Youth and the repoliticization of Quechua

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In this article, I argue that Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) in Peru has turned into a depoliticized endeavor, fed by a modernist national frame and a positivist/ modernist linguistics (García et al., 2017). Situating my discussion amid the context of discourses of IBE, I will focus on Quechua-speaking urban youth activists and the way they challenge three key issues that have been historically entrenched in the discourse of IBE and language diversity in general: the restriction of Quechua speakers to "mother tongue" speakers, the dichotomy between local and global identities, and the defensive stance towards neoliberalism and the market economy. In a context of tensions and challenges for multilingualism and of new circumstances for minoritized languages and their speakers (Pietikainen et al., 2016), these young people are questioning the depoliticized, limiting, and fictitious views of Quechua and Quechuaness from the IBE discourse. Put it differently: they are disinventing Quechua as IBE conceives it and reinventing it within a much more inclusive and politicized project, in a way that should interest educators.

Keywords: Quechua, youth, activism, language ideologies, language policy, intercultural bilingual education

1. Introduction

In Peru, intercultural bilingual education (IBE), or the education through Spanish and indigenous languages, runs the risk of turning into a tool for social reproduction. For half a century, this type of education has only been implemented in rural primary schools within discourses of language rights (Edwards, 2003; Makoni, 2012; May, 2012) and endangerment (Pietikainen, 2013; Heller & Duchêne, 2007), where notions of community, identity, and language have been conceived of as natural and fixed phenomena. In a context where Quechua, the major indigenous language in the country, has long been associated with social and political marginalization, economic poverty, and low educational achievement, IBE has acquired

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a remedial and compensatory connotation (Aikman, 2003; García, 2005; Hornberger, 2000; Howard, 2007; Oliart, 2011).[1] Nonetheless, similar to what is happening in other contexts (Pietikainen et al., 2016; also Heller, 2007), new circumstances for small languages and for their speakers "seem to disturb at least some of the fixed categories and tidy boundaries that modernity has assigned to languages, cultures and identities" (Pietikainen et al., 2016: 152).

In Peru, it is youth who are pushing this trend, constructing a different version of Quechuaness and destabilizing the IBE dominant ideologies that I discuss here. This phenomenon must be framed within a scenario where youth have much more access to higher education and use New Media regularly, both of which grant them major possibilities of critical reflexivity and communication with a wider audience who share similar concerns. In addition, discourses of rights in relation to indigenous languages are melding with discourses of 'added value' and 'distinction' as a reflection of a global neoliberal trend (Heller & Duchêne, 2012) and many Peruvians are self- identifying as Quechua much more than in past decades.[2]

In this article, I would like to argue that IBE in Peru has turned into a depoliticized endeavor, in the sense that it has been neutralized as a terrain of social struggle, and that a community of youth activists is repoliticizing language and differentiating itself from IBE specialists. Although the rise of IBE in the 1970's was framed within social movements that fought for an agrarian reform and the economic empowerment of Peruvian peasants, since the 1990's and the fierce neoliberalization of Peru's economic and educational system this type of education survives within a liberal multicultural and celebratory discourse with no attempts for socio-economic transformations. In addition to this, IBE is fed by a

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1. In Peru, Quechua coexists with many other languages, mainly Aimara in the Andes and amost 40 other languages from the Amazon. However, these languages are spoken by much less population.

2. Quechua in Peru is not only spoken in rural communities from the higlands where people are immersed in a more traditional and "indigenous" way of life, since a massive migration from the rural areas to the urban ones has been developing for decades. For instance, and although ideological processes tend to "erase" Quechua from the cities, Lima is home to more than half a million of Quechua speakers. In spite of the above, new generations born in urban areas tend to be raised in Spanish, because Quechua has historically been associated with the category of Indianess. In regions of the southern Andes such as Cusco and Ayacucho Quechua-speaking people represent around 70% of the population, including both rural and urban areas. Since the turn of the century, processes of social mobility and changes in the indexicalities of Quechua have produced new phenomena and we can now find Quechua speakers in positions that were occupied only by monolingual Spanish ones (Zavala, 2014). In the recent census (2017), 13% of the total population over five years of age declared using Quechua at home and 23% self identified as Quechua.

positivist/ modernist linguistics associated with a view of language as a bounded, objectified, homogeneous and structural system linked to a territory and the particular spirit of a people (Gal, 2018). Situating my argument amid the context of discourses of IBE, I will focus on how youth challenge three key issues that have been historically entrenched in the discourse of IBE and language diversity in general: the restriction of Quechua speakers to "mother tongue" speakers, the dichotomy between local and global identities, and the defensive stance towards neoliberalism and the market economy within a paradigm of language struggle as disconnected from other social struggles.

This study being reported here is framed within a critical-ethnographic approach to language planning and policy, one that no longer focuses only on polity-generated official documents. Instead this approach assumes policy as a multilayered process (Ricento & Hornberger, 1996; Johnson & Ricento, 2013) with which many social actors interact in various and unpredictable ways (McCarty, 2010). Instead of using the dichotomy of top-down versus bottom-up, I will follow an actor-centered field of inquiry in order to examine the role of urban Quechua-speaking youth in a dynamic and unstable language policy process. This process is always shaped and reshaped by discursive practices embedded in multiple available contextual resources. As Blommaert et al. (2009) state, "Actors never operate alone, but always have to work in a polycentric environment in which different norms need to be negotiated and balanced against each other" (206).

