
Toward a ‘Speaker Centered’ Design of Language Planing

Urla, Jacqueline

Univ. of Massachusetts Amherst
jurla@anthro.umass.edu

A large, bold, black serif letter 'M' is centered on the page. It has a classic, slightly decorative font with a small gap between the two vertical strokes. The letter is set against a white background.

Modern efforts to revitalize the Basque language were launched in 1918 at the first Congress of the Basque Studies Society. Much has been accomplished in terms of education and legislation that have helped reverse language shift. In this paper, I will argue that addressing future challenges will require a shift to a speaker – rather than the language – centered approach to language revitalization that focuses on the varied meanings, uses, and attachments people have to Basque. My paper concludes reflecting on the current interest among language advocates in methods of affirmative inquiry, participatory planning and design thinking and the possibilities these open up for imagining new multilingual futures.

Keywords: Basque language planning. Eusko Ikaskuntza. Participatory planning. Affirmative inquiry. Euskara.

I cannot express what an honor and pleasure it is for me to participate in this, the 100th anniversary conference of Eusko Ikaskuntza. It is an honor for me because of the respect I have for Eusko Ikaskuntza and the vital historical role it played in the history of the Basque Country and in the constitution of a Basque scholarly community. But also, because of the very central role that my encounter with Eusko Ikaskuntza had on my own research and understanding of Basque language revitalization.

My discovery of the proceedings of Eusko Ikaskuntza congresses of 1918 and 1922 in the library of the University of California Berkeley were transformative for the analysis and book I would later write, *Reclaiming Basque: Language, Nation and Cultural Activism*. Given the occasion of the 100th anniversary, I want to say just a little bit about why the Eusko Ikaskuntza Congresses were wo important to me and how I have come to understand the Basque language revival movement.

It was 1984. As an anthropologist in training, I had completed 15 months of ethnographic fieldwork on the recovery of Basque in Gipuzkoa. It was an auspicious time, as you know. Franco had finally died. The Statute of Autonomy was newly approved and there was a strong social movement that had begun clandestinely and was now able to really move forward

– ikastolas, AEK, Euskalherrian Euskaraz, Batua, SIADCO had just published *Conflicto Linguistico en Euskadi*. With the Law of Euskara, the BAC was now empowered to formulate language policy on behalf of Basque recovery. It was a new moment for language revival **then** just as we have been seeing today, that it is a new moment **now**.

My encounter with the published proceedings of the early *Congresos de Eusko Ikaskuntza* helped me to find the historical antecedents, to trace a *genealogy* of sorts, for much of what I had observed in the language revival movement during my fieldwork: the recurring debates on the need for standardization; the need for schooling, legitimation and for planning. I went to Euskadi prepared by what I had read to encounter a powerful discourse on the relationship between language and national identity. What surprised me more when I arrived was the insistent call for *plangintza*, for a census, for surveys and a sociological understanding of the linguistic population these could provide.

The speeches of the founding Congress of 1918 and then 1922 with lectures by Julio Urquijo, Luis de Eleizalde, and others¹ revealed a group of intellectuals, professionals, teachers, lawyers, engineers, doctors –who saw themselves at a vital crossroads in the history of their country. Industrialization and rapid urbanization had created a chaotic social order and a host of social problems had emerged, from pollution, to urban congestion, to labor and class antagonism. They were interested in progress, in modernization, and bringing a scientific and pragmatic orientation to creating a society, and an economy and a language that could flourish in the new century ahead, while also preserving their unique cultural identity and heritage. These were not navel-gazing antiquarians: they attended international scientific congresses and established relations with major European and North American libraries and academic institutions, sending back reports on the latest techniques in pedagogy, archaeology, cooperatives, fishing, horticulture, urban design.

