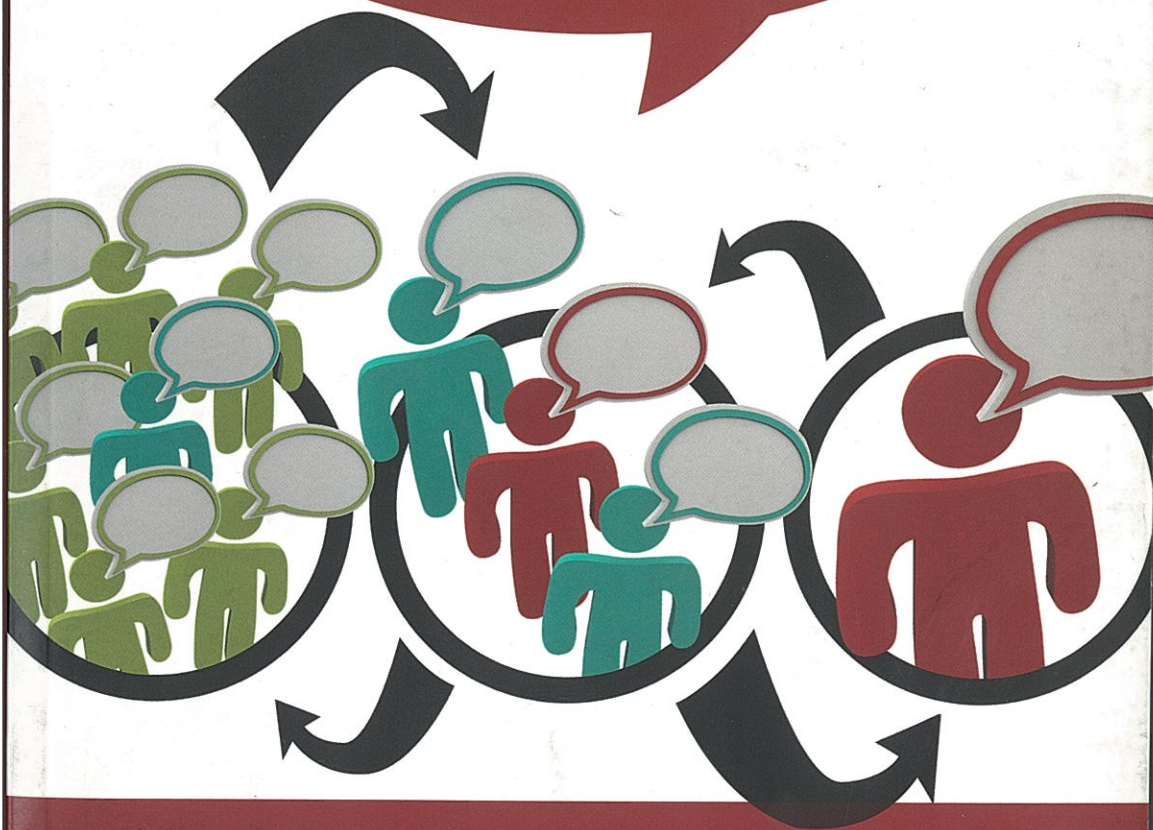


ETHNOGRAPHY AND LANGUAGE POLICY



Edited by Teresa L. McCarty

ROUTLEDGE

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Dedication

To the memory of Dell Hymes, seminal critical ethnographer of language in use

And to teachers of language policy in praxis –

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ETHNOGRAPHY AND
LANGUAGE POLICY
CASES AND CONTEXTS,
PART II

5 International Migration and Quichua Language Shift in the Ecuadorian Andes

Kendall A. King and Marleen Haboud



Figure 5.1 Map of Ecuador with major mountains and roads noted (graphics by Shearon Vaughn).

Global migration is now a massive demographic force, with international migrants constituting about 3 percent of the world's total population (United Nations, 2006). Accordingly, over the past decade, migration has emerged as a central topic of both practical and theoretical importance for social scientists, with extensive research into, for instance, the impact of immigration on US schools (Capps et al., 2005), emergency services (Berk et al., 2000), and unemployment (Djajic, 1987), as well as taxes and fiscal policy (Storesletten, 2000). Among researchers of multilingualism and migration, the experiences of migrant children in formal education systems have been a focal point, with substantial lines of research into acculturation processes and factors associated with academic achievement (Fuligni, 1997; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008; Trueba, 1988), including the role of first-language instruction (Cummins, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 2002) and the pace and nature of second-language learning and literacy (August & Shanahan, 2006).

Over the past decade, researchers of multilingualism and migration in the US, Europe, and other popular destination countries have devoted serious attention to the language issues of those who migrate; however, there have been far fewer examinations of language maintenance and usage patterns among the much larger numbers of individuals who remain at home in migratory contexts. Thus, a largely unasked question is how migration impacts language competencies, preferences, and practices within sending communities – that is, of those children and other family members who remain in their home communities. Framed more broadly, how is migration experienced and understood not by migrants, but by those left in its wake – and how does this experience impact linguistic practices and language learning in those sending communities? Further, if we take language policy as not only comprising official acts and documents, but also as modes of human interaction and production mediated by relations of power (McCarty, 2004), what does this large-scale mobility of individuals entail for the construction of language policy at the community and family levels? In other words, how do mobility and migration impact the construction of family language policy by individuals in the course of their everyday interactions?

