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# **The Intergenerational Transmission of Contending Place Identities**

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SUGGESTED RUNNING HEAD: Intergenerational Transmission of Contending Place Identities

## **ABSTRACT:**

Although a considerable amount of research exists regarding the transfer of political orientations within the family, little systematic attention has been devoted to studying the transmission of place (territorial) identities in contexts where such identities constitute a basic cleavage of political competition. This paper examines the transfer of place identities in Catalonia, Spain, where contending identities, along with left-right ideology, give shape to a distinctive regional political life. Using data from region-wide household surveys, we analyze the reproduction of place identities as observed in parent-child pairs and triads and find that it exceeds the reproduction of other political orientations, including left-right self-location and party preference. The direct transmission model fares well against the rival hypothesis of indirect transmission via parental social characteristics and the competing impact of the local context. Parent-child congruence varies according to the homogeneity of parental place identities, the same-sex and cross sex combinations of parents and their children, and the ethnic composition of neighborhoods.

**KEY WORDS:** political socialization, place identity, Spain, families

## **The Intergenerational Transmission of Contending Place Identities**

A moment's reflection points toward the pre-adult years as the critical period for the construction of social identities. True, some identities such as those connected with marriage, parenting, and vocational roles will await post-adolescent development—though even in those instances anticipatory socialization may well have occurred. However, fundamental identities associated with race, ethnicity, gender, religion, social class, nationalism, broad political ideology, and a variety of in-group/out-group classifications undoubtedly take strong root in the pre-adult years. In this paper we look at one particular identity, that associated with geographical location. We use the terms place and territorial identity as short hand designations to encompass the shared historical, geographic, linguistic, and cultural characteristics associated with national and sub-national units, and focus on the role of the family in shaping this identity among pre-adults and young adults. More specifically, we use data from a longitudinal survey of families in Catalonia, Spain, to explore the formation of Catalan (regional) vs. Spanish (national) identity.

Although a considerable amount of research exists regarding the transfer of political orientations within the family,<sup>1</sup> little systematic attention has been devoted to studying the parent-to-child transmission of place identities in contexts where such identities constitute a basic cleavage of political competition. In this paper we argue that, given the significance of place identity in Catalan politics, as described below, it seems most likely that the family of origin would be a prime socialization agent. Though surely in widely varying degrees, parents display and communicate a sense of self, relational, group, and collective identity (Brewer, 2001) with respect to place. The impact of these cues and behaviors is abetted by the strong affective

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<sup>1</sup> E.g., Jennings, Stoker, & Bowers (2009); Percheron & Jennings (1981); Tedin (1974); Westholm & Niemi (1992); Wernli (2007); and Zuckerman, Dasovic, & Fitzgerald (2007).

and authority ties between parent and child, to say nothing of the prolonged, ongoing presence of parents in the lives of their children. Our research design enables us to explore this version of social learning, “direct transmission” from parent to child. We also assess the relative success of identity transmission as compared with other central identities, the contending impact of other family-related characteristics, and the consequences of parental consistency of cue giving and the cultural make up of the local environment.

In what follows we first establish the centrality of place identity in Catalan politics. Next we outline the basic theoretical framework and define the guiding hypotheses, drawing on the premises of social learning theory and social identity theory. After briefly describing our data and research design, we then proceed to present the results of the empirical analysis. We conclude by discussing the main findings and their implications.

### **The Role of Identity in Catalan Politics**

Spanish politics is to a great extent shaped by an enduring center-periphery cleavage that reflects and is reflected by subjective territorial (place) identities. The deep cultural and linguistic differences existing in the Spanish society serve as the basis of regional identifications that to a varying degree coexist with national (state) identifications. In some parts of the country, regional identities are linked to regionalist and nationalist movements claiming higher levels of political autonomy, or even secession. Catalonia ranks among the first in the spread of territorial identity and holds one of the longest and most ambitious nationalist records.

Since the launching of the still ongoing process of asymmetrical territorial decentralization in the late 1970s, Autonomous Communities (i.e. regional governments) have fostered regional interests and contributed to the strengthening of feelings of regional identity. This has particularly been the case in Catalonia. Catalan identity is rooted in a remote history of

sovereignty and an array of distinctive cultural features, of which language (Catalan) is the central and most prominent. Catalan governments have enacted ambitious policies of linguistic “normalization” to expand the use of Catalan at all levels, mainly, but not exclusively, through the educational system.

The center-periphery cleavage at the center of Catalan politics is inextricably linked to the presence of heterogeneous place identities. Decentralization also contributed to the emergence of differentiated regional party systems (Pallarés & Keating, 2003), which capitalize on differentiated place identities. Political actors frequently invoke territorial identities in support of their demands and to mobilize public opinion to support their interests. Preferences over self government, the form of the state, and language policies, which are on top of the political debate, are to a considerable extent determined by identity. A particularly important manifestation of territorial identities appears in voting behavior, where there is a well established association between identity and vote preference (e.g., Font, Pallarés, & Serra, 1999).

### **Theoretical Considerations**

In view of the central role that place identity occupies in Catalan politics, it will be useful to consider briefly how such identity fits into prominent conceptualizations about types of social identities. There is a vast literature based on social identity theory (SIT) and its extension of social categorization theory (SCT), though as Huddy (2001) notes, there has been less application in political psychology than what might be expected. Two aspects of SIT are especially relevant in the present context.

First, the original SIT formulation posited the existence of hierarchical concentric circles of social identities, conceived of in ordinal terms.<sup>2</sup> These three levels of geographical/political identities extended from the subordinate local community on upward to the nation-state and beyond. We need not apply the particulars of this formulation in order to understand, nevertheless, that hierarchically arrayed spatial identities were recognized early on as an important aspect of the theory. Thus our focus on regional and national identities in Spain addresses one specific manifestation of social identity.

The second way in which our work ties into SIT rests in its focus on one specific form of identity. We borrow here from Brewer's (2001) cogently-presented taxonomy in which she outlines four major conceptualizations. Person-based identities refer to the development of central identities at the individual level (the "who" am I insight). Relational identities refer to interpersonal relations, how people identify themselves when interacting with frequent others. Group-based identities place the individual as an integral, non-independent part of the larger group or category with shared characteristics (the "we" and "they" feeling often found in racial, ethnic, and class divisions). Finally, collective identities extend the identification with a group to an adoption of the group's goals and standards as represented most vividly in the public sphere via social movements and group-based political mobilization. The latter perhaps constitutes the most visible application of SIT by students of political behavior.

