The Routledge Handbook of Spanish as a Heritage Language

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Publication details
https://test.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315735139-7
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Published online on: 08 May 2018

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SPANISH AND IDENTITY AMONG LATIN@S IN THE U.S.

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Introduction

Jessica[1] describes herself as a 'Spanglish' person. In her home community in Houston, she speaks Spanish to represent her Mexican identity and align with other Spanish speakers. At home in conversation with her Mexican parents and U.S.-born sister, she switches back and forth between Spanish and English depending on the person to whom she is speaking. In her Spanish class for heritage speakers, she only speaks Spanish and insists that her classmates do the same, but on the university campus outside of the classroom, she almost always interacts in English, even with her friends who speak Spanish. The value and social meaning associated with Spanish and Spanish-English bilingual practices is different in each of the contexts in which Jessica uses language, and Jessica brings with her to these contexts a history of how others have evaluated or responded to her language use in other similar contexts. For example, at a conference on diversity that she attended when she was in high school, Jessica was introduced to a girl from Spain who laughed at the way she spoke and called it 'broken Spanish.' When she talks with her cousins who live in Mexico, they say she talks like an American. Back home in Houston, she does not receive these kinds of evaluations of her language—her use of Spanish allows her to represent a desired linguistic identity in that context. Jessica's desire to speak 'correctly' motivates her in her formal study of the language, but may affect her language choice in other contexts outside of her home community.

Research on language and identity among U.S. Latin@s has addressed the value and social meaning of 'Spanish' and 'Spanglish' in a range of social contexts in diverse bilingual communities in many parts of the country. This chapter explores the development of a theoretical approach to language and identity, the different types of research that have been conducted on Spanish and identity among heritage speakers, and the findings of such research in both community and educational contexts. I also consider the implications of this research for the education of Spanish-English bilinguals in the U.S., and I argue that there is a need for research that examines heritage speakers' individual histories and considers each context as a place where multiple discourses intersect.

Historical perspectives

The social meaning and value of Spanish in the U.S. has changed as a result of social and historical developments over the last two centuries. During the colonial period, Spanish was a dominant

language in the area that is now considered the Southwest. After 55% of what was Mexican territory became part of the U.S. in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, English became the official language of this region. Bilingualism was tolerated during an initial period, but a 'subtractive' view of Americanization, which emphasized complete conformity to U.S. culture, began to develop during World War I. This led to an English-only mentality in public schools, and Latin@ children were often punished for speaking Spanish (Blanton, 2004).

During the 1960s and 1970s, inspired by the civil rights movement and the unionizing efforts in California led by labor activist César Chávez, many Latin@s in the U.S. began to fight for their political representation and social acceptation. What came to be known as the Chicano movement focused on the rights of the working class, the maintenance of Mexican culture, and resistance to exploitation and political domination (Orozco, 2009). During this period, the Spanish language held important symbolic value in Chicano activist groups. For example, in *El Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán* (MEChA), Spanish symbolized a cultural unity tied to Chicano indigenous heritage (Limón, 1982).

In her seminal essay *How to Tame a Wild Tongue* (first published in 1987), Chicana activist Gloria Anzaldúa explored the connection between language and identity for Spanish speakers from the U.S. Southwest. For Anzaldúa, speakers may use 'Chicano Spanish,'[2] to represent a Chicano identity when interacting with other Chicanos, but may select from a range of other varieties of Spanish and English depending on the interlocutor and the identity they choose to represent. Anzaldúa also pointed out that because dominant societal discourses devalue Chicano Spanish, some speakers feel uncomfortable or even shameful when speaking that variety, and their interlocutors often make judgments about them based on the way they speak (Anzaldúa, 2007).

During the period of the Chicano movement, the U.S. Census Bureau also constructed a link between the Spanish language and Latin@ identity; the classification of 'Spanish mother tongue' was used, generally in conjunction with surnames and place of birth, to identify the 'Hispanic origin' population (Leeman, 2013). While this change in Census procedures reflected an interest in more accurate representation of Latin@s in U.S. Census data, it is reminiscent of an essentialized (or overgeneralized) link between the Spanish language and Latin@ identity that has prevailed in public discourses, allowing xenophobia to take the form of anti-multilingualism.

