Language and Place in Children's Worlds

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1. Introduction

For many, language is often invisible, out of awareness in everyday activities and lives. We engage in our mundane interactions with an expected seamlessness of talk. Language often only becomes noticeable when something sounds different, like an accent we are not used to or phrase that is not quite right. We become highly conscious of our own way of speaking when trying to say something in a language that we do not know well. Then language seems like everything, we are hyperaware of it and ourselves. For writers and memoirists whose work centers on introspection about their lives in exile, the intertwined connections of language, culture, identity and place are made more salient by disruption. Language becomes both a medium for shaping childhood memories as well as an evocative icon of what was lost. For example, Eva Hoffman's (1989) *Lost in Translation* depicts her childhood in Krakow as paradise and her subsequent relocation as a young teenager with her family in 1959 to Vancouver as exile. Her autobiography exposes a doubled or divided self confronting anxiety and frustration, how she feels when she can no longer count on the aesthetics and security of her first language and culture. She remembers not only the first English word she understood from its context, "shut-up!" but where she heard it: in a chaotic schoolyard. Similarly, authors such as Edward Said, Charles Simic, and Vladimir Nabokov crystallize through their writing of childhood memories their profound discomfort and ambivalence toward a language not their native one, English, as well as their pride in being accomplished writers and speakers of it. It is a reminder of where they are, and where they are not.

Autobiographical accounts of other types of immigrant experiences also recount emplaced language experiences about the new language while simultaneously articulating a sense of dislocation and loss. Richard Rodriguez (1982) opens *Hunger of Memory* with his first day of school in California. The son of working-class Mexican immigrants, he experiences deep shock when hearing his name said in English in his kindergarten classroom for the first time, a disruption of his sense of identity. He describes his childhood as fraught with the tension of two worlds, one private and one public, each in its own language. His writing poignantly details ambivalence toward Spanish and English, each attached to different persons, places, and embodied practices. He remembers his

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embarrassment upon hearing his parents' attempts at English, and his discomfort with their demands that he speak it to them at home, sentiments echoed by children of immigrants in many parts of the world. These issues of language, identity, security, loss, feeling in place or not, shape many autobiographical accounts of uprooted and diasporic childhoods in which the "formative years" are presented through remembered conversations. Where and how one was spoken to conveys strong emotion and nostalgia. But, as we all know, memory is selective, and gifted writers move us by their careful choice of words. Writing about language, loss, place, and nostalgia is something that many of us relate to as evidenced by the immense popularity of this genre, this 'literature of the self.' It is no accident that remembered conversations and thoughts are prominent in these emotionally charged accounts of childhood.

A similar focus on language, identity, and cultural practices shapes an exciting and theoretically provocative body of anthropological research on children, their childhoods, and their social worlds. Language socialization has emerged as a field of study in the last twenty years, offering insights into children's worlds, both real and imagined, and how they are constituted through language and other expressive practices. The study of the acquisition of cultural practices focuses on a range of communicative activities across all modalities and how they are shaped by, and shape conceptions of, culture, social reproduction, identity, gender, morality, affect, memory among other critical dimensions of human social life. Language socialization is grounded in ethnographic research on embodied practices, speaking, feeling, doing, and knowing, and explores how children and other novices acquire the competencies needed to participate in their communities. How individuals come to learn, transform and lose these bodies of knowledge over the life cycle is central to theoretical and practical agendas in linguistic and social anthropology today.

I will outline some of the basic premises of language socialization research, and some of the strands of work that have helped define this paradigm. Then, I will provide some examples of how work on language socialization can illuminate one area that has not yet received systematic attention – the relationship between language and place, in particular the role of language in investing place with meanings that extend beyond childhood. This work offers an anthropological complementarity to the remembered childhood narratives I mentioned above, with examples and analyses of embodied and emplaced children's voices, highly appropriate in a time when diaspora, exile, as well as colonization of all sorts seem to characterize the experience of many. Needless to say, all of these experiences, and the ideologies that infuse them, are highly relevant to issues of language choice, shift, and change.