Based on the foregoing description of Catalan history and the current environment, it requires no great leap of imagination to discern how all four dimensions of social identity have been and continue to be at work in that region. Of particular importance for our purposes is the

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<sup>2</sup> Foundational works include Tajfel, 1978, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; and Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987; for a concise overview of the field see Hornsey, 2008).

characterization of place identity as a person based identity, given that, as Brewer (2001, p. 118) observes: “this is the conception of social identity that is most often studied developmentally, as one aspect of the acquisition of a self-concept through processes of *socialization and internalization*” [emphasis added]. Research on children’s feelings about countries and national groups has shown that at the age of 6 most children already recognize themselves as members of a national group, and Catalan children have been found to show a comparatively high degree of identification with this self-concept and to ascribe high relative importance to it (Barrett, 2007). The early development of place identity in Catalonia is probably related to its close connection with readily apparent social characteristics and cultural practices, particularly language and birthplace. But, as we have just argued, it also has to do with the significant role of place as a collective identity, encompassing common interests and values, and serving as the basis for political confrontation and mobilization. It is this contending dimension of territorial identities in Catalonia what confers them a distinctive character, absent in more nationally homogeneous polities.

If territorial identity is fundamental to comprehending political life in Catalonia, as appears very much to be the case, it becomes important to understand just how these identities are acquired and maintained across generations. One approach consists of the social learning of political orientations within the family circle (e.g., Jennings et al., 2009; Tedin, 1974; Westholm & Niemi, 1992). The core idea here is that a principal way “children” acquire such orientations is through observing, modeling, imitating, identifying with, and ultimately internalizing the behavior and attitudes of those immediately surrounding them. It is through such processes that parents can pass on their own political orientations to their children.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See Bandura (1969, 1986) for thorough discussions of social learning principles.

One premise of the direct transmission model is that parent-child similarity will vary in predictable ways partly as a function of certain attributes of the attitude object (e.g. Tedin 1974, 1980). Attitudes tend to be more successfully transmitted the more salient, affect-laden, and concrete is their object. In view of both the significance of the center-periphery cleavage for Catalan politics and the intimate association between place identities and social and cultural characteristics, we would expect to find a high degree of similarity between the place identity of parents and their offspring. Moreover, we would anticipate more similarity for that orientation than for more transitory or less affect-laden but nonetheless prominent political orientations.

Parents also serve as instruments for the acquisition of territorial identities via processes associated with status inheritance and cultural and socio-political context (e.g., Campbell, 2006; Dalton, 1982; Gimpel, Lay, & Schuknecht, 2003; Glass, Bengtson, & Dunham, 1986; Vollebergh, Iedema, & Raaijmakers, 2001). By virtue especially of social stratification and residential location, parents provide the young with differential exposures and opportunities that may in turn be related to identity formation. These social milieu factors, including the proportion of native born in the immediate environment, may operate as independent factors affecting identity or they may be what lie behind any observed correspondence between the reported identities of parent and child. Given the embeddedness of Catalan identity on readily apparent social and cultural categories, any observed similarity across generations may well be the result of a shared environment and status inheritance. Consequently, in the analysis we introduce a number of milieu characteristics in order to test the transmission model and to ascertain how these other family-related variables affect the acquisition of place identity.

A tenet of social learning theory is that such learning is affected by the frequency, duration, and rate of modeling cues (Bandura, 1969). Past research has indeed shown that the



consistency of parental cue-giving enhances the passing on of the substance and tone of relevant attitudes (e.g., Jennings & Niemi 1974, ch. 6; Jennings et al., 2009). Accordingly, we expect the reproduction of territorial identities to vary along with the level of agreement between parents. If direct transmission is one of the processes behind intergenerational similarity, parental influence on offspring identity should decrease to the extent that the parents hold different identities. We test this hypothesis by employing a set of mother-father-child triads, as described below.

In the event that the parents differ in terms of place identity, which parent prevails? Research on other orientations indicates few significant differences between the influence of mothers and fathers or a slight edge for mothers (e.g., Coffé & Voorpostel, 2010; Wernli, 2007; Zuckerman et al., 2007, ch. 5). Relative identification with each parent in these conflicted situations should be important in sorting out differential parental influence. Although other factors are undoubtedly involved, we postulate that the impact of mothers vs. fathers depends in part on the sex of the child, the rationale being that children more closely identify with and model the same sex parent (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Hence we hypothesize that sons will more closely resemble their fathers with respect to place identity whereas daughters will more closely resemble their mothers.

Just as within the household, the diversity of cues at the local environment may affect the transmission of place identities from parent to child. Here, our approach is guided by the insights of social identity theory on the interplay of situational and motivational factors in the formation of group identities. Situational factors affect the saliency of categories associated with particular social identities. Saliency is enhanced in conditions of distinctiveness. From this point of view, we would expect Spanish identity to be more easily activated within families of migrant origin living in areas of predominantly Catalan neighborhoods. Yet people need inclusion as much as

they need differentiation, and tend to adopt group identities that satisfy both needs. Brewer's theory of "optimal distinctiveness" argues that individuals are motivated to define themselves in terms that are neither too inclusive nor too differentiating (Brewer, 2009). Accordingly, we hypothesize that the particular birthplace composition of the local community will affect the definition of an "optimal social identity" in Catalonia and thereby influence the child's tendency to embrace her parents' sense of place identity, particularly in the event of contradictory pressures. At this stage, though, the prevalence of either force (differentiation or inclusion) in the definition of territorial identities in Catalonia remains mainly an empirical question, to be addressed in the subsequent analysis.

### **Research Design and Data Collection**

Our analysis is based on data from the Panel de Desigualtats de Catalunya (Catalan Panel of Inequalities), a longitudinal household survey representative of the household population of Catalonia, conducted by the Fundació Jaume Bofill, an independent research foundation ([www.obdesigualtats.cat](http://www.obdesigualtats.cat) and [www.fbofill.cat](http://www.fbofill.cat)). The survey has been administered on a yearly basis since 2002. The original sample (N=5,785 within 1,991 households) was obtained using a stratified two-stage design. In the first stage, PSUs (census precincts) were randomly drawn from the strata obtained by the crossing of four variables (territory, size of habitat, percentage of working class, and percentage of working-age population). In the second stage, 10 households were randomly drawn from each PSU selected at the previous stage. All household members aged 16 or more are automatically selected to be interviewed during each wave. Changes in sample units are monitored so that moving households are followed to their new locations, and households newly formed by former members of the initial sample of households are integrated into the sample.

For present purposes we utilize all households with offspring aged 16-35 living at home with at least one of their parents. Compared with most other western countries, residential independence generally occurs at a later stage in Spain (Requena, 2006). According to the last Population and Housing Census, 59% of Catalans from ages 16 to 35 remained in their homes of origin as of 2001. That was true of 44% of the 25 to 29 year-olds and 27% of the 30 to 34 year-olds still lived with their family (López, Valls, Verd, & Vidal, 2006). Due to this tendency the mean offspring age in our sample is 22.7, with all but about one-tenth being between 16-29. This age range, quite unusual in studies combining parents and their offspring, raises the possibility of age-related effects. Separate analysis by age groupings, however, revealed few meaningful differences in the analyses reported on below, which implies that any place identity derived from parental influence is acquired fairly early on and is maintained.<sup>4</sup> In this sense the age range of the offspring is an analytical asset.

