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The Politics of Spanish in the World

Laura Villa and José del Valle

Introduction

This chapter offers an overview of the spread of Spanish as a global language, focusing on the policies and institutions that have worked toward its promotion in the last two decades. The actions of institutions, as well as those of corporate and cultural agencies involved in this sort of language policy, are to be understood as part of a wider movement of internationalization of financial activities and political influence (Blommaert 2010; Coupland 2003, 2010; Fairclough 2006; Heller 2011b; Maurais and Morris 2003; Wright 2004). Our approach to *globalization* (Appadurai 2001; Steger 2003) emphasizes agency and the dominance of a few nations and economic groups within the neo-imperialist order of the global village (Del Valle 2011b; Hamel 2005). In line with this framework, our analysis of language and (the discourse of) globalization focuses on the geostrategic dimension of the politics of Spanish in the world (Del Valle 2007b, 2011a; Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman 2004; Mar-Molinero and Stewart 2006; Paffey 2012).

The first section presents a brief history of the internationalization of Spanish, from its original spread through colonization and its consolidation as the majority language of Latin America—linked to the 19th-century nation-building projects—to the current conditions created by globalization. We will then contextualize this contemporary spread by examining the policies designed by a number of agencies committed to promoting Spanish globally, and will note how the internationalization of markets and political practices has led to linguistic commodification (Del Valle 2007b; Duchêne and Heller 2012; Heller 2003, 2011b). Accordingly, we will first address private investment in the promotion of Spanish as well as language industries and linguistic tourism. Secondly, we will expose the tensions associated with language policy projects sponsored by agencies that represent different political and economic interests. Finally, we will look at the metalinguistic discourses of the agencies in charge of the international spread of Spanish—disseminated through their institutional publications and the echo they produce in the Spanish media—and highlight their preferred fields of action: Asia, Brazil, Europe, the US, and the World Wide Web.

Historical Perspectives

The international spread of Spanish, like that of other European languages—mainly English, French, and Portuguese—was directly connected to colonization (Calvet 1974; Del Valle 2011a; Faraco 2011; Heller 2011a; Pennycook 1998; Phillipson 1992, 2011). However, while Spain's

imperial power—with its political and social practices, its cultural and linguistic traditions—worked in favor of the imperial language, the dominance of Spanish in America resulted from a series of processes that unfolded at different times throughout Spain's colonial territories (Arnoux and Del Valle 2013; Echávez-Solano and Dworkin y Méndez 2007; Del Valle 2013).

For instance, together with Spain's political rule, a slavery-based economy, and the waves of colonists coming from Spain to populate the 'New World', the extermination of entire indigenous communities—by means of war and diseases—led to a faster imposition of Spanish in the Caribbean (Lodares 2007). In the Andean region and in North and Central America, the priority given to evangelization campaigns interfered with Spain's politics of unification (Firbas 2013). In these areas Spanish priests took advantage of indigenous languages that already served as *lingua franca*s—such as Quechua and Nahuatl, which came to be known as general languages and as instruments of communication with—and therefore Christianization of—native Americans who spoke many different indigenous languages. In South America, the use of Tupi-Guarani—the *Guarani Jesuítico*—for evangelization (Ordóñez 2007), and a fairly slow process of racial and cultural mixing, coexisted with independent indigenous settlements that were never entirely under Spain's rule and that, on the contrary, commanded frequent and—as it was in the case of the Mapuches—very successful campaigns against the colonists' dominance.

The final consolidation of Spanish in America went hand in hand with the nation-building undertakings that followed the independence movements in the early 19th century. At the time of independence, and in agreement with the contemporary dominant ideology of nationalism (De Blas Guerrero 1994; Gellner 2008; Hobsbawm 1992; Smith 2000), the adoption of a homogeneous language was not only perceived as a practical requirement for the articulation of the nation, it was also used by the *criollo* elites that led the independence movement as a powerful symbol of national identity and social unification. The political value that lettered culture acquired in the configuration of these projects and the strong investment in the development of public school systems are key features to understand the successful imposition of Spanish as the language of the new nations (Arnoux and Del Valle 2013).

Spain, for its part, took its time to accept the political and economic autonomy of the former colonies, a recognition that, in the majority of cases, did not occur until the second half of the 19th century (Cortada 1994; Pereira Castañares and Cervantes Conejo 1992). In the aftermath of the fall of the empire, Spain's political power and, mainly, its emergent commercial bourgeoisie changed strategies: they abandoned their military aspirations, launched instead a diplomatic campaign and reinforced a discourse of cultural unity in order to foster economic relations and to raise Spain's international standing (Pike 1971; Sepúlveda 2005; van Aken 1959):

The decline of trans-Atlantic commerce, the pinch of economic depression, and the realization that the former possessions were irrevocably lost to the empire, brought the decision to recognize the independence of the young republics. The resulting movement for reconciliation, which had as an immediate goal the inauguration of diplomatic relations, aimed ultimately at the creation of a fraternal coalition of Spanish-speaking countries. Spaniards who favored Hispanic cordiality cherished the hope that commercial and cultural bonds would reunite the territories that had once been held together by political ties of empire.

(van Aken 1959: 115)

Those bonds—promoted through publications such as *La América: Crónica Hispano-Americana* (1857–1886), *La Ilustración Española y América* (1869–1921), and *Revista Española de Ambos Mundos*

(1853–1855), and reinforced by the establishment of organizations such as the Unión Ibero-Americana (1885)—were grounded on ‘an unassailable faith in the existence of a transatlantic Hispanic family, community, or *raza* (race) . . . shaped more by common culture, historical experiences, traditions, and language than by blood or ethnic factors’ (Pike 1971: 1). Following the conceptual framework of linguistic nationalism (Burke 2004; Del Valle 2008; Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman 2004; Moreno Cabrera 2008), Spanish—the common language—became the central feature in the discursive configuration of the Pan-Hispanic community, a community of individuals fraternally linked by their shared language, whose justification—ever since its origins and until the present day—was the protection of Spain’s interests in Latin America (Arnoux and Del Valle 2013; Del Valle 2007b, 2011a; Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman 2004; Senz 2011).

