate for Indigenous Education (In Spanish, Dirección General de Educación Indígena, henceforth DGEI) was founded as an office within the SEP and signaled the end of Spanish-only instruction by rescinding the "direct Castilianization" policy (Messing & Rockwell, 2006, p. 258). This was historic in its reach, marking the end of 57 years of SEP assimilationist policy (1921 – 1978). In the early 1980s, didactic material started to appear in about twenty original languages, but curiously no indigenous peoples participated in the design of the material (Skrobot, 2014, p. 265), again echoing the theme that the political elites in Mexico City create educational policy.

No discussion of the founding of the IUs would be complete without mentioning the Zapatista rebellion. The historical process of linguistic rights in Mexico was accelerated abruptly by the Zapatista uprising, which started on 1 January 1994. With their communiqué of the same date ("Primera declaración de la selva Lacandona," 1994), the Zapatistas took the astonishing action of literally declaring war on the central government in Mexico City while conducting an armed occupation of San Cristóbal de las Casas, an important city in Chiapas. The first communiqué delivered an anti-globalization and anti-capitalist ideology, but the

Zapatistas quickly melded indigenous culture and language ideology into their platform. The fourth Zapatista communiqué from the Lacandon jungle in January 1996 enumerated several original languages and declared:

> The arrogant want to snuff out the rebellion that their ignorance locates at the dawn of 1994. But the rebellion that today has a dark brown face and true speech, wasn't born today. Before, it spoke with other tongues in different lands. In many mountains and many histories it has travelled, the rebellion against injustice. It has spoken in the language of Nahuatl, Paipai, Kiliwa, Cúcapa, Cochimi, Kumiai, Yuma, Seri, Chontal, Chinantec, Pame, Chichimeca, Otomí, Mazahua, …[79]
>
> ("Cuarta declaración de la selva Lacandona," 1996)

It is worth noting that not all the languages mentioned in the communiqué were specific to Chiapas (where the rebellion took place) thus attempting to unite all the indigenous cultures and languages of Mexico in the cause, including Mazahua, one of the main languages herein. The San Andrés peace accords of February 1996 negotiated between the Zapatistas and the federal government that sought to end the conflict and restore peace to the region by peacefully resolving the Zapatista conflict by mutual agreement were never ratified by the federal legislature, but contained the following:

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[79] Quiere el soberbio apagar una rebeldía que su ignorancia ubica en el amanecer de 1994. Pero la rebeldía que hoy tiene rostro moreno y lengua verdadera, no se nació ahora. Antes habló con otras lenguas y en otras tierras. En muchas montañas y muchas historias ha caminado la rebeldía contra la injusticia. Ha hablado ya en lengua náhuatl, paipai, kiliwa, cúcapa, cochimi, kumiai, yuma, seri, chontal, chinanteco, pame, chichimeca, otomí, mazahua, …

> 3. Subsection 3. Knowledge and respect for indigenous culture. It is necessary to elevate to a constitutional level the rights of all Mexicans to a multicultural education that recognizes, diffuses, and promotes the history, customs, traditions, and, in general, the culture of indigenous peoples, the basis of our national identity.[80] (*Los acuerdos de San Andrés*, 2003, p. 28)

This subsection in particular comes very close to clamoring for an intercultural education for the entire country. Out of frustration with a perceived lack of good faith on the part of the federal government, the Zapatistas started organizing a new form of government based on *caracoles*[81] and a new non-SEP sanctioned school system[82]. In the case of education, Baronnet[83] mentions that the new Zapatista inspired schools were not systematically attended by all the population nor were the school organization meetings attended by everyone, causing a loss of legitimacy (2015, p. 716), however, he also mentions that Mayan languages were, to a certain extent, substituted for Spanish.

In 2001 the SEP paved the way for IUs in its five-year plan for education (2001 – 2006):

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[80] Conocimiento y respeto a la cultura indígena. Se estima necesario elevar a rango constitucional el derecho de todos los mexicanos a una educación pluricultural que reconozca, difunda y promueva la historia, costumbres, tradiciones y, en general, la cultura de los pueblos indígenas, raíz de nuestra identidad nacional

[81] The caracoles are Zapatista affiliated local autonomous governments located in Chiapas and based on citizen-led, democratic councils that operate outside of the conventional Mexican government. Literally, snail or conch shell.

[82] Virtually all schools in Mexico, both public and private, are affiliated with the SEP.

[83] The same as Gunther Dietz, Bruno Baronnet is an investigating profesor at the Instituto de Investigaciones en Educación, Universidad Veracruzana, Campus Sur, Xalapa, México

> In order to increase equitable coverage not only is it necessary to enlarge and diversify the university offering, but also to geographically move it closer to the social groups with the least possibility of access. This must be done in a way that these groups' participation in higher education corresponds more and more to their presence in the overall population, and to achieve excellent quality educational programs for all Mexicans, such that regardless of the institution where each person decides to study they will get an appropriate education[84]. (Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2001, p. 183)

The IU concept and top-level policy was laid out in *Universidad Intercultural Modelo Educativo*, whose first edition was published in 2006 by lead author María de Lourdes Casillas Muñoz, whose job title was Directora de Educación Media Superior y Superior in the office of Coordinación General de Educación Intercultural y Bilingue[85] (CGEIB as noted in chapter 1), which is an office of the SEP and has been in existence only since 2001 (Casillas Muñoz & Santini Villar, 2009; Gullo, 2018). The CGEIB is a strategic office of the SEP and sets the top-level requirements for the IUs (Pública, n.d.-a). The two federal agencies, the DGEI and CGEIB have different missions. The older DGEI "has the mission of ensuring that minority languages are not abandoned as a result of Spanish language dominance in schools" while the newer CGEIB "seeks to make intercultural education available to all Mexican students, not only indigenous ones." (Gellman, 2016, p. 49).

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[84] Para incrementar la cobertura con equidad no sólo es necesario ampliar y diversificar la oferta educativa, sino también acercarla a los grupos sociales con menores posibilidades de acceso de forma tal que su participación en la educación superior corresponda cada vez más a su presencia en el conjunto de la población, y lograr que los programas educativos sean de buena calidad para que todo mexicano, con independencia de la institución en que decida cursar sus estudios, cuente con posibilidades reales de obtener una formación adecuada.

[85] In English, her job title is Director of High School and Higher Education and she worked in the Department of Education's General Coordination for Intercultural and Bilingual Education.

The first of the IUs to open and one of the research sites herein was UIEM. Its opening in 2004 was reported first-hand (Gallegos Ruiz, M. & Larsen, R., 2006). Gallegos and Larsen reports that on opening day, Margarita de la Vega, an Otomí activist and the new dean of language and culture, affirmed the goal that all students would be trilingual: An original language, Spanish, and English. De la Vega went on to say "Their (the students) main goal is to reaffirm their culture of origin" (2006, p. 20), although all the IUs admit three groups from the entire population: indigenous, non-indigenous from the surrounding area, and non-indigenous from the entire country and even the world. At UIEM Mazahua is the main study language and is one of the objects of investigation herein as there is little, if any, research of any substance about the actual state of language ideology there. According to two education professors at UNAM, it is worth noting that the term "intercultural" is used to distance its conceptualization from "bicultural" or "multicultural", highlighting the equal footing of all involved cultures, mainstream mestizo and indigenous (Navarrete-Cazales & Alcántara Santuario, 2015, p. 147).

### *2.7.4 Legal Foundation of the Intercultural Universities*

In January 1992 the Mexican constitution was amended and, for the first time in its history since its initial creation in 1824, the word "indigenous" appeared (Elizondo & Castillo, 1996, p. 59). Article 4 has to do with the rights of individuals. A paragraph was added to Article 4 that recognized the existence of "indigenous" peoples and that they have the right to practice their "customs" and should be given legal consideration, especially in questions of land reform. However, there is no mention made of any kind of federal support or source of funding to continue their "customs". According to Elizondo and Castillo:

> The [constitutional] reform added a new paragraph to Article 4 that recognized the existence of indigenous peoples. The new paragraph grants "cultural rights" to indigenous peoples, allowing them to maintain their forms of social organization and to practice their "customs." The new paragraph also states that the "practices and juridical customs" of indigenous peoples should be taken into account by the legal system and in cases concerning land. (1996, p. 59)

The changes of 1992 were more a gesture of political goodwill than anything substantive since there was no guarantee, enforcement mechanism, or funding (Nava Escudero, 2012, p. 226). Article 2 has to do with the definition of the Mexican state. It was not until 2001 that a profound change occurred in Article 2 granting environmental rights in addition to other rights and responsibilities to indigenous peoples (Nava Escudero, 2012, p. 228). The 2001 changes were possibly more a result of the 1994 Zapatista uprising and the (failed) 1996 San Andrés peace accords than anything else.

Against the backdrop of widespread erosion in original languages in the last one hundred years in Mexico, starting in about the last 4 decades the Mexican federal government began with initial SEP policy changes began the process of the recognition of linguistic rights of indigenous peoples. Beginning with the end of the one language policy of the SEP in the late 1970s and the demands brought by the Zapatista rebellion in Chiapas in the 1990s, Mexico now ostensibly recognizes its multicultural composition. During the same time, the Mexican biospheres were initially created and a new environmental awareness took hold in the government and in society at large, prompting the IUs to also share a concern for sustainable development. It is during this time, and only in the last 25 years, that the concept of the IU was born. Today, there are 12 IUs in Mexico and they have been established on a state-by-state basis with the federal government sometimes paying for the construction of the

physical campus and the state funding their yearly budget, although the formula varies, sometimes year-to-year. Since there are 32 states in Mexico, not all states have an intercultural university.

In the strategic policy-setting *Modelo Educativo* in section V. *Strategic Actions to Create the Intercultural Universities*, which concerns the underlying policy for creating the IUs, is found:

> The petitions [demands from indigenous groups] are generally based in proposals derived from movements articulated by different indigenous peoples who are searching to reclaim their fundamental rights. Such was the case of some key actors in the regions inhabited by the Mazahua and Otomí peoples[86] in Mexico State, who, starting in the decade of the seventies, analyzed how the young members of their communities had faced many obstacles in accessing quality educational opportunities, and particularly the difficulties that they faced in higher education, given that the educational institutions at that level, for the most part, cater to young people in an urban environment who are educated in a context where Spanish is the privileged language of interchange between teacher and student[87]. (Casillas Muñoz & Santini Villar, 2009, p. 133)

[86] There is a footnote here in the *Modelo Educativo* that cites an activist document from 1975 "of limited distribution" and does not provide a reference but only cites the title "Memorias de los Foros de Consulta de las comunidades mazahua- otomí de la región norte del Estado de México, México, 1975".

[87] Las peticiones se han basado generalmente en propuestas derivadas de movimientos articulados de diferentes pueblos indígenas que buscan reivindicar sus derechos fundamentales. Tal fue el caso de algunos actores clave de las regiones ocupadas por los pueblos mazahua y otomí en el Estado de México, que a partir de la década de 1970 analizaron cómo los jóvenes integrantes de sus comunidades habían enfrentado múltiples obstáculos para acceder a servicios educativos de calidad, y particularmente las dificultades que padecían para incorporarse a estudios en el nivel superior, dado que las instituciones educativas de dicho nivel atendían, mayoritariamente, a jóvenes del medio urbano y educados en un contexto en donde el idioma español es la lengua privilegiada de contacto entre docentes y estudiantes.

The above introduction to the section of the *Modelo Educativo* about the strategic creation of the IUs succinctly sums up a major reason and motivation for their creation, activism coupled to a real, demonstrable need to address a human rights issue (lack of educational opportunities, especially higher education). Also within this section of the document, some principal characteristics of IUs are enumerated. As was discussed in section 1.2 about terminology, the very first one states that the word "indigenous" will not appear in the names of the IUs due to its association with segregation and, because of the IU mission, the IUs shall be named using the word "intercultural" (Casillas Muñoz & Santini Villar, 2009, p. 135). Regarding the funding of the IUs, in this section appears "It was taken into account that both the financial contribution from the federal government and from the state government for the case of institutions of higher education[88]…" (Casillas Muñoz & Santini Villar, 2009, p. 137) which goes on to specify the necessary approvals from the SEP and other agencies. The point here is that at the federal level of the CGEIB, there was an assumption of joint financial support from both the federal and state governments. UIEM is perhaps a typical type of IU as its on-going funding is by Mexico State (it was constructed with funds from the federal government and the administration of then-president Vicente Fox during his tenure of 2000 - 2006) and is independent of the traditional autonomous university system. On the other hand, UVI is unusual in that it is incorporated into the traditional, autonomous UV. The *Modelo Educativo* from the federal agency CGEIB is written, as are many things in Mexico, from a top-down, centralized perspective, and, of course, the CGEIB is located in Mexico

[88] Se tomó en cuenta que tanto la aportación financiera de la Federación como la del gobierno estatal para el caso de instituciones de educación superior públicas

City, and the *Modelo* contains "It was proposed to initiate a study in areas near to the location of the new institution to discover the expectations of the groups, potentially demanding, in the communities with a significant proportion of indigenous language speakers"[89] (Casillas Muñoz & Santini Villar, 2009, p. 133). This passage is typical, the centralized apparatus in Mexico City would decide policy, but at the same time it promises to consult with the affected groups prior to making a final decision. In other words, the affected indigenous groups have no autonomy and no final say in the academic program, but they can make suggestions, that is, if the proposed study is actually undertaken.

Focusing on UIEM, in the Gazette of the Government of Mexico State[90] dated 10 December 2003, the first IU in Mexico was created by chapter 1, article 1 of a state legislative decree:

> Article 1. The Intercultural University of Mexico State is hereby created as a decentralized public organization at the state level, with its own legal status and its own budget[91]. (Decreto Que Se Crea El Organismo Público Denominado UIEM, 2003, pt. Article I)

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[89] Se propuso iniciar un proyecto en entidades próximas a la zona en que proyectó la ubicación de la nueva institución, para detectar las expectativas de los grupos potencialmente demandantes en las comunidades con una proporción significativa de hablantes en lenguas indígenas.

[90] In Spanish, Gaceta del Gobierno del Estado de México

[91] Chapter 1, Artículo 1.- Se crea la Universidad lntercultural del Estado de México, como un organismo público descentralizado de carácter estatal, con personalidad jurídica y patrimonio propios. (Decreto del Ejecutivo del Estado por el que se crea el organismo público descentralizado de carácter estatal denominado Universidad Intercultural del Estado de México, 2003, Article 1, p. 3. Available at http://normateca.edugem.gob.mx/normateca/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/DECR_016.pdf, retrieved 07/06/2020).

However, it was not the first indigenous-serving institution. The Autonomous Indigenous University of Mexico[92] in Sinaloa dates back to 1982 (which joined the CGEIB sponsored network in 2005) and the Intercultural Superior Institute Ayuuk[93] in Oaxaca, which is part of the Jesuit school system, opened in 2006. But UIEM was the first of the now 12 IUs built on an expressly intercultural model which usually has the federal and state governments as partners and comes under a federal program of the CGEIB (Again, this is the SEP office that promotes and manages intercultural and bilingual education). It is interesting to note in the above Article 1 that created UIEM that it leaves the university itself to determine and create its own legal environment and management of its budget.

The Mexico State congressional decree that created UIEM gave a mandate of revitalization of regional languages and cultures and the promotion of foreign languages. Concerning Spanish it stated:

> Foster the development of communicative competencies in diverse languages, promoting the revitalization and daily use of the mother tongues[94].

At first glance this section of Article 3 seems to be promoting the Spanish language because that is the mother tongue in much of San Felipe del Progreso. However, the use of the word "revitalization" only makes sense if it is addressing original languages, which principally is Mazahua in San Felipe del Progreso. This section continues:

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[92] In Spanish, Universidad Autónoma Indígena de México

[93] In Spanish, Instituto Superior Intercultural Ayuuk

[94] Propiciar el desarrollo de las competencias comunicativas en diversas lenguas, fomentando la revitalización y el uso cotidiano de la lengua materna […] (ibid Art. 3, III, p. 3).

> […] promoting fluency in a second language, commonly used in communication throughout the national territory and developing the teaching and practice of foreign languages, as a tool to comprehend and fully understand cutting-edge technological processes and promoting a wider communication with the world[95].

This explicit endorsement of "foreign" languages is seen in the IUs mainly as the English language program. At UIEM most students take four years of English, but there is little attention paid to studying Spanish. Most students at UIEM also take four years of an original language, mostly Mazahua but also smaller groups that study Otomí, Matlatzinca, Tlahuica, and Nahuatl. At UVIH most students take a single year of English and there are no classes offered in original languages. The linguistic situation at UVIH is quite different than UIEM in that, whereas at UIEM there are few students native in an original language, at UVIH the majority of students are native in Nahuatl and there are a few students who speak Otomí, Tepehua, Totonaco, and Tének, but these languages are much less common in the student body. Also, UV has just started a program of certifying some of these languages which exempts the student from English classes, or in other words, the second language requirement can be fulfilled with an original language, putting the original language on an equal footing with English. There are no classes where the subject of study is Spanish. At both universities, UIEM and UVIH, the language of instruction is almost universally Spanish.

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[95] […] promoviendo el dominio de una segunda lengua, común a los procesos de comunicación en el territorio nacional y desarrollando la enseñanza y práctica de idiomas extranjeros, como herramienta para comprender y dominar procesos tecnológicos de vanguardia y promover una comunicación amplia con el mundo (ibid).

The state-level decree that created UIEM was promulgated only two years after the major federal constitutional changes that had occurred in 2001. The same political climate affected the constitution of Mexico State, which in 1995 contained the following in Article 5 of the second section which concerned constitutional guarantees and human rights:

> In addition to providing basic education, the State shall promote and attend to all kinds, ways, and levels of education, including beginning, college level and indigenous education considered necessary for the development of the nation; favoring public policies to eradicate illiteracy in Mexico State. The educational system of Mexico State includes rural schools, arts and trades and agricultural schools, special education, indigenous and adult education[96].

This passage seems to indicate that indigenous education is something separate from other forms of education such as rural, arts, trades, agriculture, special, and adult education. This seems oddly out of place in the context of UIEM considering that at UIEM the student body is highly Hispanicized with few students speaking any of the original languages of Mexico State, at least not natively (this will be further discussed in chapters 4 and 5). It begs the question of just who are these "indigenous" students and what exactly is their "need". It enumerates various groups, but only one group is defined by ethnicity/race, i.e., indigenous, which as a category is arguably somewhat vague. At the same time, this passage denies any kind of agency to the different groups and declares that the state will decide what to do in

[96] Además de impartir la educación básica, el Estado promoverá y atenderá todos los tipos, modalidades y niveles educativos incluyendo la educación inicial, superior e indígena considerados necesarios para el desarrollo de la nación; favorecerá políticas públicas para erradicar el analfabetismo en la Entidad. El sistema educativo del Estado contará con escuelas rurales, de artes y oficios y de agricultura, educación especial, educación indígena y educación para adultos. (Gobierno del Estado de México, 1995, p. 8)

regard to these different groups in order to support the national interest, once again the top-down approach to governance. It would appear that the state government could unilaterally close UIEM if it were decided that the national interest would be better served, for example, by the economic savings that would ensue, essentially serving the national interest by keeping "indigenous" people ignorant and uneducated. It is also interesting that this passage includes a statement that public policy has the responsibility and is tasked with the elimination of illiteracy in the state. Of course, without being explicit, this is obviously referring to Spanish-language literacy, it has little to do with the promotion of original language literacy.

It is also worth noting that the IUs are not autonomous like the traditional Mexican universities. For instance, the Autonomous University of Mexico State[97] (UAEM) was founded in 1828 as a literary institute and became autonomous in 1956. Even though the autonomous universities are funded by the state and federal government, the governments have limited ability to monitor or influence the management of the universities. The IUs are not autonomous and do not enjoy this legal protection. In 2010, UIEM collected 90 million pesos (about 7 million USD at the exchange rate then) of which 52 million pesos came in the form of a subsidy, provided for 80% by the federal government and 20% by the state, which is from *datos escolares* from UIEM[98].

In summary, the legal foundation of UIEM comes from the state government and the state government reserves the right to decide what is in the national interest. The state

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[97] In Spanish, Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México (UAEM)

[98] Downloaded from (Universidad Intercultural del Estado de México, 2010).

constitution states that public policy should promote literacy (presumably meaning Spanish-language literacy). The actors at the community level have no agency or means to express what they need or want in an education. Finally, the legal foundation of UIEM provides for the establishment of UIEM, but there is no guarantee that the university continues nor is there a mechanism to ensure that the university is meeting the needs of the region, at least not at the state level.

### *2.7.5 Mission and Vision Statements of the Intercultural Universities*

Presumedly, one of the objectives of mission and vision statements is to project an image of the university as a desirable place to study, thus attracting students, potential educational service providers, and staff, and to promote a favorable impression with the public, but at the same time these statements should be faithful to the charter of the university. In the case of the IUs, the mission and vision statements are written in a way that would tend to attract students who want to remain in the region and who feel a connection to the region, its languages and cultures. As will be seen, both the mission and vision statements of the IUs studied herein repeatedly address the issue of regional languages and cultures and seemingly are concerned less with addressing vocational training and career.

According to Cortés-Sánchez, a professor of entrepreneurship and innovation at the University of Rosario, Bogotá, Colombia, mission and vision statements should answer three questions:

> Their main purpose is to answer three essential questions for any organization: what is our business? what should it be? And, where do we want to be in the future? (2017, p. 7)

UVI's answer to the question "where do we want to be in the future?", which is closely linked to the question "what should our business be?", from its mission statement[99], is "promoting the achievement of a better quality of life with sustainability and strengthening the languages and cultures of the state of Veracruz". The following is UVI's vision statement:

> …which guides its [UVI's] actions towards social, cultural and gender equity, and promotes the value of local knowledge as complementary to scientific knowledge and the promotion of the use of indigenous languages, through innovative, flexible Educational Programs focused on learning.

It has added the concept of equality and access to education based on human rights as a future goal ('towards') and the promotion of local knowledge as coexisting with scientific knowledge, which is a nod to regional and indigenous understandings and knowledges.

On the other hand, the UIEM vision statement states:

> The institution [UIEM] has a Center for Teaching and Research in Language and Culture, which is the body that allows for the recovery, teaching and research of native languages and cultures, as well as the evaluation of their use and the certification of their domain, in order to stimulate their revitalization and maintenance.

Such words as "recovery … of native languages and cultures" and "to stimulate their revitalization and maintenance" are specifically focused on language and culture. Also, the "certification of their domain" refers to certifying an individual's competence in the language, which is the "domain".

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[99] The mission and vision statements of both schools studied are contained in Appendix C.

In the UVI mission statement the forward-looking mission is to carry out:

> …the harmonization of regional, national and global visions, promoting the achievement of a better quality of life through sustainability by strengthening the languages and cultures of the state of Veracruz.

The almost perfunctory focus on "strengthening the languages and cultures of Veracruz" is how the mission statement concludes. The "harmonization" of the regional vision is also an intent to improve linguistic and cultural rights and the social attitudes towards them in the region, and also connect them with the national and global community. Also in the mission statement is the concept of "seeking the dialogue of knowledges" which is often seen in anthropological literature (Boege, 2019; Dietz, 2012c; Dietz & Mateos Cortés, 2011b), which most likely comes from the university's central administration in Xalapa, where anthropologists Shantal Meseguer Galván and Gunter Dietz have worked or currently work. Since they are both former rectors of UVI, they could conceivably have influenced the language used in the mission statement. This concept is one of honoring the original languages and cultures of Veracruz.

The mission statement of UIEM starts with "The training of professionals committed to the economic, social and cultural development of the communities of Mexico State and the country" an ambitious goal of community development, involving several aspects within the state and projecting out to the entire country. It also makes mention of "the training of professional" which is, at least, a verbal acknowledgment that employment and economic considerations are important. It focuses back onto the local communities in its conclusion proposing as a goal to "generate conditions favorable to the self-development of towns" by

disseminating research and knowledge by enabling communication between those several aspects, benefiting local communities.

#### 2.7.5.1 The Objectives of UIEM

Using UIEM as an example IU because it was founded and funded in a prototypical way by the state legislature and federal government, revisiting the Mexico State congressional decree that created UIEM, the first subsection of article 3 mandates the top-level objectives of UIEM:

> Provide high quality educational programs oriented to forming professionals and intellectuals committed to the economic and cultural development in the areas of community, region, and nation, whose activities will contribute to the promotion of a process of revaluation and revitalization of original languages and cultures, as well as the process of the creation of knowledge of these peoples;[100]

This passage is straightforward and coherent except for the use of the incongruous term "these people" which sounds like the politicians in the metropolis speaking in the third person and objectifying the people intended to be served by UIEM. With regard to language and culture, at UIEM the usual four years of Mazahua study is aligned with the mandated objectives of revaluation and revitalization of original languages, at least as best as could be given the situation that UIEM cannot not convert monolingual Spanish-speakers into Mazahua-speakers beyond low-intermediate language capabilities. This implies that language revaluation can certainly take place, but language revitalization must be left as a continuing

[100] Impartir programas educativos de alta calidad orientados a formar profesionales e intelectuales comprometidos con el desarrollo económico y cultural en los ámbitos comunitario, regional y nacional, cuyas actividades contribuyan a promover un proceso de revaloración y revitalización de las lenguas y culturas originarias, así como de los procesos de generación del conocimiento de estos pueblos;

generational question. Also, the Center for Teaching and Research in Language and Culture mentioned previously also supports not only language revaluation and revitalization, but also the cultural aspects of the mandate. If there is one weakness in the mission statement it is that it mentions economic issues only once "The training of professionals committed to the economic, social and cultural development of the communities of Mexico State and the country;…" whereas the nursing program, the communications major, and the sustainable development major might satisfy this mandate, it remains to be seen how knowledge of language and culture contribute economically. As will be seen in the qualitative interviews, graduates are managing to apply all the different majors to their work, at least so far within the first few generations of graduates. On the other hand, the vision statement of UIEM itself does not speak of economic issues at all, however, it does mention international partnerships and subsection III of article 3 of the congressional decree mentions "…developing the teaching and practice of foreign language, as a tool to understand and master cutting edge technological processes.."[101]. In this regard, the usual four years of English at UIEM is aligned with this mandate.

#### 2.7.5.2 The Characteristics of UIEM

Article 4 of the Mexico State congressional decree is largely concerned with the operation of the university, standards for admitting students and selecting instructors, budget management, accreditation, etc., as is much of the rest of the decree. There are a few subsections related to the university's mission. Subsection III states:

[101] …desarrollando la enseñanza y práctica de idiomas extranjeros, como herramienta para comprender y dominar procesos tecnológicos de vanguardia…

> Formulate, evaluate and adapt to the regional characteristics, where appropriate, the study plans and programs, which must be subject to the provisions issued by the General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education.[102]

The reference to the General Coordination of Intercultural Bilingual Education is a reference to the CGEIB, which is the office of the SEP that is charged with making all schools in Mexico intercultural as well as more specifically charged with managing the bilingual schools and intercultural universities. This and the mandate to adapt to regional characteristics is consistent with the mission and vision statement. This is seen in the first sentence of the UIEM mission statement:

> The training of professionals committed to the economic, social and cultural development of the communities of Mexico State and the country; promoting a dialogue of knowledge between the ancestral knowledge and values of indigenous peoples and scientific knowledge.

The reference to the communities of Mexico State and the mention of ancestral knowledge certainly is in harmony with the decree.

Subsection VI addresses issues of language and culture:

> Organize, develop y promote teaching, investigation, and the diffusion of culture and the extension of educational services in the perspective of revaluation, development, and maintenance of languages and cultures.[103]

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[102] Formular, evaluar y adecuar a las características regionales, en su caso, los planes y programas de estudio, mismos que deberán sujetarse a las disposiciones que emita la Coordinación General de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe.

[103] Organizar, desarrollar e impulsar la docencia, la investigación y la difusión de la cultura y extensión de los servicios educativos en la perspectiva de la revalorización, desarrollo y consolidación de las lenguas y culturas.

Once again, the mission and vision statements are consistent with this mandate.

In conclusion, the mission and vision statements are by and large consistent with the state government intended missions of the universities. It must be kept in mind, however, that at UIEM, English and Mazahua are objects of study, they are not the language of instruction. The situation at UVIH is somewhat different, there is only one year of English required. So it could be argued that the language mission of revaluation (ideology) might be better answered and complied with by the academic programs than the language mission of revitalization and maintenance (proficiency in original languages).

### *2.7.6 Some Prior Research on the Intercultural Universities*

Although the IUs have been in existence less than two decades, there is a body of literature extant, a substantial part of which notes shortcomings and limitations of the IUs, while at the same time often recognizing the importance of the IUs as promoters of social equality. Hamel, author of the chapter "Bilingual Education for Indigenous Peoples in Mexico" in *Bilingual and Multilingual Education*, describes how the concept of interculturality replaced the notion of biculturality in the 1990s (2017, p. 401), which antedated the construction of the first IUs but approximately coincided with the preliminary discussion and deal-making for them. Hamel traces the trajectory of the government and legal changes that set the stage for the IUs while noting that the IUs were created as top-down projects without any local community participation (ibid.). Sylvia Schmelkes, as was noted in chapter 1, a former General Coordinator of the CGEIB in Mexico City and a prominent investigator and author on intercultural education, states the mission of the IUs is to right past wrongs and promote social equality, which implies a utopian goal of complete equality (2011, p. 102) and thereupon the question emerges of how much of this aspiration is

attainable or has been attained, not whether complete success or failure can be avowed. While at least one of the IUs in this work, UVIH, has been studied to see what impact it was having in the community in terms of creating a sustainable group of professionals in the community (Bernal Lorenzo, 2015; Méndez Rebolledo, 2012), some studies have been more theoretical in assessing *indigenismo* and its relationship to the IUs (Dietz & Mateos Cortés, 2011b). In the case of Fuentes-Morales (2008), in her dissertation an in-depth qualitative study was made of bilingual schools in Michoacán focusing on school policy and administrators/teachers. She did not study the IUs, possibly because her work was published in 2008 at which time the IUs had only been in existence about five years, but the nearest IU, the Indigenous Intercultural University of Michoacán[104] had only been founded the year before in 2007 (Banks, 2012, p. 1482). Pedota (2011), in his Master's thesis, studied documents and he did not travel to Mexico nor did he conduct interviews in order to describe the IUs. In spite of the title of Skrobot's dissertation, *Las políticas lingüísticas y las actitudes hacia las lenguas indígenas en las escuelas de México*[105], which seems to specifically target language ideology, curiously in over 500 pages she barely devotes a single page to the IUs even though she reports that nine IUs existed at the time of writing (2014, p. 254), which would have included UIEM and UVIH.

The Latin Americanist Lehman, in interviews at five IUs between 2006 and 2009, highlights the gap between the stratospheric ambitions of the IU concept and the reality of

[104] While not directly a part of this work, it is interesting that this school has the term *indígena* in it's name, something against CGEIB policy per the *Modelo Educativo*.

[105] Linguistic Policy and Attitudes towards Indigenous Language in Mexican Schools.

such things as teaching indigenous peoples their "own" language using techniques for teaching adults a second language (2015). At UIEM this is evident as few students are native in Mazahua and most students are monolingual in Spanish, although this is not true at all at UVIH, as will be seen in the following chapters which present the research done for this dissertation. Lehmann manages to describe the IUs in terms of a largely introspective discussion at each university about exactly how to implement and balance interculturality against traditional universities (2013). He cites the *Programa Nacional de Educación*[106] *2001*-2006 (Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2001) and how some of the original IUs were radical constructivist creations, while the IUs have since tended to evolve into a more pragmatic fusion of a traditional university program with a program for indigenous culture and language. This questioning of the effectiveness of the IUs is also echoed by Dietz, who posed the question whether the IUs are empowering indigenous peoples or are mainstreaming multiculturalism (2009, 2012a). On the other hand, much of the critical research recognizes the need for the IUs in the face of the discrimination and assimilationist policies of the twentieth century that still reverberate throughout Mexican societ. Ávila Romero et al. recognizes this need for the IUs, while concluding that the reality is that the IUs were subsumed into traditional universities and subject to outside control from political groups like state governments, the CGEIB, and the SEP (Ávila Romero et al., 2014). These same authors, Ávila Romero et al, in 2016, studying the IU in Chiapas, UNICH[107], concluded that the clash between Western science and indigenous knowledge is too great a barrier to be

[106] National Education Program

[107] In Spanish, Universidad Intercultural de Chiapas

overcome. They did qualitative action research, where they were critical of the IUs as they exist and quoted several students complaining that the concept of interculturality was a chimera. This point of view is echoed by Gorman, who in her political science dissertation concludes that the IUs have become a victim of state-level clientelism[108] (2016). From the SEP at the top level, part of the mission of the IUs is to educate the general public about equality, at the IV Encounter of Intercultural Universities in Xalapa, Veracruz in 2018, speaking at a roundtable, the anthropologist Meseguer, ex-rector of UVI, reaffirmed the mission while noting there was still much work to be done, "Outwardly, it is necessary to work against racism, because our own graduates are victims of it; their titles do not serve them to confront institutional racism and in the IUs we have to insist on doing that"[109]. Restrepo, a Communications professor in Colombia, in studying the intercultural *Centro Indígena de Capacitación Integral* (CIDECI-Unitierra) in Chiapas, concludes that the traditional universities are linked to economic and political projects that are antithetical to indigenous knowledges (Restrepo, 2014). However, the object of her study, CIDECI-Unitierra, is not part of the intercultural university system studied herein. The anthropologist Hernández Loeza concludes that the IUs are limited by the very decrees that have founded them; that those decrees grant control to governmental bodies and result in clientelism, echoing Gorman. Concurrently, Hernández Loeza states that the IUs should not be closed, but rather should be reformulated as more autonomous (Hernández Loeza, 2016). Erdösová,

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[108] Clientelism is the exchange of goods or services for political allegiance, see (Gorman, 2016, p. 14) for an in-depth discussion of the definition of clientelism.

