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Globalization and Language in the Spanish-Speaking World

Macro and Micro Perspectives

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Language Conflict and the Micro–Macro Link in the Spanish-Speaking World

Rainer Enrique Hamel

'Language has always been the loyal companion of the empire' – Antonio de Nebrija's classic prophecy is frequently quoted as an early visionary perspective of what was to become the main ideological foundation¹ of the unity between nation, empire and the Spanish language. Not only did this vision accompany the Spanish Empire throughout its time of glory but it managed to survive its decline with the loss of the main Spanish colonies in America. Indeed, as a vision, it has regularly arisen whenever Spain has felt in need of reaffirming its hegemony over the Spanish-speaking world and its positioning *vis-à-vis* other world languages (see Cifuentes, 1998; Cifuentes and Ros Romero, 1993; Mar-Molinero, 2000, 2004; Del Valle, 2002; Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman, 2002, 2004). Since Nebrija's times, it has constituted the basis for the foundational myth of *Hispanidad* ('Hispanity'), a singularly robust ideological construct that stresses the admirable homogeneity and unity of the Spanish language compared to other international rivals, a language which can stake its claim to play a significant role in the globalized world.

Some enthusiastic Hispanists, for example the Venezuelan Leáñez Astimuño (2002), feel that Spanish is in a commanding position, for not only can it assert its role as a leading international language, but it can even defy English in its position of the sole hyper-language of the world today. They even envisage the future fusion of the Spanish-speaking countries into one polity, the 'Hispanic nation', united by the centripetal force of the common language.

Any substantive analysis of globalization, however, places Spanish far behind English – it is no rival for the global language, since mere

numbers of native speakers and homogeneity will certainly not suffice to determine the power of a language community in the international arena. Its economic and military weight, together with its vitality in key areas of future growth such as international relations, science and technology and, particularly, the composition and dynamics of its third, expanding circle will certainly play a decisive role (see Kachru's rather Anglo-centric model, 1986; Kachru and Nelson, 1996). There is little doubt that Spanish will still count among the dozen super central languages² in a hundred years or more (Graddol, 1997; Fisher, 2000).

This political science view of linguistic globalization on the macro level considers languages as large sociological and demographic aggregates and places them in the field of language policy (for example de Swaan, 2001). If we are to achieve a differentiated comprehension of multilingualism in our present world we also need further, complementary perspectives. In what follows I will examine the Hispanic world and Hispanic sociolinguistics, which I feel play a crucial role in modern sociolinguistics.

Cultural boundaries, language conflicts and shared territories

Over the past two decades, we have seen a groundswell of overt local and regional confrontations in many parts of the world. Some of them display global implications such as the present conflict triggered by the Western invasion of Iraq led by the two main English-speaking countries (USA, UK) in 2003. From an ethnolinguistic communities' perspective, such confrontations may appear, at least at first sight, to be cultural conflicts. Such radically differing US theorists as Samuel Huntington (1996) and Immanuel Wallerstein (1983) have coincidentally formulated the prognosis (correctly, it would seem) that the twenty-first century, in contrast to the twentieth century with its systemic opposition between East and West, is to become a century of cultural conflicts, conflicts that tend to be religious, ethnic and linguistic in nature or a combination of them all. This new and old focus of polarization posits, as a central challenge for the twenty-first century, the question of how some six thousand ethnolinguistic groups and peoples in the world, representing different religions and world views, will be able to coexist more or less peacefully in nearly two hundred nation-states some of which are sited within regional blocks of supra-national integration. In times of massive migration, the nineteenth-century nationalist ideal of the monolingual and monocultural nation-state looks more utopian than ever. The historical nationalist proposal of providing a territorial base for

linguistic and other ethnic rights claims, as successfully fought for by Catalans and Basques in Spain or Francophones in Canada, and less successfully by indigenous peoples in Latin America, seems to offer no appropriate solution for language conflict situations today. New approaches are called for, such as the concepts of cultural (Rosaldo, 1994) or ethnic (de la Peña, 1995, 1999) citizenship in anthropology, where intercultural spaces of a territorial, virtual or discursive nature need to be developed both theoretically and empirically from the perspective of pluriculturalism³ and additive bilingualism. I shall return to this later.

A salient aspect of globalization seems to be, then, the resurgence of ethnic, linguistic, religious and other cultural claims issued by minorities in the context of worldwide economic and political homogenization. The effects of globalization, which means first and foremost an increased connectivity on all levels, are not only to produce worldwide economic and political homogenization and weaken most nation-states⁴ as autonomous entities, but also to stimulate the upsurge of certain minorities believed to have been integrated successfully into existing nation-states during the era of modernity. Over recent years, however, the increasing multicultural diversity of old and new minorities has been 'ethnicised' to a large extent in the USA and elsewhere, a process which, according to critical voices in Europe (Bourdieu, 2001) and Latin America (García Canclini, 1999, 2004), contributes to the fragmentation of culture and stimulates ethnic fundamentalism. Current testimonies of such tendencies may be found in so-called 'White Nativism' or in Samuel Huntington's 'clash of civilizations' (1996), and in his more recent alarm that America's model of integration was at risk because Hispanics are unwilling to assimilate anymore into mainstream society (Huntington, 2004). Thus we can see a growing polarization of US society which, given its cultural globalization, influences other nations in many parts of the world. Considering recent confrontations and increasing migration as a result of globalization, we need more than ever to study and develop experiences and models of pluriculturalism, that is an enrichment perspective of multicultural coexistence in common spaces (Hamel, 2000, 2003).

To achieve this we must explore the concrete, practical and multiple ways in which different ethnolinguistic groups interact on a local and a global level, how they communicate successfully and to what extent they fall prey to cultural misunderstandings (see Gumperz, 1982), how conflicts emerge, explode or are settled in negotiated ways.

Two complementary anthropological and sociolinguistic metaphors play a significant role in this context: Cultural boundaries and cultural

conflicts. Ever since Barth's (1969) provocative essay on the conceptual relevance of boundaries as constructs for ethnic identities, the metaphors of borders, frontiers and boundaries have permeated anthropological and sociolinguistic debate. Massive migration, a centrepiece of globalization, has highlighted and at the same time diversified their role. Globalization does not simply erase existing frontiers; rather, as García Canclini (1999) points out, it rearticulates the foundational differences they divide and it accepts old and new discontinuities. Traditional walls that brutally separate nations or cut through existing communities live alongside with new invisible, blurred or extended boundaries that reach far into alien territory. Language contact and conflict reflect and at the same time constitute rich examples of old and modern borderlines of all kinds. If we analyse both language policies with their macro narratives and ideologies, and micro interactional encounters from this perspective, we may reach an understanding of how these tokens of social language practice participate in the construction of often conflicting and contradictory identities – whether they be local, class, ethnic, national and transnational.

The Hispanic world, a pluricentric language area par excellence for some (Clyne, 1992; Oesterreicher, 2002), and of contested nature for others, with its wealth of diverse contact and conflict situations, constitutes a privileged realm for the development of specific models and ways of thinking; in particular, this kind of research allows us to relate macro and micro analysis within one and the same study from a political and critical perspective. At the same time, it opens up the possibility of a significant role for Hispanic sociolinguistics and discourse analysis in the international academic arena.