Idoia Estornes (1983) has written insightfully about this moment and I learned a great deal from her. Eusko Ikaskuntza gave lie to the prevalent image in political theory at the time, that small nations interested in their language and culture were backward looking, clinging to a rock, as political philosopher John Stuart Mill (1861:293) famously

said, without interest in the tides of progress. They showed that the opposition between modernity and 'tradition' was an *ideology*, not an inevitability.

What I saw – or what the congresses allowed me to see – more specifically, was the emergence of a **distinctly modern understanding of language that we now take for granted**, and which would begin to inform the strategies of language revitalization. They argued with their compatriots that folklore and festivals praising and exhibiting the language and traditions, would no longer be enough. It was not only the beauty of the poetry or establishing the origins of the language that mattered most now. For ensuring its future, new forms of knowledge had to be gathered, and new questions had to be answered: what class of people spoke it; where it was spoken, and what was needed to be able to introduce Basque into institutions of higher learning, into commerce, and industry. Creating standardized norms for writing Basque was intimately connected to this vision anchored simultaneously in conceptualization of efficiency, modernity and the unity of the nation. Standardization, said Luis de Eleizalde, was simply a matter of "common sense".

The rise of a Basque nationalist sentiment and movement was part of, but not the whole story of the rise of Basque language revitalization. This is what Eusko Ikaskuntza's conferences showed me. Precisely because the issue of Euskara's future was not separated off from areas of social life, one could see in the proceedings of the congresses that the revival of Basque was envisioned as a problem analogous to that of the city, of public health, economic growth, or education, – that is, as a problem requiring expertise, documentation, and rational planning.

Protecting Basque language, culture and identity required not isolation and not simply patriotism: it required active intervention, study and management. The term language planning was not yet widely used, but it was there, emergent.

It is at Eusko Ikaskuntza's first conferences that I believe we encounter an articulated a vision of language as an object that can and *should* be planned. To plan language one had to know it in new ways – it needed, said Julio Urquijo. Its numbers of speakers, its territorial and social presence had to be mapped.

It was the beginning of a sociological and not just a philological understanding of language.

This is the view of language that has shaped so much of the twenty and twenty-first century language revitalization efforts. We see it in SIADECO's text, *Conflicto Linguístico en Euskadi*. I saw it in local demands. It made the social domains of Basque language use and gaining presence in public institutions a primary objective as a matter of gaining prestige. It also made measurement and enumeration of speakers a veritable industry of diagnosing the vitality of the language. Demolinguistics would grow into an ever expanding and more refined enterprise as statistics became the heartbeat of Euskara.

This understanding of language shaped the priorities of how to proceed with language revitalization. And it has also led to real innovations. As in the development of the Kale Neurketa – the first ever attempt to quantify and track the usage of language – using observational methods. And which has been an instrument for documenting the gap between capacity – knowledge of a language – and its public use (Altuna and Urla 2013; Urla and Burdick 2018).

Much has been accomplished. But we have come now to a time where the limits of this kind of language-centered approach are becoming undeniable. The challenge for a twenty-first century language revitalization is to shift to a speaker – rather than a language – centered approach. The challenge, I would say, is to figure out how to abandon the conventional notion of “language” that has been embedded in so much language planning, in *euskalgintza*, and in everyday ways of thinking and talking about language. The challenge is to make way for new understandings that can address the issue of why it is that people speak languages and what they do with them. And that is what I want to talk about today.

We need to ask new questions beyond how many people know Basque, their demographic profiles, when and where and how much they speak. This may continue to be valuable to know. But to move forward we need to address the issue of language use and for this, language revitalization must be based on more anthropological understandings of language.

Much of what I want to say is echoing and in dialogue with Jone Miren Hernandez's (2008) call for an anthropological understanding of language made almost ten years ago now in *BAT Soziolinguistika Aldizkaria*. She articulated many of the basic

premises of an anthropological vision of language that I will be picking up on here and elaborating upon.

This shift in focus from language to speakers and their means of living and creating community **with** language is a vital part of the e5 project being proposed. It is vital to the creation of a more inclusive imaginary, the imagined future(s) of the community that wants to live in some fashion or other with Basque. And that is what I want to talk about today.