[109] (Instituto de Investigaciones CA de Estudios Interculturales, 2018, p. 21). The original Spanish is, "Hacia afuera falta trabajar contra el racismo, porque nuestros propios egresados son víctimas de él; sus títulos no les sirven para enfrentar el racismo institucional y las UI tenemos que insistir en ello".

a professor of Languages at UAEM in Toluca and who is originally from the Czech Republic, doing fieldwork at UIEM and UNICH, concludes that the IUs, by their vision of including indigenous peoples in the national culture, limits their ability to revitalize regional languages (Erdösová, 2017). The IUs themselves have generated some self-studies, such as the one by Bernal Lorenzo, who herself has doctorate from UV is Language Science, found that the UVI graduates manage to incorporate themselves into the labor market rapidly after graduation but 88% of the graduates make less than 7800 pesos[110] per month with many working month-to-month or other less than ideal conditions (2015). Nuñez Patiño and Alba Villalobos, professors at the Autonomous University of Chiapas, conclude that the government has only paid lip-service to interculturality with the exclusion of indigenous peoples still comprising the mainstream (Nuñez Patiño & Alba Villalobos, 2013, p. 98).

Nonetheless, some researchers strike a more encouraging note, for instance the education researcher Aguirre Mazón, working with the IU in Guerrero, concludes that the IUs are indispensable for making social progress by increasing higher education opportunities in underserved communities (Aguirre Mazón, 2014). Dietz (2012b), who unlike many authors was intimately involved in the day-to-day administration and operation of an IU (UVI), strikes a positive and pragmatic tone of how the IUs are trying to break-out of the *indigenismo* mold to bring meaningful change to language ideology. Dietz and Cortés, while recognizing the bureaucratic, financial, academic, and political problems of having a heterodox notion of "university" and "degrees", along with traditional universities wanting to provide paternalistic outreach programs that reproduce what the IUs seek to overturn

[110] Less than about $500 dollars US at the time of the report in 2015

(2011a), report that UVI is widely supported in the regions where there are campuses (ibid.). Education researchers Franco and McCowan (2020) found UVI to be more innovative and nimble than traditional universities in the pursuit of sustainable development goals while at the same time valuing indigenous cultures and knowledges. Perhaps the most ambitious qualitative research done on the IUs was carried out in Veracruz by UVI itself. The project, called *intersaberes*, resulted in about 15 university degrees awarded to the student researchers that were involved in the project including two doctoral dissertations. Many of these theses were based on ethnographic interviews that had an anthropological or educational emphasis. One of the dissertations has one brief section devoted specifically to language that touches upon language ideology (Meseguer Galván, 2012, p. 363).

Both the qualitative interview guide and the quantitative instrument were adapted from prior work at the IUs. As an example of the paucity of language ideology research in the IUs, the qualitative interview guide was adapted from the Meseguer study of the cultural imaginaries of students at UVI Grandes Montañas. The qualitative interview guide from Meseguer (2012, p. 399) had several sections regarding cultural attitudes and how the community and education is perceived and the interviews were held with students from UVI Grandes Montañas[111], an institution built to serve an indigenous region. However, she did record the participant's maternal language and about one half of the participants were native in Nahuatl, with the other half being native in Spanish. In spite of the high number of Nahuatl speakers, there was no section and, in fact, there are few questions or themes in the

[111] UVI Grandes Montañas is a campus that is a part of UVI. UVI Grandes Montañas is located near Tequila, Veracruz, about 400 km. to the south of UVIH.

interview guide regarding language, let alone language attitudes. For use herein, a section was added to the interview guide concerning these themes of language and language attitudes; the interview guide can be found in Appendix B, with the additional language questions in Bloque III. On the other hand, the quantitative instrument (a questionnaire) was based on Méndez Rebolledo (2012, p. 310), which was a Master's thesis based mainly on the economic success and to a lesser extent the effect on self-image and community relations of the first generation of UVIH students (2005 – 2009)[112]. The adapted questionnaire can be seen in Appendix A which has only minor differences from the original.

This study, while recognizing the contribution of previous research of the IUs in Chiapas, an area where activism is more common and the location of the Zapatista armed uprising, also recognizes that even in UVIH where Nahuatl is widely spoken, the student body is highly Hispanicized. At UIEM, Hispanicization is even more deeply entrenched; few students speak Mazahua natively and most students study Mazahua as an object of study. The prior research perhaps shows that in Chiapas there is a different linguistic and cultural environment, especially considering the radical nature of the Zapatista armed uprising and subsequent Zapatista movement that is still ongoing 26 years later. It is hard to imagine anything similar taking place in the regions around UIEM or UVIH.

Of the prior research, much of it concerns the operation of the IUs, their funding and their political and social limitations and issues. Also covered by some research, sometimes by self-studies of the IUs themselves, is the quantification of the economic success of the graduates. Much of the prior research offered criticism in terms of the IUs having insufficient

[112] Currently, the twelfth generation of students is in progress 2017 – 2021.

political autonomy, too many limitations and dependencies at the political level, or the lack of regional and community input, especially during the founding of the IUs.

In conclusion, this study fills a gap in the existing literature by investigating the impact the IUs are having on students' attitudes toward their regional languages and cultures where, in fact, sometimes it coincides that a regional language *is* the student's native language, or very commonly their linguistic heritage. While some prior studies, such as that of Meseguer (2012), are more culture focused, while others, such as that of Méndez, are more economically and career focused (2012), there is usually little emphasis specifically on language attitudes in the context of the IUs. This is in spite of one of the core IU missions and values being the sustainability and strengthening of regional languages. This is important because if a community values its regional language, that is an important factor in sustaining and revitalizing the language (Fishman, 1991). This last point will be quite evident in chapter 4 where students and former students talk about their regional languages and how the IU had an impact on their attitudes. In conclusion, this dissertation is important because one of the core missions of the IUs is the revaluation and revitalization of original languages, and, although not often or thoroughly researched, nothing could be at the heart of these crucial issues more than the state of language ideologies.

## Chapter 3: A quantitative analysis

### 3.1 Introduction

The IUs aim to bring access to higher education and professionalization to rural areas and to provide local youth with professional and academic development without taxing their families with high costs. They offer 36 degrees, 6 M.A.s, and 4 Ph.D.s organized

**Figure 15** *The Intercultural Universities by State*




along four different branches: language and culture, vocational courses, community services, and sociocultural practices and values. While this dissertation aims to assess how two of these IUs (UVIH & UIEM) rate in the minds of their students in fulfilling their stated missions, this specific chapter carries out a quantitative exploration of the two student groups and their opinions as to whether the IUs are locally attuned and emphasize the importance of

original languages, cultures and local communities. The students' language ideologies will be evaluated in the next chapter through the qualitative interviews with speakers of three original languages of Mexico (Tlahuica, Mazahua, and Nahuatl), but this chapter attempts a quantitative analysis of those attitudes, something that is uncommon in other studies of the IUs.

The survey participants at UIEM and UVIH filled out a questionnaire with quantifiable data about their academic experiences. Thus, given the above-mentioned general goals of this dissertation, it was decided to also explore some of these questions – in particular quantitative survey instrument block 4, valuation of education received, block 5, future expectations, and block 6, original languages – on the basis of a quantitative analysis of survey data. Therefore, a questionnaire was designed that contained a large number of questions to be distributed among students at UIEM and UVIH; in fact, the survey was designed so as to comprise a wider variety of topics and questions than are covered in this dissertation. The complete quantitative survey questionnaire is listed in Appendix A. In what follows, a description of the design of the survey will be given, specifically the constructs, or (latent) variables, that the survey targets and the survey questions that were intended to assess these constructs.

The questionnaire broadly aimed to answer the following questions: do the IUs

1) offer new opportunities for youth from rural and indigenous communities,

2) change Mexican attitudes towards indigenous languages, and

3) offer a satisfactory academic experience to their students and (at least the hope) of improved employment opportunities.

Moreover, regarding the first point, do the IUs contribute to providing opportunities for younger generations to stay in the area instead of emigrating to the cities, can be added 1a) and thus, directly or indirectly, improve the local communities; as well as 1b) promote sustainable development.

Given the above research questions and the fact that a) at UIEM (student sample size, n = 163) has fewer speakers of original languages and is less isolated, whereas b) at UVIH (student sample size, n = 14), is more indigenous linguistically and is more isolated, one could expect some specific outcomes, but given the numeric imbalance and how the students actually replied (most gave top marks all the time), the statistical analysis should be considered preliminary and exploratory.

## 3.3 The statistical analysis

### *3.3.1 (Latent) Variables and concrete questions*

The survey targeted the following (latent) variables, represented with a short name for ease of reference[113]:

- **Variable 1: job:** This variable has to do with various aspects of the survey respondents current job: what kind of job they have, at what (career) level they are, whether they are still enrolled as students, etc. This variable was probed by the following concrete questions:
    - 1 Current activity?, with the possible responses *I study, I work, or both*;

[113] What follows are the English translations of the questionnaire items. The original Spanish questionnaire is provided in Appendix A. The numbering corresponds to the numbering of the original Spanish questionnaire.

- 3.2 Institution?, with the possible responses *public, NGO (Non-governmental organization), self-employed, cooperative, private, other*;
- 5.6 In what place would you like to work?, with the possible responses *public, NGO, self-employed, cooperative, private, other*;
- 5.7 Given your current situation, in what place could you work?, with the possible responses *public, NGO, self-employed, cooperative, private, other*.

- **Variable 2: level of education**:
  - 2.1 What studies did you do, or what studies are you doing? With open responses *bachelor's in intercultural communication, bachelor's, both, nursing, sustainable development, teaching, marketing*.
  - 2.5 If you have left the university, what degree do you have? With the possible responses *bachelor's, specialty, master's, or I don't have a degree*.;
  - 4.0 If you are currently studying in the university, in what year are you?, with a blank space provided for the response;
  - 5.1 Would you like to continue studying?, with the responses *no*, *yes*, *unsure*;
  - 5.2 Given you current situation. Do you have the possibility of continuing to study?, with the responses *no* and *yes*
  - 5.3a What maximum degree would you like to achieve, with the possible responses *high school, bachelor's, master's, doctorate, other*. The

response *other* provided a blank space with responses of *bachelor's, certificates and/or courses, specialty*.;

- 5.9a How do you visualize yourself in 5 years, with the responses *I will continue to study, working, forming a family, emigrating, supporting my community, economically comfortably off, applying my university knowledge, other*;
- 5.10a How do you visualize yourself in 10 years, with the same responses *study, working, family, emigrating, supporting, comfortably off, applying, other*.

- **Variable 3: population**:
  - 2.2 which university are you affiliated with, with the responses *UIEM* and *UVIH*;
- **Variable 4: major studied**:
  - 5.4 In what area would you like to do your studies?, with the responses *In relation to my university, without relation to my university*;
  - 5.5 In what?, with the open responses *Language and culture, gastronomy, political science, architecture, art, teaching, communication and art, community relationship, communication, audio production, professor or politician, photography, interculturality, original language, nursing, health, traditional medicine, sustainable development, governmental, sociology, anthropology, law, history, radio, tv, journalism, psychology*.
- **Variable 5: community (*local* vs. *not*) / sustainability (*no* vs. *yes*)**: **subsumes the following topics embedded in the research questions above:**

- offer new opportunities to the local/indigenous community; the following questions would be relevant to this:
    - question 4.3 promotes the growth of behaviors that benefit the region and the country through intercultural values
    - question 4.4 promotes attitudes favoring working together in the development of the communities (local/indigenous)
    - question 4.5 provides the necessary experience for the development of knowledge, skills, and positive behavior/thought
    - question 4.6 contributes to improving quality of life and building sustainable development
    - question 4.9 promotes the improvement of the quality of life for underserved populations
- convince/provide the opportunity for younger generations to stay in the area instead of emigrating to the cities;
- Directly or indirectly improve the local or underserved communities;
- emphasizing sustainable development; the following questions would be relevant to items b, c, and d:
    - question 4.2 promotes logical and creative thinking, and recognition of the importance of local knowledge
    - question 4.4 promotes attitudes favoring working together in the development of the communities (local/indigenous)
    - question 4.6 contributes to improving quality of life and building sustainable development

        - question 4.8 individual and collective development, respect for diversity and universal rights are encouraged

- **Variable 6: languages**: Latent variable 6 addresses the possibility of change in the attitudes Mexicans have towards indigenous languages after exposure to the principles of an IU, where exposure means being a student at an IU/resident of a community with an IU/ working with a graduate from an IU. It subsumes anything related to the use of indigenous languages and/or English. Notice that original questions 6.5 and 6.7 are opposite polarity from 6.6, 6.8 and 6.9 – also on language.
    - 6.1 If you speak an original language, what is its name? with the open responses *Mazahua, Otomí, Matlazinca, Nahuatl, Tlahuica, Nahuatl and Mazahua, Mazahua and Otomí*;
    - 6.2 What language(s) did you learn as a child?, with the open responses *Spanish, Mazahua, Otomí, English, Nahuatl*;
    - 6.3 What language(s) do you speak more often now?, with the open responses *Spanish, Mazahua, Otomí, English, Nahuatl;*
    - 6.4 What languages are more common in your community now?, with the open responses *Spanish, Mazahua, Otomí, English, Nahuatl*.
- **Variable 7: fulfilling mission (satisfaction with course/job/opportunity)**: This variable covered a variety of aspects related to the students' satisfaction regarding several areas mentioned in the university's mission as well as some sociocultural or socioeconomic markers (like seeing yourself start/support a family):

- question 4.4 promotes attitudes favoring working together in the development of the communities (local/indigenous)
- question 4.6 contributes to improving quality of life and building sustainable development
- question 4.11 if you had the option to re-enroll in your IU, would you do so?
- question 5.8.1 meeting your personal needs
- question 5.8.2 maintaining a family
- question 5.8.3 Improve the conditions with respect to those that your parents have had

### *3.3.2 Administering the survey*

The survey was given to 163 students at UIEM and 14 students at UVIH. The data were entered into an Excel spreadsheet, converted into the default case-by-variable format and then loaded into R (4.0.4) for further analysis.

### *3.3.3 Statistical analysis*

The statistical analysis of the survey data to be discussed in this dissertation focuses on the question of whether there are any significant/predictive attitudinal differences between the students from the two universities. In a first analytical step, an ordinal regression model is fitted using the following attitudinal questions:

- The formation of attitudes for the benefit of the region and the country with intercultural values is encouraged;
- It contributes to the strengthening of attitudes that allow relationships for the development of communities;

- Experiences are fostered that allow the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes;
- It contributes to the improvement of the quality of life and the promotion of sustainable development;
- It contributes to the improvement of the quality of life of citizens who do not receive government support.

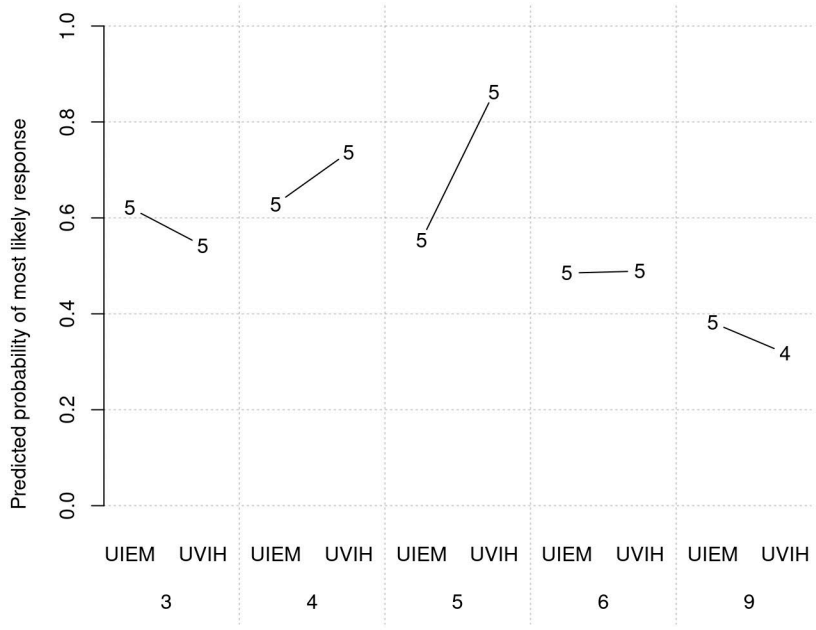
The purpose of this initial analysis was to see whether this model would return such predictive differences between the students from the two universities or whether a more fine-grained and stepwise analysis on a question-by-question basis had to be conducted to understand the distributional patterns. Thus, the variables for this analysis were:

- an ordinal variable **RESPONSE** representing a 5-point Likert scale from *agree completely* to *disagree completely*; this also means that, unlike in many rating studies, here the response variable is actually treated as ordinal, not as numeric;
- a categorical predictor **UNIVERSITY** representing at which of the two universities the survey respondent was studying.
- the question **ITEM**. For this latent variable we used question items 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, and 4.9:
- *benefit & intercultural value*, represented in graphs as *3* (the sub-number of question set 4);
- *development of communities*, represented in graphs as *4*;
- *knowledge, skills, attitudes*, represented in graphs as *5*;
- *sustainable development*, represented in graphs as *6*;

- *for satisfaction*, represented in graphs as *9*;

In this model, the interaction terms is exploratorily/marginally significant ($p$=0.0594), so the predictions are checked. It turns out that the model has only weak predictive power. Its

**Figure 16** *Predicted Probability of Most Likely Response vs. University*




R2 is 0.058 and it nearly always predicts *agree completely*, which leads to a very weak classification accuracy, precision, and recall.

Questionnaire item 3 (does the IU promote the growth of behaviors that benefit the region and the country through intercultural values) and 9 (promotes the improvement of the quality of life for underserved populations) are the only ones where UVIH respondents give the local IU high marks (*agree to some extent*), but less so than UIEM students (*agree completely*). Regarding items 4 (the IU promotes attitudes favoring working together in the development of the local/indigenous communities), 5 (the IU provides the necessary

experience  for the development of knowledge, skills, and positive behavior & thought), and 6 (the IU contributes to improving quality of life and building sustainable development), both groups are predicted to give the top mark (*agree completely*), and the predicted probability that students will give that same rating is actually higher at UVIH than at UIEM.

Given that the questionnaire was not developed within a conservative hypothesis-testing regimen, a significance threshold of 0.1 was adopted. The maximal model showed that the two predictors interact significantly ($LRT$=9.0694, $df$=4, $p$=0.05939); *AIC* also favored non-deletion. However, the discriminatory power of the model is rather low, $R2$=0.058, which is in part due to the very high numbers of responses of *agree completely* and *agree to some extent*, which account for 54% and 28.2% of all responses respectively. The model, accordingly, nearly always predicts the response of *agree completely*. However, for item 4.9 ("It contributes to the improvement of the quality of life of citizens who do not receive government support"), the model does not predict that the respondents at UVIH *agree completely* – but only *agree to some extent*, and returning to the raw data shows in fact that every single respondent from UVIH 'only' *agree to some extent*.

The slight differences between items 3/9 on the one hand, and 4/5/6 on the other may be due to the fact that 3/9 are more concretely interpretable as affecting the local community in specific ways: do the IUs benefits the region through intercultural values and do they improve the lives of underserved communities, specifically those that are not supported by the government? Immediate benefits may still be difficult to gauge, and the students may not consider that the university without governmental support can do a lot for the local population. On the other hand, all students (regardless of campus) evidently see the local IU as a positive influence in their lives, as attested by the more general and abstract benefits the

local universities provide (promoting positive attitudes towards community development, providing knowledge and skills, and generically improving quality of life, as well as building sustainable development).

However, given how relatively poorly the overall regression model can predict students' responses (even when distinguishing the questions and universities), a more fine-grained perspective was required, which will be discussed in the following section.

### 3.4 Chi-squared + residuals

**Table 7** *Chi-squared Test Results*

| RESPONSE | UIEM | UVIH |
|---|---|---|
| agree completely | 72 | 7 |
| agree to some extent | 54 | 2 |
| neutral | 6 | 1 |
| disagree to some extent | 16 | 4 |
| disagree completely | 5 | 0 |
| no response | 10 | 0 |

The more fine-grained analysis was based on the following 3-step procedure: For each question in the survey, first all the responses provided by the students were cross-tabulated with the two universities as follows (for question 6.9 'It is good that people not from my community learn the original languages'). Second, there was computed a chi-squared test (without continuity correction) on the table to determine the residuals of each cell:

**Table 8** *Chi-squared Residuals*

| RESPONSE | UIEM | UVIH |
|---|---|---|
| agree completely | *-0.09* | **0.3** |
| agree to some extent | **0.34** | *-1.15* |
| neutral | *-0.18* | **0.6** |
| disagree to some extent | *-0.56* | **1.92** |
| disagree completely | **0.18** | *-0.63* |
| no response | **0.26** | *-0.89* |

Such residuals are interpreted as follows:

- positive values mean a combination is more frequent than chance (highlighted in bold in the above table);
- negative values mean a combination is more frequent than chance (highlighted in italics in the above table);
- the greater the deviation from 0, the stronger the effect.

Third, from this table, for each university, the level (other than *no response*) with the highest positive residual was determined, which was 'heuristically' interpreted as a kind of 'prototype' or 'most distinctive' level for the students/respondents of that university. For the above table, that means that the 'most prototypical levels' are *agree to some extent* for UIEM and *disagree to some extent* for UVIH.

The following sub-sections discuss the results of this procedure with regard to the most interesting latent variables. Specifically, the questions representing each latent variable were compared to the 'prototypical' levels (as defined by the method above) for the students at each university.

### *3.4.1 Latent variable 1: job*

This variable has to do with their current job (type, level), or they could also just be studying. According to this methodology, the students/respondents from the two universities differ as follows:

- among the UVIH students, being 'only' a student is most strongly overrepresented / prototypical whereas among the UIEM students, being both a student and working is most strongly overrepresented / prototypical. Accordingly, that also means that the UVIH students are currently not working whereas the UIEM

students are; the area where they are working that is most overrepresented is being self-employed;

- in terms of where the students would like to work, the UIEM students are mostly drawn to private or public sector work whereas the UVIH students are mostly drawn to being self-employed, ONG, or public sector work.

The statistical results that indicate that the UIEM students are employed more than the UVIH students is representative of the two geographical areas around the campuses. Whereas in the vicinity of UIEM there are small cities and more economic opportunities, the area around UVIH is rural and isolated and there are only small towns in proximity to UVIH. In the area of UVIH the concept of the *faena* is widespread, this is the concept of communal community labor for the benefit of the community, a civic duty so to speak that is non-lucrative. In contrast, in the area of UIEM there is more industry including some small industrial parks and public works is more commonly seen as the responsibility of the government. These conceptualizations of work and labor could explain why UVIH students are drawn to ONG or the public sector, representing a more communal work-ethic, while at UIEM students lean more toward private sector work and away from ONGs since there is less of a communal work-ethic.

### *3.4.2 Latent variable 2: education*

According to the above methodology, the students/respondents from the two universities differ as follows:

- the UVIH students are most characterized by studying for the *licenciatura* 'only' whereas many of the UIEM students study for a wider range of different degrees (especially *licenciatura en comunicación intercultural*);

- the UVIH students are interested in pursuing a doctoral degree, the UIEM students are aiming for the *licenciatura* ‘only’;

The proceeding two bullet points are seemingly contradictory, so a brief explanation would be helpful. The first bullet point asks what degree are they currently studying towards and the second bullet point asks what degree do they desire to attain. UVIH only offers bachelor’s degrees and there is a single top-level degree that all students earn, with five focus areas (see Appendix D for details), so it is no surprise that the students listed “bachelor’s” as their study area. While there was a surprising number of students that stated their desire to pursue a doctoral degree, it was more pronounced at UVIH, but it must be kept in mind this is a *desire*, not something that will necessarily be fulfilled.

- with regard to the open questions 5.9 and 5.10, the results can only be heuristically interpreted, given the small number of students at UVIH and the wide range of possible answers; with those big caveats,
- with regard to 5.9 (What do you see yourself doing in 5 years?) the UIEM students most characteristic responses were “applying UIEM knowledge”, “supporting my community”, and “I will be working”, whereas the UVIH’s students most characteristic responses were also “applying UVIH knowledge”, “supporting my community”, but also “emigrating” and “I will continue to study”, “I would have an economically comfortable situation”;
- with regard to 5.10 (What do you see yourself doing in 10 years?) the main difference between the two student samples was that the UIEM students most characteristic responses included seeing themselves as “applying UIEM

knowledge" whereas the UVIH's students most characteristic responses included "being in a financially comfortable situation".

The low Human Development Index (HDI) of Veracruz state along with the rural nature of the Huasteca Veracruzana could explain the UVIH preference over UIEM for considering emigration, although the entire country of Mexico has experienced emigration for decades. Why the UVIH students desire a doctoral degree only invites conjecture. Many students have parents that only have a primary education and many students are the first in their family to have pursued a university education. If this interest in pursuing a doctorate can be ascribed to their UVI experience, then the UVI instilling a love of education is a UVIH mission win. Or it could be that their parents have instilled in the students that education is an opportunity not to be missed, i.e., the parents are aware that they did not have the opportunity to attend a university and wish their children to avail themselves of the offering as much as possible. This desire for higher education is echoed in 5.9 where the UVIH students see themselves still continuing to study in 5 years' time. Both UIEM and UVIH students see themselves applying university learning and supporting their community over 5 years and the UIEM students visualize themselves continuing to do this over 10 years. The UVIH students viewing themselves as economically comfortable over the next 5 and 10 years could be based on the promise of the university of providing educated professionals to form a professional infrastructure in the community, of course, with the backup plan of emigrating. The UIEM students see themselves as working. Most interesting is the fact that there are more varied responses in the UVIH population, but also that they consider emigrating (which is possibly not compatible with supporting the community, and this would be a mission failure).

### *3.4.3 Latent variable 5: community*

According to the above methodology, the students/respondents from the two universities differ as follows:

the UIEM students work where they are from (their community of origin), whereas the UVIH students work 'around the university';

- with regard to question 4.2, 'Promote the development of logical, creative thinking, and practical recognition of local knowledge', UIEM students agree to some extent, but UVIH students agree completely;
- with regard to question 4.3, 'The formation of attitudes for the benefit of the region and the country with intercultural values is encouraged', UIEM students neither agree nor disagree ('neutral') but UVIH students disagree completely;
- with regard to question 4.4, 'It contributes to the strengthening of attitudes that allow relationships for the development of communities', UIEM students neither agree nor disagree ('neutral') but UVIH students agree completely;
- with regard to question 4.6, 'It contributes to the improvement of the quality of life and the promotion of sustainable development', UIEM students disagree to some extent but UVIH students disagree completely;
- with regard to question 4.9, 'It contributes to the improvement of the quality of life of citizens who do not receive government support', UIEM students agree to some extent but UVIH students disagree to some extent;
- with regard to question 4.10, 'Theoretical and methodological resources are offered to generate knowledge on sustainable development', UIEM students disagree completely but UVIH students disagree 'only' to some extent.

Some possible reasons for the foregoing include that public transportation is more problematic in the region of UVIH due to the large geographical area, poor road infrastructure, and more limited choices in taxis and buses. Likewise, considering the extremely rural nature of the surroundings that could explain why UIEM students work where they are from whereas UVIH students work around the university, i.e. the UVIH students find it easier to find work in Ixhuatlán de Madero and also find it more convenient to work near campus due to distances and transportation issues. Item 4.2 asks if the IU promotes sound thinking along with the recognition of local knowledges. Both schools either completely agree or agree to some extent, signaling a mission win for the IUs, especially at UVIH where the responses were completely agree. On the other hand, item 4.3, asking if the IU promotes attitudes beneficial for the region and the country, the negative response by UVIH students and the neutral response by UIEM students would seem to indicate a mission failure for the IUs, at least in the sense that there are not perceived attitudes beneficial to the region, especially at UVIH. Item 4.4, which asks if the IU fosters attitudes that are beneficial to developing communities, the UVIH students agree completely but the UIEM students are neutral. The area around UVIH has a low HDI, so it might be that any positive university experience would be perceived as beneficial to the communities, especially so since every three weeks the students have a community day to progress their projects with the communities. In the case of the UIEM students being neutral, this could indicate a potential mission failure as the communities and community involvement is part of the mission statements. Items 4.6 and 4.10 both mention the IUs promotion of sustainable development in some sense and here the IUs both have some reckoning to do. Of the four responses to the two questions (two from each school) they were all either completely disagree or disagree to

some extent. The last item to be considered, 4.9, asks if the IU improves the quality of life for people who do not receive government support, UIEM students agree to some extent but UVIH students disagree to some extent. Here again, the low HDI around UVIH could make students starkly aware of the precarious nature of the local communities and therefore more critical of perceived or purported improvements in the quality of life. Additionally, around UIEM there are ample medical resources including ISSSTE (government employees), IMSS (people with salaries), and INSABI (everybody else, like marginalized street vendors). These three agencies cover about 95% of the population as mentioned in chapter 1. Around UVIH there is an ISSSTE clinic, but other medical resources are scarce and sometimes not easily reached. Because of this, perhaps the quality of life is perceived differently.

### *3.4.4 Latent variable 6: languages*

According to the above methodology, the students/respondents from the two universities differ as follows:

- the UIEM students have Mazahua as their native language, but also learned Spanish and/or English early and use these languages most often now, but Spanish is the dominant language in their community;
- the UVIH students have Nahuatl as their native language, but also learned Spanish and/or Nahuatl early and use those most often now, with Nahuatl being the dominant language in their community;

They also differ with regard to their language attitudes:

- with regard to question 6.5, 'Regional cultures can survive without native languages', UIEM students agree to some extent, but UVIH students disagree to some extent;

- with regard to question 6.6, ‘Keeping our original languages strong is important to me’, UIEM students agree to some extent, but UVIH students agree completely;
- with regard to question 6.7, ‘Enough is done to support the use of native languages in my community’, UIEM students disagree to some extent, but UVIH students agree to some extent;
- with regard to question 6.8, ‘Native languages should be taught in schools’, UIEM students agree to some extent, but UVIH students agree completely
- with regard to question 6.9, ‘It is good that people not from my community learn the original languages’, UIEM students agree to some extent, but UVIH students disagree to some extent.

The language situation described in the poll results reflects the different linguistic situations around the two disparate regions of UVIH and UIEM. As will be confirmed in the qualitative interviews, the area around UIEM was monolingual in Mazahua until about the year 1950 when the rural schools, out-migration to find work, and highways started to have an impact on the language situation. The subsequent three decades were during the SEP federal policy of one language (Spanish). The current dominant language in the area is Spanish and only a handful of students at UIEM are speakers of Mazahua. On the other hand, Nahuatl is still the language of many of the more rural communities in the Huasteca Veracruzana.

As to the poll results, there is clearly some agreement and consistency in the reposes based on the linguistic realities of the two locations. For example, item 6.5, ‘Regional cultures can survive without original languages’, the UIEM students somewhat agree and the UVIH students somewhat disagree. Since UIEM students generally don’t speak Mazahua, if

they had disagreed with this item, then they would have been condemning themselves to be deprived of their culture, and the concept of being Mazahua is still strong in the local population. Conversely, the majority of the students at UVIH speak Nahuatl, if they had agreed with this item, they would have been declaring Nahuatl of no value.

In the case of item 6.6, 'Keeping our original languages strong is important to me', both groups of students agreed, UIEM to some extent and UVIH completely. Again reflecting the linguistic situation, and perhaps indicating the positive influence of UVIH in instilling pride in their language, UVIH students completely agree, although by the same token UIEM students want to keep Mazahua strong.

For item 6.7, 'Enough is done to support the use of original languages in the community', UIEM students disagree to some extent, while UVIH students agree to some extent. This difference might reflect the yearning of UIEM students to reclaim their language, while UVIH students are more secure in Nahuatl.

For item 6.8, 'Native languages should be taught in school', UIEM students agree to some extent. This lack of complete commitment might indicate the difficulty of learning a non-Indo-European language as an adult learner, while the UVIH students agree completely, possibly reflecting their desire to reinforce their linguistic understanding of Nahuatl in a classroom setting, as previously there was virtually no educational support for this, people learned the language in the family.