Depending on the purpose of the analysis the data are organized in dyadic (parent-child) or triadic form (father-mother-child). Having the triads available enables us to test a number of propositions associated with the principles of modeling and cue-giving within the family, in particular the importance of parental consistency. When dyads are used, we half-weight to correct for duplicate offspring cases, i.e., instances in which both parents were interviewed. The

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<sup>4</sup> Older youth leaving home may be different in relevant ways than those remaining, which might result in different findings than those we report. Given the study design there is no sure way to rule out that outcome. Those living independently are slightly older, better educated, and less native born. Such characteristics had little impact on the analysis involving parent-child concordance described below, leading us to believe that our results are reasonably generalizable to cases where the child was not living at home.

maximum number of dyads used in the analysis is 861, and the maximum number of triads is 343.

Although the survey instrument focuses mainly on economic issues, it has occasionally included a few questions on politics. Unfortunately, not all the variables relevant to us have been included in the same wave. As a result, we are sometimes forced to rely on different waves for the analysis of different dependent variables. To minimize potential problems of comparability across samples due to panel attrition and a changing political climate we utilize data from three consecutive waves (2003 to 2005).<sup>5</sup>

### **Absolute and Comparative Levels of Territorial Identity Congruence**

A number of approaches could be used in order to capture ethno-geographical self identifications, including open-ended and rank order formats and multiple indicators. Some surveys include sub-regional and supra-national levels and some allow multiple identifications, as in the European Values Surveys (Dejaeghere, 2010; Hooghe & van Houtte, 2009). In light of the fact that the major tensions in Catalonia are between Catalan and Spanish identities, the survey instrument adopted the so-called “Moreno question,” which is the standard measure of territorial identity in Spanish studies and has become one of the most popular measures of regionalism in Europe (Fijtar, 2010; Moreno, 2006; Moreno, Arriba, & Serrano, 1998). It consists of a forced choice question, which reads as follows: “In general would you say that you

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<sup>5</sup> We draw on two waves to gather as large a number of observations as possible, for not all eligible household members respond in every wave, and some become eligible between waves. However, child and parent(s) observations within a given dyad or triad always come from the same wave. Unfortunately the territorial identity has not been consistently included in all the panel waves, thus preventing our taking greater advantage of the longitudinal nature of the data.

feel 1) only Catalan, 2) more Catalan than Spanish, 3) as much Catalan as Spanish, 4) more Spanish than Catalan, 5) only Spanish.” Note that the alternatives, forced choice notwithstanding, do include the both equal option.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, even though the interviewees could only select one option, they were given the explicit opportunity of expressing dual identification.

As Figure 1 reveals, sizable numbers of people in both generations did express dual identification. More commonly, though, directional options were taken. Both generations tilt decidedly toward regional (Catalan) rather than national (Spanish) identification. At the extremes, at least one-fifth of each generation identified only as Catalan whereas less than one-twentieth expressed a Spanish identification. In some respects, then, the analysis to follow essentially deals with shades of Catalan inclinations. Parents and their offspring differ only modestly in the aggregate, the younger generation in fact being the more identified with the Catalan side. Combining the “only Catalan” and “more Catalan than Spanish” categories yields about a 10% difference between the generations. With the data in hand it is difficult to determine if this modest difference reflects generational or life stage effects, although the former has received some support in previous research. Cross-sectional analyses show no sharp or consistent differences by age (Argelaguet, 2006). Younger cohorts are currently less likely to embrace

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<sup>6</sup> “Don’t know” or “No answer” options were not openly offered but coded when volunteered. Given the low percentages in this category (.8% of children, .6% of parents), we dropped these cases from the analysis. Respondents volunteering a “none of the above” answer (5.2% of children, 5.7% of parents) were coded in the middle category in the interest of maintaining a higher analytic N and because, like the “as much Catalan as Spanish” respondents, they tilt neither way along this particular continuum. In any event, excluding them from the analysis does not alter the basic findings presented below.

predominantly Spanish sentiments than are older cohorts, but this did not seem to be the case in the mid 1980s, when a higher percentage of Catalan residents were born outside Catalonia. Along with the shrinkage of the immigration flow from other regions of Spain and the consequent growth of the proportion of the Catalan-born population, there are signs that the regional government has been successful in the promotion of Catalan identity, particularly among natives (Martínez-Herrera, 2002).

Of course the fact that children and their parents have similar distributions on the measure does not necessarily mean that high levels of congruity exist between individual parents and their children. Indeed one of the puzzles occasionally emerging from research involving parent-child dyads is the similar aggregate distributions on the one hand and the frequency of dissimilar scores when parents and their children are matched up. Some of this discontinuity is surely wrapped up in measurement error, with both generations making contributions in the dyadic analysis and with some of the measurement unreliability being smoothed out in the aggregate distributions. Still, it is unlikely that this is the whole story in that a number of factors other than parental preferences can be influencing the child's sense of identity. With these observations in mind, we turn to an analysis of the parent-child pairs.

We begin with a cross-tabulation of parent and child responses (Table 1). Due to the small numbers of respondents electing the Spanish only and mainly Spanish options, we have combined those two categories here and in all analysis to follow. Altogether nearly one-half (48.7%) of the pairs are in absolute agreement. Expressed in terms of summary statistics, the overall relationship produces an intraclass correlation (ICC) of .51 and a Pearson's correlation

coefficient ( $r$ ) of .53.<sup>7</sup> As discussed below, this pairwise association would ordinarily be considered at least moderately high. Although the differences among the three largest categories are not great, some parents have more success than others in passing along their identity. Pure Catalan identifiers are the most successful, with a clear majority having children with the same preference. Standing at the other end of success are the parents who lean more toward Spanish identification, where only one-third of the offspring echo parental sentiments. Instead, a little over one-half of the offspring opt for what might be considered the compromise or halfway point of dual identity. By inference, children born into Spanish-leaning households find it difficult to resist the eroding pro-Catalan forces present in the external environment.

How do these findings compare with other research based on parent-child pairs? A first comparison is with results from other countries. Much of that research deals with party attachments and left right tendance, and we have not been able to locate other studies focusing on place identity. Bearing that limitation in mind, and judged by the standards found in the relevant literature, concordance between the Catalan parents and their children would be labeled as moderately high. In general the pairwise similarity reported here for place identity matches or exceeds that found for partisanship and tendance in a range of Western countries (Bengston, Biblarz, & Roberts, 2002; Jennings, 1984; Jennings et al., 2009; Nieuwbeerta & Wittebrood,

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<sup>7</sup> ICC shows the extent to which children and their parents resemble each other. Intraclass correlation is a better index of similarity than is interclass correlation (e.g. Pearson's  $r$ ), because it is specifically designed to measure absolute agreement within groups (parent-child dyads, in our case) rather than linear relationships between variables. We report Pearson's  $r$  for comparability with other reports in the literature.

