

Power and place

Language attitudes towards Spanish in a bilingual academic community in Southwest Texas*

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This paper explores the role of Spanish in an academic community in Southwest Texas in order to demonstrate how power, history and place affect linguistic attitudes. The changing status of Spanish from being an index of low wage paying jobs to being a marker of membership in an exclusive academic community serves as a case to investigate how power relations and history interact to shape linguistic attitudes of individuals and groups. Members of the Bilingual Creative Writing Graduate Program at the University of Texas, El Paso, were interviewed to identify the prevalent attitudes towards bilingualism, Spanish in the community and Spanish language users. A discourse analysis of the interviews revealed that participants in this community value Spanish use and bilingualism in the academic context, but have mostly negative attitudes towards local varieties of Spanish and monolingual speakers. This study demonstrates the importance of history, power and place in understanding language attitudes as shared evaluations of language users and uses.

Keywords: bilingualism, discourse analysis of attitudes, language attitudes, Spanish in the U.S.

1. Introduction

Spanish as a minority language in the U.S. has traditionally been associated with lower income wage earners and working class members of society and its use has been relegated to private and less-valued domains. However, recent demographic shifts have resulted in changes in the linguistic landscape. Americans of Hispanic heritage are the largest growing minority in the United States. According to the Census Bureau's 2005 American Community Survey, 44.2 million Hispanics live in the U.S. and 34 million speak Spanish at home (<http://factfinder.census.gov>).

Their estimated buying power is said to exceed \$700 billion (USHCC 2005). The growing number of Spanish speakers has made it the second most spoken language in the country, while growing economic opportunities associated with Spanish have resulted in a higher status for it and new domains of use. These domains include teaching, journalism, politics and advertising, among others. The tension between the increasing numbers of Spanish speakers and the expansion of domains of use contrasts sharply with the implementation of educational policies and language ideologies that promote monolingualism, making the tension an important phenomenon to investigate. Prevalent language ideologies in the U.S. have emphasized the importance of English in order to succeed in economic and educational domains (e.g. Unz initiatives and the English Only movement, Huntington's characterization of Hispanic immigrants, among others). This debate on how to interpret and what value to attribute to Spanish in the U.S. translates into conflicting and contradictory attitudes towards language use and development in individuals and communities.

Language attitudes are shared evaluations that associate particular language varieties with particular values (Woolard 1989). These associative judgments are part of our 'habitus', learned and embodied practices that distinguish us and influence how we react to other users and uses of language (Bourdieu 1991). These linguistic attitudes index our status and membership in a group and mark us in inter-group relations. In general, the use of minority or non-standard varieties marks speakers as less powerful and less competent than majority language speakers (Woolard 1989). But, what happens when there are macro-level social changes (i.e. demographic, economic rewards, status) that modify traditional associations between a language and its value for social and occupational mobility?

In this study, we explore the fluid and social nature of linguistic attitudes by focusing on the linguistic attitudes prevalent in an academic community composed of bilingual speakers of English and Spanish. This academic community is located in the border region of the U.S. and Mexico, as such it is a culturally and linguistically diverse area. This region is characterized by Spanish maintenance and use in all areas of life. This contrasts with prevalent language use and attitudes in the rest of the country where the use and development of Spanish is seen as a threat to national identity (Huntington 2004; Shannon 1999).

As a bilingual community,¹ this site can best be described in terms of two intersecting continua that range from functional bilingualism to monolingualism (Baugh 1984). This means not all members in the community are bilingual; some members are monolingual in English or Spanish. The range of abilities also encompasses different competences in terms of registers and regional varieties, including rural and standard varieties of both English and Spanish. Our analysis tries to explain how the attitudes present in this particular bilingual academic

community relate to the larger social contexts in which they are immersed and to the socio-historical context in which communities and speakers develop. In a place where socio-cultural factors such as demographic strength, institutional support and the social status of members of the linguistic group favor a strong ethno-linguistic vitality (Giles, Bourhis & Taylor 1977), we would expect language attitudes towards Spanish to be favorable. The present study focuses on the following questions: What role(s) does language play in constructing local group identities? What is the value of Spanish and bilingualism in this new academic community? How are local varieties of Spanish evaluated and used in this bilingual academic community?

Our intent is to examine the impact of social changes as those described above on individuals' attitudes. We consider attitudes as being constructed socio-historically as the result of learned patterns of evaluation and identification, consequently making it possible to educate or transform people's attitudes. The community we investigate represents an example of a place where there is a top-down attempt to create a symmetrical relationship between English and Spanish in an educational context. This power situation contests the historically hegemonic relation between these two languages where English has been the language associated with status (power) and Spanish with social life (solidarity). Our analysis of the interplay between institutional and individual language attitudes has implications for bilingual education and language policy in multilingual settings. If attitudes can be indirectly shaped and transformed through institutional program design, then students and educators can develop more positive language ideologies towards bilingualism and local varieties.

2. Previous research on language attitudes towards Spanish in the U.S.

Most of the studies of attitudes toward Spanish language in the U.S. have been carried out in the states bordering Mexico, in particular in southwest Texas due to the uniqueness of the language contact situation in this region (e.g. Amastae & Elías-Olivares 1978; Hidalgo 1984, 1988; Galindo 1996). This area, as described by Mejías, Anderson and Carlson (2002: 121), has had "extensive language contact by conquest, immigration, and proximity to Mexico for the last one hundred and fifty years." In addition, Texas is unique because of the number of Spanish speakers, the current policies that still support bilingual education and the constant movement of people across borders.

Previous studies of language attitude among the Chicano population in the U.S. have used Peñalosa's typology of language attitudes (1980). This typology includes four types of attitudes: (a) attitudes toward one's own language variety or

idiolect, (b) attitudes of Chicanos regarding other Chicanos' language varieties, (c) attitudes of Anglos regarding Chicanos' language varieties and (d) attitudes of Chicanos regarding Anglos' language varieties.

