

40 Is "Spanglish" the Third Language of the South?

Truth and Fantasy about US Spanish

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Spanish language first arrived on the North American mainland in what is now part of the southern United States, and the first stable contacts between Spanish- and English-speaking colonies also occurred in these same regions. Today, with upward of 37 million native speakers,¹ Spanish is the de facto second language of the United States and the maternal language of the majority of inhabitants in some regions, including Southern locations in Florida and Texas. Indeed, overall the United States contains some 9.3% of the world's estimated 400 million native speakers of Spanish, and depending on how speakers of Spanish are counted, is in a dead heat with Colombia as the world's fourth-largest Spanish-speaking nation (behind Mexico, Spain, and Argentina). If overall Latino figures are taken without consideration of reported English-speaking abilities, the United States rises to third place among the world's English-speaking nations. The largest number of these Spanish speakers resides in Southern latitudes. Moreover, the 2000 US Census and subsequent population estimates present dramatic evidence that the areas of most rapid growth of the Spanish-speaking population in the last few decades are southern states such as Georgia, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Alabama. If we temporarily exclude Texas, the majority of Spanish speakers in the southern states have arrived during the past half century, many during the past several decades, although a few long-standing enclaves continue to exist (including what remains of the endangered colonial dialects spoken by the *islenos* [Lipski 1990] and the *Adaeseños* [Pratt 2004] in Louisiana). In terms of demographics—and increasingly in terms of economic and political strength—Spanish is clearly the second language of the South, mostly representing varieties originating in Cuba and Mexico, but also in several Caribbean, Central, and South American nations. In addition to speaking Spanish and, usually, English, Spanish speakers living in the United States typically exhibit a wide range of language-contact phenomena that have led observers in this country and abroad to postulate that a new creation is arising from this sustained bilingual contact. It is popularly referred to as "Spanglish," a word whose very morphology connotes hybridity, mixture, and—to the most cynical—illegitimate birth. But does "Spanglish" (or "espanglish," as it is sometimes referred to

guage, often given the slightly derogatory label of Spanglish, which coexists with less mixed forms of standard English and standard Spanish and has at least one of the characteristics of an autonomous language: a substantial number of native speakers. The emerging language retains the phonological, morphological and syntactic structure of Puerto Rican Spanish. However, much of its vocabulary is English-derived. That it is an autonomous language has been recognized not only by some Puerto Rican intellectuals, most of whom strongly disapprove of it [. . .] but also by the New York School of Social Research, which has offered a course in Spanglish for doctors, nurses, and social workers.

Fairclough (2003: 187), in a survey of attitudes and inquiries about Spanish in the United States, defines *Spanglish* as simply "la mezcla del inglés y del español" ('the mixture of English and Spanish'). Odón Betanzos Palacios (2001), president of the North American Academy of the Spanish Language (a corresponding branch of the Spanish Royal Language Academy) asserts that "*Spanglish* is only a temporary means of communication [. . .] I believe that those who promote the teaching of Spanglish are not aware of the huge mistake in teaching this jargon that cannot even be understood in neighboring communities."

The self-declared admirer and promoter of Spanglish, Ilan Stavans (2003: 6), whose contrived imitations of natural utterances and whose prolific popular writings on Spanglish have made him a lightning rod for polemic, initially defines the term innocently as "the verbal encounter between Anglo and Hispano civilizations." His anecdotal accounts of learning Spanglish upon arriving in New York City from Mexico reveal an often less than affectionate reaction: "But to keep up with these publications [Spanish-language newspapers in New York City in the 1980s] was also to invite your tongue for a bumpy ride. The grammar and syntax used in them was never fully 'normal,' e.g., it replicated, often unconsciously, English-language patterns. It was obvious that its authors and editors were americanos with a loose connection to la lengua de Borges."

Adopting an anti-imperialistic stance and considering Spanglish to consist primarily of the use of Anglicisms by Spanish speakers, the distinguished literary critic Roberto González-Echeverría (1997) laments the negative implications of Spanglish:

Spanglish, the language made up of Spanish and English off the streets and introduced into talk shows and advertising campaigns represents a grave danger for Latino culture and the progress of Latinos in mainstream America. Those who tolerate and even promote [Spanglish] as a harmless mixture don't realize that this is not a relationship of equality. The sad truth is that spanglish is basically the language of poor Latinos, many of whom are illiterate in both languages. They incorporate English words and constructions into their daily speech because they lack the vocabulary and training in Spanish to adapt to the culture that surrounds them. Educated Latinos who use this language have other motives: some are ashamed of their origins and try to blend in with everyone else by using English words and literally translating English idioms. They think that this will make them part of the mainstream. Politically, however, spanglish represents a capitulation; it stands for marginalization, not liberation.

