

Doing Basqueness: A Chronotopic Analysis of Basque-American Identity

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1. Introduction

This study, by means of chronotopic analysis, sets to provide further focus on the construction and negotiation of Basque-American identity work. While research of this ethnolinguistic community is available in terms of both ethnographic fieldwork (Totoricaguena, 2003; 2004a), macroscopic research associated with migration patterns (Totoricaguena, 2004b; Romtvedt, 2011), and contact between the Basque Autonomous Community's governmental bodies and members of the Basque diaspora (Ray & Bieter, 2015), I wish to explore the identity formation of Basque-Americans by analyzing invocations and dialogic exchanges of chronotopes within metapragmatic discourse related to identity – that is, to what extent biographical and sociohistorical chronotopes inform the ways in which Basque-Americans “do” identity work (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). As such, this research further elaborates upon the identity work of Basque Americans, a continually negotiated construct with spatial and temporal fluctuations. With the objective of contributing to scholarship on chronotopic invocations and identity work of the diasporic community of Basques in the United States, I build off the methodology of Woolard (2013) to demonstrate how the chronotope acts as a dynamic construct that shapes the way Basque-Americans, as an ethnolinguistic community, continually define, negotiate, and redefine their identities.

2. Sociolinguistic Inquiry of Chronotopes

It is well-established that, as identity is a fluctuating notion of the self that is the product of social constructs, language is a vehicle by which speakers actively engage in identity work. Linguistic anthropologists have long theorized that identities are a complex interplay between sameness and difference, a concept further elaborated by Bucholtz and Hall's (2003) tactics of intersubjectivity. For linguistic anthropology, identity work cannot be removed from ideologies which are always contextualized.

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Importantly, speakers may refer to spatiotemporal notions as they invoke their identities, known as chronotopes, which Bakhtin (1981, p. 84) describes as the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships within artistic expression. Recent studies have adopted chronotopically-based analyses to understand how language and understanding of language play a role in the formation and negotiation of identity work given spatiotemporal configurations. Chronotopic invocations, within the metapragmatic speech of participants, are quite valuable to discourse analytic approaches to language and identity, especially as chronotopes consider spatiotemporal nuances to such identity work. For instance, Woolard (2013) analyzes the chronotopic frames invoked within interview data of “new Catalán speakers” of Castilian background, an analysis of which allows deeper nuance in investigating the various attitudes these second language speakers of Catalán express about their identities. Woolard distinguishes between three types of chronotopes:

(a) biographical: in which participants’ identity work is “a matter of individual psychosocial development” (p. 213)

(b) sociohistorical: in which identity work is part of greater political and sociological processes in place psychological stages of development

(c) the chronotope of adventure time of everyday life: in which time is “a matter of biographical crisis, threshold moments, and sudden changes” (p. 218) that deeply impact an individual’s perception of identity.

Blommaert and De Fina (2016) further contextualize emphasize how invocations of chronotopes are framed spatiotemporally and how their validity in indexing identity is multiscalar. Woolard’s chronotopically-centered study can then be extended in scope, from a particular spatial environment (Barcelona), to studies of transnational identity work, including diasporic communities such as Basque-Americans. Karimzad and Catedral (2017) consider notions of scales of power, between transnational identity work and language choice, focusing on the metapragmatic commentary of Uzbek and Azeri speakers in the United States. Chronotopes, then, also symbolize reflections of social hierarchies, and chronotopes invoked in conversations reveal differences not only of time and space, but also of power and saliency. In this way, the authors compare and contrast chronotopes that differ in saliency among participants. Ultimately, I argue that such chronotopic fluctuations are relevant in discourse not only within “competing” dialogues during real-time conversation, but also within the metapragmatic commentary of participants’ own identity work, both in the actual content of their commentary and the actors with whom they interact.

