FRIENDSHIP AND PEER CULTURE IN MULTILINGUAL SETTINGS

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FOREWORD

MAKING AND KEEPING FRIENDS IN MULTILINGUAL SETTINGS: WHAT WE KNOW AND WHERE WE ARE GOING

Most research on children's friendship takes either an outcome approach (friendships viewed as static entities over time) or a process approach (friendship regarded as socially constructed through collective actions) (Corsaro, 2004; Winterhoff, 1997). The outcome assumption articulates well with traditional models of human development, which stress the individual child's movement from immaturity to adult competence. While not in opposition to the outcome approach, in the process approach, friendship formation "involves recognizing its developmental fluidity along with its genesis as a socio-cultural promoted construction and explaining its temporal flow within the main current (system) of socio-culturally produced activities and skills" (Winterhoff, 1997, p. 227).

The process approach has generated a rich tradition of research on children's friendship and peer culture in anthropology, education, psychology, and sociology (Adler & Adler, 1998; Corsaro, 1994, 2003, 2015; Dunn, 2004; Eder, 1995; Goodwin, 1990, 2006; also see recent articles in Cekaite, Blum-Kulka, Grøver, & Teubal, 2014). Here I want to consider how research on friendship processes in multilingual settings fits the process approach and can expand our knowledge of children's friendship and peer culture in new directions both in terms of substantive knowledge and applied implications for the education and well-being of children and youth.

WHAT WE KNOW

Studies of friendship processes and children's peer cultures in multilingual settings are rare, but important work has been done. For example, in educational settings the work of Cromdal, Elgas and others is important. In a key study Cromdal (2001) captured the importance of friendship dynamics

and code-switching in a bilingual school among immigrant and native Swedish children. Elgas (2011) in a fascinating study of an American preschool classroom with several immigrant English Language Learners focuses on two children, one a girl somewhat more advanced in English than her male peer. However, it is the boy who does better (often relying on highly effective non-verbal strategies) at plugging into peer culture in the preschool. Using the two children as key examples, Elgas discusses how knowledge of their contrasting success at entering peer culture was vital in developing curriculum for supporting the immigrant children.

In other comparative work in peer settings (many of which involve immigrant and native children) that focus on conflict and dispute resolutions we see that peer relations and friendship are, in many ways, a reflection of the values and practices of the local and more general communities and cultures in which they emerge (see Corsaro, 1994; Cromdal, 2004; Evaldsson, 2003; Kyratzis & Guo, 2001; Martinez-Lozano, Sánchez-Medina, & Goudena, 2011; Poveda & Marcos, 2005). These studies demonstrate the importance of viewing friendship as a collective and cultura process. In this view, culture and language are not simply variables that affect how children come to be and have friends. Rather, friendship processes are seen as deeply embedded in children's collective, interpretive reproduction of their cultures (Corsaro, 2015).

The studies in this volume add to this prior work in many important ways. First, the studies provide new insights with data across a wide range of cultural groups on how second language children in multilingual settings establish peer relations, friendship and fit into subculture groups in established peer cultures where they are learning and using the dominant or official language along with their own mother tongues. Most of the studies fall directly in the process view of friendship where several show through impressive use of conversational and micro analysis how second language children struggle but often succeed in establishing shared communicative frames and a collective sense of doing things together which are essential for the establishment of friendship relations. Other studies relying on ethnographic observations, interviews and surveys capture the importance of language in regard to cultural identity in both peer and school cultures and subcultures as well as the family and community.

A second strength of the studies in this volume is that to address the complexities and intricacies of friendship processes in multilingual settings the researchers rely on wide range of traditional and innovative methods (often involving mixed methods). In some cases, these innovative methods capture the fast-paced and complex changes in global immigration processes

and new media technologies which are embedded in children's friendship, cultural participation, and processes of interpretive reproduction. In this sense they provide blueprints for future work not only in multilingual settings but for global studies of children and children's peer cultures more generally.

Third all of the studies provide important applied educational implications for second language learners in a wide variety of culturally diverse pedagogical philosophies, circumstances, and settings. All the studies demonstrate convincingly the importance of the recognition of building on the native languages of the children and youth observed as a strength to be developed while learning the dominant language of their new cultures. Many of the studies also encounter either ignorance of this strength or even a view of it as the opposite (a limitation to be avoided or circumscribed) within the schools studied. Finally, the recognition and demonstration of the potential of bilingualism in a global world and economy is in some of the studies linked to the children's active participation (through language practices, routines, and narratives) in their families and communities.

