



LINGUISTIC DISCOURSES IN THE UNITED STATES

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Abstract

Bilingualism and multilingualism are controversial issues which may lead to social inequalities and conflicts in contexts such as the United States, where English is the predominant language. This dissertation aims (1) to explore two of the main clashing discourses in relation to the officialization of English in the US and (2) to perceive how these discourses portray the social reality they intend to represent. Two articles (one from the English Only movement and one from the English Plus) have been selected in order to carry out an analysis employing the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) method proposed by Fairclough (1989, 1992). The research shows that the English Only discourse upholds that English must be the only language studied, whereas the English Plus discourse advocates for a multilingual society. The study also reveals beliefs regarding nationhood and American identity, and discloses that both discourses seek the unification of the country.

Keywords: bilingualism, multilingualism, CDA, United States, English Only, English Plus.

Resum:

El bilingüisme i el multilingüisme són temes controvertits que poden generar desigualtats socials en contextos com el dels Estats Units, on l'anglès és la llengua predominant. Aquesta dissertació té l'objectiu (1) d'explorar els dos principals discursos oposats en relació amb la oficialització de l'anglès als EUA i (2) de percebre com aquests discursos plasmen la realitat social que intenten representar. Dos articles (un del moviment 'English Only' i un del 'English Plus') han estat seleccionats per dur a terme una anàlisi utilitzant el mètode d'Anàlisi Crítica del Discurs (ACD) proposat per Fairclough (1989, 1992). La recerca mostra que el discurs provinent de 'English Only' defensa que l'anglès és l'única llengua que ha de ser estudiada, mentre el discurs de 'English Plus' recolza una societat multilingüe. L'estudi també revela creences sobre el nacionalisme i la identitat americana, i desvela que ambdós discursos cerquen la unificació del país.

Paraules clau: bilingüisme, multilingüisme, ACD, Estats Units, English Only, English Plus.

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1. Introduction

A growing multilingual society has contributed to the change and development of cultural practices and identities, and to the formation of new social institutions and structures (Hall, 1996). These changes raise the awareness of sociologists and linguists because these transformations may translate in the favouring of some languages as being more socially and politically dominant, at the expense of other languages more prone to suffer from political and economic domination and which must fight in order to strengthen their status (Edwards, 1996). The English language, being a *lingua franca*, finds itself placed in the former group, especially in the English-speaking countries, as it is the case of the United States. Language minority languages, such as Spanish, are sometimes not only discredited and undervalued, but regarded as a threat to the nation's unity. The point of departure of the following dissertation will be the different discourses which can be found in the US regarding bilingualism/multilingualism, monolingualism and multiculturalism. Thus, the aim of this research is to explore two of the main (and clashing) discourses with respect to the officialization of English in the US, an issue which uncovers other beliefs like the meaning of 'nationhood' and the immigrants' right (or not) to maintain their mother tongues (which is related to bilingual education).

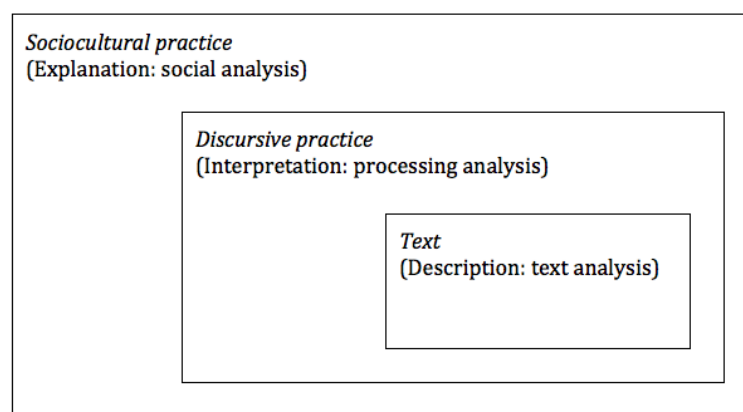
In order to analyse properly such discourses, a theoretical framework has been provided, which includes (1) a definition of discourse, (2) a general introduction to bilingualism and (3) the concrete situation of bilingualism in the US. Within the latter section, a subpart regarding language policy has been enclosed following Spolsky's (2004) theory of language planning, which embraces (a) acquisition planning, focused on bilingual education policies, and (b) status planning, centred on the English Only and the English Plus movements. Spolsky (2004) also considers corpus planning, but it is not actually relevant for this research because two of the major concerns in the US are bilingual education and the proclamation of English as the only official language (Schmidt, 2000). The data analysed consists of two articles (attached in "Annexes") written by members of opposed movements, one in favour of making English the

official language of the US (the English Only) and one against (the English Plus). The tenets of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) will be employed in order to dissect the texts and discover the genuine forces which operate in the discourses. Hence, connections will be established between the literature and the actual texts, and conclusions will be drawn by considering how those discourses portray the social reality they intend to represent. In addition, it will be discussed whether the two discourses proceed from absolutely opposed natures or whether they share, though concealed, a common goal.

2. What is ‘Discourse’?

The notion of ‘discourse’ is a complex one due to the variety of definitions that can be found depending on the theoretical and the disciplinary approach which is adopted. By way of illustration, in social theory, ‘discourse’ is related to the ways different areas of knowledge and social practices are structured (e.g. medical science), whereas in linguistics, ‘discourse’ usually refers to an extended sample of written or spoken language (Fairclough, 1992). Fairclough’s attempt is to reconcile language analysis and social theory by regarding ‘discourse’ as something simultaneously social and linguistic. Thus, Fairclough (1992) highlights that ‘discourse’ involves much more than language use, for “it is language use seen as a type of social practice” (1992: 28). Fairclough (1992) further argues that when analyzing a discursive event, i.e. any instance of discourse, one must go beyond the text and analyze “the relationship between texts, processes, and social conditions, both the immediate conditions of the situational context and the more remote conditions of institutions and social structures” (Fairclough, 1989: 26). Therefore, in order to carry out a holistic analysis of an event, it has to be analysed as a textual practice, as a discursive practice and as a social practice. The textual analysis involves the study of the text *per se*, the discursive analysis draws the attention to the text production, distribution and interpretation and, eventually, the social analysis comprises the ideology which the text reveals and whether the discursive event reproduces or challenges hegemonic social practices.

Three-dimensional conception of discourse



Source: Fairclough (1992: 73)

3. Introduction to Bilingualism

Many definitions of bilingualism have been suggested by scholars over time; yet, a single universal definition of bilingualism has not been accepted, probably due to the “multi-faceted structure” and also to “the relativity” of the phenomenon (Niemiec, 2010: 9). Actually, some researchers define bilingualism as the ability to speak two or more languages (see Butler and Hakuta, 2006; Edwards, 2010), whereas others, such as Kemp (2009), employ the term ‘bilingual’ for speakers of two languages and ‘multilingual’ for speakers of three or more. Weinreich (1953: 5), one of the fathers of research into bilingualism, claimed that “the practice of alternately using two languages will be called bilingualism, and the persons involved, bilingual”. Similarly, Skutnabb-Kangas (1984: 91) also defined a bilingual person as an individual who “uses (or can use) two languages (in most situations) (in accordance with her own wishes and the demands of the community)”.

Aside from the number of languages, the degree of competence has also been an area of disagreement. Bloomfield (1933) claimed that bilingualism originates from adding a perfectly learnt foreign language to one’s native tongue; yet, he himself acknowledged that the definition of ‘perfection’ was relative and vague. Weinreich (1953) defined bilingualism in a simpler way, arguing that it was the alternate use of two languages, and Haugen (1953) described it as the ability to produce meaningful and complete utterances in a second language. According to Chin and Wigglesworth (2007: 3), “bilingualism can be loosely defined as the use of two languages” which may include speakers who only possess elementary expressions, or as “the native-like control of two languages”. Potowski (2010: 30) maintains that bilingualism itself cannot be measured unless it is considered within the situation in which it functions for certain individuals, and concludes that “the degree of bilingualism depends on the answer to Fishman’s (1965) basic question of who speaks what to whom and when”.

Bilingualism also possesses other layers of meaning. Perhaps one of the most important distinction which should be established is between ‘societal’ and ‘individual’ bilingualism.

Hamers and Blanc (2000: 6) define the former one as “the state of a linguistic community in which two languages are in contact with the result that the two codes can be used in the same interaction and that a number of individuals are bilingual”. The latter notion is described as “the psychological state of an individual who has access to more than one linguistic code as a means of social communication” (Hamers and Blanc, 2000: 6). Apart from the contrast between ‘societal’ and ‘individual’ bilingualism, there are also some inherent dichotomies in this term. First, there is the difference between *receptive* bilingualism (one understands the language but cannot produce it) and *productive* bilingualism (one who can do both). Second, the opposition is between *additive* and *subtractive* bilingualism, the former implying an expansion of the linguistic repertoire and, the latter, causing a displacement of the first language. A third distinction is between *primary* and *secondary* bilingualism; in this case, *primary* bilingualism refers to a naturally acquired competence in the second language, whereas *secondary* bilingualism occurs when a systematic and formal instruction has taken place (Edwards, 2010).

Notwithstanding the fact that there is an increasing need for bilingualism (and multilingualism) due to the growing necessity to be competent in languages of wider communication (Cenoz and Genesee, 1998), bilingual societies are often considered a threat to the cultural unification, and, subsequently, linguistic plurality is not welcomed by everyone (Blackledge and Creese, 2010). Following the same track, Moyer and Martin Rojo (2007: 156) emphasize that migrants with different language backgrounds are a challenge for traditional ideologies because “multilingual reality comes up against [...] ideologies of monolingualism and homogeneity”. However, Joseph (2006: 45) believes that monolingual communities are a “figment of the imagination” in such a globalized world, and, in agreement with this thought, Shohamy (2006: 173) claims that “monolingualism is a myth detached from reality that must be recognized as such by education systems”.

When setting up the differences between the two or more languages which coexist in an area, linguistic arguments are not really decisive. Contrarily, non-linguistic arguments, such as the

political situation of the place and the behaviour and judgment of speakers, are of far greater importance (Baker and Hengeveld, 2012). Thus, in accordance with Cenoz and Genesee (1998: vii), “languages [...] have different statuses as majority/minority languages [...] and some of the languages are used primarily in the private domain while others are used primarily in public domains, such as work or school”. Considering the speaker’s attitude, i.e. an orientation based on evaluation of a social object (Garrett, 2010), a language can help to create a collective national identity and, subsequently, it can be used as a unifying force, for it may be the only tie uniting a society otherwise divided by differences in class or wealth (Burke and Porter, 1991). Having a national identity, as Billig (1995) maintains, involves possessing certain habits of thinking, using language and ways of talking about nationhood, reasons why an analysis of discourse is of utmost importance when studying an identity. Furthermore, holding a national identity “also involves being situated physically, legally, socially, as well as emotionally” (Billig, 1995: 8).

