

Foreign Students as Language Brokers

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Abstract

This study explored the reflections of Spanish foreign students in Valladolid, Spain on language brokering. Through the use of a Spanish survey questionnaire, the participants reported their interpreting and translating experience in a number of settings, different materials and identified the things they learned and developed as language broker. They also identified some difficulties faced when brokering, shared their feelings about language brokering and some strategies they use in its practice. Further, they recounted having brokered for their immediate family to the least known to them. Focusing on foreign students accounts demonstrate that language brokering is a rich and diverse as well as common phenomenon. It is not limited to children, female and certain ethnic, regional or language group.

Key words: language brokering, language broker, translation, interpretation, foreign students

1. Introduction

“Bilingualism is more common than people generally realize, it is also more complex” (Thompson, 2003, p. 57). One way of understanding bilingualism is through inquire on how bilinguals put into practice their competence in two (or even more) languages to read, write, listen, and speak with other people; which some researchers refer to as “translating” and “interpreting” , “natural translating” or “language brokering” (Orellana, 2003a). Human beings are predisposed to translate, interpret or language broker. This has been supported by a number of authors and has been documented among bilingual children that can and do translate as a consequence of being bilingual (Ronjat, 1913; Leopold, 1949; Grosjean, 1982; Shannon, 1987). According to Harris (1977), “all bilinguals can translate even if not all can translate well” whereas Harris and Sherwood (1978) have referred to “man as a translating animal.” On the other hand, Toury (1984) said that he has, “no quarrel with the argument that a predisposition for translating.” While Lörcher (1992) hypothesized that every individual who has a command of two or more languages (even with various degrees of proficiency) also possesses a rudimentary ability to mediate between these languages (p. 148).

In this study, the concern is on the practice of language brokering; it deals with the practices of translating and interpreting from one language to another. In addition, it is an informal practice that mainly takes place in the context of everyday activities (Halgunseth, 2003; Harris & Sherwood, 1978). McQuillan and Tse (1995) define it as the action of translating (written language) and interpreting (oral language) which children/ adolescents in immigrant families’ perform for their parents, family members, teachers, neighbors, or other adults. Whereas for Tse (1996a), it refers to interpretation and translation between linguistically and culturally different parties and unlike formal interpreters and translators, language brokers influence the messages they convey and may act as a decision maker for one or both parties.

They mediate rather than simply transmit information among the parties involved. In the present study, language brokering is define as the act of translating or interpreting by bi/multilinguals not only for their family members but also for immigrants (who are not yet proficient in the dominant language of the host society) and speakers of the host country (who are not proficient in the language of the immigrants’ language) while language brokers refer to bi/multilingual people, regardless of age, who mediate by interpreting or translating for other people, are not professionally trained to do it and do not receive monetary compensation.

Most studies on language brokering are on child language brokers or as an adult discussing their experience as children language brokers (e.g., Malakoff & Hakuta, 1991; McQuillan & Tse, 1995; Baker, 1996; DeMent & Buriel, 1999; Walichowski, 2001; Weisskirch & Alva, 2002; Orellana, 2003a; Weisskirch, 2005; Bajaj, 2007; Del Toro, 2008) and on adolescents (e.g., Tse, 1996a; Hall & Sham, 2007; Valdés, 2003; Acoach & Webb, 2004; Jones & Trickett, 2007; Chao, 2006; Wu & Kim, 2009). On the other hand, a search of the literature revealed few studies have been conducted in relation to language brokering by (young) adults (e.g., DeMent, Buriel, & Villanueva, 2005; Del Toro, 2008; Bucaria & Rossato, 2010; Weisskirch, Kim, Zamboanga, Schwartz, Bersamin & Umaña-Taylor, 2011; Esquivel, 2012; Lazarević, 2012; Cila & Lalonde, 2014). For this reason, this study explores language brokering among adults to explore how this competence is put in good use to aid others. Specifically, how these bilinguals served as language brokers, for whom, where, what circumstance, what are their sentiments, the difficulties they encounter and the benefits they acquire for serving as language brokers.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

