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Norma Gonzalez, *I am my language: Discourses of women and children in the Borderlands*. Tucson: University of Tucson Press, 2005, Pp. xiv, 220. Pb $22.95.

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In *I am my language* Norma González explores the world of Mexican American mothers and children who live in Arizona. Following in the tradition of Valdés 1996 and Vásquez, Pease-Alvarez & Shannon 1994, this ethnographic study is grounded in an "anthropolitical" approach, which, as Zentella 1997 explains, explicitly situates the language practices of a community in their political and socioeconomic context, and advocates for the educational and language rights of children. As a Tucson-born and bred researcher with insider status, González deconstructs the language practices of families on the border and documents how the physical context of the border as well as the language socialization practices of mothers affect the identity formation of the children.

In a very readable and accessible narrative, González demonstrates how Mexican immigrant and native-born children are socialized into language and the multiple, contradictory influences involved in this process. She recognizes that language is a core element of identity and that, if a child speaks more than one language, these multiple languages influence the complexity of identity formation. She underscores that fact that each language is imbued with emotions that affect the child profoundly, and she is interested in detailing the myriad ways in which language, emotion, and selfhood are intertwined.

The book is based on two years of study of 12 families, plus interviews with women from five other families. González provided participating families with cassettes and tape recorders and asked them to record family interactions at mealtime, at bedtime, and when the children were doing homework. González also conducted extensive interviews with the mothers, grandparents, and children. Initially, she assumed that an important variable affecting language socialization would be residence or nonresidence in the barrio (low-income Latino neighborhood); she assumed that this difference would map onto differences of education, income, and resources. However, she found that these and other established categories were inadequate, since overlapping concerns, unexpected differences, varying networks, and much movement between communities rendered them unhelpful.

González argues for new organizing principles in the analysis of language, including a close analysis of the narratives and other speech samples produced by the families. The study once again (cf. Vásquez et al. 1994, Valdés 1996, Zentella 1997) emphasizes the value of qualitative language studies that can fo-

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cus on the nuances and contradictions of language processes that quantitative studies often gloss over.

One of González's important points is that researchers should place more emphasis on the place of emotion in language socialization. She offers useful new analytical tools to achieve this goal. She maintains that the "emotion of minority status" (p. 47) is a powerful force in the sociohistorical context of the families studied. For bilingual children, each of their languages bears a different emotional weight. The evocative meanings associated with each of the languages are complex in the U.S. context, where English is the dominant language and Spanish is a minority language. This context makes for many contradictions and ambiguities involved with the two languages. Through an exploration of the narratives, González makes the case that Spanish is the language of family, home, and love, but also the language of resistance in the United States, where it is trivialized and under attack. English is associated with economic success and mobility; it is the language of video games and technology. González argues that when children acquire the two languages, they also acquire the emotions connected with languages, and this has a profound impact in the larger process of language socialization. In other words, the emotion of minority status is acquired, as are other aspects of language in early childhood development.

Gonzalez dedicates a chapter to examining how mothers negotiate their own identities. Although many of their stories recount the hardships they have experienced in Mexico and the United States, the stories exhibit how these women have adapted to and resisted the sociohistorical and economic forces that affect their lives. In this way González provides evidence of the complex interplay of structure and agency. Women draw on survival stories and ideologies to create a positive self-image and see themselves as agents of change for the children. The narratives contradict the stereotypes of Latinas as victims; they document lives of poverty and hardship but also foreground instances of resistance, resilience, and the taking of power. The Spanish language is part of this resistance. Their physical location on the border is also a central part of the narratives; women understand that their families are part of a transnational circuit of languages, economies, and cultures.