This chapter begins to address these questions by examining language, cultural change, and internal migration among Indigenous Ecuadorians. We explore

members maintain long-term, long-distance relationships across nation-state borders (Glick Schiller, Basch, & Blanc-Szanton, 1992) is experienced by those who do not leave; how long-term separations are framed by family and friends; and, in particular, how these shifts are linked with changing conceptions of what it means to be both a good child and a good parent – all of which have implications for Indigenous language maintenance and the local construction of language policy. This chapter does so by analyzing the experiences of highland Indigenous communities of Ecuador – focusing on one Quichua group in particular, the Saraguros – as the “fever to leave” swept the country on an unprecedented scale in the late 1990s (Bacacela, 2003; Gratton, 2007; Jokisch, n.d.).¹

Setting the Stage: Migration in Ecuador and Saraguro

JULIO: *No hay nadie ... los borrachos [se] quedan.*

[There's nobody ... the drunks are left.]

(Joking quip by former Saraguro community leader who works in Indigenous education in Quito; August 2006)

CARLA: *Más van a Estados Unidos y a España. De esta comunidad han ido. La gran mayoría a esos dos países han ido. La gran mayoría han ido, sobre todo los jóvenes, ya sea casado, ya sea soltero, la mayoría se va. Pocos, muy pocos nos hemos quedado aquí, casi solo niños con la familia.*

[More go to the United States and to Spain. From this community they have gone. The great majority have gone to those two countries. The great majority have gone, above all the young, be they married, be they single, the majority go. Few, very few, have stayed here, (and these are) almost only children (left) with family members.]

(Carla Esperanza, a mother in Cañar whose husband has lived in the US since 1996; May 2007)

Ecuador is a small South American nation-state of about 13 million (see Figure 5.1). Roughly a third of the country self-identifies as Indigenous, with Quichua being the most widely spoken of Ecuador's 13 Indigenous languages (King & Hornberger, 2004). Within Ecuador, Saraguros are an Indigenous group numbering about 20,000. As described below, Saraguros' migratory experiences are colored by their particular history and geography; however, the severe economic stress of the past two decades and the resultant high levels of transmigration are shared by many across the country (Gratton, 2007).

Prior to 1990, few Saraguros – and indeed, relatively few Ecuadorians – had ever crossed national borders for work. For Saraguros, international transmigration began as a trickle in the early- to mid-1990s, with the best estimates putting the total number residing in the US in those years at around 200 (Belote & Belote, 2005). By the late 1990s this trickle culminated in a flood of women and men to Europe, and to Spain in particular. By 2005, there were at least 1,000 Saraguros in Spain (Belote & Belote, 2005). Others put the estimate much higher, calculating that upwards of 5,000 Saraguros have moved to Spain or other European destina-

registered with the Saraguro Office of Intercultural Bilingual Education, by far the largest employer in Saraguro, abandoned their posts in search of opportunities abroad.

While precise numbers are lacking, it is clear that over the course of a decade thousands of Saraguros left their traditional territory, which consists of approximately 60 communities in the southern Andean mountains surrounding the small town of Saraguro. At the national level, Saraguros are identified by their distinct Indigenous clothing but also by their heritage language, Quichua. While Quichua competency levels vary by community – with those residing in communities furthest from town speaking relatively more Quichua and less Spanish than those from communities close to town – overall, Saraguros are engaged in a widespread language shift toward Spanish, with Spanish–Quichua bilingualism declining rapidly. This process has been ongoing for more than three decades, and varied revitalization programs, all aimed at recapturing “traditional” Saraguro language and culture, have been under discussion, under development, or under way since at least the early 1990s (Haboud, 2003; King, 2001). Nevertheless, most Saraguros under 50 are now Spanish dominant, and most under 30 are Spanish monolingual.

Saraguro identity is locally rooted in the southern Andes. Nevertheless, Saraguros have long engaged in short-term cyclical migration within Ecuador in order to cultivate lands for cattle pasture in the Amazonian basin of Yacuambi-Zamora, to work as day laborers in the mineral mines of Portavela and Zaruma, or, in more recent decades, to pursue education or employment in the urban centers of Cuenca and Loja, several hours away by bus (Belote & Belote, 2005; Macas, Belote, & Belote, 2003; see Figure 5.1). As Saraguro existence traditionally was characterized by the dual approach of small-scale subsistence farming on land near Saraguro coupled with income-generating activities beyond the Saraguro region (Belote, 2002; Vacacela, 2002), international migration can be understood as an extension of a well-established adaptive strategy dating back at least 100 years.

Yet while Saraguro transmigration in some respects is a globalized twist on a longstanding local practice, it is also part of a pronounced trend that swept Ecuador in the 1990s – what Jokisch and Pribilsky (2002) describe as the “panic to leave.” In two years alone (1999 and 2000), more than a quarter of a million Ecuadorians emigrated. Remittances soared from an estimated \$643 million in 1997 to an estimated \$1.41 billion in 2001 (Jokisch & Pribilsky, 2002). The European Union reported that during this period around 500,000 Ecuadorian emigrants sent money back to Ecuador, with these monetary transfers making up the second largest source of revenue for Ecuador after oil (Belote & Belote, 2005).

This massive exodus came on the heels of overlapping political and economic crises in Ecuador, including an expensive border war with Peru in 1995, the devastating El Niño floods of 1997–1998, declining prices of oil (the country's most valuable natural resource), and a public loss of confidence in, and rapid turnover of, half a dozen presidential leaders in quick succession (Gallegos, 2000; Lucero, 2001). These events culminated in a severe economic downturn in 1999, which

inflation, contracting more than 7 percent, while the Ecuadorian *sucre* (soon thereafter replaced by the US dollar) was devalued by 66 percent (Jokisch & Pri-bilsky, 2002). For Ecuadorians, these figures translated into a dramatically higher poverty rate (estimated at 40 percent) and increased levels of unemployment. Indigenous scholars have noted that these trends disproportionately impacted Indigenous sectors, as they tend to be relatively poorer and much susceptible to “corrective” measures such as the privatization of communal lands (Bacacela, 2003).

