

Spanish Dialectology & Spanglish in U.S. Latino Enclaves:
Guidelines for U.S. Spanish Teachers

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Vol. 1(2), 2016

Article Title: Spanish Dialectology & Spanglish in U.S. Latino Enclaves: Guidelines for U.S. Spanish Teachers

DOI: 10.21081/ax0053

ISSN: 2381-800X

Key Words: Spanish, Spanish dialectology, Spanglish, Latino, teachers, code-switching

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Spanish Dialectology & *Spanglish* in US Latino Enclaves: Guidelines for US Spanish Teachers

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Abstract

The conversation surrounding US Latino sociocultural and political issues is often micro-focused on topics that include immigration, healthcare, the economy, and education. This exposition, however, will steer the conversation towards an evolving subject sensitive to US Latino identity—language. One of the most revolutionizing attributes of US Latinos on the idea of Latinicity (*Latinidad*)—a sense of Latino identity—constitutes language practices redefining language perceptions of Spanish and English. This essay will implement a sociolinguistic analysis of US Latino enclaves and their language practices in metropolitan areas like New York City.

Because this analysis requires a linguistic foundation, John M. Lipski's "Beyond the Isogloss: Trends in Hispanic Dialectology" will be used to establish fundamental concepts of Spanish linguistics. After establishing the fundamentals of Hispanic dialectology, three of Ana Celia Zentella's published works will be used to frame the discussion surrounding US Latinos' enclaves and their language practices while evaluating the relationships of these subgroups. In effect, the prevailing hierarchy of Spanish dialects manifests itself when Latino groups have a colonized perspective about the language and refer to the Iberian dialect as the desirable dialect while causing internalized shame in speakers and their dialects. To implement action in the classroom, it is essential to consider Kim Potowski's and Celia Montes-Alcalá's suggestions in order to create a positive and educational platform where future generations can learn about the diversity of the Spanish language while embracing their linguistic uniqueness.

Key words: Spanish, Spanish dialectology, Spanglish, Latino, teachers, code-switching

Countless factors are taken into consideration when identifying contemporary relationships among various Latino enclaves in the US. Generally, sociological and anthropological areas of study tend to focus on race, gender, economic background, religion, class, and geography, among other aspects, to establish basic notions about Latino subgroups living in this country. Nevertheless, one of the most recent and significant concepts that linguists and sociolinguists have focused on is language practices by dominant Latino structures throughout the

nation. Moreover, it is Spanish dialectology and the modern linguistic tendencies of Spanish in the US that are the most compelling in understanding the complexity behind US Latino identities. However, it is imperative to highlight that the diversity of the Spanish language, through its corresponding dialects and the common linguistic practices of Spanish speakers in the US, has led to a larger and necessary discussion about identity and language. Future research should investigate the kinds of relationships that Latino communities have

with each other in other sectors of the US in regards to their dialects. Within the different stratified levels of this discussion, one of the most controversial and unsettling components in the linguistic world considers the linguistic phenomenon of Spanglish (code-switching) and other language practices by Heritage Speakers of second and third generations in the US. Unlike the experiences of native Spanish speakers who lived in Latin America, the experiences of Latinos living in the US are shaped differently. This difference manifests itself in language usage (Spanish), which may vary, to an extent, across Latin Americans everywhere. Therefore, when this discussion is situated in education, educators must acknowledge the diverse backgrounds and the varying levels of Spanish present in any classroom.

However, negative and scrutinizing ideas of language often manifest themselves in the attitudes of linguists and instructors, which affects future Latino generations. Believing that there is only one proper and formal way of speaking Spanish by presenting one dialect as a model will create personal and cultural shame amongst students who may not speak that dialect—dialectal tendencies included. In effect, this creates and leads to the reinforcement of an invisible yet existing spectrum of linguistic hierarchy in Spanish dialectology as well as the complete stigmatization of linguistic tendencies by Heritage Speakers in this nation. Particularly, language puritans, both instructors and linguists who do not consider the daily language contact and usage of their students, tend to forget that they must put their ideals aside in order to efficiently serve future generations. Because linguistic ideologies are often shaped through educational institutions, Spanish professors, teachers, and instructors should be at the forefront of addressing these language issues in their classrooms. In order for Spanish teachers to be able to address dialectal stigmatization in the Spanish language and challenge the notions that Iberian Spanish is a model for “perfect” Spanish, teachers must possess a basic linguistic background of the Spanish language including dialect variation. Also, a Spanish teacher instructing in metropolitan US cities, where there may be a strong presence of Latinos, must understand historic and current relations between Latino enclaves. Moreover, teachers must have knowledge and experience with the socio-historic presence of Latino subgroups in this country as well as acknowledge the range of social issues that affect each of these communities in and out of the US. Aside from general knowl-

