Article

Radio-Lect: Spanish/English Code-Switching in On-Air Advertisements

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Abstract: The 2020 census reports that 61.2 million Latinxs live in the US, totaling around 19% of all residents, forming the country's largest minority population. With the growing number of Latinxs, there has been a higher level of contact between Spanish and English leading to language mixing or code-switching (CS) in mainstream American culture. This paper examines the Spanish/English CS in radio advertisements on Los Angeles's 96.3 La Mega, a bilingual radio station geared towards today's youth. Using Derrick' 2015 sentential framework for the linguistic analysis of multilingual sentences, I carry out a sentence-by-sentence analysis of the linguistic nature of the on-air bilingual advertisements. I explore both national advertisements, as well as DJ-endorsed advertisements, to discern whether they follow the patterns previously pointed out in the literature for positive consumer evaluations of Spanish/English bilingual advertisements. Furthermore, I am interested in if these advertisements are in line with the ethos of 96.3 La Mega, which prides itself on being fully bilingual. This research will shed light on the linguistic nature of contemporary strategies being used in bilingual advertisements for the US Latinx community and marketing tactics designed to encourage their consumerism.

Keywords: code-switching; bilingualism; Spanish in the USA; radio; advertisements

1. Introduction

Many recent analyses have studied code-switching (CS), the use of two or more languages in the same utterance or conversation, from a variety of perspectives including structural (Wardhana et al. 2023; Cruz 2023), sociolinguistic (Sapar et al. 2023; Zhong et al. 2023), and psycholinguistic (Hofweber et al. 2023; Sheun et al. 2023). Contemporary CS has also been examined in an array of language pairs like Turkish/German (Çetinoğlu and Çöltekin 2023), French/Arabic (Nesrine and Zoubida 2023), and Spanish/Guarani (Agüero-Torales et al. 2023), among others. Bilinguals often use CS in multiple discourses to communicate with others who share the same linguistic repertoire (Derrick 2015).

Specific to the US context, the Census Bureau in 2020 reports that US Latinxs make up 61.2 million residents or 18.7 percent of the population (U.S. Census Bureau 2020). Due to this group being one of the largest minority communities in the country, the use of Spanish/English CS or Spanglish, the more popular term, is used as a symbol of linguistic and cultural identity amongst bilingual US Latinxs. Indeed, as noted by Parra (2011), "Spanglish is a language, lifestyle and culture that has one foot in each set of traditions. It is a mix of Spanish and English language that is informal and focuses on trends in fashion, music, news and art that appeals to a person who enjoys aspects of their American and Latino culture" (pp. 4–5)[1]. This expression of US Latinx identity is visible in many mainstream mediums including television (Attig and Derrick 2021, forthcoming), music (Derrick 2015), magazines (Mahootian 2006; Derrick 2015), social media (Derrick and Huizar 2019) and literature (Casielles-Suárez 2013; Derrick 2015, 2016, 2019; Pawelek and Derrick 2018), among others. As a result, advertisers often target the bilingual US Latinx population. Well-known companies like AT&T, McDonalds, Dunkin' Donuts, Honda, and Taco Bell have

all featured advertisements which include Spanish/English CS. Furthermore, Hoffman and Jurado (2023) have pointed out that US Latinxs have a $3.4 trillion collective spending power, which would rank as the fifth largest in the world. Thus, the use of Spanish and English in recent marketing campaigns may be a creative and lucrative way to give cultural relevancy and value to this audience. Since the Latinx community is representative of the largest minority group in the US, an examination of CS in radio advertisements would shed light on the contemporary practices employed to attract bilingual consumers. In this vein, the present study will analyze the linguistic nature of bilingual radio advertisements aired on 96.3 La Mega, located in the city with the largest Latinx population in the country: Los Angeles, California (Passel et al. 2020).

2. 96.3 La Mega—LA's Party Station

To provide some background information on 96.3 La Mega, it began broadcasting in a bilingual Spanish/English format in 2005 airing Spanish (h)urban (Hispanic urban) contemporary music. The station's slogan, "LA's party station" is aimed at attracting young Latinx bilinguals in metropolitan Los Angeles. Regarding bilingual listeners, Victor Caballero, former brand manager of the station, notes that "the listeners take a lot of pride in being Latino. The radio station is most concerned with figuring out how to serve the community and how to speak specifically to the needs of our listeners. This includes addressing issues that directly affect the community including immigration laws, among other issues. For the administration, it is important to be able to do this in a way that is comfortable for the DJs and for the callers that call in to the radio, in whichever language they prefer" (Derrick 2017).

