

# GETTING TO KNOW YOUR STUDENTS!

Best practices in Language of Origin data collection for Mesoamerican languages

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## The importance of acknowledging your students' heritage languages

*This guide was presented to a selected group of district staff in a pilot training program on August 13 and 14, 2020. Just minutes after the end of one of these sessions, a new family arrived at a training participant's school to turn in their registration paperwork. The training participant was able to chat with the family using the information from this guide. She learned that the father is from Oaxaca, he shared the name of his town and the name of his native Mesoamerican language. While the father had originally only listed Spanish as a home language in the paperwork, the training participant was able to add the family's Mesoamerican language to the student record. With the language of his family no longer invisible in the school setting, the father went on to share phrases in the language with the training participant. With this guide, we hope to foster more community-building interactions like this one that recognize the cultural and linguistic background of every Oregon school family.*

**Students of Mesoamerican origin in your school.** Oregon's agricultural and forestry industries are powered by individuals who are speakers of Mesoamerican languages and form language communities throughout Oregon. There are a few hundred distinct Mesoamerican languages, so many in fact, that experts do not have a precise number for them. Language families can be as large and diverse as the families of Romance or Germanic languages to which Spanish and English belong, respectively. Therefore, Mesoamerican languages can be as distinct one from the other as Spanish and English are.

**The linguistic diversity** of students of Mesoamerican origin is obscured by the four broad labels used to date within the Oregon

Department of Education: North American Indian languages, Mayan languages, Central American Indian languages, South American Indian languages. These labels lump together hundreds of distinct, mutually unintelligible and often genetically unrelated languages. Worse yet is registering the language of a student with the codes 9999 Other languages and 0000 Not applicable to collection.

**Improving our methods.** In 2020, the Oregon Department of Education launched a multi-phase effort to revise the Language of Origin code list to include codes for the languages of Oregon's nine federally recognized tribes, as well as the growing communities of Oregon students from Mexico and parts of Central America who speak Mesoamerican languages. The Language Revitalization Lab at the University of Oregon's Department of Linguistics joined this effort to provide expertise about Mesoamerican linguistic diversity and to develop a fine-grained inventory of language codes that reflect the state-of-the-art classification of Mesoamerican languages as per the Linguistics discipline. This effort is a pilot project but even within that limited scope, the updated languages code list will help to better record and honor over 150 unique Mesoamerican languages that might be spoken by Oregon students. This refined level of documentation will shed light over time on the actual number of Mesoamerican languages spoken in the homes of Oregon students. The hope is that with this newly gained data, education services can be improved to accommodate the diversity of Mesoamerican peoples in our state.

### **Improving our relationship with students and their families.**

*As part of the current effort, the University of Oregon's Language Revitalization Lab reached out to Mesoamerican families to ask about their experience in the Oregon school system as it relates to language and communication. On the question of what would make parents*

*more comfortable and open about their Mesoamerican identities and languages, one parent responded: “We feel very proud of our language and we want everybody to know that we not only speak Spanish but we also have our own language”. Children participating in this outreach effort commented that they want schools to know about the languages they speak so that they can develop a sense of true community and not feel lonely and out of place.*

**Language of Origin codes.** Oregon students speak more than 160 languages. Language use data gathered by schools are reported to the U.S. Department of Education, detailed in the Oregon Department of Education’s annual English Learner report to the legislature, and disseminated throughout the year in presentations to stakeholders. Oregon’s current language codes originate from a federal source, the ISO-639-2: Codes for the representation of names of languages--Part 2: alpha-3 code.<sup>1</sup> Language use data are also included in the Oregon State Seal of Biliteracy data collection processes.

The codes and labels in use to date at the Oregon Department of Education make the unique cultural and linguistic heritage of students and their families invisible. By documenting the languages of origin of your students with the accuracy recommended in this guide, you will learn about the unique life experience of each student and their families. This in turn will eliminate biases, prevent intolerance and generate a feeling of connection that will empower children to relate with everyone in the school setting without fear of prejudice. The use of the updated Language of Origin codes list, even at the current pilot stage, will improve culturally responsive communications to eliminate the assumption that students from Mexico and Central America all come from a Spanish-speaking background. These efforts will result in improved parent

engagement and a more supportive environment for the emotional well-being of students.

## Mesoamerican languages and Linguistic Diversity

**Where is Mesoamerica?** Mesoamerica extends from the northern regions of Central America through the central regions of Mexico. Mesoamerica is considered as a region of shared cultural and linguistic traits, yet it is a region with tremendous diversity in both respects. Figure 1 below shows an approximation of the geographic extension of Mesoamerica and of the languages in the region.



Figure 1. Approximate extension of Mesoamerica and languages used in the region

**Mesoamerican history.** Although Mesoamerica is part of what is commonly referred to as Latin America, Mesoamerican languages are not related to Spanish. Contemporary Mesoamerican languages, in contrast, are Indigenous to the region and can be traced back to as early as 1200 BCE. They predate by many hundreds of years the Spanish language and any other European language brought to the American continent by settlers during colonization after the 15th century.

***Mesoamerican languages and linguistic diversity.*** Mesoamerican languages belong to a dozen different isolates and language families. Isolates are languages that are not known to be related to any other languages. This is the case, for instance, of Purepecha, Huave and Oaxaca Chontal. Other languages belong to language families of various sizes and complexity, some of which are large and with many branches and sub-branches. One characteristic of natural linguistic diversity is that even in cases in which Mesoamerican languages are related to each other, some remain as distinct from each other as English is from Spanish.

In some cases, languages within a branch of a language family share a label. For instance, within the vast Otomanguean family is a large branch constituting Mixtec languages. The Mixtec languages in this branch break into additional sub-branches with numerous distinct languages. Therefore, a language from the Mixtec Baja region and a language from the Mixtec Alta region will be so distinct that their speakers will not understand each other. Even within a region such as the Mixtec Baja, languages can be very different and not what we call mutually intelligible. This is comparable to how English is distinct from German even though both languages belong to the Germanic branch of Indo-European languages.

### **Best practices in Language of Origin data collection**

***Attention to detail is king!*** In casual conversation one might hear a reference to “Mayan” as if it were a single language, but nothing could be further from the truth. Within the Mayan language family there are some thirty distinct languages (Campbell 2017) with designated names such as Mam or Q’anjob’al. When we refer to Indo-European languages such as Spanish, French, Portuguese and Romanian we refer to them with language-specific labels. It would be unusual for a speaker of any of these languages to introduce

themselves as a speaker of Romance for instance –Romance is the name of a language branch in the vast Indo-European language family. When documenting Mesoamerican languages of origin, we need to identify the distinct language that a student and their family might speak with as much detail as possible. This guide will help you do so.

Attention to detail is especially important for languages that bear the name of a branch of a large language family. This is the case, for instance, of Nahuatl, Mixtec, Tiqui and Zapotec languages. Let’s take Zapotec languages as an example. Most Zapotec languages have the label Zapotec in their names when used in Spanish and English. For this reason, it is easy to be misled into thinking that there is only one single Zapotec language.

Here is an example. Both Isthmus Zapotec and Ocotlán Zapotec belong to the sub-branch of Central Zapotec languages. Both are spoken in the southern state of Oaxaca but Isthmus Zapotec is spoken near the coast where the continental mass narrows at the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, while Ocotlán Zapotec is spoken in the Central Valleys of the state Oaxaca. These two regions are located about a 5 or 6-hour drive from each other. The two languages are closely related, yet, they are very distinct, perhaps as distinct as Spanish and French are. Therefore, speakers of Isthmus Zapotec and of Ocotlán Zapotec would not be able to understand each other beyond identifying a word here or there that sounds similar in both languages. If there were students in your schools who are speakers of Ocotlán Zapotec and you wanted to provide them with an interpreter, you would need to find an interpreter who speaks Ocotlán Zapotec. Hence the importance of identifying languages by a geographic region, a district, or even an individual town.

**The Mesoamerican Language of Origin guide.** This document provides a key to dozens of Mesoamerican languages that are likely to be in the repertoire of Oregon K-12 students. The key is not exhaustive, but it contains dozens of languages including the isolate Purepecha, several Mayan languages, all Nahuatl languages and all languages in the Mixtec, Triqui and Zapotec branches of the Otomanguean family.

**Finding your way through the guide.** The language names are organized by the most relevant grouping. For instance, Mayan languages are presented under a section labeled Mayan languages which corresponds to the language family. Mixtec, Triqui, and Zapotec languages are all Otomanguean languages. However, because the internal diversity in each branch is such, each branch deserves its own section in the guide. Therefore, these Otomanguean branches are organized into individual sections by language branch listed in alphabetical order: Mixtec languages, Triqui languages and Zapotec languages.

Within each section, we have prioritized an organization based on geographic region to make it easier to find a language. For instance, for a student who is a speaker of Ocotlán Zapotec from the Central Valleys of Oaxaca, you would find the section on Zapotec languages, then follow the prompts to help you zero in on the Central Valleys region, and consult the list of languages and map for that region. The maps display enough town and city names as to increase the chances that a student will find their town of origin or at least a town nearby that they are familiar with. Based on this, the map should help you find the language label that is most closely associated with the student's language and related ISO code.

The language names in this guide are presented as per the Glottolog (<https://glottolog.org/>), an online, open access resource

of the Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History that culls linguistic data on the languages of the world. The names used by the Glottolog are mostly exonyms, meaning that they are names assigned to the languages by someone outside of the language community. The language names used by the language speakers themselves, that is the endonyms, are not documented well enough to use them in this guide with accuracy at this time. The names are listed in English and with an ISO code assigned to them. When documenting a student's language of origin, document the ISO code and the language name as per the enclosed guide. In addition, ask the family to write down the name of their language as they would refer to it and the town, municipality, state and country they are from as shown in Figure 2.

<p><b>Eligibility for Language Development Support</b> This section helps the school identify if your child should be assessed to receive support in academic English instruction.</p>	<p>2. What is the primary language(s) used to communicate in your home?</p> <p><u>Ocotlán Zapotec (ISO zac), we call it dizi</u> <u>and we are from Santiago Apóstol, state of</u> <u>Oaxaca, Mexico</u></p>
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Figure 2. Documenting language names.

**Avoiding pitfalls.** About spelling variants. There is generally more than one label for most if not all languages in the guide. Any alternate names and name spellings which we were able to obtain from reputable sources and whose appropriateness we can be confident about at this time, are included in the guide. An example is shown in Figure 3 below for Mam which may be known by any of the 13 labels listed as Spelling variants. As you work with a student and their family, please be mindful of the fact that the family might

refer to their language by a label other than the label favored in the Glottolog. Therefore, please take the time to go over the Spelling Variants with the family and always ask the family to write down the name of their language as they would refer to it and the town, municipality, state and country they are from as shown in Figure 2 above.

**MAM** | Ma'am, Mum, Mam, Mam de Chiapas, Mame, Mem, Qyool, Tacaná, Tapachulano, Teco, Tlamama, Zaklohpakap, Zaklohpakep

mam mam



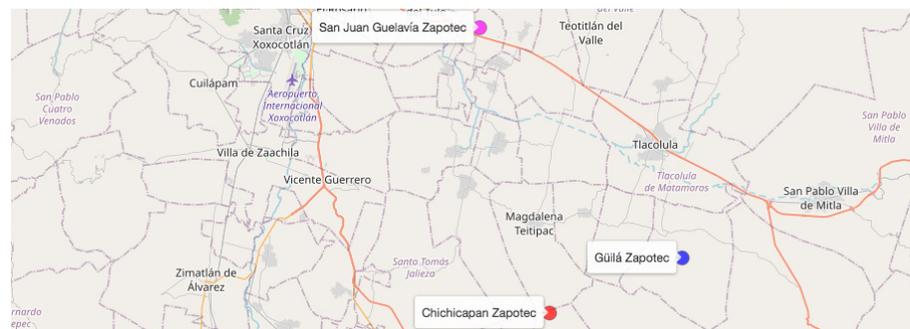
Figure 3. Example of spelling variants.

**What if a language is not listed in the guide?** As mentioned earlier, the language key in this guide is not exhaustive. Also, there are hundreds of Mesoamerican languages and not all have been documented. Even though the Glottolog language names and codes represent the state-of-the-art of what is known about Mesoamerican languages to date, gaps remain, and refinements will continue to be made to the language labels. As a result, there will be times when it might be difficult to find a family's language on the language key in this guide. In these cases, it is best to use the label referring to a broader category such as Mixtec or Nahuatl, and always ask the family to write down the name of their language as they would refer to it and the town, municipality, state and country they are from as shown in Figure 2 above.

Here is one example for how to resolve a case in which a language is not on the language key. A family from the Zapotec town of San Lucas Quiaviní will not find a label in the guide for a language called

San Lucas Quiaviní Zapotec. This is because the language does not currently have a dedicated label or ISO code in the Glottolog and other sources. San Lucas Quiaviní is located just south of the town of Tlacolula de Matamoros. Therefore, a family from San Lucas Quiaviní would easily be able to find Tlacolula de Matamoros on the map below. You can then ask the family whether there is a town on the map with a label for a language that they understand. The likelihood is that a family from San Lucas Quiaviní might indicate that their language is closest to San Juan Guelavía Zapotec. Then, please document the language as San Juan Guelavía Zapotec, (ISO zab). In addition, ask the family to write down the name of their language as they would refer to it and the town, municipality, state and country they are from as shown in Figure 4 below.

- zpv Chichicapan Zapotec
- ztu Güilá Zapotec
- zab San Juan Guelavía Zapotec



**Eligibility for Language Development Support**  
This section helps the school identify if your child should be assessed to receive support in academic English instruction.

2. What is the primary language(s) used to communicate in your home?

San Juan Guelavía Zapotec (ISO zab), we call it dizhsah and we are from San Lucas Quiaviní, Oaxaca, Mexico

Figure 4. Documenting a language that is not listed on the guide.

***Cultural, social and political sensitivities.*** Mesoamerican families living in Oregon are diverse culturally and linguistically. There is also a great deal of diversity in their life histories. Most, if not all, may have experienced severe discrimination in their home countries because of their identities and their linguistic background. Many may have also experienced war-like situations as well as other types of threat to their safety and that of their families. Therefore, talking about aspects of their place of origin including their languages could be triggering. Further, most immigrant families whose children are speakers of languages other than English are often concerned that their children will be seen as being at a deficit. After all, schooling in the US has a history of favoring monolingual English-speaking over the diversity that comes from speaking English in addition to one or more other languages at home as is the case in most of the world.

As you work with students and their families, please be mindful of these very real concerns. It will be important for you to build trust with the families as you work with them to document a student's languages of origin. One way to do so is by emphasizing that the motivation for documenting languages of origin with accuracy is so that the school can get to know students and their families well enough as to make the school be of true service to them. Please inform the families accurately and objectively how the Oregon Department of Education will use the Language of Origin data to the benefit of the students and their families. At the same time, please be careful with the wording you use when explaining this. A family may find it comforting to hear that the school wishes to acknowledge their heritage but may find it disconcerting and offensive to hear any wording that suggests their children are being targeted for remedial services.

## **Mesoamerican languages key**

The following pages constitute a key to the following languages, language branches and language families.

