

Agency in the Reconstruction of Language Identity: A Narrative Case Study from the Island of San Andrés¹

El Rol Agentivo de Fidel en la Reconstrucción de su Identidad Lingüística: Un Estudio de Caso de la Isla de San Andrés

Carlos Augusto Arias^{2*}

Institución Universitaria Colombo Americana, ÚNICA, Colombia

Abstract

The adoption of the English language paradigm and the subsequent implementation of bilingual policies worldwide are generating new linguistic hierarchies. These have an effect on the linguistic diversity at the sub-national level and on individuals' linguistic human rights. This article reports the results of a case study on an individual's re-engineering of his in-group language identity. Through the analysis of a narrative written by the participant (Fidel), this article intends to show the effects of language ideologies on the discursive and sociocultural practices of a member of a *raizal* community from San Andrés (Colombia). As a multilingual individual surrounded by multiple ideologies of language, covert and overt language policies, and language hierarchies of prestige dictated by a scope larger than his immediate social group, Fidel preserves, challenges, and transforms his in-group linguistic identity.

Keywords: Linguistic identity, language policies, linguistic human rights

Resumen

La adopción del paradigma del inglés y la implementación de políticas bilingües alrededor del mundo, basadas en los intereses nacionales de cada país, están generando nuevas jerarquías lingüísticas, y tienen un efecto en la biodiversidad

103

¹ Received: June 26, 2014 / Accepted: September 22, 2014

² carlos.ariasc@yahoo.com.co

lingüística a nivel sub nacional y en los derechos humanos lingüísticos. Este artículo reporta los resultados de un estudio de caso acerca del rol agentivo que tiene un individuo ‘raizal’ en la reconstrucción de su identidad lingüística de grupo. A través del análisis de una narrativa escrita por el participante (Fidel), este artículo trata de mostrar los efectos que las ideologías del lenguaje tienen en las prácticas discursivas y socioculturales que él tiene como miembro de la comunidad ‘raizal’ de San Andrés, Colombia. Como individuo multilingüe rodeado por múltiples ideologías del lenguaje, políticas lingüísticas encubiertas, explícitas, y jerarquías lingüísticas de prestigio dictadas por un campo que excede su grupo social inmediato, Fidel preserva, reta y transforma su identidad lingüística de grupo.

Palabras clave: Identidad lingüística, políticas del lenguaje, derechos humanos lingüísticos

Resumo

A adoção do paradigma do inglês e a implementação de políticas bilíngues ao redor do mundo, baseadas nos interesses nacionais de cada país, estão gerando novas hierarquias lingüísticas, e têm um efeito na biodiversidade lingüística ao nível subnacional e nos direitos humanos lingüísticos. Este artigo reporta os resultados de um estudo de caso sobre o papel agentivo que tem um indivíduo ‘raizal’ na reconstrução da sua identidade lingüística de grupo. Através da análise de uma narrativa escrita pelo participante (Fidel), este artigo tenta mostrar os efeitos que as ideologias da linguagem têm nas práticas discursivas e socioculturais que ele tem como membro da comunidade ‘raizal’ de San Andrés, Colômbia. Como indivíduo multilíngue rodeado por múltiplas ideologias da linguagem, políticas lingüísticas encobertas e explícitas, e hierarquias lingüísticas de prestígio ditadas por um campo que excede seu grupo social imediato, Fidel preserva, desafia e transforma a sua identidade lingüística de grupo.

Palavras chave: Identidade lingüística, políticas da linguagem, direitos humanos lingüísticos

Introduction

104

The present article reports the results of a study whose main inquiry aimed at analyzing how multiple linguistic ideologies conveyed by overt and covert language policies, and the discourses generated through them, have an effect on a multilingual individual’s reconstruction of his linguistic identity. The context for the study includes the implementation of a National Bilingualism Plan in Colombia, which overlooks the linguistic diversity of the country by reducing the bilingualism paradigm to Spanish-English (De Mejía,

2006). This language policy has adopted the tenets of the English language paradigm, assuming that English is a lingua franca that paves the road to democracy, a global economy, and human rights (Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1996). Such a policy approach establishes the learning of English as the condition for Colombia's competition in the international marketplace.

Multiple studies (Sánchez & Obando, 2008) have questioned the necessity of and the preparedness for the implementation of the National Bilingualism Plan in Colombia. Others (De Mejía, 2006, Guerrero, 2008) question the effects that this policy may have on the linguistic diversity of the country. Nevertheless, there are individual multilingual speakers in Colombia whose linguistic identity has been secluded due to their attachment to a vernacular language. Their voices presuppose a counterpart to the globalizing imperialistic English language paradigm (Phillipson, 1992; Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1996), and are just now starting to be documented (Escobar & Gómez, 2010). The main goal of this study was to document an individual voice from this multilingual reality.

