Università di Firenze     Dipartimento di Formazione, Lingue, Intercultura, Letterature e Psicologia  a.a. 2019-20 Corso di Laurea magistrale 37 in Lingue e Letterature moderne europee e americane

Laboratorio di Lingua e Traduzione inglese

“Characteristics and Varieties of North American English” John Gilbert

**Handout 6: Latino/Hispanic English in North America**

**Latino/Latin@/Latinx/Hispanic English**

* terms Latino & Hispanic usually used interchangeably, but incorrect
  + - also by the United States Census Bureau

- Latino includes Portuguese & French speakers in the Americas

- Hispanic indicates Spanish speakers or linguistic origins

- Latinos/Hispanics & Blacks are 2nd & 3rd largest ethnic minorities in the USA.

- Latinos have surpassed Afro-Ams as largest ethnic group after non-Hispanic whites

Latinos/Hispanics **18% pop**. in **2016 58 million** (more than Spain, 2nd only to Mexico)

- 53% identify as “white”

- many Central Americans identify as “*mestizos*”

- Mexican-Chicano 63.2% of Latino pop.: ca. 33 million (2016)

- Puerto Rican 9.5% (5.4m, also 3.3m in P.R.?), plus over a million Salvadoran 3.8%, Cuban 3.8%, Dominican 3.3%, Guatemalan 2.5%, Columbian

- States with most Latinos (55% of Latino pop.): California, Texas, Florida

- then N.Y., New Jersey, Illinois

- % Latino: New Mexico 47.8%; California 38.6%; Texas 38.6%; Arizona 30.5%

- South Americans tend to settle on East coast; Central Americans on West coast

- by 2060, the Census Bureau projects over 28% of population

- ca. 1/3 of USA was Spanish/Mexican longer than has been U.S.A. (since 1846-48)

- **undocumented immigrants** (“illegal aliens”) in USA (PEW Research Center, **2014**)

- 11.1 million (peak in 2007: 12.2 million)

- 3.5% of US pop.

- 52% Mexican

- ca. 66% adults living in USA at least 10 years

- number of undocumented immigrants in U.S. stabilized in recent years after decades of rapid growth

- countries of origin of unauthorized immigrants have shifted, with number from Mexico declining since 2009 & number from elsewhere rising

- more Mexicans leaving than arriving

- mass media: now ca. 300 Sp-language newspapers, about same number of radio stations & tv networks with public of millions in over 100 cities

* permanent Spanish presence in present-day USA since 1565 founding of St. Augustine (Fla.): oldest continuous European settlement in the U.S.A.

- Spanish took 1st African slaves to present-day South Carolina in 1526 (rebelled & forced Spanish to retreat to Hispaniola)

- settled in Southwest since end of 16th c (before settlement of East Coast)

- Mexico independent in 1821

- countries of origin quite diverse culturally, economically, ethnically

- significant variation in NAm Spanish as well as in Latino English

- diverse language communities

- but generally considered a homogenous unit by Anglo pop.: “the other”

- **Chicanos & Mexican Americans**

-ca. 63.2% of Latino pop.: ca. 33 million (2016)

- including recent immigrants & native-born Americans

- Chicanos: traditional home in the Southwest

- more than 1/3rd of Mexico stolen by USA in 1846-1848

- most numerous in California (urban population), Texas (esp. in Southwest: often rela- tively rural pop.)

- farmworkers

- Mexican Sp different from Chicano Sp

- Chicano English a vigorously evolving ethnic identity marker

- “borderlands/la frontera”

- have adopted some **Native Am influences**

- both in Mexico (e.g. Nahuatl, Maya) & in U.S. Southwest

- **Puerto Ricans**

- P.R., Cuba, Guam & the Philippines occupied by U.S. in Sp-Am War 1898

- U.S. citizens since 1917, U.S. Commonwealth (colony) since 1952

- traditionally went to NYC, living in closely integrated ethnic communities

- majority of mainland Puerto Ricans still live in NYC

- Spanish Harlem (East Harlem): *El Barrio*

- similar linguistically marked ethnic identity process as with Chicanos

- Nuyorican identity

- bicultural character of identity (New York & Rican)

- influence of Black culture & language also due to close living quarters

- both for marginalization from mainstream Anglo society & identification

- have adopted some AAVE influences

- unlike Chicanos

- Puerto Rico also has important Afro-Am component

- ex slave plantation system

* wave of Hispanic immigration unique because
  + relatively homogeneous

- unlike earlier ethnically-mixed waves of immigrants

- general tendency to settle in enclaves, relatively cohesive communities

- but settling also in Midwest, South

- 3 capitals: L.A. (Chicanos/Mexicans), N.Y. (Puerto Ricans), Miami (Cubans)

- maintenance of linguistic/cultural ties w/ Mexico & rest of Central & So Am, Caribbean

-unlike breaking of ties after other immigrant groups crossed ocean

- dynamic situation of on-going linguistic contact in multilingual environment

- among varieties of NAmE & varieties of Spanish

- differing language repertories available

- difference between **individual bilingualism** & **social bilingualism**

- **individual bilingualism**: should lead to loss of “minority” languages in successive generations

- typical process: predominance of L1 in 1st generation, bilingualism in 2nd generation, loss of original L1 in 3rd generation

- but **social bilingualism** could lead to more stable linguistic situation

- in bilingual situation, **linguistic specialization** (or **diglossia**: language community using 2 languages, the 1st the community’s vernacular, the 2nd another language) favors survival of both languages

- e.g. home, neighborhood, religion, work, education

- risk of Nam Spanish becoming oral language & not written?

