

# 9 Language Socialization and Repetition

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LESLIE MOORE



## Introduction

Repetition plays a major role in the development of linguistic and sociocultural competence and in the transmission and transformation of cultural and linguistic practices. Thus, language socialization scholars have always been interested in repetition and several have made it an analytic focus, examining its organization and meaning in a wide range of communities, codes, and activity settings. This chapter discusses patterns in and insights from this work. Four practices of repetition that have been studied by language socialization scholars are examined – revoicing, prompting, guided repetition, and language play – followed by a discussion of repetition-related findings from studies conducted in contexts of second language socialization and religious socialization. The chapter concludes with a discussion of how attention to repetition in socializing interactions expands and enriches our understanding of the nature of communicative competence, its development over time and across texts and contexts, and the active and sometimes transformative role of the novice in socialization processes.

In the past 30 years, repetition in discourse has received considerable attention from anthropologists, linguists, and education and language development scholars (Bauman 2004; Becker 1995; Johnstone 1994; Tannen 2007). This work has demonstrated the centrality of repetition to language, learning, and the (re)production of culture and social organization. As Brown (2001: 223) observes, repetition is

fundamental to the definition of all cultural objects: of the phoneme, of particular kinds of act, of chunks of ritual, art, music, and performance, all of which involve meaningful re-enactments in some sense. Repetition is a prerequisite for learning,

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*The Handbook of Language Socialization*, First Edition. Edited by Alessandro Duranti, Elinor Ochs, Bambi B. Schieffelin.  
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providing the possibility of assimilating experience, committing it to memory, and thus also the basis for prediction. Repetition is pervasive in social life.

Research on repetition has made clear that no two productions of the 'same' language are in fact the same because each new production recontextualizes the language and thus changes the meaning (Bakhtin 1981; Tannen 2007). Speakers and writers reshape prior texts to fit new contexts using a variety of strategies, such as expansion, embedding, and rearrangement (Becker 1995). Thus, while repetition often contributes to the reproduction of linguistic and cultural practices, it can also be(come) transformative (Deleuze 1994).

Repetition is a resource that is always available and can be used to do many different things (Merritt 1994, 1998), and this affordance is significant for language socialization. Even before the research paradigm was formulated, Keenan (1977) shed light on children's use of repetition to accomplish a wide range of social acts and thereby progress in their pragmatic competence. Analysis of talk between two white middle-class siblings made visible the complex, creative, and strategic ways in which children used repetition to shape interactions despite limited linguistic resources. Keenan's findings challenged the then widely held view that very young children's repetitions of adult speech were mere 'imitations,' a view that reflected researchers' underestimation of children as communicators and repetition as a communicative resource.

The work of language socialization scholars is distinct from other socially and linguistically oriented research on repetition in that it combines a holistic, ethnographic perspective with longitudinal case study design and field-based collection and analysis of a substantial corpus of audio- or video-recorded naturalistic discourse (Garrett 2006). This methodology makes it possible to (1) document the role of repetition in the acquisition (or not) of particular cultural and linguistic practices and (2) understand the meanings of practices of repetition, the ideologies that inform them, and their relationship to other practices in the community (cf. Schieffelin and Ochs 1996). Language socialization scholars are concerned not only with how repetition supports language development but also with its role in the novice be(com)ing a culturally intelligible subject, if not always one who conforms completely to expectations (cf. Kulick and Schieffelin 2004).

