

Assessment Literacy: Local voices, global needs

**MEXICO CITY**

21-23 March, 2019

#NewDirectionsLatam



INTRODUCING LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

Worksheets



ASSESSING
SPEAKING



$$\alpha = \frac{n}{n-1} \left(1 - \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n S_i^2}{S_t^2} \right)$$

**How
Language
assessment
works**



**FREE ONLINE COURSE FOR TEACHERS:
LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT IN THE CLASSROOM**

**AN A TO Z OF SECOND LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT:
HOW LANGUAGE TEACHERS UNDERSTAND ASSESSMENT CONCEPTS**

Edited by Christine Coombe

Turkey – University Language Testers

- Little analysis of operational data or knowledge of statistics
- High level of teacher education – MA, etc.

Needs – test evaluation, score interpretation, productive skills, esp. speaking

“I have been in charge of the testing office for the past year...However, I feel that I lack basic knowledge in testing. That's why I would like to take part in your training.”

“I am working in testing unit voluntarily and I really enjoy it...I have no certificates of previous training. If I gain a professional training and perspective, I believe I will enjoy more and will produce better work.”



LAALTA/TESOL – Teachers & Language Testers

- **Basic statistics for 40 participants**
- **Enthusiasm!**

Feedback:

- **Very useful for work activities**
- **Allocated time insufficient**



U.S. Teacher Trainers

Feedback from teachers to trainers:

- We don't *need* to know about assessment
- We don't *want* to know about assessment

Training programmes:

- All contain assessment components
- All being revised/updated
- Necessary – assessment conducted every day, (informally/unconsciously)

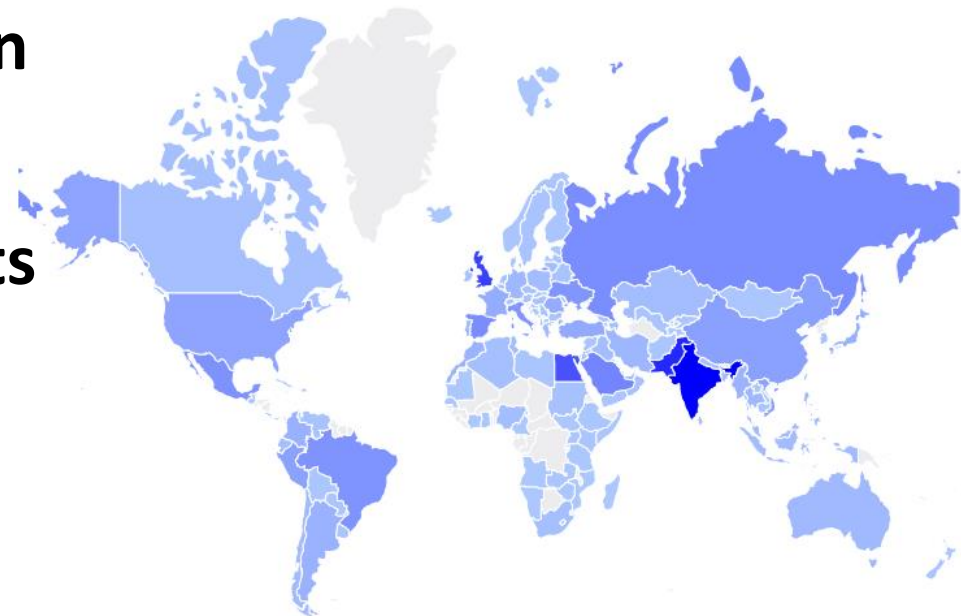
Trainers:

- Little if any background/training in assessment
- Feel need to update their knowledge or bring in outside expertise



Language Assessment in the Classroom

- Piloted in May 2018
- More than 6000 participants
- 150 countries
- Video, text, discussion
- Live Facebook feed
- Over 13000 comments



Number of joiners
1 603

But does it work?

“I've always thought that assessment preparation could have but a positive washback. After this video I don't think so any more. I test my students' speaking skills by asking them to perform in front of the class a dialogue on a topic which involves a particular aspect of lexicon/grammar/syntax, in a communicative situation, with a realistic (if not real) context. But, in doing so, am I testing? Their language proficiency (accuracy, fluency)? Their ability to memorize their role? Their acting abilities? Their boldness to stand in front of an audience?”

 BRITISH COUNCIL LEARN HOW TO DESIGN RELIABLE CLASSROOM TESTS  Future Learn



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LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT IN THE CLASSROOM

But does it work?