* under Trump presidency hate speech & anti-immigrant rhetoric has created hostile environment for Latinos in America sometimes resulting in violence & death

- **Spanglish** (mixture/influence of Spanish & English)

- criticized by some purists as a corrupting influence on both English & Spanish

- a hybrid of Spanish and English languages (e.g. Tex-Mex)

- increasingly making its way into mainstream America

- a **continuum** <——> between L. Am. Spanish & N. Am. English

- Spanglish as both Latino-English & Anglo-Spanish

- **code mixing** or ***mezcla*** is central phenomenon

- in Sp-Eng. bilingualism L1 can be either Spanish or English

- importance of **code-switching** & **code-mixing**

- juxtaposition of languages & cultures

- idea of “*la frontera*/borderland”

- creative process

- claimed as symbol of Latino identities (Nyoricans, Chicanos, …)

- after ethnic awakenings of 1960s

- increasingly accepted socially

- also in literature

- difficult sometimes to distinguish between **language interference** & intentional linguistic manipulation &/or code-switching/mixing

- the latter not necessarily indication of imperfect bilingual competence or lack of linguistic control

- linguistic systems of bilingual individuals separate or connected?

- **code-switching**:

- going to direct or indirect discourse citation of someone

- use of a filler (e.g. exclamations, interjections, connectors):

- e.g. *Dios mio, Ay, …*

- for repetition/clarification of message

- to indicate a specific interlocutor (e.g. internal or external to linguistic community)

- tag-switching (end of sentence)

- inter-sentential switching (from 1 sentence to another)

- intra-sentential switching (within a sentence)

- many speakers retain English syntactical structure while mixing in many Spanish nouns

- infiltration of English vocabulary &, less commonly, even syntax into Spanish language

- most 2nd Generation Hispanics speak English fluently, w/ a native North Am. accent

- only difference is presence of some **loan words** (**borrowing**) & **calques**/ loan translations

- e.g. *bad grass (yerba mala)* for “weeds”

- often use Black English vernacular

- in Sp-Eng. most visible linguistic differences in **pronunciation**

- obvious signs of Spanish influence

- including distinctive **stress & intonation**

- **English** (like German) **stress-timed language**

- all lexical words in an utterance carry primary & secondary stress, all remaining syllables unstressed

- provides rhythm of English

- **Spanish** (like other Romance languages) **syllable-timed language**

- tend to have a more consistent, regular rhythm than English

- specific discourse markers

- tendency to devoice /z/

- insertion of vowel phoneme /e/ before consonant cluster /sp/

- realization of vowel phonemes:

- /i/ for /ɪ/ it = /i:t/

- /eɪ/ for /e/ head =/heid/

- /u:/ for /ʊ/ good = /gu:d/

- stress shift in compounds

- e.g. ‘miniskirt -> mini’skirt

- rising pitch to stress lexical items

- rising pitch in declarative sentences

- realization of /v/ (labial-dental fricative) as /b/ (bilabial stop) or as /β/ (bila- bial fricative) a sound similar to English *v*, but with the air going between the lips. It is used for the [Spanish](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/spanish_language) letters *b* and *v*

- realization of /θ/ as /t/ & /ð/ as /d/

- e.g. thanks -> tanks, these -> dese

- realization of /t∫/ as /∫/ as in check-> sheck

- simplification of final consonant clusters

- e.g. lengths, twelfth

- grammatical peculiarities like a **tag *no****,* specific preposition & modal uses, zero-subject pronouns

- lexis

*- desperado, macho, Hasta la vista, baby* (Arnold Schwarzenegger), *Qué pasa?*

- Spanish appears to be resisting the general tendency of assimilation traditionally for other immigrant languages in 19th & 20th centuries

- importance of Sp-language mass media, internet, etc.

- social v. individual bilingualism

- Latino Spanish

- English lexis adapted phonologically &/or morphologically to norms of Spanish:

- *boila* (pot, from *boil), brecas* (from *brakes), culear* (from *to cool), chopear* (from to shop), deliberar (from *to deliver), feca* (from *fake),* *jangear* (from *to hang out), lonchear (to eat,* from *lunch), marqueta* (from *market), printear* (from *to print), rufo* (from *roof)*