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Rio Grande Hispanic consumers' perceptions of Spanglish dialogue use in print and television advertising

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RIO GRANDE HISPANIC CONSUMERS' PERCEPTIONS
OF SPANGLISH DIALOGUE USE IN PRINT
AND TELEVISION ADVERTISING

A Thesis

by

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ABSTRACT

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Hispanics are now the largest minority in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006). Along with this population growth, greater affluence has occurred. Advertisers are taking notice of these facts and are scrambling to find the most effective way of marketing to Hispanics. Spanglish dialogue use in advertising is an increasingly popular method marketers use in attempts to advertise to Hispanics. The Texas/Mexico border provides a unique opportunity for the study of Spanglish in advertising. The population of the RGV identifies as overwhelmingly Hispanic, 89.1 percent according the U.S. Census Bureau (2006). The population of this region, then, represents the target audience of advertisements that utilize Spanglish dialogue. This study investigated the valence (positive, neutral or negative) Hispanics who live in the Rio Grande Valley hold toward advertisements that utilize Spanglish Dialogue. This study compared preference for Spanglish advertisements against English only advertisements. The study found that participants preferred English advertisements.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The study of Spanglish (the mixing of Spanish and English into a single sentence or word) is universally limited. The majority of scholarly journals which publish articles about Spanglish primarily do so in the field of education (Sayer, 2008). Advertising and marketing trade publications and online forums are beginning to discuss Spanglish more often. However, most of the articles come from Hispanic focused trade magazines (i.e. Hispanic Market Weekly). In other words, Spanglish use in advertising is not a major topic of discussion, for either the scientific or (non-Hispanic) professional communities. This lack of discussion is somewhat puzzling. The Hispanic population boom is a regular feature in the news media. Still, type the word, “Spanglish,” into Google and the number one result returned will be for the 2004 movie by the same name starring Adam Sandler and Tea Leoni (Google search for word, “Spanglish”, 2008). Clearly further investigation is necessary.

Lack of formal, written discussion is not stopping major corporations from producing Spanglish advertisements, though (Lafuente, 2008). In 2008 major companies such as Procter and Gamble, Pepsi Co, T-Mobile and many others developed Spanglish language ads as an answer to fragmentation of media consumption by American consumers. Many advertisers see Spanglish use in advertising as cutting edge, almost revolutionary.

With their rise in population and affluence, Hispanics have become a highly marketed to niche market. Advertisers understand that Hispanics who live in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas use language as a bonding mechanism (Clark, 2007). Furthermore, advertisers believe that Spanglish is the language most commonly used for bonding (Kilian, 2008). Therefore, to capture the attention of Hispanics living in the Rio Grande Valley, marketers have begun to create ads using Spanglish dialogue.

While advertisers believe that Spanglish dialogue advertisements will be preferred over English only ads by the Hispanic population of this area, little scholarly research on the topic is available. Within social science research, however, there are theories that explain why Spanglish use in an advertisement should be effective.

The following study examines the reaction (positive, neutral or negative) Hispanic consumers living in the Rio Grande Valley hold toward the use of Spanglish in advertising. After reading the available literature and considering the current advertising atmosphere, this study contends that Hispanic consumers in the Rio Grande Valley will prefer advertisements (for both television and print) that include Spanglish dialogue over English only advertisements. To support this hypothesis this study begins with a literature review starting with a brief history of advertising and then leads to the emergence of Spanish Language and Spanglish niche marketing. Next, social science theories of Speech Accommodation (SAT), Uncertainty Reduction, and Source Factors are introduced as the underpinnings for understanding why Spanglish should be a desirable feature in advertising to Hispanics. The Research methods used and hypothesis tested will then be discussed followed by conclusions and opportunities for future research.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Advertising as a Marketing Tool

Advertising is one method a company uses to communicate its identity to the outside world. An ad's purpose, according to Lee and Johnson (1999) is to "...promote goods, services, ideas, issues and people" (p. 3). This study will use Lee and Johnson's definition of advertising as, "... a paid, nonpersonal communication about an organization and its products that is transmitted to its target audience through a mass media" (Lee & Johnson, p. 3).

A main purpose of advertising communication is to increase the sales of a company's product. David Ogilvy, a very successful ad man, wrote several best selling books on the subject. One, "Ogilvy on Advertising," is used regularly as a textbook in American advertising courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Here, Ogilvy (1983) states, "When I write an advertisement I don't want you to tell me you find it creative. I want you to find it so interesting that you buy the product" (p. 7). Ogilvy's statement still holds true in today's marketing environment. Young and Aitken claim (2007), "...our creative ideas must deliver a payback – with interest – on the investment our client makes" (p. 1). Experts agree the purpose of creating ads is to sell products. Advertising, as a vehicle for the sale of product, dates back much further than

Ogilvy, in fact, the practice has a thousands year old history dating back to, at least the time of ancient Rome, during the time of Pompeii (Tungate, 2007).

Advertising: past, present and evolving future

Humans have been advertising goods and services since at least 3000 BC (Encarta Encyclopedia Online). Advertising in times before the printing press consisted of well-placed placards with eye catching emblem(s) carved into them (Sivulka, 1998). Tungate (2007) notes that eye-catching signs, which were (and still are) very convincing, advertising brothels have been found in ancient Pompeii.

The invention of the printing press spurred the first major evolution in advertising (Tungate, 2007). The invention of the printing press, in 1460, allowed advertising to move from placards in front of shops to announcements printed on handbills (Sivulka, 1998). These handbills allowed an advertised message to be seen by thousands of people who lived a great distance from the business itself. This was a revolution because before the handbill a shopkeeper was only able to advertise to the few people who happened to walk by his shop (Sivulka, 1998). Soon, the revolution in advertising created by the printing press would cross an ocean and weave itself into the fabric of a new world.

Quickly, after the Pilgrims crossed the Atlantic to the new world, in 1692, advertising became part of early American's lives (Sivulka, 1998). The only reason advertising didn't have an immediate foothold in the new world was that the Pilgrims were too busy trying to grow crops, endure brutal winters and survive illness to worry about creating ads for goods (Verklin & Kanner, 2007). As America grew, so did the country's advertising industry. In fact, the first U.S. newspaper, Public Occurrences Both Foreign and Domestick, printed in 1690 carried advertisements (Lee & Johnson, 1999).

During that era, the idea of a newspaper carrying paid advertisements was a radical concept. In the 1600s – 1700s popular opinion held that in order for a newspaper to remain unbiased, paid advertisements should be excluded (Sivulka, 1998). However, always the entrepreneurs pioneering Americans, such as Benjamin Franklin, blazed the marketing trail ensuring advertisements would always be included in mass-market media.

The inclusion of advertising had lowered the purchase price for the consumer. The lower prices allowed a larger portion of the public to buy newspapers, thus creating a truly mass media (Sivulka, 1998). Paid print advertising gained acceptance over time. Soon after the Civil War, approximately 1865, paid advertisements in newspapers and magazines were not only accepted but also expected (Lee & Johnson, 1999). The advertising was, by this time, a necessary addition to print media. As mentioned earlier, ads lowered the cost of the print media; this increased circulation and provided profits the owners needed in order to keep the presses rolling (Tungate, 2007). During the industrial revolution, newspapers became an influential mass medium (Tungate, 2007). The industrial revolution also marked the first time in history that most food and goods became cheaper to buy rather than grow or make (Sivulka, 1998, Tungate, 2007) So, companies had product to sell, the public had need to buy, and newspapers had space for advertising; print became the first platform for mass media advertising.

