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Document downloaded from:

<http://hdl.handle.net/10459.1/71137>

The final publication is available at:

<https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2021.1898615>

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# **The Differentiated Role of Language Knowledge and Linguistic Acculturation Strategies in the Configuration of Occupational Aspirations: The Case of the Descendants of Migrants in Western Catalonia**

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This work was supported by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness; under Grant EDU2017-82479-R; Agency for Management of University and Research Grants – AGAUR of the Government of Catalonia under Grant 2017 SGR 322; and RecerCaixa program -Obra Social la Caixa and ACUP under Grant 2016ACUP00020.

# **The Differentiated Role of Language Knowledge and Linguistic Acculturation Strategies in the Configuration of Occupational Aspirations: The Case of the Descendants of Migrants in Western Catalonia**

**Abstract:** One of the most influential factors in the future access to the labor market of young descendant of migrants is their occupational aspirations. Sociodemographic, socio-cultural, and socio-professional family elements or knowledge of languages are key in their formation. But in bilingual societies like Catalonia, the symbolism associated to languages is an added complexity. Thus, this article aims to analyse the influence and predictive power of linguistic knowledge and linguistic acculturation profiles on occupational aspirations, using a questionnaire completed by 205 young people of African, European, and Latin American origin in Lleida.

The findings indicate that better knowledge of Catalan and a profile of linguistic acculturation which emphasizes this language predict above-mean occupational aspirations. Knowledge of Spanish has an unclear role and a profile prioritising Spanish is a negative predictor.

We conclude that language knowledge becomes a resource 'through' its symbolic value, questioning theories postulating that multilingualism always allows/facilitates access to better occupations.

**Keywords:** Linguistic Acculturation, Language Knowledge, Occupational Aspirations, Catalonia, Descendants of Immigrants

## **Introduction**

One of the most important predictors of future access to the labour market is occupational aspiration which is known to be decisively influenced by issues connected to the family's socioeconomic and sociocultural level, academic performance and knowledge of languages (Alarcón et al., 2014; Portes et al., 2017; Portes et al., 2010; Sewell et al., 1969; Kao & Tienda, 1998, among others).

However, in the case of bilingual contexts and migrants, one's knowledge of the language(s) of the host society, linguistic preferences or linguistic ideologies may be ambivalent. In this line, Chiswick (2008), based on data obtained in different countries such as United States of America (USA), Canada, Australia, Israel and Bolivia, concludes that being bilinguals may improve immigrant's wages, although this linguistic competence does not always translate into an increase in their human capital. In Catalonia, a Spanish region with two official languages -Catalan and Spanish- and where more than 300 languages coexist (Grup d'Estudi de Llengües Amenaçades, 2020), Alarcón and Garzón (2013) show how Spanish is the language that facilitates access to the labour market at first, but it is Catalan that makes upward social mobility possible in the long term. Also, Alarcón and Parella (2013), point out that there are different integration routes for the descendants of migrants, which reflects a high degree of linguistic segmentation. Even so, when comparing the linguistic ideologies of young people in the 1980s and in the early years of the 21st century, Newman et al. (2008) conclude that there has been a shift from a "Parochial" to a "Cosmopolitan" vision that would help overcoming the linguistic boundaries among groups.

Given these considerations, located in Western Catalonia, this issue leads to questions of great theoretical and contextual importance including: Which are the occupational aspirations, the linguistic knowledge and the linguistic acculturation strategies of young descendants of migrants? Which is the language knowledge of Catalan and Spanish, linguistic acculturation profiles and origin of the young people who obtained higher occupational aspirations? Which and how do these variables predict higher occupational aspirations?

