



# Conflicting Language Ideologies Concerning Bilingualism and Bilingual Education among Pre-Service Spanish Teachers in South Texas

## *Ideologias linguísticas contraditórias sobre o bilinguismo e a educação bilingue entre futuros professores de espanhol no sul do Texas*

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**ABSTRACT:** Language ideologies are the shared frameworks through which groups understand language and speakers (GAL; WOOLARD, 2001; WOOLARD, 1998). In educational settings, these ideologies may impact learning as teachers who adhere to ideologies favoring monolingualism may undermine students' identities and bilingual development in favor of assimilation. Using language ideology and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) frameworks, this study investigated the presence of different language ideologies in pre-service Spanish teachers' discourse and their positioning in face of these language ideologies. The analysis demonstrated that while pre-service Spanish teachers challenge the ideology of monolingualism and favor bilingualism, they also legitimate the 'one language' ideology that entails that the unity of a nation depends partly on the use of only one language.

**KEYWORDS:** monolingual ideologies, pre-service Spanish teachers, CDA, Spanish in the US, bilingualism, bilingual education

**RESUMO:** Ideologias linguísticas são estruturas compartilhadas através das quais os grupos entendem a língua e os falantes (GAL; WOOLARD, 2001; WOOLARD, 1998). No ambiente educacional, essas ideologias podem influenciar os processos de aprendizagem uma vez que professores que aderem a ideologias favoráveis ao monolinguismo podem enfraquecer as identidades dos alunos e seus desenvolvimentos bilíngues para favorecer a assimilação à cultura e língua padrões. Utilizando-se de ferramentas dos estudos de ideologia linguística e análise crítica do discurso, este estudo investigou a presença

de diferentes ideologias linguísticas no discurso de futuros professores de espanhol bem como suas posturas diante dessas ideologias linguísticas. A análise demonstrou que, embora os futuros professores de espanhol desafiem ideologias monolíngues e favoreçam o bilinguismo, eles também legitimam ideologias que implicam a ideia de que a unidade de uma nação depende em parte do uso de apenas uma língua.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** ideologias monolíngues, futuros professores de espanhol, análise crítica do discurso, espanhol nos Estados Unidos, bilinguismo, educação bilíngue

## 1. Introduction

The present study investigated the presence of different language ideologies in pre-service Spanish teachers' discourse about bilingualism and bilingual education. Language ideologies are systems of values about language in general, specific languages and language varieties, and linguistic practices (GAL; WOOLARD, 2001; WOOLARD, 1998). It is crucial to study pre-service Spanish teachers' ideologies concerning bilingualism and bilingual education because they influence how teachers interact with students and which learning opportunities they create in the classroom (GILES; HENWOOD; COUPLAND; HARRIMAN; COUPLAND, 1992; WALKER; SHAFER; IAMS, 2004; YOUNG, 2014). Moreover, teachers who adhere to the ideologies favoring monolingualism may undermine students' identities and bilingual development in favor of assimilation.

While the 18th and 19th centuries witnessed the advance of the 'one language' ideology, which suggests that nations express its own character through national languages (GAL; WOOLARD, 2001), the 20th century observed the strong influence of this ideology in the educational system (PAVLENKO, 2002). As we witness increases in political leaders and global politics that align more strongly with the 'one language' ideology' and, at the same time, evident movements of inclusivity, it is crucial to examine current pre-service teachers' ideologies. Understanding their ideologies and how these ideologies relate to their profession provides insights about how education can move towards a more inclusive positioning concerning languages as well as about how it can better prepare these professionals to deliver equal educational opportunities to all students.

Previous studies have investigated bilingual pre-service teachers' language ideologies (EK; SÁNCHEZ; CERECER, 2013; GUERRERO;

GUERRERO, 2017) and the language ideologies of pre-service teachers in general (MARKOS, 2012; SALAS; FLORES; SMITH, 2005) and have found different levels of ideological clarity. However, pre-service Spanish teachers' language ideologies are still understudied. Pre-service Spanish teachers are generally in contact with Spanish in academic environments, where this language is legitimized through use. They may have the opportunity to reposition themselves concerning ubiquitous language ideologies favoring monolingualism in the country. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate this population's language ideologies as they may differ from the ones of the populations studied in previous studies.

In Texas, Spanish is the home language of more than 29% of its foreign and native-born population (US CENSUS BUREAU, 2010). The Texas Education Agency (TEA) reports that 17.2% of the children enrolled at school in 2016-2017 were emerging bilinguals, or, as they designate these students, English Language Learners (TEA, 2017). Spanish is, therefore, the home language of many students enrolled in Spanish classes. The learning and use of Spanish by Spanish heritage speakers may represent a means of resisting the hegemony of English (MACEDO; DENDRINOS; GOUNARI, 2003). With the support of a Spanish teacher who believes language diversity is positive, Spanish speakers can speak their home language and challenge complete domination by the hegemony of English. Spanish classrooms may represent the space in which Spanish heritage speakers can build a counter-discourse about Spanish in the US, a discourse that presents their linguistic practices as natural.