3. Contextualizing Identity among Basque-Americans and the Basque Diaspora

Chronotopic analysis of Basqueness in the U.S. must account for Basque migration, which was encouraged by a myriad of political, economic, and social factors. Originally attracted to the gold and silver booms of 1849 and the 1850s, by the late nineteenth century, Basques living in the western United States were well-known for sheepherding -- an occupation familiar to Basques who had recently left the Basque Country and Basques who travelled north after previously establishing in South America. From the 1930s to the 1970s, the social and political turmoil of Basques during the Civil War and following Franco’s victory and leadership of Spain led to the last major migration wave to the United States. In each of these waves, distribution of Basque immigrants varied in terms of provincial origins and establishment in the U.S. In Boise, most Basques came from Bizkaia.

Following migration, the Basque-American community in Boise, Idaho practiced cultural preservation most explicitly on Grove Street. There, the maintenance of boardinghouses in the 1890s served as a “safe haven” and “home away from home” for many Basque migrant laborers living within an unfamiliar society, as well as spaces where Basques could create social networks, gain employment opportunities, and gather the most recent news from the homeland (Bieter & Bieter, 2000, p. 43; Totoricagüena, 2004a, p. 48-49). As Basques eventually became established in Boise and other parts of the United States, the boardinghouses became centers for cultural events and political activity. In the 1970s, centers would become more apolitical, but cultural elements continued to thrive. Important to note is that, initially, one had to be an official member in order to engage in activities, which itself required proof of Basque ancestry. This changed in the last few decades, as anybody is allowed to participate and engage in Basque-related activities. However, most, if not all members of the Basque culture center have some sort of ancestry and ethnic relationship to the Basque nation. Modern day Boise’s Grove Street, known as the Basque Block, represents a Basque geography of its own, including a Basque Cultural Center and Museum established in, significantly, 1987, fifty years following the infamous bombing of Gernika. Both historical investigation by Totoricagüena (2004a; 2004b) and comparison of firsthand accounts among Boise Basque-Americans compiled by the Bieters (2000, p. 153) indicate the importance of such Basque geography in the co-construction of identity.

Research in the Basque Country has shown that knowledge of Basque is a marker of legitimacy to claim Basque identity (Urla, 1987; Amorrortu, 2000; Urla, Amorrortu, & Goirigolzarri, 2016). Furthermore, regional varieties of Basque are perceived to be more authentic and legitimate than standard Basque, referred to as *Batua* (Rodríguez-Ordóñez, 2016; Woolard, 2005; Ortega, et al., 2014). Meanwhile, Lasagabaster (2008) explores the maintenance of the Basque language in the U.S. through a cross-generational study in which participants were of three different generations of Basque immigration and residents of various Western U.S. states, mostly Idaho. Ultimately, while there appears to be revival of Basque language knowledge among the third generation relative to the second, most Basque-Americans of later generations display little to no confidence in speaking the language, although they hold favorable attitudes toward the language “as a symbol of their identity” (p. 84).

4. Methodology

The following is an analysis of interview data gathered by Rodríguez-Ordóñez in the summer of 2017 in Boise, Idaho, home to one of the United States’ largest Basque-American communities. Through the interviews of two self-described Basque Americans, based in metapragmatic commentaries on Basque-American identity, I analyze the chronotopically-based language through which they describe the cultural practices that allow them to construct and negotiate identities based in Basqueness and the significance of their Basque heritage to their identities. For the sake of anonymity, I have given the interviewees pseudonyms, Max (age 27; referred to in the transcriptions as “M” for the sake of brevity) and Arrosa (age 55, referred to in the transcriptions as “A”). The interview with Max took place in the Boise Basque Cultural Center, in a quiet, isolated room, and lasted for approximately thirty minutes, while the interview with Arrosa, which lasted for approximately forty-five minutes, took place in a much noisier, yet much less formal setting, in a local bar, where rock music and others’ conversations were part of the background. Both interviews took place during the annual San Inazio Festival, a culturally significant event in which Basque-Americans from across the country participate. Conversations are

carried in English, but the interviews – which are conducted by an interviewer (referred to in the transcriptions as I) who is from Gernika, Spain, and therefore directly from the Basque Country – resemble natural conversation, as both parties discuss their experiences as pertain to Basque identity. As such, these conversations involve emic fieldwork on the part of the interviewer, and the use of certain Basque terminology to describe culture and associated traditions and customs allow the interviews to seem less like interactions between researcher and subject, and more like interactions between two, equally-interested members of Basque identity.

