

THE CULTURAL ASPECTS OF AZTEC LEXICON
IN MEXICAN SPANISH

A Thesis

by

JAMES WOODWARD POWELL

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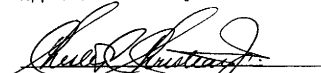
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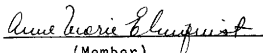
JAMES WOODWARD POWELL

Approved as to style and content by:


(Chairman of Committee)


(Head of Department)


(Member)


(Member)

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ABSTRACT

The Cultural Aspect of Aztec Lexicon in Mexican Spanish. (August 1976)

James Woodward Powell, B.A. Texas A&M University

Chairman of Advisory Committee:

Dr. Chester C. Christian, Jr.

This study concerns itself with the cultural aspects of Aztec words which have become a part of Mexican Spanish and the manner in which these items have been elaborated or transformed in becoming part of Mexican Spanish. The words in this study were grouped under the major headings of superstition, physical appearance, mental and moral defects, monetary practices, conditions, and relations, criminal and quasi-criminal activities, the body, interpersonal relations, idiomatic expressions, and miscellaneous.

The study deals with 364 items of Aztec origin, which have adopted new cultural connotations through elaboration or transformation.

The words discussed in this thesis are not necessarily known in all parts of Mexico, and some are regionalisms which may also be found in other Spanish dialects of the Spanish-speaking world.

It was found that 95.1 per cent of the 364 items have become a part of Mexican Spanish through transformation

or elaboration of the meaning of Aztec words, while 4.9 per cent have maintained the Aztec meaning in Mexican Spanish, while becoming a part of Mexican culture.

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This Thesis is dedicated to my Mother
Mrs. Ruth Ann Powell
a guiding and comforting light for
four of the proudest sons anywhere

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The present study consists of an investigation of the manner in which words from Náhuatl, the language of the Aztecs, have developed in Mexican Spanish new connotations and referents, creating a component of Hispanic culture which is distinctively Mexican, although some items which this component contains have become so diffused geographically that they are no longer commonly associated with their Aztec origin. This research is not intended to demonstrate Aztec influence on Mexican culture, but to indicate the manner in which the meaning of words is elaborated and transformed as they become part of a new cultural environment.

When Christopher Columbus landed on a Caribbean island in 1492, his contact with the Arawak Indians was the first of the many contacts that the spaniards would have with the numerous indigenous groups and their languages. These contacts became a major influence on the development of the Spanish language and Hispanic culture.

As the Spanish conquistadors encountered various groups with their specific culture, society, and environment, they also encountered strange new languages. There were many new sounds as well as new phenomena to which

This thesis is written in the style of Hispania, published by the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese.

these sounds referred. At times the Spaniards used Spanish terms for things new to them. At other times they used the Indian term, writing it according to Spanish phonetics. However, they had no way to represent accurately many of the sounds they heard.

Among the more influential indigenous languages were the Quechua of the Incas, the Quiché of the Mayas, the Taíno of the Caribbean tribes and the Náhuatl of the Aztecs.

Although only words from Náhuatl will be of concern in the present study, words from other indigenous languages are common in Spanish, and the following examples indicate their collective importance.

Words from Quechua include: cancha (roasted corn), caucha (thistle), coca (cocaine), cóndor (condor), chacra (ranch), china (Indian servant), choro (mussel), guano (guano), llama (llama), pampa (grasslands), papa (potato) and others.

The Mayas contributed words such as batab (lord), cenote (hole), patf (scarf) and others.

Contributions of Arawaks and Caribs, who spoke Taíno, include: ajf (pepper), batata (potato), cacique (chief), canoá (canoe), hamaca (hammock), iguana (Iguana lizard), maguey (American agave), mafz (corn), papaya (papaya), tuna (prickly pear), yuca (yucca plant) and others.

From the Nāhuatl of the Aztecs the Spaniards adopted many words, including aguacate (avocado), amole (mixture), cacao (cocoa), coyote (coyote), quacamole (avocado mixture), ocelote (ocelot), pulque (drink made from the maguey), tamal (tamale), tecolote (owl), tomate (tomato), zacate (grass) and others.

For present purposes, a selection of words having sociocultural significance apart from their original meanings has been made. The major sources for the words to be listed are: Diccionario de Mejicanismos (Santamaría, F. J., 1974), American-Spanish Euphemisms (Kany, C. E., 1960), American-Spanish Semantics (Kany, C. E., 1960), Diccionario de Aztequismos (Robelo, C. A., 1940), Some Spanish Words of Aztec-Mexican Origin Used in a Specific Area in Texas (Guevara, A., undated), Diccionario Manual de Americanismos (Moringo, M. A., 1966), and Indigenismos en la Lengua Común de la America Española (Zamora, J. C., 1971).

Santamaría lists some 17,346 vocabulary items and was the primary source for this study. Of those 17,346 items, approximately 6,000 were of Nāhuatl origin; however, most of these words are not relevant to the purposes of this thesis, since their use is solely in terms of the original meaning in Nāhuatl.

For example, many of the words listed by Santamaría are terms for plants, animals or miscellaneous items which

were given a Náhuatl name but have not developed special cultural meanings. Some examples of plants are mezquite (type of tree), joyote (seed used as an emetic), escapacle (medicinal plant), guamuchil (mimosa type tree), and hoizcuahite (thornbush). Some examples of Aztec terms for animals are necuazal (type of ant), chiquiote (aquatic bird), amocete (young lamprey), ocelote (ocelot), and talmotocle (squirrel). Some miscellaneous terms are güegüeches (Indian dancers), matayagual (shrimp net), and tempozonte (hump-backed).

The vocabulary items listed in this thesis have all undergone some cultural change and have several meanings. The words of Aztec origin will be listed according to their English meanings under the following major divisions: superstitions, physical appearance, mental and moral defects, monetary practices, conditions, and relations, criminal and quasi-criminal activities, the body, interpersonal relations, idiomatic expressions, and miscellaneous terms.

There has been a great deal of work done on the etymology of Spanish, but the study of the influence of Náhuatl and other indigenous languages upon Spanish is just beginning. The first publications were etymological dictionaries giving the origin of a small number of Náhuatl words. Barcfa (1902) and the Real Academia (1950) were among the first. Other authors have been more general, listing mejicanismos

(Santamaría, 1974) and indigenismos (Zamora, 1971).

Second, and more important, various authors such as Cerda (1953), Coltharp (1965), Guevara (undated), Kany (1960), Martínez (1968), and Von Hagen (1961) have produced works which show how some words of Náhuatl origin are used in specific areas of Mexico and the Southwestern United States where Mexican Spanish dialects are spoken.

Most of the important works in the areas of lexicography and etymology have originated with North American and other foreign authors, as Malkiel (1972) states:

Nowhere in Spanish, not even in a country as passionately responsive to the challenge of cultural anthropology and pre-Colombian archeology as Mexico has been for decades, has there crystallized any vigorous tradition of high-level research in indigenous languages even remotely comparable in sheer dynamism to the activities sparked in this country by Boas, Sapir, and L. Bloomfield (p. 73).

Spain and the United States have been instrumental in investigations of the lexicon and etymology of Náhuatl and Spanish. But, as Lope Blanch (1968) says: "The study of the influence of native tongues upon Castilian has barely begun" (p. 119).

Lapesa (1972) states that "the most important and sure contribution of the indigenous languages is the lexicon" (p. 347), but it must be remembered that lexical items have no meaning except in terms of the culture in which they are used.

In 1513 Mexico was conquered by Cortés, and as the Spaniards confronted the unknown plants, animals and foods of this new land they found it necessary to name them.

According to Zamora (1971) they had to:

- a) Invent a word that described some quality of that object, for example rabihorado was a bird that was described in that way because of its forked tail.
- b) Used the name of a European item when some similarity existed such as cuervo which were the names of several types of black birds encountered.
- c) Use the word for the item used by Aztecs, modifying it to make it sound phonetically Spanish, such as the word guajolote.
(p. 75)

The last method is the origin of the mejicanismos. The mejicanismos or words of Náhuatl or other indigenous origin have been preserved because some words represent objects, concepts, or relationships which continue to be important in Mexican society and culture.

Words of indigenous origin do not necessarily preserve the original meaning in Spanish. Many words such as atole and guajolote have developed other referents as well as new sociocultural connotations. For example, atole came from the Aztec word atolli meaning a mixture of a liquid mixed with corn and cooked as a "cream of wheat" and eaten like a cereal. Some of the different meanings now listed in Santamaría's Diccionario de Mejicanismos (1974) are:

A caldo y atole	on a diet
Como dueño de mi atole	I can do anything that
lo menearé con un dedo	I please or desire
o con un palo	
espués de atole	too late

Guajolote comes from the Aztec word uexolotl referring to the 'turkey'. In Mexican Spanish it means turkey. In Spain, however, the word for 'turkey' is pavo. The word guajolote has come to mean foolish, silly or idiotic. Un cabildo de guajolotes is a gathering of idiots. The Mexican word guajolote has developed as the word 'turkey' has in English.

The Spanish word tortilla, although not of Aztec origin, has suffered cultural changes since the word was first applied to the flat round corn cake of the Aztecs by the Spaniards after the conquest of Mexico. Tortilla, which means 'little cake', also is used to refer to the 'omelet' in Peninsular Spanish. In Aztec times, all members of the Aztec community used the Mexican tortilla as an instrument for carrying food to the mouth (Marett, 1971), but today people who use tortillas for this purpose are considered to be low class.