## **Theoretical Notes**

### ***Occupational Aspirations***

Occupational achievement of descendants of migrants is key to their inclusion in society under equitable conditions. One of the main predictors are occupational aspirations which are important in and of themselves and also because they reflect deeper social processes (Alarcón et al., 2014; Portes et al., 2017; Portes et al., 2010; Sewell et al., 1969; Kao & Tienda, 1998, among others). One of them is future social desirability, also known by some authors as ‘ambition’ (Feliciano & Rumbaut, 2005; Portes et al. 2009). Although it may seem obvious, ambition is a necessary condition for achieving a goal, nonetheless is not sufficient. Applied to the future occupational achievement of young people: to reach an occupation, one must aspire to it even though such aspiration does not alone guarantee it will be achieved (Hirschmann, 2001; Kao & Tienda, 1998).

As a result, research on occupational aspirations has consistently shown that there are different influential variables. Firstly, the role of the education level and occupational

status of the parents is decisive. Whether based on approaches under the Wisconsin Model (Sewell et al., 1969; Portes et al., 1978) or the Theory of Human Capital (Becker, 1983; Schultz, 1972), research has repetitively demonstrated that the higher the socio-educational and socio-professional level of a family, the higher the children's aspirations. The explanation is that children's high occupational and education aspirations are mediated by high parental motivation towards academic and occupational achievement (Buchmann & Dalton, 2002).

The case of descendants of migrants is no different. However, other conditioning factors are involved besides just the family's socio-educational and socioeconomic level. For example, gender, place of birth and age upon arrival, the family structure, inter-group relations and origin appear in most studies even though their effect is not always the same (Alarcón et al., 2014; Portes et al., 2010; Portes & Rivas, 2011; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001).

In second place and related to linguistic variables, it can be found language skills and the linguistic acculturation strategies. Applied to occupational aspirations, language knowledge has been widely studied whereas the linguistic acculturation strategies thereof have been less so.

### ***Language Knowledge, Linguistic Acculturation and Occupational Aspirations.***

As just mentioned, linguistic factors are quite relevant to the construction of occupational aspirations. To this end, again there is consensus as to the fact that higher knowledge of the society's language(s) determines even higher occupational aspirations which may potentially lead to better future occupations (Alarcón et al., 2014; Portes et al., 2010;

Portes & Rivas, 2011; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001, among others). This kind of approach tends to view knowledge of languages as another type of human capital. It is a skill which requires a cost (a significant investment of time/effort) to possess, yet also brings benefits (greater chances of finding a better job) (Di Paolo & Raymond, 2010).

These perspectives are not exempt of criticism, especially in the case of migrants and bilingual societies. Alarcón and Garzón (2013) mention three points of controversy. The first refers to the premise that proficiency in the majority language brings a higher economic return. This fact is observed when the percentage of non-speakers of the majority language is small, yet not necessarily in a high immigration context, since in these cases the residential and labour concentration may produce that its use is rarely needed (Benito & González, 2009; Chiwisk, 2008); secondly, bilingual immigrants (heritage language - majority language) do not receive better salaries or better occupations as employers value their languages as ethnic attributes rather than an economic advantage (Alarcón & Garzón, 2013). In other words, and by way of example, in certain circumstances speaking/knowing Arabic is judged as a marker of belonging to a community (which in many contexts is discriminated and stigmatized) rather than a value that can be added to the workplace; thirdly, the symbolic value of languages, in bilingual societies is more obvious and, thus, knowledge of a certain variety of the languages over another may become important. That is, the use of a certain 'non-legitimate' accent/linguistic variety is again an indication of a class (and/or ethnolinguistic) position rather than an element of human capital (Bourdieu, 1982; Newman et al., 2008).

To summarize, all the foregoing is simply an example of how languages also hold another type of value - symbolic - which can facilitate or restrict access to certain resources. It is here where languages coincide with acculturation strategies.

Based on the work of Bourhis (2001), Bourhis et al. (1997), Berry (1980, 2005, 2009), Navas et al. (2005) or Navas and Rojas (2010), the Theory of Acculturation, regarding the linguistic side, expects that young descendants of migrants in a bilingual society and in the public sphere construct different *strategies of linguistic acculturation*: i) where language A dominates, which implies a high level of adoption of that language and lesser of the other (language B), ii) where language B dominates, which would be the opposite, iii) and the bilingual strategy, aimed at a balanced adoption of the two majority languages (A+B)<sup>1</sup> or, iv) marginalization, where not much importance is placed on a good knowledge of either.