Moreover, Spanish-language radio is also becoming more widely recognized, as this population is rapidly expanding in the US. Casillas (2014, p. 248) comments about Spanish-language radio that it "represents the fastest growing format on all U.S. radio, garners top ratings in all radio markets, and caters to minority audiences that are into radio at higher rates than the average (read: white, English-dominant speaking) US radio listener". As for language use on the radio station, there is no preference for English or Spanish. Chase Wesley (2020, p. 423) says about linguistic identity on 96.3 La Mega that, "Hosts design their opening turns so as to offer up both languages as options, without prejudice or interactional bias, thereby allowing callers to select one or both languages as the medium of the exchange. This particular institution as a whole thus "does being" bilingual—that is, it *embodies* bilingualism—through this discursive practice that effectively renders Spanish, English, and code-switched Spanish–English normatively available to members of the listening community". Therefore, in considering the large population of US Latinxs and their frequency in radio participation, I turn my attention to 96.3 La Mega and the linguistic nature of its bilingual on-air advertisements. I am particularly interested in the ways that national and DJ-endorsed advertisements reflect (or not) the ethos of the Spanglish/English bilingualism used on-air by the DJs, artist interviews, and listener call-ins.

To carry out this study, I analyze the linguistic nature of bilingual Spanish/English on-air radio advertisements, examining national advertisements, or those that could be aired on another radio station and DJ-endorsed advertisements, voiced-over by radio hosts to advertise local products and services. I examine 72 hours of radio stream from 96.3 La Mega recorded in 2017, which includes 82 national advertisements and 61 DJ-endorsed advertisements. To organize this study, I first give an overview of the research that has analyzed Spanish/English CS on the radio and in advertisements. After, I discuss the linguistic frameworks I utilize in this article, followed by the analysis which will point out the different types of sentences used in on-air advertisements on 96.3 La Mega. This study will conclude by offering some general discussion about the radio station's advertising practices.

3. Previous Studies on Spanish/English CS in Radio and Advertisements

3.1. Spanish/English CS on the Radio

As mentioned above, many studies have examined CS from an array of perspectives in a variety of language pairs. Here, I focus this literature review on studies that have examined Spanish/English CS in radio and advertisements. Specific to the radio context, scholars have analyzed DJ language use and identity expression on the air. For example, Tseng (2011) studied DJ identity work related to station ethnic branding in bilingual radio and found that DJs employ topic-oriented evaluative stances to illuminate their on-air identity. They use a variety of stylistic devices to do so including code-switching, circulating discourses of in-group solidarity, and engaging listeners in fictive bonds of intimacy. Tseng (2018) also examines bilingual DJ speech, focusing their research on genre specific closing structure. The author concludes that CS serves to maintain institutional identity inside the constraints of genre norms and structures. CS also serves to enhance audience appeal and to elicit participatory audience response by building in-group identity and solidarity.

Furthermore, De Fina (2013) assesses DJ language use with an interest in language ideologies, analyzing *El Zol*, in the Washington D.C. area, which brands itself as catering to first-generation Latino transnational immigrants. The author concludes that the radio station identifies as Spanish-speaking rather than bilingual, though CS reflects a part of the daily experiences of DJ hosts and audience members. Also investigating *El Zol*, De Fina (2014) analyzed on-air identity construction. This research finds that Spanish-dominant radio hosts show a preference for Spanish and use hyper-corrective behavior towards English-dominant hosts. Spanish-dominant hosts also reject the insertion of English terms in primarily Spanish utterances in radio discourse.

Chase Wesley (2020) examines LA's 96.3 of Los Angeles with an interest in the linguistic practices involved in radio call-ins. The analysis points out that language selection should be seen as interactional achievement that is collaboratively constructed amongst participants. Moreover, the author notes that Spanish and English are on a level playing field on the radio station, showing no preference for one language over the other in on-air radio banter.