As standards of living fell sharply for nearly all Ecuadorians, opportunities abroad were perceived as increasingly attractive or necessary (see also Miles, 2004). Wages for manual work were roughly ten times greater in Spain than in Ecuador in 2001 (\$3.00 an hour vs \$2.00–8.00 a day). As a further incentive, prior to 2004 Spain did not require visas for Ecuadorians to arrive and stay in the country legally as tourists. All that was needed for entry was a round-trip airplane ticket, tourist-like clothes and luggage, and a *bolsa* (a wallet of cash for spending money) of \$1,500 (Belote & Belote, 2005). Moreover, in contrast to the US, Israel, or other European countries, in Spain language competency was not perceived as a significant barrier to communication or employment. (Nevertheless, there is evidence that Ecuadorians in Spain suffer from miscommunication and discrimination because of dialectal differences and the belief that Ecuadorians “don’t speak Spanish correctly” [Haboud, 2006a].) The net result was that Spain grew quickly as a popular migrant destination. In the early 1990s, there were fewer than 5,000 annual exits to Spain; after 2000, this number grew to 150,000 per year (Gratton, 2007). Ecuadorians are now the third largest immigrant group in Spain (following Romanians and Moroccans); the official estimate of legally registered Ecuadorian residents is 414,000 (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2009). And, in contrast to general historical patterns, Ecuadorian women migrants to Spain outnumbered their male counterparts (Gratton, 2007).

Study Aims and Research Approach

Although much has been written about what immigration entails for migrants themselves or for their destination countries in the Americas or Europe, much less is known about what such large-scale emigration has meant for those men, women, and in particular children who remain in their home countries (Moran-Taylor, 2008a, 2008b). The analysis presented here begins to fill this gap by exploring the important question of how transmigration is experienced by those who stay, and, especially, what impact such massive shifts have on preferences and possibilities for language learning and use.

The Quichua language is supported through official government policy at the national and local levels (Haboud, 2010; King & Haboud, 2002); however, capturing how migration is linked to Quichua language practices entails moving beyond textual analysis of official state, school, and community language policy, and requires what has been termed a sociocultural approach. Such an approach

enables us to scrutinize these processes as *de facto* and *de jure*, covert and overt, bottom up and top down – and thereby to more closely examine the everyday, ever-present social practices that normalize some languages and language practices, and marginalize others.

(McCarty, Romero-Little, & Zepeda, 2008, p. 161)

The aim of this chapter is thus to examine how the social practice of transmigration impacts Quichua language practices and locally constructed language policy, with a particular focus on children’s Quichua language learning possibilities in family contexts.

To this end, we conducted audio-recorded interviews and ethnographic observations in six Saraguro communities (Lagunas, Tambopamba, Tuncarta, Illinchi, Ñamarin, and Oñacapac, all in Loja province) in August 2006, and three Cañar communities (Juncal, Tunaspamba, and Cachi, all in Cañar province) between March and July 2007. In Saraguro, we conducted 26 formal interviews, and also visited friends, former colleagues, godchildren and their families, drawing heavily on contacts made while King lived in two Saraguro communities in 1994 and 1995 as part of a year-long study of Quichua language revitalization (King, 2001). In Cañar, a total of 20 hours of guided interviews, personal testimonies, and spontaneous conversations were audio- and video-taped and collected as part of a project on language vitality and modernity (Haboud, 2008). Complementing the data from Ecuador, we also conducted 45 interviews with Indigenous and non-Indigenous Ecuadorian adolescents in Spain in May of 2004 and March of 2005 (Haboud, 2006a, 2008), and with a smaller group of Indigenous Ecuadorian women living away from their families while working in the US (King and De Fina, 2010). In order to provide a textured picture of one Indigenous group in Ecuador, we focus here on the Saraguro data; our ongoing work in Cañar and other regions of Ecuador generally corroborates these findings, and suggests that these patterns are not unique to Saraguro.

Across the international research literature, migration – and in particular country-internal, rural-to-urban migration – has been observed to be a factor which coincides with a shift away from an Indigenous language and toward a language of wider communication (e.g., Dorian, 1981; Kulick, 1992). Much of this work suggests that rural-to-urban migration corresponds to individuals’ devaluation of their ethnic identity and, subsequently, a move away from their native or heritage language. While this dynamic is at play among some Indigenous Ecuadorians, the present chapter suggests that migration’s impact on Indigenous language maintenance is both more insidious and less direct. In short, most Saraguros continue to discuss Indigenous language and identity in positive terms and do not explicitly frame linguistic or cultural loss favorably. Nevertheless, international migration – and the associated dislocation of children and influx of remittances – has led to shifts in how childhood and parenthood are constructed and enacted, including how children spend their time, how they relate to their elders, and how they envision their futures. As will be highlighted below, these changes have profoundly impacted Quichua language learning

Indigenous Ecuadorians went Global/Globalization Came to Indigenous Ecuador

MARÍA: *Así es Kendalita. Estamos muy cambiados por la migración. Los jóvenes están afectados mucho mucho mucho.* [That's the way it is Kendalita. We are very changed because of migration. The youth is affected very very very much.]

MARIO: *La globalización.* [Globalization.]

KENDALL: *¿La qué?* [What?]

MARIO: *La globalización.* [Globalization.]