While national educational discourses mirrored the *Movimiento*'s focus on a link between Spanish and Latin@ identity in the 1960s and 1970s, global political and economic developments in the 1980s and 1990s led to a view of Spanish as a commodity for success in business and international relations (Leeman & Martínez, 2007). Leeman and Martínez (2007) found that these two discourses are reflected in the Spanish heritage language (HL) textbooks published during each period, respectively. They point out that in the context of teaching Spanish as an HL, the dominant discourses of both periods represented limitations to the social value of Spanish in the U.S.; in the early period, Spanish was linked to the home, denying the public and political nature of the language, while in the later period a focus on Spanish as an international language led to a delegitimization of local linguistic practices.

Both the essentialized link between the Spanish language and Latin@ identity, and the view of Spanish as an international (and not local) language, have helped to fuel the 'English-only' movement, which has particularly targeted U.S. Latin@s (Dueñas González, 2000). The 1980s and 1990s saw a wave of legislation restricting language in official contexts in the U.S. The 'English-only' movement began in 1983 when Senator S.I. Hayakawa of California founded an organization called 'U.S. English' to advocate for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would make English the 'official language' of the U.S. Since 1983, legislation to establish English as the official language of the U.S. has been proposed several times in Congress; the

most recent version of such legislation, the 'English Language Unity Act' was written in 2007 and has been proposed in every Congress since then (Tamasi & Antieau, 2014; U.S. English, 2015). Such an amendment has not been passed, nor is it likely that it will be passed at the federal level. Nonetheless, Senator Hayakawa's proposal has inspired state and municipal versions, and 31 states have adopted official English legislation since 1983. In 1998, California passed Proposition 227, which legislated that instruction be given only in English in classrooms, effectively ending the bilingual education system in public schools. The 'English-only' movement reflects a series of myths about bilingualism in the U.S., including the idea that the use of foreign languages will fragment and divide the nation, and an assumption that minority groups refuse to learn English. Zentella (1997b) argues that the movement also reflects and promotes a negative portrayal of Spanish speakers in the national public discourse. (See Chapter 3 this volume for a discussion of the current linguistic climate in the U.S.)

Contemporary perspectives on language and identity can help researchers understand how these dominant discourses play into the ways that Latin@ individuals position themselves through language use and represent themselves as particular kinds of language users. In the next section, I discuss the critical issues and topics that have emerged in scholarly research on language and identity in general and with respect to Spanish speakers in the U.S.

Critical issues and topics

Joshua Fishman, who pioneered research on minority languages, language and ethnicity, and language contact situations, is known for a view that all individuals have an inherent emotional and spiritual connection with their native language or the language of their immediate ancestors (Myhill, 1999). This perspective, which Myhill (1999) calls the 'language-and-identity ideology,' is evident in Fishman's later writing: "This soul (the essence of a nationality) is not only reflected and protected by the mother tongue, but, in a sense, *the mother tongue is itself an aspect of the soul*, a part of the soul, if not the soul made manifest" (Fishman, 1989:276, emphasis in original, as cited in Myhill, 1999). Myhill points out that much research in the sociology of language has equated language with ethnocultural identity.

The language-and-identity ideology is also evident in work within the social-psychological paradigm (e.g. Tajfel, 1974, 1981). For example, Giles and Byrne (1982) propose a framework that assumes a strong correlation between bilinguals' identification with particular ethnolinguistic groups and their level of language maintenance. The problem with the correlational approach, as He (2010) sees it, is that it tends to evaluate complex and evolving constructs such as motivation, attitude, ethnic identity, proficiency, and literacy in terms of numerical values, and leads one to think that these sociocultural traits are essential, 'built-in,' and unchanging qualities (2010:71). He (2010) criticizes these approaches because they ascribe to a perspective that views identity as something that is much more dynamic and contextually relevant.