This ongoing research also follows studies of youth as social actors who respond to cultural changes in a dynamic and agentive way (Feixa & Oliart, 2016) or as alter-activists who follow a new form of global citizenship and democratic participation (Juris & Pleyers, 2009). More specifically, my study engages with the emerging field of indigenous youth and multilingualism, which has recently discussed the role of indigenous youth as policy makers who display agency and sociolinguistic innovation towards reshaping themselves and claiming new indigenous identities (Wyman et al., 2014; McCarty et al., 2009; Hornberger & Swinehart, 2012).[3] The discussion that follows shows not only that young people are engaging in new modes of activism and social change, but also that they do not represent "obstacles" for language revitalization projects in the ways usually

3. In contrast to Bolivia and Ecuador, it is not common that people from the Peruvian Andes self-identify as 'indigenous', since the term still indexes poverty, lack of education and vulnerability. However, as the last census revealed (2017), people are starting to self-identify more as 'Quechua'. The term 'indigenous' is mostly used to make reference to the authochtonous population from the Amazon and its right to previous consultation regarding its territory and natural resources.

suggested by a more classical perspective within the field of language policy and planning (Wyman et al., 2014).

In the next section I provide a brief account of the discourses of IBE in Peru, based on ethnographic research that I have conducted for more than two decades and other sources. I will discuss the reification of the mother tongue, the association of Quechua with rural areas and the essentialization of Quechua culture. After a section on my research process, I turn to the case studies and discuss how the Quechua activists that I focus on are currently challenging entrenched and naturalized ideologies that have circulated in the Peruvian scenario for decades.

2. A glance at intercultural bilingual education in Peru

I would like to argue that IBE in Peru constitutes a type of mother-tongue education based on colonial strategies of governance and particular ways of constructing the other (Pennycook, 2002). Even though slow changes are under way, Peruvian educational and language policies concerning indigenous languages still represent bilingual subjects in reductionist terms and impose specific linguistic and identity categories on them. Within a phenomenon of erasure (Irvine & Gal, 2000), and discursive fields dominated by essentializing ideologies of language and identity (Jaffe, 2007), Quechua-Spanish bilinguals – and IBE beneficiaries- are only those who learned the indigenous language as his/her mother tongue, were raised in a rural area, do not mix the languages, and incarnate the Andean cosmovision and a type of ancestral identity. This constitutes another case in which language policies clearly exert power to set discursive boundaries on what is considered educationally normal or feasible (Johnson, 2013).

Policy documents refer to the beneficiary of IBE as someone who has learned the indigenous language as his/her mother tongue. In this way, IBE reifies the notion of the mother tongue, which does not necessarily correspond to the lived experiences of language-minoritized communities in Peru and worldwide (García, 2009), and which erases heritage Quechua speakers, emergent bilinguals, or new speakers of the indigenous language. Although these documents declare that IBE should be offered at all levels of education "in the regions where indigenous people live", the right is limited to those who have learned the indigenous language as his/her mother tongue. This way of defining the IBE beneficiary contributes to the remedial and compensatory view of this type of education and to the legitimation of a postcolonial discourse in the country.

The above fits within a rigid division between urban and rural, a dichotomy through which the country has been imagined for centuries. Since the XVIII century, being a Quechua-speaking Indian has been naturally linked to living in the

sierra or the Andes (hence the pejorative term of "serrano") and especially in rural and poor peasant communities (Méndez, 2011). This ideology works within the idea of the native as a person who is from a certain place and belongs to it, but also who is somehow incarcerated, imprisoned or confined to it within a moral and intellectual dimension (Appadurai, 1988). However, as I will analyze later, Quechua speaking youth develop their dynamic multilingual repertoires within a complex urban-rural dialectics that cannot be dichotomized (May, 2014).

The official discourse also links the indigenous language with an ancestral identity and with a *cosmovisión Andina* or an "Andean cosmovision" only found in rural areas. This is done within essentializing ideologies of language and identity (Jaffe, 2007) along with rhetorics and politics of linguistic primordialism (May, 2014) and colonial logics for constructing the other (Pennycook, 2002; Makoni, 2012). The social actors who have been central in this ancestralization of IBE are Quechua *expertos* (experts): people who were socialized in Quechua in rural communities during their early childhood, then trained by linguists during the 1980s and 1990s in different kinds of programs and now live in cities and speak mostly in Spanish. They are currently employed as IBE specialists in the local office of the Ministry of Education, teach Quechua in universities or work in NGO involved in educational issues, within a context where rights discourses are still strong but Quechua emerges as an economic resource granting access to jobs and material capital (Del Percio et al. 2017). Within a fractally recursive move (Gal, 2018), these "native speakers" display authenticity but have also appropriated the discourse of linguists in order to enact expertise and authority over Quechua (Zavala forthcoming a). This way, they differentiate themselves both from other Quechua speakers (who do not know Quechua grammar and literacy) and language specialists from Lima (who would not be culturally authentic). Similarly to what happens with the reification of the mother tongue, the imposition of this ancestral cultural identity on bilingual subjects constructs many of them as illegitimate, based on the idea that the speaker is not using the correct form of the language in relation to the identity that he/she is claiming (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Shenk, 2007).