Most (58%) of the Spanish-speaking population in Texas reports to be bilingual (U.S. CENSUS, 2015), and according to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), 24.2% of children enrolled at school in 2016-2017 were English Language Learners (ESL) (TEA, 2017). Although most of these learners participate in ESL or bilingual education programs (TEA's data do not distinguish between the two types of programs), it is unclear if teachers genuinely understand and respect these students' linguistic repertoire and support these learners' bilingual and bi-literate development. As Palmer and Martínez (2013) explain, the conceptions of bilingualism offered by many teacher education programs fail to lead future teachers to adopt practices that capitalize on the bilingual students' abilities. As a result of these conceptions, or ideologies, and despite a recent increase of additive bilingual programs (see FITZSIMMONS-DOOLAN; PALMER; HENDERSON,

2017), the educational system in the country does not value bilingualism and invests in a limited form of bilingual education, which leads Spanish speakers to academic failure (GARCÍA; TORRES-GUEVARA, 2010; PALMER, 2011). In this context, it is imperative to unveil the understudied language ideologies of pre-service Spanish teachers, which inform teaching practices and have the potential to leave their students vulnerable to academic failure.

As a result of hegemonic language ideologies in the U.S., according to which English is the natural choice in the country (ACHUGAR, 2008), the educational system in Texas encourages the abandonment of Spanish and transition to English (PALMER, 2011). Speakers have abandoned the use of Spanish even in bilingual programs as a result of teachers punishing students for using the language in class (ACEVES; ABEYTA; FELDMAN, 2012), correcting their variety of Spanish (MCCOLLUM, 1999), or limiting opportunities to study their home language, which is often considered an impediment to academic success (CARREIRA, 2013). This negative perception of Spanish and its potential effects on Spanish speakers' education mandates examination of future Spanish teachers' language ideologies because of their likely impact on pedagogical strategies and because they may expose the underlying use of monolingualism as a means of Anglo social control of South Texas' Hispanic groups (CROSS; DE VANEY; JONES, 2001; VALDÉS, 2001). At the same time, awareness of the negative perceptions of Spanish and its potential effects may lead to more inclusive practices. To this end, data from interviews with pre-service Spanish teachers in a university in South Texas were analyzed using language ideologies (WOOLARD; SCHIEFFELIN, 1994) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) frameworks (VAN DIJK, 1995, 2007), as these frameworks account for how elites use language to produce and reproduce relationships of dominance and inequality. The analysis demonstrates conflicting ideologies concerning bilingualism and bilingual education, as pre-service Spanish teachers build their discourse about bilingualism by challenging the ideology of monolingualism (BLACKLEDGE, 2000) and build their discourse about bilingual education around the legitimization of the one language ideology (PAVLENKO, 2002).

## 2. Language Ideologies

Language ideologies are systems of values and beliefs about language in general, specific languages and language varieties, and linguistic practices (GAL; WOOLARD, 2001; WOOLARD, 1998) that mediate between social structures and forms of talk (SCHIEFFELIN; OCHS, 1986). For example, while in some communities speakers use different linguistic practices daily, the ideology of monolingualism, according to which the ideal model of society is monolingual (BLACKLEDGE, 2000; LAWTON, 2008; WEISMAN, 2001), prevails in the U.S. and is evident in its educational system that restricts language diversity and fosters heritage language abandonment.

An important factor in the study of language ideologies is the complicated ways in which they manifest. Besides being heterogeneous among community members, individuals are also often inconsistent concerning their discourse and behavior around language use. Palmer (2011), for example, uncovered how bilingual teachers believed that bilingualism was an asset that could be attained through bilingual education at the same time that they viewed bilingual education as a transitioning tool to lead students to a monolingual practice.

Another complicating factor in the study of language ideologies is the essential idea that language diversity is a burden. According to this conception, languages are separable and distinguishable entities (CANAGARAJAH, 2013; MAKONI; PENNYCOOK, 2006). This Western notion of languages and varieties ignores that a language is a practice in a specific place and time and understands languages as systems or structures (PENNYCOOK, 2010). Ideologies of monolingualism interpret language diversity as being a result of immigration and deny different linguistic practices that point to the existence of language diversity due to superdiversity (VERTOVEC, 2007). These ideologies can negatively affect speakers. For example, ideologies linking specific linguistic practices to national identity, such as the 'one language' ideology (WEBER; HORNER, 2012), contribute to heritage language abandonment and raise questions about social justice since those unable to linguistically assimilate may be seen as outsiders and become victims of discrimination (BLACKLEDGE, 2000; PAVLENKO, 2002; RICENTO, 2005). In educational settings, ideologies depicting Spanish and bilingualism as deviant in the U.S. may

result in teachers undermining Spanish-speaking students' identities and bilingual development in favor of assimilation (CROSS *et al.*, 2001) or failing to provide bilingual students with the same opportunities as they provide other students (NIETO, 2000) because they believe the former will not be able to take advantage of them (WALKER *et al.*, 2004). Furthermore, when teachers adhere to and reproduce ideologies portraying monolingualism as natural, they expose Spanish-speaking students to yet another authority figure from whom they can learn self-demeaning ideologies, which students may internalize without critically reflecting on their validity.

