SPANISH LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES IN NEW MEXICO AND THEIR IMPACT ON SPANISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT. This article explores how U.S. students' receptiveness to Spanish language learning is impacted by the social perceptions of the language that exist within their surrounding community. In particular, the article questions how Spanish language use is impacted by contemporary language ideologies in New Mexico that distinguish Spanish speaking speakers as either stemming from a European colonial linguistic legacy or, conversely, from a more recent Latin–American immigrant linguistic tradition. The research underlying the article was carried out within three school districts in New Mexico, a state with protracted historic ties to the Spanish language yet which nonetheless struggles to develop Spanish language proficiency within its school-going population. Drawing from mixed–method sourced data collected over a seven month period in Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Española, the article reveals the stratified views of high school students, teachers, parents, educators and community members to the Spanish language in New Mexico, explores ideologies that Spanish language evokes in the sampled population and makes suggestions on how these research findings can be used by language-planners to improve outcomes for Spanish language learners in the United States.

RÉSUMÉ. Cet article examine à quel point la réceptivité des étudiants américains à l'égard de l'apprentissage de l'espagnol est influencée par les perceptions sociales de la langue dans leur communauté. En particulier, cet article examine comment l'utilisation de l'espagnol est influencée par les idéologies linguistiques contemporaines au Nouveau-Mexique qui distinguent les hispanophones ayant un héritage linguistique colonial européen et ceux émanant d'une plus récente tradition linguistique d'immigrants d'Amérique latine. La recherche qui appuie cet article a été réalisée dans trois districts scolaires au Nouveau-Mexique. Malgré l'importance historique de l'espagnol dans cet état américain, la population étudiante éprouve de la difficulté à développer une bonne compétence linguistique. En utilisant une approche mixte pour la collecte de données, effectuée pendant une période de sept mois à Albuquerque, à Santa Fe et à Española, cet article révèle les opinions divisées des élèves du secondaire, des professeurs, des parents, des éducateurs et des membres de la communauté envers la langue espagnole au Nouveau-Mexique. De plus, cet article examine les idéologies évoquées par l'espagnol dans la population échantillonnée et explique comment les résultats de cette étude pourraient aider les aménageurs linguistiques à faciliter l'apprentissage de l'espagnol aux États-Unis.

Keywords: *Spanish–American/ Latino identity; Spanish language; New Mexico; bilingual education; language ideology.*

INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade, New Mexico's Public Education Department has engaged in the provision of bilingual Spanish/ English education programmes designed to expose students to a language that

was widely spoken by Hispanics within New Mexican homes and communities until the middle of the twentieth century.[i] These programmes also aim at maintaining Spanish as a native language for first generation Latino students in New Mexico's public schools as well as developing Spanish language amongst Anglophone populations with no historic connection to the language. By consequence, Spanish language learning in New Mexico encapsulates a complex community of students from culturally disparate backgrounds.

Despite the expansion and delivery of Spanish/ English language programmes, consecutive New Mexico Public Education Department Bilingual Multicultural Education Annual Reports (BMEAR) published since 2010 have stated that the vast majority of Spanish language students score at non and limited proficient levels (New Mexico Public Education Department, 2014). Moreover, Census data returns (Ryan, 2013; U.S. Census Bureau, 2011) have illustrated the increased linguistic domination of English over Spanish within New Mexico's Hispanic families, indicating the perpetuated vulnerability of Spanish language within the state (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). These findings are reflected at national level—Beaudrie and Fairclough (2012) have found that Spanish as a first language is unsustainable for third generation Latino immigrants in the United States.

In order to understand these outcomes, I begin with the premise that second language and literacy development must be analyzed within its broader sociocultural context (Goldenberg & Reese, 2006). To explore this, I used questionnaires and structured interviews completed by teachers, parents, community members and high school students—in essence, the population making up a school district—to address the following research questions: How do participants perceive the use of Spanish in the school, home and community; how do attitudes to the use of and learning of Spanish in social and educational contexts vary across different language learning communities in New Mexico; what is the relationship between social attitudes to Spanish language use and Spanish language program performance in New Mexico?

By paying attention to the wider social world in which Spanish language learning is enacted in these three locations, I argued for the existence of various sociolinguistic ecosystems in New Mexico, which are shot through with a pervasive Spanish language ideology. My aim in this article is to establish how such ideologies impact Spanish language students' responsiveness to learning the language.

My use of the term language ecosystem is based on Haugen's (1972) definition of language ecology as the study of interactions between any given language and its environment. While Haugen has been criticized for using ecology as a somewhat shaky metaphor for language, his conceptualization of how language interrelates in a given environment nonetheless plays a significant role in capturing the multifaceted and dynamic interactions that occur in and through language. Since Haugen's coining of the term language ecosystems, there has been increased growth in linguistic and language-learning research that has examined language as a network of interactions as opposed to a thing. Couto (2009) pointed to the psychological and social undercurrents of this network, suggesting that a linguistic ecosystem involves interactions that take place between members of the population and the world, in the neuronal connections of the brain, and between language and society. This study is primarily focused on this latter strand

(language and society), and pays particular attention to the political, ethnic, and historic environment in which the Spanish language operates in New Mexico. This study is also based on the premise that language functions socio-politically, in order to valorize or trivialize marginalized identities (Leeman, Rabin, & Román-Mendoza, 2011; Loza, 2017; Valdés, 1998). In essence, it recognizes the persistence of language ideologies (Leeman et al., 2011) and perceives the relationship between language and minority identity as a crucial mediating factor in the acquisition of Spanish language in New Mexico's public education system (O'Brien, 2017).

To date, research on Spanish language ideology in the U.S. has tended to focus on the linguistic marginalization of U.S. Spanish and the prioritization of so-called pure Spanish in the Castilian form (Ciller & Flores, 2016). According to Valdés, Menken, & Castro (2015), U.S. Spanish occupies a lower status than 'pure' Spanish due to its association with a bilingual, bicultural community of speakers. Monolingual Spanish speakers, Loza (2017) argued, are championed as a linguistic ideal while Spanish heritage speakers (SHS) are castigated for deviating from the standard through language interference, informal grammatical constructions and code-switching. However, while the current study recognizes the existence of such language ideologies, I suggest that Valdéz et al.'s (2015) hierarchical delineation of Spanish language along a monolingual European or U.S. bilingual divide is over-simplified and fails to take into account the internal social tensions within U.S. Spanish speaking communities that create and perpetuate their own set of linguistic hierarchies and language ideologies.