Social life in the 21st century has produced a new sociolinguistic scenario in Peru, in which many people's repertoires, experiences and trajectories with Quechua do not fit within the fixed categories and the policing of linguistic and ethnic boundaries that the official discourse reproduces around the category of Quechuaness and the Quechua speaker. Since "youth" is a flexible and contestable social category (Bucholtz, 2002), I define the group of people under study in terms of their agentive interventions to ongoing sociocultural change in relation to Quechua and not necessarily their age. As they renegotiate the temporal and spatial indexicality of Quechua, young people are starting to consciously

differentiate themselves from Quechua experts and IBE policies discussed above. For instance, they refer to these social actors as *Pachamamistas*, alluding to how they worship the *pachamama* (mother earth in Quechua) anchoring Quechua culture in the past and the rural area, and not realizing that "*los Quechuas somos locales, nacionales e internacionales* [We Quechua people are local, national and international]".[4]

3. Activism and empowering research

This research is part of an ongoing process and a new phenomenon in Peru. At the end of 2014, I started to identify Quechua speaking youth activists in both Lima and other cities such as Ayacucho and Cusco in the Southern Andes. The more and more I interacted with them and became familiarized with their contesting view of Quechua and language in general, I started to question my position as a a sociolinguist, not only having been trained in Peru by other linguists historically involved with the history of IBE, and active promoters of mother tongue education, but also influenced by a modernist conceptualization of language that – as Lewis puts it (2018)- still haunts the field. My research "with" these youth (Cameron et al. 1992) through methods favouring "contamination and involvement" (Castro-Gómez, 2007: 89) helped me realize that their conceptions towards Quechua and language in general are closer to the ones from academics who are currently dismantling positivist approaches to language and society than to the ones from many language specialists who are working in language revitalization projects in Peru. Hence, studying actors engaged in political struggle not only made me reassess my responsibilities towards the communities I study, but also rethink the assumptions of my discipline (Urla & Helepololei, 2014).

This article is part of a longitudinal ethnographic research, where I have combined participant observation and interviewing, although in very informal ways. At first, I identified and interviewed fourteen young people at least once. Some of them use Quechua in music, such as hip-hop, trap, reggaeton or pop. Others are video bloggers, journalists or social communicators. Among this last group, some dub Disney movies to Quechua, narrate online soccer matches in Quechua, produce online videos in Quechua of different kinds or produce magazines in printed form. There is also a group who teach Quechua online and more recently in urban municipalities with the aim of *Quechuizar Lima* (Quechuicize Lima). After conversing with all of them, I decided to focus on six, whom I have interviewed many times. In addition to interviewing them, I have also followed their trajectories

4. Interview with young Quechua writer from a Teacher Training IBE Program.

and attended many activities where they usually participate. At the time of my first interactions with many of these young people, they were mainly conducting their projects in an isolated way. Today, many of them know each other and even support each other's work within a developing community of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991).

I am referring to these youth as "activists" because they are trying to use Quechua and debate about the language in urban spaces with a conscious and overt stance towards social change and the contestation of official language ideologies. However, although I am considering these young people "activists," this is an etic term imposed by myself, since they do not refer to themselves with it and I am not aware that a signifier has come up yet from within. Nevertheless, I frame their work within a phenomenon that has been called alter-activism (Juris & Pleyers, 2009). This represents an emerging form of citizenship among young people, which is highly globalized, deeply shaped by new technologies, open to diverse identities, much more networked and fragmented, flexible, and individualized.

Although I use the data I have from all of the young people I have interviewed at least once, I focus here on three of them, mainly because they were the ones whom I met first and with whom I had the opportunity to converse extensively. The important point here is that – despite living in different regions and within distinct bilingual trajectories- they represent a growing movement of many more Quechua young people, which is developing dissident language ideologies and practices in relation to the IBE discourse.

4. The youth

These young people are developing advocacy and activist projects in online and offline contexts in order to raise youth consciousness about the importance of using the language and empower themselves as Quechua speakers. Liberato (25), a student of education and hip-hop singer who resides in Lima, has a project called *Hablemos Quechua Bro* (Let's Speak Quechua Bro), which develops in different settings through his contact with NGO's and other types of organizations. Renata, who lives in Ayacucho, also belongs to a movement called *Los jóvenes hablemos Quechua* (Young People, Let's Speak Quechua), which commits to a similar goal. She is only 17 years old and, with the help of her mother (also a musician), started to upload covers of pop classics in Quechua from artists such as Michael Jackson and Alicia Keys when she was 14. Her first cover ("The Way You Make Me Feel" by Michael Jackson) received 1 million online views. Lastly, Liz Camacho (27), a political science student in the city of Abancay in Apurímac, belongs to a group called *Urpichakunaq Rimaynin* (The Language of Young People), which mainly

develops online activities. However, she is always "out there", engaging in community events, where she speaks in Quechua in local ceremonies and has an impact on many other young people.

The activism from these young people has been made visible by the language policy "from above" that is being implemented by the State and the Ministry of Culture. For instance, it is significant that the work of some of these young people was shown in one of the first broadcasts of a new TV news program in Quechua that started in 2017 on the Peruvian public TV. In addition, the Minister of Culture referred to Liberato's work (and quoted a verse from one of his lyrics) in an event in Ayacucho where the hip-hop artist performed. Liberato and Renata often get invited to events that the Directorate of Indigenous Languages organizes on specific dates related to the celebration of indigenous languages. However, their visibilization is clearly instrumentalized and it does not seem to contribute to the transformation of the policies from the State. In fact, similarly to what happens with IBE, these other State initiatives such as the TV program is targeted toward the Quechua rural peasant who does not know Spanish within a remedial and compensatory ideology and a traditional approach to language policy and revitalization (Pietikainen et al., 2016). Moreover, the work of this youth is clearly not having an impact on the IBE policies and practices, despite the explicit efforts by many of them to get closer to educational offices and schools to voice their concerns with educational issues.

In what follows, I will discuss three issues that the youth have been promoting and that destabilize the depoliticized, limiting, and fictitious views of Quechua from the IBE discourse. They are disinventing Quechua as IBE conceives it and reinventing it within a much more flexible, inclusive and political project, more articulated with contemporary and critical debates about language and society. These three issues advocated by the youth are: inclusive bilingual trajectories, simultaneous local and global identities and the repoliticization of language from within neoliberalism.