(Family conversation with Mario and Maria, a married couple residing in the community of Tambopamba; August 2006)

By 2006, five years after the peak emigration year of 2001, most Saraguros saw migration as something of a mixed bag (see also Foxen, 2007; Moran-Taylor, 2008b). On the one hand, remittances sent by migrants abroad have kept many families afloat throughout the economic crises and have allowed for increased consumption of material goods as well as improved access to health care. Remittances mean, for instance, that children's diets in Saraguro now are more likely to include not only basic carbohydrates such as rice and pasta, but also milk, meat, fruit, and vegetables. Remittances from abroad have also permitted many more children to attend school, as there are funds to cover materials and tuition, and children are freed from agricultural work.

Yet while nearly all welcome the influx of dollars to the region, many Saraguros are quick to cite a long list of social ills they chalk up to emigration. These include (but are not limited to):

- increased rates of teen pregnancy and lower marital rates;
- diminished use of Indigenous clothing, and preference for Western-style garments;
- inflation in general and, in particular, inflated land prices;
- intensified disputes over property and water rights;
- decreased participation in traditional community work parties (*mingas*);
- decreased interest among young in agricultural work and artisan crafts;
- the increased traffic and pollution that come with cars in communities;
- depression and loneliness;
- greater focus on wages, cash earnings, material goods, and conspicuous consumption;
- lack of adolescent discipline, the rise of gangs and associated criminal activity;
- construction of non-traditional large, concrete houses and associated zoning conflicts;
- breakdown of the traditional extended nuclear family, including less support, and more work for elderly;
- social isolation and greater social class divisions;

- alcohol and drug abuse;
- decline in education standards as many experienced teachers have emigrated;
- loss of Indigenous identity, culture, customs, and language;
- lack of respect for elders, and erosion of norms of courtesy, sociability, and respect.

No doubt many of these social problems have intensified as the result of emigration, and many, such as increased alcoholism, teenage pregnancy, and gang activity, have been noted in other Latin American migratory contexts (e.g., Foxen, 2007; Moran-Taylor, 2008a, 2008b). Concomitantly, not every item on this list of perceived social problems is directly the result of emigration. For instance, the decline in Quichua language use in Saraguro and elsewhere in the country began well before large-scale emigration was under way (Haboud, 2006b; King, 2001). Nevertheless, there is a widespread *perception* that a whole host of social problems is due to the influx of cash to the region, and the departure of so many. Emigration has become the catchall explanation for nearly any and every social ill.

Emigration looms large as a causal explanation for such a wide range of social problems because all Saraguros live in the shadow of transmigration, and, in a multitude of ways, experience it daily. All of the roughly 150 Saraguros with whom we met had at least one immediate family member who was working abroad. Most people had multiple family members and innumerable friends who had migrated. Talk of who was planning to go, who had left or arrived, who had found work, who had sent what to whom, and so forth dominated many conversations. Keeping tabs and keeping in touch has been made much easier by the proliferation of cell phones and high-speed Internet connections in Saraguro and in much of Ecuador (see Figure 5.2). As a point of comparison, in 1995–1996 making an international phone call entailed an hour or two hike into the town of Saraguro, followed by a two-hour bus ride into the city of Loja to the state-run *Telefónica* offices; in contrast, in 2006 most cell phones had perfect reception in much of the Saraguro region, and high-speed wireless Internet access was available in several areas in town.

Still, despite these advances in communication technology, as other scholars of migration have documented, transmigrant relationships are always uneven, and communication is often less than perfect (Mahler, 2001; Pribilsky, 2004). For international migrants living abroad, phone calls, letters, text messages, emails, and other exchanges with family and friends in Ecuador are fitted into long work days, sometimes arduous commutes, housekeeping tasks, and social and cultural activities. In turn, for those who remain in Saraguro, life is far less busy, and the anticipation of a letter, phone call, email, package, or wire transfer is woven into the emotion and activities of every day. Many mornings or afternoons in Saraguro are constructed around, for instance, a trip to town to see if money has been wired or to check if email has arrived. Another example is that Sundays, the day when Saraguros traditionally head to town to attend church, shop, and

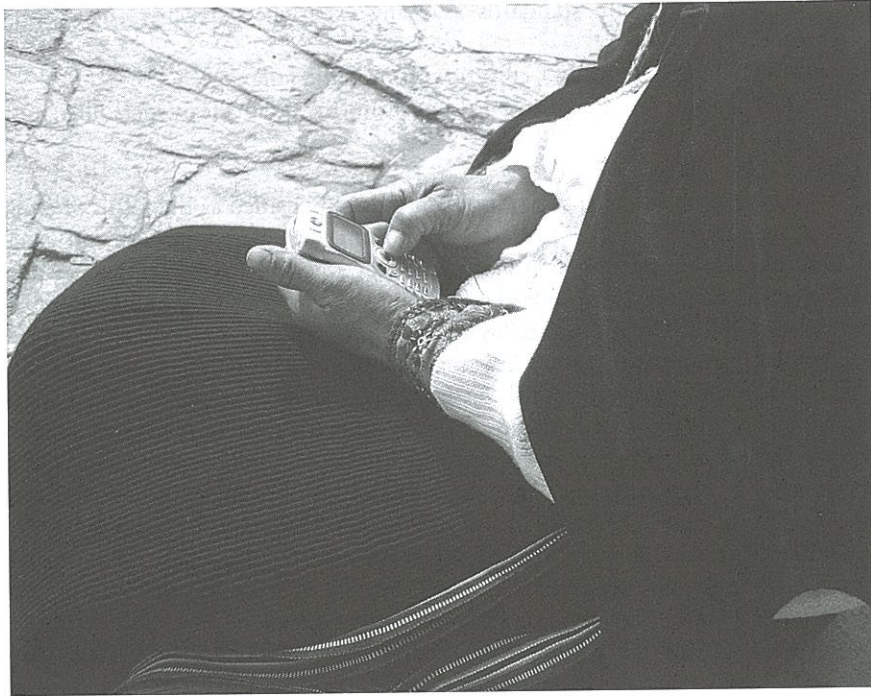


Figure 5.2 Saraguro woman texting in the central plaza of Saraguro (photograph by Kendall A. King).