The first language socialization studies showed that repetition was a significant feature of speech to and by young children in many different societies (Heath 1983; Ochs and Schieffelin 1984; Schieffelin and Ochs 1986). Moreover, these studies documented variation in the use and meaning of repetition across communities and over developmental time. Repetition figured prominently in Ochs and Schieffelin's (1984) comparison of caregiver behaviors in Kaluli, Samoan, and white middle-class American communities. White middle-class American caregivers often repeated and expanded the utterances of young children, accommodating their limited linguistic competence to treat them as conversational partners. In contrast, Kaluli and Samoan caregivers prompted young children to repeat to a third party unsimplified utterances produced by the caregiver, thereby obliging children to reproduce adult-like speech and to attend to the people and situation

around them. Ochs and Schieffelin also contrasted the use of repetition in instances when a child produced unintelligible speech. White middle-class American caregivers were willing to guess at the child's meaning by offering expanded repetitions of their speech, a strategy that was consistent with larger cultural patterns of minimizing differences in competence by adapting the situation to the child. Samoan adults preferred to deal with unintelligible speech by a child by eliciting a repeat performance, which is consistent with the cultural norm that higher-ranking individuals do not accommodate lower-ranking ones. Ochs (1988: 137) also saw in the Samoan clarification strategy a reflection of local epistemology, the belief that 'the path to knowledge is through repeated exposure, i.e. listening and watching over and over.'

## Practices of Repetition

Repetition gives rise to routines, and language socialization research 'places a premium on the study of routine' (Baquedano-López 2008: 596). Recurring and thus predictable patterns of linguistic and other behaviors provide novices with multiple opportunities to observe and engage in language use in socioculturally defined situations (Peters and Boggs 1986). Moreover, routines allow more competent members to adjust over time the scaffolding they provide for novices, who may assume increasingly active and self-regulating roles as they develop familiarity and facility with different aspects of the routine. These shifts in participation in routines over time provide language socialization researchers with insights into developmental trajectories, both actual and expected. Moreover, routines are of interest to researchers because they 'instantiate, in more or less explicit ways, important cultural categories, identities, ideologies, norms and values' (Howard 2009b: 342).

Some language socialization scholars have examined not only routine interactions but also 'practices of repetition.' That is, they have studied patterns in the use of repetition that are widely shared by members of the group and carry normative expectations about the way things should be done. This work seeks to understand how repetition is used in socializing interactions in particular communities, how these uses are socially organized, and how this organization shapes and is shaped by community members' beliefs, values, and ideologies (cf. Schieffelin and Ochs 1996). Here we discuss four practices of repetition – revoicing, prompting, guided repetition, and language play. These practices are used in a wide range of communities to socialize children and other novices into language and other forms of sociocultural knowledge, while novices may use practices of repetition for their own purposes as well.

### *Revoicing*

Several language socialization researchers have examined revoicing, in which a speaker reproduces the voice of another (sometimes referred to as 'ventriloquizing') (Bakhtin 1981).<sup>1</sup> Revoicing may be grammatically or prosodically marked as a repetition of another's speech or it may not be marked, instead merging with

the speaker's own voice. In revoicing, a speaker does not necessarily repeat another's speech accurately, and they may animate, rephrase, or invent speech in ways that express a particular stance toward the talk and/or the person who (is presented as having) produced it (Maybin 2006).

Several studies have examined revoicing in formal educational contexts, and most of this work examines teachers' revoicing of students' speech. In Japanese and Inuit elementary classrooms, Cook (1999) and Eriks-Brophy and Crago (2003) found that teachers revoiced students' utterances to provide affective support and to socialize children into cultural values of cooperation with and respect for others. He (2003) describes a less benevolent use of revoicing. She found that a Chinese heritage language teacher revoiced student contributions not to ratify but to appropriate them in order to maintain control of classroom interaction. The teacher's revoicings obscured the students' roles as authors and thereby ensured 'that interaction remains between two parties: the teacher and the class' (2003: 136). Baquedano-López, Solis, and Kattan (2005) use a Goffmanian framework (1981) to analyze revoicing in an elementary school science lesson. In this study the teacher used revoicing as a strategy to neutralize breaches in classroom discourse, reauthorizing and rekeying student utterances to mark them as relevant to the ongoing official classroom talk.

