

Chapter 6

Where in the World is US Spanish? Creating a Space of Opportunity for US Latinos

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Introduction

In the USA, Spanish is often characterized as the language of the conquered, the colonized and the immigrants; that is, as a *language of poverty*. But in the context of economic globalization in the 21st century, Spanish in the USA is slowly being *negotiated* as a language with economic value.¹

This chapter starts out by examining the US Spanish language ideology² that minoritizes Spanish and that constructs it as a language of poverty. It then goes on to examine the perspective gained from constructing US Spanish through a global angle. This global Spanish language ideology positions Spanish not as a *characteristic* of the poor, but as a *negotiable resource* for US bilinguals. The struggle between a language ideology that characterizes US Spanish as a language of poverty and one which constructs it as a negotiable resource is further examined as it plays out in US Spanish language education policies and practices.

The chapter concludes by arguing that as a result of language education policies and practices that characterize US Spanish as a language of poverty, US Latinos³ are being excluded from the possibility of negotiating Spanish as a resource for themselves. Thus, US Latinos are in a double bind. Robbed of educational spaces in which their bilingualism could be nurtured, many shift to English at a rapid pace. As English speakers, they then continue to lag behind Anglo-English speakers in educational outcomes and economic rewards. But as English speakers, they are also left out of the growing Spanish/English bilingual market for which literacy in Spanish, as well as English, is a requirement.

US Spanish as a Characteristic of Poverty

Three cases as contextualization

That Spanish is minoritized⁴ in the USA is evident in the ideology expressed by statements of three people – a US professor in an academic journal, a comic in a US mainstream publication and a US judge in his courtroom. In a 2004 article entitled 'The Hispanic Challenge', Samuel P. Huntington, a professor at the Department of Government at Harvard University, said:

The persistent inflow of Hispanic immigrants threatens to divide the United States into two people, two cultures, and two languages. Unlike past immigrant groups, Mexicans and other Latinos have not assimilated into mainstream US culture, forming instead their own political and linguistic enclaves – from Los Angeles to Miami – and rejecting the Anglo-Protestant values that built the American dream. ... There is no *Americano* dream. There is only the American dream created by an Anglo-Protestant society. Mexican Americans will share in that dream and in that society only if they dream in English. (Huntington, 2004: 1)

That speaking Spanish is to remain in the shackles of poverty – economic, social, moral and intellectual – is echoed by the words of satirical advice columnist Dame Edna. In a 2003 *Vanity Fair* column, and in response to a reader's question regarding whether or not she should begin to learn Spanish, Dame Edna said:

Forget Spanish. There's nothing in that language worth reading except Don Quixote. ... There was a poet named Garcia Lorca, but I'd leave him on the intellectual back burner if I were you. As for everyone's speaking it, what twaddle! Who speaks it that you are really desperate to talk to? The help? Your leaf blower? (Dame Edna, 2003: 116)

Dame Edna's response portrays Spanish as academically unimportant, its contributions to literature insignificant and Spanish speakers as servants and gardeners for upper- and middle-class English-speaking families. Perspectives conveyed in mainstream media, whether written as the remarks of a serious advice columnist or a satirical advice columnist, draw attention to real issues in society and the internalization of these stereotypes. The linking of Spanish speakers as employees of the service industry also drew national interest in the 1995 custody suit of Martha Laureano and her five-year-old daughter. In Amarillo,

Texas, District Court Judge Samuel C. Kiser ruled that Martha Laureano's decision to speak Spanish to her daughter was child abuse and ordered her to speak only English to her daughter. Reprimanding her conduct, the judge further commented that if she did not speak to her daughter in English then her daughter would be condemned to life as a maid (Baron, 2001). These three examples represent and link ideas about Spanish, with poor people of low social status who are unworthy of respect. In the following sections, we discuss the ways in which Spanish has been minoritized in the USA, linking it to the following characteristics:

- the language of the conquered and the colonized;
- the language of immigrants;
- the language of many;
- the language of the uneducated and poor;
- a racialized language.

Spanish as the language of the conquered and the colonized

According to Heinz Kloss (1977), Spanish in the USA could be said to have special rights because it was spoken by what he calls '*solitary original settlers*', that is, Spaniards arrived in what today is Florida and the US Southwest before the Anglo-Saxons. It is important to point out that the position of Spanish then was the opposite of what it is today in the USA. Spanish was, and continues to be today in many Latin American countries, the language of the conqueror and the powerful, devastating the linguistic and cultural resources of many Indigenous groups. Speaking of the US context, Kloss (1977) claims that the languages of solitary original settlers are entitled to be held in higher esteem than those of groups who might have arrived later. And yet, although none of the languages other than English in the USA have fared well in the face of English hegemony, it is Spanish that has suffered the most minoritization. This has to do with its status as the language of *the conquered* in what was then Mexico and is today the US Southwest, and as the language of *the colonized* in Puerto Rico.

