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The Impact of Spanish Heritage Language Programs on Spanish Language Learners' Self-efficacy.

This research study explores the experiences of Spanish heritage learners (SHL) in Spanish language classes. SHL are sometimes referred to as native speakers, quasi-native speakers, or home-background speakers and have a family-based connection to the Spanish language (Hancock, 2002). Given this broad definition of SHL, their experiences with the heritage language are wide-ranging. While levels of fluency and skill vary substantially, language ideologies, attitudes, stigma, and sociolinguistic factors can equally determine the linguistic market value of one's Spanish skills (Bourdieu, 1977). Given the high level of complexity and the wide range of influential and continuously dynamic factors, especially situated within the sociohistorical context of New Mexico, heritage Spanish learners inevitably arrive in the Spanish classroom with varying levels of access, power, self-efficacy, and opportunity. The study examines SHL lived experiences through a multi-dimensional theoretical framework including language ideology and anthropolitics, and critical, identity, and sociolinguistic theory. The study highlights the complex relationships at play among SHL and provides practical insights in SHL program design and the classroom as a field of struggle.

Keywords: Spanish heritage learners, sociolinguistics, identity, language, ideology, access, self-efficacy