Expanding on Peñalosa's typology, Galindo's 1995 study examined not only the attitudes of Chicano adolescents towards their own linguistic varieties of Spanish and English (intra-ethnic attitudes) but also the varieties used by their African American and Anglo peers (inter-ethnic attitudes). Relevant to the present discussion are Galindo's findings regarding intra-ethnic attitudes among Chicanos. Galindo (1995) indicates that attitudes towards Spanish maintenance and use are seen as 'linguistic contradictions'. While some informants expressed a negative attitude towards Spanish and its speakers and remained dominant users of English, they also seemed to have a sense of language loyalty by wanting to "preserve Spanish for future generations as an integral part of their Mexican heritage and a symbol of ethnic identity" (Galindo 1995:96). All of the informants felt that they should not eliminate Spanish from their linguistic repertoire, but that they should learn English for economic and social survival. These findings corroborate Galindo's (1996) conclusion from her study of language use and language attitudes among border women in Laredo, Texas. These women viewed English as "the language that merits recognition and promotion" (Galindo 1996:8). In both studies Standard Spanish was considered more correct and formal than Border Spanish and Caló (a local Spanish variety).

The language attitudes that Hispanics have towards Border Spanish, Caló and code-switching have been the focus of many studies (Galindo 1995, 1996; Hidalgo 1984, 1986, 1988). In Galindo's studies Border Spanish was seen as being "broken" because utterances start in one language and finish in another (1996:10). In addition, these varieties of Spanish are usually described as being spoken by the lower socioeconomic classes, or by the less educated. Negative attitudes towards local varieties of Spanish and the preference for Standard Spanish is also reported in Hidalgo's (1984) study. Hidalgo argues that populations along the Mexican-U.S. border are very sensitive to language variation and tend to favor the Spanish variety spoken in Mexico City, as opposed to local varieties spoken in Ciudad Juárez, México or El Paso, Texas. The Ciudad Juárez residents in Hidalgo's study view code-switching very negatively, asserting that "code switching may well infringe upon their identity" and may make them trespass "the border of ethnicity" (1984:29). The combination of negative attitudes towards the language practices of Mexican Americans, their constant exposure to Mexican monolingual standard varieties of Spanish and conscious and unconscious self-comparison with Mexican nationals may threaten Mexican Americans. As a result, some Mexican Americans adopt English in the presence of Mexicans. Another reason for Chicanos to adopt English is the fact that they often wish to distinguish themselves

from recent immigrants by showing that they can speak English without a Spanish accent (Galindo 1995). This linguistic practice also has a potential negative impact on the attitudes of Mexican nationals who point out that Mexican Americans “have betrayed their allegiance to what is considered *mexicano* (in terms of behavior, culture and language) and have opted instead to assimilate or acculturate into the dominant culture” (Galindo 1996:13). Despite the overall negative attitude towards local varieties of Spanish on the border, in both Galindo and Hidalgo’s studies some participants state that near the border code-switching is a reality and some proudly accept it.

Although there are clearly negative attitudes towards the Spanish spoken on the border and Hispanics² show a certain degree of loyalty to English (Hidalgo 1988), it is important to point out that Hispanics also show a tendency toward Spanish language maintenance. This is clearly seen in Mejías et al.’s study (2002) based on a 1982 project (published in 1988) examining the attitudes towards Spanish language maintenance or shift in southwest Texas. As predicted in the 1982 study, Hispanic university students in this area demonstrate a great desire to maintain Spanish through their future plans to raise bilingual children and by using Spanish in various domains in the present. The main reasons for maintaining Spanish are language loyalty as expressed by Silva-Corvalán (1994) and for communicating with other members of the community (Mejías & Anderson 1988). Maintaining Spanish for communicative purposes is also observed in Teschner’s (1995) discussion of the use of Spanish at work, in business and education arenas in El Paso, Texas. Due to its proximity to the monolingual Ciudad Juárez in Mexico, El Paso is a remarkably bilingual city where residents, especially Mexican Americans speak English but cannot afford to lose their Spanish.

On the other hand, studies of linguistic attitudes towards speakers of Standard Spanish by middle class Anglos who had studied Spanish as a foreign language in other regions of the U.S. found that these speakers associated Spanish with the home context and English with the school context (Carranza & Ryan 1975). Studies evaluating the attitudes of middle class Anglos towards Spanish-English bilingual speakers with accented English speech show that the judges rated the more Spanish accented speech negatively (Ryan & Carranza 1975; Ryan, Carranza & Moffie 1977). These studies provide a historical perspective on linguistic attitudes that are still prevalent in the regional community. The findings of studies of attitudes towards Spanish and Spanish speakers in the U.S. show that listeners tend to assess speakers of dominant languages or standard varieties more positively than speakers of non-standard or non-dominant languages.

3. The study: Place, program and participants

The Southwest Texas border region has always distinguished itself by the fluid exchange of people and products (García 1981; Martínez 1994; Richardson 1999; Sánchez 1993; Staudt & Coronado 2002). Families and businesses have established networks that ensure a circular migration pattern. There are people in the area that work on one side and live on the other and about 1600 students that cross the border from Juárez everyday to attend the university.³ There is fluidity and interdependence between both sides. The interaction and exposure to both cultures has resulted in adaptations and transformations that help constitute a particular border culture, neither Mexican nor American (García 1981; Sánchez 1993).

Recently, this border area has undergone another major demographic and economic shift due to NAFTA, the presence of *maquilas* (export processing factories) and the war on drugs. The resulting socio-economic situation has produced opportunities to use and value Spanish in the area (Staudt & Coronado 2002; Teschner 1995). Nowadays the population of Mexican or Spanish-speaking origin constitutes the majority in the area of El Paso, around 80% according to the 2000 Census.