2. Language Socialization

Language socialization is the process whereby children and other novices are socialized through language, part of such socialization being socialization to use language meaningfully, appropriately, and effectively. The process of language socialization starts at birth, because the ways in which people do or do not speak to children is culturally organized. For example, as Elinor Ochs and I claimed in our original essay on language acquisition and socialization, presenting three developmental stories drawn from ethnographic readings of Anglo-American, Western Samoan, and Kaluli social interactions and caregiving practices, the earliest proto-conversations in Anglo-American culture are part of the ways members of that social group think about infants as persons, and treat them as conversational partners, even if those infants do not yet speak. Many other groups do not hold these beliefs about infants and behave differently toward them

(Ochs and Schieffelin, 1984). Such everyday speech activities are socializing activities, the basis for the transmission and reproduction of culture. They are linked to other social practices and symbolic forms such as gender roles, ideas about morality, how children learn, etc. Language socialization includes not only the acquisition of verbal practices, but their transformation and loss. This is particularly relevant in the modern world where children are growing up in diasporic communities as well as living in communities undergoing processes of social change due to colonization and immigration. The one language/one culture/one nation model rarely applies.

Language socialization research is longitudinal in perspective and ethnographic in nature, integrating the acquisition of one's first, second, or additional languages - and the socialization that happens through language. Work carried out within this paradigm draws theoretically and methodologically on intellectual traditions within anthropology and sociology concerned with the relationship between language and culture and between speech and conduct. It integrates a semiotically based ethnographic perspective with an ethnomethodological interest in examining the details of talk and social interaction for what they reveal about members' methods and preferences. It also draws on Bakhtin's (1981) ideas about the dialogic nature of talk, as well as on psychological traditions (e.g., Rogoff, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978) that emphasize socially facilitated modes of acquiring knowledge and the importance of activity. Language socialization researchers place these concerns within a theory of social practice, as articulated by Bourdieu (1980), Giddens (1979) and others.

Language socialization has as its goal to understand how persons become competent members of their social groups, learn how to think, feel, how to conduct themselves in socially appropriate ways, and what the role of language is in this process. The two major areas of socialization are socialization through the use of language, and socialization to use language. The perspective adopted here follows Giddens' view of socialization: it is not the "incorporation of the child into society, but the succession of generations" (1979:130). It draws on symbolic interactionist and phenomenological approaches and views socialization as an interactive process between knowledgeable members and novices who are themselves active contributors to the meanings and outcomes of interactions with others. Socialization, then, is a product of interaction, co-constructed by participants. As an interpersonal process, socialization results in intrapersonal phenomena, for example, the creation and labeling of emotions and affective states, a possibility pointed out by Hildred Geertz (1959), writing about Javanese socialization over 40 years ago, and one which we can now investigate.

While people often talk about the acquisition of language, one does not acquire 'culture'; one acquires a set of practices that enable one to live in a society. Discourse practices (verbal activities) are central here, because discourse practices, like other cultural practices, are a form of knowledge, "a set of norms, preferences, and expectations relating linguistic structures to context, which speaker-hearers draw on and modify in producing and interpreting language in context" (Ochs, 1988:8). From this perspective, talk is practice, and displays both discursive consciousness and practical consciousness. Talk is a form of action as well as a symbolic system, and needs to be analyzed not only for content, but also for sociolinguistic form and interactional sequencing.

Discourse practices are a major source of information for children learning the ways and worldviews of their culture. All utterances are said by one person to some other at a particular moment of some specific socially organized and culturally meaningful activity.

As such, talk is one medium through which the interactional process of socialization and representation takes place. Following Vygotsky, speech is seen as "a mediating activity that organizes experience" (1986:125, cited in Duranti, 1992:45); thus, it is through participating in socializing activities that worlds and worldviews are created through speech activities. The ability to participate in speech activities enables children to create additional ways of knowing about the world. In becoming communicatively competent, one comes to know and experience in culturally specific ways.

In socializing contexts, caregivers often make explicit "what everyone knows" – in other words, they place what is tacitly understood into the realm of discursive consciousness. They show children what to do and how to feel, make nonliteral statements literal, paraphrase in different ways what they and others have said, correct or model what they want children to say and do. An important premise, however, is that language socializes not only through its symbolic content, but also through its use, i.e., through speaking as a socially and culturally situated activity. As Wentworth put it, "socialization is an interactional display of the sociocultural environment, a presentation to the novice of the 'rules' whereby 'respectable' behavior might be construed" (1980:68).