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE

While all of the studies in the volume present interesting analyses of peer interaction or culture in a variety of settings, all are limited in that they are primarily cross-sectional rather than longitudinal. A few of the studies involve data collection at multiple points in time, but we still mainly get snapshots of the children's experiences and active involvement in school and peer cultures (and in some degree their families and communities). Given the richness of the data and analyses we can see friendship processes in the making. However, it is often not clear how well these friendship processes or peer cultures will solidify, expand and change. Looking to the future similar analyses with a longitudinal frame (especially across key transitions in children's lives) would greatly expand the contributions in these papers.

Second, while some of the papers have a comparative analysis given the diverse backgrounds of the children they study, several do not fully integrate their work in what we already know about friendship and peer culture (see my earlier references to Adler & Adler, Corsaro, Cromdal, Dunn, Eder, Evaldsson, Goodwin, Kinney and others). There clearly are

exceptions to this problem especially in the articles by Barley, Björk-Willén, Hopf, McLeod and McDonagh, McDonnell, Thoebald et al., and Watson & Huá. However, even in these articles the connection to other work could be more developed. Of course, these limitations can be related to space restrictions in this context, but they do demonstrate how these important findings can be developed in future work.

Finally as I noted earlier many of the papers do address the applied importance of their work for immigration and educational policy and language preservation. Especially important here for future work is the call for realistic and innovative language programs and pedagogies that point to the fact that immigrant children and youth (as well as children whose native tongues are not the educational language in their own countries) are adding to important language and cultural skills they already possess. These children and youth are, for example, already far ahead of native youth in many developed countries (most especially the United States) in their movement to becoming bilingual or often multilingual in the new global environment where a second or even third language is becoming more and more in demand. Second and also related to globalization is the opportunity to build on the transnational experiences of the immigrant children and youth. Many of these children and youth, who may have been born and spent formative years in their native cultures, have developed strong family and cultural ties to their native heritage. Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, and Todorova (2008), for example, refer to building on this transnationalism as "embracing hyphenated identities" among immigrant youth. They see it as leading to more openness to diversity and to building a more competitive edge in today's global economy and marketplace of ideas. Without doubt such transnationalism and appreciation of cultural and language diversity clearly enrich children's friendships and peer cultures. At a time when we are seeing growing nationalism and fear of immigrants in many countries in the developed world such enrichment serves as a positive beckoning light to future generations. To this end the present volume makes important strides in this wondrous recognition and appreciation of the potential of the worlds of children and youth as they are living their everyday lives in the present as well as for their futures.

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FRIENDSHIP AND PEER CULTURE IN MULTILINGUAL SETTINGS: AN INTRODUCTION

Volume 21 of Sociological Studies of Children and Youth (SSCH) is a collection of research papers that explore friendship and peer culture among children and young people who are users and learners of multiple languages. Across the world, rising migration and globalization has meant an increase in the linguistic and cultural diversity of populations (Fielding, 2015). Internationally, there are more people who speak two or more languages than there are monolingual people (McLeod, 2014; Romaine, 2013). As well, the importance of maintaining indigenous languages and dialects has been the focus of government policy in some countries (Hopf, McLeod, & McDonagh, this volume; Te Maihāroa, this volume). This collection presents 10 international investigations of how children and young people make friends in settings marked by linguistic diversity, including preschool, school, neighborhood spaces or homestay settings.

Friendship and being part of a group is highly valued by children and young people (Corsaro, 1985, 2003). In order to be included in a group, children pay attention to the social expectations, resources, interests and characteristics of the members and the context: this collective of elements is known as "peer culture" (Corsaro, 2003, 2009, 2015; Corsaro & Eder, 1990). Just being a child or youth does not automatically create a unique culture. Peer culture is appropriated through interactions and interpreted in relation to other peer culture, including adult culture (Corsaro & Eder, 1990; Danby, 2002, 2008). The papers in this special volume attend to how the social and linguistic aspects of interaction meet to accomplish friendship and peer culture.

Foundational scholars in the field of sociology inspire this collection. William A. Corsaro's research (1979, 1985) forged understandings about children's friendship and the study of children's peer culture, and it is a thrill to have Professor Corsaro provide the foreword for this special volume. Corsaro (2003) brought understandings of friendship as "situated

knowledge," that is, how friendship is formed within and from social locales and interactions of the members. Children implement a range of strategies including greetings, request for access or non-verbal entry for becoming a participant and affirming affiliation with peers in preschool. Some of the studies in this volume show how these strategies play out in multilingual settings, and consider these within the social agenda of the peers (Theobald, Bateman, Busch, Laraghy, & Danby, this volume; Björk-Willén, this volume).