These changes in the linguistic and socio-political landscape have translated into different attitudes and a stronger linguistic marketplace for Spanish. Although the Hispanophobia (Crawford 1992; Huntington 2004) that characterizes the U.S. is still felt, the expansion of domains of use of Spanish to the more valued public sphere challenges the stigma attached to Spanish as a minority language. There are now more opportunities for middle class professionals on the border to use their bilingual talents and knowledge of two cultures, business and legal systems. Even though Spanish can no longer be avoided, as in the past, Anglos and English still dominate the government, major businesses and schools (Staudt & Coronado 2002; Teschner 1995). According to Teschner (1995), few Anglos learn Spanish beyond mere survival competencies. However, the demographic and socio-economic changes have made bilingualism more desirable for all.

In terms of educational opportunities, the changes in the socio-political context have translated into the creation of a series of model bilingual programs. At the primary school level, Alicia Chacón International School is a dual-language immersion magnet K-8 school that also introduces students to a third language in addition to Spanish and English. At the tertiary level, the university has a Bilingual Professional Writing Certificate, a Spanish Journalism Program (with an undergraduate major and M.A.) and the Bilingual Creative Writing Program (with an undergraduate major and a Master of Fine Arts). This emergence of educational initiatives shows that there has been a change in the community's attitudes towards the value of Spanish use and development in educational contexts.

The Bilingual MFA in Creative Writing is an example of innovative curriculum and program redesign. This program uses the linguistic and cultural resources available in the community while establishing an international social network to support the development of a professional identity exploring several cultural and linguistic traditions that inform what it means to be a writer. The Creative Writing MFA program adopted a new bilingual profile seven years ago. The implementation of a bilingual model is in response to an institutional goal to capitalize on the characteristics of the area and create a profile that makes the most of its border location. At the time this phase of the study was conducted, there were 34 students (about 12 from Latin America) and seven full-time faculty members. In this program, students can choose to write and take classes in English or Spanish or both languages and draw on several literary cultural traditions.

The student population, as well as the faculty, represents a wide variety of language socialization experiences. There are people who grew up in the border region speaking English in public domains and Spanish at home and those who come from other parts of the U.S. and learned Spanish as a second language or as a heritage language in other regions. There is also a group of Spanish-speaking immigrants to the U.S. that can be subdivided into the recent immigrants who come directly from Latin America to study or work in the U.S. and those who arrived with their families at an early age and have been educated in the U.S. In addition, there is a group of people from the Mexican side of the border who constantly move back and forth and have not really relocated to the U.S. This last group is composed mainly of middle class Mexicans who continue living in Mexico but attend university and school in the U.S. and may have family on both sides of the border. The entire group is formed by members with different sets of experiences and skills in the languages, cultures and professional resources used in this academic community.

This paper reports findings from an ongoing longitudinal research project on the development of bilingualism for professional uses in the U.S. The project is an ethno-linguistic study that began in January of 2004 that aims to track the development of the program and participants' professional identity formation through time.

4. Data collection

According to Garrett, Coupland and Williams (2003) there are three main approaches to the study of language attitudes: (a) direct elicitation through surveys or questionnaires (attitudes as propositions), (b) indirect elicitation through matched guise technique (attitudes as mental models) and (c) contextualized

study (attitudes as constructed in discourse). In this paper we focus on how language attitudes are constructed in discourse. This study was designed to explore the linguistic attitudes of the students participating in this academic community where the professors and the administration have programmatically put forth an additive model of bilingualism. This exploration of language attitudes can help explain the patterns of interaction that have developed in the program in terms of ethno-linguistic group membership.⁴

The data used for this analysis are interviews with 20 students selected to be representative of the range of language backgrounds of people in the program. The number of participants selected for the analysis of attitudes was decided based on two criteria: reflection of the range of bilingualism in the population and saturation of information. The interviews conducted throughout the spring semester of 2004 included nine students (three Spanish-dominant, two English-dominant and four bilingual as self-reported). The interviews carried out in the fall semester of 2004 included 11 students (four Spanish-dominant, four English-dominant, two bilingual and one English monolingual as self-reported). The interviews lasted an average of 25–35 minutes each. The interviews were done by the first author, a Spanish-dominant bilingual Latin American with extensive experience living and working in the U.S., known in the community as a researcher studying bilingualism. The interviewer had been introduced to the community as the sister of one of the students in the program and had support from the director of the program to conduct the study. The interviewer tried to do the interviews in Spanish in order to record examples of Spanish being used in the community but followed interviewees' preferences. It is important to note that the interviews used as data in this paper come from the first three groups of students who had entered the program since the adoption of a bilingual model. However, in their interviews they also referred to students who were still participating in the program and had entered when it had two parallel tracks in Spanish and English. All the names used in the article are pseudonyms.

5. Analysis and findings

The interview data were analyzed using discourse analysis (Martin & Rose 2003; Martin & White 2005). First, we did a rough transcription of the interviews focusing on content. We examined the dominant themes constructed in the responses and identified the following areas of evaluation to focus our analysis: (a) social acceptability and (b) value of language varieties and their users. By social acceptability we mean the degree of acceptance of the language in the community. The value of language varieties and their users refer to the linguistic market value of a partic-

ular code. This means how languages are positioned in comparison to one another and what power these varieties afford their users in this semiotic landscape.

Then the transcriptions were reviewed and the interviews analyzed using an appraisal framework (Martin & White 2005). Following an appraisal framework, we investigated how speakers evaluated the bilingual community, the program language practices and other students as language users in affective, judgmental or aesthetic terms. This type of analysis focuses on how semantic choices construct speakers' attitudes towards the information they are conveying. This interview data was interpreted comparing and contrasting the attitudes prevalent in this academic community with those in the larger social context of the region and the U.S and Latin America. The findings of the analysis are presented below.