More theoretically helpful in capturing this phenomenon is Leeman's (2012) broader conceptualization of language ideologies as relating to the political interests and agendas of particular dominant groups, which operate at regional as well as international levels and which might include, as in the case of this study, a majority Hispanic or (to use the term employed by the sample participants in this study) Spanish–American population of heritage Spanish speakers who share a territory with a minority Latino immigrant population who speak Spanish as a mother tongue. As shown by Leeman (2012), it is those with social power who make decisions on the language varieties that are considered standard. Galindo's (1991) examination of how Chicanos (Mexican-Americans born in the USA) disparage the Spanish spoken by Mexican immigrants illustrated the manifestation of such social power between a similar, yet distinct U.S. based Spanish–speaking community. In the subsequent sections of this article, I reinforce Galindo's findings, illustrating how Spanish language in the surveyed districts in New Mexico has been ideologically sub-categorized so as to prioritize Spanish–American speakers—the term appropriated by New Mexico Hispanics with an extended history of living in the state—and to marginalize recently arrived Latino immigrant speakers, thus rationalizing the subordination of the latter group over the former (Loza, 2017).

RELEVANT LITERATURE AND THEORY

To date, a number of scholars have examined the relationships between the social context of language learning in language policy, such as Reece and Goldenberg's (2006) analysis of community print literacy in the development of Hispanic biliteracy in Los Angeles, Eder's (2007) analysis of critical language learning strategies within Native American communities, and Valdés'

(2015) California-based study of the effectiveness of bilingual education for Latino youth. Each of these studies lead to a cautionary note on the issues that impede bilingual/ multicultural program effectiveness, which include perpetuations of colonial discourses and dynamics within the language-learning classroom, superficial literacy and linguistic opportunities in the second language classroom and community, and a misalignment of the inherent linguistic dynamics of languages with classroom practices. Research on second language acquisition that has increasingly linked language learning with the development of new identities and notions of self (Leeman et al., 2011) also proposes new possibilities to more fully understand how social processes impact on students' acquisition of given target languages. That notions of self and group identity develop and crystallize in opposition to or in alignment with philosophies such as nationalism and colonialism (Anderson, 1991) is deeply relevant for all bilingual communities and particularly those situated within New Mexico, an area that has experienced the destabilizing effects of colonialism since the early twentieth century along with nationalist rhetoric that has developed in response to the growth of the Latino community in the United States in recent decades (Hanna & Ortega, 2016).

Paris (2010) highlighted that the Spanish-speaking population in U.S. public education is made up of a linguistically and culturally complex and diverse community of learners and speakers, while Guglani (2016) discussed the extent to which Spanish language is used to validate Latino identity in the U.S. Both authors highlighted the intergenerational shift that has occurred in recent years around Latino identity politics amongst school-going youth. In the present article, I add a new dimension to these findings by examining a wide range of social attitudes to Spanish language from the perspective of a geographically and culturally distinct community that has heretofore received little academic attention.

A relevant aspect of this study is that learning Spanish in New Mexico schools is not simply a process of second language acquisition but also constitutes a heritage–focused effort to maintain a language traditionally spoken by a large proportion of the state's population. This, therefore, requires engagement with language revitalization theory. Here, Fishman's (1991) research on reversing language shift proves helpful. The findings illustrate that the family and local community play an indispensable role in heritage language maintenance. Indeed, Fishman (1991) concluded that heritage language support policies at state level can only be effective if they co-exist with linguistically goal-oriented families and communities who are committed to transmitting the heritage language from one generation to the next. Despite the weight of this finding, there is little evidence of state engagement with the family and community linguistic dimension in New Mexico and to date, no attempt has been made to relate the language ideologies to which students are exposed through their social ecosystems with their language learning outcomes.

Post-structuralist understandings of the relationship between language and identity, of the self and of the collective, also provide a theoretical foundation for this study. As pointed out by Kallan (2016), language presents a tangible sense of place. However, this inter–relationship can become mutilated by processes of colonization and globalization (Kallan, 2016; O'Brien, 2017), and there is often a re–modification and degradation of the places and spaces in which these exiled and disenfranchised communities speak and perceive their languages (Anderson 1991; Coole 1996;

Fought 2006). Foucault's (1980) theories on discourse suggest the social and cultural conditions that lead to the production and consolidation of power. His treatise on the extent to which socially-embedded power structures determine who can speak and what can be spoken as having important implications for language users and language learners is particularly useful for the present study. Investigating disparate Spanish language ideologies in New Mexico aims at revealing the cultural legacies and social hierarchies that produce systems of power. Following from this, I examine how such systems of power are articulated through the learning and use of the Spanish language within the sample populations.

RESEARCH DESIGN

I used the 2014-2015 Bilingual/ Multicultural Education Annual Report (New Mexico Public Education Department, 2014*)* as starting point. This revealed Spanish language proficiency rates in each of New Mexico's school districts and allowed me to select school districts with varying degrees of Spanish language proficiency in order to generate comparisons across school districts (See Table 1).

School District	Proficiency Level (%)		
	Beginning	Intermediate	Proficient
Albuquerque	35.68	39.00	25.32
Santa Fe	43.98	44.81	11.20
Española	48.94	41.26	9.81

Table 1: Spanish Language Proficiency in the Sampled Areas (Source: Appendix B, New Mexico Public Education Department Bilingual Bulticultural Education Annual Report 2014-2015)

Thereafter, current U.S. Census data was used to select three school districts within New Mexico featuring socio-economically distinct populations so as to test and compare the relationship between language ecosystems and the learning of Spanish. The populations of Albuquerque, Española, and Santa Fe proved suitable in this regard, with each providing a unique sociolinguistic landscape (See Table 2 below).

Importantly, the borders of each of these city's school districts closely overlapped with the city borders defined by the U.S. Census, meaning that the socioeconomic data generated by the latter could reliably be used to ascertain the social characteristics of each school district community. Finally, each of the selected school districts had an established, state-sponsored Bilingual/ Multicultural Education Programme, guaranteeing that all participants had some exposure to the learning and teaching of Spanish within the school district.