Although there are few studies that analyse the influence of linguistic acculturation strategies on occupational aspirations, Bourhis (2001) or Lapresta et al. (2020) start from the hypothesis that a bilingual strategy tends to produce more balanced outputs.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless it is no less true that both outputs and strategies are neither static nor unalterable. The approach and management of language and reception policies as well as the social assessment of languages are two basic factors to understanding their construction and changes.

Regarding language management and reception policies of the context, for this specific case it must be bear in mind that Catalonia is a region located in the northeast corner of Spain where two official languages (Catalan and Spanish) coexist after the

approval of the Spanish constitution of 1978.<sup>3</sup> In 1983, the Language Normalization Act was passed with the aim of promoting Catalan in the society of the eighties and nineties of the last century, which was characterized by a large presence of Spanish speakers from other parts of Spain. Its implementation involved: i) the introduction of Catalan as a vehicular language in the education system through so-called immersion programs (even though they are actually conjunction programs) (Vila-Moreno & Galindo, 2009), which consolidated knowledge of Catalan and Spanish, ii) a significant presence in the regional media and, iii) its government use (Turell, 2001).

This law has been an exemplary model due to its success. This success is both in learning languages and attitude as well as in fostering rising social mobility (Solé 1981; Woolard & Gang 1990). Moreover, Catalan became the language of social integration and ascent while Spanish was mainly a language for communication (Pujolar, 2008) associated with the first generation of working-class immigrants often of rural origin from the rest of Spain (Alarcón & Garzón, 2013). This meant the use of Catalan by those young people gave them access to better occupations than their parents had (Rendon, 2007; Solé, 1981; Woolard, 1985).

Yet nowadays, the sociodemographic and sociolinguistic composition of young people have radically changed, which has pushed a reconsideration of the role of languages as a vehicle for integration. From the very first reception plans formulated at the beginning of the century, the aim has been for Catalan to be the vehicle for a shared co-existence project without forgetting its role as a driver of social ascent (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2006, 2009, 2014, 2017). Such is the case that reports on the integration of

migrants prepared in 2013 and 2015 recommend increasing knowledge of Catalan as a catalyser for occupational improvement (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2013, 2015).

The initiatives proposed by these public policies have led to an ambivalent appreciation of the social assessment of languages by descendants of migrants. The aforementioned work by Alarcón and Garzón (2013) indicates that although Catalan may continue to hold great symbolic value in addition to being the language of integration and rising social mobility, there are differences with respect to the previous migratory cycle. First of all, origin plays an important role. In the case of Moroccan descendants who have attained a university education, the main concern is reducing their Berber or Amazigh accent even though this effort to become linguistically assimilated is not valued in the labour market. In the case of young people from Latin America, just as detected in other work (Lapresta et al., 2010a, 2018; Lapresta et al., 2010b), there is a conscious refusal to use the Catalan language unless it is absolutely essential to finding a job, which is contemplated as a remote possibility.

In conclusion, the backgrounds of these young people, the experiences of discrimination faced, and residential segregation eventually make language preferences and assessments vary, which many times hinders a direct relationship between greater language knowledge and access to better occupations.

Added to all of this is the fact that, although the majority preference of the descendants of foreign migrants is Spanish, those who live in a high socioeconomic environment or come from mixed couples largely prefer Catalan. This is also true for

those from China and Morocco (unlike those from a Latin American country) (Alarcón & Parella, 2013).

Finally, the few studies on occupational aspirations carried out in Barcelona and Madrid indicate that they are lower than, for instance, those of the descendants of migrants in USA. Specifically, in the case of Barcelona, Alarcón et al. (2014) explain this phenomenon by the ethnic and linguistic segmentation of this labor market in Catalonia. This means that the best jobs are occupied mainly by natives, thus producing more restricted aspirations among descendants of migrants. Portes et al. (2010) reached to similar conclusions in Madrid.

