

# Nido de Lenguas: Clases

Class 5 – February 18, 2021

## GOALS

- To review nouns and adjectives for describing people
- To learn about continuous and completed forms for verbs
- To learn some words for talking about time
- To explore how the people of **Laxup** enjoy *za'a* ‘corn (elote)’



*A milpa* (corn field) on the outskirts of **Laxup**

Workshop on the Languages of Meso-America  
University of California, Santa Cruz  
[wlma.ucsc.edu/nidodelenguas/](http://wlma.ucsc.edu/nidodelenguas/)

## 1. Dialogue from last class

Did you memorize the final dialogue from our last class? Get ready to perform it with one of your classmates!

*Raquel:* **Gak guk tsiu' ne'ella?**  
'How was your day?'

*Beto:* **Lastuma tsjaxake'eda!**  
'My body really hurts!'

*Raquel:* **La'a benhzju' llinha'.**  
'Because you've worked very hard.'

**Chi uyu'u ya'nh?**  
'Will you go into the temazcal?'

*Beto:* **Kalha'nh dzikda'.**  
'That is what I'm thinking.'

*Raquel:* **E weka' llanh ya'nh?**  
'Should I start the temazcal?'

*Beto:* **Benhshkawklhenh lla.**  
'Please do that.'

### Exercise

Perform the dialogue with one of your classmates for everybody else.

## 2. Review: Using adjectives to describe people

We have been learning how to describe people using adjectives for size, age, and gender:

<u>Size</u>		<u>Age</u>	
<b>las</b>	'skinny (flaca/o)'	<b>xkwide'</b>	'little, young (chica/o)'
<b>xhenh</b>	'fat (gorda/o)'	<b>wegu'</b>	'young (joven)'
<b>tone'</b>	'tall (alta/o)'	<b>wak</b>	'adult (grande)'
<b>chaparw</b>	'short (chaparra/o)'	<b>gulhe</b>	'elderly (mayor)'

<u>Gender</u>	
<b>nhu'ulhe</b>	'female'
<b>xyag</b>	'male'

These adjectives can be combined with a noun to make a phrase that describes a person:

Combining nouns with adjectives

-----      -----  
(noun)      (adjective)

Examples:

<b>bi'i</b>	<b>nhu'ulhe</b>	'girl (child + female)'
<b>bene'</b>	<b>tone'</b>	'tall adult'

### Exercise:

With the class, play *Spaceman*: this game works just like (the more violent) Hangman. Take turns guessing a letter in a phrase describing a person. If you think you know what the phrase is, you can guess that instead.

### Tarjetas

Remember, you can memorize these adjectives using digital flashcards:

<https://babel.ucsc.edu/tarjetas/adjectives/>

### 3. Talking about when actions take place

Languages have different ways for talking about *when* actions take place. In English, you have *present* and *past* forms of the verb:

<u>Present</u>	<u>Past</u>
<i>greet</i> s	<i>greet</i> ed
<i>hug</i> s	<i>hug</i> ged
<i>kiss</i> es	<i>kiss</i> ed

In Zapotec, to talk about actions that *are taking place now*, you use the continuous form of the verb. As you can see, some of these verbs start with **sh-**:

<b>shtahs</b>	'sleep (dormir)'	<b>shnhabdille'</b>	'greet (saludar)'
<b>shcheb</b>	'scare (asustar)'	<b>shnhide'</b>	'hug (abrazar)'
<b>shkache'e</b>	'hide (escondarse)'	<b>shnhupe'</b>	'kiss (besar)'

(Note: Most of these verbs should be familiar to you; only two are new.)

To talk about events that *have already taken place*, you use the completed form. As you can see, many of these start with **b-**:

<b>btahs</b>	'sleep (dormir)'	<b>bnhabdille'</b>	'greet (saludar)'
<b>bcheb</b>	'scare (asustar)'	<b>bnhide'</b>	'hug (abrazar)'
<b>bkache'e</b>	'hide (escondarse)'	<b>bnhupe'</b>	'kiss (besar)'

#### Exercise

Maestra Fe will hold up a combination of pictures depicting an action and a time. State the correct form of the verb for that time: either the *continuous* form or the *completed* form.

#### 4. Words for time

To more precisely describe when an action takes place, you can add one of the following time words to the beginning of the sentence:



**na'a**  
'now (ahora)'



**neje**  
'yesterday (ayer)'



**nase**  
'day before yesterday  
(antier)'



**xmanha' ude**  
'last week  
(semana pasada)'



**biu'nh ude**  
'last month  
(mes pasado)'



**ize'nh ude**  
'last year  
(año pasado)'

In Zapotec, these time words often go at the beginning of the sentence:

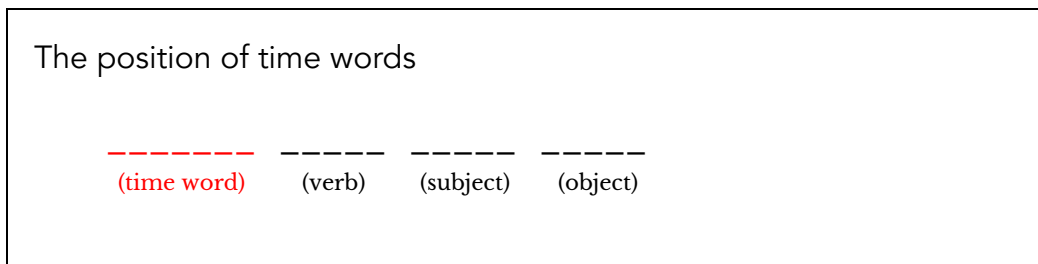
Na'a shtahs Maria'nh.