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848) which ended the Mexican American War ceded nearly half of the Mexican territory to the USA (what today is California, Arizona, Texas, New Mexico, Nevada, Utah and parts of Colorado and Wyoming). Article IX of the Treaty guaranteed that Mexicans would enjoy 'all the rights of citizens of the United States... and in the meantime shall be maintained and protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty and property and secured in the free exercise of

their religion without restriction' (quoted in Crawford, 1992: 51). Initially, Spanish was used in legislation, education and the press, but slowly its importance was eroded and its use limited, as Spanish was minoritized.

When California became a state in 1850, it was decreed that 'all laws, decrees, regulations and provisions emanating from any of the three supreme powers of this State, which from their nature require publication, shall be published in English and Spanish' (del Valle, 2003: 13). But in 1855, English was declared the only language of instruction, the publication of state laws in Spanish was suspended, and court proceedings were required to be in English (Castellanos, 1983: 18).

In 1850, the territory of New Mexico (including present day Arizona and New Mexico) was added to the Union. When 13 years later Arizona and New Mexico were separated as territories, the population of New Mexico was around 50% Spanish speaking. New Mexico wasn't admitted to statehood until 1912 when more Anglos had moved in and the majority was English speaking. The pressure to linguistically assimilate was carried out, in part, by repressing schooling in Spanish and replacing it with schools in English only. For example, in 1874, 70% of the schools were in Spanish, 33% were bilingual and only 5% were in English only. Fifteen years later, in 1889, 42% of the schools were in English only, whereas only 30% of the schools were conducted in Spanish and 28% remained bilingual (del Valle, 1983). By 1891, a New Mexico statute required all schools to teach in English.

A report of the Pew Hispanic Center counts 26,784,268 Latinos of Mexican descent in the USA in 2005. Of these, 16 million have been born in the USA. Latinos of Mexican descent make up 64% of all US Latinos, linking Spanish to its characteristic as *the language of the conquered*.

The end of the Spanish American War in 1898 granted the US Congress complete authority to decide the political status and civil rights of the inhabitants of Puerto Rico (García *et al.*, 2001). From 1898 to 1948, without the consent of the Puerto Rican people, English became the official language of public schools in Puerto Rico (García *et al.*, 2001; Language Policy Task Force, 1992). Although the Jones Act of 1917 made Puerto Ricans citizens of the USA, it did not confer them full civil and political rights. Commonwealth, the term used to describe the status of Puerto Rico since the 1950s, did not change the political, economic and social relationship between the island and the USA (Trías Monge, 1997). During the post-Second World War decade (1945–1955), approximately 50,000 Puerto Ricans migrated to the USA. Today there are 3,794,776 Puerto Ricans in the USA (Pew Hispanic Center, 2006), constituting the second most numerous Latino group and 9% of the US Latino

population. The Spanish that Puerto Ricans have brought to the USA has also been minoritized, as it became characterized as the *language of colonized people*.

Spanish as the language of immigrants

In 1965, the *Immigration and Naturalization Services Act of 1965* (also known as the *Hart Celler* or the *INS Act of 1965*) abolished the national origin quotas⁵ that had been established by the *National Origins Act of 1924* (also known as the *Johnson-Reed Act*). As a result, an unprecedented number of immigrants from Latin America, as well as other non-Western nations, entered the USA. Although in 1942 the *Bracero Program* had brought short-term Mexican contract laborers for agricultural work, after 1965 a large number of immigrants from Mexico and Latin America started to join Latinos of Mexican descent.

Table 6.1 shows the number of immigrants from 1850 to 2000, according to the official US Census. Immigration from Latin America has increased sharply, especially since 1970 when it accounted for 1/5 of the immigrants. By 2000, immigrants from Latin America constituted more than one half of all immigrants in the USA. According to the US 2000 Census, there were 16,916,416 foreign-born Latin Americans in the USA, and approximately 15 million of them spoke Spanish.

In a recent tabulation of Hispanics at mid-decade, the Pew Hispanic Center (2006) reported that out of the 41,926,302 US Latinos, 25 million are native born and almost 17 million are foreign born. That is, approximately 40% of the US Latino population is foreign born. According to another study conducted by the Pew Hispanic Center (Passal, 2006), there are approximately 11.1 million unauthorized Latino migrants as of March 2006. Spanish is also thus characterized as *the language of immigrants*, sometimes undocumented.

