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Journal of Business Research



The effects of Hispanic bilinguals language use and stereotype activation on negotiations outcomes

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 1 June 2015

Received in revised form 1 March 2016

Accepted 1 April 2016

Available online xxxx

Keywords:

Language

Negotiations

Services

Stereotypes

Bilinguals

Hispanics

ABSTRACT

Service encounters often become negotiations between the customer and the service provider. For speakers of multiple languages, the language used in a negotiation can be a critical factor in the success of that encounter. By investigating how U.S. bilinguals negotiate in either English or Spanish, this research examines the effect that the activation of the stereotype related to the minority language-speakers has on negotiation outcomes. The results of two experiments support the general notion that, among U.S. Hispanic bilinguals, the majority language (English) yields more favorable outcomes compared to the minority language (Spanish); a third study with a comparison group of bilinguals in Mexico, where no language-related stereotype exists, shows no effect of the negotiation language on the outcome. The paper discusses theoretical and practical implications of the findings and areas for future research.

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“Hola! Que tal?” “Hello! How are you?”

1. Introduction

More than 60 million Americans over the age of 5 (or 21% of the population) speak a language other than English at home, with the majority of those speaking Spanish (Ryan, 2013). In many U.S. cities, being bilingual, or fluent in more than one language, gives people an edge in the job market (Parker, 2013), and even political candidates are taking notice and producing websites and campaign literature, and giving speeches, in both English and Spanish (Associated Press, 2015). But as Grosjean (2013, p. 12) put it, “bilinguals acquire and use their languages for different purposes, in different domains of life, with different people.” Speakers of multiple languages might find themselves more successful in a given situation using one language or another based upon a number of factors, such as: which is the dominant language of the workplace, which is the primary language spoken by the consumer or members of the household, and even which language seems to better fit the situation. In a service setting, one might be interested in knowing which language would lead to a more successful service encounter for

all parties. Service encounters quite often involve various forms of negotiation, particularly when interacting with an agent or customer service representative or when attempting to resolve a complaint. Indeed, in today's global service environment, customers commonly deal with a representative who is in another country or belongs to a different ethnic group. In these negotiations, service providers and consumers usually seek to maximize their own outcome while still ensuring they achieve an agreement. When both the customer and the service provider are bilingual (proficient in two languages), the language in which the negotiation takes place might become an advantage or a disadvantage in attaining the desired outcomes for both counterparts. The question then becomes, what will be the impact of language on the outcome of the service negotiation. Once the impact of language is clear, such knowledge will allow bilingual customers and service providers to maximize their outcomes in different negotiation situations.

While much of the existing service literature merely calls for more service providers, such as doctors, nurses, or social workers, to be bilingual in order to more effectively meet the needs of their clients or patients (e.g., Chen, 2006; Engstrom, Piedra, & Min, 2009), some more recent literature has begun to investigate the impact of the language (native or second language) on consumers of services (Holmqvist & Van Vaerenbergh, 2013; Van Vaerenbergh & Holmqvist, 2014). On the other hand, despite the enormous literature on cultural differences in negotiations (e.g., Adair, Okumura, & Brett, 2001; Graham, Mintu, & Rodgers, 1994; Salacuse, 1998), only limited research examines the role of language in negotiations (e.g., Ulijn & Verweij, 2000).

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This research extends these prior efforts by investigating the role that language, as a component of the person's social identity, has on negotiation outcomes. Social identity is defined in terms of individuals' knowledge of their membership in a group, and the value and emotions attached to that membership (Tajfel, 1981). Language is not only an important component of the individuals' social identity (Grosjean, 1982), but also has the potential to signal membership in an ethnic group (Giles & Johnson, 1987). Thus, this paper will build on the previous work by employing an ethno-linguistic perspective to examine the impact that language (English and Spanish) can have on negotiation outcomes within an ethnic group (U.S. Hispanic). To investigate these effects, the proposed research relies on the threat that being judged unfavorably poses for individuals, affecting their performance and consequently their negotiation outcomes (Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995). The language-related stereotypes associated with the ethnic group with lower economic, political, and numeric status (Spanish) would then activate the stereotype threat (Grosjean, 1982; Lambert & Lambert, 1973; Montes-Alcala, 2000; Peñaloza, 1980).

Theoretically, this research contributes to the literature in several directions. Specifically, (1) the research extends the service and language literature by incorporating an ethno-linguistic perspective to the effects of language on service encounters beyond language proficiency and language preference; (2) the research also contributes to the literature on stereotype threat, by extending the effects to language-related stereotypes in a non-academic task; and (3) the research expands the negotiation literature by providing evidence that language can affect negotiation outcomes. Pragmatically, service providers and consumers will benefit from learning about the key role played by language when negotiating and using that knowledge to maximize the outcomes when negotiating service encounters.

2. Background literature and conceptual framework

2.1. Language in service encounters

While some prior research shows language to be a useful segmentation criterion in various service sectors (Redondo-Bellon, 1999), much of the literature on bilingualism in services merely discusses the need for, and experience of, bilingual service providers. For example, Chen (2006) offers a personal account of one doctor's experience attempting to work with a patient with limited English ability. The account notes how relying on interpreters, often family and friends, presents a challenge in terms of confidentiality and reliability, thus pointing to the need for professional medical interpreters. Another study evaluates bilingualism in social work services (Engstrom et al., 2009). In a qualitative study, Engstrom and colleagues find that agencies should determine what language skills social workers need, and then should both provide ongoing language training and consider differential pay for those with second language skills (Engstrom et al., 2009). Thus, some prior literature addresses the need for bilingual service providers from an administrative service delivery perspective.

More recent studies investigate the impact of service language usage on the consumer. Holmqvist (2011) studies bilingual people in two countries (speaking four languages) and finds that participants in all groups (English/French or Finnish/Swedish, with either language as the primary) prefer using their first language in service encounters, but that this preference is particularly true for high involvement services (such as banking or medicine). A qualitative study identifies financial reasons (some would switch to a service provider in their second language to get a better price) and comfort reasons (many felt more comfortable receiving the services in their native language) underlying the language preferences in both countries, while also identifying political reasons (some expressed hatred or other strong negative emotions for those who refused to speak a certain language) in Canada, but not in Finland. In similar research across three countries, Holmqvist and Van Vaerenbergh (2013) again find a strong preference for service

encounters in one's native language, particularly for high involvement services, and no gender difference in this preference.