Del Valle (1999, 2007b, 2008, 2011a, 2013) has systematically studied the discourses produced in imagining this community (Anderson 1983), and has showed that these discourses naturalize Pan-Hispanic identity and are therefore structured to erase (Irvine and Gal 2000) or at least to minimize the link between Pan-Hispanism and Spain’s economic interests. When the link is made explicit, though, Latin America is represented as a natural and legitimate target for Spain’s political and commercial aspirations.¹

The background against which Spain’s policies on behalf of the international promotion of Spanish—known as the new Pan-Hispanic language policy (PLP) (ASALE 2004)—were deployed was Spain’s economic takeoff and its ambitions in the international political arena since the late 1980s and early 1990s. Coinciding with these new geopolitical conditions, the institution traditionally associated with the standardization of the language, the Real Academia Española (RAE), started projecting a more open and democratic image. In parallel to RAE’s renewal, in 1991 Spain’s government created the Instituto Cervantes (IC) (in its origins under the oversight of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and currently co-dependent of the Ministry of Culture/Education as well) and charged it with leading efforts to promote Spanish internationally and, along with it, a modern image of the country and its economy (Del Valle 2007b; Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman 2004; Mar-Molinero and Stewart 2006).

Despite the existence of other independent institutions with some control over the safeguard and spread of the language, as we will see in the following sections, RAE and IC have been the most active agencies in the standardization and promotion of Spanish as a global language. Leading the Asociación de Academias de la Lengua Española (ASALE), the RAE has published a new grammar, orthography, and dictionary, and has promoted an image of the language and the institutions charged with its cultivation as modern and democratic. The IC for its part has continued to grow in the decades after its creation, and won control over the international promotion of Spanish: it is now present in 86 cities and 43 countries, and manages an annual budget of approximately 100 million euros.²

Core Issues and Topics

The New Pan-Hispanic Language Policy: The RAE and ASALE Project

The RAE, created in 1713 and modeled after Italy’s Accademia della Crusca and France’s Académie Française, has traditionally engaged in—and even controlled—the standardization of the Spanish language (Fishman 1974; Fishman *et al.* 1968; Hornberger 2006; Rubin 1971). Ever since its establishment, the selection and codification of linguistic norms (corpus planning) was a priority for its members: they published the *Diccionario de autoridades* (1726–1739), the *Ortografía* (1741), and the *Gramática de la lengua castellana* (1771). The development of these three main pillars in the configuration of the standard norm continued throughout the

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19th and 20th centuries, and this institution is nowadays considered the leading authority in language (Milroy and Milroy 1985).

The foundation of associated academies in other Spanish-speaking countries—a process that started in the 1870s as part of the Pan-Hispanic movement discussed in the previous section—culminated with the creation of the ASALE in 1951. This organization has offered a space to foster—and exhibit—the collaboration between all academies, and to institutionalize the joint linguistic activity that is today known as the new Pan-Hispanic language policy. According to the RAE and ASALE, this PLP promotes unity instead of purity, embraces the pluricentric character of the Spanish language, and goes beyond the linguistic terrain to consolidate the 'Iberoamerican Community of Nations'.³

Understood as the academies' 'political will to act in a certain direction', this Pan-Hispanic orientation 'takes shape in the co-authorship of all publications since the 1999 edition of the *Ortografía*'.⁴ The 1999 spelling book that inaugurated this new approach to language policy did not offer any major reform. Its value resided, instead, in its Pan-Hispanic character—in the endorsement given by all the academies of the Spanish language to the project (Del Valle 2007a; Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman 2004). More recently this brief compendium was updated and expanded in a new edition, published in 2010, that Víctor García de la Concha identified as the 'first truly Pan-Hispanic *Ortografía*'.⁵ With regards to the codification of the Spanish grammar, the RAE and ASALE presented in 2009 a *Nueva gramática de la lengua española*, together with two abbreviated volumes for pedagogical purposes—the *Manual de la nueva gramática* (2010) and the *Nueva gramática básica* (2011). Finally, the academicians have also devoted time and effort to the revision of the RAE's dictionary—traditionally the activity that is most commonly associated with the institution—and to the publication of other lexicographic works as well. In this field, three publications are worth mentioning: the 22nd edition of the RAE's *Diccionario* (2001), the *Diccionario panhispánico de dudas* (2005)—both of these books are accessible online through the RAE's webpage—and the *Diccionario de americanismos* (2010).

As stated before, together with the reconfiguration of the corpus of the language, the linguistic authorities in charge of safeguarding Spanish and spreading it internationally have also given central attention to promoting a modern and open image of the language itself and of the institutions that shape and control its expansion (status planning). The moderate prescriptivism that guides the RAE and ASALE's language policy and discourse about Spanish—characterized by a rhetoric of acceptance of linguistic diversity and variation, of reliance on the general public's ideas, and of rejection of linguistic purism and conservatism—is one of the most important underpinnings of the discursive construction of the Pan-Hispanic image of the language (Del Valle 2007a). Likewise, the celebration of meetings and conferences—such as the international conferences of the Spanish language that take place every three years—is a key strategy in the promotion of the Pan-Hispanic community (Del Valle 2007b; Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman 2004). And, finally, the extensive coverage of the RAE's and ASALE's activities and publications in the Spanish media serves as the main platform to publicize the new status of the Spanish language and to parade the comradeship among all the academies that promote it.

