Language and Identity of Latinos in South Bend

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Importance of Language

Language is much more than just meaningful sound produced by the vocal organs. The term itself refers to a range of communicative behavior, the quintessential form of which is spoken language (Blum 2008:1). Language involves words, their pronunciation, and the methods of combining them into a systematic means used and understood by a community; it is "a code in the sense of a cipher enabling equivalences to be established between sounds and meanings, but also in the sense of a system of norms regulating linguistic practices" (Bourdieu 1982:45). Language is used for virtually every aspect of our lives; without it, this bulletin would be meaningless.

For this reason, language is intrinsically linked to a person's identity. The language we speak shapes our world view, our perceptions, and greatly influences the basic concepts we use to form our thoughts. In fact, as a human being it is natural to seek one's "identity in part through the language, culture, and heritage from which one springs" (Antal 2008:145). Language, then, is an essential component of life within a community which is predicated upon "the ability to convey a concept from mind to mind virtually instantaneously" (Pinker 2008:26).

Multilinguals "habitually draw on the expressive resources offered by all the languages available to them" to express themselves in different ways (Antal 2008:143). Language skills even have a profound effect on an individual, through "what we think of those languages, how highly we regard them, how we deal with the child learning them and, as a consequence, the self-image the child develops in the process of acquiring two languages" (Antal 2008:146).

The current trend in language study is not to analyze its structure, but the meanings and functions that emerge from language in use and in interaction (Blum 2008:1). Research indicates that not only does language use reflect economic status, social prestige and power relations, but it also

Courtesy of Emilie Prot, Stephanie Brauer, Elizabeth Ferrufino, Jennifer Towey

plays a part in shaping them. These "mechanisms presuppose the political or economic unification which they help in turn to reinforce" (Bourdieu 1982:50). Moreover, "the relations of communication *par excellence* – linguistic exchanges – are also relations of symbolic power in which the power relations between speakers and their respective groups are actualized" (Bourdieu 1982:37). Language behavior, then, shapes and is indicative of positions of power, political thought, and religious practices. Therefore, language appears to be "rooted beyond almost anything else in contemporary societies" (Anderson 1983:145).

It is particularly important to examine the phenomenon of language behavior and bilingualism in South Bend, because Latinos represent the biggest, fastest-growing minority in the area. As bilingualism is one of the primary modes of expression among Latinos, it is a phenomenon whose prevalence will continue to increase. Thus, the more we know about it, the better equipped we will be to address the changes that accompany its spread. We can fear it as a sign of doom, or be grateful for the vitality it brings to the South Bend community and work towards a greater understanding of it. Then, we can use our knowledge to establish greater communication among members of the community as a whole.

The importance of investigating language behavior and bilingualism emerged during our time spent with the youth at Saint Adalbert's Catholic Church. We act as mentors for the youth group members of St. Adalbert through MEChA and a catechist in the Confirmation program. Over the years our weekly interactions with the students have highlighted the fundamental significance of understanding the people that we were working with. Through involvement in the Latino community in South Bend, it is evident that the unique language utilized by individuals, and the community at large, namely Spanglish, is one of their most salient features. In any sort of social interaction in a bilingual community, it is imperative to be conscious of not only the mechanics of linguistic insertions in the different languages, but also the history of and attitudes towards bilingualism. For this reason an examination of social, cultural, and political factors of bilingualism is advantageous for members of the South Bend community.

History of Language in the US and its Political Implications: The Founding of a Nation

Language has been a central component of the definition of American identity from the time the nation came into existence. Therefore, in order to properly understand the current sense of nationality, or nation-ness, which describes "cultural artifacts of some kind," we must carefully consider, "how they have come into historical being, in what ways their meaning has changed over time, and why, today, they command such profound emotional legitimacy" (Anderson 1983:4). This is particularly important, as the US developed a conception of its nation-ness very early, well before most of Europe (Anderson 1983:50).

Since the U.S. was "formed and led by people who shared a common language and common descent with those against whom they fought" from the declaration of its independence, the United States stressed the importance of the English language in distinguishing itself from Britain (Anderson 1983:47). The concern of language was part of a larger discussion of American and British culture, in which "language played an important role in defining an American identity that could be linked to the best of English values and culture yet remain separate from perceived English vices" (Battistella 2008:127). Without an example, the creation of the US nation-state would be incomprehensible. The European language-of-state that the US employed was "the legacy of imperialist official nationalism. That is why in the 'nation-building' policies of the new states one sees both a genuine, popular nationalist

enthusiasm and a systematic, even Machiavellian, instilling of nationalist ideology through the mass media, the educational system, administrative regulations, and so forth," including language use (Anderson 1983:114).

At its conception, the American nation was one composed of Native Americans, European immigrants, and African slaves. With such diversity within the nation and with the French and Spanish presence nearby, the creation of a common culture was a major priority. According to Benedict Anderson (1983:6), a nation is "an imagined political community," because its citizens do not meet all the fellow members of their community, yet the idea of their communion lives in the mind of each member. Therefore, it makes sense that an American language separate from that of the British "was seen as a means of representing and maintaining international status and of accommodating new knowledge and situations" (Battistella 2008:127). With the geographical and religious situation, inhabitants of the U.S., "were much more favorably situated for realizing the idea of 'America' and indeed eventually succeeded in appropriating the everyday title of 'Americans'" (Anderson 1983:63). Though founders of the nation "were sympathetic toward the learning of other languages, broader public attitudes toward foreign and minority languages have often been indifferent or hostile" (Battistella 2008:127). This is evidenced by the fact that Native Americans were "civilized" and