And lastly, item 6.9, 'It is good that people not from my community learn original languages', UIEM students agree to some extent and UVIH students disagree to some extent. The puzzling difference might reflect the desire on the part of UIEM students that the Mazahua language be disseminated in an attempt to revitalize it, while UVIH students might

be more protective of their variant of Nahuatl as a defense against the stigmatization of the language and speakers of the language (as well shall see in the qualitative interviews).

### *3.4.5 Latent variable 7: satisfaction*

According to the above methodology, the students/respondents from the two universities differ as follows:

- with regard to question 4.1, 'Is trained with a critical and comprehensive profile, competent in the areas of management, interculturality and communication', UIEM students state that goal is not achieved to some extent whereas UVIH students say it is not achieved at all;
- with regard to questions 4.5, 'Experiences are fostered that allow the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes and 4.7, 'Learning is generated in group settings based on theory, practice and social development', UIEM students are undecided ('neutral') whereas UVIH students agree completely;
- with regard to question 4.8, 'Individual and collective development, respect for diversity and universal rights are encouraged', UIEM students agree to some extent and UVIH students agree completely;
- with regard to question 4.11, 'If you had the option to re-enroll in your school, would you do so?', UIEM students are a bit more associated with the response *yes* whereas UVIH students are a bit more associated with the response *no*, but the effect is *very* weak;
- with regard to question 5.8.1, 'Meeting your personal needs', UIEM students respond *yes* whereas UVIH students are unsure;

- with regard to question 5.8.2, ‘Supporting a family’, UIEM students respond *yes* whereas UVIH students respond *no*;
- with regard to question 5.8.3, ‘Improve the conditions with respect to those that your parents have had’, UIEM students respond *no* whereas UVIH students respond *yes*.

The first item, 4.1, ‘Is trained with a critical and comprehensive profile, competent in the areas of management, interculturality and communication’, yields the results that UIEM students disagree to some extent whereas UVIH students completely disagree. These results clearly suggest a mission failure on the part of the IUs because interculturality and communication are bedrocks of the mission and vision of the IUs. Especially in the case of UVIH, there could be a lack of an overall perception that the community is engaged and that interculturality is perceived as well received and beneficial to the community.

Items 4.5, ‘Experiences are fostered that allow the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes’, and 4.7, ‘Learning is generated in group settings based on theory, practice and social development’, have the results that UIEM students are undecided (neutral) whereas the UVIH students completely agree. Here again, in the case of UIEM students, there is a potential mission failure as the mission and vision statements are all about personal and regional development of knowledge and working with the community (in group settings). Both schools work in the communities, where UVIH takes this notion a step further with a week every month of community involvement. This marked involvement with the community might be why UVIH students completely agree, as long as it is kept in mind it is a weak effect. Another contributing factor to the complete agreement by UVIH students might be the way courses are taught at the two universities. At UIEM the class structure is

more traditional with a much larger student body, while at UVIH there is a “community feel” to the small school with more intimate class sizes and many teachers who are native in Nahuatl (some instruction is done in Nahuatl).

The telling item 4.11, ‘If you had the option to re-enroll in your school, would you do so?’, results in the UIEM students tending to say *yes*, but the UVIH students tending to say *no*. Nonetheless, this effect is very weak.

Items 5.8.1, 5.8.2, and 5.8.3 have to do with economic security and success. Item 5.8.1, ‘Meeting your personal needs’, UIEM students say *yes* while UVIH students are *unsure*. This difference is perhaps due to the human development index differences between the regions rather than the usefulness of their university education. Item 5.8.2, ‘Supporting a family’, here again UIEM students say *yes* and UVIH students are *unsure*, probably reflecting the economic differences between the two regions. Lastly, item 5.8.3, ‘Improve the conditions with respect to those that your parents have had’, UIEM students respond *no* and UVIH students respond *yes*. It must be kept in mind that the parents of UIEM students often have a middle school education, while at UVIH the parents often have only a primary education, or none at all.

**3.5 Interpretation**

While keeping in mind the low predictive values, there are some broad areas of consistency in the survey results between the two universities, while at the same time not always being consistent with the university mission statements. Students at the rural UVIH where communal community work is common see themselves as economically well off in the future while at the same time tend to see themselves working at non-governmental organizations. In similar fashion, the UIEM students see themselves in the future as being

able to satisfy their needs and supporting a family, while UVIH students are not sure. Curiously, UIEM students do not see themselves as better off than their parents, while UVIH students do visualize themselves in the future as better off than their parents. The general consistency in the foregoing is a reflection of the economic disparity between the two regions.

The mission statements of the two universities are also broadly consistent. Part of the UVIH mission statement reads[114], "(The UVI mission is) promoting the achievement of a better quality of life through sustainability by strengthening the languages and cultures of the state of Veracruz". While in contrast the UIEM mission statement begins,

> The training of professionals committed to the economic, social and cultural development of the communities of Mexico State and the country; promoting a dialogue of knowledge between the ancestral knowledge and values of indigenous peoples and scientific knowledge.

Both missions focus on regional cultures and languages, while the difference in emphasis between the two is that the UIEM has more focus on producing professionals and supporting language revitalization while that of UVI has more of a focus on social justice and maintaining (not revitalizing) the communities. Both of these differences are reflected in the local economies, number of original language speakers, and the student responses to the survey instrument.

Where there are areas of potential improvement can be seen in the inconsistencies between the survey results and the mission and vision statements. Perhaps the most important

[114] The mission and vision statements of both schools are listed in Appendix A.

item in this regard is item 4.11, “If you had the option to re-enroll in your IU, would you?”. The UVIH students tended to say *no*, while UIEM students tended to say *yes*, although the effect was very weak. In both cases, the lack of a solid affirmation in their willingness to re-enroll certainly does not signal an abundance of satisfaction with their university experience, although the results beg the question of why this is the case and is something the universities should be investigating. However, the personal experience of the author at UVIH where almost the entire student body was personally known, indicated that students overall were satisfied with the school. It must be reiterated that the effect was *very* weak. Item 5.9, “Where do you see yourself in 5 years”, UVIH students tended to include “emigrating”, while for Item 5.10, “Where do you see yourself in 10 years” the UVIH students tended to say, “being in a financially comfortable situation”. The difference in responses implies that emigrating is more of a short term goal, which indicates it is being planned by some students, something that UVIH should address. Item 4.3, asking if the IU promotes attitudes beneficial for the region and the country, the negative response by UVIH students and the neutral response by UIEM students indicates another potential mission fail that needs to be addressed by both universities, of which the possible causes were previously discussed. Item 4.4, which asks if the IU fosters attitudes that are beneficial to developing communities, the UVIH students agree completely but the UIEM students are neutral. The neutral response which lacks support for the item is a mission fail for UIEM and the question needs to be asked by the administration why is the student body not in agreement with something so aligned with the mission statement. The first item, 4.1, ‘Is trained with a critical and comprehensive profile, competent in the areas of management, interculturality and communication’, has the results that UIEM students disagree to some extent whereas UVIH

students completely disagree, which in both schools says that the students believe there is a mission failure in the key areas of interculturality and communication. Both schools should be reviewing their policies and practices to ascertain why students are in disagreement with the missions. UVIH is much more engaged with the communities, the students being off campus working in the communities for a week every month. Some students confided that the communities sometimes did not understand what UVIH was about no matter how hard the students tried to explain. This might be a factor contributing to the complete disagreement by UVIH students. This would possibly me a management issue in that the administration has the responsibility of putting students in an environment where they can effectively work with the communities. Lastly, items 4.5, 'Experiences are fostered that allow the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes', and 4.7, 'Learning is generated in group settings based on theory, practice and social development', have the results that UIEM students are undecided (neutral) whereas the UVIH students completely agree. In this case, the neutral response of UIEM students indicates a lack of enthusiasm for the core part of the mission statements. In all of the foregoing, further investigation should be conducted by the IUs in order to verify or deny the validity and meaning of the responses and plan programs to strengthen the implementation of the mission statements.

In concluding it must be kept in mind that some of the statistical results are weak or very weak, and that the degrees offered have a different composition in the two universities. One difference between the schools is that UVIH offers a nursing degree (a professional degree in healthcare), although both schools offer intercultural health, a separate degree. One of the other differences is that UIEM offers a master's degree in sustainable development, whereas there are only bachelor's degrees offered at UVIH. The only other difference in

degrees offered is that UIEM offers a degree in art and design, while UVIH offers a degree in law. Moreover, the socioeconomic level of the two regions is different, UIEM having more commerce and more educational opportunities, whereas UVIH is more rural with a lower HDI. Notwithstanding some of the quantitative results and summarizing the foregoing presentation of questionnaire results, the students a UVIH indicated, as will be seen in the qualitative interviews, that UVIH felt more like being in their community. This could be because of Nahuatl being widely spoken on campus and the town of Ixhuatlán de Madero being small and isolated. However, UIEM students were more likely to see the university as an accessible means of obtaining a higher education. This community orientation at UVIH is revealed by the UIEM students being more oriented to working in the private sector, while the UVIH students are oriented toward the public and NGO sectors i.e., the community. In education, the UIEM students work toward bachelor's degrees the same as UVIH students, but the UVIH students desire a doctoral degree. This difference underscores the anecdotal observation that the students feel comfortable at UVIH and feel at home in the classroom, along with lack of opportunities in the communities, which might influence them toward continuing with their education. In regard to original languages, the UVIH students are more supportive of language resources being provided such as teaching original languages in school and supporting the original culture by using the language, while at UIEM there is less belief in doing these things. One notably difference is that UVIH students do not want people from outside the community learning Nahuatl, which indicates a protective stance perhaps rooted in the stigmatization their language suffers. In terms of satisfaction, the UVIH students are unsure of meeting their future needs while the UIEM students say yes. There is a dissatisfaction by UVIH students in responses related to community work, which is not

present in the UIEM responses, which tends to be somewhat negative or neutral. This is a key area for both universities and the program should undergo a management review of practices in the community including an audit in the communities.

## Chapter 4: The Qualitative Interviews

### 4.1 Introduction

The Mexican Ministry of Public Education's (SEP) stated mission is to guarantee to all Mexicans the access to education of the highest quality, covering all levels and modalities required and in all locations wherever they may need it (https://www.gob.mx/sep/acciones-y-programas/vision-y-mision-de-la-sep). This access is undergirded by the principles of equity, universality, and wholeness (*equidad, universalidad, e integralidad*). The formulation suspiciously echoes the French revolutionary motto, perhaps underlining the centuries-long intellectual connection between the two countries. In fact, the SEP's vision for the future, with some hint of the neoliberal agenda thrown in for good measure is:

> In the year 2030, each Mexican will have a modern, quality education through which they are trained in knowledge, skills and values.
>
> The National Educational System trains citizens in the values of freedom, justice, dialogue and democracy, in addition to giving them enough tools so that they can successfully integrate into productive life.
>
> Education is the main component of the social fabric and the best instrument to guarantee equity and access to a better quality of life for all, in addition to being the educator of the human talent required for the competitiveness and development of the country[115]. (Pública, n.d.-b)

[115] En el año 2030, cada mexicano cuenta con una educación moderna, de calidad a través de la cual se forma en conocimientos, destrezas y valores. (Continues on next page.)

This vision has not a single word about indigenous communities and sounds ominously assimilationist[116]. There is the guarantee of a "modern" education and providing an education in "values of freedom, justice, dialogue and democracy", but the alarming part is that the education provided is to insure "successfully integrate into productive life". Moreover, education is the "main component of the social fabric" not to mention the "development of the country". In light of the CGEIB's mandate to make all schools in Mexico intercultural, as contrasted with the Mestizo mainstream tone of the SEP's vision, it would seem there is a conflict between the SEP's vision and that of the CGEIB.

Access to education is the main reason SEP provides for the establishment of the Intercultural Universities (https://www.gob.mx/sep/articulos/sabias-que-existen-universidades-interculturales). As mentioned in chapter 3, these institutions are supposed to bring access to higher education and professionalization to rural areas and provide local youth with professional and academic development without taxing their families with high costs. They offer 36 degrees, 6 M.A.s, and 4 Ph.D.s organised along four different branches: language and culture, vocational courses, community services, and sociocultural practices

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El Sistema Educativo Nacional forma a los ciudadanos en los valores de la libertad, la justicia, el diálogo y la democracia, además de darles las herramientas suficientes para que puedan integrarse con éxito a la vida productiva.

La educación es el principal componente del tejido social y el mejor instrumento para garantizar equidad y acceso a una mejor calidad de vida para todos, además de ser formadora del talento humano requerido para la competitividad y el desarrollo del país.

[116] The original 3rd article of the 1917 constitution only established that public education should be free of charge, obligatory (amendment of 1934), and non-religious. Only in its current form, after the 2019 amendments does article 3 reflect the issues related to education that the indigenous peoples of Mexico might face: https://www.scjn.gob.mx/sites/default/files/cpeum/decretos_reformas/2019-09/15052019.pdf (2019).

and values. It is however surprising that the main webpages of the SEP portal hardly refer to any of the indigenous languages of Mexico and the role they might have in education.

The current state of indigenous education in Mexico still reflects important changes that took place in the 1990s, partly as a direct consequence of the Zapatista rebellion. In 1991, education was decentralized and made a concern of each state, rather than of the federal government, and indigenous education as well as the protection of indigenous cultures and rights came to the forefront of the talks between the Zapatista movement and the federal government after 1994. As summarized by Martínez Buenabad (2015), the hopes inspired by a post-PRI government regarding indigenous education and a more suitable society did not materialize as such, but at least the political and cultural discussions initiated in the 1990s and continued under Fox, as laid out in the *Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2001 - 2006* (n.d.) recognized that modern Mexico is indeed multi-cultural, that indigenous culture and identity are not 'just mechanically connected'[117] (Martínez Buenabad, 2015, p. 111, my translation), i.e. indigenous cultures can change without the individuals experiencing a consequent loss of identity (For instance, if they abandon traditional clothes), and that indigenous people are also political subjects and that the institutions that represent them can have profound changes on policy and national discourse. There was, however, no real radical change in indigenous education in the 2000s, because no dose of well-meaning *indigenismo*, even envisaging the possibility of primary education in the ca. 70 indigenous native languages officially recognized by the Mexican government, was always going to fail when confronted with pragmatic issues such as lack of resources and personnel to train the

[117] "…la cultura y la identidad indígena no ocurre de manera mecánica…"

necessary educators, as well as pragmatically more dramatic problems of infrastructure. In this case, *infrastructure* does not just mean the lack of school buildings, but more generally problems of access to running water, electricity or healthcare, which in some of the more rural and isolated communities would need to be prioritized before education in the native language. Moreover, language immersion schooling in rural communities did not and does not address the fundamental reality of rural-to-urban migration that affects most indigenous communities in Mexico, causing the continuous displacement of indigenous populations far from their original areas of provenance. In short: the indigenous peoples' right to be taught in their native language cannot be granted without envisaging "an education that reflects upon the social, natural, and cultural conditions, which implies reflecting from within the school, as an intermediating institution between the State and society, upon citizens' rights and the cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity that exist in society and the nation"[118] (Martínez Buenabad, 2015, p. 110)

In light of the preceding observations, a Facebook post in response to an original post asking about the process for a school to obtain SEP affiliation as a bilingual school is as quaint as it is telling of a general situation in Mexico whereby original languages are simply forgotten:

> For a school to be considered bilingual the subjects have to be taught in English; history, biology, mathematics, etc. Except Spanish. And generally all the employees

[118] "… una educación reflexiva de las condiciones sociales, naturales, culturales, lo que implica reflexionar desde la escuela, en tanto institución intermediaria entre el Estado y la sociedad, sobre los derechos ciudadanos, la diversidad cultural, étnica y lingüística existente en la sociedad y en el país."

speak English, that's a bilingual school[119]. (Retrieved from the Facebook group English Teachers in State of Mexico[120])

The response cited evidently expresses the canon that bilingual schools are Spanish-English only because it states that the language of instruction at bilingual schools is English for all subjects except for Spanish class. This post[121] adopts a common immersion model example, whereby most subjects are taught in a different language, in this case English, while only Spanish language and literature are taught in the majority culture language, i.e. Spanish[122]. What is surprising is that *bilingual* in any general educational context in Mexico is often equated with Spanish+English, the latter a foreign language, and Mexican indigenous languages are not even mentioned or conceived of as being potential 'vehicular' languages in Mexico, despite them *not* being foreign to the country. University of Guadalajara radio journalist Arely Ruiz Eufracio last year summarized the general attitude embodied by the Facebook post last year:

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[119] Recamier, A. [Alberto]. (2020, June 7). "Para que una escuela sea considerada como bilingue las materias tienen que ser impartidas en inglés Historia, Biología, Matemáticas,etc. Excepto Español. Y generalmente todo el personal habla inglés, esa es una escuela bilingüe."

[120] https://web.facebook.com/groups/asoc.maestros/permalink/2951248464923575/?comment_id=2951595784888843 (retrieved 1 May, 2020)

[121] According to the *Ley general de derechos lingüísticos de los pueblos Indígenas* a bilingual school is a school where the teachers read and write the regional language and are familiar with its culture (Article 13, VI.) (Cámara de diputados de la unión, 2018). As shall be seen in the qualitative interviews, the actual situation of bilingual schools is quite different from this legal mandate.

[122] As a concrete example, in the Basque Country in Spain, the successful bilingual model actually has three options for students: Study in Spanish and Basque as one of the study subjects, instruction given half in Basque and half in Spanish, or instruction in Basque with Spanish as a study subject (Intxausti et al., 2013, p. 35).

> It's necessary to understand that a bilingual education doesn't only refer to the instruction of Spanish and English, which is becoming more common in our country in schools of all levels. Bilingual education refers to the teaching of two languages, and in the case of a country with the linguistic richness of Mexico, it's more viable in an indigenous language and Spanish[123].

In any case, while immersion would be a way to preserve original languages and cultures, any attempt at implementation would need to take the issues of equality and distribution of resources into serious account. Some politicians, educators and administrators in the Mexican school system certainly understand the need to build up any reforms from the bottom up and with the participation of the indigenous populations if any serious reform is going to take place. This was the reason for instituting various consulting committees and forums in 2011-2 under the auspices of the Coordinación de la Comisión Nacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas (CDI) in order to modify the Mexican statutes for public education.[124] Its goals were: "Develop a consensus proposal to reform the General Law of Education, that would guarantee the fulfillment of all people, within the framework of a

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[123] Es necesario entender que una educación bilingüe no se refiere sólo a la instrucción español e inglés, cada vez más presente en escuelas de todos los niveles educativos de nuestro país. La educación bilingüe se refiere a la enseñanza en dos lenguas, y en el caso de un país con la riqueza lingüística de México, ésta es más viable en una lengua indígena y el español (http://gaceta.cusur.udg.mx/educacion-bilingue-en-mexico-un-reto-vigente/) (2020).

[124] Other participants (p. 7): *Coordinación General de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe* (CGEIB), de la *Dirección General de Educación Indígena* (DGEI-SEP); *el Instituto Nacional de Lenguas Indígenas* (INALI), *el Instituto Nacional de Educación de Adultos* (INEA), *el Consejo Nacional de Fomento Educativo* (Conafe), among other institutions.

multicultural and multilingual nation"[125], since little had been achieved in practical terms fifteen years after the San Andrés Agreements, in fact, the final report stated:

> The National Education System, nevertheless, shows even today only a partial transformation, considering that it has not to the fullest extent possible included the rights of the indigenous population, in its regulations, organization, functioning and connectedness as in knowledge, recognition, continuity, and valuation of the multicultural and plurilingual diversity of our nation[126] (Dr. Héctor Múñoz Cruz, 2013, p. 9).

The Report indicates that three main issues are at the root of the problem:

a) An inequity in the coverage and quality of educational services that are offered to the indigenous population, of which they are not adequately in compliance with the pertinent cultural and linguistic criteria[127].
b) That the bilingual school process in practice does not favor the maintenance and development of indigenous languages, because it privileges Spanish as the language of instruction[128].

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[125] "para elaborar una propuesta consensuada de reforma a la Ley General de Educación, que garantice la realización de todas las personas, en el marco de una nación pluricultural y plurilingüe" (p. 5, https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/37018/cdi_ley_fed_edu_2011_2012.pdf) (Dr. Héctor Múñoz Cruz, 2013, p. 5).

[126] El Sistema Educativo Nacional, sin embargo, muestra hasta la fecha una transformación parcial, puesto que no ha incluido plenamente los derechos de la población indígena en materia de educación, en su normatividad, organización, funcionamiento y vinculación así como en el conocimiento, reconocimiento, continuidad y valoración de la diversidad multicultural y plurilingüe de nuestra nación.

[127] a) una inequidad en la cobertura y calidad de los servicios educativos que se ofrecen a la población indígena, los cuales no cumplen adecuadamente con los criterios de pertinencia cultural y lingüística.

[128] b) que el proceso escolar bilingüe en aplicación no favorece el mantenimiento y desarrollo de las lenguas indígenas, por privilegiar como lengua de instrucción al español.

c) The predominance of the criterion of homogeneity in educational planning, without recognizing the rights of indigenous peoples to differentiate their cultural, communicative, and linguistic resources, which is the reason that they have not considered sufficient the diverse emphasis on interculturality and plurilinguistics, which are becoming more common in the majority of countries[129] (Dr. Héctor Múñoz Cruz, 2013, p. 9).

Eight more years have elapsed since the publication of that Report, and while even the SEP agrees that the rights and preservation of cultures and identities of original peoples and languages are part of its current thinking,[130] SEP's web portal sounds rather more non-inclusive than pro diversity, and universalist to the point of detriment of the local cultures, which that specific part of the SEP's website seems to ignore: After all, there already *is* a *separate* webpage for the Agency of Indigenous Education (https://dgei.basica.sep.gob.mx/). The initial French comparison above should raise concerns, perhaps, that the mention of *integralidad* in the context of indigenous education in Mexico, is more related to 'integration' than to an intended holistic meaning. Intercultural education was one of the goals of the reforms to the Ley General de Educación proposed by the Final Report (2013, p. 15). However, as Dietz and Mateos (2019; 2017)[131] have observed, institutions such as the

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[129] c) el predominio del criterio de homogeneidad en la planeación educativa, sin reconocer el derecho de los pueblos indígenas a emplear diferenciadamente sus recursos culturales, comunicativos y lingüísticos, razón por la cual no se han considerado suficientemente los diversos enfoques interculturales y plurilingüísticos, cada vez más usados en la mayoría de los países.

[130] (*Educación Intercultural Para Todos | .:: SEP .:. SES :: Dirección General de Educación Superior Para Profesionales de La Educación ::.*, n.d.)

[131] Cf. also Dietz, Gunther (2011). "La educación superior intercultural ante la diversidad cultural en México", in: Silvie Didou Aupetit y Eduardo Remedi Allione (coords.). Educación superior de carácter étnico en México: pendientes para la reflexión, pp. 187-222, Ciudad de México: Senado de la República/Cinvestav (2011).

IUs are not carved out as a fundamentally different, indigenous proposal for the acquisition of knowledge, but they are rather the result of individual agreements between some states and the federal government, financed by these same governmental entities, and based on calquing the degrees, modes and formats of traditional universities. These authors also observe that although more than 50% of students come from an indigenous background, this is not a requirement, although reclaiming an indigenous identity does happen among students attending the IUs (ibid.). 15,000 students attended IUs during 2016-7 (https://eib.sep.gob.mx/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/MapaUI.pdf), by comparison, the Mexican National Autonomous University has about 350,000 students. Unlike the universalist propositions of SEP's primary and secondary education, the IUs are specifically devoted to fostering the maintenance and promoting the acquisition of knowledge (traditional or otherwise) that is specifically attuned to the local communities they serve[132].

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Mateos Cortés, Laura Selene y Gunther Dietz (2013). "Universidades interculturales en México", en María Bertely Busquets, Gunther Dietz y María Guadalupe Díaz Tepepa (coords.), Multiculturalismo y educación 2002-2011, pp. 349-381, Ciudad de México: COMIE. (2013).

Mato, Daniel (2009). "Instituciones Interculturales de Educación Superior en América Latina: panorama regional, procesos de construcción institucional, logros, innovaciones y desafíos", en Daniel Mato (ed.) Instituciones Interculturales de Educación Superior en América Latina. Procesos de construcción, logros, innovaciones y desafíos, pp. 13-78, Caracas: Unesco-IESALC. (2009)

Mato, Daniel (2014). "Universidades indígenas en América Latina: experiencias, logros, problemas, conflictos y desafíos", Interculturalidad, Inclusión Social y Equidad en la Educación Superior, núm. 14, pp. 17-45 (2014).

Salmerón Castro, Fernando I. (2013). "Avances, retos y perspectivas de la educación intercultural a nivel superior", en Sergio Enrique Hernández Loeza et al. (coord.): Educación Intercultural a nivel superior: reflexiones desde diversas realidades latinoamericanas, pp. 343-349, Puebla: UIEP/UCI-Red (2013).

Schmelkes, Sylvia (2009). "Intercultural Universities in Mexico: progress and difficulties", Intercultural Education, vol. 20, núm. 1, pp. 5-17. (2009)

[132] As was seen in chapter 3, the students themselves are not always in agreement that the IUs are attuned to the local communities.

Or are they? Dietz and Mateos actually dispute the founding principle of the IUs, stating that they come about not as a real alternative to state-controlled education (embodied by the SEP) because the government is responding to demands by the indigenous peoples, but rather because of a societal need to respond to taxpayers' criticism about the perceived lack of practical impact of conventional university level education on professionalization and services in local communities, and their lack of 'efficiency' (Dietz & Mateos Cortés, 2019). Authors such as Castillo Rosas has convincingly placed these institutions, in ideological terms, simply as the latest act of the colonial *indigenista* movement (2016). Moreover, there is evidence that while the IUs are supposedly encouraging tolerance towards others and actively promoting diversity, in some cases there is friction and conflict between the very IU students along ethnic fault lines, for instance between *mestizos* and indigenous students in Chiapas (Sartorello, 2016)).

Researchers, educators, and journalists recognize that not enough has been done to promote indigenous languages and cultures in education despite the fact that in the 2003 Ley General de los Pueblos Indígenas, it is stated that indigenous children have the right to be taught primary education in their native language (art. 11). While it is true that at least these legal instruments have brought indigenous rights into the national discourse, and Mexico now recognizes its multicultural nature, at least in theory. In this chapter of a dissertation itself aiming to assess how two of these IUs (UVIH & UIEM) have fulfilled their stated missions, this specific chapter intends to establish qualitatively how the IUs are locally attuned and emphasize the importance of native languages, cultures and local communities in the experience of their own students. The students' language ideologies are evaluated here through the qualitative interviews with speakers of Tlahuica, Mazahua, and Nahuatl.

The SEP's current mandate is the lofty goal of providing an intercultural education to all Mexicans and, additionally, intercultural bilingual education to regions where there are original languages. On the other hand, several instructors and students at the IUs, both UIEM and UVIH, commented (sometimes in the interviews as will be seen later in this chapter) that the bilingual primary schools, which would be so important for preserving culture and identity, are exiguous and, in fact, exist in name only. Moreover, their mission seems, in fact, rather to fast-track original language speaking children into a Spanish-language regime as quickly as possible, commonly by the third grade. Tellingly, in the SEP major of Intercultural Bilingual Primary Education training for teachers there is just as much coursework for original languages as an object of study as there is coursework for English, both receiving only two classes of one semester each[133].

Rarely addressed by language documentation projects or by solely quantitative projects, this chapter is devoted to establishing what attitudes the participants have toward original languages and how the IUs have changed or influenced those attitudes, i.e. their language ideologies. These attitudes, expressed as likes or desires, or dislikes or disregards, are central for the maintenance of original languages. As shall be seen in the interviews, among the participants are several speakers of original languages who cannot be assumed to, a priori, have a positive attitude towards their languages due to their social environment while growing up. Moreover, with the help of the administration and professors at UIEM, several graduates were identified who were subsequently interviewed. This led to the

[133] (*Plan de Estudios 2012 | .:: SEP .:. SES :: Dirección General de Educación Superior Para Profesionales de La Educación ::.*, n.d.)

discussion of employment possibilities and experiences based on their undergraduate degree, some of the graduates of the earliest generations having been in the workforce for 10 years or so.

Most of the qualitative interviews were carried out in Mexico State at UIEM due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic-caused school closures, which closed UVIH before the planned research was complete. There was one interview done at UVIH in Ixhuatlán de Madero, Veracruz state. Interviews usually lasted around one hour. Most of the interviews at UIEM were done in a study room that the school graciously provided for that purpose. At UVIH, the interview was carried out in a vacant classroom. The guide used for the semi-structured interviews is shown in Appendix B, and the transcription of the original Spanish is shown in Appendix E, whereas in this chapter the English translation of the original Spanish is utilized.

**4.2 Overview of the People Interviewed**

Three current students were interviewed, two at UEIM with one being interviewed at UVIH. Additionally, there were five graduates interviewed, with one of the graduates now being a Tlahuica instructor at UIEM, one being a Mazahua instructor at UIEM, and two being culture and language instructors at UIEM. An interview was also conducted with the English language coordinator at UIEM who had graduated from a different university that was not part of the intercultural system. Finally there was an interview conducted with a community member native in Mazahua who is not connected with any university. In total, ten individuals were interviewed. In the following, all participants were anonymized with pseudonyms. Most of the participants are women (six of the nine participants), also reflecting the composition of the student body in general: 67% female at UIEM, and the composite figure for all four campuses of UVI is 61% female (Lehmann, 2013, p. 787). This is in line

with the traditional autonomous universities and follows a national trend of increasing female enrollment, although the IUs seem to think the trend is something unusual. For instance, the autonomous university in Toluca, an hour from UIEM, overall has about 43% percent male students and 57% female (*Universidatos: Estadística Por Género*, n.d.). The corresponding autonomous university in Veracruz is the Universidad Veracruzana in Xalapa, Veracruz, where about 47% of the student body is male and about 53% is female (UV, 2020, p. 8). Granted, the percent of female students is somewhat higher in the IUs, and this might be due to the cultural concept that males should be in professions or in some field where they can be the breadwinner, so perhaps they are more likely to seek employment or a professional degree from a traditional university. Be that as it may, Schmelkes (she was the first general coordinator of the CGEIB) states that:

> Intercultural universities have a total enrollment of approximately 7000 students to date. There is a high percentage of female students in the universities – something that was not expected. For women, intercultural universities are the only opportunity for attending higher education institutions. It is also worth noting that, though most students consider themselves indigenous, especially in the universities located in the central part of Mexico, the percentage of those who speak a native language is much lower – but they are rapidly learning. (Schmelkes, 2009, p. 12)

Unfortunately, she did not cite supporting data for the statement that "For women, intercultural universities are the only opportunity for attending higher education institutions". This statement is irreconcilable with the fact that the cited traditional universities have more female than male students. Nonetheless, the majority of IU students being women was an unintended consequence in the IUs (ibid.).

The UIEM graduate and Tlahuica instructor was Evelia. Tlahuica is a language spoken in one municipality three hours to the south of UIEM, closer to Morelos state than to UIEM. Evelia is originally from, and still resides in, San Juan Atzingo, Ocuilan, Mexico State. Tlahuica is a critically endangered language with about 700 speakers[134]. Evelia was in the first generation at UIEM, attending from 2004 – 2008. She learned Spanish first as a child and learned Tlahuica as a second language, although ethnically she is both Mixtec (mother) and Tlahuica (father). Her mother was a monolingual Mixtec speaker until she was taken to Mexico City at the age of 12 to work, while her father is a native speaker of Tlahuica. The language situation for Evelia is typical; she heard her father speaking Tlahuica when she was a child, but no one taught her Tlahuica or thought anything about it as there was no cultural or identity value attached to it, rather the contrary, as shall be seen in the interviews. Her older sister had dropped out of college to marry and Evelia's father did not want to put her in college saying she would end up getting married and drop out, but she prevailed, and while in high school applied to UAEM, the autonomous university in Toluca, which is the big traditional university in Mexico State that has about 80,000 students. She did not pass the UAEM entrance exam and, while deciding whether she would wait a year and reapply, she attended a presentation for a new university (UIEM) and decided she would apply to there. Evelia's father was highly skeptical of UIEM, because it was new and the first year it operated out of a store front as the campus had not been completed, consequently he wanted Evelia to attend UIEM for her first year, but to reapply later at UAEM. She agreed to this and

[134] (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI), 2009)

thought she would end up at UAEM, but she liked UIEM the first year, both the cultural content and the projects within the local communities, and decided to stay.

The one participant from UVIH, Griselda, was a fourth-year student about to graduate with a bachelor's degree in management for development (LGID in Spanish) [135] and is native in the Nahuatl of the Huasteca Veracruzana. As a child she spoke Nahuatl to her mother and Spanish to her father, in spite of the fact that he speaks Nahuatl, thus learning both languages. She is a traditional student in her early twenties who has lived all her life in the family home in Ahuacapa Segundo, only about half an hour from UVIH. It is remarkable that she still speaks Nahuatl, since she was discouraged from speaking it as a child, as will be explored in the interviews.

