

# Are You Minority Enough? Language Ability Affects Targets' and Perceivers' Assessments of a Candidate's Appropriateness for Affirmative Action

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In the present study, we focus on Spanish language ability as a predictor of the extent to which Latinos are viewed by both others and themselves as full-fledged minorities. Study 1 shows that perceivers viewed Latinos described as Spanish speakers as more appropriate for race-based affirmative action than Latinos who were unable to speak Spanish (controlling for intellectual competence evaluations). Moreover, the affirmative action advantage that the Spanish-speaking Latinos had over the non-Spanish-speaking Latinos was explained by perceivers viewing the Spanish speakers as having greater minority status. The results of Study 2 suggest that Spanish-speaking ability is related to self-perceptions of minority status among Latinos. Like their perceivers in Study 1, Latinos who have less Spanish-speaking ability feel less Latino and report reluctance to apply for race-based assistance in the form of academic minority scholarships.

For racial minorities, feeling like a *true* racial group member and being perceived as one may require engaging in specific race-related behaviors, conforming to specific ingroup norms or cultural practices, or having certain physical characteristics of the group. Being consistent with racially normative expectations like physical appearance (e.g., skin tone), racial stereotypes, and engaging in ingroup cultural practices may determine whether racial minorities feel like full-fledged members of their racial group. The extent to which individuals fulfill racial ingroup norms, such as having the physical appearance of a typical ingroup member or engaging in certain ingroup cultural practices common for one's ingroup, may determine whether they and others see them as *true* racial minorities.

We draw on the research in racial prototypicality to elaborate our perceiver and target perspective model of the consequences of being perceived, and perceiving the self, as less minority. Racial prototypicality refers to the extent to which group members share the common characteristics of their racial group (Chattopadhyay, George, & Lawrence, 2004). Because phenotypic cues

largely influence racial categorization, most of the work on racial prototypicality has focused on physical appearance (Maddox, 2004; Maddox & Gray, 2002). Generally, perceivers are more likely to treat physically typical racial group members (e.g., darker skinned Black individuals) as ethnic minorities compared to less typical members (lighter skinned individuals), by discriminating against them and stereotyping them to a greater degree. For example, minorities with darker skin tones are more likely to be associated with negative stereotypes and prejudices (Maddox & Gray, 2002; Ronquillo et al., 2007). As a result, minorities with darker skin tones experience greater discrimination and worse psychological and economic outcomes (Espino & Franz, 2002; Maddox, 2004). Thus, to some extent, certain minority group members may be seen as more typical of their ingroup and thus be more likely to be viewed as a member of their group.

In the present study we examine whether Latinos' engagement in a typical cultural practice within their community (e.g., fluency in the Spanish language) is related to whether they and others view them as ethnic minorities deserving of race-based affirmative action. Speaking Spanish in the Latino community is very common, with the U.S. Census (2008) indicating that

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78% of Latinos age 5 and older speak Spanish. In fact, Spanish is the second most common language in the United States (U.S. Census, 2007) due to the large percentage of Spanish-speaking Latinos in the United States. Given this link between Latino identity and the Spanish language, it is likely that the ability to speak Spanish is inherent in individuals' perceptions of the prototypical Latino.

Atypical group members often encounter negative consequences as a result of their nonnormative characteristics. A long history of work examining nonconformity to gender norms has demonstrated the backlash that people receive for failure to conform to stereotype ideals (Rudman & Fairchild, 2004). Moreover, atypical group members often receive rejection from ingroup members because they threaten the distinctiveness of ingroups and are therefore less socially attractive (Hogg & Hains, 1996; Marques & Páez, 1994). Health researchers have even suggested that Latino individuals specifically face ingroup pressure to speak Spanish (Chavez & French, 2007). Though the disadvantages associated with being a non-Spanish-speaking Latino have been noted within the Latino community (Corza, 2009), little to no research exists on the possible consequences of being a Latino who does not speak Spanish. We therefore examine whether perceivers view atypical (non-Spanish-speaking) Latinos as less minority than Spanish-speaking Latinos, rating the former as less appropriate for race-based affirmative action.