5.1 Data analysis

To examine how attitudes are constructed in discourse, we followed Martin and Rose (2003) and Martin and White (2005) who investigate attitudes as evaluations negotiated in a text to construct social relationships (appraisal analysis). We focused on the lexico-grammatical choices that construct explicit or implied evaluative meanings in terms of affect (emotions: satisfaction, happiness, security), social or moral judgment (behavior: normality, tenacity, capacity, veracity or propriety) and appreciation (the worth of things/processes/phenomena: reaction, composition, valuation). Appraisal analysis focuses on *what* is valued (things, people's character or their feelings), *who the source* of the evaluation is (speaker or other source) and the *strength* of that evaluation (positive or negative). The analysis was done from the bottom-up perspective that identifies the lexico-grammatical realizations and works back to the prosodies of the text. We used a table to code the analysis including the data sample, the source, what was being evaluated and the type of attitude (affect, judgment and appreciation). We interpreted speakers as the source of the evaluation unless the attitudes were in a projection as in reported speech or thoughts of others. We also distinguished between negative and positive attitudes and included invoked attitudes that rely on culturally shared connotations of phrases or lexical items to produce positive or negative evaluations in the reader. Table 1 exemplifies the categories and the way the analysis was carried out.

Table 1. Example appraisal analysis

Excerpt	Who evaluates?	What is evaluated?	Kind of attitude		
			Affect	Judgment	Appreciation
“[Spanish is] Every-where, 'cause almost everyone seems to be bilingual as far as growing up speaking both languages. And it surprised me.” (Olivia)	Student English-dominant	Spanish in the community	Satisfaction (disposition)	Normality (admire)	
“...todos los demás hablan perfectamente inglés y español y escriben perfectamente inglés y español, bueno no perfectamente pero todo el mundo lo entiende y lo maneja bien.” (Marcelo)	Student Spanish-dominant	Bilingual students in the program		Capacity (admire)	
“se siente la energía del Spanglish a veces del caló, se siente...” (Humberto)	Student bilingual	Code-switching in the classroom	Satisfaction (disposition)		Valuation (positive)

5.2 Findings

The appraisal analysis of the interviews shows that evaluations of judgment (behavior) are mostly in terms of capacity. The interviewees evaluate the capacity of their classmates, their professors and the residents in the community by admiring their bilingual skills and criticizing those who are monolingual. However, this generally positive evaluation of the group's capacity and of bilingualism, as reflected through the ability to use and understand Spanish in the classroom and the community, is mitigated by a more detailed look at the ways certain varieties of Spanish are evaluated. In general, interviewees approve of and value the practice of code-switching, but are very critical of the local variety of Spanish (sometimes called Spanglish, *Fronterizo*, Border Spanish or El Paso Spanish). The evaluations in terms of appreciation show a low valorization of the local variety of Spanish, although there are a few interviewees who do not share this view. The types of comments and associations made between this local variety and its users demonstrated that it is a stigmatized form associated with less educated speakers. This is interesting since it makes evident the fact that speakers evaluate language users rather

than the languages per se. Evaluations of affect are used mostly to reveal feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction between ethno-linguistic groups. This means that when making meanings that represent feelings or affective involvement, interviewees usually describe the atmosphere and environment where Spanish and bilingualism occur. Affective evaluations also reflect the speakers' emotional connection to the language, in particular when talking about their feelings of familiarity or security/insecurity with the language (i.e. Spanish). The following paragraphs will illustrate these findings with examples from the interviews.

5.2.1 *Language value and use in the community*

In general all interviewees evaluated the use of Spanish in the community as prevalent and normal in terms of frequency of use, although there are varying opinions on the social significance and value of Spanish in the regional community. There was also an interesting partition of the community along language lines. The ability to use Spanish and in particular a certain variety of Spanish is used to differentiate people in the community. The following examples illustrate these evaluations of the uses and meaning of Spanish in the community.

- (1) ...en El Paso, el español se usa para todo casi igual que el inglés.
(Marcelo, Spanish-dominant)

This example highlights the propriety of Spanish and its normality in the community (judgment). It is almost an equal of the dominant language, English. This is the evaluation of someone who comes from Chihuahua and is a frequent visitor to the city of El Paso, but resides in Mexico.

- (2) Well, it's very interesting in El Paso because, you know... the population is predominantly bilingual, I think.
(Ruby, English-dominant)

For Ruby, an Anglo from outside of the region, the focus of the evaluation is the 'predominance' of bilingualism, which is an unusual characteristic in the rest of the country. In (2), this characteristic of the community is evaluated as positive by the English-dominant student who appraises it as an appreciation of quality, "interesting", and as a judgment of normality, "predominantly bilingual".

Example (3) also constructs an evaluation of Spanish use in the community as something normal (judgment), however it foregrounds the problematic status this language has in the community.

- (3) Hay muchísimo español, pero pienso que no le han dado el valor... este al español no lo han como decir no lo han valorizado lo suficiente y lo consideran... mucha gente lo considera un idioma bajo.
(Mariela, Spanish-dominant)

Even though it is highly used, it seems speakers do not consider it appropriate or at the same level as English. It is appraised in terms of social esteem (judgment) as a language of low value. Comment (3) comes from a recent arrival to El Paso and to the U.S., which would explain the different assessment of the status of the language compared to the ones offered in previous examples. For Mariela, it is hard to understand and accept the meaning and value of Spanish in this U.S. context where it is a minority language, since she comes from a place where Spanish is the dominant language. As a contrasting case, example (4) shows how the situation of El Paso is also unique for Spanish speakers from the U.S.