Griselda has both a smartphone and a computer, but just as an indicator of how rural the setting around UVIH is, she uses the school's Wi-Fi while at UVIH, given that there is no cell signal at the campus, to download the material she needs while at school and then works on her assignments at home in Ahuacapa Segundo. Owing to the rural remoteness of the area, at her home about half an hour away (some students commute much further), she does not have internet.

Another interview was conducted with Adelina at UIEM. Adelina is ethnically Mazahua and learned the language while at UIEM and is one of the UIEM graduates interviewed. She is now a Mazahua instructor at UIEM and also speaks English. Her grandparents speak Mazahua and in the neighborhood where she grew up, that is located in

[135] All students at UVIH earn a bachelor's degree in LGID, but there are five specialties in specific areas: Health, Sustainability, Communication, Languages, and Law

the nearby small city (and also municipality) of Jocotitlán, while growing up she heard Mazahua spoken in the street and she often wondered what was being said. Her parents do not speak Mazahua but she learned a small amount from an Aunt. She is the youngest of her three siblings and all her siblings have university studies and most are now teachers. So for her it was easy opting for university studies and she has a long standing interest in languages.

UIEM graduate David is a 35-year-old who holds a bachelor's degree in Communications who graduated when he was 31 years old and therefore is a little older than the more typical student of 18 – 22 years of age. Ethnically he is Mazahua but only knows a small amount of the Mazahua language. He mentioned that he wanted to study art and graphic design in Toluca but returned to his home near UIEM and did attend UIEM which he mentioned as being a less expensive option. This is a representative story: he still lives in his hometown and UIEM is within commuting distance. Also representative is his personal situation; both of his parents have only a primary education. David also mentioned that he was interested in Mazahua and he also studied Nahuatl a little at UIEM. His interest in Mazahua was based on the presence of Mazahua speakers in his community.

Former student Laura graduated in the second generation of UIEM, 2005 - 2009, and her husband, former UIEM student Roberto, graduated in the first generation of 2004 - 2008. Roberto is from a nearby ejido, San Juan Jalpa, and Laura is from Mexico City. Although one counter example does overturn a claim, the fact that she is from Mexico City runs counter to Lehmann's (2013, p. 782) claim that the IUs represent affirmative action and constructivism because UIEM, indisputedly, accepts many potential students, even if they are from the biggest city in Mexico and are from the mestizo mainstream culture. Laura majored in Language and Culture at UIEM and does not speak an original language, while Roberto

speaks a small amount of Mazahua. Laura decided to attend UIEM because she was attracted to the emphasis on original languages and cultures. When she was a student, she did not think she would be able to find employment based on her college degree of Language and Culture, but the interview will reveal otherwise.

Participant Esmeralda was the language program coordinator for the English language program at UIEM. She did not attend UIEM as an undergraduate but attended the normal school in nearby Atlacomulco de Fabela where she earned a bachelor's degree in the teaching of English. She is ethnically Mazahua but does not speak Mazahua. She went so far as to say that with her friends she speaks English rather than Spanish, which is an indication of the growing importance that English has in Mexico. Even though there is increasing interest in English, especially for job and career competitiveness, only about 5% of the population speaks or understands it and Mexico is number 38 in English proficiency even behind some other countries in Latin America, yet another example of SEP's underperformance ("The Growing Demand for English Language Learning in Mexico," 2016). One of her comments underscores the benefit that the IUs offer in simply existing in underserved areas and by simply offering college educations at an accessible price.

> [00:13:58.91] James: Studying has been easy or difficult?
>
> [00:14:03.86] Esmeralda: It has been very difficult, always being the oldest of six sisters.
>
> [00:14:09.25] Esmeralda: Yes, in economic terms it was extremely difficult. I feel that I've experienced a miracle to be able to finish the university given that we had to help at home. We had the material to learn English. They were very expensive, extremely expensive books in comparison with other undergraduate programs. Yes, to finish was a real challenge, well [pause], it was worth the trouble. Appendix E, Esmeralda 1. (The original Spanish of all the interviews is in Appendix E.)

Esmeralda is representative of many people in the area surrounding UIEM. She is the oldest of six sisters and she was the first person in her family to graduate from college. The fees for attending both UIEM and UVIH are approximately 500 to 700 pesos per semester, about equal to $70 USD per year (two semesters), based on the exchange rate at the time of writing. Several students commented that most books were provided online for free, although in the English classes the cost of the textbook was about 350 pesos (about $17.50 USD), but the textbook had enough material to serve for a few semesters. In the English class that I taught, there were several students who said they did not have the money for the textbook, while Esmeralda would visit the class each day insisting until they bought the textbook. The area around UIEM is a low human development index environment and that must be kept in mind to make a relative judgment about, say, what constitutes "a lot" of money or not. Esmeralda suffered economically during her undergraduate days and now is in a master's program for the teaching of English as a second language, a virtual program taught online. Just as an example of how the IU is impacting her area, she is from a rural town and the bus fare to travel back and forth to the normal school in Atlacomulco was a challenge for her parents. She is grateful, however, that she is not laboring in the countryside as that, she thinks, would be a lot of hard manual work. It is striking, though, that she managed to advance as far as the middle of a master's program while her parents, as is typical for these students, only have an elementary school education. Although neither her undergraduate degree or current master's program are from UIEM, her being the English language program coordinator at UIEM has enabled her master's program by providing her a salary with which she pays for her master's program. At the same time being the English program coordinator provides further work experience in teaching English.

Current student Fernando, a third year student in the communications program, is from a community about half an hour from UIEM and, not uncommonly, stated that his mother tongue is Mazahua, but that now he can only understand it, he cannot speak it. He went to a private school, Anáhuac in El Oro, a nearby small city, which is a more traditional school, but he did not care for it, and finally entered UIEM. One of Fernando's interests is photojournalism, along with teaching and the law. He mentioned that his mother speaks Mazahua, but none of his siblings speak it, but they can all understand it. He also reported having taken English in high school and more English at UIEM, where he said the classes were of better quality than at his former college, Anáhuac.

Possibly reflecting the low socio-economic level of the surrounding communities, over one third of the participants (all people in their twenties and thirties) reported that one of their parents had died within the last few years. Several of the students were recipients of social programs, including some for indigenous people due to the classification of their hometown, even if they did not speak an original language themselves. Even Lizbeth, a fifth semester undergraduate majoring in Language and Culture, who lives locally in San Felipe del Progreso, where UIEM is located, and thus saves herself the cost of public transportation, reported that the cost of attending UIEM was a significant expense for her family.

> [00:09:24.04] James: The educational expenses that you have are significant for your family?
>
> [00:09:32.66] Lizbeth: Yes, at first it was important, my father more than anything said to me, it's that, but, how is that going to help you? [the education at UIEM]. Appendix E, Lizbeth 1.

The comments above echo a recurring leitmotiv: the significant cost of university, as well as the questioning of the legitimacy of an intercultural education in terms of the lack of legitimacy of a heterodox institution. Lizbeth also reported an additional common theme that many reported: she was the first person in her family to go to university. This is consistent with the findings in a UVI report, which found that students not only were often the first in their families to attend university, but they might even be the first in their entire community to attend university. Some side effects of this in UVI were a reduced-cost, modified entrance exam and remedial instruction at UVI to make up for insufficient educational backgrounds (Messeguer Galván, 2015, p. 23).

Current student Lizbeth, third year student in the communication major, succinctly summed up the continuing poor stature of original languages in the community in a general comment:

> Lizbeth: Maybe these days they are in poor condition [original languages]. Despite that, and I feel that it is painful, you know, because [00:14:30.0] I think now that English has a stronger influence here in Mexico and everywhere really. So I see people from Atlaco [vernacular for Atlacomulco, a small nearby city that is important in the region] and they see a person that speaks Mazahua and then, anyway, yes, but it's bad that they see that person in that way, like they want to discriminate, as if that person was less, they say. It's that nobody deserves that. In fact, it's very nice that they speak Mazahua [00:15:00.0] something that is not seen now. Appendix E, Lizbeth 3.

Not only is Lizbeth commenting on the discrimination that Mazahua speakers still suffer, but also notes that the language is disappearing. In fact, the many traditionally dressed Mazahua women that can still be seen in Atlacomulco are usually senior citizens. It is also commonly reported by the participants that they themselves now see their communities in a different

light, that the original languages and cultures are now seen as being enriching, something that they did not appreciate before attending UIEM or UVIH. The issue of discrimination against speakers of indigenous language in Mexico is well documented, see for instance Martínez Novo's study on the representations of women street vendors in Tijuana (2003).

**4.3 Language Ideologies in the Family, in the University, and in the Community**

All interview participants had positive things to say in answer to the question, "What place should original languages have in Mexico". Of course, it is easy to praise original languages in the abstract, that was even done during the decades of the one language policy and *indigenismo*. It is, however, an entirely different matter to actively support these languages with actual resources.

According to Lizbeth, the third year communication student, speaking of the presence of native speakers of Mazahua at UIEM:

> James: Are there a lot who speak Mazahua? [referring to students at UIEM]
>
> Lizbeth: Yes, it seems to me [00:12:30.0] that in the fifth semester of Culture there are three, that spoke Mazahua since they were babies and Spanish is their second language.
>
> James: What Languages are the most common in your community?
>
> [00:12:49.87] Lizbeth: Spanish and sometimes older people speak Mazahua. Appendix E, Lizbeth 2.

Which again underscores the decline of Mazahua in the area, given that only three students are native in Mazahua out of the several hundred students in the third year class. If this is typical, it can therefore be surmised that there are only about two dozen or so native speakers of Mazahua in a student body of 1,400 in the heart of Mazahua country, and in a school dedicated to support the Mazahua language and culture, possibly 2% of the student body. However, in the quantitative instrument, 5.5% (9 out of 163) reported they spoke Mazahua as

a child. She refers to Mazahua as the language of "sometimes older people", it would seem that Mazahua is not common in her community: it is the language of the grandparents, foreboding a doubtful future for the language.

Esmeralda, the English language program director, mentioned that in her community, the most common language is Spanish while "older people of 40 years of age and up" speak Mazahua. While Mazahua is commonly framed as being spoken by "older" people, people with a profession speak English, again showing the importance given to English. Esmeralda was 28 years old at the time of the interview, so "older" was interpreted by her to mean 40 years old and older. Another participant, Fernando, also commented that there was no bilingual school in his small community although there was one in a nearby small town. He did comment that the recent governments have put more emphasis on English than on original languages. Most of the participants also reported that they themselves were well thought of and accepted in their communities as a student.

Laura, a graduate of UIEM, had been a student in the second generation at UIEM, 2005 – 2009, starting the second year the school was in operation in the language and culture program. The school was located far from where she lived, about two hours or more by bus, and UIEM was not well known being in only its second year of operation in a store front in San Felipe del Progreso.

> [00:11:03.36] James: How did your community accept you or what did they think of you [in regards to being a student at UIEM]?
>
> [00:11:15.07] Laura: Well, to start with they said that it's [UIEM] really far away, it was, like, inaccessible. I didn't know about this place until I got to know the university and it seemed to my family, to the people close to me like, what is that all about? How are you

> going to eat? [with a degree from UIEM] They didn't understand very well. It's difficult for them to understand, but when one goes along doing things in certain sectors they realize where we are going and that we are going that way, and with the culture. Appendix E, Laura 1.

This is a rather common family and community reaction, the reaction being that the IU is not valid or genuine and lacks legitimacy. There is often a feeling (ideology) expressed that since the IU is not a much larger autonomous and well-known university it cannot be of quality or value. The emphasis on original languages and cultures was even questioned, "how are you going to eat?" (with a degree in Language and Culture from UIEM). This is also a privileging of traditional university majors, especially ones that lead to professional careers, that is seen in comments such as, "what is that all about?", by and large an expression of skepticism. Or "how are you going to eat?", which is an expression of doubt that the major will provide economic benefit. These typical reactions to a young person's plan to attend an IU show what is going on in language ideologies among the general population, especially the previous generations of parents who did not grow up with intercultural or bilingual schools, and certainly not the rather recent concept of a multicultural Mexico, which very much remains an ongoing issue. Those previous generations grew up during a time of stigmatization of original languages, which is readily apparent in their comments and advice.

Evelia is a speaker and instructor of Tlahuica at UIEM, a severely endangered language spoken in the southern part of Mexico State near the southern border with the state of Morelos. Evelia's relationship with her language spanned her life culminating in her profound engagement with the Tlahuica language and culture while at UIEM. Evelia's father and paternal grandparents are native in Tlahuica. Her mother is from Oaxaca and her mother

and maternal grandparents are native in Mixtec. In fact, her mother was monolingual in Mixtec until she was 12 years old, when she was taken to Mexico City to work. The following passage of the interview with Evelia provides an oft-heard story about evolving consciousness and language valuation. Evelia had this to say about her first recollections of Tlahuica:

> [00:11:15.49] James: Did you hear, hear, hear [stumbles over Spanish past tenses] Tlahuica when you were a little girl?
>
> Evelia: Yes
>
> James: Did your father speak to you or did he speak with his friends?
>
> [00:11:25.53] Evelia: They spoke within the family and because of that I started to listen to it. He didn't teach it to me, I just started to listen because they didn't teach me Tlahuica. What I did was I listened to it and how they utilized it.
>
> James: When you were a little girl, could you understand it?
>
> [00:11:48.72] Evelia: A little bit. A little. A little. I learned to understand Tlahuica a little more studying it in school. When I was a little girl, I only knew things, things. For example, um, um, my mother, um I never heard Mixtec when I was little. I didn't become aware that my mother was Mixtec until I studied at the university. I knew my grandparents were from Oaxaca and that they spoke something, my grandparents, that wasn't Spanish, but I didn't know anything about the family or anything.
>
> James: Did it interest you or did you think about it [Tlahuica]?
>
> [00:12:29.59] Evelia: We didn't think about it, I didn't think, I didn't think about it, it was something of my father's, something of theirs. Appendix E, Evelia 1.

Evelia at this point is remembering that as a child she had scant interest and did not think about Tlahuica. This illustrates the previous generations active aversion and disapproval of Tlahuica, a common reaction when a language is stigmatized and discriminated against,

which was certainly true during the one language policy of the SEP, which was in force during her parents and grandparents generations. As will be seen in the unfolding interview, she was taught and acculturated by her family expressly to avoid speaking Tlahuica. Moreover, she did not even know her mother was native in Mixtec until she was in the university. This in itself indicates that her mother did not regard the Mixtec language or culture of significant value or at a minimum did not take pride in it, as she did not even attempt to provide her daughter with the slightest exposure to the language or culture. These attitudes that border on shame for one's language could be considered the result of the stigmatization that has occurred over centuries as indicated previously in chapter 2.

> [00:12:35.94] Evelia: But they didn't teach it to me, but I listened to it. Later, even my grandmother, I remember very well that she would ask us for things and suddenly she wasn't asking in language [Spanish]. Appendix E, Evelia 1.

This use of the word "language" or literally "tongue" (lengua) is a privileging of Spanish by implicitly calling it a language, apparently the only "language", as opposed to Tlahuica, which is a dialect (*dialecto*), or in other words, substandard compared to Spanish. The *dialectos* are thought of as not being real languages because they are not Indo-European and they traditionally had no written form in spite of the fact that linguistically they are all distinct languages and equal. In linguistics, it has long been settled that there does not exist more "sophisticated" or "superior" languages, even though the attitude is obviously alive and well in Mexico, given that a speaker of Tlahuica, of all people, uses such terms. In linguistics, all languages are on an equal footing, any other attitude is a cultural construction.

[00:12:48.81] Evelia: and then she would realize that it wasn't in language [Spanish] and she wouldn't go back to ask in Spanish, then. But that was also a way of learning Tlahuica.

[00:12:58.05] Evelia: I remember very well that my grandmother, she always, well, my grandmother, when we were eating my grandmother would say to me [Speaks Tlahuica] and I thought, eh, oh, oh yeah, "pass me the salt".

[00:13:13.28] Evelia: And then that stayed with me, because she, well, it was her mother tongue, she used it with us, but because she wanted the salt, it just popped out in the moment. But the truth is, she didn't want us speaking Tlahuica. She wanted us to speak Spanish because they wanted to teach us Spanish. Appendix E, Evelia 1.

The above exchange and the explicit memory expressed by Evelia above of her grandmother discouraging the speaking of Tlahuica illustrates a common theme still taking place in many homes, that the previous generations do not believe that the original language has any cardinal virtue, to say the least, that there is no reason to pass it on to the younger generation. Or perhaps better expressed, the original language has a negative value that will harm the younger generations. All are typical survival responses when the language is stigmatized. This is the altitudinous goal of the IUs, to attempt to change such negative stigmas nationwide. Evelia, as shall be seen, has a serious motive to be angry with her parent's and grandparent's generations, but manages to cast her experience in a positive light.

Evelia depicted in some detail her undergraduate days at UIEM, especially the first year, which was coincidentally the first year that UIEM was in operation, 2004.

[00:19:01.13] Evelia: When I arrived here [UIEM] there were classes of Tlahuica, but the person who taught the Tlahuica classes wasn't a speaker of Tlahuica, because the [university] system required someone with a university degree.

[00:19:14.12] Evelia: There wasn't anyone in our town, there doesn't exist a grandparent [who speaks Tlahuica and has a university degree]

[00:19:22.77] James: That's like having a traditional structure [to the university].

[00:19:29.52] Evelia: Yes, yes, yes. Appendix E, Evelia 2.

The above exchange shows that there were some teething issues as UIEM opened its doors for the first time. Obviously, the group it was built to serve, due to historical reasons as pointed out in chapter 2, did not contain university educated Tlahuica speakers, not a single grandparent had a university degree. But as is often the case in Mexico, the bureaucracy was inflexible with the strict requirement that an instructor have a university degree. It did result to Evelia's benefit, however, since she had never formally studied Tlahuica, as is seen below.

[00:19:34.38] Evelia: There was a semester, the first two semesters, my Tlahuica classes were with Doctora Marta, but she didn't teach us how to speak, she taught us to understand the language system.

[00:19:46.29] Evelia: So, that, helped me a lot, because I learned also, since I didn't know the language system. But a language class is to learn a language. You learn its [indistinct audio]. But I learned in my Tlahuica classes the language system. Appendix E, Evelia 2.

Doctor Marta was a linguist who participated in the first academic year in the Tlahuica program, but she was not a speaker of Tlahuica. It was still advantageous to Evelia because Evelia had no formal education in the language and this surely was a solid grammatical foundation, especially since later she became a Tlahuica instructor at UIEM.

[00:20:06.39] Evelia: And there were two semesters that we'll mention to you. We students, we wanted to learn more Tlahuica, that Tlahuica was made stronger, because that is interesting. In the first generation that arrived at this university we were 14, 16 students from my town, we were a large group. I don't know if I have the correct data,

> right now I don't remember, but we were a big group and we were all from my town, we were. Appendix E, Evelia 2.

It is noteworthy that the first cohort numbered about 16 Tlahuica students considering that they were all from the south of Mexico State, hours away from UIEM. There must have been an inspiring presentation that they saw in their high school that attracted such a large cohort. The entire UIEM original cohort was only 271 students for the entire student body (*UIEM | Historia*, n.d.).

> [00:20:38.76] Evelia: Since that year, there has not been seen a cohort so big. One, two, three, four come, but we were a group of 16 students, more or less. So we liked the linguistics classes, but we wanted to learn more. How do you say this or that? How did the university react to us wanting that? They paid an expert and the linguistics teacher. So we had linguistics classes with an expert, well, there were two teachers in front of the class. One would say something and the other would write it out.
>
> [00:21:17.91] Evelia: So all that also helped us quite a bit those two semesters and it was thought the university would continue that way. But I can say, the administrations change and the visions are different. So it only lasted two semesters, that the two teachers were there two semesters. Appendix E, Evelia 2.

This is a troubling comment and hopefully it was only due to start-up and teething issues at the newly opened UIEM. It certainly is not systematic planning to have two Tlahuica specialists one year and then no support whatsoever for the following three or more years. The IUs are not autonomous like the large state and national schools, so their funding is at risk to the political winds, as noted by Gorman (2016), but more importantly is being stated by Evelia from firsthand experience. It is quite positive, though, that someone like Evelia is bestowing upon the Tlahuica program some expertise and continuity, because, as an example

of what can occur, even in the bilingual primary schools in Yucatan, Cru (2014) found an anti-Mayan attitude among teachers and even a de facto pro-Spanish policy in the powerful teachers union, *Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores de la Educación* (SNTE).

> [00:21:54.19] Evelia: And that was really good. But after, nothing. It only lasted two semesters and then it was gone. And well, I finished my bachelor's degree on time and my thesis talks about the language and how it is being maintained through families from parents to children, that's to say, that the families, that there are families in town that have maintained the language, that's what my thesis says. Appendix E, Evelia 2.

The above comment of Evelia's, that Tlahuica survives because the families pass the language down from parents to children is a bit alarming, because as previously noted in the interview, at 13:13 minutes she makes the comment that her grandmother would spontaneously speak Tlahuica, but that she did not want Evelia to speak the language. Kellie Rolstad, an education professor at Arizona State University, found a similar anti-indigenous language bias in Nahuatl speakers of central Mexico, that monolingual speakers would strategize with a bilingual before entering a store in order to conceal that they spoke an original language because of the extreme stigmatization of being an *indio*. They would carefully speak Nahuatl only when the storekeeper could not hear them. Rolstad also reports that many bilingual couples make the conscious decision to only speak Spanish to their children (2001, p. 10), again a decision based on the stigmatization of the language. Additionally, Evelia's father, native in Tlahuica, made no effort to communicate using Tlahuica with Evelia or teach Tlahuica to Evelia, for the same reason of stigmatization. Also, for Laura, upon deciding to attend UIEM, the family reaction was incredulous and doubtful, "what is that good for?". Griselda, as will shortly be seen, also reported that her family asked

her to stop speaking Nahuatl because they feared she would suffer discrimination when outside of the community. If the family is the life support for Tlahuica (or other original languages) it is hard to see an bright future, at least not based on these interviews discussing the issue in the first person and personal childhood memories. Hopefully, Evelia's comment signals a change that the IUs can, and are, helping with, the change in attitudes about Tlahuica and other original languages.

In inquiring about Evelia's community and the previous generations, one can see that the IUs and people like Evelia are precipitating changes in the communities.

> James: Because of your experience here [UIEM], do you see your language and your community in a different way? Appendix E, Evelia 3.

This question and the following question caused quite a lengthy and somewhat poignant response, which I will reproduce in its entirety, in order to deliver the full impact of the passage:

> [00:24:32.64] Evelia: Yes, yes. Eh… [long pause] My community because we can strengthen many things. Uh huh! So they are there, but we need to strengthen them, no? That is what has helped me quite a bit here, that before I didn't see. Before being in the community was, for me, something normal, no? But right now there are many things we can't do, no writing in much of the town, nothing of history, of the language, of their cosmovision. So I can do many things, I feel that I can do many things.
>
> [00:25:12.4] James: How does the generation of grandparents and your generation see the community?
>
> [00:25:24.24] Evelia: Just as I grew up [Evelia was 33 years old at the time of the interview] the grandparents and adults, had the idea that the language [Tlahuica] was useless, the culture [Tlahuica] was worthless, that it was all worthless, and we had to

become a different, a different people. But then, exactly then, we were a big generation of students [She started at UIEM in the first class in 2004 when she was about 17 years old] and that we were studying the culture and we arrived at a point where we wanted to know everything about the culture and the language, well, we started to change our vision of them [the previous generations] also. And, you know, well, they have a job to do, their ideas, they help us and I can help them. This would be if, [00:26:00.0], [long pause], that's the way it is. So they [the previous generations] started to change their vision, but we lost so much time in the process. So much like that, that right now, well, although the majority of the people want to learn that Tlahuica [culture] it has an attitude that is very positive, but the years have gone by and gotten away from us, now many years and the grandparents now are older and there is a generation that doesn't speak it [Tlahuica] and in spite of the children wanting to learn it, but, well, we have this lack of knowledge [00:26:30.0], now we don't know, but in the customs we are very strong.

[00:26:34.91] Evelia: It is a people with some customs and traditions very, very distinct, and very strong, but in regard to the language, it's like that.

[00:26:41.55] Evelia: It's sad to suddenly see that no, that now there is a generation that stopped transmitting the language and right now we want to recover it, but it's costing us double, it's costing us a lot. Appendix E, Evelia 3.

Based on this excerpt, the passage alludes to a rapidly decreasing knowledge of the Tlahuica language and culture and the previous generations consigning the original language to its demise was for the best. However, just then a relatively large cohort of new students entered UIEM and received support for wanting to maintain the original language. The support did not last past the first year, but Evelia eventually became a Tlahuica instructor. It seems that if Tlahuica manages to survive, it is possible that UIEM played some fundamental part in

changing the language ideology of the community that in turn helped the survival of the language, not to mention that the mechanics of teaching the language were supported to some extent by UIEM. It is worth observing that Evelia has a motive to be angry with the previous generations, because they stopped transmitting the language to the younger generation, thinking that the Tlahuica language was useless and even harmful to one's prospects in life. Evelia herself was taught the attitude to ignore the language and was discouraged by her grandmother from speaking Tlahuica. It is those attitudes inculcated in a child that make such a huge difference later in life, but ironically, in part because of UIEM, it became her career, and yet, what could have been a motive for resentment against her grandparents, she sees the grandparents as a vital link and two-way street of language and knowledges. She is realistic, though, and she herself, in spite of not verbalizing it, in her discourse, she came close to expressing a foreboding feeling and forecasting possible extinction for Tlahuica. Hopefully, it is not too late, although it is critically endangered with only about 700 speakers as of 2010. Unfortunately, the 2020 census was suspended due to the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus pandemic, so the current tally of speakers of Tlahuica will be delayed.

Evelia was then asked about the impact that UIEM is having on original languages:

[00:37:58.1] James: Do you think the university has had a positive impact on original languages?

Evelia: Yes, at least on mine, in my language it has had a positive impact because the communities are small.

[00:38:12.14] Evelia: So the work has reflected back to us the students, also in lifestyle. And, well, it has changed other perspectives. So, before, for example it was, like, everything in denial, don't talk about that [don't talk about the Tlahuica language]. So,

> with this new perspective, the university tends to make it out that everything is alright, that they can grow with that. So I, for example, have a brother who is an accountant. [00:38:38.02] Evelia: At the start he also said to me, "your major, what's it for?" [Evelia chuckles at her brother questioning the legitimacy of her major]. Appendix E, Evelia 4.

This is unfortunately a commonplace attitude, not only within the community, but even within families, her brother's remark demonstrating a distain for his own language and culture. In this case, Evelia was able to respond with good humor, but obviously when you are a teenager just starting out in the university this kind of talk can be negatively influential. One of the Mazahua instructors at UIEM, who was not interviewed, commented about some similar experiences with remarks made by their siblings, who referred to Mazahua as "a garbage language" and questioning her Mazahua study as a waste of time. Of course, this stigmatization and risk of death to a language is common all over the world, especially where there is a colonial history or cultural dominance by one culture over another (Limited, n.d.).

Returning to the interview with Evelia, the case can be made that UIEM is a crucial factor in providing a last effort to save Tlahuica from extinction.

> [00:39:14.57] Evelia: In fact, my brother, he said to me, for what are you going to study that [Tlahuica]? And now that he sees what I do, he says "how nice". That's the first thing he says. That is, when I showed him, for example, that all those mushrooms[136] were the ones we ate and they are documented in science and have a name in our language he says, oh, that's so beautiful, I want my children to continue learning. And I told him yes, but we have to learn more.

[136] Where Tlahuica is spoken there are 30 - 40 different types of wild mushrooms.

> [00:39:44.03] Evelia: I told him one has to learn other cultures or the national culture, more importantly our culture, the Tlahuica. So it's double work then, but we can say that we can, we can, and all that passes.
>
> [00:39:56.09] Evelia: For example, right now we have a project with the instructors of development [The major is Sustainable Development] about the animals and we went to set-up cameras to see what animals there were in the area. So we encountered certain animals and all the animals also have their name in Tlahuica. Appendix E, Evelia 4.

Evelia has the good nature to take criticism, or maybe more accurately, the ability to withstand with good nature the questioning of the legitimacy of her school, her major, and her career, taking it all in stride and manages to laugh and turn the story to her favor. It is also noteworthy that she makes the connection that "scientifically named" animals and mushrooms also have their names in Tlahuica, somehow validating the language. This passage shows that Evelia is validating the language, putting it on a par with "scientific knowledge", which is usually conveyed in Spanish, thus placing Tlahuica on an equal footing with the prestigious "scientific knowledge".

Ominously, at the very end of the interview as Evelia was being thanked for her time, she suddenly added a commentary that she had not brought up during the interview:

> [00:59:55.09] Evelia: Well, for me at least, it suddenly takes effort to size-up if the language is going to be maintained or not. Because I see, I see many things. I see a society that is growing more with another culture. I see few areas; I see little interest from the State. So, if not, we won't be successful with those conditions. And so that is when I say, let's just see, Evelia. But at least if you can make some very good documentation of everything.

[01:00:23.93] Evelia: So it's when I say I'm going to do it. At least I'm going to make some very good documentation by all accounts. Appendix E, Evelia 5.

This is the closest any of participants in the interviews or conversations came to predicting that their language is in danger of becoming extinct. Hopefully, this dark foreboding will eventually be proven wrong. It also foregrounds the tenuous hold the IUs have on the community in general and, moreover, there is only so much influence that they can wield.

In a different interview across the country in Veracruz, Griselda is a fourth-year undergraduate student at UVIH in Ixhuatlán de Madero several hundred kilometers distant from UIEM and located near the Guld of Mexico about six hours by car from UIEM. Griselda is native in Nahuatl and Spanish. Her perspective shows that UVIH has made a difference in her way of thinking about Nahuatl.

[00:11:55.66] James: To study now at the university, does it represent something different compared to what you have done before?

[00:12:05.29] Griselda: Certainly, yes, at UVI. For me it's like being in my community. I feel very happy to be in UVI because it has opened many doors for me.

[00:12:21.58] Griselda: Let's just say that in some way the State or colonial times or colonization have left us, us, eh, like we say, things aren't so favorable for us. In UVI they taught me how I'm going to get ahead, but also to value my culture. To speak Nahuatl, for me, before didn't signify more than that I could do it, yeah. But now I have realized that it isn't just speaking my language for speaking it, but it forms part of the cultural patrimony of humankind.

[00:13:04.98] Griselda: So that makes me, let's say, more conscious and more, and I consider that it's very important that we speak whatever other language, no?, because it enriches us in ourselves and also we can help other people learn about us. Appendix E, Griselda 2.

Before she attended UVIH, Griselda took her language for granted, it did not signify anything to her beyond a means of communicating. It is interesting to note that in her community, most people speak Nahuatl, perhaps contributing to the taken-for-granted attitude. It is probably equally important to point out that in her community there are, surprisingly, no bilingual schools, even though there is a SEP mandate to provide such schools to communities of original language speakers. Even more so, her high school study was via *tele-bachillerato*, which means her high school was not in a brick-and-mortar building, it was online virtual classes. Even at UVIH, normally the English instruction is online without having a regular classroom and instructor. Having been attending UVI for four years, Griselda now looks at her language as cultural world heritage, quite an upgrade in thinking and prestige for Nahuatl. The small campus size and the fact that most students speak Nahuatl, probably both contribute to her feeling that she "is in her community", an admirable accomplishment on the part of UVIH. There's even more here to learn under the surface, as she relates how her family tried to inculcate in her growing up that Nahuatl was an impediment to her life opportunities and should be abandoned and left behind.

> [00:13:56.71] Griselda: Let's just say that the community when you are little teaches you that you ought to stop speaking your language because it makes us think, it makes us think that if you speak your language, from then on you will be discriminated against outside the community and you ought to stop speaking your language in order to develop as a professional, not like just any ordinary whoever.
>
> [00:14:23.64] Griselda: But speaking only Spanish, no, that is how colonial times left us.
>
> James: That's what they teach you? In school? Or in your family?
>
> [00:14:36.61] Griselda: huh, in my family. More like they do that in families, yes.
>
> Appendix E, Griselda 3.

This redoubtable exchange substantiates just how grave the situation is regarding language ideologies even in the communities themselves. Vexingly, it is a true statement that Nahuatl speakers will confront discrimination outside of their community, but a comment must be made about the ideological implications represented by the concept that the solution is to stop speaking the language. A more robust response would be indignation directed towards this discrimination. It correspondingly indicates that Griselda has been swayed by the environment at UVIH since she references colonial times as an issue, something that – considering her childhood experiences – would have been unlikely before attending UVIH. In fact, she had mentioned before that when she was growing up she just spoke Nahuatl while thinking about it as unremarkable. Hopefully, UVIH will be able to moderate or modify the environmental and familial pressure to cease to speak Nahuatl.

Participant Esmeralda, the English program director at UIEM who is ethnically Mazahua, summarizes the generational language shift that is ongoing in Mexico State. Her parents speak Mazahua, but she only speaks a slight amount:

> [00:20:37.12] James: What languages do you speak?
>
> Esmeralda: Yes, I speak Spanish, which is my mother tongue. And I can understand a little bit of Mazahua. I can't speak it, but I can understand it because my parents and they speak it, they spoke it when we were little between themselves or when some aunt or my grandmother arrived to visit, but they never taught us to speak it. Appendix E, Esmeralda 2.