Alternative Language Policy Projects: Tensions With the PLP

Despite the countless efforts to preserve this public image of the language and its institutions, and regardless of the insistence to present the PLP as a neutral project that brings equal benefits to all Hispanic countries and Spanish speakers, RAE's and ASALE's policies and discourses are every now and then challenged by dissidents that highlight the tense

distribution of power and control over the actual management of the language and the exploitation of the resources steaming from it. Occasionally, this opposition is significant enough to reach the mainstream media and trigger intense language ideological debates (Blommaert 1999).

One of the most significant recent challenges to the authority of the RAE and the ASALE was García Márquez's proposal to simplify Spanish spelling in the inauguration of the first international conference of the Spanish language held in Zacatecas in 1997. García Márquez's speech had a tremendous impact due to his prominence in Spanish letters, but also due to the visibility of the forum in which his speech was delivered. The academicians responded with the publication of the 1999 *Ortografía*—the first milestone of the PLP, as stated above—in order to neutralize the threat to both the RAE's linguistic hegemony and the very existence of the Pan-Hispanic community as a meaningful linguistic and cultural space (Del Valle 2007a; Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman 2004). Still in the terrain of spelling reform, the newest edition of the RAE's *Ortografía* (2010) was also presented amidst a heated language ideological debate—on this occasion caused by the release of some of the changes included in the new spelling book before they had been ratified by all the academies of the Spanish language. The participants in this debate defended national peculiarities of the spelling norms, opposed the changes that they perceived as an attack to their national identities, and in so doing undermined the Pan-Hispanic ideal of brotherhood (Del Valle and Villa 2012).

Another recent public debate revolved around the essay 'Sexismo lingüístico y visibilidad de la mujer', written by RAE member Ignacio Bosque and endorsed by the corporation on March 1, 2012.⁶ The analysis of nine style manuals that promoted non-discriminatory language led the academician to conclude that the linguistic codification of gender has no repercussions on the social status of women. Consequently, Bosque rejected those stylebooks' recommendations—such as the dual expression of masculine and feminine nouns instead of the exclusive use of the generic masculine—as politically loaded practices that unnaturally contravene linguistic rules and the economy of language. The reactions were immediate and saturated the Spanish media and online forums in the following weeks. Detractors of Bosque's essay emphasized the ideological nature of his separation of language from society as well as the conservatism of the institution that he represents.⁷

These and other public debates are generally managed diplomatically through privileged access to the mainstream media in order to contain dissidence and to continue promoting the ideologies associated to the particular Pan-Hispanic project embraced by the RAE.

The International Promotion of Spanish: The Instituto Cervantes

As we stated previously, the RAE's main ally in the promotion of Spanish and the Pan-Hispanic community is the Instituto Cervantes. This institution, modeled after the British Council and the Alliance Française, was created by Spain's government in 1991 'to promote the Spanish language and Spanish and Hispanic-American culture'.⁸ In compliance with its mission, during the academic year 2011–2012 the IC offered over 16,000 language courses to approximately 150,000 students enrolled in face-to-face classes, and about 90,000 more online courses administered through its Internet platform—Aula Virtual de Español. A good number of cultural activities—almost 7,000—were also organized in the same period in all IC centers around the world. As a third important pillar in the institution's activity, it administered over 65,000 language proficiency exams—DELE—in more than 700 affiliated centers in over 110 countries during the academic year 2011–2012.

Just like the RAE, the IC plays a significant role in promoting the discourse of Pan-Hispanic fraternity. Víctor García de la Concha, as he assumed the responsibilities of the IC's director, stated⁹ 'We are going to make sure that the Cervantes is perceived in America as if it were of their own; simply because it is so. There are already quite a few Hispano-Americans that work in the Instituto, but we have to go further in order to create a common front'.¹⁰ In an effort to strengthen the idea of community, this agency also promotes the belief that its international promotion of Spanish is equally profitable for all Spanish speakers. The 2012 *Guía del Instituto Cervantes*, for instance, opens with the following words by the King of Spain to its board of trustees: 'Spanish is already the most valuable patrimony of the twenty countries and hundreds of millions of people that form a plural community, open to all, and united and identified precisely by the common language'.¹¹

However, despite the reiteration of the discourse of cooperation and parity, it is unquestionable that the IC is committed—and must be committed—to advancing the interests of the country where it is rooted and the governmental institutions and private investors that support it (Del Valle 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2011a; Mar-Molinero and Stewart 2006). In this regard, suffice it to consider a recent collaboration between the IC and the Ministry of Industry, Tourism, and Commerce, the Ministry of Culture, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, which resulted in the 2012 release of the webpage *Study in Spain*. This new digital platform originated from a homonymous promotional campaign launched in the US by Eduespaña and ICEX Spain Exportations and Inversions in 2007.¹² It aims at 'attracting foreign students to Spain, by emphasizing the educational quality of its teaching centers and the country's attractions as a touristic destination'¹³ (according to the ICEX webpage) and at 'becoming an official reference, like those existing in other European countries, providing an image and a unified message in international forums about the realization of studies in Spain' (according to the IC).¹⁴

Regarding the IC's alliance with the private sector, a number of Spain-based corporations have been funding the IC's activities ever since its creation. Nevertheless, this investment is today more efficiently organized thanks to the creation in 2009 of a platform named *Círculo de Amigos del Instituto Cervantes*, with Telefónica and Banco Santander as its two associates; Iberia and Fundación Endesa as its sponsors; and Iberdrola, Fundación Coca-Cola Juan Manuel Sáinz de Vicuña, Obra Social 'La Caixa', Fundación AXA, Correos, Fundación Repsol, NH Hoteles, and *El País* as its collaborators. The IC's service to Spain's interests—the situated and national nature of its activities—is made evident in the presentation of the *Círculo de Amigos*' webpage: García de la Concha explains that through their collaboration with the IC, those entities 'facilitate the Institution's work but at the same time spread, through our presence in 86 cities of 43 countries, the image of a modern country whose business network is cutting-edge in many aspects of innovation and quality. Joining the *Círculo de Amigos* fortifies the image of the "Marca España", of which the *Instituto Cervantes* is proud Honorary Ambassador' (our emphasis).¹⁵ We shall return to this partnership in the last part of this section to further analyze the collaboration between the IC and Spain's major companies.