In the present study, we focus on Spanish-speaking ability as a predictor of whether Latinos are perceived by others (Study 1) and themselves (Study 2) as having minority status and thus, appropriate for race-based affirmative action. For Study 1, we expected perceivers to view non-Spanish-speaking Latinos as less of an ethnic minority and, thus, prefer a Spanish-speaking Latino to receive affirmative action and an internship earmarked for racial minorities. In Study 2, we tested whether Latinos themselves might share perceivers' assumptions that speaking Spanish is a necessary credential for being an appropriate candidate for affirmative action.

## STUDY 1

Study 1 tested our prediction that a Latino candidate who spoke Spanish would be viewed as more Latino and therefore as (a) a better candidate for affirmative action and (b) a better candidate for the minority internship (see Figure 1). Because bilingual people may be seen as more competent because they have greater language skills, we also measured the perceived competence of the candidate in Study 1 to rule out this alternative explanation.

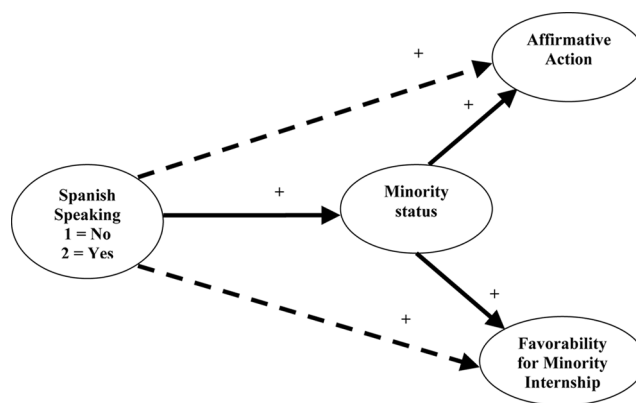


FIGURE 1 Hypothesized mediational model for Study 1.

## Methods

**Participants.** Ninety-six participants (65% women) from the Introductory Psychology participant pool received course credit for participation ( $M$  age = 19.08). The sample included 49 Whites, 29 Asian Americans, 8 Blacks, 6 Latinos, 3 multiracial Americans, and 1 person of unknown race.

**Procedure.** Participants were randomly assigned to evaluate the resume of a Latino job candidate for a minority research internship who was described as fluent in either Spanish and English or English only. On each resume, there was a section labeled "Language Fluency," where either "Spanish and English" was listed or "English Only" was listed. Other credentials (the candidate's previous experience as a psychology research assistant, as a business intern, educational background, volunteer experience, computer skills, and his overall grade point average of 3.6 and psychology grade point average of 3.8) were listed on the resume and held constant across conditions. The minority research internship was described as a "selective national internship for exceptional racial minorities who were undergraduate psychology majors looking for a summer research internship." Participants were told that this was a very competitive program and that only the best student should be chosen as the minority research intern. No other information about the internship was given. Participants were told that they would see a resume of an undergraduate and that their task was to review the resume of this candidate (which they were told to assume was the only information available to them) and evaluate this candidate by answering several questions about the application. After answering questions about the candidate (in the order described next), participants completed a recall test to see whether they attended to the language information.

**Materials.** *Favorability for Minority Internship* ( $\alpha = .78$ ) was measured with four items on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). This scale included the following statements in the following order: “I believe this candidate is the best minority applicant”; “If I only had one internship slot to give, this candidate would be my first choice for the minority internship”; “I would strongly favor choosing this candidate as an intern”; and “This candidate would make an excellent intern.”

*Affirmative Action Worthiness* ( $\alpha = .70$ ) was measured with three items on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). The scale included the following statements in the following order: “I believe this candidate is the kind of candidate that deserves affirmative action,” “I believe this candidate is the kind of racial minority that needs affirmative action,” and “I don’t believe this candidate is the kind of candidate that deserves affirmative action” (reverse coded).

*Minority Status* ( $\alpha = .81$ ,  $r = .68$ ,  $p < .001$ ) was measured with two questions on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). This scale included the following statements in the following order: “This candidate does not strike me as minority enough to receive affirmative action” and “This candidate does not seem minority enough for affirmative action.” These two items were reverse scored so that higher numbers corresponded with greater minority status in the context of affirmative action decisions.