The *Escuela Oficial de Idiomas* 'Official School of Languages' (EOI hereafter) in Barrio Delicias, Valladolid, Spain was the locale of this study. It could be seen as a small multilingual community; a melting pot of students who were mostly bi/multilinguals from different parts of the world who would want to learn Spanish (including other languages) in Spain for an affordable price. As a foreigner in Spain, multilingual and a former Spanish language student myself, I chose some foreign students enrolled in the Advanced 1 and Advanced 2 levels in Spanish at EOI in Valladolid, who were mostly multilinguals, as respondents of this study. They had to take a placement examination conducted by EOI to test their competencies in reading, writing speaking and listening in Spanish or passed the final exams of the previous level they were enrolled. Based on the results, they were assigned to Advanced level 1 or 2. Hence, they were those who had passed or obtained the B1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment and were enrolled in Advanced level 1 and Advanced level 2 which were equivalent to B2.1 and B2.2 levels of CEFR respectively. The class size of Advanced 1 was 17 and 16 in Advanced 2. As a whole, there were 33 students who were officially enrolled in the two classes. As they have surpassed the B1 level of CEFR, they are considered as independent user of the language (the Council of Europe, 2011).

At first, the objective was to have all the students of both classes as respondents of the study, however, only some were willing to be part of the study. In the end, the participants were 12 females and 4 males (48% of all enrollees in Spanish level 1 and 2) adults whose ages ranged from 18 to 47 years old. The results from Advanced level 1 group with Advanced level 2 groups were not compared as the number of students who responded did not correspond to equal number on both groups (four respondents from Advanced level 1 group and twelve respondents from Advanced level 2 groups). In terms of place of origin, they were from 10 countries: 4 (Brazil), 2 (Bulgaria), 1 (Germany), 1 (India), 2 (Italy), 1 (Morocco), 1 (Poland), 2 (Russia), 1 (Slovenia), and 1 (Turkey). In addition, eleven (11) respondents belonged to a homogeneous group in terms of place of abode (or who uses 1 language at their home or residence) whereas there were 5 who belonged to heterogeneous group; where in each speaks the combination of Bulgarian and Spanish, English and Spanish, Portuguese and Spanish, Slovenian and Serbian & Croatian, and lastly, a mixture of Arabic, English and French. In the selection of the respondents, language pairs were not a criterion as it was difficult to find many speakers of one language who had Advanced 1 or 2 level in Spanish.

The findings brought out an important characteristic of most respondents, they are multilinguals because they had the capacity to use more than one or more languages for communication. Each could use Spanish, English (somewhat or well), and their first language (L1) and might include one or more other languages. Specifically, the foreign students in the study were capable of using between two to four of the following languages: Arabic, Bulgarian, Slovenian & Croatian, English, French, Finnish, German, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Turkish, and Tupiguorami (a dialect in Brazil).

2.2. Task

There is a need to conduct studies that explores the phenomenon of language brokering for a variety of reasons, such as: immigration (for centuries, people migrated from place to place for a variety of reason), globalization (with the growing globalization people from diverse linguistic backgrounds necessitate or would like to communicate) and greater mobility of people (it could refer to tourism, work, studies, etc. in another country).

The aforementioned motives are just three of the many possible reasons why an individual has to communicate in another language and if that person lacks the language competency to communicate, there would be a need to have someone to mediate for that person and here is where a language broker comes in. As Jimenez (2005) says, "language brokering, both oral and literate, is a legitimate and commendable activity" (p. 15). This small-scale study attempts to contribute to the existing body of literature on bilingualism in general and language brokering in particular as there are few literature that relates to adult as language brokers (Harris & Sherwood, 1978 first labeled them as natural translators) and often considered inferior to professional translation. Recognizing that there are many adults who have served as language brokers (maybe since they were children), serving not only their families as interpreters but also others in their immediate environment. It also endeavors to examine if the practice of language brokering is common among bi/multilingual adults studying Spanish as a foreign language.

I am convinced that many bi/multilinguals and learners of a second language have served as language brokers at least once in their lifetime but this has rarely been considered as one of their many competences. As was mentioned earlier, most studies on language brokering have mainly focused on children in migrant families; however, it should not be ignore that many of these children who have brokered when they were young continue to broker until they reach the age of majority (Weisskirch et. al., 2011) and that there are adults who find themselves in the position of serving as language brokers for diverse contexts. This study which actually replicates and extends the studies of Tse (1996) and Orellana (2003a) posed the following research questions:

1. What are the language repertoires of the respondents of the study? How do they rate their own language abilities?
2. What are the language abilities of the parents of the respondents?
3. How many of the respondents have brokered? At what age they started brokering?
4. Have they stopped brokering, at what age and why?
5. Do the brothers and sisters of the respondents have served as language broker?
6. Of those respondents who served as language broker, in what circumstance have they served as language broker? Where? What kind of things have they translated or interpreted?
7. What do they feel about the language brokering they have done?
8. Is language brokering difficult for the respondents? Why?
9. What are the things they learn or develop as a language broker?
10. What are the strategies they use to broker?