- Mayan languages
- Mixtec languages
- Nahuan languages
- Purepecha
- Triqui languages
- Zapotec languages

Each section begins with a subsection entitled What you need to know with basic language information. This is followed by a section entitled Registering students which lists customized suggestions for walking through the key with a family. Please note that, as explained earlier, the instructions for each language section are customized based on the languages' particularities. Therefore, please read each Registering students section carefully.

Please remember that this guide is part of a pilot project. We therefore need your feedback in order to refine the materials and approaches in this project. As you work with Mesoamerican students and their families to document their languages with precision, please share your experience with the project lead of Michael Reyes Andrillon, Education Specialist and Latinx Student Plan Coordinator at [Michael.reyes@ode.state.or.us](mailto:Michael.reyes@ode.state.or.us).

# MAYAN LANGUAGES

## *What you need to know*

- The terms Mayan refers to a language family, not to a single language.
- The family of Mayan languages are concentrated in what are now Belize, Guatemala and the South of Mexico. Huastec is the northernmost Mayan language located in the northern half of Mexico.
- There are some thirty distinct Mayan languages.
- Mayan languages can be traced back to an ancestral form dating back to at least 2200 BCE.
- A Mayan hieroglyphic writing system was in use for some 2,000 years prior to the arrival of European settlers.

## *Registering students*

- Mayan languages spoken in what is now Guatemala have broadly accepted labels which may facilitate the identification of a family's language.
- The Mayan languages in this key are listed in alphabetical order based on the label used by the Glottolog. However, there are many spelling variants for all of the languages. A list of spelling variants is included below the Glottolog language label.
- The list of Mayan languages presented in this key is limited to nine Mayan languages known to be spoken in the state of Oregon. Please walk through the list of language tables and maps with the family to identify their language. Always remember to ask the family to also write down the name of the language as they refer to it, along with the town, district or municipality, state and country that they are from.
- If a family speaks a Mayan language that is not in this list, or if a family's language cannot be identified with precision, ask the family to write down the name of their language as they would refer to it and the town, municipality, district, state and country they are from.

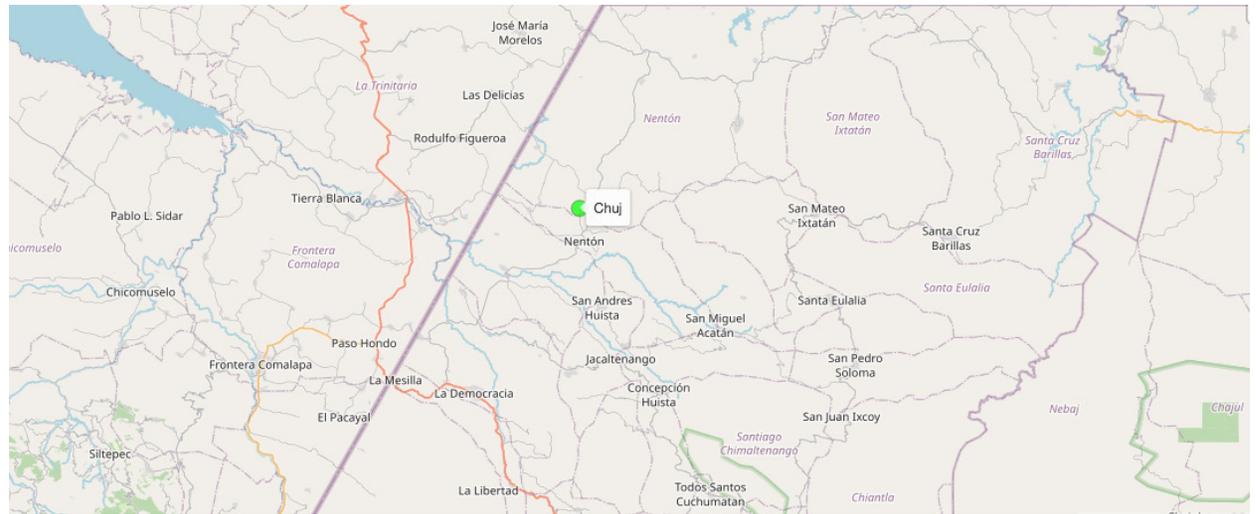
## AGUACATECO | *Aguacateca, Aguacateco, Awakateka, Awakateko, Awaketeko, Awateko, Aguateco, Balamiha, Coyotin*

agu Aguacateco



## CHUJ | *Chu, Chui*

cac Chuj

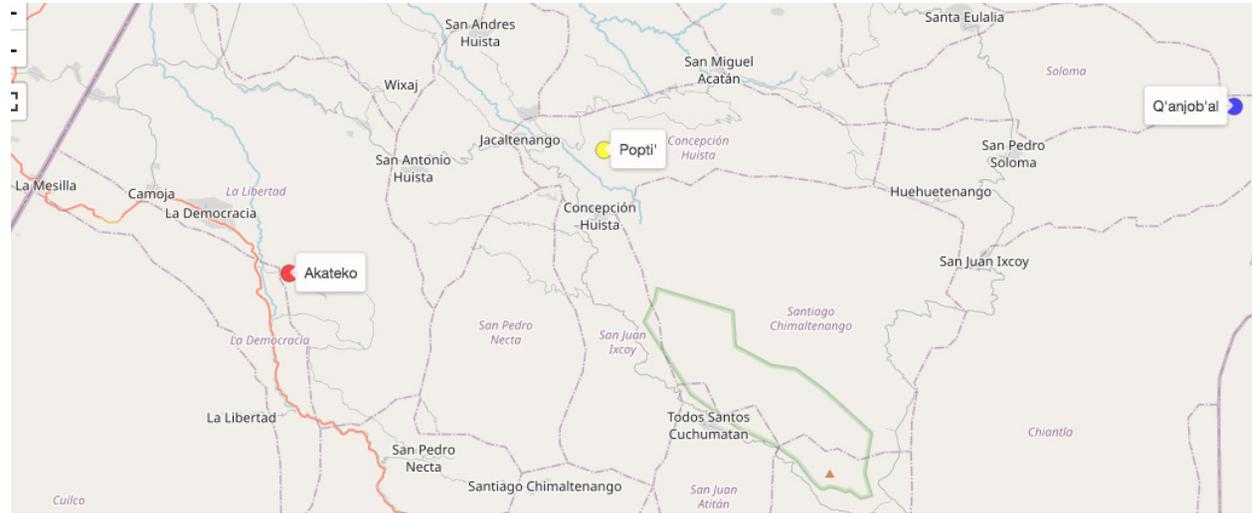


## KANJOBAL-JACALTEC LANGUAGES

knj Akateco  
Akateco

jac Popti'  
*Popty, Jakaltek, Jacalteco, Abxubal, Jacalteca, Jacalteco, Jakalteka, Jakalteko, Popti'*

kjb Q'anjob'al  
*Kanjobal, Canjobal, Qanjabal, Kanjoval, Conjobal, Canjubal, Conob, Kangobal, Kanhobal, Kanjobal, Kanjubal, K'anjobal, Qanjobal, Q'anjob'al, Q'anjob'al, Solomero, Sulumeco*

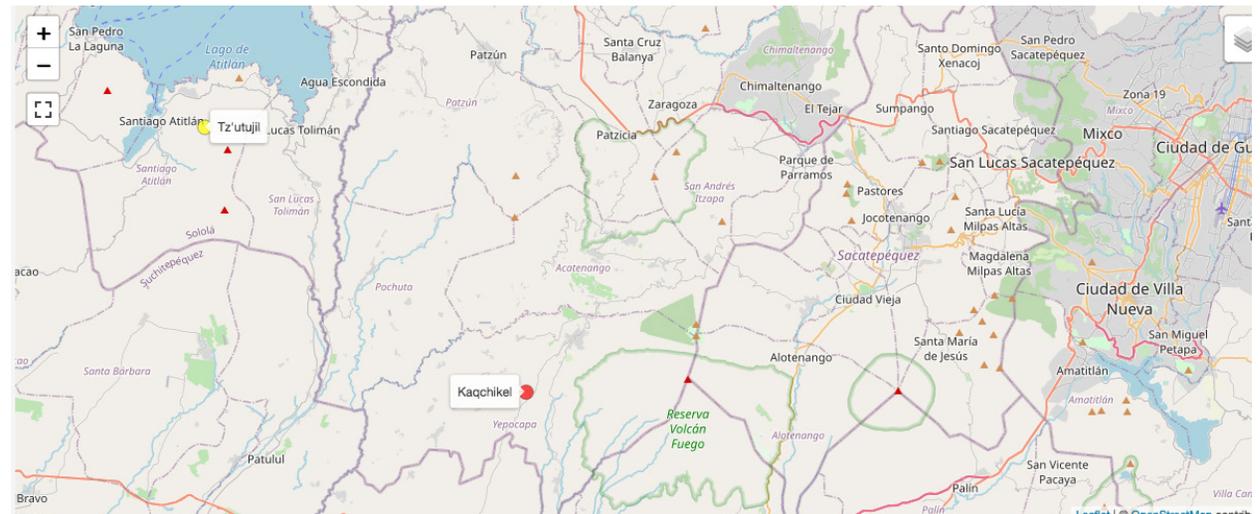


## KAQCHIKEL | Cakchiquel

cak Kaqchikel  
Cakchiquel

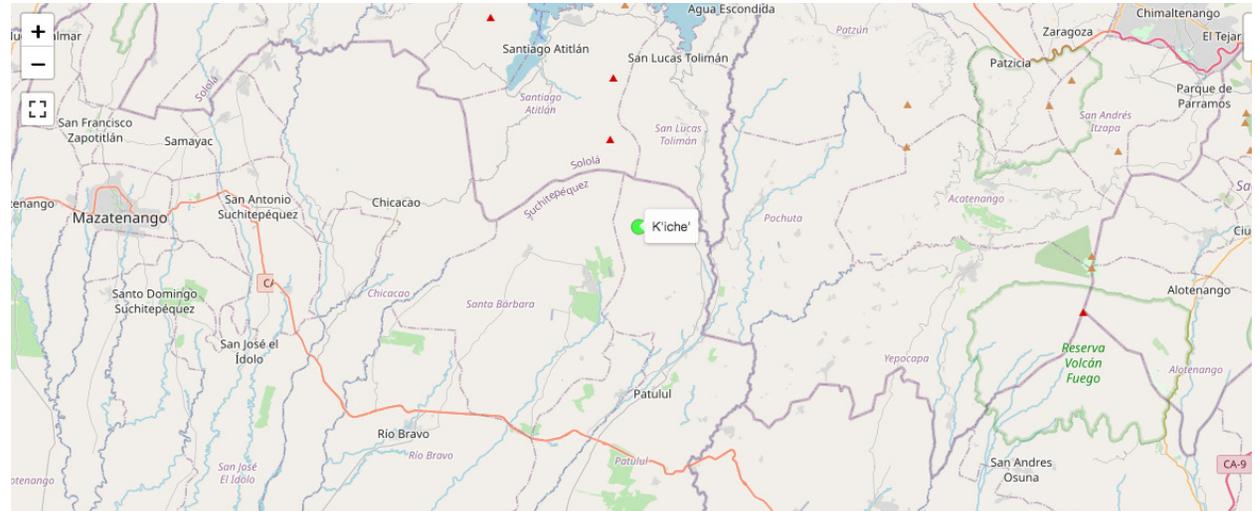
The Language of Origin codes list includes entries for several varieties of Kaqchikel. Recorded as follows: *Kaqchikel*, ISO code *cak*. The *Kaqchikel* varieties under this ISO code include: *Central Cakchiquel, Eastern Cakchiquel, Northern Cakchiquel, Santa Maria de Jesus Cakchiquel, Santo Domingo Cakchiquel, Southern Cakchiquel, Southwestern Cakchiquel, Western Cakchiquel.*

tzj Tz'utujil



**K'ICHE'** | *Quiche, Quiché, Kiche, Cachabel, Chiché, Chiquel, Kiché, K'ichee', K'iche' ch'ab'al, K'iche'tzij, Quitzé, Utlateca, Utlateco.*

quc K'iche'



**MAM** | *Ma'am, Mum, Mam, Mam de Chiapas, Mame, Mem, Qyool, Tacaná, Tapachulano, Teco, Tlamama, Zaklohpapak, Zaklohpakep*

mam mam



## MIXTEC LANGUAGES

### *What you need to know*

- The term Mixtec refers to a branch of the vast Otomanguean language family. Therefore, it refers to a group of distinct languages and not to a single language.
- To this date, the definitive number of Mixtec languages in existence is not known. One source, the Glottolog.org, lists 52 distinct Mixtec languages.
- Mixtec languages can be so distinct one from the other, that speakers from two towns that are a half hour apart will have trouble understanding each other. Therefore, it is essential that Mixtec languages be documented with the finest level of detail.
- Mixtec languages are spoken in the South of what is now Mexico, in the states of Guerrero, Puebla and Oaxaca.
- Most Mixtec language names are associated with a town or a district.

### *Registering students*

- Ask whether the family is from the states of Oaxaca, Puebla, or Guerrero in Mexico.
- If the family is from Guerrero, find the table below for Guerrero Mixtec.
- If the family is not from Guerrero, ask whether they might be speakers of Amoltepec Mixtec, Mixtepec Mixtec or Tezoatlán Mixtec.
- If the family is not from Guerrero, ask which of the regions listed below the family might be from. Find the tables for the selected region and work through the list of languages and maps to find the language label for the district or town of origin of the family or closest to it. Note that each region can have more than one table. Always remember to ask the family to also write down the name of the language as they refer to it, along with the town, district or municipality, state and country that they are from.
  - Alta Mixtec - Mixteca Alta (4 tables)
  - Baja Mixtec - Mixteca Baja (3 tables)
  - Coast Mixtec - Mixteca de la Costa (1 table)
- In the event that the family's Mixtec language cannot be identified with precision, ask the family to write down the name of their language as they would refer to it and the town, municipality and state they are from.

