

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

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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](https://blogs.uoregon.edu)

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



Source: [roblox.com](https://www.roblox.com)

## Previous studies cont.

- 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



Source: [pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com)

## Previous studies cont.

- 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



Source: [roblox.com](http://roblox.com)



## 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](http://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](http://hispanicprblog.com)

## Institutional Profile

- University in the central coast region of California
  - 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

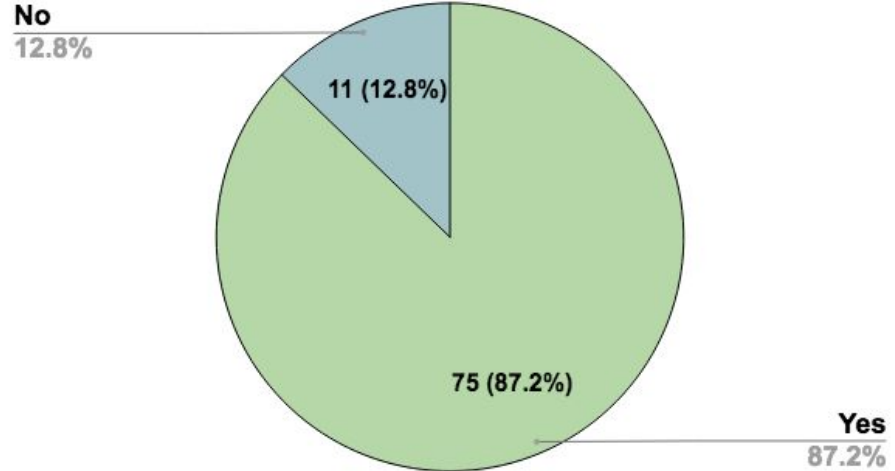
- Quantitative and qualitative
- Quantitative: calculated percentages for questions 12, 13
  - Question 12: Do you identify with this way of speaking? [the combination of Spanish and English]
  - Question 13: Do you use the mixture of these languages? [English and Spanish]
- Qualitative:
  - top-down 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





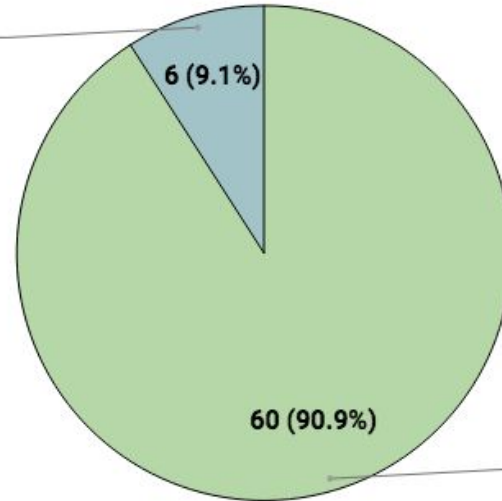
## Quantitative Results cont.

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%



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 with the purpose of explaining a concept or idea**

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

## Acknowledgments

- Special thanks to Dra. Pozzi who guide us through the research process
- Thanks to all the teacher from the Spanish department who contribute to our education during this years at CSUMB
- Thanks to our families who supported us in this journey

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