The research questions that guided this study were the following:

- What language ideologies does Fidel, produce, reproduce or challenge (Van Dijk 1998) within the discourse and attitudes embedded in the construction of his linguistic identity?
- How does Fidel construct, preserve, transform, and/or challenge the linguistic identity that he has inherited from his *raizal* social group?

Concretely, this article focuses on the agentive role played by a multilingual *raizal* individual from the island of San Andrés (Fidel) in the re-engineering of his in-group linguistic identity. The study inquires explores how Fidel dialogues with in-group discourse about the *raizal* linguistic identity, and his own socio-cultural practices in and out of this community. The main discourse artifact is a narrative in which Fidel renders his own experiences and perceptions. The term agentive role is taken from Bourdieu's (1986) concept of *habitus*, which is the place for the interaction of objectivism and subjectivism. Bourdieu asserts that individuals play a role in understanding what seems to be an objective, yet discursive and artificially constructed social reality. Playing an agentive role implies precisely that individuals generate such discursive and sociological practices that might transform the so-called objective reality.

Literature Review

Linguistic Complexity on the Island of San Andrés

The case of San Andrés' linguistic diversity goes beyond the mere recognition of Creole as a language. Indeed, the case of multilingualism in San Andrés includes a three- language equation: Caribbean English, Creole or Bende, and Spanish (Etxebarria & Trillos, 2002; Moya, 2010). It is also characterized by a complex linguistic diversity embedded in a linguistic continuum that includes multiple social dimensions.

Multilingualism in San Andrés has been researched from a socio-historical perspective (Clemente, 1991), which includes the origins of the *raizal* populations as descendants of Puritans, the early economic ties with the United States and Jamaica, and the 1950s implementation of cultural assimilation strategies that disregarded the islanders' cultural diversity in the process of consolidating the Colombian nationhood over San Andrés.

San Andrés' Creole has also been documented from the origin of the vernacular and its development as a consequence of the historical interaction between the lexifier superstrate English and the substrate Creole of African origin. Due to the lack of contact between the current Creole substrate with its original English lexifier, Spanish has become its new lexifier (Patiño, 2000).

San Andrés' linguistic diversity has also been analyzed as sharing an analogue sociolinguistic situation with some other countries from the Anglophone Caribbean as a result of the similarity of the colonial circumstances (Sanmiguel, 2007). Because of the socio-historical events and ideologies generated, those countries that host Creole languages held the standard variety of English in high regard in contrast to the negative values associated with the Creole languages, which were conceived as corrupted variations that were more barriers than opportunities for social advance (Winford, 1994).

The *raizal* identity was also bonded to the larger field of Afro-Colombianity, social inclusion and the legal acknowledgement of ethnic and cultural difference. Studies have demonstrated through narrative excerpts how *raizal* individuals exhibit a particular pride and family-rooted protectionism beyond the difficult conditions framed in their current social subordination (Mosquera, Rodríguez & León, 2009). The voices of *raizals* by means of memoirs and narratives have also been used to reconstruct and substantiate the *raizal* voice in relation to the Colombianization processes that shattered the autochthonous cultural diversity of the island (Guevara, 2007). Guevara sees islanders'

narratives as fluctuant negotiation processes and political instruments that empower them to understand the origins of the current social subordination and to confront it.

Creole plays a symbolic role in the cohesion and identity of *raizals*, as the vehicle and an important piece of the cultural heritage, as well as the phenomenology of group identity (Moya, 2010). Yet, the dominant discourse, aligned with the prestige of majority languages, has begun to permeate the language choice of *raizal* individuals and has caused them to re-engineer the role of Creole as a component of identity.

Attitudes towards Multilingualism

Multilingualism is an ethos which argues for respect and co-existence of multiple languages in daily life in plurilingual societies (UNESCO 2003). However, if individual languages are supported institutionally either overtly or covertly, there is a different set of dynamics by which languages become the vehicle and the path to exert symbolic domination, and at the same time to collaborate or resist domination (Heller, 1995).

Planned multilingualism generates subtractive and additive perspectives on language acquisition. The subtractive perspective, which promotes the learning of a new language at the risk of the mother tongue (Skutnabb- Kangas 2000), is based on an ideology that equates national identity to monolingualism. The one-language-one-nation equation (Hornberger, 2002) is a proven red herring that is also challenged by Ruiz's (1984) acknowledgement of three visions towards language: "language as a problem, language as a right, and language as a resource" (p. 17).

The vision of language as a problem conceives of language as a powerful homogenizing tool to construct shared national identity (Biseth, 2009). This vision of language was the dominant ideology that dictated the orientations of major language policies until the 1980s (Mühlhäusler, 1996). This problematic vision deals with linguistic diversity in terms of majority or minority national languages (UNESCO, 2003), allowing majority language mother tongue speakers to define the values that constitute a national culture (Biseth, 2009; Osler & Starkey, 2000). This approach results in the consideration of minority languages as more a threat to nationhood than a cultural resource as such.