Contemporary approaches in linguistics, anthropology, and educational research view identity as a form of social action that is constantly being created and recreated, shaped by both the backgrounds that people bring with them to a social situation, and on the context of the social situation itself (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). In this view, identity is constituted by the values and assumptions of particular social contexts, and by societal belief systems, which offer positions of power to certain categories of individuals and not to others, and at the same time, it is negotiated and created through interaction (Davies & Harré, 1990). To understand the interplay between the actions of individuals and the structure of communities, societies, and institutions, researchers draw from a range of theoretical frameworks. In this section, I will discuss four areas of theory that often contribute to current studies on language

and identity: language ideologies, identity construction and negotiation, investment and imagined communities, and hybridity and transcultural practices.

Language ideologies

People's identities can be shaped in part by assumptions that associate certain types of social meaning with the use of a certain language, or with certain types of language use. These assumptions, called 'language ideologies' (Kroskrity, 2004; Woolard, 1998), can include dominant societal discourses, or prevailing societal beliefs and academic assumptions (i.e. the language-and-identity ideology), and they can also describe assumptions about language that are shared within a particular group of speakers. In the case of Spanish in the U.S., dominant discourses represent Spanish as inferior to English and at the same time devalue the Spanish spoken by U.S. Latin@s, giving second language (L2) learners more credit for their Spanish skills than bilinguals receive for theirs (Pomerantz, 2002). This is because of prevailing discourses in Spanish language education that construct Spanish as a 'foreign' language despite the long-standing presence of Spanish in the U.S., and devalue the language varieties commonly spoken by U.S. Latin@s (Leeman, 2014; Pomerantz & Schwartz, 2011; Valdés et al., 2003), and a societal orientation that positions the linguistic skills of minority language speakers as a 'problem' (Ortega, 1999; Ruiz, 1984). Textbooks used in Spanish L2 courses have traditionally acknowledged U.S. Spanish speakers only minimally (Gutiérrez & Fairclough, 2006), and research on the perspectives of Spanish L2 learners in the U.S. demonstrates that these learners often position themselves as linguistically superior to the native Spanish speakers with whom they are acquainted in domestic contexts (Pomerantz, 2010; Pomerantz & Schwartz, 2011). On the other hand, some communities of Spanish speakers in the U.S. associate the use of Spanish or Spanish-English code-switching with group membership (Anzaldúa, 2007; Mendoza-Denton, 2008; Zentella, 1997a).

Research on language and identity often "draws on Bourdieu's notion of 'symbolic power,' a power to influence other people's understandings of the world, which is shaped by the value that certain dispositions hold in a particular context, or 'symbolic marketplace' (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991). Several studies exploring the relationship between language ideologies and the Spanish used by Latin@s in the U.S. have drawn from Bourdieu in their analyses (e.g. Lowther Pereira, 2010; Showstack, 2012). For example, in a study on symbolic power in the HL classroom, Showstack (2012) explored the language ideologies implicit in classroom interaction and examined how such discourses played into the ways students represented themselves as Spanish speakers and Latin@s in classroom language use. The analysis focused on apparent relations of power as reflected in the content of participants' utterances, and assumptions that the participants articulated about the identities of particular types of speakers. She found that some of the participants oriented toward an elite identity in which speaking Spanish 'correctly' was valued, claiming symbolic power in their own Spanish, and criticized people who did not fit into that category, positioning them as less powerful. In a later study, Showstack (2015a) found that some HL students who claimed symbolic power in the language skills they had learned in the classroom also identified monolingual Spanish speakers as the best judges of their own language skills, reproducing hegemonic discourses that position Spanish as a 'foreign' language, while other students constructed positions of expertise outside of the dominant paradigm. Showstack's data suggest that students' individual histories of language use played an important role in whether they positioned themselves as legitimate Spanish speakers in the symbolic marketplace of the classroom and in other contexts.

García and Torres-Guevara (2010) criticize language policies in the education of Latin@s in the U.S. for promoting a view of language as "an autonomous skill that functions independently

from the context in which it is used" (2010:182). This perspective is part of what the authors call a 'monoglossic language ideology,' which values monolingualism and ignores the bilingual repertoires and practices of U.S. Latin@s. Monoglossic language ideologies in bilingual and HL education contradict current theory in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics that describes language as a social practice that emerges in specific contexts (Blommaert, 2005). In the classroom, monoglossic ideologies may limit opportunities for the creation of social meaning through hybrid language practices that reflect the multilingual lives of U.S. Latin@s.