Ibarz (2002) offers the following observation, which clearly confuses regional and social dialects, youth slang, and language contact phenomena:⁵ "The language resulting from the mixture of Spanish and English, known as 'spanglish,' is spoken by more than 25 million people on both sides of the US-Mexican border, an area in which some 40 million Latinos live. Most use some variety of this dialect, which varies according to the country of origin."

A Web site devoted to the teaching of Spanish to Americans defines *Spanglish* as "an entity that is not quite English, not quite Spanish but somewhere in between; the 'language' spoken by an English-speaking person when attempting to speak in Spanish."⁶ Acosta-Belén (1975: 151) observed that "Speakers of the non-defined mixture of Spanish and/or English are judged as 'different,' or 'sloppy' speakers of Spanish and/or English, and are often labeled verbally deprived, alingual, or deficient bilinguals because supposedly they do not have the ability to speak either English or Spanish well." Milán (1982: 202-3) specifically recommended that researchers and educators [in New York City] refrain from using the term *Spanglish* and use instead neutral designations such as "New York City Spanish." However work by Zentella (1997: 82) has demonstrated that younger Puerto Ricans in New York and other cities of the Northeastern United States are adopting the word *Spanglish* with pride, to refer explicitly to code-switching: "[. . .] more NYPRs are referring to 'Spanglish' as a positive way of identifying their switching." Zentella offers a "grammar of 'Spanglish'" which is in effect an account of grammatical and pragmatic constraints on code-switching. She concludes (1997: 112-13) that "contrary to the attitude of those who label Puerto Rican code-switching 'Spanglish' in the belief that a chaotic mixture is being invented, English-Spanish switching is a creative style of bilingual communication that accomplishes important cultural and conversational work."

Spanglish has even made its way into children's literature, for example in a humorously didactic novel by Montes (2003) in which a Puerto Rican girl is teased by her English-only classmates. The cover blurb sets the stage: "Maritza Gabriela Morales Mercado (Gabi for short) has big *problemas*. Her worst enemy, Johnny Wiley, is driving her crazy [. . .] Gabi is so mad she can't even talk straight. Her English words keep getting jumbled up with her Spanish words. Now she's speaking a crazy mix of both, and no one knows what she's saying! Will Gabi ever make sense again? Or will she be tongue-tied forever?" The book provides a touching lesson in cultural sensitivity and a few examples of realistic code-switching, although the idea that bilingual speakers "jumble up" their languages when they become angry is unlikely to score any points in the bilingual education arena.

Drawing together literary, cultural, and political views, Morales (2002: 3) takes a politically grounded stance, linking Spanglish with the notion that:

Latinos are a mixed-race people [. . .] there is a need for a way to say something more about this idea than the word "Latino" expresses. So for the moment, let's consider a new term for the discussion of what this aspect of Latino means—let us consider Spanglish. Why Spanglish? There is no better metaphor for what a mixed-race culture means than a hybrid language, an informal code; the same sort of linguistic construction that defines different classes in a society can also

come to define something outside it, a social construction with different rules. Spanglish is what we speak, but it is also who we Latinos are, and how we act, and how we perceive the world.

3. ENUMERATION OF THE USES OF SPANGLISH AND MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The preceding survey of definitions and points of view—which represents only a very small fraction of an immense and constantly growing bibliography in a highly charged ideological climate—is more than sufficient to demonstrate that there is no universally accepted definition of the term *Spanglish*, which has variously been used to designate the following distinct phenomena:

- The use of integrated Anglicisms in Spanish, e.g. the wide use of *lonche* 'lunch' and *líder* 'leader', both in the United States and in some other Spanish-speaking nations.
- The frequent and spontaneous use of nonassimilated Anglicisms (i.e. with English phonetics) in Spanish, e.g. *¿Cuánto pagaste por el iPod* [ajpad]? 'how much did you pay for your iPod?'
- The use of syntactic calques and loan translations from English in Spanish, e.g. *el señor X está corriendo para presidente* 'Mr. X is running for president' instead of . . . *es candidato* . . . 'is a candidate.'
- Frequent and fluid code-switching, particularly intrasentential switches (within the same clause), e.g. *Mucha gente no sabe where Manchester is* 'Many people don't know . . .'
- Deviations from Standard Spanish grammar found among vestigial and transitional bilingual speakers, whose productive competence in Spanish falls below that of true native speakers, due to language shift or attrition, e.g. *tengo problemas en hablando español* 'I have problems in speaking Spanish' instead of . . . *al hablar español*.
- The characteristics of Spanish written or spoken as a second language by millions of Americans of non-Hispanic background, who have learned Spanish for personal or professional motives, e.g. *no cabalgar descalzo* 'no riding barefoot' (instead of *no subir* . . .), found on a "bilingual" escalator sign in a shopping mall.
- Finally the humorous, disrespectful, and derogatory use of pseudo-Spanish items in what anthropologist Jane Hill (1993a, 1993b) has called "junk Spanish," including pseudo-Spanish words like *el cheapo* and *no problemo* as well as real Spanish words introduced inappropriately into English sentences (e.g. *he's got a real macho attitude*).

