Intergenerational Language Ideologies, Practices, and Management:

An Ethnographic Study in a Nahuatl Community

by

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ABSTRACT

Although there are millions of Nahuatl speakers, the language is highly threatened. The dominant language of Coatepec de los Costales, a small village in Guerrero, Mexico, was historically Nahuatl, a Uto-Aztecan language, referred to by some as "Mexicano" (Messing, 2009). In the last 50 years, there has been a pronounced shift from Mexicano to Spanish in the village, and fewer than 10% of the residents currently speak Mexicano. Without intervention, the language will be lost in the village. The ultimate cause of language shift is a disconnect in transferring the Indigenous language from the older to the younger generations. In Coatepec, older Nahuatl speakers are not teaching their children the language. This recurring theme appears in case studies of language shift around the world. Using a conceptual framework that combines (1) a critical sociocultural approach to language policy; (2) Spolsky's (2004) definition of language policy as language practices, ideologies or beliefs, and management; (3) the ethnography of language policy, and (3) Indigenous knowledges, I collected and analyzed data from a six-month ethnographic study of language loss and reclamation in Coatepec. Specifically, I looked closely at the mechanisms by which language ideologies, management, and practices were enacted among members of different generations, using a combination of observation, archival analysis, and in-depth ethnographic interviews. Seidman's (2013) three-part interview sequence, which includes a focused life history, details of experience, and reflections on meaning, provided the framework for the interviews. What are the language ideologies and practices within and across generations in this setting? What language management strategies – tacit and official – do community members of different generations employ? This in-depth examination of language ideologies,

practices, and management strategies is designed to illuminate not only how and why language shift is occurring, but the possibilities for reversing language shift as well.

DEDICATION

For life, for allowing me to be on this land and to our *Nonantzin* for the beautiful gifts she gives us.

For my grandfather, who encouraged me to reconnect to my language, I will always be thankful for his inspiration.

For my grandmother, for her wisdom and teaching me how to love unconditionally.

For my father, Feliciano and mother, Sofia, who have unconditionally given me their love and support. There are really no words to describe my great gratitude and love I have for them.

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For my nieces, Irma, Alexa, Sofia and my nephew, Nefito, I hope to inspire you and to think critically. I love you!

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For all my relatives and ancestors.

For all living beings on this land, for their presence and their influence of who I am.

For my two homelands, Arizona and Coatepec.

For all the languages and for all the people who walk on this path with me—to revitalize our ancestors' languages.

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First, I would like to thank our *Nonantzin*, for the air—who gives life to all living beings, and steers us in our direction to walk on this land—thank you for letting me plant my feet so strong on this land. Thank you to the plants who nourish our spirits and bodies. Thank you to the stars, sun, moon, animals, water, and fire and all living beings who were beside me, leading me, supporting me, and giving me life and strength to finish this work. This is the work of my ancestors, which holds so much knowledge.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER Page

CHAPTER Page

CHAPTER Page

APPENDIX Page

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Page

Figure Page

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

"When you are given a gift – especially one that is alive – it must be cherished, nurtured, and treated with respect to honor the giver. The language is sacred. And the sacred gift must be passed on from generation to generation." (Watahomigie, 1998, p. 5)

Background to the Study

Although millions speak Nahuatl, a Uto-Aztecan language, it is at high risk of falling silent within the next one or two generations. My ties to Nahuatl go back generations, a language that is part of my ancestors and heart, and a language that was once heard across Mexico's land and spoken by many great leaders of the world. Nahuatl, the dominant language in that era, became buried under layers of colonization within my family and self. Now I am peeling back the layers, uncovering and giving life back to my language, culture and me. My research journey begins by reclaiming and revitalizing my language.

In this section, I provide background on what led me to undertake this study. First, I would like to introduce myself, as an Indigenous descendant would customarily do. My name is Rosalva Mojica Lagunas and I am a 36-year-old, first-generation Indigenous, Mexicana, Xicana woman with Indigenous roots in Coatepec, Guerrero, Mexico. My parents' names are Feliciano Altamirano Lagunas and Sofia Marciana Mojica Lagunas. Both are from Coatepec, a village located in the southwestern part of Mexico. They are descendants from the Aztecs and their first language is Nahuatl. Although I was not born in Coatepec I have special connections with the land and people.

I proudly acknowledge my ancestors from the land that has given us much love and honored us with her gifts. I have two homes: Coatepec and my birthplace: Mesa, Arizona.

I am fluent in Spanish and English, and although I heard both Spanish and Nahuatl spoken while growing up, I never learned Nahuatl as a child. Learning Nahuatl was never a priority or something I thought I needed in my life—it was too complex. I had other things to worry about, such as studying English, which I struggled to learn throughout my school years. At that time, my school was not prepared to teach English language learners (ELLs). I was labeled by the educational institution and became a poster child—an "at-risk" student—poor, first generation, ELL, female, and Mexican. My father finished fourth grade and did not continue his education, and my mother never attended a day of school. I was not supposed to graduate from high school. Despite my obstacles, I did and I continued my education. I was the first member of my family to earn a B.A. and a master's degree. My parents, my siblings, and most of all my grandparents were proud. My parents' struggles to provide and give their children a better life paid off. Education was always a priority to them and for their children, and that was the way to get ahead is what they believed—to be educated and make something of ourselves. For this reason, I wanted to get an education and make my parents proud.

In 2002, I became a first grade teacher, and after five years of teaching, I decided to get my master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction. I achieved my goal but craved more knowledge, so I decided to go for my Ph.D. I knew that little work had been done with new literacies and early childhood. At that time, I knew that I wanted to conduct teacher research in my classroom. I had a plan and read literature on this topic. But during my first year in my doctoral program, my grandfather passed away. This time was

very difficult for my family. During my grandfather's last month, I spent several days with him and heard his stories of long ago that were connected to our cultural and ancestral ways—the land, languages, and relationships. I was glad that he had the opportunity to see me graduate and receive both my B.A. and M.A. degrees. Then, days later, my grandfather left this land.

I remember my family sitting in a small, cold room and making arrangements for my grandfather's funeral. I was sitting on a chair and could not help but feel guilty for not spending more time with him. I started thinking about my grandmother, who had passed away five years before him. I thought about how eventually everyone will die—that is part of life. What legacy did my grandfather leave? Stories? Traditions? I looked at my father and he was talking in Nahuatl to my uncles. I then realized that not only did my grandfather die but part of our family's language also died. I looked around the room and realized that the younger people did not know the language—they could not even understand it. I was one of them. I did not know the language and soon it would disappear from our family—a part of us would also die.

This discovery kept haunting me, and I knew that I needed to change the direction of my studies. I knew there was something out there to help reclaim and revitalize my language. I was hungry for knowledge, so I searched and found it. One of my professors at the time, Dr. Doris Warriner, steered me toward Dr. Teresa McCarty at Arizona State University, who had been working with Indigenous communities on their language revitalization efforts for many years. I took a course on Indigenous language planning and policy with Teresa McCarty, who then became my mentor. Since then, she has walked along with me on my journey. My journey embodies learning about my family's

language and culture, but at the same time it contributes to what I now realize is a global grassroots movement to revitalize Indigenous languages and cultural traditions. I hope to make contributions to scholarship in this area so that other communities in a similar position can relate and look at my case study as an example of language practices, ideologies or beliefs, and management strategies across generations, and the implications they hold for understanding processes of language shift and revitalization.

Statement of the Problem

Nahuatl, often referred as Mexicano, is a member of the Uto-Aztecan language family. Most of the speakers are located in central Mexico: Guerrero, Puebla, Morelos, Veracruz, Michoacan, Hidalgo, and Nayarit (see Figure 1). The estimated number of speakers ranges from 1.3 to 1.5 million (Archive of Indigenous Language of Latin America [AILLA], 2010; Baldauf and Kaplan 2007; McCarty, 2011). "[The] Mexican indigenous population is the largest in the continent, although language shift advances in many language groups" (Hamel, 2008, p. 301).

In 2000, the Mexican national census described the number of Indigenous-language speakers as having declined as a percentage of the total population. The decline in speakers represents the language shift that has taken place in Mexico; if this pattern continues language shift will soon lead to language loss. What factors contribute to the language shift in Mexico? Are there similarities with other countries? To better understand Mexico's language shift from Nahuatl to Spanish, it is important to become familiar with and understand historical events and understand how these two concepts affected individuals' language ideologies.

Figure 1.1 Primary states in Mexico where Nahuatl is spoken: Guerrero, Puebla, Morelos, Veracruz, Michoacan, Hidalgo, and Nayarit.

http://www.emersonkent.com/images/mexico_states_today.gif

Krauss (1992) discussed how half of the world's languages would be endangered at the end of the twenty-first century and completely lost in the following century. Ash, Fermino, and Hale (2001) pointed out that language shift and loss have happened throughout human history; unfortunately it is not a new concept. Researchers have shown evidence that the development of agriculture was a primary reason for language shift/loss in different societies: Indo-European, Sino-Tibetan, Uto-Aztecan, and so forth (Ash,

Fermino, & Hale, 2001). External influences continue to steer Indigenous languages toward an undesirable trajectory that leads to complete loss.

In 1519, there were more than 25 million Indigenous speakers in Mexico, but after the European invasion, only one million speakers remained in 1605 (Heath, 1972). The colonizers stripped the Indigenous people from their language and culture and mandated them to speak Spanish and worship their God. Missionaries invaded the land and forced Christianity upon them—consequences were given to the ones who did not kneel down and worship. Many died because they refused; others assimilated. Spanish quickly became the majority language and became associated with prestige and success, and the Indigenous language became the minority. In the case of Nahuatl—once the language of empire in what is now central Mexico, with its own linguistic academy—Hill believes that the loss stems from "rapid population increase, introduction of electricity and radios, [and] intensive effort by the government to impose universal primary education" (Hill, 1977, p. 59).

After the victory and independence from Spain, Mexico was in a healing process from the Spaniards' colonization and Mexico was rebuilding its new national identity and there was need to unite all people. This meant that the Indigenous people needed to integrate into Mexico's new culture—a one-language, one-nation ideology (Fishman, 1969; 1991). Much of the Indigenous language and culture was lost during this period. This caused many to lose their language and traditional culture.

In December 2002, Ley General de Derechos Lingüisticos de los Pueblos Indígenas (General Law of Linguistic Rights of the Indigenous Peoples) passed. This law recognized the various Indigenous languages spoken in Mexico and protected the rights

of people to speak them. The government recognized various Indigenous people and encouraged them to preserve their languages, such as promoting bilingual and bicultural education. Although Mexico has recognized Indigenous languages, Spanish continues to be the dominant official language in all-national institutions, such as government, business, and education. There is little support in the Indigenous villages and in the education field there are not enough teachers who are trained to teach heritage languages. At present, the government overtly encourages Indigenous people to save their languages and traditions, but covertly there is no support and the main goal is to incorporate Indigenous people into Mexico's one-language, one-nation identity.

This dissertation is intended to address the issue of language shift in one Mexican context, focusing on what sociolinguist Bernard Spolsky (2004, p. 5) has defined as three key areas of language policy: (1) language practices (habitual patterns of language use, or what people do with language), (2) language ideologies (people's beliefs about language), and (3) language management (specific efforts—both implicit and explicit—to intervene or influence language practices). Specifically, the dissertation will reveal how these processes work within and across multiple generations in the village of Coatepec de los Costales, which will add to international scholarship on language shift and simultaneously aid in developing language planning in the community.

Purpose, Objectives, and Research Questions

As mentioned above, many Indigenous languages are in the process of becoming extinct. Different factors affect this phenomenon. A society with a dominant language pressures the Indigenous people (and other minoritized groups) to learn the dominant

language, and gradually the dominant language intrudes on an increasing number and variety of language use domains—the school (often the first site of native-language repression), religious and economic institutions, and ultimately, the family—what Fishman (1991) calls the "bastion" of intergenerational language transmission. Much of this occurs at the "subterranean" level of language ideologies—beliefs and feelings about language (Kroskrity & Field, 2009). People's language ideologies in turn affect their language practices and ultimately, language loss, in different ways. In this section I briefly describe some of these processes for the village of Coatepec de los Costales, and then I relate this to my objectives and research questions for the study.

Approximately 70 years ago in Coatepec de los Costales, the Mexicano language was the primary language spoken in the village. As I have learned from my family and participants in my study, people walked by each other and greeted one another in Mexicano. Mexicano was the language that residents used when purchasing items from the local store, working, and socializing in the zócalo, the center of the village. There were only two buses that traveled from the village to the nearby city of Iguala, and only two daily trips were made—one in the morning and one in the evening. The dirt roads were uneven and difficult for drivers to travel on. In the village, agriculture was the main source of income, which was enough to live on in the village.

Figure 1.2 The church of Coatepec de los Costales, which is located at the center of the village. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

As the larger Mexican society changed, people's social lives in Coatepec de los Costales changed too. More men traveled to the city of Iguala to earn money. The residents noticed that the workers who traveled to the city were earning more income and giving their family a "better life"—economically they were consuming school materials, clothes, made house repairs, and so on. They wanted the same for their families, and so more and more men started traveling back and forth from the village to the city. At the same time, the roads were under construction, making them easier for cars to navigate. Because of the need to go back and forth from the village to the city, the buses had more

routes during the day. Social dynamics changed with traveling back and forth. Spanish was the language that was spoken in the city, and residents knew that Spanish was the way to get ahead in life and earn money. Language shift was creeping upon the members of the village. High mobility and new ideologies were brought into the village, resulting in changed linguistic practices.

Given this situation and the expressed desire of villagers to retain their heritage language, there is a need to explore the residents' language ideologies and practices across generations as a foundation for language planning. This is the underlying goal of this dissertation. Specifically, my objectives are to examine language practices, ideologies, and management strategies within and across generations; illuminate how and why language shift is occurring; and share this information with community members to help inform their language revitalization efforts.

To accomplish these objectives, the following research questions guide this study:

1. What are the language ideologies within and across generations in this setting?

2. What are the observable language practices within and across generations in this setting?

    2a. When and how is Mexicano used within the domains of family homes, local schools, and the community?

    2b. When and how is Spanish used in these domains?

3. What formal and informal language management strategies influence community members' language practices?

4. In light of these findings, what are the implications for developing a community-based language revitalization plan?

Rationale for and Significance of the Study

This phenomenon of language loss is not new and no language is immune to it. However, because of their status as minoritized languages and the fact that, unlike colonial languages, Indigenous languages are typically spoken only within their historical homelands, Indigenous languages are more vulnerable to shift. Likewise, Indigenous languages are not recognized as national languages or given the same status in government institutions. External factors play a great role in language shift. This in-depth examination of language ideologies and practices will illuminate not only how and why shift is occurring for the Nahuatl language in Coatepec de los Costales, but also the possibilities for reversing language shift as well. The findings will contribute to the larger fields of language education and sociolinguistics/applied linguistics and to policy and practice designed to revitalize threatened mother tongues.

At the same time, this study contributes to the field of Indigenous research that encompasses one's language, culture, traditions and a way of being, with only a few Indigenous scholars who do work within their own communities. I am honored as an Indigenous scholar to write and represent my people using their voice as well. As Indigenous scholars we have a responsibility to represent our people with respect and honor. With all this in mind, doing work with Indigenous communities looks different than traditional research, and research methodologies are different. There needs to be more discussion about how this looks and how it differs from traditional research. I hope to contribute to Indigenous methodologies and help other emerging Indigenous scholars in this field of research.

Overview of Key Concepts and Terms

Language Policy

This dissertation is grounded in Spolsky's (2004, 2009) three-part definition of language policy as "language practices—the habitual pattern of selecting among the varieties that make up [a] linguistic repertoire; … language beliefs or ideologies—the beliefs about language and language use; and any specific efforts to modify or influence that practice by any kind of language intervention, planning, or management" (2004, p. 5). This framework is discussed more fully in the section that follows. With this as a guiding definition of language policy, I adopt a sociocultural approach to language planning and policy, defined as "the complex of practices, ideologies, attitudes, and formal and informal mechanisms that influence people's language choices in profound and pervasive everyday ways" (McCarty, 2011, p. xii). As discussed in the sections and chapters that follow, the ethnography of language policy and a research approach that emphasizes the value of Indigenous knowledges are also important components of this research. The following key terms are subsumed within this overarching framework for examining language planning and policy.

Language Ideologies

Spolsky defines language ideologies as "language policy with the manager left out, what people think should be done" (Spolsky, 2004, p. 14). "Language ideologies within a speech community as well as within a single individual are typically complex, heterogeneous, and sometimes contradictory" (Irvine & Gal 2000, cited in Kroskrity &

Field, 2009, p. 39). Discovering people's language ideologies is not easy. It is complex, because language is always in motion, reflecting people's changing beliefs and attitudes. Further, "… language ideologies are not merely those ideas that stem from the 'official culture' of the ruling class but rather are a more ubiquitous set of diverse beliefs, however implicit or explicit they may be, used by speakers of all types as models for constructing linguistic performances, conducting evaluations and assessment, and otherwise engaging in communicative activity" (Kroskrity & Field, 2009, p.11).

Language ideologies play a crucial role in language choice, shift, loss, and revitalization. Researchers have uncovered community members' language ideologies and have gained a better understanding of language shift and in some cases have developed a language revitalization plan (King, 2001; Lee, 2009; McCarty, Romero, & Zepeda, 2006; & Messing, 2009). It is important to uncover people's ideologies in order to understand language shift. Taking a critical look at language ideologies in Coatepec can lead to better understanding the causes of language shift, and to ways in which we can collaboratively develop a language revitalization plan with the community members.

Language Shift

According to Coronel-Molina (2014), language shift is a neutral concept in that shift can be towards a majority or minority language. More often, there is a shift from the minority to majority language in communities, and this is often referred to as a downward language movement. When a shift occurs, there is a decrease in the total number of language speakers, a decrease in the number of language speakers within a community, a

decrease in the domains in which the language is used, and an overall decrease in the use of the language within the community (Coronel-Molina, 2014).

Generally, however, shift connotes a negative trajectory away from a "smaller," minoritized language, and toward a dominant (and often colonial) one. For example, language shift occurred with forced assimilation, such as what occurred with the Quechua and Nahuatl civilizations (Heath, 1972). Hinton and Hale (2001) further explored language shift and state that "even when a family continues to use a threatened language in the home, the outside environment may be so steeped in the majority language that the child unconsciously shifts languages around school age and no longer speaks the minority language even at home" (p. 4). Many case studies (e.g., Hornberger, 1988; King, 2001; Lee, 2009; McCarty, Romero-Little, & Zepeda, 2006; Messing, 2009; Nicholas, 2009; Rasmussen & Nolan, 2011) demonstrate this phenomenon of language shift in communities located around the world.

Fishman (1991, 2001) discusses reversing language shift (RLS) and explains the stages through which shift and RLS occurs. This is a guide to help reverse language shift before language death occurs. "The road to RLS is a long and difficult one and most of this road must be paved with self-sacrifice" (Fishman, 2001, p. 98). Fishman's Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) is a quasi-implication scale; the lower the rating, the less a language is in danger. The eight stages of RLS are intended as a blueprint to recognize and help reverse the language shift. The GIDS is not a continuum but rather a guide to the indicators of shift, and what further steps need to be taken for RLS to occur.

Language Death

What is language death? Hinton (2001) and Leonard (2011), among other Indigenous scholars, have critiqued the notions of extinction and language death. "Language death" or "extinction" are terms that scholars are steering away from. "No longer do we accept the "e-word" (extinct)," says Miami linguist Wesley Leonard; "we instead use the term sleeping to refer to its status during its period of dormancy, noting that this term is not only more socially appropriate but also more accurate in that our language was never irretrievably lost" (2011, p. 142). In the case of Miami, their language was documented through a large corpus of written sources, and survived through this documentation and the continuance of a living heritage-language community. Thus, Miami was never "dead." A language is not dead when a language has some form of documentation, written or oral, and where there is still a living heritage-language community, such as Coatepec. Even if there are no remaining first-language speakers the language has the potential to be recovered and revived.

Harrison, a linguist, states, "Languages do not literally 'die' or go 'extinct,' since they are not living organisms. Rather, dominant languages crowd them out. Small tongues get abandoned by their speakers, who stop using them in favor of a more dominant, more prestigious, or more widely known tongue" (2007, p. 5). Languages can be seen as in a stage of dormancy or sleeping. Leonard (2011) states that, "the criterion for 'sleeping language' is the existence of documentation and of people who claim heritage to the language but no individuals with substantial knowledge of the language" (p. 22).

In many societies, language ideologies of "purism" in language structure, cultural identities, and life practices exist (Leonard, 2011). These ideologies are passed down to younger generations, encouraging the belief that the oldest form of language spoken is the "correct" or "pure" way. Leonard argues that all languages change and differ from the past, and this notion of change and difference should be accepted. Languages can go through a stage of dormancy, such as the Miami case, but they can also be revived, with speakers having different levels of ability in the language. In the Miami case, the existence of written documentation became the root for bringing the language back to the community.

In many communities the term language death may be perceived differently and it is critical to unravel their belief system on how they view language and think about it. The language is of our ancestors and it is our linguistic sovereignty to keep our languages alive in any form, and to begin the process of bringing ancestral languages to light for the present and future generations.

Language Revitalization

Language revitalization refers to "re-establishing a language which has ceased being the language of communication in the speech community and bringing it back into full use in all walks of life" (Hinton, 2001, p. 5). If a language is not an official language, or is not a language that is primarily used in schools, it can be considered threatened in this modern society (Hinton, 2001). Language revitalization occurs as a response to language shift. Hinton (2001) described language revitalization as complex and difficult. Yet there are cases such as Māori in Aotearoa/New Zealand and Hawaiian in Hawai‘i,

which have gone through a pronounced period of language shift and have subsequently been revitalized (May & Hill, 2005; Warner, 2001; Wilson & Kamana, 2001). It is generally agreed that for language revitalization to be effective, community members need to be involved when deciding the future of their Indigenous language (Hinton & Hale, 2001).

In the process of language revitalization there needs to be at least one Indigenous fluent speaker and an eager student who desires to learn the language in order for revitalization to take effect. Hinton (2001) describes this approach as the Master-Apprentice Approach. This occurs when there are a few speakers left or a small number of people who desire to revive their language. The native speaker teaches language through relevant culture everyday practices. Other methods of language revitalization programs involve educational institutions, where home and school partner together to help revitalize the language in both settings. Language nests are another form of reviving the language at an early age. These are a few language revitalization approaches. One approach does not fit all and every community has different needs; therefore, it may look different but these are frameworks that one can incorporate.

Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS)

All the concepts above are interrelated, and for the present study, all must be understood in relation to Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS). "Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) are not framed hierarchically. IKS are processes and encapsulate a set of relationships rather than a bounded concept, so entire lives represent and embody versions of IKS. IKS are rooted in the lived experiences of people" (Brayboy &

Maughan, 2009, p. 3). Indigenous people live their knowledge through experiences they engage in with others and the world. Brayboy and Maughan defined IKS as more than ways of knowing; it is also about ways of being, or ontologies. “We understand ontologies as capturing the process by which individuals—and communities—come to think of themselves, are framed by others, and are integrated into their local communities” (Brayboy & Maughan, 2009, p. 4).

Language encodes Indigenous Knowledge Systems, so when a language is threatened, those locally specific, community-based knowledge systems are also threatened. Knowledge can be passed down in different ways, such as storytelling, but when language is threatened those stories can also be lost. “It’s through our language and culture that we express those ways of knowing” (Leonard, 2011, p. 139). Language cannot be separated from knowledge and culture; they are interwoven, and, therefore, when one is threatened the other is too. As a result of language shift and loss many kinds of knowledge are disappearing from this land. It is critical to keep our languages alive in order to keep our Indigenous knowledge alive as well. For example, there are certain words that can only be used to explain a story or to describe a feeling or a way of being. This knowledge is the core of one’s identity to an Indigenous person and losing a sense of being can lead to critical outcomes. Our elders are key holders to the knowledge that is sacred and that is a blueprint to our existence on this land. Our language carries power and acknowledges our ancestors who have carried and passed the knowledge down from one generation to the other. Language is Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous knowledge is language.

Overview of Key Literature, Conceptual Framework, and Methodology

As noted above, this study utilizes Spolsky's (2004, 2009) definition of language policy as language practices, ideologies or beliefs, and interventions or management. This framework is the foundation of the way the study was carried out. I specifically looked at these three components of language policy to uncover why and how language shift occurred in the village of Coatepec.

I undertook this study from a critical sociocultural perspective to language planning and policy, whereby policy is viewed as processual rather than solely artifactual; "policy is not a disembodied thing, but rather a situated sociocultural process—the complex of practices, ideologies, attitudes, and formal and informal mechanisms that influence peoples' language choices in profound and pervasive everyday ways" (McCarty, 2011, p. xii). With this in mind, I looked at the role of language in Coatepec and how language policies – both explicit and implicit – were formed through this process.

The ethnography of language policy was simultaneously part of the conceptual framework and part of the methodology of my study. "With its overriding concern with cultural interpretation, ethnography is ideally suited to critically examine these language policy processes, exposing grounded manifestations of explicit and implicit policy-making at multiple levels of the system" (McCarty, 2011, p. xii; see also Hornberger & Johnson, 2007, 2011). Having an ethnographic perspective and applying ethnographic tools allowed me to examine language policy deeply in Coatepec, illuminating answers to my research questions. I also applied ethnographic tools as other researchers have done in past studies (Hornberger, 1988, 1997; King, 2001; McCarty, Romero-Little, Warhol, &

Zepeda, 2009; Ramanathan, 2005; Wyman, 2012). These case studies are examples of the importance of the use of ethnographic perspective and methodologies and how they were able to illuminate language policies in different communities.

A final key part of the conceptual and methodological section is IKS. I used the notions of IKS and linked them to language. At the same time, I applied Critical Indigenous Research Methodologies (CIRM) whereby respect, reciprocity, responsibility, and relationality constitute the "4 Rs" of research (Brayboy, Gough, Leonard, Roehl II, & Solyom, 2012). As an insider and outsider, and through the use of IKS and CIRM, I sought to capture the Indigenous knowledge within the community from a perspective that demonstrates the knowledge, traditions, and the people of Coatepec. During my time in the community there was an exchange of knowledge shared amongst the people and me, although I was the one that gained so much from them. I hope to represent them in the best way to keep the sacred knowledge sacred and only to share what they agreed upon. I also hope to "recognize self-determination and the inherent sovereignty of Indigenous people" through this work (Brayboy et al., 2012, p. 423).

Leonard (2011) states, "It [the lack of information] reflects the ongoing problem of outside scholars and others making predictions about the 'success' of Miami language reclamation without ever having asked the Miami people what our language goals are, and usually without fully understanding the larger context in which language shift has occurred in the Miami community" (Leonard, 2011, p. 138). This factor of "doing" academic work can sometimes lead to forgetting about the community. Although I am Indigenous and may be considered an insider, I did not want to make assumptions; rather, I discovered and conversed with the community members of Coatepec and talked about

language. I feel that utilizing Spolsky's three-part framework, taking a sociocultural approach on ethnography of language policy, and applying IKS and CIRM have allowed me to help and understand the residents of Coatepec.

Researcher Positionality and Assumptions

In preparation for the present study, I conducted a pilot study in Spring 2010. In that study, I discovered common themes of how feelings of ambivalence; pressures toward the dominant language; and participants' educational experiences, time, and space shaped the individuals' language ideologies and identity practices (Lagunas, 2010). The themes were present within my intermediate family, my home community, and my village in Coatepec. This led me to continue the journey of untangling the complexities of language learning.

During the pilot study, I traveled to Coatepec to collect data, and also to become familiar with my village. As noted in the opening of this chapter, my parents are from the village and I have family currently living there. This was both an advantage and disadvantage as I continued my work. As I began to work toward the study that would become my dissertation, I made several summer visits to the village, and some of the residents know my family and began to know me, as well. This served as an advantage as far as recruiting participants, but at the same time, I was still viewed as an outsider, having been born in the United States—being privileged. I acknowledge that I have been colonized and at the same time I am the colonizer. I have been stripped from my language and land. I live in the United States, where being White is privileged—I am a brown Indigenous woman and every day I deal with these issues in all contexts, including

academia and in both my personal and work lives. On the other hand when I am in Coatepec I am the privileged one. I am the one with years of experience in the educational system and I hold the power of researcher and knowledge. I know and recognize my biases. As a conscious Indigenous female researcher, I am aware of the roles that I wear and assume, as well as the impact these roles have as I conduct my research.

I consider it both an advantage and a disadvantage to be an "insider" to the community. Researchers may view me as an insider since my parents are native speakers and I have family members residing in the village. I have the advantage of knowing the community and some residents. On the other hand, community members may see me as an outsider. I have been referred to as "la Americana," not a part of the community. I have documented times when I felt like an insider but the residents' actions indicated I still was not fully accepted into the community. I feared that I might not be accepted; I do have the advantage of having family members, but at the same time, I was careful to not let this interfere with my work. I battled to prevent my biases and preconceptions from interfering with my work. I believed that reflecting and keeping a reflection journal helped me stay focused.

As I began my research it was difficult but I often tried to put myself in community members' position as an outsider coming into their homes and asking questions, an unfamiliar process. I knew that they were skeptical of what I was doing with the information I gathered. I gained their trust by participating in a number of traditional events held at Coatepec. I made myself visible in the pueblo and befriended

all. I ate like them, dressed similarly to them, and worked like them. After a while I gained their trust. I remember a specific day when I realized that I was accepted as one of the members of the community —

> It was a warm afternoon and my aunt sent me to go grind the *nixtamal*, limed corn used for tortillas. I passed the outside vendor store and greeted the women with an "adios." They would always greet back but on this particular day it was different. I took my pail of *nixtamal* to the Molino and the young women stared at me, as they were amazed and began asking, "What is she doing? Is she going to make tortillas?" In Coatepec a girl that is ready to make tortillas is considered to be a woman and supposedly ready for marriage. It is a meaning of preparedness and a sign of knowing women knowledge. The two young women stared at me and I was able to feel their eyes watching my every move. At one point they were unable to see me. I reached the Molino and asked to grind the *nixtmal*. The women there were surprised to see me all alone and had a smile on their faces. My hands were shaking and sweaty. I did not want to mess up and felt that I had tremendous pressure. I slowly gathered the *masa* with my hands, slowly moving it from one direction to the other until it was a big ball of dough. My hands were covered with *masa*. I paid and left. The *masa* quickly dried onto my fingers and hands. I passed the young women once again and they said that I no longer had *nixtamal* but *masa*. This time as I said, "Good-bye" they responded with a good-bye that was filled with happiness. It is hard to explain but in their voice I heard

the difference and I felt that they continued to stare at me but with admiration and acceptance. (Field journal, May 21, 2013)

The work that researchers do in Indigenous communities is very sacred, because it holds knowledges of our ancestors and shows us our way of being on this land. There needs to be more talk about this work in academia. Every community is different but stories like this need to be shared. It does not happen overnight and building those relationships with the members is crucial to research.