Spanish as the language of many

In 2005, one out of every seven people in the USA was Latino. And rising birth rates will make this number even higher (Jelinko, 2005). But given the fact that the shift to English among Latinos is comparable to that of other immigrants (see next section), how many Latinos actually speak Spanish? Table 6.2 shows that according to the 2000 US Census, there are almost 25 million Latinos who speak Spanish at home, that is, 78% of the US Latino population.

The USA is the fifth largest Spanish-speaking country, after Mexico, Argentina, Colombia and Spain. There are seven states in the USA with

Table 6.1 Region of birth of the foreign-born population: 1850–2000

	1850	1870	1890	1910	1930	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Europe	92.2%	88.8%	86.9%	87.4%	83.0%	75.0%	61.7%	39.0%	22.9%	15.8%
Asia	0.1%	1.2%	1.2%	1.4%	1.9%	5.1%	8.9%	19.3%	26.3%	26.4%
Africa	–	–	–	–	0.1%	0.4%	0.9%	1.5%	1.9%	2.8%
Oceania	–	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.4%	0.4%	0.6%	0.5%	0.5%
Latin America	0.9%	1.0%	1.2%	2.1%	5.5%	9.4%	19.4%	33.1%	44.3%	51.7%

Table 6.2 Language spoken at home by US Latinos*

<i>Language spoken at home</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>% Language spoken</i>
Speak only English	6,764,744	21.4%
Speak Spanish	24,636,215	78.0%
Speak other language	168,617	0.5%
Total	31,569,576	100.0%

*US Census (2000) SF3, PCT11

more than 1 million Latinos – California (12.5 million), Texas (7.8 million), Florida (3.4 million), New York (3.0 million), Illinois (1.8 million), Arizona (1.6 million) and New Jersey (1.3 million) (Pew Hispanic Center, 2006, Table 10). And there are seven states where approximately one fifth or more of the population is Latino – New Mexico (43.9%), California (35.5%), Texas (35.4%), Arizona (28.9%), Nevada (23.5%), Florida (19.8%) and New York (19.7%) (Pew Hispanic Center, 2006, Table 12). There are also 10 US cities with more than 1 million Latinos. In fact, after Mexico City, Los Angeles has the most Mexicans; after Habana, Miami has the most Cubans; and after San Juan, New York has the most Puerto Ricans. Spanish is characterized as the *language of too many* in the USA.

Spanish as the language of the uneducated and poor

The educational achievement of the Latino student population is poor in comparison to its White and Black counterparts. According to the 2000 US Census, only 64% of Latinos between the ages of 18 and 24 years have completed high school compared to 92% of Whites and 84% of Blacks in the same age group. While the dropout rate for 16- to 24-year-olds who are out of school and do not have a high school or GED diploma is 7% for Whites and 13% for Blacks, the percent for Latinos is greater than the combined total for their White and Black peers, at 28%.

The relationship between educational achievement and the economic status of Spanish speakers is evident in the large gap between poverty levels of Latinos and White non-Latinos. According to the 2000 US Census, Latinos comprised 12% of the US population, yet the poverty rate among Latinos was 21.8%, more than double the percentage of White non-Latinos who live in poverty. Latino men earn 63% of the earnings of White men, while Latinas earn only 54% of the amount White women earn. Whereas the median personal earnings of US Latinos in

2005 was \$20,000, it was \$30,000 for White non-Latinos (Pew Hispanic Center, 2006, Table 25). In 2002, the median net worth of Latino households was \$7932; that is, 9% of \$88,651, the median wealth of White households at the same time (Kochhar, 2004).

Racialized Spanish

US Latinos have been racialized in the USA. Urciuoli (1996: 15) explains the concept of *racialization* saying:

When people are talked about as a race . . . , the emphasis is on natural attributes that hierarchize them and, if they are not White, make their place in the nation provisional at best. When groups are seen in racial terms, language differences are ideologically problematic. . . . Racializing is defined by a polarity between dominant and subordinate groups, the latter having minimal control over their position in the nation-state . . . Racialized people are typified as human matter out of place: dirty, dangerous, unwilling, or unable to do their bit for the nation-state.

Spanish, as a language of racialized people, has also undergone the same process. Urciuoli (1995: 35) continues:

Whenever English speakers complain about the “unfairness” of hearing Spanish spoken in public spaces or in the workplace, they racialize Spanish by treating it as matter out of place. . . . Language varieties that evolve in colonized circumstances are unprotected from judgment unless and until they are approved by, for example, an elite language academy representing a nation-state.