Náhuatl has had more influence on the Spanish spoken in Mexico than any other indigenous language. Quechua is the second most influential indigenous language and

together they represent the most marked influences on the Spanish of Mexico.

CHAPTER II

SUPERSTITION

Superstition is an integral part of almost every culture in the world. Superstitions are found in all societies at all socioeconomic levels. Their influence in the United States has been documented by Christianity Today, (Vol. 18), in a discussion arising from the popularity of the film The Exorcist, which represents diabolic influences on a young girl.

Diablo

In Hispanic culture the mention of the words diablo or demonio are avoided and other Mexican Spanish words of Aztec origin are substituted for those words. As Kany (American-Spanish Euphemisms, 1960) says:

From time immemorial many Spanish speakers have avoided the words diablo and demonio for reasons of superstition. This is attested by the proverb en nombrando al ruin de Roma, luego asoma 'speak of the devil and he soon appears.' The Spanish euphemism ruin de Roma 'rascal of Rome' has been further softened in Spanish American to rey de Roma, thus elevating the rank of the disturbing referent and retaining the alliteration, which helps to explain the original ruin de Roma (p. 1).

Words that are of Aztec origin which speakers of Spanish use to refer to 'devil' are cuijen 'devil' (one who dresses up as a devil and goes around scaring children) chamuco 'devil' or 'evil spirit' (from the Aztec chamoco,

'evil spirit') and diasque 'devil' (from the Aztec diache 'an exclamation of surprise').

Witchcraft

Witchcraft is another important aspect of many world cultures. Some words indicating 'sorcerer' also mean 'evil'; warlocks and witches have been thought to represent evil, as illustrated by the Salem witch trials of the United States and the Inquisition of Spain. Words for sorcerers are ahuizote and nagual 'a sorcerer' (also an evil sorcerer who can change into a pig or a dog and roam the countryside at will doing evil). A verb, chiquiqüitearse (from the Aztec chiquihuitl) means 'to work magic to find the author of a crime'.

Animals

The saying of certain names of animals is superstitiously avoided for fear that some form of evil will befall the speaker. The word culebra, 'snake,' is avoided, while the names of other snakes are thought to have evil powers.

The cencuate (or zincuate) is a snake that is believed to drink the milk of mothers at night. The names of other snakes which are feared are istacoate and masacoate (or masacuate).

Other animals which represent evil to the Mexican are the zonchiche 'red-headed vulture' and the zopilote 'vulture'. As in most cultures of North and South America

where indigenous groups have made their mark on the predominant language and culture, superstition has attributed to the owl an ominous nature. The expression: cuando el tecolote canta, el indio muere, 'when the owl hoots, the Indian will die' is well known to all speakers of Spanish, but more common among the indigenous groups of Mexico.

Death

Euphemisms for 'death' are common in many cultures. In the Anglo culture of North America there are such euphemisms as 'to croak' and, 'to kick the bucket'. Death is a term which many cultures avoid specifically and adopt substitutes for it. Therefore, in these same cultures there are euphemisms for the word 'death'. As Kany says (American Spanish Euphemisms, 1960); "Most of them (civilized peoples) replace words relating to death with some euphemistic term or paraphrase to soften harsh reality (page 21)."

Among Mexican terms for 'to die' which have Aztec origins are olerle a uno el pescuezo a mecate, 'to feel close to death', (lit. for someone's neck to smell like a rope) dejar el cacaste, 'to die' (lit. 'to relinquish the crate'-'skeleton'), doblar uno el petate, 'to die' (lit. 'to fold up the mat'), and liar el petate, 'to die' (lit. 'to roll up the mat'). The verb papalotear (from Aztec papalotl 'butterfly') means 'to make the last movements before death'.

CHAPTER III

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Physical appearances which include terms for race or color of skin, cleanliness, beauty, fatness or thinness and physical defects are rich in euphemistic borrowings or substitutes from the Aztec (or Nāhuatl) language.

Race or Color of Skin

Words that indicate race or color of skin are cacahuate 'a dark colored person' (from the color of the peanut), cacalote 'Indian' (stand. def. 'crow') (from specific name given to a tribe of northern Mexico), cacastle 'Indian' (specifically an Indian of Coahuila), coyote 'a newcomer to Mexico from Spain', gachupfn 'a newcomer to Mexico', mayate 'a person with Negro blood' (stand. def. 'a beetle of many colors'), pinacate, 'a person with Negro blood' (stand. def. 'large black beetle'), tecomate, 'the children of Mexico', and zopilotes 'Indian' as the first tribes of Mexico conquered by Cortez (zopilote 'turkey buzzard').

Cleanliness

Words of Aztec origin indicating cleanliness are chamagoso,-a 'dirty' and parece un pepenador 'to look dirty' (from pepenador meaning 'a rag picker').

Beauty

Words used as substitutes or as similes for ugliness or beauty are feo como un ajolote (ugly as a salamander), picho,-a 'pretty', tepacate 'ugly' and atepacate 'ugly'. The words tepacate and atepacate from the Aztec atepocatl 'tadpole' seem to refer to ugliness of a tadpole, however tepacate is also a Spanish word referring to 'gravel'.

Obesity

Words of Nāhuatl origin which have become substitutes or euphemisms for obesity are chamaco,-a 'fat' (also a term of endearment), parece masacuate 'fat and deformed' (like a snake), pochitoque 'fat and spongy', and parecer tepacate 'to appear fat and dark' (as a tadpole).

Words meaning thin are cuija, 'a tall skinny woman', estar hecho un chichicuilote 'to be very skinny' (chichicuilote 'crane'), ser uno un popote (<popotl 'straw') 'to be slender' and suche 'skinny' (<súchil 'flower').

Physical Defects

Physical defects are often replaced with euphemisms for delicate purposes. Words indicating some physical defect are estar como un acocil used to describe someone who gets red from the sun, fatigue or embarrassment (lit. 'to be like a crayfish'), tener cara de ayate 'pock-marked face' (ayate 'woven cloth'), cacahuate 'pock-marked face', cacahuate

'peanut' (reference to the shell of the peanut which is pock-marked), petaca 'hunchbacked', petaca 'pot-gut', tamal 'large and deformed', and tepocate 'a person with a large head' (evidently aferesis of the word atepocate).

CHAPTER III

MENTAL AND MORAL DEFECTS

Mental and moral defects of a person are the most likely subjects to be replaced by metaphorical terms since the original word may lose some of its value in today's contemporary societies. As Kany says, (American Spanish Euphemisms, 1960): "When a much-used word has lost its force, the speaker fills the vacuum with a new form that, because of its newness, will adequately convey the tones of feeling." (page 48.)

Stupidity

Mexican Spanish has many euphemisms or substitutes for tonto or tontería. In Mexican Spanish we find acocote 'foolishness' (stand. def. 'gourd'), aguacate 'fool', camote 'silly' or 'simple', cegua 'fool' (from Aztec, cihuatl, 'woman'), ciguato,-a 'foolish', (<cihuatl) 'woman', chayote 'stupid' (stand. def. 'pear-shaped fruit'), chayotado,-a 'silly' (<chayote), chipote 'foolish', chiquihuite 'stupid' (<chiquihuite 'basket'), guajado,- 'foolish', guaje 'fool' (guaje 'gourd'), guajería 'foolishness', guajolote 'fool' or 'turkey' (in English, 'turkey' = 'idiot'), un cabildo de guajolotes is 'a gathering of idiots' or 'a bunch of idiots', guanaco 'foolish' or 'silly', huilota 'foolishness', jfcara 'brainless' (stand. def.

jfcara 'jar'), petate 'dull' or 'stupid', pinacate 'stupid' or 'dull', zopilo,-a 'stupid' (from zopilote 'turkey buzzard'), and zoquete 'foolish' and 'crackbrained' (stand. def. of zoquete 'block of wood' = 'blockhead').

Some additional words and expressions meaning fool, stupid and other related ideas are guajear 'to act like a fool' (from guaje), Ser aguacate con pan 'to be dull', (Ser como el chichicuilote 'to be stupid (as a crane)', Hacer a uno chiquihuite 'to make a fool of someone', hacerse uno chiquigüite 'to act ignorant' and hacer guaje a uno 'to make a fool of someone'. It may be said that many words indicating 'stupid', 'foolish', etc., are gourds or squashes that when dry are hollow.

Lying

Mexican Spanish terms of Aztec origin for lies and lying are nagual a 'lie' or a 'liar' and naqualear 'to lie.'

Drunkenness

In the Spanish language the number of terms for 'drunk' or 'drunkenness' is very high. Mexican Spanish has quite a few too, but only a small number are words of Aztec origin have become terms for 'drunk'.

Among the terms for a drunk are mayate, (mayate = beetle: the way beetles crawl might resemble a drunk as he walks) teco,-a (from tecolote) and tecolote (<tecolotl 'owl').

To describe a drunk one might use any of these terms: a medios chiles 'half drunk', 'mecatazo' drunk (from mecate rope').

Se trompezó con la jfcara del pulmón is an expression used to describe a drunk person is le hizo el soyate (lit. 'he was made of fibers'). One process used to get drunk is darse un mecatazo 'to drink alcohol in gulps.'

Cowardice

In country so cognizant of the concept of machismo, the terms for cowardice are numerous and some (such as cuilón) are also tied to homosexuality.

Words of Nāhuatl origin used for coward are cajete 'coward', cuatezón 'coward' (cuatezón, <coate 'snake'), cuilón 'coward' (also homosexual) and petate 'coward'.