	Española	Albuquerque	Santa Fe
Population	10, 224	545,852	67,947
Hispanic or Latino	87.1	46.7	48.7
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	8.8	42.1	46.2
Foreign-born persons (2010-2014)	13.8	10.7	12.9
Language other than English spoken at home by persons age 5 years +	64.6	29.9	33.4
Persons in Poverty	27.7	18.5	18.1
Spanish speaking population (% of total population)	54	26	32

Table 2: Social Characteristics of the Sampled Areas (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011)

I used two data collection tools: surveys and structured interviews. Bourhis, Giles, & Rosenthal's (1981) Subjective Vitality Questionnaire, was appropriate in illuminating participants' perceptions of the ethnolinguistic vitality of and reception to the Spanish language within their school district community. As Ehala and Niglas (2006) noted, the main limitation of the questionnaire is its focus on participants' objective view of language vitality, as opposed to representing the participant's emotional relationship with the language. Consequently, I adapted the survey, drawing from Baker's (1992) socially-framed questionnaire design in order to gather information on participants' personal perceptions of the specific cultural dynamics of the Spanish language in New Mexico. In total, the student survey had 27 statements, categorized in terms of positive orientation or negative orientation toward the Spanish language. I included additional statements to ascertain nuanced differences between each school district's perceptions of both Spanish language and Hispanic culture that fell outside of the positive/ negative dichotomy. School principals distributed the surveys. I provided students over the age of 16 years of age in each school district with information on the research one week prior to the dissemination of surveys, so students understood their choice to participate or not. Bilingual surveys were available to all students, though only two of the respondents opted to complete the survey in Spanish. In total, 469 students completed the survey across all three districts, with Española returning the highest proportion of completed surveys. A total of eighty-one percent of participant respondents identified as Hispanic. Due to a formatting error on the survey form, the gender breakdown of the survey sample population was not captured in two of the three sampled population. Nonetheless, surveys were disseminated in high schools with a relatively even distribution of male and female students.

As noted by Pavlenko (2009), quantitative methods are often too rigid a collection tool to represent the dynamic, fluid and shifting cultural forces that shape language attitudes. In order to overcome this limitation and to further explore the data generated by the surveys, I included a qualitative interview component in the research design. Structured interviews were carried out with 32 participants, fulfilling the *normal distribution* criterion recommended for qualitative research (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011) (see Appendix B for interview questions). Teaching and learning are understood as socially situated practices; therefore, participant samples from each of the three school districts were made up of at least two of each of the following: secondary

school teachers, school administrators, parents, educational stakeholders and community members. Seventeen interview participants were female and 15 were of Hispanic descent, providing a more balanced gender and ethnic distribution than the survey sample. A bilingual research assistant conducted the interviews. Three of the 32 participants completed the interview in Spanish. I informed participants of the study by dissemination a participant information leaflet in each school district, which allowed candidates to self-select as research participants. I also used non-probability snowball sampling methods in order to ensure a balanced proportion of participants from each language community.

The mixed methods study followed a convergent design (Creswell & Creswell, 2017) with concurrent quantitative and qualitative data collection, separate quantitative and qualitative analyses and the eventual merging of the data sets to answer the research questions. Survey data generated by the sample population were analysed using SPSS software, specifically via a cross-tabular descriptive analysis of the three school districts surveyed. Concepts interrogated in both the questionnaire and the structured interview included: personal attitude to the use of Spanish in New Mexico; uniformity as preferable to diversity; awareness of anti-Hispanic sentiments within New Mexico; Spanish language as declining in the community; cultural prioritization of English; and Hispanics as "Other." Interviews were structured, with questions asked in a pre-designated sequence and with little deviation from the pre-formulated list of questions. I carried out an initial thematic analysis of participants' responses in order to orientate myself to the data collected and to ensure the suitability of my analytic framework. Thereafter, I categorized responses according to positive or negative orientations to Spanish language and Hispanic culture and then compared these data with the survey results, using the school district from which responses were generated as the prime variable.

Linguistic Ecosystems of the Sampled Population

Española is 88 miles from Albuquerque and 25 miles from Santa Fe. As shown in Table 2 above, Albuquerque has by far the largest population of the three surveyed areas, with half a million residents. By contrast, Española's population is just over 10,000 while Santa Fe's is almost 70,000. Due to space limitation, I have not examined the implications of these varying degrees of urbanism on Spanish language learning in the present study. Instead, I focused on the ethnic, socioeconomic status (measured by the persons in poverty row), and linguistic features of each site, as these are considered indispensable to an understanding of the social dynamics of the targeted ecosystems (Williams, 1991).

As shown in Table 2 above, Española has the highest proportion of Hispanic residents, foreign-born residents, people living in poverty and people identifying as Spanish speakers. The latter is surprising, given that BMEAR shows that Española school district students had the lowest proportion of proficient Spanish speakers of the sampled populations (Table 1 above), with Albuquerque had the highest proportion. This inconsistency may be explained by Española's Spanish-speakers being an older non–school going population or may reflect its citizens' tendency to claim that Spanish language is used within the home as a marker of identity politics, even if the younger generations are only beginner or intermediate speakers of the language. These data

provide subtle evidence for the existence of a language ideology in Española that prioritizes a heritage of Spanish language use.