Some studies have looked at revoicing by children and adolescents. Heath (1998) found that adolescent members of a youth organization used revoicing to mock co-present peers and adults and that adult leaders accepted this practice. The leaders viewed such practice as an effective and creative (and physically nonviolent) means for resolving tensions, building collegiality, and developing communication skills, and thus consistent with the goals of the organization. Cekaite and Aronsson (2004) analyzed immigrant children's 'playful recyclings' of teachers' utterances as evidence of the children's developing metapragmatic awareness in a second language and their sensitivity to the social order in the classroom. Gordon (2007, 2009) interpreted a toddler's revoicings of her mother's words as the 'trying on of maternal identities.'

Revoicing has been examined as a strategy used by caregivers for showing children the 'right' way to speak. Clancy (1999) and Song (2009) describe Japanese and Korean mothers changing children's utterances in ways that make the speech socially and culturally more appropriate and position the child in relation to others in culturally preferred ways (see also Burdelski, this volume). Kaluli mothers did not permit older children to revoice young children's speech in ways that distorted it because they believed this would interfere with the child's language development (Schieffelin 1990). More analytic attention to the 'rules' of revoicing in different communities and settings will help us tease apart the universal and the culturally particular in this practice (cf. Schieffelin and Ochs 1996).

### **Prompting**

Prompting is another pervasive practice of repetition and one that has been studied extensively by language socialization scholars. In prompting routines,

community members give direct instruction in speech behavior by modeling utterances for children to repeat. The ways in which more competent members tell children exactly what to say have been examined in various cultural and linguistic communities, including Basotho (Demuth 1986), Kaluli (Schieffelin 1990), Samoan (Ochs 1988), Kwara'ae (Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo 1986), Inuit (Crago, Allen, and Pesco 1998), Marquesan (Riley 2001), Mayan (de León 1998, 2007; Reynolds 2008), Samoan (Ochs 1988), Wolof (Wills 1977), and English- and Spanish-speaking Americans (Bhimji 2001; Eisenberg 1986; Iwamura 1980; Miller 1982). These studies examine what kinds of speech are prompted, for what social purposes, and within what kinds of discursive and interactional structures. Researchers situate prompting routines in relation to other community practices, ideologies about child development, and larger cultural patterns in order to show how prompting routines socialize children into linguistic and sociocultural competencies valued by their communities (see Burdelski, this volume; de León, this volume).

Prompting routines are usually embedded in ongoing interaction rather than staged for purely pedagogical purposes (Schieffelin 1990). The speech that is to be repeated may be marked by intonation contour, an imperative verb of saying (such as 'say' in English), a pro-verb such as *'uri* ('in this manner') in Kwara'ae), or a contracted verb phrase (*dile* ('say it') in Spanish or *elema* from *ele sama* ('like this say') in Kaluli). Prompting routines appear to be more often triadic than dyadic, with the modeled speech being designed as much if not more for the intended recipient of the prompted speech as for the novice (Ochs and Schieffelin 1984). Prompting practices provide insights into ideologies about the acquisition of linguistic resources because they highlight which kinds of speech community members believe are important and must be taught as opposed to being learned without explicit instruction. For example, Kaluli mothers used the *elema* prompting routine to teach their toddlers assertive speech but not appeal. Both kinds of speech were important in Kaluli social life, but it was believed that appeal came naturally to children while assertiveness needed to be taught.

Prompting is an example of a widespread language socialization practice with multiple functions both within and across communities. Like the Kaluli, the Basotho (Demuth 1986) and white middle-class Midwestern mothers (Miller 1982) used prompting to teach children to be assertive. However, they also used prompting to teach politeness and to talk through children to a third person, often to deal with an awkward situation. Kwara'ae use prompting routines to distract the child, put the child to sleep, and to teach polite conversational style (Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo 1986). Mexicano adults used prompting to involve young children in teasing and the behaviors and social relationships that teasing sequences were meant to enforce and reinforce (Eisenberg 1986). Prompting routines prepared Kaluli and Samoan children for their eventual role as messenger, in which they are expected to deliver verbatim messages (Ochs and Schieffelin 1984), a role played by children in many communities (cf. de León 2007; Moore 1999, 2004b; Rabain-Jamin 1998; Reynolds 2008).

