The Attitudes of California University-level Students Towards Spanglish in a Commercial

Angélica Paredes y Ana Paola Ruiz
Dra. Rebecca Pozzi

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Source:http://klcc.org

Objectives of the Study

- This study was conducted with two goals:

  - To investigate the attitudes of students at a university in California towards Spanglish in a commercial

  - Explore the extent to which students of Spanish identify with this linguistic phenomenon

Source:blogs.uoregon.edu

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What is code-switching?

- Spanglish is a speech phenomenon among some Hispanic groups in the United States in which lexical and grammatical elements of Spanish and English are mixed (RAE, 2018)

  - It is characterized by calques, loan words, semantic extensions, and code-switching (Casielles-Suárez, 2017; Lipski, 2008)

What is code-switching? cont.

- Code-switching refers the switching between two languages within the same discourse involving the same individuals and often occurs within the space of a single sentence (Colombi, 2008; Lipski, 2008)

  - Una cosa que yo quise hacer cuando fui a Acapulco… me subí a este *parachute ride*, arriba del agua. Me subí en eso. *Oh I loved that! (*Silva-Corvalán ,2001)

- Those who code-switch, especially in one sentence, have a high command of both languages since they follow the linguistic rules of both languages when doing so.

Previous Studies

- One study (Luna & Perachio, 2005) observes the attitudes of bilinguals based on slogans using code-switching depending on the direction in which it is implemented
    - Spanish ⟺ English
    - English ⟺ Spanish

Source:roblox.com

- Bilinguals had negative attitudes towards the slogans that changed from the majority to the minority language

Previous studies cont.

Source:pinterest.com

● Ueltschy & Krampf (1997) concluded that Spanish speakers respond differently to advertising campaigns depending on their level of acculturation in the United States

● Spanish speakers who are more acculturated prefer English in written advertisements while those who are less acculturated prefer ads written in Spanish

Previous studies cont.

Source:roblox.com

- Garcia-Quintana and Nichols (2016) explored ads in English, Spanish, and a mixture of both

- All groups showed positive responses to code-switching in print advertising

- The highly acculturated group showed more positive emotions towards code-switching

Previous studies cont.

- Toribio (2000) examined the attitudes of four bilingual [English & Spanish] participants towards code-switching

- Two participants accepted the use of code-switching in their daily lives and had positive attitudes towards it

- The other two participants perceived code-switching as a negative phenomenon

Fuente:funnysigns.net

Research Questions

1. What are the perceptions of students in Spanish classes in a university in California on the use of code-switching in a commercial?

2. Do these students identify with this phenomenon?

Fuente:hispanicprblog.com

Institutional Profile

- University in the central coast region of California

- More than 7,500 students
  - 63% women
  - 37% men

- 41% of the students are Hispanic

https://guideofus.com/california/regions

Participants

- 100 students
  - 88 in a Spanish class for heritage speakers
  - 12 in a Spanish class for L2 learners

- 71 women, 28 men

- 86.9% age 18-24, 11.1% 25 and older

- 69.8% Spanish L1, 30.2% English L1

Participants cont.

- Three sections of Spanish for Heritage Speakers
  - the instructors had already discussed code-switching

- One section of an intermediate Spanish class for non native speakers: 4 heritage speakers of Spanish, 8 English speakers
  - the instructor had not discussed code-switching

Instruments

1. A survey

2. Two types of questions:

   ○ 13 multiple choice questions to obtain background information

   ○ 5 open-ended questions referring to the video; they had the option to answer in English, Spanish or both

3. Commercial from AT&T Company *The Mobile Movement: Between Two Worlds* in Spanglish

Source: AT&T

Analysis

- Quantitative and qualitative

- Quantitative: calculated percentages for questions 12, 13

  - Question 12: Do you identify with this way of speaking? [the combination of Spanish and English]

  - Question 13: Do you use the mixture of these languages? [English and Spanish]

- Qualitative:

  - top-down analysis and deductive coding based on research questions

  - bottom-up, inductive coding to determine emergent codes (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999)

Quantitative Results

12. Do you identify with this way of speaking? [the combination of Spanish and English]

Of the 11 participants that did not identify with this way of speaking, 6 self-identified as L1 Spanish speakers and 5 self-identified as L1 English speakers

Figure 1: Results to question 12

No
12.8%
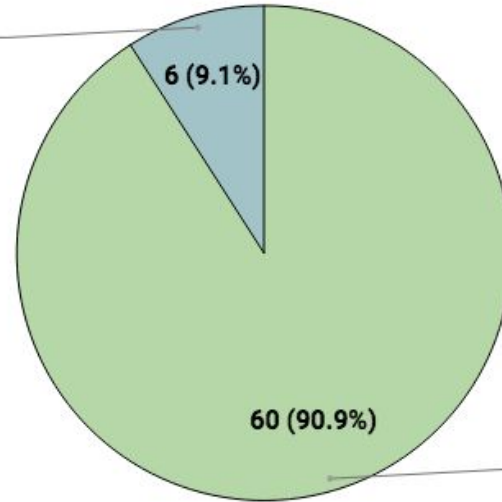
11 (12.8%)