Alternative Projects to Promote Spanish Internationally: Alliances and Tensions

The IC is not alone. In Spain a number of foundations that have appeared in the last decade—some of them funded by private investors, others created under the umbrella of local governments—are working in the area of teaching Spanish as a means of fostering linguistic tourism in the region where they are rooted. Among them, the following four stand out: Cilengua-Fundación San Millán de la Cogolla,¹⁶ Fundación Comillas,¹⁷ Fundación de la Lengua Española,¹⁸ and

Fundación Instituto Castellano y Leonés de la Lengua.¹⁹ These institutions also contribute to the spread of the Spanish language and promote Spain's image and the 'Marca España'. In this sense, it is necessary to emphasize that the IC has intensified its campaign to sign agreements for the accreditation of language-teaching centers in order to strengthen its presence within Spain. It is in this context that the increasing collaboration with those foundations should be read—only in the course of the last two years the IC gave its endorsement to the webpage *Practica Español*, released in 2013 by the Fundación de la Lengua Española,²⁰ and offered several courses during the academic year 2011–2012, in collaboration with the Federación de Escuelas de Español como Lengua Extranjera (FEDELE), the Fundación Comillas, and the Fundación Instituto Castellano y Leonés de la Lengua.

The collaboration between the IC and these foundations—and the very existence of the foundations themselves—illustrates our view of the politics of Spanish in the world as an activity directly tied to local, regional, national, and global scenarios. It is in this context too that we understand the alliances and tensions with Latin American agencies promoting Spanish, in particular in Mexico and Argentina, the two Spanish-speaking countries that have the most developed cultural industries.

The proximity to the US as well as the historical and economic relations with the northern neighbor have led Mexico to mobilize and take advantage of opportunities offered by the promotion of Spanish. The largest Spanish-speaking country in the world has created tools for the teaching of Spanish, expanded linguistic tourism in the region, and designed a language proficiency exam—CELA—implemented in 2000 to replace the former EPLE (Parrondo Rodríguez 2007: 91). The large and deep relations with the US—a coveted market for Spain and, therefore, a preferred target of its cultural politics (see Section on 'Perspectives for the Future')—are behind the series of agreements signed between Mexico's and Spain's agencies. In this front, Spain's cultural diplomacy has achieved some important goals. First, it ensured that the IC's proficiency exam had a prominent place in Mexico by signing an agreement with the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México to transform the Cervantes' DELE into a Pan-Hispanic language-testing tool.²¹ Second, it mobilized to counter the possible creation of an independent Mexican institution—the Instituto Alfonso Reyes—that would compete with the IC in the international promotion of Spanish. And it did so by incorporating Jaime Labastida, one of the main advocates of the project, to the IC's board of trustees.²² And finally, it crystallized in recent negotiations with the UNAM—which in 2009 had been awarded the Prince of Asturias Prize for Communications and Humanities—to collaborate in the promotion of Spanish in the US.²³

The other big economy in Spanish America, Argentina, has also invested, although only very recently, in the development of an organized national activity towards the promotion of Spanish (Russell *et al.* 2008; Varela 2012). In this country, the number of language courses and the government support for activities oriented to the international spread of Spanish have been drastically increasing since 2004, thanks to, among other factors, the promotion of linguistic tourism in the region, favored by the 2001 economic crisis, and the growing regional interest in the promotion of the languages of Mercosur since 2003 (Arnoux 2008; Russell *et al.* 2008). A project worth mentioning here is the Consorcio ELSE, a consortium that 'gathers two-thirds of all Argentine National Universities' and aims at 'contributing to the development of regional linguistic and educational policies, helping to value diversity and to acknowledge the importance of intercultural codes through the Teaching and Testing of Spanish as a Second and Foreign Language (ELSE)' (original English).²⁴ Their webpage offers its contents in Spanish, English, and Portuguese, and openly aims the consortium's actions at 'regional integration within Mercosur'. One of the main goals of the ELSE is the administration of a

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language proficiency exam—CELU—'which was declared of educational and cultural interest by the Argentine Senate in the year 2010, is presently administered in Argentine and Brazilian venues', 'has also been administered in Europe' since 2008, and may also be offered 'in Asia and North America' in the future.

Brazilian students, together with students visiting Argentina from the US, are the main focus of Argentina's language policies. Argentinian agencies have taken advantage of the poor public image of the IC among a sector of the Brazilian educational community, as a result of a 2006 agreement between the IC and São Paulo's government to train Spanish teachers online that was negatively viewed and that generated intense opposition from Brazilian educators (Arnoux 2008; Villa and Del Valle 2008). It seems necessary to emphasize that the activity in favor of the internationalization of Spanish organized in Argentina responds to political—national and regional—interests other than those of the IC (Arnoux 2008), and offers an alternative model of linguistic promotion to the one that the Spanish institution has been implementing. Likewise, it is also important to highlight that the opposition between Argentina's and Spain's interests has, occasionally, given rise to rather intense language ideological debates (the most prominent one being a confrontation between their respective proficiency tests, CELU and DELE) that heated up during the celebration of the international conference of the Spanish language in Rosario in 2004. An event of great significance that illustrates this opposition was the celebration in Rosario of the Congreso de las lenguas (conference of languages), simultaneous to the one organized by the mainstream institutions.²⁵

Economic and Political Interests: Marca España and Private Investment

It is now obvious that the politics of Spanish in the world are linked to the national, regional, and international geostrategic imperatives of each country. The neoliberal model that governs contemporary international relations promotes a view of global languages as assets that generate both economic value and political influence.