The following remarks will examine the various phenomena embodied by this heterogeneous list, in an attempt to extract common denominators en route to addressing the principal research questions surrounding Spanglish, irrespectively of the precise definition given to this term:

- Who uses Spanglish and in what circumstances?
- When and where is Spanglish used and not used?

- How is Spanglish acquired?
- Is Spanglish a language distinct from English and Spanish?
- Can Spanglish be characterized technically as a jargon, a pidgin, or a creole language?
- Does Spanglish have native speakers? If so, are there monolingual speakers of Spanglish?
- Does Spanglish have a common linguistic core, understood and used by all speakers/listeners?
- Do regional or social dialects of Spanglish exist?

It is impossible to adequately address all these issues in a single forum, but an overview of the issues and observations will bring matters into a clearer perspective. In the following remarks, attention will be confined to the interface of Spanish and English in the United States.⁷

4. SPANISH-TO-ENGLISH LANGUAGE DISPLACEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

Language shift from Spanish to English occurs in Hispanic communities in the United States, at the same time that the total number of Spanish speakers continues to grow through immigration. Bills, Hernández-Chávez, and Hudson have demonstrated this second-generation language shift in the Southwest (Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Colorado), in the midst of continuing growth in the total number of Spanish speakers.⁸ Bills (1989: 24) adds: "With a halt to immigration, a complete shift to English would likely occur within a generation or two." Distance from the Mexican border is a key parameter for Spanish language retention, intimately linked to opportunities for using Spanish on a daily basis at home, in the community, and in the workplace. There is a sadly negative correlation between level of formal schooling and socioeconomic achievement and loyalty to the Spanish language in the Southwest. In other words, those who achieve success have done so within social and educational systems that favor the use of English over Spanish. Bills, Hernández-Chávez, and Hudson (1999) also establish an inverse correlation between proficiency in English and retention of Spanish in the home: those who speak English better—although they may have immigrated from Spanish-speaking countries—tend to abandon the use of Spanish for daily needs even at home. In contrast, García and Cuevas (1995) have determined that among Puerto Ricans in New York ("Nuyoricans") the factor that most strongly favors maintenance of Spanish is the status of the individuals in their own community. The authors find that Spanish is used more frequently among young Nuyoricans than among older speakers, suggesting that younger generations of Puerto Ricans no longer associate use of Spanish with socioeconomic failure. Unlike in the Southwest, there is a positive correlation between educational attainment (particularly at the university level) and the retention and active use of Spanish.

The rapid shift to English among Latino communities in the United States has accelerated the incorporation of Anglicisms, has intensified code-switching, and has resulted in large numbers of semifluent transitional bilinguals, whose incomplete

active competence in Spanish—a stage which typically lasts no more than a single generation—has at times been confused with the speech of stable bilingual communities, whose members are predominantly fluent in both languages. Stable bilingual communities do exist in the United States, particularly near the Mexican border and in south Florida, and while these communities — as well as all other bilingual speech communities — will always include individuals with less than complete fluency in Spanish, the latter's deviations from monolingual Spanish grammar do not emerge as norms for the rest of the bilingual community.

5. CODE-SWITCHING AS SPANGLISH

Code-switching, at least of the intrasentential variety (e.g. of the sort *I can't understand lo que dices* '... what you're saying') among fluent bilinguals, is governed by a complex set of syntactic and pragmatic restrictions. Among the former, the most compelling is the requirement that no grammatical rule in either language be violated, and in particular that the point of transition be "smooth" in the sense that the material from the second language is in some way as likely a combination as a continuation in the first language.⁹ Fluent code-switching may therefore produce combinations in which, to give some examples, a switch occurs between article and noun, between a complementizer and a subordinate clause, between a conjunction and one of the conjuncts, etc., such as the following:¹⁰

They're still meeting at Ripley house every Thursday night y la gente se está juntando ahí.
'... and people are getting together there'
One more time Ruth, pa que la gente se cuente y they can call you at ...
'... so people can understand ...'
I'm not sayin' that son chuecos.
'... they are crooked'
But that picante goes in la carne de marrano
'... in the pork'

Although there are many exceptions, some general observations will illustrate findings specific to Spanish-English code-switching. Spontaneous code-switches not accompanied by hesitations, pauses, or interruptions, are normally unacceptable in the following circumstances:

- (1) between a pronominal subject and a predicate: **Él is coming tomorrow* / **He viene mañana*;
- (2) between a pronominal clitic and the verb: **Juan lo said* / **Juan quiere decir it*;
- (3) between a sentence-initial interrogative word and the remainder of the sentence: **¿Cuándo will you come?* / **When vas a hacerlo?*;
- (4) between an auxiliary verb (especially *haber*) and the main verb: **María ha finished the job.* / **We had acabado de comer.*;
- (5) between an adverb of negation and the modified verb: **El médico no wants that* / **The doctor does not quiere eso.*

The restrictions reflect the general need to maintain the grammatical rules of each language, following the linear order both in English and in Spanish, and to retain easily parsable chunks of discourse.