phone calls from loved ones abroad. When these phone calls do come, they may often take place in Spanish, not Quichua. As Carla Esperanza explained, her husband avoids using the Quichua language during their phone calls:

CARLA ESPERANZA: *En nuestro idioma no quiere contestar. Allí están oyendo, dice, eso dice, ya sienten vergüenza...* [He doesn't want to answer in our language. They (people) listen, he says. That is what he says. They are embarrassed...] (Carla Esperanza, a mother in Cañar, whose husband has lived in the US since 1996; August 2007)

As Pribilsky (2004) describes other highland Ecuadorians in New York: for migrants, life revolves around immediate social and economic concerns and basic survival; in contrast, family members remaining in Ecuador “could easily spend much of their time tending to issues related to their husbands’ absences. They wait in anguish when remittances fail to arrive; weeks pass without telephone calls from husbands abroad” (p. 327). Similarly, for Saraguros, in some ways migration was experienced more intensively by those who did *not* migrate.

The absence was recounted as particularly intense on special days or milestones. For instance, Juana described her sadness and loneliness on her high-

JUANA: *A mí me costó mucho adaptarme yo, sola saber que mis padres estaban lejos. Cuando me gradué yo estaba solita aquí. Sola. Yo no quería irme allí ese día a las incorporaciones y el día de la graduación yo no quería irme porque estaba tan solita. Cuando así llegó mi hermana. Llegó mi hermana y me dice Juana, pero es lo último; es lo último ... Ese día fue muy duro para mí. Me sentía super mal, muy mal.*

[I found it very difficult to adapt to being alone and knowing that my parents were far away. When I graduated I was all alone here. Alone. I did not want to go that day to the ceremonies and graduation day. I didn't want to go because I was so alone. And then my sister came. My sister came and she says to me, “Juana but this is the last thing. It's the last thing.” ... That day was very hard for me. I felt super bad, very bad.]

(Juana, mother of two, both of whose parents have been in Spain since the late 1990s; August 2006)

While adults with spouses or parents abroad felt this absence acutely, immigration cast an even longer shadow for children.

Migration and Changing Conceptions and Experiences of Childhood

ROSA: *No hay control de nada. Será por la migración. Será por la televisión. Será por el estudio. Estamos muy perdidos ya. Mucho, mucho, mucho. Hay un cambio en todo.*

[Nothing is under control. It may be because of migration. It may be because of the television. It may be because of education. We are already quite lost. A lot, a lot, a lot. There is a change in everything.]

(Rosa, a mother of four from the community of Tambopamba; August 2006)

In Saraguro and elsewhere in the Andes, education is widely touted as a cure for social problems and as a key step in economic advancement for both the individual and the nation (e.g., Luykx, 1999). Why, then, does Rosa, a mother of four boys, link formal education with life in Saraguro being out of control? To begin to answer this question, it is important to consider how transmigration has accelerated the adaptation of non-traditional or “modern” constructions of childhood and parenthood in Saraguro and elsewhere in Ecuador.

Although children in Saraguro have always been loved and valued, they have also served as important sources of labor and traditionally have played an integral role in the economic survival of the family. For instance, from a young age, children work at gathering firewood for cooking, collecting grasses for feeding guinea pigs kept in many homes for food, caring for younger siblings and cousins, feeding chickens, tending to cattle and other large animals, cooking family meals, washing clothing, and bringing water to the home (Belote & Belote, 1984). Nearly all Saraguro communities have been served by their own multi-

parents expected their children to work before and after school in the home and in the fields. Children thus were engaged in a reciprocal relationship within their immediate family – provided for materially, but also expected to assist in essential aspects of the household maintenance. As such, children in Saraguro traditionally have been “economic assets” (Belote & Belote, 1984, p. 41). The purposeful work of children and this reciprocity long has been an essential component of family life not only in Saraguro, but also in many other Indigenous Andean communities (see, for example, Weismantel, 1989).

Migration has played an important role in the undoing of this social equation. In short, children are now viewed and treated less as financial assets and more as emotional ones (Zelizer, 1994) who no longer contribute collectively to the family livelihood, but are instead a motivating factor for migration and family separation. Most Saraguros explain that they or others like them have migrated *por los niños*, “for the children.” By this they mean that they have traveled abroad to work in order to provide financially for their children, to improve their children’s material lives (with, for example, better food, clothing, health care, etc.), and to offer them what they perceive to be greater opportunities for future life success, generally by allowing children to stay in school longer or to attend what are believed to be better schools in the town of Saraguro or in a major city such as Cuenca. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the parental dollars sent home do help children attend school. Yet the migration of one or both parents also undoes many aspects of the reciprocal relationship, as children are no longer expected to engage in agricultural work or to participate in household chores. As parents have left their agricultural work behind in search of wages abroad, Saraguro children have, in turn, increasingly been relegated to unproductive roles in many migrant households and communities. As Pribilsky (2001) describes of the Andean communities of Azuay and Cañar, where migration has also been prevalent: “as an increased reliance on remittances within migrant households has triggered a move away from agricultural production, children have been relieved of their obligations to the family farm economy” (p. 260). The diffuse forces of globalization, and migration in particular, seem to have stepped up a change which was observed in the 1980s by long-time anthropologists in Saraguro: “as children have become more costly and less economically active ... it is more difficult to define a useful role for children” (Belote & Belote, 1984, p. 46). By 2006, very few children were active participants in their families’ economies. Time once spent working with family around the house and fields is now passed attending school or hanging around town – two domains where Spanish dominates.