Evidence of the political roots of the international promotion of Spanish is the government support—in terms of both institutional endorsement and injection of public funds—given to the RAE and the IC. Moreover, the IC is one of the sixteen members of the board of *Marca España*, a state policy intended 'to improve the image of our country both domestically and beyond our borders', and persuaded that 'in a globalized world, a good image of the country is an asset that helps support the international position of a political, economic, cultural, social, scientific and technological state'.²⁶ *Marca España's* webpage claims that 'language and culture are Spain's most universal values'²⁷ and that 'our image should reflect the reality of our country because Spain is its own unique history, its tradition, its peoples, its innovation and its companies . . . But it is also its sports, which have become an example of success and a mirror for society as a whole. And its language, which has the second largest number of speakers in the world. And its culture, the home of world-famous names like Cervantes, Velázquez, García Lorca and Picasso. And, of course, its cuisine . . .' (original English).²⁸

Regarding the economic weight of the language, the overwhelming proliferation of books analyzing the value of Spanish in the last ten years confirms the extra-linguistic dimension of linguistic promotion. Fundación Telefónica, an entity with strong economic interests in the strength of the 'Marca España', has been the main promoter of studies in that area, with a research project entitled 'El valor económico del español' that between 2007 and 2012 has produced ten titles, among them, *Economía del español. Una introducción* (2007), *La economía de la enseñanza del español como lengua extranjera* (2009), *Economía de las industrias culturales en español*

(2011), *El español en los flujos económicos internacionales* (2011), and the most recent, *El español en las relaciones internacionales* (2012).²⁹

The 2012 report *El español: una lengua viva*,³⁰ sponsored by the IC and included in its latest yearbook, shares some interesting data about the economic weight of Spanish. This report points out that languages, according to economic experts, have three economic functions: 'language as a market; language as support for communication and creation; and language as a tool for business'. In the area of Spanish as a market, Spain's linguistic tourism, according to the report, generated 462.5 million euros in 2007, with a 137.6% increase of 'edu-tourists' that visited Spain from 2000 to 2007. In terms of the language's support to communication and creation, the report emphasizes that with regards to the publishing sector, Spain is much stronger than Latin America is: 'Spain produces as many titles a year as the rest of the Latin American countries together, and the Spanish publishing sector occupies the fourth place in the world'. This expansion of Spain's publishing companies is the result of the internationalization of publishing houses that, in Spain's case, happened at the expense of Latin America: 'Spanish publishing companies have 162 affiliates in 28 different countries, with over 80% of these in Latin America. This proves the importance of sharing a common language when investing in third countries'. Finally, in the area of facilitating trade relationships, Latin America is again the main area of action, since 'sharing Spanish as a common language increases bilateral trade between Spanish-speaking countries by 290%'.

It is in the context of this third economic function of the language that the partnership between the IC and private investors with remarkable interests in the areas where it operates should be read. The goal of such collaboration, as the *Círculo de Amigos* of the IC states, is 'to create strategic and stable alliances in order to provide the institution and its 'friend' companies and entities with economic resources and a bigger visibility as well as to contribute to better their positioning in Spain and the world'. This institution, thus, 'creates a space of common interest in which to establish relations that would result in mutual benefit for all of us who understand the Spanish language and Hispanic culture as a cultural asset with great economic value in the world'.³¹ The commodification of the language, the equation of Spanish as an asset for Spain and its economy, could not have been made clearer.

Looking Into the Future

While it is impossible to predict the future of Pan-Hispanic language policies, they most likely will continue favoring a moderate prescriptivism and collective authorship of the normative texts under the leadership of the RAE and Spain's publishing industry. Similarly, the discourse of collaboration and Pan-Hispanic brotherhood will probably continue to be promoted, mainly in the Spanish media. Challenges to this dominant discourse and policies are also likely to continue, emerging and triggering language ideological debates similar to the ones presented in the previous sections. Regarding the fields of action that the international expansion of the language will target in the future, the promoters of the globalization of Spanish have themselves identified a number of geostrategic sites where their attention has been focusing in the last decade or so, mainly, Brazil, the US, the technologies of mass communication and, more recently, Asia and Europe.

An article entitled 'La labor del Cervantes', written by Javier Moreno and appearing in *El País* on June 18, 2000, decisively singled out 'Brazil, the United States and the Internet' as 'the trinity that will safeguard Spanish to consolidate as the second universal language after English'.³² Similarly, the current introductory section of the webpage of the IC's *Anuario* states that the articles included in those annual publications since 1998 'cover matters of permanent

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interest' in order to 'favor a better drive and diffusion of Spanish and its culture in the world'. Among those matters, the following ones are singled out:

the demography of the language; the presence of Spanish in scientific and technical production, translation and international organizations; the Spanish language in the media; the evolution of the language in particular geographic areas such as the United States of America, Brazil or Asia; or its presence in other virtual locations such as Internet and the Information Society.³³