1995; Percheron & Jennings, 1981; Tedin, 1974; Wernli, 2007; Westholm, 1999; Westholm & Niemi, 1992; Zuckerman et al., 2007).

A second comparison is with the results obtained for several other measures contained in the survey instrument. Included in the other measures are two indicators of specific political identities: 1) self-placement on an eleven point left-right ideology scale, and 2) expressions of “sympathy” (positive affect) toward the main political parties, which are treated as the functional equivalent of the well-known party identification measure widely used in the United States. Also included is a manifestation of political ideology, namely, vote choice in regional elections. Another kind of comparison involves two indicators of ostensibly non-political social identities having significant political implications—subjective social class and religious preferences. All variables in the models are coded from 0 to 1. The years for all the variables used in the analyses, along with their question wording and coding, are shown in the Appendix.

In order to make these comparisons we calculated ICC and Pearson’s correlation coefficients for each indicator. As shown in Table 2, parent-child congruence on geographical identity usually approximates or, more frequently, exceeds congruence on the other measures. Several comparisons bear close inspection. Along with the territorial issue, left-right ideology is the major dimension of political confrontation in Catalonia (Pallarés, Virós, & Canals 1991; Riba 2000). Place identity, however, is much more readily transmitted than is left-right orientation. As we advanced above, the likely explanation for this difference is that the latter is characterized more distinctly and more narrowly as political, whereas the former carries with it more embracing and stronger social-cultural, value-laden components. It remains to be seen whether this sizable difference persists after controlling for social milieu factors.

Concordance on partisan orientations fares somewhat better than does left-right



orientation. This outcome is not too surprising given the association between place identity and vote preference. Starting first with party sympathy, we see that transmission levels vary widely by party but still run moderately to substantially lower than that for place identity. Taking the mean of those coefficients yields figures of .33 (ICC) and .34 (r), still well below those for identity though higher than those for left-right. Parent-child agreement also varies widely by party according to voting behavior in the regional elections.<sup>8</sup> Here the means, .37 (ICC) and .39 (r), become a bit higher, but still far from those for territorial identity.

Comparisons based on two non-political measures of high significance are also instructive. The picture is mixed. Pair agreement on subjective social class is quite close to that for territorial identity. The centrality and salience of location in the social stratification structure presumably lie behind this moderately high rate of parent-child agreement. By contrast, parents appear to be far less successful in passing along their religious identifications. This relative failure might be surprising given the conventional belief that religious orientations are highly susceptible to parental influence and that such orientations tend to be a core part of one's social identity, but it fits the dramatic process of secularization and the decrease in the level of religious commitments undergone in Spanish society since the 1970s (Gunther, Montero, & Botella 2004). In any event, the key point is that territorial identity is "transmitted" as well as or better than two other key markers of one's place in Catalan society. Coupling these findings with those already presented points toward place identity as a characteristic especially vulnerable to parental influence.

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<sup>8</sup> In this instance we are working with a sub-sample of pairs, one in which both parent and child voted. This means that the youth portion is somewhat older than it is in the full sample and that, by definition, the sub-sample is more politically active, at least as signified by voting turnout.

### **Taking Other Factors into Account**

While the results considered up to this point do show the *similarity* between parents and their children, the procedures most likely overestimate parental *influence* per se. Parental identity may reflect other parental and family attributes, such as language, place of origin, and social class. Children may also be responding to the influences of other cue givers in their environments, such as the school or the local community. Consequently, we estimated multivariate models in order to take such factors into account.

Any search for other determinants of territorial identities must start with geographical origin. We created a dummy variable identifying youth respondents whose parents were both born in Catalonia.<sup>9</sup> Our expectation is that children with one or both parents born outside the region will show higher levels of dual and predominantly Spanish identification.

Another obvious candidate is language. As mentioned above, Catalan identity is mainly rooted in distinctive cultural features, especially that of the vernacular language. Absent more direct indicators in the survey instrument, we rely on respondents' answers when asked to name "their language." Responses to the question when posed in this fashion become a matter of personal opinion, which may bring them close to expressions of territorial identification itself. If so, that would provide an even stiffer test of the direct transmission model. A dummy variable was defined for those children whose parents both picked Catalan and only Catalan as their language—which means that Spanish was explicitly denied, even though the knowledge of Spanish in the region is nearly universal.

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<sup>9</sup> We used whatever parental data was available in calculating this and subsequent parental attributes in the models. Thus, if only one parent was interviewed we assumed that the spouse shared the same or approximately the same attributes—a likely occurrence given the types of measures under consideration.

Household income and mean parents' education were also added to the models as measures of socioeconomic status. Although their effect on place identity is far from settled, we expect them to exert a positive impact on Catalan identity, given (1) the modest background of most of the Spanish immigrants moving to Catalonia throughout the past century; (2) the markedly "Catalan" profile displayed by the economic and particularly the cultural and political elites of the region; and (3) the sympathies by these elites in the regional governments formed so far for the advancement of the decentralization process.

In order to control for other possible sources of influence, we also included an extrafamilial measure, namely, the cultural background of the residential environment. As a result of the migration flows that occurred in the 1960s and onwards, a substantial proportion of the current Catalan population was born in other regions of Spain. According to the 2001 census, 68 percent of the legal residents were born in Catalonia, 26 percent in other parts of the country. These immigrants are unevenly distributed in the territory, their numbers being much higher in big cities than in the rural areas. It can reasonably be expected that the likelihood of developing Catalan identities will be lower in the communities historically affected by immigration due to the influence of potentially relevant socialization agents such as peers, teachers, and neighbors. To take this possibility into account, the models below include a measure of the proportion of Catalan-born population in the respondent's census precinct. The average size of census precincts is around 1,100 individuals. Hence these data give us a good sense of the cultural composition of a respondent's proximate context.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Using data at such a low level of aggregation comes at the price of precision, though. In order to secure respondents' anonymity, we were not given access to the exact percentage of native residents at the

Table 3 shows the results and also includes, for purposes of comparison, the results for political ideology and sympathy for the three major parties. Looking first at the multivariate model for territorial identity, we see that all coefficients go in the expected direction, although some of them are not statistically significant at conventional levels. Catalan identity is more prevalent in areas with large proportions of Catalan-born population, among respondents with more educated parents, and when both parents identify only Catalan as their language. Despite the impact of these other factors, parents' orientations easily remain as the most influential determinant of offspring territorial identities. Parents' orientations also remain as the best predictors for left-right ideology and the party sympathy measures. Note, however, that our model specifications fare considerably less well for these measures in terms of explained variance. Which is to say that the determinants of youthful place identity are better comprehended than those for two other key elements of Catalan politics.