5. Results

Results from the two interviews, each based in metapragmatic commentary of Basque-American identity, reflect the interaction of Woolard's (2013) identified chronotopes. Max and Arrosa's unique yet parallel interpretations about what it means to be or "do" Basque each involve a dialogism that necessarily requires the exchange of various meaning-making processes, including the invocation of the biographical chronotope, in which individual and psychological agency play a dominant role in identity formation; the sociohistorical chronotope, in which social, historical, ethnic, cultural, and national space-time configurations are predominant in participants' interpretations of Basqueness; and the "adventure of every life," a fusion of the biographical and sociohistorical that involves particularly impactful memories and "personal metamorphosis" (Woolard, 2013, p. 218). I argue that the participants invoke a dialogism and interplay of chronotopes, ranging from biographical to sociohistorical spatiotemporal arrangements, which reflect multi-contextual understandings of what it means to claim – or, perhaps more importantly, to "do" – Basque identity.

As is clear from the interview data, both Max and Arrosa have had their strong sense of Basque identity defined by the previously mentioned Basque geography unique to Grove Street, Boise, Idaho, in which the Basque Block stands out as a multipurpose space for Basque cultural preservation, facilitation, and participation. The array of architecture that makes the Basque Block Basque, including the Basque Cultural Center and Museum and Basque Market, obviously provides a spatial significance to Max and Arrosa's conception of practicing their self-proclaimed Basque identity in Boise. However, just as important as the spatial component of the Basque Center in particular is its temporal association with tradition and homeland: it represents not only the actual space dedicated to Basque cultural materials and affairs, but, for these participants, a transfer of cultural practices directly from the Basque Country, so that elements of Basque culture remain timeless, to be appreciated for their pervasive nostalgia. In the following excerpt, Arrosa elaborates on the importance of the Basque Center, invoking a sociohistorical chronotope as a result, in which the shepherders of olden times are mentioned:

(1) Arrosa

A: [...] I think that the Basque Block establishes a place. It's a place that the old Basque shepherders get to be Basque.

Shortly afterwards, Arrosa discusses her planning with a committee concentrated on an extension of the Basque Block:

(2) Arrosa

A: [T]hat's one of the committees I'm working with, to see how we can expand the block, the Basque Block as—as you saw yesterday.

The significance of Grove Street's geography for maintaining Basque-American identity is quite transparent. In (1), Arrosa explicitly notes the importance of establishing a place for practicing identity, but she also incorporates a notion of time, albeit less directly, which in this case is represented by the archetypical, historical icon of the Basque shepherders, who are, of course, characterized as "old." Mention of this group does not so much index shepherders specifically as it does reinforce the notion that the Basque Block provides a crucial environment in which tradition flourishes: it is timeless and historical in nature, parallel to Bakhtin's (1981) ancestral time (as cited in Woolard, 2013, p. 215). Arrosa in (2), then, interprets the Basque Block's spatiotemporal significance as positive for the Basque-American community and preservation of identity, evident by her proposition to "extend the block," which implies not only extension of physical space dedicated to this cultural hub, but a continuation of the preservation of Basque and Basque-American history. In fact, the intrinsic connection built by both Max and Arrosa between the multiple functionalities of the Basque Block and the Basque Country is corroborated by their comparisons between the two, as the Basque Block represents a microcosm of the Basque Country itself, so that the local scope of Basqueness within Boise and the global scope involving historical migration from the Basque Country to Boise intertwine:

(3) Arrosa

A: The people in the bar: last night were seeming -- you could've taken a video in the Basque Center, Boise, Idaho, last night, and you would not know you were not in the Basque Country."