### 3. Bilingualism and Language Ideologies

Bilingualism as a social phenomenon is far more common than monolingualism (RICENTO, 2005). In the U.S., however, where one in five residents speak a language other than English at home and Spanish is the home language of 13% of the population, there is strong opposition to language diversity. Moreover, in the U.S., language ideologies depict non-English languages as a problem and a symbol of non-conformity (ACHUGAR, 2008; ACHUGAR; OTEÍZA, 2009; GARCÍA; TORRES-GUEVARA, 2010; PAVLENKO, 2002; RICENTO, 2005). Most students in public schools do not start learning another language until they enter high school, resulting in a lack of exposure to different languages and the hinderance of speakers' development of their heritage language skills (TSE, 2001), among other consequences for languages other than English and their speakers in the country.

Ideologies advocating for the use of a single language tend to present bilingualism and multilingualism as a threat to national unity (HULT; HORNBERGER, 2016), promoting the false idea that minority languages are in competition with the dominant language and that nations depend on each of their citizens using the same language to be safe and in harmony. However, bilingualism and language diversity only become problematic when minority language speakers who are unwilling or unable to assimilate are seen as deviant and suffer discrimination (CUMMINS, 1997). Common ideologies opposing bilingualism include the 'bilingualism shuts doors' ideology (CUMMINS, 1997), the 'one language' ideology (PAVLENKO, 2002), and the ideology of linguistic diversity as a threat to national unity (LIDDICOAT; TAYLOR-LEECH, 2015), among others. Due to dominant

language ideologies in the U.S., Spanish-speaking students' linguistic knowledge of Spanish is not seen as an asset, but as a liability for learning, leading to most of them receiving a form of education that does not foster bilingualism (MARKOS, 2012; MENKEN; KLEYN, 2010). As a result, many heritage speakers are deprived of bilingualism and the cognitive, social, and economic advantages associated with it.

#### **4. Bilingual Education and Language Ideologies**

Bilingual education is an umbrella term that includes several models of language teaching and displays considerable variation among implemented cases. These models vary according to several factors, including the extent to which each language is used in the classroom (from 0% to 100%) and the goal of the program, which may include (1) teaching a foreign language, (2) supporting a minority language, or (3) fostering bilingual and biliteracy development in a minority and a majority language or in two majority languages at the same time (BAKER; JONES, 1998). There are many benefits associated with bilingual education (CALLAHAN; GÁNDARA, 2014; VALENZUELA, 1999), but they depend on the implemented model, as different bilingual education models have different outcomes.

These programs can be classified as strong or weak forms of bilingual education (BAKER; WRIGHT, 2006). Strong forms of bilingual education aim at supporting bilingual students in developing their oral and written communication in the two languages. In this type of program, both languages assume balanced roles and neither of them has to concede to the other, such as in immersion, maintenance/heritage language, and two-way dual language programs. Weak forms of bilingual education, on the other hand, may use the 'bilingual' label not because they promote bilingualism, but because they target bilingual children. These models may aim to transition students from using their minority languages into using exclusively the majority language at school.

In the U.S., the most common form of bilingual education is the transitional model (PALMER, 2011), which represents a weak form of bilingual education since English is learned at the expense of the heritage language. In transitional bilingual education, languages are perceived as competitors rather than as jointly enriching each other (RICENTO, 2000; WILEY, 2014). This ideology is also present among bilingual pre-service

teachers possibly due to negative experiences, such as punishment for using the language (EK *et al.*, 2013). In terms of supporting Spanish and bilingual speakers, Texas is not adequately prepared. The TEA reports that there is only one certified bilingual teacher for each of the 33 English Language Learners (ELL) and that, as of 2017, at least 104,949 ELL students were not inserted in ESL or Bilingual programs (TEA, 2017). As previously explained, lack of preparation for supporting bilingual students combined with ideologies that present minority languages as either a problem (RUIZ, 1984) or a tool for learning the dominant language may catastrophically impact heritage students' academic performance. Because Spanish learning and use may be a tool of resistance to be used by Spanish heritage speakers (MACEDO; DENDRINOS; GOUNARI, 2003), it is essential to investigate pre-service Spanish teachers' language ideologies. Future Spanish teachers may be responsible for creating the spaces where counter-discourses legitimizing bilingualism and bilingual education emerge.

## 5. The study

This study<sup>1</sup> focused on the language ideologies in the discourse of pre-service Spanish teachers enrolled in a Teaching Certificate program at a university in South Texas. It relies on data from interviews with eighteen pre-service Spanish teachers enrolled in the Spanish Program at this university seeking their teaching certification in Spanish. In this program, students are required to take classes on Spanish language, literature, and culture.