Continuing this line of inquiry, Van Vaerenbergh and Holmqvist (2014) find that consumers are more likely to tip when served in their native language than in a second language. Moreover, the degree to which the consumer believes the server is making an effort to accommodate them mediates this result, which is independent of the consumer's language skills in their second language. Interestingly, political considerations are again important, as those with strong political feelings about language usage are much less likely to tip in their second language. Further research finds consumers are also less likely to spread positive word of mouth, and feel the provider was being less responsive, when served in their second language than in their native language (Van Vaerenbergh & Holmqvist, 2014).

This emerging literature demonstrates the impact of a service provider's language usage on consumers' responses to that service encounter. Clearly, service providers' language usage has important effects on bilingual consumers' evaluations and behaviors, beyond just that of language proficiency. Moreover, the communication and interaction between the consumer and the service provider are critical to the success of the service encounter (Bitner, 1990; Bitner, Booms, & Tetreault, 1990). Today, many service encounters are longer and more in depth, such as when dealing with phone service or a computer problem, and often amount to a negotiation between the purchaser and the service provider.

This research fits well within this literature stream by examining the effects of language from a different perspective, as part of the social identity of service providers and consumers. The aim is to extend the literature by examining the impact of language on negotiations, which are likely to be part of a service encounter among bilingual counterparts.

2.2. Language, ethnicity, and stereotypes

As a means of communication, every language conveys a unique representation of the world. Hence, researchers argue that, to some degree, culture frames language and language frames culture (Whorf, 1956). However, language also serves as an identity symbol. Under this conception, attitudes towards the ethnic group associated with a language accompany the attitudes or judgments towards the language itself. An individual's social identity is defined in terms of the social group or groups of which an individual is a member (Tajfel, 1981), and the language of that group is considered to be a valued component of that identity (Smolicz & Lean, 1979). Membership in a group may be positive or negative depending on the social comparison with other groups. Giles and his colleagues introduce the concept of "ethnolinguistic vitality," to define the factors that determine the strength and distinctiveness of the ethnicity and language of the group when confronted with other ethnic groups (Giles, Bourhis, & Taylor, 1977; Giles & Johnson, 1987). An ethnic group's economic power, political prestige, and demographic status define its ethnolinguistic vitality. Under these circumstances, when two ethnic groups are in constant contact, one language becomes the majority language; the other language naturally becomes the minority language (Giles & Johnson, 1987). When this process occurs, the language of the majority develops more favorable associations than those attached to the language spoken by any of the minorities. These less favorable associations can lead to stereotypes.

Cultural stereotypes (Devine, 1989) represent a person's perception of societally endorsed views. These stereotypes represent the perceptions about what is believed by "people in general" (Devine & Elliot, 1995; Garcia-Marques, Santos, & Mackie, 2006), and they may or may not be in accord with a person's personal beliefs. When two or more ethnic groups are in frequent contact, social comparisons take place and as a consequence, the group's cultural stereotype likely reflects the ethnolinguistic vitality of the group (Hewstone & Giles, 1977). In particular, among Mexican-Americans, perceptions of the English

language and Anglo people are more vital in their economic, political, and social power compared to the Spanish language and Hispanics (Gao, Schmidt, & Gudykunst, 1994). Peñaloza (1980) notes that Hispanics may be reluctant to use their language of origin in America because of the “perceived racism of the surrounding society” (p. 191) and that they are expected to “speak American in this country” (p. 184).

A recent assessment of the ethnolinguistic vitality of Hispanics in America concludes that, although the Spanish-speaking population of the United States is growing significantly and encountering the use of Spanish in mass media and the linguistic landscape of some communities is becoming increasingly common, their political and socioeconomic power is still limited, as is the language vitality (Barker et al., 2001). From these perspectives, then, American society is likely to hold less favorable opinions of those using a minority language, and therefore, in general hold an unfavorable cultural stereotype towards Spanish-speaking individuals.

3. Hypotheses development

Stereotypes have the potential to impair an individual's performance when he or she is in a situation for which a negative stereotype about the individual's group applies (e.g., students from low socioeconomic backgrounds compared to those from high socioeconomic backgrounds on intellectual tasks, Croizet & Claire, 1998; White versus Asian males on math tasks, Aronson et al., 1999; or females negotiating against males, Kray, Thompson, & Galinsky, 2001). According to Steele (1997), the stereotype threat initiates when participants implicitly feel the threat that others will judge them according to a negative stereotype; they subconsciously feel anxiety about possibly confirming the negative stereotype, which then results in reduced performance. Under these circumstances, judgments consistent with the activated stereotype are likely to occur, leading to the enactment of stereotype-consistent behaviors, unwittingly confirming the stereotype (Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995) as in a self-fulfilling prophecy (Merton, 1968).

In particular, prior research employs gender stereotypes to explain differences in negotiation outcomes between males and females (e.g., Garcia-Marques et al., 2006; Kray et al., 2001). This research proposes that the language stereotypes associated with a group's ethnolinguistic vitality, and therefore, their linguistic, social, and political power, are also likely to impair individuals' performance while negotiating, which could subsequently impact the negotiation outcome. Thus, if during a negotiation, a certain language implicitly activates a negative stereotype associated with the ethnic group that speaks that language, then negotiators who belong to that particular group risk confirming the negative stereotype. The threat of others' judgment being unfavorable is likely to make negotiators self-conscious about possibly confirming the stereotype, thereby inhibiting their performance, generating a negative impact on negotiation outcomes.

In sum, the use of the Spanish language in a negotiation among Hispanics is likely to increase the accessibility of the cultural stereotype of Spanish-speakers, and thus trigger the threat of being unfavorably judged. Therefore, the first hypothesis expects the language used in the negotiation to impact the outcomes.