The preeminent role of parental identity notwithstanding, the multivariate findings also reveal the toll taken on that preeminence when social milieu is taken into account, as compared with the simple bivariate relationships (top of Table 3). The coefficient for parental territorial identity is substantially diminished in the multivariate model, to the extent that it is statistically indistinguishable from the coefficient for ideology. The effect of parental views on attachments to the PSC and ERC also experiences a visible, although more moderate, decrease when other factors are controlled, due mainly to the influence of parents' language. This decrease is

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precinct level, but only to ranges comprising not less than 5 percent of the total population, as described in the Appendix.

compatible with the connection these two parties have with territorial identity.<sup>11</sup> Our results, therefore, underline the importance of shared social characteristics for the reproduction of identity, even though parents' orientations still remain their most influential determinant. The advantage shown by identity in terms of simple parent-child similarity is, to a considerable degree, the product of a shared social milieu. In contrast, social characteristics play a minor role in the intergenerational transmission of left-right ideology, which for the most part occurs through direct parental influence.<sup>12</sup>

### **The Moderating Effects of Homogeneous and Heterogeneous Environments**

The transmission of place identity does not occur within a vacuum. In particular the degree to which the child is embedded within homogeneous contexts with respect to such identities would be expected to have an impact on the rate of “successful” transmission. In this section we test this proposition by taking into account the contexts provided by the family and by the immediately surrounding geo-political area.

Agreeing and Disagreeing Parents.--The foregoing analyses were based on parent-child pairs.<sup>13</sup> However, as described in the methods section, we also have available a subset in which

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<sup>11</sup> ERC is the most extremist of the relevant Catalan nationalist parties, whereas PSC is a non-nationalist party whose Catalan identity is viewed with suspicion by the nationalists for its allegiance to the Spanish socialist party.

<sup>12</sup> Our results hold if child's characteristics (age, sex, education, and geographical origin) are also included in the models. The estimates are available from the authors upon request.

<sup>13</sup> Strictly speaking that is not so; in the instances where both parents were interviewed they were each given half-weight in the analysis.

both parents were interviewed, thereby producing familial triads, or triples. A core part of social learning theory is that the more consistent the cue giving over time and across agents, the more likely will the socializee take on the substance and tone of the cue (Bandura, 1969). In accordance with that proposition, a parent supported by an agreeing spouse should be more likely to pass on a political disposition than is a parent with a disagreeing spouse. When disagreement occurs, the question naturally arises as to which parent is the more successful and any implications thereof. In addition the question can be extended by taking into account the patterns based on the four combinations of parental and offspring sex.

Our analysis now necessarily shifts from dyads to triads, but we first need to take a quick look at the father-mother (i.e., husband-wife) dyads. In general, couples do tend to resemble each other politically by virtue of assortative mating and post-marital influence processes (Stoker & Jennings, 2005; Zuckerman, Fitzgerald, & Dasovic, 2005, and Zuckerman et al., 2007). Such is clearly true in the case at hand. A cross tabulation shows that 59% of these couples share the same place identification category, producing an ICC of .53 and an  $r$  of .54.

This moderately high level of parental agreement on territorial identity nevertheless leaves some 41% of the couples at least nominally at odds with each other and presumably sending out different signals to their offspring. In order to test for the impact of politically homogeneous vs. heterogeneous parents we followed the strategy used by Jennings et al. (2009). We first calculated the level of parental disagreement for each of the couples, taking the absolute difference between the identity scores of the spouses. The same procedure was followed for the left-right ideology and party sympathy variables. We then regressed the child's score on that of a parent randomly selected from among the two parents. In order to calibrate the impact of couple similarity on the transmission process, the parent's score was interacted with the level of parental

heterogeneity. Since ours is a measure of heterogeneity or disagreement within couples, the prediction is that the interaction coefficient will be negative.

The results of the estimations go in the expected direction, and the interaction coefficient is statistically significant (Table 4). This means that the passing on of territorial identity becomes less efficient as the level of couple disagreement increases. One way of demonstrating the impact of parental agreement on place identity is found in Figure 2. Here we see how the effect of parental orientation and its corresponding 95% confidence interval, as implied by the estimated model, changes according to the degree of concordance within the couple. When both parents share the same position (i.e., their level of disagreement is zero) parent's identity has a substantial, visible effect on child's identity. The effect drops as the distance between spouses increases, and becomes statistically indistinguishable from zero when the distance score is higher than .5. Note, however, that with a mean distance of .17 virtually all the sample falls within the significance area.

The availability of data from heterogeneous couples also allows us to explore the impact associated with parental sex and offspring sex on the transmission process. Regressing child's orientations on the orientations of disagreeing parents reveals essentially no difference between father and mother "influence" (Table 5, second column). We hypothesized earlier, however, that parent-child similarity might systematically depend on sex, with children more closely modeling the parent of their same sex. In order to test this hypothesis, we extended the model by adding offspring sex and the interaction between offspring sex and each parent's orientations. The results point in the expected direction (Table 5, third column). Given the coding of the sex of offspring variable (male=0, female=1), the "main effect" coefficients show the impact of parents' orientations on sons, while parents' impact on daughters is obtained by adding the "main effect"

to the corresponding “interaction effect.” According to these estimates, the interaction between sex and father’s identity is negative ( $p < .05$ ), while the interaction between sex and mother’s identity is positive ( $p < .1$ ).

The same-sex and cross-sex configurations are more readily perceived as displayed in a graph (Figure 3). Comparing across *parents* by sex, the effect of father is higher than the effect of mother on sons ( $p < .1$ ), and lower than her effect on daughter ( $p < .1$ ). Comparing across the *offspring* by sex, the effect of father on son is higher than his effect on daughters ( $p < .05$ ), whereas the effect of mother is higher on daughter than on son ( $p < .1$ ). Same sex modeling is clearly at work here as sons and daughters appear to take more cues from the same-sex parent. Thus in cases where parents disagree, they are most likely to find their preferences echoed in their same sex child, thereby helping preserve intergenerational continuity through that route.

Nativity of the Local Environment.-- Heterogeneity might have an effect beyond the family context. Indeed, as demonstrated above (Table 3), our own data indicate that Catalan identity is more prevalent among offspring living in neighborhoods with low levels of migrant-born population. What we want to ask at this point, however, is if the *transmission* of territorial identities from parent to child is moderated by the cultural background of the neighborhood.