In spite of that, Blackledge and Creese (2010) point out that, commonly, one of the most frequent bases for the formation of nations has been the language, especially in the nineteenth century during the Romantic movement. In fact, Geeraerts (2006: 289) talks about the “well-known romantic link between nationalism and language”. The notion of ‘nationalism’ is a thorny one, for a popular idea is that nationalism is linked to the struggles to establish new states or to extreme right-wing politics (Billig, 1995). Nevertheless, Billig (1995) believes that nationalism is present in all contemporary societies, causing that the identification between a language, a culture, a territory and a political community seems natural. The everyday renderings of the nation which construct a sense of national sympathy and belonging among people is what Billig (1995) calls ‘banal nationalism’. This researcher highlights that nationalism is a very powerful ideology because, due to its latent nature, it is seldom examined or challenged. The concept of ‘banal nationalism’ is relevant in this research because the United States is a country which perfectly represents this ‘banal nationalism’ and it is “the home of what Renan called ‘the cult of the flag’” (1990: 17, cited in Billig, 1995).

4. Linguistic Reality in the United States

The United States has been linguistically diverse since the beginning of its history, even though some may think that this diversity is the result of recent immigration. Certainly, a considerable degree of multilingualism in the US can be ascribed to immigration, but it has to be remembered that English is not an indigenous language of North America (Wiley and Lee, 2009). According to Romaine (2005: 154) the aboriginal population “had considerable physical, linguistic and cultural diversity”. It is estimated that indigenous communities spoke from 350 to 500 languages, and, although there were not many people who spoke them, European settlers met a significant number of different languages when they arrived (Romain, 2005).

The first English speakers came from England as colonizers or refugees and, therefore, English was originally an immigrant language. Along with English, at least seven other major languages (Danish, French, Russian, Spanish, German, Dutch and Swedish) were introduced to the US with European colonization. The reasons which account for the prevalence of English over the rest of the immigrant languages are that England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales have been primary sources of US immigration since the 17th century, and that “these countries were favored under a restrictive quota system between 1923 and 1965 that privileged them as well as other northwestern European countries” (Wiley and Lee, 2009: 3). Borjas (1992) claims that immigrants previous to 1965 were mostly European, with less than one-third of the total coming from Latin American or Asian backgrounds. Contrarily, as indicated by Capps *et al.* (2005), nowadays immigrant population is 25% Asian and 25% Latin American, in comparison to the 17% which represents European immigration.

As Schmidt (2000) and Potowski (2010) maintain, the third generation of immigrants are virtually English monolinguals, retaining very little ability, if any, to speak, read or write in their grandparents’ language. This conforms to the general historical pattern which shows that first generation immigrants learnt ‘survival’ English and continued to speak their mother tongue, second generation spoke the mother tongue at home but English outside and, finally,

third generation spoke mostly English (Rumbaut, 2009). Potowski (2010: 4) suggests that immigrants end up forsaking their heritage languages due to several reasons, including “peer pressure, lack of opportunity to use the language, or fear that it will interfere with their ability to learn English or get ahead in American society”. This pressure to suppress their own language can lead to adverse consequences as regards their academic results and the preservation of their cultural traditions (Potowski, 2010). Rumbaut (2009: 36) specifies that “immigrants [are] not only expected to speak English, but to speak *only* English as a prerequisite for social acceptance and integration”.

Interestingly enough, in the censuses of 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2006 people aged five or older were asked if they spoke a Language Other Than English (LOTE) at home. In 1980, 11% of the population answered affirmatively, in 1990, almost 14%, in 2000, virtually 18%, and, eventually, in 2006, practically a 20%. Contrasting now the millions of speakers, in 1980 there were 23 million speakers of LOTE, whereas in 2006, up to 55 million people. Therefore, the data signal a presence of a considerable and crescent minority of those who are not English monolinguals. Nevertheless, these growing linguistic minorities were concentrated in areas of primary immigrant settlement, and “among all the 3141 counties in the United States, the median percentage of the population who spoke a [LOTE] at home was a mere 4.6%” (Rumbaut, 2009: 38).

Table 1: *Increasing language diversity in the USA*

Year	1980	1990	2000	2006
Number of LOTE speakers (millions)	23.1	31.8	46.9	54.9
Percent of population	11%	13.8%	17.9%	19.7%

Source: Potowski (2010: 256). as been described as a ‘graveyard’ for LOTE because of its historical capacity to extinguish the mother tongues of millions of immigrants within a few generations (Portes and Rumbaut, 2006). Even if it is true that Latin American groups tend to preserve a greater ability in their mother tongue (in comparison to other groups like Asians), “their Spanish proficiency, preference and use patterns evolve and switch to English over time and generation and tend to converge toward the pattern observed historically [...] by the

third generation” (Rumbaut, 2009: 64). He continues by explaining that fluent bilingualism in the US in the second generation is something exceptional which can only be reached with: (1) intellectual and economic resources of the parents; (2) effort in transmitting their mother tongue to their children; (3) presence of second language schools where their mother tongue is taught; and (4) value of the second language in business and the labor market. Unfortunately, the mixture of these elements is uncommon, Miami providing the nearest approximation (Rumbaut, 2009). As for the potential causes that account for language loss, Kloss (1966) discovered that the languages that were established earlier, like French, seemed to survive longer, as well as the languages of those communities which resisted to integrate with the general culture (such as the Amish or the Hasidic Jews).

Indigenous communities have also suffered the changes in socialization patterns, since the previously natural process of acquiring a language like Navajo at home is now an exception rather than the normal practice. (Potowski, 2010). Navajo is the most spoken Native American language, but English is replacing traditional forms of Navajo, such as greeting and address forms (Field, 1998). Native American languages and their vitality have been conditioned by historical colonization and linguistic and cultural oppression. However, 175 Native American languages are still spoken locally today, which demonstrates the perseverance of the people involved, and new technologies, media and schooling are gaining strength in the promotion of these languages and their ingrained culture (McCarty, 2010).

4.1 Language Policy in the United States

According to Spolsky (2004), in the language policy of a speech community there are three main aspects to take into consideration: (1) its language practices –the speaker’s choice of a variety of language–; (2) its language ideology –the set of beliefs about language and language use–; and (3) its language planning or managing –the development and establishment of a plan or policy about language use–. As Spolsky (2004) describes, there are

three different types of language planning: corpus, status and acquisition planning. Corpus planning refers to “coining new terms, reforming spelling, and adopting a new script” (Cooper, 1989: 31). Status planning is defined by Spolsky (2004: 11) as “the appropriate uses for a named variety of language” or, in short, the position or the official role of a language within a nation. Finally, acquisition planning could be summarized as the development of people’s language competence in a school (Spolsky, 2004). This research is mainly focused on the acquisition and status planning of the English language in the United States because, as Schmidt (2000) highlights, in the ongoing battle over language in the United States, two of the issues which have been given special emphasis are: (1) the place of bilingual education in the schooling of language minority children and (2) the appointment of English as the only official language of the United States.

A) Acquisition Planning: Bilingual Education Policies

Due to changes in the perspectives and in the ideologies of politicians, educationists and school practices, bilingualism and bilingual education in the United States have gone through different overlapping stages. Acceptance towards bilingualism has changed through time, and, as a result, some periods have been more permissive than others. (Baker, 2011)

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were tolerant towards bilingualism, for language diversity was common and accepted, and even encouraged through religion, schools and newspapers in several languages. Education in German, Norwegian and Dutch was endorsed, and, although instruction in English was the rule during the second half of the nineteenth century, openness to immigrant languages was prompted by the competition for students between public and private schools (Baker, 2011).

However, a shift in attitude towards bilingualism occurred in the first two decades of the twentieth century. At the turn of the century, a massive number of immigrants arrived to the United States and filled the classrooms of public schools. Their lack of English competence originated fears of foreigners and gave rise to social, political and economic concern. This

was the first time that “the call for Americanization was launched, with competence in English becoming associated with loyalty to the United States” (Baker, 2011: 167). As a consequence, in 1906 the Nationality Act (or Naturalization Act) was passed and it required immigrants to speak English in order to become naturalized citizens. Another significant fact is the 1919 resolution of the Americanization Department of the United States Bureau of Education, which recommended to all states that instruction in schools, either public or private, was conducted in English. Furthermore, with the outbreak of the first World War, an anti-German feeling was spread around the United States, with a subsequent obliteration of linguistic and cultural diversity, and an enforcement of English monolingualism (Baker, 2011). Nevertheless, as García (1992) reveals, this period was not completely restrictive, for in 1923 the US Supreme Court declared unconstitutional a Nebraska state law which prohibited the teaching of a foreign language to elementary school students. The case, known as *Meyer v. Nebraska*, involved a teacher who was convicted for teaching German to a 10-year-old child. However, the Supreme Court concluded that being proficient in a foreign language was not detrimental for the morals, the health or the understanding of the child.

This restraining period persisted up to the 1960s, when a slightly more tolerant stance towards languages was achieved thanks to the National Defense and Education Act (1958), which promoted foreign language learning in elementary schools, high schools and universities. As Baker (2011) claims, this more progressive stage was largely fostered by the Civil Rights movement and the concern for equality of opportunity –and educational opportunity– for everyone. The revival of bilingual education is believed to start with the establishment of Coral Elementary School, in Dade County (Florida). In 1963, middle class Cuban exiles set up a dual language school in Spanish and English instruction, which received political support and funding due to its loyalty to the United States (Baker, 2011). Ten years later, county commissioners declared the Dade County to be “bilingual and bicultural” (Schmidt, 2000: 2).

In 1968, the Bilingual Education Act was enacted, and it amended the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 by including Title VII (Schmidt, 2000). The

enforcement of this national legislation indicated that bilingual programs were part of the federal educational policy and, subsequently, that they received federal funds (Baker, 2011). Wiley and Lee (2009: 9) claim that this national legislation signified that “the US federal government did begin to acknowledge the linguistic needs of language minority students”. Nevertheless, Baker (2011) remarks that the actual hidden goal of bilingual programs was not the reinforcement of the mother tongue of minority students but the transition from the minority language to English. These programs are called Transitional Bilingual Education programs (TBE), although defining them as ‘bilingual’ is not perfectly accurate because the mother tongue is only used as a “crutch” (Schmidt, 2000: 14) or as a “bridge” (Wiley and Lee, 2009: 9) until the student is capable of following the lessons in English in the mainstream classrooms.