2.3. Procedure

A survey questionnaire in Spanish was use as a research instrument for this study which consisted of multiple choice, guided questions and an open ended question. It was based on the study of Tse (1996) and Orellana (2003a) and was divided into three parts: the first part focused on demographic data: gender, age, place of birth, country of origin and profession including the length of stay in Spain and number of brothers and sisters; the second part enquired on the respondents' language/s usage at home and personal assessment of their own language ability and of their parents; and the third/ main part focused on language brokering of the respondents' which included questions: for whom, where, what materials, their feelings, their opinion, things learned and strategies used.

The research instrument was pilot tested with a foreign student to determine the suitability of the task and to determine how long it would take to answer the questionnaire and was later distributed to the respondents. Using descriptive statistics, simple frequencies and percentages were obtained for the background data of the respondents and their responses. Likert scale type was used to determine language repertoires and ranking was also used to provide respondents' opinion, feelings and strategies on language brokering.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1. Language Repertoires of the Participant of the study

Turning now to participants' report on their own levels of L1 and Spanish language ability in speaking, listening, reading and writing with the use of Likert-scale (where 1= not at all or little, 2= somewhat, 3=well, and 4=very well), the majority of the participants reported a higher level of L1 proficiency (average mean of 3.96) than in Spanish (average mean of 3.28).

As can be observed, the discrepancy between L1 and Spanish is not very extreme, it can be inferred that this is due to the fact that all the participants had a minimum of B1 level and were enrolled in the official school of languages in Valladolid, Spain and attended at least 8 hours of classes per week at the time they answered the questionnaire. Bloomer, Griffiths and Morrison (2005) said that, “of the languages used by any individual, there will be a language that can be classified as his/her dominant language... the language that the individual feels most comfortable using” (p. 371). Additionally, with this study’s participants’ case, they were immersed in the Spanish society and were constrained to communicate in the target language. Lambert (1955) distinguished between the “balanced bilinguals” and the “dominant bilinguals;” where the balanced bilinguals possess an equivalent competence in the two languages ($L1=L2$) and the dominant bilingual has a superior competence in one of the two languages ($L1>L2$ or $L2>L1$). Similarly, Hamers and Blanc (1989) distinguish between the ‘balanced bilingual,’ who has equal competence in both languages, and the ‘dominant bilingual,’ whose competence in one of the languages is superior to competence in the other language (p.8).

In addition, a dominant bilingual is a bilingual whose competence in one of the two languages, usually his/her mother tongue, is higher than his or her competence in the other language (Hoffmann, 1991, p. 24). And Adams (2003) discusses, the view that “bilingualism is marked by equal and fluent competence in two languages” although “there are speakers who have greater competence in one language than another” (pp. 3-4). Thus, it can be said that the participants of this study are dominant bilinguals as they speak, listen, converse, read and write in Spanish. As Hoffmann (1991) explains, a dominant bilingual has a higher degree of competence in all of the four language skills in his or her dominant language (p. 24). However, the bilingual may have language competence in either one or two of the four language skills in the other language. This type of bilinguality would be the bilinguals preferred language, the language that he or she feels more at home with. Moreover, considering the participants’ profile (adults and Spanish students), they can also be considered as sequential bilinguals (individuals who have acquired one language and then subsequently acquire another (Flynn, Foley, & Vinnitskaya, 2005).

3.2. Language Proficiency of the Participants’ Parents

In this part, participants rated their parents’ language ability following the Likert-scale type mentioned earlier with the premise that most participants would broker for their parents. Participants reported high level of L1 proficiency (average mean of 3.83) than in Spanish (average mean of 1.21) when asked to rate their mother’s language proficiency of L1 and Spanish in speaking, listening, reading and writing. They also reported high level of L1 proficiency (average mean of 3.91) than in Spanish (average mean of 1.34) for their fathers. Comparing the language proficiency of mothers’ vis-à-vis to the fathers’, the fathers’ (3.91) have higher average mean of proficiency than the mothers’ (3.83) in the first language as well as in Spanish (1.34 against 1.28). Unfortunately, the reason why the participants’ fathers had more proficiency was not known to us. And although there is no significant difference with the average means between the fathers and mothers in both their L1 and Spanish, the participants reported that they brokered for their fathers rather than their mothers though the reason was unknown to us. This finding is contrary to Chao (2006) and Cila and Lalonde (2014) studies where participants report brokering more for their mothers than their fathers.