(4) Max

I: What aspects of the Basque Country, of your experiences in the Basque Country, do you think that are revived here in the cultural center, or – or here, just in your – daily life, or, as part of you?

M: Uff. (2s pause) I—I think it's that – that connection, like, the community connection, uh, even though we're in – downtown of a capital city in—in the United States, it's – having this block – um – uh – gives you that sense of community, and you – it forces Basques to constantly run into each other, 'cause there's many different reasons to—to be – to be down here. I mean, you could be going to the Basque Market for some goods – um – you could just be going to Gernika for some croquetas, you could be going to the museum or – dropping, running errands, or – whatever, you can just pop in and see if anybody's out, around, and – come there on a Friday night, and – I can go myself to the Basque Center and know that I'm gonna have at least one or two people there that—that I can talk to and just hang out and—and relax and—enjoy. [...]

I: And that – that's something that actually is—is also why you're still in the Basque Country?

M: Mhm, of course, yeah. Oh yeah. "Hey, let's go to the – let's go to the street"—I mean, there's not really a plan, you really don't need a plan, over there.

In (3), Arrosa's description of the previous night's festivities on the Basque Block, especially within the context of the San Inazio Festival, implies the authentic nature of Basqueness as a performance in a particular place and time outside of the cultural place of origin, Basque Country. The sociohistorical chronotope she evokes creates direct

equivalence between the two places, and the events described during that point in time, “last night,” connotes shared cultural patterns to the extent that the two places – one of which is a microcosm of the other – were indistinguishable in their scenery and atmosphere. Despite differences in scope between the Basque Block and the Basque Country proper, Arrosa’s sociohistorical chronotope legitimizes such direct comparisons between two landscapes of similar though quite distinct semiotic value. In (4), Max also highlights the Basque Center’s intrinsic connection to the Basque Country, albeit, in this instance, differently from Arrosa, in that he equates the goings-on of the Basque Block with a general lifestyle, not with a specific point in time, involving more general spatiotemporal arrangements that are less ephemeral, and in this way reflecting a lifestyle of living in the Basque Country. This is evident in his frequent use of present tense verbs that describe daily events and opportunities afforded unto him as a resident of Boise (such as his stating, “I can go myself to the Basque Center and know that I’m gonna have at least one or two people there ... that I can talk to and just hang out and—and relax and—enjoy”). The differences between how Max and Arrosa talk about the performance of Basqueness – as habitual or specific to a certain time, respectively – most likely stem from these participants’ contrasting living arrangements: while Max actually lives in Boise, Arrosa, a California resident, is a frequent visitor to the Basque Block. Such differences of location may determine the more “everyday” experience of Basqueness within Max’s description of the Basque Block, whereas Arrosa sees temporary, fleeting opportunities to practice and deeply engage with her Basque-American identity.

Nonetheless, despite such discrepancies of temporal perspective, both participants invoke a sociohistorical chronotope involving the transfer of Basque culture, history, and tradition to the Basque Block of Boise, and in doing so draw comparisons to the Basque Country that they deem appropriate, in spite of objective differences between the two in terms of history and scope. The equivalence of the Basque Block and the Basque Country stems from a sociohistorical chronotope that associates the general concept of Basqueness as involving the timelessness inherent in the physical geography and performance of history and culture on the Basque Block.

As a matter of fact, the participants’ comparisons of the Basque-American mecca, represented by the Boise Basque Block, and the Basque Country are not without merit, since both Max and Arrosa express having visited the Basque Country in these interviews, thus incorporated personal experience there to justify their claims as to the parallels between the two distinct places. The following excerpt contains Max’s response to a question by the interviewer about his last trip to the Basque Country:

(5) Max

M: Oh, it was - it was incredible. Every [...] one of my trips to the Basque Country [...] is life changing, it, um - it almost puts the - it - it's like hitting the reset button for me on my perspective, and it just - it makes me open up, broaden my horizons a little bit, and it - and it just, uh, makes me appreciate, um different aspects of, like, culture, along with different aspects of living in the - in the United States and being thankful for what we have here, as well.