There are also particular circumstances that favor code-switching among fluent bilinguals:

- (1) the anticipated presence of a proper noun in the other language can trigger a switch prior to the actual insertion of the L2 proper noun:
Allá en el parque there's a little place called Sonny's 'There in the park ...'
Mucha gente no sabe where Manchester is 'Many people don't know ...'
- (2) switches are especially common between a main clause and a subordinate clause introduced by a relative pronoun or a complementizer—and it should be noted that despite the vigorous theoretical debate concerning the governing properties of the complementizer and the contention by some that the subordinate clause must be in the same language as the complementizer, observed Spanish-English code-switches do in fact occur frequently where the complementizer is in the same language as the preceding portion of the switched utterance, suggesting that complementizers act as a linguistic fulcrum for switches, rather than being inextricably linked to the language of the subordinate clause. Some examples are:
Escucharon a un señor que has been around for a long time.
'You heard a man who ...'
Me tiene envidia because I'm better lookin' then he is.
'He's jealous of me ...'
There was this guy que era un vato de México.
'... who was a Mexican dude.'
con un carrizo about big around as a two bit piece
'with a reed ...'
- (3) the presence of a coordinating conjunction (*y, pero*, etc.) is another fulcrum point which allows switches:
tienen buena carne pero hard to raise
'they have good meat but ...'
take that and hervirle
'... boil it'

6. THE SPANISH OF VESTIGIAL AND TRANSITIONAL BILINGUAL SPEAKERS

The debate about Spanglish and in general the status and vitality of Spanish in the United States is complicated by the existence of thousands of individuals who consider themselves Latinos and whose passive competence in Spanish is considerable, but whose productive competence may fall short of levels produced by fluent native speakers. Educational programs have come to refer to such individuals as "heritage (language) speakers," but their impact on the assessment of Spanish in the United States has yet to be charted. In classic studies of language attrition in minority com-

munities (e.g. Dorian 1977, 1981) the technical term *semi-speaker* has been used, as distinguished both from the fluent bilingual or monolingual speaker of the languages in question and from foreign or beginning speakers of the languages. In the ontogenesis of semi-fluent speakers, there is usually a shift away from a minority language to the national/majority language within the space of a single generation or at most two, signaled by a transitional generation composed of "vestigial speakers," who spoke the language in question during their childhood but who have subsequently lost much of their native ability, and/or of true "transitional bilinguals" (TB), a more neutral term first introduced in Lipski (1993).¹¹

At the lower end of active competence in Spanish, the least proficient transitional bilinguals may produce errors of subject-verb and noun-adjective agreement in fashions that approximate those of true second-language learners of Spanish. Prepositions may be confused or eliminated, and articles may be eliminated or inserted in configurations which are typical of English but ungrammatical in Spanish. Overt subject pronouns—normally redundant and used sparingly in fully fluent Spanish—may be used categorically and repeatedly, as in English. In extreme cases, significant grammatical deviations from Spanish syntax, such as stranded prepositions or eliminated complementizers, may be found, but most departures from Spanish morphosyntax are less drastic. A selection of examples obtained from transitional bilinguals of Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican, and Louisiana *Isleño* origin follows:

mi blusa es blanco [blanca]
'my blouse is white'

¿cuál es tu favorito parte [tu parte favorita]?
'what is your favorite part?'

un [una] rata asina
'a [musk]rat this big'

Graciah pa [por] la entrevista
'Thank you for the interview.'

[el] español es muy bonita [bonito]
'Spanish is beautiful'

Yo decidí ser maestra porque yo estuve trabajando con niños y yo pensé que yo podía hacer lo mismo
'I decided to become a teacher because I was working with children and I thought that I could do the same thing.'

Yo voy y yo nado y yo visito [a] mis amigos y [a] mi abuela
'I go and I swim and I visit my friends and my grandmother'

[lo] que estamos peliando [proponiendo] es un junior high
'What we are fighting for is a junior high.'

Los muchachos que yo jugaba con [con que yo jugaba], hablaban como yo, medio en español, medio en inglés.
'The boys I played with talked like me, half in Spanish, half in English.'

More fluent transitional bilinguals may produce no utterances that violate Spanish grammatical restrictions, but may not possess the full range of syntactic and stylistic options found among fluent native speakers of Spanish. Transitional bilinguals, most of whom are regarded—and regard themselves—as true bilinguals, are frequently taken as examples of US Latino Spanish, e.g. in business, politics, journalism, law enforcement, and the arts, and much of the criticism directed at Spanglish as an impoverished language spoken in the United States stems from confusing the symptoms of transgenerational language attrition with the state of stable bilingualism.