### 5.1 Participants

All of the participants were in the last week of the Methods of Foreign Language Instruction course, which addresses teaching and learning theories and practices. The connection between language, identity, and power is also a ubiquitous theme throughout the course program. The participants included sixteen women and two men from 19 to 64 years old. Six of the participants were in their first year in the program, two in their second year, three in their third year, and seven in their fourth year. Eleven of them were born in the U.S., six in Mexico, and one in Venezuela. The length of residence in the

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<sup>1</sup> This study received approval from the IRB (Institutional Review Board) to the use of human subjects (IRB #05□16 on May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016).

U.S. for the foreign-born participants varied from seven to 46 years. Of the eighteen participants, seventeen declared being Hispanic and one declared being non-Hispanic. All participants in the study were randomly assigned a pseudonym to preserve participants from being identified.

## 5.2 Data Generation

Before answering the interview questions, participants filled out a background questionnaire. They were not asked to rate their linguistic proficiency or language use, but all classes required for their major were held in Spanish, while all other university required classes were held in English. The interviews followed a guide using open-ended questions designed to elicit participants' opinions about several issues related to Spanish in the U.S., including (1) language use, (2) bilingualism, (3) bilingual education, (4) language maintenance (5) different Spanish language varieties, and (6) minority language students. Interviews offer advantages in eliciting ideologies because they provide opportunities for interviewees to make sense of their experiences and elaborate on their beliefs (DE FINA; KING, 2011). The mean time of the recorded interviews was 27.52 minutes (*Standard Deviation* = 8.59).

## 5.3 Interview Data Analysis

For data analysis, interviews were transcribed and coded for salient themes (*language use and appropriateness, bilingualism as impossible, bilingualism as a burden, bilingualism as an advantage, transitional bilingual education, additive bilingual education, language variation*, among others). This study presents results regarding the participants' ideologies concerning the themes bilingualism and bilingual education. Following Bengtsson's (2016) suggestions for guaranteeing validity and reliability in content analysis so that realistic conclusions can be elicited, the data analysis followed several steps: (1) the principal investigator read through the transcribed data to familiarize herself with it, (2) the data were broken down into smaller meaning units, (3) each meaning unit was identified with one or more codes, and (4) a collaborator worked with a copy of 10% of the data (two full interviews) in which the meaning units were marked, but the codes were removed. This last step resulted in 100% inter-rater reliability.

With the meaning units coded, the investigator gathered all the meaning units identified under the codes *bilingualism* and *bilingual education* and identified the language ideologies (LIs) present in them. She then searched for patterns in the participants' positionality concerning these LIs. This step followed a critical discourse analysis approach (CDA). CDA investigates connections among language, power, and ideologies (MACHIN; MAYR, 2012). Numerous studies in the interdisciplinary field of language ideologies have focused on how different groups stigmatize minority languages and their speakers through discourse (ACHUGAR, 2008; ACHUGAR; OTEÍZA, 2009; RICENTO, 2005; SCLAFANI, 2008; TARDY, 2009). According to a CDA approach, while dominant groups produce and reproduce self-serving ideologies, members of dominated groups may also contribute to the reproduction of those same ideologies, handing over the authority to decide which language is appropriate or not. Deprecating ideologies concerning a minority language generally devalue its speakers as well (GAL, 2005; LEEMAN, 2012; ROSA, 2016), which encourages minority language speakers to adhere to dominant ideologies and practices in order to gain acceptance by the broader society (LIPPI-GREEN, 2012). CDA was specifically applied in the analysis of the positionality of the participants in face of the ideologies present in their discourse. In other words, the author approached the data looking for evidence and patterns of legitimation or challenge of the language ideologies found in their discourse.

## 6. Results

This section presents the general patterns that the participants' discourse concerning bilingualism and bilingual education follow. The analysis of the interview data revealed that pre-service Spanish teachers build their discourse about bilingualism by challenging the ideology of monolingualism (BLACKLEDGE, 2000) and build their discourse about bilingual education around the legitimation of the 'one language' ideology (PAVLENKO, 2002). It is hoped that by uncovering pre-service Spanish teachers' language ideologies, this study will contribute to teacher educators' and teaching education programs' efforts to support the development of teachers who will be able to think critically about ubiquitous language ideologies in our society, as well as about their own LIs.

## 6.1 Bilingualism and the Ideology of Monolingualism

This section demonstrates how pre-service Spanish teachers' beliefs about bilingualism challenge an ideology of monolingualism, according to which the ideal model society is monolingual (BLACKLEDGE, 2000). Despite being aware that bilingualism is still not seen as positively as they believe it should be seen and that most people in the U.S. still believe that English is the only language of the country, most of the participants equated bilingualism with advantages. This is indicated throughout the data by pre-service Spanish teachers describing bilingualism as a symbol of pride and superiority. Participant Camila, for example, a 23-year old second-generation Spanish speaker in her fourth year of the Spanish teaching certificate program, provided the following answer when asked if there was any advantage in speaking Spanish in the U.S.:

Comment (1)

*"I speak more than one language and that is something that a lot of people in the United States can't say. But it's something that people still haven't realized how important it is to be able to understand another language, to be able to communicate in a language. Yeah. I'm very proud."*

