Editorial

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Heritage languages and socialization: an introduction

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Heritage languages have been a topic of specific, continual interest since the 1970s, when they received recognition from the political and educational spheres in the United States and Canada. This interest is made evident in the journal of the United States House of Representatives session on July 31st, 1974, wherein the following was stated on the topic of "Bilingual Education":

> Recognizing […] (2) that many of such children have a cultural heritage which differs from that of English-speaking persons; (3) that a primary means by which a child learns is through the use of such child's language and cultural heritage; (4) that, therefore, large numbers of children of limited English-speaking ability have educational needs which can be met by the use of bilingual educational methods and techniques. (United States House of Representatives 1975 [1974]: 1201)

In the same decade, the number of course offerings designed specifically for minority language speakers grew exponentially, particularly in North America (Lynch 2014; Valdés Fallis 1977, 1978), while social psychology began to include language as an aspect of social heritage (Lindesmith et al. 1975). These confluences led to the foundation of a specialized academic field generally known as heritage language acquisition. Although research has been carried out on a multiplicity of languages (Cummins and Danesi 1990), particular attention, since the earliest stages of the field, has been paid to Spanish (Evans 1989).

As is well known (Montrul and Polinsky 2021), the heritage language field is as dynamic as it is complex. This is evidenced by the variety of definitions that have been proposed for the very term "heritage language". Some of these have centered around language itself (Montrul 2015: 15–16), while others have focused on speakers (Rothman 2009; Valdés Fallis 2000: 156). Likewise, heritage languages have been studied through the lens of the acquisition of linguistic form and function, as well as through the study of communication practices and, quite frequently, through

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pedagogy, didactics, and evaluation. For example, Agnes Weiyun He, one of the top specialists in the social study of heritage languages, has taken a distinct interest in educational contexts (He 2011). Of course, most people will also be aware of debates surrounding the need to maintain heritage languages or else they will inevitably be lost (Peyton et al. 2001), as well as their importance in relation to identities (He 2006). In any case, the topic of heritage language socialization is far from exhausted, and a focus on merely the social aspect of heritage language acquisition, use, maintenance, and attrition or loss, offers a wide array of opportunities for further development.

The concept of "socialization" has been widely debated over the past century in the fields of sociology, psychology, and social psychology. In general, the concept has been used to refer to the development process by which children gain recognition as members of a shared social order, one which involves both parents and classmates (people), and schools and other agents (institutions). Following from Rapley and Hansen (2006), socialization has been understood in two essentially diverging ways. The first explains socialization as a process of learning or internalizing the values, attitudes, and norms of a given culture or social setting, and of enacting culturally congruent social roles and appropriate practices within them. This frame is best explained by the definition given by Maccoby (2007: 13), who says that socialization is the process by which we teach "the skills, behavioral patterns, values, and motivations necessary to function competently within a given cultural framework".

The second approach to socialization interprets it as part of the development of a reflective self, mediated by language (Mead 1934). This interpretation is akin to the sociology of Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977), which looks not only into the relationship between social figures and institutions, but also the linguistic interactions shaping that very relationship. In other words, while the first approach tends to see socialization as something that happens to people, the second understands it as a process in which individuals subjected to socialization are, at the same time, active participants in it. To that effect, "self" and "society", "identity" and "culture", are not seen as binary oppositions. Instead, each term coproduces the other, by way of largely linguistic resources, an argument we also find in ethnomethodology (Goffman 1961) and discursive psychology (Potter 2004).

It is this second approach that has been predominant in the field of "language socialization" (Duranti et al. 2011). In line with research on language acquisition, this field studies the interactions involved in the configuration and development of linguistic repertoires, which enable children to integrate and gain recognition as members of their respective communities. Within the domains or settings where these interactions take place, two stand out as singularly important, always with childhood development as the primary source of interest: home and school. That said, growing attention is being paid to other realms of social interaction, such as political communication, professional dialogue, and mass media.