Indigenous Methodologies

This brings up another point of Indigenous people doing Indigenous work in their own communities. What does it look like? And how does that differ from doing research in other communities? I struggled with collecting data and being part of my community. Doing research was a dance between two worlds of researcher and community member. At the beginning I felt like a researcher "24/7," but later negotiated those worlds and found a balance. It was not perfect but it was a balance that helped me and eventually worked within my community. There needs to be more discussion of how Indigenous people do work in their own community and how we can learn to accept the struggles as part of research.

Indigenous research is a humble experience (Smith, 2012); it is sacred, and research is ceremony (Brayboy & Deyhle, 2000; Wilson, 2008). "Reclaiming a voice…has also been about reclaiming, reconnecting and reordering those ways of

knowing which were submerged, hidden or driven underground" (Smith, 2012, p. 72). During the Spaniards' colonization era they forced our ancestors to cease speaking their native tongues, their ways of praying to their gods, and other cultural traditions; this was a way to assimilate our ancestors to the Spaniards' culture. As they physically forced our ancestors to stop being and living on this land they took knowledge away and colonized our bodies and minds. Doing this kind of research helps me as an Indigenous woman to reclaim my voice, reconnect with my ancestors, and awaken this suppressed knowledge. As I keep doing this work I hope to also help my people reclaim, reconnect, and reorder our ways of being and seeing on this land.

The two most important ways of conducting research in an Indigenous community are to report back to the community and to "share knowledge"—meaning it is a long-term commitment (Smith, 2012). We are not here to take knowledge, publish, and never go back to our communities. As we do this work we make a sacred commitment to represent our communities in the best and most honest ways and to support them, because they are part of whom we are. Thinking about Indigenous methodologies and reclaiming and reconnecting with the land of my ancestors, helped me do this sacred work. In the most humble state of being, I welcome the knowledge that I have gathered and I write it in this dissertation to the best of my ability to represent my people with the highest respect and honor.

Chapter Summary and Organization of the Dissertation

In this chapter I began by giving a brief background of the study where I discussed who I am and how I got interested in this work. After a difficult life event, the

death of my grandfather, I noticed that my family's Indigenous language, Nahuatl, was also disappearing. This led to more questions such as "Why is this happening?" not only in my family, but also in my parents' village.

After that I stated the problem, the phenomenon of Indigenous language loss, specifically looking at one community, Coatepec. Further, I discussed the objectives of my study and introduced questions that will guide my work. There is a need to explore the residents' language ideologies and practices across generations as a foundation for language planning. I discussed key concepts and terms that are applicable to my work, and ended with an overview of key literature, conceptual framework, and methodologies I implemented in my study. A combination of Spolsky's three-part definition of language policy, sociocultural approach to language planning and policy, ethnography of language policy, and Indigenous knowledge system helped guide my study and led to the organization of the study and how I wrote it.

This dissertation consists of five parts. The first part introduces the community and the problem. The second part is a literature review of similar Indigenous cases in North America, Mexico, and South America. I further discuss the key components of the conceptual framework in this section of the dissertation. The third chapter lays out the methodology I used in my research. I explain specific details of how I went about my study. In the fourth and fifth chapters I introduce the analysis of my data and further discuss my findings. The major themes include la pena, stigma versus respect, growing into the language, language practices in the home, school, and community and how the people manage the languages in various settings. The last part of the dissertation consists of implications for future research and theory, policy, and practice in Indigenous

language recovery. I conclude with an epilogue of where I am in my journey. Many ideas and reconnections sprung from this study. Today, I am trying to incorporate the values and knowledges that my ancestors have passed down. I thank many family members, friends, and professors who have also walked with me on this journey. I could not have done this study without them. There is a deep love and appreciation to my people from Coatepec for they are my family and have a special place in my heart. I will always be indebted to them. I dedicate these words to my past ancestors and future descendants.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

In this chapter, I describe an intersecting three-part conceptual framework that combines (1) a sociocultural approach to language planning and policy (LPP), (2) the ethnography of language policy, and (3) Indigenous Knowledges, and the literature related to each conceptual component (see Figure 2). As discussed in the introduction, anchoring this conceptual framework is Spolsky's 3-part definition of language policy, which is especially helpful in focusing the study that I undertook in Coatepec. I begin by discussing in more detail this definition of language policy. This is followed by a discussion of the literature on a sociocultural approach to LPP and the ethnography of language policy. Finally, I discuss how Indigenous Knowledges play a vital role in these intersectional concepts and how it can further explain views of members of Coatepec de los Costales. The intersecting conceptual framework consists of three-parts to guide the study. Within the framework, an ethnographic lens and methodologies will be applied with a critical sociocultural approach including Indigenous knowledge systems and Critical Indigenous Research Methodologies.

Language Policy as Ideology, Practice, and Management

I will further explore each of Spolsky's components of language policy here. "Language practices include much more than sounds, words and grammar; they embrace

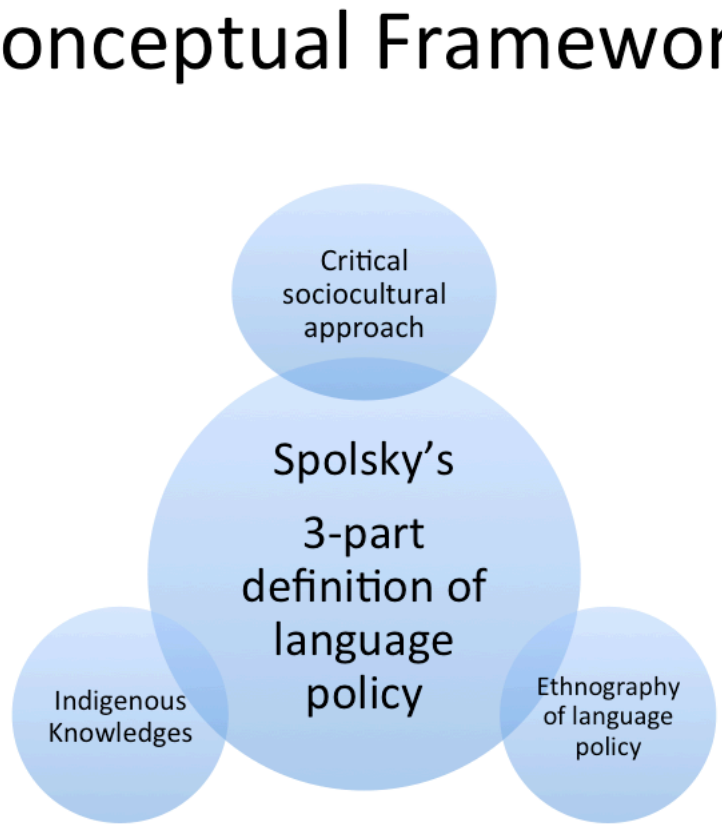

Figure 2.1 The intersecting conceptual framework consists of three parts to guide the study, all linked to Spolsky's (2004) three-part definition of language policy.

conventional differences between levels of formality of speech and other agreed rules as to what variety is appropriate in different situations" (Spolsky, 2004, p. 9). Spolsky concludes that speakers of a language may make these language choices consciously and other time not as consciously. These language choices can unveil information such as social class and education level. Language management, practices, and beliefs or ideologies are all interconnected, and affect one another in multiple ways. Spolsky uses

an example to illustrate this: A child entering school quickly learns what kind of language to use, which is acceptable, which in result the teacher is managing the language to be used. Basically, language practices are what people actually do. In Coatepec, there are different language practices; looking at the language practices in Spanish and Nahuatl has led to a better understanding of language use in the community.

The second component of Spolsky's 3-part language policy definition is language ideology. "Language ideology or beliefs designate a speech community's consensus on what value to apply to each of the language variables or name language varieties that make up its repertoire" (2004, p. 14). These ideologies and beliefs influence language practices. My study seeks to understand how language ideologies play a role in language shift in Coatepec.

Finally, Spolsky defines language management: "[When a person or group] direct efforts to manipulate the language situation" (p. 8). Spolsky continues to give examples of how this may look in different settings, such as at the legislative level, as officials decide what language should be an official language law. On the other hand, language management can also be a family member deciding what languages should be spoken at home (called family language policy by many scholars). In the case of Coatepec, I examined the observable management policies and practices occurring in family, school, and community settings. How do these management policies affect the wider picture of language shift? How do individual management policies within family affect an entire family's language choices?

Spolsky's framework of language policy—language practices, ideologies/beliefs, and management—helped me unravel and answer my research questions. It was crucial

to use a sociocultural approach to language policy through the ethnography of language policy. The following section further explores this component of the study.

A Sociocultural Approach to Language Planning and Policy

McCarty (2011) states, "Policy is not a disembodied thing, but rather a situated sociocultural process—the complex of practices, ideologies, attitudes, and formal and informal mechanisms that influence people's language choices in profound and pervasive everyday ways" (p. xii). It is imperative to have a sociocultural approach when researching and doing the work of LPP, because of the complexity of language and people. By using this approach, one gains a better understanding of how and why people make the language choices they do. Many researchers who have done community-based work in the LPP field have used a sociocultural approach to discover what is happening in the community with language (Hill & May, 2011; King, 2001; Lee, 2009; Messing, 2009; Ramanathan, 2005; Wyman, 2012). Ethnography has allowed them to examine everyday language practices, use, and management and to better understand the speech community.

"A sociocultural approach to the study of LPP enables us to scrutinize these processes as de facto and de jure, covert and overt, bottom up and top down—and thereby to more closely examine the everyday, ever-present social practices that normalize some languages and language choices and marginalize others" (McCarty, Romero-Little, & Zepeda, 2006, p. 161). Taking a deeper look at the top-down and bottom-up policies by using a sociocultural approach further helps uncover the three

components within Spolsky's definition of language policy as those components are evident in Coatepec.

"Language issues can lead to major conflicts," Spolsky states (2004, p.1); therefore language planners need to plan and openly discuss the issues in order to continue with current policies or to decide to make changes. LPP is complex because language and culture are constantly changing and in motion. Both the social location and contact with other languages change language.

From a sociocultural perspective, language planning and policy (LPP) is ever-present, although it may "look different" at various levels. LPP can occur at the federal level, which is often referred as the top-down approach. On the other hand, community-based planning, which involves the community, is known as the bottom-up approach or grassroots. However, this approach is not a linear approach, but rather with different layers, and it is referred to as the "onion metaphor" (Hornberger & Johnson, 2007; & Johnson, 2009). Hornberger and Johnson (2007) shared that this approach can "(1) illuminate and inform the development of LPP in its various types—status, corpus, and acquisition (2) shed light on how official top-down LPP plays out in particular contexts, including its interaction with bottom-up LPP; and (3) uncover the indistinct voices, covert motivations, embedded ideologies, invisible instances, or unintended consequences of LPP" (p. 275).

Hornberger (1997) explained four types of language planning: status planning, acquisition planning, corpus planning, and writing. Status planning is defined as the use of the language (Hinton, 2001). Spolsky (2009) refers to status planning as "the appropriate uses for a named variety of language." Status planning involves discussion of

language revitalization, maintenance issues, and planning long-term goals. Acquisition planning involves the users of the language. For example, how will the language be taught? To whom? (Hinton, 2001). Corpus planning is about the language. "Corpus planning refers to the choices to be made of specific linguistic elements whenever the language is used" (Spolsky, 2009, p. 11). This involves members talking about the language, asking if new vocabulary needs to be added to the language and if and how the language needs to be modernized.

Depending on a language's need the community may only do status planning and never get to the point of corpus planning. Language planning is important, and engaging the members in the community in those conversation will help them reach their long-term goals.

The following is a brief overview of similar studies that have used a sociocultural approach to language planning and policy. All of these studies illuminate language planning and policy as processual, dynamic, and in motion rather than a linear top-down approach. An example of a bottom-up approach is a case in Guatemala with the Mayan school movement (Escuelas Mayas). In 1991, the school was established and the Mayans were placed in the heart of the school's decision-making process. By 2005, 56 Mayan schools were opened and under control of the Mayan National Education Council, which took a bottom-up approach that accepted the community's participation in language planning. Although they had succeeded, they encountered problems, which caused more problems. As with all grassroots approaches, barriers such as lack of funds or government support always stand in front of a philosophy (Richards & Richards, 1996). This is an example of how language management plays a role in what languages get priority and are

taught in schools. These management policies affected students and community members' language ideologies and practices.

There have been several bottom-up approaches to language revitalization in Mexico. Ventura's (1996) research was performed with Nuu Savi women who incorporated the writing system in their planning. The Centro Editorial de Literatura Indígena, Asociación Civil (CELIAC) (Center for Publishing Indigenous Literature [nonprofit]) is an organization that supports indigenous languages and these women collaborated along with CELIAC staff and participants (Bernard, 1996; Pedraza, 1996; Ventura, 1996). The writing system, CELIAC, was a three-month course to teach campesinos and housewives to write in their native tongue (Ventura, 1996). They used a computer to record their stories. The process empowered these Indigenous members and helped them begin their process of preserving their language and culture. Women in the community shared their stories and life through the native Mixtec language. The women learned the alphabet in their language and how to use a computer. This revitalization program is a foundation that other small villages can imitate and use as an example. Combining language revitalization and technology is a great starting point where new twenty-first-century tools can be incorporated. "Indigenous languages in the communities are threatened, but the knowledge that exists in these communities is neither dead nor used up" (Pedraza, 1996, p. 184). This approach furthered uncovered languages use, practices, and ideologies and helped develop a plan to keep the language alive. However, the researchers slightly touch on Indigenous Knowledges and this is a concept that needs to be further explored in Indigenous settings with language planning and revitalization.

Hornberger and her associates (2007) looked more deeply at the role of education, in helping maintain or possibly in fostering language revitalization for Indigenous languages. Four case studies, were primarily conducted in schools—the Sámi language (Hirvonen, 2008), Māori language (May & Hill, 2008), Indigenous languages in Latin America (Lopez, 2008), and Hñähñö language (Recendiz, 2008) all closely examined how language policies play a role in schools and how these policies contribute to the individuals who live in a community where an Indigenous language is spoken. For example the Sámi bilingual program has been successful because of the language ideologies, practices, and management that is present. Although the language is taught in schools, culture is not a priority. Language and culture are both important and interwoven, and through culture, Indigenous Knowledges are present. In these school case studies, there is a lack of culture learning in schools' program. It is important to include Indigenous culture, Knowledges, and languages and discover if this is possible to do in a school setting. Schools are an important setting that manage language policies and therefore can shape one's ideologies. It is important to consider and acknowledge the importance of schools in a community. Through a sociocultural approach and ethnographic look at policies I have answered questions about how Indigenous languages and Knowledges are used in school settings.

The above examples demonstrated how these studies illuminated language planning and policy as processual, dynamic, and in motion rather than a linear top-down approach. Using this approach in Coatepec, I sought and uncovered the hidden ideologies and practices as a way to both understand language shift and begun conversations about language planning. This approach also revealed the official and unofficial, de jure and de

facto language policies and practices. How did Coatepec members make policy an everyday social practice? And how were these policies interpreted? These were a few questions that were addressed. Further, the approach illuminated the issue of social power and social change and allowed space to critically reflect on these practices.

Ethnography of Language Policy

"Ethnographic research highlights the lived experience of people in everyday life" (Levinson & Sutton, 2001, p. 4). In this study, an ethnographic lens of "a way of seeing" and "a way of looking" (Wolcott, 2008), and "a way of being" a researcher (McCarty, 2011; 2015) were used to study how language policy works in a small community in Mexico. Wolcott (2008) describes "a way of looking" as the specific methods used in ethnographic studies, such as participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. It is "to encompass all the ways one may direct attention while in the field" (p. 46). Likewise, a "way of seeing" references a cultural interpretation where there is a first-hand ethnographic experience. Ethnographers "share ideas about a way of viewing human social behavior" (p. 70). Wolcott reminds us that ethnography work is more than methods; it is also fieldwork and mindwork (Wolcott, 2008). "A way of being" is having an insider perspective by paying attention to issues of social power and change (McCarty, 2011).

Later in this section I will describe ethnographic studies where researchers have used ethnographic tools, such as participant observation, in-depth interviews, document analysis, surveys, and achievement data. These methods can help better understand a

community, how things are happening, and why. These case studies have illuminated the deeper core of what is happening in the context.

By using an ethnographic approach, Wyman (2009, 2012) examined how youth in a village in Alaska dealt with language shift and how their ideologies were influenced. Wyman focused on in- and out-of-school influences and how these shaped the youths' "linguistic practices, how they negotiate the process of language shift, and how young people's negotiations shape the language trajectories of peers, families, and communities" (p. 336). This study was part of a long-term study (1992 to 2001). Wyman used semi-structured and informal interviews with parents and youths (individual and group interviews), observations, storytelling, and data collection from assessments and artifacts. Wyman also stated that she shared her findings with educators and community members as a way to perform member checking.

In order to uncover the bigger picture of how schools played an important part explicitly and implicitly in language policies, Wyman needed to use these ethnographic tools to better understand a "way of seeing" and "a way of looking." Through this in-depth study she highlighted the role of schools, community members, and youths. This study also serves as an example of the importance of building trust and relationships in a community, which allows the researchers to gain a better "insider" perspective. This is an example of how reciprocity and relationship building demonstrate ethnography as a "way of being." Many researchers also use this approach as "giving back" to the community and becoming an activist for the community's language planning.

Hornberger and Johnson (2007) introduced the onion metaphor, which is a multilayer and ethnographic approach to language planning and policies. "Such research

could, metaphorically speaking, slice through the layers of the LPP onion to reveal varying local interpretation, implementations, and perhaps resistance" (p. 510). This allows one to explore how varying interpretations, implementation, and negotiation of language can occur in different contexts and levels. In their study, they examined two educational settings in the United States and Bolivia. Through an ethnographic approach and by looking at educational language policy and practice through the onion metaphor, they uncovered agency and the multilingual language education policy and practice that were occurring in different spaces and layers of LPP.

"Ethnographic and critical approaches to language policy are not mutually exclusive—both are committed to resisting dominant policy discourses that subjugate minority languages and, therefore, minority language users" (Johnson, 2009, p. 142). Johnson presents a methodological heuristic guide for data collection: agents, goals, processes, discourses, and the dynamic social contexts (Johnson, 2009). This guide is not meant to be seen as static, but rather as a guide that uses an ethnographic approach to language policy. Agents are referred to as the ones who make, interpret, and appropriate them and those who carry out the goals, which is the intention of the policy. The processes refer to the creation, interpretation, and appropriation. Discourses can be implicit or explicit and in social, historical, or physical context (Johnson, 2009). Johnson used this approach to link the micro- and macro-level of education policies in his study in the district of Philadelphia.

Another example of ethnographic work is that conducted by Nicholas (2009) on the role of the Hopi language in the lives of three Hopi youths. In this study, she discovered that the "youth learned to act, think, and feel Hopi through their active

participation in their Hopi world and language is only one way to experience culture" (p. 321). In her methodology section she stated that she used Seidman's (2013) three-part sequence interview and participant observation. Through these methods Nicholas collected oral stories, which allowed her to uncover youths' ideologies. Seidman's three-part interview protocol is helpful to gain participants' biographies. Other studies have also used Seidmans's interview protocol to reach their participants. I also used this method in order to help answer the bigger questions.

Nicholas was able to observe daily routines, conversations, and styles of behavior in residents' homes, village, and ritual performances. She also shared her biases in the "An 'Insider' Research" section of her study and discussed how language shift has also affected language shift in her own life. An insider perspective can be helpful at times; Nicholas acknowledged her insider perspective, and I can relate to this too. As discussed in the previous chapter, I am both an insider and outsider in the community, and I acknowledge this. This helped me in my journey.

King's (2001) researched the Saraguros Quichua community in Ecuador, whose speakers shifted from speaking Quechua to Spanish. A revitalization plan needed to be put forth to help the community after the language shift occurred. King's extensive work in language revitalization identified this community's language use and ethnic identity, which helped the community make choices in language planning. Her fieldwork in two communities in Saraguros helped her identify the language use, language attitudes, and ideologies (King, 2001). Her extensive work on language ideologies, use, and attitudes is similar to the study I implemented. This study is an example of the process of working and living in an Indigenous community in Latin Americas. King took a critical

sociocultural approach and ethnography of language policy, and I did the same. However, at the same time, I also took a deeper look at Indigenous Knowledges (IK) and how this relates to language and language revitalization. I hope I have contributed to the larger field of language revitalization by including all three concepts.

Messing (2009) explored youths' feelings of ambivalence about Indigenous language use through an ethnography study in Tlaxcala, Mexico. She discovered that youths' ideology shift contributed to the community's language shift. Through an ethnographic approach she discovered that global influence was one of the factors that led to the language shift from Mexicano being spoken (Messing, 2009) to Spanish being the majority language used among the youth. In Tlaxcala, language revitalization efforts, such as Dirección General de Educación Indígena (DGEI) (General Direction of Indigenous Education) schools and community organizations (casa de cultura), were in effect, as well as individual efforts like providing materials. In the community, language planning and efforts were implemented to save the Indigenous language. Messing discovered that although these efforts were in effect, there was a disconnect between youths' ideologies and long-term goals. Messing stated, "Ambivalence is rarely stated, but is observable in practice" (Messing, 2009, p. 361). These undercover ideologies were discovered through in-depth interviews. Messing's study is an example of the importance of language planning and illustrates that language planning never ends. Further work needs to be done, and there needs to be open communication between elders and youths to help save their language. I hope I have added to the Latin American LPP field and, specifically, that I have contributed to the beginning of revitalization of one of Mexico's Indigenous languages.

These ethnographic studies from the United States and Latin America helped researchers understand how and why things are happening in a community. What are the language practices, ideologies, and management in the communities? How are they shaped? How can we develop a language plan to save a language? These are questions that can help answer by taking the approach of "a way of looking," "a way of seeing," (Wolcott, 2008) and "a way of being" a researcher (McCarty, 2011). At the same time, Indigenous Knowledges are connected to language and language revitalization. This component is touched upon quickly in some cases, but in my study I examined language practices, ideologies, and management with an Indigenous knowledge lens to determine how this connects to language and helps answer my research questions.

Indigenous Knowledges

Indigenous Knowledges are passed down and taught through different ways, such as storytelling, rituals, and oral traditions. These knowledges are set of ways of understanding language, culture, and the world around them. "All of these ways of knowing, being, valuing, and doing make up Indigenous Knowledge Systems" (Brayboy & Maughan, 2009, p. 4). Indigenous Knowledges and Western knowledges have different ways and views of what counts as knowledge, and how knowledge is acquired and transmitted. This disconnect can cause Indigenous students to misunderstand what is valued in a mainstream society and what is valued in life. Research suggests that non-Indigenous educators sometimes clash with Indigenous students, because the educators don't understand why Indigenous people do certain things, behave in a certain manner, and do not align to the "mainstream" way (Brayboy & Maughan, 2009; Cajete, 1999; Philips, 1972). Many of the teachers who come into the schools of Coatepec, to teach,

live in the city and travel back and forth. They do not spend time in the village or take time to learn the Indigenous knowledges of the community members. At times teachers do not arrive at school, because of the time it takes to travel back and forth from the city to the village. Their language ideologies, practices, and management in the classrooms can cause language shift and cultural shift. This is an area I needed to further explore and I needed to discover the role of the school in Coatepec. Did the schools have an impact on the language use, attitudes and ideologies students have?

At the same time, "Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) are not framed hierarchically. IK are processes and encapsulate a set of relationships rather than a bounded concept, so entire lives represent and embody versions of IK. IK are rooted in the lived experiences of people" (Brayboy & Maughan, 2009, p. 3). Indigenous people live their knowledge through experiences they engage in with others and the world. Brayboy and Maughan defined IK as more than ways of knowing; it is also about ways of being, or ontologies. "We understand ontologies as capturing the process by which individuals—and communities—come to think of themselves, are framed by others, and are integrated into their local communities" (Brayboy & Maughan, 2009, p. 4). What knowledges do Coatepec members possess and what is being lost because of the language shift? A closer look at their way of being is important to better understand why language shift has occurred.

Indigenous knowledges are viewed differently in every community, and it is important to keep the knowledges alive. Our knowledges are part of our language; without it we are not fully complete. It is a struggle to keep local knowledges sacred when society is changing. In Coatepec de los Costales local knowledges along with the

Indigenous language, is diminishing. What are the causal factors? How can we bring back the importance of recognizing and practicing these knowledges? Coatepec de los Costales is not the only community that encounters this problem.

"Indigenous language revitalization is never only about language, but also about the identities and experiences of speakers and communities" (Hornberger, 2008, p. 2). Hermes, a researcher who identifies as a mixed Native heritage woman, conducted her research with the Ojibwe language (2005). Hermes focused on the way culture is taught and seen in an educational setting. She quoted from Lanny Real Bird, "I cannot teach you culture. Culture is something you have to live. Through the language we can give a part of the culture that can be lived" (Hermes, 2005, cited in Boyer, 2000, p. 14). How to teach culture and Indigenous Knowledges is the question and what it looks like in the schools, but she touched upon the problems that culture should not be romanticized. Culture, knowledges, and language are all connected and cannot be separated. If a language shifts and dies Indigenous Knowledges die as well. How can these be preserved? In schools? In homes? Making *morales* (sachet), is an example of Indigenous knowledge in Coatepec. When men make these bags, stories are told—usually in the Nahuatl, but this knowledge will soon be gone too. Should morale making be taught in schools? What is the role of Indigenous Knowledges in order to help revitalize a language?

An example of how Indigenous knowledge loss is occurring can be seen in Romero-Little's (2010), a study where she examined the problem of policy makers implementing strict regulations to early childhood education through standardized testing, which come through the strenuous laws, such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Romero-

Little explored the bigger issue of Indigenous Knowledges and how this knowledge is not recognized in early education. This is perhaps one reason these students are not performing well on standardized tests. These students do not come to school with a deficit; on the contrary, they come with different gifts and knowledges that mainstream education systems do not acknowledge. "For the community to continue, the culture and language must survive from one generation to the next, and the socialization process in which language, culture and other foundational aspects of learning must begin early, and be that of the family and community" (p. 3). Every community has different Indigenous Knowledges that this Indigenous Knowledges are taught in different forms. Romero-Little acknowledges that these knowledges should begin at home and in the community—language and culture should be a source of knowledge to strengthen a community. Indigenous Knowledges are important to maintain because it is part of one's identity.

An example of Indigenous Knowledges in the United States and the role it plays in language and language revitalization appears in a case presented by Gregory and Garcia (2011). This language revitalization effort study was conducted in the United States but dealt with revitalizing the Nahuatl language. Gregory and Garcia (2011) led a study in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and looked at the Nahuatl language and Aztec dances. The dancers preserved and conversed in their language through their dance recitals, performances, and ceremonies. Members organized language workshops using Amoxizkalli (2000) and the Book of Izkalli. Their language use was a beginning for language revitalization. Although the members spoke Nahuatl during these events, their next step was to communicate outside these events and plan other ways to continue their language. The dances were part of their Indigenous knowledge and roots and were a way

to communicate and keep their language alive. What Indigenous Knowledges are in Coatepec? How can these knowledges help preserve or reverse language shift?

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I furthered explored Spolsky's three-pronged definition of language policy, which provided the focus for my research questions, and the three-part intersecting conceptual framework, which includes a sociocultural approach to LPP, the ethnography of language policy, and Indigenous Knowledges. I examined this conceptual framework by looking at various case studies and discussed how the framework applied to my study in Coatepec. Having a conceptual framework and a related literature foundation helped answer the questions raised in Chapter One. In the methodology section of the following chapter, a road map to answer these questions is laid out.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Purpose of Study and Research Questions

In the prior chapter, I discussed the conceptual framework that I used throughout my research and I included related literature that supports this framework. In order to answer my research questions I developed a methodology that guided the research and helped me collect, analyze, and interpret my data. In this chapter, I will briefly discuss the questions and purpose of my study. I will then describe the research design, research context, and participation. Next, I will explain my data analysis methods and my role as a researcher. I will conclude by illustrating a month-by-month time line.

I used a critical sociocultural approach, the ethnography of language policy, and an Indigenous knowledge conceptual framework as a guide to help answer these questions:

1.What are the language ideologies within and across generations in this setting?

2. What are the observable language practices within and across generations in this setting?

2a. When and how is Mexicano used within the domains of family homes, local schools, and the community?

2b. When and how is Spanish used in these domains?

3. What formal and informal language management strategies influence community members' language practices?

4. In light of these findings, what are the implications for developing a community-based language revitalization plan?

This in-depth examination of language ideologies, practices, and management illuminated not only how and why language shift is occurring in the village of Coatepec de los Costales, but the possibilities for reversing language shift. My primarily goals were to reveal how these processes work within and across multiple generations in the village and to aid in developing language planning in the community.

Research Design

The overall research design incorporates two key elements, both of which stem from the conceptual framework presented in chapter 2: a sociocultural, ethnographic approach and critical Indigenous research methodology. Ethnography is more than a method of doing research; it is "a way of seeing" holistically, in situ, from participants' perspectives, and through a cultural lens (Wolcott, 2008). "There is no way we can totally capture the lifestyle of another person or group of people, any more than we could ever satisfactorily convey to another all that constitutes our own persona" (Wolcott, 2008, p. 5). But using ethnography and a lens that offers a "a way of seeing" can help one better understand what things occur in a community and how.

Wolcott describes ethnography's "toolkit"—that is, its methods—as a way of looking. Ethnographic methods such as first-hand observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis offer a researcher a way of looking into the culture of the community. "My point is that an ethnographer's way of seeing tells us more about the doing of ethnography than does an ethnographer's way of looking" (Wolcott, 2008, p. 70). A "way

of seeing" allows the ethnographer to uncover what is happening in a particular social setting. Ethnographers become insiders and have first-hand experiences. Using both approaches to ethnography can help one better understand why and how certain things are happening in a community.