Hypothesis 1. Negotiation outcomes of U.S. Hispanic bilinguals will be higher for negotiations conducted in English compared to negotiations conducted in Spanish.

Previous research sometimes shows that one of the mechanisms driving the stereotype threat is anxiety (Bosson, Haymovitz, & Pinel, 2004; Osborne, 2001; Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1999). The anxiety generated by the threat of being negatively judged in terms of the stereotype is likely to impair the performance of the negotiator. Hence:

Hypothesis 2. The effects of language on negotiation outcomes will be mediated by participants' anxiety.

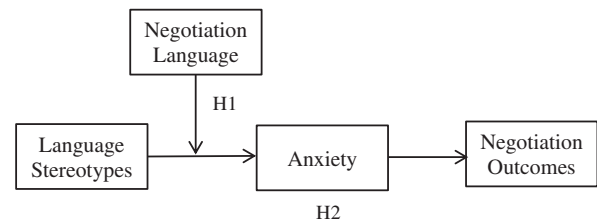


Fig. 1. The moderating effects of language on the effects of stereotype activation on negotiations outcomes.

These hypotheses are represented in Fig. 1. The paper presents three studies designed to test these hypotheses. Study 1 examines the effects of the threat activation of language stereotype on negotiation outcomes (Hypothesis 1), while Study 2 replicates the results of Study 1 on negotiation outcomes (Hypotheses 1) with a different sample population and tests the mediation effects of anxiety (Hypothesis 2). Last, Study 3 includes a comparison group to rule out alternative explanations for the findings.

4. Study 1

4.1. Participants and design

In a screening phase, graduate students from a major state university in Florida either self-identified as bilinguals (participants that reported being fluent in English and Spanish) or non-bilinguals. Non-bilingual students in the class participated in an alternative exercise and were not included in the sample. One hundred and four Hispanic bilinguals participated in the negotiation as part of a class exercise, and all were randomly assigned to one of the four experimental cells and to a negotiating partner. Hispanic participants with an average of 19 years of living in the U.S., and who highly identified with the Hispanic culture composed all dyads (c.f. Table 1).

This study manipulates negotiation language (English and Spanish), and randomly assigns the negotiation role as part of the negotiation exercise, yielding a 2 language (Spanish and English) by 2 negotiation role, between-participants experiment.

4.2. Negotiation stimuli and procedures

The negotiation exercise is a two-person, simulated negotiation role-play describing a commercial real estate service scenario, with the two roles being that of a real estate developer and a representative from a neighborhood association (Susskind & Forester, 2014). First,

Table 1

Sample demographic and language use characteristics of Study 1.

Age	(18–25 years)	33.3%
	(26–35 years)	37.4%
	(36 or older)	29.3%
Percent females		52.5%
Place of birth	United States	42.4%
	Abroad	57.6%
Average years lived in U.S.		19.5
English proficiency ^a		6.3
Spanish proficiency ^a		5.8
Language use ^b	At home	4.2
	At work	2.6
	With friends	3.3
	Watching T.V.	2.0
	Listening to the radio	2.6

^a Language proficiency was measured on a seven-point scale, where higher scores indicate more proficiency. Participants rated themselves more proficient ($t = 2.54$, $df = 103$, $p = 0.01$) in English than Spanish.

^b Language use was measured on a seven-point scale, where 1 = Only English, 4 = Spanish and English about equally, and 7 = Only Spanish.

researchers gave participants instructions regarding the negotiation exercise. The instructions requested that participants individually read their confidential materials, determine a negotiation strategy, and then meet to negotiate. The instructions also informed participants that the goal of the negotiation was to maximize their individual outcomes, while also reaching an agreement with their counterpart. Last, the researchers pointed out that the materials would specify the assigned language for negotiating.

After listening to the instructions, participants retrieved their pairing assignment together with the negotiating materials to read and prepare. Depending upon the language condition, all negotiation materials were printed either in English or in Spanish, with instructions to participants to conduct their negotiations in the indicated language. The packets contained both general contextual and confidential role-specific information. In order to follow the standard research procedures among bilingual participants (Marín & Marin, 1991), two bilingual language experts translated the Spanish version of the case booklet to English from the original Spanish version and then back translated to confirm the translation. After taking about 15–20 minutes to read all of the materials and prepare their negotiating strategy, participants met their partner to conduct the negotiation.

Participants negotiated on two issues: the total number of condominium units (from 50 to 100) to be built in a new development and the percentage (from 5% to 33%) of those units to be allocated as affordable housing. Each set of confidential role information also includes a table showing acceptable and unacceptable combinations of the two issues, as well as the outcomes (point totals) which would accrue to their side for each option. Thus, the exercise is completely quantifiable, with higher point values indicating better outcomes for the participants. The simulation also offers participants the opportunity to find integrative solutions by trading off between the issues (meaning, the case is not exclusively a win-lose negotiation). Moreover, all participants were enrolled in a negotiations course taught in English and had already participated in about 10 similar exercises in which they were expressly motivated to maximize their individual outcomes and were quite familiar with this process.

4.3. Measures

Participants' negotiations outcomes (i.e., the total number of condominium units and affordable housing agreed upon) were measured by the individual point score they achieved with the agreement they negotiated, as indicated in the case. For the role of the developer, the possible outcomes for feasible agreements are equivalent to a number of points in between 45 and 93 points, while the range of feasible outcomes for the neighborhood representative is 30 to 55 points. Combinations of the two issues yielding lower than the respective minimum point values were labeled as infeasible for that role (and not considered a valid agreement), and neither party knew the other side's valuations of the

two issues. The tables with the feasible points for each role are unique and each party values the issues differently, but final outcomes are, of course, interdependent as the two parties must come together to form an agreement.