- (4) En el centro de El Paso **oyes más el español**, de lo más español, pero yo he entrado al Texas Café en el centro, y me ven así como un **student y she'll start talking in English**, o sea y I answer to her in Spanish and luego... me habla en inglés, me sigue hablando en inglés, me dice, thank you and are you okay, y como que no sé me da como, que no me ves que soy prieto y hablo en español, pero no, como que hay esa línea de no sé a lo mejor **it's a class issue**, that if you're a student you'll just speak in English even if you're Mexican o como si fuera a Barnes & Noble y quiero hablar a español pues y ahí me dejan a mí, hablando en español and they just keep talking in English... (Humberto, bilingual)

In example (4), we observe how there is also a foregrounding of the high frequency of use and normality of Spanish use in the community (judgment). However, for this bilingual Chicano from the southwest, the status of Spanish is also problematic in the community. The normality of using Spanish in public spaces is presented as expected and then contrasted through the use of “pero” with a counter-expected situation, the choice of using English even when all the contextual features point to a Spanish-dominant speaker. The whole experience is evaluated as a “class thing” appreciated in terms of its social value. His evaluation highlights the connection between Spanish and working class practices in the community. His appraisal of the situation points to a community where there is a clear division of spaces, that differentiates where Spanish *can* and *cannot* be used.

The evaluators' interpretations of reality differ and are affected by their point of reference and previous history with the language. However they all construct attitudes that appraise languages and their use in terms of judgments and appreciation. In this particular context, Spanish is seen as prevalent and valuable for those who have had a history in the region or country comparing it to the situation elsewhere in this national landscape. But, for those coming from Latin America, where Spanish is the dominant language and the most valued one, this context provides a different reading and interpretation of the situation. For those coming from Latin America with a monolingual standard language ideology, the role of

Spanish varieties in this bilingual context challenges their preconceived notions of language norms and values.

The next set of examples illustrates the prevailing views over the status and value of the local Spanish variety. Even though not all students agree with this evaluation of local Spanish as a ‘lower’ form of Spanish, they do agree on their interpretation of what the prevalent views in the community are.

- (5) I think that **you pretty much hear it all the time**, I mean I’ve been here and I’ve had a lot of different types of jobs where I’ve had to know some Spanish and be able to have like a basic back and forth with somebody, and um, I mean, **you pretty much always hear it. I mean I can’t remember a time where like I’ve been anywhere and haven’t heard any Spanish**, and then of course, the issue as to what’s **proper Spanish...**
(Tania, English-dominant)

Example (5) shows again the prevalence of evaluations in terms of judgment that focus on the normality of Spanish use in the community while pointing to the conflict over how to value the local variety used in the community. The notion of ‘proper Spanish’ points to an evaluation of the value of this variety as well as to its acceptance in the community. This seems to be an issue of contention.

This underestimation of the value of the local variety has been internalized, not only by speakers of standard varieties, but also by those who speak this variety as their ‘home language’. There is a sense that this local variety is different in its composition in comparison to the standard (appreciation).

- (6) **Siempre hablaba español en la casa y... de vez en cuando en el trabajo** pero era un español más de... no sé cómo se dice, **del barrio, más slang**, pues **más chistoso**, de ese tipo de manera podría decir, pero **nos entendíamos**.
(Jorge, Bilingual)

In example (6), the speaker’s evaluation of the local variety is in terms of its appreciation, valuing it as a product of the community. The Spanish variety is described as “del barrio, más slang, pues más chistoso”. These features correspond to more solidarity and reveal a link to the private sphere where this variety tends to be used. The description of this variety as “slang” and “chistoso” associates it with non-standard and peculiar features positioning it as different. However, this Spanish variety is also described as functional since in-group members understand each other. So there is an implicit contrast between the standard and the actual variety used in the community.

In example (7), we observe again an evaluation in terms of appreciation pointing to the fact that standard Spanish speakers consider this variety to be deviant, since it has a lot of “errors” and is a “mixture of English and Spanish”.

- (7) O que no se le ha hablado mucho español en la casa y que te hablan **con cierta dificultad el español, ¿no? Con muchos errores y mezclan el español y el inglés** aunque parecieran **absolutamente mexicanos**.
(Marina, Spanish-dominant)

The previous example also points to the connection between language and identity. For this student it is important to point to the paradox of a case where bilingual speakers in the community are not easy to position in terms of national and cultural allegiances. Because they do not speak Spanish like dominant speakers, they are evaluated as outsiders, despite their cultural characteristics that link them to the group. This duality creates a difficulty for those accustomed to participating in more homogeneous communities where there is a clear link between language and group membership.

These examples have shown that the variety of Spanish spoken in this area is valued, in terms of its social and composition value (judgment and appreciation), as “lower” by all the participants, including bilingual speakers, as well as English and Spanish dominants. In this community, there is a constant tension between homogeneizing language ideologies that equate language and ethnicity and language ideologies that value heterogeneity accepting a more complex relationship between language and ethnic group membership.

5.5.2 *Language and ethnic identity*

The following examples point to this disconnection between language and ethnicity. In example (8), we observe how a bilingual speaker from the Juárez area perceives the language identity conflict in the community.

- (8) Familiares míos, primos, que pues, mi tía y mi tío, **ellos hablan español pero mis primos, ellos no saben...** y dicen ‘what are you telling me?’ ... y por eso fue que yo **he aprendido mucho inglés porque tengo muchos primos y todo, pero claro que sí lo saben, se hacen o se quieren creer muy gringos**, o no sé por qué y **no lo hablan**. Después que les hablas en español te dicen que **no te entendieron** o te responden en inglés.
(Martín, bilingual)

This example constructs the evaluation in social sanction terms (judgment) highlighting the importance of veracity in assessing one’s ethno-linguistic membership to a group. Those who do not speak Spanish, but have ties to Mexican culture, are evaluated as inauthentic by identifying them as “gringos”. This differentiation within the Mexican American group is also observed by newcomers to the community.