The language as a resource perspective on linguistic diversity has renewed its strength thanks to two seemingly contradictory

perspectives. First is the view of multilingualism as capital promoted by the discourse of human capital flow and global citizenship (Rasool 2004). Unfortunately, this market-based impulse of language as a resource tends to disregard minority languages that may be perceived as being of lesser value for international trade (Baker, 2006). The second vision argues that minority languages play a vital role in the protection of natural resources and identity from globalization since they function as the encoders of cultural knowledge and the prerequisite transmission of that knowledge within oppressed communities (Skutnabb- Kangas, 2001).

In regards to language as a right, UNESCO (2003) acknowledges, “Language is not only a tool for communication and knowledge but also a fundamental attribute of cultural identity and empowerment, both for the individual and the group” (p 16). This recognizes instruction in the mother tongue as an inalienable principle in the pursuit of conditions of equality in education. Besides, language and language choice are “an intimate part of social identity” (McGroarty, 1996, p. 3).

Language Ideologies and Social Anatomy

Language plays an important role in the transmission of ideologies and in the development of an individual’s social identity and self-concept. “Language is much more than a system of communication, it is a symbolical marker that distinguishes who belongs to a group and who is outside” (Boscoboinik, 2008, p. 7). In fact, language is not just the vehicle for the transmission of ideology; language and languages can also become subject of ideologies, hence playing an important role in the stereotyping of in-group – out-group distinctions.

Kelly (2002) expresses the value of language in the consolidation and transmission of identity with these words: “Individuals use language to both index and construct their everyday worlds and, in particular, their own social roles and cultural identities and those of others within them” (p. 42). Language is a core feature in enacting social identity and constituting social life (Miller, 2000), and it should not be seen just as the means by which group ideologies are expressed. Language in itself, considered as a resource of group cohesion, is the content of ideology and plays a meaningful role in the development of identity.

Woolard and Schieffelin (1994) claim that language is not just a vehicle for ideologies, but also the core of ideology itself. Thus, language is intrinsically linked to social and individual identity. Language in itself becomes part of a group’s identity, determined by ownership and

otherness paradigms that ascribe a high or low value to language as a group resource (Baker 2006; Ruiz, 1984; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2001; Winford, 1985). Be they positive or negative, “language attitudes are often contradictory, combining, in a complex manner, aspects of positive identification and rejection, nationalistic consciousness, and self-deprecation” (Francis & Ryan 1998, p. 26). Thus, the value ascribed in the larger society to language as the resource of a social group can be an indicator of the value ascribed to the group at large.

Bourdieu (1977) implies that individuals are gauged by means of both the value ascribed to the language(s) the individuals speak, and to the group(s) to which the individuals belong. “Just as the level of relations between groups, a language is worth what those who speak it are worth, so too, at the level of interactions between individuals, speech always owes a major part of its value to the value of the person who utters it” (p. 652).

Thus, ideologies about languages are also a key factor in the structuring of a society’s anatomy since competition between social groups for the consolidation of dominant - dominated paradigms concurs with competition between ideologies about distinct languages. “Just as competition for limited bio- resources creates conflict in nature, so also with languages. If a small fish gets in contact with a big fish, it is the smaller which is more likely to disappear” (Mackay, 1980, p 35).

In the competition for establishing dominant - dominated paradigms, dominant groups intend to perpetuate unequal social and economic structures by legitimizing their establishment based on their own value systems (Bourdieu, 1986). Since “human beings through their actions have made language a determinant of most social and economic relationships” (Tollefson, 1991, p. 2), languages are given a “loading of moral and political interests” (Irvine, 1989, p. 255), and arbitrary language ideologies can take the form of arbitrary language policies also used as instruments to perpetuate paradigms of social domination (Mühlhäusler, 1996; Phillipson 1992).

In multilingual communities with majority/minority language situations, language choice varies from older to younger generations based on higher status and the more fashionable image of the majority language (Baker, 2006). This, combined with a subtle deprivation of the rights of a minority language, by means of de facto policies like othering a minority language when establishing the requirements for job access, confines its use to older generations, and to a domestic role, thus posing a threat over the linguistic human rights.

Methodology

Research Design

This study was framed within the qualitative research paradigm due to its suitability for documenting epistemological problems concerning human experiences (Moustakas, 1994), and also because it validates the dialogic construction of knowledge, which intertwines facts and values (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Wallace, 1998). The adoption of this paradigm allowed for the spontaneity and the adaptation of interaction between the researcher and the participant informant in the search of apprehending a phenomenon of interest that would unfold naturally (Patton, 2002).

The discovery of patterns and connections in qualitative data lead to the description, interpretation, and analysis of subjective meanings by resorting to the participants' emic point of view (Burns, 1999) and by capturing the research subject's voice (Wolcott, 1990). They also include the researcher's acknowledgement of his own biases (Gale, 1990).