After concluding their negotiation, participants completed some survey measures related to the negotiation itself and their counterpart. Participants completed a filler task in which they described how confident they were about their role during the negotiation and answered questions about the attractiveness and the trustworthiness of the person with whom they negotiated. After completing this task, students answered the measure of Spanish and English speaker stereotypes, adapted from Garcia-Marques et al. (2006) which asked, "Think about the opinions that Americans in general have about people living in the U.S. that ONLY speak Spanish (English). How do you think Americans in general would view people living in the U.S. that only speak Spanish (English)?" They recorded their responses on seven-point scales with the endpoints: unknowledgeable/knowledgeable, unintelligent/intelligent, and informal/formal. These scales were used based on common mental associations about English-speakers among Latin American nationals as the language of knowledge, technology, formality, superiority, social and educational advancement, and conducting business (Alm, 2003; Baumgardner, 2006; Niño-Murcia, 2003). The survey included a measure of Hispanic identification assessed using Deshpande, Hoyer, and Donthu's (1986) nine-point scale measure, and measures of their perceived overall proficiency using each language, evaluated on a single scale that ranged from bad (1) to good (7). Last, participants also gave general demographic information (all measures included in Table 1).

4.4. Results

In support of the language manipulation, all participants receiving the negotiation material in English (100%) and Spanish (100%) stated that they conducted the negotiation in the language indicated by the instructions.

The means, standard deviations, and correlations among the variables are shown in Table 2. A *t*-test comparing the English- and Spanish-speaker stereotypes evaluates whether the stereotype of English-speakers is more favorable than the stereotype of Spanish-speakers, in order to confirm the English language's superior vitality compared to the Spanish language vitality. Participants' responses to the Spanish-speaker stereotype (Cronbach $\alpha = 0.90$) significantly differ from responses to the English-speaker stereotype measures (Cronbach $\alpha = 0.95$), with the Spanish speaker stereotype ($M = 4.6$) being less favorable than the English-speaker stereotype ($M = 5.8$, $t = -6.51$, $df = 103$, $p < 0.01$).

The analysis includes participants' strength of Hispanic identification ($F(1, 97) < 1$), English ($F(1, 97) = 6.3$, $p = 0.01$) and Spanish ($F(1, 97) < 1$) proficiency as possible covariates, in addition to the core predictors. English proficiency is statistically significant and, thus, is

Table 2
Descriptive statistics and correlation matrix Study 1.

Variables	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Independent variables</i>									
1. Language (Spanish = 0, English = 1)	0.5	0.5	–						
2. Negotiation role (Neighborhood representative = 0, developer = 1)	0.5	0.5	0.04	–					
3. Spanish-speaker stereotype ^a	4.6	1.4	–0.23*	–0.07	–				
4. English-speaker stereotype ^b	5.8	1.4	0.22*	0.06	0.12	–			
5. Spanish proficiency	5.8	1.6	0.15	–0.00	–0.05	0.00	–		
6. English proficiency	6.3	1.5	0.22*	–0.15	0.08	0.24*	0.38**	–	
7. Hispanic identification	5.4	1.5	0.14	–0.06	0.00	0.02	0.59**	0.39**	–
<i>Dependent variable</i>									
8. Negotiation outcomes (Points)	54.2	9.2	0.27*	0.45**	0.07	0.04	–0.02	–0.22*	–0.01

* $p < 0.05$.

** $p < 0.01$.

^a Reliability Cronbach $\alpha = 0.90$. $N = 104$.

^b Reliability Cronbach $\alpha = 0.95$. $N = 104$.

included in the subsequent analyses; all other covariates are excluded. The skewness and kurtosis values of the individual outcomes are 0.01 and -0.85 , respectively; these are within reasonable limits for assuming normality. A 2 language \times 2 negotiation role ANOVA on individual negotiation outcomes, controlling for English proficiency, tests [Hypothesis 1](#). Negotiation role is included as a factor because each role employed a different scoring scale, and participants were randomly assigned to each role. A significant main effect of language on the negotiation outcomes would provide evidence for [Hypothesis 1](#); specifically, the hypothesis proposes that negotiations in English will produce higher outcomes than negotiations in Spanish.

Negotiation role often influences negotiation outcomes as different roles often have differing goals and outcome possibilities ([Rubin & Brown, 1975](#)). In particular, given the scoring scales employed in the negotiation exercise, the average points of the developer will be higher than the average scores of the neighborhood activist. However, the negotiating role should not impact any effects of language on negotiation outcomes. A language main effect emerges ($F(1, 99) = 12.55, p < 0.001$), with greater individual outcomes when participants negotiate in English ($M = 56.7$) than when they negotiate in Spanish ($M = 51.2$). The main effect of negotiation role is significant ($F(1, 99) = 23.58, p < 0.001$); as expected, negotiations outcomes are higher for the real estate developer role ($M = 57.7$) than the neighborhood activist role ($M = 50.1$). Also as expected, the language manipulation and the negotiation role do not interact ($F(1, 99) < 1$).

4.5. Discussion

These results document the potential for language to alter negotiation outcomes. As hypothesized, requesting participants to negotiate in Spanish affects their performance, resulting in lower negotiation outcomes when compared to a similar group of participants that negotiated in English, even after controlling for English language proficiency. Less clear, however, is whether the stereotype threat is the mechanism responsible for the outcome differences. Indeed, other accounts might be advanced.

A possible alternative explanation is that, because participants were students in negotiations classes, and had spent ten weeks learning negotiating skills in English rather than in Spanish, they were better able to apply these skills in the same language. Thus, Study 2 includes a sample of U.S. Hispanic bilinguals who are not graduate students in negotiations classes and have not, therefore, repeatedly engaged in negotiations in English. This study still expects that U.S. Hispanic bilinguals would have the same negative stereotype of Spanish-speakers and would perform better in English than in Spanish ([Hypothesis 1](#)). Study 2 will also add measures of anxiety to test for possible mediation of the language effect on negotiation outcomes. Last, the scoring system that was used in the negotiation exercise had an effect on the outcomes due to the role that the participant played. Although negotiation role did not interact with the language effects, Study 2 will address the scaling issue by using the negotiation dyad as the unit of analysis.