Being seen as a participating member of the peer culture may take some time for second language learners (Rydland, Grøver, & Laurence, 2014). Targeting multilingual settings, Cromdal (2001) considered the social aspect of children's language use. Cromdal (2001, 2004) revealed how children's entry to peer groups was collaboratively accomplished and showed that language was used to portray a stance, for example of opposition or alignment, and consequently control the actions of others in a peer group. Children's interactions in multilingual settings have been highlighted with studies examining how humor and affect are used to facilitate participation (Cekaite, 2006); how announcements and proposals help achieve inter-subjectivity in pretend play (Kyratzis, 2014); and the co-produced nature of peer play (Björk-Willén, 2007), but the link to friendship has not been overt. Evaldsson's (2007) Swedish study examined how preadolescent girls imposed a social hierarchy within the group through obligations to do with friendship. In settings of language diversity and where language policies are implemented, there is more to learn about how friendship and peer culture is attended to, and children and young people's experiences of participation, their identity and subsequent feelings of happiness.

Friends are a support for children and young people when they are faced with change, such as when children move from preschool to school (Dunn, 2004; Hartup, 1992). Children and young people feel happier about going to school when they have friends (Ladd, 1990). Making friends usually involves talking and having things in common or similar interests (Dunn, 2004; Hartup, 1992). A closeness or feeling of "intimacy" is a special element that makes someone a friend (Danby, 2008; Dunn, 2004). Corsaro (1985) also observed an intensiveness of relationship in the ways that even young children talked about friends. Extending this research, this special volume examines the interplay of language with peer culture, and how children and young people account for or accomplish these interactions.

TERMINOLOGY

The term multilingual is used in a broad way in this volume to cover a range of settings where the participants use more than one language. Being multilingual includes those who acquire "more than one language, are able to comprehend and/or produce two or more languages in oral, manual, or written form with at least a basic level of functional proficiency or use, regardless of the age at which the languages were learned" (International Expert Panel on Multilingual Children's Speech, 2012, p. 1). Children learn to speak languages simultaneously, where two or more languages are spoken the same time before the age of three years, or sequentially, where children become dominant in one language before a second language is learnt (Huá, 2014; McLeod, 2007). Multilingualism is an umbrella term for both bilingualism and multilingualism.

ABOUT THIS VOLUME

We know that talk is a gateway for people to build relationships and make friends. What transpires from these studies where relationships are built in settings marked by linguistic diversity? The research papers in this special volume are a diverse collection that shows friendship practices where there are users and learners of a common language, *lingua franca*, and where linguistic diversity exists.

This collection gives special emphasis to friendship and peer cultures as the main focus for investigation in relation to language differences. The research presented here provides new learning in this domain. Even where a *lingua franca* has been established, social order, understanding, and relationships cannot be taken for granted and are constantly in flux. This special volume provides empirical data, where currently there is scarcity, to identify ways in which children and young people make friends, view and experience peer groups in setting marked by linguistic diversity.

With a focus on relational matters, this special volume presents a collection of research using a variety of methodological approaches, with representation of studies from around the globe. There are investigations from the Northern Hemisphere: with research set in the United States of America (Greer); investigations from Sweden (Björk-Willén); research from Israel (Goldstein & Golan-Cook); studies from the United Kingdom (Barley; McDonnell); and set in Spain (García-Sánchez). There are

investigations from the Southern Hemisphere: including research in Fiji (Hopf, McLeod, & McDonagh); research from New Zealand (Te Maihāroa); and set in Australia (Theobald, Bateman, Busch, Laraghy, & Danby) as well as research that seeks to traverse countries (Watson & Huá). Such global coverage explores the situated experiences of peer cultures with a high presence of migrant populations, as well as contexts where there are moves to replenish indigenous languages. The range of studies in this volume highlights the diversity in how migration is experienced by children and youth.

A number of analytic approaches are used to study the interaction, participation and experiences of children and youth in multilingual settings. This collection includes conversation analysis, linguistic anthropology, ethnographic studies, quantitative analysis, narrative analysis, action analysis, arts-based methods and mixed-methods. While presenting a diverse range of investigative methods, the overarching sociological perspective is constant: a common thread underpinning the papers is the motivation to gain the views, standpoint and interactional experiences of children, youth and inter-generations (child-adult). Such a theoretical position situates children as competent to report on their experiences about making friends and provides information about the longevity and sustainability of friendships in relation to other factors, such as the familiarity of setting, social cues and language proficiency.

ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTERS

The volume begins with Inmaculada M. García-Sánchez's research of a group of Morroccan immigrant girls in Spain. The children establish a mixed-age peer group ranging in age from four to eleven years. As the children play a game, jumprope, they establish and reinforce what become acceptable social norms for that peer group through teaching sequences and negotiation of rules. In this local context, friendship developed when the girls valued the skills and qualities of others in their peer group.