Language socialization, including socialization relative to heritage languages, is a multi-layer process involving the establishment of a two-way communicational flow. As such, socialization can be a result of the use of a language, at the same time as it is the very vehicle that enables the use of that language to begin with (Schieffelin and Ochs 1986: 163). This means that language both conditions and is an essential piece of socialization. But at the same time, socialization conditions the use, function, and form of the language itself. This two-way current takes on special significance when we turn our focus to heritage speakers. It is evident in every setting, including school, where heritage language students contribute to the socialization process to the same degree that socialization opens a door for them to use their languages (He 2011: 605). In other words, the acquisition or development of language and socialization are mutually constitutive processes which contribute to the reproduction of social order, along with the beliefs, values, and ideologies that sustain it (Ochs and Schieffelin 2011: 10).

The social settings in which heritage languages are used, developed, or disappear may originate in a wide range of populational phenomena or events, such as the imposition of a majority language by one population onto another or others, thereby turning them into minority languages. Of all the phenomena capable of producing heritage language speakers, migration is one of the most noteworthy.

Research on language socialization has focused largely on how immigrants negotiate their participation in new communities and social institutions, and how this influences them (Baquedano-López and Figueroa 2011: 536–537). It also looks at the various pressures faced by immigrants, whether in their workplaces, in educational institutions, or even among their peers (Buriel 1993; Delgado-Gaitán 1993; Goldenberg and Gallimore 1995). Likewise, much attention had been paid to the transition between home and school (Azmitia and Brown 2002; Suárez-Orozco et al. 2008), as these are the two realms with the greatest influence in the sociolinguistic development of an immigrant (Baquedano-López and Figueroa 2011: 537–538).

Nonetheless, among groups of immigrants, involvement with regional centers, circles of friends, volunteer groups, charitable, educational, or recreational organizations, and social networks of all types tends to play a decisive role in the processes of integration and socialization within a host community. These organizations always have a linguistic aspect, as they bring together people from a similar background and can help to maintain a heritage language (Guardado 2018). Speakers of minority languages or language varieties will find, in these spaces of socialization, an environment of communication and the reinforcement of their racial, ethnic, or religious identities.

In this respect, generation is a decisive factor in the process of socialization. A linguistic analysis of various generations of immigrants brings to the fore three interesting concepts. The first is “heritage speakers”, a label that corresponds to

members of the second-generation or beyond. The second concept is the "1.5 Generation", which refers to the descendants of first-generation immigrants who arrive in their host country as children. This concept arose through studies on Asians in the United States, in an attempt to characterize the children who arrived with their parents and grew up in their host country without receiving clear social categorizations as either members of the first or second generation (Ryu 1991). Later definitions have added further nuance to this concept (Bolzman et al. 2017; Waters 2014) and the phenomenon of heritage languages is especially complex and interesting in this generation. The third concept worth mentioning is "third culture kids" (Guardado 2018). This label is applied to individuals who have spent a significant period of time in two or more cultural and ethnic settings, combining characteristics of both into a so-called third culture (Fail et al. 2004).

Likewise, the integration process is strongly intertwined with socialization. Successive generations of immigrants may undergo integration or adaptation processes where language takes on a singular, decisive character. Integration entails an adjustment between an immigrant population and a host, or resident, population that enables the intersubjective construction of the social reality of both, and which leads to shared values, whether these stem from the resident population or the immigrant population. Integration is a bidirectional process that is continually refreshed and renewed, through which resident populations as much as immigrant populations organize their activity within a host community.