This post-positive approach, driven by the philosophical assumption that social reality is constructed by the individuals who participate in it, fits within a case study methodology. The case, which can be a person (Merriam, 1998), is bound to a context, time, and place (Creswell, 1998). The knowledge generated through case study research is concrete, context-dependent and based on the principle of relativism in nature (Flyvbjerg, 2006). It intends to create a rather holistic description and analysis of "complex functioning thing" (Stake, 1995, p. 2).

Context and Participants

The participant, Fidel, is a trilingual speaker (Creole, English, Spanish) who, as he acknowledges, is a *raizal* due to his heritage and conviction. In the moment of the data collection, he was 27 years old. He was about to graduate in engineering from the university, and was clearly trilingual. He happened to be my student, but also my neighbor, which allowed me to witness some of his interactions in Creole with other *raizal* relatives and friends. He was also able to talk about politics and language policies proficiently, both in English, and Spanish.

Besides possessing strong linguistic capital, Fidel was also very aware of his agentive role in society, and within the scope of San Andrés. He was well informed about policies since his relatives worked

in the cultural and political arenas of San Andrés. He engaged in the research convinced that he could contribute to the divulgation of his immediate social identity affiliation as a *raizal*, and his multilingual profile. He made himself readily available for interviews or informal conversations. Besides, he was willing to consign reflections resulting from our semi-structured interviews, and eventually crafted such reflections together in a narrative, which served as the main source of data for this study.

Fidel was not chosen based on principles of random selection (Huberman & Miles 2002) or under the premise of an objective sampling as a particular instance to illuminate a general problem, as in microscopic methodology (Giddens, as cited in Yin, 1994). Conversely, it was the intrinsicality of Fidel's case, and its very uniqueness (Abramson, 1992; Adelman, Jenkins & Kemmins, 1983; Creswell, 1998; Flyvbjerg, 2006), along with the accessibility to the informant and his subjective factors such as thoughts, feelings and desires (Broomley, 1986), which constituted the principles for case choice.

Data Collection Instruments

The case study was built through viewpoints of the participant via multiple sources of data (Tellis, 1997). The data was gathered mainly from a written narrative written by Fidel, and triggered by a set of dialogic conversations we held both about his identity as a *raizal* and his linguistic identity. The narrative reflects Fidel's voice, but it also "reflects other voices that have been experienced previously in life, in history, in culture." (Moen, 2006, p. 3). It becomes the scheme by which Fidel's human experience is rendered meaningful (Gudmundsdottir, 2001; Polkinghorne, 1988). Fidel's narrative served the purpose of gathering data about his case, and also became a useful tool for the narrator himself by helping him construct sense of the experience through a multi-vocal dialogic process that involved description and reflection. This took place at the core of multiple cycles of narrative construction, selection, and interpretation (Moen, 2006), through the "the culturally situated voices that ventriloquate through the singular voice that is claimed by an individual" (Gudmundsdottir, 2001, p. 235).

111

Data Analysis and Interpretation

In the analysis of the overarching forces of Fidel's narrative, the multilingual context (Freeland, 2003) present in his narrative, I resorted to Fairclough's approach towards critical discourse analysis

(1995). Adopting critical discourse in the interpretation of data boosts the analysis of the interwoven relations between language, discourse, and social action. Following Fairclough's triadic model, text, discourse practice, and sociological practice are analyzed in three stages: a) the descriptive (linguistic analysis of the text); b) the interpretive (text-discourse practices); and c) the explanatory (discourse- social practices).

In the descriptive stage, analysis was done from the narrative by resorting to a checklist of language elements, based on grammatical resources for ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings (Halliday, 1985). The list includes lexicalization, patterns of transitivity, the use of active and passive voice, the use of nominalization, the thematic structure of the text, the information focus, and the cohesive devices. The patterns that emerged across the linguistic functions were correlated to the situational context and the intertextual context involved in the processes of production of the text. This interpretative stage generated the identification of the discourses that dialogue with Fidel's discursive aims.

Results

Fidel's narrative, then, should be understood as a discursive practice nested in the core of a sociocultural reality that is not synchronic, but is rather the product of historical background. Fidel's multilingualism, likewise, is not solely the product of his individual life circumstances or conscious decisions, but has to do with his identity as a member of a social group that also has experienced the development of a multilingual ethos based on their shifting demographic realities.

The Ideational Construction of *Raizal* Linguistic Identity

Fidel's first discursive aim is the construction of an ideational representation of what being a *raizal* implies in terms of linguistic identity. In such a task, Fidel discovers three conflictive phenomena that constitute the *raizal* in-group identity. First, migration is one of the main constituents of in-group *raizal* identity, but at the same time the demographic shift generated by migration is the main threat to the *raizal* culture.

One salient aspect about the migration of the lineages that can be named as *raizals* is that their families migrated to the archipelago before or long before the 1950s. There is no person whose lineage can be considered *raizal* if that lineage migrated to the archipelago after 1953. (Fidel's narrative, line 20)

Therefore, the 1950s migration milestone became almost the sole element of convergence for the *raizal* culture, along with the adoption of Creole as a key feature of the *raizal* population's the language identity.