Although probably a majority of native speakers of Spanish live today as monolinguals within their vast territories, Spanish has been a border language right from its first consolidation as a language of both a nascent state and an empire (see, for example, Ortiz López, this volume).

At least four boundaries characterizing different aspects of Spanish in relation to other linguistic communities emerge as relevant. Spanish is a dominant language in most of its contact situations, namely in central Spain and in Hispanic America *vis-à-vis* the indigenous and immigrant languages. Only since the mid-nineteenth century has it also experienced becoming a widely-spoken dominated language in the USA. It is a significant border language in South and North America, with complex state-internal and external frontiers in Spain.⁵ Moreover, Spanish plays a role as an important international language of the second level – a super central language in numerous international organizations, with a dynamically expanding circle in many areas of the world.

The concept of language conflict, as framed by Catalan sociolinguists in the 1970s, represents a typical border from within Spain. The Catalans, in light of their struggle against what they clearly saw as Castilian oppression, substituted this more militant term for Weinreich's (1953) (socio)linguistic metonymy of 'language contact'. They argued that a structuralist view of 'languages in contact' presented an image of false harmony. In the real world more cases of conflict prevailed than of peaceful contact (for example Vallverdú, 1980). Their provocative redefinition of 'diglossia as language conflict' certainly sharpened a critical awareness of certain ideological implications unrevealed hitherto. They redefined the term as a dynamic conflict relationship between a dominant and a dominated language, which is unlikely to remain stable over a long period of time. Rather it will result in processes of either shift and displacement of the subordinate language, or in its revitalization, expansion into the high domains from which it had been previously excluded, thus achieving a 'normalization' of its status and corpus. Clearly, activists and later Catalan governments fought for the latter. After thirty years, Catalan language policies are known worldwide to be an instance of the successful normalization of a formerly oppressed, almost endemic language. Unsurprisingly, the 'conflict' concept has faded away over time with former rebels sitting in government.

Catalan sociolinguistics has been instrumental in introducing a historical perspective of language dynamics and change, developing conceptual frameworks and methodologies for its study. A distinct approach with its own academic and political orientation, it converged with a central area of Anglo-American mainstream sociolinguistics,⁶ namely the study of language shift, maintenance, and revitalization, so admirably developed by Joshua A. Fishman (1964, 1991) and others over four decades.⁷

The Catalan conflict approach represents a rich historical process of theoretical debate, political activity and empirical research accumulated in Spain and in other parts of the world that should not fall into oblivion. It is, in my view, of high topicality, especially since theorists of globalization from other disciplines converge in affirming the centrality of a cultural conflict approach (Huntington, 1996; Wallerstein, 1983; Díaz-Polanco, 2000). With its wealth of theoretical models, methodologies and research experience, sociolinguistics can certainly contribute considerably to the more general debate. In the remainder of this chapter I will examine examples of this contribution observed in Hispanic sociolinguistic situations.

The analysis of language conflict and shift in a Mexican context

The micro-macro link in sociolinguistics

Given that most approaches to language conflict, shift and maintenance, as well as to language policy belong by and large to the field of macro social sciences, they possess very few tools to support their macro hypothesis with substantial analysis on the micro level.⁸ For some the micro level is simply irrelevant for theoretical modelling or abstract systemic debate.⁹ Others do not have the tools to build bridges between the micro and macro and lack arguments when they are asked for concrete empirical evidence for their abstract postulates. Conversely, some current strands of micro analysis in the fields of pragmatics, discourse, conversation, and interaction analysis do not transcend the immediateness of the single ethnographic situation or discursive pattern to develop interpretations and generalizations on a sociological macro level.

In such cases the lack of integration weakens the possible power of conclusions of both sides. More than ever in times of globalization (which also implies glocalization), topics are interconnected to others in multiple ways. Therefore, general macro hypotheses need detailed data analyses which are, in part, of micro nature. Conversely, fine-grained interaction and variation analyses require global parameters derived from disciplines other than (socio) linguistics or discourse analysis in order to interpret their descriptive results.

By means of example, I shall explore a piece of Latin American research that pulls together various strings. My own research into language conflict, maintenance and shift between Spanish and Mexican Indian languages focuses on the markers of shift that can be traced in verbal interaction. It belongs to the field of language loss studies which investigate shifts in usage and do not consider attrition or other changes in competence of individual skills (cf. Hakuta *et al.*, 1992). Individual speakers are not taken into account as such as in sociolinguistic network analysis (cf. Milroy, 1980), but only as participants in specific speech events. The focus is on the collective bilingual repertoire and the ways an indigenous community mobilizes its communicative resources and develops discourse strategies to solve transactional tasks within specific speech events.

After formulating basic sociolinguistic questions and hypotheses on the macro level, ethnographic analysis of the speech community identifies key speech events and yields a general scheme of language use and distribution (mezzo level). It sets the ground for generating

hypotheses about specific fields of language conflict and change. In a third step, a multi-layer discourse analysis of selected speech events describes the discursive resources actually exploited to address specific communicative needs. It reveals how different components of discourse structure including language distribution build up specific discourse strategies. In a fourth step, different discourse strategies, speech events, and types of speech events are compared to identify indicators of processes of language maintenance and loss to show how language change can be observed *in situ* and *in actu*, that is in the process of interaction itself. Next, a framework based on the distinction between language structure, discourse structure, and cultural models helps to identify two basic modalities of language shift in progress in the case under study.

Thus the analytic procedure as a whole focuses not only on language surface and structural phenomena, but also on the underlying discourse strategies and structures, as well as cultural models (patterns and procedures), all considered central components of language. Finally, the results from triangulation and contrastive analyses will be interpreted in terms of the macro questions posited.

Socio-cultural change and the communicative repertoire

In the central highlands of Mexico, the Valle del Mezquital hosts some 80,000 members of the Hñähñú (or Otomí¹⁰) people who live predominantly in communities between 400 and 1,500 inhabitants. Over 90 per cent of the population in the higher, arid areas of the valley is indigenous; 70 per cent is considered to be bilingual, some 25 per cent of the rest is monolingual in the native language.

Over the past 30 years native communities in this area have undergone a radical process of socioeconomic change. Under outside pressure, a growing number of households have given up their traditional settlement patterns based on scattered hamlets, and have built villages of brick houses centred on a plaza where a new primary school with its basketball field has by and large replaced the church as community centre. Only thus was it possible to connect the villages with a new infrastructure of dirt roads, electricity and water supplies. Precarious subsistence farming forced a growing number of young men and women to seek employment as migrant workers in the regional centres, in Mexico City or in the USA. Since these people generally maintain close network ties with their communities and fulfill their obligations as village citizens, a constant flow of money, new patterns of consumption

and other cultural practices find their way into the villages along with the Spanish language. Radio broadcasting and incipient television reception may also play a significant role in cultural change. The primary school has definitively found its place as an institution of prestige which nourishes the expectations of social mobility and integration through the transmission of Spanish and other skills of mainstream society.

From a macro sociolinguistic perspective the language situation in the Mezquital Valley can be described as the relationship between two conflicting historical tendencies of language change. The presently dominant tendency is characterized by substitutive diglossia (in the sense of Catalan sociolinguistics, see Vallverdú, 1973; Boyer, 1991), that is a conflictual, non-stable relationship between Spanish as the dominant and Hñähñú as the subordinate language. Spanish is making inroads into the vernacular's geographical extension, its functional domains, and its lexical and grammatical structure. On the other hand, our ethnographic observation reveals a significant potential for cultural and linguistic resistance located in the close network structures of traditional kinship and farming, everyday communication, and in part in the traditional cargo system of local organization, elements of language maintenance which tend to co-occur.