5. Study 2

5.1. Participants and design

This study manipulates a single factor, negotiation language (English and Spanish), in a between-participants experiment, and the negotiation role was again part of the role-play exercise. Forty-two bilingual undergraduate students from a major state university in Florida participated in exchange for extra course credit. Thirty-two participants were recruited from business courses in management and marketing, while additional ten participants were recruited from the college's research participation subject pool in order to improve sample sizes. Three pairs of students did not reach agreement and were excluded from the sample. The resulting sample included 10 pairs who negotiated in

English and 8 pairs who negotiated in Spanish. None of the participants were currently enrolled in a negotiations class similar to those Study 1 participants were taking (in which they engaged in repeated negotiation simulations), nor did they receive a grade for their performance. Yet, they all took the exercise seriously and took between 30 and 60 minutes to prepare for and complete the negotiation. The demographic composition and language preferences of the sample are included in [Table 3](#). The sample primarily included participants between 18 – to 25 years of age, who were born abroad and have lived an average of 15 years in America.

5.2. Negotiation stimuli and procedures

The study procedures and stimuli mirror the procedures and stimuli used in Study 1. Experimental procedures randomly assigned self-identified bilingual participants to a negotiating partner, role, and language. They read their confidential information and prepared, then negotiated with their counterpart, and finally, completed the survey.

5.3. Measures

Unless stated otherwise, the measures employed in Study 2 remain the same as those employed in Study 1. Participants' anxiety is measured using an adaptation of [Osborne's \(2001\)](#) anxiety measure using the following items: "tense, under strain, nervous/jittery, calm, and uncomfortable." Each item has a score of one if they answer yes or zero if they answer no. The scores are added to compose a scale from zero to five. In order to obtain an overall assessment of favorability of the cultural stereotypes, new scales measure the Spanish- and English-speakers stereotypes with the following global evaluative scales: "very negative/very positive," "very unfavorable/very favorable," and "very bad/very good." In order to objectively assess language proficiency in each language, six multiple-choice questions (half in English and half in Spanish) ask participants about the meaning of specific statements within the negotiation materials. The resulting score is calculated based on the total number of correct answers for each language (that ranged from zero to three). Last, given that the outcomes of the negotiation depend upon the specific role that the participant played in the negotiation role-play, the unit of analysis will be the negotiation dyad. The joint outcome will be used as the dependent measure, thereby eliminating the effects generated by the differing scales used to score each negotiation role.

Table 3
Sample demographic and language use characteristics of Study 2.

Age	(18–25 years)	75.0%
	(26–35 years)	13.9%
	(36 or older)	11.1%
Percent females		39.0%
Place of birth	United States	41.7%
	Abroad	58.3%
Average years lived in U.S.		15.1
English proficiency ^a		6.3
Spanish proficiency ^a		5.1
Language use ^b	At home	3.8
	At work	2.9
	With friends	3.1
	Watching T.V.	2.4
	Listening to the radio	2.6

^a Language proficiency was measured on a seven-point scale, where higher scores indicate more proficiency. Participants rated themselves more proficient ($t = 3.55, df = 35, p < 0.01$) in English than Spanish.

^b Language use was measured on a seven-point scale, where 1 = Only English, 4 = Spanish and English about equally, and 7 = Only Spanish.

5.4. Results

Once again in support of the language manipulation, all participants receiving the negotiation material in English (100%) and Spanish (100%) stated that they conducted the negotiation in the language indicated by the instructions.

The means, standard deviations, and correlations among the variables included in the study are shown in Table 4. The objective measure of Spanish proficiency correlates highly with the self-declared Spanish proficiency measure ($r = 0.78, p < 0.01$); however, the objective and self-declared measures of English proficiency do not correlate significantly (cf., Table 4). Therefore, the analysis uses the self-declared measure for both language proficiencies.

Neither the self-declared Spanish nor English proficiency measures differ between the experimental conditions. Participants both in the Spanish language condition ($M = 5.8$) and in the English language condition ($M = 4.6, t = 1.74, df = 34, p > 0.05$) declare themselves highly proficient in Spanish. Similarly, participants in the Spanish ($M = 6.3$) and the English conditions declare being equally proficient in English ($M = 6.8, t = 1.64, df = 23, p > 0.05$). Thus, language proficiency does not differ across experimental conditions. A t -test examines whether the Spanish-speaker stereotype (Cronbach $\alpha = 0.90$) is less favorable compared to the English-speaker stereotype (Cronbach $\alpha = 0.92$), due to the ethnolinguistic vitality of both languages. In accordance with expectations, the stereotype of Spanish-speakers ($M = 5.1$) is less favorable compared to the stereotype of English-speakers ($M = 6.3, t = 5.07, df = 34, p < 0.01$).

As noted earlier, the dyad is the unit of measurement for this study, and analyzing the combined dyad points eliminates the effects of the scoring scale differences due to the negotiation role that is inherent to the role play. According to the hypothesis, the dyads' negotiation outcomes will be higher if they negotiate in English compared to Spanish. The skewness and kurtosis values for the dyad outcomes are -0.51 and -0.50 , respectively; these are within reasonable limits for assuming normality. As hypothesized, the t -test shows that the outcomes of the dyads negotiating in English (Mean = 111.8) are significantly higher than the outcomes obtained by dyads negotiating in Spanish (Mean = 99.4, $t = 1.89, df = 16$, one tailed $p = 0.04$).

Last, in order to test for the mediating effects of anxiety (Cronbach $\alpha = 0.73$), one must first test for a difference in anxiety scores between the language conditions. The skewness and kurtosis values for the anxiety scores are 2.28 and 5.6, respectively, these are not within reasonable limits for assuming normality; hence, a non-parametric test is appropriate to compare the scores. The anxiety scores between participants negotiating in English (Median = 0) and participants negotiating in Spanish are not significant different (Median = 0.5, U Mann-Whitney = 119.5, $Z = -1.51$, one tailed $p = 0.07$). Therefore, these

results cannot confirm the notion that, in this study, anxiety mediates the effect of language on negotiating outcomes.