In his first public statement as the new director of the IC in January 2012, Víctor García de la Concha declared that 'America will be the focus of the Cervantes', in an obvious reference to the United States and Brazil.³⁴ The latter country was identified as a strategic site for the promotion of Spanish at the turn of the 21st century. Articles in the IC's yearbooks of 2000, 2006–2007, and 2009, and the prominent position given in the conferences of the Spanish language to the potential of Spanish in Brazil—particularly those held in Valladolid (2001) and Rosario (2004)—prove the significant interest of Spain's agencies there. Moreover, the centrality of this country from Spain's geostrategic point of view explains the intense diplomatic campaign launched in 2000, the year when Spain's monarchs visited the country and when Brazilian president Fernando Henrique Cardoso was awarded the Prince of Asturias Prize for Cooperation. These diplomatic actions resulted in the signing of a law in 2005 that imposed the mandatory offer of Spanish in Brazil's secondary schools, whose management generated an intense language ideological debate that confronted a sector of Brazil's educational community with Spain's agencies. Among other critiques, the strong economic and political roots of the current presence of Spanish in Brazil was emphasized: on the one hand, the spread of the language in the Latin American giant is approached by Spain's agencies as a lucrative activity and as a spearhead of their commercial penetration; on the other hand, but still related with the previous point, the activities of the institutions in charge of the promotion of Spanish in Brazil have been funded by private investors with obvious interests in the country, such as Telefónica, Repsol, BBVA, and Banco Santander (Del Valle and Villa 2006; Villa and Del Valle 2008).

The United States has been given an even more prominent place than Brazil in the last decade. The IC's yearbooks of 1999, 2000, 2001, 2004, 2005, and 2006–2007 included articles dedicated to diverse aspects of the presence of Spanish in the US, and this country is the only one as of yet that holds the privilege to have had an *Anuario*—the one published in 2008—entirely devoted to it. Both these articles and the Spanish media often produce a celebratory discourse about Hispanics being the larger minority in the country that equates the demographic growth of Latinos to Spanish's conquest of international spheres. Besides, the discourse about Spanish in the US emerging from Spanish institutions continually disregards—showing more often than not a fairly poor understanding of the sociolinguistic situation of US Latinos—the value of hybrid linguistic practices that, ironically, allow for the maintenance (i.e., intergenerational transmission) of Spanish in that community (Del Valle 2006; Fairclough 2003; Lacorte and Leeman 2009; Morales 2002; Zentella 1997). Overall, in the US we witness, once again, the reproduction of the same phenomena that governed the spread of Spanish in Brazil: the promotion of ideas and politics grounded on the language-as-commodity ideology, and the pursuit of Spain's hegemony in the globalization of the language and all the industries that accompany it.

The technologies of mass communication are the third main area of interest for the promotion of Spanish that the agencies in charge of the internationalization of the language have identified. The early 2000s were, in fact, the years when the greatest efforts were made in this

field. In 1999 and 2000 the IC's yearbooks published extensive articles on the presence of different global languages on the Internet, in the digital edition of newspapers in Spanish, and in the society of communication. In addition, the RAE signed an agreement with Bill Gates in 1999 in order to improve Microsoft's Spanish (Del Valle and Gabriel-Stheeman 2004: 233). Furthermore, the weight of Spanish on the Internet and the advances made in the area of technologies of mass communication were topics given a great deal of attention in the international conference of the Spanish language held in Valladolid (2001). This being said, the attention to matters related to the quality and amount of Spanish used in the World Wide Web has by no means disappeared from Spain's agencies' discourse and actions: it was included again in the IC's 2004 and, more recently, 2012 yearbooks; it was also dealt with in the conferences held in Rosario, Cartagena, and Valparaíso, and it will, most likely, continue to be an important issue in the future as well (Millán 2010).

The last two fields of action that we think will have a major role in the future politics of Spanish in the world are Europe and Asia. With regards to the latter, it seems obvious to point at the growing international weight of some Asian economies, together with the military power of some countries in the region, as the main factors for the intensification of interest in this area. This becomes evident in the two most recent editions of the IC's yearbook—the 2011 publication included an article on Korea, the 2012 edition offers studies about the spread of Spanish in China, Hong Kong, India, and Japan. Regarding Europe, ever since the creation of the IC in 1991, this region has always been of particular relevance for the promotion of Spanish abroad. It is today the continent with the greatest amount of IC centers, thirty-six in a total of twenty-four European countries, plus one in Gibraltar. The traditional interest in Europe as a strategic area for the spread of Spanish, obviously connected with the participation of Spain in the EU, has significantly increased since Spain's politics and Spanish politicians have gained a more prominent position in EU institutions. The IC's yearbook offers a clear reflection of this intensification—the 2010–2011 edition devoted two articles to the analysis of the EU's language policy and to the status of Spanish in the education systems of different EU countries—as do, as we will see in the final section, the Spanish media.

Conclusion

A recent article (4/25/2013) in Spain's most widely read newspaper, *El País*, discussed the 'role of Spanish in the world', pointing out that 'despite its growing presence, particularly in the United States', and its steady spread 'throughout the world', Spanish is still 'under-represented globally'.³⁵ The article neatly displays the discursive trends that we have identified and analyzed in this chapter: first, the policies aimed at the international promotion of Spanish are rooted in the geostrategic interests of the political and economic agencies that support them; and second, Spain's agencies appear as self-proclaimed leaders in the internationalization of the language. This, of course, coexists, though uncomfortably, with the discourse of Pan-Hispanic collaboration and generates tension with other agents of language promotion.

The journalist involved in researching and writing the article consulted with experts on matters of language and international relations—two university professors, one of them also a translator, three diplomats from different countries, the academic director of the IC, a spokeswoman for the Spanish mission to the UN, and a UN interpreter—in order to answer the following questions: 'Does Spanish meet the criteria to join English and French as global languages? Can it do so under the present circumstances? Could it even replace French one day?' The experts seem to agree that agencies promoting Spanish should rely on diplomacy as the sphere of action to secure and strengthen its international presence instead of openly

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and aggressively challenging the role of consolidated global languages. Accordingly, the article underlines the significant presence of Spanish at the UN headquarters in New York—'thanks in large part to the growing Hispanic population of the United States'. It also emphasizes the need to reach greater prominence in other international organizations, such as the UEFA—on the grounds of Spain's soccer-league reputation in the world—and mainly the EU. An article appeared in *The Economist* is quoted to advocate that Spanish deserves a 'bigger seat at the language table'.

