Socializing Language, Behavior, and Emotion in Parent–Child Interaction: A Review of Literature

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ABSTRACT

This article reviews research on how parents socialize children's language, behavior, and emotion through everyday interaction. Drawing on language socialization theory and related work in psychology, child development, and conversation analysis, it examines the interactional practices parents use to guide children's development and participation in culturally meaningful ways. The review is organized around explicit and implicit practices across three domains of language, behavior, and emotion, highlighting the interrelatedness of these dimensions of socialization. Across studies, parents' multimodal and culturally patterned interactions reveal how children learn linguistic forms alongside culturally appropriate ways of behaving and feeling. Overall, this review underscores that socialization is a multimodal process and argues that naturalistic, longitudinal, and conversation-analytic research can further illuminate how socialization unfolds across diverse family contexts and how children actively shape these processes.

Keywords: language socialization, parent–child interaction, child socialization, conversation analysis, multimodal communication

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood is a foundational period of socialization during which children learn the norms, values, and behaviors of their communities. Research on child socialization spans disciplines including psychology, sociology, anthropology, and child development, and examines contexts ranging from households to peer groups, classrooms and other institutions (Duranti et al., 2011). While socialization has been studied across many settings, this review focuses on parent–child interactions, where parents serve as the primary socializing agents who transmit cultural knowledge through everyday routines (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). This focus is intentional, as early socialization is most consistently embedded in family routines,

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where parents have sustained access to children across developmental stages, yet remains underexamined in reviews that span multiple contexts and socializing agents. Focusing on parent–child interaction allows for a close examination of parental socialization practices in naturalistic interaction, while recognizing that other social contexts remain important sites of socialization beyond the scope of this review.

Among approaches to child socialization, the field of language socialization offers a powerful lens for understanding how children are socialized both through language and to use language by more experienced members of society (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984, 2006; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Language socialization emphasizes that linguistic input is not merely a stream of words but a culturally organized form of participation (Heath, 1982; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Through everyday communicative routines, parents guide children's understandings of appropriate behaviors, emotional expressions, and social meanings. In this way, language socialization highlights how children are inducted into culturally valued ways of speaking, acting, and feeling through naturalistic interaction, rather than decontextualized input alone.

While language socialization provides the primary framework for this review, I also draw on interdisciplinary research to show how language serves both as medium and outcome of socialization across three interrelated domains: language, behavior, and emotion. Through verbal and nonverbal practices, parents socialize children into language itself and, through language, into culturally valued ways of behaving and feeling. Accordingly, behavior and emotion are understood as linguistically mediated dimensions of socialization. Whereas existing reviews of language socialization have examined socialization practices across diverse contexts and socializing agents, this review focuses specifically on parent–child interactions and distinguishes between explicit and implicit parental interactional practices across the domains of language, behavior, and emotion. Bringing together foundational and recent work from conversation analysis, psychology, anthropology, and language development, the review addresses a gap in prior research by foregrounding moment-by-moment interactional detail and highlighting multimodal practices that are often underrepresented. Following an overview of language socialization, I examine how these practices socialize children's language, behavior, and emotion through everyday interactions.

Overview of Language Socialization

To understand how scholars have approached the study of parent[2]–child interaction, I will start by highlighting foundational work that has shaped the field of language socialization. This area of research was formally established in the 1980s through the work of Elinor Ochs and Bambi Schieffelin, who challenged dominant developmental models that treated language acquisition as a largely universal, cognitively driven process shaped primarily by input frequency. Drawing on both ethnographic and longitudinal data, Ochs and Schieffelin argued that language learning is instead shaped by culturally specific patterns of interactional routines and broader cultural norms (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1983, 1984; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1983). Building on this framework, language socialization research views culture not only as a collection of shared beliefs, values, and customs but as a locally enacted, reproduced, and negotiated process that unfolds through interaction (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984, 1986).

[2] Throughout this review, I use the term parent unless a study specifically refers to a caregiver as the socializing agent. In language socialization research, caregiver may include parents as well as other figures, such as siblings or grandparents, depending on the cultural context.

Ochs's (1982, 1986) research in Samoa and Schieffelin's (1985, 1990) work among the Kaluli of Papua New Guinea illustrate that linguistic features such as baby talk (e.g., simplifying language when talking to children) and other simplified registers, common in Western middle-class households, are not universal. Instead, children's linguistic environments reflect culturally specific ideologies about communication and learning. Ochs and Schieffelin (1984) therefore argue that understanding language learning requires examining the sociocultural contexts in which it occurs (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1983).