edge about Spanish linguistics, they must be completely aware of the common and general linguistic tendencies of US Latino Heritage Speakers as a platform to reframe the way that current and future generations perceive the Spanish language. In doing so, Spanish educators will help increase awareness on Spanish dialectology, common US linguistic tendencies among Latinos, and the language of the students while challenging restrictive, purist, and archaic notions of the Spanish language.

Ideology of Spanish Dialects:

Prior to engaging in a discussion that focuses on the interaction and attitudes of various Latino groups and their dialects, it is essential to establish general linguistic concepts of the Spanish language that will serve as a framework to help understand language attitudes that have formed and evolved around dialectal differences, including Spanglish. Every modern day language in the world is composed of dialects. A dialect is a branch that extends from one language composed of a closed system, which includes grammar structures, and an open system that is centered on the lexicon. A dialect is not a language that stands on its own; and although certain agents disagree, it is important to understand that the closed system of a language is what unites all dialects and creates one unified language. In the case of Spanish, this romance language is composed of a rich dialectal system that varies in its pronunciation, levels of intonation, and its lexicology. Many of the Spanish dialects are often identified and grouped according to various linguistic parameters such as geography.

Geographically, there are four regions in Latin America which include Mesoamerica (Mexico and Central America), The Caribbean (the three Spanish Antilles, Colombia, and Venezuela), The Andes (Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and the extension of mountain ranges), and The Southern Cone (Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay). Another way of distinguishing and categorizing these dialects is through *tierras altas* (high lands) and the *tierras bajas* (lowlands) of Latin America (Zentella 323). Ana Celia Zentella details this categorization where “the lowlands or costal area include the Caribbean, the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of Mexico, Central America’s Pacific coast, Venezuela, and the Pacific coast of South America from Colombia to northern Chile” (323). Because the diversity of the Spanish language is observed in its lexicology and its pronunciation, these

elements are often further investigated, leading to deeper issues of dialectology preference due to linguistic manifestations such as pronunciation, and, more specifically, the notion of proper and/or correct pronunciation.

When pronunciation is used as an element to group dialects, it gives birth to the idea of “radical” and “conservative” dialects (Zentella 324). Because “radical” and “conservative” are used as linguistic categories to evaluate pronunciation practices in Spanish dialectology, this form of grouping is based on dialectical practices that linguists use to characterize them. The *conservative* dialects are those that can be identified in inner-city Latin American nations that have the tendency to pronounce and retain all consonants. On the other hand, *radical* dialects are identified as those that have greater quantities of final and inter-vowel deletion, omission, inhalation, and absence of consonants. As a result, it is this form of categorization that has helped shape the larger and general ideology of Spanish dialects, placing some above others at regional, national, and international levels. One of the most common linguistic flags that is observed in Spanish dialects involves the letter /s/ and its deletion, inhalation, and omission in final syllable and an inter-vowel position. This linguistic trait has been a dominant factor studied in the *radical* dialects and has, to a degree, helped shape language perceptions in the Spanish speaking world. Also, through this determinant consonant, linguists and Spanish speaking agents have created an invisible hierarchy of dialects where the dialects that practice the deletion of /s/ have been deemed inferior to those that retain it as superior. It is important to note, though, that every Latin American country has its own predilection of a “model” dialect which can be identified through its media outlets, print, government, and institutionalized systems such as schools. When Latino subgroups migrate to the US they carry these internalized language ideologies with them, impacting current and future Spanish speaking generations. Furthermore, when Latino subgroups come to inhabit large metropolitan areas in the US and find themselves in close contact, judgment surrounding the type of Spanish each enclave may speak surges.