Second, despite the pre-eminent historical role played by Creole in the foregathering of a *raizal* identity, it is not a fully reliable in-group identity feature.

Some people think that the only thing that makes an islander *raizal* is the language, but I do not agree. There are people on San Andres that know Creole, but they are not *raizal*, and *raizal* people who don't know Creole. (Fidel's narrative, line 19)

Third, there is a trans-generational dissonance in the linguistic capital of in-group *raizals*. Fidel offers a diagnosis of the trans-generational juxtaposition of language codes and the shift of language choice in the archipelago even in the bosom of the *raizal* family and its trans-generational language identity.

My family is very typical. All my aunts, uncles and cousins speak Creole, and my grandmother can barely speak Spanish. By my mother side, my family is almost the same, but I have some cousins that grew up in a paña majority neighborhood, so they usually speak Spanish like me, but they speak in English or Creole at work or when it is necessary. (Fidel's narrative line 50)

When Fidel meets with other *raizal* generations from his family, there is a trans-generational mismatch of language choice. The older the generation, the more fond of Creole language the individual is, and conversely, the younger the generation, the more Spanish the individual speaks.

Fidel's language choice could originally be de-problematized and regarded just as a younger generation identity issue. Nonetheless, his attitude has an agentive role in the preservation of Creole, since as Mufwene (2004) claimed, "Language endangerment is the cumulative outcome of individual practices of speakers" (p. 218).

Language choice is an instrument by which multilingual speakers are allowed both to attempt to wield and also to resist the power of the symbolic domination that is exercised institutionally (Heller 1995). Fidel's language choice in favor of Spanish, when being with his relatives, may well be based on the deprivation of status exercised institutionally on Creole (Baker, 2006), but also on Fidel's free competitive adaptation to the new socioeconomic ecologies.

Besides, Fidel has also assigned a negative connotation to the language interference that occurs from his knowing Creole to his using

English. This approach is very conclusive in terms of gauging Fidel's agency in the preservation of his linguistic identity.

I started studying English in Bogotá to try to correct this mixing of languages, but it seems impossible. It looks like for every islander it is difficult to separate Creole and English when we are in San Andres or even in Colombia. Maybe the only way to get it is going to another country. (Fidel's narrative, line 75)

The use of the word "correct" to refer to his intention behind taking English lessons implies that Fidel gauges his Creole-English code-switching and code-mixing as a negative trait. This language as a problem attitude can be understood as a consequence of the discourses that give a higher value to English over Creole, and even over Spanish.

The Preservation of Fidel's In-group Linguistic Identity

Fidel's language choice demonstrates that in the new *raizal* generations there is an inversely proportional relation between closeness to the *raizal* social structure and their fondness of Creole. That is, when Fidel has a family get-together, he takes the role of the advocate of Spanish within the bosom of the core *raizal* structure; nonetheless, when he is far from San Andrés, namely in Bogotá, his language choice favors Creole whenever possible.

When I finished school, I stayed a semester in San Andres and then I came to Bogotá where I lived with some cousins. My first semester I met a lot of *raizals* and I had to talk in Creole with them. They didn't know me, but since I am *raizal*, they deduced that I could talk Creole. Living with my cousins was cool. We used to play a game in which whoever said a word in Spanish had to clean the bathroom. It was really difficult because not every word in Creole is in English. There are also words that come from Spanish. (Fidel's narrative, line 60)

Fidel's agency in the preservation of his in-group linguistic identity is signaled by seemingly contradictory paths that merge both the preservation and the transformation of the role of Creole language as a critical attribute of *raizal* identity. These contradictory paths could be reduced to the following events. 1) Fidel avoids the use of Creole when he is closer to the core of the *raizal* social group, like his older relatives. 2) When Fidel is with *raizal* individuals who are his contemporaries, he resorts to code-switching and code-mixing between Spanish and Creole. 3) When Fidel is in Bogotá, which implies a physical distance with his from his *raizal* identity, he intends to keep his linguistic identity alive, by speaking Creole. The code-switching, language choice, and English language learning intention of Fidel does not exhibit an

exclusively positive agency in the preservation of his in-group language identity; thus, there is room for the consideration of his agency in the transformation or destruction of his in-group language identity.

Transforming and Re-constructing the Role of Creole as an In-group Critical Attribute

As a multilingual individual belonging to the *raizal* community, Fidel's role goes beyond the mere reproduction and perpetuation of the deterministic cultural capital owned by his social group; in fact, as Rasool (2004) claims, there is an element of choice in the construction of his individual and his in-group social identity. Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) also resort to the concept of *habitus* to acknowledge individuals' agency in the formation of in-group identity. *Habitus* is conceptualized as the place in which the internalization of objective reality and the externalization of subjective perception converge.