That Spanish speakers, as well as Spanish, have been racialized in the USA, is also evident in the official governmental categories to which US Latinos are assigned. *Hispanic* became a US Census category in 1980, replacing ‘Persons of Spanish Mother Tongue’ (1950 and 1960) and ‘Persons of Both Spanish Surname and Spanish Mother Tongue’ (1970) (Rodriguez, 1989: 63). But Hispanic in itself became a racial category, excluding the possibility that Hispanics may be White or Black. It was 2000 when, for the first time, Hispanics were asked for a racial identification, including claiming to be of two races. But perhaps learning the lessons that they had been taught for years in the USA, approximately 42% of Latino respondents in the 2000 US Census indicated that they were not White, nor Black nor Asian, but of another race.

The Construction of US Spanish as a Problem

The minoritization of the Spanish of US Latinos is constructed through two processes:

- the conflation of ethnicity and language;
- the insistence in seeing Spanish and English as oppositional categories without the possibility of Spanish-English bilingualism.

Both of these respond to two of the three semiotic processes that Irvine and Gal (2000: 36) have identified as crucial in the operation of language ideologies – *iconization* and *erasure*.

The conflation of ethnicity and language

Because so little attention is paid to languages other than English in the USA, most analyses rely on ethnic characteristics. And thus, it is mostly impossible to differentiate between US Latinos who are English monolinguals, those who are bilingual and those who are Spanish monolinguals. As a result, Spanish is often blamed as the culprit when there may be other factors responsible for the social differences with other US groups.

An example of how the conflation of Spanish language and Latino ethnicity hides other factors is the way in which status dropout rates⁶ are estimated. The 2000 US Census only reported that the status dropout rate for 16- to 24-year-old Latinos was 28%, significantly higher than the 7% dropout rate for Whites and 13% for Blacks. But if we break down these figures further and consider only Latinos born in the USA who are, of course, all English speakers, the status dropout rate is still higher than that for both Whites and Blacks. Among the second generation there is a 15% dropout rate, while there is a 16% dropout rate among the third generation. Clearly, something else is happening here besides the Spanish language, for those US Latinos born in the USA who speak English are still doing more poorly than Whites and even Blacks.

The same can be said of income. Although in 2005 the median income of US Latinos was \$36,000 compared to \$50,000 for White, English-speaking non-Latinos, native-born US Latinos, who also speak English, are not doing better than Whites. In fact, their median income was \$39,000, higher than foreign-born Latinos (\$34,000) but very much lower than that of White non-Latinos (Pew Hispanic Center, 2006).

The negation of Spanish-English bilingualism

Although Spanish is a language of Latinos, it is not *the* language of Latinos. In fact, we can say that it is Spanish-English bilingualism that is the language of Latinos.

The US Census asks those who speak Spanish how well they speak English. As Table 6.3 indicates, it turns out that 89% of US Latinos are indeed bilingual.⁷

But although we have information about the English of US Latinos, we have little information about their Spanish, for the census never asks how they speak that language. Spanish-English bilingualism has always been portrayed as a problem, rather than as a resource, and thus, bilingualism is never assessed and Spanish language education policies and practices work against the development of that bilingualism. Although Spanish-English bilingualism characterizes the language use of US Latinos, research on language and income for US Latinos mostly focuses on English-language ability or on Spanish monolingualism, without considering the impact of their bilingualism.

Since 1980, the National Commission for Employment Policy (NCEP) has sponsored economic research on the relationship between English language ability and income differentials for Latinos. All of the studies reiterate that a deficiency in English language abilities is one of the primary roadblocks for Latinos in the labor market. This was the result of a report sponsored by NCEP in 1982, which added that the lack of English fluency affects not only the labor market position of Latinos, but also their educational achievement and their social stigmatization.

Table 6.3 English proficiency of U.S. Latinos*

Speak English "very well"	11,874,405	48.2%
Speak English "well"	5,323,330	21.6%
Speak English "not well"	4,675,560	19.0%
Total Bilingual	21,873,295	88.8%
Speak English "not at all"	2,762,920	11.2%
Monolingual Spanish Speakers	2,762,920	11.2%

*US Census, (2000). SF3, PCT11

The gap in income differentials between Latinos who speak only Spanish and Latinos who speak English, which exists despite comparable levels of education and experience between the two groups, was also the subject of a study by Bloom and Grenier (1996), who found that in comparison to English speakers, Spanish-speaking Latinos suffered a penalty of 8–15% in the case of men, and 6% in the case of women.

The limited English proficiency of Latinos is viewed as a negative outweighing the value of their asset, Spanish-English bilingualism, which Latinos bring to the labor market. The disparities in income supported when comparing Spanish monolinguals with those who speak English, as if there are two opposing categories, promote the gradual construction and association of English as a language of economic opportunity and Spanish as one of limited opportunity and poverty. But most importantly, this makes Spanish-English bilingualism nonexistent as a category of analysis, erasing it and excluding the possibility of using bilingualism as a resource.