Significant macro-societal factors of displacement coincide with elements such as these in other well-researched cases where language shift has actually taken place (see Gal, 1979; Fasold, 1984; Fishman, 1991, 2001; Kulick, 1992, and others). As I had argued before, however, there are good reasons not to establish a direct, causal relationship between macro societal factors and linguistic data to predict the communities' sociolinguistic behaviour in the future. Before the why-question of language shift can be addressed from an integrative, broader perspective, we still have to explore in more detail and depth the how-question, the process and mechanisms through which language shift actually takes place. My assumption is that a fine-grained multi-layer discourse analysis of language in interaction, that is the place where shift is in fact anticipated, enacted, and consolidated, can shed light on the interlinking constituents that relate socio-economic factors with linguistic data.

Ethnographic observation suggests that the recent changes in settlement patterns, migrant work, and political organization described above have led to a significant increase and a qualitative transformation of certain kinds of speech event. More everyday communication takes place due to people living closer together. More and more governmental and private institutions interfere with community life. Whereas in the past a

single traditional authority or 'cacique' used to take many decisions individually, today almost all important resolutions are established collectively. Thus new and different types of committees, cooperatives, *cargos* (posts), and electoral procedures have emerged over time which have transformed many kinds of meetings into key ethnographic events for community organization. New literacy needs have thus emerged within the local societies' predominantly oral, vernacular culture that affect the communities' communicative repertoire.¹¹ An initial schema of speech events emerges from this ethnography, based on a general pattern of language distribution over key speech situations.

At this point we reach the limits of traditional ethnographic analysis. The scrutiny of a schema of speech events can only yield language surface descriptions as in domain analysis, that is it assesses the presence, coexistence, or absence of the languages involved. It is not able, however, to interpret the functions and effects of language choice and alternations. Nor can it describe and interpret the complex modalities of language conflict and shift, since many of their components do not appear on the language surface.

To unravel the concrete, interactive functioning of these kinds of language processes, we used a multi-layer approach of discourse analysis which deals separately with various aspects of discourse constitution. It includes the formal organization of interaction (conversation analysis), action structure (frames or action schemas, speech acts, cf. pragmatics), and communicative schemas such as argumentation and narrative. Language choice and switching phenomena are analysed as a further level of discourse organization. Further aspects of discourse constitution can be included as distinct levels of analysis if needed (Hamel, 1982, 1988a).

Modalities of language shift: ruptures and phase shift between cultural models, discourse structure and language use

Our corpus comprises speech events in various settings; analysis focuses on key events including the organization of collective farm work, local administration (Hamel, 1988a; Sierra, 1992), the legal system (Hamel, 1996; Sierra, 1990, 1995), and bilingual education (Hamel, 1988b; Francis and Hamel, 1992). It has revealed that the processes of language conflict and shift occur on at least three levels of cognitive and discourse organization that can be distinguished analytically (Figure 4.1).

Cultural models and procedures (CM)

Components: concepts and definitions of speech events, procedures (such as procedures of politeness, of problem solving, etc.), conflict or conciliation management (e.g. discourse styles of bureaucratic procedure vs. ethnic styles in intercultural communication), overreaching discourse styles, habitus, and their underlying world views

Discourse structures (DS)

Techniques for the organization of interaction (turn-taking, sequencing, etc.), pragmatic categories such as verbal action schemes, techniques for argumentation, narration, etc., discourse strategies

Linguistic codes and structures (LC)

Units on all levels of systemic linguistic analysis: phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics.

Figure 4.1 Discourse levels of language conflict

The first level of cultural models takes elements from a range of fields. Starting with the ethnographic tradition of 'ways of doing things' and Goffman's (1974) frame analysis, it draws on Bourdieu's habitus concept (1979, 1980) and encompasses developments in cognitive anthropology and related fields (Holland and Quinn, 1987; D'Andrade and Strauss, 1992). It refers to overreaching, endurable categories that cannot be reduced to discourse structures, although in many cases there are corresponding discourse units on level 2.

In the case of Hñähñú, level 1 includes procedures and models of farming and other problem-solving devices, or conflict and conciliation management. They may materialize in social and ethnic styles that are commonly related to a specific habitus and may activate a certain range of discourse strategies. Two problems arise here: how to operationalize this level without recurrence to discourse categories; and how to distinguish it in each case from the level of discourse structures. It was necessary to introduce this level beyond the more traditional dual framework of discourse vs linguistic structure (for example Gumperz, 1982) for two reasons: (a) because of its enduring, habitus-type characteristics which go beyond specific discourse structures; and (b) because there were cases where a rupture between these cultural models and given discourse structures occurs and in which this divergence is relevant (see the following examples). Levels 2 and 3 are more or less self-explanatory. Many relevant phenomena like code-switching and borrowings may be analysed on level 2 (function) and level 3 (form).

Traditionally, language shift or loss is investigated only on the third level of analysis, the object of mainstream descriptive linguistics. As we shall see, however, changes on the linguistic surface can very often only be explained if levels of discourse and cultural organization that underlie surface structure are taken into account.

Among the most revealing findings was the discovery that language shift regularly operates through ruptures and phase shifts between the different levels of discourse organization mentioned above. Such dislocations transform the cultural basis of interpretation for the ethnolinguistic group, that is they interfere with their cultural models and lead to breaches between the language in use and the historical experience the group has accumulated over time (Lang, 1980).

In the Mezquital Valley, at least two different modalities of language can be distinguished, both of which operate through three phases of language dislocation and ruptures between levels of discourse organization as shown in an idealized form in Figure 4.2.