Many researchers who work in communities often choose to do ethnography in order to uncover what is happening as well as why and how it is happening. I too conducted ethnography in Coatepec and used this "a way of seeing" and "way of looking" in order to better understand the people and gain answers to my research questions. In addition, I used ethnographic methods and took an ethnographic approach in the way I analyzed and wrote up my data. "Ethnography is a theory-building enterprise constructed through detailed systematic observing, recording, and analyzing of human behavior in specifiable spaces and interaction" (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 29). "Ethnography is about telling a credible, rigorous, and authentic story. Ethnography gives voice to people in their own local context, typically relying on verbatim quotations and a 'thick' description of events" (Fetterman, 2010, p. 1). Therefore, intensive observation (recorded in field notes) and video and audio recording—as well as taking an emic and etic perspective—were necessary for me to capture the community members' daily lives. I immersed myself in their daily lives and lived their lifestyle to better understand their language practices, their ideologies, and their "on the ground" instantiation of language policies within family homes, the local school, and the community. In order to discover these notions, I administered a language attitude survey, conducted interviews, collected artifacts, took photos, and used videotape to uncover language ideologies, practices, and

management of the village and its residents. (Throughout the study I use the terms "village" and "pueblo" interchangeably.)

Finally, Critical Indigenous Research Methodologies (CIRM) complemented this ethnographic approach. This relates to a "way of looking" and a "way of seeing" and includes a "way of being" (McCarty, 2015), which is also a critical part of the ethnographic approach. CIRM entails "(re) claim[ing] research and knowledge-making practices that are (1) driven by indigenous peoples, knowledges, beliefs, and practices; (2) rooted in recognition of the impact of Eurocentric culture on the history, beliefs, and practices of indigenous peoples and communities; and (3) guided by the intention of promoting the anticolonial or emancipatory interests of indigenous communities" (Brayboy, Gough, Leonard, Roehl & Solyom, 2012, p. 448). CIRM fits in the Indigenous knowledge conceptual framework and guided me to understand the theoretical process. The CIRM perspective serves the community and acknowledges the role of Indigenous beliefs, practices, construction, and acquisition of knowledge, and at the same time allows one to understand the role of relationships, responsibility, respect, reciprocity, and accountability within a community. The knowledge that is acquired through the study is believed to be sacred and a kind of relationship is formed with these new kinds of knowledge "to learn from them, to care for them, and to pass them on to the next generation" (Brayboy, et al., 2012, p. 448). CIRM also aligns with "a way of being" but through an Indigenous perspective. I implemented this methodology into my work also as an Indigenous researcher.

Research Context and Participants

The Village Setting

Coatepec de los Costales sits on a hill, surrounded by other villages. A total of 1,500 people live in the village and are surrounded by four similar villages. Tonolapa is the largest village of all four villages and the only village that shares a water stream with Coatepec. These two villages have often shared water from the stream, but Coatepec has legal ownership of the land. All four villages speak Mexicano but also are in danger of losing their language. Spanish is the dominant language that is spoken in Coatepec and also in these villages.

Figure 3.1 Sunrise in Coatepec de los Costales. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

In the past, most residents, especially women, who had other duties to attend to, did not attend school because it was expensive. As a result, many of the older generation

and adults have little education or their highest school completion is sixth grade. In recent years, the Mexican government has given aid to small villages. At the beginning of the school year, families receive money for every child to attend school. This money is to help purchase school supplies and school uniforms. The Mexican government developed this aid in order to encourage parents to send their children to school and to promote the importance of education. This money is helpful, but sometimes it is not enough in order to purchase school supplies. Many students who come from a big family often drop out because it is financially difficult for the parents. Few students continue on to junior high and high school—even fewer continue on to higher education.

In Coatepec, agriculture is the main source of income. The men tend to the cornfields, which later they harvest for the rest of the year to provide nourishment. Some younger men go to the city to work or find small jobs in the village, such as mending clothes, washing clothes for others, and tending to an elder. Most of the members of the village survive by means of their own agriculture. A few members who own a store are better off; most often they have family in the United States helping them out with the cost of living.

Mexicano is the language that was once heard in the streets, but Spanish now dominates the village. As you hop onto a bus from the city, Iguala, to Coatepec, you will hear Spanish used on the bus. The driver will turn up his Spanish ballads as the hot air blows through the windows, as you travel on the bumpy road for 90 minutes. Once you arrive in Coatepec, the white adobe church is the first thing you will notice and then you will hear the kids laugh and talk in Spanish. The signs are all in Spanish, and the music that is played throughout the pueblo is all in Spanish. Two intercoms are located in the

village—announcements are made in Spanish. There are visible signs of the presence of Spanish.

Figure 3.2 Coca-Cola signs are evidence of the capitalist influence in the village. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

Figure 3.3 Phone call station, another form of evidence of Spanish influence. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

In Coatepec there are three schools: two elementary schools and one junior high school. The historic white adobe church is located in the zócalo (center of the village), which divides the village into two sides: Mazapa (west of the church) and Huayapa (east of the church). For many years, the residents of each side have argued about the roads, water, and phone lines, and who owns them. Huayapa is viewed as having more resources than Mazapa, and people who live south of the zócalo are less fortunate and struggle financially more so than the other village members. The location of where one lives determines your beliefs and attitudes. People believe that if you live south of the zócalo, you are less fortunate and don't speak Spanish correctly, meaning that perhaps

you did not attend school. I have spent a few summers in the pueblo and I have observed and heard people say that most of the kids that live away from the center are more likely to do odd jobs, because they don't go to school, or "they don't know how to speak correctly." Before collecting my fieldwork, I was interested to see if this division of the community, also affected villagers' views about Nahuatl. There were two participants, an elder and an adult who mentioned the influence of geographic location and language maintenance. One of the comments were, "In Mazapa, there are a lot of more people who speak Nahuatl and our side there is not a lot of speakers." There was not sufficient evidence that the location was a factor of language maintenance.

There has been a historic relationship between these two sides as having conflict with each other, due to road construction and water ownership. This quarreling relationship has settled down over the years, but internally the sides continue to quarrel over who has ownership of the water. Water is scarce in the village and February-June is the rainy season. Another interesting fact about the village is that people who live south of the zócalo tend to stay there and not interact in the zócalo as much as others who live closer to the main streets. They are less economically stable than those who live near the zócalo.

Sampling Decisions

Taking all this in mind, I recruited participants who lived in different parts of the village (southern, northern, western, and eastern parts of the village). The historic relationships among these parts of the village allowed me to uncover a range of language attitudes, ideologies, and practices and to better understand the residents. I chose some

family members living in the pueblo to interview, as well as non-relatives. I did a combination of opportunistic and purposive sampling and selected families living in certain parts of the village. Purposive sampling is "seek[ing] out people who can best answer each kind of question" (Quartaroli, 2012, p. 334). I enlisted a cross-section of willing families that were from various areas and that reflected different demographics of the village.

I conducted in-depth interviews with 5-10 individuals in each of these age categories: children, youth and young adults, parents with families, and elders. There were a total of 26 interviews that were conducted and one youth group interview. The children varied from 6 to 12 years old and were selected from both elementary schools, which are located on the east and west of the zócalo. I interviewed a total of six children.

The youth and young adults varied from 13 to 25 years of age. By that age few youths further their education, but four out of the seven youth attended school. I selected the youths based on conversation with teachers and the recommendation of residents of the community. I also had the input of resident members who let me know which students were exposed to the language and there were at least two youth participant who spoke some Nahuatl. The youth were given an assent form and their parents received a consent form that stated their rights and the purpose of the study. There were a total of seven participants in the youth category.

The other participants in this category were selected from various locations from the village. Those in the parents with families category ranged in age from younger parents (18-40 years old) to older parents (41-60 years old) who lived in various parts of the village. I interviewed eight people from the adults' category. Getting participants in

the last category—elders—was the most difficult, but I was able to interview a total of five participants. There were few elders and many had a hard time hearing or had health problems and often never left their homes. At the same time, few elders were able and willing to talk to a stranger. I decided to interview my grandmother as a participant in this category. Doing so allowed me to have an insider connection, though at the same time I was aware of the biases that I brought to my research.

Data Collection

I interviewed, observed, and collected artifact data as a means of triangulation. I vividly described the village and my participants for thick description and had participants read the transcribed interviews for member check. Doing so allowed me to have a valid and reliable study to describe why there is a language shift in the village, and I learned which factors are causing the language to die.

I used previous research methodologies (Bernard, 1997; Hornberger & Coronel-Molina, 2004; Hornberger, 1997; McCarty, Romero, & Zepeda, 2006; Messing, 2009; Pedraza, 1996; Richards & Richards, 1996) as examples of how to carry out my research: ethnographic interviews, participant observation, questionnaires, school achievement data, member check, and collection of artifacts. The past and present work and the work that researchers continue to do are examples of how grassroots LPP can help a community save a language.

Observation

As I immersed myself in the pueblo, I observed and took field notes. In her research with Quichua communities in Ecuador, King (2001) recognized that she was

participating in three different modes of observation: active participant observation, passive participant observation, and "nonparticipant" observation. I also was involved in these three different modes of participation when I lived in the village. King describes active participation as that which "occurred when my presence either directly influenced activities or elicited behavior" (2001, p. 58). King describes passive participation as when one's "presence was unknown or forgotten, or simply unimportant to the participants" (p. 59). This occurred when I decided to go to the zócalo and just "hang out" and observe the residents and village activities. At first residents noticed me, but as I did this often they began to take my presence as part of the normal, "unmarked" village scene. Most of my work was as a participant observer. I participated in making food; I washed clothes at the *parota* (well); I participated in traditions, community events, and parties; and I got involved with the community members as much as possible. I spent my time with life and work. I spent time in the zócalo and community events to develop trust among the residents and make myself known as a researcher, friend, and member of the community.

Figure 3.4 El zócalo is the center of the village. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

I observed at schools three times a week from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. I observed the daily routines of two classrooms: a first- third grade combo classroom and a fourth-sixth grade combo classroom. I would alternate every other week and visit the classrooms. I observed the topics and lesson skills that were taught to the students and how the students participated in the classroom. I listened to their conversations and how they interpreted the skills that were taught and how they made meaning. In this context, I was very comfortable due to my experience as a teacher. I was familiar in this setting and making it unfamiliar was difficult. I constantly reflected and stepped back so I could allow myself to see more. At times, I was asked to help out with a small group. The students would read a section from their book and I would listen. My primarily goal in

the school was to listen to the language practices and management occurring, how students use language, and what languages are spoken. In the evenings,

Field Notes and Audio-Visual Recordings

As I began to observe, I kept this question in mind: "What is happening here in the field site I have chosen?" (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 30). As indicated above, I recorded my observations in field notes. "The history of social, cultural, and linguistic anthropology resides largely in field notes of individual ethnographers," Heath and Street point out (2008, p. 76). I collected my data following the advice of Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995, 2011) and Bogdan and Biklen (2007). I collected my field notes in a notebook, where I dated them and allowed space to later go back and code them when I was ready to analyze them. I collected field notes in the elementary schools, where I observed the youths. I spent time in the zócalo, where most of the youths hung out after school and in the evenings. I gathered my data from church services, at weddings, and during special occasions, such as *quinceañeras* (young girls' coming-of-age celebrations) and *ofrendas* (offerings).

After recording my field notes in my journal I transcribed and transferred them in a Word document on my laptop. This allowed me to have easy access to code and create field note cards, allowing me to sort and categorize more at ease.

I also self-reflected while writing in a journal. Reflective field notes "contain sentences and paragraphs that reflect a more personal account of the course of the inquiry" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 122). Here I recorded the subjective part of my work such as my feelings, ideas, problems, and hunches. In this section I recorded

mistakes, likes and dislikes, and a reflection of my journey. “In order to do a good study, you must be self-reflective and keep an accurate record of methods, procedures, and evolving analysis” (p. 122). This allowed me to analyze my own way of thinking and my progress as I continued with my journey.

I brought a camera to take photos and a video camera to capture moments that words couldn’t describe. These recordings were extremely important for capturing the ongoing interactions, which helped me understand the Indigenous culture. I uploaded the photos to my computer; made notes of my observations; and recorded the time, day, and place.

Interviews

Before I began my interviews, I let my interviewees know the purpose of my study and asked permission to use their responses in my research by having them sign a consent form. I conducted in-depth interviews with 5-10 individuals in each of these age categories: children, youth and young adults, parents with families, and elders. I interviewed the elderly in Nahuatl, and I had a translator to explain the process, ask questions, and translate. I conducted interviews in Spanish and Nahuatl. In the following section, I will discuss language issues more fully. I gave the interviewees a small monetary gift for their time and service. I also asked them follow-up questions. I also conducted group interviews with individuals in the “youth and young adults” category.

I used a combination of informal and semi-structured interviews. “Informal interviews are useful throughout an ethnographic study in discovering what people think and how one person’s perception compares with another’s” (Fetterman, 2010, p. 41). I

began my informal interviews with my participants to build rapport in a natural situation. Informal interviewing is more like casual conversation, and the members of the community had never been interviewed. I believed that building trust was important, so they could feel comfortable when I embarked on the semi-structured interview. I conducted interviews after my first month of residing in the village. I had traveled to the village for three summers and built somewhat of a friendship with the residents, but I wanted to develop the trust further for an additional month.

A semi-structured interview is linked to a research goal agenda. According to Fetterman (2010), it is best to conduct these types of interviews in the middle or at the end of the study. I developed my questions using Seidman's (2013) three-sequence interview: (1) life history and language learning experiences, (2) details of experience, and (3) reflection on meaning (see Appendix D for questions). This model contains three parts that were explored with each participant in three separate interviews. "People's behavior becomes meaningful and understandable when placed in the context of their lives or those around them" (Seidman, 2013, p. 16). Keeping the structure of the three-part interview was essential in order to understand the participant experiences in the area of study. The structure helped me better understand language practices, ideologies, and management of the residents of Coatepec and to develop a language plan.

A focused life history was the first part of the three-part model. In this section, "the interviewer's task is to put the participant's experiences in context by asking him or her to tell as much as possible" (Seidman, 2013 p. 11). The questions were developed in order for the participants to share their early experiences in their families, in schools, and in the community. This was an important part to gain my participants' trust and build a

relationship. I focused on having the participants share about their experiences in their homes, school, and village.

The second part focused on the details of experience. "The purpose of the second interview is to concentrate on the concrete details of the participants' present lived experience in the topic area of the study" (Seidman, 2013, p. 18). In this section, I elicited the participants' stories of the present that related to the research study. I asked questions regarding present use of language in the schools, homes, and community and about their feelings on present experiences.

In the last section, reflection on the meaning, I asked the participants "to reflect on the meaning of their experience" (Seidman, 2013, p. 18). Participants were looking back and making meaning of their experiences and how these experiences interacted with each other. All three parts were interwoven and helped the participants make meaning.

I was also interested in conducting group interviews and was interested to see if the dynamics changed within a group interview. I conducted a short 20-minute, informal group interview with three of the youth at their school. The interviewees were willing to share more in a group setting. They felt comfortable and built upon each other's answers. "Group interviews are structured to foster talk among the participants about particular issues" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 109). Group interviews are a way to encourage people to talk about a topic and obtain multiple perspectives. Conducting group interviews allows the researcher to acknowledge the different perspectives and the range of views (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). This is one form of interviewing and this allowed me to ask follow-up questions with individuals. I facilitated two group interviews during my stay in the village. With participants' permission, all interviews were audiotaped, and

some were videotaped, and later I transcribed and translated them. All interviewees were assigned a pseudonym.

The interviews ranged in time, and younger students participated in a non-formal interview. Doing so helped me develop trust and get authentic answers and prevented interviewees from giving answers to please me. .

Language Issues

All interviews in all age group categories, with the exception of the elders, were conducted in Spanish. The primary language spoken in Coatepec is Spanish, and therefore I used Spanish to carry out interviews. Many of the elders were monolingual, speaking only Mexicano, and so in that case I needed a translator. My aunt is a fluent speaker of Mexicano and she helped translate interviews. I audio-recorded the interviews (the elders' interviews constitute a source of language documentation as well as data for this study). Also, at that time my grandmother became very ill and my mother came to the village to take care of her. My mother also served as a translator as I conducted interviews with the elders.

After I recorded the Mexicano speakers, my father and mother sat and listened to the recording and translated from Mexicano to Spanish. I transcribed as they orally told me the translation. I had both parents listen to the recordings and help with the translation in order to make sure the meaning was not changed. I do not have any Nahuatl quotations from the transcripts in this dissertation, because of the complexities of writing in Nahuatl. My parents are both native speakers, but only my father is able to read Nahuatl, and he is limited in writing Nahuatl. This was one of the reasons that I did not ask my parents

translate the Nahuatl interviews in written form and instead, asked them to orally translate the interviews. Time was also limited; by necessity, I relied on the time they had to give to these tasks. Once I knew that everything was correctly translated, I translated some of the interviews into English. I preferred to work in my native tongue, Spanish, when analyzing and looking at the interviews. It was towards the end when I translated the quotes to English.

I knew that I might encounter some language issues such as my translator not translating correctly, or not asking the right questions. As noted previously, I am not a Mexicano speaker and at the time of the interviews I did not know if my aunt or mother was translating my questions correctly or if my participants fully understood the questions. I also ran into the problem of having two translators because there were times that my aunt was not available, so I was lucky to have my mother as an alternative translator. I would have liked to have a consistent translator, so they could have become familiar with the process and questions, but feel fortunate that my mother and aunt were able and willing to assist with this critical aspect of my research.

Data Analysis

Drawing on Seidman's (2013) way of analyzing data I crafted narrative profiles of a cross-section of participants in each age group, focusing on the three-part framework of language practices, ideologies/beliefs, and language management. I used the narrative profiles to identify crosscutting themes that arose from an analysis of the interviews and observation data. I conducted all the interviews before analyzing any transcripts. Seidman suggests doing it in this manner so other interviews will not be influenced by prior in-depth analysis of other interviewees. I transcribed individual interviews as soon as I

finished with one part. This helped me keep on task and organized as all the interviews were conducted. I transcribed all the interviews in Spanish and someone helped transcribe interviews that were done in Nahuatl. My translator was a native speaker and a native born in the village. My translator was fluent in speaking and listening to Nahuatl and was able to translate from Spanish to Nahuatl and vice versa. "The researcher must come to the transcripts with an open attitude, seeking what emerges as important and of interest from the text" (Seidman, 2013, p. 117). Analyzing my data consisted of working back and forth looking at my data and ideas. This process allowed me to organize, sort, and reduce my findings in order to interpret my data. The sorting and organizing of the data was presented in a table in order to view all the categories. I later created profiles based on the information. I organized my observation field notes and interviews in a table. I developed a coding system for my topics. "[I] search[ed] through [my] data for regularities and patterns as well as for topics [my] data cover[ed], and then [I wrote] down words and phrases to represent these topics and patterns" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006, p. 173). This allowed me to look through the notes, organize them, and code them in a software program.

I began by reading the transcripts and highlighting and coding passages that seemed interesting or that stood out to me. "Coding is a procedure that disaggregates the data, breaks them down into manageable segments, and identifies or names those segments" (Schwandt, 2007, p. 32). I generated codes in order to understand what was happening in my field notes, interviews, and data collection. Once the data was coded, I derived categories/themes from them using constant comparison. In notes, these codes and categories are not static, but are constantly changing by new ideas emerging. I used

constant comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Schwandt, 2007) as a method of analyzing my data. I compared the categories to one another to determine the relevance and formed new categories and relationship among them. While coding and categorizing my data, I was taking an Indigenous epistemological stance on the data.

During the process of highlighting and coding I crafted a profile of the participants' interviews. As I read through the interviews extensively, some participants "stood out" and I took a closer look at their interviews and crafted a profile. I selected at least one from each group category (such as the children, youths and young adults, parents with families, and elders) that was compelling enough to be crafted into a profile with a beginning, middle, and end to the narrative. This allowed me to transform what they told me or their answers to my questions in the form of a story. Crafting a profile of my participants was a way to give them a voice and to have my readers develop a relationship with them through the stories and learn about their experiences, complexities, and who they are.

I maintained a copy of the original transcripts, without any highlights or marks, which I stored in a folder. In another folder I have two copies that are marked and highlighted and that contain notes. One copy is stored in a folder named "transcripts marked"—I will store this for my records. I used the second highlighted and marked copy to cut and paste into a different Word document that I used in creating my participants' profiles. Then, I put all the highlighted parts of one interview into one document, and this was where I looked at it closely, made comments, and began crafting their stories in a first-person voice. This is one way to have their voices heard and a way to see how they view the world, which is part of the CIRM.

Keeping all this in mind during the process of analyzing my data, I took an Indigenous stance. I sought "to understand the complexity, resilience, contradiction, and self-determination of these communities, and [I was] driven by a desire to serve [my] community's interests" (Brayboy et al., 2012, p. 432). Within the CIRM context, I kept the four elements ("4 Rs") in mind: relationality, responsibility, respect, and reciprocity. My goal was to analyze the data and interpret the findings in order to serve the community and address community members' expressed aspirations and needs.

Researcher Roles and Relationships

The role and the identity of the ethnographer impact the way data is collected and how relationships are formed (King, 2001). It was important for me as an insider and outsider of the community to identify and clearly state my position. My parents were born and raised in the village, and currently I have family members living there. I traveled to the village during three summers. The members of the community saw me and knew who I was; although I did not interact with them, they viewed me as an outsider. Although we have the same skin color, my skin has not been worn out by the sun and hard labor that they deal with daily. I stood out because of the type of clothes I wore, although they were not flashy. My Spanish accent and the way I interacted with others were not those of one who is an insider of the community. They viewed me as the "Americana" and saw me as having a different social status. Some might have viewed me as thinking, "I am better than them," "stuck up," or "a wannabe." It was a challenge to be accepted into the community. Although I was already in the community I needed to gain members' trust, which was difficult at first. Because I had a strong connection to the

village and people, I felt that stepping back was a challenge at times. I needed to balance my position and I recognized these challenges and was aware of them when I collected and analyzed my data.

"Reflexivity, a process by which ethnographers reveal their self-perceptions, methodological setbacks, and mental states, often includes broad general critiques of the field" (Heath & Street, 2008, p. 123). Through my journey I maintained an emic and etic perspective and was able to step away from the data and have a researcher perspective, at the same time also becoming part of the community. Through this journey I have gained knowledge and have been able to present this knowledge in a way that allowed me to have their voices heard. In the following chapter, I analyzed the data and hope to present the data in a manner that recognizes their Indigenous ways.

Phases of Data Collection

I spent six months in Coatepec de los Costales (January-June 2013). During my six months of residency I lived with my uncle, aunt, and grandmother, who live south of the zócalo. I participated in everyday activities and responsibilities, such as cooking, cleaning, washing, and tending to the house.

Phase One (January–February 2013)

During the first two months of fieldwork I mainly observed and participated in the community events. I aimed to gain the trust of the people. During phase one of my study, I attended the elementary schools and passed out the surveys. I developed relationships

with the teachers and volunteered in the classrooms. Most of my days were spent at the schools and recruiting students for my formal interviews and group interviews.

During this time I also learned new and unfamiliar skills, such as making a fire, making tortillas, and getting around the village. These two months were crucial in developing those relationships among the residents. I spent time in the zócalo and I met new people. My goal for these two months was to gain the members' trust and recruit my participants. I began to interview my participants and gave the first part of the three-part Seidman interview.

Phase Two (March–April 2013)

By phase two of my study, I had recruited my participants. At that time I concentrated on interviewing my participants. I made home visits and interviewed each participant at least five times; some were interviewed more often, depending on the need for them. I also participated in community events and got involved in the community's tradition. I continued to observe and record my field notes. As I interviewed my participants I transcribed them and listened to the recordings. I made notes of themes.

Phase Three (May–July 2013)

During the last phase of my study I read and began to analyze my data. I made arrangements about whom I need to interview. I began to organize my data by looking at emerging themes. I recorded these new findings on my notebook, which contained my field notes. I continued to make observation notes and interview people. I organized

photos and audio recordings. During this time I also read literature that related to my field. I continued to make notes and organize my data into themes and related literature.

Phase Four (July 2013-October 2015)

During the time I spent analyzing the data and writing, I made several visits to Coatepec. I made a total of five trips: December 2013, July 2014, November 2014, May 2015, and October 2015. During those times I met up with some of the participants to go over my process and shared some of the findings. My last trip, in October 2015, I met with five participants and shared my findings with them. I received their approval and with that I continued to write. It is important to check with the participants when doing this kind of work. My primarily goal was to share accurate information and to create a space for my participants' voices to be heard. Although I could not visit every participant, due to time, I did my best to share the information and be available to them.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the questions that guided my study and described the overall research design, which incorporated two key elements: an ethnographic approach and a critical Indigenous research methodology. Further, I described the sampling decisions and the participants who were involved in my study. Observations and interviews were part of my data collection. I also acknowledged the language issues that I encountered as I collected my data. Thereafter, I mentioned the method of analysis that I used in order to organize and interpret my data while taking an Indigenous stance. I also explained my role as a researcher and acknowledged my biases. I concluded by outlining

a monthly time line that helped me keep organized. In future chapters, I discuss the findings of my six-month ethnographic study.

Chapter 4

Language Ideologies

"Language is sacred. Language is ceremony. Language is our heart. Language is our body. Language is our spirit. Language carries us through this life. It shapes us. Without it, we are not whole and we do not have a heartbeat, therefore we are dead."

—Rosalva Lagunas, October, 2015

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to unravel and answer the following question: What are the language ideologies within and across generations in this setting—home, school and community? The fist part of this chapter focuses on "*la pena*"—a theme that was common across all generations. I delve into and define the various meanings of *la pena* for it had a slightly different connotation in each age category. The four meanings of *la pena* are discussed in the following chapters such as embarrassment ("sounding funny"), most common amongst the young children and youth. The second meaning among the youth and young adults was the feeling of embarrassed in mispronouncing the words and being teased. Others thought that the language sounded bad as they were saying a bad word, which went along with unable to clearly say the words. Further, the elders believed that the youth and young adults did not have interest in maintaining their language. I carefully uncovered these layers of ideologies, which the elders had towards the youth and their language learning.

The second part of this chapter I discuss the sacredness of our Indigenous language and how the members of Coatepec identify with their ancestral language. Specifically, I untangle youths' ideologies of language and how they are represented in

their complex lives. I focus on the youth because they are the key generation who can carry the language and keep it alive or allow their language to disappear from their generation. The elders manage the language, and I will discuss this further in the following chapter. Elders are the ones that have the sacred knowledge of language and it is their responsibility to pass down their knowledge to younger generations. They are the ones who teach responsibility and ways of being on this land directly and indirectly through *consejos* [advice], stories, experiences, and language. The juxtaposition of youth and elder ideologies may cause confusion about how individual community members view the Nahuatl language. Consequently, intergenerational language transmission suffers because of these ideologies. I discuss how language ideologies weave through these two generations, and how these ideologies contribute to language learning and/or loss. As I show, these juxtaposed ideologies contribute to the language shift in Coatepec.

Language Ideologies

There are various ways to define and interpret ideologies within the language context. "Michael Silverstein defined linguistic ideology as the 'set of beliefs about language articulated by users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use'" (1979, p. 193, as cited in Kroskrity & Field, 2009, p. 5). Similarly, Kroskrity, Schieffelin, and Woolard defined language ideology as the "representations, whether explicit or implicit, that construe the intersection of language and human beings in a social world" (1998, p. 3). Language shift and loss are linked to language ideologies, which are ways of thinking about a language and how it should be treated. "Beliefs and feelings about language—and those about particular languages—are indeed an

acknowledged part of the processes of language shift and language death that threaten many non-state-supported languages. These beliefs and feelings, which linguistic anthropologists term "language ideologies," vary dramatically within and across Native cultural groups" (Kroskrity & Field, 2009, pp. 3–4). Therefore, it is crucial to openly discuss language ideologies as a first step in revitalizing languages and uncovering the past.

Ideologies can be influenced from one generation to the next, and passed down ideologies can influence younger generations in a positive or negative manner. In most cases, for Indigenous languages, negative ideologies are inherited by the younger generation, which continues the cycle of language shift, and in many cases, death. Language ideologies are fluid and rooted in culture and traditions; thus, they are connected with the social context and the ways of being in and seeing the world. "Because languages are used by all people to perform so many social functions in their daily lives, language ideologies are both ubiquitous and diverse" (Kroskrity & Field, 2009, p. 9).

Lee (2009) discussed the mixed messages Navajo youth received regarding their native tongue. While they were encouraged to learn their language because it was important, they were also discouraged because of the elders' way of teasing them when they tried to speak it—"…students chose not to speak their language if they felt scolded or teased by their relatives or peers for mispronunciation or grammatical errors of Navajo words and phrases" (Lee, 2009, p. 309). Learning a language in different spaces with mixed messages contributes to the formation of one's identity. They go hand in hand, with

> ties of language to identity, to aesthetics, to morality, and to epistemology. Through such linkages, they [these ties] 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. (Kroskrity, Schieffelin, & Woolard, 1998, p. 3)

Thus, language is closely tied to identity, which is the larger concept that will be examined in this chapter, but first, it is important to acknowledge that language ideologies play an important role in identity and as such, impact language shift and revitalization. The interplay between ideology and identity underpins how one moves on this land and how these ideologies influence present and future generations.

Ideologies are at the root of language shift and need to be explored in different contexts to understand how they affect different age groups and how we can help our generation to revitalize a language. This chapter unravels various language ideologies across four generations of Mexicano speakers in Coatepec: children (ages 6-12), youth and young adults (ages 13-25), adults (ages 25-60 or 18+ if they are married, and elders (ages 60+). An overlying theme, *la pena*, [shame or embarrassment], emerged from the study and across each age category, which I analyze closely in this chapter. Within the overarching theme of *la pena,* three interwoven views are examined for how they affect language loss and shift—*la pena* to mean sounding bad, *la pena* to mean not being in style, and *la pena* to mean speaking "puro" Mexicano.

The concept of *la pena* has also been found in other ethnographic studies of various communities, such as the Messing in Tlaxcala, Mexico. There, the youth were

embarrassed to speak their ancestral language, which caused counter-narratives amongst the elders. This is similar in the case of Mexicano in Coatepec, where I took a closer look at how *la pena* interferes with language preservation. There is a stigma associated with speaking Mexicano, especially for youth and adults, which also relates to the purity of Mexicano. There is a notion that pure Mexicano needs to be spoken fluently and correctly, otherwise, it should not be spoken at all. As a result, all three of these views contribute to language loss in Coatepec. Untangling the present ideologies from those that have been passed down can perhaps show us a path on which to begin language revitalization in Coatepec.

