

Nido de Lenguas: Clases

Class 6 – May 21, 2020

GOALS

- To review asking and answering yes-no questions
- To practice making checked and creaky vowels
- To learn how to use plural pronouns
- To learn about *yet* 'tortilla'



Workshop on the Languages of Meso-America
University of California, Santa Cruz
wlma.ucsc.edu/nidodelenguas/

1. Dialogue: *Wzuhnh (Tequio)*

It is Sunday morning, time to do *wzuhnh* for the town. Beto is still in bed, and his sister Raquel comes to wake him.

Raquel: *Bebanh, wyahs! Ba gule' chejdzu.*
'Wake up, get up! It's time to go.'

Beto: *Gan chejdzu?*
'Where are we going?'

Raquel: *Chejdzu wzuhnh tse yell.*
'We are going to do *tequio* for the pueblo.'

Beto: *Ledu'ke! Kenla'a gulalla'n.*
'You're right! I forgot.'

Beto: *Duxklhenu' bezbanhu' neda'.*
'Thank you for waking me up.'

Raquel: *Byubdu' la'a de zanh yag na'n gazdzu.*
'Hurry up, because there are a lot of trees for us to plant.'

Beto: *Yo'o lla!*
'Let's go!'

Exercise

Pairs of students will perform the dialogue for their classmates.

2. Review

2.1. Verbs

First, let's review the verbs we learned last time.

<i>dze'ej</i>	'drink'	<i>shtahs</i>	'sleep'
<i>dzul</i>	'read'	<i>tsyitj</i>	'play'
<i>dzazj</i>	'shower'	<i>tzhunj</i>	'run'

Exercise

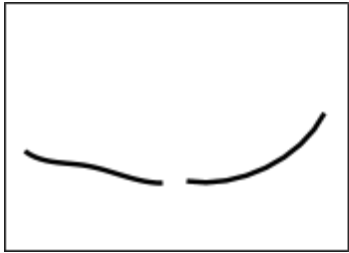
Maestra Fe will say each of the verbs. Repeat after her.

2.2. Asking and answering questions

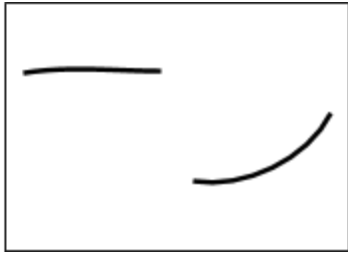
Remember that to ask a yes-no question in Zapotec, you add the question word *e* to the beginning of the sentence. You can answer with *ò'o* 'yes' or with *ó'o* 'no'.

Asking and answering yes-no questions

E _____?
'Is/Are _____?'



Ò'o. 'Yes.'
([listen](#))



Ó'o. 'No.'
([listen](#))

Exercise: Charades

Students will “pick” one of the verbs “out of a hat” — Maziar will send them by private chat — that they will act out. Everyone else will guess what they are doing by asking a yes-no question using *e*. The actor will respond with ‘yes’ or ‘no’. Whether you’re asking or answering, be sure to use the right attached pronoun!

As a reminder, here are the attached pronouns for first person (‘I’) and second person (‘you’).

First and second person attached pronouns		
<i>-a'</i>	I	first person
<i>-u'</i>	you (sg.)	second person

3. Plural pronouns

There are three more attached pronouns in Zapotec. These plural pronouns refer to *groups* of people that include the speaker or the listener. These are illustrated with the verb *dze'ej* 'drink' below:

<i>dze'ejdzu</i>	'We are drinking.'
<i>dze'ejtu'</i>	'We are drinking.'
<i>dze'ejlhe</i>	'You all are drinking.'

Now you have seen *all* the attached pronouns in Zapotec:

Attached pronouns		
<i>-a'</i>	'I'	first person singular
<i>-u'</i>	'you (sg.)'	second person singular
<i>-e'</i>	's/he'	third person elder
<i>-ba'</i>	's/he'	third person non-elder
<i>-b</i>	'it'	third person animal
<i>-n</i>	'it'	third person inanimate
<i>-dzu</i>	'we (including listener)'	first person <u>plural inclusive</u>
<i>-tu'</i>	'we (excluding listener)'	first person <u>plural exclusive</u>
<i>-lhe</i>	'you (pl.)'	second person <u>plural</u>

Unlike in English or Spanish, there are *two* first person plural pronouns. These would both be translated as 'we (nosotros)'. We will learn about them in just a minute.

3.1. 'You all' and 'we'

You have already been using some of these pronouns. When Maestra Fe asks how you are doing at the beginning of class, she uses *-lhe* to refer to the group of people that includes you and the other students. It would be translated roughly as 'you all'.

Fe: *Gak zualhe?*
'How are you all?'

Class: *Zuatu' wen.*
'We (exclusive) are doing well.'

When you respond, you use a first person plural pronoun to refer to yourselves. In particular, you use the exclusive pronoun *-tu'* for reasons we will discuss next.