For *Competence Evaluations* ( $\alpha = .84$ ), participants were asked to rate whether the candidate possessed the following competence-related traits used in previous research (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2004) in the following order: determined, capable, efficient, skillful, and organized, on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*extremely*).

## Results and Discussion

Two participants recalled the language information inaccurately and thus were not included in the analysis. Results were unchanged by the exclusion of Latino participants; thus, we kept them in the analyses. Table 1 shows the correlations among the variables. We ran independent *t* tests to examine differences between conditions. Table 2 shows the results of these tests as well as the effect sizes and the probability of replication (*Prep*; Killeen, 2005). As expected, participants rated the Spanish-speaking Latino candidate as more deserving of the minority internship, appropriate for Affirmative Action, and having greater minority status compared to the non-Spanish-speaking Latino. To rule out the possibility that competence may have driven the condition effects, we conducted analyses of covariance on each of these dependent variables adding competence ratings as a covariate. Controlling for the effect of competence on minority internship ratings,

TABLE 1  
Zero-Order Correlations Among Variables in Study 1

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. Minority status	—			
2. Affirmative Action deserving	.42**	—		
3. Competence	.32**	.10	—	
4. Internship favorability	.45**	.28**	.60**	—

\*\* $p < .01$ .

$F(1, 94) = 48.03$ ,  $p < .001$ , Spanish-speaking ability was still a significant predictor of minority internship favorability,  $F(1, 94) = 5.44$ ,  $p < .05$ . Controlling for competence ratings on affirmative action deservingness,  $F(1, 94) = 0.38$ ,  $p = .54$ , *ns*, Spanish-speaking ability was still a significant predictor of affirmative action worthiness,  $F(1, 94) = 4.73$ ,  $p < .05$ . Finally, controlling for the effect of competence on minority status ratings,  $F(1, 94) = 7.79$ ,  $p < .01$ , Spanish-speaking ability was also a significant predictor of minority status,  $F(1, 94) = 16.27$ ,  $p < .001$ .

We expected a pattern of mediation that would demonstrate that minority status ratings accounted for the advantage the bilingual Latino had over the non-bilingual Latino for minority internship favorability and affirmative action worthiness (see Figure 1). The main effects of condition and the correlations found between minority status, affirmative action, and favorability for the internship (Tables 1 & 2) confirm the first steps of mediation. To demonstrate full mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986), we ran multiple regressions adding the mediator at the second step.

To test whether minority status mediated the condition effect for minority internship favorability, we regressed minority internship favorability on condition at the first step. At the second step, we added minority status. The original advantage the Spanish-speaking candidate had over the non-Spanish-speaking candidate for the minority internship ( $\beta = .19$ ,  $p < .03$ ) became nonsignificant ( $\beta = .10$ ,  $p = .25$ , *ns*) when minority status was included in the equation ( $\beta = .25$ ,  $p < .008$ ). The Sobel’s test was significant ( $Z = 2.38$ ,  $p < .02$ ). To test whether minority status mediated the condition effect for affirmative action, we regressed affirmative action worthiness ratings on condition at the first step. At the second step, we added minority status. The original advantage the Spanish-speaking candidate had over the non-Spanish-speaking candidate for affirmative action ( $\beta = .22$ ,  $p < .03$ ) became nonsignificant ( $\beta = -.08$ ,  $p = .49$ , *ns*) when minority status was included in the equation ( $\beta = .40$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The Sobel’s test was significant ( $Z = 2.80$ ,  $p < .006$ ).

As expected, Latinos who did not speak Spanish were viewed as less minority compared to Spanish-speaking

TABLE 2  
Study 1 Results by Condition

	Spanish-Speaking		Non-Spanish-Speaking		Cohen's <i>d</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p rep</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Minority status	5.25	1.34	3.93	1.56	.91	4.39***	1.0
Affirmative Action	4.65	1.16	4.07	1.27	.48	2.31*	.95
Favorability for internship	5.58	0.64	5.13	0.88	.58	2.72**	.97
Competence	5.88	0.59	5.65	0.83	.32	2.85	.86

\**p* < .05. \*\**p* < .01. \*\*\**p* < .001.