Some expressions that indicate fear are asustarse con el petate del muerto 'to be deathly afraid' (lit. 'to be frightened of the mat of the dead'), and tener miedo a un toro de petate (lit. 'to be afraid of a scarecrow' could also be translated as 'to be afraid of one's own shadow').

Valor is expressed by many terms. Terms of Aztec origin are ser uno un chiltipiquín 'to be valiant' (chiltipiquín = 'small hot pepper') and tener más valor que él que se comió el primer zapote literally 'to be more brave than he who ate the first sapota' (the fruit is

apple-shaped and the meat is a greenish-black color; the appearances are enough to discourage the eating of the sapota fruit).

Laziness

Laziness may be expressed by words of Aztec origin in the following terms: papalotear 'to roam around from place to place doing little or no work', echarse con las petacas 'to sit around on one's rear end' and no levantar uno ni un popote 'to be lazy' (lit. 'to not even lift a straw').

Shyness

Some words for shyness are aguacate 'shy' and tener sangre de atole 'to be shy' (lit. to have atole for blood).

One miscellaneous term is zopilotear 'to eat like a pig' (lit. 'to eat like a vulture', <zopilote 'vulture').

CHAPTER V

MONETARY PRACTICES, CONDITIONS, AND RELATIONS

Money

Mexican Spanish words of Aztec origin that are used for money are cacao 'cocoa bean' (in pre-Columbian Mexico the cocoa bean was used for money), tlaco, tecolines from the Aztec tecolli 'charcoal', and pipiolas from the Aztec pipiolines 'wild black bees'.

Poverty

Words of Aztec origin that indicate 'poverty' are Parecer chile relleno, 'to seem or be ragged', Irse como el mayate con hebra y todo, 'to go along as a debtor (beetle) not paying debts', no tener un petate en que caerse 'to be flat broke' (lit. to not even have a mat on which to fall), Verse en un petate 'to be in a miserable state of affairs' (petate is a mat which most poor, low class Indians possess; therefore, 'to have fallen to the level of owning the mat' is 'to be very poor'), el que nace tepalcate, ni a comal tiznado llegar 'born poor, die poor' (lit. 'he who is born trash doesn't even get to have a sooty tortilla pan'), and estar sin tlaco 'to be broke'.

Occupations

Many common terms for occupations are of Aztec origin. Un coyote is 'a business intermediary' and coyote also is

a 'street vendor' (probably because of the shouting involved).

Other terms are chiche or chichi 'wet nurse' (<chiche 'teat'), chichigua 'wet nurse', chichigua 'servant', pepenador 'a rag picker', pepenadora 'midwife', and pilguaneja 'a nursemaid'. Interestingly enough the word coyote is also a 'paymaster for miners'.

Social Classes

Mexican Spanish terms of Nāhuatl origin for social classes are chinacate 'low class' (chinacate 'chicken without feathers'), chuchuluco 'an unrefined or low class person' and the phrase es un mecate is used to describe someone of low class (mecate 'rope'). Any gathering or meeting were social classes mix is referred to as una reunión de chile y de dulce.

CHAPTER VI

CRIMINAL AND QUASI-CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES

Stealing

Mexican Spanish terms of Aztec origin for 'thief' are cacomistle, cacomistle de cabeza 'chicken thief' (cacomistle 'ring-tailed cat'), coyote 'thief' and zopilote 'thief'.

Euphemisms for robar are nagualizar, nagualear and zopilotear (from Aztec zopilotl 'turkey buzzard').

Fleeing

'Fleeing' or huirse may also be expressed by alzar las de hule 'to run away, escape', mecateárselas 'to run away', pegar las petacas 'to flee' (petacas = 'buttocks') and hacer uno las del zopilote 'to flee' (lit. to make like a buzzard).

Deceit

Deceit may be expressed as coyote 'a trickster' or 'a deceiver', or even 'a stow-away', tamal 'deceit' or 'intrigue', tatole 'deception' or conspiracy, (tatole = 'whispering') and zapote 'a trick' or 'a trap'.

Dar atole con el dedo 'to slyly trick someone', coyotear 'to work slyly' and 'to stow away' and hacerle a uno de chivo los tamales 'to deceive someone' (lit. to

make the tamales out of goat).

Beating

The act of beating a person may be expressed in the following Mexican Spanish terms:

Sacar chocolate 'to make someone's nose bleed' (chocolate = blood), dar a uno para su chocolate 'to beat up' lit. to give it to someone for his chocolate (blood), mecatarse 'to beat up someone', pepenar(se) 'to hit'. Un zoquete is 'a hit with a fist'.

Drugs

Substituting euphemisms for the proper names of drugs is important to the users of these drugs and the usage of these euphemisms may also be a method of communicating about these drugs in the drug sub-culture.

Even in the society and culture of the United States the euphemisms are well-known. Marijuana is known also as 'pot', 'grass', 'weed', 'joints', and 'Mary Jane'.

The Aztec language provided the drug sub-cultures of Mexico with alternate terms. Tecolote ('owl') is 'a marijuana cigarette butt', zacate (= 'grass') and zacate inglés are terms for marijuana (probably influenced by the North American term 'grass') and un zacatero is a 'marijuana user' or 'addict' (<zacate>).

Chocolate de Fu Man Chu is 'opium' and tlalcoyote is 'peyote'.

Police

Police are euphemized by the terms cuico, teco (<tecolote), tecolote (tecolote 'owl' probably because the police are very evident at night) and topil 'constable' (topil 'staff of justice').

Mexican Spanish terms for 'jail' of Aztec origin are terpiloya, tlalpiloya and trampiloya, (stand. def. 'jail').

CHAPTER VII

THE BODY

Euphemisms for parts of the body are quite common. Many speakers would rather refer to some part of the body in a more polite or euphemized form. Words for the body are among the more euphemized words in most cultures, depending on the word and the culture.

Sex Organs

The words for sex organs are the most important words to euphemize, especially in careful speech. Among the euphemisms for sex organs we find the following Mexican words of Aztec origin.

The Spanish word 'pene' is expressed by camote (<camotl 'sweet potato'), el de hacer chilpayates 'that which makes kids' (chilpayates = kids), cipote (<chipote), chipote ('box'), chucucumite (from Aztec xococ-omitl 'small fish'), ejote 'bean pod', masacuate 'snake', piocha 'goatee' and tamal.

The word testículos is euphemized with the following words of Aztec origin: aguacate 'scrotum' (Spanish for avocado), ahuilotes or agüilotes 'testicles' (ahuilotes 'grapes'), ayote 'scrotum' (a type of gourd), coyoles 'testicles' (coyol 'date palm', therefore resembling dates), matate 'scrotum' (matlatl 'basket'), talayotes 'testicles',

tanate 'scrotum' or 'testicles' (tanate 'bull scrotum'), tlalayotes, 'testicles' (talayotes or tlalayotes 'small gourds') and tompiate or tompeate 'testicles' or 'scrotum' (tompiate 'basket').

Euphemisms for teta or 'breasts' are chiche 'teat' and petaca (stand. def. 'trunk').

Euphemisms for the vulva are camote (stand. def. 'sweet potato'), chayote (pear-shaped fruit), pochitoque (stand. def. 'turtle'), and tamal.

Euphemisms for the 'posterior' and 'anus' of the body are petacas 'cheeks' and cinco 'anus' (from Aztec tzintli 'anus').

Body

Reference to the body, excluding the sex and excretory organs, does not usually involve the use of euphemisms, since only these organs are considered to be unmentionable in most cultures. There are, however, some Mexican Spanish words of Aztec origin that substitute for inoffensive body terms.

Words for the 'head' are ayote 'head', (ayote 'pumpkin'), jfcara 'head' (also 'jar'), tecomate 'skull' and chayote 'head' (pear shaped fruit).

'Legs' are referred to as camotes 'legs of a girl' as in the phrase Lucia tiene muy buenas camotes. A girl with long, skinny legs is called una chichicuilote

(chichicuilote = tall wading bird with long, thin legs).

The 'nose' is called a chocolatera from chocolate which is also a slang term for 'blood'. Una cafetera is a 'coffee-pot' and una chocolatera is a 'chocolate pot' or also 'nose'. Another term for 'ear' in Mexican Spanish is guanaco (stand. def. 'meat patty').

Some terms of Aztec origin for hair are chinacate 'bald' (from chinacate 'chicken without feathers'), cabeza de ichcatón or iscatón 'cotton-top', jfcara 'bald' (as a 'jar' or 'gourd'), un molote is 'a tuft of hair' and zonchiche is 'red-headed (zonchiche 'red-headed vulture').

Other substitute terms for parts of the body are quelite 'bone' (quelites 'green edibles'), cacastle 'skeleton' (cacastle 'crate'), chocolate 'blood', camote 'bump' or 'bruise' and chipote (or cipote) 'bump' or 'bruise'.

Euphemisms for bodily excretions are cuita (also cuital, cuitas, cuitla) 'human feces' and zoquete 'feces' and the material that collects between the toes on dirty feet. Amarrar zope means 'to throw up' (zope<zopilote), enzoquetarse means 'to get all muddy' and cuitearse means 'to defecate'.

CHAPTER VIII

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

Interpersonal relations are indicated by terms for individuals, family related terms, terms for friends, parties, games, and politics. There are also terms for love, coition, onanism, homosexuals, concubines and prostitutes and panderers. Some of these terms may be euphemisms and some are terms that enhance the impact of the concept expressed.