La Pena

These are everyday phrases heard from elders, adults, youth, and children when asked, "Why don't we hear Mexicano as much as before, in Coatepec? Why do we only hear Spanish? Why aren't the youth learning the language or why don't they speak it?" *La pena*, embarrassment or shame, was a theme that emerged from every conversation across all age groups. "Los jóvenes no quieren hablar Nahuatl, por que les da *pena*" [The youth don't want to speak Nahuatl, because they get embarrassed], the older people would comment. "Tengo *pena* por eso no lo hablo" [I'm embarrassed, that's why I don't speak it], is another common phrase heard from the *jóvenes* [youth]. *La pena* was the response—they all blamed *la pena* for the language and cultural loss within their families and community.

From the interviews and observations, the different generations had different perspectives on the meaning of this phrase. *La pena* is a powerful factor in language shift

among younger generation in Coatepec from Mexicano to Spanish. Based on the interviews and observations, there were frequent common responses to the meaning of *la pena*. First, many people believed that *la pena* was due to the language sounding bad, or mispronunciations.

> Ellos se ríen, por eso no lo hablan…tienen miedo que los vana reír. Y a veces no podemos pronunciar las palabras.
>
> [[People] laugh, that's why they don't speak it…they are afraid that they will be made fun of. And Sometimes we can't pronounce the words like the others.]
>
> (Interview, March 10, 2013)

Based on the interviews, the youth did not want to speak Nahuatl because they were afraid that they would mispronounce a word and be ridiculed. At times, some of the Nahuatl words were close sounding like vulgar words in Spanish, another reason youth had difficulties pronouncing the words. Second, they described Mexicano as not in style; therefore, they had *la pena* when speaking it. Third, the ideology of speaking *puro* Mexicano contributed to *la pena*. "I don't speak it well. I sometimes mix Spanish and Náhuatl." Many had been criticized if they mixed in Spanish words when they talked in Nahuatl. This caused emergent speakers to cease speaking in their native tongue. Thus, all three perspectives of the meanings, across the generations, of *la pena* are interwoven and are elaborated in the subsequent sections: The first finding: Se Oye Chistoso [It Sounds Funny.]; the second finding: "No esta en moda!" [It's Not Cool. Not in Style.]; and the third finding: "Puro" Mexicano. A closer look at what *la pena* means to each generation is further discussed in subsequent sections, and I then conclude with how it relates to language stigma in the associated spaces.

The First Finding: "*Se Oye Chistoso*" [It Sounds Funny]

Children

Many of the children I talked with, between the ages of 6–12, I encountered in their schools and in the community. I had the opportunity to spend many days in one particular school located in Huayapa and also to spend some time at community events. As an experienced classroom teacher with a natural love for children, I was able to quickly build rapport with them. At the beginning, they were curious and asked me questions, but later, they treated me as a teacher, with a great deal of respect. We would talk about their days and school, but when it came to language, they would often laugh at my questions, not in a disrespectful manner but a shy one. This made me wonder if they felt uncomfortable talking about their language or did not know how to respond to my questions, it may have been the only time they were ever asked.

Most children referred to the language as "sounding funny." They did not want to speak it for that reason, and when they heard someone speak Mexicano, they would laugh. They would say, "Se oye chistoso" [It sounds funny.] The children spoke Spanish at school, home, and in the community and did not speak Mexicano in any of these spaces. When their elders would talk to them in Mexicano, they would respond in Spanish. Even though they had been exposed to enough Mexicano to understand, especially if they lived with their grandparents, they also chose to respond in Spanish. Thus, the children recognized common phrases and communicated by answering in the language in which they felt most comfortable. Also, the grandparents or parents would often discipline the younger children in Nahuatl. If the children disobeyed, the elders

would firmly respond in Nahuatl, and the children knew what the elders were saying by their tone of voice and actions.

Children are aware of their surroundings and, I have observed in my own bilingual classrooms, they are like sponges when learning new languages if the language is accessible and also has a positive attribution. If children are only taught one language or notice that one language is privileged over another, they begin to develop language ideologies based on their observations. Thus, when young, children are less timid to try new words, but as they get older, they begin to feel self-conscious of the way they speak or what others might say. Young children may learn their native tongue at home but when entering school they may slowly cease speaking it due to stigma associated to their native tongue. This is a factor of language shift and loss.

At times, the elders would tease the kids and ask them to respond in Mexicano. Most of the time, the kids would laugh and not try. However, when they did try to respond in broken Mexicano, the elders would laugh at them, so they would stop trying to speak it. They would get easily embarrassed and say they have *la pena*. Because this occurred so often, the children ceased to speak the language to avoid being ridiculed. Although they chose not to speak, they continued to listen and understand when the elders spoke to them or amongst themselves. This is one way of learning a language and accepting that language as part of one's life. Language can be internalized in various ways, and in this case, the children felt comfortable understanding Mexicano and responding in Spanish. Next, I discuss how the youth conceptualized *la pena* in various spaces—home, school, and community.

Youth

This notion of *la pena* as discussed in prior section contributes to the youths' having similar feelings, which leads them not speaking Mexicano, because being teased by the elders. Another factor that relates to *la pena* is the fear of being teased. The youth would get teased for mispronouncing words and therefore refused to speak in Mexicano. *La pena* is born and given life in these situations. The youth feared that when they pronounced the words, it would sound as if they were saying a bad word because some Nahuatl words have similar sounds to vulgar words in Spanish. For this reason, community members, mostly youth and young adults have said that the language "sounds bad" and "it sounds like you're saying a bad word." The words sounding bad or having negative connotations often steered the youth away from speaking because they did not want to be teased and embarrassed for speaking. They would get teased by the elders or from their peers if they were in unfamiliar spaces with other members who were not part of their friendship group. Although, when the youth were within friends, whom they trusted and felt safe they would be more comfortable trying to speak their language and a safe space was created within themselves to explore their language. But most of the time this was not the case, the youth would often tease their own peers if they heard a friend trying to say a word in Mexicano and mispronouncing it—they would chime in with the older people and say, "que estas diciendo? Esas una mala palabra." [what are you trying to say? That's a bad word.] Although the discussion is in a joking manner, the friend usually gets discouraged and does not continue speaking Mexicano. However, this only occurs when other age groups are involved, such as the elders. The elders would also tease the youth and children when they were trying to pronounce a Mexicano word.

When they struggled to say a word, the elders would tease them with love; however, the youth felt that they were being ridiculed and not supported in their language learning.

Victor and Isidra (Brother and Sister—Young Adults, ages 13-25)

During my time in the pueblo, I encountered a young family that consisted of a brother and two sisters. Victor and Isidra are the siblings who participated in the interviews and welcomed me into their home. Victor is a 30-year-old man who raised his brothers and sisters after their mother abandoned them and their father died. Thus, he has been a father and mother figure to his siblings. He washes clothes, makes food, and does every other duty of a parent. He has little time for himself because his sisters are his priority. He participates in every school event and also contributes in making food, in the school kitchen. Victor knows Catholic prayers and he is called upon to *rezar* (pray) for people who are in need. He is a fluent speaker of both Mexicano and Spanish. Even though he had never received any formal education as a young boy, four years ago, he attended a literacy class offered to the adults from the village, where he learned enough to read simple phrases and write his name and other essential information.

Isidra, his sister, attended school and graduated from *la primaria* [elementary school]. She is a fluent Spanish speaker and says she understands Mexicano but does not really speak it. After she graduated from elementary school, she stayed home to help her brother. She shared her desire to continue her education but said that her family did not have enough money to support her. Isidra is in her early 20s and stays home to help out with the household chores. She enjoys watching her *novelas,* (soap opera) and hanging out with her friends. She shares that her dream is to come to the United States to earn

money and help out her family. Both Victor and Isidra have a strong family relationship and support one another. They have an additional 17-year-old sister who they support in her education. They both want her to continue her education and earn a career.

According to my research protocol, I was originally going to interview them separately, but instead I applied Indigenous research methods to working with this Coatepec family. Being alone or isolating someone is not part of being a Coatepeceño; therefore, I interviewed them together. It was difficult because I was not prepared, but at the same time, it helped me to realize and appreciate that doing research in my own Indigenous community may not look the same as other ethnographic work. It may not align to Western research methods, but I respect the ways of my people, first and foremost. To learn from them, we must first respect the ways in which they interact and live with each other on this land. Thus, Indigenous methodologies were at the core of this research, and I will further discuss how they were applied in Coatepec and how we can learn from this application to be more sensitive in doing research in Indigenous communities.

Victor and Isidra discussed what *la pena* meant to them and how it is present in the village.

Table 4.1

Language Ideologies: Quotes from Victor and Isidra

Spanish Quotes	English Quotes
Yo creo que se vergüenza. Porque no saben hablar el idioma. y otras palabras se oyen como disparates. Pero en realidad no se oye así.	I think they get embarrassed. Because they don't know the language. And some words sound like bad words, but in reality they aren't.
Y aquí también dicen que somos indios. Somos ignorantes. No estamos preparados. Y muchos dicen …	And they say that we are Indians. We are ignorant. We are not prepared. That's what a lot of people say…
Muchos mas antes, nuestros papas y abuelitas nos ensenaron hablar, ellos no sabían español. puro Mexicano. Y la gente su costumbre todo Mexicano. Y el español no pudieron decir.	Long ago, our parents and grandparents taught us how to speak [Mexicano], they didn't know how to speak Spanish. Just Mexicano. And their ways of being was all Mexicano. They couldn't speak Spanish.
Y ahora ensena las dos cosas. Tal vez no lo puedes decir pero tu sabes que quiere decir. Pero tu no sabes decir en Nahuatl. Pero tu si sabes. La gente se vergüenza. Lo quieren decir pero luego dicen que les da pena. Se van a reír de ti. Y yo pienso que es malo que no te vergüenza de la gente pero de ti.	Now in days they teach us the both things. I might not be able to say it, but I know what it means. You might not know how to say it in Nahuatl but you know it. The people get embarrassed. They want to say it but then they say they get *pena*. They will laugh at you. I think it's bad. You should not get embarrassed by the people but of yourself."

Victor continued to discuss language learning and *la pena:*

> Ellos deben estar explicando como fuera maestro, decir, "no te sientas mal porque no le dijiste bien, no vamos a reír, porque todos nos equivocamos. Y todos pasamos por allí. Pero si tu quieres lo vas aprender" pero algunos dicen, "pero ya no quiero, es que ya me equivoco, porque ya me dijeron. Y me va decir." Yo digo sigas adelante. Si te costumbres si tu sigues. Pero otros como no quieren lo dejan atrás. Pero es muy importante."
>
> [They [the elders] should be like teachers and tell us, "don't feel bad because you did not say it right, we are going to laugh, but everyone makes mistakes. We all

go through it, but if you want you will learn it." But some of us [youth] say I already made a mistake, and I don't want to continue because they already laughed, and what will they say to me? I say keep going because it will become a habit and will continue learning it. But some people don't want to try and leave it. But it's very important.] (Interview, March 2, 2013)

Victor brings up a critical aspect of language learning. There needs to be a safe space in which to learn a language. The youth need a space where they can make mistakes and know that if someone laughs, they are not laughing at them. It is a process. Youth and elders should discuss how to create safe learning spaces. Youth as well as elders need to have a dialogue about how to share language with each other. The youth desire to reclaim their language, but the *la pena* stands in the way of their language learning.

No creo que nuestra idioma se va perder. Todavía a personas que lo hablan. También hay unos niños que lo hablan. Es por *la pena* por eso no lo quieren hablar…pero lo hablan entre ellos."

[I don't think the language will die. There are still people who speak it. There are little kids that speak it. It's because of the *pena* that they don't want to speak it, but they speak it amongst themselves.] (Interview, March 2, 2013)

When youth find a safe space in which they are comfortable speaking their language, they know they will able to take risks without feeling threatened. Creating and having a safe space is essential. The community in Coatepec struggles to provide safe spaces for youth to speak Mexicano, and this notion is furthered explored in later chapters.

Adults

In Coatepec, many adults speak Mexicano, and many who do not speak it understand it. It is difficult to have a precise number without conducting a language survey, but for this particular study four out of the eight participants within this group spoke Mexicano, two of the other participants said they were passive speakers. Deriving the results of Nahuatl adult speakers to non-Nahuatl speakers from this study is similar to the community. The adults who do not speak it are primarily in the 18–40 age group. One of the factors for not speaking Nahuatl is *la pena*. Some adults speak Mexicano and others understand it but do not speak it. The adults who were comfortable speaking in Mexicano used the language in their daily lives to communicate with elders. Other adults did not speak the language but sometimes spoke words or phrases in safe spaces. Age was not a factor, all age groups from children to elders, *la pena* affected all age groups. Adults also feared being ridiculed by elders if they mispronounced words.

During sociocultural events, the adults and elders would unite to converse and during this time, the language would often switch from Mexicano to Spanish and vice versa. The elders managed what language would be spoken. Adults who were not comfortable speaking Mexicano did not participate in speaking Mexicano but would speak in Spanish.

"My tongue gets all twisted."

Brenda is a 39-year-old woman who is married to an *albanista*, a construction worker. He is a native Spanish speaker and understands some Mexicano. Brenda is the mother of two boys, a 15-year-old and a 4-year-old, and a 13-year-old girl. Her parents are both native speakers of Nahuatl and are also fluent Spanish speakers. Her

grandmother speaks only Mexicano, and her grandmother is a big part of her family's life because she grew with her grandmother and continues to live a few steps away from her mother. Fifteen years ago, Brenda migrated to the United States and worked there for several years to save money before she began her family.

Brenda finished junior high school, but never continued her education due to illness. She is a native Spanish speaker and has taught her two older children Spanish. She is trying to have her parents teach her youngest son Mexicano. Brenda is a stay-at-home mother who supports her children in continuing their education. She participates in all the school's events and meetings. She also does side jobs, such as washing clothes, selling seasonal fruit from her garden, and making and selling food. She does these "extra" jobs to help her family in case of school or medical emergencies.

I asked Brenda if she would like to participate in the research and be interviewed. She agreed. By the time of the interview, I had known Brenda pretty well. We had developed a relationship, but we mostly spent time together, at her parents' home or at the school. For the interview, I went to her house. Her home walls are decorated with family portraits, school certificates that her children received, and a mural of the Virgin Mary is on side. There is Spanish music playing from her young boy's bedroom and the TV is the center of the living room where the entire family sits, in front of it, on a daily schedule, to watch their favorite shows. Her home is full of language practices and Spanish is the dominant language—there is no apparent evidence that Mexicano is present in her home. Her two teenage children are pressured from society to wear the trendiest outfits, watch the most popular shows and listen to the popular Spanish music.

The children greatly influence the language practices at home. Brenda's husband also is a native monolingual Spanish speaker, therefore the household is filled with Spanish.

When I asked her what languages she spoke, she said she spoke Spanish and that she understood Mexicano but did not speak it. Later, she clarified that she spoke Mexicano as well, but it was limited. She continued to explain that when Nahuatl speakers have a conversation, she understands and knows how to converse but is hesitant because she feels *la pena.*

Rosalva: Why do you have *pena*, if you know how to speak it?

Brenda: My tongue gets all twisted and I'm embarrassed to speak. And then I add a Spanish word when I'm speaking Mexicano.

Rosalva: So you mean, the youth and young adults have *pena* to speak Mexicano? Are they [youth and young adults] afraid to be laughed at?

Brenda: I don't think they have *la pena* that they will be laughed at; I think they have *la pena* that they will get mixed up…say the wrong word or pronounce it incorrectly. I'm afraid that they will say that I don't know how to say it right. I've heard people say "*ella esta hablando mucho y ni lo dice bien*" [she's talking a lot but she's not saying it right].

She continued to explain that she is embarrassed to pronounce words in Mexicano in the presence of other adults, due to her being humiliated. She feels self-conscious the way she articulates the words and questions whether they sound silly or weird, so she would rather not utter Mexicano words. However, she admitted speaking Mexicano in a

less intimidating setting. She says that she is comfortable speaking her language in front of her children. Her children are non-Mexicano speakers, so she can practice her Mexicano with them. They will not know if she is mispronouncing a word; therefore, she feels comfortable with her family.

She expressed sadness that her parents never spoke the language to her. She heard the language growing up, due to passed down ideologies she was never taught—her parents were afraid that if they spoke to her in both languages, she would not learn both and needed to choose one. Her parents believed that speaking Spanish would give their children better opportunities to be successful. Brenda also believed that this was true until she started to realize how important and beautiful her language is. She is sad to have missed the opportunity to teach her heritage language to her two older children. Currently, she is trying to practice and learn her mother tongue along with her younger son. She would like her children to learn the language, and she believes that if she begins talking to her youngest son, he might still be able to.

> Yo creo cuando tenga mas edad voy hablar mas. Ya no me va dar pena. Voy a tener mas edad y no me va importar.
>
> [I think when I get older I will speak it more. I won't have any more *pena* because I will be older and I won't care.] (Interview, May 28, 2013)

Brenda and other young adults shared that as you grow older, you grow out of having *pena*.

Figure 3.5 Brenda is with her son, in an everyday socio-cultural context. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

Elders

The native tongue of all elders who I interviewed is Mexicano, and they are comfortable speaking in this language. The elders who reside in Coatepec and who became participants in the study knew and spoke Mexicano fluently. I cannot say that all elders spoke Mexicano since I did not conduct a survey to all elders in the village, but from my observation and time in the pueblo, I noticed that all elders spoke Mexicano fluently, which led me to believe that Mexicano was their native tongue. Some elders are monolinguals and others also speak some Spanish. They often refer to Spanish as to *Castellano* (Castilian, a reference to the [colonial] variety spoken in Spain). The elders

are the language managers in various spaces, which is discussed later in this chapter. They manage what language will be spoken, but at the same time, they tease others if they do not speak Mexicano correctly. Teasing is a sign of kindness, and the men do most of the teasing. The elders often say that the younger generations do not want to speak the language because they are embarrassed. They say they [the youth] do not like it. However, the elders do not view the youth as being embarrassed or afraid of being made fun of—they see their hesitance as a sign of not caring or of disrespect for the language. Thus, there is a disconnect between what it means to have *la pena* for both generations—youth and elders, which influences the ideologies that are passed down from one generation to another.

The teens' narratives often suggested that it sounded bad and they were embarrassed but at the same time they commented that they wanted to learn it and that it was something special to them and to their village. The elders had different views on what the youth thought of Mexicano. They believed that they did not respect their mother tongue. The youth expressed feelings of embarrassment, *pena*, from the elders, as they attempted to speak the language. Although the elders never directly spoke of why they teased the youth, there was an underlying message of teasing out of love, to encourage the youth to continue speaking Mexicano. However, teasing took on a negative effect; rather to encourage young people to speak the language it brought shame — *pena* — which caused the youth to stop speaking it. The youth began to feel self-conscious of how they pronounced a word and feared that they would be ridiculed. This led them to stop speaking the language in places where they felt vulnerable. For example, I was in the plaza when I encountered some adults, elders, and children. The elders and adults were

sitting on a bench and the children were playing near the area. Since I had gained their trust, they treated me as one of them. They saw me walking towards them and stopped me, to converse. They asked, how I was doing. The following excerpt describes my experience and my observation with the notion of teasing.

> Today I was walking back to my house and all of sudden I encountered some members of the community, in the plaza. They stopped me and asked me how my day was going. I felt a sense of happiness, because I knew that I was gaining their trust and becoming one of them—a Coatepeceña. I responded and said I was doing good and told them how my work was going. Then we got into a discussion of language. I told the adults and elders that the youth wanted to learn the language and from my interviews they [youth] expressed their love of the language and desire to learn it. They [the adults and elders] were surprised and seemed, as they did not want to accept my comment. They questioned and asked, "then why don't they [the youth] speak it?" One of the elders called over a boy, who was playing nearby. The boy came. The elder asked him, if he spoke Mexicano. The boy responded, "a little." Afterwards, the elder asked the boy, how do you say, "I already played too much and now I need to go home and help my dad." They boy tried to say it but struggled to find the words. The elder told him how to say it. The boy tried to say it, but was interrupted with the elder's laughter. The elder laughed and said, "you just said a bad word." The boy felt embarrassed and didn't want to continue. He told them that he had to go home, because it was getting late. The boy refused to try speaking again because he felt

that they [the elders] were laughing at him. I witnessed a missed learning and teaching opportunity. (Fieldnotes, April, 2013)

The elders believed that their way of encouraging the youth to learn a language, through teasing, would help the youth. This way of love, teasing, is common in Coatepec's culture, but most often has negative effect. Language learning through love rather than pain is the best medicine to learn a language, which I will further explore in the conclusion.

The Second Finding: *"No está en moda!"* [It's Not Cool. Not in Style.]

One of the youth's definitions of *la pena* was that it was not in style, not trendy, or not cool. They often said it was the language of the older people. Many of the youth did not feel as if their language was relevant to modern society. Thus, modernity influenced the way the youth thought about their languages and how they practiced and managed their native tongue (or did not). The youth observed the privileged languages in popular TV shows, clothing, in music, and in school. There was no evidence of their mother tongue as being relevant. Their perception was aligned with that of the dominant languages, which was that Spanish and English were the languages of societal progression. Thus, for the most part, they privileged Spanish and English over Mexicano. This notion of modernity, and how it affects the loss and shift of Indigenous languages, especially for youth, is explored later in this chapter.

Tonalapa is the closest village, 20 minutes away by vehicle from Coatepec. Tonalapa's junior and senior high schools have a reputation of having well prepared

teachers who offer different courses and help students to be prepared and compete to get into a college in Iguala, the closest city. The people in Tonolapa do not speak Mexicano, and it is not considered to be an Indigenous pueblo by the Mexican government. There are only a handful of people who speak Nahuatl in Tonalapa. Tonalapa is more developed than Coatepec, in that it has the junior and senior high schools, a college, stores that offer Internet access and services, and more stores so that people do not need to travel to the city to go shopping. Thus, Tonalapa's schools educate children from Tonalapa as well as nearby villages. One of the subjects that are offered is an English language course. The school officials believe that learning English is extremely important to be competitive. Because these schools do not offer Indigenous language courses or consider offering these courses, students are internalizing their covert language ideologies to create their own language ideologies.

Figure 3.6 Sixth-grade boys who attended the Huayapa school. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

Thus, the youth from Coatepec do not speak Mexicano in school because they do not want to be seen as "uncool." The youth spend most of their time with friends gossiping, listening to music, and *paseando* [hanging out]. Youth are at a critical point in their lives when they feel that they need to be accepted by their peers and be a part of mainstream society. For youth to achieve this state, they must assimilate to mainstream values and ideas. In this case, Mexicano is seen as a language for older people, so they do not need to speak it until they are older. I interviewed the youth, some of whom were commuting to Tonalapa for school. The following is an interview with a young girl named, Lupita, who lives in Masapa, on the east side of Coatepec.

Lupita was a 15-year-old girl at the time of the study, who wore fitted slimmed jeans and in-style shirt, and spoke Spanish, and agreed to participate in the study. As I entered her home, I was able to hear the loud blasting popular Spanish cumbias, but she turned it down once I entered. She attended high school in Tonalapa. She commuted every morning to Tonalapa, which is 20 minutes away from Coatepec. She was dedicated to her education and completed her homework daily so she could be at the top of her class. To her, it was important to continue her education to help out her family and to prepare herself for the future. She also helped out her family with their in-home store, where they sold products such as sugar, candles, soaps, and soda. The main function of their store was the Molino. They ground the nixtamal, and as a result, many people went in and out of her home. Once she came home from school, she was responsible for doing her homework and then taking over the store duties. Lupita described a form of *la pena* in the following way:

> Para ellos es raro. Es como algo del pasado de modo. El español y ingles esta de moda. Y el Nahuatl ya no mucho. Se escucha diferente. Y ellos saben que el Nahuatl los hablan los abuelitos. Y si un chavo lo habla ellos van a empezar que no están de moda. Y por es so no lo hablan. Por que no esta de moda. Y empiezan a burlar. Y por eso no lo dicen.
>
> [For us [the youth], it's strange. It's like something out of style. Spanish and English is in style…and Nahuatl not that much. It sounds different, and we [the youth] know that the grandparents are the ones that speak Nahuatl. If a youth speaks it [Nahuatl], they will think he's not cool. And that's why they don't speak it, because it's not in style.] (Interview, March 10, 2013)

As I continued with the interview, Lupita furthered explained that she liked the language but it was not the time for her to speak it because she was still young. This notion of timing, that the youth will be ready to speak it when they are older, surfaced numerous times and is discussed in a later chapter. Meek (2007), in a study of Kaska language ideologies, also found that youth' felt respect for the language of the elders. Therefore, they felt that the language was "of the elders" and once they (youth) were ready (i.e., mature, older) they would speak the language. Lupita described the many things that were in style at that particular moment and how things changed so quickly. She said that she wanted to be modern and wait until she was older to speak Mexicano.

The messages that the youth are exposed to are everywhere—from television, social media, community, home, and school. Lee found similar findings with Navajo youth: "Students heard rhetoric in school that speaking Navajo was not popular…" (2009, p. 309). In effect, says Lee, students receive mixed messages regarding their Native tongue and English. These ideologies thus colonize their languages.

"*Puro*" Mexicano

Puro Mexicano is a term that many community members use in order to reference the language as being "pure." Their definition of "pureness" is speaking it with only Nahuatl words, no Spanish influential words, nor mixing in Spanish words in a conversation. According to villagers, about 75 years ago, people spoke *puro Mexicano* in the village. The older generation refers to *puro* [pure] Mexicano, which means that people spoke Mexicano with no Spanish words mixed into the language or conversation. Previously, Mexicano was the only language heard in the community. Nowadays,

however, many adults are criticized for not speaking puro Mexicano, which means that people do not speak it correctly because they incorporate Spanish words or code-switch as they communicate. Many of the elders say, “If you can’t speak it correctly, then you shouldn’t be speaking it. Choose either one.” This message discourages emergent speakers to continue learning or to speak the language. Emergent speakers often feel that they have to speak just as well as fluent speakers or be silence in their presence. If they do not have the validation of the elders, they prefer not to speak at all, at least in their presence.

Hill and Hill (1986) discussed the complexities of speaking pure Mexicano “at the level usually considered language proper—the sound system, the patterns of word formation, and the grammar of sentences—and at the level of the sociocultural context, including the concept of language, language attitudes, and ideas about the forms and functions of talk within which language proper must be framed if it is to be meaningful” (p. 4). The discourse and the language system are de- and re-constructed in the ways the youth and emergent speakers manage language. Hill and Hill (1986) introduced two important coding for usage—a power code and purist code. A power code opens Mexicano to Spanish and allows space in which to code-switch, and a purist code disallows all use of Spanish within the language.

The passed down ideologies of the significance of “pure” Mexicano are embedded with implicit and explicit actions. People are aware of what it means to speak “pure” Mexicano without it being explained. Sometimes, with a stare or a look from an elder, beginning speakers know that they need to speak the language correctly or to stop talking in Mexicano completely. However, this pressure to speak it a certain way made it

difficult for adults and youth to take risks and continue speaking it in the presence of elders. Her grandmother, who is a monolingual Nahuatl speaker, raised Brenda, who is mentioned earlier, and during her earlier years she learned the language because that was the only way to communicate with her grandmother. As years went by she got very ill and her parents had to stay home and take care of her. Her parents were bilingual speakers but they wanted her daughter to speak Spanish. They believed that Spanish was the language that was needed to get ahead in this world. Therefore, they encouraged her to speak Spanish and as she attended school similar beliefs were tied to the language. Slowly Brenda stopped speaking the language and giving more time and importance to the dominant language.

The youth witnessed this dilemma and also hesitated speaking it in front of the elders because they did not want to be pressured, ridiculed, or scolded for not speaking in a manner the elders felt was appropriate. *La pena* comes into play in the context of feeling shame for not speaking the language correctly. Emergent speakers felt *la pena* when speaking Mexicano when they accidently mixed a Spanish word into their conversations. The youth felt the same way and were also ridiculed when they incorporated Spanish words or code-switched from one language to another. The youth were the most vulnerable to being teased when it came to not speaking Mexicano correctly.

As Victor said:

> Antes, nuestros padres y abuelitos nos enseñaron como hablar. Ellos no sabían Español. Puro Mexicano. Toda las personas aprendieron Mexicano y ellos no podían hablar español. Pero ahora, ellos enseñan los dos. Tal vez no podrás hablar

los dos, pero tu entiendes. Las personas les da pena. Ellos quieren decirlo pero dicen que les da pena. Piensan que les van a reír. Yo creo eso es malo...no debes de tener pena de la gente, pero de ti mismo.

[Back then, our parents and grandparents taught us [how to speak Mexicano] they did not know Spanish. *Puro* Mexicano. All the people learned Mexicano, and they couldn't speak Spanish. Nowadays, they teach both things [languages]. You might not be able to say it, but you know what it means. The people get embarrassed. They want to say it and speak it but then they say they get embarrassed. They think that people will laugh at them. I think that's bad...you shouldn't get embarrassed of the people, you should get embarrassed of yourself.] (Interview, March 2, 2013)

Integration, globalization, and migration cause language shifts, as Victor mentioned in a previous quote; therefore, currently, two languages are taught at once, which leads to mixing. However, code-switching is stigmatized, as are people who use more than one language, even though code-switching demonstrates knowledge of a language and they learn when it is appropriate to code-switch. Although this may seem complex, the elders view this mixing as not knowing how to speak correctly.

In other cases, such as when the youth were with a group of trusted friends, the youth felt comfortable speaking Mexicano. They would laugh and joke around using Mexicano and would code-switch if they did not know certain words. They knew how to use Mexicano words correctly because of how they flowed in conversations, and they used grammatically correct nouns and verbs. To them, using both languages was a way to express themselves—they used both languages in their daily lives to express the way they

thought, lived, felt, and represented themselves. Language is fluid, and it is a way to express oneself during the moment, or in presence. Having multiple languages in one's life is like a dance in which one negotiates the different steps in different languages. It is a tricky and complex process—space, location, time, and people come together and influence what language will be spoken to express the heart. In this way, youth and adults have two languages with which to negotiate their lives. When they are told to choose to speak only one, or to speak one of them differently, it is difficult for them to decide how to speak respectfully.