Latinos, which accounted for their disadvantage in both minority internship favorability and affirmative action worthiness. Study 1 clearly demonstrates that perceivers advantaged Latinos based on whether they spoke Spanish and that this difference is not solely explained by a perceived gap in competence. However, it is unclear whether Latinos themselves also make such distinctions based on their own language-speaking ability.

STUDY 2

The purpose of Study 2 was to investigate, for the first time, whether Latinos who have less Spanish-speaking ability share perceivers' impressions of them as less Latino than fluent Spanish speakers. In Figure 2, we illustrate our hypotheses that less Spanish-speaking ability would be associated with lower racial

identification, lower self-esteem, and less comfort applying for race-based affirmative action through lower felt minority status. Feeling a sense of belonging to one's minority group is important for the self-esteem of racial minorities. For example, having access to and support from similar racially stigmatized others tends to be associated with greater chronic self-esteem (Fribley, Platt, & Hoey, 1998). Moreover, individuals who feel like they do not fit in with their racial ingroup may disidentify or disconnect from their racial group to psychologically protect themselves from the negative evaluations that atypical group members face (Hogg & Hains, 1996; Marques & Páez, 1994). In addition, if non-Spanish-speaking Latinos feel less like authentic group members, they may not feel as though they have the right to access affirmative action benefits like race-based scholarships. Thus, the purpose of Study 2 was to examine whether level of Spanish-speaking ability was associated with cognitive (group identification),

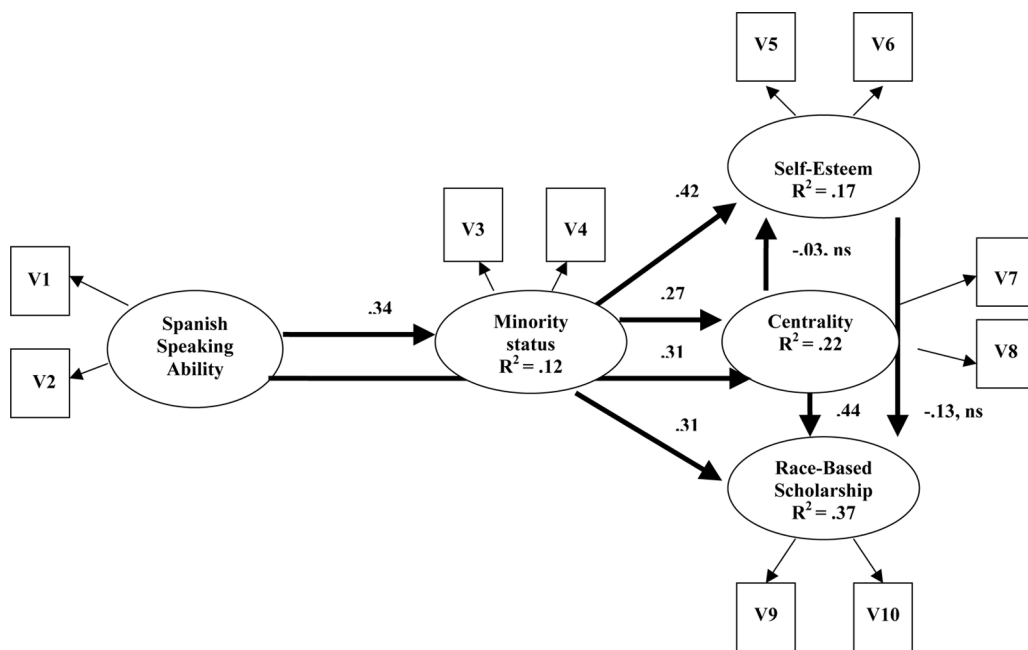


FIGURE 2 Structural equation modeling results from Study 2.

affective (self-esteem), and behavioral (willingness to apply for race-based scholarships) consequences among Latinos.

## Method

**Participants.** Eighty-two Latino/Hispanic participants (72% women;  $M=19.18$  years) were recruited from the Introductory Psychology participant pool to complete the survey in exchange for course credit. Six participants indicated having an additional racial background. Excluding those with biracial backgrounds did not alter the results; thus, we kept them in the analyses.

**Procedure.** Participants of Latino descent were invited to participate in an online survey in exchange for course credit in their introductory psychology class. The survey was described as a questionnaire about self-perceptions and race. The survey consists of several scales. For the purposes of this study, we examined the following scales, which appeared in the order that they are described.