Camila, 23

In comment (1), the participant clearly resists two ideologies: the ideology of monolingualism and the related 'bilingualism shuts doors' ideology (CUMMINS, 1997). By stating that she feels proud for speaking more than one language while many people are monolingual, the participant resists the idea of monolingualism being superior to multilingualism. By contrasting what she considers as the advantage of bilingualism and awareness of its importance to other people's disadvantage of monolingualism and lack of understanding that bilingualism is "important", the participant challenges the ideology of monolingualism as ideal. She also challenges the 'bilingualism shuts doors' ideology by positioning herself as unique (*that is something that a lot of people in the United States can't say*) for being bilingual. In a similar example (comment 2), when asked if speaking Spanish could represent any benefit for the speaker in the U.S., Carlos, a 34-year-old second-generation Spanish speaker in the U.S. in his first year in the Spanish teaching certificate program explained that Spanish represented a knowledge other people did not have and put him in a privileged position

compared to monolinguals. He challenges the ideology of monolingualism by representing bilingualism, rather than monolingualism, as superior.

Comment (2)

*“It’s something beautiful, something nice to be able to speak it, to be able to communicate, read, write in another language. It’s more, it makes me proud. Also, a lot of people can’t understand it. It puts me in a different position, like ‘I know something that you don’t. Now I’m in a higher level.’”*

Carlos, 34

Participant Natalia, a 24-year-old Mexican-born Spanish speaker in her third year of the program, also delegitimizes the ideology of monolingualism by rejecting the belief that bilingualism is cognitively onerous. Comment (3) illustrates how the participant rebuts a longstanding idea about bilingualism started in the 1970’s, and still reproduced, even though linguists have overthrown it long ago.

Comment (3)

*“T<sup>2</sup>: ¿Es hablar español bueno o malo para la autoestima de un niño?  
P<sup>3</sup>: Yo creo que es muy bueno porque, porque, les ayuda, o sea, van creciendo y ya tienen la habilidad de hablar dos idiomas. [...] Aunque muchos te digan que confunde al niño... pero no se confunde el niño porque si le hablan español solamente en su casa, el inglés lo puede aprender en la escuela. Entonces el niño es bilingüe. Mis sobrinos son así. Hablan español en la casa, en la escuela, inglés. Nunca han necesitado de ir al psicólogo, tener clases de, de comunicación, para nada.”<sup>4</sup>*

Natalia, 24

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<sup>2</sup> I stands for interviewer throughout the text

<sup>3</sup> P stands for participant

<sup>4</sup> English translation: I: Is speaking Spanish good or bad for a child’s self-esteem? P: I think it is very good because, because, it helps, I mean, they grow and at the same time they already have the ability to speak two languages. [...] Although many say that it makes the child confused... but it does not make the child confused because if people speak only Spanish to him or her at home, he or she can learn English at school. Then, the child is bilingual. That is how my nephews are. They speak Spanish at home, at school, English. They have never needed to go to the psychologist, to have communication classes, nothing.

Participant Natalia refers to the misconception spread during the 1970s, according to which exposure to more than one language could lead to a troubled course of early language acquisition (PETTITTO *et al.*, 2001). This misconception reinforces the ideology of monolingualism by representing it as more natural than bilingualism. It also supports the ideology of monolingualism with the idea that operating with more than one language is more burdensome for a country. In comment (3), however, the participant recognizes the existence of such an ideology and challenges it. She disputes the ideology with the use of the contrasting conjunctions “*aunque*” (although) and “*pero*” (but) and uses examples in her close family as evidence that bilingualism is easy to attain, as understood in the simple recipe for raising a bilingual child that she provides.

Even though most of the participants’ beliefs surrounding bilingualism were consistent with the idea that bilingualism is possible and positive, one participant, a 48-year-old Mexican-born Spanish speaker in her fourth year of the program demonstrated a different belief. When asked if speaking Spanish in the U.S. was important, she suggested that bilingualism is not possible and that knowledge of a second language can only occur when speakers abandon their first language:

Comment (4)

*“Yo veo que hablar español es importante, pero al paso es un paso muy grande que uno tiene que dar. Por ejemplo, mi hermano no habla inglés y él ya tiene más de veinte años aquí. Y mi hermana, ella aprendió inglés, pero no lo practica. Y pues, tú notas que no, no, no es fluente su inglés. Entonces, tiene mucho que ver en renunciar hablar español. De cierto modo tienes que renunciar al español, o a tu lengua nativa, para poder ser fluente en tu, en tu inglés. Y ahora que yo ya soy fluente, estoy regresando al español para poder enseñárselo a mi hija.”*<sup>5</sup>

Valeria, 44

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<sup>5</sup> English translation: I know that Spanish is important, but at the same time it is a big step one has to take. For example, my brother does not speak English and he has been here for more than 20 years. And my sister, she learned English, but she does not practice it. And, well, one realizes that her English is not fluent. So, it has a lot to do with abandoning Spanish, or one’s native language, in order to be fluent in English. And now that I am already fluent in English, I am returning to Spanish, so I can teach it to my daughter.