Young adults and youth are continuing to learn and to feel more safe and comfortable when speaking Mexicano, and they need spaces in which to feel comfortable exploring the language. The passed down ideologies of "purity" are connected to those of Spanish colonization and an internal colonization of the mind. Who determines what "pure" Mexicano is to sound like? For example, some people feel that classical or academic Nahuatl is the "pure" way to speak and should be reclaimed. Hill & Hill (1986) also found this to be true in their study of speaking pure Mexicano.

"Hablo mas español en la casa. Con mis amigos los dos idiomas. A veces pues, así platicamos algunas cosas" [I speak more Spanish at home. With my friends, I speak both languages with them. You know, sometimes we speak like that]. Youth speak where they feel comfortable and within their own generation. Most often, these are safe spaces in which they can talk, tease, and use languages interchangeably. Such talk, using Mexicano with Spanish or code-switching, should not be discouraged as long as people are speaking the language. Language evolves and changes through time and keeping it "pure" can be ideological but in other communities speaking it with other influences is a

beginning. For the meantime, there needs to be a discussion with members, on what purity means, how languages change with society, and how the current generation can save a language. This is a beginning to address these issues and view points in order to discuss further language revitalization.

Stigma Versus Respect

"No les gusta! No quieren saber nada de esto!"

[They don't like it! they don't want nothing to do with it!].

– Regino, an elder

Contradictory narratives between the youth and elders were common, and these contradictions contribute to language shift. While adults and children are included in this discussion, I focus on the narratives of the youth and elders. Many of the youth voiced the opinion that they did not speak the language but that they believed the language was beautiful. The youth raised the point of not having any adults to teach them the language. At the same time, they commented that when they tried to speak Mexicano, the older people made fun of them. So while there is a desire to learn the language, they are afraid of what other people might think. Will they be made fun of by their peers? Will the older people make fun of the way they pronounce the words? The youth recognized the importance and beauty of their language but they did not know how to acquire the language to be proficient or how to find a safe space in which to practice and make mistakes.

On the other hand, the elders' did not see the youth as being interested in the language. "They do not care to learn it and don't see the value of it." As the pueblo

changes with migration, capitalism, and social media slowly seeping in, the elders believe that their values are also being taken away. The elders say that there is no more respect. "The youth have no respect, including respect for their language." They would reminiscence about the past and how the village has changed. They often blamed social media for youths' ways of dressing, talking, and acting. In addition, they blamed migration to *el Norte* [the United States]. Once a member from the community left the pueblo, they would learn new customs and assimilate to their new communities. Then, they would bring back their new ways of being and customs to the pueblo, many of which the elders did not agree with. Some members who left and came back did not want to eat the pueblo's food and only wanted city food. "We never had people selling food, like tacos, hamburgers, or pizza. And now kids just want to eat that. They don't want tortillas with salsa y *semillas* [seeds]." Because of this change, the older generation feels that the younger generation does not appreciate their culture, land, and language. Similar findings were found in McCarty, Romero-Little, and Zepeda (2006) research with Navajo youth.

Figure 3.7 The elderly men watching the community's event. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

The elders believed that the youth view their language as the language of the "savages," of incompetent people. The elders often shared that the youth of Coatepec did not know their village's history and were embarrassed to be Indigenous. They believed that the youth wanted to assimilate to the Mexican mainstream culture, learn Spanish and English, and forget their roots. However, these ideological notions conflicted with the youth's language ideologies.

> Los abuelitos deben de enseñarnos, come fueran nuestros maestros. Ellos deben de decirnos 'no se sientan mal por no pronunciarlo bien. A veces nos podemos reír pero todos se equivocan. Todos pasamos por un etapa. Pero si quieres

aprender lo vas a lograr. Pero algunos dicen que, “Yo no quiero decir nada porque luego se burlan de mi o me dicen que no lo digo bien.”

[They [elders] should explain to us, like they are teachers and should say, ‘don’t feel bad for not saying it right. We might laugh, but everyone makes mistakes. We all go through that stage. But if you really want you will learn it.’ But some youth and young adults say, “I don't want to say anything else, because they make fun of me or they tell me that I didn’t say it right.”] (Interview, March 2, 2013)

The following quote is from a young adult who further discusses language ideologies that are passed down from generations and labels that are put on people from society. These ideologies conflict with identity and language learning—

Una persona de la cuidad esta preparada. Ella tiene estudio y nosotros cómo somos indios. A veces no sentimos menos porque nos sentimos que ellos saben mas que nosotros de lo que ellos platican. Y a veces ellos no nos entienden. Por eso…ellos son mas preparados. Ellos estudian y estudian y estudian. Nosotros aprendemos de lo que podemos. Pero nuestra lengua es mas importante. Hay muchos que quisieran estar en nuestro lugar.

[A person from the city is prepared. She has education and since we are Indians, we sometimes feel less because we don’t know as much as they do. We feel that they know more than us. Sometime they don’t understand us. They are more prepared. They study and study and study. We learn from what we are taught. But I think our language is more important. There are a lot of people who wish they could be in our shoes.] (Interview, March 2, 2013)

As we unpeel the layers of *la pena*, the theme of shame surfaces to the top. The stigma and shame is not related to the language but to the feeling of shame for not being able to speak the language. Lorenzo, a youth participants shares his feelings of shame for not being able to speak the language.

> Se siente mal por no hablar Nahuatl por que otros saben y otros no. Si me gustaría aprender. Yo creo que se vergüenza. Porque no saben hablar el idioma. y otras palabras se oyen como disparates. Pero en realidad no se oye así. Y aquí también dicen que somos indios. Somos ignorantes. No estamos preparados. Y muchos dicen …
>
> [[It feels bad not being able to speak Nahuatl. Some people know and some don't. I would like to learn. I think they get embarrassed because they can't speak the language. And some words sound like bad words. But in reality they're not. And they also say that we are Indians. That we are ignorant. We are not prepared. That's what a lot of people say.] (Interview, March 2, 2013)

The youth expressed that they were not ashamed of their language per se, but rather of their inability to speak their heritage language, Lee (2009, 2014) found similar findings, "…students revealed expressions of embarrassment for their own limited Native-language ability, not necessarily embarrassment or shame with the language itself" (Lee, 2009, p. 313). The following table demonstrates the youth's feelings of shame for not speaking their ancestral language. As one example, Victor explicitly stated that they [the youth] felt *pena* because they did not know how to speak the language. The youth voiced their concern that language is transmitted by the parents. For the youth,

then, it is the parents' role to transfer the language to their children in order for them to learn the language at a young age and perhaps this feeling of *pena* would not be a key factor in language loss.

Table 4.2

Youth's excerpts of shame of not speaking Nahuatl.

Victor	Yo creo que se vergüenza. Porque no saben hablar el idioma. I think they get embarrassed. Because they don't know the language.
Margarita	Los jóvenes están interesados. Creo que ellos quiere aprender. Tal vez algunas personas no tienen el esfuerzo para aprender. Kids are interested. I think they want to learn. Maybe some people lack of effort to learn.
Lupita	Es importante de hablar Nahuatl…Es importante de hablar para que puedas hablar con los abuelitos. Mis abuelitos habla los dos idiomas. Mi abuelitos quieren que hable Nahuatl. Ellos me hablan mas en Nahuatl. Pero escucho mas español en mi casa por eso no se me queda. Lo entiendo y contestó en español

	pero no en Nahuatl por que no lo se. Y si me gustaría saber. It is important to speak Nahuatl ... It is important to talk so you can talk to the grandparents. My grandparents speak both languages. My grandparents want to speak Nahuatl. They speak to me more in Nahuatl. But I hear more Spanish at home so that's why it doesn't stick to me. I understand and answer in Spanish but not in Nahuatl because I don't know it. Yeah, I want to learn it.
Francisca	Todos el pueblo debe de aprende la idioma. es nuestro costumbre. Pero aquí la vergüenza nos gana. Debemos enseñar a nuestro hijos que aprendan nuestro idioma…Mis padres no me hablaron tanto. All the people must learn the language. It is our custom. But the embarrassment overcomes us. We should teach our children to learn our language…My parents did not talk to me so much [in Nahuatl].

Most of the Coatepec youth attended school in Tonalapa and continued their education in Iguala, the closest city to Coatepec, 19.2 miles away, which by bus is a ride of approximately 60-90 minutes due to stops along the way. Most youth shared that they wanted to get an education to help their family members. Their absence in the community made it seem as if they had forgotten their roots and lost respect for their community. The elders also believed that youth getting an education was a sign of their feeling as if they were better than others. On the other hand, the youth expressed that they missed their pueblo and wanted to come back, while at the same time, they wanted to give their families "*una buena vida*" [a better life]. They [youth] expressed that if they needed to, they would move to the city to work, but that their home would always be Coatepec and they would return.

The adults did not witness their children speaking Mexicano. For example, Petra says, "I would like my daughters to speak both languages. I don't think they like it

because I don't hear them talk to each other—only in Spanish." However, this does not mean that the children were not negotiating a space in which to do so. Children and youth manage these spaces differently than adults do, and they have different challenges in maintaining their identities as Coatepeceños.

In Tlaxcala, Mexico, Messing (2009) explored youths' feelings of ambivalence about Indigenous language use through an ethnographic study. She discovered that youths' ideology shift contributed to the community's language shift. Similar findings emerged in this study. Some adults are Mexicano speakers and some only understand the language. The non-Mexicano speakers did not learn it because it was not passed down to them because of language ideologies, such as those related to language status. Because their parents wanted their children to be successful and Spanish was the language of status and power, they wanted their children to be fluent in Spanish. They believed that teaching two languages would interfere with learning one of the languages. Although they wanted their children to learn their native tongue, they did not want to impede them from learning the global language, which would lead to success in educational institutions and the global job market.

In Coatepec, amongst the adults, the contradictory narratives of feeling ashamed of their language and at the same time respecting their language was a common theme, similar findings are found in Messing (2009) study. The shamed resulted form the social stigma that was attached to it (see also Lee, 2009, on similar ideologies among Native North American youth). Although they viewed their Mexicano language as important, they felt they did not need it to acquire a job or to continue their education. Hence, there was no formal way in which to learn Mexicano. The following chapter describes the

dilemma of having no space in which to learn Mexicano, which contributed to the language shift and loss. An elder, Candida is a bilingual participant who learned both languages at home. Later on she went to boarding school where they encouraged her to speak her native tongue. For Candida both languages were equally important growing up since she had a positive experience maintaining her language at home and school. She comments that language maintenance has to do with the parents. Below is a quote from our interview.

> Depende de los padres. Otros piensan que si hablan Mexicano no van hablar Español. Eso es uno de los razones yo creo que no lo enseñan. Tienen miedo que no van aprender Español muy bien.
>
> [It depends on the parents. Some think that if they speak Mexicano then they won't learn Spanish so well. That's one reason I think. They are afraid that they will not learn Spanish so well.] (Interview, February 26, 2013)

Open Window to Language Learning

As I built rapport with the youth, I slowly gained their confidence and I began observing their circle of friends, how they communicated, and how they interacted with themselves and with other people of the community. I would observe them play and joke from a distance and I would record field notes in my journal. It became an everyday practice, to the people, to see me take notes and photos. After I analyzed and coded the data, a theme that was common amongst the youth and elders, which I have labeled, "growing into the language." In the following section I will explain this theme, "growing into the language," in depth.

As perceived and expressed by villagers, growing into the language is a sacred transition from child to "adulthood." Therefore speaking Mexicano is considered sacred. I use the term adulthood loosely because to others adulthood can range from 22 to 45, or beyond—it means the age of responsibility to carry the sacred language within oneself and to transfer it to one's offspring. This concept is co-constructed with life's lessons and one's own movement in life to determine when one is ready for the language. For every individual his or her journey is different, but ultimately the end goal is to receive this gift of language, which may look different in every case. But, what is the cost of waiting? At the same time this concept is problematic and I do not wish to romanticize it. If youth wait too long or do not have the place to practice the language they will not be able to learn it and the language will disappear within their family. What are the risks and consequences of waiting to use the language?

Today's youth understand the language when someone speaks it, and the youth can speak it although their fluency levels differ from one another. As discussed above, many of the youth felt ashamed in speaking Mexicano and did not want to be ridiculed; they did not know how to pronounce words correctly, or the language carried a stigma of not being "cool." Yet at the same time there was an expressed ideology that as youth listened to the language, eventually when they felt they were ready or comfortable to speak, they would. This was a sign of respect—a rite of passage—showing respect and ready to receive a special gift. They knew that their ancestral language was a gift and should not be taken for granted so they spoke it when they felt they were ready. This ideology of being ready was not directly spoken about; it appeared to be understood amongst the youth. Once I interviewed the youth, observed them, and analyzed the data, I

recognized this pattern and this phenomenon. “Estoy joven…y voy hablar cuando este mas grande.” [I am young. I will speak it when I get older.] This way of thinking contributes to their belief that the language will never die because there will always be someone speaking it. The notion that the language will always be present and never become dormant is an ideology that most people believed. There was no action of how to maintain the language, but there was an assumption that it would always be there.

Meek (2007) and Pye (1992) discuss the complexities of speaking a language when children and youth feel it is their time to speak. Meek discovered that children in the Yukon Territory were passive language learners, meaning they listened but did not have the opportunities to speak or felt that they could not speak because it was the elders’ language. They continued this passive learning as a sign of respect to the older generations. The elders’ role was to maintain their Kaska language and to teach the younger generation how to live and respect. The children learned that being quiet and listening was a sign of respect to the elders, but at the same time they were not speaking their language. The passive way of absorbing a language impeded their learning of Kaska.

Therefore, if youth are waiting for their time to speak, there is a need for youth to be exposed to the language such as in schools, at home, and within the community. They need places to hear the language and opportunities to practice it. Every year that passes without the youth speaking their language aloud is another year that language learning suffers. Children who were around their grandparents or raised by their grandparents had a stronger foundation of the language, because their grandparents talked to their grandchildren in Nahuatl. At times, grandparents were the ones that took care of their

grandchildren while the parents went to the fields or to the city to work. The second part of this chapter will be devoted to the importance of the grandparents or elders in the community. They are the key holders of the language and their role is important in order to maintain and revitalize the language in Coatepec.

Growing Into the Language

The theme of growing into a language meant that the youth believed they would not speaking the language until they reached the age of responsibility. The youth held the language with the utmost respect, and when they were ready, felt they would speak it. Although this notion was never directly spoken, there was an underlying agreement that the youth would wait until they were older to speak their native tongue. In similar study, Lee (2013) discovered that the Native youth shared a great respect for their language and heritage even though they could not speak the language. They expressed the pride they had towards their language and if they could speak it, they would do it all the time. In Coatepec, the youth also expressed this respect towards their language. “Para mi es un orgullo…Yo si soy Indígena. Si es orgullo. Somos…nuestros abuelos nos enseñaron el respecto.” [For me it’s pride…I am Indigenous. Yes, it’s pride. We…our grandparents showed us respect.] Although many youth could not speak their language they were proud of their language and hoped one day to speak it. They knew that the language was unique and important for themselves, community, and ancestors.

As I developed my relationship with the community people, one particular group that I connected with was the youth. It took time to gain their trust and get accepted in their circle of friends. At the beginning I tried to be present at their school and community events. I allowed myself to be around places where they would hang out, such as the zócalo (the center of the village). Slowly they were able to confide in me and talk about language in a different manner. I came in as a researcher with scripted questions along with my audio-recorder and camera ready to document the data. They were not accustomed to being asked structured questions about their language and to answer them while being recorded. It wasn't until after many times spent together that we developed a relationship where we synched and they were able to share their ideas and, thoughts regarding language and where they felt liberated to talk about it in a different manner rather than just answering a pre-written question. It was a fluid conversation where we had a back and forth dialogue. Although we developed a relationship in a short time, the relationship was at its prime—flourishing and strengthening—but was cut too soon due to my return to the United States.

The youth shared that they spoke Nahuatl in different settings where they felt safe and comfortable to take risks, which I further delved into earlier in this chapter. There were many reasons why the younger generation did not speak it. Although they did not speak it, many had passive abilities and said they understood and had great respect for Mexicano. A youth described the language as a sacred gift from the ancestors and stated how important it is to respect it. As I listened to youths' responses about taking care of the language as a sign of respect, I wondered if this "respect" was also indirectly taught to the children and youth. Were the younger generations taught to "respect" the elders

and learning that the language was of the elders? Were the younger generations waiting for the language because they were indirectly taught the language was for the elders? Were the younger generations observing who uses the language and were receiving a message?

Figure 3.8 The girls from Huayapa. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

The younger generations would listen to the language daily if they had grandparents living in their household. In the community the older people would speak it during special events, such as birthdays, offerings, and religious ceremonies. The adults would get together and talk in Mexicano and the youth were exposed to the language in these contexts. Acquiring a second language sometime requires people to go through a silent period, where they just listen and take the language within. When they are ready to speak, they will speak. I view this process as similar to that of Coatepec's language

learning or lack of learning in the community, based upon the findings and participants' comments. The youth are listening and taking in the language in different sociocultural practices and experiences. They are passive learners, meaning they are listening but not speaking it. A constant response to language learning is that they were going to speak the language once they were "ready" sometime in the future. Some youth spoke Mexicano, within their own age group. They managed when to use language and with whom. They felt that the language was a sacred gift and that they were not ready to use it in their daily lives in public. Similar findings in McCarty, Romero-Little, and Zepeda (2006) revealed that the youth knew much more than the adults often gave credit to their passive language abilities.

This meant that they were going to speak it when they felt they were "mature" and ready to take care of it. Age was not a major factor as long as they felt they were responsible to handle and take care of their language. Lupita, who worked in a *molino* store [a place to grind the nixtamal into masa to make tortillas], shared a story of her friend who began speaking Nahuatl. After marriage, her friend felt he was mature enough to take responsibility to carry the language within himself and his family. The following section is part of the interview where Lupita constructs the idea of growing into the language.

> Cuándo crezcan van hablar. Por que yo veo otros q están casados y ellos hablan mas de eso. Pero de chavo no. Pero cuando se casan ya son diferente. Por que yo si veo unos chavos que no lo hablaban pero ya no hablan porque están con personas mas adultos y lo practican un poquito mas.

> [When they grow up, they will speak. Because I see some people who are married and they speak it [Mexicano]. But as a teenager…you don't…But when you get married, you are different. Because I see some young people who didn't speak it and now they hang out with adults and they practice it.] (Interview, March 10, 2013)

Growing into the language is an important part of living in the village. Lupita described the young man who did not speak Mexicano openly but who did once he got married, which is an example of growing into the language. He wanted to share this special gift with his family; therefore, he began speaking it. Lupita did not go into detail if the young man felt embarrassed or if he was able to clearly carry a conversation in Mexicano. The fluency of the man is unknown, as is Lupita's definition of language fluency or ability to speak the language. This is also problematic since her definition of language fluency may be different from that of others. This concept needs to be further untangled.

Other young adults and youth shared that they were going to speak the language once they got older. They shared that they would not be embarrassed because by that time they would be ready. The notion of being ready and showing respect for the language, in this manner, aligns with ancestral knowledges that are passed down from one generation to the other. Being ready is another complexity of language learning. "Being ready" may have different meanings for different generations such as the children, youth, and young adults. Lupita shared the story about the young man who was ready to speak and who decided that marriage was a sign of aging and responsibility. Brenda shared that she would be ready to speak once she was older. At the time of the interview she was 32

years old. How does she and others define age? Or when one is ready to receive the language? In Table 2, Brenda describes that she did not think she was ready to speak the language due to her language ideologies of *la pena*. Brenda believes that with age she will outgrow *la pena* and then she will be ready to speak the language because she will not care what others think of how she pronounces words—she won't be self-conscious about how she speaks. Anita, Lorenzo, and Margarita shared how they wanted to transfer the language to their children. They shared that it is crucial for them to speak the language in order to teach their future children. Margarita was the only one of the children and youth participants who spoke Nahuatl; although she was a fluent speaker she did not use the language unless it was necessary. The participants shared that they did not speak the language but understood it. We come back to the idea of what does fluent mean to them? How do they define it? What does that look like? Perhaps this is a limitation in the study, that I did not clearly ask these questions about their definition of fluency. I define fluency as being able to carry a conversation in Nahuatl. Speakers are able to switch languages or mix words where they are aware and know how to correctly insert words in conversations where it is semantically and syntactically correct.

Table 4.3

Youth and Young/Adults' Quotes on Language Ideologies

Participants	Quotes
Anita is in her early 20s and speaks only Spanish, but understands some Mexicano.	Quiero aprender el Nahuatl para que aprenda mis hijos. Necesito hablarlo primero para que ellos aprendan. I want to learn the language so my kids can learn to speak it. I should speak it first so then my kids can learn to speak it.
Lorenzo is 13-years-old. He speaks only Spanish.	Otros jóvenes tienen pena otros no. la idioma me significa grande. Yo quiero aprender ese idioma para ensenar a mis hijos. Some youth are embarrassed and others aren't. The language means something great. I want to learn that language, so I can teach my children.
Edgar is 12-years-old and speaks Spanish and some Nahuatl.	Me gusta hablar Nahuatl. Eso es el mejor parte de este pueblo. Creo que estuviera bonito si todos hablaran. Nosotros no tenemos pena. Hablamos. Pero solo con nosotros…chavos. No [we] are not embarrassed. We do speak it. well…we speak it only with us boys… I like speaking Nahuatl that's the best part of the pueblo. I think it would be pretty if everyone would speak it.
Margarita is in her early 20's. She is fluent in both languages, Spanish and Nahuatl.	Mi mama y abuelo me ensenaron como hablar y escribir Nahuatl. Quiero transmitir mi idioma a mi futuro hijos. Mom and grandpa taught me how to speak and write in Nahuatl. I want to transmit the language to my future kids.
Brenda is in her mid 30's. She speaks Spanish and understands some Nahuatl.	Creo cuando crezca voy hablar lo mas. Ya no voy a tener pena porque voy hacer mayor y no me va importar. I think when I get older I will speak it more. I won't have any more *pena*, because I will be older and I won't care.

In Table 4.2, Edgar—a 12-year-old boy—shared his joy of speaking Nahuatl and his wish that everyone in the pueblo would speak it. He confirmed that some youth speak the language amongst themselves. Although they are not speaking it in public or with elders, they are practicing in some kind of manner. Edgar is an example of how language ideologies play a role in how one constructs and manages language. All of the participants from Table 2 show the determination to keep the language alive. Table 2 also demonstrates examples of quotes of participants that claimed that they wanted or would speak the language when they were ready. Some participants did not directly say they will wait until they were ready but said that they will teach their children, which implies that they are waiting for a time. Brenda, a mother, talks about her time being ready.

Although waiting for the language and respecting it demonstrates the value and importance of their language, it is also important to recognize if people are not speaking and practicing the language, it will eventually disappear. Youth run the risk of waiting until they are ready to speak the language that they won't be able to speak it in a fluent manner; therefore, it is crucial for the younger generation to practice the language in different places in the community.

One is taught to show respect through words and actions and their way of living. The knowledges and ways of being on this land are part of being Indigenous, being Coatepeceño(a). These are lessons that our ancestors have taught us: to respect the gifts that are given to us. The people always thank their Creator [God] for their food. They say, "These are gifts from God. We have everything here. We don't pay for anything, because they are gifts." This is similar to language. Language is a gift from the Creator

that gives us knowledge and strength in order to be here on this land and to pass it down to our children. Although the young adults and youth claim to grow into the language, many begin but stop to use the language due to language ideologies, stigma, and being ridiculed. There is a struggle to preserve a language in a household. It is difficult, and the community is needed in order to stay strong and maintain a language. If this does not happen, language loss occurs.

Figure 3..9 Traditional fruit, bonete (*yulu*). (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

Language readiness is an important concept to untangle and begin the discussion of what it means and how it looks. Speaking the language in open places and practicing it is also important for emerging speakers to become fluent. The youth's ideologies are the ones that manage when it is important to begin speaking. One of the reasons that they wait until they are ready is because of language ideologies. They have respect for the

language that they learned from the elders. They carry this gift within themselves but they need to begin to share it with others, or with time the language will slowly disappear.

Chapter Summary

Nuestra cultura se va desaparecer sin nuestra idioma.

[Our culture would disappear without our language.]

— Coatepec Elder

In this chapter the language ideologies across generations were explored. Many factors contributed to the language shift and loss occurring in the village. Although language loss is happening there is a respect towards the language that it is believed to be sacred. The community embraces their native tongue and desires its presence in the village because it is part of them; it is who they are and what defines them. Without their language they believe they are not whole, and that a part of them is also lost. The following quote is from a youth that exemplifies this ideology:

> Si Nahuatl se pierde el pueblo va perder algo. Son los raíces del pueblo, el Corazón. Los jóvenes debemos de reflexionar. Porque es nuestro lengua y necesitamos hablar. Tal vez va pasar por que los abuelitos saben y los jóvenes no tanto.
>
> [If our Nahuatl language is lost, our village will lose something. They are the roots of our pueblo. The heart. Us, youth, need to reflect. It's our language and we

need to speak it. Maybe one day it will get lost because the grandparents are the ones that know and the youth not so much.] (Interview, February 28, 2013)

Generationally transmitted ideologies can be positive as well as negative; damaging ideologies can lead to destructive attitudes and actions. In this case, actions are slowly killing off the language within their community. Youth are slowly turning away from their ancestral language, but at the same time there are a group of strong young leaders who manage and continue to use their language in safe places. They have resisted and discovered in ways to preserve their language. Although at times it is not observable to the common people, there are youth speaking and using it in their daily lives. At the same time elders might not see it as a "pure" way or the best way to speak the language but it is how the youth negotiate language practice in their places and time.

Figure 3.10 Elderly woman of the village—my grandmother, Guadalupe Cabrera. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

Common Indigenous communities relate to this notion of *la pena*, which leads to language loss, such as the case of the Native American youth in McCarty, Romero-Little, and Warhol's (2009) ethnographic study and Nicholas' (2009) work with Hopi youth. The youth had strong ties to the language and respect for it but at the same time were ashamed of not learning it and not being able to speak it correctly. *La pena* or shame kept them quiet and not speaking their native languages. As a result, language shift and loss occurred in their generation, which caused a domino effect on later generations.

Language learning is apparent in safe spaces and flourishes when older people nurture and encourage speakers. There are always elders or adults who speak Mexicano; therefore, people believe that the language will never disappear because there could always learn later in their lives. Thus, *la pena* exists and will always be there, but at the same time it will slowly diminish with time and maturity. Youth believe that Mexicano will be heard and spoken more often as one grows older. In conclusion, language ideologies begin to construct beliefs on maintaining or ceasing to speak a language. These ideologies are at the core and it is pertinent to untangle the ideologies that are passed down from one generation to the other.

In the next chapters, I examine language practices and management in Coatepec. I further explore the observable language practices within and across generations in various settings and how Mexicano and Spanish is used within the domains of family, homes, school and the community. How does this contribute to the language loss and how can we use the findings in order to begin the dialogue of a community-based language plan to revitalize Mexicano in Coatepec?

Chapter 5

Language Practices and Language Management

Nos dos idiomas son bonitos. Depende en donde estas para decidir que idioma hablar.

[Both languages are pretty. It depends where you are at and then you decide what language to speak.]

–Jose, adult participant

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I discussed the language ideologies of residents of Coatepec. Although *la pena* is a factor for language loss there is, at the same time, a great respect for the language. In this chapter, I describe the language practices across three different contexts, in the home, school, and community. I examine how children, youth, adults, and the elders interact in social contexts and the presence and absence of Spanish and Mexicano languages are during the sociocultural events. In the home setting, I unravel the social dynamics that occur during the preparation of cooking, in everyday cooking and during special events. I further discuss the importance of agriculture in the village and the relationships that are built during those moments. Traditional arts and dances are included in this section. The artisan work of the *moral*, a handbag made out of agave fibers, is in the same process of becoming vanished as the Nahuatl language. Afterwards, I discuss the community's events and the language practices in school across generations.

The second part of the chapter describes the formal and informal language management strategies that influence the community members' language practices. I

specifically look at the importance of the elders' role and how they manage language across settings. At the same time, the government influences language and cultural choice in Coatepec. I discuss the ways they have power and covertly influence Spanish-speaking in the community and to assimilate to the Mexican mainstream culture. Finally, I discuss the need for space for Nahuatl in the community and schools.

Language Practices — Home and Family

Cooking

Cooking is more than preparing food. Cooking nourishes our bodies, gives thanks to Mother Earth, and connects us to our ancestors. It is ceremonial, building relationships with the land, food, fire, the self, and all living things. Typically, women prepare daily meals, while men gather the *leña* (wood). Traditionally, and still to this day, most families continue to use leña to cook. Cooking is a process that may require several steps of food preparation. For members of Coatepec, *laxcallis* (tortillas) are part of the daily diet; they are eaten at every meal. Women make enough tortillas for the entire day, always saving some for the following meal.

Figure 5.1 An adult participant cooking seeds on a *comal*. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

In Coatepec, corn is sacred, and it is the main component of meals. The process of making *laxcallis* [tortillas], usually takes up to two days. On the first day of *laxcallis* making, the women prepare the nixtamal by cooking it, in order to get it ready for the following day. The following day, the women wash the *maíz*, corn, usually the mother prepares the *nixtamal*, an Aztec word to describe corn cooked and soaked, washes it

twice until the head of the *maíz* comes off and it is considered clean. If there is a young female in the household, she is responsible to take the *maíz* to the *molino*, a mill, to get the corn grounded into *masa*, dough. While the young girl takes the *maíz* to the *molina* the other women in the household prepares the fire. She carefully chooses the *leña* she will use and places them under the *comal*, ceramic griddle, stacking them in a respectful and careful manner in order to connect with the fire. The fire is living and its purpose is to prepare and give warmth to the food. Then she begins the fire, being gentle and never getting frustrated or mad because the fire is sacred. The young girl comes back from the *molino* and they are ready to begin the process of tortilla making.