3.3. Number of Participant Performing Language Brokering

As to the prevalence of language brokering, data revealed that 13 out of 16 participants indicated that they have served as language broker, 2 were uncertain (but later revealed that they actually broker) and only 1 reported that she has never brokered. Of those who affirmed that they are practicing language brokering, 7 started between the ages of 21 and 25, 4 of them started between 16 and 20, 1 at age 10 and another 1 at age 9. Contrary to previous studies (for example, in Tse, 1996a the starting age of brokering was between 8 and 12 while in Cila & Lalonde, 2014 it was 12) where most of the language brokers started when they were at the primary school, the majority of participants of this study started when they were secondary or university students or already professionals. Thus, language brokering is a common occurrence among many (young) adults (Weisskirch et al., 2011).

3.4. Have they stopped brokering, at what age and why?

As mentioned earlier, the participants are adults (from 18 to 47 years old) who continue to broker up to the present. One (1) out of 15 language brokers have stopped practicing it at the age of 33 because she is pursuing a postgraduate degree in Spain and she has no one (family member or friend or acquaintance) who needs language brokering. The finding indicates that there is no sign that language brokering ends in college (e.g., Weisskirch et al., 2011; Cila & Lalonde, 2014) but rather it continues to adulthood (e.g., DeMent et. al., 2005; Del Toro 2008); most likely because they know someone who requires language brokering assistance.

3.5. Do the brothers and sisters of the participants have served as language broker?

Although five (5) of the participants reported that their brother or sister have served as language broker, 9 out of 15 participants who took the role as language broker are the oldest child in the family. This finding is similar to Tse's (1996a) study where the oldest child of the family usually takes the role of a language broker. In general, the findings revealed that regardless of birth order, the participants play the role of language broker (Esquivel, 2012).

3.6.1. For whom the participants served as language broker?

As for whom participants have brokered, they reported that they translated/interpreted for their father (6 out of 15), friends (5), siblings and other relatives (4), mother (3), boyfriend, neighbor, school officials and people at work/companies (2), and one (1) each for teachers/ professors, foreigners, and national police. Thus, it can be said that like in previous studies (e.g., Cila & Lalonde, 2014; Lazarević, 2012; Bucaria & Rossato, 2010; Weisskirch & Alva 2002; Tse, 1996, 1995; Kaur & Mills, 1993), the majority of the participants in this paper served their family; that is from people closest to them and then extended to others least known to them thus pointing to language brokering as a phenomenon that include various people.

3.6.2. Places where participants served as language broker

The result of the present study indicates that language brokers act as translators and interpreters in a variety of settings and situations which is similar to previous studies whether the participants were children, teenagers or adults (e.g. Esquivel, 2012; Bucaria & Rossato, 2010; Wu & Kim, 2009; Puig, 2002; DeMent & Buriel, 1999; Hall & Sham, 1998; Tse 1996a; Kaur & Mills, 1993; Shannon 1987). Specifically, they reported having served as language brokers in the street (9 out of 15), shops (7), home and restaurants (6), work or companies (4), school or university (3), and one (1) each for medical consultation, parents and teachers' conference, airport and immigrants' association. As can be seen, there are three new aspects of language brokering included in this study, work/companies, airport and immigrants' association. And like Lazarević's (2012) study, participants in the present study indicated that they broker more in non-formal setting (in the street, restaurant) contrary to previous studies which indicated that immigrant youth often translate for their parents in formal setting, such as medical consultation or airport (Del Toro 2008; Trickett & Jones, 2007).

3.6.3. Materials that participant translated/ interpreted/ brokered

Participants of this study, like other language brokers, has facilitated so that others could conduct their daily tasks for others. In terms of frequency, the materials that adult language brokers in this study work on are conversations (10 out of 15 who admitted they are language brokers), words (9), letters and legal documents (5), phone calls (4), and signs and newspapers/ magazines. This is followed by movies, homework, school information, TV shows, and bank statements (2). And lastly, defendants and police statements, clothes size in a department stores, and business. The materials that they brokered are similar to some of those mentioned in previous studies (Cila & Lalonde, 2014; Esquivel, 2012; Halgunseth, 2003; Puig, 2002; Weisskirch & Alva, 2002; Walichowski, 2001; DeMent & Buriel, 1999; Hall & Robinson, 1999; Bajaj, 2007; Tse, 1996a; McQuillan & Tse, 1995) except for making doctor's appointments, visiting hospitals, job applications, and making trips to the post office.