75 (87.2%)

Yes
87.2%
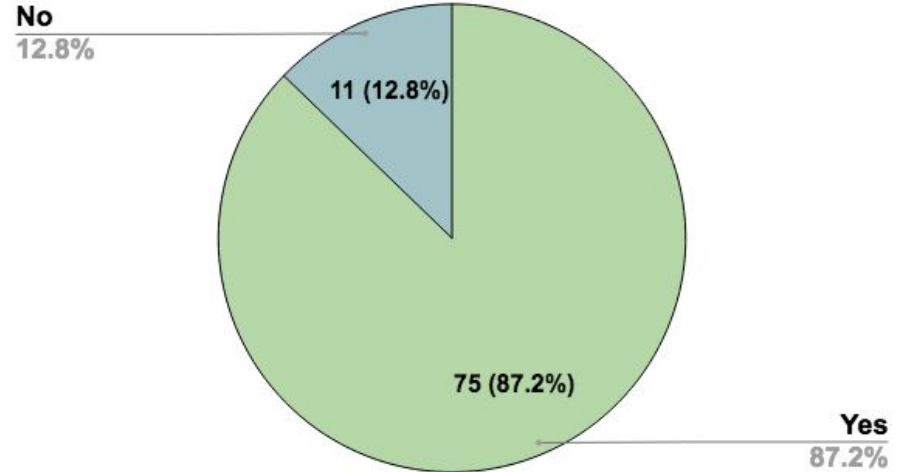
Quantitative Results cont.

13. Do you use the mixture of these languages? [English and Spanish]

Of the 6 participants that reported they do not use the mixture of these languages, 4 self-identified as L1 Spanish speakers and 2 self-identified as L1 English speakers

Figure 2: Results to question 13

No
9.1%

6 (9.1%)

60 (90.9%)

Yes
90.9%

Qualitative Results

- 5 categories emerged in the data related to students' perceptions of code-switching:
    - Code-switching with the purpose of explaining a concept or idea
    - Positive Feelings
    - Validation
    - Identity and Culture
    - Negative Opinions
- Quotes included from participants are verbatim

Results cont.

Code-switching as an Auxiliary

The qualitative results show that most of the students who participated in our project perceive the code-switching as a tool to communicate with people who are bilingual in English and Spanish

- ○ "It...**flows** a little more for me to switch between languages."

Feelings Towards Code-switching

They felt joy and pride

- ○ "I feel very **happy** and almost **teary-eyed** [when I hear the people in the commercial use English and Spanish in the same sentence]. This is because I feel like there's a lack of representation. However, hearing Spanglish being used makes me feel more connected with the culture."

Validation

They realized they are not the only ones who speak this way

- ○ "...**I am not alone** and **not the only one** that does that."

They applauded the media's use of code-switching to promote their products

- ○ "I think its awesome that the media incorporates two different language, & shows diversity & culture in a great way."

Identity and Culture

Code-switching is a way to incorporate both cultures

- ○ "I incorporate both of my language in the way I speak on a daily basis, **I am proud of being bilingual** and **I want to embrace both languages.**"

Code-switching is part of the identity of many of these students

- ○ "I use and hear Spanglish everyday everywhere. **It has become a part of who we are** and of our culture."

Negative Opinions

For 6 students, code-switching is perceived as unacceptable

- ○ "I don't like how it sounds because, it doesn't sound **professional** nor **adequate**. It's either **all Spanish or all english.**"

- ○ "My culture is **pure**, there is no need for me to mix my english with it."

Conclusions

- Nearly all participants viewed code-switching in a positive way

- Most participants expressed joy, pride, and validation regarding the use of code-switching

- Few participants viewed the phenomenon in a negative way

- Most participants indicated they identify with this phenomenon

Findings

Topics already explored in current linguistic literature

- ○ Negative connotations
- ○ Cambio de código como auxiliar-colombi-guitarras

Topics not yet found in current linguistic literature

- ○ Positive Feelings
- ○ Validation
- ○ Identity and spanglish

Future investigations

- Include a variety of commercials: English, Spanish and the mix of the two

- Incorporate examples of Spanglish from different modalities/media sources: commercial radio, newspaper, magazines and billboards

- Explore the attitudes of teachers towards Spanglish/code-switching

- Compare attitudes between generations of immigrants in the US

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