

## Nine Miles of Separation: Identities at work in the Iberian Peninsula

Spain was a country of labor emigration for centuries; in the 1960s, Spaniards migrated to jobs in central Europe mainly in France, Switzerland, West Germany, and Belgium. By the late 1970s and early 1980s, many emigrants returned home. By those years, Spanish economy grew and created over two million new jobs between 1986 and 1990; this growth continued with the number of jobs increasing by 24 percent from 1996 to 2001. Spain social protection also expanded during that time. These changes started to attract the influx of large number of immigrants from Africa, Asia and Latin America who consider Spain and other southern countries the back door to reach the rest of Europe. These migration waves have been explored from different perspectives; one of them is a proliferation of literary works that deal with the immigrants experience in the host country.

Drawing on Bucholtz and Hall's (2005) framework on identity research, and on Tannen's (1994) use of fiction to learn about real life interactions, this paper analyzes identities displayed in five short stories from two short story collections published in Spain in 1999 and 2006 *Inmenso estrecho* "Immense Strait" and *Inmenso estrecho II* "Immense Strait II". Bucholtz and Hall indicate that identity is a product of linguistic interaction which is "active negotiation of an individual's relationship with larger social constructs (Mendoza-Denton 2002:475)". This paper analyzes interactions between Spaniards and immigrants in selected short stories. In this regard, Tannen (1994) accepts fiction as a possible representation of real life interactions. The selected stories represent dialogues between the main immigrant groups to the Iberian Peninsula up to the 2006s: Latin Americans (Peruvians and Dominicans) and Africans (Moroccans). The dialogues between these two groups were divided into immigrants and Spaniards and were classified according to Bucholtz and Hall's Second Principle, Positionality and Fourth Principle, Relationality.

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