Fidel's language choice in favor of Spanish within his in-group interactions, and his attempts towards correction and standardization of his English show that he cares about the linguistic capital he owns, even if it seems to focus mostly on the majority language (English) rather than on Creole. However, reconstructing and re-inventing the role of language choice and language use as a binding device of *raizals* can lessen his individual responsibility and remorse, thus attributing his language choice to the circumstantial and deterministic nature of his language encounters.

From that perspective, Fidel's transformation of the in-group linguistic identity can be consistent with what other *raizals* of his generation are doing. From that perspective, Fidel would not be threatening his linguistic identity; on the contrary, he would be preserving the new shade given to the in-group linguistic identity by his generation.

Re-defining and Lessening the Role of Creole as a *Raizal* Identity Marker

Some people think that the only thing that makes an islander *raizal* is the language, but I do not agree. There are people on San Andres that know Creole, but they are not *raizal* and *raizal* people who don't know Creole. (Fidel's narrative, line 1)

This excerpt can be contrasted with the one following:

From the colonial times, the *raizal* culture developed out of the mixture of ethnicities and cultures, but had Creole and English as its backbone. (Fidel's narrative, line 18)

The apparent contradiction between these two excerpts could be discarded by addressing the time dimension, by which the first quote would refer to a rather present or general time of *raizal* identity whereas the latter is referring to the origins of the Creole culture and the Creole language. Besides, it could also be argued that the focus of the first excerpt is to discard the Creole language as the only constituent of *raizal*. However, by releasing some of the load of Creole in the convergence of *raizal* identity, Fidel opens space for the justification of the new *raizal* generations' language choice patterns, and his own. Language choice plays a pivotal role in the endangerment of languages in contact. Depending on the perspective being adopted, be it deterministic or agentive, there are two triggers of language choice that play a role in the endangerment of a language: competition and/or selection (Mufwene, 2004).

The term competition suggests the political, economic, cultural, and social domination of one population by another that exerts control over the production and consumption of language values. The generation of socioeconomic ecologies regulated by the dominant group result in the mechanics of language ecology that inform an individual's favoring the use of one language over another one. Selection implies that the individuals are the ones who assign values to the languages in their community. It acknowledges the agency of individuals as speakers who through their language choice may cause one language to thrive and another to become endangered.

Fidel legitimates the young *raizal* generation's language choice by acknowledging Spanish as a lexical donor to Creole. Adopting the premise that transformation is not destruction, Fidel gives a personal insight on the Creole-Spanish ecology, his ownership of the languages, and the language contact phenomenon that emerges out of his own language choice, such as like code-switching and language borrowings.

But when I am in a group of *raizals*, we usually mix up both languages: Spanish and Creole. (Fidel's narrative, line 46)

116 The language contact phenomenon being referred to in Fidel's conversing with his *raizal* acquaintances is code-switching. The speakers are proficient in both languages, and they may mix the languages randomly, or based on the topic and context, nest the conversations, which would give this code-switching a diglossic value (Windford, 1985).

The language contact between Creole and Spanish among the *raizal* community has also triggered some borrowings that Fidel acknowledges as a condition of Creole as a living language.

Creole is hard influenced with Spanish. Whenever we don't know a word in English or Creole, we use the Spanish word. It is funny that even Creole speakers sometimes have not noticed that influence. One day, a *San Andresana paña* friend working in a lawyer's office was visited by a man wanting to leave his resume. This man was speaking Creole, and instead of saying "resume," he said "*hoja de vida*." My friend understood that he meant to leave his resume and told him to leave it aside on a desk. The guy was surprised that she had understood Creole. Then, my friend had to explain to the man that she did not speak any Creole, but she understood him because he had used the word in Spanish. (Fidel's narrative, line 67)

Concepts such as *résumé* do not have a term in Creole, so due to language contact, Creole speakers have borrowed the term *hoja de vida* from Spanish and have included it in their linguistic repertoire, taking for granted its being a Creole concept. Fidel interprets language borrowings from Spanish to Creole as a fact that shows that Creole is a living language.

I am not trying to say that it is bad. I believe that this fact shows that Creole is a living language. (Fidel's narrative, line 69)

However, allowing and promoting these language borrowings and language code switching does not necessarily represent the natural ethos of peaceful language ecology between Spanish, a language with a high status, and Creole, the minority language code. The fact that Fidel has accepted these borrowings as natural attests to the powerful nature of the ideologies that are used as premises in the structuring of larger social entities and their power relations. The asymmetrical and ideologically loaded discourses that constitute the main stream of the river that drags with its power not just Fidel's linguistic ideology, and the *raizal* linguistic ideology, but also convulses the local linguistic paradigms, thus generating a new and naturalized hierarchy in the ecology of languages.

Conclusions

This study used critical discourse analysis as a tool to interpret data from the narratives rendered by an intrinsic case study informant, Fidel, to determine how the construction of his linguistic identity as a *raizal* individual performed two effects. First, he executed and voiced some the external discourses as well as the de jure and de facto language ideologies, including acculturation, national homogenizing language policies, and the internationalizing language policies of global inclusion. Second, he played an agentive role in the generation of an in-group social identity of *raizals*.