Immigrant integration can be divided into various levels (or phases, if they take place successively): survival integration, work or school integration, social integration, and identarian integration (Moreno-Fernández 2009). In situations where the migratory and majority language cohabitate in the destination country, migrant families face the challenges that come with the conciliation of linguistic integration into the host society, on the one hand, and the transmission of their heritage language at home, on the other (Muñiz 2009; Torres 2019). In these contexts, parents make decisions about how to handle the language at home. These decisions depend largely on their attitudes and expectations about the heritage language and its intergenerational transmission. As gestured at above, our knowledge of the process of language socialization in general, and the socialization of heritage language speakers in particular, has grown with the increase in studies and analyses in various fields. Still, there is one aspect that has been paid little attention that deserves to be kept in mind, because it can serve as a broader framework for the domains in which heritage languages are used and set their roots. This aspect is that of the geographical spaces where the socialization of immigrants and their descendants take place, with urban spaces of particular note.

Urban spaces act as centers of social, cultural, and economic exchanges in modern migration. For example, in Europe, Spanish-speaking migrants, who have

received little analytical attention, are most concentrated in urban areas with populations greater than 500,000: roughly 30% of Spanish-speaking migrants in Europe reside in five urban centers (Milan, London, Paris, Berlin, and Zurich). This phenomenon is replicated in certain countries, especially in central and western Europe, such as Germany, where 32% of Spanish-speaking migrants are concentrated in urban centers with populations greater than 500,000. This concentration has only continued to grow, with 60% of year-to-year variations taking place in these centers and their peripheries.

Cities and their respective metropolitan areas are also capable of attracting new flows of migrants because of their opportunities for personal and professional development. This means that they quickly create interrelated groups and networks of significant size, which in turn become a high priority for political and administrative action. Setting aside familial bonds, the communication chains between recently arrived migrants and migrants from the same place who have resided in a given center for a longer period of time can create new migratory flows, because this dynamic minimizes risks and fosters integration. Networks of migrants from the same country or linguistic-cultural community form a social capital that acts as a support system in the various phases of migration: in the selection of a destination as a knock-on effect created by channels of information about the opportunities in a given region; in the arrival phase, by providing information about the necessary procedures (e.g. bureaucracy, housing, work); and in the settlement phase, as agents for social integration (e.g. associationism, the maintenance of traditions) (Calero and Rohloff 2016; Sevillano Canicio 2014). In this last sense, associations between the Spanish-speaking community are a positive factor for language maintenance, as community initiatives either directly demand, support, or enact education programs for Spanish as a heritage language (Loureda et al. 2020: 73–77).

Likewise, urban spaces favor the pull a family might feel to communicate in a non-majority language in their place of residence, the availability of academic offerings for the reinforcement of competence in such language, and the ability to socialize in that language in external spaces. As a result, quantifying them and describing their structure can help us to understand the dynamics of heritage language conservation. There are some interdisciplinary methods well-suited to the task, such as language demographics, combining geographical, sociological, and linguistic data, all of which are necessary to refine our analysis of the relationships between cultures and societies. A demolinguistic study considers individual reasons within the maintenance of linguistic-cultural identity and the ability to maintain communication with an individual's family in their country of origin and their community of Spanish speakers. What's more, factored into these analyses are reasons derived from the construction of urban plurilingual spaces in their host community. This dynamic allows us to label urban spaces as favorable for the

maintenance of Spanish as a migratory and heritage language, as is reinforced by the prevalence of educational programs for Spanish language and culture.

With immigrant populations of varying sizes and densities establishing symmetrical and asymmetrical relationships with resident populations – whether these are native or historically migratory – we can see urban spaces as the framework for the development and construction of use settings or spaces that enable language socialization. Among these spaces, home and school are especially noteworthy, but they aren't alone. Let's take a more detailed look at some of these spaces or contexts.

(1) Family

Family, or rather, the "family household", is a key element in generational replacement and therefore, the transmission of language to subsequent generations (Curdt-Christiansen and Silver 2012). In fact, it could be said that family is the primary site of socialization for heritage language speakers. Still, home and family configurations are not static, and are subject to demographic changes conditioned by forces that influence language transmission processes. For example, data shows that Western societies are seeing a decline in household size and in the number of households with married couples, meanwhile non-familial households are slowly on the rise. Within the potential diversity of a household, every family creates its own "language policies" and the conditions in which interactions between children and their guardians take place (De Houwer 2020). More than just language acquisition itself, this also plays a role in the transmission of linguistic attitudes and ideologies.