4.1 Inclusive bilingual trajectories

Influenced by the traditional literature on bilingualism- IBE promotes additive bilingualism -in the sense of the coordinated use of two discrete languages- and frames bilingual development as a linear process with students beginning with an L1 and then adding an L2. Nevertheless, the actual bilingual trajectories reveal much more complexity and heterogeneity and problematize unidirectional assumptions in terms of migration, language learning, and language use. As other research has shown, the sociolinguistic scenarios where indigenous youth are raised are much more complex that what the term "bilingual" or even

"multilingual" could imply (Wyman et al., 2014). The three young activists that I focus on have experienced different trajectories of bilingualism and display different Quechua resources, and their bilingualism mostly reflects dynamism and recursivity.

Liz Camacho is the most in line with the depiction of "bilingual" by the official IBE discourse because she learned Quechua as her "mother tongue" and Spanish when she entered school. She was born in a rural community in the region of Apurímac and predominantly spoke Quechua as a child. She migrated to the city of Abancay and was forced to use more Spanish, especially when she got into first grade when she was 6 years old. Since then, she has always lived in the city of Abancay, although she regularly visits her parents' house in the rural area where she was born, not only to be with her family but also to produce many of her videos. When she was starting her university career in Political Science, one of her teachers asked her to participate in a local Quechua radio program, since she was one of "the best Quechua speakers" in the course. After this event and other similar ones, members of her family and friends convinced her to make videos in Quechua and she decided to create a blog with videos of different kinds of topics that sometimes include interviews to somebody else. In some of her latest videos, she includes another young person, an emergent bilingual who uses resources associated with both Spanish and Quechua, whom Liz treats as a legitimate conversational partner.

The case of Renata is very different. Despite having Quechua-speaking grandparents, neither her parents nor herself grew up speaking it, although she declares that she can recently understand her grandmother when she speaks to her in the indigenous language. When I first interviewed her three years ago, she could not talk much about what she was doing and it was her mother who used to respond when I asked questions. Nevertheless, after many interviews from the national and international press (such as BBC World and CNN) once she obtained 1 million online views of her first cover, she started to view herself within a history of oppression that involved the language of her family and is now much more empowered. In order to translate the songs that she sings, she asks her grandmother or a Quechua teacher she knows for assistance. She also checks Quechua textbooks where she picks up Quechua phrases that she then uses with the audience during music concerts. She is also studying English in the evenings because she would eventually like to travel to an Anglo-speaking country to study music.

The case of Liberato reveals a very complex bilingual trajectory that is worth telling. It shows how people's communicative repertoires constitute an ensemble of resources that are biographically organized and that follow the rythm of their lives (Blommaert & Backus, 2011). Even though his parents are Quechua speakers and he used to hear the language as a child, Liberato was born in Lima

and his parents did not address him in Quechua. It is important to point out that, since Lima has been associated with the use of Spanish, if someone speaks Quechua beyond a safe space, the interlocutor could assume that he or she does not know Spanish and hence is an Indian who belongs to the highlands. When Liberato was nine years old, his mother passed away and his father sent him to live with his grandmother in a peasant community in the Southern Andes, where he discovered that Quechua was "a language". He lived with her for two years, went to school while he was there, and had to learn Quechua "*por la fuerza* [by force]" because his classmates used to mock him. When he was twelve years old, he went back to Lima and stopped speaking Quechua during seven years, until he became interested in rap: "*Desde que empecé a rapear comencé a recordar el quechua* [Since I began to rap, I started to remember Quechua]" (interview with author). Now, he has recovered many Quechua resources and is able to use Quechua during an interview within translingual practices. Liberato's case shows that the sociolinguistic environments in which youth language socialization takes place are multilayered and varied and that language shift is not necessarily linear or unidirectional.

Despite this complexity in terms of bilingualisms, IBE discourse restricts Quechua speakers to "mother tongue" speakers and maintains the division between L1 and L2, as if these categories were ontological realities and not social constructs created within a discipline. For example, the institutions of higher education that impart the preservice teacher education programs in IBE assume that the students speak Quechua as their first language and have to learn Spanish as their second language, similar to processes geared towards the target population of IBE five decades ago. Even though the majority of students in these institutions learned Quechua as their "mother tongue," many others are emergent bilinguals (García, 2009). Furthermore, those who learned Quechua during childhood do not feel that it is the language that they know best, mainly because they stopped using it when they migrated to a city, when they got into school, or when it was forbidden in different spaces. From these higher education institutions' point of view, the students not only display deficits in their Quechua – they are not "legitimate Quechua speakers"- but also in their Spanish, since they are supposedly L2 Spanish speakers in the process of acquiring the language and would always be lacking proficiency in relation to "proper L1 Spanish speakers" (Zavala, 2018). This clearly reproduces an ideology of languagelessness (Rosa, 2016), which assumes the limited linguistic capacity of a social group, one that does not necessarily coincide with the students' language abilities and practices.