During this time, it is crucial to build relationships with the females in the household. The older and younger generations share stories as they knead the *masa*, dough, and roll it into small balls. They flatten the masa and carefully lay the tortilla on the *comal*. During this everyday practice, the women's conversations are important. During these times, mothers and older females share what it means to be a woman with the younger women. They may also give life advice. Older women often tell young girls not to flirt with boys and not to be on the streets with boys because people tend to gossip—and no one wants to be the focus of the *pueblo's* gossip. Other times, conversations are more relaxed, and the women gossip and joke around. During these moments, all females in the household are involved in the social practice of making *laxcallis*. Young girls from the age of six wash the corn, bring it to the *molino,* and help make it. This is an intergenerational practice, in which traditions, culture, and language are alive and fruitful.

Figure 5.2 Grandmother showing her daughter how to make tamales. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

During my stay in Coatepec, I was invited to help with the food during religious ceremonies, birthdays, and offerings. One day, my aunt told me that she was going to help make food at a relative's offering, and she asked me if I wanted to attend and help out. For women in our culture, it is important to participate in cooking. Cooking is part of the knowledge that our grandmothers have passed down, and our role is to teach future generations. So, on the day of the cooking, I woke up early, before sunrise. As we walked up the rocky hill, I was still half asleep, trying my best to wake up my body and mind to get ready for a long day of helping. I often travelled with my aunt, and the community

members frequently thought that I was her daughter. They thought that I left very young to attend school in the city and that I would come back to the village once in a while to spend time with her. This misconception would have explained my usual absence in the village and my visits every summer.

We finally reached our destination and entered the household. As we entered, the first room contained flowers, candles, and offerings. It was a place where people united to pray and remember. We shook hands and greeted everyone. Then, we continued to walk through towards the back of the house, where the women were already gathered and had been cooking for a couple of hours. I greeted everyone and stood next to my aunt like a young girl standing next to her mother—shy and uncertain of what to say or do. I waited to see what others were doing and to get directions from the other women. As I stood, I observed four women in a different room making tortillas. They had several stacks of tortillas and continued to make more. As they cooked, they were talking—sometimes in Mexicano and other times in Spanish—laughing as they made light of the laborious work. Two women were in charge of making the tortillas, one was in charge of turning them over, and another was in charge of kneading.

In our cooking area, one woman was in charge of setting up the fire and getting it ready. There were three older women, and everyone else asked questions of them before doing anything in the kitchen. Two other women, including my aunt, were in their early 50s. I was the youngest in the circle of women. We were making *tamales de nejo*, a traditional food that is made when someone passes away. One of the women who was kneading the masa grabbed a little bit of it and asked the oldest woman to taste whether the salt was okay or whether it needed more. The woman said that it was good, and once

she gave her okay, everyone was ready to make tamales. One of the women sprinkled some *xochipal* (type of flower) petals. We all grabbed a corn leaf, spread the masa, and wrapped it up.

Figure 5.3 Tamales de nejo—*xochipal* sprinkled on top of the *masa*. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

The women began talking in Spanish, and the eldest spoke and said something in Mexicano. All of the women looked at me and laughed. I stood there making tamales and wondering what they were saying, feeling uncomfortable. Then, my aunt said that they were amazed I knew how to make tamales. They said that I was almost ready to get married in the pueblo. This kind of teasing and joking in Mexicano is very common when cooking. At times, when in a circle of people, it is easier to joke around in Mexicano. In

this case, the women were teasing and talking about me. If I were not strongly rooted in my identity and language ideologies, this experience may have led me to stray away from Mexicano.

One lady asked me a question in Mexicano. I did not know what she asked, but my aunt told me how to respond. I responded in my broken Mexicano, and they all laughed. I laughed, too. I knew that I had not pronounced my response correctly, but I also knew that they were happy I was trying. Although it made me feel uncomfortable, I understood their teasing as a sign of love and acceptance. I continued to listen, and tried to participate in the conversation by laughing when they laughed and saying *quema* (yes) when they asked me questions. I pretended that I understood, responded with *quema*, and smiled. I wanted to be part of the circle of women, so I passively participated and listened to them.

The conversation switched between Spanish and Mexicano depending on who was talking and the topic they were discussing. When the eldest began talking, the conversation switched back to Mexicano. Most of the women there spoke Mexicano and added to the conversation, but there was one lady who only responded in Spanish. Obviously, she understood Mexicano, but could not speak it. As I observed, I noticed that the eldest managed the conversation—what topics to discuss and what language to use. The rest of the ladies followed suit, indicating their respect for her. The lady who did not speak Nahuatl listened most of the time during the fluent Mexicano conversations; so, she was passively participating.

Language practices like this occur daily in local homes, especially when women gather to cook. Cooking is a daily chore, and the language practices involved are critical.

There is a lot of activity happening: who is managing the language, what is being discussed, who is actively and passively participating, what knowledge is being passed down, how topics and language change when women and girls of different ages are involved, and how the number of women affects the conversation. All of these considerations need to be further explored.

However, there were many occasions during which the elders were absent, especially in the schools. The women go in to the schools daily to prepare their children's meals. The mothers rotate and take turns cooking, each one responsible for creating daily lunch menus. The women bring in and prepare their everyday foods. Though the schools offer dry foods contributed by the government, the mothers prefer their traditional foods and use the donated foods only sparingly. During my time of observation, the women who prepared the food spoke mainly Spanish. They would gossip, laugh, and converse in Spanish. This was perhaps due to their being in a public institution: The power of the institution immensely influences the language spoken. Thus, the collaboration of school and community in language revitalization is important for encouraging adults and students to speak their home languages.

In addition to cooking, gathering with family members to eat the prepared meals is a crucial time during which language is a main component. During my stay with my aunt and uncle, we ate meals twice a day. My aunt and I prepared the meals. It was a daily ritual to eat and converse, and after eating, we would continue to sit in the kitchen table and talk for at least an hour. We would often talk about what was occurring in the village. Since I spoke only the Spanish language fluently, the conversation would be in Spanish. Sometimes, though, my aunt and uncle would converse in Mexicano, either

because they were discussing something that they did not want me to hear or because they were able to express themselves better in Mexicano.

The language dynamics changed when there was an addition to the table. During dinner, an aunt, an uncle or another relative would often stop by, and my aunt and uncle would invite him or her to join us. It is customary and a sign of respect to always invite in anyone who arrives while you are eating; similarly, to show respect, the invitee should never refuse. As new members joined the table, the language topics and the language itself would evolve, illustrating the language's fluidity. If a new member was older and knew Mexicano, the conversation would switch to Mexicano. I would sit and listen passively, laughing when they laughed, and I was often able to grasp certain details by visually listening and looking at the conversationalists' facial expressions and movements. At the same time, I noticed that new conversation members tended to use Spanish and Mexicano interchangeably, depending on how they thought they could best express themselves. Sometimes, a joke or a serious talk was best shared in Mexicano, and other times the speakers would switch to Spanish, especially if they wanted to make sure that everyone understood. These choices were made subconsciously, and they changed at the beginning of each conversation.

Figure 5.4 Stories were shared, during dinnertime, around the kitchen table. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

The conversations were different when children were involved. The majority of the time, conversations were in Spanish so that the children could understand. When children were scolded, however, the person doing the scolding often switched to Mexicano. This was also true when the children were teased. Although children may not speak Mexicano, they know when they are scolded, teased, or given chores. They are able to manage and understand conversations through the speaker's tone of voice and body language. For example, I was invited to a dinner at a friend's household. During my time there, the women in the household, including an adult, a teenager, and two young girls aged seven to eight, were preparing the meals. I was a guest, so I was not allowed to help. I noticed that the conversation was in Spanish, often including commands like *traiga las tortillas* (bring the tortillas) and *garres los bazos* (get the cups). While I waited, I spoke with the father about the traditions in the pueblo. As he shared the pueblo's traditions and

culture, I could not help feeling guilty for not helping with the meal. The father continued to talk about the traditions, but then, in the middle of the conversation, he turned around and firmly scolded the younger girl. He said something in Mexicano, and the girl quickly went to the kitchen. The young girl also responded to the command in Mexicano, rather than in Spanish. She knew that when her father talked to her in Mexicano, he was serious.

Does speaking to children in Mexicano have a different value to them? Is Mexicano considered a more serious language? Why do adults use Mexicano specifically to scold children or to tease them? What language ideologies underlie this context and language choice? I have witnessed and derived from field notes that Mexicano has great status within the community. Even though it might not be recognizable to all, it has a level of importance. In this way, the Mexicano language is similar to the elders, who have respect, even though they may not be the same as or envision the same things as the younger generation. In the same way, when children hear the Mexicano language, they know to respect it. Similarly, when they are teased, it can be hurtful or embarrassing because of who is doing the teasing.

Family Gatherings

In the pueblo, people often come together to celebrate birthdays, religious communions or offerings, and school celebrations. During these times, people unite to honor one or more individuals. In such events, people of all age groups are present. Usually, these events are happy, and people gather to eat, laugh, and share stories. These times are crucial for the elders to share stories with the young adults. The elders share their stories in Nahuatl, and the young adults are passive participants; some may speak,

but the others are listening to the language and trying to make meaning of it. Children are present and are also listening to the Mexicano as the elders speak. These children are running around, playing with relatives and friends, but they hear the Mexicano language; although they are not consciously taking in the language, they are subconsciously breathing it in. In other words, the children may not be sitting and listening to the speakers, but they are exposed to the language in the moment. These events are opportunities for knowledge to be passed from one generation to the next. The preparation of a single event takes many hours or even days, and people unite and help one another to make the celebration take place. The people who are involved take their participation seriously and are committed to their duties.

For example, during a Catholic saint celebration, one family is in charge of taking care of and bringing the saint into its home. The hosting family has the responsibility for lighting candles and providing daily fresh flowers for the saint. After a year of taking care of the saint, the family has a celebration to honor him or her and look for another family to host the saint for the following year. The saint is passed on during this celebration or gathering. The current hosting family prepares a dinner for the new hosting family and for the community. The current hosts are responsible for inviting all members of the community into their home; so, they need to have meals ready to feed an entire village. It is unusual for everyone in the village to attend; instead, typically the closest friends and family members attend. During these moments, Mexicano is used particularly amongst the elders, as is the case in other events. This confirms the social value of language for potential revitalization processes: The Indigenous language brings people together and has the potential to give life to a language that may be dormant. During social events, all

generations come together. Thus, perhaps, such social gatherings are the most crucial part of language revitalization.

Figure 5.5 The community members celebrating their Saint with flowers, candles, and prayers. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

Agriculture

Agriculture is a way of life in Coatepec. It is a sociocultural practice that is within the context of family life, because all family members are involved in the process. It is

the people's life. It is their breath; their heart; their way of living and being in this world. The people survive using the gifts that the land gives to them. They are grateful for these gifts, and in return, they nourish the land. Below is an excerpt from an elder interview, Octavio, which was conducted in Nahuatl and then later translated in Spanish and English.

> Me gusta aquí. Me gusta porque todo es regalo. Hay quelite, regalado. *Papalotsi*, regalado. Ciruela, regalado…en Iguala lo venden por 10 pesos. La fruta es regalado. Por eso me gusta aquí. Mis hijos me dicen que valla a la cuidad, pero yo no quiero. Me gusta aquí. Todo es gratis…muchos de los jóvenes no les gusta aquí es por que no saben como hacer las cosas [trabajar].
>
> [I like it here. I like it because everything is a gift. There is free *quelite*, *papalotsi*, (wild herbs). Free plums…in Iguala, the city, they sell it for 10 pesos. The fruit is free here.
>
> That's why I like it here. My kids tell me to go to the city, but I don't want to. I like it here. Everything is free…many of the youth who live here don't know how to do this stuff.]

The different seasons require different types of laborious work to prepare the land, work the land, and harvest the crops. The men dedicate their daily lives to working the land. Getting a plot ready for planting takes time, love, and patience. Usually, the men are the ones who wake before sunrise and set out to the fields with their young sons. They walk in the darkness with their donkeys and machetes to their fields. For some of the community members, fields could be 20 minutes away by foot going up the hills; for others, they could be an hour or more away. Most of the people have land to grow their

food, and if they do not own any land they ask others to share their land and in return they will give them some crops. During the journey, the men have the opportunity to talk. This time is sacred: The fathers share stories of different landmarks as they pass by. The fathers also teach the young men how to tend the land and share knowledge of being. Usually, the father speaks in Mexicano, if this is his first language; even if it is not, he will still use some words in Nahuatl to share certain stories or talk about different landmarks.

For example, when I hiked with my uncle to the *Encinos,* a secluded place 75 minutes away, by foot, from the village, my uncle shared his stories as we trudged the path. He spoke to me in Spanish so I could understand, but at the same time, he used Mexicano names and landmarks within the stories. These stories were sacred: They belong to our ancestors and to future generations. All pieces of the land have a name and a creation story. My uncle shared a story about a mountain, and in the telling, he used some Mexicano. He had to use Mexicano in order to share his stories because there was no other way to share what he needed to share. I realized then how much interaction there must be between father and son as they walk to their fields every day and how language is an important part of agriculture and life practices. Perhaps the men do not share stories of the landmarks every single time or converse for the entire walk, but they do communicate. What languages are being valued and used? In my case, my uncle and aunt took turns sharing some of the knowledge that their grandparents and parents had shared with them. They also shared stories from when they were young. I learned how they lived long ago and how things had changed with time. These are important stories that encompass our ancestors' knowledge, and language is at their core.

Once we reached our destination, we unpacked and found a little spot to rest. My aunt searched for some wood and we started to make a fire to reheat some of our bean tortillas that we prepared a day ahead. Then, we sat down and breathed in the air and thanked *Nonantzin*, Mother Earth, for the beautiful trees, plants, rocks, mountains, and little creatures that she has gifted us. We cooked our food and sat in silenced for a moment and then once again shared some stories before we went back home.

As a father and son reach their field, they unpack, tie up their donkeys, and get ready to work on the land. The father usually shows his son how to work the lands. This is knowledge that is passed down from one generation to another. The father shows his son how to tend to the land, how to treat it and respect it, and how to work together to give life to it; in return, the father teaches, the land will also give life. Depending on the season or time of the year, different chores that need to be done. While the men are planting, cleaning, harvesting, or preparing the land, they are sharing conversations with one another. Some stories can only be told in Mexicano because that is the way they are told. In this way, the young boys are exposed to the language and learn the way of being on the land through Mexicano. Although they may not speak it in return, they are listening.

The women usually go to the fields later in the day, during lunchtime. They bring tortillas and food to the men. At times, the women may stay and help with the work, while at other times, they may drop off the food and then head home to finish their daily chores.

Figure 5.6 Grandmother walking to el campo with her granddaughter. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

Figure 5.7 The men usually tended the land and crops. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

Corn is the main crop that is grown in the field. Corn is sacred and the primary source of food. It is used throughout the year in many ways. Through planting, harvesting, and cooking, corn is used daily, and it is intertwined with the language—Mexicano. As mentioned earlier, tortillas are an everyday food item; members of the community eat tortillas at least twice a day. Children, youths, adults, and elders use Nahuatl words, such as nixtamal and *laxcaliis*, to talk about the food and its preparation. In our food, Nahuatl words are always present, and in this way, our knowledge is preserved. The Nahuatl words are passed from one generation to another, ever present in the community's knowledge. It is possible that future generations may use these words without knowing where they come from or whether they are Nahuatl. I hope that this will not be the case and that the Nahuatl language will continue to be present throughout the

process of prepare the foods in this ceremony of gathering the gifts of the land together to nourish our bodies.

Gathering the Flowers—My Experience

Below is an excerpt of my experience going to the fields to collect flowers with my aunt. The name of these flowers is *cacaloxochitl* (Plumeria rubra). They are originally from Mexico, and they grow on trees with milky sap. Every week, my aunt would gather the flowers and make them into leis to sell. In this way, she would help the family and bring in income.

> It's Saturday and it's almost two weeks that I've been here. This morning I went with my aunt and little cousin, Selena, to el campo. We helped my aunt get her flowers off the tree. She climbed the tree to cut the flowers off the tree. Selena and I picked the pretty flowers off the ground. We had to make sure the flowers petals were not drying or eaten by bugs and insects. The flowers are white with some pink and have five petals. It took a while to pick the flowers and put them in a bag. After, we left and walked back home. The walk home is long the road has rocks and dirt—it's like hiking—with sandals! As you walk the dirt gets in your sandals and your feet and toes are covered with dirt. Everyone wears sandals and no one wears tennis shoes. I wanted to wear my tennis shoes but I want to live like them, so I wear my sandals every day. As we continue our journey home we talk about how happy we are to have gathered so many flowers. We also look at the fruits that surround us. We find a few fruits from the tree and we stop a few times to pick them and eat them. It's a nice little treat to have while a long day in

the sun. My aunt laughs and shares stories, in Spanish, when she was young. [She wants me to learn how life was back then and how it has changed. She does this to encourage me because sometimes life can be hard in the village.] She also tells me I'm doing good. That makes me happy. (Fieldnotes, February 23, 2013)

Figure 5.8 Cacaloxochitl tree (*Plumeria rubra*). (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

We collected the flowers and took them home. At home, we chose the best ones to string. We all helped each other make the leis. I chose the best ones, my uncle cut the string, and my aunt and cousin strung them. When all was done, my aunt put them in water to keep them fresh. These are common social language practices that occur daily in community members' homes. Though each family's practice may look a little different,

many family members go together to gather flowers or fruit from the fields. In so doing, they participate in subtle everyday language practices. During our conversation it was mainly in Spanish because most of us only spoke Spanish. My uncle and aunt shared the name of the flowers in Nahuatl, cacaloxochitl, and her life on this land. They said that this flower is one of the most beautiful smelling flowers there is. During nighttime it sleeps but in the morning with the sunrise it wakes up and sometimes sheds tears of happiness. My uncle and aunt shared that this flower has been here for a long time and brings happiness to people. At this moment I realized the importance of family conversations and the many stories that are shared amongst each other when working together.

Figure 5.9 Making leis with the family, a sociocultural practice event. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

Language Practices in the Community

Arts

Arts are a form of self-expression, and Mexico is known for its folkloric dances, pyramids, artisan work, and colorful clothes. Coatepec has many traditional styles of artwork, such as weaving with agave fibers to make *Costales*, bags, and *morales*. It is also known for its dances, which contain stories that are shared with other pueblos. These traditions are part of what makes up Coatepec. Mexicano is used in many of these traditions, but it is slowly disappearing.

One of the oldest arts that Coatepec is known for is making *morales*. *Morale* is a sachet, a bag made out of agave fibers. Coatepec is known for making these bags but over time people have stopped making it because it is a long process. This knowledge has been passed down from generation to generation, but in the past few years, like the Mexicano language, it has been slowly disappearing. Making *morales* involves the entire family, but the men are the ones who are most involved in the process. The process is sacred; it involves land, plants, water, and the being. It is not a solitary practice; instead, it is done with others. During the process, Mexicano is used because many of the names of the plants, tools, and processes are Mexicano. This is one way in which Mexicano is present and has a place where it is acknowledged and used. As this art disappears, the Mexicano used in this space is increasingly lost.

For example, in the making of *morales*, the maguey is the central part of the moral. The men use their machetes to collect the leaves and then soak them in the river. They also gather the fibers to weave. During this entire process they are connecting with the land, the water, and the sun. They are communicating with their creator and teaching and passing on knowledge to the young ones. Thus, making *morales* is more than making a moral; it is also a process, a teaching of lessons, and a sharing of stories. Making *morales* is a ceremony. Only a handful of men still continue with this tradition. For this reason, Mexicano is at risk of becoming dormant in the pueblo, unless community members are dedicated to revitalizing it.

As I sit with the elder, Victor, he is excited to share his knowledge of making *morales*. He is a monolingual Nahuatl speaker so I have my mother be our translator. At times he tries to communicate with me using hand signals with some Nahuatl. He grabs the agave fibers from his room while trying to untangle them to show me. He tells me that these fibers are from the maguey. Then he walks me over to his tool area. He slowly sits on his chair and wraps a rope around his waist to hold up the fibers and two tools to help him make the *morale*. He shows me how to make it, weaving the fibers in and out of the other ones with the help of the tools. He shares that he has been doing this for a long time.

> Mi papa me enseño como hacer los *morales*. Y ahora yo lo hago. Me gusta hacerlo pero toma mucho trabajar y a veces es difícil venderlo o no me dan mucho por ellos.

[My dad taught how to make *morales* and now I make them. I like making them, but they are a lot of work. Sometimes it is hard to sell them or they don't give you enough money for the hard work that is put into it.]

Figure 5.10 Elderly man getting the fibers ready to make *morales*. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

Figure 5.11 One of the few adults left in the village, who make *morales*. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

Danza—Ceremonial Dances

Danzas are language practices that unite members to socialize in common practice. In Coatepec, several traditional dances are performed. These dances are conducted primarily in Spanish, but the oldest ones, such as the *Tecuaniis de Viejos*, are done in Mexicano. Since fewer village members still speak Mexicano, in the village, people have ceased dancing the Mexicano dance. Getting dancers to participate in the Mexicano *Tecuaniis* dance is difficult because there are no Mexicano speakers who want to perform it, due to their lack of knowledge of the Mexicano language. Thus, slowly, this dance has disappeared from the pueblo. However, though no one is dancing it now, there are a handful of men who know the dance. The music is also recorded, and there are parts that people have written down. Thus, the dance is archived in people's homes and it

will be preserved as long as it is kept documented. This particular danza teaches the history of the people, their language, and their colonization. It encompasses their culture, their way of being on the land, their language, and their ancestral knowledge.

The traditional dances are mainly performed by males ranging from five years old to men in their thirties. The dances encompass speaking parts that each dancer must learn, and the dancers wear traditional costumes. The males are confident in speaking when they dance. Most of the dances require a mask, which helps the men feel confident because they are hidden. It takes many days to prepare for a dance because the men must practice their parts and memorize them. A young boy that I interviewed shared that he enjoyed dancing because it was part of his culture.

> Yo bailo en la danza. Ahorita El Moro. A veces practicamos una semana o a veces tres. Si te gusta, te animas te bailar. Tu le dices a tu papas y bailas. Tengo anos que yo bailo. Fue difícil a principio para aprender. Yo no se que significa ese danza…pero se siente bonito, bailando y yo no tengo pena de bailar. También bailo los Tecquaniis.
>
> [I dance. Right now I dance the El Moro. Sometimes we practice for one week and sometimes three [weeks]. If you like it you get motivated to dance. You tell your parents and then you start dancing. I have years dancing. At first it was hard to learn. I don't know what the dance signifies…but it feels good dancing and I'm not embarrassed to dance. I also dance the *Tecquaniis*.]

He was glad to help keep the dance alive. Language is a powerful component of dances, and this particular art is still very much alive.

How can we revitalize Mexicano through dances? How can we help the youth get excited about learning their talking parts in Mexicano? How can we get a teacher motivated to teach the dancers? All these questions are helpful in creating a plan to revitalize Mexicano in this language practice. Although the dancers might not know how to communicate or converse in Mexicano, they speak Mexicano when they perform. The entire pueblo then hears the Mexicano and is able to grasp some of the words as they see the performance. This is one way to help revitalize Mexicano and show the importance of the language's presence.

Figure 5.12 Young boys preparing to dance the *Tecuaniis*. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

Figure 5.13 Young boys participating in the *Tecuanniis danza*. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

Religious Ceremonies

Catholicism is the primary religion in Coatepec. Most community members attend religious events to honor the Catholic saints. One family hosts each saint and offers food and prayer services. There are also monthly saint services, which people attend to ask for aid when they are in any kind of need—spiritual, mental, physical, or monetary. Their faith in their saints is strong, and they believe that their saints will bring them good luck. There are four major saint events during the year: Easter, the *feria, fair*, and Christmas.

During these events, community members gather together to pray, cook, eat, and honor the saint. All prayers and dances are conducted in Spanish. As the women gather together to cook the food, you hear Spanish and Mexicano are used interchangeably. As

described earlier, the older women are the language managers. If the older women decide to speak Mexicano, then the conversation is in Mexicano.

At the same time, when there is big gathering to celebrate a saint, a *quinceañera* (when a young girl turns 15 and is considered a woman), or a wedding, the hosting family often kills an animal, such as a pig or a cow, to feed the guests. The men gather to cut the meat and cook it. The elders rest and enjoy cold drinks. As in the circle of women, the eldest in the group controls the language spoken. If the eldest feels comfortable speaking Mexicano, then the conversation is in Mexicano. In some cases, there are younger adults who understand Mexicano but do not speak it; they will join the conversation by responding in Spanish. The eldest will then either honor the original language or dismiss it and switch to Spanish.

My cousin was making a special dinner for her son because he was graduating from the *primaria* [elementary school]. In order to make the food she needed some help. This is a traditional where women ask help from other women in the community, to come and help. They also invited an elder who is knowledgeable and has experience making the food. Their role is to lead in the kitchen. I was asked to help in the kitchen, during this time. I received small responsibilities such as peeling the garlic. As I sat down to peel the garlic I observed the women in the kitchen who had more responsibilities. My aunt and my cousin talked in Spanish and gossiped. Once the elder arrived, she joined the conversation, but quickly the language switched to Nahuatl. I assumed it was easier for her to express herself in Nahuatl. My aunt also a Nahuatl speaker switched to speaking Nahuatl. Now the conversation was in Nahuatl. My cousin not a native speaker could understand it, but did not add to the conversation. Although sometimes she would answer

in Spanish if they asked her a question. I witnessed the power of the elders and how much influence they have of what language is spoken.

Figure 5.14 Religious ceremonies in Coatepec de los Costales. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

Language Practices at School

In Mexico, schools comprise the *Jardin de Niños* (preschool), *primaria* school (elementary school, grades 1-6), *secundaria* school (junior high, grades 7-9), and *preparatoria* school (high school, grades 10-12). There are two elementary schools in Coatepec de los Costales: one in Masapa and the other in Huayapa. There is also a junior high school and two preschools. School hours go from 8 AM to 1 PM. At the beginning of 2013, teachers stopped coming to the village due to educational politics and protests. During this time in Mexico, educational politics and new teacher evaluations placed significant strain on teachers, who felt the pressure of teaching their students to obtain

high test scores. Teachers felt that they did not get paid enough and should not be responsible for how well their students performed on standardized tests. Therefore, some teachers decided to protest by not attending work. Other teachers joined militant teaching unions and voiced their struggles to the government.

An educational reform was introduced and signed in February 2013 under President Enrique Pena Nieto. The reform was then amended to the national political agreement Pact for Mexico, which was signed in December 2012. The Pact was created to strengthen Mexico by uniting Mexican citizens, democratizing political and economic issues, and involving citizens in designing and evaluating policies. The amended educational reform disrupted educational policies and teachers' job security, prompting teachers to resist by protesting the laws and not attending to their job duties. The protests affected many Mexican children, especially in small villages. When teachers stopped attending to their jobs, whether due to lack of transportation, safety issues, or job security, the children in these indigenous communities stopped scoring as well on tests as children from the cities. Children in villages also face disadvantages resulting from a lack of educational materials and technology. Teachers fear that they will be penalized for low test scores. These teachers also have a difficult time balancing how to include children's indigenous languages into their curricula, particularly when they are pressured to achieve high test scores. As a result, language and culture are absent from schools.

Figure 5.15 Fourth and fifth grade combo class. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

Figure 5.16 Teacher working with first graders. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

Figure 5.17 School's library with only Spanish literature. (Photograph by Rosalva Lagunas)

Students in villages do not have the same access to education as students in the city, although they are expected to have the same high performance on tests. In the education curriculum, there is no authentic representation of indigenous people, nor is there accurate history or culture. Many of the students are not able to see themselves in their textbooks or relate to what they are being taught. Meanwhile, teachers struggle to incorporate students' funds of knowledge and ancestral knowledge in their classrooms. Teachers do not receive adequate preparation to teach in Indigenous communities. As a result, students learn that Spanish is the only language that is important. They see that there is no space for their native language—it is not in their textbooks, on school bulletin

boards or on campus; the teachers do not use it; and, in sum, it is invisible in their educational world. The elementary and junior high schools in Coatepec struggle to acknowledge the local language and culture—and, thus, are subconsciously passing down negative language ideologies. Ultimately, the students are learning that their language is not as rigorous or important as Spanish.

In Tonolapa, they offered English classes to the youth. The youth took English as an elective and tried to learn the language. "English is a cool language," the youth would comment, "can you teach us English?" As I stayed there and the people learned to trust me and recognize me they knew I spoke English. There were times when I was asked to hold English classes for their children. The parents knew that English was a language of power and status therefore the children also knew that English was important. This left Mexicano at the end, which convinced children, and youth that Spanish and English were the languages that they were the most important languages. There was no value tied to Mexicano and learning their language.

Bilingual Nahuatl and Spanish Preschool

The bilingual Nahuatl preschool, Jardin de Niños Cuayautitla, is an attempt to revitalize Mexicano in Coatepec. The school is federally funded and offers classes to three different age groups. The school is considered a "bilingual" language immersion school in Spanish and Nahuatl. The school receives monetary funds from the government to teach and preserve their native tongue by focusing on young learners in preschool and kindergarten. The government has taken the initiative to help Indigenous communities preserve their traditions, culture, and language, which they believe contribute to the

Mexican culture and should be recognized. Their long-term goal is for students to learn and preserve their indigenous language and pass it down from one generation to the next. Although the government provides funds to the educational institutions, the program lacks appropriate teaching materials that are relevant to Indigenous communities and their way of life, as well as teacher preparation classes to prepare them to teach within indigenous communities.

Figure 5.18 Preschool, *Jardin de Niños Cuayautitla*, located in Huayapa. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

Jardín de Niños Cuayautitla's typical hours are from 8 am to 12 pm. Two teachers, teacher A and teacher B, drive into the village from the city, Iguala, every day. I

had the opportunity to observe the class for a short period of time. However, due to time limitations, I did not spend more time in the preschool. I interviewed teacher A because she had been teaching in Coatepec longer than teacher B. Teacher A has been teaching for 13 years and is a fluent speaker of Spanish and Nahuatl. The Nahuatl she speaks is different from the Nahuatl spoken in Coatepec. She speaks a variation from San Agustin Guapa, which contains some similarities but also differences from the Nahuatl spoken in Coatepec. Teacher A teaches the oldest group, who will be graduating preschool and entering elementary school. In the 2012–2013 school year, 34 students were enrolled in her class.

In this school, the students learn their national anthem in Nahuatl, and most of them have it memorized and sing it every Monday morning as part of their announcements. The "bilingual" program was initiated to produce Nahuatl and Spanish speakers, with the intention of giving equal teaching time to both languages in the curriculum. This, however, is not the case. Spanish is the language primarily spoken in the classrooms and used to instruct the students. The teachers give some instruction in Nahuatl, such as when introducing animal names and colors, but it is spoken less than 5% of the time in class. The teachers are frustrated because they do not have the support of the parents to continue teaching in Nahuatl as there is no reinforcement at home.