The notion of agency is directly relevant here. As Giddens (1979) has argued, agents know a great deal about the workings of society by their participation in it, and it is through participation that learning takes place, that novices 'learn how to learn', (Bateson's (1972) concept of deutero-learning). Some of this is facilitated by social referencing (Klinnert et al., 1983), the process by which infants and young children come to understand the affective valences of novel entities and situations through monitoring others' affective displays. Social referencing plays an important role in language use and acquisition. Just as interactants use facial and other nonverbal expressions to signal how they feel about entities, speakers use language for the same purpose. Moreover, just as interactants seek affective information from faces, they also seek it in language. Thus, more knowledgeable members have a role in shaping social cognition, as novices or children look toward those individuals for how to react, learning how to read what interactions mean by how they are keyed and framed, and producing these frames as part of their own reflexive monitoring processes. This highlights the importance of studying the actual situations and occasions that constitute particular circumstances. If, as Giddens claims (1979:251), "mutual knowledge is a necessary medium of access in the mediation of frames of meaning," then it is in these scenes and occasions that mutual knowledge becomes established.

A critical part of the interactional dynamic is the active learner. Children are agents in the process in many respects. They influence the form and content of face-to-face socializing activities, as more knowledgeable members must modify their actions according to what children know and say. This also points out the importance of face-to-face interaction as a place where children can discover as well as be guided through the design of appropriate conduct. As much of everyday life is based on face-to-face interactions, seemingly trivial and repetitive conversational procedures have a profound impact on social conduct.

From this perspective, socialization can be viewed as a mastery of the dialogical contexts of communication. Discursive practices can be examined directly, but more importantly, in relationship to each other, and their linkages to more general or macro-cultural patterns, meanings, ambiguities, and paradoxes. Thus, language socialization is a process that not only takes place between children and caregivers, but between any group

of novices and more knowledgeable members. It is a process that takes place throughout the life cycle.

There have been several major strands of work in language socialization, and each offers a set of methodological and theoretical insights as well as raises questions about the next step, or additional linkages. Research has focused not only on children, but novices of all ages across a range of settings: families, schools, and professional settings such as scientific laboratories, law schools, and workplaces in many parts of the world (see Garrett and Baquedano-López, 2002). Very briefly (with apologies for omissions), one group of early projects on children's language socialization was carried out in monolingual, small scale pre-industrial communities in Papua New Guinea (Schieffelin, 1990), Java (Smith-Hefner, 1988), Western Samoa (Ochs, 1988), and the Solomon Islands (Watson-Gegeo, 1992). A second strand of work centers in post-industrial, monolingual urban settings, e.g., Tokyo (Clancy, 1999; Cook, 1996), Taipei (Farris, 1991; Fung, 1999), South Baltimore (Miller, 1982), and in rural American communities (Heath, 1983; Sperry and Sperry, 2000; Ward 1971). A third strand focuses on bilingual communities undergoing social change and language shift, for example, studies in Oceania (Kulick, 1992; Riley, 2001), in the Caribbean (Garrett, 1999; Paugh, 2001), and in Native North American communities (Field, 2001; Meek, 2001). A fourth strand focuses on multilingual diasporic communities in the United States, for example, among members of New York's Puerto Rican communities (Zentella, 1997), Hasidic Jewish communities (Fader, 2001) and Chinese communities (He, 2001), as well as among members of Los Angeles's Mexican community (Baquedano-López, 2000).

But this is only one of many ways to begin to characterize language socialization studies as there is an unusually rich concentration of comparative work as well, some areally based, such as studies of Mayan language communities which include Tzotzil (de León, 1998), K'iche (Pye, 1992), and Tzeltal (Brown, 2002). Others are topically comparative with a focus on language and gender socialization, ethnicity, morality, religion, and literacy, to name but a few, (see Kulick and Schieffelin, in press).