▶ In many cases, prompting routines provide children with models of and practice in appropriate speech, and children reproduced the speech as expected. This

is not always the case, however. Marquesan caregivers use prompting to elicit speech from children that would amuse others either because it was socially inappropriate or because the speech was likely to be phonologically ill-formed (Riley 2001). Prompting routines by Kaqchikel Mayan peer caregivers delivered inappropriate messages and conflict talk through younger children, cast as 'little parrots' who were seen as not competent enough to be held accountable for speech they repeated (Reynolds 2008). The little parrots sometimes resisted their assigned role and at other times exploited it to 'laugh at, challenge, and undermine different relations of power from a relative position of powerlessness' (Reynolds 2008: 100). In the Tzotzil Mayan community, young children used repetition to manipulate footing when conveying messages to adults, reframing and rekeying the speech of the message-sender to their own playful ends (de León 2007).

### *Guided repetition*

Many researchers have documented teaching and learning practices that are highly routinized and characterized by repetitive language use that often does not entail much or any attention to or comprehension of the literal meaning (Ausberger 2004; Chick 1996; Fader 2008; Hornberger and Chick 2001; Kulick 1992; Moore 1999; Needham 2003; Watson-Gegeo 1992). Commonly referred to as rote learning or recitation, such practice was examined in detail by Moore (2004a) in her study of the language socialization of Fulbe children in Qur'anic and public schools in Maroua, Cameroon.

Out of this study came the concept of guided repetition, a reframing of rote learning as social practice (Moore 2006b, Rogoff et al. 2007). Guided repetition is similar to prompting in that more expert members explicitly model linguistic forms for imitation by less expert members. Guided repetition activities, however, are not embedded in ongoing interaction. Rather, they *are* the ongoing interaction, staged for pedagogical purposes, often spanning several encounters. Guided repetition activities have four phases – modeling, imitation, rehearsal, and performance – each of which entails particular rights and obligations for both expert and novice. In each phase the expert supervises the novice and may provide assistance, evaluation, and/or correction as the novice works toward mastery of the new skill.

Among the Fulbe, guided repetition may be dyadic or multiparty and was used to socialize novices into multiple modalities. Dyads were preferred in Qur'anic schools to ensure the accurate transmission of Qur'anic texts, while multiparty structures dominated in the public school, where collective instruction in French was believed to build community and provide children with useful models of what and what not to do with language. In both schooling traditions, guided repetition was used first to develop oral language skills on which literacy skills were later built. Teachers paid close, corrective attention to children's bodies as they reproduced French and Arabic texts because pointing, eye gaze, body positioning, and other forms of embodiment were believed to be both signs of and means for developing the desired skills, knowledge, and orientations that were associated with the two languages. In both schooling traditions, participants

believed that guided repetition was the appropriate, effective, and right way to teach. This commitment to the practice was rooted in the shared belief that children in early and middle childhood were excellent and eager imitators and memorizers and that skills and knowledge (or bad habits and incorrect understandings) acquired in this period were more likely to take root and endure than those introduced at a later age.

Children were expected – or at least hoped – to learn very different ways of being in the world through Qur’anic and public schooling, and guided repetition was accomplished in culturally specific ways. Qur’anic schooling was meant to socialize children into reproductive competence in Arabic and into Fulbe and Muslim values of self-control, respect for religious authority and hierarchy, and submission to the word of God. The practice of guided repetition in Qur’anic schools emphasized strict discipline, the authority of the teacher, and reverent renderings of the text. Public schooling was supposed to create Cameroonian citizens, individuals who could speak and write and think in French as was required in the social, civic, and economic activities of a modern, democratic nation state. Guided repetition as practiced in the classroom was characterized by more peer interaction, liberal manipulation of the text, and greater fluidity in the roles of expert and novice.