Believing that someone who was born in a rural community necessarily speaks Quechua as L1 and Spanish as L2 presupposes people's repertoires as indicative of origins, defined within static rural spaces and not biographical tra-

jectories that reflect a life and not just a birth (Blommaert, 2009). But beyond acknowledging this, what really interests me here is to point out that while the IBE project is one of exclusion, the youth's is one of inclusion and of inventing new and more heterogeneous bilingual identities. In other words, while the IBE discourse restricts the beneficiary of this type of education and who the legitimate Quechua speaker is, the young people are including more and more people into the undertaking. As Liberato declares in one of his posts on FB when uploading a picture of himself in a hip hop concert: "*El quechua es para todos y está en todos lados* [Quechua is for everyone and we can find it everywhere]". Using a similar tone: "*Achka quechua runakuna kachkanchik wawqipaniykuna. Somos millones de Quechuas con buena música invadiendo todoo el world* [There are millions of Quechuas with good music invading the whole world]" (FB post). Liz is also concerned with not promoting a division between those who "know Quechua" and those who "do not know Quechua".

Unlike the TV news program from the State discussed earlier, delivered in "pure" Quechua and with no Spanish subtitles, Liz has started to put Spanish subtitles on the videos she makes in Quechua, although this has implied much more work for her. She also asserts that she attempted to include Quechua in other youth movements in her university. Nevertheless, "*No todos leen textos en quechua y tampoco saben escribir y se hacía complicadísimo. No podían, entonces ya no venían* [Not everybody reads texts and they neither know how to write in Quechua. This made things complicated and then people decided not to participate]" (interview with author). This forced her to be more flexible and look for other strategies. The mission is straightforward: "*Los que saben y los que no saben, todos merecen respeto* [The ones who know and the ones who don't, everybody deserves respect]" (Liberato, interview with author). This way, the youth challenge the idea that the legitimate Quechua speaker is only the one who acquired Quechua as his/her first language and try to construct a community of Quechua-speaking people where many more types of bilinguals are included.

Another widespread representation that the young activists challenge is that those who speak Quechua should necessarily display an ancestral identity tied to a peasant community, and that one is *either* local or global.

4.2 Local and global identities

IBE's discourse seeks to produce two types of separate and hierarchical subjectivities: one linked to the Quechua subject and another to the Spanish subject, based on a conception of languages as autonomous codes that go together with fixed and clear ethnolinguistic groups and cultural practices (Zavala, 2018; García et al., 2017). Besides this essentialized understanding of the language-identity link,

it promotes an ancestralized identity that has to be recovered from the past and that starkly contrasts with more contemporary practices. As May has stated, this constitutes a "retreat into the equivalent of a bucolic, antediluvian, rural (Indigenous) romanticism epitomized in the traditional urban-rural divide" (2014: 232). Opting for contemporary cultural practices is sometimes interpreted as leaving the local culture behind and betraying the respect one should have for ancestors.

In contrast to this view, the young activists construct themselves as simultaneously local and current and contemporary. They draw on local resources (such as Quechua, local clothing, Andean music and musical instruments, and indigenous rituals), but also on global ones through transcultural identifications made possible by global popular cultures and New Media. For instance, while IBE schools only promote cultural practices that are thought to be authentic and try to reify an ancestral identity in the students, youth opt for presenting themselves as Quechua in new ways, in part through the interaction and simultaneous use of different cultural practices. In his songs, Liberato introduces tropes and verses from huaynos (traditional Andean music), within an intertextual strategy of "intentional hibridity" (Bakhtin, 1981) and esthetic eclecticism, which allows him to evoke indigenous identities while he is performing contemporary music. He even believes that "*Con el rap los niños hasta más van a apreciar el huayno* [With rap, kids will appreciate huayno more]" (interview with author). This singer acknowledges his indigenous roots ("*Orgulloso de mi sangre indígena, de madre campesina* [Proud of my indigenous blood, from a peasant mother]", reads in a FB post), but he also feels that he is cosmopolitan: "*Yo en mi música trato de englobar todo, no hablo de los Chankas, yo soy de todos lados* [In my music I try to include everything, I don't talk about the Chankas,[5] I belong everywhere]" (Interview with author). The development of "glocal consciousness" or the use of globally-circulating forms of popular culture in locally specific ways is part of hip-hop as a site of identity formation and contestation accross national boundaries (Alim et al., 2009). However, it is important to point out that this phenomenon also defines the work of other youth who are not involved with hip hop.

Liz Camacho creates videos about cultural practices (such as how to make *tamales* in a traditional *batan*), but also discusses current phenomena such as corruption, the university reform, or the march of "Not one woman less". In her videos, she dresses up in ways that do not correspond with the figure of personhood (Agha, 2005) that the use of Quechua usually indexes. She wears ripped jeans, has dyed hair with different colors, and earings with long feathers, although her look is in constant flux. In our conversations, she told me a story about when

5. The Chankas is the ethnic group that is identified with the people from the region where Liberato was born.

a professor from her university took her to a meeting with IBE teachers in the Regional Directorate of Education in Abancay to talk about her project and, as she declared, *"Me dijeron que era imposible que hablara quechua tan bien* [They told me that it was impossible that I speak Quechua so well]" (Interview with author). In one of her first videos, she wore a t-shirt with the words "New York" printed on it and had a catholic cross hanging from her neck. Some people criticized her arguing that she should have worn a more traditional type of clothing and that the cross did not make sense because Quechua is laic. At first, she was concerned by these commentaries, but she now shares the anecdote with self-confidence in what she does.

Renata is much younger than Liz, but the same trend can be observed. She likes rock and roll but also Andean music such as huaylías, a more traditional version of huayno. She posts on FB that "*El quechua es cool* [Quechua is cool]" but also uploads pictures of herself with her grandmother wearing *sombrero, poncho,* and traditional clothing. She is studying English and believes that Quechua classes would be more popular if teachers combined them with English classes, since the popularity of English could engage students with Quechua and both could be learned simultaneously; once, her mom's organization announced free Quechua lessons and nobody showed up.