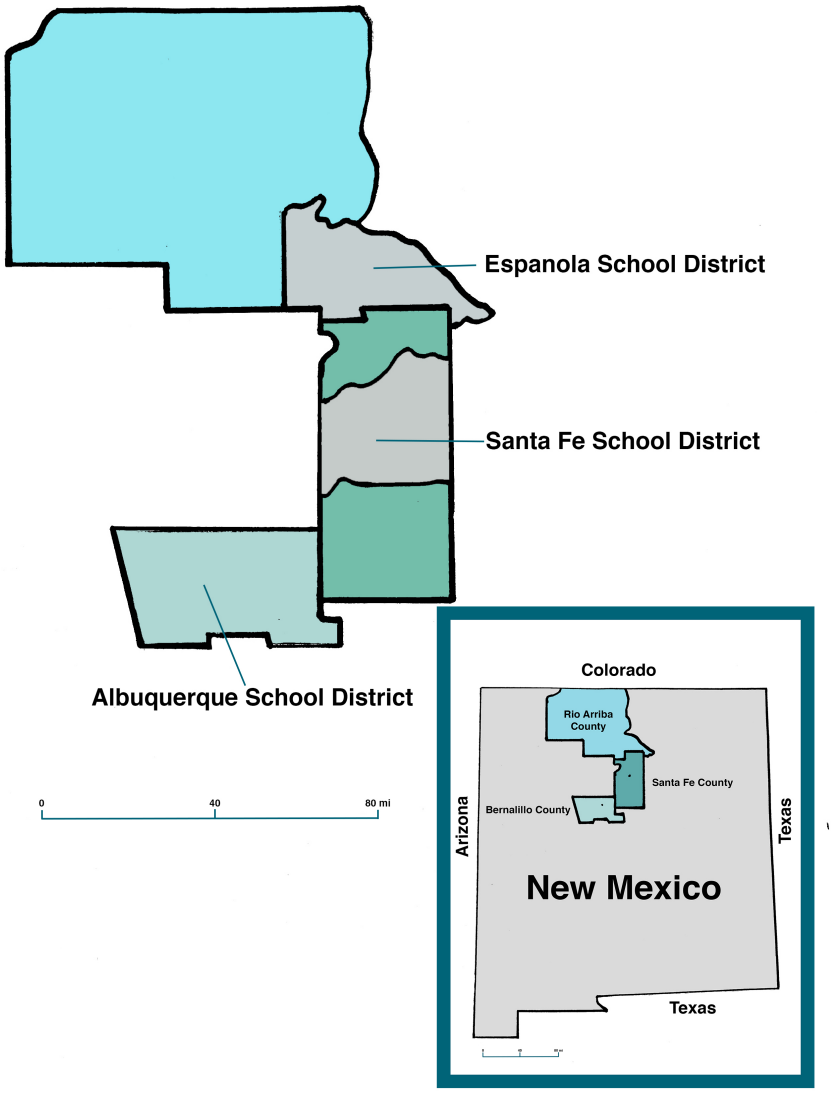

Figure 1: Surveyed New Mexico School Districts
Source: Author

U.S. Census data allows deeper insight into the distinct levels of bilingual confidence in each research location. For example, Santa Fe's Spanish speakers reported much lower rates of English language proficiency than those in Española, suggesting that the former constitute a first or second generation Latino immigrant population, while Española's population may be formed from a heritage Spanish–speaking community, thus reinforcing its use amongst an older population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). That over 96 percent of Española's 5- to 17-year-old Spanish-speaking population was reported as speaking English "very well" also indicates that young people in Española strongly identify with two languages, whereas their counterparts in Santa Fe do not. In Albuquerque, Census results suggest that the majority of Spanish speakers are first generation

immigrants in the 18- to 64-year-old category, one-third of whom reported limited English language proficiency. The children of these immigrants are identified as strong bilinguals in Spanish and English, though in slightly lower proportions than in Española.

At a state level, the reality of Spanish language loss is obvious (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011), with only 28 percent of New Mexico respondents reporting an ability to speak Spanish, in spite of over 70 percent of its population identifying as Hispanic. Significantly, the majority of Census respondents who reported Spanish language proficiency were in the 18- to 64-year-old age bracket. According to Fishman's (1991) Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale (GIDS), this suggests the potential for the maintenance of Spanish language in New Mexico, since languages are most vital when spoken by a younger and childbearing population. However, this finding is hinged on a presumption of social inclusion; if younger minority language users feel themselves to be socially isolated, their native language will continue to regress. Also significant is that the second largest majority of Spanish speakers were recorded within the 5- to 17-year-old bracket, which reinforces the potential for Spanish to gain momentum in New Mexico, if the language is being engaged with in authentic ways within this population. Outcomes of language policies to reinvigorate the speaking of the Irish language in the Republic of Ireland may present a relevant caveat here: studies show that where the population of Irish speakers soars in the 5- to 17-year-old age bracket, it sharply declines in the 18- to 64-year-old age bracket, since the Irish language is principally being engaged with through formal primary and secondary school language classes, often without any application or resonance in the broader community, thus creating an unsustainable and ineffective pathway for language revitalization (O Ríagáin, 2009). That those over 64 years of age constitute the smallest proportion of Spanish speakers suggests that the majority of New Mexico's Spanish speakers are younger, generational immigrants from Spanish speaking countries, a finding that aligns with the systematic growth of Spanish in the United States between 2005 and 2011 (Ryan, 2013).

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Quantitative Analysis of High School Students' Attitudes to the Use of Spanish

Quantitative analysis found overwhelmingly consistent levels of positive receptiveness to the use of Spanish among the surveyed students. Indeed, even ostensibly dramatic statements in support of Spanish language were received liberally by the surveyed cohort, as exemplified in the responses below to Statements 2 and 6 (see Appendix A for complete survey results).

Statement 2: All students in New Mexico should learn a second language, especially Spanish.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	18.3%	50.0%	28.3%	3.3%	100%
Española	25.5%	59.4%	12.1%	2.9%	100%
Santa Fe	24.0%	56.5%	16.2%	3.2%	100%
Total	24.1%	57.2%	15.7%	3.1%	100%

Table 3: Responses to Statement 2

Statement 6: Learning Spanish is important for my country's future.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	16.1%	48.4%	30.6%	4.8%	100%
Española	20.6%	51.7%	22.7%	5.0%	100%
Santa Fe	20.4%	47.1%	27.4%	5.1%	100%
Total	19.9%	49.7%	25.4%	5.0%	100%

Table 4: Responses to Statement 6

Mean results generated by survey data illustrated moderate levels of variance between school districts on responsiveness to Spanish language and Hispanic culture. Española's school district returned highest levels of receptiveness to the use of Spanish, Albuquerque returned the least proportional support for the same concept, and Santa Fe's student responses were only slightly less positive toward the role of Spanish in the school and community than their peers in Española, with each school district rating Spanish language highly. However, both Santa Fe and Española's students also articulated a strong sense of identification with Anglophone-oriented questions (Statements 5, 22, 23).

The questionnaire succeeded in drawing out interesting socio-economic profiles of the surveyed communities. Albuquerque students were most likely to assert that their families struggled financially and to indicate the Hispanophone nature of their community (Statements 11, 24). However, this immersion in a Spanish language community did not correspond with high levels of Spanish language advocacy amid Albuquerque's students and instead, some consistently negative tendencies toward the use of Spanish in the community were observed within Albuquerque's body (Statements 2, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14).