However, even when experts agree that 'Spanish is ready to be used as the Romance lingua franca in the diplomatic and international arena', as the former IC's academic director, Francisco Moreno-Fernández, puts it, they also recognize that the international standing of Spanish depends on the political weight of the entities (i.e., particular countries) associated with the language. In this sense, the article quotes David Fernández Vítóres, co-director of a study entitled *El español en las relaciones internacionales* (2012), funded by Fundación Telefónica, as explaining that 'Spain's economic situation makes it hard for the country to project itself internationally'. Here, once more, the apparent egalitarian community of interests behind the international promotion of Spanish clashes with the situated nature of the politics of Spanish in the world. Thus, while the article erases, for the most part, any agency in the international promotion of Spanish and gives voice to the discourse of Pan-Hispanic fraternity and collaboration—quoting, for instance, Moreno Fernández's idea that Hispanic cultural policy 'should be the result of a consensus that balances the interests of all the Spanish-speaking nations'—it does fail to conceal its bias towards the IC, Spain, and its economic and geopolitical interests. This alignment is made evident, for instance, in the slightly veiled critique to countries that resist cooperating with the Pan-Hispanic language project—the refusal or inability of the Spanish-speaking nations to work together on a sustained campaign to promote their language internationally'. And it is made even more obvious in the leadership role attached by default to Spain's policies and institutions: the article finishes by stating that '[a]t a time when Spain faces unprecedented economic difficulties, perhaps it will fall to Latin America to take up the struggle for the moment in promoting Spanish as a truly global language' (our emphasis). It seems necessary to ask, then, what would happen when Spain's crisis subsides: would Latin America still lead the promotion of Spanish as a global language, would Spain take over that mission, or would all Spanish-speaking countries join forces in a truly Pan-Hispanic internationalization of the language?

Related Topics

language spread
 linguistic imperialism
 language and globalization
 language as commodity
 language and identity
 Pan-Hispanic language policy

Further Reading

Del Valle, J. (ed.) (2007b). *La lengua, ¿patria común? Ideas e ideologías del español*. Madrid: Iberoamericana Vervuert. (A volume that combines theoretical discussions of the concepts of language ideologies and linguistic nationalism, with case studies that analyze discourses and ideologies in contemporary Spanish language policy.)

- Fairclough, N. (2006). *Language and Globalization*. London: Routledge. (A theoretical approach to globalization. With particular attention to language, this book contains a review of the literature on globalization as well as an analysis of the discourses of globalization.)
- Heller, M. (2011b). *Paths to Post-Nationalism. A Critical Ethnography of Language and Identity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Study of six language debates in the recent history of francophone Canada. Advocates for a critical approach to the study of language in society—i.e., ethnographic sociolinguistics—that brings to the forefront the link of social difference and inequalities to specific historical contexts and social processes.)
- Mar-Molinero C. and Stewart, M. (eds.) (2006). *Globalization and Language in the Spanish-Speaking World: Macro and Micro Perspectives*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. (The studies gathered in this volume analyze the impact of globalization processes and the promotion of Spanish in context of contact between Spanish and other languages.)
- Maurais, J. and Morris, M. A. (eds.) (2003). *Languages in a Globalising World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (A collection of theoretical works and cases studies that address different aspects of the changes and challenges faced by a number of languages and world regions in the era of globalization.)
- Wright, S. (2004). *Language Policy and Language Planning: From Nationalism to Globalization*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. (An analysis of contemporary language policy and language planning at three different but coexistent levels: nation states, international and supranational spaces, and minority language communities.)

Notes

1. The neocolonial discourse that advocates Spain's right to exploit the Latin American market was made explicit at the international conference of the Spanish language held in Valladolid in 2001: 'Iberoamerica is a natural area for the expansion of Spanish companies and institutions because the common language and cultural roots facilitate access to markets and to clients' (Casilda Béjar 2001).
2. Institutional information consulted in the webpage of the Cervantes Institute: www.cervantes.es/sobre_instituto_cervantes/informacion.htm and www.cervantes.es/memoria_ic_web_2011-2012/CERVANTES_SITE/index.html
3. www.rae.es/rae/%5CNoticias.nsf/Portada4?ReadForm
4. <http://asale.org/ASALE/ConAALEBD?IDDOC=15&menu=3>
5. See 'El papa desde ahora usa pirsin', published in *El País* 12/17/2010: http://elpais.com/diario/2010/12/17/cultura/1292540402_850215.html
6. *El País* published the essay on 3/4/2012: http://cultura.elpais.com/cultura/2012/03/02/actualidad/1330717685_771121.html. It is also accessible in: [www.rae.es/rae/gestores/gespub000040.nsf/\(voanexos\)/arch50C5BAE6B25C8BC8C12579B600755DB9/\\$FILE/Sexismo_linguistico_y_visibilidad_de_la_mujer.pdf](http://www.rae.es/rae/gestores/gespub000040.nsf/(voanexos)/arch50C5BAE6B25C8BC8C12579B600755DB9/$FILE/Sexismo_linguistico_y_visibilidad_de_la_mujer.pdf). See the endorsement of the RAE in: www.rae.es/rae/gestores/gespub000011.nsf/voTodosporId/8A2D12812A66E09FC12579B6005787A2?OpenDocument&i=6.
7. See, for instance, critiques made by Juan Carlos Moreno Cabrera and Mercedes Bengoechea respectively in: <http://infoling.org/informacion/IG28.html#Uies6Kzhd3Q> and <http://blogs.elpais.com/mujeres/2012/03/el-informe-de-la-rae-el-error-humano-y-la-evoluci%C3%B3n-de-las-lenguas.html>
8. http://nyork.cervantes.es/en/about_us_spanish.htm
9. Unless otherwise indicated, translations are our responsibility.
10. http://cultura.elpais.com/cultura/2012/02/01/actualidad/1328100559_854253.html
11. www.cervantes.es/imagenes/File/guias/guia_instituto_cervantes_2012-espanol.pdf
12. www.icex.es/icex/cda/controller/pageICEX/0,6558,5518394_6754360_5630587_4268892_0_-1_p5762650,00.html?estado=0
13. www.icex.es/icex/cda/controller/pageICEX/0,6558,5518394_5519005_6366453_4671361_0_-1,00.html
14. www.cervantes.es/memoria_ic_web_2011-2012/CERVANTES_SITE/index.html