Guided repetition recently emerged as a new practice for socializing Fulbe children into the telling of folktales, an innovation that was contemporaneous with the Fulbe’s increased participation in schooling (Moore 2006a). Traditionally, children learned folktales by observing multiple performances by experts, but expert tellers had begun explicitly teaching folktales to children through guided repetition, and children were using the practice amongst themselves to teach and learn folktales. Fulbe women, concerned that children were no longer immersed in folktales as in the past, may have appropriated a contemporary and effective institutional practice for teaching other kinds of oral texts to prevent the loss of the folktale tradition. The innovative use of guided repetition for teaching and learning folktales may have also reflected shifting beliefs and expectations among adults and children regarding the role of children in language-centered activities. In guided repetition interactions with adults and with their peers, younger children took more vocal, active roles in an activity in which formerly they had played a more passive role as recipient until puberty or later. Thus, the folktale tradition was being both sustained and transformed by guided repetition, as children assumed new roles and created new narratives.

### *Language play*

Language play is the use of rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, and other repeating patterns in language to amuse, delight, dispute, and confound. The role of repetition in children’s exploration, practice, and manipulation of language in verbal play has been studied by scholars in a wide range of communities, including African American (Goodwin 1990), Caribbean (Garrett 2005; Paugh 2005), Euro-American (Keenan 1977; Ochs and Schieffelin 1983), Italian (Fasulo, Liberate, and Clotilde

2002), Kaluli (Schieffelin 1990), Mayan (de León 2007; Reynolds 2007), Northern Thai (Howard 2009b), Polynesian (Riley 2001), and immigrants to Sweden (Aronsson, this volume; Cekaite and Aronsson 2006). This work illuminates language play as a resource for the development of communicative competence and for the negotiation of the social order in families and peer groups.

Several of these studies illustrate the ways in which language play supports language development by making particular linguistic features salient for the novice and by providing opportunities for practice of patterns of phonology, morphology, syntax, discourse, and pragmatics. Thus, children's practices of language play can be understood as an occasion to develop and display metalinguistic awareness and, more particularly, awareness of the repeating patterns that constitute various genres and types of talk. Children's play with language forms found in the adult world is not just about acquisition of these forms, however, but also children's appropriation and transformation of them for their own purposes (Goodwin and Kyratzis 2007). Thus, language play is examined as a site where children can engage with the cultural and linguistic practices of their community in ways that are creative and sometimes subversive.

In rural Mexico, young Tzotzil Mayan siblings in family settings play with the repetitive structures characteristic of Mayan conversation (de León 2007). This observation builds on Brown's (1998) study of the impact of the Mayan conversational pattern known as dialogic repetition on the early language development of Tzetzal Mayan children. Even very young Mayan children displayed competence in this conversational structure, in which each speaker repeats all or much of the prior speaker's turn.<sup>2</sup> Tzotzil toddlers' playful engagement with this pattern of parallelism reflected and contributed to their metalinguistic awareness (de León 2007). Analysis of two siblings' greeting games and their playful disruption of the preferred structure of conversation indicates that even very young children were able to manipulate the repetitive structures of their language community for their own ends.

Language play in Kam Muang (Thailand) mixed-age peer groups demonstrates how the repetitive, scripted, and predictable nature of children's language play enables a younger child to join in the activities of older and more competent children (Howard 2009b). Moreover, Kam Muang children were able to use the activity as a 'jumping-off point,' tweaking the repetitive structure to achieve a humorous breach of expectations to the delight of all. Such creative violations of the genre demonstrate the child's awareness of and emergent skill in the improvisational aesthetic so highly valued in the peer group.

Mixed-age peer groups in an African American community made skilled and creative use of repetition in talk, called 'format tying' (Goodwin 1990). Boys and girls used repetition to challenge, argue with, and negatively assess others, findings that challenged the widely held view that repetition was primarily a linguistic resource for doing alignment and agreement. Children use repetition not only in talk but also in gesture to construct assessments – and thus norms, identities, and relationships – within peer-group interactions (Goodwin 2007).