3. Why Place?

While many important issues relevant to how children come to learn the ways and world views of their community have been investigated through language socialization research, such as gender, morality, affect, reciprocity, to name but a few, there has been little systematic attention to the role of language in establishing children's sense of place. While some have claimed that with modernity and postmodernity, place loses reality and significance (Giddens, 1990; Gieryn, 2000), place nonetheless remains a constituent element of social life, as evidenced not only by current work in anthropology, sociology, and environmental psychology, but in the lives of children everywhere. Place has three intertwined features: geographic location, material form, and investment with meaning and value (Gieryn, 2000: 464-65). Naming, identification, or representation by those interested in that place is critical in establishing a location as a place. Place holds history, identity, or memory for those who name or represent it and its significance can shift or disappear when those values no longer pertain. Place is not context or setting; it is a critical force, both locational and conceptual, physical and psychical, in shaping social life, as persons and activities are remembered and anchored across time (Feld and Basso, 1996; Myers, 2000). Place is social; and as the philosopher Edward Casey (1993) pointed out, nothing of interest to sociologists (or anthropologists) is nowhere – everything that we study is emplaced.

Very young children are also sensitive to these dimensions of place, as evidenced in the extensive use of place names in their earliest narratives. For example, transcripts of the monologic narratives of a twenty-three month-old English-speaking child show her extensive use of place names such as "Childworld" (a toy store), "Tanta's" (her aunt's place), "the Ocean," "Downtown," among many others. Alone in her crib during naptimes, she produced stories about something that had happened, or she had been told was going to happen, retellings based on a book or something she imagined (Nelson, 1989). Thus, her activities and thoughts were anchored to places that she knew and she articulated them as part of her own story-telling activity.

Place attachment, the formation of emotional bonds between people and a place, is a powerful factor in social life (Altman and Low, 1992; Basso, 1996; Gupta and Ferguson, 1997) and is often based on the social relationships that are enacted in a place. Incorporating aspects of one's identities and memories, these relationships can be represented verbally, indexing shared social experiences in particular places. The affective states associated with place attachment are often embedded in or accompanied by language. Thus, narrative and place naming are often central to place attachment, as talk is a primary way of representing, as well as reimagining and creating place when one is not materially inhabiting it.

Research on place attachment in childhood emphasizes the importance of emplaced experiences, and how children achieve personal identity via *place attachments* (Altman and Low, 1992). Chawla (ibid.) links place attachment in children to concepts of bonding, feelings of rootedness, necessary for healthy development. She notes situations where absence of such place-based support, e.g., homelessness, leads to social and psychological problems. Analyzing the discourse of agoraphobia, an anxiety disorder associated with leaving safe places such as home, Capps and Ochs (1995) show how place is constructed as the locus of anxiety in narratives that agoraphobic mothers tell to their children. Many individuals' most powerful memories are located in places associated with childhood - houses, neighborhoods, as well as secret or unofficial places (Cooper Marcus, 1992).

Place, however, is a deeply cultural construct, and the ways in which place shapes or is used to shape experience about it varies across time and societies. The question of how speech practices are implicated in the construction of such potent associations has yet to be explored, and in what follows I offer some preliminary suggestions. I draw on language socialization research carried out in two societies in which place is constructed quite differently, as are the ways in which speech practices help constitute their meanings for children throughout their lives.

4. Place: Dominica, W. I.

The first ethnographic example demonstrates a relationship between language, place and agency and is drawn from Amy Paugh's dissertation (2001) on the intricate linkages between language ideologies and linguistic practices in Dominica, a small post-colonial island nation located between Martinique and Guadeloupe in the Eastern Caribbean. Paugh focused on children's language socialization in a rural farming community in this multilingual creole society, linking socialization practices to conflicting local and national language agendas.

The co-existence of two or more languages within a particular community or society, whatever the sociohistorical circumstances that have brought them into sustained contact, is rarely a neutral or unproblematic state of affairs, and Dominica is no exception. As a result of its dual French and British colonial history, two languages, Patwa, a French-lexicon creole, and a local variety of English convey different social meanings. These language differences map onto or index, or are used to constitute and reinforce, the boundaries of other social categories and divisions based on such notions as community, class, gender, and age/generation.

In Dominica, when English became the language of schooling and all official functions, Patwa was relegated to use at home. However, in the last two or so decades, parents have come to view Patwa as an impediment to educational success, and have shifted to speaking English to their children at home, reducing the places in which children can speak Patwa. For rural children, Patwa has become more associated with those areas outside the control of caregivers, the outdoor unbounded areas – the road, bush, and gardens. Adults, however, closely monitor what language children are speaking, and will issue strong reprimands if they hear them speaking Patwa in inappropriate places.