The hierarchy of dialects in the Spanish language continues to be reinforced among Latino enclaves in the US. Moreover, case studies like those of Zentella can teach linguists and Spanish instructors about the detrimental and negative consequences of *chiquita*-fication in relation to dialects and linguistic tendencies with Her-

itage Speakers (323). The concept of *chiquita*-fication is one that devalues and marginalizes Spanish dialects according to the pre-established, invisible hierarchy of dialects as well as some of the more current linguistic properties found with Heritage Speakers, namely Spanglish (code-switching). *Chiquita*-fication is a process that is more often than not a product within Latino communities, especially when they are in close contact. Moreover, as the word *chiquita* (small) indicates, some Spanish dialects are viewed as inferior or diminutive in prestige, and the speakers of these dialects are deemed as uneducated or poor Spanish speakers. When conducting a study to examine the language relations between various Latino subgroups, Zentella suggests that it “requires an anthropological linguistic perspective, incorporating socioeconomic and political realities that determine how and why Latinas/os speak as members of different groups at different times, and even at the same time, and how they evaluate those differences” (25). In effect, one is obligated to contextualize and consider the sociological components that also serve as key molding factors in the linguistic ideologies and language practices of Latinos.

The Dominican Narrative: *MI ESPAÑOL ES “MALO” (MY SPANISH IS “BAD”)*

After conducting a general exposition of Spanish dialectology and the existing philosophies surrounding its various dialects, it is important to evaluate language interactions between Latino communities in the US. Zentella researches the lexical relations, influences, and adaptations of four different Latino enclaves in her work “Lexical Leveling in Four New York City Spanish Dialects: Linguistic and Social Factors.” The four communities that Zentella focuses on in New York City are of Cuban, Puerto Rican, Dominican, and Colombian nationality given the dominating presence of these Latino subgroups in this metropolis. The lexical exchange case study facilitated in New York City included the participation of 194 Latinos: 73 Puerto Ricans, 51 Colombians, 50 Dominicans, and 20 Cubans (1095). 67% of the people interviewed identified as women while the remaining 33% identified as male. At least 59% of the participants reported having a high school education, and 63% were between the ages of 0-40 (Zentella 1105). Another important element that the data captured involved the level of Spanish proficiency. More than half (67%) of

the interviewees self-reported to be very good or excellent speakers of the language. Because this investigation focused on the lexicon of these four Latino enclaves and their lexical exchange, the interviewees were asked to identify items as they would in ordinary conversations. Participants were also asked to provide, depending on their knowledge, lexical terms used by other Latino groups to identify the same items.

Although Zentella's study highlights lexical exchange and problems among these four groups, it perfectly illustrates the concept of the hierarchy that continues to ideologically dominate language relations among groups through *chiquita*-fication. In addition, her work illustrates the false ideology that the best and most proper representation of the Spanish language can be found in Madrid, Spain. Per instance, out of the four Latino groups in this study, the Dominican dialect was the least favored by the other Latino subgroups, including members from within the Dominican enclave. This perception is due to the linguistic persecution presented by other Latino groups and the oppressive notion of "bad" Spanish that most Dominicans in New York City consider their dialect inferior. Latino enclaves that consider Dominican Spanish as improper and undesirable have ascribed to imperialistic, archaic perceptions of the Spanish language, which, in effect, are visible when Latinos interact.

Although it is noted in the study that the four Latino groups had a natural tendency to exchange and adapt various lexical flags, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and Colombians did not adapt any of the lexicon from the Dominican enclave. On the other hand, the Colombians, Cubans, and Puerto Ricans that participated in this study favored some words from each of their lexicons. The Dominican enclave "did not produce any word that was favored by a majority of their group only, but speakers from that country produced the most examples of words which the others did not mention at all" (Zentella 1097). Primarily, this is inevitably due to two very important components: the *chiquita*-fied status of the Dominican dialect and the internalization of negative linguistics attitudes inherited through generations. According to Zentella, "one possible explanation is that Dominicans may be aware of the low status of their dialect. The majority of the Cubans, Puerto Ricans, and Colombians in the New York City study made derogatory remarks about Dominican Spanish" (29). Inherently, this poisonous logic reveals why "sounding like a Dominican [is] most