The craft of advertising developed as technology advanced. Both radio and television had ad revenue as each hit the airwaves (Lee & Johnson, 1999). By the mid 60's a mass-market media campaign required little thought. Television was a part of American life and advertising on the three big broadcasting stations (ABC, CBS and NBC) guaranteed millions of people seeing an ad. Verklein and Kanner (2007) give an

example of television's ability to reach mid- 60's households, "In 1965, Procter and Gamble launched Scope by buying four weeks of ads on the big three TV networks... Scope reached more than 90 percent of television households, not once, but 10 times over" (p. 4). Through the 60's and into the 70's running an ad campaign on television was an easy decision for increased brand recognition. However, as the saying goes, the times they were a changing.

Home Box Office, better known as HBO, began airing in 1972 (Lee & Johnson, 1999). On the heels of HBO, the cable TV industry quickly began to rise. As television channels increased, dedicated viewership decreased. Sivulka (1998) writes, "The technological explosion of the 1980's fragmented both the mass market and the mass media. Advertisers and agencies realized that consumers were becoming harder to reach with traditional mass media campaigns" (p. 404).

Cable TV was not the only diversion for an increasingly fragmented audience. By the mid -80's the internet was already in use on college campuses and in a select few homes. Subtly, the internet was already creeping into popular culture. Movies such as 1983's War Games, 1985's Weird Science and 1986's Pretty In Pink all feature the internet (or internet like uses of the computer). By the mid 90's the internet was a common feature in U.S. homes. The new technology was ungluing eyeballs from the television screen and fixating them on the computer screen.

The rise of the internet also took readership from newspapers and magazines (Verklin & Kanner, 2007). The speed of the internet allowed for quicker reporting of news. Not only was the internet providing information quicker than traditional print

media, content on the net was for the most part free. The internet provides information at a speed impossible for newspapers. Verklin and Kanner provide this example,

On January 4, 2006, we, along with millions of others, awoke to exultant news. MIRACLE IN MINE: TWELVE FOUND ALIVE 41 HOURS AFTER BLAST, beamed the Atlanta Journal Constitution...And there it was, on page one of The New York Time: 12 MINERS FOUND ALIVE 41 HOURS AFTER EXPLOSION.

We'd all gone to sleep the night before fearful about the fate of the trapped Sago, West Virginia, coal workers and awoke fearful about the fate of newspapers...For on the radio, TV, online –everywhere- was the real news that morning, that except for one lucky survivor, all the miners had perished. (2007, p. 45)

Beyond just news, the internet offers social networking, audio and video content, gaming and much more. Currently, there is little argument that the net is further fragmenting the U.S. audience. In the case of both print and television, the advertiser no longer has an easy decision when it comes to where to place an advertisement. Advertisers are realizing that, “We must accept that there is no ‘mass’ in mass media and leverage more targeted approaches” (Young & Aitken, 2007, p. 5).

Media fragmentation is the industry term for the explosion of news and entertainment sources now available to viewers (and readers). Media fragmentation, as the name implies, is the diffusing of media into multiple sources of emerging media (such as cable stations, online news magazines, blogs, etc). Gorman (2004) writes, “The

fragmentation - and the era of real choice - began for viewers in 1980, when CNN and its all-day newscasts arrived on the scene” (p. 1). Initially, marketers had no idea how to handle this fragmentation (Smith, 2005). All advertisers knew was, their dedicated audience was slowly drifting away. In fact, almost overnight, rather than having a dedicated audience advertisers had to speak to multiple and considerably smaller audiences.

To this day, advertisers search for methods to combat media fragmentation. Advertisers are coming up with new and innovative techniques to overcome fragmentation. For example, audiences react positively to product placement in media such as movies, television and music (Hall, 2004). Other attempts at overcoming media fragmentation have met with greater resistance. For example, consumers tend to view internet pop up ads as annoying and consequently ignore this type of advertising (Jin & Villegas, 2007). Often times, however, so many advertising messages deluge an individual throughout the day that the net result is no message is fully processed.

Marketers continually expand their efforts to catch potential consumers’ attention. Billboards, sports marketing, “talking” grocery store shelves, handbills, internet pop up’s and much, much more all call for us to, buy, buy, buy. The advertising industry estimates that nationwide over \$400 billion was spent on advertising in 2008 (Intense Influence, 2008). Studies show that the average American is exposed to over 3000 ads a day (Verklin & Kanner, 2007). The American consumer, however, does not always appreciate all that exposure. In fact, many Americans have become impatient with the very ads that are supposed to be bringing them information (Berger, 2007). Consumer

impatience is causing many of the advertisements, which can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars and take months to produce, to be ignored.

While each American is exposed to over 3000 ads a day there is little argument that considerably fewer than 3000 are being processed. The industry calls this advertising overload, clutter. Clutter is, “The enormous number of advertisements we are exposed to on a given day, which leads to information overload and in many cases paralysis” (Berger, 2007, p. 6). Clutter causes consumers to ignore advertising in two ways; one, the consumer becomes so overwhelmed by the multitude of advertising s/he misses the message (Berger, 2007). Take, for example, the average commute to work, advertisements assault an individual in the form of billboards, the car radio, the sides of semi trucks and signage from nearby businesses. All this as an individual zips by at speeds of 55 m.p.h or greater.

Clutter also allows Americans to choose which advertisements are worth their attention. There is such a wealth of media, a click of the remote or mouse will instantly take a consumer from an intrusive commercial to interesting new sources of entertainment. Moreover, Americans are annoyed with the overwhelming amount of advertisements. Sixty nine percent of Americans claimed an interest in products that can block advertisements (Berger, 2007); seven out of ten Americans wish they could “will” advertisements away (Verklin & Kanner, 2007). Today, Americans literally are able to “will” many advertisements away. With the wealth of media available to most living in the U.S. skipping an advertisement is only the push of a button away.

Verklin and Kanner (2007) call this the, “Digital Democracy.” Digital democracy simply means, “...(we) choose which ads we see and where we see them”(p. 1).

Consumers are becoming experts at skipping the advertisements marketers work so hard for them to see. The video recorders of today have ad blocking capabilities. The internet has free software which can block pop ups and other ad-ware. In today's market place if an ad does not catch a consumer's attention it is likely that ad will become another piece of clutter unceremoniously clicked past.

Advertisers are aware of the new digital democracy. Further more, marketers know they have to create ads that are creative, interesting and modern enough to catch the viewers' attention before the remote (or mouse) button is clicked or the printed page is turned. Advertisers have no more than a few seconds to capture the viewers' attention, three seconds in the case of a television advertisement and one second in the case of a print ad (Plessis, 2005).

Plessis (2005) notes that capturing a viewer's emotions will also capture his/her attention. Marketers, however, must use emotion correctly (Ogilvy, 1983). Plessis (2005) explains, "...there is not much to be said for the advertisement to be associated with negative emotion; and that positive emotion has little to do with shouting" (p. 130). So, with Plesiss's and Ogilvy's words in mind advertisers must carefully consider which emotions to appeal to when advertising to the Hispanic consumer who lives in the Rio Grande Valley.

Scholarly research on the topic of Hispanics' emotional ties is limited. On this topic, marketing trade journals are blazing the trail. Generally, Hispanics are emotionally tied to (amongst other things) family and culture (Vitticka, 2007). Vitticka (2007) states, "U.S. Hispanics still relate to the culture and tradition from their home countries. Unlike mainstream America who strives to become independent quickly and survive by

themselves” (p. 1). An important aspect of the Hispanic culture is their language, Spanish (Applebaum, 2008).