Linguistic consequences: Shift to English

As a result of the way in which US Spanish is constructed, giving economical value and social status only to English, US Latinos shift to English. The language shift of US Latinos has been widely documented and continues at an unrelenting pace even today (Alba & Nee, 2003; Alba *et al.*, 2002; Bills, 1997; Hernández-Chávez, 1993; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). According to the 2000 US Census, 16% of Latinos born in Latin America are monolingual speakers of English. Third generation Latinos speak English only, and the second generation shows a strong preference for English over Spanish. Bilingualism then becomes merely transitional. Bills explains this rapid language shift to English by stating:

The finding of clear associations between using Spanish and low socioeconomic status is repeated in study after study. Furthermore, these associations are transparent to everyone in the society, and the clarity of the evidence to Hispanic youth and young adults surely pushes the process of the shift. (Bills, 1997: 280)

Economic consequences: Privileging English-only speakers

The Swiss economist, François Grin (2003) has explained that if one language is promoted to prominent status, then its native speakers will have social and economic advantages precisely because of the competence in the prestigious language.

By constructing Spanish as a language of poverty and Spanish-English bilingualism as nonexistent, White English monolinguals enjoy privilege while excluding US Latinos.

We will turn to this again later.

Deconstructing US Spanish within the Context of Bilingualism

A changing perspective from English only to one of Spanish-English bilingualism has begun to emerge. Although most studies compare Latinos who speak English with those who do not in economic measures, researchers have begun to ask – How do Latinos who speak English only fare with regards to those who are bilingual?

In a 1990 study, García found that English monolingualism had no effect whatsoever on income, especially for Cuban Americans in Miami-Dade County, where Spanish had negotiated for itself a role not only for communication, but also for economic value (García, 1995). These findings were confirmed by Boswell (2000: 422), who claimed that for both Florida and Miami-Dade County: ‘Hispanics who speak English very well and speak Spanish have higher incomes, lower poverty rates, higher educational attainment, and better-paying jobs than Hispanics who only speak English. The differential in mean income is especially apparent’. In Miami-Dade County, Spanish-English bilingualism has begun to emerge as a valuable economic resource.

Linton (2003: 24) has also found that there is a ‘positive relationship between upward mobility and bilingualism’. The development of this positive relationship is described through Portes and Rumbaut’s (1996, 2001) model of *selective acculturation*. The selective acculturation model is an additive model that allows a person to adapt to the majority culture while still holding on to elements of their origin. Selective acculturation explains that when ethnic networks and strong communities (such as that of the Cuban American population in Miami-Dade County) support children to deal with prejudice, navigate the education system and find a place in the labor market for the ethnic language, bilingualism can bring equal, if not greater, benefits. In the case of the Cuban population in Miami, the Spanish-speaking community has embraced bilingual schooling and invested in the local market to build institutions run by bilingual citizens. This has promoted bilingualism as an asset, a tool and a resource, which is a benefit to the entire community.

Portes and Rumbaut’s (1996, 2001) new model of ‘segmented’ assimilation suggests that participation in the subeconomy of the ethnic

economic enclave requires fluency in the ethnic language and bilingualism. Affirming the value of Spanish-English bilingualism, Massey (1995: 648) has said: 'Increasingly the economic benefits and prospects for mobility will accrue to those able to speak both languages and move in both worlds'.

Spanish as a Global Resource

If the USA constructs Spanish as a language of poverty, in the last three decades Spain has promoted Spanish as a global resource. The words of Álvarez Martínez (2001) are indicative of this language ideology:

Cuando afirmamos, pues, que el español está de moda, lo que estamos diciendo es que ahora nuestra lengua, lengua oficial de veintiún países, es el centro de atención de gran parte del mundo.

[When we say that Spanish is fashionable, what we're saying is that now our language, official language of twenty-one countries is the center of attention of a great part of the world.]

One of the most evident indications of this new Spanish language ideology promoted by Spain is the establishment of *Instituto Cervantes* on 11 May 1990, with the purpose 'Agrupar y potenciar los esfuerzos en la defensa y promoción del español en el extranjero' [To bring together and empower the efforts to defend and promote Spanish outside of Spain] (Sánchez, 1992: 60). By 2006, there were 66 Instituto Cervantes Centers all over the world, with four in the USA – Albuquerque, Chicago, New York and Seattle.

In promoting Spanish as a global language that is fashionable and that people all over the globe would want to speak, Spain promotes its characteristics as an important demographic presence and status of economic profitability and global influence.

Spanish as an Important Demographic Presence

The demographic strength of Spanish is evident in the number of its native speakers, the number of its speakers and the number of countries in which it is spoken.