Alongside this foundational work, Shirley Brice Heath and Peggy Miller expanded the field's scope. Heath's (1982, 1990) ethnographies showed how language socialization shapes social identity and cultural practices. Her research revealed that children from three neighboring U.S. communities with differing cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds were socialized using distinct language and literacy practices that shaped participation in the broader society. Miller (1986) demonstrated how routine storytelling supports children's narrative and emotional development. These studies reinforced a shift toward seeing language as both a medium and an outcome of socialization, with parental practices reflecting broader ideologies of learning and participation.

Methodologically, language socialization emphasizes naturalistic, longitudinal, and ethnographically grounded research that integrates micro-analysis of interaction with broader sociocultural patterns (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Studies necessitate using discourse and ethnographic methods to examine how verbal and embodied practices organize social life (Duranti et al., 2011). These methods are useful for analyzing parent–child interactions as they treat culture as something people do through everyday communicative practices, therefore showing how the acquisition of language, social behavior, and emotional expression are intertwined with the process of becoming a competent member of society.

Building on this foundation, this review examines how parents use language to socialize culturally valued ways of speaking, behaving, and feeling. Because language and embodiment are inseparable in social action (Ochs, 1996), this review distinguishes between explicit verbal practices and implicit embodied, prosodic, or indirect practices. Together, these explicit and implicit practices function as integrated semiotic and linguistic resources through which socialization occurs. Accordingly, this review is organized into three sections: socializing language, socializing behavior, and socializing emotion, with each addressing how explicit and implicit parental practices guide children's communicative, behavioral, and emotional development.

SOCIALIZING LANGUAGE

This section identifies various parental practices for socializing children into language use and explores how both explicit and implicit practices are used to accomplish this.

Explicit Practices

Clancy (1999) notes that explicit instruction, such as telling children which words to use, is the most overt form of socialization into language use (p. 1417). This section focuses on directives as the central explicit practice through which parents socialize children's language use. Directives, defined as utterances aimed at getting the listener to perform a specific action, can

take various syntactic forms, including imperatives, requests, questions, prompts, or invitations (Searle, 1976). Rather than analyzing syntactic forms, the focus here is on how directives operate within interaction. Parents use directives to prompt children to label objects, repeat language, correct language use, and elicit stories.

First, parents use directives to prompt children to label objects (i.e., recall and name an object with or without visible referent). These directives are often framed as questions such as "What is it called?" (Kheirkhah & Cekaite, 2015, p. 12), which support vocabulary recognition and encourage language production. Similar prompts guide children to use a target language, particularly when parents identify a trouble source or aim to reinforce a less dominant language. Filipi (2015) shows how parents use directives within Initiation Response Evaluation sequences to support bilingual lexical development. For example, when a child responds to Dad's "What's that?" in English with "celi" in Italian, Dad evaluates with the English translation, "It's a bird" (Filipi, 2015, p. 108). Directives can also embed the expected language in the question, such as "What is it called in Marathi?" (Tare & Gelman, 2011, p. 6). These directives not only support lexical development but also socialize children into pragmatic norms (e.g., answering questions) and language boundaries (e.g., code-switching) (Filipi, 2015; Kheirkhah & Cekaite, 2015). Through such prompts, parents help children build metalinguistic awareness and align with family language expectations.

Directives are also used to prompt children to repeat specific linguistic forms. Rather than requiring independent recall, parents issue imperatives such as "say de mess" ("say, mess") to elicit repetition (Filipi, 2015). While directive repetition practices are widespread across cultures, their forms vary. In West Kwara'ae, parents use the imperative "uri" ("like this") to prompt repetition (Watson-Gegeo & Gegeo, 1986), whereas in bilingual households, directives such as "say xiexie" ("say thank you") reinforce both linguistic repetition and heritage language use (Curdt-Christiansen et al., 2024). Across contexts, prompting repetition models target forms and socializes culturally appropriate language use.