1. Languages are not seeds

The problem, for language revitalization, rests centrally with the notion of both “language” and language communities as bounded, homogenous entities; as things in the world that have life spans and die.

This is the kind of language ideology that has informed much of the contemporary endangered and minority language advocacy as we know it.

Let it first be said that the advocacy from organizations like Terralingua and many others, has been very effective in raising awareness of the richness and value of language diversity. Their work has done a great deal to advance the collection, documentation and preservation of digital recordings of language – preserving them for posterity and future study much like the underground seed vault that has been created in Norway where the world's biodiversity of plants are safeguarded against future disasters.

But languages are not really like seeds to be preserved.

In a brilliant article about the epistemology of the digital archive, the anthropologist Robert Moore explains that the architecture of the digital archive created to preserve samples of “languages” produces two important distortions:

1. They reproduce an understanding of languages as neatly bounded, autonomous grammatical systems,
2. and secondly – and very importantly – they erase the reality of the full range of multilingual resources that speakers of endangered languages **actually** use in their lives and that characterize the lives of people in the communities where many minoritized and endangered languages are spoken.

Though Moore is speaking of endangered languages and how they are documented, much of what he has to say, I believe, is quite relevant for us here today.

2. Disinvent language

We would do well to heed the African linguist Sinfree Makoni's call to "disinvent" this understanding of language as we currently know it, abandon the whole schema of "mother tongues", "native" speakers, and reified languages that obscure the multiplicity and complexity of sociolinguistic practices. We need to take up a speaker-centered view of language (Makoni and Pennycook 2005).

What does that mean?

Linguistic anthropologists prefer to think of language not as "things" to be planned or seeds to be stored, but as **social action**, more than a set of grammatical rules and vocabulary, it is an instrument and a dynamic **practice** – an instrument for the expression of identities and embedded in the dynamics of creating and maintaining social relationships and belonging in particular social groups.

Speech is relational, it is shaped by and contributes to social hierarchy, and it is world-making.

As Hernández (2008) explains, anthropologists give special importance to the **indexical and heteroglossic** properties of language. These are difficult words to translate but with these words we want to say something very basic and essential about language.

And that is that the meaning of what we say does not derive solely from the denotational or referential value of words. Rather it derives also from many aspects of features such as the intonation, morphological and verbal strategies that are always referring or "pointing" (indexing) other previous uses of those elements and the social personae with which these elements are associated. These elements are vehicles that communicate about our social status, for example, or say something about the relationship we have or wish to have with the person we are speaking to, or speaking about, and our attitude towards what we are saying.

As speakers and as listeners, we draw upon these indexical layers, and the diverse and stratified 'voices' that speech is

always embedded in. This is what gives so much richness and complexity to communication. This is key to the speaker-centered perspective on language. To be speaker centered is to recognize that we need to broaden the field of vision, to go beyond the quantity of speakers of "a language" or the amount or the variety chosen, and to situate speakers' dynamic use of language in connection to the social fabric of their lives and relationships.

Let us see how Jone Miren Hernández explains this shift in perspective:

"Orain arte hizkuntzak bakarrik izan du protagonismoa. Hizkuntza abiapuntua eta helburu izan da; tresna eta bitartekoa izan ordez. Hemendik proposamena bestelakoa da: zergatik ez onartu hizkuntzak hiztunak komunitate bateko kideak izateko garain duen garrantzia? Zergatik ez aztertu hizkuntzarekin lotura duten elementuak eta aspektuak komunitate bat edo giza talde bat osatzeko garaian duten papera?" (Hernández 2008:35).

We need to situate the use of the language in the wider context and communities that influence not only the code choices speakers make, but also many of the other features of their speech. To arrive at this, we need different conceptual and methodological apparatuses for the study of language, including among them more ethnographic studies based on the contextualized description of how people use language.