For Hispanics language is more than a means of communication it is also a form of bonding. However, many Hispanics who have acculturated into U.S. customs Spanish is not the preferred language for bonding, neither is English. For millions of Hispanics, Spanglish is the language of choice (Clark, 2007). When explaining why marketers are beginning to include Spanglish in advertising, Clark states, “Walter Cronkite Spanish’ is perfect if you’re delivering the news. But if you are persuading, you need to relate emotionally” (p. 2). Remember, Plessis (2005) states that to gain a consumer’s attention, through advertising, first reach out to their emotions. Further, Clark (2007) states that Hispanic consumers have an emotional connection to Spanglish. Therefore, it seems reasonable to suggest, that to capture the attention of Hispanic viewers who live in the Rio Grande Valley advertisers should appeal to their emotional bond with Spanglish.

Advertising in Spanglish is a reaction to the fragmentation of mass media. Today, marketers consider Hispanics a niche market. Niche marketing, or advertising to a small, well-defined group has taken the place of mass marketing and is another tactic marketers are utilizing to compensate for the changing face of media (Young et al, 2007, Luna & Peracchio, a, 2002). By targeting highly segmented populations, marketers are able to tailor a very specific message to a select group of people. To illustrate this point Lindsay writes, “The only businesses that then thrive are those that move beyond "me-too" or incremental offerings to marketing more-relevant and more-differentiated products and services. The only way to accomplish this is to focus on a narrower target” (2007, p. 1). Narrowing the market allows advertisers to create specific messages aimed directly at

their target market. Furthermore, with new media avenues, such as the Hispanic viewer targeted LATV, marketers can guarantee their message will reach the audience the ad was intended for. Today, ethnicity is an important criterion advertisers' use for fragmenting the market into niches (Holland & Gentry, 1999, Luna & Peracchio, 2005, Young & Aitken, 2007).

With the rise in affluence of the Hispanic population, marketing to this group is becoming increasingly important to major US corporations. Due to population size, affluence and media use the Hispanic population clearly warrants niche market consideration (Karrfalt, 2006). Major corporations such as Kraft, General Foods and others are creating specialized marketing departments to develop advertising specifically for the Hispanic population (Lindsay, 2007).

While, niche marketing has shown to be effective the practice is not without its pitfalls (Smith, 2005, Iezzi, 2007, Lafuente, 2008,). Major corporations have created campaigns, which have not only failed to reach the intended niche market, but in some cases have offended said market. Examples of niche marketing failures are, Taco Bells, "You quiero taco bell" Chihuahua campaign and RJ Reynolds attempt at marketing cigarettes specifically to inner city African Americans. These advertisements seemed to be under researched. In both cases the target audience was more offended by the campaign than persuaded to buy the product. O'Guinn & Faber,(1986), note that in order to be effective a campaign's message must hold relevance to members of the niche market being advertised to.

Further, Palumbo and Teich (2005) note, "Advertisers must strive to avoid the appearance of misusing ethnic symbols and ruining their credibility as an advertising

source” (p. 164). In the rush to produce modern and innovative ads, companies must be careful not to offend the target audience. This is an important consideration when an advertiser creates an ad utilizing Spanglish. Today marketers can only assume that Spanglish in an advertisement is appreciated by Hispanic consumers. To this date, there is not enough study on consumer perceptions of Spanglish dialogue use in advertisements. Therefore, considering the lack of evidence supporting Spanglish advertising, companies cannot be certain they are not offending rather than gaining potential customers.

Marketing to Hispanics

With spending power in the hundreds of billions of dollars, a growing, youthful population and strong levels of acculturation the Hispanic market has become important to US marketers. From the late 1980’s to the mid 1990’s advertisers, believed two methods of creating advertisements were best when marketing to Hispanics. One method was Spanish language commercials that borrowed concepts and images generalized from Anglo advertisements. The second method was to translate directly from English into Spanish commercials already in circulation (Ueltschy & Krampf, 1997). Both methods would quickly prove to hurt companies’ reputations within the Hispanic community rather than help. By the mid 2000’s advertisers understood new tactics would have to be developed specific to the Hispanic market. This section will discuss how creating the advertised message to Hispanic consumers evolved and the methods currently in use by companies.

Wentz noted in 2003, reaching the bicultural market could (and still can) be very difficult and confusing. For many years, Anglo marketers believed they were reaching

the Hispanic audience by placing Spanish ads on Spanish television channels. These ads had little connection with Hispanic consumers. Creation of Spanish language ads generally followed one of two tactics. One tactic was to create a direct translation into Spanish from a preexisting English commercial (Zbar, 1999). Often times these ads felt impersonal and cold to the Hispanic consumers. Beyond cold and impersonal, some direct translation ads simply made no sense. An example of a humorous but embarrassing attempt at direct translation comes from the Dairy Association in the U.S. In the mid 90's the Dairy Association had great success in the U.S. with their, "Got Milk" campaign. When the Dairy Association decided to expand the campaign to Hispanic consumers the Association opted for a direct translation of, "Got Milk" into Spanish. Imagine the surprise of Dairy Association executives when told they were asking millions of Spanish speakers: "Are you lactating?" (Tornoe, 2007). Type the phrase, "Hispanic marketing mishaps" into Google and more examples of English to Spanish direct translation mishaps will pop up. As a few marketers made embarrassing mistakes, the industry as a whole began to realize, advertising to Hispanics required more than pulling out the old English-Spanish dictionary.

As companies realized that direct translation was not the answer when advertising to Hispanics they began to concentrate on creating advertisements that were conceptualized, written and acted entirely in Spanish (Wentz, 2003). While Spanish only advertisements were a move in the right direction, early attempts often missed the mark. Zbar (1999) provides an example of how marketers were just not getting the Hispanic market. In this example, Zbar is discussing an ad campaign for Luvs diapers run by Procter and Gamble, "Post-run testing revealed Hispanic consumers got the message that

Luvs was better and cost less, yet they weren't motivated to buy. P&G wanted to know why. The package-goods giant was ``reaching them with something that was adapted, but you're (Luvs diapers) not talking to their heart," (Zbar, p. 1). Going into the early 2000's marketers knew they needed to market to Hispanics but the question was still, how.

Moving into the 2000's marketers working with social researchers began to develop advertising guidelines to reach Hispanic consumers. Ueltschy & Krampf in 1997 noted there are three main approaches in advertising to Hispanics: the "Change the language approach," the "Nothing different" approach and the "Completely different approach." Ueltschy & Krampf (1997) provide definitions for each approach: the "Change the language" approach takes English language advertisements and translates them into Spanish, or a mix of English and Spanish. The "Nothing different" approach, assumes that Hispanic consumers have the same buying trends, interests and language as their Anglo counterparts. Due to perceived similarities between Hispanic and Anglo markets the "Nothing different" approach makes no change in its advertising to Hispanics, assuming the message will be received the same by both groups. The "Completely different" approach assumes that Hispanics will identify and appreciate ad campaigns based on their culture and native language. When marketers use Spanglish in their advertisements, the marketer is utilizing the "Completely different" approach.

From the first experiments in advertising to Hispanics to today, much has been learned. Unfortunately, the lessons learned only serve to confound many advertising executives. Hispanics living in the U.S. have a rich, beautiful and complex culture. The complexity of Hispanic culture, however, can seem to outsiders as a frustrating set of contradictions. Hispanics living in the U.S.:

- Are fiercely patriotic to the U.S. yet cling to traditions of their homeland rather than fully acculturating to U.S. customs
- Work to learn and master English yet use Spanish (and Spanglish) as a source of bonding and pride
- Hispanics from different countries share many core values and a language yet Hispanics from different geographical areas honor those values and speak the language in way unique to their specific country of origin.
- Are stereotyped as, not having population numbers sufficient to affect sales bottom lines, poor and undereducated; when in fact they are the largest minority population in the United States, put billions of dollars a year into the economy (and rising in affluence at an astounding rate) and are gaining power in both the government and business sectors.
(Burleson, 2006, Clark, 2007, Applebaum, 2008 Lafuente, 2008)

These contradictions make understanding U.S. Hispanic culture difficult from the outside looking in.