Individuals

Positive terms for individuals are cipote 'child', chamaco 'child', cuate 'twin', parecer cuates 'to look alike', escuincle or escuintle 'kid' (from Aztec itzcuintli 'common dog'), tepacate 'kid' (from the Aztec atepocatl 'tadpole'), and chacalín 'child' (stand. def. 'little shrimp').

Negative terms for individuals are ahuizote 'a malevolent person', parece del cacahuate 'indecent, improper person', cuate 'twin', parecer cuates 'to look alike', chichicaste 'sarcastic person' (stand. def. 'nettle'), chilitipiquín 'irritable person' (stand. def. 'small hot chili pepper'), chiquimole 'tattletale', (stand. def. 'linnet bird'), chuchuluco 'maladjusted person' (stand. def. 'crude tamale'), escuintle 'despicable person', mitote 'quarrel' (stand. def. 'a dance of the Aztecs'), molote 'quarrel'

(stand. def. 'small bird'), nagual 'wicked person' (<Aztec nagualli 'witch'), nixtamalero 'unimportant person' (stand. def. 'corn masa'), petate 'insignificant person', pilquanejo 'insignificant person' or 'servant', pinacate 'insignificant person' (from Aztec pinacatl 'beetle') and tepalcate 'a useless person' (stand. def. 'trash').

A few verbs that indicate actions of one individual against another are camotearse 'to annoy' (<camote), chacualear 'to gossip' (stand. def. 'to scrape'), guacamolear 'to joke slyly' (<guacamole 'avocado salad'), mecatear 'to tie up with a rope (<mecate 'rope').

Family

Mexican Spanish terms of Aztec origin which substitute for terms for members of the family are chapulín 'child' (stand. def. 'grasshopper'), chilpayates 'kids' (stand. def. 'little children'), and jocoyote, socoyote or xocoyote 'youngest child in a family' (stand. def. 'sour fruit').

The expression es más mamón que un cencuate is said of a child who nurses too much. Cencuate, in the expression refers to the superstitious belief that the snake called cencuate drinks a mother's milk at night. The literal translation of the expression is 'he sucks more than a cencuate'. Pepeñar means to adopt an orphan and care for the child as a member of the family (stand. def. pepeñar 'to pick up scattered rubbish').

Friends

The terms for friends are, strangely enough, all derivations of the Aztec word coatl 'snake' (stand. def. coate 'friend'). These words are cuate 'intimate friend', catezón 'intimate friend', acuate 'buddy', coate 'friend', cuata 'girlfriend', catacho 'good friend', cuatito 'good friend'.

Parties

Terms that can replace words for types of parties are chincual 'party' (stand. def. 'itching'), mitote 'home party' (stand. def. 'dance'), and súchil 'end of a party' (stand. def. 'flower').

Games

Some Mexican Spanish terms for games are chipote 'handclapping game' (stand. def. 'bump'), machincuepa 'somersault', and matatena is a game of skipping stones on the surface of the water, matatena also means 'round flat stone'.

Politics

Terms for politics are few, but there are three: dar la machincepa 'to change political parties' (machincuepa 'somersault'), machincuepa 'a political change' and octito 'a person who causes riots' (stand. def. octito 'little pine').

Love

Terms that substitute for terms of love tend to be colorful in that they reinforce or enhance the impact of the concept, and, as Kany says in American Spanish Euphemisms "matters of love, perhaps more than any other, require veiled allusion, mostly euphemisms, to screen them from indiscreet ears and eyes." (page 161) The terms of Aztec origin are camote a 'sweetheart' (camote 'sweet potato'), chamaco,-a 'lover', echarle a uno el mecate (lit. 'to tie the rope on someone'), encamotearse (deriv. camote) 'to fall in love', las palabras del epazote 'a marriage proposal' (epazote 'saltwort'), guacamolear 'to touch sensually' (guacomole<aguacate, mole), guajolota 'lover' (note: this word is delicate. It also means prostitute and must be used carefully), jalar mecate 'to flatter' (Note: Kany in American Spanish Semantics, 1960 says: "jalar (halar) 'to pull, tug' to 'attract'..." (page 221), 'to attract, and 'rope (mecate)' indicate stronger than attraction. One could say 'attraction with a pull to it'. The final term is mitote 'exaggerated emotion'.

Coition

Alternative terms for joder and coger of Spanish origin are coyolear 'to copulate' (coyolear<coyol 'palm-tree'),

echar mecate 'to copulate' (lit. 'to throw rope') and venirse los mecates 'to climax' (lit. 'to have the rope come out').

Alternative terms for masturbación are hacerse el popote to 'masturbate' (popote 'straw') and popote 'masturbation', from Spanish hacer paja or, masturbarse.

There are many terms in Mexican Spanish for 'homosexual' and there are several of Aztec origin. Terms of Náhuatl origin are cuatatón deriv. cuate 'friend', cuilón and cuiloni (also 'coward'), joto (from Aztec xote), and mayate (stand. def. 'beetle' because of the beautifully colored clothes worn).

Terms that describe or indicate the standard maricón are les encanta el chayote serenado (lit. 'they like or are enchanted with the clear pear shaped fruit'), and le den jocoque a la solitaria (jocoque 'cut milk, solitaria 'the lonely').

Two terms for concubine are guajolota (stand. def. 'turkey hen') and pilquaneja (stand. def. 'woman in service').

Terms for prostituta are chapola (<chapulín 'grasshopper'), chapulín, guajolota (stand. def. 'turkey hen'), güila or huila (from Aztec huilana 'kite, invalid'), güisa or huisa (from Aztec huitzli 'hummingbird'), and pfpila (stand. def. 'turkey hen').

Terms for a panderer are cacahuate (stand. def. 'peanut'), chichigua (stand. def. 'nursemaid,) and pepenche (<pepenador<pepenar).

CHAPTER IX

IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS

Many Aztec words have found a place in idiomatic expressions and proverbs. The idiomatic expressions and proverbs may be regional and therefore, not all Mexicans may be aware of the expressions and their meanings.

A <u>acocote</u> nuevo, tlachiquero viejo.	Always hire the proven man. (<u>acocote</u> 'gourd')
El que desde chico es guaje, hasta <u>acocote</u> no para.	He who is dull (or a fool) as a child is more so as an adult. (<u>guaje</u> 'gourd')
A caldo y <u>atole</u>	On a diet (lit. 'on broth and corn soup')
Como dueño de mi <u>atole</u> , lo menearé con un <u>dedo</u> o con un palo	I can do anything that pleases me. (lit. 'As the owner of my corn soup I can stir it with a finger or a stick')
¿De qué <u>atole</u> ?	Why? for For what reason?
Después de <u>atole</u> .	Too late.
Echar el moco en el <u>atole</u> .	To make something turn out wrong. (<u>moco</u> 'mucus')
Tener sangre de <u>atole</u> .	To be very timid or cowardly. (lit. 'to have <u>atole</u> for blood')
Darle <u>ayotes</u> a uno.	To jilt someone. (<u>ayotes</u> 'squash')
No importarle un <u>cacahuate</u> .	Not to be important enough to hurry. (<u>cacahuate</u> 'peanut')

Pedirse <u>cacao</u> .	To give up and let oneself be conquered. (<u>cacao</u> 'cocoa')
No valer un <u>cacao</u> .	To be of no importance (lit. 'Not worth a cocoa bean')
Atorarse el <u>camote</u> .	To be dumbfounded and not know how to answer. (lit. 'to get stopped up with a sweet potato')
Tragar <u>camote</u> .	To express oneself with difficulty. (lit. 'to gulp a sweet potato').
Tomar uno un <u>camote</u> .	To take affection to another person.
El <u>comal</u> le dice a la olla- culo tizado.	Don't throw stones when you live in a glass house. (lit. 'the pan says to the pot-dirty bottom').
Echarle <u>copal</u> al santo.	To take a drink (the drink is usually alcoholic). (<u>copal</u> 'resin' used in pagan worship).
Andar como <u>coyote</u> .	To trot as one runs. (lit. 'to run like a coyote').
<u>Coyotes</u> de la misma loma.	Birds of a feather flock together. (lit. 'coyotes of the same group').
Ser más listo que un <u>coyote</u> .	To be very sharp or sharp as a fox.
Mamar <u>chiche</u> .	To exploit a situation. (<u>chiche</u> 'teat').
Estar hecho un <u>chile</u> .	To be very angry (lit. 'to be made a chili' (pepper-hot)).
Hacerse <u>chile</u> con el culo.	Being very angry but not being able to show it.

- No le tenga miedo al chile aunque lo vea colorado.
Don't fear something simply by the way it appears or Don't judge a book by its cover.
- Parecer que no le curaron el chincual.
To act like one has ants in the pants. (lit. 'seems like they didn't cure the itch').
- Hacer a uno chiquihuite.
To make a fool of someone. (lit. 'to make someone out to be a basket').
- Calentarsele el chomite a una mujer.
To be totally lost in love with a man. (lit. 'for a woman to warm up her skirt').
- El que desde chico es guaje hasta acocote no para.
He who is stupid or foolish is even more so as an adult. (guaje 'gourd' acocote 'large gourd').
- No necesitar de guaje para nadar.
To not need anyone. (lit. 'not to need a gourd to swim', guaje is a gourd used to learn to swim).
- Sólo los guajolotes mueren la víspera.
No need to fear death (or changes in life), everyone dies when his time comes.
- Parecer uno malacate.
To be in constant movement or to have ants in the pants. (lit. 'to seem like a spindle').
- Irse uno como el mayate, con hebra y todo.
To go along in life not paying debts and unaware of surrounding. (lit. 'to go away like a beetle, thread and all').
- Caerse uno de mecate.
To get caught red-handed. (lit. 'to fall from the rope').