5.5. Discussion

Study 2 replicates the findings; participants negotiating in English (non-stereotyped group) outperform participants negotiating using the stereotyped language (Spanish). Additionally, the results are not attributable to prior negotiation training and skills acquired in English, because Study 2 participants lack such experience. In this study, the dyad is considered the unit of measurement. Using dyad-level measurement eliminates the effect of the differing scoring scales for each negotiation role that is inherent to the role play; however, this method of analysis cannot account for any true effect of the negotiation role, as that was not the goal of the research.

The stereotype threat theory establishes that the fear of being associated with the unfavorable stereotype produces anxiety that results in individuals' impaired performance while negotiating, consequently affecting their negotiation outcomes (Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995). However, the study results show no significant anxiety differences between language conditions. The general discussion further elaborates on this point.

Although one alternative explanation is ruled out, the idea that Hispanics negotiating in their second language (English) experience a more analytic decision-making process compared to those who negotiate in their native tongue (Spanish) remains plausible. Previous research finds that those using their native tongue exhibit more decision biases (e.g., biases in savings, investments, or retirement decisions) than those using a second language (Keysar, Hayakawa, & An, 2012). This reduced bias, then, could lead to higher negotiation outcomes for those negotiating in their second language (which was English here). In order to test this alternative explanation, a new study conducts the same experiment among a sample of non-stereotyped participants (English-speaking bilinguals from Mexico). If stereotype threat is the mechanism through which language has an effect on negotiation outcomes, and Mexico has no unfavorable cultural stereotype towards Spanish speakers, Mexican nationals should not experience a threat from speaking Spanish. Therefore, one would not expect to find language effects on negotiation outcomes. But if instead, the mechanism in place is the reduction of decision biases by thinking in a foreign language, Mexican bilinguals negotiating in English would achieve higher negotiation outcomes compared to those negotiating in Spanish, just as was the case for the U.S. samples of Studies 1 and 2. Therefore, Study 3 tests an additional hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3. Negotiation outcomes of Mexican bilinguals will not differ between negotiations conducted in English or in Spanish.

Table 4
Descriptive statistics and correlation matrix Study 2: U.S. Hispanics.

Variables	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<i>Independent variables</i>											
Language (Spanish = 0, English = 1)	0.6	0.5	–								
Spanish-speaker stereotype	5.1	1.3	0.01	–							
English-speaker stereotype	6.3	0.9	–0.01	0.19	–						
Anxiety	0.7	1.2	–0.16	–0.12	0.07	–					
Self-declared Spanish proficiency	5.1	2.2	–0.28	0.27	0.17	0.11	–				
Self-declared English proficiency	6.6	0.8	0.29	–0.17	–0.02	–0.20	–0.27	–			
Spanish proficiency ^a	2.1	1.1	–0.27	0.26	0.18	0.15	0.78**	–0.17	–		
English proficiency ^a	2.6	0.6	–0.25	0.11	–0.14	–0.12	–0.04	–0.23	0.06	–	
Hispanic identification	5.3	2.1	–0.20	0.24	0.32	–0.23	0.62**	–0.07	0.34	–0.14	–
<i>Dependent variable</i>											
Dyad negotiation outcomes	106.3	14.6	0.43**	0.22	–0.09	0.001	0.28	–0.10	0.39*	–0.13	0.10

* $p < 0.05$.

** $p < 0.01$.

^a The scale used to test objectively English and Spanish proficiency ranged from 0 to 3.

6. Study 3

6.1. Participants and design

Study 3 was conducted at a private university in Mexico City, Mexico. A single factor between-participants experiment manipulates negotiation language (English and Spanish), and as before, randomly assigns the negotiation role as part of the role-play exercise. The sample consists of thirty bilingual business students recruited from marketing courses, and a convenience sample of six participants that were recruited from the university staff in order to improve sample sizes; all participants were monetarily compensated in exchange for their participation. Once again, none of the participants has prior formal negotiation experience or training. Table 5 shows the demographic composition and language preferences of the sample. More than 80% of the sample was born in Mexico, and although participants mainly use Spanish to communicate with friends and family, they listen to the radio and watch TV in both languages.

6.2. Negotiation stimuli, procedures and measures

The negotiation stimulus, procedure, and measures are identical to the ones described in Study 2.

6.3. Results

As with the previous studies, 100% of the participants in each language condition report using the corresponding language.

Table 6 shows the means, standard deviations, and correlations among the variables of Study 3. Once again, the objective measure of Spanish and English proficiency does not correlate significantly with the self-declared proficiency measures (cf., Table 6). The self-declared Spanish and English proficiency measures do not differ between experimental conditions. Participants in the Spanish language condition ($M = 6.8$) declared themselves highly proficient in Spanish just as did participants in the English condition ($M = 6.6$, $t < 1$, $df = 34$). Similarly, participants' self-reported English proficiency in the Spanish ($M = 6$) and in the English language condition ($M = 5.9$, $t < 1$, $df = 34$) does not differ significantly.

In Mexico, Spanish is the official language and holds the numeric majority; however, English is considered to be the language of social advancement, prestige, and sophistication in Latin America (Alm, 2003; Baumgardner, 2006; Nielsen, 2003; Niño-Murcia, 2003). Therefore, unlike the samples collected in the United States, the stereotype of Spanish-speakers should be just as favorable as the stereotype of English-speakers and neither would be unfavorable. A t -test compares the Spanish-speaker stereotype (Cronbach $\alpha = 0.97$) to the English-

speaker stereotype (Cronbach $\alpha = 0.94$). As expected, among Mexican nationals, the Spanish-speaker stereotype is favorable ($M = 5.5$) and does not differ significantly from the English-speaker stereotype ($M = 5.8$, $t = 1.07$, $df = 34$, $p > 0.05$).

According to Hypothesis 3, the outcomes of Mexican dyads would not differ between language conditions. The skewness and kurtosis values for the dyad points are 3.4 and 13.3 respectively, suggesting non-normality. Therefore, a non-parametric U Mann-Whitney test is appropriate to compare the dyad outcomes. In accordance with expectations, for the pairs of Mexican participants, the distribution of the outcomes is not significantly different between negotiations conducted in English (Median = 125) and negotiations conducted in Spanish (Median = 115, U Mann-Whitney = 29, $Z = -1.02$, $p = 0.34$).