From the inside looking out, however, the view becomes much clearer. Where traditional ad agencies failed, Hispanic run companies stepped in to fill the void. Companies such as La Comunidad in Miami, Grupo Gallegos in L.A., Bromley Media in San Antonio and Del Rio Advertising in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas all specialize in advertising with a Hispanic focus. Instead of contradictions in the Hispanic market, these companies see opportunity.

The above-mentioned pioneering ad companies, along with a few others, were able to identify core values the Hispanic population identifies with. For example, these companies instinctively knew that images of family, home and community would resonate with U.S. Hispanics (Vitticka, 2007). Understanding core values of the Hispanic community, these agencies were able to do something larger, more established ad firms could not, create advertising Hispanic consumers believe in.

Today companies still struggle with the question of how to positively and effectively market to Hispanic consumers. In most cases, large companies simply hand the advertising work over to Hispanic run advertising agencies (Wentz, 2006). By utilizing these agencies, companies are beginning to create advertising the Hispanic market can appreciate. Almost gone are the days of direct translation or culturally misguided advertisements. Wal-Mart is an example of a company that has figured out small changes in translation can make dramatic differences.

“...the general market tagline “Save Money. Live Better” became ‘Save More. Live Better (‘Ahorra Mas. Vive Mejor’). That may seem like a small change, but it was an important distinction.

‘To Hispanics, it’s not just that Wal-Mart saves you money. It relieves angst because you know you’ll find what you need...’ explained Alex Lopez Negrete, whose Houston agency created the campaign. ‘If Wal – Mart is only talking about money to Hispanics, it’s leaving something off the table’ (Applebaum, 2008, p. 1).

Companies, such as Wal-Mart have begun to understand, it is not just about the Spanish in an advertisement; The Spanish dialogue must speak to Hispanics core cultural beliefs.

As important as understanding what images to include in advertisements, these advertising insiders understood what to leave out! Prior to Hispanic advertising agencies, advertisers lumped all Hispanics into one group. This group collectively was the Hispanic or the Spanish-language demographic (Burlison, 2006).

Hispanics hail not only from Mexico but also from Puerto Rico, Spain, Cuba, and many other countries. As mentioned above each group of Hispanics has a unique way of honoring core customs and speaking the language. Killian (2008) provides one example of a mistake common to non-Hispanic advertising agencies, “Many advertisers use words from one Hispanic culture when the target is another. Since Cinco de Mayo is a Mexican holiday, why use Puerto Rican or Cuban vocabulary?” (p.1). Hispanic advertising agencies, however, understand the differences in the Hispanic Population. Not only did these advertising insiders understand the differences, they created advertising that spoke to those differences. Hispanic advertisers realize that the Rio Grande Valley speaks a brand of Spanglish unique to the area (Clark, 2007). As a result, advertisers are turning their understanding into commercials that speak to the population.

Spanglish

Social science research has shown that using bilingual dialogue in advertising can create positive associations with the advertised product in the mind of the consumer (Kelly-Holmes & Atkinson, 2007, Hornikx, Meurs, & Starren, 2007). Two factors work to create that positive association:

1. By using the language of the consumer, an advertiser can seem more like the consumer thus creating a bond (Hornikx et al., 2007).
2. Often times words in one language have deep or symbolic meanings that do not translate exactly into any others. By using the original language of a word, the full impact of its meaning will transfer into an ad (Luna & Peracchio, 2002).

An example of principle number 2 is, the Spanglish word, *chiflada*. The closest translation into English of the word *chiflada* would be, spoiled or unable to make up one's mind. An imaginary ad using the word may be, "Looking for cars with her is difficult because she is *chiflada*. Then, we saw the Chevy Malibu and the decision was made!" If the word, "spoiled" or phrase, "could not make her mind" were used in place of *chiflada* the full impact of the ad would be lost on the Hispanic consumer.

The research indicates that when used properly bilingual dialogue in an advertisement can create a bonding with the product in the mind of the consumer and an ability to grasp the full meaning of the ad dialogue (Hornikx, et al, 2007).

Advertisers have discovered when advertising to Mexican-Americans in Texas, Spanglish is marketing gold (Clark, 2007). Spanglish is effective because not only do Hispanics understand the language but they also appreciate it (Clark, 2007). In fact, Hispanics often use Spanglish as a bonding mechanism (Nueliep, 2003). Furthermore, this unique dialectic blend of English and Spanish has just recently lost much of the stigma as being the language of the under educated and uncultured (Sayer, 2008). Today, many Hispanics at all economic, educational and acculturation levels use Spanglish in their speech (Clark, 2007).

Spanglish is the unique blend of Spanish and English languages spoken by many US Hispanics (Stavans, 2003). In the Rio Grande Valley of Texas the term, “Tex-Mex,” is often used interchangeably with Spanglish. The two words, however, have the same meaning. A blending of both Spanish and English within the same sentence or same word is the key feature of a Spanglish statement (Neuliep, 2003). An example of a Spanglish phrase is, “Tiempo is money.” “Tiempo” (meaning ‘time’ in Spanish) is blended with the English, “is money” to create a phrase which is neither completely Spanish nor completely English. What that phrase has become is uniquely Spanglish.

Spanglish is important to many in the Hispanic culture (Clark, 2007). The dialect is a way for Hispanics to remain connected to their culture. Neuliep (2003) states, “...the hybrid language is an expression of friendship, acceptance and approval” (p. 87). Neuliep goes on to note that Spanglish is the result of people living in two worlds. Most often (according to Neuliep) Spanglish speakers attend English schools, sporting events, etc, but live in homes and neighborhoods where Spanish is the main language. As Hispanics, blend the cultures of Mexico and the U.S. into their lives, so to, over time, have they blended the languages.

As noted above, large companies and many advertisers believe that Spanglish dialogue use in advertising is effective when marketing to the Hispanic population. There is, however, little empirical evidence to support that belief. Social science has developed theories which explain why multi-lingual advertisements can be effective. This study will examine Speech Accommodation Theory, Uncertainty Reduction Principle and Source Factors as the theoretical bases which drives the hypothesis and research questions.

Speech Accommodation Theory

Speech accommodation theory (SAT) is an interpersonal communication mechanism used to gain either similarity or distance from others (Dixon, Tredoux, Durrheim, & Foster, 2001). SAT holds that a communicator will modify his/her speech or verbal style, to include word usage, accent and sentence structure, to either match or create dissimilarity from the intended receiver. To create similarity a speaker will use the principle of, converging (Williams, Giles, Coupland, Dalby, & Manasse, 1990, Holland et al, 1999). Convergence occurs when a speaker borrows speech patterns or accents from the addressee. In other words, the speaker will make his/her speech more like that of the message receiver. Divergence occurs when a speaker uses speech or verbal patterns that are dissimilar from the receiver. The speaker does this to highlight the difference between him/herself and the message receiver. Therefore, convergence is an attempt at creating similarity while divergence is an attempt at creating distance.

Convergence in advertising is technique used the world over (Krishna & Ahluwalia, 2008). Throughout Europe and Africa, English and French are the most common languages infused with the local language (Luna & Peracchio, 2005). In the U.S. Chinese has become a popular language to include in advertisements (Taylor & Stern, 1997). Marketers believe by writing ads that speak in the consumers' home language a bond is built between the advertised product and the consumer. Krishna and Ahluwalia (2008) note that there is little empirical evidence that supports these ads as being persuasive. In other words, social science research has not shown that bilingual advertising influences consumers to buy the product. The body of literature on this topic,

however, is increasing. Furthermore, with or without empirical evidence, advertisers believe in bilingual advertisements as a method of bonding (converging) with consumers.