Since the Bilingual Education Act did not stipulate the pedagogical methods which had to be employed in class, controversy over opposed approaches arose by the early 1970s (Schmidt, 2000). A relevant landmark in United States’ bilingual education was in 1974, with the court-case *Lau v. Nichols*. The case concerned some Chinese students from San Francisco School District who denounced that they were not receiving equal opportunities, given that instruction was carried out in a language which they did not understand. The US Supreme Court verdict prohibited English submersion programs for language minority students (Baker, 2011) and ruled that “schools were obligated to teach English to students who could not understand the language” (Wiley and Lee, 2009: 10). This resolution resulted in the ‘Lau remedies’, which included English as a Second Language classes, English tutoring and some form of bilingual education in order to help students not proficient in English (Baker, 2011). Again, confusion spread because the ‘remedies’ encompassed a wide range of programs which were designated as *bilingual* without considering if any of them was actually using bilingual education (Wiley and Lee, 2009).

Thus, during this period, the type of bilingual education needed for minority children was not specified, but, however, the right to equal opportunity for speakers of LOTE was recognized

(Baker, 2011). Moreover, during those years “Maintenance Bilingual Education and ethnic community mother tongue schools” experienced a growth, although it was slight (Baker, 2011: 170). In Maintenance Bilingual Education programs the mother tongue is seen as a worthy resource which should be preserved and developed, so the aim of these programs is the “mastery of both languages, not just English” (Schmidt, 2000: 14). What is more, the amendments introduced to the Bilingual Education Act in 1974 assured grants to schools to make possible the teaching of different languages and cultures in order that students could progress effectively (Baker, 2011). Nonetheless, it is worth mentioning that Congress ascertained that these amendments should “not be misinterpreted to indicate that an ultimate goal of [bilingual education programs] is the establishment of a ‘bilingual society’” (Schneider, 1976: 201).

The amendments to the Bilingual Education Act led to discussions about to what extent a student’s native language had to be used in class and, subsequently, which bilingual programs were the most suitable ones. In 1978, the United States Congress stipulated that funds would only be provided to Transitional Bilingual Education programs, but not to Maintenance Bilingual Education programs (Baker, 2011). This decision could mark the beginning of a period in which bilingual education was largely dismissed, which clearly continued during the 1980s with the Reagan administration. During this period several organizations supporting English-only policies appeared (Wiley and Lee: 2009) and bilingual education encountered a continued hostility. By way of illustration, President Reagan made this statement against maintenance bilingual programs:

It is absolutely wrong and against American concepts to have a bilingual education program that is now openly, admittedly dedicated to preserving [the students’] native language and never getting them adequate in English so they can go out into the job market and participate. (cited in Schmidt, 2000: 15)

In 1983, efforts were made to finish with the educational status of bilingualism (Salomone, 1986), and, in fact, President Reagan attempted to reduce the federal role in education by

trying to abolish the Department of Education (Drachman and Langran, 2008). What is more, with 1984 and 1988 amendments, programs where the student's native tongue was not used received a higher percentage of funds (Baker, 2011). Such efforts became stronger with the appointment of William C. Bennett as secretary of education in 1985, who launched a campaign to "rescue English as the sole national language from the forces of bilingualism and multiculturalism" (Schmidt, 2000: 16). However, the Reagan's administration was never completely successful in hindering bilingual education because of the fierce opposition of bilingual program's supporters in Congress (Schmidt, 2000).

The administration of George H.W. Bush did not focus much on bilingual education, but when the following president, Bill Clinton, was elected, bilingual education experienced a period of support. (Drachman and Langran, 2008). In 1994, there was an important reform of education with the Goals 2000: Educate America Act and the Improving America's Schools Act (IASA) (Baker, 2011). These acts offered resources so that all students could give their best and achieve good academic results, particularly Limited English Proficient (LEP) students. Baker (2011: 189) declares that these legislations sought to provide children with "an enriched educational program, improving instructional strategies and making the curriculum more challenging". The Clinton administration regarded language as an asset, and, thus, approaches to develop bilingualism started to be adopted, such as two-way bilingual instruction for both English-speaking and language-minority students (Crawford, 2008).

Since bilingual education seemed to go in the right direction, its supporters believed that the 1990s would become the era when bilingual programs would gain general acceptance (Crawford, 2008). Proficiency in more than one language was expected to be welcomed because it brought economic benefits to the person and, more importantly, to the country, so funding for bilingual programs increased and policy makers' backing seemed assured (Baker, 2011). Nevertheless, discontentment grew among politicians and the US press, and attacks against the new legislation were constant. Considering all this pressure, funds to bilingual education were reduced by 38% between 1994 and 1996, which implied sharp cuts in

bilingual programs, teacher training, research, evaluation and, in short, a decline in support of bilingual education (Baker, 2011).

Things worsened for bilingual education in 1998, with the approval of Proposition 227 –the ‘English for the Children’ Initiative– passed by Ron Unz, a Republican activist, in California. The idea for this proposition originated a year before when a group of Spanish-speaking parents insisted to the Ninth Street Elementary School (Los Angeles) that their children were instructed in English. When the school rejected their proposal, the parents took their children out of the institution (Baker, 2011). According to Drachman and Langran (2008), although most of Hispanic people supported bilingual education, some of them were disillusioned due to deficiencies in the programs. Thus, Ron Unz took advantage of this tense situation and organized and financed a campaign which aimed to virtually outlaw bilingual education programs in all the state, and to replace them with English-immersion programs (Edwards, 2010; Schmidt, 2000). California voters approved the initiative by a 61% to 39% margin, but it was challenged by minority rights activists and by teachers, who signed a petition to oppose to the dismantling of bilingual programs, though in vain. (Drachman and Langran, 2008).

With the victory in California, Ron Unz continued with his enterprise around the United States. In Arizona, Proposition 203 was passed by 63% vote in 2000, and, in Massachusetts, Question 2 was approved by a 68% vote in 2002. Nevertheless, Unz was unsuccessful in Colorado in 2002 with only a 44% vote (Baker, 2011). Crawford (2008: 75) points out that “although only three states have taken this drastic step so far, together they enroll 43% of the nation’s English Language Learners (ELLs)”.

Another significant legislation regarding bilingual education was the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), signed into law by George W. Bush in 2002. One of the purposes of the law has been that “children who are limited English proficient, including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency” (Title III, Section 3120). NCLB abolished the Bilingual Education Act, for what Edwards (2010) states that this initiative replaces bilingual education legislation and strengthens even more the tendency towards English-immersion schooling.

Funds for transitional programs are not specifically limited by the law, but, nonetheless, funding for maintenance programs has been completely removed (Edwards, 2010). As Wright (2007) highlights, NCLB relies too much on high-stakes tests and fast ‘sink-or-swim’ English immersion, whereas bilingual programs receive few incentives and lack quality.

With regard to the way schools are required to function, they are to test their students annually on reading and arithmetic, and school funding may depend on the pupils’ scores. Moreover, the results have to be made public by *group*, for instance Hispanic children, ESL pupils, black children, etc. Respecting this, McDermott and Hall (2007: 11) express the following: “what a good idea, to leave no child left behind, and what a revolting development that its main effect has been to record just who is being left behind according to increasingly constrained versions of knowledge measured on high-stakes tests”. Apart from that, education centres may suffer major arrangements like the dismissal of teachers or the intrusion of private educational companies to take charge of operations (Wiley and Lee, 2009). Furthermore, Katz (2004) adds that apart from pushing back bilingual education, NCLB also obstructs second-language acquisition for native English speakers, for they will not be able to learn a foreign language until secondary school. Moreover, García (2005) remarks that, interestingly enough, most references to ‘bilingualism’ have been eliminated: Title VII, the Bilingual Education Act, is now Title III, English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement and Academic Achievement Act.

In November 2008, the 44th President of the United States, Barack Obama, was elected. The President has acknowledged the need for an educative reform, and, especially, he has recognized some problems with NCLB (Baker, 2011). President Obama has openly criticized the heavy emphasis placed on high-stakes testing and he has declared his support for bilingual education (Ehlers-Zavala, 2011). According to the President, education is a central pillar to restore the American economy, so with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), his major education reform, “funds are used to raise standards, improve teacher quality, and turn around struggling schools” (Baker, 2001: 195). As part of this act, in

July 2009 President Obama announced the program ‘Race to the Top’, which gave \$4.3 billion to states in order to reform educational activities. Such activities include, among others, preparing students efficiently to succeed in college and the workplace, relying on high-quality assessments, recruiting and developing effective teachers, and supporting intervention strategies for lowest-performing schools (Baker, 2011).

Ehlers-Zavala (2011) claims that ARRA is mainly aimed at the disadvantaged, and that the impact it will have on English Language Learners is not clear yet. As of the time of writing it is still unsure if the reforms on bilingual education will be successful because, for the time being, the issue has been addressed more by words and plans than by actual facts.

B) Status Planning: “English Only” vs. “English Plus” movements

In spite of the fact that 80 percent of Americans speak English as their native language, the US does not have an official language at a national level. Nonetheless, the country has a “linguistic culture” which “supports the use of English to the exclusion of almost all other languages, so that an explicit policy that would officialize English is not necessary, and probably never will be” (Schiffman, 2005: 121). Rumbaut (2009) reinforces this idea by claiming that with virtually a quarter of a billion monolingual speakers, English is not threatened at all. What is otherwise endangered is “the survivability of the non-English languages that immigrants bring with them to the United States – including those from Asia and Latin America” (Rumbaut, 2009: 67).

As the Census Bureau 2011 shows, the top twelve LOTEs spoken in the US are: Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog (or Filipino), Vietnamese, French, Korean, German, Arabic, Russian, Italian, Portuguese and Polish. As noted, the Spanish speakers represent the biggest minority, and yet they sum a total of 37.5 million, very little compared to the 230 million of people who speak English as their only language (US Census Bureau, 2011). A half of all Latinos live in two States: California and Texas (Barker and Giles, 2004), and, according to the US Census Bureau of the year 2011, approximately 62% of the US minorities speak Spanish at home.

Potowski and Carreira (2010) summarize the state of the Spanish language in the US as follows:

Spanish is the most publicly present and vibrant non-English language spoken in the USA, the language most studied in high schools and universities, the language most people will tell you that they wish they could speak. Ironically, US public school policies do not typically allow heritage Spanish-speaking children the opportunity to continue developing age-appropriate communication and literacy skills in Spanish, nor is public use of Spanish always welcomed by the general populace. (79)

Therefore, this extended diffusion of the Spanish language (more than any other LOTE) has been the trigger for the blossoming of the so-called “official English movement”, also known as the “English Only” movement. As Tatalovich (1998) expounds, even though Asians were the target in some localities, Spanish-speakers were the main focus. This movement formally began the 27th April 1981 when Senator S. I. Hayakawa presented to the Senate the ‘English Language Amendment’ to designate English as the only official language of the United States. Schmidt (2000: 28) states that, despite not having a uniform welcome at a national level, “at the state and local levels, this legislation has been successful, as proponents have persuaded legislators and voters to adopt policies designating English as the official language in a number of states and localities”. Currently, a total of 31 states have adopted English as the official language, and although in many states “this has been largely symbolic, in others, there have been material consequences for immigrants” (Lawton, 2013: 102). It is also worth mentioning that in 2007 three bills were proposed to establish English as the official language of the United States (S133, HR 769 and HR 997). Although the three of them never appeared for a vote, they were referred to subcommittees, which is a clear indication of the need to protect English officially (Potowski, 2010).