Other noteworthy scholarship has assessed the US radio industry and the bilingual Latinx community. For example, Casillas (2014), researching the disparity in revenue between English and Spanish radio, finds that it is due to racial and linguistic bias. The author suggests that this devaluation of Spanish language radio will continue until Arbitron's audience measurement policies consider more linguistically and racially diverse audiences. Moreover, Castañeda (2014) points out that the political economic framework of the US radio industry has historically emphasized commercialism and a White Anglo power structure, placing pressure on Latinx commercial radio to follow market forces instead of service to the community.

In sum, we note that some radio stations that cater to US Latinxs embrace the use of Spanish, English, and Spanish/English CS, choosing to reflect a bilingual radio station identity, whereas others reinforce a Spanish-dominant preference through their on-air discourses and DJ interactions. Additionally, Spanish language radio in the US, though representative of the largest minority group in the country, is still undervalued related to genre perception and radio station revenues in comparison to English language radio.

3.2. Spanish/English CS in Print Advertisements

Outside of research on Spanish language radio, DJ speech and identity construction, there has also been scholarship on the use of Spanish/English CS in print advertisements. Pioneering research on bilingual advertising, such as Levitt (1983), suggests that advertisers are most successful if they utilize a single language to target a bilingual audience and encourages marketers to ignore regional differences and instead advocate for advertising to a global marketplace. Also examining the language use and the grammaticality of CS in bilingual advertisements, Luna and Peracchio (2005) analyze which direction of

Spanish/English mixing would interest consumers most. They conclude that bilingual advertisements should switch from Spanish to English, so that English, associated with a higher status and power in the US context, stands out. Building on the conclusions of Luna and Peracchio (2005) related to the impact of CS on persuasion amongst consumers, Luna et al. (2005) analyze CS found in advertisements for their grammaticality in order to assess persuasion. They find that breaking linguistic rules for CS only affects consumer persuasion when consumers process advertisements in data-driven modes. Otherwise, the preservation of linguistic constraints does not necessarily influence persuasion.

With an interest in consumer attitudes and the direction of language alternation (English to Spanish or Spanish to English) in bilingual magazine advertisements, Bishop and Peterson (2011) assess the medium (mainly Spanish or English) in which advertisements are located, considering Mexican-American participants' perceptions of the advertisements. The study points out that the main language of the medium does play a part in the linguistic content that appears in the advertisements. Furthermore, they conclude, regardless of the medium, there are fewer advertisements that employ bilingualism in comparison to solely Spanish or English.

Callow and McDonald (2005) similarly examine medium selection in magazines analyzing advertiser's decisions regarding language choice by comparing advertisements in Spanish-only and Spanish/English dual language magazines in the U.S. Latinx market. They note that advertisers use a customizable approach to advertisements in Spanish-only mediums by choosing mostly Spanish-only advertisements. However, in the dual language medium, advertisers use a standardized approach, which can include monolingual Spanish or English advertisements, as well as those that include CS. Similarly, Bishop and Peterson (2010) analyze the medium of advertisements that include CS. They find that the US Latinx bilingual audience had the most positive reaction to advertisements that display a matrix or base language that uses the most salient language of the medium. In other words, if the medium is mostly Spanish, the bilingual advertisements should present Spanish more than English. Their findings suggest that maintaining the medium and the advertisements in the same base language improved ad recall, perceived advertiser cultural sensitivity, and has a direct positive influence on persuasion and cognitive ad involvement, which positively influences the persuasiveness of the ad.

Specific to print advertisements, Hagan (2009) assesses a variety of Spanish/English advertisements collected in Miami. The qualitative analysis researches the motivations for presenting advertisements that use Spanish/English CS, and the author additionally examines other patterns of language alternation like the use of language in specific domains, age and gender of speakers of the target language, as well as the position of the first English word in an ad. The study points out that English words appear in predominantly Spanish advertisements to supplement the Spanish lexicon. This is not because these words are lacking a Spanish counterpart, but because the vocabulary words in English may be exercised differently in Spanish, although the translation is the same. Thus, the previous research on the use of Spanish/English CS in print advertisements has shown the following: (1) consumers find advertisements that switch from Spanish to English most attractive, (2) bilingual advertisements should closely reflect the medium they are placed within, (3) advertisements designed for US Latinx bilingual consumers are most appealing if they use Spanish or English instead of CS, and (4) code-switched advertisements which alternate from Spanish to English use English to supplement the Spanish lexicon representing terms specific to the US context.