Here, there is a dialogism of two different chronotopes: the biographical and the sociohistorical. The biographical chronotope is engaged by Max’s description of the impactful, insightful excursions to the Basque Country onto the develop of his self, in which he goes so far as to invoke the metaphor of “hitting the reset button” to convey the notion that he becomes a new person after each visit, presumably for the better. Nearing the end of

that same sentence, however, he also engages with a sociohistorical chronotope that shifts the scale from personal, psychological development into a grander scale of socioeconomic differences, evident in his juxtaposition of the United States' advantaged position and the seeming lack of material resources in the Basque Country. This process of realization, both within the self and as demonstrated by socioeconomic differences between the two places, is a habitual one, involving continuous transformations of both Max's personhood and the inclusion of more macroscopic elements such as economic inequality with each trip he takes.

For Arrosa, who has more experience in the Basque Country than Max, there are a number of particularly life-changing experiences that represent pivotal moments as concerns her Basque-American identity work. In the following example, Arrosa connects her present-day methods of maintaining and preserving Basque identity with a life-changing event, in line with Woolard's chronotope of the "adventure time of everyday life" (2013, p. 218):

(6) Arrosa

A: [...] I try to incorporate Basqueness in my Spanish teaching. I always talked about something with – when I was there, a friend of mine, Stephanie (xxx) asked me, "Hey! Let's go to Gernika for the fiftieth anniversary." And I'm like – of the bombing of Gernika – and I'm like, why would I wanna go there? And she said, "Well, you know, I'm going." And so, I decided not to go, and then when my – she came back said it was impresionante. Theeee – the Germans that dropped, using the same airplanes, they dropped flowers.

I: Yeah.

A: And so for thirty years, I regretted that decision of not going.

I: Right.

A: And so I: -- throughout—throughout the years, I thought, okay, I'm not dancing anymore. How can I educate and perpetuate, like, the Basque logo? So, my Basqueness, my—my chi is that I—I try to incorporate Basque stuff.'

Throughout the interview, Arrosa thoroughly describes her way of contributing to Basque heritage preservation, at one point declaring, "[M]y way to contribute to the Basque community is through art," and in doing so maintains her commitment to being a "caregiver of Basque," evident near the interview's end in which she describes "paying homage" to past relatives and Basque culture through Basque art. And though it would be implausible to argue that this one memory, embodied by the regret Arrosa feels for skipping on the Gernika anniversary event, represents the sole factor responsible for her emphasis on Basque identity work, it certainly made enough of an impact on her biographical timeline to shape the way she thinks about her identity. This chronotopic landscape, most akin to Woolard's "adventure time of everyday life," involves both the "biographical crisis" described by Woolard (2013, p. 218) and reference to a particularly prominent historical event that carries such semiotic value among those who observe Basque heritage.

Such invocation of "adventure time of everyday life" is present in Arrosa's other memories in the Basque Country, and (7) involves what appears to be a negatively-perceived event that was both personally devastating and enlightening in regards to practicing Basqueness within the context of speaking *Euskara*, the common Basque term for the Basque language in general. Here, Arrosa describes her negative experience of attempting to speak the standard *Batua* with an older relative of the Basque Country who spoke a dialectal version:

(7) Arrosa

A: [...] I was studying in the Basque Country and I told her [my aunt], I said that I was learning Euskara, and I said I was learning Batua, and she said, “Batua? I will not speak to you in Batua, because it’s not Basque!”

I: Right. Right.