forced to speak English. In fact, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in the United States, it "is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship" (Anderson 1983:7). For this reason many, including Franklin D. Roosevelt, extolled language as both a symbol of national unity and a means of creating that unity while forming and maintaining that comradeship. "Ultimately it is this fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people" to persecute others "for such limited imaginings" because they do not ascribe to the perception of what it means to be American (Anderson 1983:7). Therefore, since acquiring the English language is seen as an essential component of "swift assimilation of immigrants to American language, customs, and values," maintaining a foreign language could be interpreted as an obstacle to the adoption of American speech and values (Battistella 2008:126). The act of retaining other languages has "often been seen as unpatriotic, uneducated, or separatist" (Battistella 2008:126). Anderson argues that this relates to the imagined community, since "there is a kind of contemporaneous community which language alone suggests" (Anderson1983:145). Indeed, the notion of unity in this national community is so strong that there is a "near-pathological character of nationalism, its roots in fear and hatred of the Other, and its affinities with racism" (Anderson 1983:141).

Thus, "Through a complex historical process, sometimes involving extensive conflict, a particular language or set of linguistic practices has emerged as the dominant and legitimate language, and other languages or dialects have been eliminated or subordinated to it" (Thompson 1991:5). In this case English is thought of as the "dominant and legitimate language; this victorious language, is what linguists commonly take for granted. Their idealized language or speech community is an object which has been pre-constructed by a set of social-historical conditions endowing it with the status of the sole legitimate or 'official' language of a particular community" (Thompson 1991:5).

Houston Chronicle / Johnny Hanson

Anti-Immigrant Attitudes towards Language

The great influx of immigration from 1880 to 1919 caused political concerns about assimilation to reach an extreme. Some proposed literacy tests and deportation of immigrants who failed to learn English, while other initiatives focused on "Americanization". The role of the educational system, which "contributes significantly to constituting the dominated uses of language as such by consecrating the dominant use as the only legitimate one, by the mere fact of inculcating it" , can be seen in the fact that foreign language instruction was restricted in public schools (Bourdieu 1982:60). During the famous case of *Meyer v. Nebraska*, concerning the teaching of German in the after-math of World War I in 1919, the Nebraska Court wrote:

"To allow the children of foreigners, who had emigrated here, to be taught from early childhood the language of the country of their parents was to… educate them so that they must always think in that language, and as a consequence, naturally inculcate in them the ideas and sentiments foreign to the best interests of this country."

The case was appealed and the restriction on languages declared unconstitutional, yet it was decided that all citizens needed to be literate in English. *Meyer v. Nebraska* illustrates how policy makers at the beginning of the twentieth century saw foreign languages "as promoting a heterogeneity at odds with good citizenship" (Battistella 2008:130). These legislative pronouncements are part of the "political process of unification whereby a determinate set of 'speaking subjects' is led in practice to accept the official language" (Bourdieu 1982:44).

The belief that a common language resolves social differences and builds understanding among diverse individuals, and thus is necessary for national unity and economic productivity, motivates the ideology of language assimilation. Similarly, a common language is a precondition for economic production and for symbolic domination. Therefore, the fear that language diversity will lead to political disunity and violence is another motivating factor for English-only promoters. The periods of American history in which foreign and minority languages have been stigmatized and suppressed feed into this movement as well. Thus, assimilation has been the focus of legislative processes which foster, not only English dominance, but monolingualism. In fact, to return to the concept of an imagined community, "the completely homogeneous language or speech community does not exist in reality; it is an idealization of a particular set of linguistic practices which have emerged historically and have certain social conditions of existence," what Pierre Bourdieu refers to as "the illusion of linguistic communism" (Thompson 1991:5). By ascribing to this ideal and its set linguistic practices as the correct model, the member of a linguistic community "produces the illusion of a common language and ignores the social-historical conditions which have established a particular set of linguistic practices as dominant and legitimate" (Thompson 1991:5). This policy of linguistic unification obviously favors a specific group of people, while others, namely speakers of the minority language, "become part of a political and linguistic unit in which their traditional competence was subordinate and devalued" (Thompson 1991:6).

Because this conception is artificial, its imposition and preservation is dependent upon "a permanent effort of correction, a task which falls both to institutions specially designed for this purpose and to individual speakers" (Bourdieu 1982:60). As such, individual speakers play an active role in their decision of which language to speak, for "[t]o speak *the* language, without further specification, as linguists do, is tacitly to accept the *official* definition of the *official* language of a political unit" (Bourdieu 1982:45). In so doing, a speaker is subject to the fact that "[a]ll symbolic domination presupposes, on the part of those who submit to it, a form of complicity which is neither passive submission of external constraint nor a free adherence to values" (Bourdieu 1982:51). The "symbolic domination" of the ever expanding and authority-laden role of English is a "statement about the economic, social, and political forces propelling children towards English" (Zentella 2008: 160).

US VS. THEM

Social Factors

Not only does language use reflect economic status, social prestige and power relations but it also plays a part in shaping them. Pervasive in the "jurisdiction of a certain political authority, [language] helps in turn to reinforce the authority which is the source of its dominance" (Bourdieu 1982:45). These "mechanisms presuppose the political or economic unification which they help in turn to reinforce" (Bourdieu 1982:50). Language, then, appears to be "rooted beyond almost anything else in contemporary societies" (Anderson 1983:145).