Table 6.4 shows that in 1996, Spanish ranked fourth in terms of native speakers (Grimes, 1996) and its ranking is expected to hold by 2050, according to predictions made by Graddol (1997).

With regard to the number of Spanish speakers worldwide, Spanish again is ranked fourth, with between 400 and 425 million speakers, after Chinese, English and Hindi-Urdu (Graddol, 1997). According to

Table 6.4 Number of native speakers in millions

Grimes (1996)	Graddol (1997) in 2050
1. Chinese: 1123	1. Chinese: 1384
2. English: 322	2. Hindi/Urdu ^a : 556
3. Russian: 288	3. English: 508
4. Spanish: 266	4. Spanish: 486

^aIn Graddol's analysis, Hindi and Urdu were counted as one language

Ethnologue (2005), there are over 322 million speakers of Spanish worldwide (Gordon, 2005).

Spanish is also official in 21 countries. Only English, French and Arabic hold official status in more than 21 countries. In 1997, Spanish was the language of 77 international organizations, putting it in third place behind English (181 international organizations) and French (165 international organizations) (Graddol, 1997).

On the Internet, Spanish is also acquiring a presence. Wallraff (2000) reports that of the 56 million people who use a language other than English on the Internet, Spanish represents nearly a quarter (cited in Mar-Molinero, 2004).

Spanish as having Global Influence

It is often said that although Spanish is demographically powerful, it is economically weak. But, increasingly, Spanish is recognized for its economic profitability as well as for its global influence. Table 6.5 presents the estimations of *Gross National Product of Languages* given to us by Graddol (1997). In Graddol's analysis, Spanish has a gross national product (GNP) of \$610 billion and ranks sixth, after English, German, French, Chinese and Japanese.

Graddol (1997) has also developed an *Index of Global Influence*, which is based on what he calls the *Engco Model*. The Engco Model includes three major components:

- demographics (numbers, age and rate of urbanization);
- economics (GNP and opening to international trade);
- UN development indices (combines quality of life with literacy and education).

Table 6.5 Gross national product of languages in \$US billions

Language	GNP
1. English	\$2338
2. German	\$1196
3. French	\$803
4. Chinese	\$803
5. Japanese	\$700
6. Spanish	\$610

Using the Engco model, Spanish receives a score of 31 when English is 100. In fact, Spanish is in fifth place behind English, German, French and Japanese.

Spanish and Economic Profitability: The USA

Although Spanish competes in global influence, its potential for economic profitability in the USA is what makes Spanish an important resource (Carreira, 2002; Pomerantz, 2002; Villa, 2000). But it is interesting that this potential is maximized in the country where Spanish is precisely marked as the language of poverty. Understanding the economic potential of Spanish in the US market is important for any who would wish to change the characterization of Spanish from being the 'language of the poor' and to renegotiate it as a potential resource of US Latinos.

The Spanish-speaking market in the USA has grown, and continues to grow significantly. In 2003, the Latino population controlled \$653 billion in consumption power, and that figure is expected to reach \$1 trillion by 2008 (Selig Center for Economic Growth, 2003). This represents *more than three to four times the buying power* of the rest of the Spanish-speaking world (Carreira, 2002; Villa, 2000). In fact, the US Latino purchasing power is growing at a triple rate compared to that of the overall US population (Franco, 2004).

The rapid growth of the Spanish-speaking market is even better understood when taking into account the fact that Latinos comprise approximately 13% of the US population and in 2003 contributed to 23% of the buying power of the nation (Carreira, 2002). This may have to do with the undocumented, but it is also clear that Spanish has buying power in the USA. The Spanish-speaking market is growing eight times faster than the rest of the English-speaking market, surpassing that of

African American and Native Americans. From 1990 to 2002, the buying power of Latinos doubled. In addition, the spending patterns of the young Latino population (35% of the Hispanic population in 2000 was under the age of 18) will dictate the success or failure of youth-oriented products and services (Franco, 2004).

The earnings in Spanish language ads have increased more than seven times since 1990. Although the earnings were \$14.3 million in 1970, they reached \$111 million in 1990 and \$786 million in 2002. Spanish is clearly turning from being a language which restricts access to the US economy, to one which is part of a growing Spanish-speaking market in the USA itself, as well as a language capable of opening up access to the world economy.

US Spanish Language Education Policies and Practices

At the same time as Spanish-English bilingualism is acquiring value in the global market today, the USA is restricting bilingualism. In teaching Latino students, the focus in US classrooms is on the teaching of English. Not enough attention is paid to the basic academic preparation of Latinos, regardless of language – something that has a marked effect on their possibilities for employment and their income potential. At the same time, there is little attention given to the advantages of developing Spanish-English bilingualism.