Paugh's extensive audio- and videotaped data show that children as young as 2 years are sensitive to language choice according to activity and place signified, and use Patwa, especially when outside of the hearing of adults, for role and fantasy play to help verbally create the place in which their play is situated. Thus, in learning to use language, children are also acquiring knowledge of social categories and the culturally particular ways in which language(s) are implicated in constituting them. Children's own agency using Patwa in play is evident, but the dominant ideology that valorizes English means that they must learn *where* they can display their competence in Patwa, as well as where they must hide it.

From the time they are small, children engage in mixed-age play with siblings and other children who share the same home or yard, or live close by. Their sensitivity to language choice with regard to addressee, topic, in addition to place and activity, is evident in their conversations as well as role-play. For example when playing school, children use English, but in role play activities associated with adult male roles, such as farmers, bus drivers, and pig hunters that are associated with places outside the home and school, outside the human-built environment, Patwa is used extensively. Such play often entails verbally creating an emplaced activity and enacting gendered roles in which the use of Patwa is appropriate. Through such fantasy play, children draw on and reproduce more broadly held ideologies about the relationship and meanings of the two languages, including ideas about the people who use them and the appropriate social places for their use. The following sequence, adapted from Paugh (2001:376-77), illustrates this point.

Four boys, Reiston (3;8 years), his cousins Marcel (11 years), Junior (9 years) and Alex (6 years) are playing on the concrete-paved yard of the house. Their grandmother is sitting on the veranda of the house, but out of view of the children who have begun to play under the house. The boys find several pairs of work boots and begin putting them on. Marcel takes one pair for himself, and gives another pair to Reiston. He initiates a play fantasy about pulling weeds growing amongst the potatoes in the *jaden* 'garden'(there are no potatoes, only a patch of grass, and some banana trees; Patwa words are in italics and glossed in bold-face):

1 M→R (putting on a pair of boots) Let's put our boots yeah?

2 M We going *jaden*.
'We're going to the **garden**.'

3 R (putting on the boots) Yes.

4 M We going *sèklé* our *patat*.
'We are going to **weed** our **potato**'

(M walks out from under the house wearing a pair of boots)

5 M Let's go and *sèklé* the *patat*.
'Let's go and **weed** the **potato**'

(R tries to follow M, but is walking slowly because of the large boots)

6 M (loud and impatiently) Let's go Reiston!

(M stops just outside of the concrete-paved yard, and looks at some grass on the ground)

7 M *Patat sala ka fè zèb déja wi zò* (sucks teeth indicating annoyance).
'**That potato making grass already yeah'**

[M bends down and pulls out grass, pretending to weed potatoes]

8 M→ R Reiston go and cut the *patat* with me! *I ka fè zèb*.
'Reiston go and cut the **potato** with me. **It is making grass**.'

(R joins M, they pretend to weed the imaginary potato patch together for about ten minutes)

What does this activity display about children's social and linguistic knowledge? In line 1, Marcel suggests a play activity, using English, the language that is appropriate to his place of speaking, the concrete-paved yard. As the boots go on, he codeswitches to Patwa, saying on line 2, "We going *jaden*," thus naming the place of the activity in the language appropriate to it, setting a frame for the language/place relationship. Reiston, also standing on the concrete-paved yard agrees (line 3), also using English, and puts on the boots. Marcel announces his plan, line 4, "We going *sèklé* our *patat*," repeating it line 5. They walk further into the backyard; Reiston has trouble walking in the large men's boots. Marcel impatiently issues the imperative, "Let's go Reiston!" in English on line 6, but once he is off the concrete paved yard – in the garden behind the house, a place associated with (male) adult activity and Patwa – he shifts completely into Patwa on line 7: "*Patat sala ka fè zèb déja wi zò*" [the weeds are already growing in the potatoes]. Switching to English to urge Reiston to join him, he switches back to Patwa on line 8 to describe the weeds amongst the potatoes: "*I ka fè zèb*" 'It is making grass' [weeds are growing]. Reiston finally joins Marcel, and the two pull grass, a pretense for weeding. After about ten minutes, Marcel announces the end of this play activity using Patwa (lines 9-10), as he leads his cousins out of the garden, heading toward the yard (adapted from Paugh 2001:378-79).