7. SECOND-LANGUAGE SPANISH AS EXEMPLARY SPANGLISH

In addition to the more than 37 million Spanish speakers currently estimated to reside in the United States (as calculated in section 1), uncounted millions of other Americans have learned Spanish as a second language, through formal education and through life experience. Many of these L2 Spanish speakers have occasion to use Spanish on a regular basis, on the job and in their personal lives, and they are sometimes called upon for impromptu or even official translation and interpretation in situations which frequently exceed their linguistic abilities. Over the past several decades, as Spanish became acknowledged as the language that could no longer be ignored, numerous official and unofficial documents, signs, instruction manuals, and notices have been translated into Spanish and, collectively, have become something of a cultural and linguistic icon readily discernable by anyone living in or visiting the United States. Unfortunately, those requesting the translations have not always seen fit (or have not had ready resources) to seek qualified translators or native speakers. There are of course no data on the frequency with which the resultant mistranslations have been correctly attributed to second-language learners with compromised proficiency rather than to bilingual Spanish speakers, yet anecdotal evidence, particularly from abroad, suggests that many first-time visitors to the United States are convinced that this profusion of inauthentic Spanish is tangible proof of the decadent state of US Spanish even among resident native speakers.

8. "JUNK SPANISH" IN AMERICAN POPULAR CULTURE

Americans are increasingly immersed in a morass of what anthropologist Jane Hill (1993a, 1993b) has called "junk Spanish,"¹² typified by the menu items at Tex-Mex restaurants, jokes and stereotypes found in mass media, and the names of streets, buildings, and subdivisions even in the least Hispanic parts of Middle America. Real and invented Spanish words are juxtaposed, while often disregarding grammatical concord and semantic coherence: e.g. "no problema," an "el cheapo" product, someone "showing his macho," etc. To give an example from the *X-Files* television series,¹³ the script calls for the normally sensitive and chivalrous Fox Mulder to say "noho on the rojo" when trying to warn a monolingual Puerto Rican not to touch a red button. Yesterday's Frito Bandito has been replaced by the more recent "Spanish"-speaking Taco Bell Chihuahua. Yet simultaneously, the same media sometimes decry Spanglish indiscriminately, as though cross-fertilization in bilingual communities were not the common patrimony of English, French, Latin, Hebrew, Chinese, indeed all the world's lead-

ing languages and most of the others as well. Matters are exacerbated by the fact that many detractors of Spanish in the United States have turned junk Spanish exemplars into urban legends that are now widely believed to have currency among US Spanish speakers. More than half a century ago the Nobel Prize-winning Spanish author Camilo José Cela claimed that he had encountered stores in the northeastern United States that advertised home delivery of groceries via the highly infelicitous combination *deliveramos groserías*, literally (and taking into account spelling differences) 'we think about dirty words.' This same pseudo-Spanish expression has subsequently been attributed to stores in Miami, Texas, California, and elsewhere, as a brief Internet search will reveal, in all cases without a single eye witness to the alleged impropriety.

Hill extends the rubric of "junk Spanish" to include legitimate Spanish words or constructions used derisively; e.g. "no way, José," "yo quiero Taco Bell," "hasta la vista, baby," etc. For Hill, junk Spanish is a racist affirmation of the superiority of white Anglo-American culture and language, having no legitimacy as a merely humorous tip of the hat to another language. In a society that has become increasingly intolerant of racial and ethnic slurs in public discourse, insensitive portrayals of pseudo-Spanish (in some respects reminiscent of the parodying of African American English which resurfaced during the Ebonics controversy) are a stark reminder of the challenges that remain.

Moreover, because of the presence of junk Spanish in American popular culture and the elevation of some apocryphal specimens to iconic status, humorous pseudo-Spanish constitutes an impediment to the serious study of Spanish dialect in the United States and to the determination of what—if anything—"Spanglish" might actually be.

9. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON SPANISH IN THE UNITED STATES

Setting aside the distractions of "junk Spanish," serious empirical research on Spanish in sustained contact with English in the United States does reveal some grammatical limitation of Spanish morphosyntactic resources in favor of those that coincide with English, although true cases of grammatical convergence are rare except among transitional or semifluent bilinguals (cf. Pousada and Poplack 1982). There is some variation in verb tense usage among some bilingual speakers, particularly the historically variable preterit-imperfect distinction, although this distinction is never obliterated, as in English (Floyd 1976, 1978, 1982, Chaston 1991). Similarly, the Spanish indicative-subjunctive distinction never disappears, except among nonfluent heritage language speakers, but some constructions that show variable subjunctive usage among monolingual speakers may gravitate toward the indicative among English-dominant bilinguals. This is particularly true with the subjunctive used with future reference, as in *Lo voy a hacer cuando tenga/tiene tiempo* 'I will do it when I have time'. Silva-Corvalán (1994) and others have documented a reduction in Spanish word-order possibilities in bilingual communities, restricted to combinations that match the canonical SVO order of English. Thus while monolingual Spanish speakers in other countries may place the subject after the verb in combinations like *Llegó Juan ayer* 'Juan arrived yesterday', Spanish-English bilinguals often prefer *Juan llegó ayer*, with the same word order as found in English. Bilingual Spanish speakers in daily contact with English