3.2. Inclusive vs. exclusive

The exclusive pronoun is used when a group of people is referring to themselves *excluding* the listener. The inclusive pronoun is used when a group of people is referring to themselves *including* the listener.

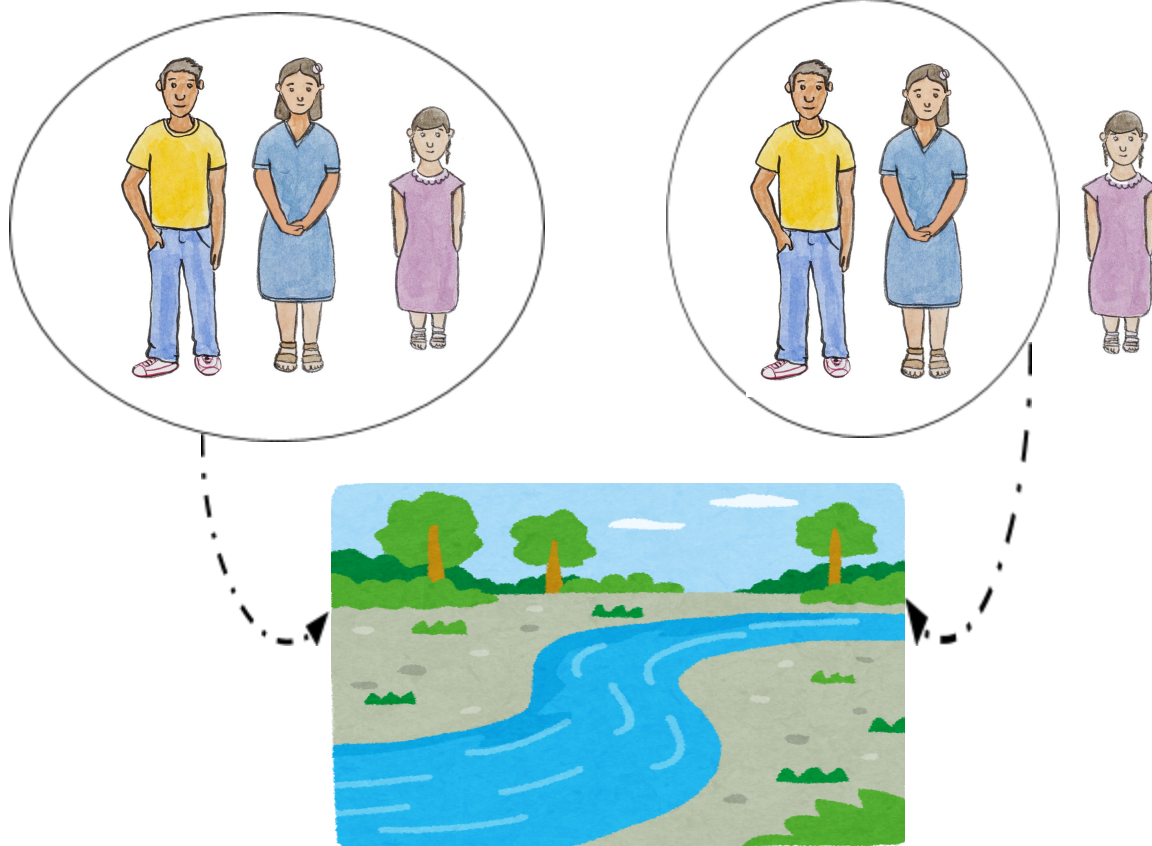
Here is another example. Raquel is talking to her little sister Roxana. Their brother Raúl is also with them. Raquel says:

Txunjdzu yegw'n.

'We (incl.) are running to the river.'

Txunjtu' yegw'n.

'We (excl.) are running to the river.'



Exercise

Students will take turns giving the *correct* verb with the *correct* attached pronoun for each scenario.

1. Raquel and Roxana are playing with their toys. From outside the room, Raúl shouts, "What are you doing?" Roxana says:

----- 'We are playing.'

2. Raúl runs into the room where Raquel and Roxana are in bed. He asks:

E -----? 'Are you sleeping?'

3. Raquel is babysitting Roxana. Roxana asks what activity they are going to do next together. Raquel says:

----- *libr.* 'We are reading a book.'

4. Raquel likes to drink coffee in the morning. Raúl comes into the kitchen one morning and sees her sipping on something. He asks:

E ----- *kafe?* 'Are you drinking coffee?'

5. The siblings are playing charades. Raquel and Roxana act out going jogging together. Raúl says:

-----! 'You are running!'

Then, Raquel and Roxana respond by saying:

Ô,o, -----! 'Yes, we are running!'

6. Raquel and Roxana come downstairs with a board game. Raúl really wants to play with them. He says:

E -----? 'Are we playing?'

7. Roxana sees Raúl and Raquel drinking something. She asks whether she can have some, too. They say:

Ó,o, ----- *mezkal!* 'No, we are drinking mezcal!'