3. Repertoires

A second thing we need to do is to relentlessly critique and challenge what sociolinguists call "monoglot" and "mother tongue" language ideology (Silverstein 1996; Pennycook 2002). Monoglot language ideology is, simply put, the idea that languages are classifiable distinct entities that are defined by a common set of norms that become a means of stratifying speakers. Mother tongue ideology refers to another set of deeply ingrained beliefs that (a) the language one learns at home is defining of one's true or essential identity, and (b) that this is the 'natural' way to learn a language and that such speakers embody a more 'authentic' speakerhood.

Today's sociolinguistics has increasingly moved away from the notion of bounded languages and towards the concept of

repertoire – the array of linguistic resources that speakers deploy in their social relations and world making. This may draw from more than one language or grammar, or from various registers, dialects².

Given that we know that the population of Basque speakers has been changing and diversifying dramatically we can also expect that ways of relating to and speaking Basque have also diversified. There is a whole generation of people who have learned Basque outside the home. They are the majority of young people today and have distinct profiles, different identifications, different ways of learning Basque and, along with that, different ways of engaging with Basque in their lives – with co-workers, with friends, their children, and social media. As Hernández stated back in 2008, the dichotomous view of Basque versus Spanish speakers, communities and identities do not serve us well in this context – if they ever did.

The research project I did with my colleagues Ane Ortega, Esti Amorrortu and Jone Goirigolzarri on new speakers was a very preliminary attempt to grasp the diverse ways new speakers have learned Basque and incorporated it into their lives and their identities (Ortega et al 2015). How do they use Basque in conjunction with other languages they may know? We need to understand so much more than whether or not they speak Basque – we need to understand how and what they do with it. What it means to them.

Our research showed that some 'new' speakers feel identified with and proud of their fluency in the local euskaldun register of his town, others we talked with aspired to that kind of fluency, but have difficulty accessing the networks for learning those registers. And others have no interest in using the language as anything other than a workplace language. While still others see speaking Basque or Spanish as a personal choice not deeply linked to identity and not something that should be invested with any special social or political significance.

Given that ways of speaking are vehicles for expressing our affective attachment to places, to particular communities of practice, to neighborhoods, and to activities, how can the planning of the e5 project going forward respect these and other varied kinds of attachments and ways of engaging with Basque that we have yet to encounter? How can participatory planning create the possibilities for an expansive participation in the design of the future?

4. Speaker centeredness and the community capitals framework

I want to turn now more specifically to the Community Capitals Framework for language planning that is currently underway. It is an approach borrowed from some of the newer forms of organizational management and planning – particularly affirmative inquiry and participatory design thinking.

I want to comment on what I see to be positive about this method, raise some concerns I have, and also point to what I see as some of the distinctive and positive strengths of the Basque language revival movement that I think would be wise to continue.

As I understand it, the strategy of affirmative inquiry used in the Community Capitals Framework begins with the question: what resources does Basque society already have in a variety of domains (social, cultural, political, environmental, economic) that it can draw upon to imagine and enable new scenarios for living in and with Basque? This is an important shift in planning discourse – one that starts with an assessment of strengths, instead of deficit or problems, and gives recognition to the importance of **emotions** – **desire** in particular – as well as **imagination**, with an emphasis on the **generative**, and the **creative**.

I believe – and this is what excites me about this new design approach – is that given that it is constructed from the already always multilingual perspectives of small language communities, is the potential such perspectives might have to take us towards **new kinds of linguistic futures** distinct from the monoglot ideology that has reigned supreme. It might help take us away from the imaginary of the uniformly homogenous linguistic community: one nation, one language, one people. In laying open the question – what are the futures that communities of speakers or aspiring speakers of small languages desire, it could possibly have the potential to be something more radical and liberatory.

Might this practice of affirmative inquiry and collaborative design give rise to elements of a different ontology or way of living language?

I think there is much potential for this affirmative inquiry to lead towards what scholars call “**transition design**” – I will return to this in a moment.