The above exchange sounds ominously similar to Evelia's comments, parents who speak an original language, but by their actions did not pass the languages on to their children, representing a critical factor in the lack of intergenerational transmission. Esmeralda's assertion that she does not speak Mazahua deserves a bit of scrutiny. It is certainly possible

she is not a grammatical speaker, or maybe not a speaker at all, but assuredly if she can understand Mazahua as spoken by her parents, she has some level of proficiency in the language, at least listening comprehension. The point here is that she seems to be distancing herself from the Mazahua speech community, rather than attempting to establish solidarity with it.

> [00:20:57.86] Esmeralda: So, and afterwards English.
>
> Esmeralda: [00:21:00.0] Well yes, I love it [English]. I love English and a little French.
>
> Appendix E, Esmeralda 2.

It is worth bearing in mind that there is, in the younger generations in Mexico, now competition from English as a desirable and sought-after skill. English is considered by many to be a consequential factor in procuring a superior and desirable job, hopefully with an established company based in the United States. Borjian also found that English, while always having been considered desirable by the Mexican middle and upper classes, now has received interest across all of Mexican society, particularly as a means to improve employment opportunities (Borjian, 2015). As was observed at the IUs with the incoming, previously public school educated students poorly prepared in English (almost no English skills was common), Borjian also notes in the interviews with 74 Mexican English instructors, that the public SEP schools offer English instruction that is frequently of inferior quality, while private schools can offer better quality English instruction. Also worth bearing in mind is that Esmeralda did not study at UIEM, so she was not required to take four years of Mazahua, she was 28 years old at the time of the interview, so, of course, could have attended UIEM as UIEM was in operation since she was about 13 years old. Nonetheless, she

chose to travel further to Atlacomulco de Fabela, with more expense and hardship, and study at the Escuela Normal de Atlacomulco in order to be an English teacher.

Adelina, a Mazahua instructor at UIEM, for her part, said the hardest aspect of commencing the program at UIEM was becoming proficient in Mazahua. She is ethnically Mazahua but had been exposed to the language sparsely as a child. At UIEM, at least in its first few years, she commented that the Mazahua class was conducted solely in Mazahua, which was indeed a struggle for her. Adelina struggled because, unlike many of the students, she did not have a parent or other close relative who spoke Mazahua routinely at home. Then, one day while walking through town, she heard some street vendors speaking Mazahua. It was a couple around 60 years old, and the lady was dumbfounded that there was a university where students studied Mazahua. The couple took a keen interest in helping Adelina with Mazahua, that lasted throughout the years Adelina was attending school at UIEM.

The above and the following story show that the SEP and perhaps the IUs themselves are not doing enough to go beyond the support of regional, local languages and cultures and address the overarching and idealistic issue of societal education and change.

[00:32:43.74] James: huh, Now for a little change of theme. What differences are there between you and an urban student?

[00:32:57.45] James: Are there advantages or disadvantages?

[00:33:04.42] Adelina: Well, I have been able to see a few of the differences, because when I entered here [UIEM] I went to Mexico City, well, there I had contact with

different kinds of people. So that, and being there in the institute[137], well, you see many students from UNAM[138] or other schools that are very well prepared, very well known.

[00:33:30.0] Adelina: So, at first, when you say to them that you have come, they ask you, what university are you coming from? And I told them that I come from the Intercultural University of Mexico State [UIEM].

[00:33:45.05] Adelina: Many don't know that. Or many ask you, where is that? They don't know.

[00:33:53.38] Adelina: They don't know the [intercultural] model nor do they know the institution.

[00:33:58.48] Adelina: So then I explained to them about the objectives, the mission, the vision that the school has and everything. And many said to me, what do you study? I, well, study an undergraduate program in Language and Culture. And what languages do you speak? And I told them, well, Mazahua. Their response was, don't tell me people are still using that language! and that it is still spoken? Appendix E, Adelina 3.

The indelible attitude being expressed, the incredulous response that casts doubt upon her statement that she speaks an original language and even questioning that Mazahua is still spoken is noteworthy in its expression of a language ideology. One of the missions of the SEP is, along with an intercultural model for the IUs with the ambitious goal of making all schools intercultural, is to educate society of the multicultural nature of Mexico, now enshrined in the federal constitution, as mentioned in chapter 2 above. Apparently, based on

[137] National Institute of Anthropology and History, Spanish acronym INAH.

[138] UNAM is the big national university based in Mexico City, la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. It has almost 300,000 students and is the best university in Latin America according to the Shangai Rankings (*ShanghaiRanking's Academic Ranking of World Universities 2019 Press Release*, n.d.).

the dialogue with students from traditional and prestigious universities and institutes, the outcome to date is not satisfactory if a well-educated student at the best university in Latin America is completely unaware of UIEM or even of the intercultural model. Adelina did add, however, that some people accepted her Mazahua studies as valuable. Others, however, as she noted, held a certain level of discrimination against the idea. She added that some of her fellow students that studied Mazahua and whose appearance is more indigenous, per common perceptions in society, suffer discrimination when they search for work.

David, who was a slightly older student in his thirties, had studied art a few semesters at the big, traditional autonomous university UAEM in Toluca, the state capital, so he was in a position to make a comparative statement.

> [00:14:40.46] James: Was being here [UIEM] in the university, was it something very different compared to what you had done before?
>
> [00:14:50.04] David: Yes, yes, for the focus. Before I had already studied a few semesters of art at UAEM, in Toluca. So to come here is another context, the same San Felipe [location of UIEM] is another place. Since it is not so urban, then since arriving in the school it was also a different thing to get to know my fellow students that were native speakers of languages, of original languages. To hear them speak, to see my fellow teachers. I got to know the dance, los temascales. Yes, it was a different matter.
>
> Appendix E, David 2.

This panorama of a distinctive academic and social environment is indeed what the IUs were designed to promote. David's first-hand account is quite descriptive about the differences in the schools, one located in the big city, a respectable destination for students, and the other in the more rural San Felipe del Progreso, enabling an affordable university education for the local population.

Apparently, according to David, Mazahua is now being taught in some of the primary schools in the area.

> David: Most of my friends speak Spanish. [00:21:00.0]
>
> James: What languages are more common?
>
> David: Between Spanish and Mazahua, Mazahua, eh, there is a new interest, no? In the primary schools they have Mazahua. They are teaching more in the primary and so also, we are trying to promote all that with the audiovisual project we are developing that we are teaching to the children some songs that we do ourselves in the Temascal [indigenous dance]. We translate them into language [Spanish], [00:21:30.0] which are simple songs, [indistinct word] simple, quick. Appendix E, David 3.

This is a remarkable comment considering that for much of the hundred years after the Mexican revolution the SEP actively sought to, more than anything, to simply ignore original languages, which unfortunately fed and still feeds into their deterioration. Before about 40 years ago, it would have been exceedingly unusual for Mazahua to be taking a dignified place, or any place other than being impermissible and suppressed, in elementary schools. It appears that UIEM did have a positive effect on David's language ideology that is now having positive ramifications in the community. Moreover, David's comment indicates that the SEP and the CGEIB might actually be trying to take action to create an environment where interculturality can enter the mainstream.

Roberto, who graduated in the first generation of 2004 – 2008 from UIEM, spoke about how the community perception of UIEM has changed over the years:

> James: The intercultural university [UIEM] has changed in ten years?
>
> [00:14:13.39] Roberto y Laura: Yes, a lot.
>
> James: In what way?

> Roberto: The most visible is in its structure, not in its material. It has come to be known as a refence point in the municipality [San Felipe del Progreso], the intercultural university. That [00:14:30.0] has changed over time. When the university opened, our concept was that it was an ugly duckling of an education, like an education that was not legitimate, not recognized. Now, with this building [where the interview took place, classroom building Tlaloc] with this material of structure, the university has positioned itself as a reference point in San Felipe. Does it provide a quality [00:15:00.0] education? We can't say that, well, it has created another idea that the people from here, in that context. Before, one only thought about finishing secondary [middle] school and immigrating to the cities to work as cheap labor.
>
> [00:15:19.15] Roberto: And now the university has changed the way our parents think, like it is a new option to go after other types of work, [00:15:30.0] not just being cheap labor, but now thinking about teaching, researching, being a linguist, researching, being an academic. Yes, the concept of the university has changed in our [local] society during these last ten years. Appendix E, Roberto 1.

This is an enlightening history by means of a first-hand report on how UIEM has changed people's attitudes in the rural community of San Felipe del Progreso. The first generations, now having graduated ten years or more ago, commonly report this lack of legitimacy in the early years. The UIEM campus itself is a showcase of Mexican architecture based on pre-Hispanic themes. It commands quite a physical presence only about a kilometer or two from downtown San Felipe. It is also encouraging to hear that UIEM is reshaping how people think of themselves and their community, that they do not have to conceive of themselves as uneducated and unable to have more than a marginal job with low pay. UIEM is encouraging people to reimagine themselves and think of themselves as educated and capable of doing

more with their lives while remaining in the community. It is worth noting that this infusion of hope and a different way of seeing career prospects, along with the imposing physical presence of UIEM, when carried by students into the home, will also influence the attitude of the parents, which is important for language transmission.

Roberto reflected on being an ethnic Mazahua and what the language signifies:

> Roberto: It's difficult now a days that we, the young people, see ourselves as Mazahuas first. It's easier to deny it before society and say I'm a Mexican, nothing more and that I speak Spanish. Appendix E, Roberto 2.

This preliminary observation about identity reiterates the historical motivations for stigmatization of original languages in Mexico and Roberto unfortunately appears to be confirming this as this theme of identity reflects the nation-building project initiated by the revolutionary governments and the rural schools. This was precisely the objective of that project as discussed back in chapter 2, to destroy cultural and linguistic differences and only imagine that all citizens were "Mexicans" who solely speak Spanish.

> [00:27:50.14] Roberto: So then, I think that to position the original language comes to generate an analysis, an [00:28:00.0] individual introspection of who we are. Appendix E, Roberto 2.

Here Roberto is turning his attention to reflect upon the state of Mexican society and offers some tentative solutions to the issue of ethnicity and original languages in Mexico.

> [00:28:07.07] Roberto: It just occurred to me one day. Why doesn't it appear on our voter credential [the universal national identification in Mexico], the origin, let's say the group to which we belong, whether Mazahua, Nahuatl, Otomí? I think that, starting from there, we'll generate something in our heads. To say, I'm not just Mexican, I live [00:28:30.0] with the Mexican nationality, but I belong to a group named whatever,

> Mazahua, Nahuatl, Otomí, I might speak it or I might not speak it, that is also something that should be, let's say, questioned in academia. Appendix E, Roberto 2.

It is illuminating to hear Roberto deconstructing the concept of Mexican identity and suggesting a multicultural alternative, that has for so long been buried in denial at a national level. He concludes that academia should be charged with considering this weighty issue. Roberto was referring to academia as an agent of social change in the context of social justice. In his mind, having a stronger recognition of original cultures in society is moving in the right direction.

On a less optimistic note, Esmeralda, the English program coordinator at UIEM, relates the experience of one of her younger sisters who did graduate from UIEM and talks about her abilities in Mazahua, which her sister studied for 4 years at UIEM and whose parents speak Mazahua between themselves.

> [00:22:50.09 Esmeralda: Sometimes she [her sister] speaks with them [the parents] a little in Mazahua or in the street when she encounters some other person that is older. She graduated two years ago.
>
> James: And how is her [00:23:00.0] Mazahua?
>
> Esmeralda: Eh, like different, very different. She just barely learned 50 percent because she doesn't like it either. Also, it's a requirement of the school and is needed to get your degree. Appendix E, Esmeralda 3.

It has to be whether or not a positive contribution to language ideology is taking place when the student is coerced into the study of a subject they do not care to study, resulting in only a limited ability to speak Mazahua and probably not imbuing the student with a great regard for the language. On the other hand, it should be added, since her parents have only primary school educations, that the strategic location of UIEM is changing the higher education

landscape in the region simply by its presence. Esmeralda commented that one problem with studying an original language is that there are people in the community who actively belittle and ridicule the undertaking. Esmeralda said there were two students at UIEM from her hometown of San Pedro el Alto, in other words very few. Moreover, she mentioned that many students in San Pedro el Alto drop out of primary school to work and regretting that as consequences of their lack of education and of the hard physical work young people are undertaking at 12 or 14 years of age, alcohol abuse, and unwanted pregnancies also follow. Obviously, UIEM and the IUs in general have a monumental imperative in changing attitudes not only about language ideologies, but the importance of education in general.

When asked what place should original languages have in Mexico, Esmeralda replied that they should have a recognized place in Mexico because of what they represent and because their speakers suffer discrimination.

> James: What place ought original languages have in Mexico? What do they deserve from the government, from the people?
>
> [00:28:11.9] Esmeralda: I feel that original languages ought to be truly recognized as a bridge of communication between the persons who have knowledge [indigenous knowledge], that have wisdom, with the community and they ought to have recognition from the government, they [the government] ought to give them some benefit, some economic help for the persons that speak this language, because sometimes they suffer discrimination [00:28:30.0] because they speak that language. So, I feel it shouldn't be that way, they ought to have their rights and obligations. Appendix E, Esmeralda 4.

In this excerpt Esmeralda is voicing what is readily apparent to many, that original peoples should be recognized and supported by the government because of the discrimination they suffer due to speaking their language. This is also a consequential distinction, that the

government should provide resources to support original peoples. Esmeralda, in voicing the opinion that there should be economic support, is recognizing that many speakers of original languages are economically marginalized. Discrimination in Mexico is widely acknowledged, for instance (Medrano, n.d.) published in the online UNAM magazine "Voices of Mexico" (:: *:: Revista Voices of Mexico · Issues · No. 80 ::*, n.d.) an article pertaining to the widespread discrimination against original languages and peoples and ascribed to the media the practice which is well known as *indigenismo*, demonstrating how these negative attitudes are ingrained in society.

> [00:28:35.72] James: Do you also think that the intercultural university helps in that aspect?
>
> [00:28:41.6] Esmeralda: To a certain amount, yes, it's helping that the language is recognized and valued. Appendix E, Esmeralda 4.

Here, Esmeralda affirms that the IUs help in language recognition, but with the qualifying phrase "to a certain amount". As has been noted by other authors, the IU experiment is still a work in progress (Gorman, 2016; Lehmann, 2013). Esmeralda further reiterated that in her community there is a serious problem with drugs and alcohol, which she attributed to the fact that many people drop out of primary school and find work in Mexico City while still being in their teenage years, but then return to San Pedro el Alto on weekends and spend all their money on drugs and alcohol. She also mentioned the high rate of teenage pregnancy in her community. Not directly related to language ideology, she further mentioned that the local *delegado* (city council member) receives government funds for fighting delinquency but spends the money on themselves for their personal benefit.

### 4.4 Language Ideologies from a Generational Perspective

An interview that took place with a community member not associated with UIEM was with 87 year-old Adelita. Also present were her daughter Odalis, and her granddaughter, 27 year-old Yazmin. Present at the interview were, then:

a) Adelita, 87 years old, the primary participant in the interview

b) Odalis, 49 years old, the daughter of Adelita

c) Yazmin, 28 years old, the niece of Odalis and the granddaughter of Adelita

The three women had lived their lives in San Pablo Atotonilco, which is located about 40 minutes from UIEM. San Pablo Atotonilco is about 20 minutes by car from Atlacomulco, thus closer to Atlacomulco than to UIEM, an area highly impacted by Atlacomulco, an important regional and largely Spanish-speaking city. The three women are catholic and none of the three women are associated with UIEM. Adelita, who was born in 1933, provided some very important information about the 1930s and 1940s. When she was a little girl, she stated that the entire rural areas of the municipalities of Atlacomulco and San Felipe del Progreso (where UIEM is located) was monolingual in Mazahua. When asked about the languages spoken in the area, Adelita related that when she was a little girl, "Just Mazahua [00:03:00.00], just Mazahua". Elaborating on the school topic with Adelita:

[00:07:19.70] James: So, which, what schools did you attend?

Adelita: I didn't go to school.

James: none?

Adelita: none.

James: Was it very common in those years [1930s and 1940s]?

[00:07:30.00] James: Was it common back in those years that there weren't schools?

[00:07:34.95] Odalis: Mother, tell him that there weren't schools.

Adelita: Yes, there were, but far from San Pablo.

Adelita: We [indistinct].

[00:07:50.33] Adelita: It dries my mouth [Speaking, for which she wanted a glass of water].

[00:08:10.72] James: In those years, all the schools used Spanish, only Spanish?

Adelita: uh huh [Nods in the affirmative.] Appendix E, Adelita 1.

Adelita never attended school, which at that time would have been only in Spanish, most likely part of the revolutionary rural schools system, which confirms from a first-hand account the one language policy of the SEP (cf. Martínez Buenabad 2015). In addition, with subsequent communication with her granddaughter Yazmin, it was revealed that in Atlacomulco, the nearby important small city and seat of the municipal government, Spanish was the operational language including for people who worked in the city. Adelita also commented that currently, there are few Mazahua speakers in San Pablo Atotonilco, all of them being in their eighties and nineties.

Mazahua is Adelita's mother tongue and she was monolingual in Mazahua until her children started to attend school when she was about 20 years old, ca. 1953. She started having children at about 15 years of age, and she learned Spanish out of the necessity of communicating with teachers at her children's school. At one point in the interview, a discussion took place about who of the three women had Mazahua as their mother tongue. One half of the interview took place in Mazahua, as that was Adelita's mother tongue, while Odalis served as interpreter, which she appeared to do quite competently. Odalis interpreted into Mazahua for her mother Adelita and into Spanish for me, being that Adelita spoke about half the time in Spanish and about half the time in Mazahua. However, when asked, Adelita's daughter Odalis stated that she did not speak Mazahua, that she could only understand it.

Considering that Mazahua is non-Indo-European and tonal, however, to be able to interpret the language into Spanish seems to demonstrate competency in the language. Although not a proof and being a side issue, it could be that Odalis' denial of speaking Mazahua (and to a lesser extent the granddaughter Yazmin, as she apparently did have limited skills in Mazahua) is related to the stigmatization of speaking Mazahua, even though she denied that she had any problem or shame in speaking the language. This is an overt attitude, akin to *indigenismo*, of honoring the "old" language and showing pride in it, while the covert attitude is represented by her saying that she does not speak Mazahua, even though she has a high degree of fluency in the language, showing an aversion to admit she speaks the language. Odalis reported that what had customarily occurred in the community was that an older brother would travel to Mexico City to find employment. Upon his return, he would express the attitude (ideology) learned in Mexico City that conversing in Mazahua was disgraceful and dissatisfactory. The outcome would be the younger siblings would stop speaking Mazahua. This seemed to be reflected in Odalis' assertion that she was not native in Mazahua, while simultaneously being a competent interpreter of Mazahua into Spanish, a discordant juxtaposition of ideology and reality.

### 4.5 Employment Expectations and Experiences

UVIH in Veracruz has a strong connection with the surrounding communities by initiating student fieldwork projects in the community during the first year and continuing through the entire four year undergraduate degree (Mateos Cortés, 2017, p. 158), which was likewise confirmed through conversations with students and educators at UVIH. Intercultural higher education in Mexico aims at creating new, culturally and linguistically appropriate, professional career opportunities that empower indigenous youth and their communities. In

this paper, empirical results are presented from a research project which ethnographically accompanies graduates from an intercultural university, the Universidad Veracruzana Intercultural (UVI), located in four indigenous regions of the South Eastern Mexican Gulf coast. After briefly describing the way this university operates by opening up alternative kinds of knowledge, the features of the new indigenous professionals who graduated from this institution are analyzed. In the second half of the article, the graduates' professional and community development related capacities to link diverse sources of academic and non-academic knowledge are empirically studied; finally their emergent political broker capabilities and community roles are explored (Mateos Cortés, 2017, p. 158). Similarly, at UIEM there is community involvement which includes a community health outreach program associated with its nursing program, as well as other projects. One other contrast between the IUs and traditional schools is that the IUs do not use a traditional all-or-nothing rigid entrance exam, the two schools in this study do indeed have entrance exams, but it is weighted with a personal interview that allows leeway in accepting students, which might also have the unintended consequence of negatively influencing potential employers with a more conventional way of thinking. Mateos Cortés (2017, p. 165) found, in the case of UVI, that graduates were entering into unstable self-employment in a capacity as cultural brokers. Lamentably, the only UVIH interview was with a student about to graduate, who did not have an employment history yet, as a consequence of the SARS-CoV-2 shutdown of schools. On the other hand, at UIEM there were several discussions about work, employment, and career during the interviews with graduates.

After graduating from the first generation of UIEM in 2008, Evelia, the Tlahuica instructor, worked in the museum of the National Institute of Anthropology and History

(INAH in Spanish). One concern that students expressed is that of encountering employment after graduation with a degree in, for example, Intercultural Communication or Management of Intercultural Development, but Evelia does have a representative professional story, as will be seen below, where I summarize points from the insights gathered from the other graduates I interviewed. She managed to find employment with a scholar, linguist Dr. Martha Muntzel, in INAH. Dr. Muntzel's career encompassed language documentation of Tlahuica, Evelia's language. From there, Evelia returned to UIEM as a professor of Tlahuica. What is typical of her story is that graduates manage to find work related to their studies, whether this can continue long-term as the supply of graduates increases year-over-year remains to be determined.

Evelia did, for the most part, find employment based on her degree in UIEM. She graduated in the first generation of UIEM in 2008 and then worked for two years in INAH as an assistant to a researcher who documented the Tlahuica language and culture. After that, she helped with the 2010 census working for the Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática (INEGI). In 2011 she rejoined UIEM as a professor of Tlahuica and was subsequently certified as an instructor for teaching independently, in 2011. She has been at UIEM continuously since then. Currently, there are eight students studying Tlahuica with six being from the area where Tlahuica is spoken and two from the city of Toluca which is about halfway between UIEM and the Tlahuica region. Historically, Tlahuica was spoken in the southern part of the municipality of Toluca, but today Tlahuica is principally spoken in only one locality, San Juan Atzingo in the municipality of Ocuilteco, Evelia's town, approximately one hour south of the municipality of Toluca in Mexico State. There are no

students studying Tlahuica that are from the vicinity of UIEM, where the predominant original language is Mazahua.

> James: When you received your bachelor's degree did you find work that was what you expected when you were a student?
>
> [00:24:11.22] Evelia: Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes because I really liked to continue helping with research. But, for that I need to earn some academic titles and get some academic degrees (she laughs). Appendix E, Evelia 3.

This affirmation is a recurrent theme among the graduates interviewed, that they have found employment related to their studies at UEIM, although it is not possible to infer any kind of generality based on a limited number of qualitative interviews.

Fernando is a 19-year-old student in the third semester of his program at UIEM. He is representative of the economic status of many students.

> [00:13:32.42] James: What would you do with your first paycheck, when you work?
>
> Fernando: My first paychecks?
>
> [00:13:45.85] Fernando: Well, one would be for basic necessities that I have, obviously food, clothing, shoes, everything like that because I feel that is basic. Appendix E, Fernando 1.

This reflects a likewise common theme in the interviews, that school is an economic challenge for students and for their families, not necessarily because of the 1,000 or 1,500 peso annual school fee, but for overall cost of school fees together with the cost of public transportation, the cost of the deferment of employment, etc. For instance, Fernando said that the cost of the university was a hardship at times and he will buy basic necessities with his first paycheck.

Adelina, a Mazahua instructor at UIEM, is one of the graduates of UIEM with a major in Language and Culture and during her six or eight years since graduating, she found she could find work in different capacities, but all were fortuitously related to her language studies:

> [00:09:14.48] James: What does it signify to be a student in this institution?
>
> [00:09:20.85] Adelina: Well, for me, I don't know anything more than my situation. But the truth, for me it has helped me a lot to have studied here. I have seen it as an opportunity that has opened other doors for the better. This work is something that I never thought I would have, truthfully, because when I returned [home] from here I had various job offers. Appendix E, Adelina 1.

It is interesting how Adelina states clearly that she can only speak to her situation and that perhaps she has had employment offers and opportunities resulting from her UIEM experience. Nonetheless, it remains to be seen if the UIEM graduates can continue to find employment since many of the graduates including Adelina have found employment with government agencies and public schools, which might not be a scalable resource over time. Her case might be somewhat unusual also in that she wrote her undergraduate thesis about a Mazahua custom, the pilgrimage to the volcano de Jocotitlán to honor the harvest, partly in Spanish and partly in Mazahua. The pilgrimage dates back to about 1800 and the volcano dominates the local landscape with a summit elevation of almost 4,000 meters (about 13,000 feet), which rises above the surrounding valley of about of about 2,500 meters (about 8,000 feet) elevation. She did mention that having the ability to speak, read, and write Mazahua[139]

[139] Native speakers, like 87-year-old Adelita, very rarely have skills in reading and writing Mazahua.

was the weightiest factor that procured her the position at the National Museum of Anthropology; the majority of her Mazahua skills were developed during her undergraduate studies at UIEM. Adelina continues:

> [00:09:49.11] Adelina: Better put, I don't know if it was because I'm from one of the first generations [of UIEM], but, for example, before coming back here, like this work. [00:10:00.0] Adelina: I worked in the National Museum of Anthropology. I was a researcher, I worked there almost four years. I was in a project. Yeah, I was in a project of ethnography of the indigenous regions of Mexico. So I, together with other researchers, conducted, we were in charge of doing research about the five original communities [the five indigenous peoples] of Mexico State in this case, well, as I pertain to the Mazahuas, it was my chance to just do more to highlight those things about the Mazahuas. But, well, when I returned from here [UIEM], I looked for work as a teacher, like an educator and I had the opportunity, too. Recently I left here to go and work as the director in a bilingual Otomí preschool. [00:11:00.0]. Appendix E, Adelina 1.

The bilingual schools where Adelina found work as director is a Spanish - Otomí primary school. In Mexico, the bilingual schools that are Spanish - Original language (not Spanish – English, which are common through high school), these Spanish – Original language bilingual schools being referenced here, are primary schools intended, despite the mandate of the CGEIB, to assimilate students into Spanish instruction by the third grade.

This is a noteworthy work history including working as the director of an Otomí preschool in Temoaya. Temoaya is a municipality and a city about an hour to the south of UIEM and about 45 minutes from the large city of Toluca, in Mexico State. According to the INEGI database, the municipality of Temoaya has a population of 83,395 inhabitants with 20,514 of whom speak Otomí, or about 25% of the population. There are only 32 Mazahua

speakers in the municipality and in total only 272 speakers of other original languages (*Población de 3 Años y Más*, n.d.). Curiously, Adelina, a speaker of Mazahua, has found work where there are very few Mazahua speakers, also a recurrent criticism of the bilingual schools, that they do not employ speakers of the local language, thereby severely impairing their missions. She did comment, however, that she can understand a little bit of Otomí, which is undoubtedly due to both languages being closely related in the Oto-Pamean subfamily of the Otomanguean languages. It is actually surprising that Adelina found employment in a bilingual school at all. A recurring theme in the interviews with native speakers of original languages is that there are no bilingual schools in their communities, likewise noted by UVIH student Griselda. This lack of bilingual schools is another example of an abuse of linguistic rights of minority languages owing to a lack of funding and, consequently, a lack of basic, primary education, especially in a federal preschool where Adelina worked (*Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 2015, p. 26). Adelina did mention that Otomí was spoken in the preschool mainly with the parents, many of the two dozen children attending the school did not speak Otomí and that some could only listen and understand it. Part of the school activities was to study basic aspects of Otomí, such as greetings, but the instruction was in Spanish. This must be born in mind in addition to the scarcity of bilingual schools in Mexico, that bilingual schools often are bilingual in name only. As an aside, Adelina commented that in the bilingual preschool some of the parents were monolingual in Otomí and their cultural orientation is extremely traditional. When she was introduced as the new director of the preschool, the following day several of the fathers showed up at the school, but none of the mothers. The fathers openly expressed disappointment that the school had not chosen a man for the job of director. The Otomí

women have a distinct manner of dress, similar Mazahua women, while the men do not, which was evident in the dress of the mothers at the preschool, according to Adelina. It would seem that the bilingual schools in Mexico have an additional challenge as culture brokers, none of which appears to be effectively redressed. Remarkably, all this takes place less than an hour away from Toluca, a large Hispanicized city. After four years with INAH at the museum, then the two year stint as the director of the preschool, Adelina returned to UIEM as a Mazahua instructor.

Adelina is representative of the majority of participants in the interviews, they at times would speak addressing issues in the communities, such topics as young people who do not want to study and only desire to emigrate to encounter employment, but the interview participants for the most part wanted to stay and work in their communities, often adding the caveat that they know how difficult it is to find employment. The interview participants were volunteers who responded to my invitation to participate and include two language instructors who are also committed to their languages and communities. In the following dialogue, Adelina mentions that evangelization reached her town early, which is certainly the case as the parish priest of Jocotitlán as mentioned back in chapter 2, published a catechism with linguistic notes about Mazahua in 1637 (Burkhart, 2014).

> [00:24:41.05] James: So, would you like to work in your community? Do you want to leave in the future?
>
> [00:24:49.93] Adelina: Well, for me I would like to work in my community, in my community, over there [the interview took place in UIEM, 40 minutes from Jocotitlán]. I'm from downtown Jocotitlán, for sure. So over there, like [00:25:00.0] the evangelization arrived very quickly.

> [00:25:04.86] Adelina: Over there is primarily where Mazahua was spoken. But upon arriving this thing about baptism quickly came evangelization, well, all the Mazahuas moved to the outskirts [Reference to the Spanish arrival in the sixteenth century]. So, there where I live, in the city center, now there are almost no people who speak Mazahua.
>
> [00:25:34.14] Adelina: Not now. So this, well, now no more. In the neighboring communities. But yes there are persons that still speak only Mazahua that speak it and in Jocotitlán that speak it in San Felipe or in Atlacomulco it's different because still it's good. Owing to that evangelization, now almost they use many loan words from Jocotitlán [00:26:00.0]. So here, still in San Felipe [UIEM is located in San Felipe], they use a little bit more to say how is the language. So this, well, for me yes I would like to work in some project or some activity in Jocotitlán, because this, well, I would want that they speak, still the Mazahua language can be rescued and practiced, in addition to teach them all that is the culture [00:26:30.0]. Appendix E, Adelina 2.

This is a commonplace desire among intercultural students and graduates, namely to work in their community, both with the language and with the culture in some capacity. In Mexico State, there is more of an apprehension or foreboding sense that the original languages face the possibility of extinction, "…the Mazahua language can be rescued and practiced…". There is also often some, almost unconsciously, cultural content, such as in the above dialogue with Adelina, where she obliquely acknowledges how when the Spanish priests arrived, the Mazahua people were forced out of Jocotitlán, a city where they were the original inhabitants.

Adelina, like Evelia, had a stint working at INAH in Mexico City and had some interesting comments describing that experience that illustrate how ideologies can produce

discrimination related to the employment environment. She was met with incredulity when people heard that she had worked at INAH, which in Mexico is a highly prestigious and culturally important institution, this incredulity is interrelated with cultural or perhaps even employment discrimination.

> Adelina: So then, many people [00:36:00.0] were surprised that I could have worked there at the National Institute of Anthropology and History because they would say to me, you come from INAH? [Acronym in Spanish] You studied at the National School of Anthropology or you didn't? And they say that almost all who know, that almost all the researchers from the museum of the Institute, well, they are from INAH, or they are from UNAM or they come and everyone thinks that I had studied there, but no, when I tell them that I am from here [UIEM]. [00:36:28.92] Adelina: *Then they just sit there just sort of surprised a little bit.* (Italics mine) Appendix E, Adelina 4.

It must be underscored how much INAH and UNAM are respected in Mexico, as they are both cultural and societal flagships and cultural cardinal compass points in Mexico. For instance, whenever there is a natural disaster, such as an earthquake or a major oil spill, the government immediately presents UNAM professors to explain the situation and why and how the government is taking action. Also, anthropology is a popular discipline in Mexico, and the federal government likewise often parades INAH researchers whenever there is a discussion of cultural issues, especially historical cultural topics. INAH is a crown jewel of the anthropology establishment in Mexico and the comment by Adelina that her own local people could not accept and process that she, from UIEM, an intercultural school "out there" in the hinterland in Mazahua country, could have been a researcher at INAH in Mexico City, itself the seat of the federal government (and another culturally laden imaginary), is revealing. Even her coworkers at the prestigious institutes simply assumed she was from

UNAM or some other prestigious institution, demonstrating how little prestige and consideration original languages and peoples, and more to the point IUs have in Mexican society. It is remarkable that INAH has so much prestige and Mazahua so little, the opposite should be true: after all, the subject of study and object of protection by INAH are languages like Mazahua or Tlahuica. Original languages should not be objects of study in order to support the prestige of INAH and create prestigious careers in the metropole. This issue extends to the members of her immediate family, who were not enthusiastic about her decision to study Mazahua, but after they learned that she was working in INAH in Mexico City, their attitude changed considerably and they congratulated her on her studies.