According to Tatalovich (1998), research suggests that the “English Only” movement is fueled by a generalized antiforeign feeling. In fact, the initiatives for the “English Only” movement arose due to the concern of some Anglo-Americans about “their position relative

to other ethnic groups – particularly Latinos” (Barker and Giles, 2004: 2) and they believe that English is “the only means of ensuring the unity of [the] American cultural identity” (Horner, 2001: 747). Even if research shows that these fears do not have a solid foundation (Barker et al., 2001), the belief that Spanish speakers pose a threat to the dominant English majority is a powerful argument to reinforce the English-only policies. As Edwards (2010: 17) remarks, a desire for group security “is normally heightened in circumstances of external threat or discomfort”. Thus, if English speakers firmly believe that Spanish is going to surpass English, they will take action against the promotion of Spanish, even if objective evidence states that this is not likely.

The enterprise of the “English Only” movement has strived for limiting services in LOTEs available to immigrants, such as “the translation of driver’s license exams, income tax forms and voting materials” (Lawton, 2013: 102). This movement is led by politicians (mainly Republicans), ordinary people and, curiously enough, immigrants. Moreover, several action groups like ProEnglish, English First and U.S. English have been essential in the struggle for declaring English the official language of the United States. As Lawton (2013: 102) claims, “these groups aim to gather and disseminate evidence to support their claim that most Americans want Official English, influence public opinion and lobby for official English legislation”.

ProEnglish was founded in 1994 and its first project was defending the official English initiative passed in Arizona; it describes itself as a national organization which works through the courts to make English the official language of the US and to end bilingual education in favour of English immersion programs¹. English First was born in 1986 and it claims to be a “national, non-profit grassroots lobbying organization”² and its goals are clearly specified as making English the official language, give every child the opportunity to learn English and remove ineffective and expensive multilingual policies. Finally, U.S. English was founded in 1983 by Senator S.I. Hayakawa in order to introduce a constitutional amendment to make

¹ “Mission”. *ProEnglish*. <https://www.proenglish.org/about-us/mission.html> Retrieved: 06/05/2014

² “About English First”. *English First*. <http://englishfirst.org/d/about> Retrieved: 06/05/2014

English the U.S. official language, as well as to prohibit any law or regulation requiring the use of a LOTE (Fitzgerald, 1993). U.S. English is the most widely-known organization of the three and it is self-described as “the nation's oldest, largest citizens’ action group dedicated to preserving the unifying role of the English language in the United States”³. U.S. English originated as a derivation of the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), which claimed tougher restrictions on immigration (Fitzgerald, 1993). Lawton (2013: 102) claims that U.S. English “is a powerful and well-funded right-wing lobby which orchestrated the English Only campaign in the 1980s at the national level”.

Before the creation of these organizations, in 1970 La Raza Unida Party was one of the most important political groups already fighting in favour of bilingual education. This party, formed by Mexican-American people, boycotted schools to claim equal treatment of Spanish-speaking students and, after winning a majority of school board seats, they established a bilingual education program in their schools (Fitzgerald, 1993). Nonetheless, with the momentousness of the English Only movement, the English Plus movement emerged in 1985, prompted by The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and the Spanish American League Against Discrimination, and became nationally influential (Fitzgerald, 1993). Two years later, the English Plus Information Clearinghouse (EPIC) was set, and several organizations aligned with EPIC in the battle against English Only, such as Arizona English, Californians United Committee Against Proposition 63, Colorado Unity, and Speak Up Now for Florida (Tatalovich, 1998). Furthermore, various educational groups also support EPIC’s goals, like The National Association for Bilingual Education, National Council of Teachers of English, Modern Language Association, the Linguistic Society of America, and Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (Fitzgerald, 1993).

As Soto (2007: 162) asserts, “the English Plus movement is an acknowledgement of both the multilingual heritage of the U.S. and the current importance of English within this country”. Thus, it supports both the maintenance of the minorities’ mother tongue and their acquisition

³ “About U.S. English”. *U.S. English*. <http://usenglish.org/view/2> Retrieved: 06/05/2014

of English proficiency. Additionally, the advocates of this movement encourage native English speakers to learn another language because they argue that language skills are essential in the global economy, and that multilingualism undoubtedly contributes to the development of the United States (Soto, 2007; Crawford, 2008). Hence, “whereas English Only encourages the shedding of any previous identity as immigrants become ‘Americans’, English Plus emphasizes the importance of embracing the heritage of students with limited English proficiency as an asset rather than as a flaw” (Soto, 2007: 162). Just as several states have adopted laws to make English the official language, some others like New Mexico, Washington, Oregon and Rhode Island have passed laws or resolutions reinforcing official multilingualism. What is more, important cities such as Atlanta, Dallas, Cleveland, Washington, DC, San Antonio and Tucson have also adopted English Plus measures (Tatalovich, 1998).

As Lawton (2013) remarks, the actual danger of the English Only movement is its capacity to influence public opinion through a discriminatory discourse that generates an anti-immigrant sentiment. Thence, English Plus still remains the main national endeavour to oppose the English Only movement (Fitzgerald, 1993), and, yet, it principally appeals to ethnic minorities and language teachers, for other citizens fear that bilingual education is mainly about maintaining solely Hispanic cultures (Crawford, 2008). Sceptics about English Plus argue that “knowing a foreign language is wonderful [...] but shouldn’t English come first?” (Crawford, 2008: 20).

5. Methodological Approach

For the analysis of the discourses on multilingualism/bilingualism and monolingualism in the context of United States two articles have been selected, one published in a magazine and the other one located in a webpage. The first article was written by a follower of the English Only movement, whereas the other one was created by advocates of the English Plus movement. Even though more texts have been taken into consideration in order to grasp the dominant

discourse(s) of the United States, these two have been chosen as representative to be analysed more in depth through the practices of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA henceforth).

CDA could be defined as an interdisciplinary approach which studies how language and discourse are used to achieve social goals and the role they play in social maintenance and change (Bloor and Bloor, 2007). Wodak and Meyer (2009: 8) argue that the notion of 'critical' has to do with "revealing structures of power and unmasking ideologies". Language use is regarded as a social practice, which is a "relatively stabilised social activity", like classroom teaching or television news (Fairclough, 2013: 264). This implies that language is socially constructed and that, in turn, language contributes to constructing society. Thus, Fairclough (1989: 15) notes that "language connects with the social through being a primary domain of ideology, and through being both a site of, and a stake in, struggles for power".

This study is concerned with the assumptions and beliefs regarding the discourses of bilingualism/multilingualism and monolingualism in the United States, where these social phenomena are one of the most controversial issues concerning social equality. Within the US context, multilingualism/bilingualism is sometimes regarded as a divisive trait because it results in the construction of opposite identities (i.e. those in favour and those against). Therefore, in order to establish the nature and the impact of the aforementioned discourses, a critical analysis perspective will be applied taking into account the model proposed by Fairclough (1989, 1992). This model consists of the analysis of the three interrelated types of practice which shape discourse: the textual practice, the discursive practice and the social practice.

The analysis of textual practice will reflect upon the most salient formal and semantic features of the discourse, such as grammar and vocabulary, which operate in the construction of the discourse. Hence, a linguistic analysis will be carried out in order to ascertain the nature and the effect of the writers' syntactic and lexical choices in the construction of meaning. The study of the discourse practice will embrace a general contextualisation of both articles, including the processes of text production (the authors), distribution (the medium) and

consumption (the readers). Finally, within the analysis of social practice, the contextual surroundings of the discourse will be analysed considering how reality is presented, which ideologies are supported by the producer of the text, and how the text may reinforce or change the ideological position of the reader.

5. Data Analysis

5.1 Textual Analysis

“Bilingualism in America: English Should Be the *Only* Language”

One of the most salient features of this text is how the writer gives himself authority and power. S.I Hayakawa employs the declarative mood throughout the text, which can be found in sentences such as “the government has acted as if it has a duty to accommodate an immigrant”, “English unites us” and “there are a number of alternative methods that have been proved effective”. According to Goatly (2013), universal statements reflect that the author assumes a higher degree of expertise or authority. Presenting something as a fact can be used as a strategy to prevent the reader from denying what the author claims. Apart from the declarative mood, the author also makes use of the interrogative mood in three occasions, which shows again the author’s assumption of authority .

Questioning is not the only grammatical way of demanding verbal behaviour of the reader, but also commanding (Goatly, 2013). Both strategies help the text to be more personal because the writer assumes the presence of a reader, although occasionally mass audience is treated “as though they are individuals being directly addressed” (Goatly, 2013: 89). There is a high level of deonticity in the text due to the fact that the author uses many modal verbs of obligation. Thus, “should (not)” appears nine times, “will” seven times, and “must” and “need to” one time each. As Goatly (2013) highlights, modals of obligation show that the writer is in a position of power. Moreover, the author gains authority through clauses such as the following ones: “as an immigrant to this nation, I am keenly aware of”, “as a former resident of California, I am completely familiar with”, “as a former U.S. senator from California... I

am very familiar with” and “my experience has convinced me that”. Therefore, the reason why the writer is so authoritative may be both because he himself was an immigrant to the US and because of his former job as senator of California.

Another significant point in the text is the pronoun use. Bloor and Bloor (2007) assert that it is very relevant the way individuals place themselves, as people usually identify themselves with their own social groups” (i.e. the Self) and in opposition to other social groupings (i.e. the Other). In the present text, S.I. Hayakawa establishes this dichotomy through the pronouns in first person singular, “I”, and plural, “we”, which together compose the Self, and the pronoun in third person plural, “they”, which represents the Other. The writer not only uses “I” and “we”, but “me”, “my”, “us” and “our” in several occasions, and the first person plural uses make reference to the Americans. The Other is sometimes depicted as “some” or “the skeptics”, but also as “the government” and “the US Department of Education”, who the author establishes as being the ones to blame for introducing an education system counterproductive for the prevalence of the English status in the US.