**Materials and procedure.** Spanish language ability was measured with two items ( $\alpha = .84$ ,  $r = .71$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Participants were asked to rate their Spanish language-speaking ability on a scale from 1 (*very little ability*) to 6 (*very high ability*). They were then asked, "How often do you use Spanish to speak to your parents?" on a scale from 1 (*almost never*) to 6 (*very often*).

To assess *minority status ratings*, we asked participants how much they agreed with two statements: "Sometimes I don't feel Hispanic/Latino enough" and "I don't think that others feel that I am Hispanic/Latino enough" on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Items were scaled such that higher scores indicated greater self-perceptions of minority status ( $\alpha = .85$ ,  $r = .75$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

*Minority scholarship worthiness* was assessed by having participants indicate their level of agreement from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) to the statement, "I feel that I should not apply for race-based scholarships" (reverse coded).

*Racial identity centrality* was measured with the four items from the Collective Self-Esteem importance subscale (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992) for which participants were asked to rate their level of agreement from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) with items such as, "The racial ethnic group I belong to is an important reflection of who I am."

Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with the 10 items from the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965;  $\alpha = .84$ ) on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Example items include "I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on

an equal basis with others" and "I feel that I have a number of positive qualities."

## Results and Discussion

We tested the model depicted in Figure 2 employing structural equation modeling techniques with EQS software. Table 3 shows the correlation between the variables. For measures that had more than two items, we created parcels to serve as indicators because parceling reduces bias in estimations of the model (Bandalos, 2002). We report the following goodness-of-fit indices: normed fit, non-normed fit, and comparative fit. Acceptable fit indices exceed .90 (Bentler & Bonnett, 1980; Raykov, Tomer, & Nesselroade, 1991). We also report the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), which should be at or below .06 to indicate a good fitting model (Hu & Bentler, 1999). When comparing the hypothesized model to alternative models, the model with the lowest Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) has the superior fit to the data (Kline, 2005).

The measurement model fit the data well (see Table 4). Moreover, the hypothesized model fit the data well. In accordance with our predictions, Spanish-speaking ability was associated with feeling more Latino (i.e., higher minority status), and in turn, feeling Latino was associated with greater global self-esteem, greater identification with the Latino identity and greater comfort with applying for race-based scholarships.

The hypothesized model was compared to alternative models of the data (see Table 4). For example, we compared the hypothesized model with language ability as the predictor to an alternative model with minority status as the predictor (Alternative Model 1). We tested this alternative model because it is plausible that feelings about one's minority status may drive the effects. The hypothesized model was a superior fit to the data compared to Alternative Model 1 according to both fit indices and comparing the AIC. Models with the lowest AIC are preferred (Kline, 2005). Because Spanish-language ability among Latinos may instill greater confidence in Latinos, which then could drive the effects, we also compared the hypothesized model to an alternative model where we switched the location of minority status

TABLE 3  
Zero-Order Correlations for Study 2

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Language ability	—				
2. Scholarship worthiness	.33**	—			
3. Minority status	.38**	.42**	—		
4. Self-esteem	-.04	-.02	.24*	—	
5. Race centrality	.31**	.47**	.37**	.12	—

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

TABLE 4  
Fit Statistics and Chi-Square Comparisons for All Models

	$\chi^2$	<i>df</i>	<i>NFI</i>	<i>NNFI</i>	<i>CFI</i>	<i>RMSEA</i>	<i>AIC</i>
Measurement model	22.76, <i>ns</i>	18	.93	.97	.98	.05	
Hypothesized model Language Ability → Minority Status → Criterion Variables (Racial Centrality, Self-Esteem, Scholarship)	25.19, <i>ns</i>	20	.93	.97	.98	.05	-14.81
Alternative Model 1 Minority Status → Language Ability → Criterion Variables (Racial Centrality, Self-Esteem, Scholarship)	39.86**	20	.88	.88	.93	.10	-0.14
Alternative Model 2 Language Ability → Self-Esteem → Criterion Variables (Racial Centrality, Minority Status, Scholarship)	28.67†	20	.92	.95	.97	.07	-11.33
Alternative Model 3 Racial Centrality → Language Ability → Criterion Variables (Minority Status, Self-Esteem, Scholarship)	32.76*	20	.90	.92	.96	.08	-7.24
Alternative Model 4 Minority Status → Racial Centrality → Criterion Variables (Language Ability, Self-Esteem, Scholarship)	39.86**	20	.88	.88	.93	.10	-0.14