Considering these conclusions, I examine the linguistic nature of the bilingual national and DJ-endorsed advertisements on 96.3 La Mega with an interest in the language distribution and use of CS. I also examine if the CS is representative of the linguistic patterns used in the bilingual format of the radio station. As Spanish/English CS appears to reflect part of the linguistic repertoire of US Latinxs of Los Angeles (Attig and Derrick 2021), these advertisements provide a means for fruitful inquiry into the ways this linguistic variety is seeping into the advertisements of local and national goods and services being marketed to

the US Latinx community. A linguistic analysis of these advertisements will expand the current literature on Spanish in the US and the contemporary language practices used in bilingual marketing and broadcasting.

4. Methodology and Frameworks

To examine the CS present in the bilingual advertisements on 96.3 La Mega, it is important to note the different types of CS patterns that bilinguals utilize. As pointed out by Poplack (1980, p. 583), CS is "the alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence or constituent". Poplack's research distinguishes three types of CS: Tag, Inter-sentential, and Intra-sentential. Tag-switching is seen when a tag phrase is taken from one language and inserted into another. Some English tags include 'so', 'you know', 'I mean', right, etc., as cited below from Poplack's corpus:

1.   I could understand QUE (that) you don't know how to speak Spanish, ¿VERDAD? (right). (Poplack 1980, p. 596)

Another type of switching is inter-sentential (also known as extra-sentential), where CS takes place between sentences.

2.   A: I had a dream yesterday, last night.
       B: ¿DE QUÉ NÚMERO? 'What number?'
       A: EL CERO SETENTA Y CINCO. 'Zero seventy-five'. (Poplack 1980, p. 598)

The last and most complex switching, intra-sentential CS, happens when the switch occurs within the sentence. Poplack notes that only the most competent bilinguals use intra-sentential CS because it requires the most skill to produce. In (3), we have an example:

3.   He was sitting down EN LA CAMA, MIRÁNDONOS PELEANDO, Y
       ('in bed, watching us fighting and') really, I don't remember SI ÉL
       NOS SEPARÓ ('if he separated us') or whatever, you know. (Poplack 1980, p. 589)

Considering the different types of CS that bilinguals employ in their linguistic practices, in this study, I examine the linguistic nature of the Spanish/English CS in 96.3 La Mega's on-air advertisements.

As mentioned previously, I collected 72 hours of radio stream for this project. I eliminated the music and DJ talk/audience interactions, leaving me with the advertisements. Since this study analyzes bilingual advertisements, I discarded monolingual English and Spanish advertisements. Furthermore, there are many advertisements that repeat during the broadcast; therefore, I counted each bilingual advertisement only once. In terms of analyzing the linguistic nature of the bilingual advertisements on 96.3 La Mega, I examine the distribution of language use sentence by sentence, using Derrick's (2015) sentential framework for the analysis of multilingual sentences. The use of this framework will allow for an examination of the linguistic nature of the radio advertisements to assess if they are reflective of the linguistic norms used on-air.

Derrick's (2015) framework is particularly noteworthy, as it considers bilingual intra-sentential sentences that do not have a matrix or base language. This framework categorizes bilingual sentences as follows: English-base bilingual sentences, Spanish-base bilingual sentences, and hybrid sentences. In this typology, the base language provides the grammatical structure for the sentences and most of its lexical items. Thus, sentences like (4) will be analyzed as an English-base bilingual sentence, which can include one or more insertions of Spanish words or phrases. Examples below from well-known US Latinx authors show English as the base language in their bilingual texts:

4.   I met papi's *sucia* (Drown: 43)
       'I met papi's whore'

A sentence such as that in (5) will be considered a Spanish-base bilingual sentence:

5.   *En una de esas, los 4 muestran sus mejores* "dance moves" *y una coreografía para una de sus canciones más intensas, la de "Déjate Caer", y bailan bastante bien, por cierto.* (Life in Spanglish: 6 September 2013)
       'In one of those, the 4 of them show their best dance moves and a choreography for one of their most intense songs, "Déjate Caer", and they dance really well, of course'.