That being said, instead of constructing dichotomies, these young people affirm themselves as people in the world and from the world but at the same time claim local culture. "*Este viajero bohemio que solo danza con la cultura andina que siente mi alma* [This bohemian traveler who only dances with the Andean culture that my soul feels]", says Liberato in one of his lyrics. Within a reconstruction of classic ethnic boundaries or a phenomenon of metroethnicity (Maher, 2005), they neither follow an ethnic movement nor do they construct themselves as part of a fixed identity or group, but are more oriented towards cultural hybridity, multicultural lifestyles and cultural ethnic tolerance. What they defend is their right to be: The mixture, the exchange, and the appropriation of cultural practices with freedom and respect. They do not want to leave people out for what they are because they want to celebrate being together. This is related to a strong sense of reaffirmation and celebration of a particular contemporary way of being young, Peruvian, and Andean with no shame or sense of humiliation attached to it and with no sense of betrayal to their cultural communities either. Like the lives of Native American youth, these activists "negotiate, cross, and occupy sociolinguistic borderlands (…) in which 'traditional' and 'modern,' ruralscape and cityscape, and multifaceted identities and language loyalties intermix" (McCarty, 2014: 255).

In contrast to the emphasis from linguistics and IBE discourse in the place-connectedness of small languages (Blommaert, 2010), these young people feel deterritorialized and that they do not belong to a single place. This constitutes

a phenomenon of late capitalism, where imagining alternative forms of belonging – like "citizen of the world"- becomes available (Heller & Duchêne, 2012). For instance, Liberato declares that he feels that he is from the jungle but also from the Andes: "*Cuando estoy con chicos de la selva me siento selvático y cuando estoy con los de la sierra me siento serrano* [When I am with youth from the jungle I feel that I am from the jungle, but when I am with people from the Andes I feel that I am also from the Andes]" (Interview with author). He also states the following in his lyrics: "*Soy cholo, soy negro, soy blanco, soy un peruano, latino carajo, esto es lo que traigo* [I am cholo, I am black, I am white, I am Peruvian, latino damn it, this is what I bring]". Moreover, in one of his FB posts, he uploaded a picture of himself dressed as a Shipibo (Amazonian indigenous people) with his face painted. In fact, he has given many rap workshops in the shanty town of Canta Gallo in the city of Lima with Shipibo migrants where having a common language does not seem to be the most important matter. Liberato's goal is that this youth "*activen su conciencia* [activate their consciousness]" and start rapping in Shipibo. He would like them to say: *"'Oye este chico hace esto que parece bien rebelde y nosotros ¿por qué tenemos que opacarnos?'"* ['Hey, this kid does this that seems quite rebellious and why do we need to overshadow ourselves?]".

Liz also declares during our conversations that *"No me siento ni de ciudad ni de campo. Me siento de muchas formas pero no sé cómo lo podría explicar (…) solo quechua, quechua de todos lados* [I do not feel neither from the city nor from the countryside, I feel many ways but I don't know how to explain it (…) only Quechua, Quechua from everywhere]". Renata also thinks that Quechua "puede mantenernos unidos [can keep us together]" (Interview with author), alluding people with Quechua ancestors. She believes that people can get closer to Quechua by singing her songs: "*Activa la opción de subtítulos en el video y canta conmigo!!!* [Activate the option of subtitles in this video and sing with me!!!]", she posts in FB.

While the last section showed that youth are reconstructing the category of bilingual, this section reveals that they are also creating a different version of Quechuaness, which is in sharp contrast with the one that Peruvian language policies and IBE have reproduced along the last decades. In the next one, I will discuss how youth negotiate with the market and display new forms of activism that mean struggling from within the system and not only in relation to language. In this sense, they display themselves as contemporary Quechua whose fight involves the language but within concerns for social justice (Flores & Chaparro 2017).

4.3 Repoliticizing language from within neoliberalism

Quechua has begun to turn into an economic resource that can be exchanged for other symbolic and material capital, although the orientation towards the language as a problem and as a sense of pride within rights discourses is still strong. Not only can the use of Quechua supply you with status in particular contexts, it can also give you access to jobs in the Ministry of Education, international funding agencies, universities, and other local organizations, which commonly require educational textbooks and other types of materials, translators, Quechua teachers, and different sets of advice about Quechua. For instance, Liberato is conscious about this and would like to study more Quechua because "*Hay chamba como miércoles en quechua* [there are a lot of jobs in Quechua]" (interview with author). Quechua has also been used in some commercial brands as a source of economical profit for specific companies. However, these examples only constitute minor attempts at Quechua commodification.

The youth I have been working with are conscious of the tension between "pride" and "profit" and have many doubts about what path to take in relation to the use of Quechua within the market. On the one hand, they see this perceived value of indigenous languages as emblems of originality and authenticity as a positive shift, since it can be an opportunity to raise language awareness. Nevertheless, the essentializing discourses of language and identity are quite preminent, resulting in the activists being told they are betraying Quechua when they use it for economic gain (Pietikainen, 2013). Their conflict, however, is more related to the fact that Quechua can become a profit for the economy but not necessarily for those who produce it. Additionally, the conflict lies in the risk of using Quechua only to reproduce a multicultural neoliberal and celebratory discourse. As Liberato declares in relation to this type of discourse: *"No me gusta cuando el quechua solo se usa para decir 'mi region es bonita', y cuando tengo que mover mi trasero y hay gente que se está muriendo por el friaje. El quechua no es una broma, no es para matarse de risa. Hagamos mensajes de resistencia en quechua* [I do not like when Quechua is only useful for saying 'my region is beautiful,' and when I have to move my butt and there are people who are dying because of the cold weather. Quechua is not a joke, it is not for dying of laugher. Let's make messages of resistance in Quechua]" (interview with author).