vehemently rejected" (29). Many linguists have noted that there is also a micro ranking of preference within the dialects of the Caribbean (Cuba, Puerto Rico, Colombia, Venezuela, and the Dominican Republic) where the dialect of the Dominicans is found to be the least desirable and the Colombian most desirable. Desirability in language dialects is often a parameter that shows a predilection towards dialects that practice consonant retention and have a standardized pronunciation like the Colombian dialect from Bogota. The Dominican dialect demonstrates high levels of inhalation, deletion, omission, and the absence of /s/ in the ending and inter-vowel position of most Spanish words, which has led to the creation of non-recognized plurals like *las mujereses* for *las mujeres*. Due to the high level of consonant retention in the Colombian dialect, like the one in Bogota, and the low levels present in the Dominican dialect, there is a polarizing relationship depicted in this study.

Moreover, the New York case study emphasized the impact that socioeconomics and education had on all four of these Latino communities. The Puerto Rican and Dominican enclaves were some of the poorest, least educated and, also, the darkest Latinos in the city (Zentella 1102). Due to these factors as well as their Spanish dialectical practices, these groups face individual and group discrimination. Contrary to these subgroups, the New York Cuban and Colombian communities were reported to be predominantly middle class, with higher education achievements, and lighter skinned. Their Spanish dialectical varieties are not stigmatized like those of their Latino counterparts. The contrasting socioeconomic realities of these four New York Latino subgroups undeniably affect their individual and group perceptions about their respective dialectical uniqueness.

Because New York Dominicans have been linguistically persecuted and oppressed by their Latino counterparts, they have internalized the belief that their pronunciation, their lexicology, and their language are incorrect and, therefore, bad. Zentella highlights the detrimental effects of internalization when she states that "among the Dominicans in the New York City study, for example, those with higher education were more in favor of learning to speak like Spaniards than those with elementary or secondary education. Dominicans demonstrated a higher level of linguistic insecurity than the other groups of Latinas/os, and at both educational levels" (29). The fact that Dominican community members have internalized the belief that their dialect is inferior to the

rest of the Latino community is problematic. However, the severity of this internalized notion escalates when the Dominican community begins to view Iberian (Madrid) Spanish as a linguistic paradigm to follow. Such a belief reinforces the historic and racist idea that the only “real” and “perfect” Spanish is spoken in Madrid.

The derogatory views of the Dominican dialect are also linked to the national experience of older Dominican generations who were gravely impacted by the *trujillato* (the Trujillo dictatorship). The Trujillo dictatorship, through its Eurocentric imperialist mission to “whiten” the Dominican Republic and create a new idea of Dominicanity, damaged and fragmented the sense of Dominican identity, which included language. During the Trujillo regime, Dominicans were indoctrinated by Eurocentric values, which impacted the way the Dominican community sought to establish a sense of national identity. The research that Zentella, among other sociolinguists, has presented has helped bring to light the intergenerational damage that Dominicans experienced due to their dialect and the nature of its lexicology and pronunciation. The internal, linguistic insecurity that the Dominican community portrayed in this case study also revealed that when interviewees were asked to rate their English and Spanish competency, they self-reported some of the lowest ratings out of the four participating Latino enclaves. With a 46% fair and a 30% poor in English and 56% fair and a 4% poor rating in Spanish, the New York Dominican community has internalized negative perspectives about their speech—both in English and Spanish (Zentella 1101). As a result, the Dominican community and their sense of *Latinidad* (*Latinicity*) is molded diversely than other Latinos.

Spanglish (Code-Switching):

Another very current and significant linguistic characteristic among US Latino subgroups and Heritage Speakers of second and third generations includes what is vernacularly known as *Spanglish*. John M. Lipski explains that “*Spanglish* has been typically used to describe: integrated and spontaneous borrowings in Spanish, syntactic calques and loan translations, code switching, deviational Spanish grammar in vestigial bilingual speakers, Spanish spoken as a second language, and junk (or mock) Spanish” (Montes-Alcalá 102). However, many linguists would argue that Spanglish is a colloquial term for a sophisticated linguistic system

identified as code switching in two different languages. Because code switching is strongly seen in the daily lives of many Heritage and Bilingual Speakers of various Latino enclaves, it is important to evaluate the reasons leading to its prevalence in Latino enclaves while comprehending the marginalized status of Latinos who practice it.