## GUERRERO MIXTEC - Lenguas Mixtecas en el estado de Guerrero

mim Alcatlatzala Mixtec  
*Select this language for the communities of Alcatlatzala, Atlamajalcingo del Monte, Cuatzoquitengo, Plan de Guadalupe (off map), Potoichan and Tototepec*



xta Alcozauca Mixtec  
*Select this language for Alcozauca Mixtec, Petlascalancingo Mixtec and Xochapa Mixtec*



mxv Metlatónoc Mixtec

xty Yoloxochitl Mixtec



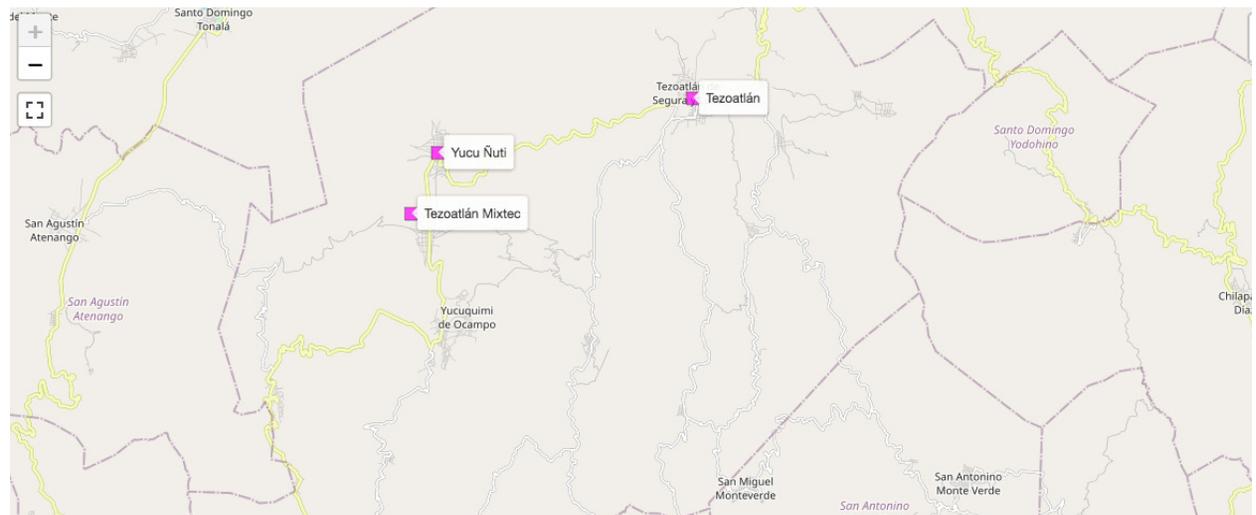
## AMOLTEPEC MIXTEC, MIXTEPEC MIXTEC AND TEZOATLÁN MIXTEC

mbz Amoltepec Mixtec

mix San Juan Mixtepec Mixtec



mxh Tezoatlán Mixtec



## ALTA MIXTEC: EASTERN ALTA MIXTEC • MIXTECA ALTA: MIXTECA ALTA DEL ESTE

xtd Diuxi-Tilantongo Mixtec



vmm Mitlatongo Mixtec

mil Peñoles Mixtec

mxs Huitepec Mixtec

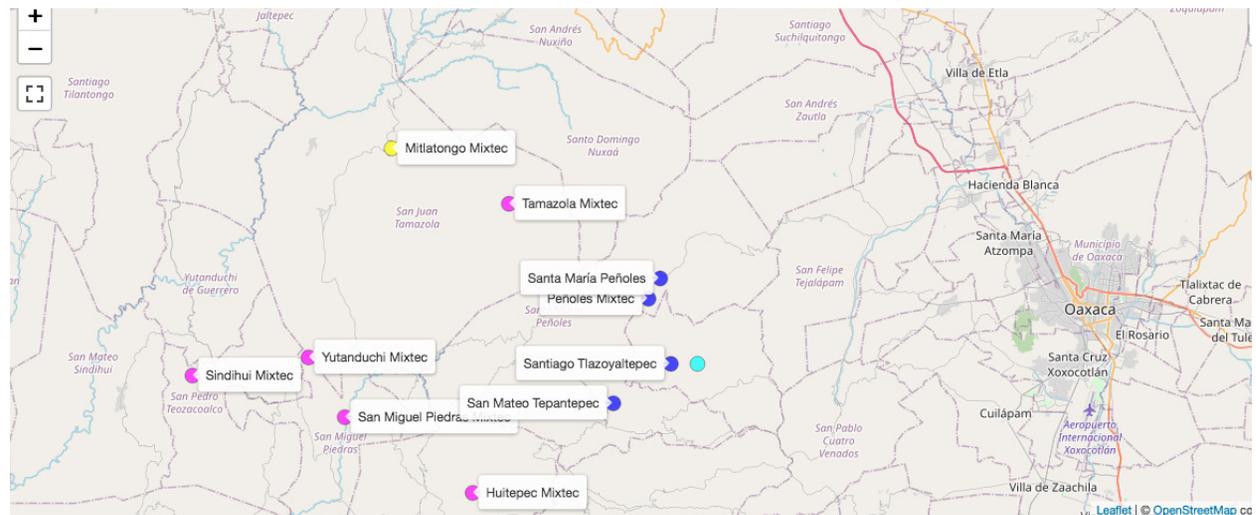
xtp San Miguel Piedras Mixtec

xts Sindhui Mixtec

vmx Tamazola Mixtec

mab Yutanduchi Mixtec

mqh Tlazoyaltepec Mixtec

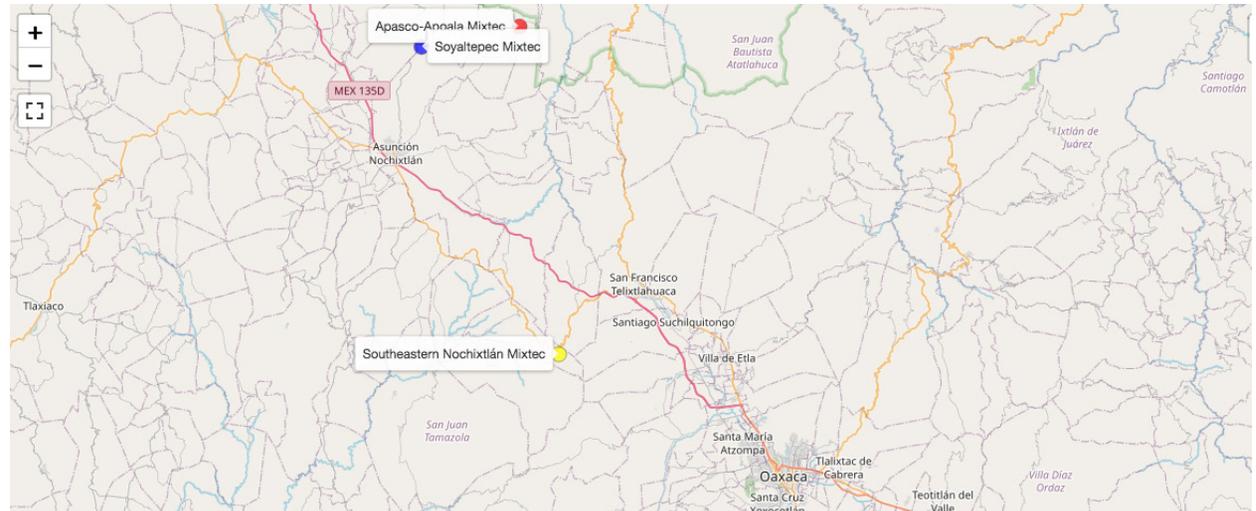


## ALTA MIXTEC: NORTHEASTERN ALTA MIXTEC • MIXTECA ALTA: MIXTECA ALTA DEL NORESTE

mip Apasco-Apoala Mixtec

mxy Southeastern Nochixtlán Mixtec

vmq Soyaltepec Mixtec

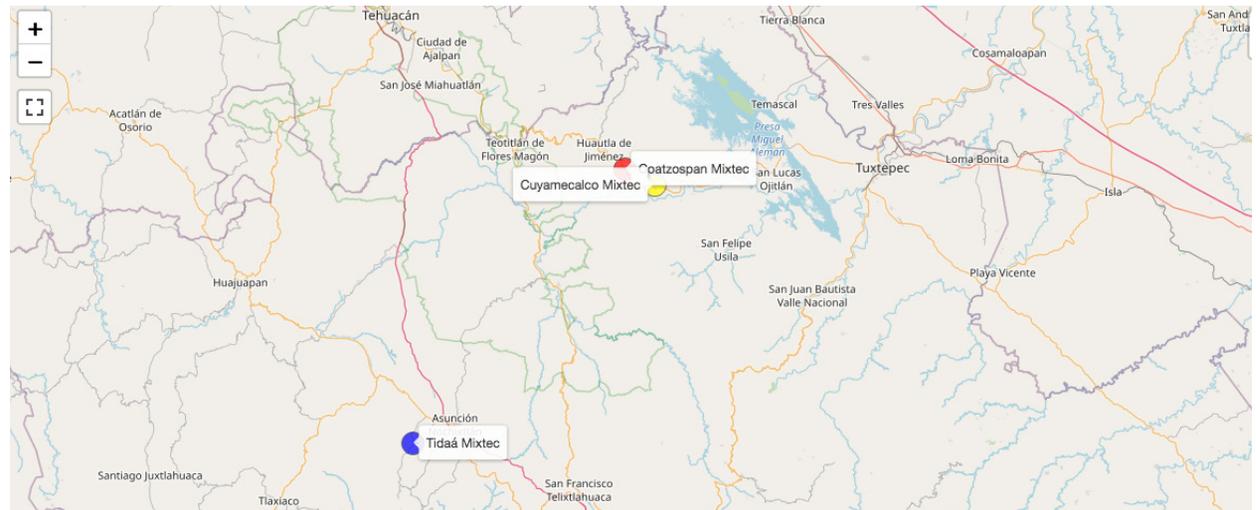


## ALTA MIXTEC: NORTH ALTA MIXTEC • MIXTECA ALTA: MIXTECA ALTA DEL NORTE

miz Coatzospan Mixtec

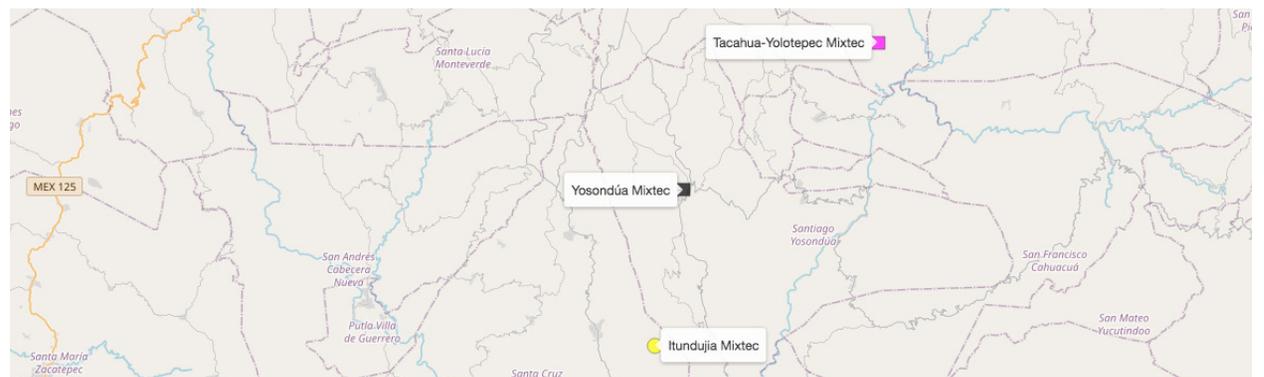
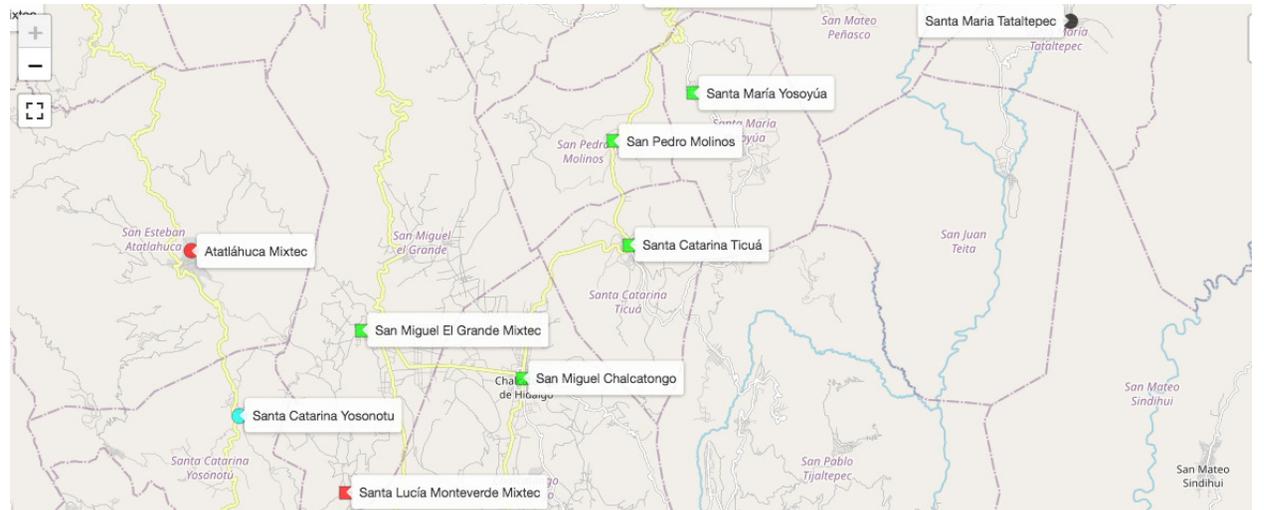
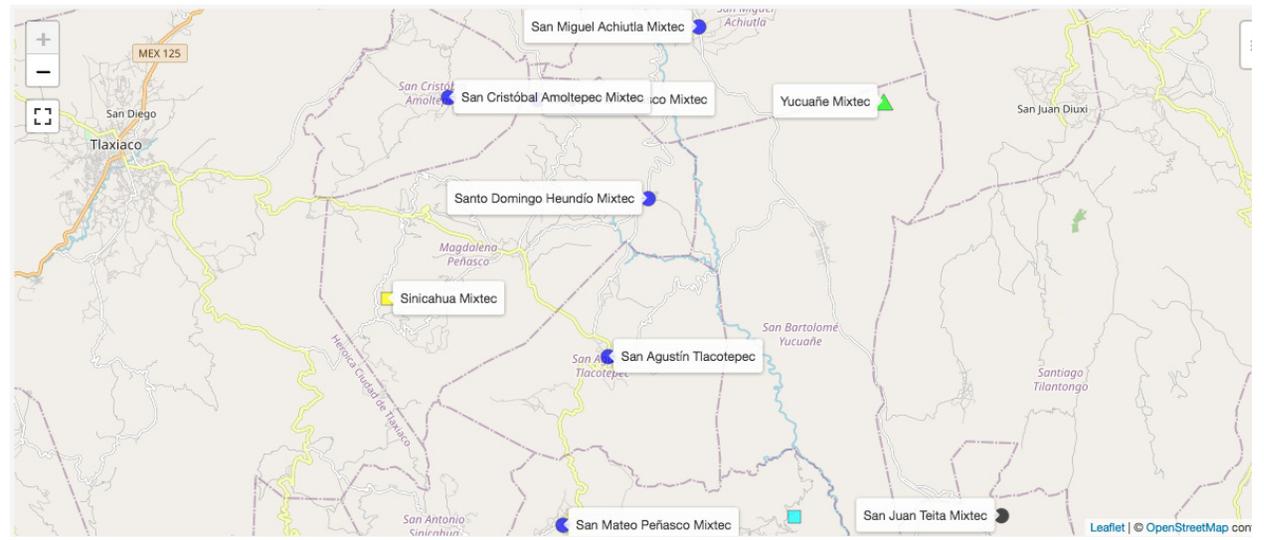
xtu Cuyamecalco Mixtec