9 M *Annou ay. Nou sòti an jaden.*
'Let's go. We are leaving the garden.'

(J stumbles as he tries to step up where the concrete begins; R laughs at J)

10 M *Nou sòti an jaden. Nou sòti an jaden.*
'**We are leaving the garden. We are leaving the garden**.'

(R tries to step up where the concrete begins and falls forward onto it)

11 A *Ga!* (laughs)
(affective marker expressing surprise) (calls attention to R's fall)

12 A _ Reiston cannot even going up
/
13 M /_ *Nonm la fèb. I pa sa mouté bik la.*
'The man is weak. He cannot climb the hill.' (re: R)

(J laughs and claps hands in front of R; M walks back to R and helps him stand up and walk)

14 M→R *Nonm ou fèb* yeah. *Ou ni gwo* boot *la, ou la.*
'**Man you weak** yeah. **You have the big** boot, **you there**.'

15 G'Mo→ M (from the veranda) Stop the Patwa in the yard *mouché Marcel.*
'Stop the Patwa in the yard **mister Marcel**.'

As the children enter back onto the concrete paved yard, the two younger ones have difficulties climbing back onto the concrete. After Reiston falls, his cousin Alex uses the Patwa *ga*, (line 11) to point out the fall, expressing surprise at it. Marcel then incorporates the fall as he continues the play frame, pretending R is a farmer walking up a hill to come out from the garden and return home. Though he is now back within the boundaries of the yard, Marcel continues to structure the play in Patwa, telling Reiston on lines 13, 14: "*Nonm ou fèb* yeah. *Ou ni gwo* boot *la, ou la*." [Man you weak, you have the big boot] At this point, the children are back within the hearing range of their grandmother. She yells to Marcel on line 15, speaking fast: "Stop the Patwa in the yard *mouché Marcel*." Significantly, she does not tell him to stop the Patwa completely, but rather qualifies it with "in the yard." She is specific about place; it is unacceptable to speak Patwa within the social space around the home and in the yard which are considered to be under the control of adults, and are clearly marked off from the street, garden, or bush. Marcel's grandmother nonetheless uses a Patwa address term, *"mouché Marcel"* ['**mister Marcel**'], in her imperative to stop speaking Patwa, a frequently used address term when caregivers scold children in both Patwa and English. After the scolding from his grandmother, Marcel resumes his play in English.

Paugh also examined the use and meaning of Patwa more widely, linking local ideologies and practices to broader cultural debates concerning its use and meaning. Language activists view Patwa as an icon of the nation, and National Day celebrations feature its use. Many urban elites wish to see Patwa used more broadly, and promote its

use in radio and in public fora. Paugh notes the nostalgia that urban elites and language activists have for Patwa; it is a reminder of a rural life that many associate with an idealized, idyllic past. Those living in the rural areas have little nostalgia for Patwa when it comes to their children's future, and thus resist the urban intellectual elite's efforts to promote Patwa. These ideological stances towards both languages, English and Patwa, convey social values associated with those languages and their speakers, and children learn in every interaction that language choice is never neutral, but always socially marked.

5. Place: Bosavi

The second ethnographic example illustrates a different type of relationship between language and place, and is drawn from my research in Papua New Guinea among the Bosavi people. Bosavi people, which include the Kaluli, live in scattered communities averaging less than 100 people in a tropical forest environment. Extended families enjoyed spending time away from village settlements at their bush houses where they would hunt, fish, and gather forest products on their own lands. Most Bosavis had relatively little contact with Europeans until the early 1970s, when Protestant missionaries from Australia set up a small mission station in the area.

Place is of central importance in Bosavi life. Schieffelin (1976) describes how Kaluli used place and place names to demarcate events ranging from the mundane to the memorable. Locality and place names served as anchors for significant ceremonies and events, as well as remembrances of personal experiences (e.g., building gardens, hunting trips, sharing particular foods). Feld's (1988, 1996) research on Kaluli poetics further elaborated the relationship of language and place, showing how the sequential citation of place names in song and lament created maps that memorialized events, times and social relationship. Such place name sequences encoded a local time-space, and were deeply connected to the place where, rather than the time when, people had done things together. As Feld notes, across the range of contexts for talking, singing or lamenting, “it is striking to notice how quickly and thoroughly a person and a memorable feature of his life are narratively located in a placed space-time” (1996:111).