There are two important educational programs that target different aspects of the education of Latinos (1) bilingual education and (2) the teaching of Spanish as a heritage language. The first one, bilingual education, is an educational effort mostly at the elementary level, but also at the secondary level, focusing on using both Spanish and English. This is implemented primarily with the goal of developing the English language skills of Latino immigrants, and in very few cases to develop their bilingualism.⁸ The field of teaching Spanish as a heritage language developed at the secondary and tertiary level, and focused on developing the Spanish of Latino students. As we will see, whereas the first one focuses mostly on English, the second one targets only Spanish, leaving little room for the development of Spanish-English bilingualism that is necessary for negotiation of Spanish as a resource of US Latinos.

Bilingual Education

Perhaps no other educational policy reveals as much the struggle between an ideology that views Spanish as the language of poverty and one that glimpses the possibility of negotiating Spanish-English bilingualism as a resource than bilingual education.

Since the passage of the Bilingual Education Act in 1968, bilingual education has been mostly a path towards Anglification. In the 1974 reauthorization, bilingual education was clearly defined as *transitional*:

It is instruction given in, and study of, English and (to the extent necessary to allow a child to progress effectively through the education system) the native language of the children of limited English speaking ability... (quoted in Castellanos, 1983: 120)

But from the beginning, some bilingual education programs valued bilingualism and attempted to develop Spanish also. The 1984 reauthorization specifically approved *developmental bilingual education* in which students can maintain their languages after learning English. These programs, however, have always been rare. With the 1984 reauthorization, funding also became available for English-only programs as special alternative instructional programs (SAIPs), and these programs were expanded in the 1988 reauthorization (Crawford, 2004; E. Garcia, 2005).⁹ The 1988 reauthorization also imposed a three-year limit on participation in transitional bilingual education programs. Congress reauthorized Title VII in 1994 for the last time, substituting the title of Bilingual Education Act for *Improving America's Schools Act*. Although it gave increased attention to two-way bilingual education programs, the quota for the SAIPs in which English only is used was lifted.

Even transitional bilingual education came under attack in the last two decades of the 20th century. The most effective attack against bilingual education was spear-headed by a Silicon Valley software millionaire, Ron Unz. *Proposition 227* (California Education Code, Section 305–306), which was introduced in 1998 as 'English for the Children' and required that 'all children in California public schools shall be taught English by being taught in English' (quoted in Del Valle, 2003: 248), was passed by 65% of the California voters. A year after California's *Proposition 227* was passed, Unz took his efforts to Arizona. In 2000, 63% of the Arizona voters approved *Proposition 203* (Arizona Revised Statutes 15-751-755), which banned bilingual education. In 2002, the proposition in Massachusetts (Question 2, G.L. c. 71A) to replace transitional bilingual education with Structured English Immersion programs for English language learners passed by 68%. But in that same year, Amendment 31 to Colorado's state constitution that would have made bilingual education illegal was defeated with 56% of voters opposing it. The campaign to defeat the amendment focused on the possibility that non-English-speaking children would be in the same classrooms as other children. A TV commercial warned that Unz' initiative would 'force children who can

Table 6.6 The silencing of the word 'bilingual'

Original name	Modified name
Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA) →	Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement and Academic Achievement for LEP students (OELA)
National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE) →	National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs (NCELA)
Title VII of Elementary and Secondary Education Act: The Bilingual Education Act →	Title III of No Child Left Behind, Public Law 107–110: Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students, 2001

barely speak English into regular classrooms, creating chaos and disrupting learning'. As Crawford (2004: 330) says, the approach used could be described as 'If you can't beat racism, then try to exploit it'.

As many have remarked, the word 'bilingual' (what Crawford has called 'the B-Word') has been progressively silenced (Crawford, 2005; Garcia, 2003, 2006; Hornberger, 2006). The names of offices, clearinghouses and laws have been changed to omit any reference to a bilingual reality. García (2008) portrays this silencing of the word 'bilingual'; some examples are presented in Table 6.6.

As the last row of Table 6.6 indicates, in 2001 *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) was passed, containing Title III (Public Law 107–110) which is titled, *Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students*. The purpose of Title III is 'to ensure that children who are limited English proficient, including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency'. Although it is still possible to obtain funding for bilingual education programs, NCLB requires mandatory, high stakes tests in English for all children, leading Crawford (2005: 336) to call the Act 'No Child Left Untested'.