Increasingly, US marketers' attempt convergence with the Hispanic consumer living in Texas, more specifically Texas's Rio Grande Valley by writing Spanglish advertisements (Clark, 2007). This style of marketing should be well received. Research shows that Hispanics of all acculturation levels have generally positive attitudes towards the use of Spanish in advertising (O'Guinn et al, 2002, Palumbo et al, 2005). Palumbo et al (2005) state, "The Hispanic viewer is aware of the advertiser's respect for their values while simultaneously feeling included in mainstream society" (p.162). As noted above, however, past studies have focused on bilingual advertising utilizing formal Spanish. The use of Spanglish in advertising remains largely untested.

Theory

Speech accommodation theory (SAT) is a central concept to the success of code switched advertisements. SAT is language shifting by a speaker in an attempt to appear either more or less similar to the intended receiver of the message (Wong & Mei, 2002, Dixon, et al, 2000, Williams, et al 1990).

The current study looks to the convergence model of SAT. In convergence, a speaker borrows unique speech characteristics of the audience (or individual). By adapting unique verbal cues, the speaker is attempting to create similarity between him/herself and the intended receiver of the message. In the case of code switched advertising marketers are attempting to create similarity between their product and the Hispanic audience.

Creating trust in the mind of the consumer is important in all advertising (Young & Aitken, 2007). For credibility building in advertising this study will look at uncertainty reduction theory and source factor(s) uncertainty reduction theory (Berger & Calabrese) explains how a bond is created with the consumer.

Source factor(s) is another important consideration when developing a Spanglish advertising campaign. The “source” is from where the message originates. Moreover, as the sender of the message, the source must be credible. Each of these concepts, speech accommodation theory, uncertainty reduction theory and source factors will be discussed in detail.

The Hispanic acculturation process is difficult for many advertisers who stick to the traditional advertising model (Vitticka, 2007). Members of the Hispanic population are loyal Americans who fully believe in the American dream. While remaining loyal to the, “American Way,” Hispanics hold tightly to the customs of their homelands (Clark, 2007). Values such as tight knit family bonds, strong community ties and religion are all ingrained beliefs of American Hispanics (Vitticka, 2007). While these may seem like easy values for advertisers to relate to, the challenge lies in the traditional concept that there is a singular Hispanic population. There is not a single Hispanic population; in fact, there are multiple Hispanic populations! A Hispanic from Puerto Rico does not share the exact same customs as a Hispanic from Mexico. While both groups share core values, their methods of honoring those values differ greatly.

The unique acculturation process of American Hispanics has caused a great deal of confusion for American advertising agencies. Some agencies, however, have discovered Spanglish speaks directly to specific segments of the Hispanic population.

Currently, Spanglish dialogue is an important component of several ad campaigns circulating through the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. The process of Spanglish becoming a marketing tool is included in the Review of Literature.

A study of this type is important for two reasons. One is the decreasing effectiveness of traditional marketing methods. Second is the growth (in both population and affluence) of the Hispanic population. These changes within the United States are occurring simultaneously and are forcing marketers to reevaluate old methods of advertising.

There is a vast amount of social science literature on the topic of bilingual dialogue use in advertising (Stayman & Deshpande, 1994, Kates & Goh, 2003, Luna & Peracchio, 2005, Hornikx, Meurs, & Marianne, 2007). Most studies focus on advertising in English and a language other than Spanish. The few articles, which do study English/Spanish bilingual advertising, use formal Spanish dialogue. The literature lacks analysis of the acceptance of true Spanglish (the meshing of English and Spanish to create a unique word) in advertising. This study will add to the body of literature by examining Spanglish in the above mentioned form. Research has also ignored the Texas/Mexico Border as a location for studying this approach towards advertising. With a growing and affluent Hispanic population, advertisers stand to gain much by understanding how to advertise in this market. This study will look at Hispanic consumers' level of valence (positive, neutral or negative) in association with the use of Spanglish dialogue in advertising. The purpose of this study is to further understanding of this new and increasingly popular method of advertising.

To claim people buy products with which they feel similarity, familiarity and trust is not an earth shattering statement. When creating marketing campaigns, advertisers strain to include dialogue, images and text that will elicit those exact feelings within the consumer. While advertisers have had an intuitive understanding of these facts for, at least, hundreds of years, social science research has only recently developed theories that explain how and why feelings of similarity, familiarity and trust work as marketing tools. Speech Accommodation Theory explains how feelings of similarity develop. Uncertainty Reduction Principle explains familiarity. In addition, Source Factors provide a basis for building trust in a product. These theories (Speech Accommodation Theory, Uncertainty Reduction Theory and Source Factors) explain the effectiveness of Spanglish dialogue in advertising. This section will first examine advertising overall. Next, will be a discussion of the different approaches marketers have taken when advertising to the Hispanic population. The review of literature will then provide a theoretical explanation as to why Spanglish dialogue in an advertisement should receive a positive response from Hispanic viewers living in the Rio Grande Valley. The section will conclude by presenting hypotheses and research questions that guide the study.

Uncertainty Reduction Principle

Uncertainty reduction principle (URP) is a communication theory with several concepts. The basic premise of URP, however, is that communication episodes are used to reduce uncertainty between communicators (Berger & Calabrese, 1975) In other words, humans communicate to learn more about one another. Berger and Calabrese state several axioms of URP. The two axioms that apply to this study are; (1) Similarities between persons reduce uncertainty and (2) Decreases in uncertainty level produce

increases in liking (1975). Advertisers utilize URP when creating Spanglish language commercials. These commercials are a direct attempt by the company to create similarity with the Hispanic consumer

An indirect discussion of URP is interwoven throughout this paper. Consider the history of advertising to the Hispanic population. A main reason early advertisements had little affect on Hispanic consumers was their inability to connect with the audience. Recall the failure of direct translation ads and Spanish ads that contained few images with which Hispanic consumers could relate, in both cases, Hispanics viewed the commercials as cold and impersonal. This is because the ads shared no similarity with the core beliefs held by the Hispanic population (Vitticka, 2007).

As Hispanic-run agencies began creating advertisements for the Hispanic consumer, the commercials became more effective. The Hispanic agencies have been able to create ads that reflect the values and everyday lives of Hispanic consumers. This can be seen in a version of the California Milk Processor Board's famous "Got Milk" campaign. The Board's executives having learned their lesson from previous "Got Milk" advertisements which were not accepted in the Hispanic community hired a Hispanic ad agency to create the "Toma Leche" campaign (de Lafuente, 2008). Toma leche translated to English is, "It takes milk." The campaign concept is it takes milk to remain healthy. This concept speaks to values held by many in the Hispanic community.

Applebaum (2008) states that Hispanics appreciate these ads. These ads reflect similarity to the lives of Hispanic consumers. By using Spanglish in their advertising, marketers can seem more similar to potential Hispanics customers living in the Rio

Grande Valley. The similarity will decrease uncertainty, thus increasing liking. The increased liking should translate into sales.

Source Factors

Source factors relate to the credibility a potential customer attributes to a speaker or message (Perse, 2001). Yoon, Kim and Kim (1998) define source factors, “as a ‘weight’ that can enhance the value of information in a message” (p.165). In other words, by using a trustworthy source, the customer will have greater faith in the end message. Trustworthiness is essential in advertising (Wilson, 2007). If the audience does not believe the spokesperson, then there is little chance that the product will be purchased (Stafford & Stafford, 2002). Perse (2001) explains that one method of creating a credible source is, “...through similarity, or by convincing message recipients that they share their values, morals, or background characteristics” (p. 72). Use of Spanglish is one method of creating similarity between potential Hispanic customers and the marketed product.