Multilingualism can be used to provide further tools to structure discourse beyond those available to monolinguals (Gardner-Chloros 2009:43). Using both languages, as in code switching, can be used to manage and avoid conflicts when different languages are associated with different roles in a society; the purpose of code switching may be for politeness, humor, bonding, or dampening directness. For instance, a bilingual Spanish speaker's lack of code switching in the presence Anglos may be due to perceived norms of courtesy (Lipski 1985:10). Language can also be used to give different voices to issues; it can symbolize varying degrees of speaker involvement or distancing from a situation, as with the common use of the passive voice in Spanish. One example is "it was lost

to me" (*Se me perdió*), rather than admitting responsibility, by declaring "I lost it," (*Yo lo perdí*). The preference of a particular language in a situation depends on the speaker's self-perception, perception of others, competence in that language, attitude and ideology, social networks and relationships with his or her audience.

It has been suggested that the minority language is often regarded as a "we-code" and is thus associated with the in-group and informal activities, whereas the majority language serves as the "they-code," and is associated with more formal, outgroup relations (Gardner-Chloros 2009: 56). In other words, the more formal the situation, "the more practically congruent with the norms of the legitimate language, the more it is dominated by the dominant, i.e. by the holders of the legitimate competence, authorized to speak with authority" (Bourdieu 1982:69). This phenomenon serves as proof that the "official language is bound up with the state, both in its genesis and in its social uses... Obligatory on official occasions and in official places, this state language becomes the theoretical norm against which all linguistic practices are objectively measured" (Bourdieu 1982:45). Practically speaking, English, the dominant language in the U.S., "is the one to be used on formal occasions, the legitimate (i.e. formal)

language, the authorized, authoritative language, speech that is accredited, worthy of being believed, or in a word, *performative*, claiming (with the greatest chances of success) to be effective (Bourdieu 1982:70). This juxtaposition between the dominant and minority language is particularly evident in the workplace, especially one in which Anglos are in charge. In these situations, "Spanish-speaking employees often use Spanish as a tool of solidarity and resistance" (Blum 2008:286). They can thus speak openly, and so, "Latino workers use Spanish to develop an alternative linguistic market in which individual agency may be asserted in different ways" (Blum 2008:286).

Nevertheless, both sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic studies "suggest bilinguals' ability-or desire- to separate their languages depends on many factors, including their education, the norms of the community where they live and the type of conversation (Gardner-Chloros 2009: 145). While one may wish to disregard what language use seems to indicate, "one must not forget that the relations of communication *par excellence* – linguistic exchanges – are also relations of symbolic power in which the power relations between speakers and their respective groups are actualized" (Bourdieu 1982:37).

Societal and Individual Multilingualism

Human beings are social by nature, thus the way we speak is one way through which we signal our social identities. Therefore, language is a tool used by group members for all social interactions. The question of group membership is a complicated one for many Latinos in South Bend, who are not solely members of any one language community.

When an individual experiences increased proficiency in a language, it may modify membership in the original group as well as the other linguistic-cultural group, which becomes more than a reference group for the speaker, and may, in fact, become a second membership group.

Transnationalism

The issue of the mutability of group membership in relation to language shift is especially true of transnational persons, who tend to straddle two linguistic-cultural groups. As part of this question of belonging, language and acceptance into a language community is closely associated with an individual's identity and identity shift. Transnational individuals (like many Latinos in South Bend) who live in the United States but maintain close ties with family members in Mexico face a unique situation. Because a person is bilingual, family members in the sending community often expect that their immigrant relatives speak their same language. However, while the bilingual individual speaks the language, because he or she has been living abroad, he or she may not know many of the things which people who speak that language regularly know. The problems the bilingual speaker has when trying to understand what people mean may have nothing to do with the language as such, "but with the way of life which is unfamiliar to him. Precisely because he speaks the language so well, people take it for granted that he knows things that he does not know but which they would expect to have to explain to a foreigner" (Antal 2008:146).

Assimilation

Here in South Bend, however, bilinguals can switch from one language to another in a way that corresponds with different settings and people. The language being used may be indicative of an individual's cultural identity and the need to establish themselves as part of a specific [ethnic] group. Thus, the choice of language is frequently a sign of in-group identity, ethnicity, and solidarity. Therefore, it can be used to include or exclude an individual. Because language use reflects identification with a particular group, and "there is a kind of contemporaneous community which language alone suggests," in no other instance is this more apparent than in the form of poetry and holidays" (Anderson 1983:145). There is a unifying force, if only symbolic of the fact that, "[n]o matter how banal the words and mediocre the tunes, there is in this singing an experience of simultaneity. At precisely such moments, people wholly unknown to each other utter the same verses to the same melody" (Anderson 1983:145).

It has been postulated that choosing more than one language, or switching between languages, known as code switching, "can be a feature of stable bilingualism for an extended period, and then following social changes, it may persist and become implicated in language shift" and thereby serve as an intermediate developmental or transitional stage for an individual or a speech community(Gardner-Chloros 2009:25). Similarly, English replaces Spanish in an increasingly large number of domains. Since for many Latinos in the United States the switch from Spanish to English predominates, it could be indicative of English becoming the stronger language. In this case the directionality of the switching may indicate, not the unavailability of a word, but the facility of the retrieval of the word in the stronger language. Code switching "arises in a variety of different contexts, as a symptom of developments, from accommodation to divergence and from language maintenance to language shift. It reflects social differences and tendencies within the same society and language combination, just as it reflects those between different societies and different language combinations" (Gardner-Chloros 2009:21). Even, within a single community, language use can signal generational differences and changing trends among the community, as indicated by the fact that, "[d]espite fears among some people that English usage is diminishing in the Latino community, census data and several studies indicate that by the second generation, nearly all Latinos are fluent in English and that by the third generation, few can even speak Spanish" (Aizenman:2009).