My language socialization study carried out from 1975-77 focused on how children became participants in everyday interactions involving reciprocity and exchange; it drew on local conceptions of personhood, gender, affect, and language ideology. I noted the importance of place names in family conversations, creating linkages between persons to their named places, sago camps, streams, gardens, key to their local activities and identity (Schieffelin 1990). Recently, I have returned to thinking more systematically about how language, place, and memory are deeply interwoven in the lives of children, especially as my research during subsequent fieldtrips has focused on the rapid social change that has taken place in Bosavi since the mid-1970s, disrupting the local sense of place documented earlier (Schieffelin, 2002).

Even though place and place names were extremely important, Kaluli did not use special routines in order to teach their children the names of places when they were in those places. Instead, place names and the people and activities associated with them were embedded in the everyday talk between children learning to talk and the people with whom they regularly interacted. One such pervasive verbal routine consisted of verbal prompts to a child who was just starting to talk to “say [a proposition]” to a third person. Through participation in extensive "say it" routines directed to others, children who did

not yet have verbal skills were able to get what they wanted and be treated as persons. These prompts gave the young child an assertive voice, one produced first by a more competent speaker, but when said by the child, treated as the child's own utterance. This not only gave the child a sense of agency through culturally preferred ways of enacting sociality through language, it also socialized the organization of attention. Children quickly learned what they were to pay attention to, talk about, and they often learned place names and their associations before they experienced the places themselves. This sequence that follows, recorded in February 1976, was typical in that it displays the discursive frame for young children's participation in these ways of knowing and speaking.

Meli (2 years) is sitting around a small cooking firewood with her **Mo**ther and **Fa**ther; they hear her cousin **Mama** (3 years) outside the house.

1 Fa → **M** ⇒ Mama	*Mamayo! ho:lema*	call out 'Mama!'
2 **M** →Father	*a:h?/*	huh?/
3 Fa → **M** ⇒ Mama	*Mamayo!*	Mama!
4 **M**→ Mama	*Mamayo/*	Mama!/
5 Fa→ **M** ⇒ Mama	*na:no to toma:ni meno! a:la:ma*	say 'come and talk with us!'
6 **M**→ Mama	*na:no to dudu meno!/*	with us talk -- come/
7 Fa → **M** ⇒ Mama	*Mamayo!*	Mama!
8 **M**→ Mama	*Mamayo!/*	Mama!/
9 Fa → **M** ⇒ Mama	*so:go:*	cross cousin
10 **M**→ Mama	*so:go:wo!/*	cross cousin!/
11 Fa → **M** ⇒ Mama	*towo:*	talk
12 **M**→ Mama	*towo:/*	talk/
13 Fa → **M** ⇒ Mama	*toma:ni*	to talk
14 **M**→ Mama	*toma:niyo:/*	to talk/
15 Fa → **M** ⇒ Mama	*mena:*	come!
16 **M**→ Mama	*mena:/*	come!/
17 Mo → **M** ⇒ Mama	*ne Wa:fio:wo! ho:lema*	call out 'my Wa:fio!'
18 **M**→ Mama	*ne Wa:fio:wo!/*	my Wa:fio!/
19 Fa → **M**	*wo:! ogolo ho:lema,*	hey! call out loudly,
	mo:da:daka:	one can't really hear it
20 **M** →Fa	*a:h?/*	huh?/
21 Mo → **M** ⇒ Mama	*ne Wa:fio:wo! uwo:!*	my Wa:fio!! uwo:!
22 Fa → **M**	*dasiliya:ga: ho:lema*	stand up and call out
23 **M**→ Mama	*ne Wa:fio:wo!/*	my Wa:fio!

In addressing someone, Kaluli have a variety of options including proper names, pronouns, kinship terms, or special relationship names based on something shared. Such options are systematically displayed in early interactions such as this calling-out routine. The order of address terms used in calling out, however, is never random; they increase and intensify social relatedness based on something shared. In lines 1, 3, and 7 Meli is instructed to first call out Mama's proper name. When a response is still not forthcoming, Meli (line 9) is directed to shift to the appropriate kinterm: cross cousin. When there is still no answer, she is prompted (lines 17, 21) to use a shared name (*wi a:ledo:*) that pertains only to Mama and herself, my *Wa:fio*, a place name at a river bank where Meli and Mama had shared fish. This is a name they chose to call eachother, and Kaluli use such names to evoke a special closeness in requests. Thus, in a routine interaction, one of

calling another to come over, social preferences are displayed; what is important in terms of relatedness becomes salient as such routines shape everyday interactions. The notion of place communicated here is about sociality; even the place name is a reciprocal term, e.g., 'my *Wa:fio*.' Such practices underscore that in Bosavi, place, like food is shared and social.