“This is a new concept to me and it is a very interesting one "construct". I love how it sounds and what it means, it guides your efforts towards a more meaningful goal than just a passing grade, if you teach to the construct you are teaching for students to use language in real situations, I think.”



But does it work?

“This week has been extremely informative and interesting. Wish this had been available before I started my training career! Well, better late than never :)”

“To be honest, I have never sat down and considered what assessment really entails. This course has been a real 'eye opener'.”

 BRITISH
COUNCIL LEARN HOW TO DESIGN RELIABLE CLASSROOM TESTS  Future
Learn



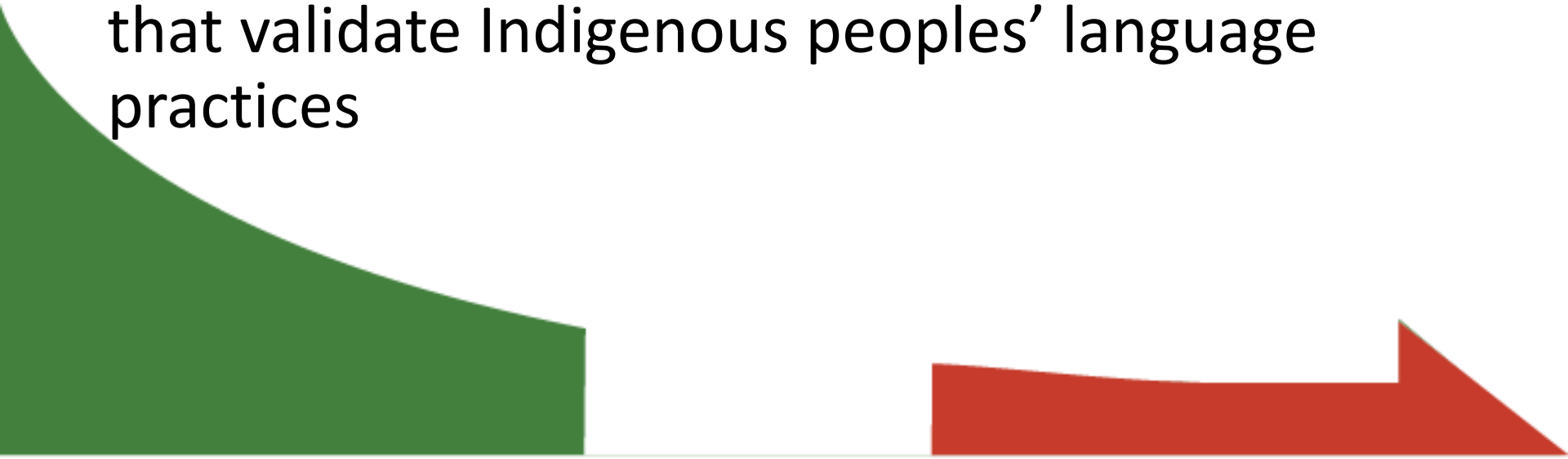
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Assessment Literacy and practices in Mexico: the case of Indigenous groups