mtx Tidaá Mixtec



## ALTA MIXTEC: WESTERN ALTA MIXTEC • MIXTECA ALTA: MIXTECA ALTA DEL OESTE

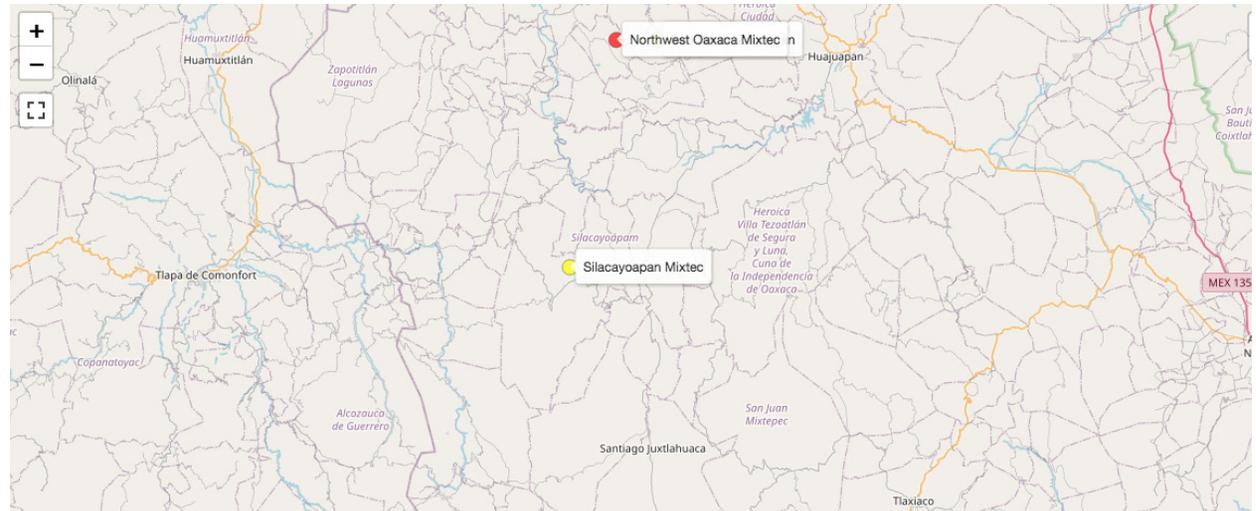
- mib Atatláhuca Mixtec
- mce Itundujia Mixtec
- xm Magdalena Peñasco Mixtec
- xtn Northern Tlaxiaco Mixtec
- mie Ocotepec Mixtec
- xtj San Juan Teita Mixtec
- mig San Miguel El Grande Mixtec
- mdv Santa Lucía Monteverde Mixtec
- xti Sinicahua Mixtec
- meh Southwestern Tlaxiaco Mixtec
- xtt Tachua-Yolotepec Mixtec
- xtl Tijaltepec Mixtec
- mpm Yosondúa Mixtec
- mvg Yucuañe Mixtec



## BAJA MIXTEC: CENTRAL BAJA MIXTEC • MIXTECA BAJA: MIXTECA BAJA CENTRAL

mxa Northwest Oaxaca Mixtec

mks Silacayoapan Mixtec



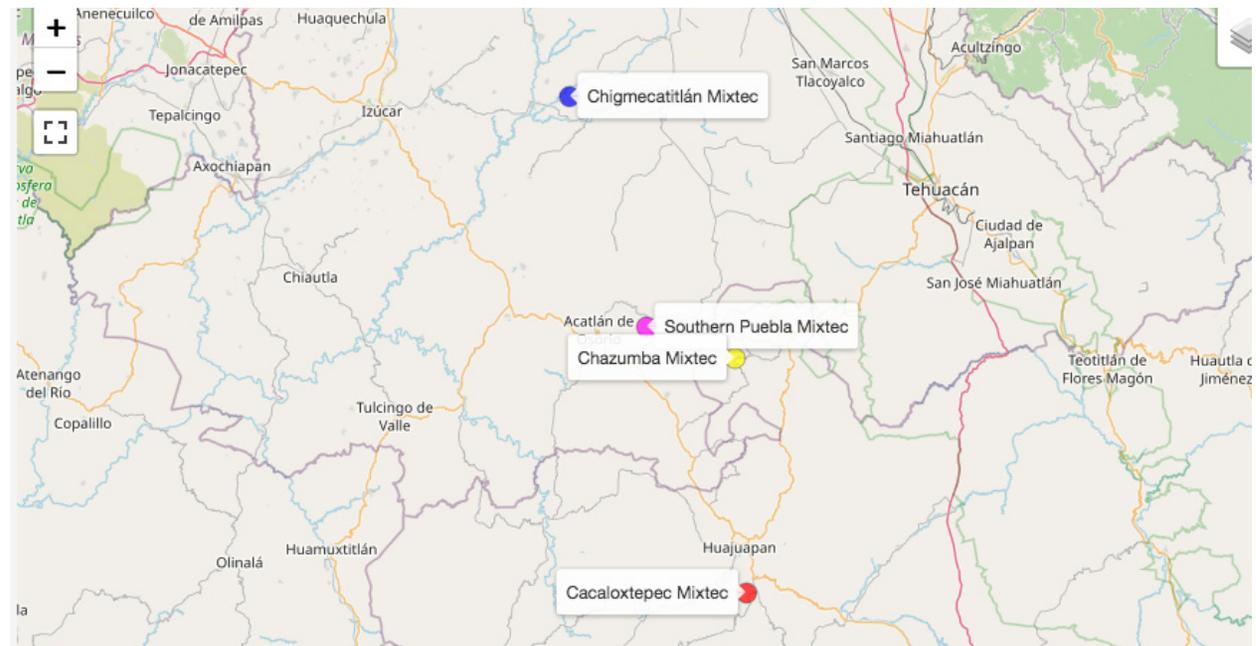
## BAJA MIXTEC: NORTHERN BAJA MIXTEC • MIXTECA BAJA: MIXTECA BAJA DEL NORTE

miu Cacaloxtepec Mixtec

xtb Chazumba Mixtec

mii Chigmecatitlán Mixtec

mit Southern Puebla Mixtec

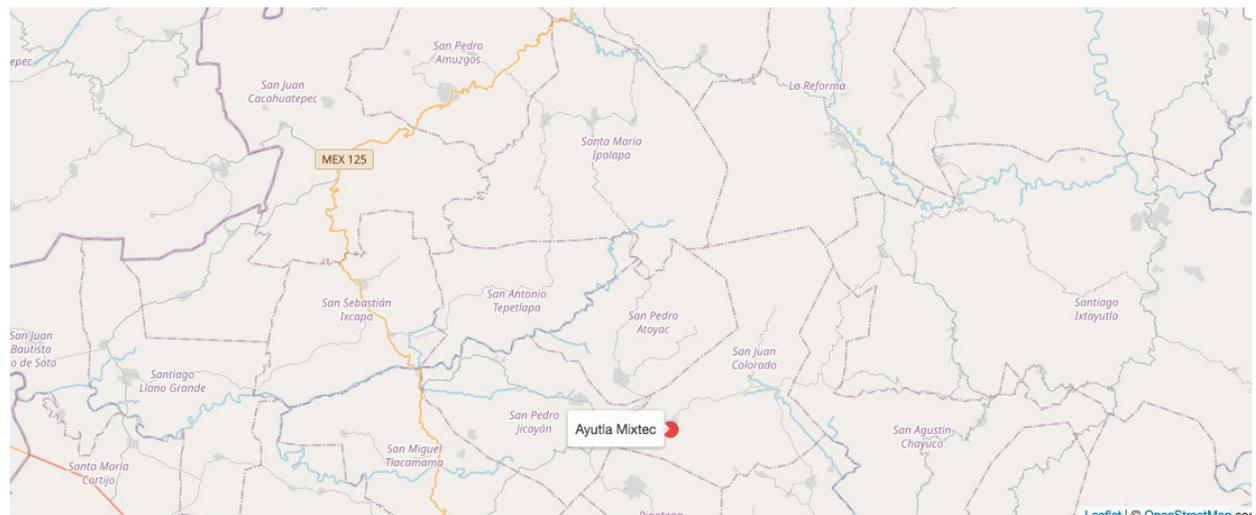
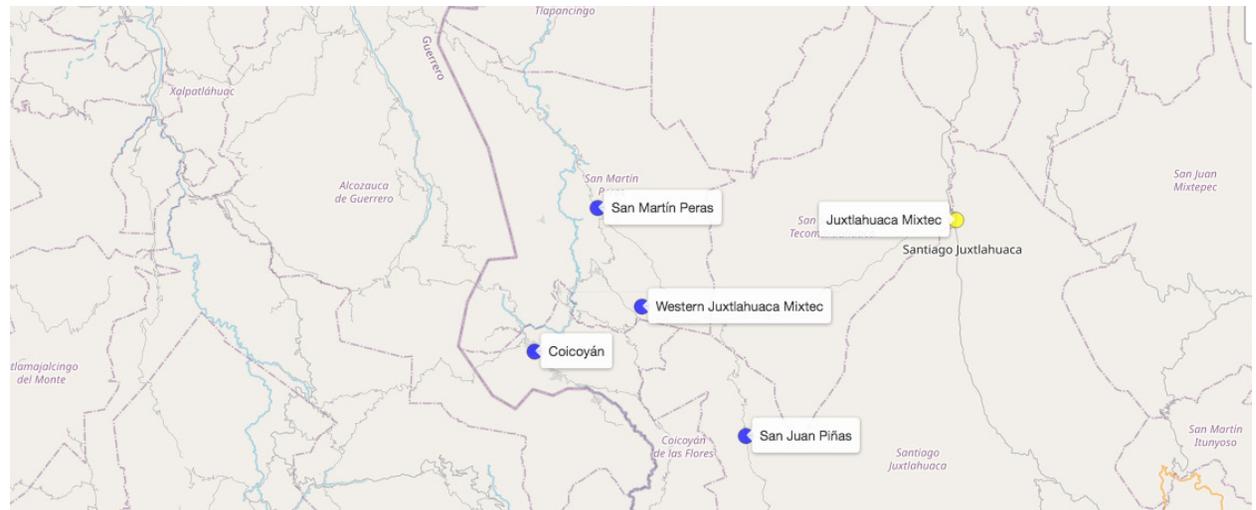


## BAJA MIXTEC: SOUTHERN BAJA MIXTEC • MIXTECA BAJA: MIXTECA BAJA DEL SUR

miy Ayutla Mixtec

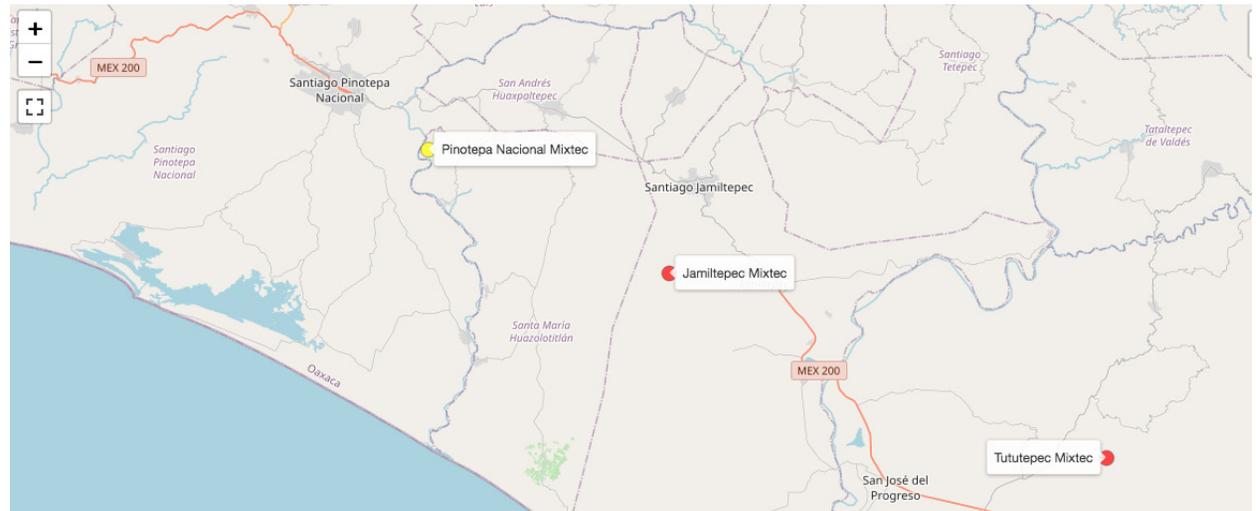
vmc Juxtlahuaca Mixtec

jmx Western Juxtlahuaca Mixtec



## COAST MIXTEC • MIXTECA DE LA COSTA

- mih Chayuco Mixtec
- vmj Ixtayutla Mixtec
- mxt Jamiltepec Mixtec
- mjc San Juan Colorado Mixtec
- mtu Tututepec Mixtec
- mio Pinotepa Nacional Mixtec
- mza Santa María Zacatepec Mixtec



# NAHUAN LANGUAGES

## *What you need to know*

- The terms Nahua and Nahuatl refer to a branch of the vast Uto-Aztecan language family. Therefore, these terms refer to a group of distinct languages and not to a single language.
- Nahuan languages constitute a language family which includes Classical Nahuatl considered as the language spoken by the Aztecs in what is now central Mexico.
- Nahuan languages are not related to Spanish. Instead, they are related to a number of Native American languages such as Tübatulabal, Hopi, Comanche, Shoshoni and the Paiute languages, among others.
- Nahuan languages are distributed across the entire region of Mesoamerica.

## *Registering students*

- The Pipil language in El Salvador. Ask whether the family comes from El Salvador. The Pipil language is a Nahuan language in El Salvador. Pipil is highly endangered with few speakers but increasing efforts to revitalize the language. If a family identifies as speakers of Pipil, document the language as follows: Pipil, ISO code ppl.
- Classical Nahuatl is the language associated with the Aztec peoples and considered to have been in use as a lingua franca during colonial times. Some descendants of Nahua and other Mesoamerican peoples have chosen to speak Classical Nahuatl as a way to affirm their Indigenous identity. If a family identifies as speakers of Classical Nahuatl, document the language as follows: Classical Nahuatl, ISO code nci.
- Nahuan languages in Mexico. If a family comes from Mexico, ask whether the family is from any one of these regions and states:
  - Huasteca Region – Región de la Huasteca
  - State of Guerrero – Estado de Guerrero
  - States of Puebla and Tlaxcala – Estados de Puebla y Tlaxcala
  - States of Veracruz and Tabasco – Estados de Veracruz y Tabasco
  - State of Oaxaca – Estado de Oaxaca
- Find the table for the selected region below and work through the list of languages and maps to find the language label for the district or town of origin of the family or one closest to it.
- Always remember to ask the family to also write down the name of the language as they refer to it, along with the town, district or municipality, state and country that they are from.
- In the event that the family's Nahua language cannot be identified with precision, ask the family to write down the name of their language as they would refer to it and the town, municipality and state they are from.