Although the author uses “I” for strategic purposes like increasing credibility by mentioning his experience, using the first person singular is a the most personal way that the author of a text can employ, and it is regarded as informal and individual (Goatly, 2013). Therefore, the author is highly subjective in his writing, maybe even more than he intended. According to Iedema *et al.* (1994), there are several ways to introduce subjectivity in a text, like ‘intensity’ and ‘appraisal’. Regarding intensity, the author garnishes the text with adverbs such as “incredibly”, “highly”, “particularly”, “certainly”, “completely”, “very”, “rather”, “quite”, “almost”, “enough” and “little”. Appraisal analysis refers to “the recognition and classification of stance” (Bloor and Bloor, 2007: 33), and the two most usual types of appraisal are ‘affect’, i.e. an expression of emotion, and ‘judgement’ or moral assessment. Thus, in the text we can find adjectives like “alarmed”, “satisfied”, and verbs like “feel” and “fear”, all of them examples of affect. Furthermore, there are quite a lot of judgements such as

“it is certainly true”, “it functions particularly well”, “the situation is a chaotic mess”, it is politically infeasible” and “current requirements are clearly unfair”.

In order to increase the reliability of his arguments, S.I. Hayakawa mentions other countries where multilingualism is the law, like India, Canada and Belgium and thus aims to demonstrate that multilingualism is a nuisance and not a resource. Nevertheless, his deductions are based on rather vague and weak evidences: “I haven’t heard anyone suggest that [India] functions particularly well because of its multilingualism”, “most Indians will concede that the situation is a chaotic mess which has led to countless problems”, “it is almost certain that [bilingual costs] will increase [in Canada]” and “in the US, which has 10 times the population of Canada, the cost of similar bilingual services would be in the billions”. This imprecision of the data is achieved through hedging, which is “a linguistic avoidance of full commitment or precision” (Bloor and Bloor, 2007: 103) in order to save the author’s face or reputation. Modal verbs are also a way of hedging, like “would”, which appears eight times, “may”, which is written four times, and “could”, which can be found three times.

Special attention has to be drawn to the way S.I. Hayakawa defines bilingual education and the alternatives he suggests. According to the author, he is in favour of bilingual education as long as it is “*truly bilingual education*”, but it is obvious that he misunderstands its definition and purpose. The writer claims that he supports that bilingual education in which the native language is used only to learn English, and that as soon as this goal is achieved, the “dependency on their native language” has to finish. Hayakawa’s alternatives are Sheltered English and ESL, but Baker (2011) expounds that these models are ‘weak’ forms of bilingual education because they do not help the students to remain bilingual.

Finally, special emphasis has to be given to the way the author describes monolingualism and multilingualism or bilingualism. In the following table there is a summary of the expressions which S.I. Hayakawa employs to define each concept. By simply looking at this scheme, one realizes that the authorial stance regarding multilingualism or bilingualism is both explicit (or overt) and conscious (or inscribed).

Table 2: *Description of monolingualism and multilingualism/bilingualism in S.I Hayakawa's text.*

Monolingualism	Multilingualism/Bilingualism
Unites	Divides
Encourages trust	Results in chronic political instability
Reduces racial hostility and bigotry	[Is] a problem
Unifies	[Is] costly and confusing
Has powerful unifying effects	[Is] a bureaucratic nightmare
Enables to have a democratic government	[Is] politically infeasible
[Is less expensive]	[Is not] a model of efficiency
	[Is] a mistake
	[Bilingual education programs] shortchange
	[Bilingual ballot] is racist

Source: Compiled by author

“English Plus Versus English Only”

The title of this article already gives a clue to the reader of the tone and the nature of the text. It suggests that the readers will encounter an illustration of the battle between both movements, and it is exactly what they find. Throughout the text, there is a constant attack to the English Only movement and the English Language Amendment, which aimed at proclaiming English the official language of the United States. The authors of this text present some statements as universal truths, which will be difficult to belie if the readers assume them as such. Thus, there are sentences like: “this movement, if unchallenged, will eventually make English the official language of the United States”, “The English Only Movement is merely the latest form of linguistic racism” and “what we share is a common patriotism, a common dream of opportunity in our nation”. What the authors are achieving with this assertiveness is constructing the reality the way they want the reader to perceive it, which is a major strategy in manipulating public opinion.

Apart from the declarative mood, the interrogative mood is very present along the text. There are a total of six questions, five of them rhetorical. According to Goatly (2013), rhetorical questions presuppose the answer and, since the response is supposed to be common knowledge, there is no need to make it explicit. The last question is not rhetorical, but expository, which is employed to introduce interest in an issue. Moreover, with this type of

questions the author has the chance to answer them and, consequently, there is the assumption that their self-response is true (Goatly, 2013). In the text, the writer answers: “whose Constitutional and Civil Rights will be violated if English is declared the official language of the United States? The answer is the language minority individual [...]”.

The identities portrayed in the text are clearly distinguished and the position which the writers adopt is explicit, as it is summarized in the title. On the one hand, English Plus and LULAC organization form the Self, and, on the other hand, the English Only movement and US English organization shape the Other, which in this case is the one to blame, not the government like in the other article. Interestingly enough, when “we” “our” and “us” appear, they make reference to all the Americans, not to English Plus or LULAC. The opposition is never referred to by “they” or “them”, because when these pronouns appear, they are substituting the word “immigrants”.

Another strategy used by the writers to create differences between the two identities is using a specific type of verbs for each one. Thus, these are the actions which the Self carries out as described in the text: “create”, “form”, “respect”, “celebrate”, “promote”, “foster”, “support” and “acknowledge”. On the contrary, the following ones are the verbs which portray the Other’s actions: “limit”, “eradicate”, “take away”, “revoke”, “reduce”, “keep from”, “prevent”, “prohibit”, “end”, “eliminate” and “affect”. Without considering these verbs’ co-text (i.e. the words or sentences which are near them), one realizes that the verbs belonging to the group of the Self have far more positive connotations because they all give a sense of progress and construction, while the verbs related to the Other promote the idea of blockage and destruction. This association of the Self with the execution of positive things, whereas the Other is related to negative actions will have a powerful effect on the way the readers picture the reality, for ‘good’ will possibly be equated to the English Plus movement and LULAC, and ‘evil’ to the English Only movement and US English.

Not only verbs, but adverbs in this text have been accurately chosen in order to provide a better image of the Self and to support the authors’ arguments in favour of multilingualism

and against the English Only movement. Here there are some examples: “[the constitution] has been utilized to intentionally take away the rights”, “never in our history [...] has the amendment process been used to revoke basic rights], “the language minority individual [...] stands to be directly and gravely affected”, “elevating [English] to constitutional status, immediately and undeniably, brings a host of negative consequences”, “English (Only) Language Amendment would [...] severely limit” and “some even suggest that bilingualism [...] constitutes a national risk”. It would be interesting as well to mention that the writers point out the goals of English Plus, which are focused on “justice”, “opportunity”, “responsibility” and “the best of human resources”. Thus, by designating and highlighting these values as the main objectives of the movement, the authors are already implying that the opponent is seeking the contrary and that the Self has to fight against the Other in order to achieve these goals.

One of the strongest arguments which the authors bring to the fore is the following one: “History tells us that the United States of North America is a nation of immigrants and many languages”. Undeniably, the United States in its origins was the home of people from different nationalities, and the authors take advantage of this powerful argument to defend that multilingualism and multiculturalism are the natural state of the country. Therefore, if multilingualism is the essence of North America, everything which attempts to fight against it can be fairly classified as “un-American”. In the following table, the way the authors present monolingualism and multilingualism or bilingualism is schematized. However, it has to be taken into account that ‘monolingualism’ described as in the table should be understood as ‘making English the official language in the US’, as there is no explicit reference to monolingualism in the text.

Table 3: *Description of monolingualism and multilingualism/bilingualism in S.I LULAC’s text.*

Monolingualism	Multilingualism/Bilingualism
[Is]un-American	Holds [the] nation together
[Leads to] discrimination	[Is a] national and [a] natural resource
[Leads to] antagonism	[Is] a strength
[Is a form of] linguistic racism	[Is] a human resource

[Creates] a divided nation
Reduces and eradicates [people's rights]
Brings a host of negative consequences
[Is outdated]

Source: Compiled by author

5.2 Discursive Analysis

“Bilingualism in America: English Should Be the *Only* Language” is an article featured in the USA Today Magazine and written by Dr. S.I. Hayakawa in July 1989⁴. The USA Today Magazine is a monthly periodical published since 1978 by the Society from the Advancement of Education, and it is independent from the USA Today newspaper. The Society from the Advancement of Education is an Indiana-based non-profit corporation which strives for fulfilling the education and economic needs of the poor children around the world⁵. Through the publication of USA Today Magazine there is an attempt to spread information about United States domestic issues and events, especially educative. Since one of the main concerns of the magazine is education, it is not surprising to find this article attached, for bilingual education is a key issue in it. Notwithstanding the bias of the magazine, the publication of this article may have been a good opportunity to inform the citizens about a spread viewpoint regarding bilingualism and bilingual education and the consequences which these ideas may have in the educative and social sphere.

Samuel Ichiye Hayakawa, as it has been explained in the theoretical framework, was a Republican senator from California and an honorary chairman of US English in Washington, D.C. He was also a psychologist, linguist, semanticist, teacher and writer, and worked as instructor in several American universities. He was born in Vancouver, Canada, in 1906, and he was the son of Japanese immigrants. He died in 1992 at the age of 85. The writer's purpose was to inform the American society of the fatal consequences of multilingualism for the country, but also to demand a reaction from the ‘native’ Americans against it. Due to the fact

⁴ “Bilingualism Should Be the Only Language”. *Ebsco Host*. <http://connection.ebscohost.com/c/articles/11928509/bilingualism-america-english-should-be-only-language> Retrieved 31/05/2014

⁵ “Index”. *Education SAVES Children*. <http://www.educationsaveschildren.org/index.html> Retrieved: 31/05/2014

that the author wanted to gain support from native Americans, it would be fair to state that they were the target readers, not immigrants. It is almost certain that North Americans were probably the only ones to read this article (and magazine) because when it was first published, it could only be found in paper. Nevertheless, nowadays everyone with access to the Internet can go through it. It is not easy to determine what prompted S.I. Hayakawa to write this article precisely in 1989, but it has to be remembered that the 1980s, with Reagan's administration, was a decade characterized by the extreme hostility to bilingualism and bilingual education. Furthermore, the reauthorization in 1982 of Section 203 to the Voting Rights Act, which required bilingual ballots, could have perfectly fueled the reinforcement of his anti-bilingual sentiment.

Regarding "English Plus Versus English Only", it is an article which can be found in LULAC's website in the section "Issues", within "Advocacy"⁶. LULAC is the oldest Hispanic civil rights organization in the United States and it was founded in 1929, during a time when, as it has been explained in the theoretical framework, English monolingualism was beginning to be the norm, whereas diversity, either linguistic or cultural, was negatively perceived. During these decades, LULAC has fought for equal opportunity in education, politics, health care, employment and housing for all Hispanics living in the United States. The organization has also struggled against the increase of anti-Hispanic sentiment and xenophobia, and it has held conferences and seminars to raise awareness on issues such as language and immigration. Moreover, LULAC has also employed the media (radio and television) to protest against the English Only movement⁷.