A: “And if you want to teach—speak [local variety], I’ll speak to you.” And I said that today, they don’t teach [local variety] anymore, and she said, “But I’m not going to speak a bastardized Basque,” soooo – and I said, “But I will never speak to you in Basque,” and she said, “But I’m not—I’m going to keep my identity.”

I: Right.

A: So—that was hard for me, because she was so stubborn, it made me not get to speak to her in Basque, but it’s—it’s the point, Basques are so stubborn that we—we—we don’t often assimilate.

This memory not only serves as a particularly negative experience, but also reinforces Arrosa’s greater generalization that Basques are or act a “certain way” – in this case, stubborn. Her transfer of this chronotope of “the adventure of everyday life” to a greater conclusion of cultural essentialism – what it means to be Basque, as well as the associated, “intrinsic” qualities thereof – necessarily invokes another chronotope of sociohistoricity. This is seen, first, when Arrosa recounts the differences between her and another member of the community’s perceptions of what it means to speak an authentic versus artificial form of *Euskara* (see also Ortega, et. al., 2014); and second, as Arrosa interprets this person’s negative perception on language change (in which *Batua* is considered a “bastardized Basque”) as a reflection of greater group characteristics, that is, being resistant to assimilation. A chronotopic analysis of (7) reveals conflicting attitudes between Arrosa and her aunt as a result of differing spatiotemporal circumstances that have shaped their opposed understandings of what dialect of Basque may be labeled “authentic” versus “bastardized.” Whereas her aunt indignantly maintained that her own dialect reflected a sociohistorical narrative of authenticity, Arrosa, in her enthusiasm to build onto a Basque identity which had been such an integral part of her biography hitherto, mistakenly presumed that speaking the standard *Batua* would be encouraged in the Basque Country, a spatiotemporal arrangement that would presumably foster such enthusiasm. This instance was a contradiction, bordering on conflict, between two divergent chronotopic perspectives.

As concerns Max’s *Euskara* knowledge, he alludes to the Basque language as a marker of Basque identity, and in doing so invokes chronotopes of biography and sociohistoricity, as represented in (8) and (9), respectively:

(8) Max

M: Oh, of course, yeah, I mean I - naturally speak it [Euskara], you know, well when I’m over there, when I’m immersed in the - in the language and I’m forced to speak it, it - it’s easy, but right now I - I’ll choose English, be - because I’d rather get my point across than - than - s-struggle (chuckles) through Euskara.

(9) Max

M: You either got it [Basqueness] or you don’t. And – And the beautiful thing about the Basque culture – you – you’re well aware of this – is that it’s the one who has Basque one who (xxx) is the one who Basque – one who has the Basque

language, but if you have respect, love, and your mind, body, spirit, whatever, then you're Basque, in my opinion. As long as you're respecting the culture and making efforts, um – to be – part of that, and – and – and then lot – then a lot of people think that's the language, but I think, if you can do the language, then, fantastic, that's so important, but if – you just don't have the means or if that's not – if that's not in the cards, as long as you have the utmost respect and – and uh – um – show that, then – then – sure you can be Basque – you know.

In (8), Max illustrates a biographical chronotope in which his access to Basque and level of Basque proficiency is restricted to a certain time and place: “when I’m over there,” with the deictic “there” pointing to the Basque Country. By this description, the conclusion may be drawn that only a certain spatiotemporal arrangement within Max’s life trajectory will make possible his Basque speaking abilities. This is not a small point: the fact that he insists on this ability, despite it being spatially and temporally unavailable during the interview in Boise, means that he acknowledges the Basque language’s relevant, semiotic role in Basque heritage identity work. Max actually makes this point explicit in (9) by reviewing the importance of knowing the language to practice Basque identity, yet he also states the importance of respecting the Basque culture in order to be able to identity as Basque.