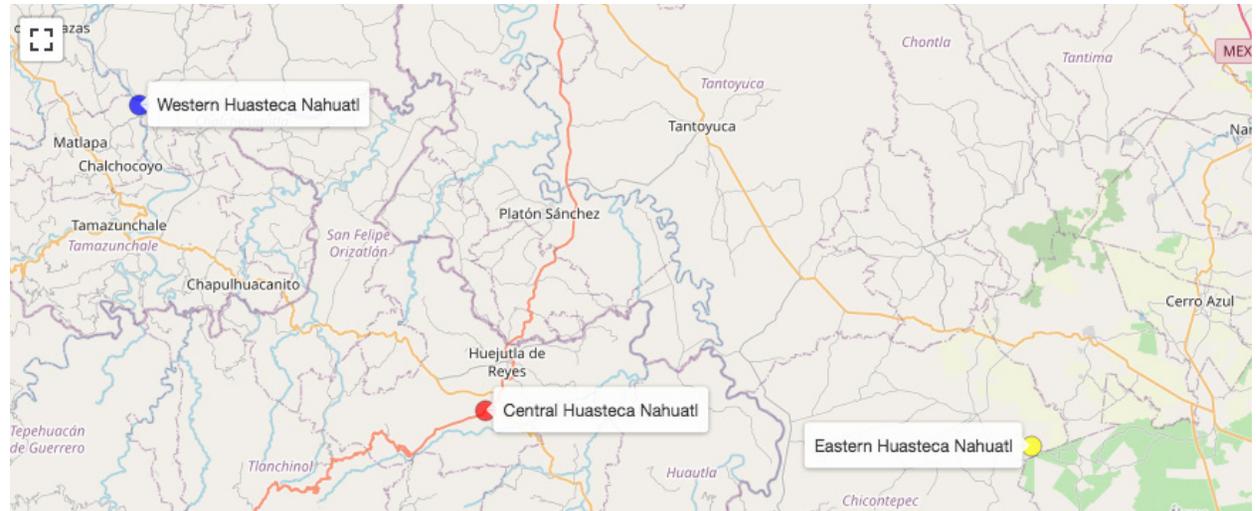
## HUASTECA

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nch Central Huasteca Nahuatl

nhe Eastern Huasteca Nahuatl

nhw Western Huasteca Nahuatl



## GUERRERO

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ngu Central Guerrero Nahuatl





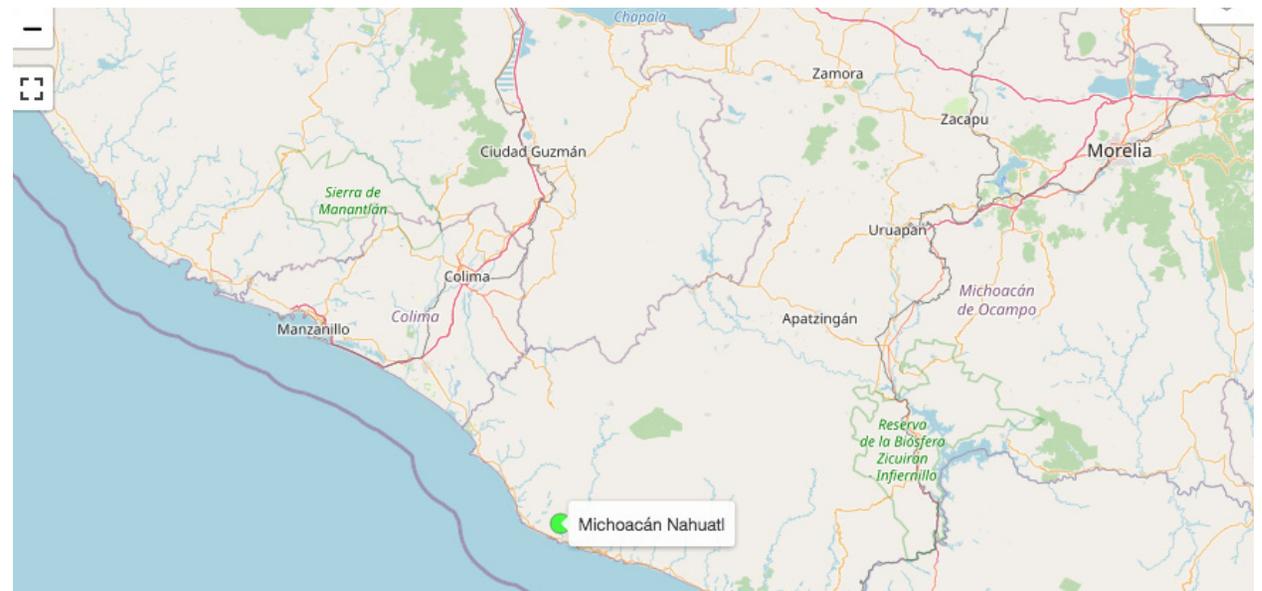
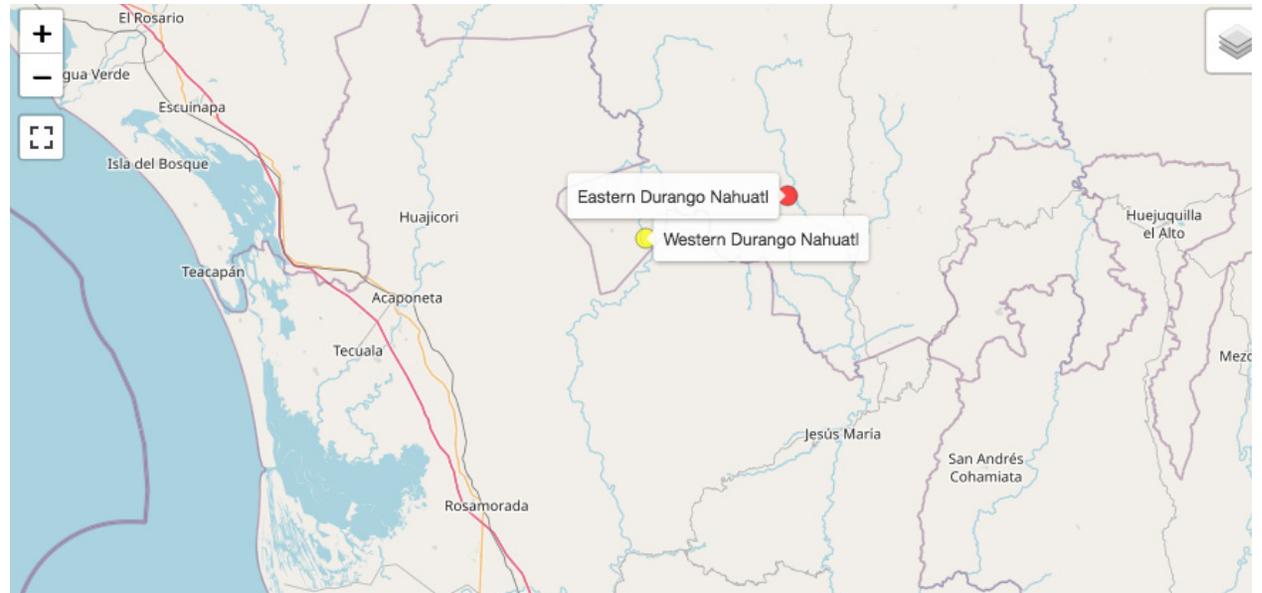
## DURANGO, NAYARIT, MICHOACÁN

azn Western Durango Nahuatl  
*Western Durango Nahuatl is actively used in the State of Durango communities of San Agustín de Buenaventura, Curachitos de Buenavista, San Diego, Tepetates II (Berenjenas), Alacranes and Tepalcates). It is also used in the State of Nayarit communities of Santa Cruz, La Laguna, Mesa de las Arpas, and El Duraznito.*

azd Eastern Durango Nahuatl  
*Eastern Durango Nahuatl is spoken in communities such as San Pedro Jícora in the State of Durango.*

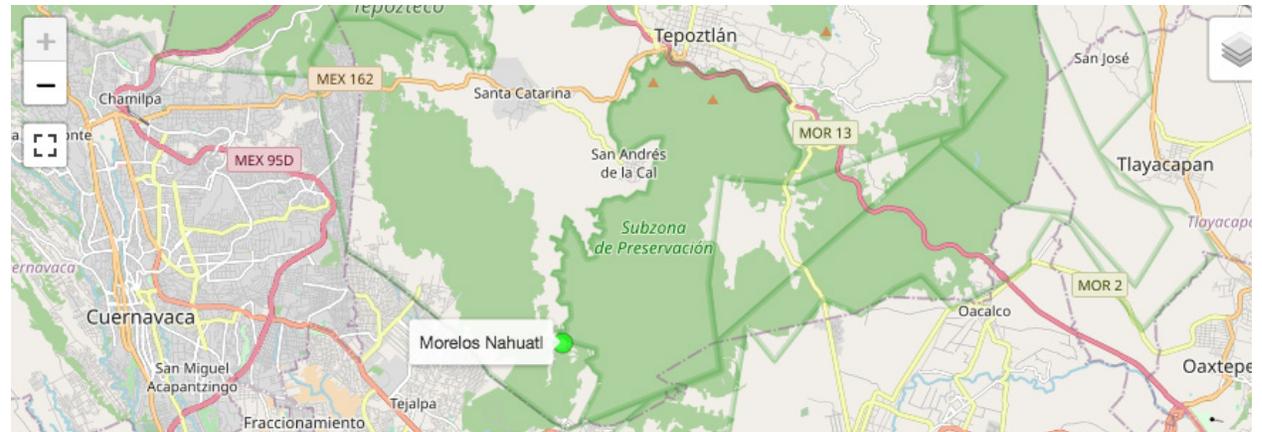
nln Durango Nahuatl  
*Western Durango Nahuatl and Eastern Durango Nahuatl are distinct languages that constitute the branch of Durango Nahuatl languages. If it becomes difficult to determine which language is the student's language of origin but the family reports being from Durango or Nayarit, document the language as follows: Durango Nahuatl, ISO code nln.*