In contexts where the majority language is not the same as the language in their country of origin, migrant families become an especially interesting lens through which heritage language transmission is studied. It's here that the first, and sometimes only contact with that language takes place, and where the younger generation's linguistic repertoire will be configured (Blommaert and Backus 2013). Within this configuration, a decisive role is played by a family's stance on interactions (in one or more languages) within the home, via the space they grant to the majority language, the attitudes they take towards language alternation or mixing, and the social value they place on each (Lanza 2021). Each of these questions will arise and find some resolution, whether consciously or unconsciously, in an immigrant family. In many cases, they make conscious decisions about languages and the varieties that are to be used at home in family interactions, not unlike decisions about what is appropriate and inappropriate (Schiffman 1996).

Nonetheless, communication outside the home can also be heavily conditioned by a family's language policies. Adults often condition contact with other families and circles of friends, in much the same way that they involve their family members in various types of activities, whether religion, sports, leisure, or cultural activities, and other activities related to their heritage language and culture. Put simply,

heritage language speaker socialization is not limited to the family environment (Curdt-Christiansen and Silver 2012; Fishman 2001).

(2) School

School is undoubtedly the other key environment when it comes to the language socialization of children and teenagers. Their communication with each other and their teachers, and the language of the materials and resources, are fundamental not just in terms of language acquisition but also the transmission and potential adoption of social ideologies, identities, and values. Importantly, there is an intermediate phase in the process of school socialization with a particular relevance: the transition from home to school. This transition can be either harmonious or disruptive (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco 2001). When it is immigrant children experiencing school socialization, the transitional process frequently takes on a disruptive character from a social, cultural, and, of course, linguistic perspective. This is true even when immigrant children speak the majority language, but in a variety that is not the norm in the host community.

However, bringing family languages into school can contribute to a student's integration and academic success. There is a positive effect when immigrant children feel their heritage language is well-received at school, whether through the acceptance of its use in the classroom, access to content in that language, or the implementation of targeted bilingual programs. However, the process can only have that positive effect when paired with an appropriate attitude from parents, teachers, and classmates who speak the majority language. When the socioeconomic perception of migrants or the ideologies, beliefs, and attitudes about them are negative, it may not be sufficient to provide linguistic continuity. Though if a school offers the resources for a continuity, in some way or another, this means that its ideologies, attitudes, and beliefs are favorable to the adaptation and integration of migrants, and to the recognition of their identity.

School adaptation is a process of accommodation that works multi-directionally and dynamically, and only guarantees success when there is harmony between all the involved parties (children, teachers, school, and family). As such, it would be a mistake to consider school integration as solely a matter of academic performance or the individual qualities of young students. Studies carried out on the transition and acculturation of young immigrants have helped to create models of various forms of adaptation. Berry et al. (2006) performed a comparative study across thirteen countries and found a strong link between the form in which acculturation takes place for young people and the process of their psychological and sociocultural adaptation. According to these authors, acculturation, understood as the reception of and adaptation to another culture, has four fundamental profiles: integration (positive psychological and sociological adaptation), ethnic (poor psychological and

sociocultural adaptation), national (moderately negative psychological and sociocultural adaptation), and diffuse (negative adaptation). Their results show that there is no incompatibility between the conservation of personal identity and the establishment of bonds with the majority community.

(3) Centers and groups

For immigrants, transitional processes from their culture and language of origin to those of the majority in the host community are hardly limited to school. An immigrant family may be located near various centers, clubs, associations, cooperatives, circles, and groups of varying natures, where they can broaden their circle of relationships and their opportunities for social interaction. As a result, these centers act as a space for linguistic socialization, whether they're oriented towards culture, art, religion, sports, or work, among other things.