- (9) Ocurre un fenómeno **muy curioso** sobre todo ahora que estoy también dando clases, que **la gente que ya nació aquí muchas veces se siente muy tímida al hablar español**. Lo entienden perfectamente pero casi no lo hablan, ¿no? Igual que en la maestría... y eh entonces en algún momento **siento que el español fue como ‘no debes de hablar español’**. Entonces por eso **no lo saben, no lo saben bien, lo saben bastante mal, deficiente**. Entonces, eh... yo pienso que **antes se tenían que reprimir** y lo interesante que veo en la comunidad en relación con por ejemplo mis alumnos es que **todos quieren hablarlo bien**. Uno de ellos me decía, ‘es que mis primos de México **se burlan de mí, de que no hablo bien español y yo quiero aprenderlo bien**.’ Entonces **sí hay ese interés por los menos**. Y **me parece bueno, ¿no?**
(Miriam, Spanish-dominant)

In example (9), a recent arrival to the community notices that local Spanish speakers have a feeling of inferiority and distinguish themselves from Mexican nationals by the fact that they speak a different and ‘lower’ variety of Spanish. It is also interesting to point out that these evaluations are constructed in affective terms and social judgment terms. The attitudes are described as affective reactions by the local community and as social evaluations of the performance of local Spanish users. Miriam, a standard Spanish speaker, has a negative evaluation of the local variety and considers local Spanish speakers, “bad” or “deficient” (appreciation). The implied notion behind these evaluations is that there is *one* Spanish. Variations to this idealized version of the language are considered deviations. The local variety and the problematic construction of an ethno-linguistic identity that essentializes the relationship between language and ethnic group membership are the result of policies that repressed the use of Spanish in the community. This repression is actually documented by legislation and personal accounts of the local residents of Spanish-speaking heritage that were interviewed in this project.

Example (10) again shows the problematic connection between language and identity in the community and reveals a tension between residents of Mexican heritage from El Paso and Juárez.

- (10) Yo estoy... arriba del charco, **no me quieren** en México y **no me quieren** en los Estados Unidos y estoy... **isolated**. Y así **muchas personas están así** porque mis familiares de México, porque yo nací en los Estados Unidos, siempre **no nos querían tanto** [risas] y **nos peleábamos, pero siempre nos trataban como si nosotros éramos mejores**. Decían, que ¿cómo se dice? **Que ponemos la impresión que éramos mejores** pero yo nunca los traté así. Pero ellos **me trataron como si yo no fuera parte de la familia**.
(Jorge, bilingual)

In the previous example, a local resident constructs an affective attitude in response to standard language ideologies. This evaluation of his language use experience points to his difficulty being recognized as an authentic member of either community, Anglo or Mexican, since both communities share a homogenizing ideology that does not accept diversity or heterogeneity. A hybrid identity is not recognized as valid in this context (judgment). This tension between groups and the relationship between language and identity is also foregrounded in example (11).

- (11) ...there you know I have met **some Chicanos here that don't speak any Spanish** but that seems to be because their parents came from some other part of the country where **they try to be white or something** and so they **don't speak any Spanish**, but hopefully... I've met some white people that have lived here all their life **and they don't know any Spanish, like none**. And I'm like, "how can you not know any?"; I mean don't you hear people talking ever? Like I don't understand that. So, yeah, they just must be very, like, **secluded like all their friends are white...**
(Tania, English-dominant)

In this example, we also observe how there is an assumption that language indexes an identity and that those that do not abide by this principle are considered problematic or abnormal (judgment). The Chicanos that do not speak Spanish are evaluated as denaturalized, while the Anglos who have not learned Spanish are seen as secluded and isolated from their regional community.

In these cases, language functions as a way to position a group in relation to the other and to signal their membership as authentic participants in a heterogeneous community. The complex linguistic and cultural make up of the community creates a context where the essentializing views that link language and identity are constantly challenged. The following section explores the participants' evaluation of language value and use within the program.

5.2.3 *Language value and use in the program*

The evaluations of the social significance and value of bilingualism, Spanish and language users in the program have certain similarities with those that characterized students' evaluations of regional community practices. The main difference seems to be that the program represents a context where bilingualism and a variety of dialects of Spanish are used and valued by those in power (i.e. the professors). This difference in power balance allows for different dynamics of interaction and valuations in the academic community. The values and practices in this academic community challenge the homogenizing language ideologies that dominate views of the regional community. The following examples illustrate these points.

- (12) ...well right now, there's a Colombian, people from Argentina, Uruguay, Mexico, and so that's, that's pretty much all, **and here El Paso, the Spanish in El Paso is different than in Mexico too**, so uh, I think that for **the most part the language of the academics, which would be the students from Latin America who are very intellectual, that Spanish is more formal** I would think. Um, see it just depends on which group you're talking about, like for instance **the local people who speak Spanish they're, I don't see them as intellectual; they don't have the same intellectual background**, as you know educational systems differ and then just, it's a perception of mine that **I feel the people from South America have a higher level of education, or they're just more well read.**
(Martina, bilingual)

In example (12), the bilingual student constructs an evaluation of the speakers in terms of appreciation by comparing the diversity of Spanish dialects represented in the program. This depiction and evaluation contrast with the more binary division of judgment previously described as characteristic of the community; that is, that there is a standard Spanish and local Spanish. The other interesting aspect highlighted by this example is that the division among ethno-linguistic groups is now represented in broader national terms. Instead of focusing on differences of status between Mexicans and local people of Spanish-speaking heritage, the division in the program is defined by Latin Americans vis-à-vis local residents. The assessment in terms of judgment of Latin Americans as more intellectual and well-read positions them as having an advantage in the academic community. There is also an implied differentiation between the local Spanish-speakers and the Anglo English-speakers, which results in an implicit hierarchy within the program where Latin Americans are identified as the most intellectual followed by the Anglos and finally the local Spanish-speakers. This hierarchy reveals the differential power structure that exists in the academic community, where local residents particularly people of Spanish-speaking heritage are still a minority.