David is a 35-year-old, who graduated a few years previously with a major in Communication. He also has an interest in art, graphic design, and photography. In spite of commenting that he had not been using his communication degree directly in his work life, like other participants he had managed to find employment not far removed from his studies at UIEM:

> [00:08:03.29] James: How has it been for you in your field of work? Eh, eh, did it turn out like you expected?
>
> [00:08:11.38] David: Well, more or less I haven't found what I would like, well, how to develop my career, but I've found work. Not directly in communications and all, but I have developed different jobs, like in the city hall of Atlacomulco. I was in charge [00:08:30.0] of a dining facility for indigenous children and right now I'm managing a good project. Aside from my liking to work as a photographer, I'm developing a project for the National Institute of Indigenous Peoples. I applied for the project. I applied for this support for a project that I was developing and right now I'm developing something of an audiovisual production in language [Mazahua]. So they're helping my relatives,

> friends that speak Mazahua well. All the production [00:09:00.0] is spoken in language [Mazahua] with subtitles [in Spanish]. Appendix E, David 1.

In the general population, it is common to call Mazahua a "dialect" which is a pejorative, rather David called it a language, which, of course, it is, and this is an indication of the positive impact that the IUs are having on ideologies. It is remarkable how David has managed to remain purposely in his career and has maintained his ties to his community and at the same time developed his creative talents. Although he underrates the value of the work experience he has had post-UIEM, in spite of that he has had some career related opportunities over those few years.

Roberto and Laura, both early graduates of UIEM and who are married to each other, were interviewed together. After graduating from the first and seconds generations of UIEM respectively, in 2008 and 2009, they were successful in finding work related to their academic programs.

> James: So you were outside of the community [of Jalpa, near UIEM] for almost seven years, for seven years?
>
> [00:39:54.14] Laura: We worked in Puebla, Guanajuato, Morelos, in [00:40:00.0] many states, and we participated in a national evaluation from Mexicali to Yucatan, and, well, it was cultural development and with the people as communities
>
> [00:40:21.68] Laura: So we were there a long time away and we just returned.
>
> James: Were you teachers?
>
> [00:40:25.31] Roberto: Not teachers, no, we are developers of social services.
>
> [00:40:34.76] Roberto: We worked here in Mexico State. Before that, there arose an opportunity for us to go and work in the state of Morelos providing social assistance. The social assistance was about knowing how to conduct community assemblies,

identify problems, well, by some means developing and surfacing solutions by those same community assemblies [00:41:00.0]. We had to have workshops, in this case it was about the culture of water, because we worked with water. About the systems of potable water in rural communities [Mexico has issues related to sufficient potable water for the population].

James: It was a program of the Mexican government?

Roberto: The company was from the government and we worked for the company. We worked in the company and a proposal came out for us to go to Guanajuato and afterwards return to Puebla and [00:41:30.0] in Toluca. The last job that we had was an evaluation for the Interamerican Development Bank about indigenous communities. Appendix E, Laura and Roberto 1.

Particularly in public institutions, it is common in Mexico to work for a contracted period of time at the end of which the worker's employment ends. For instance, many of the academic and administrative jobs at UIEM are by contract for 1, 2, or 3 years. In the case of Roberto and Laura, it seems somewhat more sustainable to have a career-oriented job that lasts for seven years. For one, seven years of such experience is valuable to have on a résumé. Also, it remains to be seen if the constant supply of graduates, about 300 per year from UIEM but only about a dozen from UVIH, can be absorbed via this type of employment, i.e., working in a government related job to aid the community development of infrastructure, such as the water supply. It is also worth noting that both Laura and Roberto, at the time of the interview, were working for UIEM as culture and communications professors. In regard to sustainable work opportunities, UIEM is indeed enabling employment opportunities notwithstanding student anxiety about finding a job.

Griselda, a graduating senior from UVIH, is representative of the source of apprehension for a lot of undergraduate students: the dread of the upcoming search for gainful employment and misgivings about having a degree in language and culture from an IU.

> [00:05:13.05] James: How do you visualize the work environment that awaits you? [00:05:20.01] Griselda: It's difficult, it's difficult because, well, we know that there are a lot of professionals that have a lot of professions, they're all very important, since then, and [00:05:30.0] for example, the, the, eh, the intercultural developers [The graduates of UVI], well, always when we go to a different community, to a different place, when we are in a different environment that isn't UVI, they always ask us, but, what is that?, no? And so we try to explain what it is that we do, what it is that we are searching for there, but they don't comprehend because I think it is necessary that [00:06:00.0] this form of intercultural teaching, well, should be applicable everywhere, no? Appendix E, Griselda 1.

Griselda is expressing that regardless of having the experience of four years of studies as an undergraduate, when in a community environment away from UVIH Griselda is confronted with questions from people who cannot understand what UVI is attempting to accomplish, in spite of her trying to explain her program. She sees this lack of understanding in the community as an inauspicious omen for her future employment prospects in the same community. This foreboding about having a heterodox education results in her approaching the job market with fearfulness and unease. This is a quotidian theme in the undergraduate students, and yet all the graduates interviewed had managed to find work, most of which was at least partially related to their intercultural education.

### 4.6 Sustainability

Two professors of education and researchers of higher education, Perales Franco and McCowan (2020) found that at UVI there was a strong, almost activist component to the Sustainable Development emphasis and that UVI strongly supported students and encouraged them to engage with their community. Likewise, the topic of sustainability evoked some strong reactions from the participants in the interviews. In the case of the research of Perales Franco and McCown, they found that there was at times also a tension between the students and their parents. Echoing the cultural imaginaries that the IUs are trying to change, the parents were surprised when the students continued to speak Nahuatl, because the parents did not appreciate the students speaking Nahuatl, being that speaking an original language, to their generation, represented ignorance and the life of a *campesino*, not a Spanish-speaking professional.

Adelina had a strong response to the question about sustainability and biodiversity:

> [00:47:54.42] James: But, at the same time [that the government started to have an interest in original languages].
>
> [00:47:58.97] James: The government also started to have an interest in the environment.
>
> [00:48:08.56] James: When, when the biospheres started, like for the monarch butterflies that, that are inhabited by the Mazahua people, why do you think this interest in the environment? For example, here [UIEM] there is a major in Sustainable Development.
>
> [00:48:30.0 James:] Why the interest in the environment and at the same time original languages and cultures? Appendix E, Adelina 5.

The question being posed, if not precisely expressed, is why does Adelina think that a new interest in preserving original languages roughly coincides with the early efforts to create

biospheres and other environmental protections, in other words, preserving the natural environment:

> [00:48:32.08] Adelina: Well, it's in the relation of importance that the Mazahuas have with nature. In that is the most important thing, because in agreement with their cosmovision, the Mazahuas, for them nature is a fundamental part of life. So this is it, [00:49:00.0] to the environment they have different rituals or cycles of life. So, for example, in the communities, for them the cornfield is a place that is very important because it is the source of sustenance. This, this also is a sacred place, then this, in this case they always search for an equilibrium between humankind [00:49:30.0] and nature. So also there is a certain respect for all that is biodiversity, because in them, in their thinking, there are four creator beings that maintain humankind. Those four creator beings are the *menche* that is from water, the *mentagma*, which is from the air, the *mesidi* that is from fire, and the *mejomo*, [00:50:00.0] that is from earth. So this, always to the creator beings they give thanks and they venerate them. So each being has their determined festival or their determined place in the community. So they are all year, during the whole year, they have festivals in each one's turn. So, I [00:50:30.0] think that the importance of a bachelor's degree in the environment depends on that, in the importance that nature and biodiversity have and that they are sacred for the Mazahuas. Appendix E, Adelina 5.

This is an oft heard theme in the interviews and throughout the IUs themselves that was well expressed by Adelina, that the communities have deep cultural and spiritual connections to the surrounding rural areas that are traditionally agricultural. Both universities, UIEM and UVIH, have majors or emphases in sustainable development, besides other IU campuses in other states. UIEM also offers a single master's degree, Management of Sustainable Rural Innovation. Although the biospheres themselves have had a mixed reception in academic

literature, for instance Hoffman (2014), an anthropologist, found that within the monarch biospheres near to UIEM there is an ongoing issue with illegal logging and improper management of resources. Although Adelina connects a Mazahua cosmovision to the biospheres, and this cosmovision must undoubtedly exist and be alive in the more remote areas and vestiges of it are widespread in the cherished beliefs that people hold dear, many Mazahua people, after 500 years of evangelization and missionary activity, are Christian, either Catholics or Protestants, including groups such as Jehovah's Witnesses. Muro, who wrote a Mazahua-Spanish dictionary (1975) also engaged in translating the bible into Mazahua, as well as some of the members of the Summer Institute of Linguists such as Spotts (1953). Therefore, the cosmovision and belief-systems will vary depending on the individual and their environment, since with 500 years of contact they can hardly be what they were before.

Furthermore and apropos of the concept of sustainability, Adelina currently belongs to a group that calls itself the *cronistas* whose members document cultural events and cultural studies in the regional communities. They do not just cover Mazahua events, but also historical events such as the battle between insurgents and federal troops that took place in Jocotitlán during the Mexican revolution. Certainly, interest in these topics can help sustain the local culture and community, including original cultures and languages.

The success the interviewed graduates had in their search for employment is remarkable, especially considering that many had parents with only a secondary or even just a primary education. Hopefully, this will continue in the future and have a positive impact on the communities and associated language ideologies. One caveat is most of the gainful employment was related to the government, not the private sector. Perhaps this is inevitable

in Mexican society conjointly with cultural studies, but it would be a promising sight to see some job creation by entrepreneurship or at least more in the private sector, jobs more evenly distributed throughout the community would provide a more extensive bedrock for employment and community involvement.

David had a similar response as Adelina regarding the government's interest in the environment which began at approximately the same time as renewed interest in original language.

> [00:40:21.83] David: Because I think that always there is a very close relationship and I think that, I don't know, if I'm the only one that thinks this way. But between the original cultures and nature, because the relation is closer that all the original peoples have with nature and with the environment, they are less industrial, less technology, that we can say, not that they're excluded from all that, but they have always had a close relationship with nature. I don't know, with the countryside it's how from the hillside they obtain firewood and sustenance, same from the cornfield, from the river, with [00:41:00.0] corn, with cultivation. So it's a relationship more direct with nature. I've always thought that with original peoples I think it's this intrinsic relationship very close to nature. So I think that it's not just a coincidence, but they go hand in hand. I've always emphasized, for example, as a dancer I've seen that in that way, let's say, that the Matlatzincas give an offering, to the river. With [00:41:30.0] the Mazahuas they light a fire and give thanks to the corn, they put out little flowers and do this when the corn grows and the apple trees and it appears to me to be very important. Appendix E, David 4.

David is strongly associating a closeness to nature with original peoples, in like manner to Adelina, mentioning the customs of making offerings and giving appreciation for natural

processes and occurrences, and therefore equating original peoples with a heightened interest in the environment. In the region around UIEM there are people who gather *quelites* (wild greens) and who forage for firewood in the forest, also there are many small *milpas* (corn patches) farmed by families, so that there continues to be a certain closeness to nature that is usually not as common in more urban areas. UVIH is considerably more rural and men often work to trim the thick vegetation with machetes with virtually no machinery. These responses from the participants are, of course, personal and subjective and do not explain why the government became interested in the environment and original peoples. Although the government does sporadically take action based on an expressed need of the people such as the dealings between Vicente Fox and Mazahua activists which resulted in UIEM being constructed.

Laura speaks of her and Roberto's seven years sojourn away from UIEM and their nearby home community of Jalpa to which they had recently returned:

> [00:42:26.4] Laura: But we returned [00:42:30.0] just [after 7 years away for work] because our teachers [at UIEM] inculcated in us that seed, they told us, it's all fine and good that you go away and learn, but always return to your community because your community needs you and because the school also requires that you pay back something for all the many things that it gave you. So, when we returned, that was what I said to my students, no? I want to pay back in some way for all I got from here and [00:43:00.0] I would like that you [the students] do the same thing. Yes, it's fine to go away, yes, it's good to learn and do a lot of things away from here, but I think the most important objective of the university is to return and do something for your school community. [00:43:18.96] Laura: So we have very little here. Relatively very little, but we have the intention of doing something more for the community. Appendix E, Laura 2.

There is an intricate set of feelings being expressed by Laura in this dialog. One, she clearly is grateful for her experience at UIEM and believes in returning to the community and giving back in some way, although what that means is not readily apparent. On the other hand, she is expressing the concern about how little they earn in Jalpa and working at UIEM. If the IUs are to be sustainable, there must be some way to contribute back to the community that is tangible and at the same time enables the support of a family in doing so, the IUs cannot simply exist in a vacuum with no sustainable path forward, while at the same time churning out hundreds of graduates each year. The possible exception to this is the intercultural nursing program at UIEM, which, of course, is producing health care professionals that, presumedly, will by and large stay in the community and contribute back in that way while at the same time earning an income.

When asked this same question, why the interest in sustainable development and original languages, why did the interest in these two subject arise at around the same time in the 1970s and 1980s, Esmeralda, the English language coordinator, responded:

> So they said, but, how do they do it? [traditional farming methods with no chemicals] And to be able to know how they did it, we'll have to learn the language, because the majority are monolingual. Given that they are older people that don't speak Spanish so we can communicate with them, we'll have to learn Mazahua. The interest arose in the language at the same time in order to be able to extract the knowledge and apply it to the necessities and problems that we are currently living [00:54:30.0]. Appendix E, Esmeralda 5.

Similar to David and others, Esmeralda is connecting sustainable development with an interest in Mazahua because, according to her accounting which contains an element of reverence, the people with traditional knowledge of farming without the use of chemicals are

monolingual in Mazahua, they do not speak Spanish, and it is worthwhile communicating in Mazahua in order to access their knowledge.

### 4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the theme of the impact that the IUs have had on graduates, including individuals who are now educational service providers, in both ideological terms as well as employment opportunities. As was made amply clear by the participants, the IUs, whose creation was enabled by SEP policy and actions, as well as the general governmental environment, sometimes even at the highest level, have had an impact on individual lives in terms of employment opportunities as well as an altered, more positive, attitude towards original languages. In the minds of students and graduates, for the most part the IUs have had a positive impact on the linguistic ideologies of students. Where once the original language was taken for granted, and often actively discouraged by family and community, now there is a sense that original languages are an important part of cultural heritage including personal identity. Finally, the interviews touched upon the relationship between a traditionally agricultural original people and sustainable development. San Felipe del Progreso, where UIEM is located, is part of the government monarch butterfly biosphere (gob.mx, n.d.), although currently the nearest overwintering colonies are across the state line in Michoacán near the town of Senguío, which was traditionally Mazahua. The overwintering colonies were only discovered in 1976 by Dr. Fred Urquhart, after 40 years of study of the monarch. The federal government founded the biosphere in 1986, showing relatively quick action to ensure protection and demonstrating interest in protecting the environment.

# Chapter 5: Conclusion and Sustainability

## 5.1 Introduction

Ever since their founding, the mandate of the IUs has been to provide a location and an environment for ethnic and linguistic minorities in Mexico to study their languages and cultures in the context of an emergent ideology of respect and strengthening within the community. As Evelia said, there came a point at UIEM where she realized that the Tlahuica language and culture were being threatened from within and decided that she wanted to learn everything about the Tlahuica language, culture, and cosmovision before it was too late. Or Griselda, who's family discouraged her as a child from speaking Nahuatl and later learned at UVIH to value her ability to speak Nahuatl. As Evelia related her childhood experience, "Just as I grew up the grandparents and adults, had the idea that the language [Tlahuica] was useless, the culture [Tlahuica] was worthless, that it was all worthless, and we had to become a different, a different people". And later she concludes, "It's sad to suddenly see that no, that now there is a generation that stopped transmitting the language and right now we want to recover it, but it's costing us double, it's costing us a lot". It is challenging to imagine how the interview participants would have restrengthened their original languages and community without the opportunities represented by the IUs. Many government agencies and programs over the recent decades to redress indigenous issues, nonetheless, unfortunately their effectiveness must be called into question since the linguistic situation steadfastly continues to deteriorate. As seen in the interviews, one of the most critical factors, that of the stigmatization of original languages, has been outside of the grasp of government programs, because it continues in the community and family environment of the current generation of

university students. Even today, the latest agency to contend with that issue, INALI, as will be seen in this chapter, does not seem to have a viable strategy to redress this issue.

## 5.2 Summary of Key Findings and Implications of the Research

The following research questions were first enumerated in section 1.5.1, the introductory chapter, and will now be revisited in the light of the research conducted herein.

### *5.2.1 Research Question 1: What language ideologies have been inculcated in students and educational service providers by families and communities?*

As was stated in chapter 1, this question represents the quest for the baseline of what ideologies preexist in the communities, what language ideologies were perceived as part of childhood learning experiences from families and the communities. As in the entire world, speakers of minority, stigmatized languages can be unwilling to admit they speak the language and often consciously decide not to pass the language on to their children. Hill and Hill found that few young people would admit to speaking Nahuatl, even though there was evidence to the contrary:

> An important reason for the abandonment of ways of speaking which are defined as 'Mexicano' is that the Mexicano language has been redefined by many Malinche people as a marker, not of an identity which is somehow special and valuable, but of an identity which is worthless and oppressed. (1986, p. 403)

And as an example referring to the world:

> Many minority children are being forced to feel ashamed of their mother tongues, their parents, their origins, their group and their culture. Many of them, especially in countries where the racism is more subtle, not so openly expressed, take over the negative views which the majority society has of the minority groups, their

> languages and cultures. Many disown their parents and their own group and language. They shift identity "voluntarily", and want to be German, Dutch, American, British, Swedish, etc. (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1988, p. 19)

Accordingly, two speakers of an original language, Evelia and Griselda, described a family environment that was discouraging towards their languages, which their parents thought was the best for their future opportunities. Another interviewee, Esmeralda, who is the English-language program coordinator at UIEM, and who is ethnically Mazahua, related that she can understand Mazahua but cannot speak it because no one "ever taught her" the language. This in spite of the fact that both her parents and various aunts and uncles speak Mazahua natively. Adelina noted that the two Mazahua-speaking individuals that helped her learn Mazahua were dumbfounded to hear there was a school dedicated to support the Mazahua language. Those individuals were about 60 years old and their surprise illustrates how attitudes are changing, albeit as recently as a few decades ago native speakers sometimes tried to hide the fact that they spoke Mazahua and, in addition to the stigmatization, there was limited government or other kinds of support for original languages that was visible at the community level, harkening back to the practice of *indigenismo* of paying only lip service to original languages.

The stigma of original language, unfortunately, conveys the ideology that the original languages are counter-productive to one's own life, useless, and therefore disposable. It must be emphasized that the generation of the parents and grandparents of current students as well as the relatively young graduates and education service providers, generally preexist the IUs, so their ideologies are those of the past, before the IUs were founded, and represent community norms of that time, which they acted upon with the intent of providing a better

future for their children. Moreover, in the foregoing description of the poor linguistic environment is seen the intended consequences of SEP policy during most of the twentieth century. The SEP's policies were based on *indigenismo* and a one-language policy. To summarize, these SEP policies were intended to instill awe and respect for the distant indigenous past, but at the same time promoting the idea that the "modern" contingencies of nation-state building required a relinquishing of original languages and cultures. This underscores how idealistic, ambitious, and lofty, but nonetheless necessary, is the presence and missions of the IUs.

### *5.2.2 Research Question 2: What are the overt and covert language ideologies in the IUs?*

Answering the question concerning overt language ideologies in the IUs is fairly straightforward. Simply reviewing the public mission and vision statements show a strong commitment to community and language which is likewise reflected in the university majors. University events such as the offering to the four compass points (UIEM) or the intercultural encounters (UVI) show that the administrations are committed to their missions. At UIEM almost all students study an original language, mostly Mazahua. At UVIH there is some classroom instruction conducted in-language in Nahuatl because most students are native in Nahuatl. Consequently, the overt and public language ideologies in the IUs demonstrates the commitment to original languages and cultures.

On the other hand, a response to the question concerning covert language ideologies is more challenging. The often covert nature of language ideologies is illustrated by *indigenismo* which, for much of the twentieth century, was espoused and embraced as a benign and dignified response to original languages while simultaneously promoting policies of replacement of languages with Spanish. In the qualitative interviews several of the

participants acknowledged that the IUs had a positive impact on their self-image and on how they conceptualized original languages. The language instructors themselves are also transmitting the message that their original language is something historic that contains a rich cultural identity. Nonetheless, this intersection of ideologies is ominously close to *indigenismo*, valuing the rich cultural heritage of the language, without having the expectation of producing proficient. According to Evelia:

> So, before, for example it was, like, everything in denial, don't talk about that [don't talk about the Tlahuica language]. So, with this new perspective, the university tends to make it out that everything is alright, that they can grow with that. Appendix E, Evelia 4.

When talking about "perspective", Evelia is describing a new language ideology, instead of scrapping Tlahuica she is looking upon it in an alternative, positive light. It is hard to imagine what more could be done in a practical sense to improve regional language ideologies than to produce graduates with a newly-found positive outlook on the language. That these graduates live in the community can correspondingly only be positive in that they project these new ideologies back into the family and community. The challenge, of course, is that the process does not become co-opted into a bureaucratic system and continues without political meddling which would require autonomy and additional funding.

### *5.2.3 Research Question 3: Do students want a structural change in the community or do they merely want a viable route to a university education?*

Although no participant or poll respondent explicitly addressed this question, it was obliquely fielded by some of the participants in the interviews. Roberto, who was in the first generation at UIEM, 2004-2008, recounted that the university was an "ugly-duckling" operating out of a storefront when opened and was often not considered to be a legitimate

institution in those early years. Now, as he recounted, the imposing structure of UIEM's physical plant is a reference point for San Felipe del Progreso. Because of this vital new option to receive a university education, he noted that young people don't have to plan in terms of just finishing a secondary education and immediately going to work in a menial job. Although Roberto did not categorically state this, his observations do allude to a structural change in the community, not because of a desire on his part, but because of the new availability of a university education in San Felipe del Progreso. Certainly, there were preexisting university opportunities in San Felipe del Progreso, the situation is clearly not straightforward and unambiguous, but the preexisting educational opportunities are often oriented toward trade schools. One student at UVIH did explicitly say he had wanted to go to school at UV to become a doctor, but since he was not admitted, deemed UVIH an attractive alternative to earn a university degree. But here again, even if many students "merely" attain a university degree instead of opting for menial employment, eventually it will create a change in the community. On the other hand, Evelia, the Tlahuica instructor, clearly wants a structural change in the community, not as an employment related goal, but the more ideological goal of changing the status of the Tlahuica language from one of complete disregard to one of cultural patrimony. Interview participant David was able to find employment in nearby Atlacomulco running a cafeteria for indigenous children. Although he said that it is not directly related to his degree from UIEM, it certainly seems to be leastwise related in terms of ideological considerations and certainly is undoubtedly a factor for refashioning the community. David also noted that his experience in UAEM Toluca was quite distinct from the more rural setting in San Felipe del Progreso where he encountered native speakers of original languages. In David's case, he expressed the desire to contribute

to the Mazahua community is some capacity related to his degree. In summary, some students are indeed focused on earning a college degree, while others expressed the desire to contribute to the community in some capacity related to their degree. While no one explicitly stated that they want a structural change in the community, if enough can fulfill the desire to contribute to the community, or increase the number of professionals in the community, of course this will contribute a concomitant structural change.

### *5.2.4 Research Question 4: What effect have the IUs had on shaping language ideologies?*

The response to this crucial question is an ongoing and unfolding description of the linguistic landscape which will play out in future decades while being perhaps more important than trying to measure past accomplishments. All the interview participants except for Adelina who was 87 years old at the time of the interview and had never attended school, said they had a newfound respect for regional languages based on their experiences at the IUs, regardless of whether they were speakers of a regional language, ethnically part of the regional culture, or were exclusively from the mestizo mainstream. As has been previously mentioned in regard to prior research questions, the IUs are definitely having an impact on students' language ideologies in spite of sometimes being perceived by parents and the community as illegitimate institutions because they are not traditional, well established universities. As UIEM graduate Laura reported, in the early generations before the physical plant was constructed for UIEM, in her community people were often incredulous and sought to offer reasons why she should *not* attend UIEM. However, by 2019 the sheer physical presence of UIEM has changed the perception of UIEM in the community. This physical presence is a significant factor for ideological change in the community. Also, as the number of graduates accumulates over time, there will be more impact on community attitudes.

From a different perspective, considering the greater Mexican society away from the local community and considering Mexico City as the metropole and certainly the political and cultural center of the country in terms of the mestizo mainstream, Adelina reported some interesting reactions to her presence as a researcher in INAH. She reported that in INAH there are career researchers who are usually from UNAM or some other prestigious university and she recounted that some of her INAH co-workers were stunned when she said she was from UIEM and not from a prestigious university. Her coworkers were not aware where, or even what, UIEM stood for. This surprise based on ignorance was in spite of her being a speaker of Mazahua and conducting her research in Mazahua communities. This highlights once again that the traditional institutions in the metropole are ponderous ivory towers and not active in the communities. In this regard, it would appear that the dominant mestizo mainstream still has a great need of ideological change to accrue an understanding and respect for original languages and the grassroots intercultural universities. This is evident notwithstanding their mission and vision statements. The mission statement of INAH is:

> The National Institute of Anthropology and History investigates, *preserves* and disseminates the archaeological, anthropological, historical and paleontological heritage of the nation to strengthen the identity and memory of the society that holds it. (*Misión y Visión INAH*, n.d.)[140] (Italics mine)

The obvious disconnect between how Adelina was received at INAH and the INAH mission statement underscores the contradictions in Mexican society regarding original languages and

[140] In the original Spanish: El Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia investiga, conserva y difunde el patrimonio arqueológico, antropológico, histórico y paleontológico de la nación para el fortalecimiento de la identidad y memoria de la sociedad que lo detenta.

cultures. In this aspect, INAH resembles more of a prestigious institution, carefully documenting original languages and providing careers to the researchers in the metropole. Not one interview participant referenced INAH or INALI in any positive or negative way regarding linguistic rights of minority languages, simply inexistent, while INAH and INALI seem almost irrelevant at the community level except for the possibility of gainful employment in Mexico City. INALI is a fairly recent institution that was founded during the administration of Vicente Fox to recuperate these types of bureaucratic problems and which is likewise concentrated in Mexico City. It must be noted that the IUs are affiliated with the SEP and also state legislatures. The SEP too is a centralized agency in Mexico City, so is subject to the same criticism of being isolated from regional communities. However, the difference between the SEP and other agencies like INALI and INAH, is that the SEP has an office dedicated to intercultural education, the CGEIB, and it is this office, through policy documents such as the *Modelo Educativo*, that support the regional planning and state-level support for the IUs. The CGEIB is also charged with making *all* schools in Mexico intercultural, an ambitious undertaking where only time will tell how this impacts society and the likes of UNAM, INAH, and INALI. Again, the IUs are a real, physical presence in some very remote areas like UVIH, where there are very few alternatives for a university education that is within the reach of many students and that concurrently support regional languages. In summary, if the traditional organizations such as UNAM, INALI, and INAH are any measure of the forefront of linguistic ideologies in Mexican society in general, based on Adelina saying that co-workers in INAH had no knowledge of the IUs and even that they did not know that anyone still spoke Mazahua, it would appear that the effects of the IUs has been, at least until now, small. One the other hand, the IUs are active in the local communities

working with students and the communities to change language ideologies and provide community support.

### *5.2.5 Research Question 5: Are the IUs creating sustainable communities attuned to regional languages, cultures, and sustainable development?*

### *5.2.6 Research Question 6: Are the IUs creating a group of graduates that have been able to find employment related to their education while staying in their region?*

These two questions are taken together because they form a foreward-looking inquiry concerning the sustainability of the programs and of the communities, that is to say, whether or not the program will be deemed successful in a longitudinal study. The question of sustainability is an inquiry into overall viability over time while the question of employment is certainly a crucial supporting consideration. Irrespectively, the IUs need to navigate the political waters, especially since they are not autonomous, and remain committed to their mission and vision in the future.

One issue that the IUs have in their quest to support local communities and languages is the sheer asymmetry of numbers. Large student bodies in the traditional autonomous universities is typical in Mexico, whereas the autonomous universities in Mexico State and Veracruz have about 80,000 students each, the student body of UIEM is about 1,400 and UVIH has about 50 students. Optimistically, this will be a large enough fountainhead to change ideologies, not just in the students that take advantage of the IUs, but also in the surrounding communities, and even in the greater society. It might even be an advantage to have a small student body, in a positive experience for the students who feel they are "in their community" and perhaps they can pass on the values of the mission statements. On a grander

scale, beyond the IUs, it remains that the CGEIB successfully implements its magnific goal of reimagining and converting all schools in Mexico into intercultural schools.

Not all previous research or academic commentary about the IUs has been altogether positive. As has been noted in previous chapters, according to Gorman, the IUs are guilty of a very serious charge of being co-opted by state-level clientelism (2016). Additionally, Dietz raised the question of whether interculturality empowers indigenous communities, or rather merely mainstreams multiculturalism (2009). Regardless of whether these or other authors questioned the current or future state of the IUs, the interviews and quantitative instrument both show a robust attitudinal development in both UIEM and UVIH of an improving ideology towards original languages and cultures as a result of the IU experience. Consequently, at least looking at the internal environment among students and educational service providers, the IUs studied are having a beneficial impact on changing language ideologies.

Clearly, the IUs are a necessary and worthy experiment in the attempt to strengthen language ideology and change public attitudes towards original languages from within the community. Due to their recent founding, going forward it remains to be seen if they will be co-opted into becoming traditional universities, encounter funding issues, or other political machinations. Just as an example of how political the university can be, upon starting the fieldwork at UIEM, the Rector, Maestro Aníbal Mejía Guadarrama, interviewed me in a private meeting to discuss what it was that would be investigated, as if he were trying to ascertain if there was any risk of exposure in how his university would be portrayed. Although he supported the fieldwork project at his school, he seemed to be leery of having an outsider in the institution in spite of this type of external linkage being part of the UIEM and

UVIH missions, which include foreign exchange students and visiting professors. Although this was a relatively minor event with a positive outcome, it shows the political side of the IUs, and hopefully in the future the politics will not become dominant in the institutions in any kind of detrimental sense. This is why the IUs should be autonomous, otherwise there is no guarantee of political involvement.

The IUs are striving to fulfill the crucial mission of promoting regional languages and cultures and only future assessments will demonstrate if the IUs have indeed contributed to staunch the already advanced decline of Mexico's original languages and whether or not the IUs will be a meaningful component of language preservation. The college major or emphasis of sustainable development that is regularly seen in the IUs and is offered by both UIEM and UVIH, is concerned with the sustainability and development of not only rural agriculture, but also regional languages and cultures in the context of a sustainable community, agricultural, and cultural ecosystem. The on-going discussion of original language rights exposes current ideologies of students and parents; within this context, the qualitative interviews have shown some important changes that have occurred in the recent generations of students, coinciding with the contributions of the IUs. As Evelia and Griselda so poignantly stated, the previous two generations were aligned with the suppression of Tlahuica and Nahuatl, fundamentally for the betterment of the younger generation's opportunities in life and those previous generations cannot be faulted in the least after 400 years of rampant colonialism, which, ideologically, still lives on today. The physical presence of the IUs facilitated both Evelia's and Griselda's awakened interest and commitment to their native languages, thus hopefully making some organic changes in

ideologies sustainable and contributing to the development of an appreciation for language and culture in future generations.

Due to the historical paucity of support of regional languages, the IUs are attempting to fulfill a pivotal role in regional language support that is not always seen in Mexican institutions, which tend to be centralized in Mexico City. The IUs role in providing higher education in the context of regional culture and language is a model of community support not always seen in other institutions such as INAH and other institutions. The centralized federal government in Mexico City has created and periodically reshuffled various government entities over the years that putatively existed to promote original languages and cultures. For example, the activities and research of the prestigious and highly thought of INAH makes it difficult to visualize how INAH is actually doing anything significant to protect language and culture, although its important research has included such topics as documenting the phonology of Mazahua (Knapp Ring, 2008) or by analyzing the *Doctrina* of Nágera, which was written in 1637 and which contained linguistic notes about Mazahua (Knapp Ring, 2013). Even just by its prestige INAH can exert a pro-indigenous ideology throughout society. Nevertheless, as noted above in this chapter, the mission of INAH includes the preservation of Mexican cultures and languages. In this, it has been remiss.

Even more recently created institutions to support original languages like INALI, which has a Mazahua native speaker in the Mexico City office, are conspicuously absent in any kind of sustained local presence or programs that serve the communities. Even the university degrees awarded to students that have links to INAH and UIEM, such as Romero Hernández (2013), tend to be language documentation which is not oriented toward language or cultural support. The IU graduates, on the contrary, report the desire to work in and with

the community, to make an impact on regional languages and cultures, and have, for the most part, achieved these goals during the first two decades of the existence of the IUs. To encapsulate a major finding, this is the sea change that the IUs represent, although the IUs do not have a markedly community activist stance, they do have a palpable presence in the community that directly addresses community issues instead of being an ivory tower removed in the metropole.