Participant Valeria speaks Spanish and English and takes classes in both languages at the university. She is also in constant contact with other bilingual speakers. However, contradicting her experience, she claims that bilingualism is, if not impossible, only possible to attain by abandoning one's dominant language. She uses examples to substantiate her view that speakers can only acquire a language by forsaking another language. In one of these examples, her sister never achieved fluency in English. However, she did achieve fluency because she abandoned Spanish, while her sister did not. Her lexical choices of “*renunciar*” (renounce or abandon) and “*regresar*” (return) in her recipe for becoming fluent in English, along with her examples, reinforce the idea that bilingualism is not natural, but monolingualism is, legitimizing the ideology of monolingualism. In her discourse, bilingualism is onerous, if not impossible. Thus, it is natural that one people speak only one language.

Palmer (2011) and Markos (2012) found similar beliefs in the discourse of bilingual teachers in Central Texas and pre-service teachers in general in Arizona. Participants in these studies also legitimized the ideology of monolingualism by affirming that students must be ready to leave Spanish behind and move on to English. Although only one participant in the present study legitimized the idea of moving from Spanish to English or abandoning Spanish to embrace English, she is preparing herself to be a Spanish teacher, one who believes English monolingualism is the goal in the U.S.

The participants' discourse about bilingualism is built around the ideology of monolingualism. The examples in this section evidence how this ideology influenced these future Spanish teachers' discourse, but, in all but one of the cases, the participants position themselves against such ideology. With only one exception, they tend to resist and challenge the idea that bilingualism is individually and socially burdensome and that monolingualism is ideal for a society. Other studies have found a discourse portraying monolingualism as ideal in the discourse of future pre-service teachers in general and in the discourse of bilingual teachers. The present study, however, presents evidence that pre-service Spanish teachers display a different trend. They tend to challenge the ideology of monolingualism when talking about bilingualism.

## 6.2 Bilingual Education and the ‘One Language’ Ideology

This section demonstrates how pre-service Spanish teachers' beliefs about bilingual education legitimize the ‘one language’ ideology, which

equates one language with one territory or a national identity (PAVLENKO, 2002) in their discourse about bilingual education. The ‘one language’ ideology is present in the discourse about bilingual education of most of the pre-service Spanish teachers who participated in the present study. They asserted the importance of bilingual education, but, at the same time, associated this type of education exclusively with heritage speakers or transnationals’ children. Bilingual education in their discourse is also understood as a transitioning tool to teach English by using Spanish or as a tool for this population’s educational achievement in general. The idea of linking bilingual education to the needs of specific groups is a strong reinforcement of the ‘one language’ ideology since the goal is not to encourage the general population to become bilingual but to use Spanish as a tool to teach English to heritage speakers of minoritized languages and to accomplish having a monolingual classroom.

Participant Lucia, a 24-year-old second-generation Spanish speaker in the U.S. in her fourth year in the program, for example, when asked if bilingual education should be offered in the U.S., immediately linked this kind of education to Spanish heritage learners of English:

Comment (5)

*“Yes, we should have it [bilingual education] because there are people who are immigrants and they, they come here and their kid doesn’t speak English and, you know, I would say, I know you need both languages. It will be easier for them.”*

Lucia, 24

Bilingualism, according to this view, is a skill that only immigrants’ children need to have, and bilingual education is a tool for fixing the language deficit (ALFARÓ; BARTOLOMÉ, 2017) immigrant children bring with them. Thus, English-speaking Anglos do not need to be bilingual. Despite her positive attitudes towards bilingualism expressed in *“I know you need both languages”*, the direct application or benefit this participant recognizes for bilingual education is to help immigrants’ children learn English. The connection the participant builds between bilingual education and immigrants’ children, with the conjunction “because”, implies that the only people who need to speak both languages are the transnationals’ children and that children of parents born in the U.S. do not need a language other than English. The participant’s discourse legitimizes the ‘one language’ ideology through the belief that bilingualism is unnecessary unless you are an

immigrant. English-speaking Anglos already speak the one most important language, which is English. Ek *et al.* (2013) also found bilingual pre-service teachers reproduce the ‘one language’ ideology by linking bilingual education to heritage speakers. The present study, however, demonstrates how pre-service Spanish teachers hold beliefs that have the potential to influence their teaching practices, as other ideologies do.