In the following examples, we can observe how the program tries to challenge the established linguistic and cultural power structure of U.S. academic communities by allowing, encouraging and valuing bilingualism and language diversity.

- (13) Inclusive los papeles que nos pide yo le he escrito mitad en inglés y mitad en español y es **acceptable** para él.
(Julián, Bilingual)

Example (13) demonstrates the validity and propriety of code-mixing in the program (judgment). The speaker highlights the fact that even in writing code-mixing is considered a valid form of creative expression. The next example constructs

an affective evaluation of the environment as encouraging and valuing of code-mixing and hybrid forms.

- (14) cuando llegué aquí, **me sentí tan libre, que puedo comenzar a hablar en español y I can finish talking in English, even though the class might just be Anglos.** And then I don't have to, I don't feel that restriction, porque, como que el **programa me da, gives me a validation to speak my tongue** o como dice Gloria Anzaldúa "the forked tongue", y este, **no me preocupo tanto por lo que me van a entender.**
(Humberto, Bilingual)

Example (14) illustrates in form and content how language experimentation and variation are validated in this academic community. The speaker identifies the program as providing the necessary validation and authority to challenge pre-conceived and naturalized evaluations of non-standard forms of communication (judgment). Example (15) also supports the normality of bilingual interaction in the program (judgment).

- (15) ...**sometimes it gets mixed and everyone's talking in different languages, so the bilingual aspect I guess is to speak and talk in whatever you want and writing in whatever you want and everyone else will understand you.**"
(Olivia, English-dominant)

This example, points to the complexity of the type of interaction that occurs in the program and the level of acceptance it has. Through the use of pronouns and modals that encode a high degree of compliance, the force of the evaluation is increased.

The next examples show sources of conflict this type of heterogeneous environment creates in terms of group membership and ethno-linguistic identities. In example (16), the Spanish-dominant speaker creates a clear divide between the English-dominant speakers, who tend to be less proficient and less willing to interact in the other's language, and the Spanish-dominant group that tends to behave more bilingually (judgment).

- (16) Mira bilingüe... Hasta el momento es **bilingüe para todos los latinoamericanos, para toda la gente que está de otro lado, y que habla... y que el español es su lengua materna, porque para muchos de los... de los americanos que están dentro del programa bilingüe, no es bilingüe porque no saben... no saben español. Muchos no saben.**
(Alicia, Spanish-dominant)

In example (16), we observe the underlying tension between ethno-linguistic groups constructed as evaluations of judgment in terms of capacity (knowing or not Spanish). This tension signals how dominant language ideologies intrude

into the program. Even though the program attempts to create an academic space where bilingualism is accepted and valued, students come to the community with well-established standard language ideologies (judgment). Their beliefs about language, their habits of interaction and language abilities limit the potential of creating an academic community where diversity is valued.

For English-dominant or English monolingual students the unequal situation is evident also, but does not create as much discomfort in terms of their educational experience. Examples (17) and (18) illustrate this group's views on the language situation in the program.

- (17) I imagine that **their situation when you learn a language is similar to mine, they probably understand more English than they can say, so we can have an entire conversation me speaking English them speaking Spanish** and be okay with that. **So I think it works.**

(Thalia, English-dominant)

This example points to how an English-dominant speaker interprets the language proficiency difference as natural and normal (judgment). She does not feel the pressure to accommodate to the other's needs, because in this context difference is acceptable and it does not impede participation. The situation is positively evaluated in terms of appreciation as "working".

In contrast for some, as illustrated in example (18), the linguistic gap results in some sort of peripheral participation that affects their learning and puts them at a disadvantage.

- (18) So you know the **language thing has not been a problem, I think it's been interesting. I feel bad that you know, it sounds like there is some really fascinating writing that's come up in Spanish and I can't do anything about it; I can't read it; I can't understand it, so I do feel a little guilty, you know I feel that all of the native Spanish speakers know enough English that they can read my work to comment on it but I'm sort of like exempted from like thirty percent of the class because I just can't do anything with it, you know.**

(Sean, English monolingual)

In example (18), we observe evaluations of appreciation and affect that construct the situation as "interesting" but with emotional impact, "guilty", on the English monolingual student. He has become aware that he is missing out on the educational experience and the potential of this bilingual community because of his lack of Spanish language abilities. The difference in language abilities in the academic community results in differential access and participation (judgment).

The findings from the analysis of these interviews point to clear patterns in the ways members of the community assess the meaning and value of languages

and their users in the local and academic community. Most evaluations are constructed as judgments that draw attention to the normality, authenticity and social esteem of Spanish and its users. There are also some evaluations of appreciation that highlight the compositional attributes of Spanish as a code. In addition, some participants constructed affective evaluations of the situation and their experience with languages in the community. These affective evaluations point to the effect language ideologies have on individuals and communities. This configuration of evaluations signals how linguistic behavior, appreciation of language and individual experiences with language respond to folk views of the meaning and value of language (i.e. language ideologies).

The analysis also demonstrates that students' evaluations position them as members of particular ethno-linguistic groups, creating a clear division between Spanish-dominant speakers, English-dominant speakers with a sub-division of Spanish speakers into local Spanish speakers and standard Spanish speakers. These groups tend to share similar evaluations, i.e. attitudes towards speakers of certain varieties.