Statement 9, "Spanish speakers are not discriminated against in our community," produced some polarised opinions among the Albuquerque cohort, with 18% strongly agreeing with the statement and 16% strongly disagreeing. When compared to Santa Fe and Española, however, they emerged as the least likely group to claim discrimination against Spanish speakers in their local community.

Santa Fe students were more likely to agree that their families struggled financially than their peers in Española, a finding that might be surprising given the lower socioeconomic profile of families living in the latter district (see Table 2 above). Overall, Santa Fe students exhibited the lowest level of tolerance for statements that suggested the Otherness and inferiority of Spanish language and culture (Statements 4, 8, 9, 10, 14, 18, 20, 26) and they emerged as the only surveyed cohort to express as a majority their belief that Spanish speakers were discriminated against within their community (Statement 9). However, they were less convinced about the prioritization of Spanish than their peers in Española (Statements 1, 2, 12,16, 17) and emerged as a community that tended to be more supportive of the cultural role of Spanish language users as opposed to its use as a formal, academic language in New Mexico (Statements 1, 7, 17, 22).

Española's students returned consistently positive responses to the relevance of Spanish language in the curriculum and community and their high levels of confidence in their Hispanic language

and culture is demonstrated in their responses to Statements 6, 8, 10, 14, 16, 18, 29, 26 and 27. Survey feedback also confirms their biculturalism and aspirations to bilingualism; though they tend to support the use of Spanish they also favour statements that advocate for Spanish-English bilingualism (Statements 5, 7, 12, 13), a finding consistent with the returns of the U.S. 2000 and 2010 Censuses, in which young people in Española strongly identifying with both English and Spanish. Finally, the Española cohort exhibited the most concern about the regression of Spanish language use in their community (Statements 11, 24).

School District	Proficiency Level (%)			Language Attitude (Mean)*
	Beginning	Intermediate	Proficient	
Albuquerque	35.68	39.00	25.32	2.8142
Santa Fe	43.98	44.81	11.20	2.8601
Española	48.94	41.26	9.81	2.8739

Table 5: Relationship between language proficiency and language attitudes (Source: Appendix B, New Mexico Public Education Department Bilingual Bulticultural Education Annual Report 2014-2015)

*Mean average for language attitudes was achieved by a software generated means comparison of statements 1,2,4, 6, 8, 12,16,17,19, 22, 25, 26. A Scale from 1 to 4 was used to establish the mean, with 1= Strongly Negative Attitude and 4= Strongly Positive.

Table 5 illustrates a statistically opaque relationship between language ideologies and language performances. While the language mean results show marginal differences, they suggest that though Española returned the lowest rates of Spanish language proficiency, these students reported the most positive language attitudes of the three surveyed districts. In contrast, though the Albuquerque school district has the highest percentage of proficient language users, these students reported the lowest levels of support for the language of the three communities. Qualitative data were, however, much more effective in illuminating the existence of the relationship between language proficiency and language attitude. Specifically, the interviews affirm that the most proficient users of Spanish in New Mexico are not necessarily surrounded by communities that positively perceive their language use. Conversely, and as developed in the interview data that I present shortly, while school districts such as Española purport to support the use and learning of Spanish, their learners continue to struggle with proficiency, suggesting a disconnection between learners' cultural and linguistic responsiveness to Spanish language and their ability to communicate in Spanish.

Interview Data and Analysis

Data from the structured interviews confirm the influence of Spanish language ideologies on the Spanish language learning classroom. Interviewees often unambiguously articulated how receptiveness to Spanish amongst communities and students hinges on whether the Hispanic speaker is related to a 'Spanish–American' or to a Latino immigrant community.

As shown in Table 6 below, the overwhelmingly positive attitude to Spanish language that Española students indicated was replicated in interview data from the same district. On the contrary, 45% and 50% of the interview data from Albuquerque and Santa Fe, respectively, included more negatively oriented discourse on the same questions while consistent levels of neutrality were maintained across all three surveyed communities. In essence, the data revealed the influence of wider social attitudes to the Spanish language on students' responsiveness to their Spanish language learning.

Interview Responses by School District	Positively Oriented Discourse*	Negatively Oriented Discourse*	Neutral Discourse*
Albuquerque	4	5	2
Española	8	0	3
Santa Fe	2	4	2

Table 6: Qualitative Cross Tabulation of Interview Responses
*Orientation of positive vs. negative discourse was evaluated by responses to interview questions 4, 5, 9 and 11.

Apart from this, the interview responses provided deep-level insight into the language ideologies that exist within New Mexico. First, interview data revealed the extent to which Spanish language in New Mexico was seen to represent either a Spanish-American or Latino immigrant population. Specifically, Spanish language was positively viewed both by students and their surrounding social community where Hispanic identity was associated with a European Spanish cultural legacy. Conversely, it was negatively viewed in the districts where the Spanish language was psychosocially equated with Latino immigrants. This is illustrated by the fact that the Albuquerque cohort, where Spanish speakers are mostly first- or second-generation immigrants, reported the highest level of resistance to Spanish, as reflected in the following statements:

> Something I notice is that some students tend to be embarrassed about speaking Spanish. . . .I think that the media has actually done us a disservice and really has portrayed Hispanic bilinguals and Spanish-speaking immigrants as a negative. (AB3A)[ii]

> People that don't speak a lot of English that are recent immigrants often times I only see them on the news interviewed if a crime happened in their community or something. They are not profiled as being a great language and culture resource for us. (AB2A)

> I think that Spanish-speaking immigrants are still viewed upon somewhat negatively and I think that we need to encourage people to learn the language and not be ashamed to use it. (AB3A)

> I've run across a lot of people who say it's [the immigrants'] job to learn to speak English: 'I don't have to learn to speak with them'. So, I think there's some bias there, whether it's racial bias or just, you know, 'you're in my country, you need to be like me.' (AB4B)

> [in the media] If it's a crime. . .ethnicity is always pointed out [. . .] if it's something like a heroic thing they almost go overboard like 'look how great they are even though they're just a Spanish speaking.' (AB5B)

In Santa Fe, Spanish language ideologies were more clearly articulated. For example, one participant stated that:

> Most people here in Santa Fe have a very positive attitude towards Spanish, the people I've met, especially those that know this place's origins, or that their family come from Spain from past generations. My perception is that it goes hand-in-hand with the socio-cultural status. The higher the socio-cultural status, the more respect and admiration there is toward learning Spanish. (SF2A)