There is variation across communities, codes, and settings with respect to which kinds of language play are allowed. Kaluli mothers forbade language play that

had bird-like qualities such as high pitch and melodic descent because such 'bird talk' interfered with language development and created a dangerous association between children and birds (Schieffelin 1990). Fulbe children studying at home with their mothers were allowed to play with Qur'anic verses by stretching sounds and exaggerating rhythms, whereas such behaviors would have been punished by the teacher at Qur'anic school (Moore 2004a). Mothers affirmed the teacher's obligation and right to punish such behavior, but they also asserted that, in playing with the sounds of the Qur'an, children made it their own. Language play often entails violation of the 'rules' of linguistic and sociocultural behavior, and language socialization research illuminates how language play is organized and constrained by ideologies about language, learning, and childhood.

## Repetition in Context

Recent work on repetition has focused on language socialization in second language settings and religious communities. Not surprisingly, there is overlap, for religious education often entails socialization into a second language. The following section discusses insights into socialization in these contexts that attention to repetition has yielded.

### *Second language socialization*

Researchers have examined repetition in second language socialization in many countries, including Cameroon (Moore 1999, 2004a, 2006b, 2008b), Canada (Duff, Wong, and Early 2002), Hungary (Duff 1995), Japan (Cook 2006; Meacham 2007), Mexico (Ausberger 2004), Papua New Guinea (Kulick and Stroud 1993), Thailand (Howard 2003, 2009a), the Solomon Islands (Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo 1992), and the United States (Fader 2001; Kanagy 1999; Ohta 1999). Repetition plays an important role in second language learning, learning in a second language, and the development of second language learning communities and learner identities.

Several scholars have discussed the importance of repetition for learners with limited linguistic resources in the second language, as it provides opportunities to observe and practice second language forms (Cekaite and Aronsson 2004, 2006; Pallotti 2002; Rydland and Aukrust 2005). Moreover, children learning a second language use repetition of themselves and others to gain access to and participate in play, conversation, and second language learning activities. Repetition within a lesson helped to build cohesion across a stretch of whole-class talk in an English-immersion class in Hungary (Duff 2000). Repetition across lessons also helped to build community, as class members refer back to talk and text from previous sessions. In Sweden, immigrant children's alliteration, sound repetitions, and other parallelisms in second language play at school extended play and created opportunities for collaborative repetitions and variations on a pattern, what the authors called 'peer-run language lessons' (Cekaite and Aronsson 2006: 187).

Repetition is not always a good thing in second language contexts. Duff (2000) demonstrates that too much repetition of a linguistic form undermined community building in an American foreign language classroom. Many researchers have documented the use of highly repetitive language and interactional structures in under-resourced second language classroom, and they have examined how such practices hinder children's development of second language competence by providing few opportunities for children to use the language for their own expressive purposes (Howard 2008). Poole (1992) found that American English-as-a-second-language teachers used many of the same practices of repetition that characterize Baby Talk in speaking with their adult students, and such practices were not always well received.

A language socialization perspective on repetition in the second language classroom reveals that practices of repetition often reflect larger discourses and create particular kinds of second language users. Meacham (2007) compared the 'replaying practices' (repetitions of lexical items and syntactic formats) of teachers and students in English-as-a-foreign-language classrooms in two Japanese high schools. She found that students at the technical high school were positioned as 'defensive receivers' of English through simple, repetitive, highly routinized patterns in which English forms were produced with Japanese phonology. In contrast, students at the highly ranked liberal arts high school were positioned as 'active tellers' who were trained to use English to explain Japanese culture to native English speakers, a participant framework that required them to approximate the pronunciation of their imagined audience. Meacham argues that repetition practices in these two schools were linked to broader discourses about the role of English in Japanese society and the communicative roles of different kinds of Japanese citizens.