Teacher A commented: "el apoyo de los padres es el problema . . . ellos no saben la idioma . . . por eso también no pueden ensenar a sus hijo(a)s." [the parent support is the problem . . . they don't know the language . . . that's one reason they cannot teach their kids]. This was also a problem when I spoke to the parents regarding the preschool, who would often share that the teachers did not speak the same Nahuatl as they did. Therefore,

they did not understand what the teachers were teaching their children, and since it was another variation of Nahuatl, they could not help their children. The teachers shared similar frustrations. They wanted to learn the Mexicano spoken in Coatepec, but felt that the parents were not responsive to their pleas for them to teach them. The teachers also said that they have invited parents to the school so they could help them with the language, but as mentioned earlier, most parents did not speak the language.

> Este pueblo es diferente de los otros pueblos que yo estuve. El pueblo que estuve ante los padres tenían dificultades de hablar Español. Nahuatl se oía en las casas, pero aquí in Coatepec es al contario. Los padres no hablan Nahuatl solamente español.
>
> [It's different from the last community I was at. The last community parents had trouble speaking Spanish and Nahuatl was present in their homes but in Coatepec it is opposite. Parents don't know Nahuatl and they only speak Spanish.]

Although the Jardín de Niños (preschool) in Coatepec is a bilingual school whose purpose is to revitalize the local language, the school has faced many struggles that have prevented it from fulfilling its philosophy and vision. The school's vision was to create fluently bilingual children who could speak both Spanish and Nahuatl. The government's educational reform, which included Indigenous communities, supported these villages and demonstrated that the Mexican government supported the language learning and culture of indigenous peoples. Special funding was given to indigenous communities to support the vision of bilingualism. However, although the government has helped through monetary aid, it has not done anything further to help these communities. There

is a lack of teacher training, textbooks are not relevant to the community, and curricula are not aligned with Indigenous knowledge.

Language Management

Grandparents

Who manages language? Who has the power? After examining the data from field notes and interviews, I noticed a common theme within processes of language management: signs of respect. *Respect* has different meanings in different generations, but all meanings share a common root. The online Merriam-Webster dictionary, defines respect as a " a feeling of admiring someone or something that is good, valuable, important, etc.; a feeling or understanding that someone or something is important, serious, etc.; and should be treated in an appropriate way a particular way of thinking about or looking at something." In Coatepec, children, youths, and adults have respect for the elders. The youths had respect for their language and culture, even when some adults and elders did not think they did. Everyone showed their respect in different ways. This inconsistency in ideologies concerning the meaning of respect caused friction across generations.

In observation, I noticed that all the children and youth would greet the adults and elders by saying "adios." In addition, the youth and children would help the adults and elders by carrying heavy items or giving up their seat on the bus. Also, the children and youth would participate in traditional danzas and religious ceremonies. "Nuestra idioma es de nuestros abuelitos. Necesitamos respectarlo." [Our language is of our ancestors. We need to respect it.] Since the children and youth did not speak the language the elders

assumed that they did not respect the culture and language and did not realize other ways they were showing respect.

Figure 5.19 Elderly woman, who was a participant in this study—passed away in 2015. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

The older generation managed the language used in the community. In the previous chapter, I mentioned the different contexts in which elders are at the core of language management. In all situations, the elders determine what language is to be spoken. Respect is a main component of language management. There is great respect for the elders, including who they are and the knowledge they have to share. Although the

action of *respect* has evolved and changed and some elders believe that *respect* has left the community, it is still very much alive. The power of language management demonstrates the respect that people have towards the elders. In every context—home, school, and community—conversations change to fit the preferred language of the elders.

The influence of language choice is strong in families when grandparents live in the same household. Children who grow up with their grandparents have strong foundations in Mexicano. They hear it as children and throughout their formative years. The dominant language spoken in such households is Mexicano because the elders are the managers. The adults in the household also have stronger foundations in Mexicano than other adults who do not live with their parents.

I interviewed the Alvarez family and spent some time getting to know the family's interactions within different contexts, such as their home, their school, and their community. The Alvarez family consisted of a grandmother with two daughters—one who was 17 years old and the other, Delia, who was in her early 40s—and Delia's five children, all of whom lived in the same household. They managed to support the family with little income. The grandmother, Sara, spoke only Mexicano and understood limited Spanish. Sara had never learned Spanish, and we had difficulties communicating with one another. I used a lot of visuals and hand movements when we were by ourselves without a translator. Every time I encountered her, Sara was busy making food, cleaning or getting ready to wash.

Sara was the one who took care of the family and managed the household. Through her role, she also managed the language that was spoken in the home. Since she was the eldest and a monolingual Mexicano speaker, the household spoke Mexicano.

Sara's language choice influenced her grandchildren's linguistic knowledge and led them to learn two languages. Her children had strong foundations in Mexicano because they heard it daily and had to communicate with Sara. When I was there, I witnessed Sara giving commands and communicating with the others in Mexicano, to which they would respond in Spanish. I am unsure of whether they did this because of my presence (for example, they could have felt "ashamed" or had *pena* to speak Mexicano in front of me), but there was great evidence that they had knowledge of what Sara was saying. At times, the younger children would laugh and be embarrassed when I asked them how to say a word in Mexicano.

The children living in the household had a reputation for knowing how to speak Mexicano, although they would sometimes act ashamed to do so. For example, the children would laugh or deny it when asked whether they knew how to speak Mexicano. The family also had the reputation of being the poorest people in the village. The stigma that speaking Mexicano equates to being uneducated, "savage," or poor could have contributed to the children's feelings of shame. When I asked them about the language, they would laugh and not comment. However, although they may have experienced language shame (*la pena*), they had a strong foundation in the language. They knew how to communicate and could understand any conversation. Having a monolingual elder in a household has great influence over the household's language choice. It determines which language is spoken and what language the children speak. In this case, if the elderly grandmother were not living in the household, the situation would be very different. This example demonstrates the power of the elderly and how they manage language in different settings.

Government Institutions—Oportunidades

Oportunidades, founded in 2002, is a Mexican government assistance program for people in low socioeconomic classes. Oportunidades gives families cash payments to encourage parents to regularly send their children to school, visit health clinics, and get nutritional support. This is one way that the Mexican government is trying to decrease poverty in Mexico and provide underprivileged communities the same opportunities as other communities. The government's efforts to close the gap may appear promising, but for indigenous communities, these efforts may also represent covert government attempts to encourage residents to follow more mainstream lifestyles.

Another component of Oportunidades is its monthly meetings. These meetings inform and educate families on how to live better, healthier lives. They also educate parents about illnesses and illness prevention. Other meetings encourage communities to take responsibility for having clean, no-garbage zones, for keeping their water clean, and for using medicine to kill mosquitoes. These measures, though, are a cloak to assimilate indigenous people into the mainstream Mexican lifestyle and to convince them that there is only one *right* way of living. For example, Oportunidades encourages people to move away from traditional medical care and to use Western medicine. There is also a push for young children to get shots and use Western medicine when they are sick. Citizens are encouraged to visit the health office to learn more about their responsibility to live a healthier life. Everything is documented, and the village members must perform certain tasks in order to receive monetary income at the end of each month.

So, what role do various languages play in the government's process of giving monetary aid to the village? Language is at the core of this process; however, the government is covertly discouraging language preservation, even though its new media campaign promotes the preservation of indigenous culture, traditions, and languages. For example, there is talk about language maintenance but there is no action. How are the Indigenous communities, schools, and government working together in order to preserve languages? As I interviewed the teachers they expressed a lack of government aid to help the village maintain languages and culture. There are no teacher preparation courses for teachers to better serve Indigenous students. Thus, the government appears to have placed itself at the forefront of the new movement of helping poor and indigenous communities; however, in reality, there is no real action to support these communities in preserving their culture or language.

At an Oportunidades event, I witnessed the government staff coming to the village to distribute cash payments. I observed how they set up their tables and paperwork and how they called names one by one to report to the front of the table to receive the cash. Before they started, the government representatives began by going over different rules on how to behave, how to wait patiently, what paperwork people needed to have out when they approached the table, and how to respond. All directions were given in Spanish, which meant that some monolingual elders just listened. These monolingual elders had sons or daughters with them to explain and translate. One way that the government managed the language was that all participants were required to say thank you in Spanish, to shake the representative's hand, and to fill out the form in Spanish.

The representatives explicitly showed the village members how to greet someone, how to handle the paperwork, and how to thank them.

Figure 5.20 Government health institution sharing information with the people of Coatepec. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

The meetings usually last a couple of hours, during which time the representatives go over basic meeting notes and deliver the income. During one particular event, I sat with my aunt and observed the process. I watched an elderly man whose name was called out as he approached the table. He slowly got up from the hard stone bench and, with his slow pace, approached the representatives. His papers were all disorganized, but he handed them to the staff member. The staff member began lecturing him on how he needed to take better care of this paperwork and how certain papers needed to be thrown away. The elderly just listened and shook his head as he agreed. As they signed his paper and gave him his cash payment, they scolded him for not saying thank you in Spanish.

They said, “You need to say thank you.” He repeated, “Gracias,” in his low soft-spoken voice. They told him that his answer was not loud enough and encouraged him to say it one more time. Afterwards, the representatives lectured the entire group and demonstrated the “proper” way of speaking and the appropriate etiquette for attending their meetings. Clearly, this example demonstrates the power and management that the government has over language and culture.

This example also demonstrates the importance of speaking Spanish and promotes the ideology of success in life from a Western society perspective. The representatives are implicitly encouraging Spanish over Mexicano, even though they are not saying this directly to the people. These covert ideologies play a great role in culture and language preservation.

Educational Institutions

Can schools save Indigenous languages? This was the question that Hornberger (2008) asked in her edited book by that name. I pose the same question in this dissertation. Schools can either help or hinder language learning. Standardized tests, curricula, and textbooks are all written in Spanish and are geared towards the mainstream society of the Mexican people. Indigenous people are scarcely discussed in textbooks and are only minimally explored during history lessons, while, at the same time, superficial history facts are taught. As a result, Indigenous students cannot see themselves in their textbooks or relate to the taught content. The teachers are all monolingual and do not have the expertise or training to teach students about their language.

One particular time, the teachers attempted to integrate their students' language and traditions. They asked the students to ask their grandparents about the legends and stories of Coatepec. The teachers then told the students to be ready to share these stories in the following class period. I heard the kids whispering to each other, asking, "What are you going to write about?" or saying, "I'm going to ask my parents to come with me to ask grandma/pa." I saw the students' enthusiasm in learning more about their history and the stories of their village. Some of the students would need to ask their parents to translate, if their grandparents only spoke Mexicano. The following day, only a handful of students had completed the assignment. These students shared the legends of Coatepec and drew pictures to go along with their text. All of the assignments were done in Spanish and shared in Spanish. Mexicano was never spoken, although the students talked about it briefly. Thus, even in this attempt to integrate the local culture, Mexicano was overlooked. It is difficult to bring this traditional language to the forefront when Spanish is the influential language of power and status.

Village teachers are trying in good faith to cover the curriculum with the textbooks that they have been given. They know that this curriculum does not "fit" the students' knowledge. However, they feel that their hands are tied because they have not received adequate training to help these Indigenous students be successful. There are some things that could be done, however: The teachers could invite the elders into the classrooms to share their language and stories. Signs and bulletin boards could be placed around the school to promote Mexicano learning. The absence of Mexicano in the schools is relevant, and it is hurting the children and the youth by showing them that Spanish is the language of success in education.

Figure 5.21 Students honoring their flag and national anthem. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I described the language practices and management that I witnessed across multiple generations, in different settings. If elders live in the home with young children, there is hope for language preservation to pass on the language. The power of the grandparents in language preservation is unique. This power demonstrates that they have sacred knowledge and inherited wisdom from past generations that are within their bodies, heart, mind, and tongue. Although not all families live with the elderly, the community members continue to experience the presence of the elders in

different contexts where respect is present and language is present. This finding gives hope to future language reclamation efforts.

Throughout the village there is evidence of Spanish dominance, including signs, Spanish messages shared through the village's intercom, and Spanish music heard throughout the roads. School is conducted in Spanish (even in an allegedly bilingual Spanish-Nahuatl school) and the government meetings are held in Spanish, not giving any accommodations to Nahuatl monolinguals. Clearly, there is no "official" space for Mexicano in the village. There are no signs or community members who encourage others to speak Mexicano.

As one enters the village there is a sign that welcomes visitors to the pueblo. A little further there is also a painting titled, "*Fundación del pueblo 'Cualtepel' Ano 1840,*" a *serpiente*, serpent, sits on the hills of Coatepec. The pueblo is watched by the *abuelita*, grandmother, of Cualtemoc. The pueblo is rich in history, traditions, and arts. At one point Mexicano was the primary language and was heard all over the village and amongst nearby friends from close by villages. Mexicano was used to communicate with family and friends, to trade goods, to worship, and everyday language practices. The Coatepeceños worshiped their own Gods, similar to the Aztecs rituals; these were passed down ideologies and beliefs. They performed these rituals in their mother tongue, but as the year of the Spanish conquest occurred many things changed. Similar to the conquest of the Native Americans in what is now the United States, the Indigenous people of present-day Mexico were also stripped of their culture, traditions, and language. Slowly the Coatepeceños integrated the ways of the Spaniards, in the way the worshipped god to what they ate and to the language they chose to speak.

In 1821, Mexico gained its independence from Spain and the government needed to unite its people to form a strong country. Mexico had lost its identity and it was in search for their identity as a one country one language. Language would be the uniting factor to help all; therefore, while Spanish is not the official *de jure* language, it is the language accorded national status and used in educational institutions, government, and other public sectors.

Spanish was the language to trade goods, socialized as status and power. Educated people (i.e., individuals with schooling) spoke Spanish. People who did not speak Spanish were associated as being *indio*, Indian, and stigmatized as being primitive. Slowly these language ideologies were passed down from generation to generation as Spanish replaced Mexicano. Parents wanted the best for their children and didn't want their children to keep the "Indio" stigma; they wanted them to acculturate and be part of the new "Mexico."

In Coatepec Coca-Cola distributors bring in their products; television programs are all in Spanish, signs of presidential campaigns are hung all over the pueblo, announcements are conducted in Spanish, educational classes are presented in Spanish. How can Mexicano be revitalized or given the same status as Spanish if there are no spaces for Mexicano?

In my visits and five-month residence in Coatepec, it became clear to me that one of the reasons Mexicano is slowing disappearing is because it is not given a space to breathe and to live. Language is a living organism and in order to continue living it needs oxygen—a place to dwell. When that is taken away the language slowly withers away and language shift occurs. Mexicano is present in various spaces and moments in

Coatepec. These times can be nurtured to grow and be transferred to everyday life moments. We need to take advantage of the times spent together and language practice events to help the younger generation to acquire the language. The exposure is already present so how can we use these moments to teach our future speaking generation? How can we encourage our youth to speak and spend more time in these circles of language speakers?

Fishman (1991) argues that all minoritzed languages need a "safe harbor," where people can have value for communicative purposes in their life. Stage 6 on the Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS) is a very crucial stage. "The core of this stage is the family" (Fishman, 1991, p. 94). Although the family is the center for RLS, it may not be sufficient due to external pressures such as social upward mobility and economic pressures. If there is not a "safe harbor" for a language to blossom it will be more difficult for members of the community to continue speaking it. This notion of "safe harbor" is currently missing in Coatepec. Below, I will further discuss what this looks like in different context across generations.

Covert government influence is also complicit in language shift within the village. There is no evidence of the positive outlook of the Nahuatl language around the community; to the contrary Spanish has overtaken the village's public spaces with signs, commerce, social media, and music. There is little space for Nahuatl to breathe and live in people's daily social practices. Government officials enter villages like Coatepec, bringing their ideologies to the pueblo and influencing community members towards the mainstream way of being.

In schools, there is not much difference. Spanish is the primary language and all textbooks, curriculum, and books are in Spanish. There is no evidence or representation of Indigenous people in the books. Standardized tests are also conducted in Spanish. Teachers are not trained to work in Indigenous communities and do not know how to serve the students. They come into the field with little knowledge of their students' background, culture, and way of being; therefore it is difficult for them to understand the students of Coatepec and their identity.

Clearly, one language is privileged over the other; it is evident in the schools, community and homes. Although there is some positive outlook in the homes where language can still be kept alive, the other social contexts are not supportive. Agents within all three contexts need to work together in order to strengthen the language and keep it alive. The everyday social cultural events give hope that there does exist a reason to use the language and that it is important to respect it. The language is present in Coatepec specifically in parts of their lives, such as family gatherings, cooking, planting, and so on. There is still a possibility to reverse language shift if people commit in teaching their children the language. The people who they can rely on for language revitalization are themselves. There needs to be a trust that learning the language is important in today's global world and that it is as rigorous as any other language and full of knowledge that the language carries.

In the conclusion chapter, I describe the nascent possibilities for language revitalization in Coatepec and suggest other options to help promote language preservation. I will conclude by summarizing the dissertation and share my next journey.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND NEXT STEPS

"Yo creo que nunca se va perder. Los abuelitos siempre están allí, para enseñar."

[I think it will never be lost. The elders are always there, to teach.]

– Julio, young adult participant

In this dissertation, I have explored and sought to answer three questions tied to Spolsky's three-part language policy framework, and a fourth, action-oriented question designed to apply this research to positive change:

1. What are the language ideologies within and across generations in this setting?
2. What are the observable language practices within and across generations in this setting?
    2a. When and how is Mexicano used within the domains of family homes, local schools, and the community?
    2b. When and how is Spanish used in these domains?
3. What formal and informal language management strategies influence community members' language practices?
4. In light of these findings, what are the implications for developing a community-based language revitalization plan?

In this last chapter, I will synthesize the findings for Research Questions 1–3, and in light of these findings, I will suggest the implications for developing a community-based language revitalization plan (Research Question 4).

Figure 6.1 The road to Coatepec de los Costales. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

Responses to Research Questions

What are the Language Ideologies Within and Across Generations in this Setting?

Language ideologies varied across generations as well as in the ways members thought about and perceived the Mexicano language. In some cases, generations clashed ideologically with each other. *La pena* – linguistic shame – was a common theme across all generations, but had a slightly different meaning in each generational context. For example, among the youth, *la pena* was linked to perceptions of speaking Nahuatl as not being in style, sounding bad, and being "uncool." In older generations (and as perceived by youth as well), *la pena* referred to the (in)ability to speak "puro" Mexicano. In contrast to these largely negative ideologies among residents of Coatepec, a positive stance also emerged from the data. Despite feelings of linguistic shame and stigma, youth

nonetheless had a positive outlook on Mexicano, as addressed in-depth in Chapter 4. Uncovering these ideological layers is important in order to discuss potential next steps toward language revitalization.

La pena, a major and recurrent theme, had many layers to unpeel in order to understand what it meant across generations. Ricento and Hornberger (1997) discuss language planning and policymaking as a layered process involving multiple "language planning agents, levels, and processes" that they liken to the layers of an onion "that together compose the LPP whole (the 'onion') and that [permeate and interact] with each other in a variety of ways and to varying degrees" (p. 402). Throughout my research I encountered the ways in which LPP processes interacted with different factors in Coatepec and unpeeling the layers is necessary.

In continuing to unpeel the layers, for example, I found that the children felt embarrassed when trying to speak Mexicano. They felt that when they pronounced certain words incorrectly, the elders would quickly comment, resulting in embarrassment for their improper pronunciation. Children feared the elders' ridicule, so instead of trying to pronounce Nahuatl words, they decided not to say anything at all. This contributed to children not learning the language at an early stage. This was also true for the youth and young adults, who felt that the elders would tease them. Thus, they preferred to cease speaking the language rather than endure the embarrassment. In reality, the elders did not tease them in a hurtful manner, but out of love. They wanted them to learn the "proper" way to pronounce words, and believed that by teasing the children, youth, and young adults; they were helping them to understand their mispronunciations.

This notion of teasing was an underlying view, by the elders, to encourage the youth to speak Mexicano—a teasing of love. The "teasing of love" was to bring humor into the conversation, although the youth did not feel the "love" of the elders in that particular context and they did not reciprocate the humor. To the contrary, the youth felt that the elders' teasing and laughter were negative and made them feel uncomfortable, which led them to stop speaking the language. This contradictory way of showing love in order to encourage language learning needs to be further explored to open communication on how to use laughter as positive reinforcement in language learning. For example, a natural flow of laughter c as the elders and youth interact with each other would be positive reinforcement in developing relationships and encouraging language learning. Laughter in this sense may be thought of as a positive "medicine" that would, perhaps, "cure" youth's feelings of linguistic uncertainty and ambivalence.

Another factor within this multilayered ideological process was the way Nahuatl was spoken by the younger generation. They would code-mix Spanish and Nahuatl when speaking, or code-switch in the middle of a sentence. The elders did not approve of this and therefore would tease them, which also contributed to the younger members ceasing to speak the language.

Lastly, as other researchers have found, the youth associated the language with social status. They feared that the language was not seen as "cool" or in style and related its use to older people. In addition, the youth were influenced by social media, which privileges Spanish and English as languages of status and power. At the same time, the youth stated that they were waiting for the proper time to begin speaking the language. As Lee (2009) and others have written for Native North American youth, the youth in

Coatepec held a special respect for their elders, their language, and their culture and know that they demanded the utmost respect. Although the elders did not share this view, the youth were waiting for the moment of maturity when they felt they would be "ready" to begin speaking the language. Most of the youth and young adults who were monolingual Spanish speakers said that they would learn the language once they matured.

The romantic ideology that one will later acquire the language is problematic. Moments of language learning are being missed and opportunities to learn the language are passed by. The youth expressed the feeling that in later years they would speak Mexicano, but in reality not all Coatepec youth are acquiring the language. Questions arise, such as: If youth wait to speak the language, how will they become fluent in Nahuatl? How many youth are actually acquiring the language? What is being lost or what is the cost of waiting to speak Nahuatl rather than speaking it earlier in age? These questions need further exploration. In addition, there is a need to investigate ways in which youth negotiate waiting to speak their language and how the ideology of, "*There will always be someone here [in Coatepec] who will speak the language*" interweaves with "waiting to speak." (For a similar account with Kaska youth in British Columbia, see Meek, 2010.)

Although there are contradictory discourses across generations, a respect for the language and culture of Coatepec exists. While the youth respected the language and wanted to learn, they felt embarrassed to speak it. The youth felt that there was no safe space to learn a language without being teased, while the elders believed that youth did not want to learn their sacred language and wished they were more interested. At the

same time, the older people only assumed what the youth believed, as they did not communicate these contradictory ideologies with one another.

How do we begin to open communication and revitalize this community's language? I asked these questions of all the participants, and their responses clearly showed the want and need to open this communication. The community needs to have an open dialogue to share ideas on how they would like to revitalize their language and community. As Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer (1998) write for Tlingit revitalization in southeast Alaska, there is a need in Coatepec to create dialogic space for "ideological clarification" around language planning goals – a process discussed later in this chapter.

What Are the Observable Language Practices Within and Across Generations in This Setting?

In examining language practices – the second component in Spolsky's three-part language policy framework – this research question also seeks to identify when and how Mexicano and Spanish are used within the domains of family homes, local schools, and the community. Spanish is the common language in Coatepec, and it is the primary language used and heard across all three settings: home, school, and community. Although the presence of Nahuatl is limited in Coatepec, it is still very much alive, especially in cooking, gatherings, arts, *danza*, and *morale* making. In earlier chapters, I discussed how Nahuatl is a crucial part of cooking. In cooking, the women come together to socialize and to pass down traditions to younger females. Both languages are heard and spoken, but there are certain words that are spoken only in Nahuatl and continue to keep their Nahuatl name, such as *nixtamal* and *metate*. In the home, the most common

language is Spanish, although if elders are living in the household, Nahuatl is present. For example, grandparents would usually say a command in Nahuatl or scold the children in their native tongue. Thus, if grandparents live in the same household as their children, Nahuatl can be heard. However, families in Coatepec watch television and listen to music, which is all in Spanish. Hence, Spanish is definitely present in every home and Nahuatl is present in a few homes.

In the educational institutions, Spanish is the language that is valued and given priority. The curricula and all textbooks are in Spanish. Although a section in the textbooks examined for this study briefly discusses students' ancient ancestors' history and language, these references to the past are the only evidence of students' culture in school. Although, there was a bilingual school, Nahuatl was limited. Therefore, it is evident that Nahuatl is not heard in the school setting. In my observations, outside the bilingual school, where Nahuatl was also extremely limited, the only time that the language was heard in the school environment was when there was a Nahuatl-speaking parent at school and another parent was translating.

Many religious ceremonies and social events take place within the community. The community announcements are all conducted in Spanish and all signs around the community are in Spanish. Church ceremonies are also conducted in Spanish. In these settings there is clearly no space for Nahuatl. As a researcher with a lineage to Coatepec, it is discouraging to see the influence of the colonial language within the community and how this has affected language learning opportunities, ideologies, and use.

What Formal and Informal Language Management Strategies Influence Community Members' Language Practices?

One of the greatest potential influences on language maintenance and management are the elders or grandparents in the village. They are the ones who can change a spoken language in a conversation. There is much respect for the elders, and because of this, bilingual speakers may switch from Spanish to Nahuatl in deference to the elders. Meek's (2007) findings found this to be true for Kaska in British Columbia, and that youth, in particular, expressed and demonstrated respect for their language and their elders in the community. Although at times it may not be noticeable or recognized amongst the elders, the youth held great respect towards their language and culture. The elders have influence on the way the conversation will flow and who will participate in a conversation. In chapter 5, I discussed their influential status.

Since the government recognizes Coatepec as an Indigenous village, the village receives monetary aid as well as low-income aid from the government. The monetary aid is to fund the bilingual school and help with resources such as school supplies. However, the aid does not go to teacher preparation. This aid has helped them tremendously financially, but in exchange for what? Their language and traditions are threatened. The government requires specific meetings and mainstream knowledge to be learned; consequently, the community members put more effort into bringing this new knowledge into their homes, essentially leaving their traditions behind.

Lastly, educational institutions are a primary component of a child's life. Children spend most of their day in school and, therefore, these institutions are extremely influential on their language learning and language choices. This covert way of producing

Spanish speakers and not recognizing their home language has been going on for many years. Many of the students want to get an education and be competitive, and they have learned that in order to do this, they need to know how to speak Spanish. Their language is not recognized in schools, so they put more effort into learning Spanish and globally privileged English, further contributing to language shift.

In Light of These Findings, What Are the Implications for Developing a Community-Based Language Revitalization Plan?

Based on these findings, there is a clear need and desire to revitalize the language, but equally, there are many challenges as well. The contradictory ideological discourses across the generations are contributing to language shift. The youth's acknowledgment of the importance of their Indigenous language and their desire to reclaim their language did not align with their elders' ideologies. These patterns demonstrate a disconnect across school, family, community, and government domains. In such a case, "bottom up" (Hornberger, 1997) or grassroots language revitalization efforts in other contexts provide insights into strategies that may be adopted in Coatepec.

One such effort is the Master-Apprentice Language Learning Program or MALLP, "a mentored learning approach, created for people who may not have access to language classes but, instead, have access to a speaker" (Hinton, Vera, & Steele, 2002, p. xiii). The program began in California, where there are more than 50 Native American Indigenous languages spoken, but only a few speakers of each language. The MALLP was created to support and help individuals learn their heritage language with the help of one fluent speaker. Thus, they are able to transfer it to their homes, schools, and

community. The master-apprentice method encourages learning a language through meaningful sociocultural interactions. As an Indigenous way of living and being on this land, it makes sense to learn our language through these experiences, such as cooking, cleaning, gardening, storytelling, and so on.

As a native Spanish speaker and former English learner at school who is currently learning my ancestral language through family-based sociocultural activities, I can attest to the fact that that this is an optimal way to learn a language. Although I don't feel I am learning Nahuatl more quickly, the speakers' words are more meaningful, and as I learn each word, it is engrained in my mind, heart, body, and spirit. Language cannot be learned in isolation; it is part of me and needs to be learned through these experiences as I connect with the land that our creator has gifted us for a small amount of time. I am grateful for that.

One approach in the master-apprentice method is to have a set time where only the target language spoken. This may begin as only 15 minutes and increase over time. This allows for the language to develop, as it is taught and reinforced at a specific time in a culturally meaningful social context. This approach has been developed and implemented in various communities; each case differs in the barriers and possibilities faced (see, e.g., Hinton & Hale, 2001).

In my case, I began learning Nahuatl with my parents. I yearned to learn and reclaim the language that I felt was missing within my heart, mind, spirit, and body. I had native speakers — my parents — accessible to teach me the language in a place where we could practice speaking in the context of real-life events. My parents and I began our small class in our living room where we sat in a circle so we could all see each other. We

started with the greetings, coming in and out of the house. We knocked and waited for someone to answer the door. We continually practiced this important greeting until it was registered it in our minds. We did this for six months, until eventually with time and schedule conflicts, the language lessons began to linger.

This type of language learning is not very common in Coatepec. There needs to be an elder who is willing to collaborate with a learner and dedicate time to specifically teach the language through real social context experiences. I encountered individuals who would be willing to begin a master-apprentice approach. In this case, a non-speaker and a fluent speaker are needed who are motivated, patient, and determined.

Learning a language at home is the most natural approach where everyday practices occur and language is reinforced. Language is acquired, rather than directly taught as in a school setting. Children learn the language at an early age and learn the grammatical tenses through time and by listening to their elders. This approach helps children take in all that a language encompasses such as the stories, the tone of the language, the jokes that are told, and so on. In order for a language to continue to grow and flourish language needs to be transmitted to babies. When babies are naturally taught their native tongue, there is a greater chance for them to learn and maintain the language within their household and in myriad other settings as they continue to grow. In this study, I did not explore infant language acquisition, a limitation and a topic for future research in order to discover what child language acquisition/transmission practices are present in Coatepec. This would be a source of information that might encourage parents in understanding the importance of teaching Nahuatl to children from an early age.