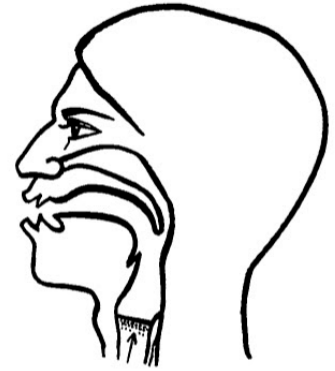
4. Vowel forms

As you know, Zapotec has five vowels, like in Spanish: *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, and *u*. However, each vowel has four different forms in Zapotec:

<i>u</i>	<i>tu</i>	‘one’	basic (básica)
<i>u’</i>	<i>beku’</i>	‘dog’	checked (cortada)
<i>u’u</i>	<i>yu’u</i>	‘house’	creaky (quebrada)
<i>uh</i>	<i>duh</i>	‘rope’	breathy (susurrante)

These forms differ in how air passes through your vocal folds (voice box). This is important for pronouncing the sounds of Zapotec correctly.

The basic vowels (*a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*) are pronounced with air passing through your vocal folds freely. You do not have to do anything special.



4.1. Checked vowels

Checked vowels start out just like basic vowels, but they end *abruptly* by closing the vocal folds. This prevents air from escaping from the lungs.

We have already seen several words with a checked vowel:

<i>beku’</i>	‘dog’	<i>xhile’</i>	‘sheep’
<i>bene’</i>	‘person’		

The sound that is produced when you close your vocal folds quickly is called a glottal stop. We write it with an apostrophe (’).

Practice

1. First, make a long *aaaa* sound, tapering it smoothly at the end. This is the basic vowel *a*.
2. Next make another *aaaa*, but this time cut it off abruptly at the end. If you exaggerate, it might sound like you are choking or about to cough.
3. Repeat these cut-off *aaaas*, making them shorter and shorter. Now you are making the checked vowel *a’*.

Exercise

Now, go back to the three words above and pronounce them after Maestra Fe. Pay attention to how you pronounce the checked vowel.

4.2. Creaky vowels

The creaky vowels sound like basic vowels that are *interrupted in the middle* by a glottal stop.

We have already seen some words with a creaky vowel, including the following:

dze'ej
nu'ulhe

'drink'
'woman'

bi'i

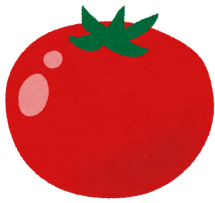
'child'

Practice

1. First, say 'uh-oh'. Notice how the air stops flowing between the two vowels 'uh' and 'oh'. This is a glottal stop.
2. Next, try to make the creaky vowel *a'a* in Zapotec. To do this, say 'uh-oh' but replace both vowels with *a*.

Exercise

Listen to Maestra Fe pronounce the *new* words below. Try and spell each word, concentrating on the form of the vowel (basic, checked, or creaky). After you have written the word down, students will take turns saying which form the vowel has.



tomato (tomate)



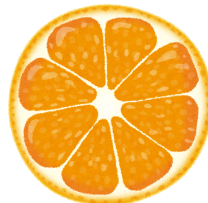
corn (maíz)



pot (cazuela)



house (casa)



orange (naranja)



bull (toro)



butterfly (mariposa)



tortilla



mouse (ratón)

5. Final dialogue: *Yet* (Tortillas)

In Laxopa, women make tortillas at home every day. First, *maiz* kernels are boiled with a small chunk of limestone to soften them, then rested overnight. The next day, the corn—now called *nixtamal*—is rinsed, then ground in a hand-cranked *molino*. The ground corn—*masa*—is then formed into tortillas by taking a ball of *masa* and flattening it with the heel of one's palm, and finally cooked on a *comal*.

For big events, such as weddings, baptisms, and festivals, many women come together to make tortillas for everyone. Half form the tortillas, and half cook them.

Beto's wedding is very soon, and his sister Raquel is helping prepare the food for all the celebrations. Beto arrives with some new cooking equipment.

Beto: *Padziuxh, gak zuu'?*
'Hello, how are you?'

Raquel: *Lastuma tsjaxake'eda' tantw bxua'*
yete'n tse wechagna'n!
'I'm tired from grinding so much
corn for the wedding!'

Beto: *Duxklhenu' tantw benhu' llina'!*
'Thanks for doing all that work!'

Ba uxhia' chi llile'n etsindzu.
'I bought 10 *comals* for us to
cook them with.'

Raquel: *Wen gule' benu'! Na'ats na'a yiyundzu*
ga'n uxuadzunh na'.
'Well done! Now we can decide
where to put them.'

Beto: *E gualla' lhe'?*
'Should I help you?'

Raquel: *Benhshkagwklhenh! Lastumatsja zi'in.*
'Yes, please! They're really heavy.'

Beto: *Sulodzu lla. Wakkse.*
'Let's start then. That's fine.'

Raquel: *Lla lla!*
'On with it then!'

You can listen to the final dialogue online here:

<http://wlma.ucsc.edu/nidodelenguas/clases/2020/6-dialogue.mp3>