Where SF2A related Spanish language in Santa Fe to a Spanish colonial legacy, an oppositional opinion is expressed by another Santa Fe participant, who sees her students psychosocially relating Spanish language to a Latino immigrant minority, leading to rejection by the students:

> Even my own students have to. . .maybe in order to belong, in order to not be losers, to not feel like losers, to be part of the 'cool' people, and to be part of a perhaps victorious or prevailing culture, they prefer to not speak Spanish even if they know it. So, the Spanish language is being lost considerably because the Spanish language is associated with uneducated and backwards people. (SF3A)

> There's definitively in the United States a scale of clout, I guess [. . .] it kind of goes down the list and the last on the list is usually Mexicans [. . .] when you look at the media at Mexican Americans, or different Mexican ethnicities, they're usually portrayed as maids or things like that in the media, in the movies. As for Antonio Banderas and Penelope Cruz is [sic.] star power of Spanish, from Spanish descent. (SF5B)

Interview data from Española reasserted the existence of language ideologies that positively associated the speaking of Spanish with a prevalent Hispanic or Spanish–American culture. This linkage of language and a certain community of people was seen by interview participants as promoting Spanish language learning within the school district:

> I just think that people like to speak Spanish, you know, especially local Hispanics; they like to chat with their neighbours that way and. . . . I think that it is [a] real important part of the sort of present culture. (ES4B)

Crucially, however, responses from Española show that Spanish language use is carefully constructed as representing a European colonial legacy as opposed to a Latin American immigrant community, thus creating an imagined, often mythicized, community of language users with which Spanish language learners and users struggle to relate:

> I think Española holds on to an identity with a cultural heritage dating back to Spain, whether they still actually have real connections to that or not [. . .] I think Northern New Mexico people here will even say like 'our Spanish is different than other places,' and I think it might be to a certain extent, but I don't know how much that serves kids if the goal is to become bilingual in a sense of being able to use it in the larger world. (ES2B)

> In Española the people connect themselves with Spain and Spanish heritage, not anything else. It's a sense that that language is pure. It's their Spanish and it's from Spain, and all the other ones are almost less than Spanish in a way; and the immigrants coming in and people from other areas coming in are lower in status, so, therefore, [they] don't want to learn your language. (SF5B)

This statement echoes Leeman's (2012) argument on the desirability of European Spanish over all other varieties in the U.S. However, it is important to also recognize that communities such as Española, which lay claim to owning the so-called pure Spanish variation, also represent those that struggle most with maintaining Spanish language proficiency in their school districts. This suggests that, far from promoting the use and learning of Spanish, Española's—and to a lesser extent, Santa Fe's—language ideologies and its real or imagined tradition of descending from a mythicized European colonial linguistic and cultural legacy has rendered Spanish language acquisition an increasingly exclusive and largely inaccessible goal for Spanish language learners. Furthermore, the persistence of these language ideologies has demotivated Española's sizeable native Spanish-speaking Latino immigrant population from maintaining their first language, because it is seen to represent an inferior linguistic and cultural tradition. In practical terms, this creates a Spanish language hemorrhage in which the most proficient speakers of Spanish in each of the sampled communities are those that are most likely to be discouraged from speaking it, due to the cultural biases that exist within their linguistic ecosystems.

Interview data also revealed a tangible sense of psychosocial distinctiveness in each of the communities. A strong sense of regional and linguistic exceptionalism stratifies New Mexico's language ecosystems and is identified by the research participants as a Northern New Mexico (Española and Santa Fe) and Southern New Mexico (Albuquerque and south) sociolinguistic divide:

> In Northern New Mexico Spanish is highly regarded, whereas in Southern New Mexico they are very clear that they do not want you to speak Spanish. And when I was in school you were segregated. So, if you came from Santa Fe they would sit you on one side, even in Los Alamos they would sit you on one side and they would say inaccurate or inappropriate things to you. (SF1A)

As a consequence of these diverse perceptions and experiences of Spanish language learning, Spanish in the surveyed populations is not conceived of as a world language of communication but rather as a reflection of the state's heterogeneous and hierarchically-organized micro–cultures. Crucially, Spanish language ideologies in the surveyed populations are impacted by racial legacies that originate with Spanish colonialism and that are perpetuated by contemporary stereotypes around Latino immigration to the U.S. Whereas this bolsters the social status of Spanish language

in Española, which maintains an ideal image of itself as a European colonial–Spanish community, it negates it in immigrant–occupied pockets of Albuquerque, where Spanish language use is associated with a recently arrived Latin–American, and especially a Mexican, population.

It is worth noting that the interview data focused particularly on the role of immigration in shaping language attitudes. As one respondent stated, recent immigration from south of the U.S. border has increased feelings of ambiguity toward Spanish language education, especially among state residents who self-identify as "Spanish–Americans." This was clearly articulated by one participant in the following way:

> The issue, though, is including Mexican or immigrant families in the language program. That's a whole, another discussion that sometimes is difficult to have because these very proud traditional New Mexicans, who identify more with Spain than they do [with] Mexico, see a need for these programs for their children but to include the *Mexicano*, it's still a politically charged issue here for many communities.

These insights reinforce the necessity of looking at Spanish language ideologies within the U.S. in all of their complexity and of recognizing that tangible social distance exists between Hispanics who trace their origin to a European-Spanish colonial legacy and Latino immigrants who have more recently made their home in the American southwest. That these intra–ethnic differences have heretofore gone under–acknowledged is problematic, particularly given that language ideology has been used to validate the social distance between these two groups. The use of Spanish as a tool of socio-cultural subversion within the Hispanic community itself may contribute to increasingly negative attitudes to the language among marginalized Hispanophones, thereby eroding the linguistic motivation of its most proficient speakers.

CONCLUSIONS

As shown above, narrative responses reveal the existence of a pervasive Spanish language ideology in New Mexico and the contemporary external and internal political, social and cultural influences that continue to shape its development. Conversely, questionnaire data illuminated a burgeoning student population shaped by 21st century additive bilingual programmes and multicultural worldviews, yet still vulnerable to and influenced by the ideologies of their surrounding community. Indeed, cross tabulation of survey data with interview data revealed a direct correlation between students' language outlooks and those of their parents, teachers, and community members. Arguably, this has an important implication for Spanish language school language programmers, who should not only consider the cultural dynamics of the language learning classroom when planning for minority language development, but should also find ways to amplify and draw from positive language models in the community and to mitigate or learn from the surrounding community's more negative language ideologies.