This shift is also enmeshed with changing residential configurations in the wake of parental migration. When one Saraguro parent migrates, the child typically resides with the remaining parent. When both parents migrate, children are left under the care of extended family – most often a grandmother or an aunt. In such cases, parents send remittances to caregivers, who often give all or a portion directly to the child. The fact that children now have access to cash is a salient change to Saraguros and one that was often mentioned in conversations, as dem-

instead to attend school for longer hours, for more years, or at greater distance, meaning longer commutes into town or even residing in nearby cities during the week. While migration introduces cash into children’s lives and relationships, and alters how and where children spend much of their time, migration also highlights the emotional ties between parents and children, and makes this interpersonal relationship more salient. Indeed, separation from loved ones, and from children in particular, is routinely described as the hardest aspect of life abroad (Belote & Belote, 2005). At the same time, the reciprocal relationship between child and parent, which was previously constructed in part through shared labor, is transformed into one where cash and merchandise now plays an important role (see Foxen, 2007, and Moran-Taylor, 2008a, for similar findings in Guatemala).

This emotional hardship and financial independence is variably experienced by children of different ages and living arrangements. For nearly all children, however, having one or both parents abroad means much greater autonomy and freedom (Moran-Taylor, 2008a). Teens were well aware of the stress caused by such independence, and often described it as a lack of “respect” amongst teens for adults (also see Foxen, 2007).

JOSÉ: *Pero siempre [se] quedan con familiares. No sé.* [But (the children/teens) always stay with relatives. I don’t know.]

MANUEL: ... *Salen a los bailes de noches. Pues regresan al otro día. Así en esa forma falta respeto no tratando de respeto.... Las personas dejan a los hijos acá. No respetan a los abuelitos. Ya no es como los papás. Hacen lo que quieren.* [They go out to the dances at night. And well, (they) return the following day. In that way, they lack respect, and are not treating (grandparents) with respect.... The people that leave their children here. (The children) do not respect the grandparents. It’s not like their parents. They do what they want.]

JOSÉ: *Mandan plata. Llevan la vida muy mala algunos...* [(The parents) send money. (The children) lead a very bad life some of them ...]

(Group conversation with teenage boys from community of Tambopamba; August 2006)

Saraguro adults were also quick to note that financial improvements in children’s lives are not without emotional or personal costs.

JUANA: *Mucho mucho peor va. ¿Cómo va a ser para los niños? Debe ser bastante duro y es por eso que [...] que los chicos ahora de doce trece años beben. Beben, ¿por qué? Porque no hay control de los padres ... Eso es lo que dicen, y otra que tienen dinero en mano.*

[A lot a lot worse it is going. How is it going to be for the children? It should be pretty difficult and for that reason that, that the teenagers now drink (at) 12, 13 years of age they drink. They drink why? Because there is no control from the parents ... That’s what they say, and other (people say) that (it’s because) they have money in their hands.]

LUIS: *Hay muchos problemas con los jóvenes ... Por ejemplo, el alcohol, las drogas... Salen los papás comprándoles carros. Ha habido accidentes. Está es totalmente una vida así deshumanizante. Sólo la plata.*

[There are many problems with the youth.... For example, alcohol, drugs.... The parents end up buying them cars. There have been accidents. A totally dehumanizing life. Only money.]

(Luis, a former school teacher from Tambopamba and parent of young adult children; August 2006)

As these quotes demonstrate, there is a widespread sense that the cash brought into the local economy through emigration has entailed a trade-off in terms of family separation and its impact on children. At the most obvious level, widespread emigration among Saraguros means that families are separated and there is more cash in the local Saraguro economy. At a deeper level, for many families transmigration has meant shifting conceptions of parenthood, childhood, and family obligation. When parents leave to seek employment abroad, family-based agricultural work diminishes in importance, and both children and parents are released from their traditional reciprocal, labor-based relationship. Parents send cash home to children directly (or to relatives who transfer a portion of that to them directly); children, in turn, are expected to study in preparation for non-agricultural professional positions. Rosa, quoted at the start of the section, was voicing concern over precisely this shift in parental roles and relationships. From her vantage point as a middle-aged woman, many of the children surrounding her did in fact seem “out of control.” They no longer spent time in the fields working with parents or grandparents; they had pocket change and hours of free time, both of which were unimaginable in her youth (or even for her own children when they were young). And most troublesome for Rosa and for many parents of her generation, children and teens seem brazen, free, and often disrespectful of their elders, all of which have implications for Quichua language shift.

Quichua Family Language Policy and Intergenerational Transmission

These changing conceptions of childhood and parenthood, and corresponding shifts in values and behaviors, significantly impact Indigenous language maintenance and revitalization in Saraguro and elsewhere. As Joshua Fishman (1990) has cogently argued, a critical stage of any and all efforts to reverse language shift (RLS) is the (re)establishment of intergenerational transmission, wherein the language serves as the routine language of informal, spoken interaction between and within familial generations. Even under optimal conditions, reinstatement of intergenerational transmission is an ambitious and only rarely achieved goal (Romaine, 2007), as it requires that the parental and grandparental generations have sufficient competency in the language to use it regularly in the home, and, in many contexts, that adult caretakers explicitly agree on and commit to a shared

many Saraguro families, neither of these conditions is met. Quichua language competency levels of most adults of childbearing age are limited to minimal, and many families are no longer in regular, day-to-day, face-to-face contact to sustain such interactions, even if they agree on these goals.