Identity construction and negotiation

Ideologies like those described earlier provide conversation participants with frames for understanding the meaning of language use in a particular context, and they can also shape the ways that Spanish speakers represent their identities and the identities of others when they narrate their experiences with language and use language in interaction. On the other hand, individuals can also exercise individual agency and challenge prevailing assumptions about identity through their language use.

When people use language in a way that others associate with a certain type of identity, they are 'indexing' that identity with their language use. 'Indexicality' refers to the use of a sign, such as a linguistic form, to point directly or indirectly to a particular behavior, point of view, attitude, or social position (Ochs, 1993). For example, a student who makes an effort to enforce the use of 'Standard Spanish' in the context of the HL classroom, correcting others' language when they produce calques and Anglicisms, may be indexing an expert identity. However, understanding the ways that people index social identities is not as simple as associating certain linguistic forms with certain types of people; the indexing of identity may happen indirectly (He, 2004; Ochs, 1993). In the case of the HL classroom, an expert identity is associated with a particular set of linguistic and interactional practices. In order for interlocutors to understand the indexical reference to an expert identity, they must have an understanding of how the expert identity is structured within the discursive practices of that classroom.

Individuals do not always represent social positions by reflecting the existing assumptions about language and identity; they can also challenge these assumptions through 'performance.' Although this term has been used with diverse meanings in linguistic anthropology, it often refers to a highly deliberate social display that challenges or subverts dominant ideologies (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004). One way that this happens is through a process called 'denaturalization,' in which "identities come to be severed from or separated from claims to 'realness'" (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004:386). For example, Showstack (2012, 2016) demonstrates how Spanish heritage speakers in HL courses denaturalize essentialized constructs of bilingual identity by displaying exaggerated representations of the classroom monolingual standard norm of language use (e.g. by translating the name of a Texas grocery store to Spanish when speaking Spanish with classmates who live in Texas). The notion of 'performance' described here differs from Butler's (1990) concept of 'performativity,' which focuses on the production of gender as a reiteration of hegemonic practices.

In addition to representing themselves as particular types of people, individuals can also ascribe social positions to others. For example, instructors in multilingual contexts can ascribe novice positions to students by correcting and evaluating their language use, and they can also position them as experts by acknowledging the knowledge and experiences they bring with them to the classroom (He, 2004; Palmer et al., 2014; Showstack, 2015b). The identities that people represent and ascribe to others are often negotiated in interaction, or 'co-constructed' (Jacoby & Ochs, 1995).

Investment and imagined communities

The ways in which language ideologies influence the identities and practices of individuals are related to not only the cultural contexts of language use but also the histories and life situations of individual leaners. Peirce (1995) proposed that language learners who feel that using the target language will bring them social return have 'investment' in the language and are therefore more likely to represent themselves as 'legitimate speakers' by choosing to use the language in certain situations in which dominant power relations might not position them as legitimate. This perspective has shed light on the language practices of Spanish-English bilingual students in dual language bilingual programs, a context in which both Spanish and English language skills hold a certain value and language learning is an important goal for some students. Research on language use in dual language classrooms has suggested that students' language choice in different contexts and their willingness to take risks with language reflect their social investments, including not only investment in learning an additional language, but also their investment in achieving a range of different types of social positions in the classroom (Mateus, 2014; Potowski, 2004).