This article was written under a grant given to LULAC in 1986 (although it was last modified in February 2013), and even though the names of the authors are not specified, it is remarked that Frank M. Ortiz, past Southwest Regional Vice President of LULAC, contributed to the article. The fact that an article advocating for the rights of language minority communities was written in the 1980s is comprehensible because, as it has been recalled with Hayakawa's

⁶ "English Plus versus English Only". League of United American Citizens. http://lulac.org/advocacy/issues/english_vs_spansih/ Retrieved 01/06/2014

⁷ "History". League of United American Citizens. <http://lulac.org/about/history/> Retrieved 01/06/2014

article, it was a restrictive period in respect of LOTEs. In addition, it has to be remembered that a year before the article was written, a fierce campaign against bilingualism was launched by the secretary of education William C. Bennett. Furthermore, it can be inferred from the text that this article may have been a reaction against the emergence of the US English organization in 1983:

Notwithstanding this long held Constitutional Doctrine, a new "English Only" movement has emerged. "U.S. English," which claims a membership of 170,000, maintains that the public use of foreign languages, especially Spanish, in our country will create "language segregation" and a gradual lost of national unity. ("English Plus vs. English Only", 1986: 3)

The authors' purpose in writing this article probably was, on the one hand, to explain what the function of LULAC is and what this organization does for the Hispanic language community, and, on the other hand, to ask for support in order to fight against the English Only movement. Thus, this article was mainly aimed at Spanish speakers living in the United States but also to 'native' Americans so that, after reading the article, they upheld the organization. Unfortunately, there is an important information gap regarding where the article was originally published in paper. Nonetheless, nowadays it can be found in LULAC's webpage and everyone can have access to it.

5.3 Social Analysis

The two texts under analysis are examples of two of the most reproduced discourses in the United States concerning not only language equality, but equality in every sense of the word. Maybe the origins of both of them date back to the end of the Second World War, when language diversity started to be regarded as a threat for the United States. The beliefs portrayed in "Bilingualism in America: English Should Be the *Only* Language" clash with those represented in "English Plus versus English Only", and yet, they both attempt to ask for what it is 'fair' and 'American'. The social problem portrayed in both texts is making (or not) English the official language of the United States, which triggers the creation of two

confronted identities: those in favour (followers of the English Only movement) and those against (supporters of the English Plus movement).

In his article, S.I. Hayakawa claims that a common language is the means to reach democratic principles and a democratic government. The Cambridge Online Dictionary defines ‘democracy’ as “the belief in freedom and equality between people, or a system of government based on this belief, in which power is either held by elected representatives or directly by the people themselves”. Thus, the notion of ‘equality’ is essentially connected to democracy and it has to be understood as “social, religious, cultural, ethnic and racial equality”⁸. Therefore, the question is if S.I. Hayakawa is actually being democratic along his discourse. Apparently, he is; he carefully chooses some statements like “my goal [...] is to see all students succeed academically, no matter what language is spoken in their homes” or “I do not oppose bilingual education”. Nevertheless, there are some sentences in which we can find the genuine ideology of the author. Thus, he implies that English is superior to other languages by saying “the government has been edging slowly towards policies that place other languages on a par with English” and, moreover, he also maintains that it is erroneous to preserve the minority language children’s “dependency on their native language”. More significantly, at the end of the article, the writer states that the American citizens must clarify that they do not support living in a “Tower of Babel”. Hence, the issue goes beyond the concern about making English the official language and it is ascertained that the author’s main preoccupation is the existence of LOTEs in the US.

Otherwise, LULAC’s article supports precisely the idea that multilingualism and multiculturalism are a resource which has to be conserved because it is not detrimental for anyone, neither for monolingual English speakers. The organization defends that there is no need for granting English an official status due to the fact that it would not improve anyone’s condition, whereas it would lead to tragic consequences for language minority individuals, who would forfeit rights and opportunities. Contrarily, S.I. Hayakawa advocates for a status

⁸ “Democracy”. *Wikipedia*. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democracy> Retrieved: 03/06/2014

planning to proclaim English official, claiming that it is of utmost importance because it is the only way of unifying the nation and assuring the maintenance of English. S.I. Hayakawa's text includes a quotation which assures that in 10 years time one would have to learn Spanish or leave Miami because no English would be spoken. This statement reflects that Spanish speakers are considered a threat to the unity and primacy of English, even though research shows that their proficiency in Spanish is lost with time, as it has been previously expounded in the section "Bilingualism in the United States" (cf. Rumbaut, 2009).

In the debate about English as the official language, immigration and, subsequently, ethnic differences are of considerable relevance and concern, as it can be interpreted in the articles. On the one hand, S.I. Hayakawa believes that bilingual ballots are profoundly racist because only "brown people, like Mexicans and Puerto Ricans; red people, like American Indians; and yellow people, like the Japanese and Chinese" are provided with them, which indicates that they are not considered as intelligent as other immigrants to learn English. On the other hand, LULAC defends that xenophobia is a significant feature, although hidden, of the English Only movement's agenda. Thus, LULAC affirms that discrimination based on language, what they call "linguistic racism", conceals a form of bigotry based on ethnicity. According to Wiley (2000), discrimination based on language is called *linguicism*, which is similar to racism but differs in that the latter is based on biological characteristics. LULAC points out that this type of discrimination can be perceived in the way the English Only movement disapproves of multilingualism and multiculturalism and, in fact, Wiley (2000: 72) adds that "from an ideological perspective racism promotes *monoculturalism*". Therefore, it would be fair to state that the genuine discrimination based either on language or on race (or both) can be found in the pro-monolingual discourse of S.I. Hayakawa and, by extension, of the English Only movement, given that they promote linguistic assimilation into English and they reject to live in a multicultural nation or, as S.I. Hayakawa himself claims, in a "Tower of Babel".

Curiously enough, there is the dichotomy which S.I. Hayakawa establishes regarding the nature of nations. For him, two types of nations can be found in the world: "nations of

immigrants” (which need a unifying language) versus “countries which share race, religion, ethnicity or native language”. This idea goes back to Billig’s (1995) theory of nationalism and reflects the belief that the creation of a nation is based on the identification between a culture, a language, a territory and a political community. LULAC’s article also reinforces the idea of ‘nation’, although, in this case, ‘nationhood’ is related to the heterogeneity of languages and cultures. Furthermore, both discourses appeal to the glorification of nationhood, yet through different perspectives, which leads to the shaping of two different national identities. As it has already been mentioned, Billig (1995) highlights that owning a national identity not only means being situated physically, socially and legally, but, maybe more importantly, being positioned emotionally, and it is precisely this last characteristic the one that allows these two different identities to blossom.

On the whole, these two identities or social groups are mainly engrossed in the dilemma of what being American really means. S.I. Hayakawa (or the English Only movement) believes that speaking in English is one of the most important things (if not the most) to have the right to be called American. By way of illustration, he highlights the magnitude of “the connection between English language ability and citizenship”, and insists on making English the official language in order to “send the proper signal to newcomers about the importance of learning English”. Conversely, for LULAC and other supporters of the English Plus movement, being American means protecting the linguistic and cultural diversity of the country, and they claim that formalizing English language is something completely “un-American”, for it would lead to the discrediting of LOTEs and their speakers. Interestingly enough, S.I. Hayakawa maintains that Americans need to “preserve [their] traditional policy of a common language”, whereas, for LULAC the tradition is found in multilingualism and multiculturalism, which is the “true glue” of the nation. Wiley (2000: 85) mirrors perfectly the English Only ideology, in which “English monolingualism [is] a defining characteristic of citizenship and American identity [and] proficiency in standard English [has become] much more important in rationalizing the extent to which various groups would be provided access to equitable education”.

To finish with, it is essential to consider which impact or effect these discourses may have had (or may still have) on the receivers. Regarding S.I. Hayakawa's article, the social structure portrayed is that of the English supremacy and that one cannot be considered truly American unless he or she masters the English language. The author is also reproducing the monolingual ideology that languages are in competition (Wiley, 2000) and that LOTEs jeopardize the survival of English. Moreover, S.I. Hayakawa also defends the idea that an acquisition planning based on a bilingual education that aims at preserving the immigrants' native languages is wrong and that its primordial goal must be learning English as fast as possible. Thus, this text may cause that the native Americans regard LOTEs as a menace and, through the fear of being deprived of their own language, they may support the loss of immigrants' languages and the 'bilingual' education which best contributes to it. On the contrary, LULAC's article is an attempt to fight for the restructuring of the social values in the United States in order to achieve that (Hispanic) immigrant people and their native languages are viewed as something valuable and not as a danger. LULAC and the English Plus movement advocate that Americans should cast an eye on the past and remember that the diversity of languages and cultures is the true essence of the United States and the only possible way of becoming a strong nation. In this case, readers may position in favour of protecting the nation's multiculturalism and regard difference as a worthy resource. At the same time, the receivers would probably lose the fear that English remains on the sidelines if there are other languages spoken in the country, for it is explicitly clarified in the text that English is the most spoken language in the US and will continue to be.

6. Conclusions

Bilingualism and multilingualism complex phenomena which exist in virtually every society and which have been important focuses of attention in the United States especially since the first two decades of the 20th century. Although being in its origins multilingual and multicultural, the US began setting up differences between English and the rest of languages spoken in the area, placing the former in a privileged place. From then on, several acts have

been passed in order to regulate the status and the position of languages, one of the main concerns being the educational sphere. Polemics around bilingual education has been relentless and, depending on the period, different policies have been established, ones more prone to maintaining the children's native tongue and others aimed at the quick acquisition of English, disregarding the immigrants' first language. This disagreement in bilingual education policies is, in general, not helping in the preservation of the children's mother tongue, and research shows that third generation immigrants do not retain virtually any ability in their grandparents' language. Notwithstanding this fact, there is a discourse that is constantly reproduced which maintains that Languages Other Than English, especially Spanish, pose a threat to the unity of the nation. Such discourse is the motto of the English Only movement, which furthermore claims that competence in English is directly connected to loyalty to the United States. In order to counterattack this discourse, the English Plus movement originated as a reminder that multilingualism is not divisive and that it is the quintessence of the United States.

As a way of exploring in depth these discourses, two texts (one from each movement) have been analysed using CDA and taking into consideration the textual, the discursive and the social practice. With the analysis, these two discourses came to light and provided insightful information about beliefs concerning the position of languages and the American identity. On the one hand, the English Only movement considers that English has to be the only language studied and that there is no need to reinforce the proficiency of immigrant's languages, while being a 'true' American equals mastering the English language. On the other hand, the English Plus movement advocates for the mastering of English but, furthermore, for the conservation of all the immigrant languages. For the members of the latter movement, being American means respecting a multilingual and multicultural society, and the proficiency in English is not as important as it is for the English Only movement. Interestingly enough, in spite of the apparent direct opposition between these two social identities, they follow a common thread: they both seek to find the way to unify their nation, although through

different procedures, and they highlight the importance of being American and of having a genuine American identity in order to be widely accepted in the country.