Extending the predictions from SIT to the similarity between parents and offspring, and given the range of diversity in Catalan precincts, we expect that the birthplace composition of the local environment has a significant influence for the transmission of predominantly Spanish identities, but not for that of predominantly Catalan identities. In order to estimate the impact of neighborhood composition on the transmission of territorial identities within the family, we regressed child’s identity on parent’s identity, the percentage of Catalan-born population at the



precinct level, and the interaction between the two.<sup>14</sup> As Table 6 shows, the percentage of native population in a parent-child pair's neighborhood significantly affects pair similarity: the lower the proportion of native Catalan population, the higher the congruence. The marginal effect of parent's identity is .70 (s.e.=.6;  $p<.001$ ) in neighborhoods with 55 percent or less of Catalan-born residents, and less than half that figure (.30; s.e.=.05;  $p<.001$ ) in neighborhoods where natives make up more than 90 percent of the population.

Again, the implications of these estimates are better understood by graphic display. Figure 4 shows the predicted value of child's identity on the "only Catalan" to "mainly and only Spanish" identity scale along the proportion of native population in the relevant precinct, according to the model in Table 6. In more homogeneous areas, children tend to converge toward the predominantly Catalan side of the scale, and predominantly Spanish identifiers are less successful in passing on their identity to their offspring. The family imprint increases visibly as the presence of native residents in the community declines, that is, as the parental background becomes less distinctive and more inclusive. On the other hand, the transmission of predominantly Catalan identity is unaffected by the birthplace composition of the neighborhood. As a result, the younger generation reproduces the diversity of the older generation in heterogeneous communities, whereas in more homogeneous communities minorities rapidly assimilate the prevalent identity.

Our results thus show how heterogeneity influences the transmission of place identity in two different environments. First, the level of agreement between spouses compromises the faithful reproduction of identity, as parent-child similarity is enhanced when parents hold similar

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<sup>14</sup> We are again using data in dyad form. Estimates based on triads and average parents' identity lead to the same substantive conclusions.

positions and depressed when they disagree. This result is consistent with theories based on social learning and social influence processes and the recurrent finding that consistency of cue-giving fosters learning from parents. Second, the analysis based on precinct data suggests that the passing on of identity is affected by the birthplace composition of the local context. Minority identities (e.g. predominantly Spanish identity in Catalonia) are more successfully transmitted in heterogeneous neighborhoods with a larger presence of the minority group (Spanish immigrants) rather than in homogeneous majority neighborhoods (native Catalan areas). Significantly, the birthplace composition of the local environment has a negligible effect on the reproduction of majority identities, which is almost as successful in heterogeneous areas as it is in homogeneous areas.

### **Conclusions**

A large body of research has focused on the direct role of the family in the acquisition of social values and political orientations in the United States and other Western nations. To our knowledge, no extant reports exist on the topic of this paper: parent-to-child transmission of place identity. As seen from the social identity theory perspective, place identities are a central part of one's social identity. They are often associated with deeply felt symbols and shared social characteristics, such as cultural background and mother tongue, coinciding with geo-political space. Still, identification with the (national) state lacks in this instance the quasi-consensual character that is common in more nationally homogeneous polities, due to the presence of a center-periphery cleavage with profound consequences for Spanish and particularly Catalan politics. Territorial identities are thus politically relevant but at the same time more accessible and less abstract as compared with overt political orientations, such as left-right tendance and partisanship, because the former are embedded in readily apparent social and cultural categories.

Accordingly, our analysis of parent-child Catalan dyads shows that place identity displays a moderately high level of parent-child agreement in bivariate terms—usually as high as those found for central political orientations in other countries, and generally higher than other prominent political identities and attitudes in the context of Catalan politics. Importantly, this is true with respect to the other major cleavage in Catalan politics, that of left-right orientation. At the same time, concordance on territorial identity also matched or exceeded concordance on two fundamental characteristics of Catalan society with strong political implications—religious preference and social class identification. These results point toward the special character of place identities and their centrality for the individual’s social self-concept.

We explored these initial findings and tested the transmission model in two ways, first by introducing into an explanatory model social milieu characteristics associated with the family. The results showed that a shared social environment may well be responsible for the overall enhanced level of parent-child concordance found for place identity, but social learning within the family still appears to be the major force at work. Our second extension put the transmission model to another test by looking at the effects of heterogeneous environments. In line with the teachings of social learning theory, consistency of cue giving enhanced the transmission of place identity. Reflecting within family dynamics, when inconsistency did occur, children proved more likely to model the identification of the same sex parent. Of special relevance to a central tenet of social identity theory, cultural composition of the immediate vicinity had an independent effect on self-identity as well as moderating parent-child congruence.

Our results bear on larger issues involving mixed and sub-national identities, how they are preserved, and the conflicts they provoke. In the instant case we can see how families both directly and indirectly shape the formation and maintenance of territorial identities with very

important, but essentially rather benign and democratically resolved political outcomes. That has not been so historically, or contemporaneously, for numerous other settings in which ethno-geographic identities have led to civil strife. One only has to look at Catalonia's neighboring Basque Country to appreciate the sometimes violent manifestations of such identity-based conflicts. It is clear, then, that the passing on of territorial identities can have diverse, and sometimes, deadly consequences.

Observers are sometimes caught by surprise when ethno-geographic hostilities break out after being seemingly dormant for long periods of time. While it is true that political entrepreneurs and changing circumstances can precipitate such conflicts, it is unlikely that they would become so virulent in the absence of collective memories being activated in the mass public. We have just demonstrated how families help perpetuate place identities in a setting that surely does have its element of grievances and ambitions. Yet, it is a setting largely absent the violent and acrimonious history of ethno-geographic conflicts and grievances found in many other settings around the world. If Catalan families are so successful in inculcating place identities under their particular circumstances, it seems highly likely that the passing on of identities would be equally or even more successful in environments where the identities are laden with images of an evil "other," an "other" that helps create one's own social identity.

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## **Appendix: wording and coding of measures**

**Place identity** (measured in 2004 and 2005): “Which of the following statements do you feel personally most identified with? Only Catalan / More Catalan than Spanish / As much Catalan as Spanish / More Spanish than Catalan / Only Spanish.” The last two options were collapsed to produce a 4-point scale, coded from 0 (only or predominantly Spanish) to 1 (only Catalan).

**Left-right ideology** (2004-05): “Where would you place yourself on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means extreme left and 10 means extreme right?” Coded from 0 (extreme left) to 1 (extreme right).

**Party sympathy** (2003): “Please tell me which political parties you feel more sympathy to (read out each, mark yes/no).” A specific variable is created for each of the five parties (CiU, PSC, PP, ERC, ICV): 1=respondent expresses sympathy for that and only for that party; .67=sympathy for that and some other party or parties; .33=no sympathy for any party; 0=sympathy for other party or parties but not for that party.