The linguistic phenomenon of Spanglish has been identified as a tendency that surges with a specific group of Latinos in the US. Many of the Latin Americans who settled in the US during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were monolingual speakers of Spanish; however, with the development of second and third generations, the close contact that Spanish speakers had with the English language has largely influenced their day to day language. García, Otheguy and Fernández found that second generation Cubans incorporated more loans into their speech patterns than members of the first generation (Zentella 1101). Because second and third generations of Latinos grew up with a closer contact to the English language, their speech patterns are impacted and the result can be observed with their use of loan words. This, however, does not address the reality of first generation Latinos living in the US who may have adopted certain loan words into their daily speech. Code-switching has been a polarizing subject in the linguistics field and has led to demonizing consequences through various platforms that shape language ideology (academia, schools, language academies, etc.). In effect, conservative language ideologies affect those who are *Spanglish* practitioners, making them martyrs of their own language tendencies by other Latino members. It is noteworthy that Latinos who lived in their Latin-American homelands for a significant period of their lives are not accustomed to the code-switching practices of Latinos that have had close contact with the English language—as is the case for most who were born and/or grew up in the US According to Montes-Alcalá,

Second generation bilinguals are accused of not knowing English or Spanish. i.e., of being semi-lingual or even a-lingual, and of contaminating the Spanish language by adapting or inserting words from English. The most widespread term for describing their speech is Spanglish, but Puerto Ricans also decry “*hablar mata’o*” (“speaking killed”), while Mexicans use *mocho* (“cropped”) and Tex Mex to describe the phenomenon, or claim that those who *are pocho* (US born/raised) *speak pocho* (the Spanish of US born/raised Mexicans). (33)

Although linguists and Latino members persecute Bilingual and Heritage Speakers because of their language tendencies, they forget that many educational districts and institutions are part of the problem. Our ill formed bilingual programs in the US have failed to value the mother language (Spanish) of many Latino children by having them acquire the English language in a span of three years or less. Because language is linked to the cognitive development of an individual, a child must first develop full cognition in their native tongue so that in the apprehension of another language they may transfer and translate their ideas in the target language. Before Bilingual and Heritage Speakers are linguistically corrected for their language practices, one is obligated to recognize that our bilingual systems of education are highly flawed and are to blame for the “deficiency” that Bilingual and Heritage Speakers show. Our bilingual programs and model of education do not grant monolingual non-English speakers the platform they need to expand their cognitive evolution in their mother language. Because the objective behind US bilingual programs is for young children to learn the English language within a short time frame, their primary language is not being developed and/or expanded through the second language acquisition process. Unless bilingual programs are modeled to teach two languages through comparative and likelihood methods until middle school, bilingual speakers will find themselves at a disadvantage in one of the two languages. Moreover, code switching is also a result of the insufficient linguistic and literary growth of young Latino generations in either English or Spanish, which is due, also, to bilingual programs in the US. Without the lexical amplification of either language, code-switching will continue to be a prevalent linguistic trait among future Latino generations in the US. Although code-switching does require a high level of linguistic capacity and coordination, younger Latino generations are not receiving the full benefits of developing their mother language. When the main goal of US bilingual programs is the acquisition of the English language, young Latino children are being systemically asked to learn or relearn their primary language at a later moment in their educational paths.

Aside from the negative considerations that have been exposed by linguists in response to Spanglish, there are many positive considerations. A linguist is obligated to consider that being a Bilingual requires an advanced capacity and cognition to intermix two languages while

respecting various grammatical and closed structures of a language. Additionally, it is in the open structures (lexicon) of a language where the real code switching occurs. One of the biggest assumptions concerning Bilingual Speakers is the idea that they are “fluent” speakers in at least one or both languages. Nevertheless, the idea of “fluency” (being fluent) is ambiguous in meaning because it does not contain a clear definition of what a “fluent” speaker should possess. Does it mean that one can speak various languages without stopping? Does it mean that one’s speech is free of grammatical errors? Does it mean that an individual has a good lexical formation in the language? There are many concerns with this idea due to the professional work force and employment agents. In an effort to better define the language capacities of individuals, it is important to utilize practical terminology, such as: novice, intermediate, and advanced. Other appropriate terms include proficient and competent.