But I want to mention three other positive features of this framework of planning in the e5 project:

1. The principle agent is described as “the community that wants to develop Basque”. This is very notably NOT a linguistically defined or ethnically defined identity. It is not defined by profession either (eg. language planners). Belonging in this community of change is based on a shared aspiration, not on possessing a particular speaker profile or degree of fluency. It is a self-ascribed community of practice –people who come together not based on their identity, but rather on a common activity.
2. I especially applaud the commitment to **polycentrism**, to **collecting various kinds of** imagined scenarios for the future from people active in different walks of life, and to **synchronizing** goals, rather than seeking **uniformity** in outlook.
3. And finally, there is the commitment to participatory methods.

The ability to mobilize popular participation in language revitalization has been one of the real strengths and positive attributes of the Basque language movement. This is something that I don't think has been very well known outside of Euskal Herria. From, the early mobilization of everyday citizens in the ikastolas, the decentralized network of euskalategi and gau eskolas of nature of AEK, to the later emergence of local euskara elkarteak, – this capacity Basques have to come together, to form associations, to cooperate and work together, this is truly a cultural resource – that has served the language movement well.

Then, as now, community involvement, building consensus and a sense of ownership in the process of reclaiming a language, tolerance for critique, asking questions, and reassessment of strategy, these are keys to **resilience** of the movement.

Although I understand its use, I will confess I feel we should be cautious about the use of the term **capital** in this framework. At the very least, any time one uses the term, one wants to do so in a non-naïve way and to recognize that access to and the benefits of capital are often unequal.

I myself prefer the term “resources”. And this is because we live in a neoliberalized economy in which the logics of the

market have colonized a large part of our social world and value system.³ We are constantly being steered toward and participating in valuation systems based on market metrics.

A good deal of sociolinguistic research these days is documenting how this is happening. Increasingly universities market their language teaching programs as cumulative individual assets to advance one's value on the market (Martín Rojo 2018).

We could 'sell' Basque that way. And in the world we inhabit, it might be politically strategic, as SIADECO (2015) has done recently, to quantify the economic value of Basque. If nothing else, this produced a persuasive refutation of the prejudice that small languages are in a sense worthless.

But in the end, I think these metrics and markets don't ultimately serve us well. We cannot forget that it is capitalism itself that has in many ways contributed to the value system and the political economy that works against small languages.

So I want to encourage as radical a design imaginary as possible. I want to encourage actors in euskalgintza to become transition activists/designers for how to live in a small language.

From my work over the years, I see resources that can serve you well. As I have said, the underlying social values of collective work, the capacity to mobilize, to innovate, and the value placed on social solidarity are extraordinary in Basque society – these are tremendous assets.

What other resources and contexts allow us to experience an alternative ontology of language, another way of imagining **how to live and think about language differently?**

I think Bertsolaritza might be one.

I say this because I observe in bertsolaritza – maybe you do as well – a stance toward language that is quite different from the dominant monoglot, monetized, and inherently hierarchical language ideology that surrounds us.

Here, in this practice, language seems not to be conceived so much as an individual possession as much as it is a kind of **commons**; not as an object to be governed, an enumerable thing with rates of growth and decline, but as a place where imagination, creativity, and surprise prevail over the goals of parity with majority languages or the logic of standardized

norms⁴. Here is a potentially valuable resource to draw upon for imagining a more solidary – and playful – relationship to Basque.

At the heart of improvisation is the stance of YES, AND... building upon the speech of those that come before them – this is the principle of **dialogical co-creation**. And this principal is what design thinking, at its best, is all about.

5. Final thoughts

In my book, *Reclaiming Basque*, I said that language revitalization movements are never just preserving a language; they are always also agents in shaping and changing how people understand what language is. This Congress, one hundred years ago, helped to do exactly that: to launch the modern era of language planning.