Ponerse uno a dos reatas y un <u>mecate</u> .	To overeat at a party or banquet. (lit. 'to put on two lariats and a rope').
Tener comal y <u>metate</u> .	To feel at ease with the people around one. (lit. 'to have tortilla pan and grinding stone').
Estar pegada al <u>metate</u> .	Said of women who feel destined to a life of making corn tortillas. (lit. 'to be tied to the corn grinding stone').
Ser una cosa el <u>mole</u> de uno.	To be someone's special or favorite dish. (<u>mole</u> 'mixture').
Ir al <u>nopal</u> sólo cuando tiene tunas.	To maintain a friendship only for the selfish benefit of one of the friends. (<u>nopal</u> 'prickly pear cactus', <u>tuna</u> 'pear').
Hasta levantar el <u>petate</u>	Being the last one to leave at a party. (lit. 'until the mat is raised').
Arañar uno el <u>petate</u> .	To make the very best effort. (lit. 'to scratch the mat').
Dejar a uno en un <u>petate</u> .	To leave one in complete misery. (lit. 'to leave someone on a mat' as an Indian)
No se puede silbar y tragar <u>pinole</u> .	It's impossible to do two contradictory things at the same time. (lit. 'one can't whistle and drink harina').
Tener cara de <u>quelite</u> .	To look sick. (<u>quelite</u> 'light-green vegetables').
No valer un <u>tejocate</u> .	Said of something that is worthless. (<u>tejocate</u> 'sloe').

Valer un <u>tlaco</u> .	Said of something that is of low value or low esteem. (<u>tlaco</u> 'small copper Aztec coin').
No importarle a uno una cosa un <u>tlaco</u> .	Said of something very worthless.
Cargar uno con los <u>tenates</u> .	To move away or to change one's place of living. (<u>tenate</u> 'bull's testicles').
Hacer uno las del <u>zopilote</u> .	To flee or disappear. (lit. 'to make like a vulture').

CHAPTER X

MISCELLANEOUS

The following miscellaneous terms which did not fall into any previously mentioned category will be discussed according to their derivation from original Aztec meaning and compared with the standard definition.

Words denoting absurdity or, nonsense are cacalote or cácalo 'absurb' (stand. def. 'crow') and como chiches de gallina 'nonsense' (lit. 'like tits on a hen' a good equivalent of the American expression 'like tits on a boar').

Words of Aztec origin that are terms for drinks are atole 'a drink made from corn meal dissolved in water or milk' (stand. def. 'corn gruel'), coyoi 'an alcoholic drink' made from the fruit of the palm tree' (stand. def. 'palm tree' or 'its fruit'), coyote 'an alcoholic drink' (stand. def. 'coyote') and chocolate 'a drink made of cocoa, sugar and vanilla' (stand. def. 'a drink or mixture of cocoa and sugar').

Other various terms are chiche 'a comfortable house' (stand. def. 'teat'), pistle 'a horse with bad qualities' (stand. def. 'type of dark obsidian'), atepocate 'tadpole', gachupín 'spider' (stand. def. 'man with spurs') and sūchil 'a venomous sanke' (stand. def. 'flower').

Of Aztec origin are amate 'hieroglyphic manuscript' (stand. def. 'paper'), cajete 'round holes' also 'the center of the maguey where the juice collects' (stand. def. 'round wooden bowl'), ciguata 'woman' (stand. def. 'pale, anemic'), cuate 'double-barreled gun' (stand. def. 'twin'), hule 'rubber hammer' also 'kite' (stand. def. 'rubber' or 'oil cloth'), masacoate 'incoherent literary work' (stand. def. 'boa'), matate 'hanging nest of the woodcock bird' (stand. def. 'net' or hanging net'), nixtamal 'Venus-the-planet' (stand. def. 'corn meal'), papalote 'kite' or 'windmill' (stand. def. 'butterfly'), petaca 'cigarette box' (stand. def. 'trunk'), toro de petate 'scarecrow' (lit. 'straw bull'), tanate 'purse', (stand. def. bull's 'scrotum') and tenate 'purse' (stand. def. 'bull's scrotum, <tanate).

Some words of Aztec origin for plants are chichiqua 'shade tree' (stand. def. 'nursemaid'), guaje 'a gourd used to learn how to swim' (<guaje 'gourd'), huila 'an agave' (stand. def. 'kite', 'invalid'), papalote 'a tropical plant' (stand. def. 'butterfly') and piocha 'primrose' (stan. def. 'goatee').

Alternative terms of Aztec origin for adjectives are cipote 'enormous, beautiful' (<coyote, canis latrans), cuijen 'dark' (cuijen 'dark colored hawk'), chocolate 'dark brown' ('color of chocolate'), nagual 'savage', 'barbaric' (<nagual 'witch'), quelite 'pale green' (color

of quelite 'green vegetables'), tecolote 'grayish-brown' (color of the tecolote 'owl') and zocato 'strong' (stand. def. 'damaged, wilted fruit').

Some alternatives for adverbs are chiche 'very easily' (<chiche 'teat') and con la suavidad del aguacate 'very smoothly' (refers to the softness of the meat of the avocado).

Finally, some interjections are enhanced by using substitute words or euphemisms to express the meaning. Some of these interjections are chile! 'an obscenity expressing surprise' (<diasque 'devil') and pepenado! = hijo de puta 'son of a whore' (pepenar 'to pick up rags').

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSIONS

This study has included 364 words of Náhuatl origin and their derivatives. For the most part, the words were transformed or elaborated in becoming part of Mexican Spanish and Mexican culture. There was, however, one group of words which indicated an influence of the Aztec on Mexican culture through lexical influence.

This group, which did not transform or elaborate items from the original Aztec, but instead maintained identification with Aztec culture after the words became a part of Mexican Spanish consists of a group of eighteen items (4.9% of the entire 364 items). A prime example is ahuizote. Ahuizote (<ahuizotl) was originally the name of an early Aztec king. The Aztec king Ahuizotl was a malevolent, evil king and in Mexican Spanish the word ahuizote is translated as 'an evil, malevolent person'. Two other such examples, cencuate (<centlicoaatl) and istacoate (<iztaccoatl) are snakes that have always been superstitiously feared by the Indians of Mexico (the cencuate was feared because it supposedly drank the milk of mothers while they slept at night).

One final example of how a few words of Aztec origin have maintained their Aztec cultural referents in present day Mexican Spanish is the expression cuando el tecolote canta el indio muere ('when the owl calls, the Indian will

die'). This expression carries the cultural form of the superstition of the Aztecs through into present-day Mexican culture by means of the influence of Náhuatl on Mexican Spanish

The other 357 words which show evidence of transformation or elaboration became culturally "Mexican" through one of six ways: (1) metaphors based upon similarity, of appearance, (2) metaphors based on similarity of quality, activity, or function, (3) metaphors based on similarity of perceptual or emotive effect, (4) nomination, (5) correlative analogy and (6) substitution (Kany, 1960).

The greatest number of words (139 or 38% of 364) of Aztec origin became a part of Mexican Spanish because they became metaphorically based on similarity of quality, activity or function, such as the word amate (<amatl) 'paper'. Today, besides meaning 'paper', it also means 'a manuscript of hieroglyphics' since the primary use of amatl in Aztec Mexico was for writing, which was done in hieroglyphics; therefore, there is a similarity of function. Another example of metaphors based on similarity of quality, activity or function is mayate. Mayate (<mayatl) is a large beautifully colored beetle, and because there is a similarity of activity between the way a large beetle crawls and a 'drunk' walks (stagger); therefore, mayate is one way of saying 'drunk'. Finally, the example

papalotear (<papalotl 'butterfly') suggests the actions of a butterfly and one translation of papalotear is 'to flutter around from place to place,' as a butterfly does.

The second largest group of words that were elaborated or transformed (95 or 26% of 264) are those words which are metaphors based on similarity of appearance. The first example of this type of metaphor is ahuilotes. Ahuilotes (<ahuilotl) are fruit shaped like grapes and the translation 'testicles' bears witness to the fact that this fruit is similar in appearance to testicles. Another example is the word jícara (<xicalli) which is a round empty vessel made from a fruit. Because the fruit resembles the 'head' we find one of the translations of jícara to be 'head'. Finally the word tepocate (<atepocate) 'tadpole' is used to describe persons with larger than normal heads as in the expression parece tepocate 'he looks like a tadpole (large head, small body)'.

The third largest group (68 or 18% of 364) is nomination or an old word (Aztec) used as a referent for which it was not previously used. An example of this would be ahuizote (<ahuizotl) 'nutria' which now also means 'sorcery or witchcraft'. Other examples would be cacahuate (<tlalcacahuatl) 'peanut' now also means 'pimp' and huila or güila (<huilana) 'kite' is now also a name for a common agave plant.

The fourth group (29 or 8% of 364) includes metaphors based on similarity of perceptual or emotive effect. The expression no vale un cacahuate 'not worth a peanut' refers to the low value of something by using an item that also has little value. Another example is the word chinacte (<tzinacatl) 'a chicken without feathers'. The word chinacate, then would have a perceptual or emotive effect similar to that of its referent in Spanish, 'bald man'. Finally, the word escuintle (<itzcuintli) originally in Aztec referred to a cur or mongrel and one of the translations, similar in effect, is 'kid' (Note; 'kid' in this case is a low class kid or dirty kid).