may prefer the analytical passive voice construction—congruent with English—to the pseudopassive constructions with *se* that are peculiar to Spanish: *el problema está siendo considerado* 'the problem is being considered' instead of *se está considerando el problema*. In Spanish, because virtually all verbs are conjugated for person and number, overt subject pronouns are normally redundant and used primarily for emphatic or focus constructions, while English requires overt subject pronouns in nearly all finite verb constructions. Research on pronoun usage among bilinguals reveals a broad range of variation, with a clear tendency to use more overt pronouns in Spanish as a direct correlate of English dominance (Lipski 1996a).

10. SUMMARY OF MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To summarize the preceding discussion, coherent notions of "Spanglish" cluster around two common denominators, both of which represent unremarkable language-contact phenomena found in virtually every bilingual society, past and present. The first is the frequent use of unassimilated and assimilated borrowings and loan-translations (calques). The second is fluent code-switching. Adopting this dual characterization as a working definition, let us return to the research question posed at the outset. The attempt to constrain the notion of "Spanglish" must depend on a number of factors.

Who uses Spanglish and in what circumstances? Borrowings and loan-translations (calques) are typically used by all bilingual speakers, including those for whom one of the languages is a second language, learned in adulthood. The frequency and density of calques and assimilated loans in Spanish is, in part, inversely proportional to exposure to Spanish-origin sources of new lexical input such as formal instruction in Spanish and the ready availability of Spanish-language mass media produced from all over the Spanish-speaking world. As for code-switching, attitudes vary widely and not all bilingual speakers spontaneously engage in it. Indeed, any true bilingual is able to speak exclusively in Spanish (e.g., when the interlocutor is monolingual or will not allow code-switching), although borrowings and loan-translations may still be used at all times.

When and where is Spanglish used and not used? Loan-translations and borrowings are found in all Spanish-English bilingual communities, and many have spread to monolingual Spanish-speaking areas, in the language of consumer products, popular culture, and the Internet. Fluent code-switching is confined to speech communities in which Spanish and English are used on a daily basis.

Is Spanglish a language distinct from English and Spanish? So far, no variety of Spanish that has absorbed a high number of lexical Anglicisms is any less "Spanish" than before, although one could imagine an as yet nonoccurring situation in which English lexical items that retain their English pronunciation and morphology become increasingly frequent in bilingual discourse. Nor, in my opinion, is code-switching a third language, although fluent code-switchers have arguably augmented their monolingual grammars with a set of grammatical and pragmatic constraints on switch-points. Code-switching is clearly a third form of discourse, which, like any other discourse mode, carries its own pragmatic rules and even grammatical peculiarities. Knowing how to switch languages does not constitute knowing a third language, any

more than being ambidextrous when playing tennis constitutes playing a new sport. Admittedly, however, while the rules of tennis do not change in accordance with the handedness of any particular delivery, the languages involved in code-switched discourse typically do percolate into one another to some extent. Ultimately, the issue of whether or not much code-switching of Spanish and English constitutes a new language is overshadowed in importance by evidence that such behavior is not in itself a diagnostic of language deterioration. Only in the unthinkable event that all immigration to the United States from Spanish-speaking countries were to cease, and that a bilingual enclave such as Miami, Los Angeles, or New York City were simultaneously cut off from the remainder of the English-speaking population, is it conceivable that, after several generations, the legacy of contemporary bilingualism would morph into a language empirically distinct from English and Spanish. Elsewhere such events have certainly occurred, for example in the formation of some creole languages (e.g. Palenquero in Colombia, Sranan in Surinam), but it requires special circumstances that cannot be reasonably predicted for Spanish in the United States.

Can Spanglish therefore be characterized technically as a jargon, a pidgin, or a creole language? As used by most linguists, the term *creole language* refers to a new language that arises when a reduced contact vernacular such as a pidgin—which, critically, is not spoken natively by anyone—is expanded in subsequent generations into a complete natural language (Holm 1988, 2000, Mühlhäusler 1986, Romaine 1988). In this sense, no manifestation of Spanglish qualifies as a creole language.

Does Spanglish have native speakers? There are certainly native speakers of Spanish varieties containing a large proportion of Anglicisms, so if Spanglish refers to such dialects, then it has native speakers. Similarly fluent code-switching is most common among native bilinguals. If by Spanglish one means highly Anglicized Spanish or fluent code-switching, then there are certainly individuals who have acquired this linguistic competence natively. However, given the considerable interspeaker and interspeech community variation of Anglicisms, calques, and code-switching, I do not find the term “native speaker” to be particularly useful, any more than it would be in reference to a native speaker of, say, slang.