Fidel concludes that Creole is still a constituent of *raizal* identity, that Creole is alive, that its contact with Spanish is not pervasive since Spanish is now a lexical donor. Further, that although Creole and English are two distinctive languages, he considers his code-switching as a pathological trend that needs to be corrected by pursuing the learning of a standard version of English.

This study allows for conclusions about how ideologies and language policies played a role in the generation of both Fidel's individual and in-group identity as a *raizal*. However, the limitations and area for further research is grounded in the fact that findings are rather bounded to a time and a space, and no generalizations can fully be made from an individual as a case informant.

It is also worth mentioning that the narratives from which the data was analyzed were gauged within the parameters dictated by the axial coding that was framed within the area of inquiry, yet such narrative is much more than a sheer source of data. It provides the soil for an intersubjective dialogical construction of knowledge, and becomes an empowering tool that gives voice to the individuals that have to endure the application of top-down language policies. It offers a human and individual perspective that is very often left aside in the logical positivistic approach that informs the planning, execution, and materialization of language policies worldwide.

A final comment should be made in regards to the fact that this study is the result of two subjective perspectives; the rather emic one from Fidel, and the one of an outsider who has gathered the data and analyzed it, again subjectively following the parameters of the critical discourse analysis approach to a case study research. Thus, it is worth acknowledging that the readings of reality and data might well be biased, which does not necessarily lessen the value of the findings.

References

- Abramson, P. E. (1992). *A case for case studies*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Adelman, C., Jenkins, D., & Kemmins, S. (1983). Rethinking case study: Notes from the Second Cambridge Conference. In *Case Study: An overview*. Case Study Methods. Victoria, Australia: Deakin University Press
- Baker, C. (2006). *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Biseth, H (2009) Multilingualism and education for democracy. *International Review of Education*. 55(1), 5-20.
- Boscoboinik, A. (2008). *Standardized language as a way to support a common identity: The case of Roma communities*. University of Fribourg, Switzerland. Retrieved from http://www.uab.ro/cercetare/ciel/jolie/jolie%202008/1.boscoboinik_andrea.pdf
- Bourdieu, P. (1977). The economics of linguistic exchanges. *Social Science Information*, 16, 645- 668.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.) *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241-258). New York. Greenwood.
- Bourdieu, P., & Passeron J. C. (1977). *Reproduction in education, society and culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press
- Burns, A. (1999). *Collaborative action research for English language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Clemente, I. (1991). *Educación, política educativa y conflicto político-cultural en San Andrés y Providencia (1886-1990)*. Final report presented at the Fundación para la Promoción de la Investigación y la Tecnología. Bogotá, Universidad de los Andes.
- Creswell, J. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among the five traditions*. London: Sage Publications.
- Escobar, W. & Gómez, J. (2010). Silenced fighters: identity, language and thought of the Nasa people in bilingual contexts of Colombia. *PROFILE, Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 12(2), 125- 140
- Etxebarria, M., & Trillos, M. (2002). *Política lingüística y realidad sociolingüística en el Caribe Colombiano*. Universidad del Atlántico: Universidad del País Vasco. Proposal to the Congreso Mundial de Políticas Lingüísticas. Barcelona. Retrieved from: http://www.linguapax.org/congres/Tallers/article1_esp.html

- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language*. New York: Longman.
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qualitative Inquiry* 12(2), 219- 245.
- Francis, N., & Ryan, P. M. (1998), English as an international language of prestige: Conflicting cultural perspectives and shifting ethnolinguistic loyalties. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 29(1), 25–43.
- Freeland, J. (2003). Intercultural-bilingual education for an interethnic-plurilingual society? The case of Nicaragua’s Caribbean coast. *Comparative Education*, 39(2), 239- 260.
- Gale, J. (1990). A novel experience: A classroom exercise for exploring patterns. *The Qualitative Report*, 1(1), 6-7.
- Gudmundsdottir, S. (2001). Narrative research on school practice. In V. Richardson (Ed.). *Handbook of research on teaching* (pp. 226-240). New York: MacMillan.
- Guerrero, H. (2008). Bilingual Colombia: What does it mean to be bilingual within the framework of the National Plan of Bilingualism? *PROFILE, Issues in Teachers’ Professional Development*, 10(1), 27-45.
- Guevara, N. (2007). San Andrés Isla: Memorias de la colombianización y reparaciones. In C. Mosquera & L. Barcelos (Eds.), *Afro-reparaciones: Memorias de la esclavitud y justicia reparatoria para negros, afrocolombianos y raizales* (pp. 295-317). Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia.
- Halliday, M.A.K. (1985). *An introduction to functional grammar*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Heller, M.(1995). Language choice, social institutions, and symbolic domination. *Language and Society*, 24(3), 373-405.
- Hornberger, N. (2002). Multilingual language policies and the continua of biliteracy: An ecological approach. *Language Policy*, 1(1), 27-51.
- 120 Huberman, M., & Miles, M. B. (Eds.). (2002). *The qualitative researcher’s companion: Classic and contemporary readings*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Irvine, J. (1989). When talk isn’t cheap: Language and political economy. *American Ethnologist*, 16(2), 248-267.