In addition to labeling and repetition, directives are used to correct children's pronunciation, grammar, or language choice (Kheirkhah & Cekaite, 2015; Meyer Pitton, 2013; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2022). For instance, in West Kwara'ae, a mother corrects a child's mispronunciation by segmenting the word into syllables and directing the child to repeat each syllable (Watson-Gegeo & Gegeo, 1986). In bilingual contexts, correction may enforce language choice. Meyer Pitton (2013) describes a father instructing his sons to switch from French "moi aussi" ("me too") to Russian "nado govorit' ja tozhe" ("you have to say 'me too'") (p. 521). Similarly, Nguyen and Nguyen (2022) show mothers correcting the vowel in "excuse" by first repeating the child's incorrect pronunciation ("ɛxcuse") and then modeling the correct form after the child repeats the mistake ("no, excuse me") (p. 249). Such directives to correct children's language use help align their speech with culturally expected language forms.

Finally, directives are used to elicit storytelling. Parents employ open-ended prompts (e.g., "What did you do at school today?") followed by more specific questions to help children organize and elaborate narratives (Filipi, 2019; Kim & Carlin, 2022). In some communities, parents co-construct narratives through evaluations or partial tellings that guide interpretation and affect (Miller et al., 1990; Ochs et al., 1992). For example, during a telling, a parent's prompt "you annoyed him, didn't you?" simultaneously evaluates the telling and event and invites confirmation, foregrounding culturally preferred narrative frames (Miller et al., 1990, p. 301). More recent work similarly shows that such directive scaffolding varies across language in bilingual families, reflecting cultural values around authority and participation (Rochanavibhata

& Marian, 2024). Using directives to elicit storytelling supports language development and socializes children into culturally valued narrative practices.

This section has examined how parents use directives, an explicit socialization practice, to prompt children to label objects, repeat language, correct language use, and elicit stories, shaping children's language use and orienting them toward culturally appropriate ways of speaking. Explicit practices typically involve adult input and rely on direct prompts, instructions, and corrections. The next section examines implicit practices in socializing language.

Implicit Practices

This section details implicit practices of socializing language, including child-directed speech (CDS), embodied resources, and language use in the child's presence. One key implicit practice is CDS, also referred to as parentese or baby talk, which is a culturally variable speech register used to make language more accessible to young children characterized by features such as higher pitch, exaggerated intonation, slower tempo, and simplified vocabulary (Snow, 1977). Ramírez-Esparza et al. (2017) show that the frequency and quality of CDS, such as shorter utterances and simplified grammar, predict vocabulary development in both monolingual and bilingual children. Similarly, Diamond (2024) describes how *doolar talk*, a modified register in Dovubaravi communities, supports language acquisition through simplification while fostering children's agency in attending to and interpreting input. However, cross-cultural studies challenge the universality of CDS. In Kaluli and Samoan households, for example, caregivers rarely simplify language or address infants directly (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Together, these findings show that while CDS can support early language development, the form and function of language input vary across cultural settings.

Another implicit practice to socialize language is the use of embodied resources. Through gaze, gesture, and touch, parents orient children's attention to objects and participants, creating opportunities to associate words with the surrounding environment, which supports longitudinal vocabulary production (Roopnarine & Davidson, 2015; Wildt & Rohlfing, 2024). Outters et al. (2020) found that securing joint gaze with toddlers, often in conjunction with features of CDS, was associated with increased child engagement and richer language input. Similarly, Wildt and Rohlfing (2024) show that when mothers shift their gaze toward a target object, repeatedly invite infants to follow, and monitor infants' gaze responses, these practices create opportunities for object-related talk and are linked to stronger vocabulary development over time. Embodied resources often work alongside verbal strategies to guide children's attention, support word associations, and socialize children into culturally patterned ways of learning and using language.

A third implicit parental practice to socialize language is using language in the child's presence. Through overhearing, children observe how language is used across participants and contexts (Clancy, 1999; Gaskins & Frick, 2023; Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984; Tare & Gelman, 2011). For example, Tare and Gelman (2011) found that bilingual parents shifted to using English when an English-speaking researcher was present, implicitly showing children that language choice depends on participants and social context. Similarly, Gaskins and Frick (2023) describe a mother requesting a knife from a grandmother during dinner, asking "mamo podasz mi nóż też proszę" ("mum will you pass me the knife too please"), allowing the child to overhear a polite request and observe its embodied completion when the knife is passed (p. 128). Using

language in the presence of children provides rich, implicit input through which children learn both linguistic forms and social expectations of language use.