   In subsequent work, Norton points out that the ways language learners perceive communities of speakers of the target language with which they are not directly affiliated can affect their learning trajectories (Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton, 2001). Originally proposed by Anderson (1991:241) the concept of 'imagined communities' refers to "groups of people, not immediately tangible and accessible, with whom we connect through the power of the imagination" (ibid.). While Anderson's discussion of imagined communities focused on the concept of 'nation,' Kanno and Norton (2003) expand the concept to include a broader range of conceptualizations of possible future communities for language learners. For example, a learner's imagined community could include a professional community into which she or he hopes to become integrated, or a transnational community. Norton (2010) points out that the communities represented by language instructors are often disconnected from the ways in which learners see themselves using the target language in the present and the future, and argues that this disconnect may affect learners' investment in the language. For example, in an ethnographic study on a Spanish HL class in a charter high school in the U.S. Southwest, Helmer (2013, 2014) found that students resisted the ways instructors positioned them within imagined communities through classroom interaction and choice of pedagogical materials. One instructor chose to use foreign language teaching materials, which did not seem to acknowledge the students' identities as target language insiders (Helmer, 2014); another instructor, attempting to let students know that she valued them as a linguistic resource, characterized them as 'Pachuco,' unintentionally ascribing to them a 'gangster' identity (Helmer, 2013:280).

Hybridity and transcultural practices

'Hybridity' is a theoretical concept that has been important in contemporary research on identity in multilingual contexts. The term is often used to describe the ways that speakers use language to simultaneously draw from multiple social practices to represent new and alternative identities and, in educational contexts, create new opportunities for learning (Gutiérrez et al., 1999). The combination of two languages, or multiple varieties of a language, has been identified as an important aspect of identity and social meaning among Latin@s in the U.S. (Martínez, 2013; Zentella, 1997a). The hybrid language practices of Spanish-English bilinguals have been described in the seminal works of Anzaldúa, who wrote about her personal experiences as a Chicana growing up in the Texas borderlands (Anzaldúa, 2007), and of Zentella, who

did an ethnographic study on bilingualism as a social practice in a Puerto Rican neighborhood in New York, among others (Zentella, 1997a).

Current research on language and globalization that addresses the ways in which people negotiate identities across several cultures and geographical locations simultaneously often uses terms such as 'transnational' and 'transcultural' that highlight the fluidity of languages and cultures in a globalized world (Back, 2015). Farr (2006) studied a community of Mexican-origin families living in both Michoacán, Mexico and Chicago and examined the ways in which they used language to represent local identities. While Farr uses the term 'transnational' to describe this community, Back (2015) chooses the terms 'translingual' and 'transcultural' to describe a group of Ecuadorian musicians who travel abroad to perform music. Back's participants draw from multiple languages and cultures to perform gendered and ethnic identities, drawing on different 'historicities,' or shared cultural histories, depending on their interlocutors and audiences. Drawing on the work of scholars from applied linguistics such as Canagaraja (2013), Back points out that the term 'transnational' is often used to make reference to a concept of two or more static cultures, while 'translingual' and 'transcultural' better describe the ongoing production and negotiation of multiple identities among her participants.

Language and identity in specific contexts

Research on the social meaning of Spanish among Latin@s in the U.S. has addressed language practices and perceptions in a variety of contexts. This section reviews research that has been conducted in family, community, and work contexts and discusses the role of HL and bilingual education in transforming Latin@ students' linguistic identities.

Family, community, and work contexts

Zentella's (1997a) ethnographic study of the linguistic practices within a Puerto Rican community in New York called *El Bloque* demonstrated how individual bilingual speakers create social meaning through different kinds of language use. Zentella's participants tended to use more Spanish with adults in the community and more English with their peers, but they frequently practiced code-switching when interacting with other bilinguals. One of the primary reasons that her participants used code-switching was to construct an in-group identity. The study also demonstrated that the juxtaposition of English and Spanish in particular moments of interaction was used for a range of interactional purposes, and that participants chose from a variety of different language varieties (and different kinds of language mixing) depending on the social context.

Among Latin@ gangs in California, Spanish and particular uses of English can represent not only Latin@ identity but also gang membership. In an ethnographic study on the linguistic and bodily practices (i.e. dress and gesture) of young Latin@ high school students who belonged to two different gangs, the *Norteños* and the *Sureños*, in northern California, Mendoza-Denton (2008) found that her participants indexed membership in each gang through the use of Spanish and English and the production of particular linguistic features, such as discourse markers and the pronunciation of certain vowels. Spanish was associated with the *Sureños* and English was associated with the *Norteños*, but members of each group made conflicting claims about the other group's language practices and ideologies. Mendoza-Denton observed that, while both groups claimed to produce monolingual speech in one language or the other, all of her study participants produced language that exhibited features of bilingual speech.