Mothers work to reinforce children's sense of self through constant family activities, children's parties, and family reunions. Networks of relatives are always present so that children come to understand that they are part of a loving community. Whether or not they can speak Spanish, and most children cannot, they are nonetheless grounded in Mexican family sense. Even though they are living in the United States, frequent trips to Mexico and frequent interactions with first-generation immigrants imbue children with a sense of self. Living in the Borderlands, they create their own sense of Mexicanness that will be different from that which exists on the other side of the border. The families are skill-

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ful at seeking resources from various repertoires on both sides of the border. González compares the socialization of immigrant and native-born children and finds that immigrant families are tied into a "dual status framework" (101) so that they are constantly comparing their situation in the United States with what they left behind in Mexico, and they maintain more ties to Mexico than do the U.S.-born Mexican Americans. However, in both cases children are very much incorporated in transnational kinship networks.

González also explores the functions of each language in the household. It is clear that English often serves an instrumental and functional role. Although Spanish is not used to the same degree as English, it still appears in ways that challenge the dominant place of English. In the transcripts González locates many Spanish words for food, family, music, and other emblems of identity. Clearly there are forces operating both for and against total assimilation. In transcripts around homework, González locates instances of the struggle between dominant discourse and Mexican interests. While interjecting their Mexican identity, parents privilege the discourse of the school and tend to replicate language ideologies of the mainstream educational system, since they have high hopes for their children's schooling. While fathers seem to be present in most of the households studied and appear in the illustrative transcripts in the book, González primarily focuses her analysis on the language of mothers and children. An analysis of the role of the fathers in the language socialization of children in the Borderlands would be an interesting future study.

González offers a useful corrective to monolithic views of culture. She critiques the practice of viewing ethnic groups as static entities characterized by essential differences. In the spirit of Gloria Anzaldúa (1987), González demonstrates that the border is an important site for studying the ambiguities and contradictions observable when cultures and languages come into contact. She urges educators to pay attention to language as not just a mirror of reality but constitutive of reality. González concludes with policy implications of her work, built on the idea that language socialization is an important site for the construction of identity; she suggests that schools pay more attention to children's languages. Schools need to be attentive to the fact that language is central to the achievement of children, and so schools should promote all the languages in a child's world. There needs to be more recognition of the fact that languages are imbued with conflicting emotions and that talk is an important site for the reproduction of political and sociocultural issues that affect the child. Spanish is part of the self of the Mexican child even if he or she does not speak Spanish. The active and passive bilingualism that these children bring to the classroom should be reinforced rather than condemned. This admirable study will be of interest not only to educators and language specialists, but to anyone concerned with debates on language and culture in the United States.

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Deborah Schiffrin, *In other words: Variation in reference and narrative*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Pp. xvi, 373. Pb $39.99

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Using "reference" in its broadest sense, Schiffrin states that *In other words: Variation in reference and narrative* is about "how we redo references to both entities and events" (p. xii) – that is, "how speakers resolve tensions between continuity (saying the 'same thing') and change (adapting the 'same thing') to new circumstances." This enables the author to bring together in one book analyses of both micro (grammatical) and macro (event sequences) features of discourse.

The book is divided into nine chapters, which can be read independently or in sequence as a whole. The two main foci are referrals and narratives, the former defined by Schiffrin as "the use of referring expressions to evoke a referent," and the latter as "the use of event clauses to tell a story" (13). The chapters are divided between these foci, with chaps. 2 through 4 mainly concerned with referrals, chaps. 5 and 8 with both referrals and narrative, and chaps. 6 and 7 with narrative. The analysis is restricted to "second position referrals," which Schiffrin defines as when a speaker "makes a referral and then redoes all (or part) of that referral, or tells a story and then replays all (or some) of that story" (13). Recurrences in second position include repairing (chaps. 2, 3, 4, 8), repeating, paraphrasing and altering (chaps. 2, 3, 4, 5, 8), reframing (chap. 6) and restructuring (chaps. 7, 8).

The first chapter introduces variation analysis within the linguistic paradigm as a major means of studying different ways of saying the same thing. Schiffrin provides an excellent overview of the study of variation, acknowledging that variation analysis is problematic in that what counts as "the same thing" cannot always be as objectively defined at other levels as at the level of phoneme. As she further observes, analysis of variation beyond the grammatical or phonolog-

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