South Bend West Side

St. Adalbert Cathedral, courtesy of TheAmericano.com

Previous issues have established that the concentration of the Mexican immigrant population in South Bend is on the West Side. Because of this con-

centration, it is proper that the research target that area of the city.

In order to research language and its use in the South Bend West Side Mexican immigrant community, we relied on two forms of investigation. The first of these is a form of short term ethnography. It was mentioned in the introduction that our service work with South Bend youth both inspired our research topic and provided useful information in the way both Spanish and English are incorporated in different settings. One of these groups was the St. Adalbert youth group, which meets with Notre Dame MEChA students once a week for mentoring and tutoring. The second group is the Confirmation class that meets on Sundays at St. Adalbert. We will be drawing

some examples from our time spent with the kids of the South Bend West Side.

The second form of investigation is a full-page questionnaire that was administered to the youth that we worked with, namely the St. Adalbert youth group and confirmation classes, and a group of ESL students at St. Adalbert. A total of 84 valid questionnaires were collected.

The questionnaire allows us to make generalizations about the attitude and behaviors of the Mexican immigrant community in South Bend, while our experiences in our service work will give us specific examples to complement the questionnaire results. Below are some of the demographics of the respondents.

	US Born	Foreign Born
All	**54%**	**46%**
19+ yrs old	**0%**	**100%**
15-18 yrs old	**58%**	**42%**
14– yrs old	**65%**	**35%**

Males	**39**
Females	**37**
Average age	**16.4**

*Some percentages and counts may not add up to 100%, or 84, This is due to answers being omitted by the respondents.

The Language Itself

Despite varying results in data about code switching, it is not simply an insertion of random phrases or words from one language or other. Rather, bilinguals who utilize code switching have mastered a subtle and fluid set of patterns and rules for insertions as well as for "gauging the linguistic capacities and identities of the people with whom they converse" (Blum 2008:150). Not only do impersonal rules govern which language should be employed at any given moment, but so do the speaker's individual preferences.

Many factors, including gender, level of involvement in the outside English-speaking world, type of employment, and age, are involved in people's mastery and use of various codes (Blum 2008:150).

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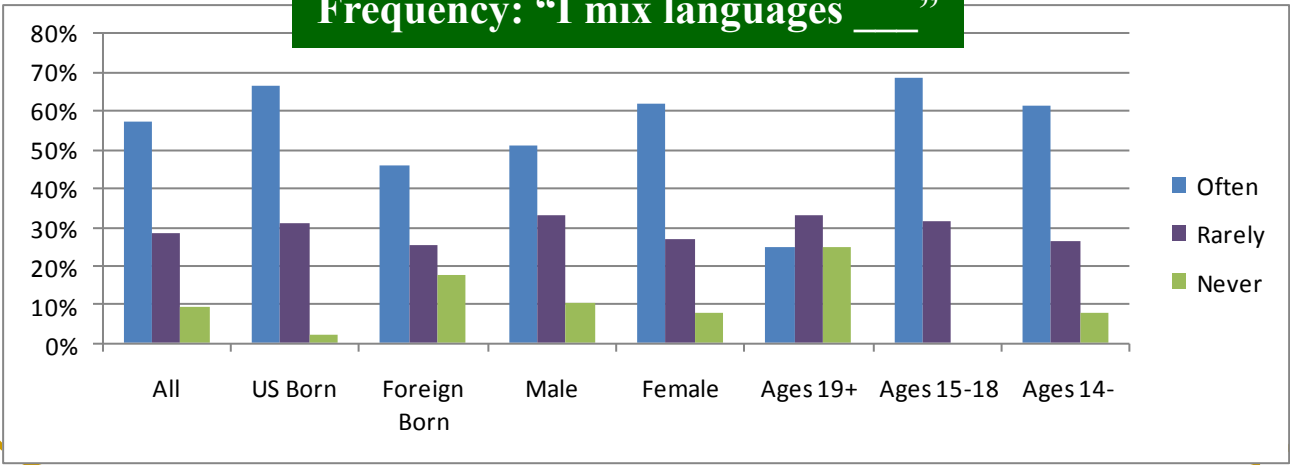**From comedian Bill Santiago's book** *Pardon My Spanglish, iPorque Because!*

Mechanics of the Language

According to Steven Pinker, "each person's brain contains a lexicon of words and the concepts they stand for (a mental dictionary) and a set of rules that combine words to convey relationships among concepts (a mental grammar)" (2008:26). It is phrase structure that language is made of. In the case of bilingualism, a speaker's lexicon is greatly expanded, but rules for their structure and combination, known as code switching, remain nonetheless. The term code switching refers to the movement from one language ("code") to another, or a "deviation from the norms of either language which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language" (Antal 2008:143). The results of the questionnaires show that in all categories, South Bend Mexican-origin individuals tend to code switch "often" (except for older respondents), connecting the relevance of the literature research to the South Bend Mexican population.

This shift can occur in different situations or at sentence boundaries, referred to as "intersentential code switches," or even within the same sentence, often with no interruptions, hesitations or other indications of a major categorical shift, "intrasentential code switches" (Blum 2008:150). Just as English-only grammar is autonomous of cognition, bilinguals are often unaware of the rules for code switching (Pinker 2008:27). Indeed, at play, leisure, work, and school, multilinguals unconsciously and habitually draw on the expressive resources offered by all the languages available to them (Antal 2008:143).