A significant branch found in Spanglish practices involves *Anglicisms*. The Zentella case study in New York City also uncovered that out of the four Latino subgroups participating in the study, Dominicans were more likely to resort to Spanglish practices in order to avoid being criticized for their dialect. The Puerto Rican community, too, borrowed from the English lexicon by calquing certain terms, such as “vase” with a phonological adaptation of [bejs] (Zentella 1097). The marked presence of Anglicism in the Puerto Rican dialect is a product of two potential factors: the neo-colonization and presence of the US in the island and the period of time the Puerto Rican enclave has been in the US. When there are rich dialects in contact, as is the case with metropolitan cities like New York City, the incorporation of *Anglicisms* facilitates communication among Latinos that may not share the same lexicon. According to Zentella, “Anglicisms can play the role of neutralizer between competing dialectal variants because the prestigious outside language acts as the lingua franca that resolves the conflict without favoring one group at the expense of the other.... Thus, Latinos in New York turn to English in order to understand each other’s Spanish” (1100 -1101). English, therefore, is used as a resort language when the richness of dialects and their lexicons may create minor difficulty communicating among Latino communities. To an extent, this leads to an adaptation of code switching, semantic extension, and calquing. Also, this does not mean that these speakers are defi-

cient or incompetent in the Spanish language. The language negotiation and adaptation in the New York City example demonstrate the establishment of a language network that meets the needs and realities of these four Latino enclaves. Moreover, Latinos everywhere in the US are sometimes forced to resort to the English language when they lack knowledge on the general/popular lexicology of other Spanish dialects. Nevertheless, when young Latino generations emerge in the educational system and experience institutional instruction of the language, they are exposed to learning a standard form of the Spanish language that allows and prepares them to communicate with speakers everywhere.

Guidelines for US Spanish Teachers

In light of the ongoing discussions concerning Spanish instruction in the United States, Spanish dialectology, Spanglish, and other linguistic practices that occur within Latino subgroups, there is a lot of work to be done in the classroom. Spanish instruction at the secondary and post-secondary level is highly focused on grammar, culture, literature, and composition, leaving out a crucial element in the study of a language—linguistics. Linguistics is an important element in the educational and professional formation of a Spanish instructor, who must be familiar enough with it to provide it as a tool for Spanish language learners of any background. However, most university systems have a tendency to incorporate linguistic courses for Spanish educators as electives rather than as a mandatory component in the curriculum. This, indeed, is a problem and will affect the pedagogy in the classroom when the instructor attempts to explain the dialectal diversity of the language. In effect, foreign language departments must incorporate linguistics courses into the general education plan of teachers for their own prosperity and the good of their service. Cardenas explains that through the research of linguists, educators of any foreign language “can be sooner and better prepared for the task of language teaching, rather than leave it for long years of experience and trial and error to become a master” (456). In addition, a linguistics background enables teachers of Spanish to identify what linguists identify as *trouble spots*—areas where students may struggle in the acquisition process of the target language. For instance, a trouble spot that monolingual English speakers may face as they acquaint themselves with the phonology of the target language

(Spanish) involves the pronunciation of the consonants *p*, *t*, and *k* (Cardenas 456). Unlike the Spanish language, these consonants in an initial position of a word have an aspiration (puff of air) in English, which is difficult to eliminate when pronouncing Spanish words. In order to help condition monolingual English speakers to pronounce these consonants without aspiration, instructors can have students practice articulating these consonants by having them place a piece of paper in front of their faces and, as they pronounce them, the objective is to diminish the amount of aspiration used.