Does Spanglish have a common linguistic core, understood and used by all speakers/listeners? The key word here is “common,” since most Spanish speakers in the United States recognize both assimilated and spontaneous Anglicisms, and since all bilingual speakers can readily understand code-switched discourse irrespective of personal preferences. While there are lexical Anglicisms and calques such as *para atrás* (e.g. *te llamo para atrás* ‘I’ll call you back’) that are used by nearly all bilingual Latino speakers, spontaneous creations are more common, thus undermining the notion of a stable Spanglish core. Some of the examples already presented in this article demonstrate the sort of spontaneity found in bilingual speech communities, for example *[lo] que estamos peñando [proponiendo] es un junior high* ‘What we are fighting for is a junior high’; *En la guerra estaban tratados iguales* ‘in the war [black and white soldiers] were treated equally’. Purported dictionaries of “Chicano Spanish” (e.g. Galván and Teschner 1977) or “Spanglish” (e.g. Cruz, Teck et al. 1998, Stavans 2003) usually include a potpourri of items gleaned from numerous sources and regions, and do not constitute the lexical repertoire of any known speech community.

Do regional or social dialects of Spanglish exist? Regional and social dialects of US Spanish continue to exist, representing the dialects of the countries of origin as well as the results of dialect-leveling in some urban areas; and sociolinguistic differences are found among each US Latino speech community, often correlated with the socioeconomic background of the speakers. Therefore, if one accepts—as I am reluctant to do—the notion that Spanglish has native speakers, then there would also be regional and social dialects of Spanglish. However, it would be difficult to point to the sort of systematic variation (e.g. isoglosses, consistent lexical or grammatical differences) among different groups of US Latino speakers based on the interface with English, rather than on the dialectal origins of the Spanish they speak. Use of unassimilated Anglicisms and spontaneous calques is largely opportunistic, varying according to individual attitudes toward language usage, as well as educational opportunities, the language preferences of interlocutors, and numerous other occasional factors. The choice of whether or not to code-switch is similarly governed by pragmatic constraints that correlate more closely with idiolectal attitudes and abilities than with entire speech communities. Although no comprehensive typological survey of Spanish-English code-switching across all the major US Latino speech communities has yet appeared, published data on Puerto Rican Spanish in the northeastern United States (Poplack 1980, Torres 1997, Zentella 1997 among others), Dominican Spanish in the same region (Bailey 2000, 2002, Toribio 2000), and Mexican-American Spanish in the Southwest (Pfaff 1979, Timm 1975, Lipski 1985) do not suggest systematic syntactic or pragmatic differences in code-switching that might be correlated with the ethnic groups in question. Ultimately, then, the question of whether Spanglish has regional or social dialects reduces to the question of whether Spanglish is a language at all. If one accepts the proposal made in this article that the Spanish-English interface in the United States is characterized by a fluid, idiolectally variable and constantly changing set of phenomena that have not coalesced into a language, then Spanglish—however one might choose to regard it—is not best represented as being divided into dialects.

11. CONCLUSIONS

It is precisely the rapid shift to English (in most regions after at most two generations) that militates against the formation of any stable United States varieties of Spanish, much less against any empirically replicable hybrid language such as “Spanglish.” In speech communities where one Spanish-speaking group predominates, the corresponding regional variety of Spanish is retained, together with the inevitable introduction of lexical Anglicisms and some syntactic calques. In large urban areas where several Spanish-speaking groups converge (e.g. Chicago, Boston, Washington, New York, Houston, and parts of Los Angeles), some dialect leveling has taken place, again with some introduction of Anglicisms, but the specific linguistic features vary from city to city. In no instance has a homogeneous and consistent “United States” dialect of Spanish emerged, nor is such a variety likely to result in the foreseeable future. As a consequence, whereas monolingual Spanish speakers in the respective countries of origin (Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, etc.) can identify traits in the speech of their com-

patriots born or living extensively in the United States that differ from their own, each observer will come up with a somewhat different set of contrasts, whose common denominators form a vanishingly small set. We may choose to designate as "Spanglish" the totality of the discrepancies between monolingual Spanish of other nations and the speech traits of Hispanophones in the United States—both English-influenced traits and, purely by association, traits resulting from leveling—but to do so is to deprive this term a place among the languages of the United States.