**Vote choice** (2004-05): “[If voted] Which party did you vote for?” A specific variable is created for each of the 5 main parties: 1=respondent voted for that party; .5=did not vote; 0=voted for any other party.

**Subjective social class** (2004-05): “Which of the following social classes do you place yourself in? Upper class / Upper-middle class / Lower-middle class / Lower class / Other / None.” Coded from 0 (lower class) to 1 (upper class). Responses “other” and “none” were dropped from the analysis.

**Religion** (2005): “Please tell me how you define yourself in religious matters. Practicing Catholic / Non-practicing Catholic / Other denominations / Agnostic / Indifferent / Atheist.”

Three dichotomous variables were created, identifying Catholics (both practicing and not), other denominations, and agnostic/indifferent/atheists vs. all others.

**Education** (all years): highest level of education achieved: Primary or less / Lower secondary / Upper secondary technical (ISCED-97 level 3b) / Upper secondary high skill (3a) / First stage of tertiary (5b) / First stage of tertiary (5a) / Second stage of tertiary. Coded 0 (primary or less) to 1 (second stage of tertiary).

**Income** (all years): household's total net income (in Euros). Sample deciles, coded from 0 to 1.

**Percent of native Catalan population** (2001): Percentage of the census precinct population born in Catalonia, measured in 8 intervals: 55% or less, 55-60, 60-65, 65-70, 70-75, 75-80, 80-85, 85-90, more than 90%. Coded from 0 (55% or less) to 1 (more than 90%).

**Table 1 Parent-child correspondence on place identity, 2004-05 (row percentages)**

$\downarrow$ Parent	Child $\rightarrow$	Sp>Cat or Sp	Cat=Sp	Cat>Sp	Cat	(N)
Sp or Sp>Cat		33.3	55.2	11.5	.0	(44)
Cat=Sp		6.3	49.3	30.0	14.4	(184)
Cat>Sp		2.7	13.6	47.0	36.7	(169)
Cat		2.6	6.5	34.8	56.1	(115)
(N)		(34)	(145)	(180)	(153)	(511)

The Ns displayed are weighted in order to take into account “duplicated” cases when both father and mother are available. The unweighted total N is 861.

Sp=Spanish; Cat=Catalan.

*Source:* Panel de Desigualtats.



**Table 2 Comparing parent-child similarity on place identity with other measures**

	ICC	r	N (pairs)
Place identity (5 p.)	.511	.532	(861)
Left-right (11 p.)	.290	.338	(774)
Party sympathy (4 p.):			
CiU	.248	.273	(783)
PSC	.408	.410	(783)
ERC	.404	.435	(783)
ICV	.120	.157	(783)
PP	.476	.449	(783)
Vote choice 2003 regional elections (3 p.):			
CiU	.414	.414	(553)
PSC	.548	.565	(553)
ERC	.309	.354	(553)
ICV	.241	.261	(553)
PP	.340	.353	(553)
Subjective social class (4 p.)	.463	.502	(726)
Religion (dummy variables):			
Catholic	.170	.322	(637)
Other denominations	.451	.473	(637)
Atheist/agnostic/indifferent	.174	.332	(637)

Intraclass correlation (ICC) and Pearson's correlation (r) coefficients. All coefficients are significant at the  $p < .01$  level or better.

Party names: CiU=Convergence and Union; PSC=Socialists' Party of Catalonia;

ERC=Republican Left of Catalonia; ICV=Initiative for Catalonia-Greens; and PP=Popular Party

*Source:* Panel de Desigualtats.

**Table 3 A multivariate test of the parent-child transmission model**

	Place identity	Left-right ideology	CiU	Party sympathy PSC	ERC
<i>Bivariate</i>					
Parent's orientation	.541 *** (.031)	.381 *** (.058)	.200 *** (.030)	.358 *** (.038)	.443 *** (.036)
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.293	.116	.073	.165	.188
<i>Multivariate</i>					
Parent's orientation	.333 *** (.034)	.360 *** (.060)	.187 *** (.032)	.292 *** (.040)	.347 *** (.038)
Household income	.024 (.035)	.010 (.024)	-.028 (.039)	.007 (.043)	.032 (.045)
Mean parents' education	.067 * (.031)	-.072 *** (.021)	-.103 ** (.039)	-.030 (.046)	.058 (.052)
Parents' birthplace: both Catalan	.017 (.029)	.005 (.017)	.026 (.034)	-.036 (.037)	-.009 (.033)
Parents' language: only Catalan	.201 *** (.032)	-.063 *** (.017)	-.046 (.036)	-.099 ** (.034)	.203 *** (.037)
Percentage native population in neighborhood	.124 *** (.036)	.007 (.026)	.029 (.044)	-.076 (.053)	.045 (.053)
Constant	.208 *** (.030)	.259 *** (.030)	.189 *** (.028)	.317 *** (.037)	.148 *** (.030)
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.435	.161	.088	.212	.266
N (pairs)	805	743	731	731	731

Unstandardized regression coefficients, with robust standard errors in parentheses.

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Party names: CiU=Convergence and Union; PSC=Socialists' Party of Catalonia;

ERC=Republican Left of Catalonia.

Source: Panel de Desigualtats

**Table 4 Effect of parental agreement on the transmission of place identity**

	Child's orientation
Parent's orientation	.691 *** (.060)
Parental heterogeneity	.628 *** (.128)
Parent's orientation * heterogeneity	-.920 *** (.197)
Constant	.242 *** (.038)
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.304
N (triads)	343

Unstandardized regression coefficients, with standard errors in parentheses.

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

*Source:* Panel de Desigualtats.

**Table 5 Effect of parent's sex on parent-child similarity when parents disagree**

	Parent's sex	Parent-child sex combinations
Father's orientation	.400 *** (.064)	.512 *** (.082)
Mother's orientation	.366 *** (.067)	.273 ** (.088)
Female		-.005 (.120)
Father's orientation * female		-.272 * (.127)
Mother's orientation * female		.228 (.134)
Constant	.221 *** (.059)	.218 *** (.075)
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.330	.350
N (triads)	142	142

Unstandardized regression coefficients, with standard errors in parentheses.

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

*Source:* Panel de Desigualtats.