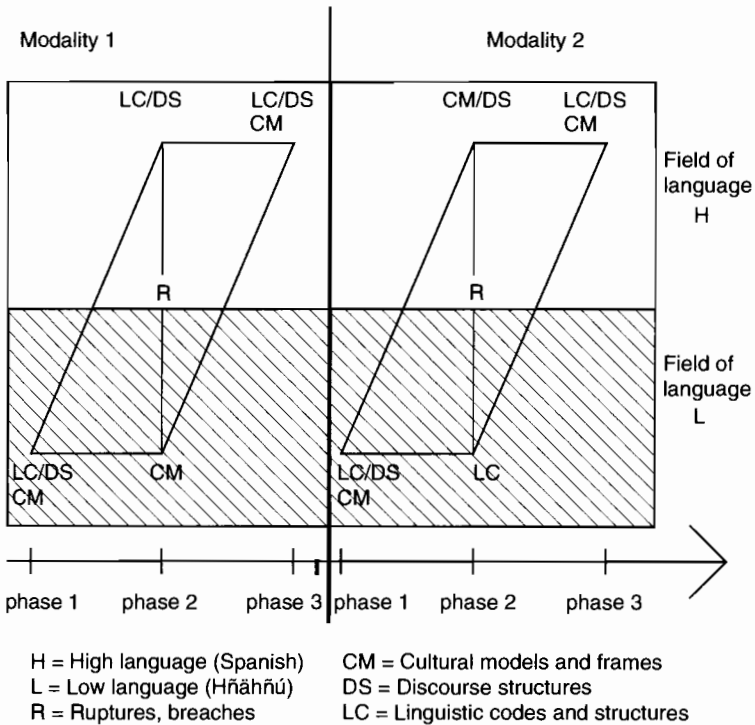


Figure 4.2 Modalities of language shift

Modality 1

- *Phase 1:* Before the national language and culture break into a certain domain at a given point in history, the three levels coincide within the indigenous universe.
- *Phase 2:* In some cases changing conditions will at first force the speakers to adopt new linguistic codes and discourse structures from the dominant language. This typically happens in domains of central relevance for social organization and language conflict: in bilingual education, local and regional administration, and in a series of contact situations between the communities and external agents (bureaucracy, service institutions, banks, and so on). The new linguistic codes and discourse structures remain inherently incomprehensible in the first instance, because the Indian speakers cannot establish a relationship between them and their own historical and biographical experience.
- *Phase 3:* It is only in the third phase that the breach is overcome, reuniting cultural patterns, discourse structures, and linguistic codes in the realm of the dominant language and mainstream culture. Language and discourse phenomena that used to be incomprehensible now become accessible, since at this stage indigenous speakers have acquired the modes of appropriation of social experience from the dominant society, that is the cultural base of interpretation for their linguistic codes and discourse patterns. In sum, the Indian language, its discourse structures and cultural models are gradually excluded in a complex process consisting of three phases in which one or two discourse levels are replaced at the time. In the long run this process leads to a situation where the indigenous language is abandoned and, according to Mexican ethnicity ideology, a given community is no longer considered indigenous, but rural ('campesina') in generic terms.

The third phase is no doubt the most idealized in this framework. Very often it is never reached as a homogeneous cultural model belonging to the mainstream society on a large scale. Frequently new syncretic models emerge and stabilize over time in a hybrid area somewhere in between the two language fields, as is sustained by researchers in sociolinguistics (cf. Hill and Hill, 1986) and anthropology (cf. Bonfil Batalla, 1990). Nevertheless, in many cases it can be shown that the cycle of language shift is completed when a new coherence is established between cultural models, discourse structure, and linguistic surface structure in the realm of the dominant language.¹²

Let us consider a contact situation where usually the indigenous language prevails (internal meeting), but where the presence of an

external agent imposes Spanish as the main but not exclusive language of the meeting.

Case 1: Settlement of damages in the cooperative

Participants: RB = employee of the agricultural bank; A, B, C, ... = indigenous peasants, members of the ejido; K = indigenous peasant and primary school teacher.

Setting: A bank employee is participating in a meeting of the peasant council in Pozuelos which takes place in the inner court of a peasant house used as a regular meeting place in the village.

Topic: Procedural questions regarding the settlement of damages for a lost harvest are discussed with the bank employee.

Background: The last harvest was lost due to the lack of rain. Since the harvest was insured, a damage settlement was claimed. One of the conditions for settlement is that the peasants must have sown between two pre-established dates (15–25 July, and in this case 1–8 July). Harvest insurance is a new procedure for the indigenous peasants in Pozuelos. The previous year they lost indemnities because they did not know how to present their claims. This year the agricultural bank granted a loan for the seeds, which can only be recovered if the insurance company settles damages. The bank employee, whose bank is interested in a damage settlement, calls this meeting to help the peasants prepare the damage claim, just a week before an insurance agent is to visit the village to investigate the situation. In sum, a potential conflict of interests between two institutions (the insurance company and the bank) is at stake, a setting which is altogether alien to the peasants' experience.

Transcription (the text in Hñähñú is underlined>).

1st segment

- 1 RB entonces usted don Vidal, así son dos hectáreas, no se, no se reportaron..
well then, don Vidal, it's two hectares, you didn't report them..
- 2 no sé si ya sembró.. o sembraron
I don't know whether you sowed already.. or did you sow
- 3 B sí ya sembré ahorita
yes I've sown just now
- 4 RB pero después del 15 de julio.. entonces va a decir usted cualquier día
but after July 15.. then you will tell them any day

- 5 después del 15 de Julio del 15 al 25 de julio, pero cualquier día
after July 15 July 15 to 25, just any day
- 6 B haha
yes
- 7 RB presenta usted para que le reconozcan (IC),
you [tell them] to make them accept it (IC),
- 8 B haha.haha.haha
yes, yes, yes
- 9 RB porque si no no le van a reconocer nada ... ¡Ventura Mendieta
Sánchez!
'cause otherwise they won't acknowledge anything ... (NAME)
- 2nd segment
- 10 RB por ahí ¡Teotonio Angeles Hernández! son dos
there now, (NAME) there are
- 11 C ¡presente!
here!
- 12 RB hectáreas, nos reportó una una no está sembrada
2 hectares, you reported one one hasn't been sowed
- 13 C haha
yes
- 14 RB si está sembrada es después del 15
if it has been sowed it was after the 15th
- 15 C sí..el 15
yes..the 15th
- 16 RB así es.. y sembró del primero al ocho de julio
very well..and you sowed between July 1st and 8
- 17 C sí
yes
- 18 RB ¿se acuerda? del primero al ocho de julio, no la
remember? from July 1st to 8th, just don't
- 19 C sí
yes
- 20 RB vayan a regar, cuando la rieguen, todo esto se va abajo, eh?
mess it up, if you do, [it'll all come down on you], ok?
- 21 C sí
yes
- 22 K oxqui punfri nu ra fecha porque nu b-u ya con con que-a hinda recibi
don't forget the date, 'cause otherwise with. With.. they won't accept it

23 C

haha

yes

24 RB ¡Absalón Pérez B.!

(NAME)

*Analysis*¹³

The analysis follows standard procedures for multi-layer analysis in the following order:

- 1 The formal organization of the sequential structure: turn-taking, conditional relevance, etc.
- 2 Action structure analysis (verbal action pattern or frame, speech acts, strategies).
- 3 Social relations.
- 4 Language distribution.
- 5 Traces of language shift in process.

Point 5 integrates the analysis by describing general strategies of minorization, the establishment of hegemony, and the rupture between experience and discourse structure.

1. Sequential structure The bank employee calls on one peasant after the other to analyse each case. All other peasants are present. Segment 1 represents the standard procedure. Segment 2 contains two expansions.

In terms of the local management of the sequential structure RB controls the distribution of turns throughout the session. By calling on each peasant he selects the next speaker (lines 9, 10, 24) and principal interlocutor for this segment. No self-selection takes place except by K, the teacher (22), who intervenes as a cultural broker and translates the instruction into Hñähñú. RB maintains institutional control over the initiation of each pair sequence (summons – reply). He establishes conditional relevance very directly through the list (number of reported hectares, sowing dates). His organizational control is marked by a loud, official voice, and a fast, 'executive type' speed and voice modulation; names are shouted out in accordance with custom in such (and bigger) meetings.

2. Action structure Here we identify verbal interaction patterns or frames, speech acts and strategies. From a pragmatic perspective we explore how turns and utterances are constituted as actions and how they enact interaction patterns.

RB establishes the action structure of the event based on a general pattern of business meetings with a fixed agenda and a chairperson

(institutional role). The verbal interaction pattern (VIP) contains the following underlying structural units or steps:

- 1 Opening and establishment of the agenda.
- 2 Participants' roll.
- 3 Discussion of business.
- 4 Conclusions, resolutions.
- 5 Formal closings.