3.7. Participants' attitudes and feelings toward language brokering

This study reveals that 10 out of 15 participants have positive attitudes towards language brokering and another 10 said brokering help them learn Spanish. On the other hand, 8 out of 15 recognized that brokering help them to learn more of their first language and in their Spanish language learning. Whereas 6 out of 15 said that they know Spanish culture better because of their brokering experience while 5 out of 15 said they know their own culture better for that experience. Only 3 out of 15 said that brokering did not affect his first language or Spanish language learning and a dismal 1 out of 15 who said that brokering facilitates meeting other people who speaks or learning Spanish as well as know their culture of origin. Another one doesn't like to broker and another considered brokering as a burden. As can be observed, participants reported more positive feelings than negative (Walichowski, 2001). Nevertheless, it can be said that the study reported both positive and negative feelings towards language brokering which coincided with previous studies (e.g., Kaur & Mills, 1993; Tse & McQuillan & Tse, 1995; Tse, 1996; Hall & Sham, 2007; Walichowski, 2001; DeMent et. al., 2005; Bajaj, 2007; Bucaria & Rossato, 2010; Esquivel, 2012; Lazarević, 2012).

3.8. Why language brokering is difficult

Richards (1953) said that “translating is probably the most complex type of event yet produced in the evolution of the cosmos (p. 250).” This was affirmed by 12 out of 16 participants of this study. In terms of ranking, here are the following reasons why they considered it difficult: Eight (8) out of 15, said, “decipher and make sense of information about a wide range of subjects that are often expressed by speakers and writers in complex or unclear ways” while seven (7) declared “convey information while juggling these competing social demands.” Whereas six (6) out of 15 related, “choose words that are appropriate for the genre, topic, and context” and “choose appropriate ways of speaking that the audience can understand” as reasons for its difficulty. Three (3) out of 15 conveyed, “Attend to the needs and expectations of multiple audiences – for example, a parent and a bank officer.” And lastly, one (1) of the 15 who affirmed that language brokering is difficult because one must “assume appropriate social roles.” Hence, participants recognize the difficulties they encountered when they function as language broker but that do not hinder them for doing it.

3.9. What the participants learned as language broker

While language brokering proved to be difficult for the majority of the participants, they recognized that it also facilitate learning. They have learned vocabulary (12 out of 15 participants) and gained metalinguistic awareness or the ability to reflect on language (11 participants). Seven (7) out of 15 participants reported acquiring “real world” literacy skills and social maturity. While, 6 of the participants said that they develop cross cultural awareness, 5 said that language brokering enhances their audience awareness and strengthen their civic and familial responsibility. Whereas 2 of the participants reported that they learn teaching and tutoring skills. The results of the current study coincide with previous studies that: language brokers may develop linguistic abilities (Diaz-Lazaro, 2002; Shannon, 1990), have a more sophisticated vocabulary that could help them build their lexicons (Halgunseth, 2003; McQuillan & Tse, 1995), translation provides an avenue to enhance linguistic awareness (Malakoff & Hakuta, 1991:163), allowed them to be more mature and independent, meet more people, and increase their proficiency in both languages (Halgunseth, 2003; Valdes, Chavez, & Angelelli, 2003) and may also develop higher decision-making strategies (McQuillan & Tse, 1995; Diaz-Lazaro, 2002).

3.10. Strategies used to served as an efficient language broker

When asked for the strategies they use for language brokering, 8 out of 16 (50%) of the participants shared the strategies they use in order to be an efficient language broker. Here are the strategies they mentioned:

Table 4 – Language Brokering Strategies

Participants	Strategies used (In Spanish)	Strategies used (English)
P1	comprender y transmitir la información con la mejor fiabilidad de la interpretación	understand and convey the information with the best reliability in the interpretation
P3	Escuchar, interpretar y tener un amplio vocabulario	listen, interpret and have an extensive vocabulary
P4	Utilizo vocabulario coloquial y gestos. Doy unos ejemplos.	I use colloquial language and gestures. I give some examples
P6	para traducir textos españoles utilizo vocabulario de “puns” y también sitios web como “leo.org”	I use “puns” vocabulary and also website such as “leo.org” to translate Spanish texts.
P7	Primero de todo: paciencia para oír y explicar. Utilización de gestos y ejemplos actuales. Y además, un lenguaje adecuado a la persona que nos pregunta.	First of all: patience to listen and explain. The use of gestures and examples. Moreover, a language adequate to the person who asks us.
P11	Un diccionario bueno, de refranes por ejemplo en lengua maternal	A good dictionary, of proverbs for example, in first language
P14	Transmitir seguridad y confianza al cliente, intentar estar lo más cerca posible de cliente, buscar las salidas a corto y medio plazo	To transmit the message to the client with assurance and confidence, to intend it to be as understandable as possible to the client, to look for solutions in the shortest time possible.
P16	Prestar mucha atención, no solamente leer los libros del curso sino leer periódicos y ver la televisión, conocer la cultura para ampliar el conocimiento	To pay attention, not only to read books of the course but read newspapers and watch television, learn the culture to expand knowledge

Common among the strategies stated by the participants are the use of vocabulary understandable to the ‘client’, the use of gestures and examples to facilitate communication and understanding; listening attentively and explaining well were also mentioned. Furthermore, one suggested the need to enhance language competence and expand knowledge by reading books and newspapers, watching television and learning the target culture. Related to the findings of the current study are the strategies enumerated by Orellana (2003a) on translating or interpreting (for and by kids) which are also applicable for adults who serve as language broker. Among the suggestions she mentioned that participants of this study also use are: take the time you need to gather your thoughts, use body language and gestures, try substituting words that sound similar in either language and try saying things in different ways, take time to look over the material first when translating texts so try to understand the main ideas and be careful not to make up information (p. 9).

4. Conclusion

In the present study, the elicited responses were based on the experiences and perceptions of fifteen (15) out of 16 or 94% of the participants from diverse cultural and language origin who took on the role as language brokers. Although the current study is based on a small sample of participants, the findings suggest that not only children serve as language brokers but adults as well. Furthermore, adult language brokers do not only served their immediate family but also to friends, colleagues and even strangers without monetary exchange and in a wide range of domains (such as street, shops, companies, school among others). Indeed, where, what, and for whom participants brokered, in general, are consistent with the literature on language brokering except three new aspects (work/ companies, airport and immigrants' association). Furthermore, the majority (9 out of 15) who were the oldest child (Chao, 2006; Valdes et. al., 2003; Hall & Robinson, 1999) and the rest were not, indicating that language brokers were not always the first-born child (Esquivel 2012).

Without a doubt, this study support previous studies which argue that language brokering involve various people, distinct materials and different domains making it a rich and diverse phenomenon. Similar to Cila and Lalonde's study (2014), participants translate different items that require not only simple linguistic but also more complex linguistic and cultural knowledge (such as TV shows). As language brokers of this study are foreign students, it confirmed what Esquivel (2012) said about the practice of language brokering, "it is not unique to certain ethnic groups or regions; instead, it is a practice that is common across various immigrant groups in a variety of regions, at home and abroad" (p. 7), which is consistent with other studies (e.g. Tse, 1995a, 1996a). Neither is it unique to female gender although the majority of the participants were female (75%) similar to previous studies like Lazarević (2012) and Weisskirch (2005). A distinction that this study presents is that the majority of those who admitted of serving as language brokers started in a later age (secondary/university students or already professionals) and had sufficient Spanish level in order to mediate for other people unlike the majority of studies which show children usually start brokering between the ages of eight and twelve (Cila & Lalonde, 2014; Lazarević 2012; Esquivel 2012; Hall & Robinson, 1999; Hall & Sham, 1998; Tse, 1996a; McQuillan & Tse, 1995; Tse, 1995a).

The study reported both positive and negative feelings towards language brokering but it can be said that the positive outweigh the negative. Participants of this study recognized the difficulties in the practice of language brokering but they still continue to broker for others and even identified strategies used to do their language brokering task well. Likewise, they also acknowledged that it facilitates learning, enhances linguistic, met linguistic and cultural awareness, as well as develops "real world" literacy skills and social maturity. As we live in a globalized society and that the "role of language brokers will persist and continue to develop" (Percy, 2006), it is recommended that this study be replicated with multiple options to answer all questions and that the number of participants should be increased; not only from Spanish language learners but from other languages too as it may illustrate how extended is the practice of language brokering among adults across different languages and cultures. It is envisaged that it was able to contribute in the recognition of language brokers' linguistic and cultural competence and their assistance to facilitate communication for others.

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