When these centers and groups have been created by people with a migratory background and are oriented to receive other people with that background, new immigrant families can go to them for a space that favors the recognition and maintenance of their identity of origin, including their native or heritage language. But these specific sorts of centers can also fulfill a double purpose: on the one hand, they offer a space for the reinforcement of a heritage or original identity, helping create relationships and interactions among people with a migratory background. On the other, they offer a space for cultural and linguistic socialization, as well as one that can help people transition into the culture and language of the host community (Guardado 2018).

Likewise, as spaces for socialization, centers and groups attended by immigrant families or some of their members can act as a setting for the reproduction of ideologies, values, opinions, and attitudes, with relevance in various spheres of society, such as work or politics. Depending on their nature, these factors can just as easily encourage adaptation or integration into a host community as they can disrupt it, in much the same way that they can favor adaptation through the construction of a dual identity or act as the decisive factor of inadaptation through the rejection of that identity.

(4) Workplace

The workplace is another space for socialization that has been paid relatively little attention in terms of its relevance to the linguistic and cultural adaptation and integration of immigrant populations. In a sense, the transitional process from family to work by adults mirrors that of children and teenagers to school, in that there are patterns of acquisition and reproduction for ideologies and opinions that can take place at any age. Interactions among coworkers, along with the hierarchies, values, and codes in effect at each workplace, not to mention the age of the workers themselves, lead to different dynamics.

Linguistic interactions within workplaces have characteristics not shared by interactions within families, schools, or social centers. For one thing, businesses, corporations, or institutions often turn to professional lexicons, institutional discourses, and group linguistic markers that make socialization a much more complex process, because they have to be balanced with lexicons and discourses outside of work (Roberts 2010: 214). But the mastery of these linguistic and lexical resources is absolutely necessary, both in terms of an immigrant's adaptation and of the improvement of their status and work conditions. Additionally, all this must be seen through a lens in which the mastery of language(s) is increasingly important in the working world, particularly in the service sector and in businesses or institutions that require internationalization for their development (Heller 2010).

Nonetheless, the existence of codes, values, and attitudes specific to every workplace doesn't mean that each component manifests continually or statically. When these environments include migrants, and when they make room for multilingualism, whether for professional or personal reasons, communication dynamics become more intense and more complex. In some cases, these dynamics can bring about internal tensions between new employees and veterans (Gershon 2015), between residents and immigrants, between speakers of some languages and others. Just as these conditions evolve, so too do the internal dynamics of every work group.

This Special Issue of the *Journal of World Languages* offers a series of articles which take up some of the most important issues in heritage speaker socialization and language. Maria Polinsky, in the first article, discusses the status of Spanish in bilingual contexts. The discussion centers around the issues of the baseline (the language that serves as input to the bilingual upbringing), minimal exposure required for the acquisition of a language as a native one, and sociolinguistic models that allow for discontinuity in a given language community.

Adopting a transnational perspective, Óscar Loureda Lamas, Francisco Moreno-Fernández, and Héctor Álvarez Mella present a quantification of heritage speakers in Europe and outline linguistic and demographic profiles directly related to various processes of socialization. In this way, they attempt to show how demolinguistic analyses can contribute to our understanding of the social realities of a language.

Héctor Álvarez Mella, Charlotte Blattner, and Ana Gómez-Pavón's article discusses family expectations with respect to the intergenerational transmission of Spanish and explores attitudes towards heritage languages and educational programs. They present the results of an exploratory study undertaken in Germany to look into the primary arguments made by families when it comes to including heritage language courses or bilingual educational spaces in their approach to language at home. Their analysis reveals the importance of Spanish in terms of family cohesion and shows how language socialization practices are a valid alternative for Spanish-speaking families.