This exploration of bilingualism and multilingualism in the US, as well as the revelation of the two most important discourses regarding languages and identity in this country, may be useful to educators and language policy makers, whose role in society has proven to be decisive in the way foreign language acquisition is regarded in bilingual or multilingual societies. The teachers' stance towards languages is essential since they help to shape the ideology of future generation citizens, and, as for policy-makers, they play a crucial role in either promoting languages through incentives or in obstructing foreign language learning through inconclusive debates. Furthermore, policy makers should take into consideration language experts' findings in order to determine whether a policy will be feasible or non-viable for the improvement of society. By way of illustration, in the United States the so acclaimed establishment of English as the only official language has been ascertained to be unviable by language researchers.

In addition, this study provides further evidence for how institutions that hold power have an influence on the way people think and how language is used to construct opposite identities in society. In turn, this research reflects how the issue of language within a nation may raise complex debates due to the different ideologies that coexist in the area. These ideologies end up taking the form of discourses which are continuously diffused, reproduced and maybe challenged by opposing discourses. It is the critical discourse analyst's duty, hence, to recognize such discourses, study them, reveal how they are used to achieve social goals and uncover the role they play in social maintenance or change.

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8. Annexes

“Bilingualism in America: English Should Be the Only Language”

“Rather than insisting that it is the immigrant's duty to learn the language of this country, the government has acted as if it has a duty to accommodate an immigrant in his native language. ”

By S.I. Hayakawa

- 1 DURING the dark days of World War 11, Chinese immigrants in California wore badges proclaiming their original nationality so they would not be mistaken for Japanese. In fact, these two immigrant groups long had been at odds with each other. However, as new English-speaking generations came along, the Chinese and Japanese began to communicate with one another. They found they had much in common and began to socialize. Today, they get together and form Asian-American societies.
- 2 Such- are the amicable results of sharing the English language. English unites us as Americans-immigrants and native-born alike. Communicating with each other in a single, common tongue encourages trust, while reducing racial hostility and bigotry.
- 3 My appreciation of English has led me to devote my retirement years to championing it. Several years ago, I helped to establish U.S. English, a Washington, D. C.-based group that seeks an amendment to the U. S, Constitution declaring English our official language, regardless of what other languages we may use unofficially.
- 4 As an immigrant to this nation, I am keenly aware of the things that bind us as Americans and unite us as a single people. Foremost among these unifying forces is the common language we share. While it is certainly true that our love of freedom and devotion to democratic principles help to unite and give us mutual purpose, it is English, our common language, that enables us to discuss our views and allows us to maintain a well-informed electorate, the cornerstone of democratic government.
- 5 Because we are a nation of immigrants, we do not share the characteristics of race, religion, ethnicity, or native language which form the common bonds of society in other countries. However, by agreeing to learn and use a single, universally spoken language, we have been able to forge a unified people from an incredibly diverse population.
- 6 Although our 200-year history should be enough to convince any skeptic of the powerful unifying effects of a common language, some still advocate the official recognition of other languages. They argue that a knowledge of English is not part of the formula for responsible citizenship in this country.
- 7 Some contemporary political leaders, like the former mayor of Miami, Maurice Ferre, maintain that "Language is not necessary to the system. Nowhere does our Constitution say that English is our language." He also told the *Tampa Tribune* that, "Within ten years there will not be a single word of English spoken [in Miami] -- English is not Miami's official language -- [and] one day residents will have to learn Spanish or leave."
- 8 The U.S. Department of Education also reported that countless speakers at a conference on bilingual education "expounded at length on the need for and eventuality of, a multilingual, multicultural United States of America with a national language policy citing English and Spanish as the two 'legal languages.'"
- 9 As a former resident of California, I am completely familiar with a system that uses two official languages, and I would not advise any nation to move in such a direction unless forced to do so. While it is true that India functions with 10 official languages, I haven't heard anyone suggest

- that it functions particularly well because of its multilingualism. In fact, most Indians will concede that the situation is a chaotic mess which has led to countless problems in the government's efforts to manage the nation's business. Out of necessity, English still is used extensively in India as a common language.
- 10 Belgium is another clear example of the diverse effects of two officially recognized languages in the same nation. Linguistic differences between Dutch- and French-speaking citizens have resulted in chronic political instability. Consequently, in the aftermath of the most recent government collapse, legislators are working on a plan to turn over most of its powers and responsibilities to the various regions, a clear, recognition of the diverse effects of linguistic separateness.
- 11 There are other problems. Bilingualism is a costly and confusing bureaucratic nightmare. The Canadian Government has estimated its bilingual costs to be nearly \$400,000,000 per year. It is almost certain that these expenses will increase as a result of a massive expansion of bilingual services approved by the Canadian Parliament in 1988. In the U. S., which has 10 times the population of Canada, the cost of similar bilingual services would be in the billions.
- 12 We first should consider how politically infeasible it is that our nation ever could recognize Spanish as a second official language without opening the floodgates for official recognition of the more than 100 languages spoken in this country. How long would it take, under such an arrangement, before the U. S. started to make India look like a model of efficiency?
- 13 Even if we can agree that multilingualism would be a mistake, some would suggest that official recognition of English is not needed. After all, our nation has existed for over 200 years without this, and English as our common language has continued to flourish.
- 14 I could agree with this sentiment had government continued to adhere to its time-honored practice of operating in English and encouraging newcomers to learn the language. However, this is not the case. Over the last few decades, government had been edging slowly towards policies that place other languages on a par with English.
- 15 In reaction to the cultural consciousness movement of the 1960's and 1970's, government has been increasingly reluctant to press immigrants to learn the English language, lest it be accused of "cultural imperialism." Rather than insisting that it is the immigrant's duty to learn the language of this country, the government has acted instead as if it has a duty to accommodate an immigrant in his native language.
- 16 A prime example of this can be found in the continuing debate over Federal and state policies relating to bilingual education. At times, these have come dangerously close to making the main goal of this program the maintenance of the immigrant child's native language, rather than the early acquisition of English.
- 17 As a former U. S. senator from California, where we spend more on bilingual education programs than any other state, I am very familiar with both the rhetoric and reality that lie behind the current debate on bilingual education: My experience has convinced me that many of these programs are shortchanging immigrant children in their quest to learn English.
- 18 To set the record straight from the start, I do not oppose bilingual education *if it is truly bilingual*. Employing a child's-native language to teach him (or her) English is entirely appropriate. What is not appropriate is continuing to use the children of Hispanic and other immigrant groups as guinea pigs in an unproven program that fails to teach English efficiently and perpetuates their dependency on their native language.
- 19 Under the dominant method of bilingual education used throughout this country, non- English-speaking students are taught all academic subjects such as math, science, and history exclusively in their native language. English is taught as a separate subject. The problem with this method is that there is no objective way to measure whether a child has learned enough English to be placed in classes where academic instruction is entirely in English. As a result, some children have

been kept in native language classes for six years.

20 Some bilingual education advocates, who are more concerned with maintaining the child's use of their native language, may not see any problem with such a situation. However, those who feel that the most important goal of this program is to get children functioning quickly in English appropriately are alarmed.

21 In the Newhall School District in California, some Hispanic parents are raising their voices in criticism of its bilingual education program, which relies on native language instruction. Their children complain of systematically being segregated from their English-speaking peers. Now in high school, these students cite the failure of the program to teach them English first as the reason for being years behind their classmates.

22 Even more alarming is the Berkeley (Calif.) Unified School District, where educators have recognized that all-native-language instruction would be an inadequate response to the needs of their non-English-speaking pupils. Challenged by a student body that spoke more than four different languages and by budgetary constraints, teachers and administrators responded with innovative language programs that utilized many methods of teaching English. That school district is now in court answering charges that the education they provided was inadequate because it did not provide transitional bilingual education for every non-English speaker. What was introduced 20 years ago as an experimental project has become -- despite inconclusive research evidence -- the only acceptable method of teaching for bilingual education advocates.

23 When one considers the nearly 50% dropout rate among Hispanic students (the largest group receiving this type of instruction), one wonders about their ability to function in the English-speaking main-stream of this country. The school system may have succeeded wonderfully in maintaining their native language, but if it failed to help them to master the English language fully, what is the benefit?

Alternatives

24 If this method of bilingual education is not the answer, are we forced to return to the old, discredited, sink-or-swim approach? No, we are not, since, as shown in Berkeley and other school districts, there are a number of alternative methods that have been proven effective, while avoiding the problems of all-native-language instruction.

25 Sheltered English and English as a Second Language (ESL) are just two programs that have helped to get children quickly proficient in English. Yet, political recognition of the viability of alternate methods has been slow in coming. In 1988, we witnessed the first crack in the monolithic hold that native language instruction has had on bilingual education funds at the Federal level. In its reauthorization of Federal bilingual education, Congress voted to increase the percentage of funds available for alternate methods from four to 25% of the total. This is a great breakthrough, but we should not be satisfied until 100% of the funds are available for any program that effectively and quickly can get children functioning in English, regardless of the amount of native language instruction it uses.

26 My goal as a student and a former educator is to see all students succeed academically, no matter what language is spoken in their homes. I want to see immigrant students finish their high school education and be able to compete for college scholarships. To help achieve this goal, instruction in English should start as early as possible. Students should be moved into English mainstream classes in one or, at the very most, two years. They should not continue to be segregated year after year from their English-speaking peers.

27 Another highly visible shift in Federal policy that I feel demonstrates quite clearly the eroding support of government for our common language is the requirement for bilingual voting ballots. Little evidence ever has been presented to show the need for ballots in other-languages. Even prominent Hispanic organizations acknowledge that more than 90% of native-born Hispanics currently

are fluent in English and more than half of that population is English monolingual.