Together, these implicit practices of child-directed speech, embodied resources, and language use in the child's presence demonstrate how parents create rich environments for language learning without relying on overt instruction. Through subtle forms of input, children acquire linguistic forms while learning how language use is shaped by cultural beliefs, contexts, and participation frameworks.

Research on explicit and implicit language socialization shows how children learn through multimodal directives and everyday participation. However, most studies center on mother–child interactions from Western middle-class contexts, overlooking fathers, siblings, and multiparty interactions as important socializing agents and contexts. These practices also rely heavily on outcome-based measures, such as vocabulary size or language proficiency that prioritize developmental results and offer limited insight into moment-by-moment interaction. Further research addressing children's agency, multimodal resources, and the sequential organization of interaction would further highlight how language socialization is accomplished and culturally situated.

SOCIALIZING BEHAVIOR

While language and behavior are deeply intertwined, language socialization research shows that parents' talk routinely guides children's social and embodied conduct. Whereas the previous section focused on socializing language, this section examines how parents use explicit and implicit practices to socialize children's behavior. Here, behavior socialization refers to the process through which children learn culturally appropriate ways of acting, responding, and participating in everyday routines (Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984; Sterponi, 2014).

Explicit Practices

Similar to socializing language, directives are a primary means through which parents explicitly guide behavior. Directives take various syntactic forms, including imperatives and interrogatives, and may extend into multi-turn directive sequences. Regardless of form, directives function as explicit linguistic resources for behavioral guidance across daily routines (Antaki & Kent, 2015; Arcidiacono et al., 2022; Kim & Crepaldi, 2021; Sterponi, 2014). This section focuses on how directives are used to promote compliance, manage resistance, and prompt acknowledgment of actions. Directive sequences can also embed additional practices, such as offering alternatives or presenting hypothetical consequences to manage resistance.

Parents use directives to promote compliance during mealtime, bedtime, playtime, and homework routines (e.g., Antaki & Kent, 2015; Arcidiacono et al., 2022; Kim & Crepaldi, 2021; Sterponi, 2014). Imperatives such as "allez termine" ("come on, finish your plate,") (Morgenstern et al., 2021, p. 61) or interrogatives like "Ska du på dig pyjamasen nu?" ("Are you going to put on the pajamas now?") (Goodwin & Cekaite, 2014, p. 196) orient children to comply with expected behavior. Directives are also central to transitions between activities. Parents can signal a transition using discourse markers (e.g., "okay") followed by the new course of action such as "okay, pajamas?" (Goodwin & Cekaite, 2014, p. 191) to transition from dinnertime to bedtime. Parents can also frame transitions collaboratively, as in "ska vi ränsa din

säng nu då?" ("shall we now tidy up your bed then?") (Goodwin & Cekaite, 2013, p. 128), socializing children into patterned routines. These formulations delicately shift the child's course of action while socializing them into the patterned routines of daily life.

Explicit practices also play a central role in managing resistance. Parents frequently engage in extended directive sequences, which are multi-turn interactions where parents work to pursue or negotiate compliance (Antaki & Kent, 2015; Butler & Wilkinson, 2013; Cekaite, 2010, 2015; Goodwin & Cekaite, 2014). These sequences demonstrate that directives are not isolated commands, but rather intricate interactional processes through which parents socialize children into culturally appropriate behaviors. For example, a mother initiates a directive "do you wanna put that down and eat?" and, following resistance, negotiates by proposing "we::hhll at least sort it out so that you can eat it with your hands and not have it over your plate" (Hester, 2016, p. 63). Similarly, when a daughter resists repeated food-related directives, the mother ultimately abandons the pursuit, concluding with "va bene, niente pane questa sera" ("well, no bread for this evening") (Arcidiacono et al., 2022, p. 5). These instances highlight the multi-turn pursuits parents use to manage resistance, showing that behavioral compliance can be pursued, partially secured, or abandoned depending on the child's resistance.

Within these sequences, parents often embed alternatives or hypothetical consequences to minimize overt conflict. For instance, during a transition from playtime to bedtime, a mother avoids a direct command by asking, "Would you like to put them (the toys) neatly in the corner or go to bed?" (Antaki & Kent, 2015, p. 29), often placing the preferred option last. Parents may also escalate to hypothetical consequences such as "If you don't eat your dinner, there'll be no pudding" (Hepburn & Potter, 2011, p. 108) or shift from threats to alternatives ("Are you going to be silly or sensible?") (Antaki & Kent, 2015, p. 31). These hypothetical consequences highlight a future projected outcome or consequence of the child's behavior and further orient the child toward compliance. These embedded practices within multi-turn directive sequences allow parents to maintain authority while still offering children a sense of autonomy and managing resistance.