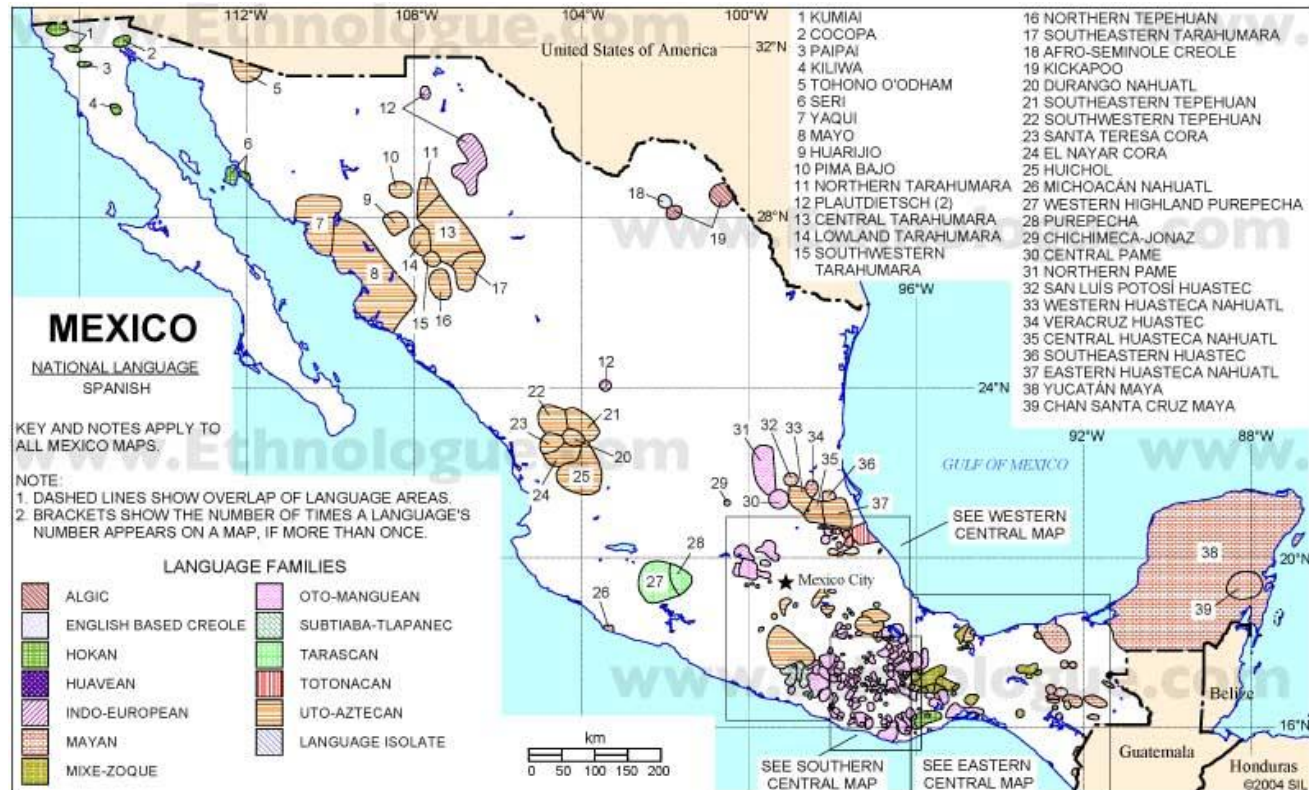
Mario E. López Gopar & Constant Leung
Universidad Autónoma Benito Juárez de Oaxaca
King's College, London

The bottom of the slide features two large, abstract geometric shapes. On the left is a green shape that starts as a wide curve at the bottom left and tapers towards the right. On the right is a red shape that starts as a wide curve at the bottom right and tapers towards the left. These shapes appear to be part of a larger design or logo.

Purpose

- To briefly describe the cultural and linguistic diversity of Mexico
 - To argue that assessment literacy practices in Mexico have been Eurocentric, placing Indigenous peoples in deficit models
 - To argue for local foci in assessment practices that validate Indigenous peoples' language practices
- 
- A decorative graphic at the bottom of the slide consisting of two solid-colored shapes. On the left is a green shape that starts as a wide base and tapers to a point on the right. On the right is a red shape that starts as a wide base and tapers to a point on the left, mirroring the green shape's form.

Mexican Linguistic diversity



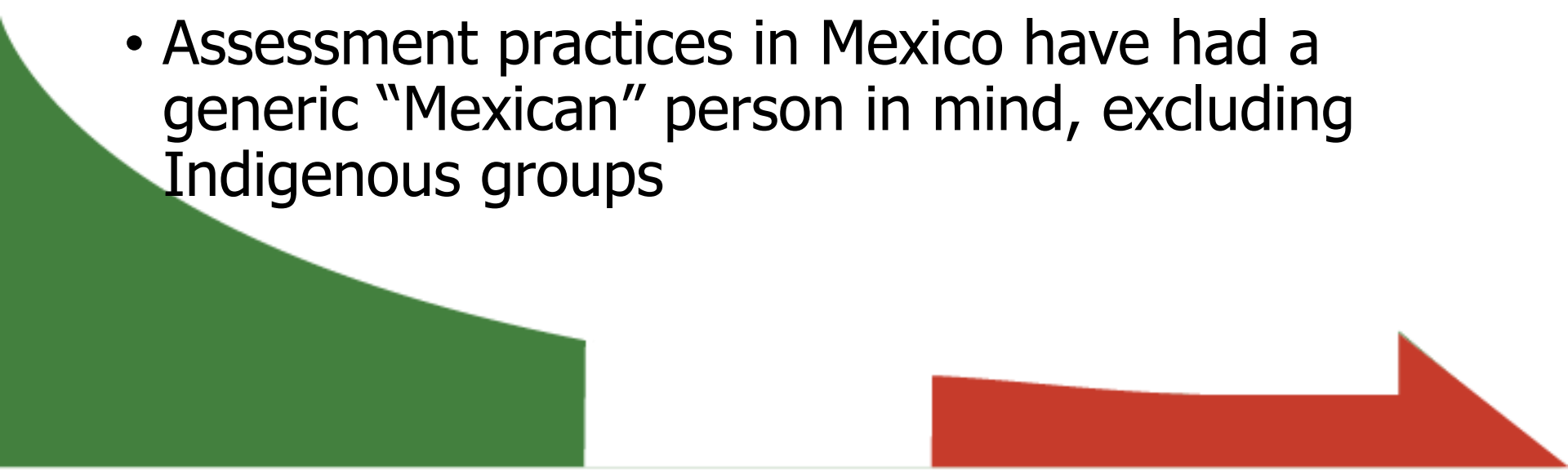
- 13 Language Families (6 in Oaxaca)
- 62 Indigenous languages recognized (364 Indigenous languages) (INALI, 2019)
- Language vs Dialect