6. Conclusion: Basqueness as Active Participation

Both Max and Arrosa exemplify Toticagüena’s (2004b) proposal that “the core elements of Basque ethnic identity are defined in a constant manner, focusing on ancestry, music, dance, sport, cuisine, and religion, and decreasingly on language” (p. 192-193) – and even relative to ancestry, “subjective orientations of identity” predominate among later generations of the Basque diaspora (p. 200). Of course, individuals vary in terms of how they position themselves in terms of identity, and between the two participants, Max’s position of identity-making contradicts narratives that assert the level of one’s Basqueness by means of blood purity. The following is his response to the interviewer’s question concerning whether there is a difference between being “Basque-American” and “American Basque,” in which he incorporates a sociohistorical chronotope that denotes progress versus regression:

(10) Max

M: I don’t know, I – I hate conversations like that – um – I think it doesn’t – doesn’t – uh – necessarily – it doesn’t move things forward, it doesn’t – it doesn’t help our cause or – um – or help – help – it doesn’t help anything if we’re just worried about – how we identify ourselves. [...] I identify myself as Basque. Um, obv – I’m clearly an American, because – I have to be a part of somewhere, and – and I enjoy the luxuries of being an American and I’m proud to be an American, but – um – y’know, being Basque is something that take – it takes time, it takes commitment, it takes love, it takes passion, it’s—it’s not something you can turn off and on. It’s something – it’s a fire that – that – that’s always lit inside me and [...] it’s different from – from anything else, and then when people say, “Oh, you’re only half Basque,” or – I mean, you know, “Oh, what percentage Basque – how Basque are you?” “Well, I’m full blood” [...] or “Well, I’m only a quarter Basque,” and people will kind of get down, and, like – just embrace it. You’re either Basque or you’re not, y’know?

Through use of a metaphor that connotes the dichotomy of moving forward versus moving backward (progress versus regression), Max rejects the notion of a “purity” ideology in the

development of Basque ethnolinguistic identity formation. The sociohistorical chronotope here is present in his reference to Basque group dynamics, arguing that the most progressive option for those who claim Basque identity is avoidance of an extremist focus on identity: those who identify as Basque or Basque-American must continue “forward,” beyond the displays of (blood) purity. Max dispels the idea that the Basque identity of people claiming a certain higher percentage of Basque ethnicity necessarily supersedes the Basque identity of people who have a lower percentage, but who nonetheless dedicate themselves to the elements necessary to “do” Basqueness: *time, commitment, love, and passion*. He even invokes a sociohistorically-based chronotope within the scale of national citizenship, within a proclamation of American pride, and in doing so exemplifies the possibility of claiming more than one specific identity even as a practitioner of Basqueness. Similar to Max’s stance in (10), Arrosa’s commentary concentrates on the participatory nature of building onto Basque identity, as is represented by her language that focuses on contributing to Basqueness. Following the interviewer’s comment about the idea of equating one’s level of Basqueness with one’s proficiency in speaking *Euskara*, Arrosa addresses how she “compensates” for lack of such proficiency:

(12) Arrosa

I: Euskara – eh eh – [Basque proverb] – “It’s Basque what makes us Basque,” right? This proverb.

A: Right, right. So – but not all of us have that great opportunity.

I: Uh-huh.

A: So: – I understand some Basque, but I feel that my way to contribute to the Basque community is through art, because I’m not a good dancer – and I am not a linguist.

Shortly afterwards, Arrosa would posit the question she asks herself: “in a hundred years, what’s going to tie you to Basqueness?” For both Max and Arrosa, this question begs the same general answer: participation in the community. As such, Basqueness requires identity work, maintained first and foremost through the involvement of Basque cultural affairs. Max and Arrosa both claim that continuous interaction with fellow Basques – both in Boise and in the Basque Country, as well as participation in cultural events and festivals, especially those centered in the Basque Block – defines their Basqueness. In contextualizing those who “do” Basque identity across multiple spatiotemporal arrangements, which are represented by both individual biographies and sociohistorical knowledge common among Basque communities in general, chronotopic analysis of the interviewees’ discourse then adds further dimensional nuance to definition, negotiation, and re-negotiation of Basque identity.

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