Frequency: "I mix languages ___"

Category	Often	Rarely	Never
All	57%	29%	9%
US Born	67%	31%	2%
Foreign Born	46%	26%	18%
Male	51%	33%	10%
Female	62%	27%	8%
Ages 19+	25%	33%	25%
Ages 15-18	69%	32%	8%
Ages 14-	61%	26%	8%

In the Context of the Family

In the case of bilingualism as a result of migration, children are often more learned in the language of the receiving society, English, than their elders. Though parents address each other and their children predominantly in Spanish, children tend to respond in either Spanish or English, and they frequently speak English among themselves. However, this characterization necessarily obscures many differences among and within families. There may be "almost as many language patterns as families because of the unique configurations of several variables, including the number of caregivers and children, and differences in language proficiency, education, bilingual literacy skills, years in the US, gender and age of each speaker" (Zentella 2008:152). The different language backgrounds of the people encountered in different situations requires constant code switching in accordance with the addressee's dominant language (Zentella 2008: 153). Over time many children's code switching increases along with their awareness of dominant cultural norms, and distancing from those of the home culture (Zentella 2008:154). Moreover, constant interaction with code switching children can come to influence the parents' language behavior (Zentella 2008:156).

	"My Spanish is ___"		
	14- yrs	16-18 yrs	19+ yrs
Very good	33%	42%	58%
Good	61%	47%	42%
Bad	6%	5%	0%
Very bad	0%	5%	0%

In our questionnaire we asked respondents a series of questions in order to give us insight into how Mexican immigrants perceive their language proficiency and how they use the languages at their disposal in a given situation.

Within the context of the family, age and who one is talking to have an impact on that person's language proficiency and how they use the available languages. The first table shows a decline in the proficiency of Spanish as the age of the respondent decreases. Before we make that correlation, it is important to note that all the older respondents were born outside of the United States, while 60% of the respondents under the age of 18 were born in the U.S.

	With my children I speak English (19+ yrs old)	With my parents I speak English (15-18 yrs old)	With my parents I speak English (14- yrs old)	With my siblings I speak Spanish (15-18 yrs old)	With my siblings I speak Spanish (14- yrs old)
Always	25%	5%	16%	32%	24%
About 75% of the time	0%	21%	14%	21%	14%
Half the time	8%	21%	20%	32%	27%
About 25% of the time	8%	42%	14%	16%	14%
Never	50%	11%	33%	0%	12%

The language used by those interviewed when speaking to others in the family varies by age. Half of the parents replied that they never speak English with their children. On the other hand, the use of English by children when speaking to their parents seems to be more common. The use of English increases even more when children talk with their siblings. This follows the general trend that was mentioned above.

Language and Identity

The language that an individual can speak or chooses to speak is essential to the study of identity. As was mentioned in the Assimilation section of this issue (page 5) the choice of language is frequently a sign of in-group identity, ethnicity and solidarity. Therefore, it can be used to include or exclude an individual. For Mexican immigrants living in the United States, proficiency in Spanish is the way other Mexicans stratify people of Mexican origin. For example, it has been mentioned by some of the youth group members of St. Adalbert that Mexicans who do not know how to speak Spanish, or don't speak it well, are more "white" than Mexicans who do speak Spanish well.

The responses to the question, "Mexicans who don't speak Spanish are less Mexican" will help us gauge the beliefs of the respondents between language and identity. Overall, a quarter of the respondents agreed with the statement . This will be used as the "norm" to which other results will be compared.

The first group to be compared to the "norm" is place of origin. Approximately 6 percent more of those that are foreign-born agree with the above statement. There may be several reasons why this difference exists. One of these may be that US-born people of Mexican descent tend to rate their proficiency in Spanish lower than the foreign-born. They may not want to be as judgmental when it comes to Spanish proficiency if they themselves don't think their Spanish is good.

The group that most agrees with the statement is the male group. Interestingly, females have a lower acceptance of the statement than males , yet they rank their proficiency in Spanish higher than males and in reference to the "norm".

Age seems to have a strong correlation to the acceptance of the statement. As respondent age increases, so does proficiency in Spanish. Also, the "False" response rate increases with age. Older respondents, especially those over 19 years of age, tend to use Spanish more frequently in every day situations. A more detailed investigation would be required to find out why younger respondents and males tend to view Spanish as a strong indicator of "Mexicaness", yet they tend to have lower self-reported proficiency in Spanish.

	"Mexicans who don't speak Spanish are less Mexican"							
	All	US-Born	Foreign-Born	Male	Female	Ages 19+	Ages 15-18	Ages 14-
True	25%	22%	28%	36%	14%	8%	16%	31%
False	75%	78%	72%	64%	86%	92%	84%	69%

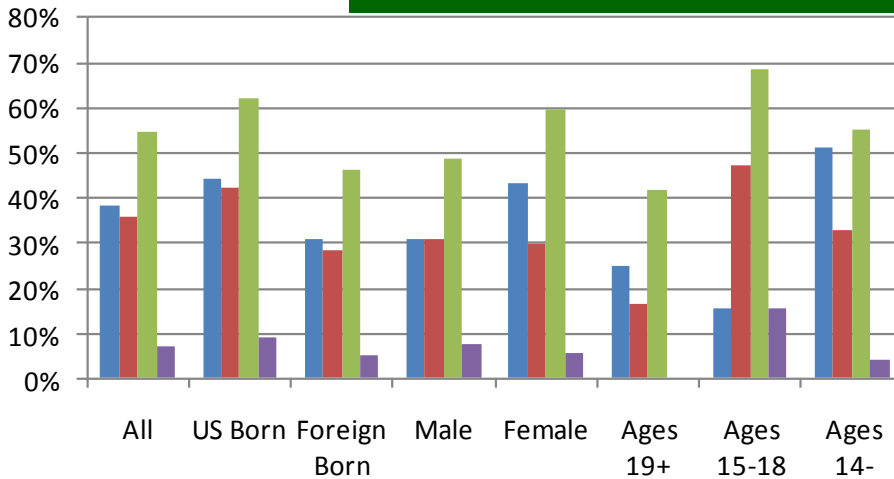|	"My Spanish is ___"							
	All	US-Born	Foreign-Born	Male	Female	Ages 19+	Ages 15-18	Ages 14-
Very good	38%	24%	54%	33%	41%	58%	42%	33%
Good	55%	69%	38%	56%	54%	42%	47%	61%
Bad	6%	4%	8%	8%	5%	0%	5%	6%
Very bad	1%	2%	0%	3%	0%	0%	5%	0%

