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Introduction

The varieties of Spanish heard throughout the United States have been referred to in numerous ways by many different people, depending on their perspective: US Spanish, Spanglish, pocho, corrupt Spanish, etc. Regardless of the label it receives or what one thinks of it, its status as a contact variety is undisputed. This issue of *Voices*, “Bilingualism and Beyond,” features articles that examine the consequences of such contact, whether they relate to its impact on speakers’ identities, the status of Spanish and other languages as minority languages or its repercussions as seen in the education system, past and present. While the majority of articles relates to the United States, and several to Los Angeles in particular, readers will note that a couple also extend beyond the geographical boundaries of the US and one is not tied to any part of the world but rather focuses on the teaching of Spanish in general. Far from lacking relevance to the situation in the US, the linguistic encounters between speakers of Spanish and those of Nahuatl or of Arabic that are described in some of these articles can provide models for understanding the development of various instances of language contact situations and their outcomes. It is hoped that situating discussions of US Spanish within a larger dialogue whose focus extends beyond issues of Spanish-English contact will bring to light data that have been obscured by assumptions of language loss and corruption.

The articles in this issue are ordered so as to present a wide spectrum of the effects of bilingualism, beginning with discussions of impact at the level of countries and national language policy and ending with examinations of phenomena that are observed when the scope of research is narrowed down to specific aspects of bilingualism or the repercussions that speaking two or more languages can have on the members of a particular community. This issue opens with Bryan Kirschen’s article on the relationship between Spanish and Arabic and the various situations of language contact that have obtained in Northern Morocco and a few of the linguistic features that they have yielded. One must understand the political role that Spain has played in northern Morocco, he suggests, in order to create connections between past and present linguistic practices in this region. This article is followed by Ricardo García’s study of bilingualism involving náhuatl and Spanish or other indigenous languages in

the Aztec empire as illustrated through an ethnographic analysis of two episodes of translation. The 'thick description' provided by his research offers evidence that Europeans and indigenous non-Nahua translators relied on náhuatl to communicate. Like García, Covadonga Lamar Prieto uses historical documents to examine the process by which Californios, the original Spanish-speaking settlers of California and their descendants, were deprived of their land and, consequently, their right to use Spanish in the courts and schools. Contrary to common belief, she shows that Californios continued using Spanish widely in a variety of registers and that, rather than abandoning their language, it was taken from them.

The remaining articles focus on Spanish and bilingualism in a narrower context, that of Los Angeles. The first of these is Claudia Parodi's description of the minority languages project she is working on. Part demographic study and part sociolinguistic survey, this analysis of the thirteen most-commonly spoken ethnic languages in Los Angeles sheds light on the situation of diglossia that develops in this region and also provides evidence that Spanish is the most widespread of these, given that it is used by speakers of other ethnic languages. Belén Villarreal's article examines the role that bilingual public school administrators play in allowing parents to voice their concerns regarding their children's education and safety, thus bringing to light issues that affect the entire school population. Given the large numbers of non-English speaking parents in communities that are home to large percentages of immigrants, the need for bilingual and bicultural principals and staff is greater than ever. In the following article, Armando Guerrero, Jr. addresses the assumptions that are often made about bilinguals who have acquired non-standard forms of English, like East Los Angeles Chicano English (ELACE). After presenting some of the basic features of ELACE, he explains the importance that it has within the community and offers some important reflections regarding the need for maintaining this and other minority varieties. Continuing with the topic of language attitudes and the assumptions made about people based on their linguistic behavior, Jhonni Carr presents the results from a pilot study designed to examine subjects' beliefs about various aspects of a speaker's identity based on her pronunciation of words of Spanish origin. Findings based on respondents' answers and comments lead her to suggest that there may be some negative consequences associated with pronouncing words of Spanish origin in Spanish rather than adapting them to English. The

issue closes with Nancy Meléndez-Ballesteros' article on an important but often overlooked aspect of Spanish that second language learners need to acquire in order to become competent bilinguals: pronunciation. Preliminary results from production tasks involving voiced stop consonants indicate that students benefit from utilizing the type of audio-visual imitation exercise that she implements in the L2 classroom.

Whether wide or narrow, the scope of the studies examining bilingualism in this issue of *Voices* offers new perspectives on a topic whose relevance to studies of Spanish, especially in the context of the United States, is undeniable. The dialogue on these subjects and future research that this journal aims to stimulate will attest to their influence on the wider field of Hispanic linguistics and other relevant academic disciplines.

