

# The Relationship Between Hispanic and Latino Identity and Perceived Importance of Learning English



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## Introduction

- Latino and Hispanic children with English-proficient parents are more likely to attend college and secure higher-paying jobs, but lower English proficiency rates and income levels suggest systemic barriers (R. Ryberg & L. Guzman, 2023; A. Nora & G. Crisp, 2009).
- Learning English is key to personal and professional success, enabling cross-cultural communication and access to broader opportunities in education and technology (I.F. Chung, 2013; P.S. Rao, 2019; T.B. Tin, 2013).
- High educational aspirations among Hispanic and Latino individuals highlight the importance of English for academic and career success, with many viewing it as essential to reaching their potential (B. Schneider et al., 2006; G. Valdés, 2004).

## Research Questions

- Are Americans of Hispanic/Latino origin more likely to place greater importance on learning English?
- Does this relationship remain robust when considering potential demographic explanatory variables such as age, sex, education status, and political party?

## Methods

### Sample

- This study used a sample (n=8,255) from the 2020 American National Election Study (ANES), which conducted mix-mode interviews with American voters both before and after the 2020 U.S. presidential election in order to create a representative sample of the American electorate.

### Measures

- **Hispanic/Latino Identity:** Measured by the question, “Do you consider yourself to be of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?” Responses are coded as Yes (1) and No (0).
- **Importance of Learning English:** Assessed by the question, “How important do you think it is that everyone in the United States learn to speak English?” Responses are coded from 1 (Very important) to 4 (Not at all important). These variables were then collapsed into two categories, 0 being Not Important and 1 being important.
  - Other variables included age (measured quantitatively in years, with 80 indicating 80 or older), sex (coded as 1 = Male, 2 = Female), education status (coded as 1 = Less than undergraduate, 2 = Undergraduate, 3 = Above undergraduate), and political party (coded as 1 = Democrat, 2 = Republican).

## Results

### Bivariate

- A logistic regression analysis demonstrates a significant difference (OR=0.677,  $p < 0.001$ ) in the perceived importance of learning English between individuals who identify as Hispanic or Latino and those who do not.
- Non-Hispanic/Latino respondents placed greater importance on learning English compared to their Hispanic/Latino counterparts (Figure 1).

### Multivariate

- When accounting for potential confounding variables (age, education status, political party), there was not a statistically significant difference (OR=1.06,  $p = 0.666$ ) between Hispanic/Latino and non-Hispanic/Latino respondents
- As age increases, support for valuing learning English increases dramatically as well, and there is no statistical significance between my main variables. However, it is notable that despite this, respondents who are Hispanic/Latino are more likely to find learning English significant, which is a flip from the bivariate analysis (Figure 2).
- Age has a statistically significant relationship with valuing learning English, ( $p < 0.001$ ), with increased age resulting in increased value on learning English.
- Political party and education status were both confounding variables that showed a statistically significant relationship with valuing learning English. Sex was not a confounder and did not have a statistically significant relationship.