Diversity and Migration


- Oaxaca has the highest migration rates in Mexico (Pimienta Lastra & Vera Bolaños, 2005).
 - Thousands of indigenous families are migrating to urban cities, the USA and Canada included.
 - 400,000+ indigenous peoples in the USA (Huizar Murillo and Cerda, 2002)
 - Umbrella terms such as Latinos, Hispanic hide this diversity
- The (Indigenous) Retornados

Assessment practices and Indigenous peoples

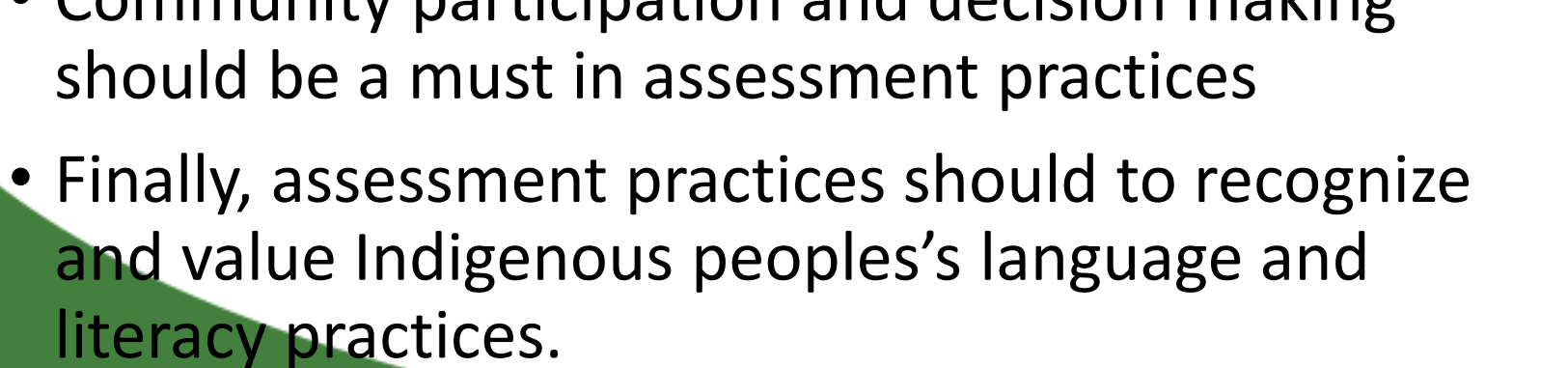
- Geo-politics of being
- Geo-politics of knowledge (Mignolo, 2000)
- Schools have been mainly responsible for the ideological colonization of peoples (Maldonado Alvarado, 2002)
- Assessment practices in Mexico have had a generic “Mexican” person in mind, excluding Indigenous groups



Assessment practices and Indigenous peoples

- Indigenous migrant children's education in Mexico is reported to be in a critical state.
 - The lowest level of Spanish alphabetic literacy and the highest level of retention and dropout rates (Schmelkes, 2002).
 - This is only true however, if school-valued literacy practices and standardized tests are taken as the norm (Prueba ENLACE)
 - “Eurocentric” (Menezes de Souza, 2003) and “alphabetic-only” view of literacy (López-Gopar, 2007) places Indigenous in deficit models.
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The need for local assessment practices

- Assessment practices need to capture the language and literacy practices of the Mexican diverse population, if they are to provide a fair and accurate assessment of Indigenous peoples' abilities.
 - Community participation and decision making should be a must in assessment practices
 - Finally, assessment practices should to recognize and value Indigenous peoples's language and literacy practices.
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- **Gracias!**
- **Diushi pe lii! (Zapotec)**
- **Tixa'vi (Mixteco)**
- **Tlazohcamati (Nahuatl)**
- **Dyos bo' otik (Maya)**
- **Merci!**
- **Thank you!**