### 5.3 Concluding Remarks and Future Directions

It remains to be seen if the IUs can represent on a regional scale, with a community focus and presence, the traditional indigenous institutions, represented by organizations such as INALI and INAH, or even the older Instituto Nacional Indigenista (INI, founded 1948) which metamorphosed into the CDI in 2003. As has been noted, the traditional institutions suffer from a lack of community involvement and have a disinterested, ivory tower orientation projected from the metropole, except possibly in the case of the CDI which is oriented toward physical infrastructure projects such as potable water, but, nonetheless, is scantily involved in cultural or educational development. The grassroots and originally activist-oriented IUs were created to bring language support directly to the communities in a non-paternalistic manner and currently have a physical presence in the communities and are actively trying to support original languages and culture. As noted by Adelina, in her hometown in the Mazahua region, the sixty-year-old Mazahua couple who helped her with her studies could not believe there was a university (UIEM) that supported the Mazahua language. One has to ask where have INALI (and its predecessors) and INAH been over the last 50 years. Of course, the ideologies represented in these prestigious institutions didn't arise from, nor were they created by, these same institutions, they were and still remain

endemic in Mexican society. Future research will need to be conducted to continue to monitor the experiment that are the IUs in order to gauge their influence in original language support, especially at a national level, which is especially important and which is part of their missions.

The lack of a supporting educational ecosystem is a significant threat to the long-term viability of the IUs, or at least a threat to their missions and visions. The almost complete lack of meaningful bilingual primary schools and the lack of language support in secondary and high schools is a serious threat and forms the basis of the abject impotence of the IUs to promote or preserve the presence of native or bilingual speakers of original languages. Among the interview participants, Griselda came from a town predominately of Nahuatl speakers, and yet, astonishingly, there does not exist a bilingual school in her town. Adelina, who was the director of an Otomí bilingual preschool, described a bilingual school where Otomí was mostly used to communicate with parents, not with students, wherein the academic program was designed to rapidly induct the students into the Spanish-language mainstream. It is challenging to reconcile the CGEIB policy of making all schools intercultural with the reality of a lack of educational infrastructure to provide linguistic support and rights to original language speakers. This lack of a bilingual infrastructure at all educational levels short of higher education is a huge piece of the puzzle of language support that simply exists in name only and is a serious systemic challenge that astronomically impedes the IUs' attainment of their missions of strengthening regional languages. In the future, the SEP and the CGEIB need to procure funding and implement a coherent bilingual educational policy, which is no small task, neither financially nor societally. This dire

situation needs to be researched in order to determine its causes and its cures by means of reforms and to propose major changes in program architecture.

The typical mission and vision statements of the IUs contain wording to the effect that original languages are to be revaluated and revitalized. In the case of UIEM and UVIH, there clearly is goodwill being created and developed within the language ideologies of students. As was seen in the qualitative interviews, not only students, but also educational service providers reported a reawakened esteem and respect in their ethnic languages and cultures as a result of their university experience. Notwithstanding, the question of language revitalization must be left as an intergenerational and ongoing future research theme, inasmuch as original languages are rarely the language of instruction and, at least at UIEM, are a major program of study exclusively as an object of study, both considerations implying that competence in original languages is not being produced by the IUs. Without the numbers of competent speakers being increased, it cannot yet be said that the goal of language revitalization is being attained.

The importance of the IUs having community influence is a valid one, for instance, in Atlacomulco de Fabela, only about 20 minutes from UIEM, there is a definite presence of Mazahua in this small, but important, regional city, mostly evident by women's dress, which is distinctive. However, many people in Atlacomulco were not born there, and are not ethnic Mazahua and, although there is a general awareness of the presence of UIEM close by, and the Mazahua heritage in the area, these things usually have little to do with day-to-day activities and livelihoods, so it could be questioned whether UIEM is having any impact on preexisting language ideologies. In order to further its mission, which includes outreach to the entire Mexican society, the community involvement of students at UIEM should have as

a focus all the surrounding communities including Atlacomulco, not just the locations with more Mazahua presence. In the future, there should not be an inward-looking focus at the more indigenous communities, the entire surrounding area should be included in the important community work, and this should be an area of future research.

The IUs are not autonomous universities and are subject to political winds and exigencies. The consequences of the political vagaries to which the IUs are subject, and their less secure funding situation compared to the traditional autonomous universities, will in the future reveal if this results in an erosion of the IUs mission or even a major change of course, or if the IUs can maintain their mission and vision with regard to original languages and cultures. In the future, the state governments must move to insure and guarantee a sufficient level of funding for the IUs so that they can pursue their missions without being subject to clientelism or political machinations. Therefore, the IUs must be made autonomous to ensure there future viability.

Concerning the IUs overlapping goals of enabling structural changes in the community and providing access to university degrees, the positive changes in attitudes about original languages noted by the interview participants is an encouraging development for the community as the students and graduates go out into the communities. Hopefully, in future research these changes will be seen to continue apace as more students graduate and go out into their communities. At the same time, the overwhelming interest in higher education shown by the quantitative instrument, particularly represented by the interest in earning a PhD, signals a new challenge to the educational infrastructure of the community. Especially at UVIH, the students overwhelmingly wanted to attain a doctorate. While keeping in mind that at both schools almost all students are working toward a bachelor's

degree, and none a doctorate, the reality is that there is no university close by to either university that offers doctorates. UV offers limited doctorates in Tuxpan on the Gulf of Mexico, several hours away from UVIH by public transportation, limited to agriculture and marine science. UAEM is within 2 hours of UIEM and has wide availability of doctorates. In this regard, it is a future challenge to the state and federal governments as well as the SEP and CGEIB to fund and provide this educational opportunity at the regional level, thus creating a complete educational ecosystem, from bilingual primary schools through advanced degrees in support of regional languages and cultures. With respect to a complete educational system, it should be mentioned the apparent complete failure of the bilingual primary Spanish - original language schools, at least in the areas of UIEM and UVIH. Aside from their paucity and near nonexistence, those that are in operation are assimilationist and are serving very little to sustain original languages. The bilingual schools are in dire need of overhaul which is real challenge in the form of broken infrastructure and would require large funding sources and reform.

And finally, future research should include a comparison of the IUs with the attitudes in the traditional autonomous universities and nearby cities. This will hopefully be done diachronically to measure the change in attitudes over time. In the case of UIEM, this could be UAEM in Toluca or some of the satellite campuses in or near San Felipe del Progreso. In the case of UVIH, this might be UV in Poza Rica, Veracruz. This should also be done within the IUs themselves to see what generational changes are being accomplished. Hopefully, the previous generations attitudes towards original languages, which grew out of the untoward one language policy of the SEP and the widespread discrimination after 400 years of rigid

colonialism, will commence to be seen on a wide scale as antediluvian. The IUs are just at the beginning of this process and only time will tell what the outcome shall be.

In an ideal world all original languages, even the critically endangered Tlahuica, will continue to be spoken into the future and thrive. The IUs are a significant component in the strategy of language support and are part of a strategic educational policy by the CGEIB. It is sincerely hoped that in spite of all the obstacles and limitations, the IUs succeed in fulfilling their objective, and that they remain strongly focused on them.

The desideratum is therefore further dissemination of the IUs' ideological tenets, both through their graduates and through more IU campuses, and secure autonomous funding for these institutions. These factors would encourage a gradual but hopefully steady change in attitudes towards original languages and cultures, more sustainable systems of production and environmentally friendly practices, as well as local community involvement. Such an outcome would be very positive for the local communities themselves, but also for Mexican society as a whole, and could become a model of how a more equitable access to knowledge can be provided by institutions of higher learning, as well as a more just way in which modern society attributes value to both traditional and the more conventional scientific-technological knowledge in the Western sense of the word.

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## Appendix A. Quantitative Instrument Questionnaire

No. encuesta: Lugar:
Versión 1.00

Marca uno **o más** espacios

1. Actividad(es) Actual(es): ___ Estudias ___ Trabajas

   Otra(s) (especifica) _____

2. La formación académica

   2.1 ¿Qué estudios realizaste o estás realizando?

   2.2 ___ Estudio en una universidad Relación con la UVI ___ Sí ___ No

   2.3 ___ Cursos Relación con la UVI ___ Sí ___ No

   2.4 ___ Diplomado Relación con la UVI ___ Sí ___ No

   2.5 Si has salido de la universidad, ¿qué título tienes?

2.6 ___ Licenciatura Relación con la UVI ___ Sí ___ No

2.7 ___ Especialidad Relación con la UVI ___ Sí ___ No

2.8 ___ Maestría Relación con la UVI ___ Sí ___ No

2.9 ___ No tengo título Relación con la UVI ___ Sí ___ No

2.10 Otro: _____

3. Trayectoria laboral

3.1 Trabajas ahora ___ Sí ___ No

3.2 Institución

___ Pública ___ ONG ___ Autoempleo ___ Cooperativa ___ Privada

Otra _____

3.3 Lugar

___ Lugar de origen ___ Donde está la UVI

Otro _____

3.4 Satisfacción de la Orientación

___ Sí ___ No ___ Parcialmente

3.5 Satisfacción de la Carrera

___ Sí ___ No ___ Parcialmente

4. Valoración de la formación recibida

4.0 ¿Si estás cursando en la universidad, en cuál año estás? _____

Contesta lo siguiente basado en tu experiencia en la universidad:

En una escala de 0 a 5, otorga un valor. Donde 0 representa que no se cumplieron los objetivos en absoluto y 5 que se cumplieron completamente

4.1 ____ Formar con perfil crítico e integral, competentes en ámbitos de la gestión, animación y comunicación

4.2 ____ Promover el desarrollo del pensamiento lógico, creativo, reconocimiento práctico de saberes locales

4.3 ____ Propiciar la formación de actitudes en beneficio de la región y el país con valores interculturales

4.4 ____ Contribuir al fortalecimiento de actitudes que permitan relacionarse, en desarrollo de comunidades

4.5 ____ Proporcionar experiencias que permitan el desarrollo de conocimientos, habilidades y actitudes

4.6 ____ Contribuir al mejoramiento de la calidad de vida y la construcción de desarrollo sustentable

4.7 ____ Generar aprendizajes en ambientes grupales en articulación de teoría, práctica y desarrollo social

4.8 ____ Propiciar el desarrollo individual y colectivo, el respeto a la diversidad y a los derechos universales

4.9 ____ Contribuir al mejoramiento de la calidad de vida de ciudadanos desfavorecidos por programas

4.10 ____ Ofrecer recursos teóricos y metodológicos para generar conocimientos sobre desarrollo sustentable

4.11 Si tuvieras la opción de volverte a inscribir a la UVI, ¿lo harías?

___ Sí ___ No ___ NA

5. Expectativas

5.1 ¿Te gustaría seguir estudiando?

___ Sí ___ No ___ NA

5.2 Dada tu situación actual. ¿Tienes posibilidades de seguir estudiando?

___ Sí ___ No ___ NA

5.3 ¿Qué grado máximo de estudios te gustaría alcanzar?

___ Preparatoria ___ Licenciatura ___ Maestría ___ Doctorado

Otro (especifica) _____

5.4 ¿En qué área te gustaría hacer tus estudios?

___ En relación a los de la UVI ___ Sin relación a los de la UVI

5.5 ¿En qué? (especifica) _____

5.6 ¿En qué lugar te gustaría trabajar? (Marca todos que corresponden)

___ Pública ___ ONG ___ Autoempleo ___ Cooperativa ___ Privada

Otra (especifica) _____

5.7 Dada tu situación actual. ¿En qué lugar podrías trabajar?

___ Pública ___ ONG ___ Autoempleo ___ Cooperativa ___ Privada

Otra (especifica) _____

5.8 Con los estudios en la UVI consideras que puedes:

5.8.1 Satisfacer tus necesidades personales ___ Sí ___ No ___ No estoy seguro

5.8.2 Mantener una familia ___ Sí ___ No ____ No estoy seguro

5.8.3 Mejorar las condiciones respecto a las que han tenido tus padres

___ Sí ___ No ___ No estoy seguro

5.9 ¿Cómo te visualizas en 5 años? (Marca todos que corresponden)

___ Sigo estudiando

___ Estaré trabajando

___ Formaré una familia

___ Emigrando

___ Apoyando a mi comunidad

___ Tendría una situación económicamente desahogada

___ Aplicando los conocimientos de la UVI

Otro (especifica) _____

5.10 ¿Cómo te visualizas en 10 años?

___ Sigo estudiando

___ Estaré trabajando

___ Formaré una familia

___ Emigrando

___ Apoyando a mi comunidad

___ Tendría una situación económicamente desahogada

___ Aplicando los conocimientos de la UVI

Otro (especifica) _____

6. Idiomas

6.1. Si hablas una lengua originaria, ¿cuál es su nombre(s)?

_____

6.2. ¿Qué idioma(s) aprendiste primero de niño?

_____

6.3. ¿Qué idioma(s) hablas con más frecuencia ahora?

_____

6.4. ¿Qué idioma(s) es el idioma más común en tu comunidad ahora?

_____

Selecciona una de las opciones para cada declaración

6.5 Las culturas regionales pueden sobrevivir sin lenguas originarias

___ Completamente de acuerdo

___ De acuerdo

___ Indiferente

___ En desacuerdo

___ Definitivamente no estoy de acuerdo

6.6 Manteniendo fuertes nuestras lenguas originales es importante para mí

___ Completamente de acuerdo

___ De acuerdo

___ Indiferente

___ En desacuerdo

___ Definitivamente no estoy de acuerdo

6.7 Se hace lo suficiente para respaldar el uso de las lenguas originarias en mi comunidad

___ Completamente de acuerdo

___ De acuerdo

___ Indiferente

___ En desacuerdo

___ Definitivamente no estoy de acuerdo

6.8 Se debe enseñar las lenguas originarias en las escuelas

___ Completamente de acuerdo

___ De acuerdo

___ Indiferente

___ En desacuerdo

___ Definitivamente no estoy de acuerdo

6.9 Está bien que la gente no de mi comunidad aprende las lenguas originarias

___ Completamente de acuerdo

___ De acuerdo

___ Indiferente

___ En desacuerdo

___ Definitivamente no estoy de acuerdo

## 7 Conclusión

7.1 ¿Estás dispuesto a participar en una entrevista voluntaria sobre tu experiencia en la universidad?

___ Sí ___ No

Si sí, por favor deja tus datos a continuación:

Nombre y apellido _____

Número de teléfono _____

Email _____

¡MUCHAS GRACIAS POR TU PARTICIPACIÓN!

## Appendix B. Guide for Semi-Structured Interview

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| N/Ent: | Lugar y fecha: | Clave: |
| Edad: | Seudónimo | IES, Carrera, Semestre: |
| Sexo: | Comunidad de origen: | Comunidad de residencia: |
| Lengua m: | Otras lenguas: | Religión: |
| N/Fam. | Gpo. sec: | Gpo. político: |
| Obs:<br>Hora Inicio: | | Hora Final: |

Bloque I: Motivos y experiencias de trabajo

¿Por qué decides estudiar una carrera?

¿Cuándo surgió esta inquietud?

¿En qué carreras pensaste y por qué?

¿A qué o a quién crees que se debe este interés tuyo por estudiar?

¿Por qué en esta institución?

¿Qué significa ser un alumno de esta institución?

¿Cómo visualizas el campo de trabajo que te espera?

¿Dónde y de qué te gustaría trabajar?

¿Qué condiciones laborales te gustaría tener o esperas?

¿Qué elementos tomarías en cuenta para elegir un trabajo?

¿Trabajarías en tu comunidad o fuera? ¿por qué?

En la comunidad, ¿cómo crees que serás recibido?

¿Has trabajado? ¿De qué? ¿En qué has usado el sueldo?

¿En qué emplearías tus primeros sueldos?

Bloque II: Educación

¿Cómo ha sido tu educación?

¿Estudiaste en escuela bilingüe? ¿Qué representó para ti esa experiencia?

¿Estudiar ha sido fácil o difícil? ¿A qué factores se debe, sentimientos, éxitos, problemas?

Estudiar ahora la universidad, ¿representa algo distinto a lo que has hecho antes?

¿Consideras estar lo suficientemente preparado para este nivel de estudios, representa un reto difícil o sencillo?

¿Es suficiente la educación que recibes aquí o requieres de otras actividades de formación?

¿Qué diferencias podrías tener con un estudiante urbano? ¿Ventajas, desventajas?

¿El gasto educativo qué realizas es significativo para tu familia?

¿Cómo se ha involucrado tu familia en este nivel educativo que cursas?

Bloque III: Lengua

¿Qué lenguas hablas?

¿De niño, cuál fue la primera lengua que hablaste? (Puede ser más que una lengua)

¿Qué lengua es más fácil para ti?

¿Qué lengua hablas en casa? ¿Con tus padres? ¿Con tus hermanos?

¿Qué lengua hablas en la universidad?

¿Qué lengua(s) hablas en la universidad?

¿Has estudiado español en una escuela? ¿Por tu propia parte?

¿Qué lengua hablan en tus clases?

¿Porque la universidad utiliza esa lengua?

¿Qué lengua(s) usas con tus amigos? ¿En tu trabajo?

¿Qué lengua hablas con más frecuencia?

¿Qué lenguas son más comunes en tu comunidad?

¿Las lenguas regionales deben tener qué lugar en México?

¿Cómo se puede hacer las lenguas regionales más fuertes?

¿Qué impide que la gente aprende una lengua regional?

Solo para hablantes de una lengua regional:

¿El uso de una lengua regional promueve bienestar? (Mental, emocional, espiritual- te sientes bien/positivo)

¿Hablas una lengua regional más o menos que en el pasado? Si no ha cambiado, ¿que mantiene la lengua fuerte?

¿Quieres hacer algunos comentarios adicionales?

¿Qué quieres ver en cuanto a tu lengua regional veinte añoa en el futuro?

¿Tus estudios en la universidad ha cambiado como ves tu lengua? ¿Cómo?

Bloque IV: Comunidad

¿Qué relación tienes con tu comunidad? ¿con quiénes te relacionas más frecuentemente en tu comunidad?

¿Qué participación tienes? ¿organización, grupo, proyecto?

¿Eres apreciado por tu comunidad como estudiante?

¿Cómo es percibida la juventud en tu comunidad?

¿El estudiar te ha permitido ver a tu comunidad de otra manera?, ¿qué aprecias y qué te disgusta de tu comunidad?

¿Qué problemas hay en tu comunidad?

¿Apoyarías una organización o movimiento de tu comunidad?, ¿qué demandas o ideas defenderías?

¿Te sientes comprometido con tu comunidad, de qué manera?

¿Es importante la religión para ti?

Bloque V: Juventud

Si estás fuera de tu comunidad, ¿cómo vives esta etapa?

¿Qué actividades realizas con otros jóvenes?

¿Qué haces en tu tiempo libre?

¿Qué relación tienes con tu familia? ¿con quién tienes una relación más cercana? ¿quién influye más en ti? ¿a quién admiras y por qué?

¿Tienes una habitación o la compartes?

¿Usas celular?

¿Tienes computadora? ¿qué uso le das? ¿dónde aprendiste? ¿uso de Internet?

¿Cuáles consideras que son los problemas de los jóvenes?

¿Cuál es tu expectativa de la época en que te tocará ser adulto?

¿Cuáles son tus miedos o preocupaciones?

¿Cuáles son tus expectativas respecto a formar una familia? ¿hijos?

¿Cuáles serían las cosas que harías distinto a tu familia?

¿Si trabajas, hay más oportunidades para hombres o mujeres? ¿cómo te afecta?

Bloque VI: Becas

¿Has sido beneficiario de algún programa social?

¿Qué opinas de ellos?

Bloque VII: Migración

¿A dónde has viajado? ¿Qué lugares conoces?

¿Qué lengua(s) usas allá?

¿Qué gente de otros lugares conoces?

¿Has pensado en emigrar?

¿Qué lugares quieres conocer? ¿Por qué?

¿Conoces personas que han migrado?

¿Has pensado en migrar? ¿Por qué?

¿Qué lugares te gustaría conocer? ¿por qué?

## Appendix C. The Universities' Mission and Vision Statements

### C.1 UVI Mission and Vision Statements

UVIH – translated from the original Spanish. The cited web page which contains the mission and vision statement of UVI cover all four campuses in Veracruz state, including the campus studied in la Huasteca.

Our Mission

The Intercultural University of Veracruz is an entity of higher education empowered to generate, apply and transmit knowledge through the design and implementation of educational programs with an intercultural focus, centered on localized learning and linked research; seeking the dialogue of knowledges, the harmonization of regional, national and global visions, promoting the achievement of a better quality of life through sustainability by strengthening the languages and cultures of the state of Veracruz[141]. (*Misión, Visión y Objetivos – UV-Intercultural*, n.d.)

Our vision

The Intercultural University of Veracruz is an academic entity with a solid academic capacity and competitiveness based on the work of its Academic Bodies, which guides its actions towards social, cultural and gender equity, and promotes the valuation of local knowledge as

[141] La Universidad Veracruzana Intercultural es una entidad de educación superior facultada para generar, aplicar y transmitir conocimiento mediante el diseño e implementación de programas educativos con enfoque intercultural, centrados en el aprendizaje situado y la investigación vinculada; procurando el diálogo de saberes, la armonización de las visiones regional, nacional y global, promoviendo el logro de una mejor calidad de vida con sustentabilidad y fortaleciendo las lenguas y culturas del estado de Veracruz.

complementary to scientific knowledge and the promotion of the use of indigenous languages, through innovative, flexible Educational Programs focused on learning, which articulate the training of students through a vigorous community bond, with the promotion of sustainable human development, as a condition for the improvement of the quality of life of disadvantaged sectors of society. It is an entity committed to the principles of respectful coexistence in diversity and promoting skills for the participation of its teachers and students in local, regional, national and international spheres[142]. (*Misión, Visión y Objetivos – UV-Intercultural*, n.d.)

### C.2 UIEM Mission and Vision Statements

UIEM mission and vision statement translated from the Spanish from the cited web page.

Mission

The training of professionals committed to the economic, social and cultural development of the communities of Mexico State and the country; promoting a dialogue of knowledge between the ancestral knowledge and values of indigenous peoples and scientific knowledge. Promote the dissemination of the communities' own values as well as the opening of spaces to promote the revitalization, development and maintenance of native languages and cultures, stimulating a pertinent communication of the university projects to the surrounding

[142] La Universidad Veracruzana Intercultural es una entidad académica con una sólida capacidad y competitividad académica basada en el trabajo de sus Cuerpos Académicos, que orienta sus acciones a la equidad social, cultural y de género, e impulsa la valoración de saberes locales como complementarios de los saberes científicos y el fomento al uso de las lenguas indígenas, a través de Programas Educativos innovadores, flexibles, centrados en el aprendizaje, que articulan la formación de los estudiantes a través de una vigorosa vinculación comunitaria, con la promoción del desarrollo humano sustentable, como condición para la mejora de la calidad de vida de sectores desfavorecidos de la sociedad. Es una entidad comprometida con los principios de una convivencia respetuosa en la diversidad y con la promoción de competencias para la participación de sus profesores y estudiantes en ámbitos locales, regionales, nacionales e internacionales.

communities, in order to generate conditions favorable to the self-development of peoples and towns. To contribute to a culturally and linguistically relevant education by incorporating the intercultural approach in all the study plans it offers, to achieve the construction of a more just and equitable society[143]. (*Misión, Visión y Valores | Universidad Intercultural Del Estado de México*, n.d.)

Vision

UIEM is a university that implements an innovative educational model based on the intercultural approach that favors the grounding of young students and graduates in their communities of origin, through the educational offer and programs of degrees, specialties, postgraduate and quality continuing education courses, duly certified.

Through a successful management of its organizational processes, planning and administrative operation, processes of accreditation of the quality of its services are promoted, quality assured by highly qualified academic and administrative personnel, selected with rigorous profiles in constant updating and evaluation.

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[143] Formar profesionales comprometidos con el desarrollo económico, social y cultural de las comunidades del Estado de México y del país; propiciando un diálogo de saberes entre los conocimientos y valores ancestrales de los pueblos indígenas y el conocimiento científico.

Fomentar la difusión de los valores propios de las comunidades, así como la apertura de espacios para promover la revitalización, desarrollo y consolidación de lenguas y culturas originarias, estimulando una comunicación pertinente de las tareas universitarias con las comunidades del entorno, a fin de generar condiciones favorables al desarrollo propio de los pueblos.

Contribuir a una educación cultural y lingüísticamente pertinente mediante la incorporación del enfoque intercultural en todos los planes de estudio que ofrece, para lograr la construcción de una sociedad más justa y equitativa.

UIEM promotes an important rapprochement with national and international higher education institutions with the purpose of establishing actions in the area of academic mobility and scientific cooperation, which will allow expanding the horizon of quality that is projected of training processes and research projects related to problems in the community.

The generation of new knowledge tends to consolidate gradually through the impulse to research developed by UIEM academic bodies, developing interdisciplinary work that translates into current and avant-garde knowledge for society in general. The institution has a Center for Teaching and Research in Language and Culture, which is the body that allows for the recovery, teaching and research of native languages and cultures, as well as the evaluation of their use and the certification of their domain, in order to stimulate their revitalization and maintenance. Likewise, it offers teaching, evaluation and certification of the English language or any other foreign language that strengthens the professional academic training process of the students[144]. (*Misión, Visión y Valores | Universidad Intercultural Del Estado de México*, n.d.)

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[144] Se proyecta, como una institución universitaria que implementa un modelo educativo innovador basado en el enfoque intercultural que favorece el arraigo de los jóvenes estudiantes y egresados en las comunidades de origen, a través de la oferta de programas educativos de licenciaturas, especialidades, posgrados y cursos de educación continua de calidad, debidamente certificados.

A través de una acertada gestión de sus procesos organizativos, de planeación y operación administrativa se promueven procesos de acreditación de la calidad de sus servicios, calidad asegurada por personal académico y administrativo altamente calificado, seleccionado con perfiles rigurosos en constante actualización y evaluación.

Promueve un importante acercamiento con instituciones de educación superior nacionales e internacionales con el propósito de establecer acciones en materia de movilidad académica y de cooperación científica, lo que permitirá ampliar el horizonte de proyección de la calidad de sus procesos formativos y proyectos de investigación vinculados a los problemas comunitarios.

### *C.2.1 UIEM Mission and Vision Statement for Sustainable Development*

Mission

The bachelor's degree has the mission of forming professionals who are caring and committed in the sustainable development of their communities and of the whole country and that they influence in a positive way in the making of decisions and actions that impact in biological, economic, social, and cultural spheres. Promoting the integration of traditional and scientific knowledge in an intercultural dialog, interdisciplinary with a perspective of differing groups, through the substantive functions of the University.

Through the action of the bachelor's degree, the relationship between Interculturality and Development will materialize. To reach this goa is a challenge because it implies the relearning by the instructors, changes in the methods and materials of teaching, administrative aspects, of organization, in university life, and the permanent redesigning of study plans[145]. (*Licenciatura En Desarrollo Sustentable | Universidad Intercultural Del Estado de México*, n.d.)

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La generación de nuevos conocimientos tiende a consolidarse paulatinamente a través del impulso a la investigación que desarrollan sus Cuerpos Académicos, realizando trabajo interdisciplinario que se traduce en conocimiento actual y de vanguardia para la sociedad en general.

La institución cuenta con un Centro de Enseñanza e Investigación en Lengua y Cultura que es la instancia que permite la recuperación, enseñanza e investigación de las lenguas y las culturas originarias, así como la evaluación de su manejo y la certificación de su dominio, a fin de estimular su revitalización y consolidación.

Asimismo, oferta la enseñanza, evaluación y certificación de la lengua inglesa o cualquiera otra lengua extranjera que fortalece el proceso de formación académico profesional de los estudiantes.

[145] La Licenciatura tiene la misión de formar profesionistas solidarios y comprometidos con el desarrollo sustentable de sus comunidades y del país que influyan positivamente en la toma de decisiones y acciones que impacten a las esferas biológica, económica, social y cultural. Promoviendo la integración del conocimiento tradicional y el científico en un dialogo intercultural, interdisciplinario y con perspectiva de género, a través de las funciones sustantivas de la Universidad.

Vision

To be a bachelor's degree that can apply the intercultural model in educational practice and in the pertinent and innovative plan of studies that strives to be recognized at a regional, national, and international level for its academic excellence, for its advanced, pioneering research from start to finish, for the connection and diffusion with the community, whose actions shall influence in a positive way, together with the public, private, and social sectors, the sustainable solution of local, regional, and global problems[146]. (*Licenciatura En Desarrollo Sustentable | Universidad Intercultural Del Estado de México*, n.d.)

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A través de la acción de la Licenciatura se proyecta materializar la relación entre la Interculturalidad y el Desarrollo. Lograr esta meta es un desafío en el que se implica el reaprendizaje de los docentes, cambios en los métodos y materiales de enseñanza, en aspectos administrativos, de organización, en la vida universitaria y el rediseño permanente de planes de estudio.

[146] Ser una Licenciatura que aplica el modelo intercultural en su práctica docente y en su plan de estudios pertinente e innovador, que busca ser reconocida a nivel regional, nacional e internacional por su excelencia académica, por su investigación de frontera y de principio a fin, por medio de la vinculación y la extensión con la comunidad, cuyas acciones influirán positivamente junto con los sectores público, privado y sociales en la solución sustentable de problemáticas locales, regionales y globales.

## Appendix D. Degrees offered at UIEM and at UVIH

At UIEM there are six undergraduate degrees offered:

Language and Culture

Sustainable Development

Intercultural Communication

Intercultural Health

Intercultural Art and Design

Nursing

At UIEM there is one master's degree offered:

Management of Sustainable Rural Innovation

All degrees are listed on the school website (*Posgrado | Universidad Intercultural Del Estado de México*, n.d.)

At UVIH there are only undergraduate degrees offered. They are all degrees in Intercultural Management for Development[147] but there are five emphases:

Health

Sustainability

Communication

Languages

Law

[147] In Spanish, *Licenciatura en Gestión Intercultural para el Desarrollo* or LGID.

## Appendix E. Original Spanish of the Qualitative Interviews

All interviews and cited commentary originally took place in the Spanish language. The interviews were translated into English in the text, but in this Appendix appear the original Spanish transcription.

### Adelina

#### *Adelina 1, 9 Minutes into the Interview*

[00:09:14.48] James: ¿Qué significa ser un alumno de esta institución?

[00:09:20.85] Adelina: Pues para mí, no sé si nada más en mi caso. Pero la verdad, a mí sí me ha ayudado mucho haber estudiado aquí. Yo [00:09:30.0] lo he visto como una oportunidad que me ha abierto otras puertas para la mejor. Este trabajo es que ni yo pensaba hacer la verdad, porque cuando yo regresé de aquí sí recibí varias ofertas de trabajo.

[00:09:49.11] Adelina: A lo mejor no sé si fue porque era de las primeras generaciones [of UIEM], pero, por ejemplo, yo antes de ingresar aquí, como este trabajo, [00:10:00.0] trabajé en el Museo Nacional de Antropología. Yo era investigadora, de ahí estuve casi cuatro años ahí trabajando. Estaba yo en un proyecto. Sí, estaba en un proyecto de etnografía de las regiones indígenas de México. Entonces yo, junto con otros investigadores realizado, nos encargamos de hacer investigaciones de las cinco comunidades del Estado [00:10:30.0] de México originarias en este caso, pues yo, como pertenecían a los Mazahuas, me tocaba solamente más de cómo hacer más hincapié en esas de los mazahuas. Pero pues yo cuando regresé de aquí busqué trabajo como maestra, como docente y tuve la oportunidad también. Recién regresé de aquí de irme a trabajar como directora en un preescolar indígena bilingüe en [00:11:00.0] en Temoaya.

***Adelina 2, 24 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:24:41.05] James: Entonces, te gustaría trabajar en tu comunidad? Quieres salir al futuro?

[00:24:49.93] Adelina: Pues a mí sí me gustaría trabajar en mi comunidad, en mi comunidad, ahí. Yo soy del centro de Jocotitlán, claro. Entonces ahí, como [00:25:00.0] llegó muy pronto la evangelización.

[00:25:04.86] Adelina: Ahí es donde principalmente se hablaba mazahua. Pero al llegar este de bautizar muy temprano la evangelización, pues todos los mazahuas se fueron a las orillas. Entonces, ahí donde yo vivo, que es el centro, ya casi más bien ya no hay personas que hablen mazahua.

[00:25:34.14] Adelina: Ya no. Entonces este, pues ahora ya nada más. En las comunidades aledañas. Pero sí hay personas que todavía hablan nada más que el mazahua que hablan y en Jocotitlán que hablan en San Felipe o en Atlacomulco es diferente porque también es bueno. Debido a eso de la evangeliza, ya casi usan muchos préstamos del Jocotitlán [00:26:00.0] clack. Entonces aquí, todavía en San Felipe, utilizan un poquito más para decir que el lenguaje tal cual es. Entonces este pues a mí sí me gustaría trabajar algún proyecto o alguna actividad en Jocotitlán, porque este pues quisiera yo que se hablara, todavía se pudiera rescatar y practicar más el idioma mazahua, además de enseñarles todo lo que es la cultura. [00:26:30.0]

***Adelina 3, 33 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:32:43.74] James: huh, Es un poco de cambio de tema que diferencias hay entre ti y un estudiante urbano.