Finally, parents use directives to prompt children to acknowledge and account for their actions (Burdelski, 2012; Kim & Crepaldi, 2021; Sterponi, 2014). For example, after a child bangs his spoon on the table, a mother evaluates the behavior as "bad manner" and the father directs him to apologize "chanto ayamari nasai" ("properly apologize") (Burdelski, 2012, p. 284). When children resist, parents may pursue acknowledgement through follow-up interrogatives (e.g., *"*why were you flapping?") (Kim & Crepaldi, 2021, p. 170) or morally charged prompts such as "How come you didn't shut up, Julie?" (Perregaard, 2010, p. 378). These directives embed moral evaluation and socialize children into accountability and culturally appropriate ways of behaving.

Socializing behavior explicitly occurs through a versatile set of directive practices that parents utilize to promote compliance, manage resistance, and prompt children to acknowledge their actions. What may begin as a simple directive can unfold into an extended sequence that shapes understanding of appropriate conduct. Together, explicit practices manage immediate behavior while contributing to children's social and moral development.

Implicit Practices

This section examines the implicit parental practices of prosodic cues, embodied resources, and evaluative language to guide children's behavior. These practices socialize

children to learn how to act appropriately not only from what parents tell them to do, but also from how parents talk, act, and respond within interactions. These resources are often used in daily routines, either independently or with explicit directives, providing children with indirect guidance on behaving appropriately within their sociocultural context.

Prosodic cues, including changes in intonation, pitch, and rhythm, are a commonly used implicit practice for parents to index behavioral expectations (Goodwin & Cekaite, 2013, 2014; Gordon, 2008; Watson-Gegeo & Gegeo, 1986). Prosody can intensify or soften directives, signal approval or disapproval, or mark transitions. In Kwara'ae, falling intonation and strong stress convey commands, while high-pitched, singsong tones discourage behavior (Watson-Gegeo & Gegeo, 1986). Gordon (2008) shows how a singsong tone in "sitting on your bottom" softens the directive while promoting compliance (p. 335). Likewise, markers like "alright" or "okay" followed by a noun with rising intonation (e.g., "okay, pajamas?") signal transitions and invite cooperation (Goodwin & Cekaite, 2014, p. 191). Prosodic cues therefore allow parents to enhance their directives to obtain behavioral compliance.

Parents also use embodied resources, including gaze, posture, proximity, touch, and gesture, to guide behavior (Cekaite, 2010, 2015; Goodwin & Cekaite, 2013, 2014, 2018; Kidwell, 2005). These may occur independently or alongside directives when guiding children's participation and behavioral alignment. For example, gaze can signal disapproval or redirect attention. Kidwell (2005) describes "the look," a prolonged evaluative stare from a parent, as a nonverbal form of discipline, while Tolmie and Rouncefield (2013) show how body orientation, proximity, and gentle touch during bedtime stories support attention and compliance. Similarly, body torque and steering can signal transitions without overt instruction (Cekaite, 2010, 2015). Together with directives, embodied resources can enhance behavioral routines. After gesturing to her child's messy face, a mother wipes it while saying "miałaś buźkę wytrzeć no?" ("you were supposed to wipe your face, come on") (Gaskins & Frick, 2023, p. 131), creating a multimodal turn that both embodies and directs behavior. Parents use embodied cues to guide children's behavior by managing physical alignment, coordinating transitions, and signaling behavioral expectations.

Finally, parents implicitly socialize behavior by using evaluative language to convey social and moral norms (Butler & Wilkinson, 2013; Gaskins & Frick, 2023; Song, 2019). Evaluations embedded within narratives convey moral stances and show how accountability is enacted (Ochs & Taylor, 1992). Parents also provide feedback through evaluative comments or labeling of behavior, such as "you're eating dinner really nicely" (Hepburn, 2019, p. 458) or "good boy" (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2017), helping children perceive desirable behaviors without being explicitly instructed to act differently. Additionally, parents may reference sibling behavior to highlight expectations, such as "poor Leo, he has been waiting a half an hour for you" (Galatolo & Caronia, 2018, p. 49). Parents' use of evaluative language indirectly teaches children about social roles and behavioral expectations.

