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Language Acquisition vs Ethnic Identity: How Family Involvement Affects Heritage Language Maintenance

By: Lyndsy Cadet '20

Descripción

This project analyzes the relationship between ethnic identity and maintenance of its heritage language. Specifically, how the level of familiarity with the parent's culture affects the acquisition of Spanish in first generation participants in the North-East region. The study has implications for participants and teachers. For participants, it is important to learn about their heritage culture to maintain their language skills to then pass down their history to future generations. For teachers, to promote the maintenance of a student's heritage language and the acquisition of a second language, as well as, create a space for students to feel comfortable to take pride in their bilingualism and culture.

Vocabulary

Generación 1: (G1)

People (young adults and older) who emigrated to the US while being fluent in other languages other than English

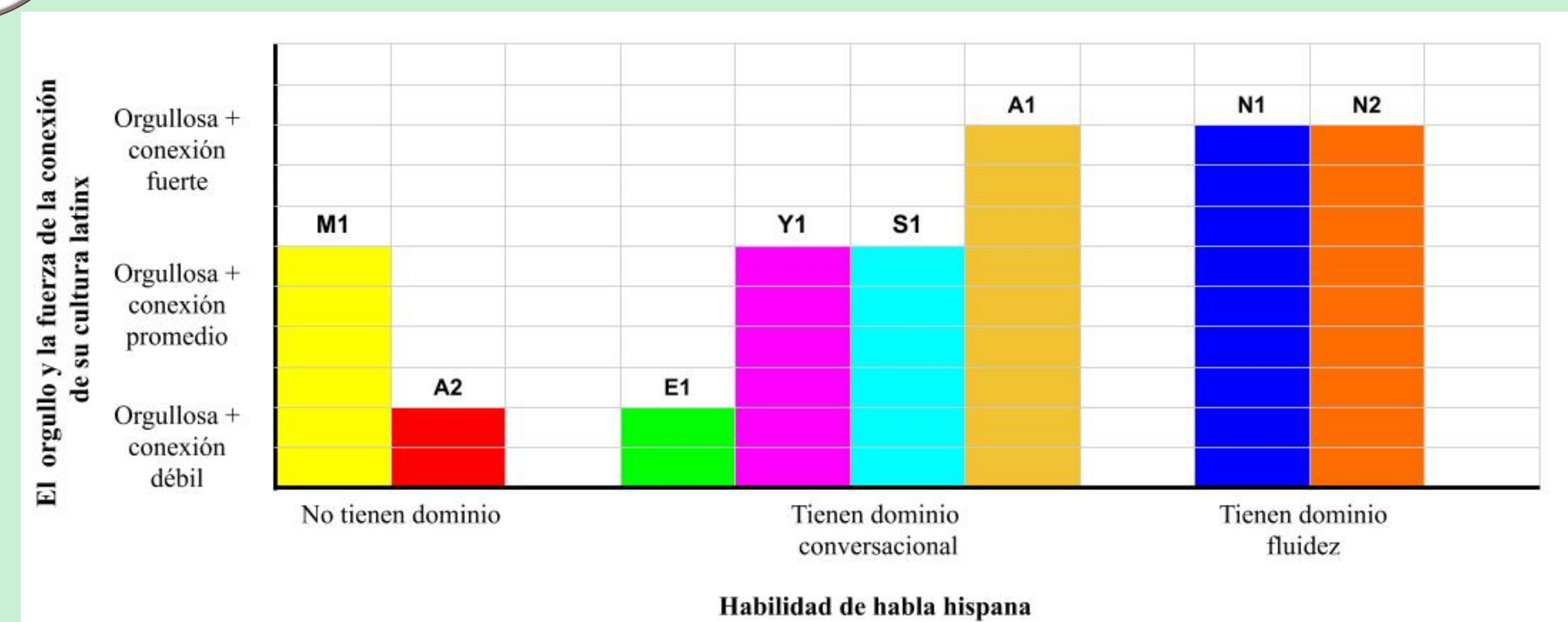
Generación 2: (G2)

People who were born in the United States and has at least one immigrant parent

~This is referring to sociolinguistic generation types~

PREGUNTA DE INVESTIGACIÓN 1:
¿Hay una conexión entre el nivel de español de un hablante y sus sentimientos hacia su etnicidad?