Within step 3 a small VIP is enacted and repeated with each peasant (P), altogether 11 times.

Steps:

- 1 Calling a name (RB) and verifying presence (RB + P).
- 2 Stating reported information (RB).
- 3 Verifying, clarifying information (RB + P).
- 4 Instructing future action concerning report (RB).
- 5 Dismissal through initiation of next VIP (calling new name) (RB).

In the first segment the standard model develops. RB utters direct instructions for the peasant's future action in the form of directive speech acts (orders, instructions) (lines 4, 5, 7). Indeed, he instructs the peasant (B) very bluntly how to act at the meeting with the insurance agent. Then he adds a justification (7) with the illocutionary force of a warning (9).

The second segment contains two expansions. First we find an exhortation in the form of a pattern expansion intended to develop a shared perspective of the issue (18–21). RB defines the situation as a counselling event with this utterance. From the point of view of social relations, the turn (18, 20) also contains a proposal to establish a relationship of complicity which is accomplished through its uttering and ratification by the peasant (21, 23).

The second expansion consists of a pattern reinforcement uttered by the peasant teacher (K) who acts as a cultural broker and repeats the instructions in Hñähñú (22). He focuses on the decisive question of the sowing date.

3. Social relations Social relations are in general terms asymmetrical: RB is a member of the dominant society; he is the expert, and he controls the session resorting to series of discursive resources (list, and so on). Unlike many other interethnic encounters in these communities, however, all participants are making an obvious effort to build up a working relationship of cooperation and to keep the objective and

subjective tension (Bourdieu, 1980) as low as possible. Although the bank employee maintains control during the whole session, no conversational sanctions against the indigenous speakers can be observed. RB makes a significant effort to establish a relationship of complicity which is more evident in segment 2 than in segment 1 and consolidates over time. K acts as cultural broker.

4. Language distribution Language choice and distribution fit neatly into the picture of cooperation. Spanish dominates throughout the event, but Hñähñú is never excluded. Participant-oriented language choice obliges the Indians to use Spanish in their interactions with the monolingual bank employee. In spite of their obviously limited competence there are no signs of stigmatization *vis-à-vis* their ethnic dialect of Spanish or the use of Hñähñú among themselves. The competent bilingual teacher intervenes as an interpreter when communication is at risk.

5. Traces of language shift in process Our discourse analysis reveals some basic mechanisms of language shift *in actu* as part of an overall process of language minoritization. It is precisely the kind of hegemonic constellation (in a Gramscian sense) described above that sets the stage for language minoritization and displacement. Given the overall power relations, limited competence in Spanish and task-related deficiencies in the indigenous discourse repertoire are exhibited as 'objective' shortcomings, without the need to resort to stigmatization or meta-discursive discrimination. Such interethnic conditions create a favourable climate for the adoption of frames, discourse techniques and pragmatic conventions from the dominant society, as can be observed in this example.

Frequently the peasants' general insecurity becomes evident, as is manifested by hesitation phenomena and other conversational cues; they obviously find it extremely difficult to interpret the technical relations between sowing dates and damage claims, and to decipher the underlying discourse patterns (DS) they have to rehearse in Spanish (LC), since they do not correspond to their cultural models (CM) of farming experience (see schema 3). According to their own cultural base, sowing and harvesting are determined by a different time logic related to the climate, to rain and drought, not to fixed calendar dates. The breach between language and discourse structures on the one hand, and historically accumulated experience (the cultural model), on the other, is clearly demonstrated in this instance of adopting new discourse techniques needed for a successful damage claim.

The new convergence of the three discourse levels in the dominant universe (phase 3) is virtually foreshadowed in the teacher's and other

cultural brokers' behaviour, since they have at least in part acquired the cultural models crystallized in the discourse and language structures which make them comprehensible.

Modality 2

A second modality that can be reconstructed from the data concerns a shift in cultural models:

- *Phase 1:* Here too, the three discourse levels coincide within the realm of the indigenous culture before Spanish makes its inroads.
- *Phase 2:* In this phase the cultural models (CM) and in part the discourse structures (DS) from the national society are introduced first, whereas the indigenous language (LC) remains present on the surface. Examples of this modality can be found in intra-ethnic institutional (or semi-institutional) speech events on the community level such as dispute settlements (conciliations), committee meetings, or general assemblies where certain obligatory rules of native language use apply predominantly (field A, in part B, of schema 1). Members of the new leadership (teachers, migrant workers) typically introduce new procedures for political and social organization such as agendas and participant roles for meetings, the nomination of chairpersons or steering committees, written reports, summaries, elections, among others.
- *Phase 3:* Once the cultural models and discourse patterns are well-established and a conceptual, that is a cognitive reorientation has taken place, the loss of the native language on the surface level (LC) can occur more easily, given the asymmetric power relations that obtain between the two language groups. At this point Spanish seems much more appropriate than the Indian language to satisfy new communicative needs. Thus, also through this modality the production and appropriation of social experience may ultimately converge within the dominant culture and language, unless a process of language awareness and resistance emerges at this point as sometimes occurs in language shift situations (cf. Hill and Hill, 1986).

Case 2: Community assembly – passing over the judge's office

This case corresponds to phase 2 of the second modality. The indigenous language (LC) is maintained as the legitimate means of communication, although Spanish breaks in through side sequences and in specific episodes (report, and so on) (field B of schema 1). The assembly as a whole is a fairly new event (CM), which contains some traditional ethnic discourse units; in the decisive episodes, however, new discourse

structures (DS) (chair, participant roles, oral report based on written text, and others) dominate the course of action.

Participants: OJ = outgoing judge, a teacher; S = secretary; NJ = new judge, a peasant; CH = chairperson; C1-X = some 100 citizens (family heads), mainly peasants.

Setting: At this general assembly all citizens of the village Decá are summoned to participate in the annual ritual event of handing over the judge's office to the new office bearer elected in a previous assembly.

Topic: The main point on the agenda is the handing over of the judge's office. The judge is at the same time the mayor, that is the highest authority in the community. Prior to the act itself the outgoing judge renders an activity report which has to be discussed and approved. Then the judge's office is handed over.

Background: The annual election and installation of the judge in two subsequent assemblies constitute a highlight in the community's political life, since the nomination of candidates, the election itself and the report of activities presented by the outgoing judge open a space for sometimes controversial debates on local politics, value systems and community norms.¹⁴ In former times the selection of the new office bearer was performed through a much less public procedure in the Hñähñú villages, such as the nomination by the predecessor or the council of the elderly. At the time of our data collection in the early eighties, however, a more democratic schema had been adopted, without all procedural details already having been defined, as we shall see.

The analysed speech event is a general assembly convened to hand over the judge's office; it comprises three key episodes: the debate about the nomination of a chair for the meeting (for the first time in this village), the report of activities presented by the outgoing judge, and the handing over of office.

A first segmentation of the transcript reveals a number of noteworthy phenomena. First, the main active participants (mostly school teachers and other cultural brokers) engage in extended and complex conversational activities to establish, open, carry through and close the assembly. Second, a number of very explicit focusing accomplishments occur which function to establish and re-establish order according to the overall verbal interaction pattern of the meeting. Some of the obstacles that hamper the orderly development of the meeting show up very clearly in the complex interlinking of the sequential structure on the surface and the underlying verbal action structure (Figure 4.3).