As mentioned above, advertisers work hard to create commercials that reflect the values, morals and characteristics of the Hispanic population. In the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, Spanglish is a hybrid language spoken by many of the area’s Hispanic population. Also mentioned previously, Spanglish interactions carry deeper meaning than just the passage of information. For Hispanics in the Rio Grande Valley Spanglish is an important bonding mechanism. Spanglish conversations carry a symbolic meaning of trust, kinship and common background (Nueliep, 2003). Spanglish dialogue use allows advertisements to transfer that symbolic inference to the advertised product (Stafford & Stafford, 2002). Thus, when a spokesperson in a television commercial or the headline of

a print ad speaks in Spanglish, source credibility is created in the mind of the Hispanic consumer.

Acculturation

Acculturation occurs as a minority person (or group) acquires the majority population's cultural beliefs (Palumbo & Teich, 2005). Acculturation occurs over time and through continuous contact with the host culture (Neuliep, 2003). As people move through the process, they obtain different levels of acculturation, low, medium or high. Palumbo & Teich, note that the person going through the acculturation process will gain customs and beliefs from the host society while retaining values from the culture of origin. Hispanics, in general, hold on to core values of their homelands as they become deeper engrained into the fabric of America. This is important for marketers to remember. Advertisers should always keep in mind that even a highly acculturated Hispanic will identify with cultural symbols of his/her heritage.

At this time, it is important to comment on the use of the ethnic identifier, Hispanic. The term Hispanic covers a diverse group of people who originate from multiple countries and backgrounds. This study will concentrate on Hispanics who identify as Mexican or Mexican American and reside in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, as this group is the target market of Spanglish dialogue advertisements (Clark, 2007).

This study contends that Spanglish advertisements will be preferred to English only advertisements by Hispanic consumers' in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. Speech Accommodation Theory, more specifically convergence, will help create similarity between the marketer and the consumer. Then, URP will reduce the uncertainty. The reduction of uncertainty will create confidence within the mind of the Hispanic

consumer. Finally, the source factor in the Spanglish advertisement will leave a Hispanic consumer with feelings of trust and creditability towards the product. When these three factors combine, the consumer should develop a positive opinion of the advertised product.

CHAPTER III

HYPOTHESES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Given the previous indicators that Hispanic consumers will be more persuaded positively by an advertisement that includes at least some Spanglish, this study puts forth the following three hypotheses and two research questions;

H.1. Hispanics living in the Rio Grande Valley will have a more positive attitude toward a product advertised using Spanglish dialogue compared to a product using English only advertising.

H.2. In print advertising, English mixed with Spanglish dialogue will create a more positive attitude, in the mind of the Hispanic consumer, toward the product being advertised when compared to the same product using an English only advertisement.

H.3. In television advertising, English mixed with Spanglish dialogue will create a more positive attitude, in the mind of the Hispanic consumer, toward the product being advertised when compared to the same product using an English only advertisement.

Additionally, the following three research questions will be considered;

R.1. Utilizing English and Spanglish dialogue, which medium supports a more positive opinion of the product being advertised: print or television?

R.2. Is there an interaction effect between language use and advertising medium?

R.3. Does acculturation level have an effect on how Spanglish advertisements are perceived?

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

Participants

This study utilized a convenience sample to gather participants. All participants were students, faculty or staff members associated with two medium sized universities in South Texas. This study used n= 316 participants. One hundred seventy three (54.7%) females and 143 (45.3%) males participated in the study. Participants' ages ranged from 18 – 48. This study divided participants into 10 groups. Participants either watched one of four different video ads or read one of six print advertisements. Participants in groups 1-4 (labeled V1 – V4) viewed video advertisements. Groups 5-10 (labeled P1 – P6) viewed print advertisements. The participant breakdown was as follows:

Group	Advertisement Viewed	Number of Participants
V1	English video: Citibank	29
V2	Spanglish video: Citibank	29
V3	English video: Texas Federal Bank	30
V4	Spanglish video: Texas Federal Bank	33
P1	English print: Sovereign Bank	32
P2	Spanglish print: Sovereign Bank	35
P3	English print: Citibank Photocard	30
P4	Spanglish print: Citibank Photocard	37
P5	English print: Liberty Bank	30
P6	Spanglish print Liberty Bank	30

Individuals could participate in this study only one time. To ensure no one participant was assigned to multiple groups the questionnaire included the question, “Have you participated in this study before?”. This study did not consider questionnaires indicating an individual had previously participated in the study. Random assignment was the method used for placing participants within groups. This study only considered participants identifying themselves as Hispanic.

Design

A between subjects experiment utilizing a two (print vs. television advertising) x two (advertisements in English only vs. advertisements containing English and Spanglish dialogue) design was conducted. T-tests and an ANOVA were run.

Independent Variable

This study used two independent variables: advertising medium (print compared to television) and language.

Dependent Variable

Spanglish use in advertising is an attempt by the advertiser to create a positive association for the product in the mind of the consumer. For that reason participants’ valence toward the advertised product is the dependent variable. This study measured preference by analyzing participant responses to the questionnaire.

Stimulus Materials

This study utilized two different video advertisements and three different print advertisements. For both the television and print advertisements, this study looked to productions already in circulation outside of the Rio Grande Valley. Once identified, three print ads that fit the study criteria had their original tagline modified into Spanglish.

The two television advertisements had their original English voice over dialogue back translated into Spanglish. The original language for all advertisements was English. The study author and a group of Hispanic, English/Spanish speaking, Rio Grande Valley natives did the translations of English scripts into Spanglish.

To ensure cultural bias did not affect attitude toward the ad this study chose banks as the advertised product. Banks have shown to hold little cultural significance to Hispanics in the US (Luna & Peracchio, 2005). In other words, banks are a product used by all ethnic groups living in the U.S. and no one group can claim unique, “ownership.” This method of utilizing products which hold no cultural significance to any one cultural group follows Deshpande and Stayman’s (1994) work, “It is expected that an identification effect due to increased ethnic salience should influence credibility most when there is no direct reason to suspect that members of one group have more expertise than those of another on the topic of the message (that is, for example, the advertisement is not for a product for which one ethnic group is generally considered to have more experience and/or knowledge” (p. 63). For that reason, six different banks were used as the product(s) being advertised. Six different banks were used in order to ensure that participant reaction was not ad specific. Scripts for the video ads and copies of the print ads are included in the appendix of this study.

Voice over dialogue was used in all four video advertisements. This study recruited a professional television announcer to voice the dialogue. The announcer was female and spoke without a Hispanic accent. Ethnicity of the voice talent was not revealed to participants. Hispanics (in general) do attribute more credibility to announcers who sound more like them (Palumbo & Teich, 2005). For this study,

however, the advertisement, not the ethnicity of the announcer, was the focus. Therefore, ethnicity of the announcer should not have influenced the results of the study. The announcer voiced both the English and Spanglish versions of the advertisements.

Voice was edited into all four commercials. Only the voice over was changed in the Citibank Photocard advertisements. The Texas Federal Bank ad included updated graphics along with new voice-overs. After editing, the ads were exported into quick time files and stored for viewing on the principal investigator's laptop.

Adobe Photoshop graphic software aided in placing taglines into the advertisements. Graphics and fonts remained identical between pairs of advertisements. Only the script changed between English and Spanglish versions of the advertisements.

Questionnaire

All groups received the same questionnaire. Participants recorded level of preference for the advertised product on six, 5-point scales. The scales were phrased:

1. "This bank is poor quality/ This bank is high quality"
2. "I would not join this bank /I might join this bank"
3. "This bank is not appealing at all/This bank is very appealing"
4. "I would not recommend this bank to a friend/I would recommend this bank to a friend"
5. "This bank is mediocre/This bank is exceptional"
6. "This bank is very bad/This bank is very good."