7. General discussion

This paper investigates the proposition that U.S. bilinguals' language usage can affect the outcome of service negotiations. The research employs an ethno-linguistic perspective to examine the impact that language (English and Spanish) can have on negotiation outcomes of U.S. Hispanic bilinguals. Under this perspective, English is associated with higher vitality, economic power, political prestige, and demographic status in America and Spanish is considered the minority language. These culturally shared views, or stereotypes, can represent a threat to negotiators if they are unfavorable, and the individual identifies with the stereotyped group; the negative stereotype can affect individuals' performance and consequently their negotiation outcomes (Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995). The findings of Study 1 suggest that language has an effect on negotiation outcomes, and that this effect cannot be solely attributed to language proficiency. The use of Spanish in negotiations may implicitly activate unfavorable stereotypic judgments towards Spanish-speakers, and pose a threat to participants negotiating in Spanish. As shown in Study 1, the stereotype associated with Spanish speakers is less favorable compared to the stereotype associated with English speakers, and the individual negotiation outcomes of participants negotiating in Spanish are lower compared to the outcomes of the group of participants that negotiated in English, even after controlling for English language proficiency.

Study 2 replicates Study's 1 findings with another U.S. sample and allows for the confirmation that these effects are associated with the culturally shared stereotypic views about Spanish speakers among U.S. Hispanics. Last, the lack of language effects on negotiation outcomes among the group of non-stereotyped participants (Mexican nationals) of Study 3 provides further support for the proposed theory. Additionally, Studies 2 and 3 allow one to rule out some alternative explanations to the findings. First, one cannot attribute the findings to negotiation training and skills acquired in English prior to the study, because Study 2 participants lack such experience. Second, the inclusion of a group of Mexican nationals in Study 3 rules out the reduction of decision-making biases by thinking in a foreign language as the mechanism behind the results (Keysar et al., 2012) given that English is the foreign (or second) language in Mexico. Contrary to this theory, Study 3 findings show no negotiation outcomes differences due to language use.

However, Study 2 results fail to support the mediation effects of anxiety. Though the results show that the group of participants negotiating in Spanish obtains lower outcomes compared to the group of participants negotiating in English, the studies do not confirm that these results are due to increased anxiety among stereotyped participants. The literature commonly lacks support for the mediation effects of self-reported anxiety. As the stereotype activation is said to create an implicit threat, participants are often unaware that they are unwittingly acting in ways which reinforce the threat; in that case, they would not report feeling greater anxiety (e.g., Aronson et al., 1999; Brown, Charnsangavej, Keough, Newman, & Rentfrow, 2000; Oswald & Harvey, 2000; Steele & Aronson, 1995), and anxiety generally

Table 5
Sample demographic and language use characteristics of Study 3.

Age	(18–25 years)	75.0%
	(26–35 years)	8.3%
	(36- or older)	16.7%
Percent females		47.2%
Place of birth	Mexico	83.3%
	Abroad	16.7%
English proficiency ^a		6.0
Spanish proficiency ^a		6.7
Language use ^b	At home	6.1
	At work	4.1
	With friends	5.7
	Watching T.V.	2.3
	Listening to the radio	3.4

^a Language proficiency was measured on a seven-point scale, where higher scores indicate more proficiency. Participants rated themselves more proficient ($t = 4.09$, $df = 35$, $p < 0.01$) in Spanish than in English.

^b Language use was measured on a seven-point scale, where 1 = Only English, 4 = Spanish and English about equally, and 7 = Only Spanish.

Table 6
Descriptive statistics and correlation matrix Study 3: Mexican nationals.

Variables	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<i>Independent variables</i>											
1. Language (Spanish = 0, English = 1)	0.5	0.5	–								
2. Spanish-speaker stereotype	5.5	1.3	0.07	–							
3. English-speaker stereotype	5.8	1.1	0.10	–0.17	–						
4. Anxiety	0.7	0.9	–0.12	0.13	–0.33	–					
5. Self-declared Spanish proficiency	6.7	0.7	–0.12	0.35*	–0.17	–0.10	–				
6. Self-declared English proficiency	6.0	1.0	0.03	0.07	–0.13	–0.10	0.24	–			
7. Spanish proficiency ^a	2.9	0.4	0.24	–0.16	–0.00	–0.21	–0.06	0.15	–		
8. English proficiency ^a	2.6	0.7	0.13	–0.22	–0.03	–0.15	–0.04	0.16	0.49*	–	
9. Hispanic Identification	5.8	1.2	–0.05	0.38*	–0.06	0.10	0.54*	0.23	–0.14	–0.12	–
<i>Dependent variable</i>											
10. Dyad negotiation outcomes	122.8	33.3	–0.11	0.23	0.03	0.20	–0.09	–0.05	–0.31	–0.16	0.26

* $p < 0.05$.

^a The scale used to test objectively English and Spanish proficiency ranged from 0 to 3.

accounts for a minor part of the variation of the performance of stereotyped participants (e.g., Osborne, 2001; Spencer et al., 1999). The lack of findings can be due to measurement deficiencies; non-verbal anxiety measures fare better than self-reported measures of anxiety (Bosson et al., 2004). However, given the lack of support for the mediation effects of anxiety, the possibility that negative stereotypes against Spanish speakers alone, and not the mechanisms underlying the stereotype threat, drive the effects cannot be completely ruled out.