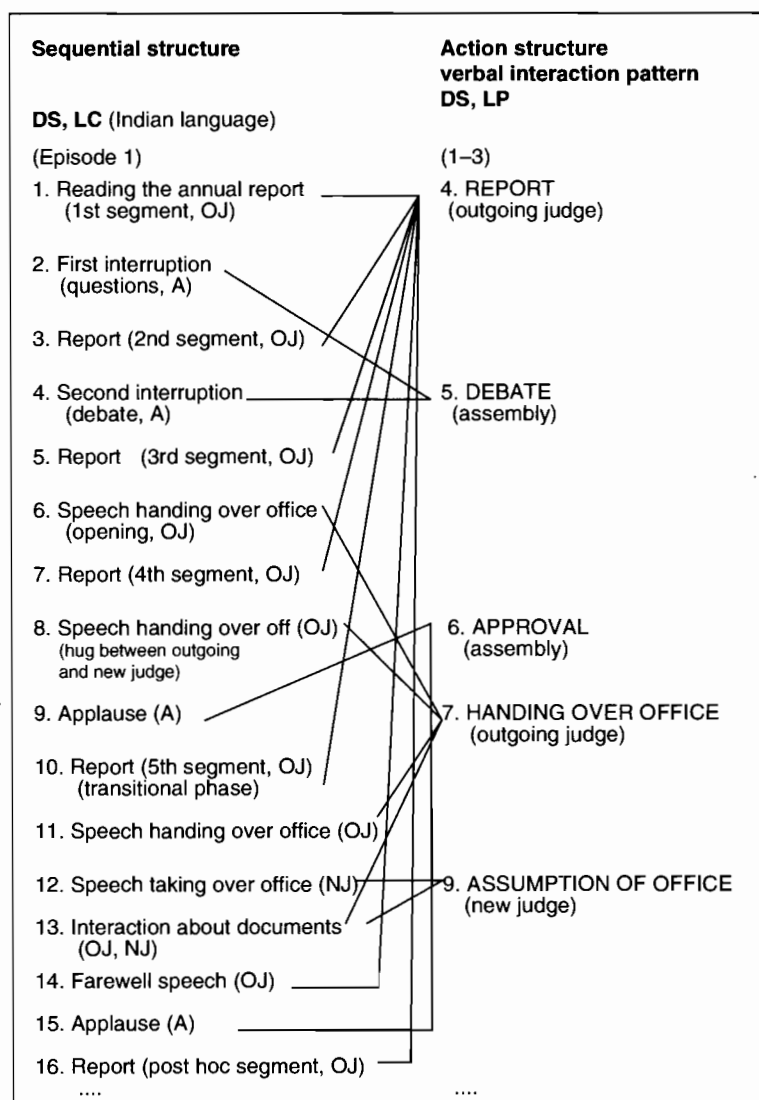


Figure 4.3 Community assembly: handing over the judge's office
(OJ = outgoing judge, NJ = new judge, A = assembly)

*Analysis*¹⁵

The assembly is based on a verbal interaction pattern which contains, in a simplified version, the following steps: (1) establishment of opening conditions; (2) formal opening; (3) agreement on the agenda, election of a chairperson, and beginning; (4) activity report (OJ); (5) debate; (6) approval (or disapproval); (7) handing over the office (OJ); (8) assumption of office (NJ); (9) handing over other offices (secretary, treasurer, etc.); (10) formal resolutions and closing (Figure 4.3 only shows steps 4 to 8).

Striking intersections occur between certain steps in the action (structure, report, debate, approval, handing over the office) and the sequential structure. The report is interrupted several times by activities belonging to other steps of the action structure which violate the sequential logic. Indeed, the report continues even after (segment 16) the official transfer of office has happened, at a time when the outgoing judge is no longer in office.¹⁶

A complex pattern of post-diglossic language distribution can be observed, where domain boundaries are weakened through the leakage of functions and mixing of forms. Although Hñähñú still acts as the legitimate language of communication in the assembly, Spanish is already making its inroads into the event. In many side sequences among the leading figures of the assembly, as well as through code-shifting into Spanish in the report and other formal episodes, the dominant language is present.

All these phenomena characterize the assembly as an event undergoing a fundamental process of change. Many of its constituent parts and procedures are not yet well established. Public elections and taking up office are derived from new cultural models imported from the wider national society. Detailed discourse analysis reveals how difficult it is to establish the corresponding discourse structures such as verbal interaction patterns as general frames of orientation. Here again we encounter the breach between levels of discourse organization typical for processes of language shift. In this case, the process starts with the introduction of cultural models and, in part, discourse structures from the national society, whereas the indigenous language is maintained on the surface level in phase 2. Once more, the perspective of total shift is prefigured in the behaviour of the cultural brokers who demonstrate a sustained language preference for Spanish in this kind of event through numerous code-switches and transfers.

In both modalities of language shift, the typical breach and phase shift between language codes, discourse structure, and cultural models

leads to a rupture between socio-historical production and the discursive appropriation of experience. Such a procedure of cultural and linguistic fragmentation has proven to be an effective language policy strategy that tends to minoritize subordinate ethnolinguistic cultures.

Sociolinguistic theory and method: the role of cultural models, discourse and language structure

At the beginning I had argued that a deeper understanding of language shift would imply a change in focus from the analysis of large-scale outcomes of language shift to the processes themselves. Three related issues surface from my analysis which call for debate and further research: (1) the sociolinguistics of societal bi- and multilingualism; (2) the phases, dynamics, and mechanisms of language shift; and (3) the relation between societal macro factors and linguistic behaviour.

The social relationship between hegemonic and subordinate languages

In order to comprehend more fully the mechanisms of language shift it seems to me that we will have to reconceptualize first of all the relationship between 'high' and 'low' languages and the corresponding frameworks of interpretation. In the sociology of language this relationship relates to the structural and functional attributes of the languages themselves as reflected in the classic concept of diglossia (Ferguson, 1959; Fishman, 1967, 1980). Languages or dialect varieties possess high or low status, they are labelled as having \pm morphological complexity, \pm prestige, \pm literacy, and so forth. Languages appear thus isolated from discourse, culture, and from their speakers. The underlying concept of languages in contact or conflict constitutes a metonymic metaphor, a reduction which excludes the speakers. Of course, it is not languages which are in contact but speakers, users, language communities for whom the languages may be the object and sometimes the instrument of a social relationship of conflict and struggle. And very rarely do the frontiers and conflict lines coincide neatly with the language boundaries involved. Therefore, a framework is called for which (re)incorporates the pragmatic dimension of discourse and the actors, and differentiates between various dimensions of language structure, discourse, and culture.