Together, these implicit practices allow parents to guide behavior indirectly. Rather than relying solely on explicit directives, parents subtly shape conduct through prosody, embodiment, and evaluative language in everyday interactions.

Research has shown how parents use these explicit and implicit practices, often multimodally, to guide children's behavior, manage resistance, and socialize expected behavior in everyday routines. Much of this work relies on short-term observations and focuses on parent-led practices, offering limited insight into how behavioral expectations are negotiated over time and how children influence, resist, or exercise agency in the socialization process. These studies

also primarily focus on the mother as primary socializing agent with less attention on non-maternal caregivers and multiparty interactions. Interactionally grounded and longitudinal approaches could further illuminate how behavioral expectations are locally produced and culturally sustained in everyday interactions. The next section addresses how similar practices are used to socialize emotion.

SOCIALIZING EMOTION

Just as parents draw on linguistic and multimodal resources to socialize language and behavior, they also guide children's emotional expression and regulation in culturally appropriate ways. Emotion socialization involves learning to recognize, label, and manage feelings through affectively[3] meaningful interactions (Ochs, 1996; Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984). While emotion has been widely studied in psychology, language socialization research highlights how emotional competence is interactionally accomplished and shaped by cultural and communicative norms. This section reviews explicit and implicit parental practices for socializing emotion in everyday interaction.

Explicit Practices

Across prior research, two explicit practices emerge in how parents socialize emotions: attributing emotional states to ongoing experiences and providing affective evaluations of past actions. While emotions cannot be 'taught' in the same way as vocabulary or behavior, parents guide children's understanding of emotional experiences through explicit verbal practices that supply emotion labels and link feelings to social action. Attributing emotional states in the moment supports children's immediate recognition and regulation of emotions, whereas affective evaluations of past actions orient children to emotional causes or consequences.

One explicit practice in socializing emotion is attributing emotional states to ongoing experiences where parents explicitly name or label emotions as they occur (Clancy, 1999; Huang, 2011; Miller & Sperry, 1987; Ochs, 1986; Wingard, 2022). Parents often do this by providing children with linguistic resources for identifying and articulating feelings, helping them recognize how emotions relate to events and actions in real time. Huang (2011) shows that Taiwanese parents attribute emotional states during storytime by asking questions like "xiao laoshu you meiyou haipa?" ("Is the little rat afraid?"), explicitly attributing the emotion of fear to the character and helping children recognize emotional states in narrative contexts. Ochs (1986) similarly demonstrates a mother attributing an emotional state to her infant crying by saying to the older siblings, "the baby is angry" (p. 252). Here, the mother frames the infant's ongoing crying as an expression of anger, thereby making that emotional interpretation available to the older siblings. Such attributions expand children's emotional vocabulary and scaffold emotion recognition in real time.

A second explicit practice is affectively evaluating past actions, in which parents use affective labels to interpret or validate behavior. While attributing emotional states involves naming emotions as they are experienced, affective evaluations occur when parents interpret or comment on behavior through an affective lens, whether that behavior has just occurred or is

[3] Affect refers to the display of mood, attitude, feeling, disposition, or emotional intensity (Ochs, 1996, p. 410).

being recounted from an earlier context. Burdelski (2019) shows a mother evaluating a hamster's biting as the result of tiredness: "hora, tsukareteta n da yo" ("Look, it's that (she) was tired") (p. 36), connecting how internal states can motivate behavior and explain social actions, even when that behavior is undesirable. Similarly, Wingard (2022) describes a parent evaluating a child's destructive action of ripping up paper after writing down her feelings as an appropriate response to feeling mad with "that's a great way to get your feelings out… it's good you ripped it up" (p. 454). These evaluations demonstrate how emotions motivate past behavior and how actions can serve as socially acceptable emotional expressions.

Explicit parental practices, including attributing emotions in the moment and evaluating past actions, jointly support children's emotional development. Attributions give children language to recognize feelings as they arise, while evaluations link emotions to their causes and consequences, illustrating how feelings motivate behavior and guide appropriate responses. Explicit practices primarily manage present and past emotional states and behaviors, but research reveals a gap in how children are socialized to anticipate future emotional states and regulate their actions accordingly. Beyond these explicit practices, parents employ implicit practices that shape children's emotional understanding in more indirect ways.