ncl Michoacán Nahuatl

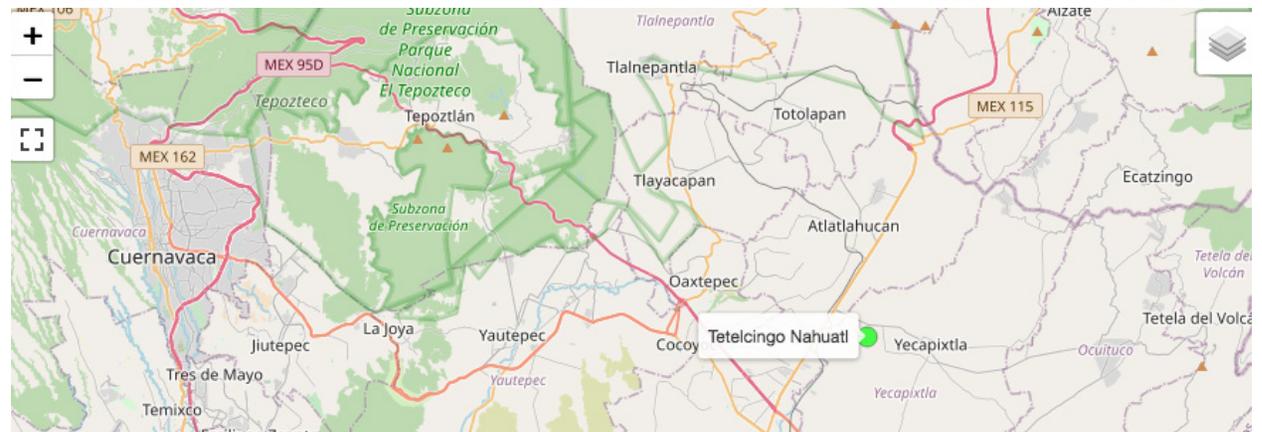


## ESTADO DE MÉXICO, MORELOS

nhm Morelos Nahuatl



nhg Tetelcingo Nahuatl

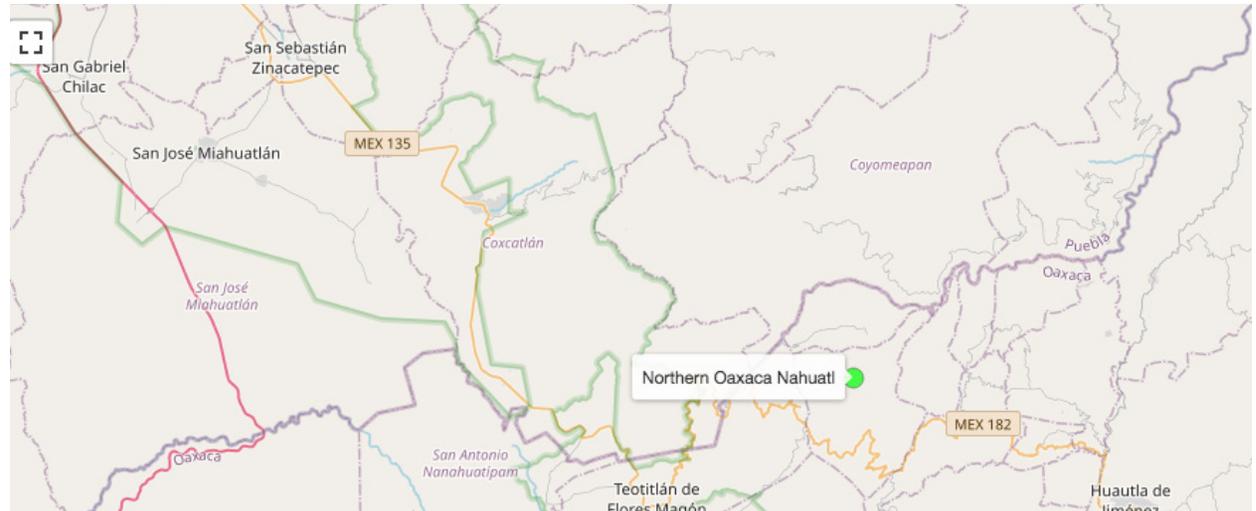


nhv Temascaltepec Nahuatl



# OAXACA

nhy Northern Oaxaca Nahuatl

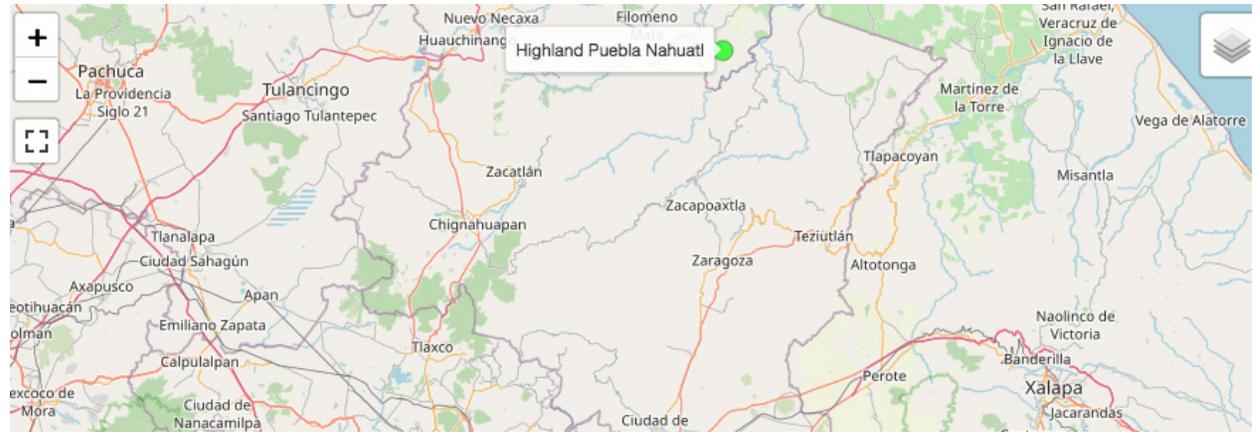


xpo Pochutec

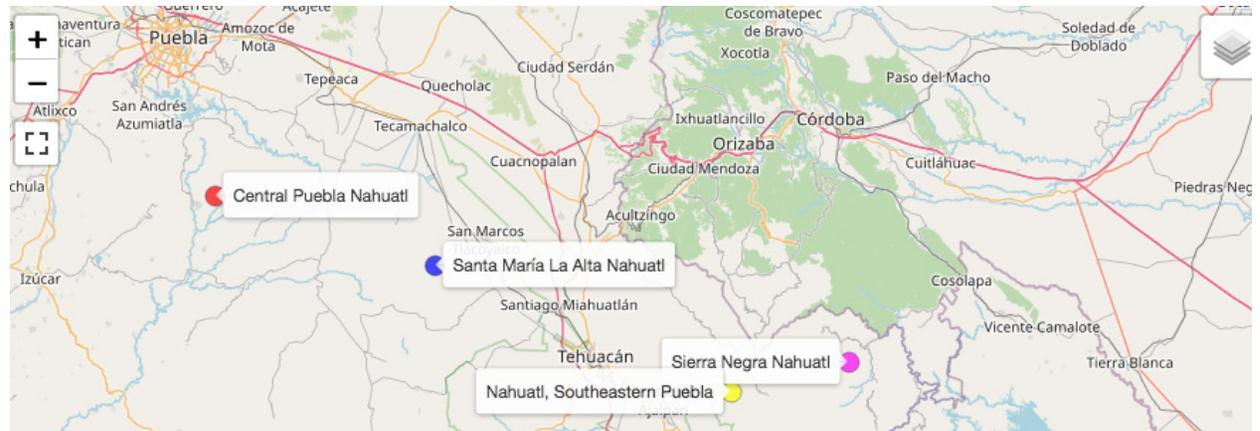


## PUEBLA, TLAXCALA

azz [Highland Puebla Nahuatl](#)



ncx [Central Puebla Nahuatl](#)

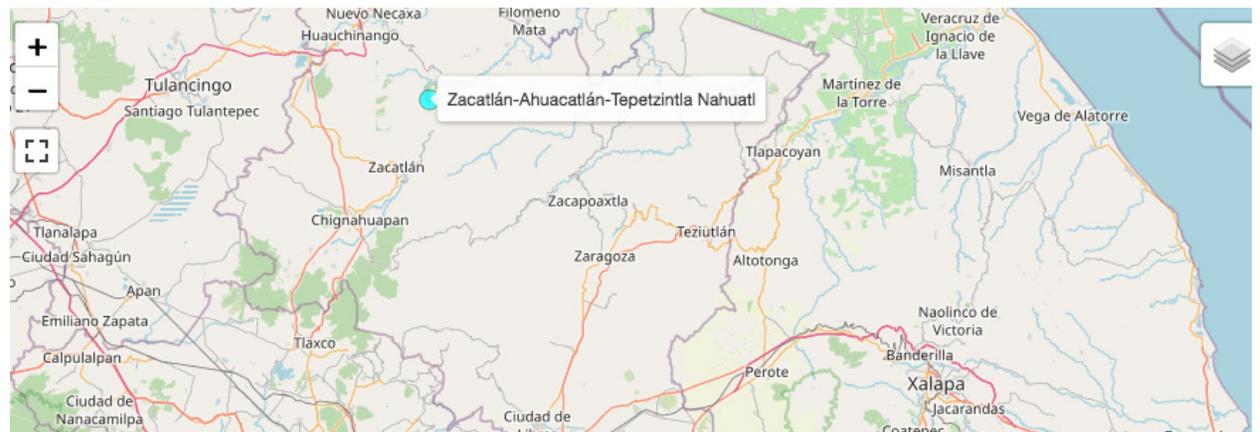


npl [Nahuatl, Southeastern Puebla](#)

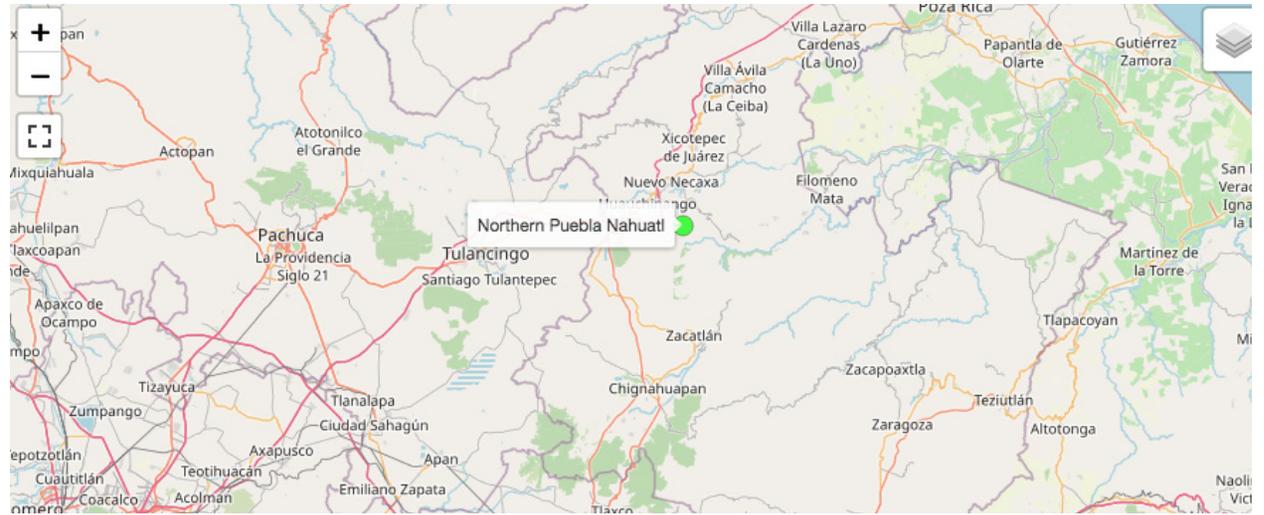
nhz [Santa María La Alta Nahuatl](#)

nsu [Sierra Negra Nahuatl](#)

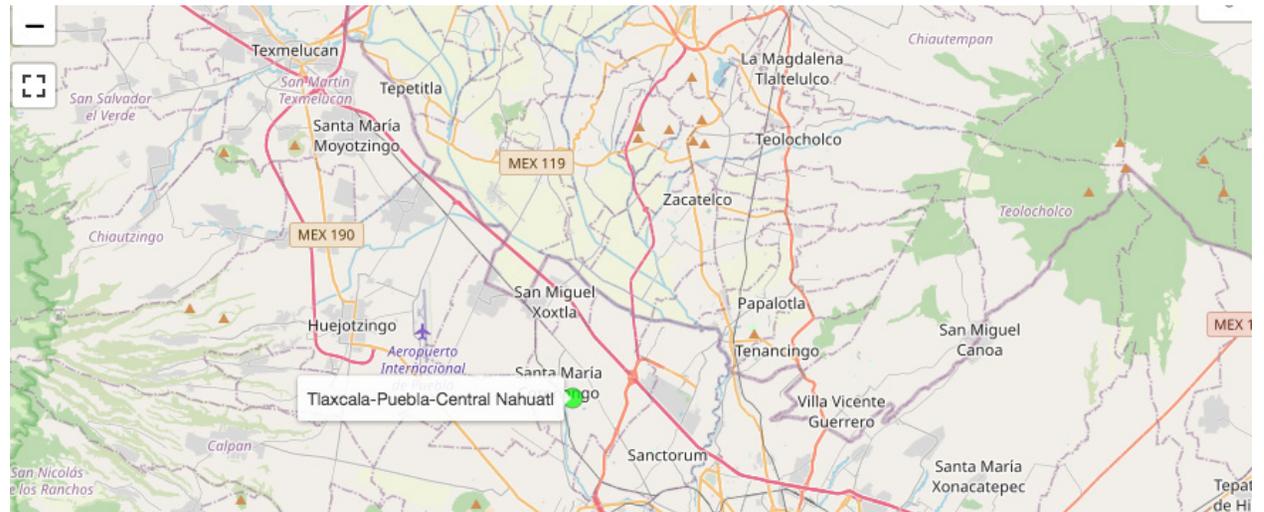
nhi [Zacatlán-Ahuacatlán-Tepetzintla Nahuatl](#)



ncj Northern Puebla Nahuatl



nhn Tlaxcala-Puebla-Central Nahuatl



# VERACRUZ, TABASCO

nhq Huaxcaleca Nahuatl



nlv Orizaba Nahuatl



nhk Isthmus-Cosoleacaque Nahuatl

nhx Isthmus-Mecayapan Nahuatl

nhp Isthmus-Pajapan Nahuatl

nhc Tabasco Nahuatl



## PUREPECHA LANGUAGES

### *What you need to know*

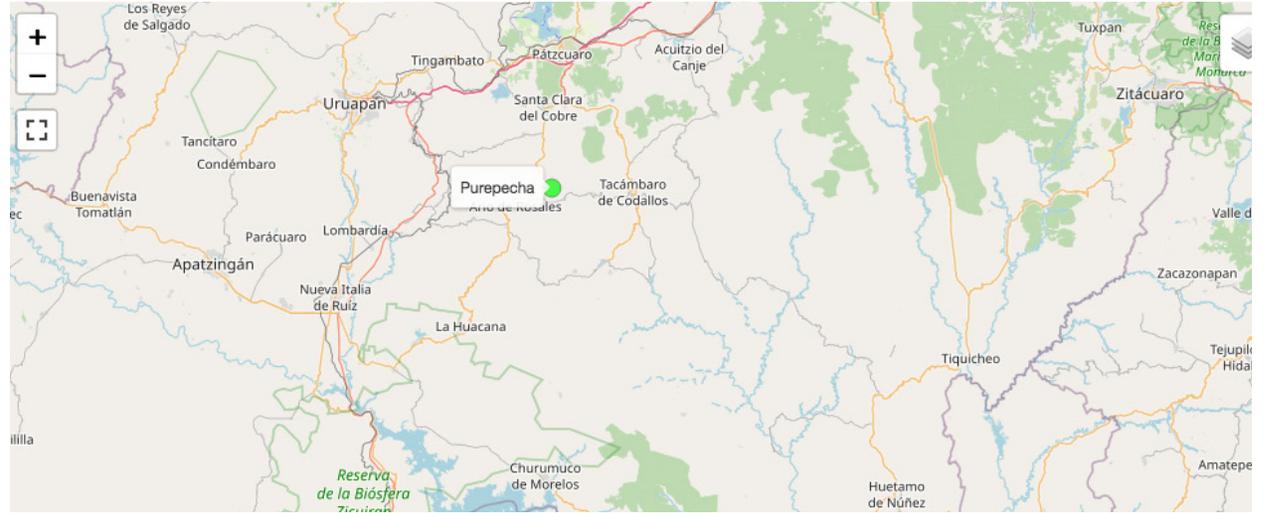
- Purepecha is considered to be an isolate which is a language or a group with few languages that are not known to be related to any language family in the world.
- Purepecha is spoken in what is now the state of Michoacán in Mexico.
- The Glottolog lists two language labels, Purepecha and Western Highland Purepecha. The label Purepecha is widely used along with Tarascan, whereas the label Western Highland Purepecha is not broadly known beyond the Linguistics discipline.

### *Registering students*

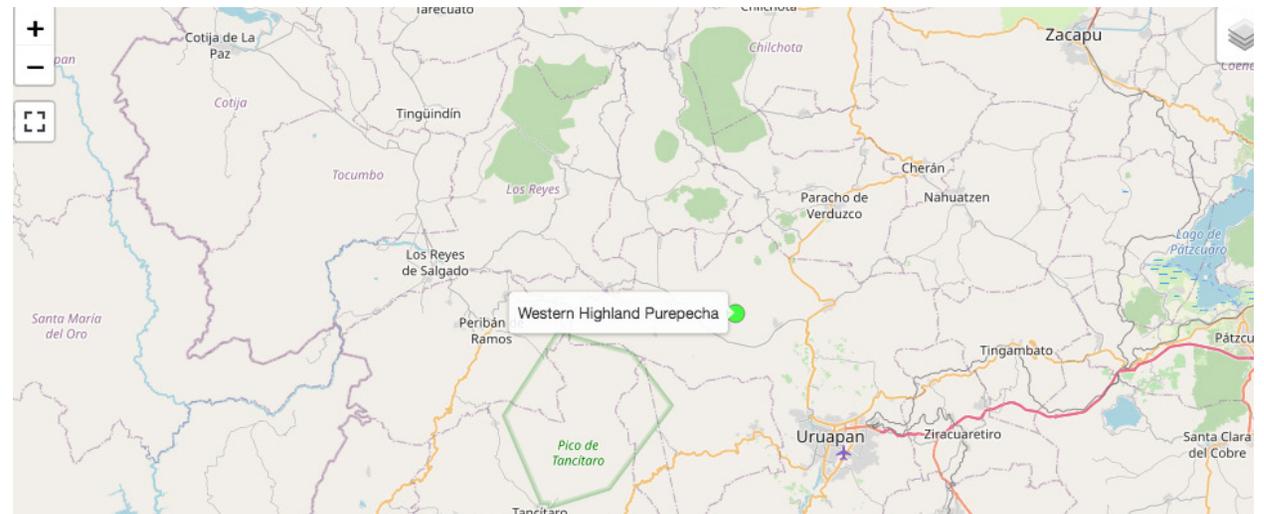
- Use the two maps below to guide the selection of one of the two available language labels.
- If a family prefers to use the Purepecha label to identify their language even if their town appears in the Western Highland Purepecha map, please honor the family's choice.
- Always remember to ask the family to also write down the name of the language as they refer to it, along with the town, district or municipality that they are from.

**PUREPECHA** | *P'urhepecha, P'orhepecha, Purépecha, Michoacano, Porhe, Porhé, Porhepecha, Purecha, Purembe, Purépecha de Michoacán, Phurepecha, Ph'orrhépecha, P'orepécha, P'urhepecha, P'urhépecha, Purepicha, Púrhepecha, Tarasca, Tarasca de Michoacán*

tsz Purepecha



pue Western Highland Purepecha



# TRIQUI LANGUAGES

## ***What you need to know***

- The term Triqui refers to a branch of the vast Otomanguean language family. Therefore, it refers to a group of distinct languages and not to a single language.
- Triqui languages are spoken in what is now the state of Oaxaca in Mexico.