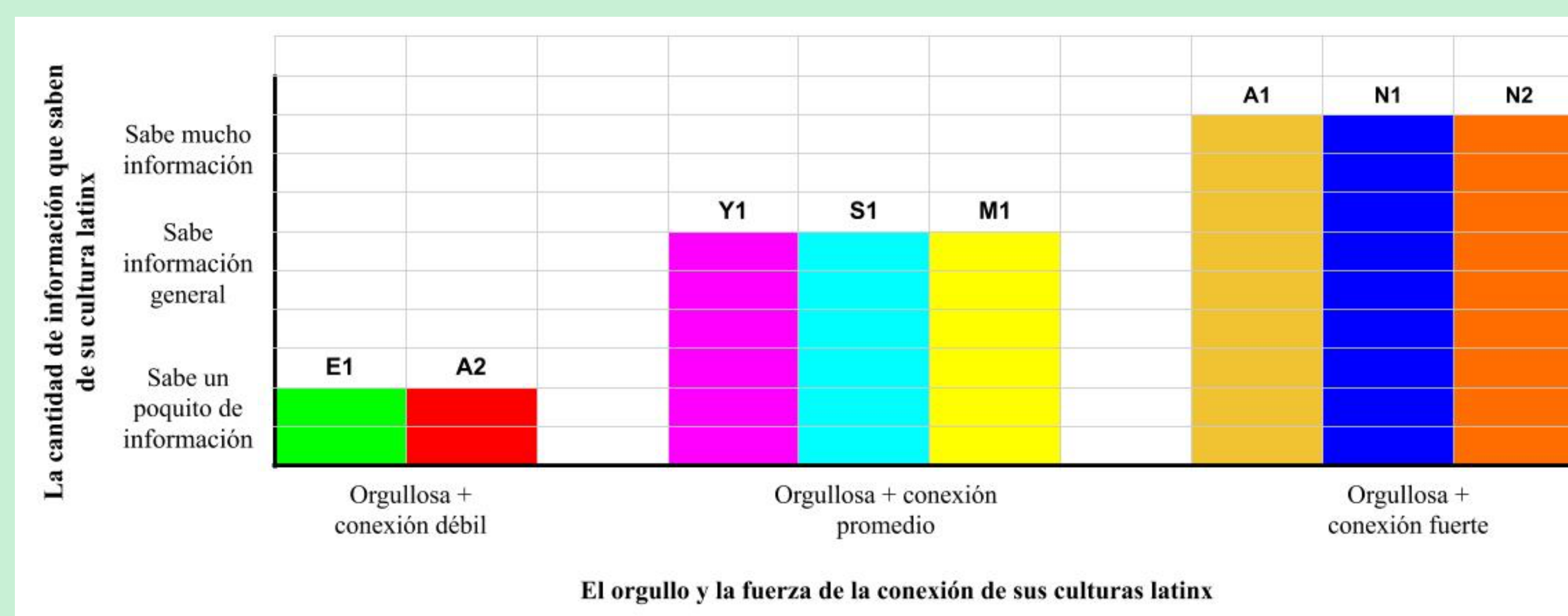
Resultados de las entrevistas



A pesar de los diferentes niveles de habla hispana, todas se sienten orgullosas de sus raíces étnicas en cada entrevista.

PREGUNTA DE INVESTIGACIÓN 2:
¿La fuerza de conexión que ellas sienten con su etnicidad afecta la cantidad de información que conocen ésta?

KEY:
(X)1 = Participant ID



Las participantes sienten una conexión más fuerte cuando saben más información de sus orígenes. Por lo tanto la cantidad de información influye en la fuerza de la conexión que ellas tienen orígenes étnicos

Metodología

Marco teórico:

Método directo (Garrett 2010)

- Entrevista sobre las relaciones entre mis participantes (G2) y su familia (G1), la adquisición de sus idiomas, y que aspectos de cultura y tradiciones les aprendían de G1

Resumen de mis entrevistadoras:

- 8 estudiantes universitarias
- Todas viven en el Noreste, EEUU
- 3 de ellas son una mezcla de 2 etnicidades
- Tienen a menos de un padre que es G1.

Límitaciones

- Tamaño de la muestra (8 participantes)

Conclusion

- The variable that influences how strongly connected G2 feels to their ethnicity is how much information they know about their culture.
- The G2's Spanish speaking ability indirectly affects how connected they feel with their ethnicity
- G2's Spanish speaking ability can affect how effectively G1 can share or teach cultural traditions & history
- In order to preserve ethnic, cultural norms for future generations, it is essential that G1 & G2 have a strong relationship

Recommendations

THE GOAL: To maintain the preservation of the heritage language in future sociolinguistic generations

- G1 needs to teach their children how to speak their heritage language and their ethnic history and traditions
- G1 needs to identify their kids as both their ethnicity and nationality. G2 are not just Americans they have an ethnic background as well
- U.S teachers needs to create an inclusive environment for their multilingual students
 - Normalize students speaking in whichever language they feel comfortable speaking in
 - Include time for students to discuss their identities and cultures