6. Conclusions

To understand the significance of language attitudes in this academic community we need to situate it in the socio-historical context of the local community and the national landscape. In this academic community, the linguistic prestige of English prevalent in the local and national community has been challenged by the changes in the number of Spanish-dominant speakers who come to this community without the baggage of being a member of a linguistic minority (Ogbu 1992). These Spanish-dominant speakers from Latin America have high levels of literacy and educational backgrounds that make them equal or advantaged competitors in an academic setting that has typically associated speaking Spanish with low educational levels and low socio-economic class. These Spanish-dominant speakers seem to accept the bilingual character of the program, but show ambiguous attitudes towards 'non-standard' varieties of Spanish. At the same time, these English-speakers are able to revise their preconceived notions of Spanish speakers' academic abilities and professional potential, but are not all willing to make the effort to learn the Other's language. For the speakers of local varieties of Spanish, the situation is uncertain. They seem to have more positive attitudes toward the use of Spanish in academic situations. This opportunity to use Spanish in a domain typically associated with English opens up the possibility of expanding their linguistic resources to develop Spanish academic language. In addition, this academic community offers a space where their local variety and in particular

code-switching are accepted as valid materials for creative purposes. The most problematic issue seems to be the role of local varieties, traditionally associated with informal registers, when engaging in academic or professional activities. The use of these varieties in academic situations appears to continue being associated with lower education and less intellectual identities.

As the analysis has demonstrated language attitudes are shaped and transformed by changes in the socio-political conditions (Lippi-Green 1997). Demographic and socio-economic changes within Latino groups in the U.S. and in the El Paso area have created the conditions for this bilingual academic community to emerge. The positive evaluation of bilingualism in new domains usually reserved for English has effected changes in the attitudes of individuals.

The expression of attitude is part of the process of constituting groups and it is part of social belonging (Garrett et al. 2003: 226). The analysis showed how in this academic community subgroups are constructed based on their views of the social significance of language and language practices. This is clearly illustrated in the case analyzed here where the evaluation a student makes about the language choice of others and the value s/he attributes to speakers of those languages positions the student as member of a particular ethno-linguistic group. Thus it is by making certain types of linguistic choices and evaluations that speakers construct their ethno-linguistic identity in the academic community. So there are patterned and naturalized sets of evaluations that are associated with a particular socio-cultural group. These patterns of evaluation and language choice in valued domains function as a form of inclusion or exclusion in the community.

Attitudes reflect positions taken by social actors in an argument that is part of a larger social controversy (Billig 1987). The argument at hand is one between dominant monolingual language ideologies that favor standard varieties of English and Spanish versus heteroglossic language ideologies that value diversity and the expansion of meaning-making resources. This argument becomes relevant in this community through the choices that are made at the program level, i.e. allowing the use of both languages in all activities (additive model of bilingualism) and at the individual level (i.e. languages students use to engage in academic activities). Some of the questions for further longitudinal exploration are: How does the community reconcile the internal cultural differences between languages and between varieties of the same language? How do evaluative judgments affect students' participation and success in the academic community?

These questions need to be addressed by educators working in bilingual or multilingual settings. As previous studies have shown, teachers' expectations and evaluations of students' performance are influenced by attitudes to speakers and to languages. Students and teachers alike evaluate the intelligence of speakers based on their ability to articulate words in a manner most reflective of the 'standard'

(Seligman, Tucker & Lambert 1972). Participants in an academic community perform according to how they interpret the situation. This means that understanding the linguistic attitudes prevalent in the local and larger community can help educators plan and understand what participation structures (Philips 1972) and approaches to language and culture can be more advantageous in fostering a multilingual and multicultural sensitivity and professional identity.

This awareness of the importance of language attitudes can translate into pedagogical interventions that make language and power issues explicit. The development of critical language awareness can help students and teachers understand how the discursive patterns they use and the linguistic choices they make collude with or contest dominant language ideologies (Heller & Martin-Jones 2001). In this particular setting, this would mean: How can Anglo students become more proficient in the Others' language? How can Spanish speakers expand their linguistic repertoire? and How can all participants question the values attached to particular language varieties? Explicit discussions about the roles of language in learning and developing an academic identity can make everyone in the community more aware of the social meanings and value of the linguistic choices they make and the process through which they can challenge them.

Notes

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1. We define bilingual community following Romaine (2004) and Wenger (1998) as communities of practice where individuals interact and communicate regularly sharing a repertoire of communal resources while engaging in activities. In some cases, membership is defined not in terms of actual use of two or more languages, but in terms of passive knowledge and shared norms of understanding. Although, as Santa Ana and Parodi (1998) have demonstrated, even in so called "monolingual speech communities" there are variations in the use and evaluation of different language practices.

2. 'Hispanics' is used in this paper when the authors cited use it as the name to refer to populations of Spanish-speaking origin. We have respected their choice of terms to refer to this group and later use terms such as Chicano/a, Latino/a and Latin Americans when we are describing these groups based on the ways the groups have labeled themselves in the data collected or in the community. These labels refer to the construction of an ethno-linguistic identity and seem to be an important feature in participants' descriptions of their group membership within this particular community.

3. The PASE Program is a regional program developed to increase the enrollment of universities in this area by charging in-state tuition to Mexican citizens living in the border region. For most Mexicans even paying the in-state tuition fee is an enormous amount, so the people who benefit from this program are mostly from the middle and upper-middle class. (Interview with Assistant Director of PASE, the university).

4. It is important not to limit students' identity to their ethno-linguistic group membership and to acknowledge that not everyone who is from Latin America or is Mexican American behaves in the same way. In fact, there are students who are singled out as representative of exceptions to the norm within the community. This implies that there is an assumed expectation of how subgroups within the community behave and that the differences within groups are noticed also. However, these distinctions in terms of ethno-linguistic identity emerge from participants' discourse and are used to distinguish participants within this community of practice.

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