Reasons for Code Switching

Code switching does not arise out of lack of common language, but rather as an outcome of a particular case of bilingualism, since it is not likely that any speaker who is part of a bilingual community can truly maintain the two languages separate, regardless of the fashion in which the two languages were originally learned (Gardner-

used to specify who is being addressed or to distinguish the degree of speaker involvement in, or distance from a message, (as with the earlier example, "Se me perdió") whether a statement reflects personal opinion or knowledge, whether it refers to specific in-

vide a signifier for a word or phrase which has no ready translation in one of the languages. There may also be significant differences in connotation between "equivalent" terms in the two languages (Lipski 1985:11). This resonates with the common reason given for switching when a word doesn't come as easily in one language. It is the most frequent reason given to explain why South Bend Mexicans code

Purpose: "I mix languages to ___"

Legend:
- To clarify
- To more accurately express myself
- Because I can't think of the word in Spanish/English
- Other

*Respondents were instructed to "check all that apply".

Chloros 2009:35, Lipski 1985:5). As such, bilinguals sometimes switch mid-utterance; this can be done "for emphasis or to convey a different feeling. Sometimes it is done because different languages are used for different functions. Hearers also make inferences about a speaker's use of their various languages" (Blum 2008:109). Conversational code switching is often used for quotations (an example from our field research is the use of Spanish when mentioning *dichos*, or common sayings), interjections or sentence fillers, message qualification, and reiteration (see graphs above and on the next page). Reiteration often amplifies or emphasizes a message. It can also be

stances or has the authority of generally known fact. Spanish is often used in ambiguous situations, since its grammar and usage more easily lends itself

Other responses-

- "because it's fun" female, 15

- "by accident" female, 14

- "no, nunca (no, never)" female 37

to the use of the passive voice (Lipski 1985:13).

Other investigators have "indicated that code switching may occur to fill in lexical gaps in a speaker's repertoire," that is to pro-

switch. Another suggestion, still, is that it is beneficial to go back and forth in order to make the most out of both languages such as in order to persuade someone of something (Lipski 1985:12). Furthermore, switching codes may shift the overall language of discourse into one temporarily or permanently more comfortable for one or more participants in a conversation. Insecurity as to the correct usage or pronunciation of a word in one language may also trigger a lexical switch.

Code switching can take on different forms within a community. The practice may "reflect an imbalance in the competence of different generations, but other instances embody different patterns of identification with the home country, the host country and the community itself" (Gardner-Chloros 2009:35). Since switching constitutes a departure from norms of either

language, it may function as an attention-getting device or to mitigate requests. Also, code switching may subtly insinuate factors or concessions, "in the United States Hispanic communities it is usually a shift from English to Spanish which conveys the insinuation, since Spanish is felt to be 'closer to the heart'" (Lipski 1985:13). If the topic is highly charged the selection of a particular language may be used to highlight ethnic solidarity. There are various factors involved in code switching, including, grammatical, linguistic and situational. Differences within a group depend on area, length of residence in the United States, socio-economic status and perhaps other factors (Lipski 1985:10).

During our emersion in the South Bend Mexican community, we came across examples of bilingualism and code switching, some that can have

major implications for U.S. society. On December 5th, 2009, John Adams High School hosted a DREAM Act summit for the Mexican community. The DREAM Act (See Issue XX of this Volume) is a piece of legislation that will open up the pathway to permanent residency, and ultimately citizenship, to undocumented minors so that they may enter into higher education. The summit was lead by a group of high school students primarily from John Adams. Their Power-Point presentation was in English, yet they spoke in Spanish when they presented to the group of interested high school students, teachers, parents, college students, and other important Mexican figures in South Bend. For the most part their presentation had no linguistic problems, except for a few occasions when the presenters were stalled while trying to think of a word in Spanish. They waited for a

few seconds, and they tended to switch to English until they got their point across. After that they returned to speaking Spanish. At a follow-up meeting I asked why they used an all English presentation while speaking in Spanish. Their official response was that they did not take the time to translate the entire thing (they had used this same presentation in Indianapolis a few months before). Though we can attribute their lack of translating the English Power Point to laziness or maybe procrastination, it is interesting that the barriers usually associated with language difference were not enough to force them to translate the presentation. Consciously or subconsciously, it is very likely that the students understand that bilingualism and code switching is an integral part of the Mexican immigrant experience.

One Grammar or Two?

At first glance, it may seem that with bilingualism neither language preserves its character. However, it appears that many if not all bilingual speakers form their sentences first at some abstract semantic level. This abstract formation may occur before the speaker knows what language the sentence will come out in. In some cases the speaker's sentence may be originally formulated in one language yet be produced in another (Lispki 1985:7). Lipski suggests that if "bilingual language switching follows principled guidelines, then the bilingual speaker must be able, consciously or unconsciously, to keep the languages apart." In other words, there is a language tagging mechanism.