The maximum score for the questionnaire was 30 and the minimum score was six. The higher a participant scored the questionnaire the more favorable was his/her opinion.

This questionnaire followed the work of Luna & Peracchio (2005). The questionnaire included an acculturation scale to measure the effect of acculturation on ad preference.

Procedure

Participants for the video advertisements were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions. Assignments were determined by following the output of a random number generator. To begin the study the principal investigator introduced himself to the participants and read the consent form. Next, participants watched the assigned video advertisement twice. After watching the ad, participants completed the questionnaire. Participants were debriefed after returning the questionnaire to the principal investigator.

Randomization of the print advertisements questionnaires occurred before delivery to participants. After introducing himself and reading the consent form, the principal investigator would hand the survey packet to the participant(s). The packet contained the consent form, one advertisement and the questionnaire. The principal investigator would ask participants to view the ad and then provide their opinions based on questions asked on the questionnaire. Once the questionnaire was turned into the principle investigator, participants (upon request) were debriefed.

Results

This study examined the perception of Spanglish advertising in the mind of Hispanic consumers living in the Rio Grande Valley. To test consumers' perceptions a series of independent T-tests were run for H1, H2, H3 and R1. To test the interaction effect posed in R1 an ANOVA was run. To test R2 and R3 ANOVA's were run.

H1: Hispanics living in the Rio Grande Valley will have a more positive attitude toward a product advertised using Spanglish dialogue compared to a product using English only advertising.

This hypothesis predicted that Hispanics living in the Rio Grande Valley would have a more positive perception of products that utilize Spanglish dialogue in advertising as opposed English only advertisements. This hypothesis was not supported. Significance, however, was found in the opposite direction. For H1, English dialogue in advertising was preferred over Spanglish, ($M = 16.25, 13.50, SD = 6.06, 5.88$), $t(4.04)$, $p < .000$

H2: In print advertising, English mixed with Spanglish dialogue will create a more positive attitude, in the mind of the Hispanic consumer, toward the product being advertised when compared to the same product using an English only advertisement.

This hypothesis predicted that Spanglish dialogue in advertising would create a more positive perception of the product being advertised when compared to English only advertising. The hypothesis was not supported. Once, again English was preferred by a significant amount, ($M = 16.04, 12.5, SD = .6.09, 5.68$), $t(4.11)$, $p < .000$

H3: In television advertising, English mixed with Spanglish dialogue will create a more positive attitude, in the mind of the Hispanic consumer, toward the product being advertised when compared to the same product using an English only advertisement.

This hypothesis predicted that Spanglish dialogue in a television advertisement would create a more positive attitude toward the product being advertised than an English only advertisement. The hypothesis was not supported. Significance was found, however,

in the opposite direction. English dialogue was preferred over Spanglish by a significant amount, ($M = 16.59, 15.1, SD = 6.06, 5.89$), $t(1.37), p < .000$

R1: Utilizing English and Spanglish dialogue, which medium supports a more positive opinion of the product being advertised: print or television?

This question was posed in order to discover which medium would be most effective when an advertisement utilizes Spanglish dialogue. For this study television was preferred over print advertising when an advertisement inserts Spanglish dialogue, ($M = 15.85, 14.25, SD = 6.00, 6.13$), $t(2.25), p = .025$

R2: Is there an interaction effect between language use and advertising medium? This question was posed to discover how language effected consumers' perceptions of advertisements. For this study, no interaction effect was found. $F(309, 308) = 2.196, p = .139$.

Additional Findings

Tests were run for R.Q, 3, to see if language, media use or acculturation effected participants' views of Spanglish dialogue use in advertising. English was preferred over Spanglish for participants who were high viewers of Spanish television. The result was not significant, however. Participants who identified as speaking more Spanish than English also preferred the English advertisements to those with Spanglish dialogue. Participants, who identified as thinking mostly in Spanish as, with significance, preferred the English only advertisements. In each case, the English only advertisements were preferred over the advertisements that included Spanglish dialogue. Some possible explanations for the study's findings follow.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to discover which style of advertising, English only or English/Spanglish dialogue advertisements, created a more positive perception of the advertised product in the mind of the Hispanic consumer. The three hypotheses were specific to that purpose. Each of the three hypotheses predicted that Spanglish mixed with English would be preferred. In each case, the opposite of the study's prediction was found. This study found that English only advertising produced more positive opinions.

Creating an effective Spanglish language advertisement is a difficult task. As noted in the literature review, there are multiple methods of developing an advertisement when marketing to Hispanics. This study utilized the, "Change the Language," approach. This method may not be the most effective when creating a Spanglish language advertisement. Back translating into Spanglish is difficult to do within experimental constraints. When English is "changed" into Spanglish, the verbiage can seem forced and unnatural. Several participants noted this fact in reference to the advertisements utilized in this study. For Spanglish language advertisements the, "Completely different," approach may be best.

Group members who translated the ads into Spanglish agreed that Spanglish tends to be spoken without conscious thought. That is to say, the words are part of the speaker's everyday vocabulary. Furthermore, Spanglish words are not proper English or Spanish words. So, when a Spanglish word is shoehorned into an advertisement (as discovered in this study) the results can lead to a negative attitude toward the product being advertised.

Running the study on college campuses may have also affected the results. An understanding of English is required to attend or work at a U.S. college. This study printed all literature, such as consent form, questionnaire, etc in English. Spanglish, then, could have seemed out of place to the participants. “Out of place” could have translated to wrong in some participants’ minds. While Spanglish is gaining acceptance, it still has the reputation as the language of the poor and uneducated. Pulling people out of poverty and educating them are two roles of a university. Many people who attend or work at the colleges where the study was run, are first generation college students who come from impoverished backgrounds. For many participants, the Spanglish advertisements may have represented all they were struggling to rise above. Reveron (2007) illustrates the above point by stating, “Latinos in high school and college are educated in English and live day-to-day in English. It’s much more about reaching them from a cultural standpoint, not a pure linguistic one” (p. 2). In the case of this study, the language may have been technically correct but the cultural marker was wrong.

Viewers generally have low involvement with advertisements (Pelsmacker, Geuens, & Anckaert, 2002). As mentioned above, advertisements have seconds to capture a viewer’s attention. If that attention is lost, the viewer turns the channel, flips the page or becomes engaged in a secondary activity. Participants for this study viewed each television ad twice and spent several seconds scanning the print advertisements. Involvement, for participants of this study, was high. Therefore, the same advertisements viewed outside of the study may have received a more positive rating due to lower involvement. Although, it is important to note that involvement with the ad was not tested, this study, using guidelines set forth by Yang (2004), rates participants’

involvement with the ad as high. Yang also notes that involvement with an advertisement is high when the viewer is actively involved with, and cognitively engaged in watching the ad. High involvement with the Spanglish advertisements bolsters the argument for the previous discussion point. High involvement may have reminded participants of the negative connotations of Spanglish rather than the positive attributes of the advertised product.

As noted above, support for H2 was not found. Once again, the English advertisement created a more positive attitude in the mind of the consumer toward the product. One possible explanation for this finding is participants' ability to view Spanglish words in writing. Seeing the informal words on the written page may emphasize the informality of Spanglish. This informality may be perceived as improper or, "wrong."

Television relies on moving visuals as well as audio. Further, television allows viewers to look into the "lives" of actors on the screen. The Citibank advertisement featured an actor and used a "hidden camera" type look. The English version of this advertisement was the highest rated. Participants reacted to the actor by laughing and engaging with a higher level of involvement. The Texas Federal Bank advertisement on the other hand used mainly graphics, eliminating the human element. For Spanglish to be more strongly received, perhaps, actors should be seen on screen speaking the dialogue.