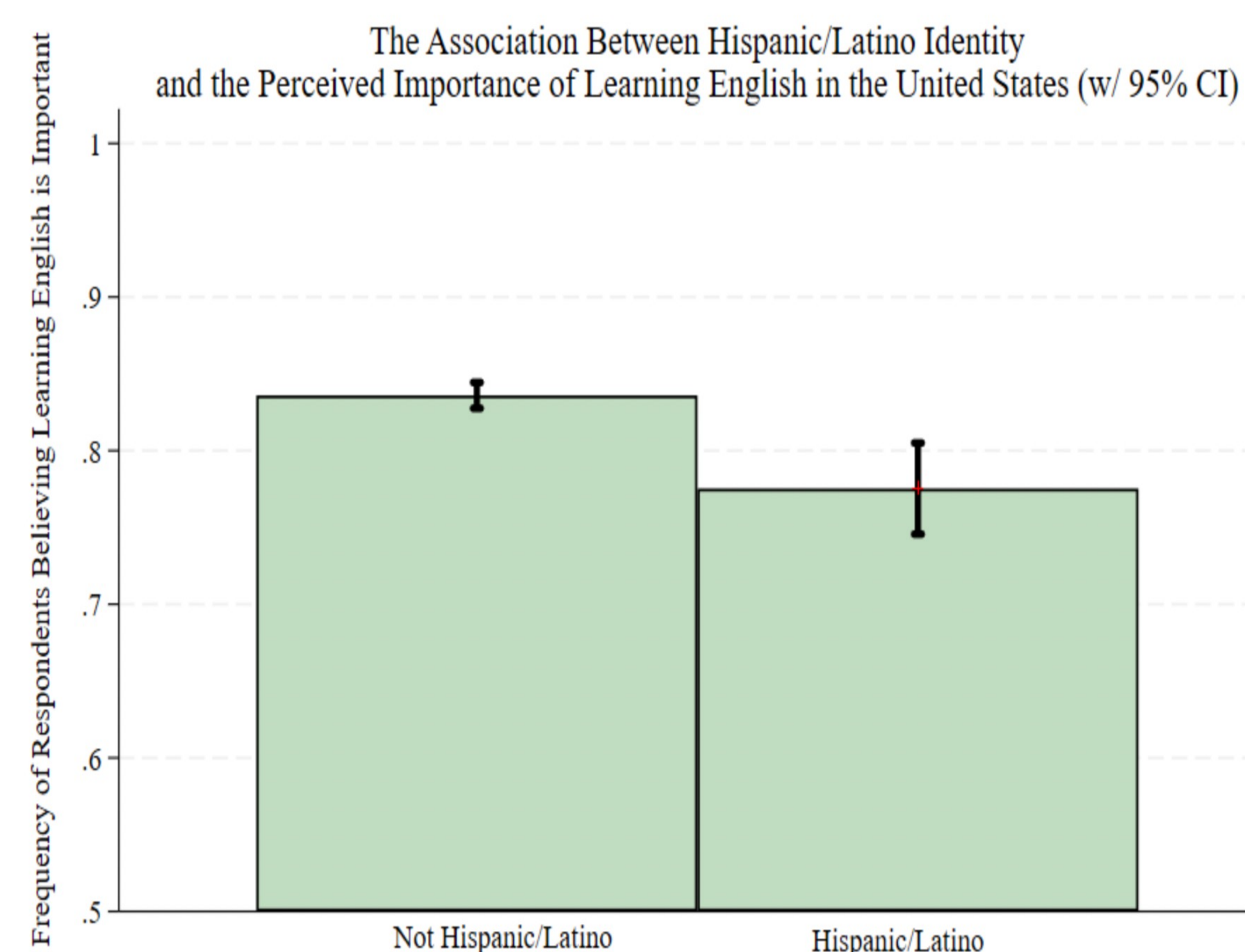


Figure 1:

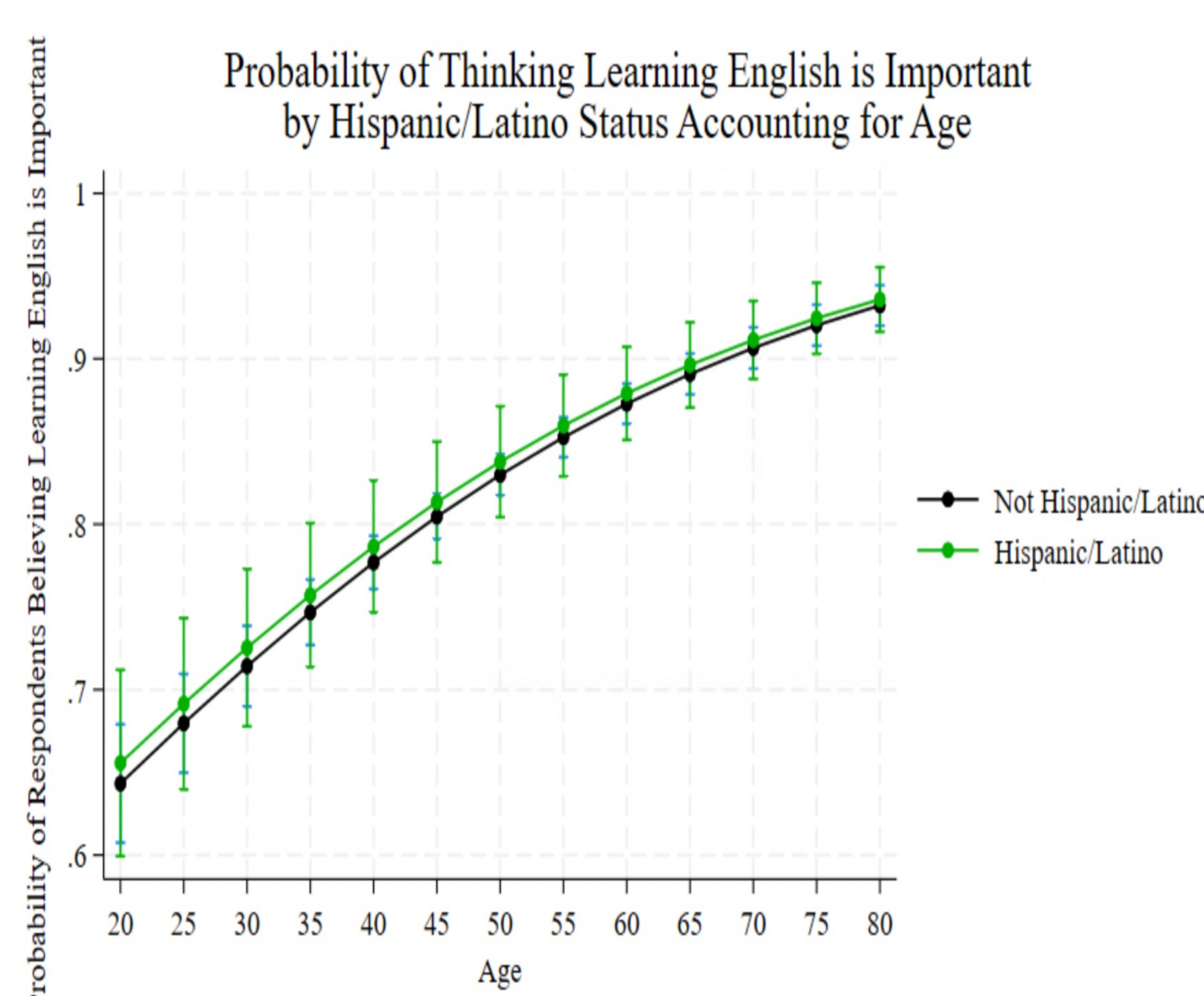


Figure 2:

## Discussion

- These findings contribute to research regarding the sociocultural factors influencing attitudes toward language and integration in the United States.
- Future research is needed to explore why age, political party, and education status are such strong confounding variables in this study.
- It is worth exploring whether Hispanic individuals are more likely to view learning English as important, even if this result is not statistically significant. This possibility was suggested by the analysis that factored in age.

## References

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