In contrast to the urban contexts of Zentella's and Mendoza-Denton's studies, Torrez (2013) examined the relationship between language and identity among working-class Mexican-descent families in rural Michigan. She investigated the meaning and value that members of these families associated with a variety they called *Mexicano* (similar to Chicano Spanish) and found that *Mexicano* legitimated the experiences and traditions of members of *Mexicano* communities, setting them apart from recent immigrants, and it served as a resource for communicating with and supporting fellow farmworkers.

In addition to creating solidarity within a specific Spanish-speaking community, a speaker's choice to use Spanish, and his or her choice of linguistic features, can be a move to represent a sense of solidarity with other Latin@s of different ethnolinguistic backgrounds. Research on the language use of Central Americans in the U.S. shows that Salvadorans and Hondurans often avoid using the personal pronoun 'vos' when interacting with others who are not first-generation immigrants from Central America (Raymond, 2012; Woods & Rivera-Mills, 2012). Negrón (2014) examined the language use of eleven Latin Americans from Queens, New York and found that they used linguistic and discursive strategies to align with their Latin@ interlocutors by downplaying ethnic differences and constructing a sense of solidarity. She focused on one conversation between two of her participants, 'Roberto' and 'William,' to demonstrate how they used diverse strategies, including the production of features from different varieties of Spanish and code-switching between English and Spanish, to align with each other and negotiate their shared Latin@ identity.

However, Spanish speakers do not necessarily need to draw from multiple dialects of Spanish in order to identify with more than one Latino group. In a study on Latin@s with one Mexican parent and one Puerto Rican parent in Chicago, Potowski (2014) found that the majority of her participants spoke a variety of Spanish that was phonologically either Mexican or Puerto Rican, and yet they claimed to be equally Mexican and Puerto Rican and challenged others who questioned their membership in either group.

Another area that has been addressed in studies on language and identity among Latin@s in community contexts is the relationship between language proficiency and ethnic identity. Research indicates that some Latin@ groups do perceive language proficiency as linked to ethnic identity. For example, in a study on the language socialization practices of Mexican-descent families in California, Pease-Alvarez (2002) found that for Mexican immigrant parents, teaching Spanish to children and socializing them to use the language at home was a way to overcome threats to their children's Mexican identity. However, several studies have suggested that certain groups of bilinguals in the U.S. do not consider a high level of proficiency in Spanish to be necessary for the representation of Latin@ identity or membership in a particular Latin@ group (Pedraza, 1985; Toribio, 2000; Zentella, 1997a). This perspective is reflected in Koike and Graham's (2006) analysis of a Spanish-language political debate between Dan Morales and Tony Sánchez, two candidates who were competing for the Texas Democratic Party's nomination for the governor of the state of Texas in 2002: both candidates were heritage speakers of Spanish, but while Sánchez emphasized his fluency in Spanish, Morales emphasized his identity as an English-speaking Hispanic and appeared to represent a view that people with a dual Hispanic and U.S. identity do not have to speak Spanish to be Hispanic.

DuBord (2014) points out that it is not always desirable for Spanish speakers to accept the dominant discourses that link Spanish to Latin@ identity. In a study on the interactions that took place at a day labor center in Arizona, she found that day laborers used English as part of a set of discursive practices to perform the identity of a 'good worker,' simultaneously resisting dominant discourses that position Latin@ immigrant workers as a "faceless mass of unskilled Spanish speakers" (2014:119).

Transforming identities through HL education

Educational contexts differ significantly from the contexts described earlier in terms of how Latin@s construct and understand the relationship between the Spanish language and social meaning because of the institutional discourses that shape classroom practices. These discourses may include the ideologies described earlier that subordinate the Spanish language and its speakers and position Spanish as a 'foreign' language. Latin@s represent and orient toward perspectives on the value of Spanish in particular educational contexts in different ways, depending on how language ideologies are represented in institutional discourse and on the perspectives and experiences that individuals bring with them from their home language practices (Showstack, 2013).