Because English is relatively uninflected as far as nouns, adjectives and verbs, switching from Spanish to English can occur without transferring or introducing a complicated grammatical concordance (Lipski 1985:19). The

most common instance of simple insertions is borrowing, namely a single word switch. This single word switch is suggested by the high frequency of code switching among the subjects of our research due to not knowing a word in either English or Spanish.

Nouns, for instance, are freer of syntactic restrictions than other parts of speech and are available to even those with minimal competence in two languages (Gardner-Chloros 2009:30). Noun insertion indicates lexical unavailability; it is merely a mechanical switch instead of a fluent intrasentential shift which transfers the linguistic focus from one language to the other. For this reason, borrowing is a common occurrence. Nevertheless, there are switches that require greater competence in both languages. An anticipatory intrasentential shift, such as my red carreta, as opposed to my carreta red, is an example of this. It has also been noted that is easier to understand shifts that

occur at definable syntactic boundaries. For instance, "[t]he number of people who have taken up parachuting as a sport está definitvamente aumentando," rather than "The number of people who have taken up el deporte del paracaídas está definitavemente aumentando" (Lipski 1985:20). Indeed, this can be taken as striking evidence which may be adduced in favor of the hypothesis that there is a greater overarching mechanism that governs both languages, and the complete integration of their distinct grammars. This resonates most with bilingual speakers who are sufficiently proficient in both languages and engage in spontaneous switching. It may become more useful to speak in terms of a single bilingual grammar. "Precisely the recognition of an internal structure for bilingual language shifting militates in favor of such a systematic integration, since without a structured basis for language shifting one is free to simply postulate random interference resulting from imperfectly learned systems" (Lipski 1985:2).

Attitudes Toward Code Switching

Utterances containing vocabulary of syntax from another language have been called interference, while others see it as convergence. It can be perceived of as "ungrammaticality," which is no more than "a consequence of our having a fixed code for interpreting sentences" (Pinker 2008:27). There are various attitudes towards code switching which differ even among members of a bilingual community. A father who was part of a family study of language use did not correct his daughter when she alternated Spanish and English constantly, although she reported that her father disapproved of code switching and insisted that she speak one language of the other. In his own speech, the father

of Spanglish is that its use is "acceptable". The differences between the groups are minor, but could be a indicator of a deeper attitude towards code switching. The table on page 9 shows the responses to the statement that "Mexicans who don't speak Spanish are less Mexican". On this table the 19+ age group had the highest "False" response frequency of all the groups (92 percent compared to the "norm" of 75 percent). This would generally indicate that older respondents don't see proficiency in Spanish as an indicator of belonging to the Mexican ethnicity. While this same age group had an overall positive attitude towards Spanglish, they had one of the lowest

these groups have these attitudes towards Spanish and Spanglish.

One old view from those outside the code switching community perceived bilinguals as suffering "cognitive deficiency as a result of their bilingualism" (Blum 2008:150). More recent data, on the other hand, suggests that navigating this complex world calls for very detailed social and linguistic knowledge. In fact, scholars accounting for the switches have observed many important things about this phenomenon, "including the fact that it follows precise grammatical rules and that it gives evidence of the speaker's attitude toward what is said" (Blum 2008:150).

Rather than mental confusion, this complex interaction between

Attitude: "Spanglish is ___"
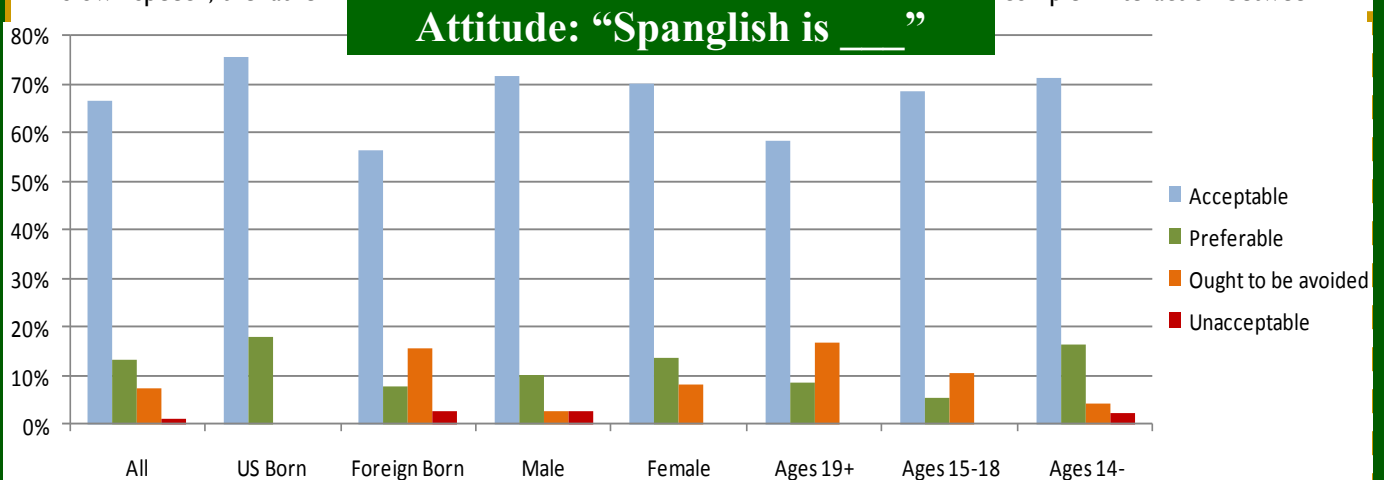
usually kept both codes strictly apart. Only a minimal number of intrasentential code switches by him were recorded throughout the study. They were all directed at his daughters and were switches to English for single words, "not the larger constituents or whole phrases that characterized the switching of the second generation" (Zentella 2008:156).