With this complex background, the aims of this article are to analyse and quantify the influence and predictive power of linguistic variables on the occupational aspirations of migrant descendants in Catalonia. It is an aspect that has not been studied much jointly considering the language knowledge and linguistic acculturation strategies.

### ***The Present Study***

This study was conducted in the city of Lleida, the capital of the province of the same name, situated in the west of Catalonia. The population in 2019 was 138,956 people making it the most populated provincial capital after Barcelona (ahead of Tarragona and Girona). Another characteristic feature is the high percentage of foreign resident population which totals 18.74%, only behind Girona (20.13%) and ahead of Barcelona (17.57%) and Tarragona (17.43%) (Spanish National Statistics Institute, 2020).

One other consideration is essential to estimating the population with cultural and linguistic background which is not traditionally Catalan and/or Spanish. The data on acquisition of Spanish nationality indicate that around 3-5% of those with it have received it due to residency. This means that added to the volume of foreigners are a significant number of people with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds with Spanish nationality (Spanish National Statistics Institute, 2020).

All of this is transferrable to the young people of Lleida. Of a total of 3,981 boys and girls aged 14-16, some 14.14% are foreign (563), in addition to a considerable number of people who have acquired nationality after birth.

According to the most recent official data, Lleida is socio-linguistically characterized as a context where the Catalan language is very much socially significant. 57% of the population regularly uses Catalan, well above the regions of Girona (54.10%), Camp de Tarragona (40.40%) and metropolitan Barcelona (27.50%). Moreover, 6.90% of the population regularly uses other languages (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2019a).

Socioeconomically, the tertiary sector predominates in Lleida, although the agricultural sector and farming industry are of great importance. An example of this is that in 2018 the proportion of occupations linked to agriculture was 5 times higher than in Catalonia as a whole (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2019b). The occupations to which foreigners are dedicated are not in different sectors, being mainly centered in agriculture (53.31%) and the service sector (36.39%). Although it is also true that their unemployment rate is higher than the total (38.60% Vs. 11.90%) and the prestige of their jobs are lower (Generalitat de Catalunya, 2019b).

## **Objectives**

The objectives of this article are:

- (1) To establish the occupational aspirations of young descendants of migrants aged 14 to 16 in Lleida (Western Catalonia).
- (2) To analyse the effect of the knowledge of languages, linguistic acculturation strategies and origin on the development of higher occupational aspirations.
- (3) To study whether these variables are predictors of higher occupational aspirations.

These objectives aim to answer the research questions exposed at the beginning of the article:

RQ1: Which are the occupational aspirations, the linguistic knowledge and the linguistic acculturation strategies of these young people?

RQ2: Which is the language knowledge of Catalan and Spanish, linguistic acculturation profiles and origin of the young people who obtained above-average occupational aspirations?

RQ3: Which and how do these variables predict above-average occupational aspirations?

## **Method**

### *Participants*

The participants in the study are 205 young people of African, European and Latin American origin in the city of Lleida. Their mean age is 15.15 years and they are currently studying at six different public secondary schools.<sup>4</sup>

Delving deeper into their origin, most of the young people of African origin were born Moroccan or are of Moroccan descent, those of European origin are Romanians or are of Romanian descent and those of Latin American origin are Colombians or of Colombian descent.

INSERT TABLE 1 NEAR HERE

### *Variables*

The variables used for this article are:

- Occupational aspirations: this was determined with an open question regarding the occupation they would like to have as adults. Once the responses were obtained, they were coded based on status following the Professional Prestige Scale created by Carabaña and Gómez-Bueno (1996). This classification provides

an indicator of professional status in a range of 60-350. Given the aims of the article and although descriptively, they will be presented disaggregated. The following categories will be used for the multivariate analysis: higher than mean / not higher than mean.