The e5 project using the Community Capitals framework presents us with a new participatory design methodology that seeks to be more open to imagination. As an outside observer, I do not pretend to dictate your road map. You will know what you most want to do. From my perspective, I want, however, to encourage at least an exploration and possible alignment with transition thinking and transition design.

The transition discourses and movement emerging in the Global North and the Global South call for the collective imagination of other worlds, and other values. They call for a rupture with the capitalist and patriarchal logics of development and perpetual exploitative growth that have brought such catastrophic consequences. There is no fixing of these systems, say transition activists; we must redefine well-being, what Latin Americans call *buen vivir*, reaffirm values of solidarity and recognize radical interdependence. They call in various ways, for a paradigmatic and ontological shift to what Colombian anthropologist Arturo Escobar (2018) calls: the values of the pluriverse.

Does language have a place in this movement? The transition activists do not say much if anything about this. Yet clearly, for many of the indigenous and minoritized communities that are engaged in these social movements, language IS a part of their world-making projects. We have to invent that bridge more explicitly, create that dialogue, between language diversity and the project of the pluriverse. Like transition thinkers, I don't

think we can find a place for small languages without an ontological/epistemic shift of the dominant ways of thinking about language – and thus thinking about life – in capitalist modernity. These ways have not served small languages or really anyone well.

Transition theorist Thomas Berry, whom Escobar draws upon, has said it well: we are now between two stories. The old paradigms of a progress of growth and modernity have failed us, the new paradigm has yet to be designed (Escobar 2018).

In language revitalization, it may be similar. The old goal of “normalization” – whatever that meant – has in some ways run its course. It is time to design what living in a small language can mean today.

As this project moves forward, we can and should embrace the same kind of responsibility that the members of the first Congress of Eusko Ikaskuntza felt to be agents in shaping how language is understood by combining this process of not just **design**, but **transition design**, that will have a pluralist, speaker-centered, approach to language and a capacity to accept diverse ways of living in and with Euskera – from the *bertsolari*, to the code-switching new speaker, the occasional user, to the 'passive' speaker all as having legitimate place in the larger social world of Basque.

I think that much of success of this new and exciting venture will depend on **how** it is carried out and whether it can truly invite pluralist experiences from the margins as well as the center of *euskalgintza*.