The view of bilingual education as a transitioning tool, and thus exclusively useful for heritage speakers of minoritized languages, is ubiquitous among the participants in the present study. This is the belief that participant Carla, a 24-year-old second-generation Spanish-speaking pre-service Spanish teacher in her fourth year in the program, expressed. When asked if bilingual education should be offered in the U.S. and to whom, she explains:

Comment (6)

*“Yo digo que sí, se debe enseñar. Eh, hay muchos niños que entran a la escuela no sabiendo el inglés, y es necesario que se les introduzca el inglés, pero enseñándolos de primero con el español. Y ya que tengan la opción, ya que estén mayores, es, que tengan la opción de escoger si sí.”<sup>6</sup>*

Carla, 25

Participant Carla asserts that bilingual education should be provided because it benefits the Spanish-speaking population in the U.S. by helping them learn English and preparing them to be introduced into the mainstream English classroom eventually. There are many models of bilingual education, but the participants in the present study seem to understand bilingual education as a tool for transitioning non-English-speaking children into the English-speaking mainstream classroom. Again, there is the view that only one language is important in the U.S. and that students’ heritage language can be used as a tool to lead students to speak this national language. As illustrated in the comment, for these future Spanish teachers, there is no room for Spanish or bilingualism in the U.S., and Spanish-speaking students

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<sup>6</sup> English translation: I think yes, it should be taught. Ah, several children start school not knowing English, and it’s necessary to start introducing English to them, but teaching them first through Spanish. And then, when there’s opportunity, when they’re older, ah, they must have the option of choosing [to learn Spanish].

who come to U.S. schools must abandon their languages to make room for the one language of the country.

The next comment by participant Isabella, a 20-year-old second-generation Spanish-speaking pre-service Spanish teacher in her first year in the program, exemplifies the belief that Spanish/English bilingual education should be available in the entire country. Additionally, her comment links this type of education to Spanish-speaking students' success.

Comment (7)

*I: We know that there are some bilingual schools in the U.S., schools in which the academic content, like math and science, is taught both in English and in Spanish. Should bilingual education be provided in the U.S.?*

*P: Bilingual education should definitely be provided to all of the schools in the United States just because there's not a certain area that, I believe, has a greater number. Like you could have a greater population of the students that come from Spanish-speaking homes but that doesn't mean just because a greater population could be in California, for example, that doesn't mean there's not a closed population in Austin or in North Carolina, New York, wherever. So, I feel like, bilingual education should be provided because if we want them to be, succeed, and the goal of education is to get them into the four content areas, then we need to start them out in their native language because that's the only way they're going to succeed in our schools. So.*

Isabella, 20

Participant Isabella demonstrates being a strongly committed educator, as evidenced in her belief that the goal of education is the students' success through their exposition to the four content areas. She also displays her commitment to educating all students, including immigrant non-English-speaking ones, when she affirms that educators must reach these students even if the only way to do so is to use the students' native languages. However, the participant limits the benefits of bilingual education to non-Spanish-speaking students by defending it being used exclusively in the education of Spanish-speaking English learners. The association of bilingual education exclusively with those whose home language is Spanish reveals the 'one language' ideology since, according to this view, Spanish is only useful for those who use it at home and not for the broader population of the country.

In very rare instances, participants challenged and resisted the ‘one language’ ideology in their discourse concerning bilingual education. Participant Catalina, a 20-year-old third generation Spanish-speaker in her first year in the program, in comment (8) challenges the ideologies by advocating for bilingual education not only for a specific group but for everybody. She also challenges the ideology that ‘bilingualism shuts doors,’ affirming that in our diverse world, bilingualism opens doors.

Comment (8)

*‘I: We know that there are some bilingual schools in the U.S., schools in which the academic content, like math and science, is taught both in English and Spanish. Should bilingual education be provided in the U.S.?’*

*P: I think we should have it for everybody, and start with young kids. And the more languages you know, the more worthwhile worldly you’ll be able to be, because you’ll be able to communicate with different countries and cultures and have that, like, mindset starting from a young age that the world is diverse, because the world is diverse. It is not something, like, if you grow up in your little bubble, then your little bubble is all you think about. And if you get popped by encountering someone who speaks a different language than you, who practices a different culture than you, then it makes you uncomfortable and sometimes uncomfortable people get angry.”*

Catalina, 20

Participant Catalina challenges the ‘one language’ ideology in several ways. First, she resists it by associating bilingual education and second language knowledge with being worthwhile for the ability to communicate with different cultures. Then, she associates bilingual education with being open-minded. Finally, the participant uses a metaphor about living in a “little bubble” as the opposite of being open to diversity. This negative representation of the “bubble” as the monolingual condition, which does not prepare speakers to encounter diversity, is enhanced with the metaphor of the bubble being popped in the potentially problematic encounter between a monolingual speaker and diversity. Her statement suggests a challenge of the ‘one language’ ideology and the very monolingual practice.

Despite their positive views of bilingual education, pre-service Spanish teachers in the present study tend to associate this type of education exclusively with heritage Spanish speakers. This association legitimizes the ‘one language’ ideology by implying that bilingual education is useful for

heritage Spanish speakers exclusively. It limits the benefits of bilingual education and its ultimate goal of promoting bilingualism only to people who will use the language at home, as if the broader population in the US would not benefit from being bilingual. With few exceptions, the participants' notion of bilingual education is either a transitioning tool or a tool for academic success to be used exclusively for minoritized language speakers. This view on bilingual education parallels reproducing the 'one language' ideology since it implies that only groups with ties to other languages need those languages and that other groups in the US could not benefit from bilingualism. In other words, it implies that bilingualism is not natural; it is for transnationals only.