The answer to R1 was very surprising and contrary to previous research (see, Ogilvy, 1983, Walma van der Molen & Klijn, 2004). Some studies show that Hispanics prefer broadcast media for information gathering. However, other studies state the opposite view; print is equally as important for information gathering as broadcast

(Leonardi, 2003). For this study, television advertisements were preferred over print advertisements. This may go back to the study's use of the, "Change the Language," approach. The television advertisements' voice-overs were mixed with music and timed to match the tempo of the ad. Thus, the embedded dialogue was produced to feel like a natural part of the ad. In the case of R.2., the main effects were so high an interaction effect was not possible.

In the print advertisements, only the tag lines were manipulated. The changing of the tag line may have been enough to account for the lower print advertisements' scores. However, further research should be done on this topic.

Limits of Research

A study of this type needs to expand its sample outside of a university setting. The principle investigator made efforts to include students, faculty and staff in order to gain a variety of opinions. The Valley unfortunately, is traditionally an undereducated area (Watt, Huerta, & Lozano, 2007). This study, then, may not speak for many who live in this area.

While college campuses in this area do represent a growing portion of the Valley, they allow only a limited sample. For this study, funding and time were both limited. Therefore, gathering a larger sample in the community was not possible. Advertisers would benefit greatly by funding studies that determine the entire market's attitude toward Spanglish in advertising.

Media context may have affected participants' attitude toward the ads. As mentioned previously, participants viewed the television ads on the principal investigator's laptop. The print ads were included in packets handed to the participants.

Both types of advertisements were out of their usual environments. While watching video on computers is becoming more common, (video) commercials are still associated with television. Print advertisements seem out of place if not viewed in the context of the specific print media in which the ad is embedded (Pelsmacker, Geuens, & Anckaert, 2002). Previous studies have shown that advertisements viewed out of context may be judged more harshly than those viewed in context (Coulter, 1998, Pelsmacker et al, 2002.). Future studies should ensure ads are viewed in the context to which participants are accustomed.

The advertisements themselves were a limitation. This study utilized English commercials that were already in circulation. Back translations were done to create the Spanglish version of each ad. As noted in the discussion, this is the least effective way of creating a Spanglish commercial. To ensure validity of test results, in this study, taglines for both English and Spanglish versions of the ads had to remain unchanged (Except for the addition of Spanglish in half the ads).

This tactic, while important to this study, can cause ads to feel unnatural. Often times, an exact translation from English (especially in the case of a dynamic language such as Spanglish) is impossible. Applebaum (2008) provides an example of just such an occurrence in the business world, “That was the case earlier this year when Chase followed up its black-and-white themed branding campaign, dubbed ‘What Matters’ – a double entendre for which there is no Spanish equivalent – with an Hispanic effort called ‘Juntos Se Puede or ‘ Together We Can’” (p. 2). For future studies, creation of both the English and Spanglish versions of the ads need to be considered during the design phase.

Topics for further research

Spanglish dialogue is still an under researched topic. Therefore, there is much to study in the area of Spanglish advertising. Past research indicates that Hispanics, in general, use and appreciate Spanglish (Clark, 2007). Advertisements in Spanglish, then, should be viewed more positively than English only advertisements. Further study on this topic is required to determine the most effective way of infusing Spanglish into advertising. What follows is a brief discussion of topics for further research.

The message source is an important area to consider for continuing study. How do Hispanics, as a group, want to hear, see and emotionally feel the Spanglish message? Wilson (2007) states that Hispanics generally prefer advertisements that feature Hispanic actors/spokespersons to advertisements that feature non-Hispanic players. This study believes that source factor(s) is important when advertising to the Hispanic population. An advertisement should create similarity between the product and the consumer (Perse, 2001). This study attempted to create similarity through language not through a spokesperson. Future studies, then, should focus on the spokesperson of the advertisement. Will Hispanic consumers prefer a Hispanic to a non-Hispanic spokesperson? Will voice over be preferred to an onscreen spokesperson? Are actors preferred to an on screen spokesperson that is providing a testimonial or direct appeal? How Hispanic Consumers who live in the Rio Grande Valley perceive the source of the advertisement will be a critical area of future study.

Demographics are always an important consideration in advertising. Niche markets are created based on demographics. Understanding how various age groups view Spanglish in advertising is an important area for future study. Level of education may

affect how Hispanics living in the Rio Grande Valley view Spanglish advertisements. Along with education, future studies may want to consider how consumers at various income levels view Spanglish advertisements. Understanding how demographics affect Spanglish advertisements will clue marketers in on how to write positively received future ads in this genre.

Conclusion

This study set out to discover whether Hispanics living in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, prefer English only or Spanglish dialogue advertisements. Hispanics' cultural connection to language and emotional tie to Spanglish led to a hypothesis stating that Spanglish use in advertising would be preferred to English only. The results of the study indicated the opposite to be true, that in fact, English only advertisements are preferred. These findings, however, should not cause advertisers to shy away from Spanglish. As noted throughout this paper, Spanglish is the unofficial language of people who live in the Rio Grande Valley. This study serves as an example, perhaps, of how not to utilize Spanglish in an advertisement. The, "Change the Language," method of creating Spanglish ads is not the best method for getting a message across. Rather than shying away from Spanglish in advertising, marketers should conduct further research. Only through deeper study will advertisers discover the most appropriate method of incorporating Spanglish into advertising messages.

Clearly, further research in this area is necessary. Effectively advertising to Hispanics has implications deeper than marketing products. Public service announcements and other public messages are increasingly targeted towards Hispanics. Communication professionals need to know if Spanglish is an effective way of creating

messages for the Hispanic market. If media professionals and marketers are going to sell (product or ideas) to Hispanics, they are going to need to understand how to communicate with this audience.

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APPENDIX A

ADVERTISEMENT SCRIPTS

Video Scripts

V1 – Citibank English

“Having the tools to be in control, that is using your credit card wisely.”

V2 – Citibank Spanglish

“Having los tools para estar en control that is usando tu credit card wisely”

V3 –Texas Federal Bank English-

“Are you making progress with your bank these days? I see. Then if we you we'd bank with us.”

V4 – Texas Federal Bank Spanglish

“Are you making progress con tu banco estos days? Ya veo. Then if we were you bancaria con us.”

Print Scripts

P1 - Citibank Photocard English

“Some memories make great pictures. Some make great photo cards.”

P2 – Citibank Photocard Spanglish

“Some memorias hacen great pictures. Otros hacen great photo cards.”

P3 – Liberty Bank English

“Feeding your bank too many service charges?”

P4 – Liberty Bank Spanglish

“Esta tu bank lonchando muchos service charges?”

P5 – Sovereign Bank English

“If there is one thing the past has taught us, it is the value of a well-timed visit”

P6 – Sovereign Bank Spanglish

“Si hay something que el past nos ha teacheado, it is the value de una well timed visit”

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Soon after graduating with a BA in Communication with an emphasis in TV/Film from The University of Texas Pan American, Nick went to work for the university as a Video Producer.

At the university, Nick has honed his story telling technique. “Make the small story big,” is a motto of his. Nick will tell all who ask, “Anybody can tell the big stories, stories such as movie stars coming to town or a fire at the local school. Those stories almost tell themselves, just show up and you will have good video. But, it takes a true story teller to have the audience care about a teacher who is quietly helping low income students get accepted to Ivy League universities or the custodian who cherishes his job.”

At UTPA Nick produced, wrote and edited several note worthy videos. One example is the Parental Involvement video series produced for GEAR UP. The series was sent to the United States Congress in order to increase program awareness.

After graduating in May 2009 with a MA in Communication from the University of Texas Pan American, Nick will begin teaching at the university. For further discussion about any of the topics discussed in this study please contact Nick at: ASB 1.126 1201 W. University Ave. Edinburg, TX 78539.