Given that so many children now reside with their grandparents (who are much more likely to be fluent in Quichua than the parental generation), one optimistic scenario would be that this domestic arrangement might facilitate the acquisition and use of Quichua by children. This possibility has been raised by national-level education officials, as well as some community-level activists in Saraguro and Cañar. Yet, as parents and teachers such as Luis (quoted below) note, given the shifts in values and practices outlined above, this is not common practice.

LUIS: *... Los niños de diez años, sus padres se van y viven con los abuelitos. Los abuelos hablan quichua. Eso puede ayudar. Pero [los abuelos] no hablan. [... Children, ten years old, their parents leave and they live with the grandparents. The grandparents speak Quichua. That can help. But they (the grandparents) don't talk (to the children).]*

KENDALL: *¿Por qué no hablan? ¿Por qué será?* [Why do they not talk? Why is it that way?]

LUIS: *Faltan motivación.* [There is a lack of motivation.]

KENDALL: *Ellos mismos.* [Themselves.]

LUIS: *De ellos mismos. No se dan cuenta.* [Of themselves. They don't realize.]

(Teacher and parent from the community of Lagunas; August 2006)

Children in many such homes far outnumber the adults, and King's household visits in 2006, as well as those of other researchers (cf. Bacacela, 2003; Belote & Belote, 2005), indicated that it was not uncommon for eight to ten children to live under one roof. Although these cases probably represent the extreme of the continuum, many grandparents seem to have limited control over their charges. Older children receive money directly from their parents abroad, and many grandparents or older aunts and uncles are at less than full physical strength and at times overwhelmed by the sheer number of children and responsibility of care. These moves differ from “child circulation” strategies common in Peru and elsewhere, under which rural-to-urban migrants move their children between houses as part of “family-making efforts” (Leinaweaver, 2007, p. 163), in that Saraguro children generally are not moving into homes which offer greater physical or emotional security. Further, sorting out caretaker responsibility is complicated by the fact that children often move back and forth between two or more homes – for instance, between maternal and paternal grandparents. (A case in point: twice during King's visit, one of her godchildren, aged ten, took secret, unapproved long-distance overnight camping trips with a group of children, telling each set of grandparents that she was staying with the other.) As noted above, in the past *respeto* (respect) for elders was paramount, but by 2006 many Saraguros noted that this had declined sharply (also see Foxen, 2007). What this seems to mean in

into ways of speaking Quichua, grandparents' influence is greatly diminished in many homes, and instead children are socializing them to use Spanish.

At a more basic level, if children are no longer spending much time with the adult members of their families – working in the fields, tending to tasks at home – they cannot be socialized into traditional Quichua language practices or values. Equally significantly, if parents have left their communities to earn wages outside of the country, it is hardly realistic to expect children to value traditional agricultural, cultural, or linguistic practices. Quichua is still strongly associated with ruralness, agricultural, and “traditional” Indigenous practices, including tending to small fields and herds of animals (see Figure 5.3). While most Saraguros value their ethnic identity and exhort the importance of maintenance of traditional cultural practices, they themselves have made different choices. Together, these factors mean a greater reliance on schools and formal education for transmitting Quichua as a second language.

Educational Language Policy, Quichua as a Second Language, and English

Appropriate national-level educational language policies to support Indigenous language education and maintenance in Ecuador have been in place for roughly two decades (Constitución Política de la República del Ecuador, 1998). The 1988



Figure 5.3 Mural in the town of Saraguro depicting traditional Saraguro dress and rural

constitution explicitly recognized the multilingual and multicultural nature of the country, and provided the legal opening for expanded Indigenous rights. Ecuador's Indigenous groups, or *nacionalidades*, were granted specific rights, including the right to social and economic development without loss of their identity, culture, or territory; the right to culturally appropriate education; and the right to participate actively in all decisions impacting them. To this end, Article 84 of the 1988 constitution established that support, development, and reinforcement of Indigenous people's communities would be recognized and guaranteed; further, Indigenous traditional ways of life and social organization, including the exercise of authority and law, would be preserved and developed. Article 346 (1988 version) also guaranteed bilingual intercultural education based on use of each nationality's native language as the principle means of education. The most recent (October 2008) constitution reinforces rights to bilingual intercultural education, and emphasizes the need to spread bilingualism and interculturality to non-Indigenous schools. Regarding the use of Indigenous languages, the 2008 constitution (Article 2) recognizes Quichua and Shuar as official languages of intercultural relations (Constitución Política de la República del Ecuador, 2008; DINEIB, 2008; EIBAMAZ, 2008).

With this broader legal backdrop, in Saraguro this has meant that as Quichua has moved further away from everyday communication within and across generations, it has become more institutionalized (see Figure 5.4). This is most evident

