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Mexican temporary migrants in Canada: a sociolinguistic approach

Canada is well recognized because of its immigration policies and settlement programs that include ESL classes that help newcomers in its adaptation and integration process, recognizing in this way that linguistic competence is crucial for the social inclusion and engagement of migrants. However, migratory laws do not contemplate these kinds of help for temporary migrants that come from Mexico and the Caribbean through the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SWAP). The SWAP has been a source of relevant economical, political, and social research with important policy implications. Within the literature, language barriers have always been mentioned as a major problem of this population because it amplifies migrants' challenges of social and work needs, relations and adaptation, but there is no evidence of sociolinguistic research.

In my study, I pretend to study the sociolinguistic situation of the SAWP workers from Mexico through a sociolinguistic census that will be applied to one hundred participants along five chosen cities in two Canadian provinces, where I will compare language acquisition and/or attrition and it's relationship to workers' exclusion, linguistic adaptation, attitude, identity and vulnerability, considering social variables such as age, sex, place of origin, education, literacy level, income, social networks, ESL access, Spanish literacy access, language brokers, ITS access, etc. I assume that some of my findings will be that the deficient or inexistent linguistic competence of the language of the majority in an environment of language contact is a manifestation of exclusion and segregation of the Mexican seasonal agricultural workers in Canada.