- Knowledge of Catalan: form teachers assessed each young person's knowledge of Catalan language on a 5-point Likert scale.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, external individual knowledge data are presented. This is important because most studies on language and occupational aspirations are based on subjective data on language knowledge.
- Knowledge of Spanish: the process was similar to the one above, yet assessing their knowledge of Spanish.
- Linguistic acculturation strategies: inspired by the work of Berry et al. (2004), Bourhis et al. (1997) and Bourhis (2001), the scales used by Navas et al. (2005) and Navas and Rojas (2010) or Lapresta et al. (2020) were adapted to a 5-point Likert scale on the extent of the adoption of Catalan and Spanish in two areas: at school and with unknown adults.<sup>6</sup> An example of these questions: To what extent do you adopt [Catalan/Spanish] [at school in general / with unknown adults]? Therefore, a total of 4 items (2 domains x 2 languages) were used to construct the clusters.
- Origin: admits the categories of Europe / Africa / Latin America

### ***Data Analysis***

Descriptive statistics, tests of association (chi-square and V's Cramer) and mean contrasts (ANOVA) were used.

A k-means clustering was done to detect the linguistic acculturation profiles using the Euclidean distance as a measure of similarity and maximum variance between clusters with the 4 linguistic acculturation items described above. They were not standardized since all the variables are measured on the same scale. This technique has been widely used in studies of this kind (Navas & Rojas, 2010; Berry et al., 2005).

A binary logistic regression was then done. The purpose was to analyse the predictive capacity of the linguistic acculturation profiles, language knowledge assessments and origin on the development of above mean occupational aspirations. The level of significance used in all cases was 0.05. The data were processed using SPSS version 24 statistics software.

### ***Procedure***

Once the corresponding authorities were informed and the necessary authorizations were obtained, we addressed the secondary schools included in order to request their approval and collaboration.

The surveys were conducted collectively with the class groups (number of class groups) by personnel trained for such purpose. The questionnaire was provided in Catalan since it is the vehicular language of instruction in Catalonia. It took 30 – 45 minutes to

complete. On the other hand, the form teachers for each class group provided an individual assessment of knowledge of the official languages for each student.

## **Results**

### ***Occupational Aspirations, Language Knowledge and Linguistic Acculturation Strategies.***

*Which are the Occupational Aspirations, the Linguistic Knowledge and the Linguistic Acculturation Strategies of these Young People?*

The occupational aspirations of the migrant descendants correspond to occupations of medium-low professional prestige, reaching a mean score of nearly 150 points ( $\bar{x}$ = 153.81;  $\sigma$  = 41.98), on a scale of 60-350. Even still, somewhat more than half of the young people aspire to occupations of a professional prestige above this mean (53%).

On the other hand, the mean assessment of Catalan and Spanish knowledge was medium and very similar at 3.05 ( $\sigma$ = 0.88) and 3.04 ( $\sigma$ = 0.92), respectively (on a scale of 1 to 5, as mentioned).

Linguistic acculturation strategies were handled separately. The closest-fitting solution in the cluster analysis reveals three acculturation strategies.

The one with the most subjects (38.91%) is what could be called 'bilingual' with a high score in the adoption of Catalan and Spanish at school in general and with unknown

adults (Figure 1). The young people choosing a ‘Spanish’ profile account for 31.03% while those choosing a ‘Catalan’ profile, 30.04%.

INSERT FIGURE 1 NEAR HERE

The sociodemographic and sociocultural composition of these groups show no significant differences at all, except for knowledge of Catalan (Table 2).

INSERT TABLE 2 NEAR HERE

Comparatively and as trends, there is a rather balanced percentage of boys and girls in the three strategies and the mean age is around 15. Greater percentage variability exists when comparing the distribution of origins with those from Africa slightly standing out in the bilingual profile, those from Latin America in the Spanish profile and those from Europe in the Catalan profile.