Dual language immersion has been identified as a context in which the social meaning and value of Spanish and English are under constant negotiation (Palmer, 2007). Research on bilingual education has demonstrated that English is often favored over Spanish because it is associated with greater status and power (Palmer, 2009; Potowski, 2004). However, recent studies have also explored the ways in which students from Spanish-speaking households and their instructors counteract dominant societal discourses, claiming symbolic power in the use of Spanish and in hybrid language practices (Martínez, 2013; Mateus, 2014; Palmer et al., 2014).

Like bilingual education programs, ethnically diverse university campuses are also contexts in which multiple discourses intersect and are negotiated, leading to a range of possible associations between the Spanish language and different kinds of social value. Urciuoli (2008) demonstrated that Hispanic bilingual university students in campus multicultural organizations at one U.S. university constructed their linguistic skills both as an 'added value' and as a 'deficit.' When students oriented to the 'deficit model,' they described themselves as deficient speakers, rather than acknowledging their home or community language varieties as legitimate genres appropriate for certain contexts.

The sense that one's home language practices are somehow flawed can be particularly acute for Spanish heritage speakers who take university-level courses focused on language, especially when the instructors of those courses are not trained to teach HL learners. A groundbreaking study by Potowski (2002) revealed that many Spanish HL learners in Spanish courses designed for L2 learners classified their own Spanish as bad and were often corrected when producing linguistic features typical of U.S. Spanish in the classroom. In a related study, Achugar and Pessoa (2009) found that members of the Bilingual Creative Writing Graduate Program at the University of Texas, El Paso valued the use of Spanish in the academic context, but expressed negative attitudes toward the use of local varieties. Coryell et al. (2010) examined perspectives of HL learners taking an on-line Spanish HL course, and found that all of the students constructed a 'culturally proper ideal metanarrative,' a view that they needed to acquire 'formal Spanish' or 'true Spanish' in order to be culturally proper. (See Chapter 33 this volume for further discussion on heritage speakers' attitudes toward Spanish dialects.)

Research has investigated the construction and negotiation of Spanish HL identity and related language ideologies in a range of different types of Spanish language courses, demonstrating that each classroom represents a unique set of discursive practices and available identity categories (Abdi, 2011; Harklau, 2009; Helmer, 2013, 2014; Lowther Pereira, 2010; Showstack, 2012, 2013, 2015b). While earlier studies highlight the ways in which HL learners either become marginalized by classroom discourse (e.g. Abdi, 2011; Harklau, 2009) or construct discourses that marginalize others (Showstack, 2012), there is also a need to understand what happens when HL instructors make an effort to counteract dominant ideologies.

Language educators have done a great deal of work in recent years to counteract the presence of dominant discourses about Spanish in the U.S., and research conducted on HL

learner identity at the university level has revealed how HL education can contribute to empowerment and the construction of expert identities among students in the Spanish HL classroom (Leeman, 2005; Leeman et al., 2011; Sánchez–Muñoz, 2013; Showstack, 2015b). Sánchez–Muñoz (2013) investigated the effects of a Spanish HL course on the linguistic confidence of the students in the class. Her participants expressed that their identities as Latin@s were closely related to their Spanish language proficiency. Many of the students reported greater linguistic confidence, especially in their writing skills, after having taken the course. Sanchez–Muñoz points out that Spanish HL courses play an important role not only in Spanish language maintenance but also the development of linguistic self–esteem and a sense of community belonging.

Leeman et al. (2011) suggest that the expert identities students construct in the classroom context do not necessarily correspond to positions of agency and empowerment outside of the classroom. They developed a service-learning program for their advanced Spanish students that included as one of its goals the promotion of expert identities for their HL learners outside the classroom. After participating in the service-learning program, their students reflect a sense of expertise in using the language in contexts in which some had not positioned themselves as experts previously.