Local and national language practices and identities are in contact and sometimes in conflict in the second language classroom, and repetition can be used to mediate differences (Howard 2009a). In a first-grade classroom in Northern Thailand, where children who speak Kam Muang must learn (in) Standard Thai, children were socialized into the linguistic and bodily practices for displaying respect through repetitive correction sequences (Howard, this volume). The teacher and children created in these ritual exchanges a local version of polite and respectful Thai citizenship. Children were allowed to speak their first language so long as they used Standard Thai politeness particles, which the correction routines had made into emblematic markers of speaking the official language of the classroom and the nation.

### *Religious socialization*

Johnstone (1987) notes that repetition is particularly prevalent in two kinds of language: child-directed speech and ritual speech. And, indeed, practices of repetition figure prominently in the socialization of children and other novices into religious texts and their associated activities, identities, and ideologies, as shown by work among Latino Catholics (Baquedano-López 1998, 2008), Spanish Gitano

Evangelicals (Poveda, Cano, and Palomares-Valera 2005), Hasidic Jews (Fader 2006, 2008, 2009), American Muslims (Aminy 2004), Fulbe Muslims (Moore 2004a, 2008a), and Samoan American Protestants (Duranti, Ochs, and Ta'ase 1995; Duranti and Reynolds 2000).

In her study of *doctrina* classes in a Latino community, Baquedano-López (2008) explored the different processes through which the Act of Contrition was constructed as a text that was sacred, shared, and relevant to the children's lives. Choral readings led by the teacher in both small groups and as a whole class required children to focus their attention and synchronize their actions as they committed the text to memory, creating a collective ritual of remembering. *Doctrina* lessons also included small-group work that was intended to promote children's understanding of the text. In these activities the teacher recited the Act of Contrition with the children, stopping after each line to reframe it grammatically, prosodically, and conceptually in ways that made the text more comprehensible for the children, more clearly relevant to their lives, and thus a text that 'matters to them in the present moment and as a blueprint for future action' (2008: 597).

Multiple patterns in the use of repetition also characterized language and literacy socialization practices in a girls' school for Hasidic Jews in Brooklyn (Fader 2008, 2009, this volume). Lessons on *loshn koydesh* or 'holy language' texts (a mixture of Ancient Hebrew and Aramaic that is the language of the Torah, its commentaries, and prayer) emphasized accurate and fluent reproduction of the text, while no explanation of the literal meaning of texts was provided. Literacy instruction in Yiddish and English had a 'rote, embodied aspect' similar to the holy language lessons. Lessons were highly repetitive, and writing instruction emphasized Hasidic values of femininity: neatness, following directions, and disciplining the body. In this community, where literacy is seen as transformative, secular English literacy had been transformed to serve Hasidic Jewish socialization goals.

Oral recitation lessons in these classrooms differed from literacy lessons in that they stressed 'the performance of earnest intention,' manifested primarily through loud and clear articulation in the choral recitation of prayers (Fader 2008: 626). Such performance was believed in this community to be not a reflection of proper religious feeling but rather a means for developing it. Such repetitive ritual practice was a crucial part of training the bodies and minds of children not only to conform to God's commandments but also to commit to them.

A similar pattern of practice and belief also characterized the Maroua Fulbe (Moore 2006b, 2008a). Guided repetition was used to teach children to recite, memorize, read, and write the Qur'an. The schooling experience was intended to teach the child not only to respect God's Word and those knowledgeable therein but also to develop in him good moral character and a deep and enduring emotional response to the sounds of the Qur'an. A child did not need to comprehend the literal meaning of the text, for the accurate and fluent reproduction of its sounds and signs constituted the fundamental layer of understanding of and commitment to the text, the foundation on which all further moral, spiritual, and intellectual development should be built.

All three of these studies note that highly repetitive educational activities prepared children intellectually, emotionally, and corporally for participation in other religious practices that were important in the community. *Doctrina* classes were considered direct preparation for a child's first confession and first communion, and teachers trained children in the textual knowledge and bodily comportment they needed to partake of these two sacraments for the first time and for a lifetime. Qur'anic schooling trained children in ways of producing and relating to Arabic texts that were essential to competent participation in prayer, sermons, religious ceremonies, and healing practices. Lessons in *loshn koydesh* oral recitation and literacy prepared girls to be pious Jewish women who prayed loudly and clearly. In all three communities, the mastery of sacred texts was essential to religious competence and community membership. The process of learning these texts was one of ritualization that fostered a sense of connection with the text and with co-religionists. Once a text was mastered, children were expected to recontextualize it many times and in many ways, thereby infusing faith and morality into their daily lives.