Spanish as a Heritage Language

In 1978, Guadalupe Valdés held a National Endowment for the Humanities Institute to encourage thinking about teaching Spanish for Spanish speakers in contrast to existing approaches of teaching Spanish as a foreign language, an approach to which US Latinos had long been

subjected in secondary and tertiary education (Valdés, 1997). Since then, attention to this field has increased, although its growth has been slow and insufficient (for more on this see Fishman *et al.*, 2006; Valdés, 1997). In 1999, Russ Campbell of the University of California in Los Angeles organized the first conference of *Heritage Languages in the United States*. Attempting to include those US Latinos who are no longer speakers of Spanish, the field has renamed itself 'Spanish as a Heritage Language'. However, as García (2005) has remarked, the choice of words is problematic. On the one hand, as the 17-year-old Dominican García (2005) quotes, heritage language sounds a lot like something old, something that is not a viable resource in the USA. On the other hand, focusing only on the heritage language ignores the possibility of Spanish-English bilingualism, the true resource for US Latinos.

Why?

Ideological space for Spanish-English bilingualism in the USA has been closed by the common assumption that the Spanish language itself is to blame for the poverty of its speakers. Speaking of US language policy, Wright (2004) reminds us that this is consistent with other US behavior toward language. Says Wright (2004: 163, 165)

Some of the most robust resistance to globalization comes from within the United States itself... The US government is able to guard its sovereignty and autonomy in the classic manner of the nation states... [W]e appear to be witnessing asymmetric developments within globalization: loss of economic autonomy and political sovereignty for many states; continuing economic autonomy and political sovereignty together with the survival of some elements of traditional "one nation, one territory, one language" nationalism for the United States.

But as this US space has closed, a space for Spanish-English bilingualism and biliteracy has been opened globally, in which Spanish may be considered an economic resource for those who are educated and bilingual. Given the lack of interest displayed by US schools in educating bilingual citizens, the possibilities for negotiating Spanish as a global and economic resource will remain in the hands of the Spanish and Latin American elite, robbing Latinos, one more time, of the possibility that their Spanish be an instrument for acquisition of economic power.

If we consider the possibility for Spanish to be a negotiable resource of US bilingual Latinos, and the educational establishment's work against such bilingualism, the question that we must pose is why – Why are we

afraid of educating bilingual and biliterate US Latinos, capable of negotiating for all of us, as well as for themselves, Spanish/English bilingualism as an economic and social resource? Cameron (1995: 216–217) speaks of what she calls 'verbal hygiene'; that is, a way of advancing particular agendas by controlling language use. She explains:

Arguments about language [have] provided a symbolic way of addressing conflicts about class, race, culture and gender. It is true that this symbolic deployment of language tends to obscure the true source of disagreement and discomfort.

In a chapter called 'Accumulation by Dispossession' Harvey (2005: 181) provides what may be a reason for the disagreement and discomfort:

Hegemonic state power is typically deployed to ensure and promote those external and international institutional arrangements through which the asymmetries of exchange relations can so work as to benefit the hegemonic power.

By dispossessing US Latinos of Spanish-English bilingualism, the USA ensures that only those who speak English only can benefit and continue to accumulate capital and other resources.

But what are the costs involved in this dispossession? François Grin (2003) has said, in the context of the European Union, that English is worth learning, but that restricting foreign/second language acquisition to English only would be a very short-sighted policy. How short-sighted is our present policy of restricting the Spanish-English bilingualism of US citizens? Will we pay a price in a globalized world? We cannot foresee the future, but it is clear that for now, US Latinos are paying a price.

Notes

1. We are aware that the only value of language is not simply economic. Fishman (1999: 19) upholds the nonmaterial value of language and says that by focusing so much on power, it misses 'the real elephant' and 'reduces human values, emotions, loyalties and philosophies to little more than hard cash and brute force'. The topic of this book, however, is poverty. Thus, we focus here on the economic value of Spanish.
2. Language ideology has been defined by Irvine (1998: 52) as the linking 'of ideas and interests through which people interpret linguistic behavior', and more specifically as the linking of 'ideas about language with ideas about social rank, respect and appropriate conduct'.
3. Throughout this chapter, we use 'Latino' to refer to all Spanish speakers of Latin American descent. We prefer this term to 'Hispanic', the term used by the US Census.

4. We use 'minoritized' and not 'minority' to signal the role of power as it was exerted.
5. The quota was 2% of the number of people from that country who were already living in the USA in 1890.
6. The status dropout rate refers to those who are out of school and have not earned a high-school diploma or GED.
7. In our analysis, we consider those who 'speak English very well, well or not well' as bilingual, using a minimalist definition of bilingualism, as that of Diebold (1964).
8. Of course, not all bilingual education programs are of the transitional kind. There are a few developmental bilingual education programs, and there are also two-way bilingual education programs. These two other kinds of bilingual education programs develop bilingualism, but there have always been few of these in the USA.
9. For more on this entire history, see especially http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/policy.1_history.htm.

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