Furthermore, in spite of very progressive attitudes towards the use and development of bilingualism within the surveyed communities, there remains an anxiety among Latin–American immigrants in New Mexico to prove their American-ness by losing Spanish as a native language.

This was most visible in Albuquerque and was seen by interview participants as a reaction particularly influenced by contemporary media perceptions, political ideologies, and language ideologies around the "Otherness" of Hispanophone communities. Moreover, the persistence of language ideologies in New Mexico that prioritize Spanish–Americans speakers over Latin–American immigrants is clearly evidenced in the data. This finding is significant not just because it highlights the ineffectiveness of measuring Spanish language ideology purely along a U.S.-European linguistic divide, but also because it calls into question current research on language ideology that associates language prestige with monolingual Spanish or English speakers. In the case of this research, bilingualism was not the important variable in categorizing a language as standard or ideal; rather, the identification of the speaker as either Spanish–American or immigrant emerged as the most important factor in influencing whether his or her Spanish language use was viewed positively or negatively in the surrounding community.

Overall, the data show an overwhelming preference of New Mexico's high school students to become proficient Spanish speakers. However, to realize this goal, there is a crucial role to be played by their families, teachers, and surrounding community in modelling positive and inclusive attitudes to the Spanish language, regardless of its origins or etymologies.

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APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE STATEMENTS AND RESPONSES CROSS-TABULATED BY SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Note: A Statement 15 was not included in the survey due to a clerical error. As a result, Statement 16 follows directly from Statement 14.

Statement 1: Spanish should be an official language of the U.S.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	22.2%	38.1%	33.3%	6.3%	100%
Española	17.3%	45.1%	29.1%	8.4%	100%
Santa Fe	21.4%	37.7%	32.5%	8.4%	100%
Total	19.4%	41.6%	30.8%	8.1%	100%

Statement 2: All students in New Mexico should learn a second language, especially Spanish.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	18.3%	50.0%	28.3%	3.3%	100%
Española	25.5%	59.4%	12.1%	2.9%	100%
Santa Fe	24.0%	56.5%	16.2%	3.2%	100%
Total	24.1%	57.2%	15.7%	3.1%	100%

Statement 3: Being Hispanic is not the same as being American.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	16.7%	28.3%	33.3%	21.7%	100%
Española	11.9%	29.8%	37.4%	20.4%	100%
Santa Fe	14.2%	21.3%	32.9%	31.0%	100%
Total	13.3%	26.7%	35.3%	24.2%	100%

Statement 4: Our community would be stronger if we all spoke English instead of speaking different languages.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	7.9%	27.0%	42.9%	22.2%	100%
Española	12.6%	22.3%	39.1%	26.1%	100%
Santa Fe	11.5%	22.9%	40.1%	25.5%	100%
Total	11.6%	23.1%	40.0%	25.3%	100%

Statement 5: Teachers should have native English proficiency.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	23.3%	43.3%	30.0%	3.3%	100%
Española	14.1%	57.7%	23.5%	4.3%	100%
Santa Fe	12.3%	59.1%	24.0%	4.5%	100%
Total	14.7%	56.3%	24.6%	4.2%	100%

Statement 6: Learning Spanish is important for my country's future.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	16.1%	48.4%	30.6%	4.8%	100%

Española	20.6%	51.7%	22.7%	5.0%	100%
Santa Fe	20.4%	47.1%	27.4%	5.1%	100%
Total	19.9%	49.7%	25.4%	5.0%	100%

Statement 7: People who want to be Americans should learn English.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	30.2%	41.3%	17.5%	11.1%	100%
Española	25.7%	43.9%	21.1%	8.0%	100%
Santa Fe	27.1%	46.8%	18.2%	7.1%	100%
Total	27.1%	44.5%	19.6%	8.1%	100%

Statement 8: I am not interested in learning to speak Spanish fluently.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	9.8%	26.2%	23.0%	41.0%	100%
Española	9.7%	17.4%	35.6%	37.3%	100%
Santa Fe	8.3%	14.7%	44.2%	32.7%	100%
Total	9.3%	17.7%	36.9%	36.2%	100%

Statement 9: Spanish speakers are not discriminated against in our community.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	17.7%	45.2%	21.0%	16.1%	100%
Española	15.0%	43.3%	31.3%	9.9%	100%
Santa Fe	14.8%	30.3%	40.0%	14.8%	100%
Total	15.3%	39.1%	32.9%	12.4%	100%

Statement 10: Spanish speakers speak too much Spanish at school.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	13.1%	32.8%	29.5%	24.6%	100%
Española	8.5%	16.9%	53.4%	21.2%	100%
Santa Fe	7.7%	14.1%	47.4%	30.1%	100%
Total	8.8%	18.1%	48.1%	24.7%	100%

Statement 11: There is more Spanish spoken around here now than there was several years ago.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	22.6%	48.4%	21.0%	8.1%	100%
Española	12.3%	39.6%	38.7%	8.9%	100%
Santa Fe	17.9%	43.6%	28.2%	9.6%	100%
Total	15.7%	42.2%	32.7%	9.1%	100%

Statement 12: All teachers in New Mexico should be bilingual.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	13.1%	29.5%	44.3%	13.1%	100%
Española	17.3%	42.2%	35.4%	4.6%	100%
Santa Fe	18.3%	35.9%	35.3%	10.5%	100%
Total	17.1%	38.4%	36.6%	7.8%	100%

Statement 13: People who speak both Spanish and English fluently are more successful.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	31.1%	41.0%	26.2%	1.6%	100%
Española	29.7%	47.3%	16.3%	6.7%	100%
Santa Fe	29.5%	34.6%	26.9%	8.3%	100%
Total	29.8%	42.1%	21.3%	6.6%	100%

Statement 14: You have to learn English if you want to be successful.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	28.6%	33.3%	27.0%	9.5%	100%
Española	13.1%	33.1%	41.5%	12.3%	100%
Santa Fe	9.7%	31.0%	38.1%	21.3%	100%
Total	14.1%	32.4%	38.3%	15.0%	100%