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15. www.circulocervantes.es/presentacion.htm
16. Cilengua was created in 2005 under the umbrella of the Fundación San Millán de la Cogolla, a partnership between La Rioja government and Ibercaja Obra Social y Cultural. Cilengua is mainly devoted to the philological study of Spanish (its origins, its history, and its literature and translation), but it also offers language courses adapted to all needs. These courses are advertised exploiting a discursive representation that symbolically portrays San Millán as the birthplace of the Castilian language: 'El mejor español en el mejor lugar'/'Estudiar español en la tierra que lo vio nacer'. See www.cilengua.es/ and www.fsanmillan.es/
17. Fundación Comillas, also established in 2005, is financed both with public investments from the government of Cantabria and contributions from the private sector, such as Telefónica, Caja Cantabria and La Caixa. This institution aims at promoting the Spanish language and Hispanic culture in order to 'serve as an International reference and influence the development of the town of Comillas, the surrounding area, and the Autonomous Community of Cantabria as a whole' (original English). www.fundacioncomillas.es/en/
18. Fundación de la Lengua Española, established in 2006, 'is a private institution' whose goals are 'to present the world a global and integrated offer in the field of Spanish teaching' and 'to enable Castilla y León to become the world's top destination for Spanish language learners' (original English). www.fundacionlengua.com/
19. Created in 2002 as a public institution linked to the government of Castilla y León and integrating the Universities of Burgos, León, Salamanca, and Valladolid, the Fundación Instituto Castellano y Leonés de la Lengua seeks to promote Spanish by organizing cultural activities and offering courses on both the language and its teaching. www.ilcyl.com/
20. The Agencia EFE is the other organization that endorsed this project. www.practicaespanol.com/
21. See 'El gran desafío del español' (published 5/3/2004) and 'El español como segundo idioma ya tiene un título de referencia' (published 6/27/2004), from *El País*: http://elpais.com/diario/2004/06/27/cultura/1088287202_850215.html and http://elpais.com/diario/2004/05/03/cultura/1083535202_850215.html
22. See the plan for the creation of the Alfonso Reyes Institute in <http://estepais.com/site/?p=37222>. See also the following related news: 'Los 7 pulsos de la Academia Mexicana de la Lengua y el Gobierno mexicano a la RAE y el Instituto Cervantes' (<http://addenda-et-corrigenda.blogspot.com/2012/11/los-7-pulsos-de-la-academia-mexicana-de.html> <http://addenda-et-corrigenda.blogspot.com/2012/11/los-7-pulsos-de-la-academia-mexicana-de.html>), and 'Jaime Labastida nuevo vocero del Instituto Cervantes' (www.eluniversal.com.mx/notas/874919.html).
23. See 'La UNAM, Príncipe de Asturias de Comunicación y Humanidades', published in *El País* on 6/10/2009, and 'El Cervantes y la UNAM promoverán el español en los Estados Unidos', published in *El País* on 2/15/2013: http://sociedad.elpais.com/sociedad/2009/06/10/actualidad/1244584802_850215.html and http://cultura.elpais.com/cultura/2013/02/15/actualidad/1360952321_730166.html
24. www.else.edu.ar/en/node/106
25. Both the inaugural speech of the international conference of the Spanish language and the memorandum of the Congreso de la Lengua have been compiled by Glözman and Lauria (2012).
26. <http://marcaespana.es/en/quienes-somos/que-es-marca-espana.php>
27. <http://marcaespana.es/en/educacion-cultura-sociedad/lengua-literatura-educacion/destacados/6-one-big-family>
28. <http://marcaespana.es/en/quienes-somos/que-es-marca-espana.php>
29. ~~http://www.fundacion.telefonica.com/es/que_hacemos/conocimiento/publicaciones/vee/index.htm~~
30. See the 2012 Cervantes' yearbook http://cvc.cervantes.es/lengua/anuario/anuario_12/default.htm. Also accessible in www.cervantes.es/imagenes/File/prensa/El%20espaol%20una%20lengua%20viva.pdf. There is also a translation, with the title *Spanish: A lively language*, in www.languageswork.org.uk/home.aspx.
31. www.circulocervantes.es/quees.htm

32. http://elpais.com/diario/2000/06/18/cultura/961279208_850215.html
33. <http://cvc.cervantes.es/lengua/anuario/>
34. The article appeared in *El País* on 1/27/2012, and explains this quote as referring to the interests of García de la Concha and the Cervantes Institute ‘both in the South Cone and in the Hispanic aspect of the United States’. http://cultura.elpais.com/cultura/2012/01/27/actualidad/1327663179_043000.html
35. The article, signed by Naiara Galagarra, had two different versions. The Spanish version, entitled “‘Excusez-moi”, deje sitio al español”, appeared in *El País* on 4/25/2013; the English version was entitled ‘What is the World Role of Spanish?’ and published a few days later in *El País*, on 4/30/2013. All quotes come from the English version. http://sociedad.elpais.com/sociedad/2013/04/25/actualidad/1366913109_148939.html http://elpais.com/elpais/2013/04/30/inenglish/1367320944_963514.html

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