In contrast to many Quechua "experts" who are defensive towards the market and prefer to maintain cultural and linguistic "purity", these young Quechua-speakers engage with the market in a different way. The three of them accept to collaborate in events that are promoted by NGOs, universities, the Ministry of Culture, the media (radio and TV), and others from civil society, but usually refrain from those related to the big corporate world whose main goal is to earn

money for the company. For instance, Liz would not work for potential congress members who want to gain voters. Liberato would not sing for a mining enterprise: "*Puedo cantar para coca cola pero la minera contamina todo el agua* [I can sing for Coca Cola but the mining industry contaminates water]" (Interview with author). He does not participate in the rap contests that Red Bull organizes because he feels that this company will use his rap in Quechua in order to "*mostrarse* [show off]" and earn more money. Renata does not accept offers for events and concerts where people earn money from the tickets sold. Nonetheless, this distinction is not always easy to make and they often find themselves in a process of trial and error. For instance, Liberato was invited to Germany for a music festival that was organized by PROMPERU, the government's office that promotes Peru's National Brand in both the country and abroad, but he was hesitant about how it represented diversity. Liz accepted an offer to produce a video for the Regional Government of Apurímac with information about its social projects, but she ultimately felt that it used Quechua to project a positive image to the rest of the population. She was never paid and this made her regret accepting the job in the first place, because this confirmed to her that Quechua was not really valued.

These youth sing or work for some business companies (and not for others) because they are conscious that this is the only way to keep doing what they do. To work within these limitations, they earn money from companies and then use it for activism in other contexts. As Liberato puts it: "*Cantar para algunas empresas también es un ingreso que me ayuda a mí a hacer más música. Con ese dinero hago más música y esas producciones van a llegar a más público. Un amigo me decía 'no tengas miedo, hay que seguir haciendo revolución pero hay que aceptar la realidad, vas a seguir activando pero con un sustento'. Tú solo te moldeas* [To sing for some companies means that I have an income that helps me to make more music. With that money, I make more music and those productions will reach more people. I remember a friend telling me: 'don't be afraid, we have to keep making a revolution but we have to accept reality, you will keep activating but with an income'. You mold yourself]" (Interview with author). His plan is to make songs that are not that polemic, since he wants to insert himself into a big music market with a fresher message. However, he also points out that "*Una vez que tenga toda esa fama podré decir todo lo que me dé la gana; cuando esté ahí podré regresar al Liberato de antes* [once I am really famous, I will be able to say whatever I want; once there I will be able to come back to be Liberato as I was before that]" (Interview with author). Moreover, he affirms that "*Lo politico está en el quechua*" [The political is in the Quechua sections]" (Interview with author), which the big companies do not understand. Renata gets invited to concerts in different places and,

whenever she gets paid, she organizes other free and smaller concerts in Ayacucho where she can do what she wants.

In contrast to this constant negotiation with the market, IBE positions the students within "pure" traditional practices anchored in the past, treating them as rigid and permanent. Moreover, IBE policy does not seriously contemplate the incorporation of digital or new media platforms for Quechua teaching, since these do not align well with the essentializing discourses of language and identity that predominate. The youth, conversely, mainly live through these media platforms and the online-offline distinction does not seem to be that useful anymore (Dovchin et al., 2018). Renata, for instance, told me that without them, she would be *perdida* [lost] and that she could not do what she does. Nevertheless, this also reveals a tension that implies succumbing to a neoliberal subjectivity without intending to do so. For instance, many of these activists are obsessed with posting news everyday and counting the number of followers and likes that they get for what they upload, aiming at visibility in relation to the global external gaze. After all, we know that neoliberal regimes operate as well through new technologies and daily life linked to the Web 2.0. In these platforms, people search for reputation and status through advertising and branding techniques for the management of their personal and professional lives (Lipovetzky, 2005). For instance, Liberato told me that participating in social networks is rewarding but also very stressful, and that sometimes he feels that "*ya no doy más* [cannot do it anymore]", mainly because of this risk of projecting himself as a competitive brand. Although new media have been crucial to the development of Quechua and other indigenous languages from other contexts (Cru, 2015; Eisenlohr, 2004; Moriarty, 2011), only time will tell how this tension unfolds regarding their future.

Going back to the above, I would like to stress that the option for cultural hybridity and the use of Quechua go together with the struggle for very specific political causes, which are dealt with from within the market system. This clearly differentiates the youth from IBE and official language revitalization policies and even resignifies what language revitalization means. For instance, besides posting her music on Facebook and YouTube, Renata participates in many events where she sings but also works to raise youth consciousness about a variety of issues. She interpellates people with questions such as: "*¿Quién está orgulloso de ser peruano, de ser serrano, de ser cholo?* [Who is proud of being Peruvian? Of being *serrano*? Of being *cholo*?]" (observation in concert).[6] In September of 2018 (right before handing in this article for publication), and after three years of having met her, Renata uploaded a video in Quechua with a song of her own, where she combines

6. 'Serrano' and 'cholo' are racialized terms, which Renata tries to resignify during her concerts.

trap music with a ritual and ancestral dance. However, simultaneously, the song lyrics denounce patriarchal structures and the unpunished cases of feminicide as a result of the corrupt justice system in the country. As she puts it in her youtube channel: *"Con este video quiero animar a las mujeres que NO CALLEN ante tanta injusticia y corrupción* [With this video I would like to encourage women to not remain SILENT in front of injustice and corruption]".