The knowledge and extent of usage will vary according to educational level and Spanish academic exposure. For instance, a Spanish instructor teaching at the grade school level may use their linguistic background to better acquaint children with the basic sounds of the language. It will be convenient to teach them the proper ways of articulating and pronouncing vowels, consonants, and syllables. On the other hand, a secondary and post-secondary educator will have to explain to their students the dialectal richness of the language so that they do not mistake the dialects for independent languages. Similarly, teachers working with Heritage Speakers may have to explain common language practices identified among native speakers such as the deletion, omission, and elision of certain consonants in an ending word position (*-ado*, *-ido*). While some Spanish educators may argue that having a linguistics background in the language is only contingent on the level of instruction, it is crucial to reiterate that a linguistics background in Spanish will aid teachers in all aspects of instruction (acquisition, comprehension, speaking, and writing). Again, the specificity and extent to which the instructor may have to incorporate their linguistics background will correlate to the needs of the students.

With a linguistic background, Spanish teachers will be able to address the issues of *chiquita*-fication that occur with Spanish dialects and Spanglish. Lipski also concurs: “Awareness of dialect difference has always existed among Spanish teachers, but only lexical variation was systematically incorporated into pedagogical materials.... Armed with such tools, the student need not regard dialectology as an esoteric pursuit on the sidelines of literary and linguistic research, but can begin to appreciate the practical impact of a well-rounded approach to language variation” (806). Lipski highlights the importance of incorporating a Spanish dialectology in the classroom that does not limit itself to just lexicol-

ogy but rather provides a formal, linguistic exposition of dialects. Presenting a unit or study of Spanish dialectology in the spirit of educational sovereignty allows students to value their dialectical differences and their pronunciation. The presentation of Spanish dialectology through a formal educational setting gives students the ability to grow aware of the dialectical and lexical richness of the Spanish language. The inclusion of Spanish dialectology in the classroom allows Spanish teachers and students to challenge the invisible yet prominent hierarchy of dialects in the language in the midst of growing tolerant and exchanging knowledge. Additionally, Heritage Speakers are able to have a personal and cultural connection to the study of Spanish dialectology because they are able to see themselves reflected in the syllabus. Also, by raising dialectical awareness of the Spanish language, educators can continue to challenge negative attitudes towards stigmatized dialects.

Spanish teachers that specifically work with Heritage Speakers in classrooms identified as *Spanish for Speakers of Spanish/Spanish Speakers* must be aware of the contextual and general practices of these speakers. Kim Potowski has outlined four of the most common linguistic phenomena in her book, *Fundamentos de la enseñanza del español a hispanohablantes en los EE. UU.* Those include:

- (1) **Code switching:** switching from one language to the other.
- (2) **Lexical borrowing:** importing a lexical element from English to Spanish
- (3) **Semantic extension:** the acquisition of a new meaning of a Spanish word
- (4) **Calquing:** the importation of an English phrase/word to Spanish

Although it is important for Spanish teachers who are working with Heritage Speakers to acknowledge these linguistic phenomena, they must be careful about exposing personal and negative attitudes towards their students. A Spanish teacher working with students of this caliber must be able to use the student's personal knowledge of the Spanish language to enrich it in all facets of the language. The teacher must present the formality of the Spanish language without shaming the students' language practices because it can affect the environment of the classroom and the willingness of the students. In effect, students need to be aware of the reasons behind some of these linguistic practices in the US as well as their relation to Spanish dialectology.

Because the instruction of Spanish varies differently for Heritage Speakers, unlike monolingual students of other languages, they should be able to grow in their linguistic capacity and awareness both in English and Spanish. In an educational system where students are urged to learn the dominant language and then expected to learn their mother tongue as a foreign language, educators teaching foreign languages should strive to provide new learning experiences to their students not presented by current models of language acquisition and foreign language study.

Overall, Spanish teachers everywhere must be open to the realities of their students with the languages that surround them because it is an important factor that impacts their language practices with any language. Spanish teachers, aside from their general duties as instructors of the language, must find their personal calling as representatives of this language in the classroom. They must continue to reframe archaic notions concerning the Spanish language as modern times call for a reform in general Spanish pedagogy and ideology. It is the preservation and cultivation of the Spanish language that must be upheld yet not at the expense of any community. Foreign language instructors must continue to bring up meaningful discussions and topics in the classroom as a way to address potential misconceptions about dialectal variety found in any modern language. Educators and linguists everywhere must continue to propagate this ongoing discussion for the sake and educational sovereignty of the Spanish language and its dialects.

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