The variables related to the parents’ professional status and education level also do not reflect significant differences. The mean prestige of the fathers’ and mothers’ occupations is low in all cases (around 83-92 points) while the fathers and mothers mostly have primary or secondary education levels.

Finally, and as already mentioned, the linguistic acculturation strategy only introduces significant differences in knowledge of Catalan language ( $F_{(2,203)} = 3.51$ ;  $p = .032$ ). More specifically, those choosing Catalan have significantly better competence ( $\bar{x} = 3.26$ ;  $\sigma = 0.93$ ) than their peers with a Spanish profile ( $\bar{x} = 2.83$ ;  $\sigma = 0.97$ ).

### ***Bivariate Analysis and Linguistic Predictors of Occupational Aspirations***

*Which is the Language Knowledge of Catalan and Spanish, Linguistic Acculturation Strategies and Origin of the Young People who obtained Above-average Occupational Aspirations?*

Knowledge of Catalan among young people whose occupational aspirations are above mean is higher than those with lower aspirations ( $\bar{x}= 3.21$ ;  $\sigma= 0.75$  vs  $\bar{x}= 2.94$ ;  $\sigma= 0.97$ ). There are no significant differences in the case of knowledge of Spanish (Table 3).

Secondly, young people with above mean occupational aspirations mostly construct predominantly Catalan linguistic acculturation strategies (40.80%), followed by those with a bilingual profile (35.90%) and those with a predominantly Spanish profile (23.30%).

Thirdly, the origin is also significant. Of those with higher occupational aspirations, 43.20% are of European origin, 30.50% are of African origin and 26.30% are of Latin American origin.

INSERT TABLE 3 NEAR HERE

*Which and how do these Variables predict Above-average Occupational Aspirations?*

As concerns the logistic regression results, Model I shows the linguistic predictors (Table 4).

The one with the greatest weight is comprised of linguistic acculturation strategies (Wald= 7.796; p= .007), yet it is only significant in the case of those with a predominantly Spanish profile in comparison to those with a predominantly Catalan profile. What's more, it is negatively significant. In other words, developing a Spanish linguistic acculturation strategy implies a higher likelihood of not having above-mean occupational aspirations than those who choose Catalan.

Knowledge of Catalan is also significant; in this case, positive: a higher assessment score of Catalan knowledge predicts above-mean occupational aspirations.

INSERT TABLE 4 NEAR HERE

The second model introduces origin which, although not significant (yet very close to being so), does show some variation. Firstly, the model improves (Nagelkerke  $R^2 = .150$ ). Secondly, and even though everything mentioned for Model I does not reflect any important variations; assessment of Spanish knowledge becomes significant. However, unlike knowledge of Catalan, it is negatively significant meaning that greater knowledge of Spanish predicts occupational aspirations that are not above mean.<sup>7</sup>

## **Discussion and Conclusions**

The first determination is that the occupational aspirations of the young people studied are lower than those of migrant descendants in other countries such as the USA (Portes et al., 2009; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). This finding is no less remarkable simply because it is expected as it is in absolute concordance with other studies conducted in Madrid and Barcelona (Alarcón et al., 2014; Portes et al., 2010). On the other hand, the linguistic knowledge of Spanish and Catalan is medium, but in the case of those whose occupational aspirations are above average that of Catalan is higher. This fact shows that the knowledge of languages has an influence on their configuration (Alarcón et al., 2014; Portes et al., 2010; Portes & Rivas, 2011; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001), although Catalan knowledge is the one that predicts the highest aspirations. Finally, the majority acculturation linguistic strategy is bilingual, which is consistent with other studies on this topic of the descendants of migrants in Catalonia (Lapresta et al. 2020). But again, the strategy that predicts the highest aspirations is the one that favors Catalan.

Evidently, the results have their limitations and more extensive studies as well as qualitative research to complement it are needed, nonetheless this does not preclude to draw some theory and contextual implications as to the role of linguistic factors in the formation of occupational aspirations in Western Catalonia.