Liz' videos in Quechua (and Spanish) also situate language within other socioeconomic struggles. For example, in one about the unfair situation of potato sellers from peasant communities Liz included the following written phrase on the top of the video frame, which clearly reveals her goal: "*Jóvenes quechua hablantes opinan contundentemente* [Young Quechua-speaking people give their opinion forcefully]". She is also concerned with joining other organizations and strengthening the fight for Quechua with other types of battles, such as the one of LGBTQ. This clearly shows that there is a disinvention of language as an autonomous object detached from social practices and the unequal distribution of resources.

These cases show new forms of activism (and language activism specifically), which struggles from within the system. While IBE discourse has been neutralized for generating social transformations, the youth are repoliticizing language in terms of Mouffe's discussion about the political as a space of power, conflict, and antagonism (2005). They acknowledge antagonism as constitutive of human societies and the hegemonic nature of social order. As Liberato declares during interviews with me, "*Lo que yo hago es revolución, que es cambio para el bien de todos. Para mí revolución es transformar. Ir a paso lento pero a paso de elefante, ¿no? firme, eso es para mí la revolución* [What I do is revolution, which is something that produces change for the well-being of everybody. For me, revolution means to transform. Transform at a slow pace but an elephant pace, right? Steady, that is revolution for me]". This reveals that youth are not only reimagining and reconstituting boundaries that circumscribe languages and identities in a problematic way, but also the notion of language itself. For them, language is a social practice always inserted within the exercise of power.

5. Final thoughts

My study shows a tension that has been developing in the last decade between traditional and post-traditional approaches to language policy and revitalization (Pietikäinen et al., 2016): while the discourse of IBE is attempting to guarantee the linguistic human rights of first-language Quechua speakers who mostly live or have lived in rural areas, a community of Quechua speaking youth are opting for a more innovative and creative, but also politicized route. They are trying to invert

the status of Quechua through the use of the language in urban everyday life by encouraging more people to know, learn, and use it. And they are also situating language within other socioeconomic struggles.

In contrast to official policies such as IBE, the TV news national program or the work with Quechua-speaking civil servants (Zavala, 2014), the activists' aim is not to "preserve" languages within a dominant discourse of "inclusion" of the neglected population; rather, they hope to make powerful claims of belonging and exert new power relationships. They are clearly producing changes in terms of recognition, although not that clearly yet on how material resources are redistributed. In any case, while IBE has developed a depoliticized discourse and is doing "more of the same" with little social change involved, youth are problematizing the social indexicalities of Quechua and the notions of authority and legitimacy as they relate to linguistic forms and speakers. This is being done within carnivalesque modes of critique and transgression practices (Pietikainen, 2013, 2016; Pietikainen et al., 2016), which attempt to disturb and dislocate fixed categories and boundaries within creative, provocative, and ludic frames. Even though these practices can be seen as "flash lights" or "short lived sparks" that could end up fading away, they are part of moments in which "moving" the dominant ideologies becomes a possibility in the local conditions and practices of the Quechua language. They are instances of performative acts in language policy (Lo Bianco, 2010), whose impact will depend on how they are taken up by and allied with other social actors and language policy instances, as well as being supported by a larger nexus of authorizing agents. As Pietikainen et al. have argued, "What counts and will count as speaking and using these small languages today and in the future depends not just on top-down policy and planning or community-led bottom-up initiatives and actions but also on more eclectic, more entrepereneurial, more opportunistic and more fluid social structures and endeavours, as well as individual interest and choice" (2016: 24).

I am aware of the dangers that a postmodern concept of speakers and languages can bring for the protection of minoritized languages (Pietikäinen & Kelly-Holmes, 2011) and of the fact that the notion of language with clear boundaries has been useful for mobilization, legislation, and qualifying for rights from national and international bodies. Nevertheless, a critique of the discourse of linguistic rights (Makoni, 2012; Edwards, 2003) does not entail a rejection of boundaries as unimportant or no longer relevant. Instead, it calls for a more reflexive approach to the social construction of boundaries, how they have emerged, and what interests are at stake in their fixation. Furthermore, I agree with Pennycook (2002) in that these are times to strategically problematize rather than strategically essentialize. Peruvian history has demostrated that the essentializing option has not necessarily guaranteed the growth of the languages; on the contrary, it has

excluded and disempowered a great number of speakers from the language policy process and has created social difference, hierarchies, and inequalities within Quechua speakers themselves. More openness towards the complexity of bilingualism and the incorporation of "non-native" Quechua speakers, local and global simultaneous identities, and the critical negotiation with neoliberalism should not be taken as the definite solution to Quechua language policy, but should be taken into account as a more realistic alternative when thinking about the present and the future of the indigenous language.

Repoliticizing language means taking into account power within language practices. Nevertheless, we must question a priori presumptions about the relationship between language and power (Rosa & Burdick, 2017), and avoid celebrating the valorization of stigmatized languages and varieties as a straightforward exercise in agency and empowerment. It is important to work contextually within ethnographic perspectives in order to avoid overarching statements about the mother tongue, for example. Nonetheless, repoliticizing language does not only mean raising questions of access, power, and inequality; it also presents an intellectual skepticism towards the meanings of concepts in the field (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007). Without being familiarized with the latest academic debate about the need to unpack the categories and boundaries from applied linguistics, these young people are questioning the depoliticized, limiting, and fictitious views of Quechua from the IBE discourse, and are using the language to make change in their societies. They are desinventing Quechua as IBE conceives it and reinventing it within a much more inclusive project. As Dovchin et al. (2018) argue, we should emphasize pedagogical approaches that engage with the diverse worlds of young people. Youth and young adults constitute the people "where the action is" (1) and they should interest us as educators.

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