'Maria is sleeping now.'

Neje bnhide bi'i xyage'nh bene' nhu'ulhe'nh.

'The boy hugged the woman yesterday.'

Notice that the form of the verb changes, depending on what time word is used.



#### Exercise

Maestra Fe will (again) hold up combinations of pictures depicting an action and a time. Describe what is happening using the correct time word *and* the correct form of the verb. (Go back and look at Section 2 to remember the words for people.)

## 5. Final dialogue: Za'a 'corn (elote)'

The harvest of **za'a** 'corn (elote)' is one of the most delicious times of the year in **Laxup**. After months of hard work — first planting the corn, then taking care of the plants, finally harvesting the fresh corn — the people of **Laxup** can enjoy the many different ways of preparing the corn.

After shucking the corn (**shtsuxe'**) and removing the kernels (**txube'**), a number of different foods can be made, including: **yetgu za'a** 'tamal de elote', **nhiszeye' za'a** 'atole de elote', and **yet za'a** 'tortilla de elote'.

Beto is coming back from the *milpa* (corn field), carrying **za'a** 'elote' in a **llume** 'basket', when he sees his sister Raquel:

*Raquel:* **E ba belho'o?**  
'Are you back?'

*Beto:* **O'ó, ze nhua' za'a.**  
'Yes, I have brought some corn.'

*Raquel:* **Wenh gulhe! Nha' gundzu yetgu za'a.**  
'Great! Now we can make tamales de elote.'

**Sulodzu xustsunh lla nha' xube'dzunh.**  
'Let's shuck it and remove the kernels.'

*Beto:* **Wakkse'.**  
'Okay.'

*Raquel:* **Ba de xche' godzu!**  
'That will be our dinner!'

You can listen to the final dialogue online here:

<https://wlma.ucsc.edu/nidodelenguas/clases/2021/5-dialogue.mp3>

## 6. Homework

6.1. *Story jumbles.* We have now learned how to use different verb forms and words for time to describe when actions take place. Below, you will find three short stories, where the sentences might be out of order. Choose the right order for each of the stories, using the time words to help you decide.

1. ***The first day of school.***

- a) Na'a shtahs bi'i tone'nh.
- b) Nase' bnabdille' bene' skwele'nh bi'i tone'nh.

Correct order: \_\_\_ \_\_\_



2. ***Maria and Beto fall in love.***

- a) Xmanha' ude bnhupe Bedw'nh Mari'anh.
- b) Bi'unh ude bnhide Mari'anh Bedw'nh.

Correct order: \_\_\_ \_\_\_



3. ***The scary dog.***

- a) Neje bcheb beku'nh bi'i nu'ulhenh.
- b) Na'a shkache'e bi'i nu'ulhe'nh beku'nh.

Correct order: \_\_\_ \_\_\_



6.2. *Translation.* Now that you've put them in the right order, translate each of the stories above into English or Spanish.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6.3. *Practice with verbs.* Each sentence below is missing the first part of the verb. Based on the time word at the beginning of the sentence, fill in the missing verb to describe a continuous or a completed action.

1. Iz'enh ude \_\_\_\_\_ (hide) bi'i chaparw'nh bene' tone'nh.
2. Nase \_\_\_\_\_ (hug) Maria'nh bene' gulhe'nh.
3. Na'a \_\_\_\_\_ (sleep) beku'nh.
4. Neje \_\_\_\_\_ (greet) bene wake'nh bi'i xyage'nh.
5. Na'a \_\_\_\_\_ (kiss) bi'i lase'nh bi'i xhenha'.
6. Biu'nh ude \_\_\_\_\_ (scare) bi'i skwele'nh Beto'nh.

6.4. *Memorize.* Listen to the final dialogue online several times:

<https://wlma.ucsc.edu/nidodelenguas/clases/2021/5-dialogue.mp3>

Then, memorize the dialogue. Practice being both Beto and Raquel. If you can, practice with your classmates too. We will start our next class by asking students to perform the dialogue.

\* \* \* \* \*

You can look up the meaning or pronunciation for any word in the online Zapotec dictionary, which now bilingual in either English:

<https://zapotec.ucsc.edu/slz/dictionary.html>

or in Spanish:

<https://zapotec.ucsc.edu/es/slz/dictionary.html>