Firstly, greater knowledge of Catalan among immigrant children predicts above-mean occupational aspirations while abilities in Spanish do the opposite. Secondly, young people with a predominantly Catalan linguistic acculturation profile are more likely to have better expectations than those who prioritize Spanish.

Regarding the first point and considering the theory of human capital, greater knowledge of the two languages should predict higher academic aspirations. This fact, which is true for Catalan, is not so for Spanish which seems to confirm some of the criticism that has been lodged against this theory in the case of migrant descendants in bilingual contexts. Proficiency in a majority language (Spanish) does not imply higher aspirations and, in the case of these descendants of Latin American migrants, proficiency in and the use of their own dialectal variety may be perceived as an ethnic marker, not as human capital.

As a result, it seems as though language knowledge in Catalonia becomes human capital ‘through’ the symbolic capital which is connected with the second point mentioned. The fact that predominantly Catalan linguistic acculturation produces higher occupational aspirations than Spanish acculturation can be largely understood if the symbolic and integration value attributed to the Catalan language is considered. To this end, it seems that society in general and integration and language policies in particular, may be implicitly transmitting the idea that the language that facilitates social ascent is Catalan. This does not mean the Spanish language is not valued; however, it is valued as a language mainly for communication which obviously facilitates access to the labour market yet through another occupation profile. In other words, and in complete concordance with the results of other studies (Alarcón et al., 2014; Pujolar et al., 2010), knowledge of Spanish could be a predictor of higher occupational aspirations, yet knowledge of Catalan is a predictor of the best aspirations. It is hardly odd then that young people choosing to mainly use Catalan reflect ambitions of occupations of a higher status than their peers who essentially use Spanish.

All this could indicate once again that in bilingual societies and when focused on the descendants of migrants, one must be very careful when establishing direct relationships between linguistic knowledge and occupational achievement.

These ideas are even more relevant when considering that all these processes not only arise when accessing the labour market but also in the education system when aspirations of what 'can be expected' or is 'desirable' in such labour market are being formed (Feliciano and Rumbaut, 2005; Portes et al., 2009).

All things considered, what could happen if these young people, who become assimilated to a certain extent, do not fulfil their aspirations because of other social processes such as residential, ethnic or other segregation preventing them? This question requires further study with larger longitudinal samples that include a qualitative perspective; however, it could be hypothesized that the non-fulfilment of one's desires would lead to frustration and conflictive or marginalizing behaviours. These situations of social fracture are well known in surrounding countries with a greater tradition of welcoming migrants.

To prevent them, more in-depth reception, language, education and labour policies are required. Such in depth studies will not only value the Catalan and Spanish languages socially and economically speaking, but also the broad linguistic range offered by migrant descendants.

As a society, it is absurd that a portion of the population proficient in three or four languages must face discrimination and be at disadvantage when accessing the labour

market, above all because they have a different background which is ‘traditionally’ Catalan and/or Spanish. After all, what they truly reflect is a new and immense human and cultural capital.

## **Endnotes**

1. From the perspective of the descendants of migrants, in a bilingual context, majority languages can be considered as the ones with greater ethnolinguistic vitality (with a greater demographic base, normative recognition and high socioeconomic status) (Giles et al. 1977).

2. These outputs include, among others, linguistic knowledge and uses, self-identification or linguistic integration (Bourhis 2001; Lapresta et al. 2020).

3. Actually, three official languages coexist in Catalonia: Catalan, Spanish and Aranese (a language spoken in the Aran Valley).

4. The reason for their public secondary school enrolment is that descendants of migrants have the right and obligation in Spain to enrol in mandatory education despite their legal status. This means almost all of the population is enrolled in school.

5. It refers to a teacher who oversees a particular class in a school.

6. These two areas were chosen as they encompass the public sphere rather completely by covering linguistic interactions with closer and more distant individuals.

7. The results hold steady with alternative models not presented herein yet which processed the two languages separately (due to the high risk of collinearity).

## **Disclosure statement**

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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