Susan McDonnell's longitudinal ethnography, conducted in Irish school and home contexts, shows how children orient to language capability to present themselves as a viable peer. Being proficient in the dominant school language was "a marker for belonging" in peer groups, but being able to portray themselves as a member of the group by responding to social cues

and local interests also helped to bridge speaking distance. Members who do not "normally belong" (Huá, 2014) can claim membership to groups.

Suzanne C. Hopf, Sharynne McLeod and Sarah H. McDonagh use mixed methods to bring together insights from children and teachers about children's language choices in a Fiji an school. Children in the study reported that they would cross to a neutral linguistic space when participants of the peer group held different main languages. When communicating with friends, children reported being happy to use a variety of languages, with English identified as lingua franca to establish "neutral linguistic space." Overall, mandating instruction of three main languages in Fiji schools (Standard Fijian, Fiji Hindi and English) seemed to be effective in promoting friendship.

Identity and belonging are explored in the volume. Ruth Barley's ethnographic study of young children's interactions focuses on identity, difference and peer interactions in an English preschool. She found that while speaking the dominant language of English was one factor that helped children made friends, religious and ethnic were also operationalized and incorporated into how children defined identity in the peer culture. Her research highlights how education policy initiatives might work to promote rather than counter discrimination.

Keith Goldstein and Pnina Golan-Cook examine how immigrant youths in high schools across Israel account for identity. Surveying students in Israeli schools where Hebrew was the dominant form of instruction, they show how the youths adopt subcultural identities rather than adhere to static ethnic or language identities. This enabled them to gain more popularity within the peer culture. This study shows identity to be "a process of continual emerging and becoming" (Miller, 1999, p. 150).

Three papers highlight the intricacies of initiating, accessing and sustaining interaction in contexts marked by linguistic diversity. Polly Björk-Willén shows how preschool children work towards making friends using a *lingua franca* of Swedish. The children use objects, word-mixing and attention getters as well as gestures and intonation as they work towards joint understanding. This study highlights the complexities involved in forming friendship, even among young children, and the delicate co-produced nature of this interaction.

Maryanne Theobald, Amanda Bateman, Gillian Busch, Megan Laraghy and Susan Danby present an ethnomethodological study of access strategies, participation and the use of objects within the peer group. Their Australian study examines children playing in block play activities of a multilingual preschool. One L2 learner child comes into focus when he

draws on the moral obligations of being a friend to access play. Objects (toy dinosaurs) are important resources for participation in play being used to gain entry into the area and to defer obligations to play. Ultimately the uptake of the interaction is collaborative with the agenda of all parties involved playing a part for successful play entry or not.

Tim Greer's research in a home stay setting in the United States of America (USA) highlights the role of digital technology as a resource to transverse language differences. Using turn-by-turn conversation analysis, Greer details how youths from different language and cultural backgrounds, Japan and Indonesia use images and a smartphone dictionary app to progress their relationship. This chapter presents important findings that show how technology can provide affordances and challenges for friendship formation where there are language differences.

The promotion of intercultural friendship in summer camps is the focus of Jennifer Watson and Zhù Huá's chapter. Gathering the views of youths (aged 14 years) who attended the camps across nine different countries, the study reports that participating in summer camp helped the youths to learn about other cultures. Concepts such as how to make friends and be a good friend are identified as outcomes of attendance. One boy talked about the depth of relationships formed when children and elders joined together.

The final chapter, by Kelli Te Maihāroa, presents generational views of family members, including children, teenagers and parents, in a total immersion preschool for Indigenous languages (Māori). With two points of data collection, the findings show that relationships formed in the immersion program were maintained and sustained over time and flowed into social endeavors that existed outside the program itself, fostering a sense of identity and belonging in the local community.

As Corsaro (this volume) notes, there is more to learn about the role of language on friendship and potential areas for further research in this field include understanding how friendship is sustained in multilingual settings This special volume attempts to study the topic of friendship as "situated knowledge" (Corsaro, 2003) and from the standpoint of children and youth (Mayall, 2002), rather than bringing a presumed definition of friendship. Analyses demonstrate that the peer group's interactional environment is of significance to how friendship and peer culture gets undertaken. The papers highlight the competencies of children and young people to achieve intersubjectivity, form sub cultures, and use what means they have at their disposal, such as non-verbal interaction and physical objects, to make friends or exclude others in heterogeneous situations and diverse settings. This collection considers how aspects such as intergenerational, multi-age and

policy agendas influence friendship and peer culture, and how peer cultures in turn may affect these concerns.

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