**Table 6 Effect of neighborhood homogeneity on the transmission of place identity**

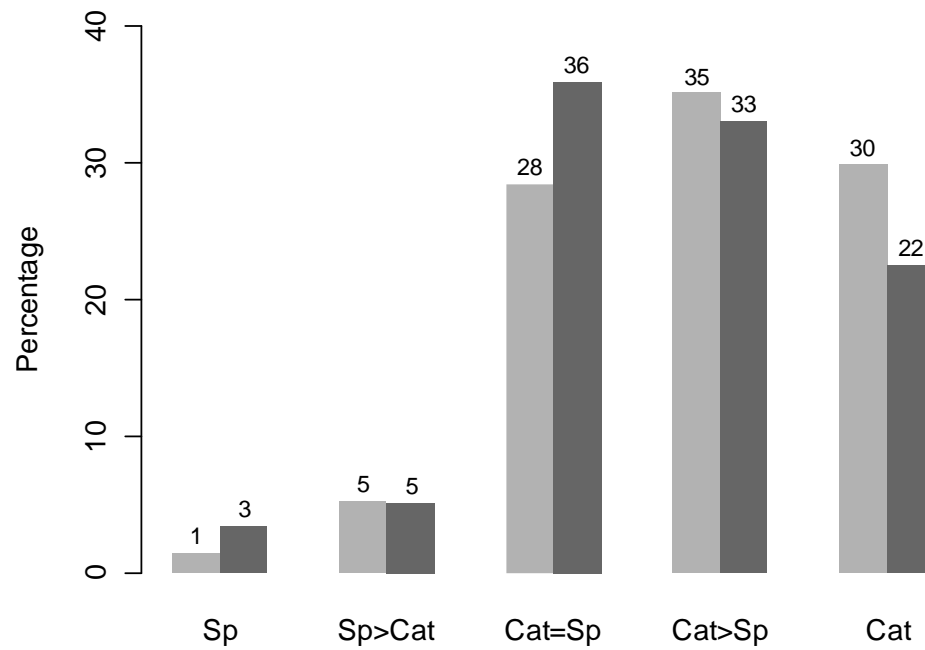
	Child's orientation
Parent's orientation	.696 *** (.063)
Native Catalan population (area)	.484*** (.055)
Parent's orientation * native Catalan pop.	-.395 *** (.100)
Constant	.098 ** (.032)
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.368
N (pairs)	850

Unstandardized regression coefficients, with robust standard errors in parentheses.

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

*Source:* Panel de Desigualtats.

**Figure 1 Place identity of children and their parents, 2004-05**

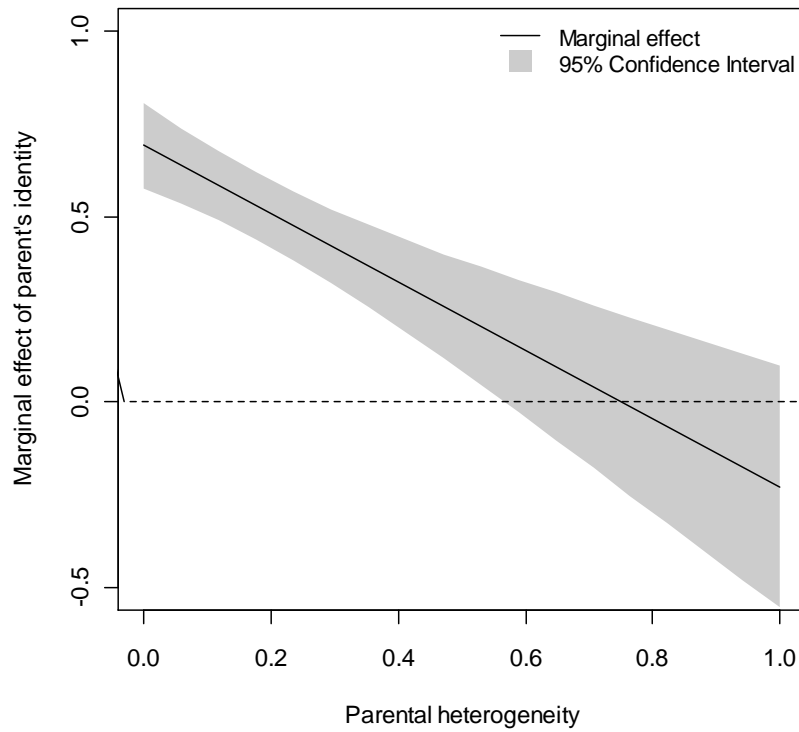


Sp=Spanish; Cat=Catalan.

N (unweighted): Children=511; Parents=861.

*Source:* Panel de Desigualtats.

**Figure 2 Marginal effect of parent's on child's place identity, by level of parental heterogeneity**



Shaded area shows the 95% confidence level of the predicted effect of parent's score on child's score according to the level of parental couple disagreement.

*Source:* Panel de Desigualtats, based on the estimates in Table 4.

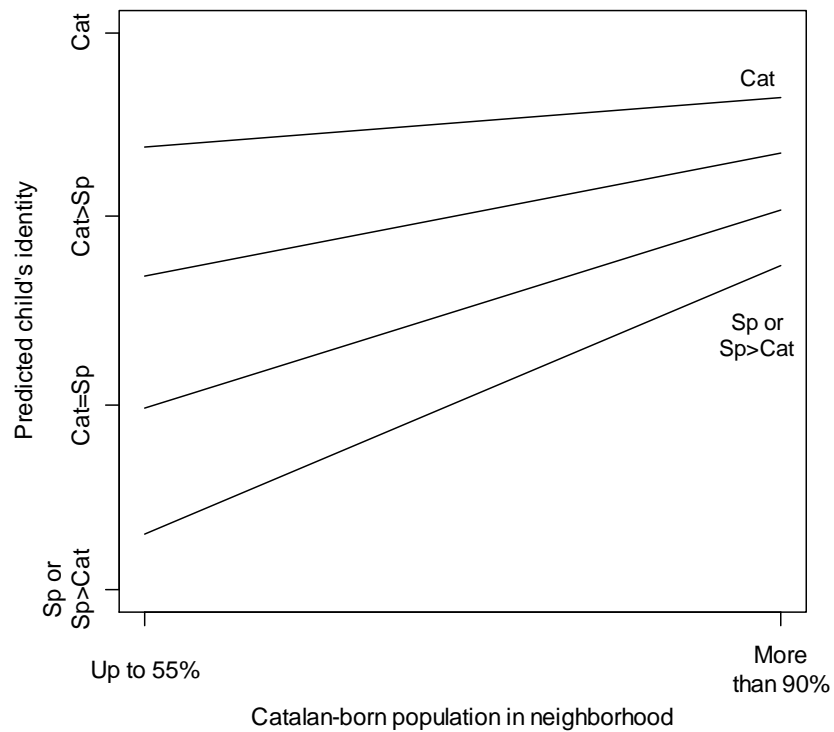
**Figure 3 Relative impact of parents' place identities by gender**



*Source:* Panel de Desigualtats, based on estimates in Table 5.



**Figure 4 Predicted value of child's place identity, by parent's identity and proportion of Catalan-born population in neighborhood**



Predicted value of child's identity according to the estimates in Table 6. Each line assumes a different value of parent's identity, from only or mainly Spanish (bottom) to only Catalan (top). Sp=Spanish; Cat=Catalan.

*Source:* Panel de Desigualtats, based on the estimates in Table 6.

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