## ***Registering students***

- Use the map below to find the language label for the district or town of origin of the family or one closest to it.
- Always remember to ask the family to also write down the name of the language as they refer to it, along with the town, district or municipality, state and country that they are from.
- In the event that the family's language is not one of the languages listed, ask the family to write down the name of their language as they would refer to it and the town and/or municipality they are from.

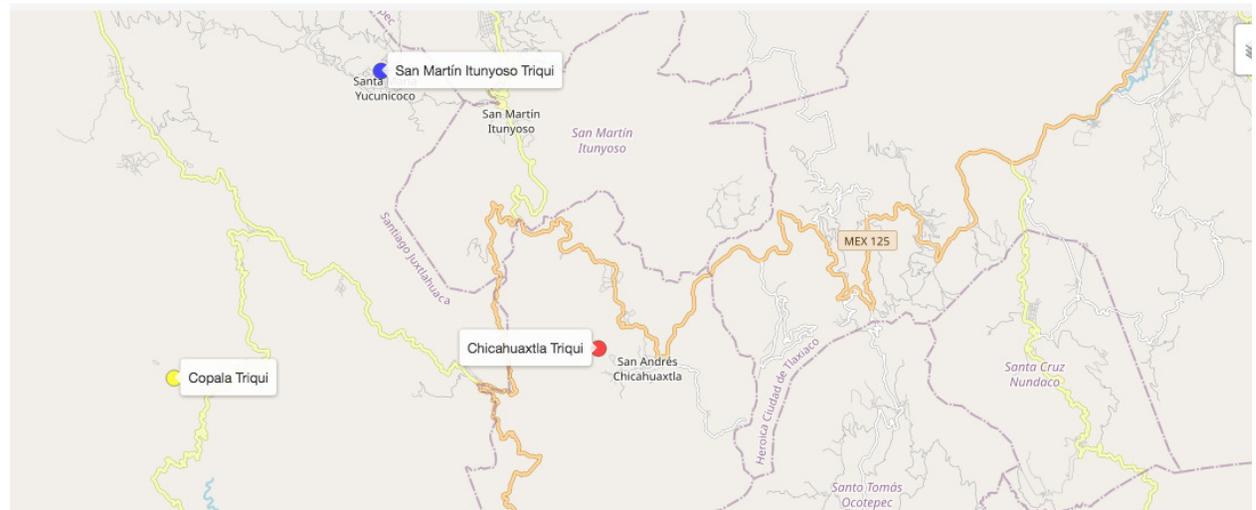
## **TRIQUI** | *Trique*

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trs Chichahuaxtla Triqui

trc Copala Triqui

trq San Martín Itunyoso Triqui



# ZAPOTEC LANGUAGES

## *What you need to know*

- The term Zapotec refers to a branch of the vast Otomanguean language family. Therefore, it refers to a very large group of distinct languages and not to a single language.
- Zapotec languages can be so distinct one from the other, that speakers from two towns that are a half hour apart will have trouble understanding each other. Therefore, it is essential that Zapotec languages be documented with the finest level of detail.
- To this date, the definitive number of Zapotec languages in existence is not known. One source, the Glottolog.org, lists 58 distinct Zapotec languages.
- Zapotec languages are mostly spoken in the state of Oaxaca but there are a few languages spoken in the state of Veracruz.
- Most Zapotec languages are referred to by their speakers with a label that includes the word for word as said in the language itself. Regrettably, self-designated language names are not well documented. Therefore, in order to avoid misrepresentation, this guide uses the Zapotec language labels from the Glottolog. These language labels are generally associated with a town, district or geographic region.
- Zapotec languages in this guide are organized following the categorization in the Glottolog. This means that the languages are organized by small groups of related languages which are more likely to be mutually intelligible to their speakers. The languages, therefore, are not listed in alphabetical order.

## *Registering students*

- Ask whether the family is from the states of Oaxaca or Veracruz in Mexico. If they are from Veracruz, ask the family to write down the name of their language as they would refer to it and the town and/or municipality they are from.
- If the family is from Oaxaca, ask what region the family is from:
  - Central and Isthmus regions - Región Central e Istmo de Tehuantepec
    - Northern region – Región Sierra Norte
    - Southern region – Región Sierra Sur
    - Western region – Región occidente
    - Papabuco region – Región de lenguas Papabuco
- Find the table for the selected region below and work through the list of languages and maps to find the language label for the district or town of origin of the family or closest to it.
- If the family's town does not appear on the maps, ask whether they can identify a language label with the name of a town where the language spoken is easiest for the family to understand. Then, document the language with the label corresponding to the selected neighboring town.
- Always remember to ask the family to also write down the name of the language as they refer to it, along with the town, district or municipality, state and country that they are from.
- In the event that the family's Zapotec language cannot be identified with precision, document the language as Zapotec, ISO code zap. Ask the family to write down the name of their language as they would refer to it and the town, municipality and state they are from.

## CENTRAL AND ISTHMUS REGIONS • REGIÓN CENTRAL E ISTMO DE TEHUANTEPEC

zoo Asunción Mixtepec Zapotec

zaf Ayoquesco Zapotec

zpy Mazaltepec Zapotec

zaw Mitla Zapotec

zpf San Pedro Quiatoni Zapotec

ztn Santa Catarina Albarradas Zapotec

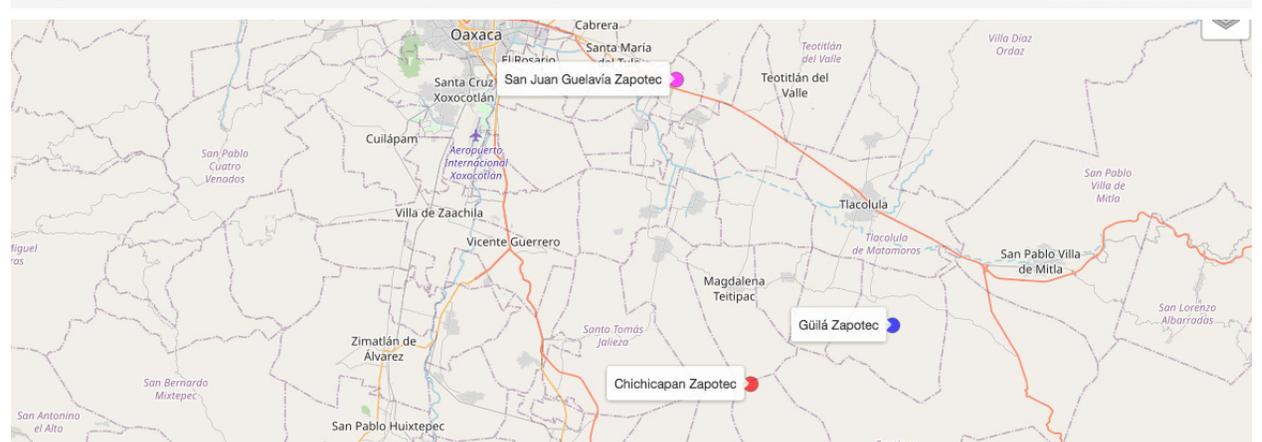
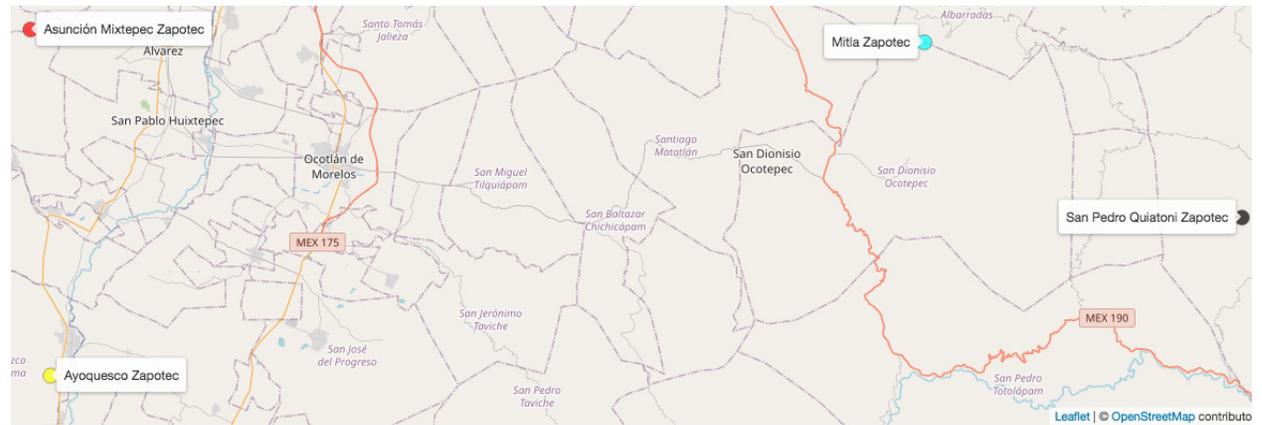
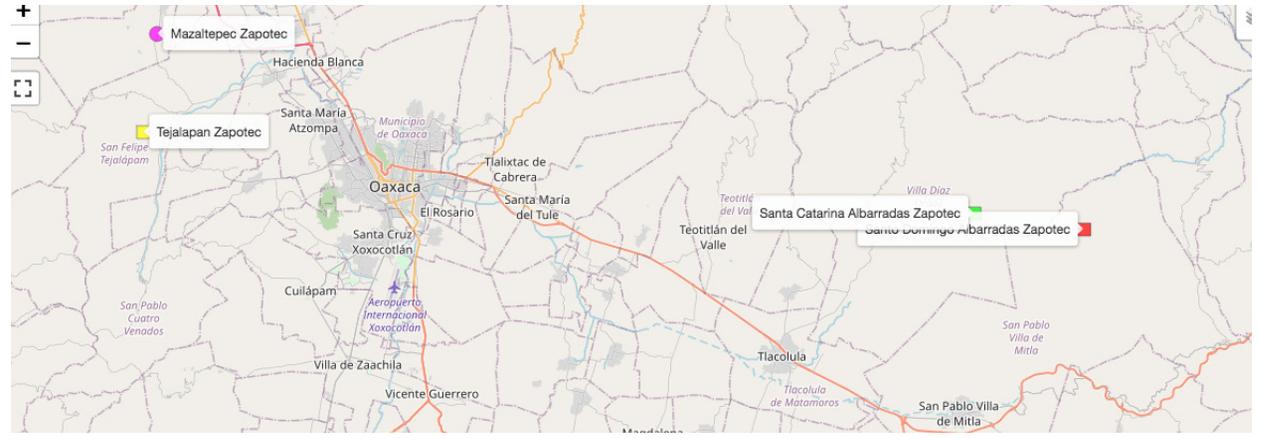
zas Santo Domingo Albarradas Zapotec