The South has been the scene of many linguistic skirmishes, and has certainly received more than its fair share of slings and arrows designed to belittle speech patterns. Cultural and racial mixture has always produced the most vehement outcries of all, to wit attitudes surrounding Gullah, African American vernacular Englishes, Louisiana French and Louisiana Creole. Linguists—and the more enlightened lay persons among us—in general agree that the languages of the South have been enriched through contact and exchange, and that the only thing impoverished or decadent are the viewpoints that seek superiority over these speakers. I suggest that as most commonly used, "Spanglish" is no more than the latest addition to the list of epithets and slurs applied to the speech of the underclasses, and that the true nature of the Spanish-English interface must be sought from an additive rather than a subtractive viewpoint. As Spanish speakers in southern states grow in numbers and prominence, the nuanced English and Spanish that result from this cross-fertilization will further enrich the linguistic profile of our communities.

NOTES

1. The 2000 census reported 35.3 million Latinos (classified as "Hispanic") in the United States, of which 28.1 million or 79.6% reported using Spanish at home (with no indication of level of proficiency). Of the latter figure, 47.5% were born in the US and the rest were foreign-born. The official population estimate for the Latino population from mid-2006 indicates some 44.3 million Latinos out of a total US population of 299.4 million; this represents a 25.5% increase in the Latino population from 2000. The US population grew some 6.4% during the same interval, indicating that the reported Latino population is increasing at four times the rate of the overall US population. As of the date of writing this article, the estimated population of the United States is 303.5 million, or a 1.4% increase from 2006. Extrapolating a 5.6% increase in the Hispanic population from mid-2006 to February 2008 gives an estimated total Latino population of 48.6 million. If one assumes the same ratio of reported Spanish language usage as found in 2000, this produces a figure of 37.3 million Spanish speakers. The real numbers are probably considerably higher, due to the well-known underreporting of minority groups, and to the fact that only speakers age 5 and older were considered in the US census figures, as well as to the fact that the increase in the Latino population from outside the United States is larger than the increase in the native-born group.

2. The *American Heritage Dictionary* gives the very generic and neutral definition "Spanish characterized by numerous borrowings from English." On the other hand, the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *Spanglish* as "A type of Spanish contaminated by English words and forms of expression, spoken in Latin America."

3. Tió (1954), Granda (1972), and Pérez Sala (1973) are among the linguists who have taken a similar stance, as do the journalists Lloréns (1971) and Varo (1971). See Lipski (1975, 1976) for a different viewpoint.

4. All translations from works originally written in Spanish are my own.

5. See also Castro (1996), Valdés Bernal and Gregori (2001).

6. In one case (Avera 2001) Spanglish refers simply to an elementary textbook in conversational Spanish written in bilingual *en face* format. The author defines Spanglish as "the combination of the words Spanish and English. The two languages represent the form of communicating for millions of people in the Americas, Australia, England, Spain, and others." No mention of language mixing or interference is found in the textbook, although the use of available cognates is encouraged throughout. In a few cases (e.g. García Rojas and Molesworth 1996), the term *Spanglish* has referred to English as spoken as a second language and with interference from Spanish, a phenomenon that Nash (1971) has dubbed *englañol*.

7. One possible exception would be Spanish-English contact phenomena in Gibraltar, a speech community whose sociolinguistic profile closely mirrors that of many parts of the United States: English is the sole official and prestige language, while Spanish is the native and preferred language of a majority of the population. Code-switching, calquing, and borrowing in Gibraltar is strikingly convergent with data from the United States, and most of the following remarks can be extrapolated to include Gibraltar. (For a recent study of code-switching and related phenomena in Gibraltar, see Bonamy 2008.)

8. Bills (1989, 1997a, 1997b), Bills, Hernández-Chávez and Hudson (1995, 1999), Hernández-Chávez, Bills, and Hudson (1996), Hudson, Hernández-Chávez and Bills (1992, 1995).

9. Poplack (1980) first proposed the "Equivalence Constraint," requiring that linear order of sentence constituents immediately on either side of the switch be grammatical with respect to both languages; this constraint continues as an operative principle in code-switching research. At about the same time (while Poplack's article was circulating as a working paper of the Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños), Lipski (1977) independently proposed a somewhat similar constraint, namely that whereas the portion of a code-switched utterance that falls before the switch may contain elements that diverge syntactically from the other language, portions following the switch must be syntactically equivalent in both languages.

10. The literature on the syntactic constraints which govern code-switching is vast and still growing. Among studies relating specifically to Spanish are Dussias (2003), Lipski (1982, 1985b), MacSwan (1999), Poplack (1980), Pousada and Poplack (1982), Sankoff and Poplack (1981), Sobin (1984), Timm (1975), Toribio (2001a, 2001b). Muysken (2000) reviews many of the relevant theoretical models.

11. Dorian (1977, 1981), Lipski (1985a, 1993, 1996b), C. Solé (1979, 1982), Y. Solé (1975), Attinasi (1978, 1979), Peñalosa (1980), Sánchez (1983).

12. Her original term was "mock Spanish."

13. In the episode "Little Green Men," first aired on September 16, 1994 (second season).

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NEW PERSPECTIVES ON LANGUAGE VARIETY IN THE SOUTH

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