References cited

- Altuna, Olatz and Urla, Jacqueline. 2013. The Basque Street Survey: Two decades of assessing the public use of Basque. *Int. Jo. of the Sociology of Language* 224:209-227.
- Blommaert, Jan and Backus, Ad. 2012. Superdiverse Repertoires and the Individual. *Tilburg Papers in Culture Studies*. Paper 24.
- Escobar, Arturo. 2018. *Designs for the Pluriverse. Radical Interdependence, Autonomy, and the Making of Worlds*. Duke University Press.
- Estornes, Idoia. 1983. *La Sociedad de Estudios Vascos: aportación de Eusko Ikaskuntza a la cultura vasca, 1918-1936*. San Sebastián: Eusko Ikaskuntza.
- Flores, Nelson. 2017. Bilingual Education. In, *The Oxford Handbook of Language and Society*. O. García, N. Flores, and M. Spotti, eds. Pp. 525-543.
- Flores, Nelson and Rosa, Jonathan. 2015. Undoing Appropriateness: Raciolinguistic Ideologies and Language Diversity in Education. *Harvard Educational Review*. 85(2):149-171.
- Harvey, David. 2005. *Neoliberalism: A Brief History*. Oxford University Press.
- Makoni, Sifre and Pennycook, Alastair. 2005. Disinventing and (Re)Constituting Languages. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, 2:3, 137-156.
- Martín Rojo, Luisa. 2015. Neoliberalism and Linguistic Governmentality. *The Oxford Handbook of Language Policy and Planning*. James Tollefson and Miguel Pérez-Milans, eds. Oxford University Press. Pp. 544-567.
- Mill, John Stuart. 1861. *Considerations on Representative Government*. London: Parker, Son and Bourn.
- Moore, Robert. 2017. Discourses of Endangerment from Mother Tongues to Machine Readability. In, *The Oxford Handbook of Language and Society*. O. García, N. Flores, and M. Spotti, eds. Pp. 221-242.
- Ortega, Ane; Urla, Jacqueline; Amorrortu, Estibaliz; Goirigolzarri, Jone and Uranga, Belén. 2015 "Linguistic Identity Among New Speakers of Basque". *Int. Jo. of the Sociology of Language* 231: 85-105.
- Pennycook, Alastair. 2002. Mother Tongues, governmentality and protectionism. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 154:11-28.
- Sarasua, Jon. 2005. Present-day Bertsolaritza: Reality and Challenges. In, *Voicing the Moment: Improvised Oral Poetry and Basque Tradition*. Samuel Armistead and Joseba Zulaika, eds. Reno, NV: Center for Basque Studies. Pp. 305-321.
- Sherzer, Joel. 2002. *Speech Play and Verbal Art*. 1st ed. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Siadeco. 2015. *Valor e Impacto Económico del Euskera. Resumen de Resultados*. Study Commissioned by the Department of Education, Language Policy and Culture. Vice Ministry of Language Policy. Vitoria-Gasteiz: Eusko Jaurlaritza.
- Silverstein, Michael. 1996. Monoglot 'Standard' in America: Standardization and Metaphors of Linguistic Hegemony. In, *The Matrix of Language*. Donald Brenneis and Ronald Macaulay, eds. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press. Pp. 284-306.
- Urla, Jacqueline. 1989. Reinventing Basque Society: Cultural Difference and the Quest for Modernity, 1918-1936. In, William A. Douglass, ed. *Essays in Basque Social Anthropology and History*. Reno: University of Nevada Press. Pp. 149-176.
- Urla, Jacqueline. 2012. *Reclaiming Basque: Language, Nation and Cultural Activism*. University of Nevada Press.
- Urla, J. et al. 2017. Basque Standardization and the New Speaker: Political Praxis and the Shifting Dynamics of Authority and Value. In, P. Lane and J. Costa, eds. *Standardizing Minority Languages: Competing Ideologies of Authority and Authenticity in the Global Periphery*. Routledge Critical Studies in Multilingualism.
- Urla, Jacqueline and Burdick, Christa. 2018. Counting Matters: Measuring the Vitality of Basque. *The International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 252:73-96.

Notes

1. Julio Urquijo 1918. Estado Actual de los Estudios Relativos de la Lengua Vasca (Primer Congreso de Estudios Vascos); Julio Urquijo 1919. Lengua internacional y lenguas nacionales: el euskera lengua de civilización (RIEV 10). Luis de Elizalde 1918. Metodología para la restauración del euskera. (Primer Congreso de Estudios Vascos). Luis de Eleizalde. El problema de la enseñanza del País Vasco. (Primer Congreso de Estudios Vascos).

2. See Blommaert and Backus (2012) on the notion of repertoire. See also the interesting work of Jonathan Rosa and Nelson Flores (Flores 2017; Rosa and Flores 2015), among others, who seek to understand the verbal dexterity exhibited in the repertoires of latinx youth.

3. I use the term “neoliberalism” to refer to the ideology that the governing social principle is or should be the maximizing of market potential, making any practice or form of knowledge valuable to the extent that it has market value (see, e.g., Harvey 2005).

4. Speech play (Sherzer 2002) is at the core of the verbal art of *bertsolaritza*. Also important is the improvisor's stance toward other speakers; this is a stance of 'yes and' – of building upon one another's narratives, of creating pleasure by an acute observation, an unexpected image or pun. The fact that poets early on decided to create and run their own association is a crucial factor in the character that *bertsolaritza* has today. The resistance to commodification, cosmopolitanism, solidarity and exchange basque improvisers have developed with improvisers elsewhere in the world is a direct result of this self governance (see Sarasua 2005).