Implicit Practices

This section highlights implicit parental practices including prosodic cues, embodiment, and describing emotional experiences in the presence of children. These practices guide children to recognize, interpret, and express emotions without overt instruction.

Prosodic features, including changes in pitch, rhythm, intonation, and volume, signal affective stance and create shared emotional experiences without explicit labeling (Aronsson & Morgenstern, 2021; Hepburn, 2019). For example, heightened pitch and loud volume co-construct shared excitement in responses like "WOW!" (Jin et al., 2022). Similarly, elongated sounds (e.g., "BRA::VO!") can be used to amplify positive emotions. Prosodic cues can also signal negative affect while simultaneously socializing behavior. For example, Hepburn (2019) shows how a heightened emotional response from a parent, marked by raised pitch and loud volume ("↑What'you ↑↑doing., NO:.") can foster a negative emotional response of shame or fear for the child (p. 456). Prosody can also soften negative actions through playful affect, as in South Baltimore, where mothers use singsong rhythms to teach children and foster closeness (e.g. "I'm gonna get that baby") (Miller, 1986, p. 201). Overall, the use of prosodic cues is an influential implicit parental practice to help children recognize culturally situated emotional expressions.

Parents also use embodied resources, including facial expressions, gaze, touch, and posture, to communicate emotion in visible and sensory ways (Denham et al., 2015; Lunkenheimer et al., 2020; Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2006; Waring, 2021). Repeated exposure to gestures such as smiling, frowning, or dramatic expressions socializes children into recognizing joy, disappointment, and surprise. Waring (2021) shows how parents express surprise using exaggerated facial expressions alongside audible inbreaths and nonlexical vocalizations ("awh") to heighten shared feelings of joy and surprise in play gift-giving routines. Further, Aronsson and Morgenstern (2021) describe "glee gestures," where parents use embodied expressions of beaming faces and clapping alongside verbal praise (e.g., "Bravo!"), reinforcing shared emotional moments of joy and happiness. Embodied resources also foster intimacy in routines like bedtime through close positioning, eye contact, and shared activity (Evaldsson & Abreu Fernandes, 2019; Goodwin & Cekaite, 2018; Tolmie & Rouncefield, 2013). Goodwin and

Cekaite (2018) highlight that parents use embodied positioning such as hugs and touching the child's face to co-construct shared joy and closeness during bedtime routines. Through repeated embodied interactions, children learn how emotions are expressed, intensified, and shared.

Parents further socialize emotion by describing emotional experiences in the child's presence. Miller and Sperry (1987) show that mothers recount anger or aggression using verbs like "hit," "scratch," "shut up," and labels such as "dummy" or "cheater," allowing children to overhear how emotions are framed and regulated. Similarly, Ochs (1986) demonstrates that when a mother labels a young child's emotional state to older siblings ("the baby is angry") (p. 252), the younger child, though not the addressee, implicitly learns about the emotion. By describing emotional experiences in the child's presence, parents expose children to both affective language and knowledge about when and how emotions may be expressed.

Prosodic cues, embodied resources, and children's overhearing of emotional descriptions allow parents to express affective states, co-construct affective stances, and expose children to socially appropriate emotional norms.

Research shows that explicit and implicit practices to socialize emotions work in multimodal, interactional, and culturally situated ways. However, much emotion socialization work remains grounded in psychological approaches that code emotions rather than examining the socially organized and sequentially produced nature of this socialization process. Cultural differences in emotional expression are acknowledged but remain underexplored. Interactional and longitudinal analyses that trace how emotions are constructed, contested, and transformed across moment-by-moment interaction would provide deeper insight and further show how emotion socialization is intertwined with language and behavior.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The literature reviewed illustrates how parent-child socialization occurs through explicit and implicit linguistic practices that shape children's language, behavior, and emotion. Through these practices, parents integrate children into culturally meaningful ways of speaking, acting, and feeling, supporting their development as competent members of their communities. Explicit practices, such as directives, are especially central to socializing language and behavior, while implicit practices, including prosodic cues and embodiment, are more prominent in socializing emotion. Explicit and implicit practices often work together as multimodal strategies to support learning across all three domains. Crucially, by coordinating language, behavior, and emotion, parents provide children with semiotic resources for understanding experiences across time, enabling them to talk about, evaluate, and anticipate past events, present experiences, and future outcomes.