7.1. Implications

This research has several theoretical implications. First, this investigation extends the emerging literature on bilinguals' use of language in services. Previous research by Holmqvist and Van Vaerenbergh (2013), Van Vaerenbergh & Holmqvist (2014) notes a strong preference for service encounters in one's native language, particularly for high involvement services. These researchers also find a higher propensity to tip and to engage in positive word of mouth after receiving service in one's native rather than a second language. Nevertheless, the current research shows that when service encounters require a certain amount of negotiation, a person's native language may not always lead to the best outcomes. Any negative cultural stereotypes associated with the native language would need to be taken into account in such situations. Second, this research also contributes to the literature on stereotype threat, by extending the effects to language-related stereotypes in a non-academic task. This attempt is the first to examine the effects of threats from language-related stereotypes that surge from the language vitality within the society. Last, these studies expand the negotiation literature, by providing evidence that language can affect negotiation outcomes, and provide an understanding of the conditions under which language can affect negotiation profits, by associating these effects with language stereotypes.

Given the growth of the Hispanic ethnic group within the U.S. (Brown, 2014), Hispanic bilingual consumers can benefit from the outcomes of this research. In contrast to tangible products, the provision of services involves a greater level of interaction between the consumer and the service provider, even sometimes involving the consumers in the co-creation of the service (Wilson, Zeithaml, Bitner, & Gremler, 2012). By understanding the effects of language on service encounter negotiations, the research provides guidelines for negotiations in which language could affect the end result. According to the results, based on the vitality of the minority language and the associated stereotypes, U.S. Hispanic bilinguals would benefit from negotiating with other bilinguals in English.

While other literature shows that bilinguals prefer receiving services in their native language, particularly high involvement services such as medical care (e.g., Van Vaerenbergh & Holmqvist, 2014) and the ability to use their first language even impacts the likelihood that those in a minority culture will seek healthcare services (e.g., Rios-Ellis et al., 2008),

this research would suggest that, at least for service encounters in which the outcome is the result of an inter-dependent negotiation, using the majority language could lead to higher outcomes. In the context of long term business service relationships, social power plays a role in the success of those business relationships (Pinnington & Scanlon, 2009), and the perceived social power of an ethnic group could be impacted by the vitality of the language of the negotiation. Whenever the stereotype of speakers of the minority language is negative vis-à-vis the domain of the service negotiation (such as the stereotypical view of Spanish speakers having lower power and/or business competence), the use of that minority language for the interaction could create a threat and, in turn, lead to impaired performance as compared to using the majority (non-stereotyped) language.

Moreover, Roberson and Kulik (2007) note that knowledge of the stereotype can interrupt the stereotype threat process. Just as when women are told about gender stereotypes before engaging in negotiations, they then moderate their behavior so as not to conform to the stereotype (Roberson & Kulik, 2007), so too can Hispanics bilinguals be told about stereotypes that are associated with the ethnic group. Providing this information may lead them to achieve their goals in service encounter negotiations conducted in Spanish.

7.2. Limitations and future research

This research has several limitations. Perhaps the largest of these limitations is the fact that participants are students engaging in simulated negotiations role play exercises, rather than using actual negotiations with real-world consequences, limiting the generalizability. However, this set of studies is a first step in investigating the role of language usage in negotiation outcomes. As such, experimental control and internal validity are of primary importance here. And, indeed, an abundance of negotiations literature using simulated exercises exists (e.g., Adair et al., 2001; Brett & Okumura, 1998; Graham et al., 1994). Moreover, while Study 1 uses students taking negotiations courses, Study 2 includes students with no previous experience negotiating and finds similar results. Future research could attempt to generalize the results with non-student participants and/or field studies, as well as investigating other languages from different nations or different minority languages within the United States.

Another potential limitation of this research is that the participants self-evaluated their bilingual abilities. The effort to objectively measure participants' language proficiency was not successful here. An alternative procedure could have measured participants' proficiency through an outside observer rating, but this procedure would have added significantly to the experimental complexity and time requirements. In addition, self-reported language ability typically correlates well with actual language ability (Marín & Marin, 1991). Therefore, using self-reports appears to be an acceptable tradeoff for the experimental efficiency.

These studies evaluate the effects of language on negotiation outcomes in situations in which neither member of the negotiation dyad has control or power over the language used and both participants are bilingual. Participants are not able to choose the language in which they negotiated. Again, this procedure created maximum experimental control and relatively even cell sizes; the results cannot be extended to situations in which the exertion of a choice in language would imply a position of power. Perceptions of power can affect negotiations processes and outcomes (e.g., Greenberg & Landry, 2011). In one exploration of negotiating power, dyads in which both parties had low power achieve lower joint gains than did either unequal power dyads or equal high power dyads (Wei & Luo, 2012). Janssens and Brett (2006) note that the choice of language within a global team or negotiation can influence the balance of power among the members, enfranchising some and disenfranchising others. This investigation cannot speak to such situations; therefore, additional research is needed to examine the effects of language choice, and how that choice might influence negotiation outcomes.

Future studies should similarly consider evaluating the effects of language on the behavioral expressions of personality (Chen & Bond, 2010). Among coordinate bilinguals, those who acquire and use their second language in separate cultural settings from their first, the use of a particular language can accommodate their personalities to the cultural norms of the ethnic group associated with that language, affecting their behavioral personality expressions. Since the data cannot allow for distinguishing compound (those who acquire both languages in the same culture) from coordinate bilinguals, one cannot rule out that negotiation outcomes in English are higher among U.S. bilinguals due to an accommodation to the personality traits associated with Americans (more extraverted, agreeable, and conscientious) that favor higher negotiation outcomes (Ramírez-Esparza, Gosling, Benet-Martínez, Potter, & Pennebaker, 2006) instead of, or in addition to, being influenced by stereotype threat.

In conclusion, the three studies included in this investigation provide evidence for an effect of language on negotiation outcomes among U.S. Hispanic bilinguals negotiating with other bilinguals. Further, the data support the view that the threat of confirming negative stereotypes of the minority language is associated with these results. This research synthesizes and extends the literatures in three areas – those in services, stereotype threat, and negotiations – and provides practical guidelines for bilingual Hispanics seeking to more effectively negotiate service encounters.

Acknowledgements

The authors thank Cesar García Brena and Louis Melbourne for their assistance in the data collection and stimulus design. They express their gratitude to the editor and the three reviewers for their helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper. They also gratefully acknowledge the financial support from the Asociación Mexicana de Cultura, A.C.

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