*Note.* Each row represents the structural model performed. *NFI* = normed fit index; *NNFI* = non-normed fit index; *CFI* = comparative fit index; *RMSEA* = root mean square error of approximation.

and self-esteem (Alternative Model 2). According to both fit indices and AIC comparisons, the hypothesized model was a superior fit to the data than Alternative Model 2. Because the centrality of Latinos' race may influence how well they spoke Spanish, we tested Alternative Model 3, which tested racial centrality as the predictor of language ability. According to both fit indices and AIC comparisons, the hypothesized model was a superior fit to the data than Alternative Model 3 because the hypothesized model had higher goodness-of-fit indices, lower RMSEA and a lower AIC. Finally, we examined whether minority status self-perceptions influenced racial centrality, which in turn predicted language ability, self-esteem, and scholarship worthiness (Alternative Model 4). According to both fit indices and AIC comparisons, the hypothesized model was a superior fit to the data than Alternative Model 4 because the hypothesized model had higher goodness of fit indices, lower RMSEA and a lower AIC.

Although we cannot determine causality with correlational data, the tests of alternative models support the causal paths we propose. The results of Study 2 suggest that Spanish-speaking ability is related to self-perceptions of minority status among Latinos. Like their perceivers in Study 1, Latinos who have less Spanish-speaking ability feel less Latino and also report reluctance to apply for race-based assistance in the form of academic minority scholarships.

## GENERAL DISCUSSION

The present studies are the first to show that being perceived as "minority enough" is an important indicator

of whether affirmative action should benefit Latinos, from the standpoint of perceivers as well as Latinos themselves. In Study 1, perceivers believed that Latinos who spoke Spanish were more Latino and thus more deserving of affirmative action than those who did not speak Spanish. In Study 2, Latinos showed a similar pattern of self-perceptions, suggesting that the extent to which they speak Spanish is associated with how Latino, how racially identified, and how positively they view themselves. In addition, these factors predict whether Latinos themselves feel they should apply for scholarships intended for Latinos.

Although these studies suggest that self- and other perceptions of Latinos' minority status depend to some extent on their Spanish-speaking ability, it is important to note that in Study 1 non-Spanish-speaking Latinos' minority status ratings were at or above the midpoint of the scale, suggesting that, to some extent, they were seen as ethnic minorities deserving of affirmative action. Thus, the results of our study suggest that Latinos who don't speak Spanish are less likely to receive minority resources (affirmative action and minority internships) compared to those who do speak Spanish, as a result of lower (not absent) minority status. It is unclear from these findings what a midpoint rating on the minority status scale actually means (see Blanton & Jaccard, 2006, for discussion), and whether crossing the midpoint (in any degree) implies categorization as a minority or actual conferring of a minority resource. For example, would the Latino who does not speak Spanish have been denied access to these minority resources if the question had been phrased as a yes or no decision? Similarly, Study 2 suggests that Latinos who don't speak Spanish are *less likely* to apply for scholarships or awards for

minorities, but the study does not say whether they would *not apply altogether*. Despite this, Studies 1 and 2 show that non-Spanish-speaking Latinos are viewed significantly different than Spanish-speaking Latinos in affirmative action contexts. These differences are likely to lead to real-world consequences (denial of a minority internship) if the affirmative action context is particularly competitive, and standards for being awarded a minority resource are especially stringent.