[00:32:57.45] ¿Hay ventajas o desventajas? [00:33:00.0]

[00:33:04.42] Pues yo sí he podido ver un poco de la diferencia, porque cuando yo ingresé de aquí me fui a la Ciudad de México, pues ahí tuve contacto con diferentes tipos de personas. Entonces este y más estando ahí en el instituto, pues ves tú muchos estudiantes de la UNAM o de otras escuelas muy preparadas, muy reconocidas. [00:33:30.0] Entonces, al principio, cuando tú le dices que vienes de te preguntan ¿de qué universidad vienes? Y les digo vengo de la Universidad Intercultural del Estado de México.

[00:33:45.05] Muchos no saben eso. O muchos te preguntan dónde es eso. No conocen.

[00:33:53.38] No conocen el modelo ni conocen la institución.

[00:33:58.48] Entonces ya les explicaba que [00:34:00.0] qué objetivos misión, visión tiene la escuela y todo. Y muchos me decían ¿qué estudiaste? Yo, pues estudié la licenciatura en Lengua y Cultura. ¿Y qué lengua sabes? Les decía, pues mazahua. ¿A poco todavía se usa eso o a poco todavía se habla?

***Adelina 4, 36 Minutes into the Interview***

Adelina: Entonces muchos [00:36:00.0] se sorprendían de que yo pude haber entrado ahí al Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia porque me decían, ¿tú vienes del INAH? ¿Estudiaste en la Escuela Nacional de Antropología o no? Y dicen que casi los que se sabe, que casi todos los investigadores del museo del Instituto, pues vienen de la INAH, o vienen de la UNAM o vienen y todos pensaban que yo había estudiado ahí, pero no cuando les decía que era de aquí. [00:36:28.92] Entonces se quedaban así, [00:36:30.0] como sorprendidos a poco.

***Adelina 5, 48 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:47:54.42] James: Pero a la misma vez. [que el gobierno empezó a tener interés en las lenguas originarias]

[00:47:58.97] James: El gobierno empezó [00:48:00.0] a tener interés en el medio ambiente. [00:48:08.56] James: Cuando, como empezaron las biosferas, como para las mariposas monarcas que, que están habitados por gente mazahua, ¿por qué piensas que el interés en el medio ambiente, por ejemplo, aquí hay una carrera en desarrollo sustentable? [00:48:30.0] ¿Por qué el interés en el medio ambiente y a la misma vez lenguas y culturas originarias? [00:48:32.08] Adelina: Pues está en la relación de la importancia que tiene el mazahua con la naturaleza. En eso recae ahora así que lo más importante, porque de acuerdo a la cosmovisión, los mazahuas, para ellos la naturaleza es una parte fundamental en la vida. Entonces este [00:49:00.0] entorno a ella se realizan diferentes rituales o ciclos de vida. Entonces, por ejemplo, en las comunidades, para ellos la milpa es un lugar muy importante porque es el ahorro de alimentos. Este, este también es un lugar sagrado, entonces este en este caso ellos siempre buscan un equilibrio entre el hombre [00:49:30.0] y la naturaleza. Entonces también hay un cierto respeto a todo eso que es la biodiversidad, porque en ellos, en su pensamiento, hay cuatro seres creadores entonces que son los de los mantenimientos. Esos cuatro seres creadores son el *menche* que es el del agua, el *mentama*, que es el del aire, el *mesidi* que es el del fuego y el *mejomo*, [00:50:00.0] que es de la tierra. Entonces este siempre a estos cuatro seres creadores se les agradece y se les venera. Entonces cada uno de ellos tiene su determinada festividad o su determinado lugar en la comunidad. Entonces ellos estén todo el año durante todo el año hacen festividades en torno a ellos. Entonces, yo [00:50:30.0] creo que la importancia de hacer una licenciatura en torno al medio ambiente recae en eso, en la importancia de que la naturaleza y la biodiversidad es importante y sagrada para los mazahuas.

**Adelita**

***Adelita 1, 7 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:07:19.70] James: Entonces, ¿cuáles? ¿Qué escuelas asististe?

Adelita: No fui a la escuela

James: ¿nada?

Odalis: nada.

James: ¿Era muy común en aquellos años?

[00:07:30.00] James: ¿Era común en aquellos años que no había escuelas?

[00:07:34.95] Odalis: Madre, dígale a que no había escuelas [en aquellos años].

Adelita: Sí, había, pero lejos de San Pedro.

Adelita: Nosotros nos [indistinct].

[00:07:50.33] Adelita: Seca la boca [quiere un vaso de agua].

[00:08:10.72] James: En aquellos años, ¿todas las escuelas aquí, por aquí, utilizaron español, solamente español?

Adelita: Nods in the affirmative.

**David**

***David 1, 8 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:08:03.29] Cómo te ha ido en el campo de trabajo que, eh, es, eh, ¿salió como esperaste?

[00:08:11.38] Pues más o menos no he encontrado lo que yo quisiera, pues como desarrollarme, pero sí he encontrado trabajo. No así directamente en la comunicación todo, pero sí he desarrollado diferentes labores, como en el ayuntamiento de Atlacomulco. Estuve a cargo [00:08:30.0] de un comedor para niños indígenas y ahorita estoy desarrollando un proyecto bueno. Aparte de que me gustó este empleo como fotógrafo, estoy desarrollando un

proyecto para el Instituto Nacional de los Pueblos Indígenas. Solicité el proyecto. Solicité este apoyo para un proyecto que yo estaba desarrollando y ahorita estoy desarrollando algo de producción audiovisual en lenguaje. Entonces me están ayudando mis familiares, amigos que hablan del mazahua bien esté. Toda la producción [00:09:00.0] es hablado en lengua con subtítulos.

***David 2, 14 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:14:40.46] Fue estar aquí en la universidad fue algo muy distinto a lo que habías hecho antes?

[00:14:50.04] Sí, sí, por el enfoque. Antes ya había estudiado unos semestres de artes en la UAEM, en Toluca. Entonces venir aquí es otro contexto, el mismo San Felipe es otro lugar. Como no es tan urbano, entonces desde llegar en la escuela era también otra cosa conocer a compañeros que eran hablantes naturales de lenguas de lenguas originarias. Escucharlos hablar, ver a mis compañeros maestros. Conocí también la danza, los temascales. Sí, fue otra otro asunto.

***David 3, 21 Minutes into the Interview***

David: La mayoría de mis amigos hablan español. [00:21:00.0]

James: ¿Qué lenguas son más comunes?

David: Entre el español y el mazahua, el mazahua, eh, teniendo como un nuevo interés, ¿no? En las primarias están teniendo mazahua. Está enseñando más en la primaria y entonces también estamos tratando de fomentar eso con el proyecto que estamos desarrollando de lo audiovisual le estamos enseñando a los niños unos cantos que hacemos nosotros en el temascal. Los traducimos al lenguaje [Spanish], [00:21:30.0] que son cantos sencillos, [indistinct word] sencilla, rápida.

***David 4, 40 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:40:21.83] David: Porque yo pienso que siempre hay una relación muy cercana y creo que si, no sé, sólo yo lo pienso. Pero entre las culturas originarias y la naturaleza, porque es más cercana la relación que todos los pueblos originarios tienen con la naturaleza y con el entorno, que son menos industriales, menos tecnológicos, por así decirlo, no que tengan excluidos de todo eso, pero siempre tienen una relación más próxima con la naturaleza. No sé con el monte así que obtienen del cerro, leña y alimentos, así como con la milpa, con el río, con [00:41:00.0] el maíz, con la siembra. Entonces es una relación más directa con la naturaleza. Siempre que pienso en los pueblos originales pienso en cómo esa relación intrínseca es muy próxima con la naturaleza. Entonces pienso que no es sólo una coincidencia, sino que van de la mano. Siempre resalta, por ejemplo, como danzante he visto eso así, vamos, que los matlatzincas y le dan ofrendas al río. Vamos [00:41:30.0] con los mazahuas y prenden el fuego y le agradecen el maíz, le ponen florecitas y este es el maíz cuando crece los manzanos y me pareció muy importante.

**Esmeralda**

***Esmeralda 1, 14 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:13:58.91] Estudiar ha sido [00:14:00.0] fácil o difícil?

[00:14:03.86] Ha sido muy difícil, siempre siendo la mayor de cinco hermanas.

[00:14:09.25] Sí, en términos de economía fue extremadamente difícil. Siento que he tenido un milagro poder terminar la universidad que tenemos que apoyar en casa. Teníamos los materiales que tenían para inglés. Eran muy caros, libros extremadamente caros en comparación a otras licenciaturas. Si terminaron realmente fue un reto, pero bueno, valió la pena.

***Esmeralda 2, 20 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:20:37.12] James: ¿Qué lenguas [00:20:30.0] hablas?

Esmeralda: Sí, hablo el español, que es mi lengua materna. Y puedo entender un poco de mazahua. No puedo hablarlo, pero puedo entenderlo porque mis papás y ellos hablan, hablaban cuando estábamos pequeñas entre los dos o cuando llegaba de visita alguna tía o mi abuela me hablaba mazahua, pero nunca nos enseñaron a hablar.

[00:20:57.86] Esmeralda: Entonces y después el inglés.

Esmeralda: [00:21:00.0] Pues sí, me encanta. Me encanta el inglés y un poco de francés y un poco. Parece que se va haciendo un tema muy bonito, interesante y está aprendiendo con lo básico de chino mandarín, porque me encantaría aprender chino mandarín. En parte porque me encanta estudiar relación, pero no por mí misma. Así estudiaba las clases básicas. Es un idioma mucho más complejo de aprender porque es diferente.

***Esmeralda 3, 23 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:22:50.09] Esmeralda: A veces habla con ellos un poco de mazahua o en la calle cuando encuentran a alguna otra persona mayor. Se graduó hace dos años

James: y, ¿como es su [00:23:00.0] mazahua?

Esmeralda: Ush, como distinta, muy distinto. No aprende apenas 50 por ciento porque no le gusta tampoco. Además, es un requisito de la escuela y de titularse.

***Esmeralda 4, 28 Minutes into the Interview***

James: ¿Qué lugar deben tener las lenguas originarias en México? ¿Qué merecen del gobierno, de la gente?

[00:28:11.9] Esmeralda: Siento que las lenguas originarias deben ser reconocidas realmente como un puente de comunicación entre las personas que tiene conocimiento, que son los

sabios para con la comunidad y deberían tener conocimiento por parte del gobierno, deberían darles algún beneficio, algún apoyo económico a las personas que hablan este idioma, porque a veces son discriminadas [00:28:30.0] por el hecho de hablar esa lengua. Entonces siento que no debería ser así, deben tener sus derechos y obligaciones.

[00:28:35.72] James: También piensas que la universidad intercultural ayuda en ese aspecto.

[00:28:41.6] Esmeralda: De cierta manera sí está ayudando a que la lengua sea reconocida y esté valorizada.

***Esmeralda 5, 53 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:52:29.39] James: Tengo una pregunta. Muy cerca de aquí vemos las biosferas para proteger a las mariposas, mariposas, monarcas, también en la escuela hay una carrera de desarrollo sustentable. Por [00:53:00.0] qué? Porque surgió el interés en el medio ambiente y el interés en las lenguas originarias a la misma vez, como en los años 70 y 80.

[00:53:21.12] Me parece inspirado por el ambiente y la preocupación por el cuidado del ambiente, pues surge a raíz de que el cambio más climático está afectando a todos los países del mundo, especialmente [00:53:30.0] el interés por rescatarlo, no rescatarlo a lo mejor, pero puede crear estrategias que puedan ayudar a disminuir ese calentamiento global. Entonces, por eso las personas de aquí decidieron desarrollar esta carrera, donde creamos que se crean con tecnologías que están basadas, tienen todos los ingredientes que utilizan, están basados en la naturaleza, son naturaleza, no afecta. No producimos, no se producen químicos. Entonces eso hay vida, mucha naturaleza, especialmente. Y recurrimos también [00:54:00.0] al rescate de las lenguas, porque son los antepasados quienes tienen desconocimiento de cómo ellos antes cultivaban los campos de maíz sin utilizar químicos, sin utilizar abonos y teniendo buenas cosechas. Entonces ellos dijeron, pero, ¿cómo lo hacían? Y para poder saber

cómo lo hacían tienen que aprender la lengua, porque la mayoría está monolingüe. Ya personas mayores que no conocen el español para poder comunicarse con ellos tenían que aprender mazahua. Surge el interés de la lengua al mismo tiempo para poder extraer el conocimiento y aplicarlo a las necesidades y problemas que se viven [00:54:30.0] en la actualidad.

**Evelia**

***Evelia 1, 11 Minutes into the Interview.***

[00:11:15.49] James: ¿Oíste, oíste, oías Tlahuica cuando eras niña?

[00:11:22.7] Evelia: Sí

James: ¿Tu papá te habló o hablaba con sus amigos?

[00:11:25.53] Evelia: Hablaban en familia y así [00:11:30.0] y así empecé como a escucharlo. No me lo enseñaron. Yo escuchaba por qué no me enseñaron Tlahuica. Lo que yo lo escuchaba, cómo lo utilizaban ellos.

[00:11:44.44] James: ¿Pero de niña podías entenderlo?

[00:11:48.72] Evelia: Poco. Poco. Poco. Más bien entendí un poco más la Tlahuica estudiándolo. De niña solamente sabía cosas, cosas.

[00:11:56.94] Evelia: Por ejemplo, mi [00:12:00.0] mamá, eh, eh, nunca escuché mixteco de niña. De hecho, yo me entero que mi mamá es mixteca hasta que estudio en la universidad. Yo sabía que mis abuelos eran de Oaxaca y que hablaban algo mis abuelos que no era español, pero no sabía ni de qué familia ni nada.

James: ¿Y la Tlahuica? Sí, sí, lo escuchaba, lo escuchaba en familia o con la gente del pueblo. Pero no, no nos enseñaban a los niños.

James: ¿Te interesaba o pensabas?

[00:12:29.59] Evelia: No pensamos, [00:12:30.0] no pensaba, no lo pensaba, era algo de mi papá, algo de ellos.

[00:12:35.94] Evelia: Pero no me lo enseñaban, pero sí lo escuchaba. Entonces, incluso mi abuela, me acuerdo mucho que nos pedía cosas y de repente no las pedía en lengua [This refers to Spanish].

[00:12:48.81] Evelia: Y luego se acordaba de que no era en lengua y ya no las volvió a pedir en español, entonces. Pero fue así como también una forma de aprender Tlahuica.

[00:12:58.05] Evelia: Me acuerdo mucho que mi abuelita, ella siempre que [00:13:00.0] mi abuelita, cuando estábamos comiendo mi abuelita me decía [Tlahuica] y pensaba, eh, "dame la sal".

[00:13:13.28] Evelia: Y entonces eso se me fue quedando, porque ella, pues como era su lengua materna, la usaba con nosotros, pero porque la quería, le salía en ese momento. Pero en realidad no quería hablarnos Tlahuica. Nos quería hablar en español porque ellos querían enseñarnos de español. [00:13:30.0]

***Evelia 2, 19 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:19:01.13] Evelia: Cuando [00:19:00.0] llegué aquí había clases de Tlahuica, pero quien nos daba las clases de Tlahuica no era un hablante de Tlahuica, porque el sistema pedía a alguien titulado.

[00:19:14.12] Evelia: No había en el pueblo, no hay un abuelo que tenga el título. Para el sistema no podía dar clases.

[00:19:22.77] James: Es como tener una estructura tradicional.

[00:19:29.52] Evelia: Sí, sí, [00:19:30.0] sí.

[00:19:34.38] Evelia: Hubo un semestre bueno, los primeros semestres. Justamente mis clases de Tlahuica eran con la doctora Marta, pero ella no nos enseñaba a hablar, nos enseñaba a entender el sistema de la lengua.

[00:19:46.29] Evelia: Entonces, pues eso, a mí me sirvió bastante, porque así aprendí también, no entendiendo el sistema de la lengua. Pero una clase de lenguas es aprender una lengua. Aprendes en sus [indistinto]. Pero [00:20:00.0] aprendí en mis clases de Tlahuica, el sistema de la lengua.

[00:20:06.39] Evelia: Y hubo dos semestres que justamente le comentamos. Los alumnos queremos aprender más Tlahuica, que Tlahuica se refuercen, porque es muy curioso. En la primera generación que llegó a esta universidad éramos 14, 16 estudiantes del pueblo. éramos bastantes. No sé si [00:20:30.0] tengo bien el dato, ahorita no recuerdo, pero éramos un grupo grande y todos éramos del pueblo, entonces éramos.

[00:20:38.76] Evelia: Desde ese año. No ha vuelto una generación tan grande. Vienen uno, dos, tres, cuatro, pero éramos un grupo grande de 16 alumnos más o menos. Entonces nos gustaban las clases de lingüística, pero queríamos aprender más. ¿Cómo se dice que esto, aquello? [00:21:00.0] La universidad cómo vio que nosotros queríamos eso? Le pagó a un experto y a la maestra de lingüística. Entonces teníamos clases de lingüística con el experto, pues eran dos maestros en al frente. Alguien quien lo decía y alguien que escribía.

[00:21:17.91] Evelia: Entonces eso también nos ayudó bastante esos dos semestres y se pensaba la universidad a seguir así. Pero digo, las administraciones cambian y las visiones son diferentes. Entonces solamente nos duró dos semestres estar así esos [00:21:30.0] dos semestres.

[00:21:32.31] James: ¿Dos profesores?

Evelia: Sí, en la misma clase podía hablar.

[00:21:36.57] Evelia: Sí que era un experto de la comunidad y el maestro de lingüística. Eso era muy bueno.

[00:21:43.08] Evelia: Aprendíamos súper bien porque cuando cualquier cosa las decía, la maestra la anotaba y ya decía Miren, es así, así, así.

[00:21:54.19] Evelia: Y eso era muy bueno. Pero después nada más. Nada más duró dos semestres y ya no esté. [00:22:00.0] Y bueno, yo termino este justamente mi tesis de licenciatura habla sobre que la lengua se sigue manteniendo por un sistema de parentesco, es decir, que las familias, que hay familias en el pueblo que han mantenido la lengua, eso dicen la tesis.

***Evelia 3, 24 Minutes into the Interview***

James: ¿Cuándo sacaste tu licenciatura el trabajo que encontraste era como lo que esperaste cuando eras estudiante?

[00:24:11.22] Evelia: Sí, sí, sí, sí, sí, porque me gustaba mucho seguir ayudando en la investigación. Pero, para eso tengo que titularme y alcanzar a los grados académicos [she laughs].

James: ¿Por tu experiencia aquí, ves tu idioma y tu pueblo de una manera diferente?

[00:24:32.64] Evelia: Sí, sí. Eh… [long pause] a mi pueblo porque siento que podemos potencializar muchas cosas, ¡uh huh!, entonces están ahí, pero necesitamos potencializarlos, ¿no? Eso es lo que me ha ayudado bastante aquí, que antes no lo veía. Antes estaba en comunidad y para mí era algo normal, ¿no? Pero ahorita no podemos hacer muchas cosas, no escribir [00:25:00.0] mucho del pueblo, no de la historia, de la lengua, de su cosmovisión. Entonces puedo hacer muchas cosas, siento que puedo hacer muchas cosas.

[00:25:12.4] James: ¿Cómo ve el pueblo la generación de abuelos y tu generación?

[00:25:24.24] Evelia: Justamente cuando yo crecí, los [00:25:30.0] abuelos y los adultos, teniendo una idea de que no servía la lengua, no servía la cultura no servía que teníamos que ser como otro, otro pueblo. Pero después, justamente, que somos una generación grande de estudiantes y que estamos estudiando la cultura y llegamos a querer saber todo de la cultura y de la lengua, pues empezaron a cambiar su visión también ellos. Y ahora, pues ellos sí tenemos una tarea, nos ayuda las ideas y yo les puedo ayudar. Esto sería si [00:26:00.0] esto es así. Entonces empezaron a cambiar su visión, pero perdimos mucho tiempo en pasar este proceso. Tan es así que ahorita, pues aunque la mayoría de la gente quiere aprender que Tlahuica tiene una actitud muy positiva, pero nos ganaron muchos años, ya nos ganaron muchos años y los abuelos ya están grandes y hay una generación que no lo habla y aunque los niños ahora quieran, pero pues tenemos ese desconocimiento, [00:26:30.0] ya no sabemos cómo en las costumbres estamos muy fuertes.

[00:26:34.91] Evelia: Es un pueblo con unas costumbres y tradiciones muy, muy marcadas y muy fuertes, pero en la lengua sí es.

[00:26:41.55] Evelia: Es triste ver de repente que no, que ya hay una generación que nos dejó de transmitir la lengua y que ahorita la queremos recuperar, pero nos está costando doble, nos está costando bastante.

***Evelia 4, 38 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:37:58.1] James: ¿Piensas que la universidad ha [00:38:00.0] tenido un impacto positivo en las lenguas originarias?

Evelia: Sí, al menos en la mía, así en la mía se ha tenido un impacto positivo porque son comunidades pequeñas.

[00:38:12.14] Evelia: Entonces el trabajo se ha reflejado con nosotros los estudiantes, también en el estilo de vida. Y pues sí han cambiado como otras perspectivas. Entonces, antes, por ejemplo, era como todo negado no hablar de eso. Entonces, con esta nueva perspectiva, la universidad tiende [00:38:30.0] a hacerlos que está bien, que pueden crecer con eso. Entonces yo, por ejemplo, tengo un hermano que es Contador.

[00:38:38.02] Evelia: Él al principio también me decía tu carrera ¿para qué? [Evelia laughs] [Delete an aside made by James]

[00:39:14.57] Evelia: De hecho, mi hermano, me decía, ¿para qué vas a vivir de esto? Y ahora que ve todo lo que hago, dice que bonito. El primero que dice es todo eso. O sea, cuando le mostré, por ejemplo, [00:39:30.0] que todos esos hongos eran los que comíamos y estaban ubicados en la ciencia y que tenían un nombre en nuestra lengua y dice O, eso es bonito, que mis hijos lo sigan aprendiendo. Y yo si le digo que sí, pero tenemos que aprender más.

[00:39:44.03] Evelia: Le dijo que hay que aprender de las otras culturas o la de la cultura nacional, más la cultura de nosotros, la Tlahuica. Entonces es doble trabajo luego, pero sí podemos decir podemos y eso pasa.

[00:39:56.09] Evelia: Por ejemplo, ahorita teníamos un proyecto con los maestros de desarrollo [00:40:00.0] sobre los animales y fuimos a poner cámaras para ver qué animales había en la zona. Entonces encontramos ciertos animales y todos los animales también tienen su nombre en lengua.

***Evelia 5, 60 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:59:55.09] Evelia: Bueno, yo al menos me cuesta de repente [01:00:00.0] dimensionar si se va a mantener la lengua o no. Porque veo, veo muchas cosas. Veo una sociedad que está

creciendo más con otra cultura. Veo pocos espacios, veo poco interés del Estado. Entonces, si no, no lo vamos a lograr así. Y entonces es cuando digo a ver, Evelia. Pero al menos si puedes hacer una muy buena documentación de todo.

[01:00:23.93] Evelia: Entonces es cuando digo voy. Al menos voy a hacer una muy buena documentación de todas cuentas. [01:00:30.0]

**Fernando**

***Fernando 1, 14 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:13:32.42] James: ¿Qué harías con tus primeros sueldos, cuando trabajas, cuando trabajes, cuando trabajes?

Fernando: ¿Mis primeros sueldos?

[00:13:45.85] Fernando: Pues una servía como las necesidades básicas que yo tengo, obviamente alimentación, vestido, calzado, todo eso porque siento que es básico.

**Griselda**

***Griselda 1, 5 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:05:13.05] James: ¿Cómo visualizas el campo de trabajo que te espera?

[00:05:20.01] Griselda: Es difícil, es difícil porque, bueno, sabemos que hay muchísimos profesionistas de muchísimas carreras, todas son muy importantes, desde luego, y [00:05:30.0] por ejemplo la, las, eh, los gestores interculturales [The graduates of UVI], pues siempre que vamos a otra comunidad, a otro lugar, que estamos en otro entorno que no es la UVI, siempre nos preguntan, pero ¿qué es eso? ¿no? Y entonces nosotros le intentamos explicar qué es lo que hacemos, que es lo que aquí lo que buscamos, pero no nos comprenden porque pienso que es necesario que [00:06:00.0] esta forma de enseñanza intercultural pues sea aplicable en todos los espacios, ¿no?

***Griselda 2, 12 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:11:55.66] James: Estudiar ahora la universidad, ¿representa algo distinto a lo que has hecho antes?

[00:12:05.29] Griselda: Claro, si en la UVI. Para mí es como estar en mi comunidad. Me siento muy contenta de estar en la UVI porque me ha abierto como muchas puertas.

[00:12:21.58] Digamos de alguna forma lo que el Estado o la colonia o la colonización [00:12:30.0] nos nos ha dejado, eh, como las digamos, las cosas no tan favorables para nosotros. En la UVI me enseñó cómo van a darme cuenta, pero también a valorar mi cultura. Hablar náhuatl para mí antes no significaba más allá de que podía hacerlo ya. Pero ahora me doy cuenta de que no solamente es hablar mi [00:13:00.0] idioma por hablarlo, sino que forma parte del patrimonio cultural de la humanidad.

[00:13:04.98] Griselda: Entonces eso me hace, digamos, más consciente y más, y considero que es muy importante que hablemos cualquier otro idioma, ¿no?, porque nos enriquece a nosotros mismos y también podemos ayudar a que otras personas aprendan de nosotros.

***Griselda 3, 14 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:13:56.71] Griselda: Digamos que la comunidad cuando te formas de pequeño [00:14:00.0] te enseña que debes de dejar tu lengua porque nos hace pensar, nos hacen pensar que si tú hablas tu lengua, desde luego serás discriminado afuera y debes de dejar de hablar tu lengua para formarte como un profesionista, no como tal.

[00:14:23.64] Pero hablando solamente español, no, eso es como lo que nos dejó la colonia.

James: ¿Eso es lo que te enseñan? ¿En la escuela? ¿O en tu familia?

[00:14:36.61] Griselda: huh, en mi familia. Más bien se da eso en las familias, como sí.

**Laura**

***Laura 1, 11 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:11:03.36] James: Cómo te aceptaron en la comunidad o qué pensaron de ti?

[00:11:15.07] Laura: Pues para empezar dijeron que estaba muy lejos, era como inaccesible. Yo no conocía este lugar hasta que conocí la universidad y les parece a mi familia, [00:11:30.0] a la gente cercana como, ¿Qué es eso? Con qué se come? No lo entienden muy bien. Es difícil que lo entiendan, pero cuando uno va haciendo cosas en ciertos sectores se dan cuenta de por dónde vamos y de que vamos sobre y con la cultura.

***Laura 2, 42 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:42:26.4] Laura: Pero regresamos [00:42:30.0] justo [after 7 years away for work] porque nuestros maestros inculcaron esa semilla en nosotros, nos dijeron. Está muy bien que salgan y que se aprenda, pero siempre vuelvan a su comunidad porque su comunidad los necesita y porque la escuela también requiere retribuirle algo de lo mucho que les dio. Entonces, cuando nosotros volvimos, eso fue lo que yo les dije a mis estudiantes, ¿no?, quiero retribuirle de algún modo lo que se metió aquí y [00:43:00.0] yo quisiera que ustedes ya lo mismo. Si está muy bien salir, sí, está muy bien aprender y hacer muchas cosas fuera, pero creo que el fin más importante de la universidad es que vuelva a hacer algo por tu comunidad de escuela. [00:43:18.96] Laura: ¿Entonces tenemos muy poco aquí? Relativamente no, pero sí tenemos intención de hacer algo más por la comunidad.

***Laura and Roberto 1, 40 Minutes into the Interview***

James: ¿Entonces estuvieron fuera de la comunidad por casi siete años, por siete años?

[00:39:54.14] Laura: Trabajamos en Puebla, Guanajuato, Morelos, en [00:40:00.0] muchos estados y participamos en una evaluación nacional desde Mexicali hasta Yucatán, y pues era gestión cultural y a los pueblos como comunidades.

[00:40:21.68] Laura: Entonces estuvimos mucho tiempo fuera y apenas volvimos.

James: ¿Son maestros?

[00:40:25.31] Roberto: Maestros, no, somos promotores de atención [00:40:30.0] social.

[00:40:34.76] Roberto: Trabajábamos aquí en el Estado de México. Posteriormente surgió una oportunidad para irnos a trabajar en el estado de Morelos haciendo atención social. La atención social es desde saber llevar una asamblea comunitaria, identificar problemas, pues de alguna manera soluciones emergidas por la misma [00:41:00.0] comunidad. Tendríamos que realizar talleres, en este caso de cultura del agua, porque trabajábamos con agua. Sobre los sistemas de agua potable en comunidades rurales

James: ¿Era un programa del gobierno mexicano?

Roberto: La empresa era del gobierno y trabajamos por la impresa. Nosotros trabajábamos a la empresa y así surgió la propuesta de irnos a Guanajuato y después regresar a Puebla en [00:41:30.0] Toluca. El último trabajo que hicimos fue una evaluación por el Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo de comunidades indígenas.

**Lizbeth**

***Lizbeth 1, 10 Minutes into the Interview***

[00:09:24.04] James: ¿El gasto educativo que realizas es significativo para tu familia?

[00:09:32.66] Lizbeth: Sí, al principio es de primero, mi papá más que nada me decía no es que, pero ¿de qué te va a servir?

***Lizbeth 2, 12 Minutes into the Interview***

James: ¿Hay muchos que hablan mazahua?

Lizbeth: Sí, me parece [00:12:30.0] que en quinto semestre de Cultura son tres, que que hablaban mazahua desde bebés y español como segunda lengua.

James: ¿Qué idiomas son más comunes en tu comunidad?

[00:12:49.87] El español y a veces hay algunas personas grandes que hablan mazahua.

***Lizbeth 3, 15 Minutes into the Interview***

Lizbeth: Tal vez hoy en día ya están deterioradas. Pese a eso, y yo siento que les da pena, sabe, porque [00:14:30.0] yo creo que ahora el inglés tiene una influencia más fuerte aquí en México y en todos lados realmente. Entonces yo veo a las personas de Atlaco [Atlacomulco, a nearby small city] y ven a una persona que habla mazahua y luego, en fin, sí, pero es malo si así ven a la persona que habla mazahua, como si intentaran discriminar, como si fuera menos que esa persona, dice. Es quien no es así. De hecho, es muy padre. Que hablen mazahua es [00:15:00.0] algo que ya no se ve.

**Roberto**

***Roberto 1, 14 Minutes into the Interview***

James: ¿La universidad intercultural [UIEM] ha cambiado en diez años?

[00:14:13.39] Roberto y Laura: Sí, muchísimo

James: ¿De qué manera?

Roberto: La más visible es en su estructura, no en su material. Ha venido a marcar como un referente del municipio la universidad intercultural. Eso [00:14:30.0] ha cambiado a partir del tiempo. Cuando en algún momento se puso la universidad, nuestra concepción era como una educación patita, como una educación no legalizada, no reconocida. Ahora, con este edificio,

con los materiales de estructura, la universidad se ha posicionado como un referente en San Felipe. ¿Existe educación [00:15:00.0] de calidad? Podemos no decirlo así, pues ha construido incluso otra idea que es la misma gente de aquí, de este contexto. Antes sólo se pensaba en terminar la secundaria y emigrar a las ciudades como mano de obra barata. [00:15:19.15] Y ahora la universidad ha cambiado la forma de pensar de nuestros padres como una nueva opción para aspirar a otros tipos de trabajos, [00:15:30.0] no sólo ser mano de obra barata, sino ahora también pensar en ser docentes, investigadores, lingüistas, investigadores, académicos. Sí ha cambiado la concepción de la universidad en estos diez años en nuestra sociedad.

***Roberto 2, 28 Minutes into the Interview***

Roberto: Es difícil en la actualidad que nosotros, los jóvenes, nos reconozcamos como mazahuas en un primer momento. Es más fácil negarnos ante la sociedad y decir soy mexicano, nada más y hablo español.

[00:27:50.14] Roberto: Entonces, yo creo que el posicionar la lengua originaria viene a generar un análisis, una [00:28:00.0] introspección individual de quiénes somos.

[00:28:07.07] Roberto: En algún momento se me ocurría. Por qué no aparece en nuestra credencial de elector el origen, o digamos el grupo al cual nosotros nos semejamos que sea mazahua, náhuatl, otomí. Yo creo que, a partir de ahí, nosotros en nuestra cabeza va a generar algo. Decir es que yo no sólo soy mexicano, vivo [00:28:30.0] en la nacionalidad mexicana, pero soy perteneciente a un grupo denominado sea mazahua, náhuatl, otomí lo hable o no hable, que también es algo que sea, digamos, cuestionado la academia.