In socializing language, parents primarily use explicit strategies to socialize vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and narrative structures available to children through repetition, correction, and prompting (e.g., Filipi, 2015; Kheirkhah & Cekaite, 2015; Kim & Crepaldi, 2021). Implicit strategies, such as child-directed speech, embodied resources, and language used in the child's presence further support linguistic competence by embedding language within everyday interactions (Diamond, 2024; Gaskins & Frick, 2023). The relative lack of research on implicit language socialization likely reflects a focus on language production rather than on participation and interactional processes.

Practices for socializing behavior reveal how explicit and implicit practices jointly regulate conduct and foster moral development. Directives overtly promote compliance, manage resistance, and prompt acknowledgment of actions, while prosodic cues, embodied gestures, and evaluative language implicitly embed expectations for appropriate conduct (e.g., Antaki & Kent, 2015; Sterponi, 2014; Wingard, 2006). Importantly, prosody and embodiment often upgrade or reinforce directives, enabling parents to manage dispreferred behavior multimodally (e.g., Cekaite, 2013, 2014; Goodwin & Cekaite, 2014). These practices demonstrate how parents provide explicit opportunities for children to comply with routines and also how parents implicitly shape what counts as meaningful or appropriate conduct within their communities.

Socializing emotion centers on helping children understand and respond to affective states. Implicit practices are especially influential, as children learn to recognize and interpret feelings through prosody, embodiment, and descriptions of emotional experiences (e.g., Hepburn, 2019; Goodwin & Cekaite, 2018; Waring, 2021). Explicit practices of attributing emotional states and evaluating past actions (e.g., Burdelski, 2019; Huang, 2011; Wingard, 2022) provide children with emotion vocabulary for understanding how emotions motivate past or present behavior. Explicit practices are less frequently studied, likely due to methodological challenges in capturing affect and to the difficulty of teaching emotions directly when emotional expression itself is culturally contingent. This suggests a need for approaches that can capture affect as an interactional accomplishment rather than a fixed internal state.

Across the literature, a key insight that emerged is that many parental practices serve multiple functions. Directives may simultaneously teach vocabulary and promote compliance. Prosodic and embodied cues can support behavioral regulation while fostering emotional awareness. Similarly, explicit practices such as affective evaluations illustrate how parents linguistically frame emotions as reasons for behavior, rather than as external stimuli that simply trigger responses. In this way, children are socialized into understanding emotion, behavior, and language as interconnected components of culturally meaningful action. These findings underscore a central contribution of child socialization research: children are not merely acquiring skills in isolation but are being socialized into an interconnected, culturally shaped system of language, behavior, and emotion.

This review also highlighted several key gaps in the literature. First, research has disproportionately centered on mothers as the primary socializing agents, with limited attention to fathers, non-parental primary caregivers, same-gender parents, or diverse family structures. Further, few studies examine multiparty interaction or the role of siblings as socializing agents, despite evidence that siblings actively participate in managing routines and reinforcing norms across cultures (e.g., Arcidiacono et al., 2022; Cho, 2018; Galatolo & Caronia, 2018). In addition, much research on emotion socialization comes from psychology and emphasizes coded outcomes rather than interactional processes, leaving the sequential organization of socialization underexamined in longitudinal language socialization research. Further, although this review focuses on parental practices, socialization is not one-sided. Ochs (2000) emphasizes that socialization is reciprocal, with more and less experienced members learning from one another. Future research should further examine children's agency and how they negotiate and shape socializing practices.

Addressing these gaps requires greater use of naturalistic, longitudinal, ethnographic, and conversation-analytic approaches that attend to multimodality, cultural contexts, and family structure. Without such fine-grained analyses, socialization can be overlooked in how moment-by-moment talk, embodiment, and participation take place. Conversation analysis, in particular,

allows researchers to examine how parents and children jointly negotiate meaning, manage accountability, and construct emotional, behavioral, and linguistic norms in everyday interaction.

This review contributes to language socialization research by synthesizing work across three domains, demonstrating how language, behavior, and emotion are jointly socialized through explicit and implicit interactional practices. Parents' communicative practices not only socialize children's language, behavior, and emotions but also reflect and reinforce cultural and social norms, enabling children to participate in their communities. This cross-disciplinary review highlights interactional, multimodal, and culturally situated practices to advance parent–child language socialization research and points toward future work that can more fully capture cultural contexts, family structures, and children's agency, providing deeper insight into the dynamic and reciprocal processes of child socialization.

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