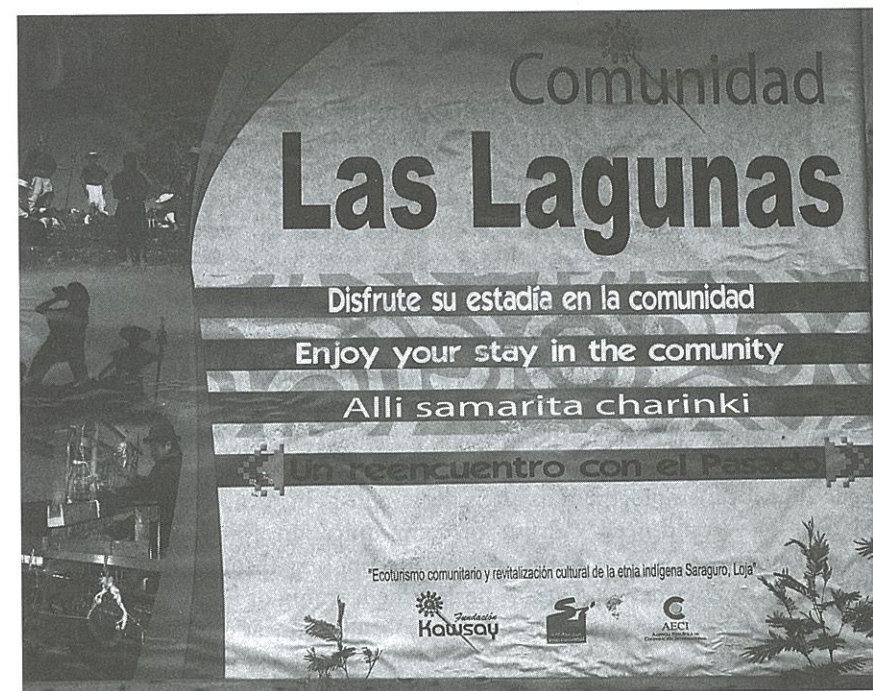


Figure 5.4 Trilingual sign welcoming visitors to the Saraguro community of Lagunas and

within formal school systems. Indeed, when Quichua was raised as a topic during interviews and conversations, the language was nearly always discussed in the context of formal education. This contrasts sharply with how Quichua was framed in conversations with Saraguro community members in the mid-1990s; then, Quichua was described as a language used in the home and with elderly relatives. Even the symbolic, ritualistic uses and explicit teaching of the languages within families, documented in the early and mid-1990s (King, 2001), were no longer evident ten years later.

Quichua language revitalization in Saraguro – and in many other places – has always relied heavily on school programs (Hornberger and King, 1996, 2000; see also Hornberger, 2008). The increased reliance on school-based efforts to instruct Quichua is in step not only with declining adult proficiency levels, but also with the greater emphasis on schooling and teacher credentialing in the region. For instance, all Indigenous schools in the region are part of the national system of Intercultural Bilingual Schools. To be employed as a teacher within the system one must be certified as “bilingual,” which means passing a written and oral exam in Quichua. With few exceptions, for both children and adults, Quichua competency and usage has been relegated to a school subject and institutional domain.

However, even with this limited role, Quichua faces competition from another language: English, which is invariably linked by Saraguros (as well as Cañar Quichua speakers) with external emigration.

MIGUEL: *Ahora que todo, todo la tecnología está en inglés para viajar es necesario el inglés. Inmigrar para eso pues conseguir trabajar en otros países tienen que conocer el inglés que es una lengua universal.*

[Now that everything, all the technology is in English, English is necessary to travel. Immigration for that reason and well, to find work in other countries they have to know English which is a universal language.]

(Administrator in the Office of Indigenous Bilingual Education; August 2006)

For Saraguros, the prominence of migration – including both the absence of so many individuals and the influx of money and merchandise – reinforces the perceived need for Spanish, and increasingly, for English as well. During informal conversations with Saraguros, English was raised as a topic of conversation much more frequently (and with more passion and urgency) than was Quichua. Overall, Quichua was described as a school subject, and as something that was needed for local employment as a teacher; English, in turn, was framed as the language one would need and use for communication, for work abroad, and for “real” purposes such as those related to technology (Moran-Taylor, 2008b). In Ecuador, as elsewhere in Latin America, the learning of English has come to symbolize realized dreams of migration, job and educational opportunities, and “entering the global market with its ‘imagined’ great advantages” (Niño-Murcia, 2003, p. 130; see also Haboud, 2001). For most, Quichua and other Indigenous languages play only a minor role in this envisioned future life

Conclusion

This analysis of transmigration and Quichua language offers two lessons. First, the data from the Saraguro case demonstrates how Quichua language learning and potential revitalization are intimately linked with changing conceptions of childhood and parenthood among Saraguros – a point which has not been much developed in the literature on language shift (King, Fogle, & Logan-Terry, 2008). Most Saraguros still view Indigenous Saraguro identity favorably, and explicitly frame Quichua language as a critical component of their Indigenous ethnic identity. Nevertheless, long-term international migration has resulted in shifts in how childhood and parenthood are constructed and enacted; most notably, how children spend their time, how they relate to their elders, and how they envision their future, all of which critically impact language choices and language usage patterns.

Second, this chapter has shown how even progressive language policy to support an Indigenous language such as Quichua can be simply overwhelmed by large-scale global forces. The data here remind us of the importance of conceptualizing migration not as a phenomenon that primarily impacts the host country, but as one that also affects the sending communities in profound ways. Indeed, one could reasonably argue that the impact of migration on Ecuadorian communities has been far greater than any economic, social, or cultural impact on the US or on Spain. The official policies and formal language planning activity to support Quichua have been in place for more than a decade. Ecuador’s Indigenous organizations maintain that the current laws and policies – which they had a major hand in shaping – are well crafted, and work to promote respect for their linguistic and cultural rights. This chapter has underlined the challenges to advances in Indigenous language planning by illustrating how global developments – including the destabilization of local currency, changing visa requirements, and an international marketplace of labor – are much more powerful forces than whatever stated government policy is put into place. Whether or not this official policy meets its explicitly stated goals, and whether Quichua and other Indigenous languages can maintain a foothold in the republic, depends to great measure *not* on the creation of future additional national-level language policies, but rather on how the local ecology and micro-constructed language policy and actual language practice continue to change in relation to migration and other global phenomena.

Note

1. Quichua is commonly known as Quechua outside of Ecuador. It is used exclusively in Ecuador in reference to varieties of the language and to Quichua peoples.

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