ztt Tejalapan Zapotec

zpv Chichicapán Zapotec

ztu Güilá Zapotec

zab San Juan Guelavía Zapotec

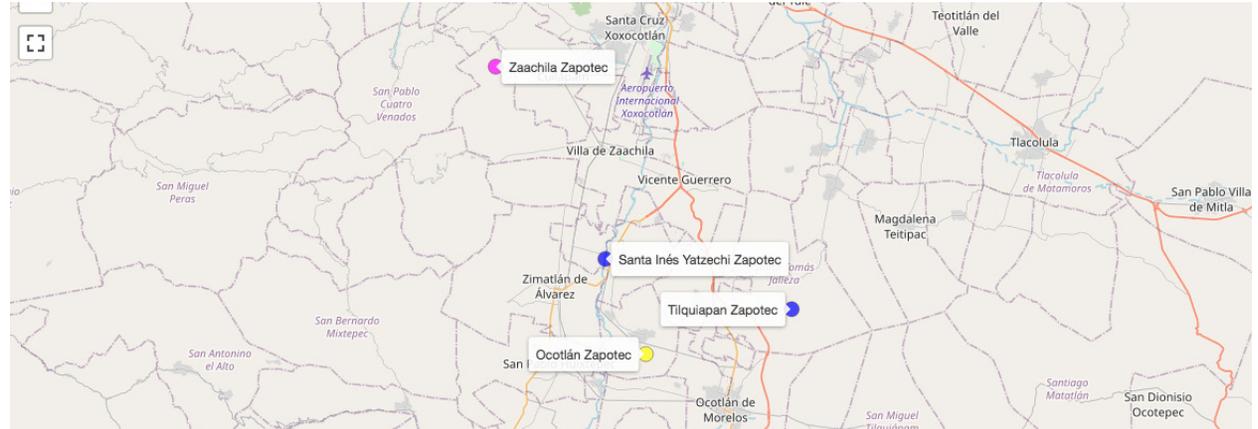


zac Ocotlán Zapotec

zpn Santa Inés Yatzechi Zapotec

zts Tilquiapan Zapotec

ztx Zaachila Zapotec



zai Isthmus Zapotec



zpg Guevea De Humboldt Zapotec

zpa Lachiguirí Zapotec

zpe Petapa Zapotec

zpj Quiavicuzas Zapotec



## SOUTHERN REGION • REGIÓN SIERRA SUR

ztl Lapaguía-Guivini Zapotec

zpi Santa María Quiegolani Zapotec

zpr Santiago Xanica Zapotec

zax Xadani Zapotec

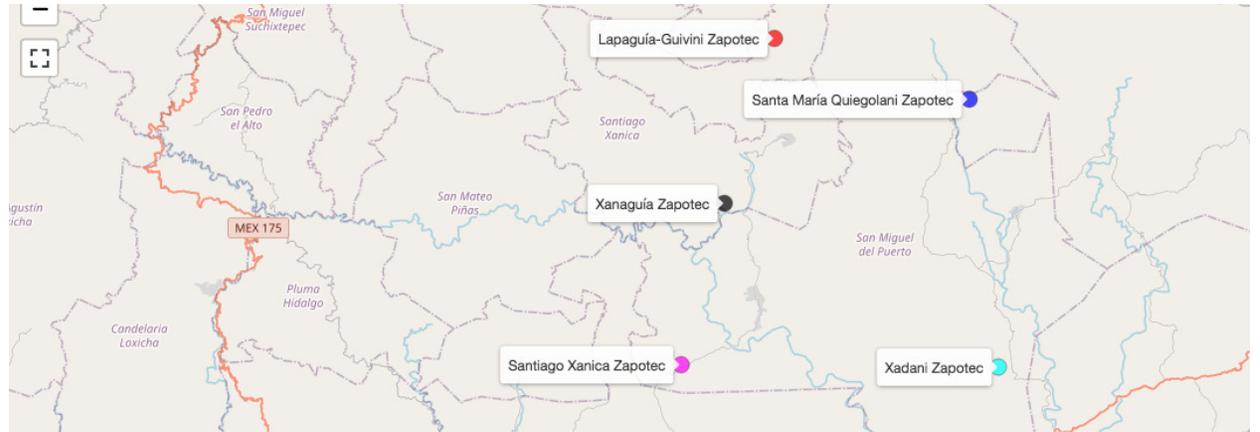
ztg Xanaguía Zapotec

zpm Mixtepec Zapotec

ztq Quioquitani-Quieri Zapotec

ztp Loxicha Zapotec

zao Ozolotepec Zapotec



zam Cuixtla-Xitla Zapotec

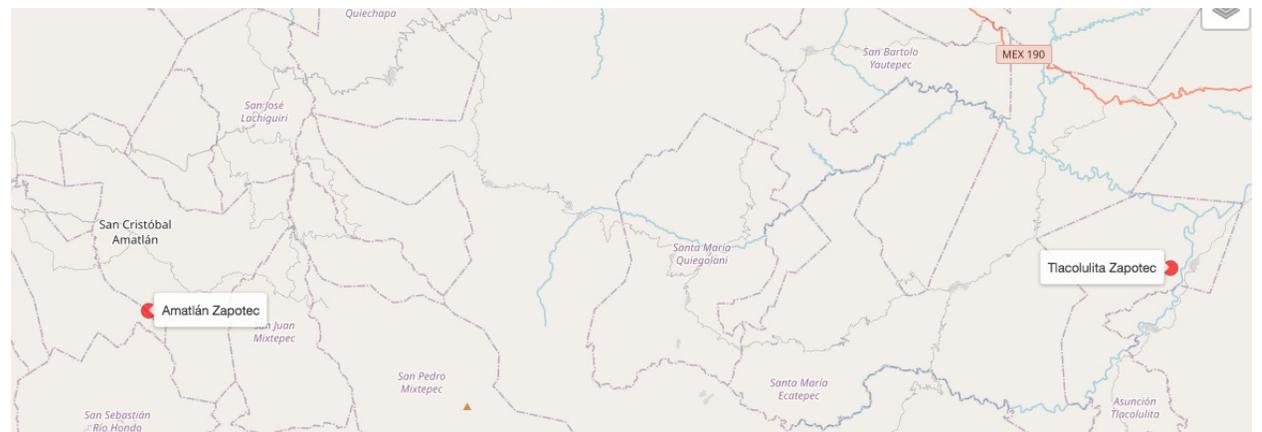
ztm San Agustín Mixtepec Zapotec

zpb Yautepec Zapotec



zpo Amatlán Zapotec

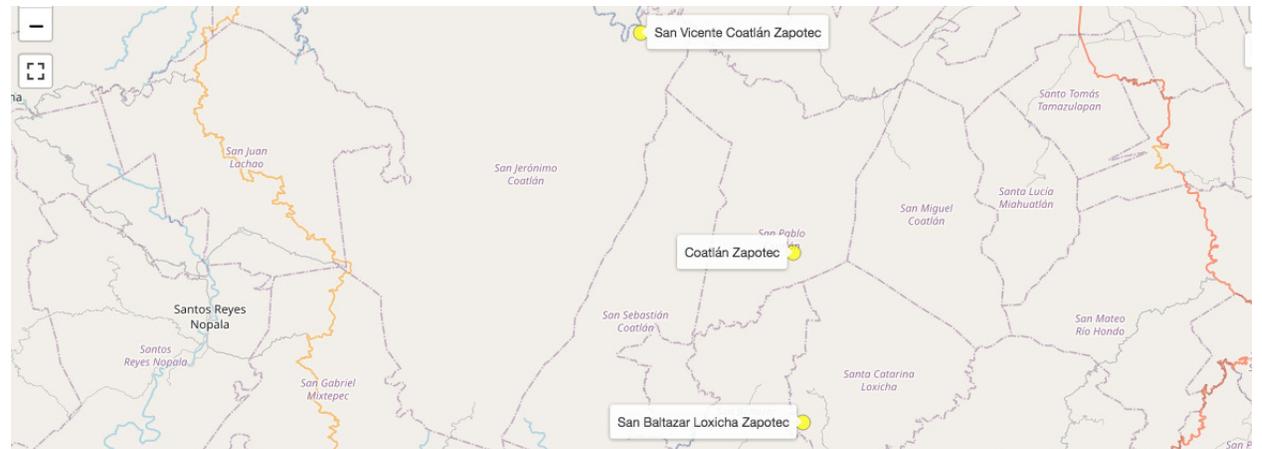
zpk Tlacolulita Zapotec



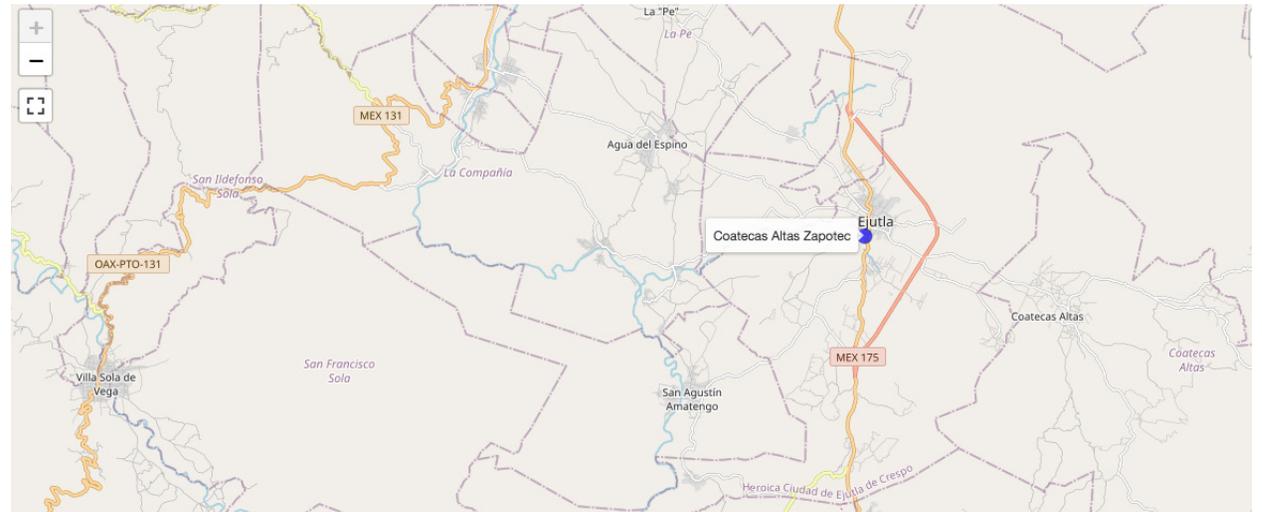
zps Coatlán Zapotec

zpx San Baltazar Loxicha Zapotec

zpt San Vicente Coatlán Zapotec



zca Coatecas Altas Zapotec



## NORTHERN REGION • REGIÓN SIERRA NORTE | *Cakchiquel*

zad Cajonos Zapotec

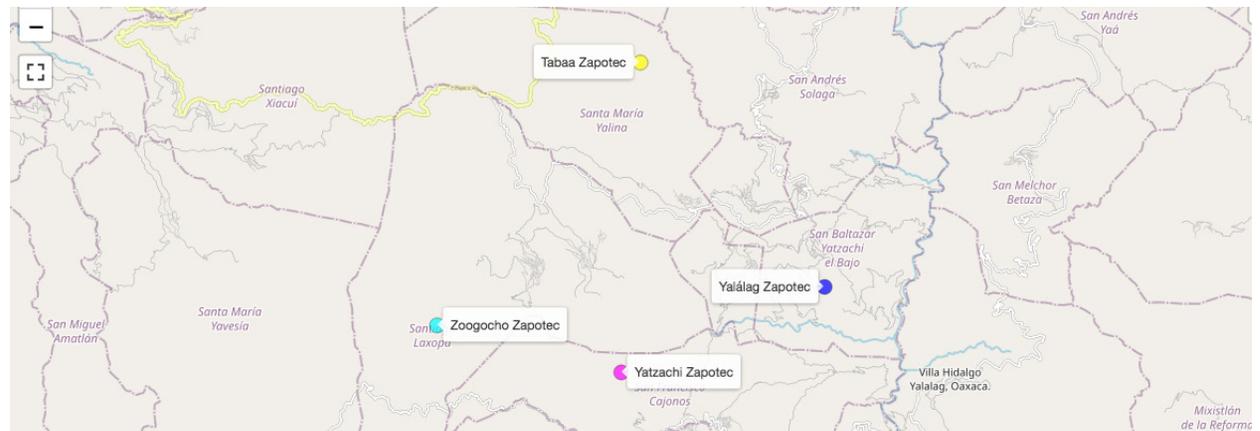


zat Tabaa Zapotec

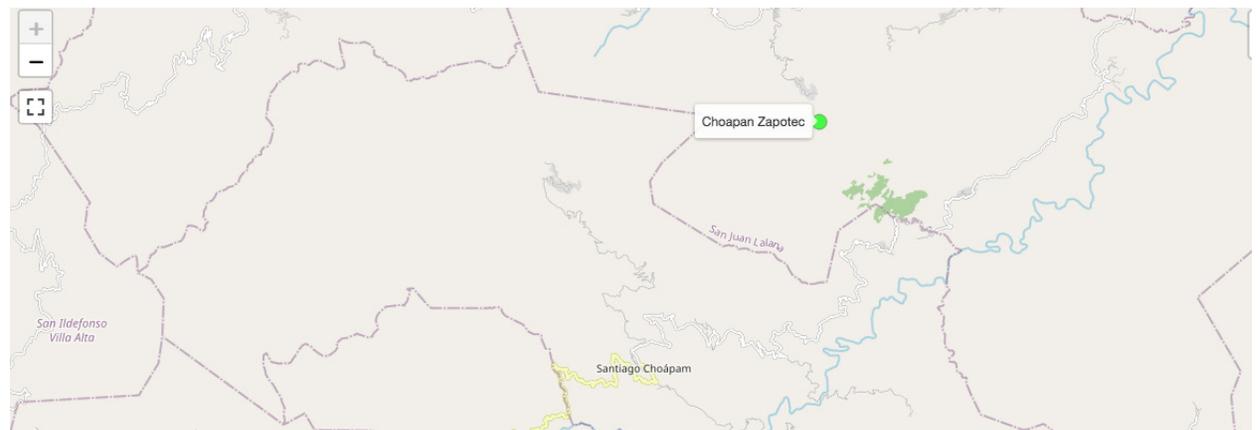
zpu Yalalag Zapoteco

zav Yatzachi Zapoteco

zpq Zoogocho Zapotec



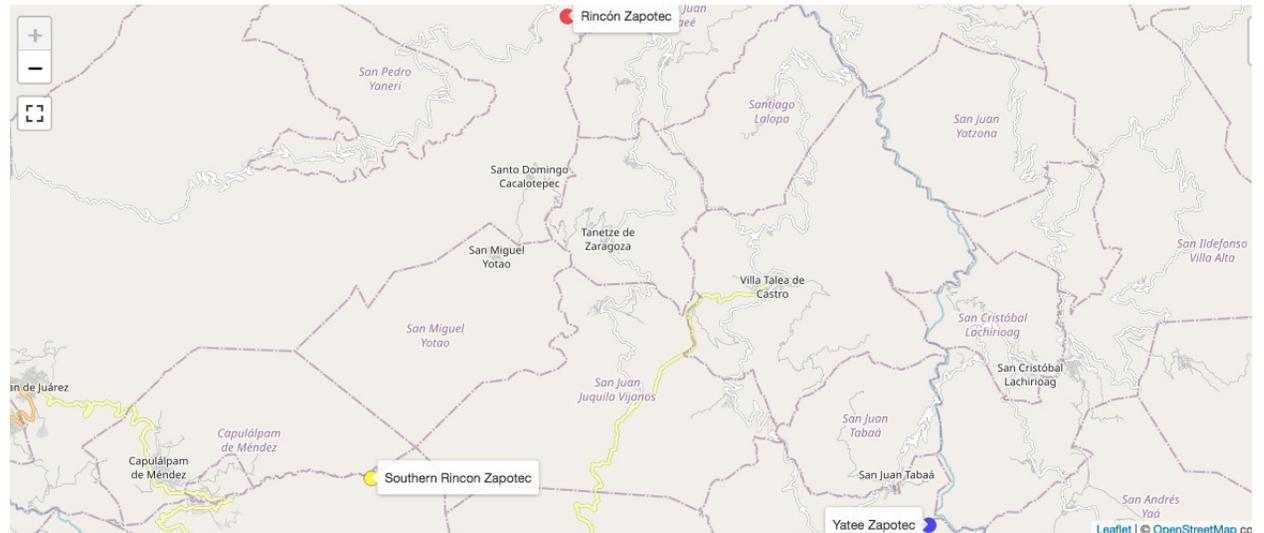
zpc Choapan Zapotec



zar Rincón Zapotec

zsr Southern Rincon Zapotec

zty Yatee Zapotec



zaq Aloápam Zapotec

zaa Sierra de Juárez Zapotec



zpd Southeastern Ixtlán Zapotec

zae Yareni Zapotec

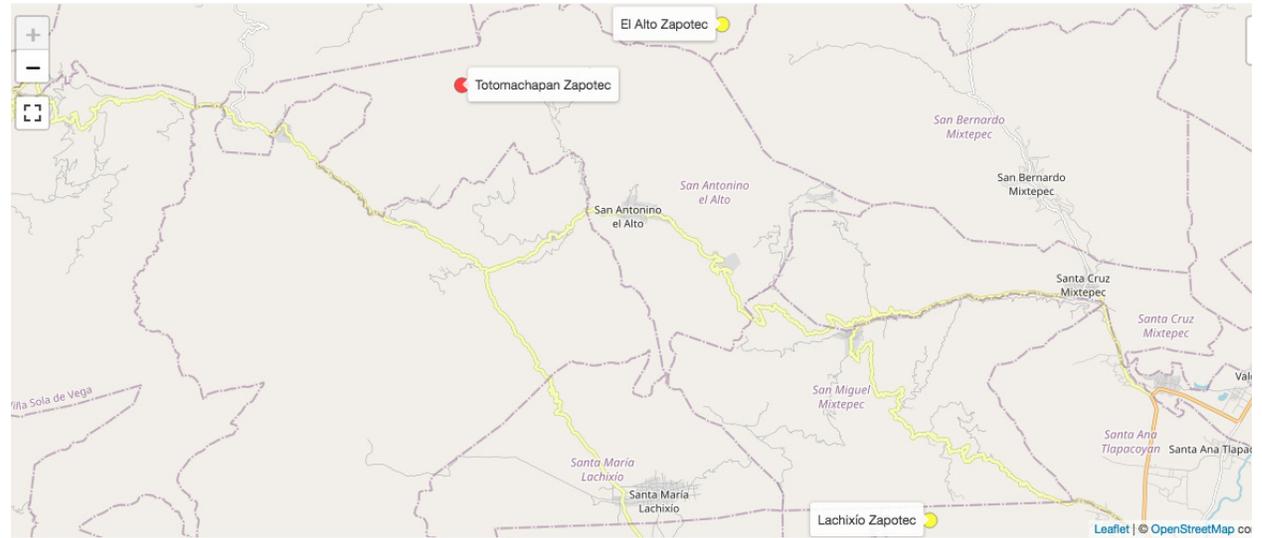


## WESTERN REGION • REGIÓN OCCIDENTE

zph [Totomachapan Zapotec](#)

zpp [El Alto Zapotec](#)

zpl [Lachixío Zapotec](#)



## PAPABUCO REGION • REGIÓN DE LENGUAS PAPABUCO

zte [Elotepec Zapotec](#)

zpz [Texmelucan Zapotec](#)

zpw [Zaniza Zapotec](#)



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