To help make Meli's calling out more effective, her Father also gives her stage directions, said softly, (line 19) telling her how to call (loudly) and the reason why one must do so, as well as (line 22) telling her to stand up so she will be heard. Not only do her parents tell her what to say, they model the manner of speaking, adding the calling out morpheme *-o* to the proper name, kinterm and shared place name, saying it with the correct calling out intonation. After repeated attempts, however, Meli's focus shifted to something else.

Attention to place and place names was also marked by frequently asked questions about comings and goings, the child's as well as others. Even two year olds are expected to know and answer with place names. *Where* questions were the usual; *when* questions were almost never asked. Knowing where someone has been often indicated what they might have been doing, and with whom. Through conversational exchanges that featured attention to place, children developed an ability to draw inferences, make connections between person, place, and activity. Children's participation in interactional sequences as the one above present a perspective on social life in part through language signs as mediated social experience. As they gained familiarity with people and their activities, participated in occasions of sociality and sharing, children were expected to talk about, as well as experience, particular places as anchors for memories, feelings of belonging and sense of shared lives. In other words, these mundane socializing activities mattered because they were critical to children's acquisition of cultural practices and knowledge, namely, building productive sociality in a society where obligation, reciprocity and access were already inscribed onto the space of place. This sense of place is in stark contrast to what has been described in much of the literature about Western children's place attachment, where special places are characterized as private and secret. This is not what Kaluli children experienced or sought. For them, place was socially and actively constructed along the affective dimensions of sociality and sharing throughout the community, both within and across generations.

Because ethnographic accounts are never timeless, one final comment about contemporary Kaluli life. Major social changes have taken place in Bosavi over the last two decades, and I have had an opportunity to document some of them during four subsequent research trips made between 1984 and 1998. Among the most profound change is the shift in the meanings of place and the places of meaning, changes initially brought about through Christian missionization. There was a shift in the places where people spent time, as pastors told villagers to stay around the village attending church, in anticipation of the Second Coming, so less time was spent in the bush. Traditional ceremonies that featured sung place names memorializing past relationships were last performed in 1984. Missionaries encouraged children to attend the mission school where they learned other people's place names in geography classes, places they will most likely never see. These changes were amplified by increased interactions with government and outside business ventures such as mining and logging. Over the last twenty years, Kaluli who followed this new regime imbued meaning to new places - the local airstrip, school, government and mission station - all of which took on some of the memories that had previously been invested in sago camps and river banks. While place is still important in everyday talk, these new places have become more salient than the old ones, and are indicative of new

types of relationships, both within Kaluli society and across its boundaries. Just as contact is necessary for other types of relationships, periodic contact with a place is necessary to maintain a sense of place; without contact, one's sense of place is experienced as *nostalgia*, which Eva Hoffman calls, "an excess of memories." And in Bosavi, nostalgia for place was characteristic of song and lament, and these expressive forms are no longer part of the repertoire.

Conclusion

Insights from research on language and place index broader cultural and political issues not only in children's worlds, but provide an entry into understanding the social construction of affect and feelings of belonging more broadly. Globalization and the export of modern childhood to populations thought to be in need of civilization and development (Stephens, 1995:16) have had an impact on language practices in many parts of the world. Colonialism, including missionization, has led to a radical restructuring of lives and ways of thinking through speaking other peoples' languages, often to the exclusion of vernaculars. Kenyan writer Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1981) has long advocated "decolonising the mind" through the appreciation and use of the mother tongue in African education. Voices remembered from childhood, retrieved by diasporic and exiled writers attest to enduring connections between language, place, memory, and identity. Language socialization research contributes yet another complementary perspective for understanding processes of social reproduction and change, and gives children engaged in those processes a chance not only to be seen but also to be heard.

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