The findings of my research – as well as those of other studies (for example Gal, 1979; Kulick, 1992) – lead to the conclusion that the mechanisms underlying language conflict, shift, or maintenance

processes are less defined by patterns of language distribution over domains than by clashes between cultural models, competing discourse strategies and discourse styles. These phenomena are based on communicative repertoires and speakers' resources, among which language choice and code-switching are a central but not exclusive component. Hence the dividing lines of conflict and shift do not necessarily coincide with language boundaries on the surface. Social relations of domination which refer directly to cultural conflict are produced, in my research, both in Spanish and in the indigenous language. A member of parliament of Hñähñú heritage from the state party PRI may well develop a 'dominant' discourse in the Indian language. And many acts of protest and resistance may be presented in Spanish, but based on ethnic cultural patterns.¹⁷

Thus a theoretically appropriate model should not start with the languages as abstract entities, but with the social relations of power and dominance between communities and their members, relationships which are often implemented under the modalities of hegemony and subalternity. Although the two languages in question proto-typically appear as central foci in such a framework,¹⁸ the relations of power are constituted and reproduced with variable discursive resources. It is only on the basis of a great number of repetitive procedures in the (re)production of discourse patterns and strategies that overreaching, more stable discourse styles (cultural models) emerge and consolidate as general forms of habitus. In this perspective, the old debate about 'languages in contact' vs 'languages in conflict' loses much of its relevance since it only refers to surface phenomena that do not necessarily reflect the underlying relations of power. In our case, as in many others, the construction of hegemony and the mechanisms of language displacement work most efficiently when no open conflict is in sight.

Mechanisms of language shift

The structural provisions for language shift are rooted in the remarkable synchronic heterogeneity of the indigenous communicative system. Its broad repertoire of coexisting resources serves as a starting point for a gradual redistribution of coexisting variants based on a reassessment of values and meaning potentials (status, efficiency, ethnic loyalty) attached to each of the languages concerned. A systematic comparison of different speakers' verbal behaviour in each speech event, of discourse strategies across events, of types of speech events and of different communities allow us to construct an 'apparent time' axis of the historical

process of change in language choice patterns, discourse patterns and cultural models. As a typical procedure we encounter relatively long-lasting processes of negotiation which start with the first occurrence of a new pattern in a few speakers' repertoire and culminate with its general acceptance and use by the local speech community. Sometimes participants explicitly discuss a new procedure or refer to novel terms or patterns in stretches of metadiscursive speech.¹⁹ In most cases, however, the degree of innovation of a given item, its evaluation and its relative acceptance will have to be reconstructed through the procedures and levels of discourse analysis shown above.

The examples analysed in this paper highlight the great complexity typical in many language conflict and shift situations. Indeed, it proved impossible to restrict the analysis to the linguistic codes and structures on the surface as is usually the case in traditional sociolinguistics, since decisive shift phenomena occurred at the levels of discourse structures and cultural models. As we have seen, a typical process of language shift is often triggered by new discourse patterns and cultural models which are introduced while the minority language is still preserved on the surface during a certain phase.

In both modalities of language shift the ruptures and phase dislocations between the three levels (culture, discourse, language) in the Hñähñús' communicative universe led to a contradiction between the historical production of experience (e.g. farm work, political organization) and its linguistic-discursive appropriation. This first step of cultural fragmentation belongs to the typical repertoire of language policy strategies that promote the minoritization of a subordinate ethnolinguistic group; the process occurs largely behind the backs of the speakers. It operates even more efficiently because it works as a strategy without a 'strategic calculus', a process which is not planned consciously and in which the minority group members participate actively. The most significant and probably most enduring effect of language displacement is achieved when a given discourse in the dominant language, which initially remained incomprehensible for the minority language speakers, becomes comprehensible because they have by and large adopted the forms of appropriation of the social experience inherent in the discourse.

Macro societal factors and language shift

At the beginning I discussed the central issues concerning the relationship between macro societal factors and linguistic behaviour, and the

resulting explanatory and predictive power of models for language shift. Perhaps these questions could now be reformulated in a more precise way.

Rather than interpret language shift as a direct, causal effect of socio-economic change, it has to be seen as the outcome of intervening cognitive and pragmatic instances such as the reorientation of the minority speakers towards new languages, their cultural models, and pragmatic conventions. In the long run such a reorientation may lead to a change in their ethnic status. This approach focuses on the markers and traces of language shift *in actu* and *in situ*; that is, in the process of verbal interaction itself. It seeks to argue theoretically and demonstrate empirically the ways in which language (surface) structure, discourse structure, and cultural models form constitutive components of language shift. It seems that processes of language change (shift or revitalization) function, perhaps typically, through ruptures and phase dislocations between the three levels of analysis.

The Hispanic community in the USA: cultural models, discourse structures, language use

No doubt this approach and methodological procedure could yield interesting results in the many other contexts of language contact, including in the Hispanic world. The sociolinguistics of Spanish in the USA is a case in point. From the point of view of the Spanish language community, a new member has emerged with its own characteristics that plays a key role in the relationship between Spanish and English. For some (Mar-Molinero, 2004), even the future of Spanish as a global language is at stake in the USA.

The question of whether immigrants eventually assimilate and give up their languages has been a key issue for the sociology of language (Fishman, 1964). Given the enormous growth of the Hispanic community to over 30 million in the USA, this controversial question is discussed increasingly often in relation to Spanish. Whereas some researchers document ongoing language shift (Veltman, 1983, 1990; Hudson, Hernández Chávez and Bills, 1995; Bills, Hernández Chávez and Hudson, 1995), others (Huntington, 2004) sustain that the Hispanics are no longer assimilating in the same way as other immigrants in the past, thus apparently violating a foundational contract of the American nation and provoking a crisis of its national identity.

A micro-macro approach certainly has the potential to draw a much more differentiated picture of the language situation in the USA than did Huntington's recent rather crude statistical review. It could shed light on the hybrid nature of multiple contact and conflict aspects

which connect language, discourse, and culture in complex ways. No doubt ruptures between these components occur on a massive scale. Many Hispanics experience such cultural and communicative fragmentation upon their arrival. They then adopt new cultural and discourse patterns while still speaking Spanish in a given context. Conversely, they often act on the basis of their traditional patterns and encounter conflict and cultural misunderstandings when using English in domains where it is mandatory. Language shift in terms of interrupted intergenerational transmission no doubt continues. By the time many immigrants understand what were to them initially incomprehensible types of US discourse, even in Spanish, they will have adopted the social experience inherent in those discourse patterns. At the same time, Hispanic (Mexican) culture is experiencing a period of vigorous renaissance, either reshaped as US Latino culture, or reinforcing traditional heritage patterns in the US-Mexican community. Spanish in its multiple varieties is consolidating in some domains and moving forcefully into others (Suárez, 2002).²⁰ From a perspective of individual and societal enrichment and additive bilingualism, this process shows dynamic signs of a new hybrid bilingual repertoire. A simple analysis of the surface phenomena – the presence or absence of Spanish in a given domain – will certainly not suffice to explain the complex landscape of language dynamics in the USA.

Back to the macro: findings on the micro level as a basis for language policy

There can be little doubt that the findings from integrated micro–macro research in sociolinguistics and discourse analysis are essential if we are to draw a more differentiated picture of language contact situations and shift processes as a basis for language policy and planning decisions. Such an enterprise will work successfully if the initial hypotheses that guide the research design and data collection include central macro issues from the perspective of sociolinguistics and language policy. In my own research on language conflict and shift, bilingual education, institutional interaction and other topics, I usually start with macro questions (conflict, shift, identity, power) that orient a step-by-step procedure which moves from macro to mezzo levels (ethnography, speech events), then to the micro (interactional discourse analysis) in order to return to a macro level of interpretation.