- 28 Furthermore, if the proponents of bilingual ballots are correct when they claim that the absence of native language ballots prevents non-English-speaking citizens from exercising their right to vote, then current requirements are clearly unfair because they provide assistance to certain groups of voters while ignoring others. Under current Federal law, native language ballots are required only for certain groups: those speaking Spanish, Asian, or native American languages. European or African immigrants are not provided ballots in their native language, even in jurisdictions covered by the Voting Rights Act.
- 29 As sensitive as Americans have been to racism, especially since the days of the Civil Rights Movement, no one seems to have noticed the profound racism expressed in the amendment that created the 'bilingual ballot'. Brown people, like Mexicans and Puerto Ricans; red people, like American Indians; and yellow people, like the Japanese and Chinese, are assumed not to be smart enough to learn English. No provision is made, however, for non-English-speaking French-Canadians in Maine or Vermont, or Yiddish-speaking Hassidic Jews in Brooklyn, who are white and thus presumed to be able to learn English without difficulty.
- 30 Voters in San Francisco encountered ballots in Spanish and Chinese for the first time in the elections of 1980, much to their surprise, since authorizing legislation had been passed by Congress with almost no debate, roll-call vote, or public discussion. Naturalized Americans, who had taken the trouble to learn English to become citizens, were especially angry and remain so. While native language ballots may be a convenience to some voters, the use of English ballots does not deprive citizens of their right to vote. Under current voting law, non-English-speaking voters are permitted to bring a friend or family member to the polls to assist them in casting their ballots. Absentee ballots could provide another method that would allow a voter to receive this help at home.

31 Congress should be looking for other methods to create greater access to the ballot box for the currently small number of citizens who cannot understand an English ballot, without resorting to the expense of requiring ballots in foreign languages. We cannot continue to overlook the message we are sending to immigrants about the connection between English language ability and citizenship when we print ballots in other languages. The ballot is the primary symbol of civic duty. When we tell immigrants that they should learn English -- yet offer them full voting participation in their native language -- I fear our actions will speak louder than our words.

32 If we are to prevent the expansion of policies such as these, moving us further along the multilingual path, we need to make a strong statement that our political leaders will understand. We must let them know that we do not choose to reside in a "Tower of Babel." Making English our nation's official language by law will send the proper signal to newcomers about the importance of learning English and provide the necessary guidance to legislators to preserve our traditional policy of a common language.

“English Plus Versus English Only”

LULAC's activism has extended to the realm of language and cultural rights by holding seminars and public symposiums on language and immigration issues, and has spoken out on printed and electronic medias against the movement to limit, or to eradicate, the use of minority languages.

LULAC has monitored the emergence and growing prominence of the movement to declare "English" the official language in some states. This movement, if unchallenged, will eventually make "English" the official language of the United States of North America. LULAC, has debated this issue on countless occasions, has formed educational and information forums and has created several task forces on language policies.

LULAC feels that cultural and linguistic pluralism is part of the "true glue" that holds our great nation together and has established the "English Plus Concept" as a response to the un-American opposing nature of the "English Only Movement."

Recently, LULAC saw a positive development in its campaign to promote the "English Plus Concept." Through combined efforts of LULAC and Atlanta's mayor, the Honorable Andrew Young, the Atlanta City Council unanimously passed a resolution designating that city "multilingual and multicultural." The resolution stipulates Atlanta "respects the linguistic and cultural differences of its citizens." It was passed as a response to the resolution passed by the Georgia State Legislature designating "English" the official language of the state. This was a great encouragement to LULAC to continue promoting its "English Plus Concept."

This concept celebrates the cultural and linguistic diversification of America and treats this nation's multiethnic and multilingual communities as national resources.

Great number of politicians and community leaders have already endorsed the "English Plus Concept" because it states that although young people of limited English proficiency "need and want to be fluent in English to enter into the mainstream of this nation, they have much to offer from their diversified languages and cultural backgrounds." These national and natural resources must be protected and celebrated.

The "English Plus Concept" promotes the addition of a second language without forfeiting one's mother tongue fosters the suggestion that "additive bilingualism" creates "a language competent society" in which both limited English proficient individuals and native English speakers will be able to develop fluency in a second language while simultaneously developing reading and writing skills in the home language.

Several studies have shown that only four percent of high school graduates in our nation have had at least two of foreign language training, while one hundred percent of limited English speaking students have capabilities in other languages.

History tells us that the United States of North America is a nation of immigrants and many languages. The United States of North America has built on this as a strength and can continue to build if we continue to see diversity as strength. What we share is a common patriotism, a common dream of opportunity in our nation, no matter what our heritage or what generation our family came to this nation. The "English Plus Concept" continues the support and the acknowledgment of our strengths through common dreams and through diversity of backgrounds all focused on the same goals- justice, opportunity, responsibility, and the best of human resources. "English Plus" is one way to acknowledge a very important human resource- individuals with understanding of different languages and cultures in our ever shrinking world.

Attempts to make English official represents the first time that the constitution of the United States of North America has been utilized to intentionally take away the rights of American citizens rather than to extend or strengthen them. Never in our history, except for a brief period of prohibition, has the amendment process been used to revoke basic rights. As the 1984 LULAC testimony on the "English Language Amendment" points out,

"This is not the 13th Amendment ending slavery. This is not the 14th Amendment calling for equal protection laws. This is not the 19th Amendment allowing women the right to vote. Nor is this the Equal Rights Amendment ensuring women fair treatment in society."

If the ongoing efforts to make English the official language of Texas and the United States are successful, English will not be the nation's official language, discrimination will. The "English Only Movement" is merely the latest form of "linguistic racism" in Texas and in the United States. Antagonism and discrimination based on language goes beyond race and has victimized virtually every immigrant.

Both the 19th and the early 20th centuries witnessed legislation which institutionalized discrimination against blacks and other immigrants groups. Paralleling the rise of Jim Crow in the 1880s which denied newly won constitutional rights to Black Americans. "English Only" and nativist groups have spawned efforts to reduce the political clout of new immigrants, eradicate their languages, and keep them from the social economic mainstream since the last century.

Laws were enacted to prevent Chinese from testifying in court, Japanese from owning land, German from being learned in schools, and Hispanic children from attending integrated schools.

It took the Supreme Court in 1923 to strike down laws in over twenty states which made "English official" and prohibited the teaching of other languages in schools. That such "English Only" legislation was reprehensive to the basic laws of our nation was made clear by Justice McReynolds, who wrote for the Court in *Meyer vs. Nebraska* (1923) U.S. 390,

"The protection of the United States Constitution extends to all, to those who speak other languages as well as to those born with English on the tongue. Perhaps it would be highly advantageous if all had ready understanding of our ordinary speech, but this cannot be coerced by methods which conflict with the constitution- a desirable end cannot be promoted by prohibited means."

Notwithstanding, this long held Constitutional Doctrine, a new "English Only" movement has emerged. "U.S. English," which claims a membership of 170,000, maintains that the public use of foreign languages, especially Spanish, in our country will create "language segregation" and a gradual loss of national unity. Some even suggest that bilingualism, especially Spanish, constitutes a national risk.

At first glance, the idea of an "English (Only) Language Amendment" seems harmless. Why oppose a symbolic amendment to declare by law what we all know anyway, that English is already the language of our country? Why not legally sanction the "glue" that binds us together as a nation? While its supporters depict the "English Only Movement" as a gentle reminder that "English" is the nation's language, and who could disagree with this; nonetheless, elevating it to constitutional status, immediately and undeniably, brings a host of negative consequences and exposes the true and hidden agenda of this movement.

First, an "English (Only) Language Amendment" will not make use of English any more official than it is today. There are already many laws governing the use of English. Most of the 50 states, and almost all of the territories, have English as a legally sanctioned requirement for public and judicial institutions. These laws regulate court and legislative proceedings, official records and legal notices. Most states also require English language examinations before a person may practice a profession. English language and civic requirements still exist for naturalization and citizenship.

Second, amending the Constitution of this great nation, or a State Constitution, is not a matter to be taken lightly and requires serious consideration of its potential consequences. Amendments fundamentally set out to correct institutional or systemic denial of civil rights, and are therefore necessary adjustments to preserve equal opportunity and equality for all citizens. As such, any critical analysis of the "English (Only) Language Amendment" must answer two questions,

Exactly whose rights are being violated because English is not the official language? Who exactly will benefit from passage of such an amendment?

By arguing that the "traditional" status of English is in jeopardy does not justify a Constitutional Amendment to restore "primacy." English speakers still retain full access to equal education and employment opportunity, are entitled to full protection under the law, and may utilize the print or electronic media of their choice. Thus, the conclusion from the availability of such freedoms is that Civil and Constitutional Rights of monolingual English speakers are not violated by lack of an official language. On the

contrary, the fundamental question to ask about the "English (Only) Language Amendment" is this,

Whose Constitutional and Civil Rights will be violated if English is declared the official language of the United States?

The answer is,

The language minority individual, who stands to be directly and gravely affected by passage of such an amendment.

In fact, rather than ensuring the participation of language minority persons in the political process, the "English (Only) Language Amendment" would end, or at least severely limit, numerous language assistance programs and services.

The "English Only Movement" would prohibit interpreters in courts and medical institutions. It would eliminate Spanish language radio and television broadcasting and possible 911 emergency operators. Currently, bilingual personnel are available at federally funded community centers, as well as alcohol and drug treatment programs which serve language minority communities. The "English (Only) Language Amendment" would likely affect the availability of the bilingual personnel at these centers, which have recently come under attack by the "English Only" proponents.

Section D of California's "English Only Amendment" encourages widespread attacks on all uses of Spanish and other languages in public and private contexts. Designated the "Personal Right of Action and Jurisdiction of Courts," this section permits anyone living or doing business in California to sue in State Courts to enforce the use of "English Only." Therefore, local governments, hospital districts, state agencies, utility companies, etc., would be subject to lawsuits. Even though courts might reject the "English Only" arguments, the mere ability of an individual to take them to court will deter these entities from properly serving non-English speaking residents in order to avoid legal fees, court costs and litigation.

Limited English proficient persons do not need to be encouraged; they need to be enabled. As Senator Domenici stated before the Senate in September 1985,

English (Only) Language Amendment will not help anyone learn the English language. It will not improve our It will not lead to a cohesive nation. In fact, it will create a more divided nation. This proposed amendment is an insult to all Americans for whom English is not the first language now at this stage of their life and to all those Americans who would like to learn English but who cannot for one reason or another."

Legislating an official language will not produce "better citizens" or make them feel "more American." On the contrary, the effort sends ethnic communities the message that it is un-American to be actively bilingual and that the desire to maintain ties to one's cultural and linguistic heritage is unpatriotic. Paradoxically, the stated objective of

the "English Only Movement" to foster unity and nationhood by legislating a common language is having the opposite effect. Entire communities have split ideologically along racial and language lines.

No one, least of all limited English proficient individuals, question that English is already the official language of the nation. Hispanic Americans and other language minority groups have always accepted English as the national language and do not need new federal legislation to inform them of this fact. It would be foolish and cruel to deny that which Hispanics and other ethnic and linguistic minorities in this nation know probably better than anyone: English is the language of the general societal, political, and economic discourse. To get ahead in these areas, one must know English. Yet, knowing English is simply not enough, to suggest that this is the case, as do groups like "English Only," makes the "Official English Movement" as one looking to the 19th century and out of step with America entering the 21st century.