The fifth method of transformation of elaboration of words from Aztec was the acceptance of word through correlative analogy, or words that are immediately associated. These words were 2.2 per cent of 364 or eight in number. The first example of this is found in the expression el comal le dice a la olla - culo tizado, lit. 'the pans says to the pot-dirty ass'. The word comal was accepted in Mexican Spanish (and used in this expression) because the two words comal and olla are immediately associated and for the purpose of this expression are almost identical. The other example of correlative analogy is the word tepocates 'tadpoles' (also translated 'kids'). As tadpoles are the young of the frog, so kids are young human beings.

The last category is substitution. This group of words numbering 7 (1.9% of 364) includes words of Aztec origin which substitute for words in Mexican Spanish for the same concept. A good example is in the expression no vale un tejocote 'not worth a sloe (berry)'. The words un tejocote (<te-ocotl) can be substituted with un tlaco 'small copper coin', un cacahuate 'a peanut' for un cacao 'a cocoa bean'. All of these substitutes can replace the word nada in the expression no vale nada 'it's worthless'. A final example is in the expression ser algo el mole de uno which is translated in Spanish ser su gusto especial, therefore, el mole de uno = su gusto especial and it is the same concept expressed with a substitute of Aztec origin.

In conclusion, many languages have influenced the development of Spanish, and continue to do so. Even now the English language is influencing Spanish in ways similar to, yet different from those in which Náhuatl, the language of the Aztecs, has influenced its development. At the same time, the influence of Náhuatl may create still other variations in the future, because a language is never static so long as it is used by any living group. We may therefore say that Náhuatl continues to develop within Spanish even though relatively few people now use it as a separate language.

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APPENDIX

The following is a listing of all Aztec words discussed in this thesis. The words were taken from various sources which will be noted by the following abbreviations.

<u>American Spanish Euphemisms</u>	AmSE
<u>American Spanish Semantics</u>	AmSS
<u>Diccionario de Americanismos</u>	DAm
<u>Diccionario de Aztequismos</u>	DAz
<u>Diccionario de Mejicanismos</u>	DM
<u>Picardía Mexicana</u>	PM

The words will be listed alphabetically followed by the Aztec word from which the word was derived and the standard definitions. Derivations will be noted separately.

acocil < acuitzilli 'freshwater shrimp'

DAz: Estar como un acocil - said of someone who gets red in the face because of the sun or fatigue.

acocote < acocotli 'long narrow gourd used to draw sap from the Maguey'

AmSE: fool

AmSS: fool, foolishness, stupidity

DM: 1) a acocote nuevo, tlachiquero viejo - always hire the experienced man.

2) El que desde chico es guaje, hasta acocote no para - he who is born a fool is even more so as an adult.

aguacate < ahuacatl 'avocado plant or fruit'

AmSE: testicles in general

AmSS: 1) foolishness, stupidity

2) cowardice

3) shyness, timidity

DAz: Es aguacate con pan - said of dull or stupid people

DM: Con la suavidad del aguacate - said of something done slyly.

ahuilote < ahuilotl 'fruit of the coyotomate' Variation: aguilotes

DM: testicles

ahuizote < ahuizotl 'nutria'

AmSS: a troublesome or nagging person

DAm: 1) a person who bothers others

2) a cruel and terrible man

DM: 1) witchcraft, sorcery

2) a type of bird

Note: The Aztec word was taken from the name of an early Aztec king named Ahuizotl.

ajolote < axolotl 'salamander of the lakes around Mexico City'

DM: 1) used to describe dark, chubby people

2) Feo como un ajolote or Parece un ajolote - used to describe the ugliness of a person

amate < amatl 'paper'

DM: a manuscript written in hieroglyphics as many of the Aztec codices

atole < atolli 'cornflour gruel'

DM: 1) a caldo y atole 'on a diet'

2) Como dueño de mi atole, lo menearé con un dedo o con un palo 'I can do anything I please.'

3) ¿De qué atole? 'why, for what reason?'

4) Después de atole 'too late (to benefit)'

5) Echar el moco en el atole 'to have

something turn out wrong.'

6) Dar atole con el dedo 'to trick someone'

AmSS: Tener sangre de atole 'to be timid'

DAz: Es pan con atole - said of suave persons

ayate < ayatl 'fiber cloth'

DAz: Tener cara de ayate - said of persons with a pock-marked face

ayote < ayotli 'large gourd, pumpkin'

AmSE: 1) Darle ayotes a uno 'to jilt someone'

2) ayotes 'testicles'

AmSS: ayote 'the human head'

cacahuate < tlalcacahuatl 'peanut'

Variation: cacahuete

AmSE: pimp (panderer)

AmSS: used to describe someone with a pock-marked face.

DAz: 1) Parece del cacahuatl - applied to an indecent person

2) No me importa un cacahuete 'It's not worth a damn.'

DM: No vale un cacahuete - said of a worthless person

cacalote < cacalotl 'crow'

AmSS: Cacalotes 'popcorn'

DM: 1) var. cácalo 'absurdity, nonsense'

2) Indian from a primitive tribe of Northern Mexico

cacao < cacahua 'cocoa'

AmSS: cacao 'money' (cocoa beans were used as money in post-conquest times)

DAm: Pedirse cacao 'to give up'

DM: No valer un cacao - used to describe something of no importance

cacastle < cacaxtli 'a crate used for carrying fruits, vegetables or eggs'

AmSE: Dejar el cacaste 'to die'

DAm: cacastle 'the skeleton of vertebrates'

DM: cacastle 'an Indian of one of the many tribes of Coahuila'

cacomistle < cacomiztli 'civet cat'

Variation: cacomiscle

DAz: Cacomiscle de cabeza prieta 'a chicken thief'
PM: cacomiscle 'thief'

cajete < caxitl 'a round wooden bowl'

DM: cajete 1) 'round hole, wider than deep'
2) 'the place in the center of the
maguery where the sap collects'
3) 'coward'

camote < camotli 'sweet potato'

AmSE: camote 'vulva'

AmSS: 1) camotes 'legs of a female'

2) camote 'sweetheart'

3) camotear 'to annoy'

4) encamotarse 'to fall in love'

DAm: Tener un camote - said of someone very much
in love

DM: 1) Atorarse el camote 'to not know how to
answer'

2) Tomar uno un camote 'to take affection to
another person'

3) Tragar camote 'to express oneself with
difficulty'

4) Camote 'welt, bump or bruise'

5) Camote 'silly, simple or ignorant'

PM: 'penis'

cegua < cihuatl 'woman'

Variation: cigua

AmSE: synonym for silly or foolish

cencuate < centlicoatl 'venomous snake'

DAz: Es más mamón que un cencuate - said of babies
who nurse too much

CM: A snake that is superstitiously believed to
suck a mother's milk at night.

ciguato < cihuatl 'pale, anemic'

AmSE: ciguato, -a 'foolish'

DM: ciguata 'woman'

cinco < tzintli 'posterior'

AmSE: Cinco 'anus'

comal < comalli 'flat pan used in cooking tortillas'

DAz: El comal le dice a la olla - culo tiznado - this is a term applied to a person who reproaches another for the same defect that he has... 'Don't throw stones when you live in a glass house'.

copal < copalli 'resin'

AmSE: Echarle copal al santo 'to drink' usually in reference to drinking alcohol

coyol < coyolli 'Date palm and/or its fruit'

AmSE: 1) coyolear 'to copulate'
2) coyoles 'testicles'

DM: Coyol - name for a drink or liquor made from the fermented fruit of the date palm.

coyote < coyotl 'wild canine of Mexico'

AmSE: thief

AmSS: coyote 1) a term used by the Indians to describe whites
2) used to describe or replace the color light brown or tan
3) stowaway

DAm: coyotear 'to stow away' or 'to deceive'
Coyotes de la misma loma - a term that would describe people alike ... 'Birds of a feather flock together'.

DAz: Coyote 1) paymaster of mines
2) native of the country
Coyotera 'person who cries with screams'
Andar como coyote - an expression that is used to describe someone who trots as he runs
Ser más listo que un coyote - said of a very sharp person

DM: Coyote 1) street vendor
2) business intermediary
3) pure-blooded Spaniard
4) alcoholic drink

cuate < coatl 'snake, twin'

Variations: cuata, cuatito, cuatacho, acuate, coate

AmSS: cuate 'double-barrled gun'

DAm: confidant

DAz: Encuatar 'to unite' as to unite two things
similar or equal

PM: derivative cuatatón 'homosexual'

coatezón < coatl 'intimate friend'

DAm: coward

cuico, -a < cuica or <cuico 'policeman'

DM: tale-teller or gossiper

cuija < cuixa 'lizard'

DM: cuija 'a tall, skinny woman'

cuijen < cuixen 'dark, spotted hawk'

AmSE: Someone who dresses up as a devil and goes
around scaring children at public festivals.