## **7. Discussion and Plausible Hypotheses**

This study examined pre-service Spanish teachers' language ideologies in their discourse concerning bilingualism and bilingual education, a phenomenon that, although understudied, needs to be investigated because teachers' ideologies are likely to impact teaching practices. It revealed conflicting ideologies concerning these themes. While the pre-service Spanish teachers challenge the ideology of monolingualism and favor bilingualism, they also legitimate the 'one language' ideology, according to which each nation has room only for one language. Legitimation of the 'one language' ideology is mainly done by linking bilingual education and its benefits exclusively to heritage speakers of Spanish in the U.S. and by implying that the main goal of bilingual education is to transition Spanish speakers to an English monolingual classroom. This concept participants have of bilingual education is likely due to the fact that, in Texas, the most common bilingual education model to which children are exposed is the transitional model, with the goals of assimilation and relative monolingualism. Seeing transitional bilingual education as the only possible form of bilingual education does not create the right conditions for bilingual development. Moreover, this belief may prevent efforts to teach Spanish to groups who are not Spanish heritage speakers. It also prevents the construction of a Spanish language class in which language ideologies linking Spanish to negative stereotypes may be demystified and more positive ideologies may be developed. If Spanish teachers spread ideologies according to which there is no place for Spanish in the U.S. or that Spanish is

not as legitimate as English, the right to the heritage language is taken away by the professional who is committed to the language, the Spanish teacher.

The results presented here are similar to those Ek *et al.* (2013) found among bilingual pre-service teachers, those Palmer (2011) found among bilingual teachers, and those Markos (2012) found among pre-service teachers in general (MARKOS, 2012) in the U.S. The present study revealed that, despite the contact pre-service Spanish teachers have with Spanish in academic environments that could legitimize the language use, pre-service Spanish teachers do not display higher levels of ideological clarity compared to other teachers. Contact with the language in environments that could legitimize its use in the country does not seem to be enough to influence pre-service Spanish teachers' language ideologies.

Being bilingual for Spanish-speaking populations in the U.S. means being able to participate in the U.S. society by using their own language and the majority language with all the benefits bilingualism may bring at the same time. Teacher education programs need to prepare critical teachers who will question pervasive harmful language ideologies instead of mindlessly acting based on them, which may leave heritage speakers vulnerable to academic failure (NIETO, 2000; VALENZUELA, 1999) and even lead them to abandon their heritage language (MCCOLLUM, 1999; YOUNG, 2014). Teacher education programs have the responsibility of intervening in this situation by preparing critical teachers who will treat language ideologies in a critical way instead of acting based on them and passing them on to their students. Dominant monolingual ideologies in multilingual societies have the potential to exclude and create discrimination against those who do not adhere to the monolingual norm (BLACKLEDGE, 2000). These ideologies are harmful to minority speakers and may prevent them from using their language due to feelings of incompatibility, as mentioned in one of the participants' comments.

Pre-service teachers who are being prepared to teach Spanish in the U.S. and who will serve many heritage speakers of languages other than English carry some harmful ideologies concerning bilingual development. Ideologies according to which monolingualism is more natural and less burdensome are likely the most responsible force in convincing these future teachers, who are all bilingual speakers, that their bilingual skills are not always an asset and that an education model supporting bilingual development is not necessary. In order to correct this power imbalance

that leads speakers to believe that the goal of bilingual education should be transitioning speakers to use English, Spanish teaching programs must prepare critical teachers who will not only challenge the pressure to assimilate culturally and linguistically to the monolingual norm but will also show acceptance of the linguistic assets their students bring to the classroom. Teachers must encourage their students to critique and resist the language ideologies that compel them to renounce such linguistic assets.

Reflections guiding prospective teachers in understanding that language legitimacy is arbitrary and not democratic must be part of any teacher education program (LIPPI-GREEN, 2012). This is because teachers need to recognize that monolingualism has consequences for speakers of minoritized languages (FLORES; ROSA, 2015) and that only a student who is aware and critical about his situation of oppression by arbitrary social forces is capable of acting to change this situation (FREIRE, 2017). Pre-service teachers need more contact with and guided reflections about the different linguistic varieties by which they are surrounded, as well as about the situations and needs of the students they will serve. This can be done through projects in which they need to interview students, parents, teachers, and school administrators in their community and analyze their results by following reflection guides. Without intense contact with the community to be served, teachers cannot be appropriately prepared for the work they will do at schools.

Educating teachers who will foster critical analysis of mainstream norms, reject the neutrality of knowledge, and accept issues of social justice and democracy as part of the acts of teaching and learning must not be optional for our teaching programs (FREIRE, 2017). Teaching Certificate Programs must create opportunities for reflection and help future language teachers awaken to their responsibility to develop learners who will “deconstruct language, texts, and discourses, in order to investigate whose interests they serve and what messages are both explicitly and implicitly conveyed” (HAWKINS; NORTON, 2009, p. 32). Only when teaching education fosters teachers who develop such critical practices, and teachers abandon the dominant discourse about language, will teachers more fully promote all students’ linguistic development and academic success.

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