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FIRESTONE, Amy, 2017, *Combinamos el quechua». Lengua e identidad de los jóvenes urbanos en el Perú*, Lima, IEP. 253 pp.

Various studies carried out in recent decades have observed the negative effect of the mass migrations to large Peruvian cities – which began in the mid-20th century – on the future of Quechua, Aimara, and other indigenous languages. In different ways, these studies emphasized the difficulties that migrants encounter when using their indigenous languages in the cities to which they migrate and, consequently, in transmitting these languages to new generations – which, as many theoretical studies indicate, is crucial for a language to survive. One alternative view that linguist Anna María Escobar has defended in recent works is that Quechua and Aimara may have spread in migrants' destination cities to a greater extent than we have been able to prove, accomplished through family and hometown networks that have defied observation but which can be discovered through detailed ethnographic studies.

Amy Firestone's book, based on her doctoral dissertation (for which Escobar was her advisor), tackles this problem from a sociolinguistic and ethnographic perspective. This is accomplished through a study carried out in two important cities with different characteristics, located in the south-central and southern parts of the Peruvian Andes: Ayacucho – or Huamanga, as it is traditionally known – and Arequipa, focusing on young men and women. In addition, this is the first work that systematically applies the variable of social networks to the study of the relationship between language and society in Peru.

The book does not provide a simple answer to the question of the future of indigenous languages in destination cities. Based on her case studies, Firestone proposes a model that she calls the *Chacra* Model, which emphasizes the presence of family contact with the rural environment – the communities that her subjects' parents are from – as the factor that determines maintenance of a language of origin. In addition, the author mentions other key factors: a) spaces of interaction; b) the central social activities that take place in these spaces; c) the interlocutors; and d) the topics of conversation.

In spaces of interaction, social activities and interlocutors favor the use of the indigenous language in that they are closer to rurality; in fact, these three factors are subordinate to rurality per se, and therefore the only other factor that is really different is the topic of conversation. Thus, it is not the language itself that leads to greater or lesser identification or ethnic pride.

The model thus predicts that an indigenous language will be sustained in families and communities that maintain links with their areas of origin, while in the case of families and communities that do not maintain such links – such as the Arequipa family that Firestone observed – the indigenous language will disappear with the passing of generations. Rural life, then, is the great anchor that allows migrants to maintain an active link with the dominant speakers of Quechua and, to this extent, continue to recreate the indigenous language in the destination cities and integrate it with Spanish in new varieties, such as the *combinado* that Firestone proposes for Huamanga – which, in my view, should be characterized more finely in ethnographic and linguistic terms. The latter is, in general terms, what she observed in the case of the Hernández sisters in Ayacucho.

This is a factor which is (at least) as important as intergenerational transmission itself, according to the author, who studied two cases in which it was precisely the parents who were absent in the destination cities, either because they stayed in rural areas or because they moved abroad in search of new opportunities. Things are not as clear, however, if we take into account an unexpected finding of the research, which could have received more emphasis in the book: the identification of what the author calls a “new ideology” of symbolic valorization of Quechua by first generation youth in Arequipa, based on new interpretive frameworks proposed by globalized society.

As various authors in the field of socio-cultural linguistics have pointed out, globalization and migration are changing the linguistic market and indigenous languages are acquiring new values and new meanings, especially among youth – for example, as a means of identity construction and artistic creation, as a platform for political action, and as instruments for the performance of a bilingual or bicultural “authenticity” in increasingly complex symbolic markets. This, according to Anna María Escobar’s proposal, opens up new possibilities for Quechua and Aimara in the destination cities. In this sense, we might think that identifying the links with rural life is insufficient to answer the question about the destiny of an indigenous language, and indeed we must also pay attention to the new emerging identities among youth and the symbolic links that they establish with the language of their parents and grandparents.

It is possible to point out some problems with Firestone’s book. First, despite its title, the question of identity does not receive sufficient attention in the analysis. Second, given that this is an ethnographic study, one would expect to hear more of the voices of the subjects studied – through fragments of interviews, for example. This would have aided understanding of how

emic or internal the category of *combinado* is, which Firestone proposes and which is also included in the title. On the other hand, although the author emphasizes the category of social networks as necessary, the relevant aspects of these are not described in sufficient detail. For example, one does not see the real interaction between young people from families that are most integrated with their rural areas of origin, and their relatives who live there. Finally, there are some problems with the translations of linguistic categories into Spanish, including *intrasentential*, which is translated as **intrasentencial** instead of **intraoracional**; *language shift*, which is translated a **cambio de lengua** instead of **sustitución lingüística**; and *unmarked choice*, which is translated as **opción sin marcar** instead of **opción no marcada** – the usual choices in the specialized literature.

The principal virtues of the book are the detailed ethnographic descriptions of the family spaces observed, the careful analysis of a series of interactions in Quechua and Spanish from the point of view of language choice, and a useful review of past studies on language and migration in Peru. On balance, Firestone's study will become an important referent in the literature on links between linguistic contact, language choice, and migration experiences. It is of interest not only to linguists but also to anthropologists, sociologists, educators, and all those interested in migration issues.

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