Future directions and recommendations

The studies described in this chapter focus on the value of Spanish and on the relationship between Spanish and identity, either in homes and communities or in formal educational contexts, and on the ways in which such discourses can come into contact through educational practices. In order to better understand moments of intersection between the different discursive practices in which Spanish heritage speakers participate, more research is needed to understand the connections between individual Spanish heritage speakers' histories—the discourses about language to which they have been exposed and how others have positioned them throughout their lives—and the ways in which they negotiate and make sense of their identities as Spanish-speakers and as multilinguals in specific moments of interaction (see Young, 2014). Thus, there is a need for further case studies and linguistic life histories on individual heritage speakers (He, 2014), building on the work of Zentella (1997a) and drawing on more recent research that addresses the construction of identity in interaction and in narrative. In the field of applied linguistics, such case studies will contribute to an understanding of the dialectic between learner histories and classroom language learning practices (Young & Astarita, 2013). In the field of Spanish in the U.S., case studies on individual HL learners will contribute to an understanding of the ideological contexts of Spanish language use in the U.S.

Finally, an understanding of how HL learners develop their roles as participants in a wide range of discursive practices over time can lead to a reconceptualization of HL learning. While it has been established in the field of HL education that instructors need to go beyond comparing HL students to the imagined 'native speaker,' such advancement depends on a nuanced understanding of alternative perspectives on HL linguistic identity. In order to promote HL investment in classroom language learning, pedagogical practices must acknowledge both the communities of practice in which the students use Spanish outside of the classroom and the ways they envision themselves using the language in the future. Further research on individual learners will allow pedagogues and curriculum developers to avoid representing the kind of essentialized perspectives on language and identity that can alienate HL learners even in classroom contexts that aim to legitimize minority language practices.

Research on the relationship between Spanish, language value, and identity reveals a wide range of diversity in the meaning and value of Spanish and bilingual practices in different community and educational contexts. In particular, the symbolic value of Spanish in educational contexts is often quite different from its value within Spanish-speaking families and communities. Gutiérrez et al. (1999) suggest that the classroom can be a place where home and community discourses meet institutional discourses, allowing for the creation of what they call a 'third space.' They show how one instructor in a bilingual classroom engaged students in a class discussion by drawing on local knowledge, acknowledging its value, while at the same time teaching new concepts. Since Gutiérrez et al.'s study, a great deal of scholarly work has explored the ways in which HL and bilingual education can engage students by recognizing family and community discursive practices and identities. Two types of curriculum design that acknowledge and explore the identities associated with home and community language practices have been applied in the field of HL education: critical language awareness (Leeman, 2005; Martínez, 2003) and critical service learning (Leeman et al., 2011). By exploring the social value of language and the relationship between language and identity in different contexts, students not only develop identities as language experts, they also become empowered to counteract dominant ideologies that subordinate U.S. Spanish speakers. (See Chapter 22 for a further discussion of critical approaches.)

In addition to developing curriculum to address HL students' affective needs, it is important for teachers of bilingual students to realize that the relationship between language and identity is embodied in classroom interactional practices. Studies combining classroom ethnography with discourse analysis in both HL and bilingual education have demonstrated how teachers reflect particular ideologies about the relationship between language and identity (Palmer et al., 2014; Showstack, 2015b). Palmer et al. (2014) propose a set of 'translanguaging' strategies through which dual language instructors can draw from both Spanish and English to recognize students' bilingual practices in the classroom, countering the traditional enforcement of a 'monolingual norm' in bilingual education. Showstack (2015b) points out that HL instructor training should also address the ways that language ideologies are embodied in teacher stance-taking practices, including practices that index stances of expertise and authority, stances toward particular linguistic forms associated with U.S. Spanish, and stances toward the expectations for language use in the classroom context.

Notes

1 A pseudonym.
2 A variety used widely in the Southwest that includes features of rural Mexican Spanish as well as forms that have resulted from contact with English.

Further reading

Leeman, J., & Martínez, G. (2007). From identity to commodity: Ideologies of Spanish in heritage language textbooks. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies, 4*(1), 35–65. This study analyzes the discourses on the value of Spanish represented in Spanish language textbooks for heritage speakers in two different historical periods.
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