Marcela Fritzler has written an article to present the earliest results of a larger study about the specific characteristics of the Spanish-speaking community, the presence of Spanish as a heritage language, the resources and instruments used to transmit this language, and the level of interest in developing it in Israel. Marcela Fritzler's article reflects on the possibility of preserving a heritage language in future adults by keeping in mind the heavy weight of the Hebrew language as the dominant language in Israeli society. Her conclusions point as much to the need for language maintenance to be part of a family strategy as the importance of appropriate bilingual educational policies, which make space in the classroom for a family's cultural heritage.

María Luisa Parra Velasco's article, while not eschewing family strategies, focuses more clearly on schools. Her article presents an analysis of a longitudinal study on four Latino students who attended a transitional bilingual kindergarten in Boston, in the United States. María Luisa Parra Velasco argues that the use and development of Spanish in children cannot be fully understood if it is seen only as an individual skill, and not as an intrinsic component of broader dynamic processes of socialization of which English also forms a part, and in which both teachers and parents participate. The data presented by María Luisa Parra Velasco offers an integrated perspective on the use of Spanish in the school adaptation process, as these children learn English over the course of kindergarten.

Andrew Lynch, meanwhile, explores the presence of heritage languages in workplaces in the United States, specifically Miami. Miami has one of the highest rates and recognition of English-Spanish bilingualism, and as a result, there are more opportunities for socialization. Andrew Lynch discusses personal stories of linguistic socialization in workplaces among adults who are heritage speakers of Spanish. His article shows that, in the vast majority of workplaces in Miami where Spanish is actively spoken, there is no standardized rule or practice regarding the use of the language. The experiences he analyzed highlight the potential of workplaces as a space to generate more positive attitudes towards Spanish in adults, and to motivate heritage speakers into a more active use of their language.

Finally, María Clara von Essen presents an analysis of linguistic socialization in a community that has received migrants who speak a different modality of the same language. It could be said that her study deals with the socialization of speakers of "heritage dialects". To that end, María Clara von Essen combines ethnographic and quantitative analyses based on information from Argentinian immigrants in the Spanish city of Málaga, where Spanish is spoken in its Andalucian modality. Her analysis tackles the complex interactions between the accommodation or acquisition of a second dialect, language socialization, ideologies, family language politics, and identity. In her conclusions, María Clara von Essen shows that family language policies configure their children's development, correlate with their formal success

in school, determine their maintenance of the heritage modality, and even affect their sense of identity. More concretely, it is the language policies of mothers, along with their attitudes towards the varieties of language they're in contact with, that condition the social and scholarly development of their children.

Each article here, both individually and as part of the whole, shows the many methodological differences entailed in the study of linguistic socialization. Obtaining access to household information – the private lives of families – can be difficult, as can peer into school and workplace dynamics. Every family, every school, every classroom, every job has its own patterns. Interactions in each place obey distinct criteria, because there are innumerable social microparameters conditioning socialization, and more particularly, the maintenance or disappearance of a heritage language or variety. What's more, neither the situations nor the settings (e.g. family, school, work) of immigrants are stable or continuous, and that dynamic quality can make for radical changes in the conditions of socialization.

This multifarious reality explains why it is so hard to make methodological decisions in studying the socialization of heritage language speakers. Ethnographic or qualitative approaches, focus groups, analysis of social networks or individual narratives, and case studies are all valid techniques in one situation or another, but they are not always interchangeable. Nor should we forget about quantification, which can aid us in constructing a macro-perspective that doesn't interfere with the observations of qualitative data. Conventional research strategies propose the discernment of the relative importance of individual and environmental factors or variables involved in human development and socialization patterns. The issue, however, is not just in discerning the importance of each factor, but in identifying the factors themselves in closed, private environments. While socialization, as a generic social phenomenon, poses many sizable methodological obstacles, those obstacles are all the larger and more numerous when it comes to immigrant socialization, and in particular, the socialization of immigrants who are speakers of a heritage language or variety.

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