Research on language policy in Latin America has not yet fully explored the richness of the diverse and multiple language situations in

its territory, despite significant explorations on many topics (for example Heath, 1972; Cerrón-Palomino, 1993; Cifuentes and Rosmeso, 1993; Hornberger, 1997; López and Jung, 1998; Hamel, 1993, 2001, to quote but a few). Present indigenous movements that increasingly challenge the homogeneous nation-state voice demands relating to linguistic rights such as the use of their languages in education and other public domains of political relevance. There are calls to move away from a traditional assimilationist education and strive for a new pluricultural and plurilingual perspective of integration without assimilation. Since its rebellion in 1994, the principal demands of the indigenous Zapatista movement in Mexico have clustered around the central concept of autonomy, as have those of other, less well-known movements in Colombia, Panama, Bolivia and elsewhere. It is difficult to imagine that any language policy – or the study of it – could be relevant and successful if it reduces its scope languages to objectified structural entities, without taking into account the discursive repertoires, dynamic systems of action, language ideologies and cultural models sustained by their collective subjects/protagonists. All these topics call for detailed analysis on the mezzo and micro level.

Similarly, Spain's present quest to reconstruct its linguistic and cultural hegemony in the Spanish-speaking world based on the ideology of grandeur, cohesion and unity of the Spanish language (see Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman, 2004, chapter 10), will probably fail as long as it is sustained by a reductionist and idealized concept of the 'langue' that excludes foundational components such as diverse communicative repertoires and cultural models. As discourse patterns and cultural models usually vary more than the structure of the language itself within a language community, any attempt to reestablish a common Hispanic identity will encounter significant difficulties as long as it does not take into account differentiated discourse traditions, cultural models and local communities which serve as the prime referents for identity planning and construction. These points of reference central to diverse Spanish communicative systems are to a large extent responsible for the vitality and strength of the Spanish language.

In the Hispanic world Spanish operates together with its communicative and ideological repertoires in multiple functions and contexts, as a dominant and subordinate language, as border and conflict language as well as the principal focus of identity for millions of speakers, a pluricentric language (Clyne, 1992; Oesterreicher, 2002) at home in more than 21 countries. Given this richness of scope and field, Hispanic sociolinguistics may well contribute significantly to both Hispanic language

debates and general sociolinguistics if it takes up the challenge and seeks to develop models of micro–macro relations able to cope with the richness and diversity of its realm.

Notes

- 1 Whether Nebrija's expression, which accompanied the presentation of his famous early grammar of Spanish, really meant what it is normally quoted as saying has been questioned by detailed historical analysis (Bierbach, 1989). Issued several months before the 'discovery' of America, it was oriented more towards the normalization of Spanish than conceived of as the basis for an imperial language policy. In any case, the discursive effect is evident and has been reinforced by its multiple uses and possible abuses from colonial times to the present day.
- 2 In his well-known typology of languages, De Swaan (1993, 2001) reserves the term 'hyper-central' language to English, whereas the second-layer international languages such as Spanish, French, Portuguese, Russian, German and a few others are called 'super-central' (see also Calvet, 1999, 2002 who adopts this terminology in his ecological model).
- 3 A significant differentiation between divergent ideological orientations related to factual diversity needs to be established here. In my own work (Hamel, 1997, 2000, 2003) I distinguish between 'multiculturalism' and 'pluriculturalism'. The first frames diversity as a problem which includes a certain tolerance of minority rights as an inevitable, but uncomfortable necessity. This is a typical mainstream orientation in the US and most Latin American states that recognize indigenous minorities and their rights, but regard them as a barrier to national unity and promote subtractive bilingualism. 'Pluriculturalism' in turn represents an enrichment orientation which considers diversity as an asset and potential cultural capital for a nation. It is usually related to additive bilingualism. The term 'pluriculturalism', although it is less used in English, recovers UN and UNESCO terminology and retrieves positive connotations *vis-à-vis* the more neutral 'multiculturalism'.
- 4 Except the USA and, to a lesser extent, a handful of other central imperial states, as Chomsky (2003) so brilliantly points out.
- 5 The borders of Spanish establish a dynamic relationship with national frontiers. Whereas they are blurring in South America between Brazil and its Hispanic neighbours given increasing regional integration, the 'hard' border in North America between the USA and Mexico does no longer exist as a true linguistic borderline. In Spain, on the contrary, the regional autonomies of Catalonia and the Basque country are reinforcing their linguistic boundaries against Spanish.
- 6 I use the term 'sociolinguistics' here as the broadest term to encompass all different approaches that relate language and society, including the sociology of language (see Fishman's foreword to Glyn Williams' (1992) sociological critique of sociolinguistics).
- 7 Fishman himself has radicalized his own process of taking sides in favour of the oppressed language groups of the world, in a countermovement to the general trend of increasingly depoliticized sociolinguistics elsewhere.
- 8 An pioneering exception is Gal (1979). Throughout the 1980s and 90s, more integrated approaches emerged (for example Heller, 1994, 1999),

including in the field of Hispanic sociolinguistics (Woolard, 1989; Hamel, 1988a), despite the general tendency of fragmentation I refer to later on.

- 9 The critique of 'grand theories' in sociology and their impossibility of falsification in Glaser and Strauss' (1967) first chapter of *Grounded Theory* is still today a jewel of theoretical debate well worth reading.
- 10 The Hñähñú are better known as 'Otomí', meaning 'bird arrow' or 'bird hunter', a Nahuatl name imposed during Aztec domination before Spanish colonization. Today the group is recovering its name 'Hñähñú' in its own language, meaning 'sons of the people hñú'. Hñähñú has now become the official name of the sixth largest indigenous people in Mexico with some 280,000 members according to the 1990 census.
- 11 On the development of literacy practices in this area, see Hamel (1996).
- 12 In no way does this framework claim to be deterministic in the sense that it predicts a *necessary* outcome of the process. Its aim is to reconstruct a process as can be shown retrospectively in empirical data.
- 13 This is a summary of what is a much more detailed analysis.
- 14 Within our research project, see Sierra (1992) for a detailed analysis of this kind of speech event.
- 15 In this case analysis will be restricted to a structural comparison between the sequential (level 1) and the action structure (level 2).
- 16 A methodological objection could be raised in the sense that this case might represent a variant of the pattern which is specific for the Hñähñú culture. Detailed analysis reveals, however, that the chairperson's interventions are not ratified and typically occur when the report gets stuck. Furthermore, all active participants engage in conspicuous focussing activities which reveal the 'inappropriate' embedding of the sequences in question (see Hamel, 1988a).
- 17 This appears very clearly in the discourse developed in Mexico by the indigenous EZLN (Zapatista Army of National Liberation) in their negotiations with the federal government during 1994 and 1995 and in their public interventions since.
- 18 This occurs mainly at the level of diglossic ideologies, cf. Gardy and Lafont (1981), see also Woolard (1998) and Silverstein (1998).
- 19 These comments are relatively easy to obtain in interviews and other elicitation procedures (Hill and Hill, 1986; Muñoz Cruz, 1987). While useful to generate hypothesis or to confirm other analyses, it is only when they happen in naturally occurring speech events that they acquire their full significance for the discourse approach applied here.
- 20 I will not address here the debate on convergence or preservation of different varieties of Spanish as markers of national identity (see Silva-Corvalán, 1994; Mar-Molinero, 2004).

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