DM: a dark color

cuilón < cuiloni 'sodomite'

AmSE: homosexual

DM: 1) coward

2) fool

cuita < cuitatl 'excrement of birds'

AmSE: cuitearse 'to defecate'

cuita, cuitl, cuitla 'human excrement'

DM: cuítar 'human excrement'

chacuallear < xacualoa 'stir, scrape, sift'

DM: to gossip

chacalfn < chacalfn 'little shrimp'

AmSS: child

chamaco < chamua or < chamauac 'child'

Variation: chamagoso, -a

AmSE: Dirty
 AmSS: 1) Fat
 2) Term of endearment
 DM: Kid

chamuco < chamoco 'evil spirit'

AmSE: Devil

chapulín < chapulfn 'grasshopper'

AmSE: Prostitute (chapulín or chapola)
 AmSS: chapulfn 'child'

chayote < chayutli 'pear-shaped fruit'

Variation: chayotada

AmSE: chayote 1) silly, stupid, foolish
 2) vulva
chayotada 'foolishness'
 PM: chayote 'head'
Les encanta el chayote serenado - said of effeminate males.

chiche < chichi 'breast, teat'

AmSS: chiche 'wet nurse'
 DAm: chiche 1) comfortable and elegant house
 2) as an adverb - 'very easily'
 DM: chiche ciega - a term applied to a miser
Como chiches de gallina - a phrase used jokingly on something absurd or incredible
Mamar chiche 'to exploit a situation'

chichicaste < tzitzicastli 'nettle'

DM: a person who is sharply sarcastic

chichicuilote < tzitzicuilotl 'a wading bird'

DAm: Ser como el chichicuilote - said of fools
 DM: chichicuilote 'a person with long thin legs'
Estar hecho un chichicuilote 'to be very skinny'

chichigua < chichihua or chichihualli 'nursemaid'

AmSE: chichigua 1) servant
2) pimp

DAm: chichigua 'any shade tree'
DM: protector or panderer [pimp]

chile < chilli 'pepper'

AmSE: penis

DAm: A medios chiles 'half drunk'
De chile y de dulce - term for a meeting or gathering where social classes mix.
Parecer chile relleno 'to be ragged'

DAz: No le tenga miedo al chile aunque lo vea colorado
'don't be afraid of something just because it looks dangerous'. [Don't judge a book by its cover]

DM: Estar hecho un chile 'to be very angered'
'chile' - an obscenity expressing surprise
Hacerse chile con el culo 'being mad but not being able to show it'

chilpayate < chilpayatl 'young child'

PM: El de hacer chilpayates - a descriptive phrase that denotes the penis

chiltipiquín < chilli and tecpintli 'small chili pepper'

DM: chiltipiquín 'a very irritable person'
Ser uno un chiltipiquín 'to be very courageous'

chinacaste < tzinacatl 'a chicken without feathers'

DAz: Chinacaste 1) low class person
2) a bald person

chincual < tzin and cuahitztli 'an itching'

DM: chincual 'party'
Parece que no le curaron el chincual - an expression referring to someone who cannot sit still [He has ants in his pants]

chipote < xipotli 'bump or bruise'

Variation: cipote

- AmSE: chipote 'penis'
cipote 1) child
 2) simpleton
 AmSS: cipote 1) penis
 2) child
 3) enormous, beautiful
 DAz: chipote 'foolish'
 DM: chipote 'a children's handclapping game'

chiquihuite < chiquihuitl 'basket'

Variation: chiquigüite

- DAz: Hacerse uno chiquigüite 'to act ignorant'
chiquigüitear - a verb that describes the
 action of witches who are deducing the author
 of a theft.
 DM: chiquihuite 'stupifying, useless'
Hacer a uno chiquihuite 'to make someone out
 to be a fool'

chiquimole < chiquimolli 'linnet (bird)'

- DAz: chiquimole 1) tattletale
 2) a breeder of quarrels

chocolate < xococatl 'chocolate' [Author's note: The true derivation of the word seems to be Aztec. As Moringo says (Diccionario de Americanismos), "chocolate is undoubtedly of Aztec origin, but its formation is unknown. It appears in its actual form around 1580." Moringo further states that "the Náhuatl words xococ and atolli seem to have influenced the development. Robelo gives (Diccionario de Aztequismos) the etymology of "xococ + atl."

- AmSE: chocolatera 'nose'
Dar a uno para su chocolate 'to beat up someone'
 AmSS: chocolate 'blood'
 DAm: Sacar chocolate 'to hit someone and make their nose bleed'
 DM: chocolate 1) a drink
 2) candy
 3) the color dark brown
 PM: chocolate de Fu Man Chu 'opium'

chomite < tzomitl 'type of skirt or petticoat'

DM: Calentársele el chomite a una mujer 'to be completely lost in love with a man'

chucucumite < xococ and < omitl 'a small fish'

AmSE: penis

chuchuluco < chuchuluco 'tamale made with unsifted flour'

DAZ: 1) Maladjusted man or woman
2) An uncivilized person

diasque < diache 'evil one'

AmSE: diasque 'devil'

DM: An exclamation of surprise

ejote < exotl 'young bean pods'

PM: ejote 'penis'

epazote < epazotl 'saltwort'

DM: Las palabras del epazote 'a marriage proposal'

escuintle < itzcuintli 'common dog', 'mongrel'

Variation: escuincle

AmSS: escuintle or escuincle 'child'

DAZ: escuintle 1) skinny dog
2) child

DM: escuincle 'despicable person'

gachupín < cacchopini 'a man with spurs'

DM: gachupín 1) a newcomer
2) Spanish commoner
3) a type of spider

guacamole < ahuacamulli 'a mixture of avocados, tomatoes, onions and chilies'

DM: guacamolear 1) to joke slyly
2) to touch sensually

quaje < huaxin 'a gourd'

AmSE: quaje 'foolish'
quajería 'foolishness'
Hacer quaje a uno 'to make a fool of someone'

AmSS: quajear 'to act like a fool'

DAm: El que desde chico es quaje, hasta acocote no para 'foolish as a child, foolish as an old man'

DAz: quajada 'foolishness'

quajolote < uexolotl 'turkey'

AmSE: quajolota 'prostitute'
quajolote 'silly' or 'fool'

DAm: quajolotada 'foolishness'

DAm: quajolote 'silly' or 'stupid'
Sólo los quajolotes mueren la víspera 'no hay que temer peligros, porque cada cual muere en su día [Everyone will die someday]'

DM: Un cabildo de quajolotes 'a gathering of idiots'

guanaco < cuaitl + nacatl 'meat patty'

AmSE: foolish, silly

DM: guanaco 'ear'

guapal < huapalli 'board with hooks'

DM: cloth where baskets are kept

güisa < huitzlin 'hummingbird'

Variations: huisa, huiza

AmSE: prostitute

huila < huilana 'kite'

Variation: quila

AmSE: prostitute

DAm: invalid

DM: common name of an Agave

huilota < uilotl 'dove'

DM: foolish

hule < ulli or < ollin 'India rubber' or 'oil cloth'

AmSE: Alzar las de hule 'to run away or escape'
AmSS: Hammer used to strike the marimba

ichcatón < ichcatl + tontli 'cotton'

Variation: iscatón

DM: cabeza de ichcatón 'cottontop'

istacoate < iztaccoatl 'white venomous snake'

Variation: istacuate

AmSE: The name of a snake superstitiously avoided
saying

jícara < xicalli 'jar made of fruit'

AmSE: stupid or brainless

AmSS: the head

DM: container for a chocolate drink

PM: Que les llene la jícara - said of effeminate
men or homosexuals

Se trompezó con la jícara del pulmón - said of
drunks

jocoque < jocoque 'nutritious preparation of cut milk'

PM: le den jocoque a la solitaria - said of
homosexuals

joto < xote 'lame'

AmSE: homosexual

machincuepa < matil + tzincuepa 'somersault'

Dz: Dar la machincuepa 'to change political
parties'

DM: Machincuepa 1) somersault
2) change of political party

malacate < malacatl 'spindle'

DAm: Parecer uno malacate 'to be in constant movement'

DM: Malacate 'a tree on the Pacific'

masacoate < mazatl + coatl 'type of boa' 'a worm with horns' 'horns'

Variation: mazacoate, masacuate

AmSE: masacoate 1) a superstitious snake
2) penis

DAz: Parecer masacoate - an expression used to describe fat, deformed persons.

DM: masacoate 'an incoherent literary work without logic.'

matate < matatl 'bag' or 'hanging net'

AmSE: scrotum or testicles

DAm: Hanging net of the chorchca (bird)

matatena < mailt + tetl + tena 'round stone'

DM: a game of skipping stones across the water

mayate < mayatl 'beautifully colored beetle'

AmSE: pederast or homosexual

AmSS: someone with Negro blood

DAm: drunk

DM: Irse como el mayate, con hebra y todo "to go along like a 'debtor' who hasn't paid his creditors - distant like"

mecate < mecatl 'rope'

AmSE: mecatazo 'drunk

AmSS: jalar mecate 'to flatter.