## Conclusions

As Tannen (2007: 56) states, 'repetition is at the heart of language,' and much of what we do with language entails recycling language we have heard or read before. Thus, it is no surprise that repetition is at the heart of language socialization, too. Language socialization research that gives analytic attention to repetition has made clear that repetition is central to the formation and the performance of the competent and creative speaker/member. Practices of repetition such as revoicing, prompting, guided repetition, and language play are part of socializing interactions all over the world. Such practices facilitate 'accurate acquisition of canonical linguistic and cultural practices by children and novices' (Howard 2009b: 341), as well as the development of skill in adapting these practices that is crucial to functioning and being recognizable as competent community members.

Repetition is an important resource for accomplishing social action, and thus attention to repetition helps us to appreciate the active role played by the novice in his or her own socialization. Each repetition is something new (Deleuze 1994), and the act of repeating can be transformative. Several of the studies discussed here use a Goffmanian framework to decompose speaker roles, and this work shows that even young children are able to use repetition in complex ways to accomplish their own social aims in talk with peers, siblings, parents, and teachers. Having acquired canonical, traditional, or authoritative language forms, novices are able to diverge from them in creative and possibly innovative ways. An important part of becoming communicatively competent is learning how to manipulate the repetitive patterns of language in ways that are both original and intelligible, as well as when and where one may do so, to what benefit, and at what risk.

Several of the studies discussed here demonstrate the intertextuality of language socialization, and further exploration of this dimension will enrich the field (cf. Poveda, Cano, and Palomares-Valera 2005; Wortham 2005). In religious socialization, children participate in the repetition of sacred texts not only in school contexts but also in many other kinds of speech event. Language play in peer groups gives rise to language forms that children bring into play in later encounters and other contexts. The challenge for language socialization researchers is to illuminate this interconnectedness by linking events, texts, and language forms across settings and over time to see how they shape the developmental trajectories of individuals and the social groups to which they belong. More attention to repetition is essential to expand and deepen our understanding of the intertextual nature of communicative competence and the processes through which it is developed.

Looking at repetition through the lens of language socialization increases our understanding of the complexity and rich variation in how repetition is used in discourse and what it means across different cultures, communities, codes, and activities. As the work on revoicing, prompting, and guided repetition shows, attention to repetition in caregivers' speech to and for children gives us insights into the culture because such speech highlights (implicitly or explicitly) identities, acts, texts, stances, and/or relationships that are valued in the community. Language socialization research shows how the use of repetition with and by children and other novices varies across communities and is shaped by cultural values and beliefs about children, language, learning, and the social order. The paradigm will benefit from more attention to how practices of repetition are organized and how these practices shift over time as individuals develop and communities change. We may find that patterns of repetition vary across time and communities in systematic ways, with particular practices regularly co-occurring with each other and with particular goals, values, identities, and social-ecological conditions. Through rich ethnographic accounts and comparisons across individuals, communities, time, and space, language socialization research has and will continue to illuminate the role of repetition in the construction of meaning, selfhood, and social groups.

## NOTES

- 1 I use the term revoicing to refer to reproductions of others' speech that are not required by the interactional structure (as in prompting and guided repetition, as well as in the phenomenon often referred to as language brokering) and do not make use of rhythm, alliteration, or other forms of parallelism (as in language play).
- 2 Brown (1998) also found that the productive vocabulary of young Mayan children consisted predominantly of verb roots (in contrast to the noun-dominated vocabularies of children learning European languages). She attributed this developmental trend to dialogic repetition in adult conversation, which gave rise to utterances in which the verb was highlighted.

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