These studies suggest that Spanish-speaking ability contributes to both perceivers' and Latinos' own perceptions of minority status; however, it is not yet clear *how* Spanish speaking ability confers minority status onto Latinos. The Spanish language is extremely common in the Latino community (U.S. Census, 2008), a prototypical practice among Latinos that may convey a level of ethnic commitment to the Latino group. Indeed, some researchers suggest that commonality among racial group members (e.g., speaking Spanish) predicts their psychological closeness to the group (Smith & Moore, 2000), perhaps enhancing perceptions of them as minorities. Furthermore, Spanish-speaking Latinos may be more likely to face discrimination (Edwards & Romero, 2008), a factor influencing whether one belongs to a minority group (Jetten, Branscombe, Schmitt, & Spears, 2001; Sellers & Shelton, 2003). Similarly, recent work by Kaiser and Pratt-Hyatt (2009) has found that those who are highly racial identified African Americans experience greater discrimination from others than less identified African Americans. If more typical group members are perceived as more likely to experience discrimination, they may be seen as more in need of affirmative action and, thus, more worthy. We believe that the most important next step in research on minority status is to determine what factors (e.g., perceived similarity, racial identification, experiences of discrimination, or other disadvantages) determine minority status.

The current studies show that affirmative action contexts may be especially relevant for perceptions of atypical minority group members, but it is also important to detail how atypical minorities are viewed in non-affirmative action contexts. Peer relations within the minority group may be especially difficult for atypical minorities who face pressure to conform to group norms (Contrada et al., 2001). In their research on ethnicity-related stressors, Chavez and French (2007) found that Latino college students specifically face in-group pressure to speak Spanish, highlighting the unique challenges non-Spanish Latinos may face within the group. Yet even intergroup interactions may prove stressful for atypical minorities. Although some researchers note that Spanish speakers face more discrimination (Edwards & Romero, 2008), English-speaking Latinos and more acculturated Latinos may

be more *aware* of the discrimination they face (Perez, Fortuna, & Alegria, 2008). Although non-Spanish-speaking Latinos may *actually* face less discrimination, they may *experience* more discrimination than Spanish-speaking Latinos. Few researchers have examined how non-Spanish-speaking Latinos are perceived either within or outside of their ethnic group, and we strongly encourage future work in this area.

Our results may indicate a more general process at work in perceptions of atypical minorities. Although we focused exclusively on Latinos in this article, recent findings suggest that similar results occur for Chinese people who do not speak Chinese (Sanchez & Chavez, 2009) and for biracial people (of both minority and White racial descent; Sanchez & Bonam, 2009). Thus, we feel differential evaluations of minority status in the context of affirmative action decisions may apply to other racial minorities and other indicators of minority status (e.g., having partially White racial inheritance). Notably, perceiving individuals as varying in levels of minority status may serve to maintain stereotypes by excluding atypical and potentially hierarchy threatening minority group members from the racial categories they belong to, a process similar to that of subtyping (Richards & Hewstone, 2001). For instance, to retain *what it means to be Latino*, perceivers may view nonnormative Latinos (e.g., non-Spanish-speaking Latinos) as less Latino than those who fulfill particular stereotypes (e.g., speak Spanish, have darker skin, etc.). Further research is needed to understand to what extent such processes drive perceptions of non-Spanish-speaking Latinos and atypical minority group members in general.

In addition, it is important to note that the designs of Study 1 and Study 2 do not allow us to determine all of the causal paths shown in Figures 1 and 2. Future research is needed to provide further support for the proposed causal paths. Because we had very few Latino participants in Study 1, we were also unable to adequately compare the minority status evaluations of ingroup and outgroup perceivers. Previous research suggests that ingroup members may respond particularly negatively to ingroup members who deviate from ingroup norms (Eidelman, Silvia, & Biernat, 2006); thus, this seems an important avenue for future research.

These findings highlight the dilemma that Latinos and perhaps other racial minorities face. On one hand, Latinos may experience a good deal of pressure to acculturate to fit into majority culture (e.g., Gordon, 1964). On the other hand, the more Latinos become acculturated (e.g., by not speaking Spanish) the less Latino they feel, the lower their self-esteem, and the less appropriate they are perceived to be for race-based affirmative action. Between the pressure to acculturate and the consequences of doing so, it is likely that many

Latinos feel trapped. Moreover, Latinos may want to acculturate to reap advantages of the dominant culture, but the more they acculturate the less access they will have to resources specifically aimed at aiding racial minorities. Of importance, the present studies were not intended to address who should receive affirmative action. Instead, we hope the present findings help us begin to understand who is perceived as appropriate for affirmative action, how people determine who are “true” racial minorities, and what the consequences are for these evaluations of minority status.

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