In our study of the Mexican community of South Bend the general view

acceptance percentages of all the groups. Also, the graph on page 7 shows that this group has the lowest incidence of language switching.

The reverse is true of the male group. Males had the highest "True" response rate for the "Mexicans who don't speak Spanish are less Mexican" statement, yet they have the second highest positive attitude towards Spanglish. Further studies would need to be administered to discover why

the two languages "is a far cry from the anarchical confusion postulated previously" (Lipski 1985:1). As seen in the section on the history of multingualism in the U.S. and its political implications, code switching and indeed, foreign languages in general have been seen as problems to be overcome rather than resources to be fostered. It can be taken as a sign of doom for the dominant language or as a sign of a more widespread vitality.

Conclusions

Though, multilingualism in the United States has had a complicated history, our research seems to be indicative of a shift in the direction of a more positive attitude towards the multilingualism.

The study of code switching has provided for a greater understanding of multilingualism and language mixing, not as a deficiency, but as a window into a greater mechanism of grammatical governance in multilingual thought processes.

Language is an essential factor in identity. For example, code switching is a typical facet of the lives of transmigrants. Similarly, language shift may be indicative of assimilation.

Social factors involved in multilingualism are not only indicative of the socio-political landscape, but rather, they also shape the socio-political situation.

The Mexican immigrant community in South Bend has a positive attitude towards code switching. The youth, in particular, are utilizing their multilingualism not just for the sake of ethnic solidarity, identity and entertainment. They also sue it but the betterment of their lives and others in their community. They are doing this all while they face increasing monolingualism pressures by the dominant society.

A Spanglish sign on the Westside of South Bend.

Questionnaire

My Spanish is/*Yo hablo español*: ☐Very good/*Muy bien* ☐Good/*Bien* ☐Bad/*Mal* ☐Very bad/*Muy mal*

Spanish is very important to me/*El español es muy importante para mi*: True/*Cierto* False/*Falso*

English is very important to me/*El ingles es muy importante para mi*. True/*Cierto* False/*Falso*

Mexicans who don't speak Spanish are less Mexican/
Mexicanos que no saben como hablar español son menos mexicanos: True/*Cierto* False/*Falso*

I prefer to speak English/*Yo prefiero hablar ingles*: True/*Cierto* False/*Falso*

Spanglish is/*Spanglish es*: ☐Acceptable/*Aceptable* ☐Preferable/*Preferible*
☐Ought to be avoided/*Se debe evitar* ☐Unacceptable/*Inaceptable*

I mix languages/*Yo mezclo idiomas*: ☐Rarely/*Rara vez* ☐Often/*Con frecuencia* ☐Never/*Nunca*

I mix languages (check all that apply)/*Yo mezclo idiomas (marque todos los que aplican)*:
☐To clarify/*Para aclarar* ☐To more accurately express myself/*Para poder expresarme mejor*
☐Because I can't think of the word in Spanish/English/*Porque no se me viene la palabra en ingles/español*
☐ Other/*Otro*: _____

The following questions refer to this answer set./ *Las preguntas que siguen usan estas respuestas.*
(1) Always/*Siempre* (2) About 75% of the time/*Como 75% del tiempo* (3) Half the time/*La mitad del tiempo*
(4) About 25% of the time/*Como 25% del tiempo* (5) Never/*Nunca*

When I text I use Spanish/*Cuando mando mensajes de texto, uso español*: 1 2 3 4 5

On the job I use Spanish/*En el trabajo uso español*: 1 2 3 4 5

With my parents I speak English/*Con mis padres hablo ingles*: 1 2 3 4 5

With my children I speak English/*Con mis hijos hablo ingles*: 1 2 3 4 5

At school I speak Spanish/*En la escuela uso español*: 1 2 3 4 5

With my siblings I speak Spanish/*Con mis hermanos hablo español*: 1 2 3 4 5

With my friends I speak English/*Con mis amigos hablo ingles*: 1 2 3 4 5

Education completed/*Educación completada*:
☐1-5 grade/*grado* ☐ 6-11 grade/*grado* ☐ 12 High school/*Secundaria*
☐ Some college/*Poco colegio* ☐ Graduated college/*Termine colegio*

Age/*Edad*:_____ **Sex:** Male/*Masculino* Female/*Femenino*

I was born in the U.S./*Yo nací en los EEUU*: Yes/*Si* No/*No*

I am a legal resident of the US/*Soy un residente legal de los EEUU*: Yes/*Si* No/*No*

I am a US citizen/*Soy un(a) ciudadano(a) de los EEUU*: Yes/*Si* No/*No*

I came to the US when I was/*Me vine a los estados unidos cuando tenia*: _____ years of age/*años de edad*

We would like to have interviews with some of our respondents. If you would like to participate in these interviews, please provide your name and phone number so that we may contact you. Thank you./ *Nos gustaría tener entrevistas con unos de nuestros encuestados. Si usted gustaría participar en estas entrevistas, por favor provenga su nombre y numero de teléfono para poder contactarlo(a). Gracias.*

_____ _____
Name/*Nombre* Phone number/*Numero de teléfono*

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