In Coatepec, a few children are learning the language in their homes. In these few cases, a grandparent is living with them. In the findings section, I discussed the importance of grandparents and how they uphold the language within a family. Language learning starts within the home, but learning needs to continue as children get older. Evidence suggests that children who listen to both languages and live within a language-rich household will embrace and learn the languages. Fillmore (2011), for example, discusses the importance of intergenerational language transmission and the crucial role for language revitalization within the families and communities. "A language is given new life when children learn it from parents and families" (p. 19). As a participant in this study related

> "*Los padres no dicen a sus hijos que deben aprender. Los padres deben exigir a sus hijos que deben de hablar.... Pero yo creo hay deben estar los padres, ellos deben de decir a ellos.*
>
> [The parents say that their kids should learn. The parents should encourage their kids to speak the language.... But I think the parents should be there for them.] (Victor, Interview March 2, 2013)

This is the natural approach to language learning, but at the same time, the parents need support, and larger sociopolitical factors play a significant role in whether such an approach can be activated and sustained. This brings us to the challenges in developing and sustaining a community-based language revitalization plan.

Once children begin to attend school, they encounter the language that is privileged in the educational setting. In Coatepec, children enter an all-Spanish-speaking school where they slowly cease speaking their native tongue. This is a crucial time for

grandparents and parents to continue speaking their native tongue at home. Eventually, the children will encounter the external sociopolitical factors that interfere with heritage-language maintenance. This process is apparent in Coatepec, where children may have strong role models at home, but once they begin school, the opportunities for language maintenance are greatly diminished.

Overall, my data indicate that the youth do in fact long to learn their heritage language, and feel strongly that it is their parents' responsibility to pass down their language. They want to learn their language, but they feel that their parents must take the initiative to begin the process of teaching.

> *Los chavos si están interesados. Yo creo que quieren aprender…los padres necesitan enseñarlos la idioma…que no se queden callados.*
>
> [Kids are interested. I think they want to learn....Parents need to transfer the language....Don't stay quiet.] (Lupita, Interview, March 10, 2013)

The youth wish that they had learned Nahuatl at a young age. Thus, in Coatepec, there is an apparent cry to have an open conversation about language learning. This will initiative the kind of ideological clarification, which, Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer (1998) point out, "is the essential beginning for any program dealing with language and culture preservation" (p. 63).

Implications for Research and Theory in Indigenous LPP

Synthesizing the data collected for this study, and using my conceptual framework as a roadmap to unravel language ideologies, practices, and management, have helped me understand the process of language shift underway within Coatepec.

There are four primary implications from this study. First, this study demonstrates the importance of analyzing language shift across multiple generations. To aid the analysis of those intergenerational processes of language shift, I applied Spolsky's three-part definition of language policy. This study clearly shows that there are contradictory ideological discourses across generations, specifically amongst the youth and elders. There is a belief among adults that the youth are not interested in their language and lack respect for their culture. Yet observations and interviews with youth revealed that they have great respect for their language and culture, but feel that they do not have a safe space to speak the Nahuatl language. The study demonstrates the need for dialogue between generations and the importance of communication in order to maintain and revitalize a language.

Second, this study demonstrates the importance of long-term ethnographic work in Indigenous communities in order to understand LPP as a complex and contested sociocultural and sociopolitical process. In my case, visiting Coatepec during the year was a different experience than living there for an extended period of time. Living there and experiencing everyday practices with the people and family members helps one the day-to-day social interactions through which a heritage language is both claimed and displaced – "the complex of practices, ideologies, attitudes, and formal and informal mechanisms that influence people's language choices in profound and pervasive everyday ways" (McCarty, 2011, p. xii). Long-term fieldwork, involving in-depth interviews and daily observations, are necessary in order to understand these complex LPP Processes.

As people of this land, Indigenous peoples possess inherent linguistic rights to continue speaking our languages. Yet there are circumstances where it is extremely difficult to exercise these rights, such as states like Arizona, with language-restrictive education policies. Despite these policies, there are ways to ensure that our languages are honored and perceived as "rigorous" – that is, capable of expressing complex concepts – an academic as well as a home-community language. In order for this to happen there needs to be an open discussion with policymakers. Our elders and young people need to speak up and voice their thoughts on language revitalization. What does it mean to us? What does it mean when our language and culture are taken away from us? How does this affect learning in the schools? Nonindigenous policymakers need to be aware of research such as this and similar studies; there must be two-way recognition of the importance of maintaining one's language and culture. As discussed by López (2008) in his analysis of "counterpoised visions" of bilingual education in Latin America, there needs to be collaboration between top-down policymakers and grassroots community members. My work speaks to the importance and need for language revitalization and maintenance. Despite of the colonization of the people of Coatepec, the language has been sustained. The people continue to push back the oppressors – they demonstrate survivance (Vizenor, 1994) – despite the coloniality of power.

Third, this study demonstrates the crucial need for Indigenous people to conduct research and work in their own communities. Indigenous researchers such as Bryan Brayboy, Linda Tuhiwawi Smith, Tiffany Lee, Serafin Coronel-Molina, Sheilah Nicholas, Mary Eunice Romero-Little and others are doing this work. It is our

responsibility to work with our people and bring Indigenous Knowledges to the academic world. There needs to be a place for our Indigenous Knowledges to be seen as rigorous as Western knowledge. This is the beginning to unravel these issues in academia and our own communities.

Finally, this study revisits the importance of the researcher's positionality and reflexivity. As an insider and outsider to the community, I had to constantly reflect upon and question my positionality. Being an insider brought great advantage to me, but at the same time it was difficult to navigate and be seen as a researcher. At times, I felt that I was in two different worlds as a researcher and member of the community. I realized I did not have to choose either one but it was a dance between two roles. There is a need for further critical conversations on research methodologies and power – how to be a researcher in one's community and how particular Indigenous methods may look different in other communities. For example, I realized that most of the time I could not interview a member without an interruption occurring. I felt that my interviews were not following the protocol but then realized that was part of living and being part of my participants' community. Once I reflected as a researcher and member of the community I was able to continue with my work. These are all important implications for further discussion.

Concluding Thoughts on Reclaiming Our Talk

Reclaiming one's language when one is ready is a journey. In order to do so we need to unravel colonized ways of thinking and to accept our Indigenous language in everyday practice. Mexicano needs to be recognized as the beautiful, complex, and

powerful language that it is, on par with all the world's languages, including the linguistic hegemons, Spanish and English. Other contemporary Indigenous communities have privileged their Indigenous language as on a par with and even more important than the colonized language. For example, in Yucatan there is a strong community of people who speak their Mayan Indigenous language. In their community not speaking Mayan is a disadvantage in people's lives (Rusty, 2008). Mexicano needs to be seen as such and recognized in the community as holding value. Learning a heritage language is not easy—it requires time, patience, endless practice, and the space to make mistakes. In the end, though, reclaiming one's ancestral language brings love and builds relationship. It confirms where one is from and gives a sense of connection to people, place, and the land from which the language comes.

My ancestors have gifted us with their language. I give thanks by cherishing and striving to keep our language alive. Although keeping my language alive may seem unrealistic, living in a dominant-English speaking country, it is my way of keeping myself—my heart—alive. My language is not just spoken words but encompasses who I am—our culture, traditions, way of being and seeing the world. These Ancestral Knowledge Systems (AKS) (Sandoval, Lagunas, Montengalo, & Diaz, 2016) are the fundamental foundation that supports us in our personal, academic, work, and communal lives. Yet these knowledges are not recognized in the academy, so I pose the question of where and how can our ancestral knowledges can exist in the academy? Some knowledges are sacred and belong in our homes and community but our ways of learning and doing can also enrich conventional knowledge produced in the academy, including learning through culturally sustaining and revitalizing practices (Django, 2012; McCarty

& Lee, 2014). Our languages should be valued within university cultures, not only because of the rich and diverse knowledge they encode, but because those languages embody who we are. Moreover, ancestral knowledges need to be transmitted to our younger generations to demonstrate to them that our way of being on this land is as valid and valuable as what youth learn from Western science and social science. Bridging the gap between home, school, and community through AKS is an area ripe for further research.

Although Mexicano is not present in everyday usage in Coatepec, it is present in certain moments. That is the beginning of revitalizing the language, and during those moments we need to nurture it and allow it to blossom in our everyday usage. As we reintegrate the language into the community in signage, announcements, and allowing speakers to feel safe to speak it in public without being ridiculed, we open a beginning phase of language revitalization for all. This will take effort from all the people and perseverance to continue this work. This work is not for the weak. It takes time and effort from all, but it is all worth it for our future generations to understand their ancestral ways. We need to stand for them and for the children to come, who will also take this on for themselves and all Indigenous people. Language learning is love and love is language learning. As discussed earlier, a pedagogy of love is necessary when doing this work (see also Orellana, 2015).

In this revitalization effort, schools and educators must also take an active role. One way to revitalize a heritage language in a community is to bridge the gap between school and home. Both need to work together and create a plan that best fits the community and the language. Hornberger and her coauthors (2008) delve into and seek to

untangle the question: Can schools save indigenous languages? The answer, these authors state, is that schools cannot do so alone, but schools are "strategic tools" for language revitalization (McCarty, 2008); they are in a crucial position to support of language learning at home and in the community. Especially in endangered-language communities like Coatepec, all social sectors – private and public – must collaborate for the language to flourish and be successful.

These findings are also transferrable to the U.S., including language-restrictive states such as Arizona. Under such restrictive circumstances, how can we bring language learning and a "pedagogy of love" to U.S. classrooms? As Orellana (2015) writes, "When driven by the forces of love, and provided with the right kinds of tools and social supports, language [becomes a tool' for connecting us to things we love" (p. 83)—including, in this case, ancestral knowledges and languages. Acknowledging students' ancestral knowledges and valuing their language is a way to encourage language revitalization and maintenance. Discussing these issues amongst school, home, and community is a way to bridge the knowledge gap and encourage the learning of ancestral knowledges.

Indigenous preschool programs around the world have sought to encourage and promote language learning, but restrictive government educational and language policies have impeded their efforts to continue, putting restraints on them of what to teach and how to teach, such as the Head Start program (Romero-Little, 2010). On the other hand, other preschools have been successful in developing fluent speakers at an early age, such as the Māori and Native Hawaiian preschools. In the Māori schools students are taught solely in their native tongue. The school's philosophy reflects Māori culture and language

and aims explicitly to revitalize and maintain their mother tongue and heritage (e.g., Hill & May, 2011). These preschools give us hope that there are ways for schools, home, and the community to come together and build a plan that can revitalize and maintain threatened Indigenous languages. Coatepec is on the right path with its bilingual school, but a plan that bridges the parents, teachers, and community needs to be implemented. For Māoris and Hawaiians, "language nest" preschools have played a crucial role in revitalizing their languages and cultures, and this can also be the case for the Coatepec people. Starting young and helping our future children learn the language while building relationships amongst schools and families can be key. I propose, therefore, calling a community meeting where the teachers, parents, and community members come together to discuss various ways to offer mutual support, including inviting community members to teach the language. Community members also need to realize the importance of the school and learn strategies to support upcoming generations of language learners.

Presently, in Coatepec's main schools, there is no recognition of the local language, leading students to believe that their language is not as valuable or as rigorous as Spanish. The push to achieve high-test scores and high performance in schools is competitive and challenging. Students who wish to continue their education must fulfill various requirements in order to be accepted into college. As a result, they set aside the struggle to learn Mexicano because they do not see this language as an asset for their future.

The community-based language project needs to begin in the heart of Coatepec. Parents, schoolteachers, elders, children, youth, and other community members need to come together to initiate discussions about their language ideologies. The years of

colonization and the inner colonization that continues in the lives of community members are a destructive and deconstructive process that needs to be addressed. Many adults and elders experienced a time when they were told not to speak their Indigenous language and to be ashamed of their culture. Schoolteachers prohibited students from speaking in their mother tongue and forced them to speak only Spanish. Ideologies surrounding language status and power were planted in the minds of present-day adults and later transferred to their children. To begin the process of decolonizing mind and body, community members must share testimonies of their experiences and memories. To implement this, a safe place is needed where these stories can be told, heard and respected, and where each teller and hearer can learn from the experiences. This is not an easy task. We have been taught not to speak up, not to talk about our feelings, to keep them all inside. This is another barrier to overcome and to recognize that it is legitimate and indeed necessary to share our experiences. This is the beginning of internal decolonization, which leads to self-love. When we achieve self-love we realize the importance of our culture and our linguistic rights to keep our languages alive. We do not need to be in the place of our ancestors in order to practice this inherent linguistic right; we do not need permission to continue our sacred work. We are not alone; we are a community that helps each other. We help each other by helping our neighbor grow crops, fetching a pail of water, preparing food for a sick member, and so on. In the long and arduous journey to reclaim a language, the heart and mind also need help.

This study demonstrates that youth yearn to learn their heritage language, but feel that the elders and adults either don't want to teach them or will ridicule them. There needs to be a discussion about how schools can help bridge the gap of language learning

and how they can emphasize this in schools. A small group of people might begin this process due to time constraints and work in the village, but slowly, more people may become involved, especially if grants are offered to help revitalize the language. At the same time, we need to involve the elders – they are the language key holders and they need to pass down the knowledge that comes with language learning. We need to use laughter as medicine, as the younger generation collaborates with the older generation.

To begin the process, we need to ask the community members what their language goals are. What do we want our language and culture outcome to be? How can we get the support of the school, community, and government? How can we promote the intergenerational transmission of our language? It is our right to reclaim our language and culture. The government and years of colonization cannot take this right away from our people and us. We are people of strength and Mexicano is a rich language that holds countless wisdom, stories and traditions. The journey will not be easy, but it is time to begin the talk and to reclaim what is ours.

This work is a continuation of my life. It is a journey of reclamation of love—self-love, communal-love, and relationship building-love. This is not the end but only the beginning where life has been given back to me and now I share this and do this work for my future children and family.

Figure 6.2 Three generations of strong Indigenous women—daughter (me), my grandmother, and mother. (Photographed by Rosalva Lagunas)

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APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM

ASU Knowledge Enterprise Development

Office of Research Integrity and Assurance

To:	Teresa Mccarty ED 144E
From:	Mark Roosa, Chair Soc Beh IRB
Date:	01/15/2013
Committee Action:	**Expedited Approval**
Approval Date:	01/15/2013
Review Type:	Expedited F7
IRB Protocol #:	1212008650
Study Title:	Language Ideologies, Practices, and Management: Mexicano in Coatepec de los Costales
Expiration Date:	01/14/2014

The above-referenced protocol was approved following expedited review by the Institutional Review Board.

It is the Principal Investigator's responsibility to obtain review and continued approval before the expiration date. You may not continue any research activity beyond the expiration date without approval by the Institutional Review Board.

Adverse Reactions: If any untoward incidents or severe reactions should develop as a result of this study, you are required to notify the Soc Beh IRB immediately. If necessary a member of the IRB will be assigned to look into the matter. If the problem is serious, approval may be withdrawn pending IRB review.

Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of this study, such as the procedures, the consent forms, or the investigators, please communicate your requested changes to the Soc Beh IRB. The new procedure is not to be initiated until the IRB approval has been given.

Please retain a copy of this letter with your approved protocol.

APPENDIX B

OBSERVATION PROTOCOL
(ADAPTED FROM T. MCCARTY)

La Escuela de Coatepec--Langauge use in Education
Coatepec de los Costales Case Study
Classroom/School Observation Protocol

Observer: _____ Location/Scene: _____

Date: _____ Participants: _____

Activity: _____ Language(s): _____

Other Contextual Notes: _____

Visual Map:

Running Record:

Time	Observation	Observer
Comments		

(Use additional pages as necessary.)

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS
(SPANISH VERSIONS)

Language Ideologies, Practices, and Management:

Mexicano in Coatepec de los Costales

Entrevista Protocolo

Gracias por su tiempo de contribuir su historias y su tiempo en este proyecto. El objetivo de este proyecto es contar estas historias y compartir sus pensamientos con respecto a el idioma en Coatepec. Esta secuencia de entrevista es en tres partes está diseñado para explorar y reflexionar sobre el sentido de sus prácticas de idiomas, ideologías y gestión. Vamos a empezar a explorar momentos clave o experiencias de su vida, después voy a pedir que elaborar sobre sus experiencias reales con el lenguaje. La última sección le permitirá reflexionar: ¿Qué tienen tus experiencias lingüísticas significa para usted personalmente? ¿Qué te gusta de tu idioma?

Categoría de Participantes	Part 1: Focused Life History Parte 1: Historia de vida	Part 2: Details of Experience Parte 2: Detalles de Experiencia	Part 3: Reflections on Meaning Parte 3: Reflexión
Ancianos (mayor generación)	Por favor di nos de su idioma y cultura -- Cuantos anos tiene? Adónde nació y adonde se creo? Que es la Idioma, cultura y educación de sus Padres? En que idioma(s) fue criado? Personas/Enseñanzas importantes in su vida? Cuantos hermanos(as) tiene y que es la idioma de ellos? Que idioma habla con sus hijos/nietos?	Que le gusta mas de su idioma/cultura? Quien todavía usa/habla Náhuatl? Los jóvenes habla la idioma? Cuando va de compras que idioma usa para comunicarse?	Que son sus aspiraciones para sus hijos? nietos? Y miembros de sus familia? Que han sido sus desafíos cuando usted habla en Náhuatl? Que opina usted sobre sus nietos queriendo aprender el Lenguaje? Porque cree usted que les gustaría aprender? Como se siente usted cuando no se puede comunicar con sus nietos y otras personas? Que tan importante es su idioma? Describe su cultura.
Adultos con familia (segundo generación)	Por favor di nos de su idioma y cultura -- Cuantos anos tiene? Adónde nació y adonde se creo? Que es la Idioma, cultura y educación de sus Padres? En que idioma(s) fue criado? Personas/Enseñanzas importantes in su vida? Cuantos hermanos(as) tiene y que es la idioma de ellos? Que idioma habla con sus hijos/nietos? Experiencias en la Escuela.	Cuando habla en Náhuatl? Cuando cree que es apropiado usar la idioma? Cuando preferiría hablar Náhuatl en ves de español? Como se siente que sus hijos no hablan la idioma? Como decidió que idioma ensenaría a sus hijos?	Que importante es su Lenguaje Nativo? Escucha usted personas hablando español? Náhuatl? Ingles? Como piensan que Náhuatl es visto por otras personas en Coatepec de los Costales? La cuidad de México? Que piensa de su idioma en el futuro? Tiene usted consejos para la tercera generación que no hablan la Indígena idioma?
Niños y Jóvenes adultos	Hablemos de ti y tu familia-- Cuantos años tiene? Adonde nació y adonde se creo? Que fue la primera idioma que aprendió? Cuantos idiomas hablas? Cuantos hermanos(as) tienes? Que es lo que hacen tus padres? Idioma(s) tus padres/abuelos hablan en casa? Que idioma hablan mas en casa? Escuela? O con amigos? Adonde escuchan que se habla náhuatl? Que sabes sobre el Lenguaje Náhuatl? Quien debe aprender la idioma? importancia?	Como se siente sin poder hablar Náhuatl? Como puedes describir a la idioma Náhuatl? Es importante este idioma si no hay necesidad de saber lo en México? Que es lo que sabes sobre Náhuatl?	Que significa para ti de ser 3ª generación y hijo de padres Nativos de la idioma Náhuatl? Aspiraciones como descendiente Azteca? Como planea incorporar su lenguaje o cultura? Como han cambiado sus ideas sobre Náhuatl desde joven, hace un año, y ahorra? Que quieres que sepan las otras personas de 3ª generación que no hablan la idioma? Familiares? Como te sientes sabiendo que esta idioma se puede perder de tu familia?

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS
(ENGLISH VERSION)

Language Ideologies, Practices, and Managagemnt

In Coatepec de los Costales

Principal Investigator: Rosalva Mojica Lagunas, Arizona State University

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

(adapted from McCarty)

A NOTE TO PARTICIPANTS. Thank you for taking time to contribute your story to this project. Much has been written about threatened and minoritized languages, but the stories of individual language revitalizers remain to be told. The goal of this project is to tell these individual stories and provide a more grounded, authentic, and hopeful account of "smaller" languages and their speakers. This three-part interview sequence is designed to explore and reflect on the meaning of your language practices, ideologies, and management. It may help to begin by thinking of the pivotal moment(s) or life experience(s) that launched you on this journey. We can work forward and backward in terms of your experiences; the process can be circular and recursive rather than linear. The second part of the interview sequence asks you to elaborate on your actual experiences with language. Which languages do you use, where, and why? What does a "typical day" with your language look and feel like? Finally, there is an opportunity to reflect: What have your language experiences meant for you personally? What do you love about your language, and what does it mean to be a speaker of it? What has language learning meant for your heritage language community? What are your most memorable language experiences?

Participant Category	Part 1: Focused Life History	Part 2: Details of Experience	Part 3: Reflections on Meaning
Older generation	Please tell us about your language and culture background-- How old are you? Where were you born and grew up? Parents' language, culture, education? Language(s) raised in? Important people/teachings in your life? Number of siblings and their languages Language used with children/grandchildren?	What do you like best about your language/culture? Who continues to use the Nahuatl language? Do the younger people speak the language? When you buy things from the stores how do you communicate? How do you think "others" view Nahuatl?	What are your aspirations for your kids? grandkids? Family members? What have been the challenges you face when speaking Nahuatl. What do you think of your grandkids wanting to learn the language? Why do you think they would want to learn it? How do you feel when you can't communicate with other people, such as your grandkids? How important is your language? Describe your culture
Adults (Second Generation)	Please tell us about your language and culture background-- How old are you? Where were you born and grew up? Parents' language, culture, education? Language(s) raised in? Important people/teachings in your life? Number of siblings and their languages Language used with children/grandchildren? School experience	When do you speak Nahuatl? When do you think it's appropriate? When would you choose to speak Nahuatl over Spanish? How do you feel that your children don't speak it? How did you decide what language to teach your children? Do you believe that schools should play a role in teaching the language? Why or Why not?	How important is your Native tongue? Do you hear people speaking Spanish? Nahuatl? English? How do you think Nahuatl by other people in the United States? Coatepec de los Costales? Mexico City? What do you think your language holds for the future? Do you have any words of wisdom for the non-native third-generation children? Did you know that there are other places in the world that Indigenous languages are dying? How does that make

			you feel? Can you comment on your ideas?
Youths (Younger Generation)	Let's talk about you and your family-- How old are you? Where were you born and grew up? First language learned? How many languages do you speak? No. brothers/sisters What do your parents do Language(s) parents/grandparents speak at home? Languages spoken most often at home? School? With friends? Where do you hear Nahuatl spoken? What do you know about the Nahuatl language? Who do you think she learn it? importance? Memories of language learning in school?	How do you feel unable to speak Nahuatl? How would you describe Nahuatl? Is this language important to you, if there is no need for it in the Mexico? What do you know about Nahuatl? Do you believe that schools should play a role in teaching the language? Why or Why not?	what does it mean to you to be a daughter or son of a Native Nahuatl speaker? What are you aspirations as a member of Coatepec? Aspirations as a descendent of Aztec How do you plan to incorporate your language or culture? How has your ideas on Nahuatl change when you were young, a year ago, now? What would you like other non-speakers to know? family members? What feelings do you have regarding this language that it can die from your family? Did you know that there are other places in the world that Indigenous languages are dying? How does that make you feel? Can you comment on your ideas?

APPENDIX E

CONSENT FORM
SPANISH VERSION

Forma de Consentimiento

Ideología de la Idioma Nahuatl en Coatepec de los Costales, Guerrero, Mexico

INTRODUCCION

Este formulario le dará (como prospecto participante en el estudio de investigación) con información que puede afectar su decisión acerca de si quesería o no participará en esta investigación, y se registrará el consentimiento de los que aceptan participar en el estudio.

INVESTIGADORA

Rosalva Lagunas, estudiante de doctorado en Currículo e Instrucción (Lengua y Alfabetización) en la universidad, Arizona State University, le ha invitado a participar en este estudio.

PROPOSITO DE ESTUDIO

Este estudio se propone reconocer y entender las ideologías lingüísticas en primera, segunda y tercera generación de la lengua Nahuatl.

DESCRIPCION DEL ESTUDIO DE INVESTIGACION

Si usted decide participar, se le pedirá que proporcione más información. Se trata de un estudio doctoral y se utilizará como parte de una tesis. Voy a entrevistar a hablantes de Nahuatl de primera generación, hablantes de Nahuatl de segunda generación, y que a los que no hablan Nahuatl de tercera generación. Voy a utilizar los resultados de las entrevistas en un trabajo de investigación para mi tesis de Universidad Estatal de Arizona. Yo puedo contactar a usted de nuevo y le pedirá que responda más preguntas.

Su participación en este estudio es voluntario. Usted puede elegir de no contestar las preguntas en las entrevistas.

RIESGOS

Su participación en este evaluación no involucra riesgo física.

BENEFICIOS

Por medio de participar en este estudio usted puede aprender la forma de ver y entender Nahuatl. Puede encontrar que sus creencias sobre el idioma puede cambiar y ser más conscientes de las creencias de otros.

CONFIDENCIAL

Toda la información obtenida en este estudio es estrictamente confidencial. Yo puedo utilizar los resultados de este estudio de investigación en los informes, presentaciones, y en mi tesis.

RETIRO PRIVILEGIO

Usted puede retirar se de este estudio a cualquier tiempo.

COSTO Y PAGO

Usted no tendrá que pagar nada para participar. Cuando haya terminado de participar en el estudio, usted recibirá un modesto regalo.

CONSENTIMIENTO VOLUNTARIO

Si usted tiene alguna pregunta antes, sobre el estudio, durante o después de su consentimiento, puede ponerse en contacto conmigo por medio de correo electronico roslag@asu.edu o 480-529-5282.

Si usted tiene preguntas acerca de sus derechos como participante en esta investigación,

puede comunicarse con la Dra. Teresa McCarty a TeresaMcCarty@asu.edu.

Su firma abajo indica que usted da su consentimiento para participar en este estudio. Al firmar abajo, usted está otorgando permiso a los investigadores el derecho a usar cualquier tipo de fotografías o cintas de vídeo, tomadas de ustedes para presentar o publicar dentro de una tesis.

Usted recibirá una copia de este formulario de consentimiento.

Yo reconozco que he leído y explicado a usted, anterior de esta investigación y que todas mis preguntas son respondidas. Estoy deacuerdo voluntariamente de participar.

_____ _____ _____

Firma de Participante Nombre de Letra fecha

DECLARACION DE INVESTIGADOR

"Yo certifico que he explicado a la persona por encima de la naturaleza y el propósito de este estudio. He contestado todas las preguntas que se han tenido, y he sido testigo de la firma anterior. He ofrecido al participante una copia de este documento firmado, de consentimiento. "

_____ _____ _____

Firma de Investigador Nombre de Letra fecha

APPENDIX F

CONSENT FORM

ENGLISH VERSION

CONSENT FORM

Language Ideologies, Practices, and Management:

Mexicano in Coatepec de los Costales

INTRODUCTION

The purposes of this form are to provide you (as a prospective research study participant) information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to participate in this research and to record the consent of those who agree to be involved in the study.

RESEARCHERS

Rosalva Lagunas, doctoral student in Curriculum and Instructions, Arizona State University has invited your participation in a research study.

STUDY PURPOSE

The purpose of the research is to address the issues of language shift in Coatepec de los Costales. We will look at three areas of language policy: language practices, language ideologies, and language management. We hope to reveal these processes work within and across multiple generations in the village of Coatepec de Costales, which will add to international scholarship on language shift and aid in developing language planning in the community.

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH STUDY

If you decide to participate, then you will join a study involving research of language shift across multiple generations. You will be asked to answer a series of questions, at any time you may choose not to answer a question. If you are to participate in a group interview, you will be chosen by purposive sampling.

If you say YES, then your participation will last for six months at Coatepec de los Costales. You

will be asked to participate in interview sessions and some may be asked to participate in a group interview session. Approximately 40 of subjects will be participating in this study.

RISKS

There are no known risks from taking part in this study, but in any research, there is some possibility that you may be subject to risks that have not yet been identified.

BENEFITS

The possible/main benefits of your participation in the research are to be aware of language shift, loss, and language policies. You may begin language planning in your family to reverse the language shift. The community may also benefit in begin talking about how they can reverse language shift and plan for the future of the community.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential. The results of this research study

may be used in reports, presentations, and publications, but the researchers will not identify

you. In order to maintain confidentiality of your records, Rosalva Lagunas will use pseudonyms for all the participants. The researcher will only have access to the information and data that is collected.

WITHDRAWAL PRIVILEGE

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. It is ok for you to say no. Even if you say yes

now, you are free to say no later, and withdraw from the study at any time.

COSTS AND PAYMENTS

The researchers want your decision about participating in the study to be absolutely voluntary.

There is no payment for your participation in the study.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT

Any questions you have concerning the research study or your participation in the study, before

or after your consent, will be answered by Rosalva Lagunas, 1118 E. 9th Dr. Mesa, AZ 85204, 480-529-5284.

If you have questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel

you have been placed at risk; you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional

Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at 480-965 6788.

This form explains the nature, demands, benefits and any risk of the project. By signing this

form you agree knowingly to assume any risks involved. Remember, your participation is

voluntary. You may choose not to participate or to withdraw your consent and discontinue

participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefit. In signing this consent form, you are

not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies. A copy of this consent form will be

given

(offered) to you.

Your signature below indicates that you consent to participate in the above study.

_____	_____	_____
Subject's Signature	Printed Name	Date

By signing below, you are granting to the researchers the right to use your likeness, image, appearance and performance - whether recorded on or transferred to videotape, film, slides, and photographs - for presenting or publishing this research (or for whatever use).

INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT

"I certify that I have explained to the above individual the nature and purpose, the potential

benefits and possible risks associated with participation in this research study, have answered

any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature. These elements of Informed Consent conform to the Assurance given by Arizona State University to the Office for Human Research Protections to protect the rights of human subjects. I have provided (offered) the subject/participant a copy of this signed consent document."

Signature of Investigator_____
Date_____

Biographical Sketch

Rosalva Mojica Lagunas earned her PhD in Curriclum & Instruction from Arizona State University (ASU) in May 2016. Rosalva is an Indigenous scholar, with family roots in Guerrero, Mexico. Her work focuses on language ideologies, practices, and management and language revitalization. Rosalva is learning her parents' native language, Nahuatl, through meaningful sociocultural experiences. She hopes to develop a language revitalization plan to preserve her family's language. Her study will contribute to the larger fields of language education and sociolinguistics/applied linguistics, and to policy and practice.