- Kelly, J. (2002). *Teaching and researching language and culture*. London: Longman.
- Mackey, W. F. (1980) The ecology of language shift. *Sprachkontakt und Sprachkonflikt*, 32: 35- 41 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2006). *Designing qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- McGroarty, M. (1996). Language, attitudes, motivation, and standards. In S. L. McKay & N. H. Hornberger (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics and second language teaching* (pp. 3- 46). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- De Mejía, A. M. (2006). Bilingual education in Colombia: Towards recognition of languages, cultures, and identities. *Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal*, 9, 152- 168.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case studies: Applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Miller, J. M. (2000). Language use, identity, and social interaction: Migrant students in Australia. *Research on Language & Social Interaction*, 33(1), 69-101.
- Moen, T. (2006). Reflections on the narrative research approach. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(4), 1-11.
- Mosquera, C., Rodríguez, M. M., & León, R. E. (2009). Las Acciones afirmativas como medio de inclusión social. Énfasis conceptuales, polémicas frecuentes y experiencias de implementación en algunos países. In C. Mosquera & R. León (Eds.). *Acciones afirmativas y ciudadanía diferenciada étnico-racial negra, afrocolombiana, palenquera y raizal*. (pp. 69-153). Centro de Investigaciones CES. Universidad Nacional, Bogotá.
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Moya, S. (2010). *Situación sociolingüística de la lengua Creole en San Andrés Isla: El caso de San Luis*. Unpublished Master's thesis. Bogotá: Universidad Nacional. Retrieved from: http://www.humanas.unal.edu.co/linguistica/index.php/download_file/.../119/
- Mufwene, S. (2004). Language birth and death. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 33, 201- 222.
- Mühlhäusler, P. (1996). *Linguistic ecology: Language change and linguistic imperialism in the Pacific region*. London: Routledge.

- Osler, A., & Starkey, H. (2000). Citizenship, human rights and cultural diversity. In A. Osler, & H. Stoke (Eds.), *Citizenship and democracy in schools: Diversity, identity, equality*. Trent: Trentham Books.
- Patiño, C. (2007). *Sobre la cuestión lingüística del pueblo raizal del archipiélago*. Retrieved from: <http://colombia.indymedia.org/news/2007/10/74130.php>
- Patton, M. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Phillipson, R., & Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (1996). English only worldwide, or language ecology. *TESOL Quarterly*, (30)3, 429-452.
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (1988). *Narrative knowing and human sciences*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Rasool, N. (2004). Sustaining linguistic diversity within the global cultural economy: Issues of language rights and linguistic possibilities. *Comparative Education*, 40(2), 199-214.
- Ruiz, R. (1984). Orientations in language planning. *NABE Journal*, 8(2), 15-34.
- Sánchez, A., & Obando, G. (2008). Is Colombia ready for “Bilingualism?” *PROFILE, Issues in Teachers’ Professional Development*, 9, 181-195.
- Sanmiguel, R. (2007). El bilingüismo en el archipiélago de San Andres, Providencia y Santa Catalina. *Revista Magisterio: Educación y Pedagogía*, 27, 28- 31.
- Stake, R. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Tellis, W. (1997). Application of a case study methodology. *The Qualitative Report*, 3(3). Retrieved from: <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR3-3/tellis2.html#stake>
- 122 Tollefson, J. (1991). *Planning language, planning inequality: Language policy in the community*. New York: Longman.
- UNESCO (2003). *Education in a multilingual world*. Paris: UNESCO. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001297/129728e.pdf>

- Van Dijk, T. (1998). *Ideology: A multidisciplinary approach*. London: Sage.
- Wallace, M. (1998). *Action research for language teachers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Winford, D. (1985). The concept of “diglossia” in Caribbean creole situations. *Language in Society*, 14(3), 345-356.
- Windford, D. (1994). Sociolinguistic approaches to language use in the Anglophone Caribbean. In M. Morgan (Ed.), *Language and the social construction of identity in creole situations* (pp. 43-62). Los Angeles: Center for Afro- American Studies Publications.
- Wolcott, H. (1990). On seeking -- and rejecting -- validity in qualitative research. In E. Eisner & A. Peshkin (Eds.), *Qualitative inquiry in education: The continuing debate* (pp. 121-152). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Woolard, K., & Schieffelin, B. (1994). Language ideology. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 23(55 – 82).
- Yin, R. K. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Author

***Carlos Augusto Arias** holds an M.A. in Applied Linguistics to TEFL from the *Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas*. He is currently working as a full-time professor and head of the English department at *Institución Universitaria Colombo Americana, ÚNICA*. His research interests include EFL, critical discourse analysis and CLIL.