Statement 15: Spanish should be taught alongside English in all schools in New Mexico.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	30.6%	43.5%	24.2%	1.6%	100%
Española	30.4%	56.1%	11.8%	1.7%	100%
Santa Fe	18.3%	51.0%	23.5%	6.5%	100%
Total	26.3%	52.7%	17.5%	3.3%	100%

Statement 16: There should be classes taught entirely in Spanish at my school that are mandatory for graduation.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	4.9%	23.0%	52.5%	19.7%	100%
Española	14.2%	24.3%	45.6%	15.9%	100%
Santa Fe	7.3%	16.0%	48.7%	28.0%	100%
Total	10.7%	21.3%	47.6%	20.4%	100%

Statement 17: I dislike Spanish music and culture.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	4.8%	11.1%	38.1%	46.0%	100%
Española	5.6%	9.9%	39.9%	44.6%	100%
Santa Fe	3.3%	5.3%	37.7%	53.6%	100%
Total	4.7%	8.5%	38.9%	47.9%	100%

Statement 18: Schools should teach more of our Spanish colonial history.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	13.3%	53.3%	28.3%	5.0%	100%
Española	19.7%	49.4%	28.8%	2.1%	100%
Santa Fe	11.7%	47.4%	26.6%	14.3%	100%
Total	16.1%	49.2%	28.0%	6.7%	100%

Statement 19: Mexicans in New Mexico don't like to learn English.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	5.2%	20.7%	50.0%	24.1%	100%

Española	10.3%	20.1%	46.6%	23.1%	100%
Santa Fe	10.0%	18.0%	42.7%	29.3%	100%
Total	9.5%	19.5%	45.7%	25.3%	100%

Statement 20: Since I am in the U.S.A, people should assume I only speak English and should not address me in any other language.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	12.9%	19.4%	33.9%	33.9%	100%
Española	8.4%	19.7%	49.0%	23.0%	100%
Santa Fe	9.3%	18.5%	40.4%	31.8%	100%
Total	9.3%	19.2%	44.0%	27.4%	100%

Statement 21: If I were born again, I would choose to be born into an English-speaking family.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	8.3%	21.7%	45.0%	25.0%	100%
Española	12.7%	26.7%	34.7%	25.8%	100%
Santa Fe	12.4%	31.4%	26.1%	30.1%	100%
Total	12.0%	27.6%	33.2%	27.2%	100%

Statement 22: In public, bilingual students prefer to speak English rather than Spanish.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	15.0%	35.0%	36.7%	13.3%	100%
Española	9.0%	47.4%	34.2%	9.0%	100%
Santa Fe	5.4%	40.5%	41.2%	12.8%	100%
Total	8.6%	43.4%	36.9%	10.9%	100%

Statement 23: I often see Spanish newspapers and advertisements in my local area.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	13.1%	32.8%	29.5%	24.6%	100%
Española	11.1%	34.9%	41.3%	12.8%	100%
Santa Fe	13.8%	38.2%	35.5%	11.8%	100%
Total	12.3%	35.7%	37.7%	14.1%	100%

Statement 24: I feel proud of the Spanish traditions and the Spanish language here in New Mexico.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	26.2%	54.1%	14.8%	4.9%	100%
Española	39.9%	48.3%	10.5%	1.3%	100%
Santa Fe	37.9%	41.8%	11.1%	7.8%	100%
Total	37.4%	46.9%	11.3%	4.0%	100%

Statement 25: There are times and places when Spanish should not be spoken.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	9.7%	29.0%	38.7%	22.6%	100%
Española	11.0%	28.0%	39.0%	22.0%	100%
Santa Fe	7.2%	22.9%	41.8%	28.1%	100%
Total	9.5%	26.4%	39.9%	24.2%	100%

Statement 26: My family struggles financially.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	6.9%	32.8%	36.2%	22.4%	100%
Española	4.8%	23.8%	36.8%	34.6%	100%
Santa Fe	4.0%	30.0%	34.3%	30.7%	100%
Total	4.8%	27.1%	36.2%	31.7%	100%

Statement 27: There is more strength in uniformity than in difference.

School District	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Albuquerque	23.3%	43.3%	21.7%	10.0%	100%
Española	14.4%	39.3%	34.1%	10.0%	100%
Santa Fe	14.3%	28.6%	39.5%	17.7%	100%
Total	15.6%	36.6%	34.2%	12.6%	100%

APPENDIX 2: STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Please begin by stating your date of birth, place of upbringing, occupation and ethnicity
2. Describe your language background
    a. Did you have choices around what language(s) you spoke or used?
    b. What motivated you to speak/ learn a certain language?
3. Describe the people that you interact with through this school district, mentioning their roles (e.g. students/ parents/ teachers), their dominant languages, socio-economic status, traditions, political & social views)
4. How would you describe the general attitude toward learning minority or native languages such as Spanish within this school district today (positive/ negative/ tense/ active/ passive/ contentious/ accepted/ innate/ developing/ regressing)?
5. What are your feelings about the introduction of the Seal of Biliteracy to New Mexico Schools?
6. Do you think that the Spanish taught in the classroom equips students to converse with native Spanish speakers in Northern New Mexico/Albuquerque?
7. Tell us about times you got involved in your child's second language learning
8. Do you think there is a role for community members in the Spanish language classroom? If so, what is it?
9. How does the local media (e.g. radio station, newspapers) portray (a) Hispanic Bilinguals (b) Spanish speaking immigrants?
10. In ten years' time, what status do you think Spanish will have in Northern New Mexico?
11. Do you think that language attitudes in Northern New Mexico might be different to language attitudes in other parts of the State or outside of the state?
12. Who is primarily responsible for keeping Spanish and other minority languages alive?

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[i] Hispanic is a generic term used by the U.S. Census to identify a Latino or Spanish ethnic community. In this paper, the term 'Hispanic' is frequently replaced with either 'Spanish–American' or 'Latino.' This reflects the terminology used by the study's participants when self-identifying their language and ethnic background. Notably, I do not use the term 'Chicano' to describe the sample participants because they themselves do not identify with that categorization.

[ii] Interview responses were coded with numbers and letters. 'AB' represents 'Albuquerque'. 'SF' represents 'Santa Fe'; 'ES' represents 'Española.' In turn, 'AB1' refers to 'Albuquerque Participant Number 1; 'SF5' refers to 'Santa Fe Participant Number 5; 'ES4 would represent 'Española Participant Number 4' etc.