DAz: ¡Es un mecate! 'he's a low class person'

Darse un mecatazo 'to drink alcohol in gulps'

DM: mecate - said of a person without culture or refinement

Caerse uno del mecate 'to get caught red-handed'

Olerle a uno el pescuezo a mecate 'to feel close to death'

Ponerse uno a dos reatas y un mecate 'to overeat at a banquet'
Venirse los mecates - the action of ejaculation during coition
Echarle a uno el mecate - said of one who gets married

mecatear < mecatl 'to rope'

AmSE: mecatear 'to leave' or 'flee'
mecateárselas 'to escape'

metate < metatl 'corn grinding stone'

DAz: Estar pegada al metate - said of women who feel doomed to a life of making tortillas [or of women who feel doomed to the kitchen]
Tener comal y metate 'to feel safe and at ease with the people around one'

mitote < mitotl 'dance of the Aztecs'

AmSS: an uproar
 DM: 1) home part
 2) exaggerated emotion
 3) noise, quarrel, disturbance

mole < molli 'mixture of chilies and other things'

DM: Ser una cosa el mole de uno 'to be someone's favorite dish'

molote < molotic 'type of small bird'

DM: molote 1) tumult, noise, confusion
 2) bundle
 3) tuft of hair
 4) type of enchilada

naqual < nahualli 'witch'

AmSE: naqual 1) an evil sorcerer who can change into a pig or a dog and roam the countryside at will doing evil
 2) liar
 AmSS: naqulear 'to steal'
 DAm: naqual 'lie'
 DM: savage, barbaric

nixtamal < nixtli - tamalli 'corn masa'

DM: nixtamalero 'unimportant person'
nixtamal 'the planet Venus'

nopal < nopalli 'prickly pear cactus'

DM: Ir al nopal sólo cuando tiene tunas 'to maintain a friendship only for the benefit of one of the friends'

ocote < ocotl 'pine'

DAz: ocuito 'person who builds up discord among people'
 DM: ocote 'torch'

papalote < papalotl 'butterfly'

AmSS: papalote 'kite'
papalotear 'to roam or loaf around from place to place'
 DM: papalote 1) tropical plant
 2) windmill
papalotear 'to make the last movements in death'

pepenar < pepena 'pick up scattered things'

AmSE: pepenar 'to copulate'
pepenador 1) rag picker
 2) dirty person
pepenche 'panderer'
pepenadora 'midwife'
pepenado - equivalent of hijo de puta
 AmSS: pepenar 'to pick up'
 DM: pepenar 1) to hit with fists
 2) to adopt an orphan and care for it as one's own

petaca < petlacalli 'trunk'

AmSE: petaca 1) hunchback
 2) belly or pot gut
 3) breast
 4) plural 'buttocks'
Pegar las petacas 'to flee'

DAz: Echarse con las petacas - said of someone who refuses to work.

DM: petaca 1) cigarette case
2) a woman's hip

petate < petatl 'mat'

AmSE: petate 'poor'

Liar el petate 'to die'

AmSS: petate 'an insignificant person'

DAm: petate 'foolish' or 'stupid'

DAz: Verse en un petate 'to be in the worse misery'

Asustarse con el petate del muerto 'to be deathly afraid'

Tener miedo de un toro de petate 'to be afraid of fear'

DM: toro de petate 'scarecrow'

Arañar uno el petate 'to make the best effort'

Dejar a uno en un petate 'to leave someone in misery' or 'to ruin someone'

Hasta levantar el petate 'to leave at the last of a party'

No tener uno ni un petate en que caerse 'to be very poor'

Ser uno un petate 'to be a disgraceful fool' (pendejo)

pilguanejo, -a < pilhuanhio 'clerical servant'

AmSE: pilguaneja 'concubine'

DAz: pilguanejo 'despicable man'

DM: pilguaneja 'nanny'

pinacate < pinacatl 'large, black beetle'

AmSS: pinacate 'person with Negro blood'

DAm: pinacate - said of persons with low capabilities, 'crude'

Da: pinacate 'stupid or insignificant person'

pinole < pinolli 'corn harina'

DM: No se puede silbar y tragar pinole - a phrase which expresses the impossibility of doing two contradictory things at one time

piocha < piochtli 'goatee'

AmSE: piocha 'penis'

DM: piocha 1) a primrose
2) a pick axe
3) good, soft, excellent, pretty
and magnificent

pfpila < pipilpipil 'turkey hen'

DM: pfpila 'prostitute'

pfpiola < pipiolin 'wild black bees'

AmSE: pipiolas 'momey'

DM: pipiola 'child up to the age of 7 or 8'

pistle < pitztli 'a variety of obsidian'

Variation: pixtle

DM: pistle jokingly 'a horse with bad qualities'

pochitoque < pochictic 'turtle'

AmSE: pochitoque 'vulva'

DM: In Tabasco 'someone fluffy, fat or spongy'

popote < popotl 'straw' made from hollow stem

AmSE: El popote 'masturbation'

Hacerse el popote 'to masturbate'

DM: No levantar uno ni un popote 'to be excessively lazy'

Ser uno un popote 'to be thin'

quelite < quilitl 'edible green vegetables'

AmSS: quelite - represents the color of pale green

DAm: Tener cara de quelite 'to be pale and green as if sick'

DM: quelite 'bone'

sũchil < xochil 'flower'

DAm: sũchil 'end of a nocturnal party'

DM: sũchil 'venomous snake'

suche 'skinny'

talayote < tlalayotli 'gourd'

DAz: talayotes 'testicles'

tamal < tamalli 'tamale'

AmSE: tamal 'vulva'

AmSS: tamal 'intrigue, deception'

DAz: Hacerle a uno de chivo los tamales 'to cheat someone'

DM: tamal 1) large bulk

2) penis

Hacer un tamal 'to prepare a trick'

tanate < tanatl 'bag of palm leaves or leather'

Variation: tenate

DM: tanate 1) bag or purse
2) scrotum of bulls
3) 'testicles' in general

tatole < tlatolli 'agreement'

DM: tatole 1) whispering
2) conspiracy

tecolines < tecolli 'charcoal'

AmSE: tecolines 'money' in general

tecolote < tecolotl 'owl'

Variation: teco

AmSE: tecolote 1) a drunk
2) butt of a marijuana cigarette
3) policeman

AmSS: tecolote 'color grayish brown'
teco, -a 'a drunk'

DM: Cuando el tecolote canta, el indio muere
'when the owl chants, the Indian dies'

tecomate < tecomatl 'drinking vessel made out of a gourd'

DM: tecomate 1) a name given to the children of
México
2) the human head - specifically the
cranium

tejocote < te-ocotl 'sloe'

DAz: No vale un tejocote - said of something that is absolutely worthless

tepalcate < tepalcatl 'trash or rubbish'

Variation: tapalcatl

AmSS: El que nace tepalcate, ni a comal tizado llega 'born trash and always will be'

DAm: tepalcate 'useless person'

tepeguaje < tepe-huaxin 'guaje de monte [gourd]'

DM: Cabeza de tepeguaje 'a stupid or foolish person'

tepocate < atepocatl 'tadpole'

Variation: atepocatl

AmSE: atepocate or tepocate 1) ugly
2) a person with a large head

DAz: Parece atepocate - said of a fat dark-skinned person

tepocate < tepocatl 'gavel or stone fragment'

DM: tepocate 'little child'

terpiloya < teilpiloyan 'jail'

Variation: tlapiloya and trampiloya

AmSE: jail or prison

tlaco < tlaco 'half'

AmSE: Estar sin tlaco 'to be broke'

DM: tlaco 'money'

Valer un tlaco - said of that which is held in low esteem

No importarle a uno una cosa un tlaco 'to have no value or worth'

tlalcoyote < tlalli + coyotl 'badger'

DM: tlalcoyote 'name for peyote'

tlaxcal < tla + ixcalli 'tortilla'

DM: among the descendants of the Aztecs, the tortilla

tompiate < tompiatl 'basket of palm leaves'

Variation: tompeate

DM: tompiate 'bag'
tompiates 'testicles'

topil < topilli 'staff of justice'

AmSE: topil 'policeman'

tuza < tuzan or totzan 'pocket gopher'

DM: mischievous child

xocoyote < xocoyotl 'sour fruit or unripened fruit'

Variation: jocoyote, socoyote

AmSS: the youngest member of the family

zacate < zacatl 'grass'

AmSE: zacate 'marijuana'
DM: zacatero 'drug addict'
PM: zacate inglés 'marijuana'

zapote < tzapotl 'sapota fruit or tree'

DAz: Tener más valor que él que se comió el primer zapote - said of someone very courageous
DM: zapote 'trap, trick'

zocato < zocatl 'damaged or wilted fruit'

DAm: zocato 'weak or sickly child'
zocato 'strong'

zonchiche < tzontli + chichiltic 'red-headed vulture'

AmSE: red-headed vulture feared by lower classes
and Indians

DM: redhead

zopilote < zopilotl 'turkey buzzard'

Variation: zope

AmSE: zopilote 'buzzard feared by the Indians'

zopilotear 'to rob, steal'

amarrar zope 'to throw up'

DM: zopilo, -a 'silly'

Hacer uno las del zopilote 'to flee'

zopilotes 'first conquered tribes of the
conquest by Cortez'

zoquete < zoquite 'smelly thing'

AmSE: zoquete 'feces'

enzoquetearse 'to get all muddy'

DAm: zoquete 'blow with the fist'

zoquete 'silly, foolish, crack-brained'

zoyate < zoyatl 'fibers of the leaf of the palm tree
used to make hats'

PM: Le hizo el zoyate - said of drunks

VITA

I was born James Woodward Powell on August 18, 1944 to Colonel and Mrs. James H. Powell, USAF, in Springfield, Illinois.

I was educated in schools throughout the United States and Europe. Graduated from Stephen F. Austin High School, Bryan, Texas in 1962, and received my B.A. Degree from Texas A&M University, in May of 1967.

After graduation I taught French and Spanish at Memorial Junior High School in the Spring Branch Independent School District in Houston, Texas for seven years before returning to Texas A&M University for graduate work. While in Houston I served as Chairman of the French Section of the Houston Area Teachers of Foreign Languages and also was a member of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese and the American Association of Teachers of French.

While at Texas A&M University I was a senator in the Student Senate of Texas A&M University, a member of Pi Delta Phi, National French Honor Society, and maintained my membership with AATSP and the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Language.

My permanent address is: 1020 Foster, College Station, Texas 77840.

The typists for this Thesis are Mrs. Ruth Ann Powell and Mrs. Rosa Richardson.

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