A sentence such as (6), on the other hand, will be considered a hybrid sentence with no base language:

6. This city I love *está toda* spread out, *es enorme, llena de tráfico y luces, y* freeways *y* mini-malls. (Life in Spanglish: 13 January 2012)
   'This city I love is all spread out, it's enormous, full of traffic and lights and freeways and mini-malls'.

Since the radio advertisements also include English and Spanish monolingual sentences, Derrick's (2015) framework proposes the following sentential categorization:

(1) Monolingual English Sentences: sentences that include only English.
(2) English-base Bilingual Sentences: sentences that have English as the base language and 1+ Spanish insertions.
(3) Monolingual Spanish Sentences: sentences that include only Spanish.
(4) Spanish-base Bilingual Sentences: sentences which have Spanish as the base language and 1+ English insertions.
(5) Hybrid Sentences: sentences with no base language.

Thus, English-base bilingual sentences and Spanish-base bilingual sentences involve insertion, while hybrid sentences show no clear base language. The use of Derrick's (2015) classification will allow me to determine the degree of bilingualism in the advertisements and the type of CS used and to point out the linguistic nature of national and DJ-endorsed advertisements on 96.3 La Mega.

5. Analysis

5.1. National Advertisements

In the corpus composed of 143 national and DJ-endorsed bilingual advertisements, I have established a base language for each sentence by dividing them into Monolingual English, English-base bilingual sentences, Monolingual Spanish, Spanish-base bilingual sentences, and hybrid sentences. Below, Figures 1 and 2 show the linguistic structures found in the 82 national advertisements.
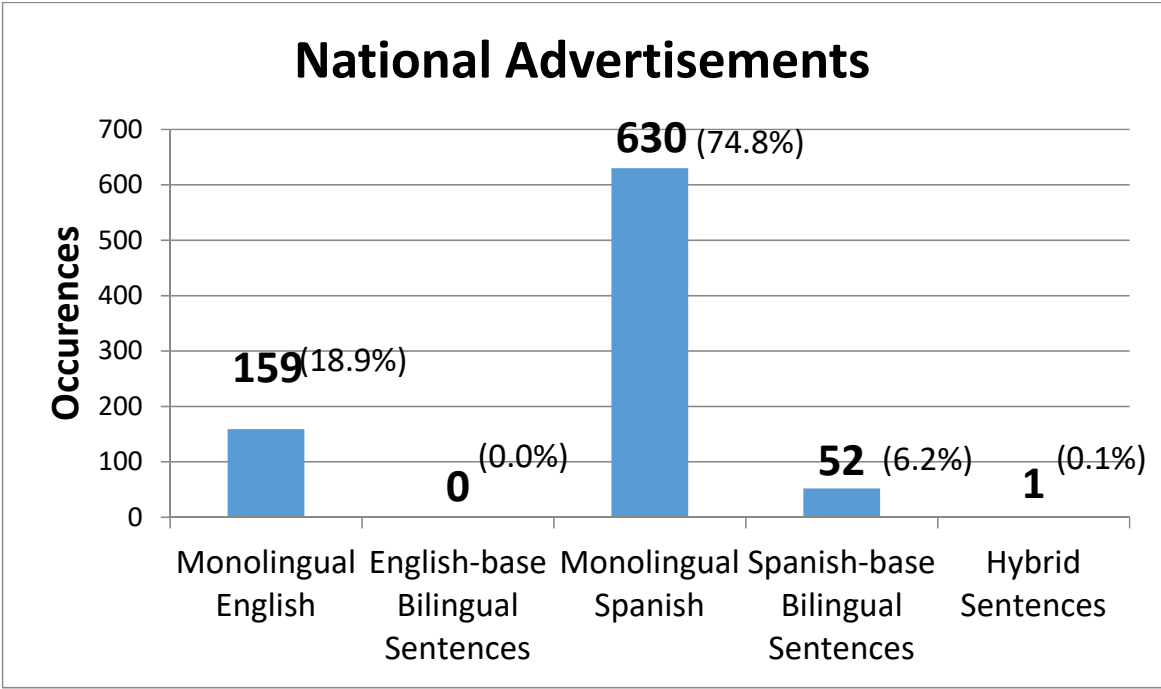

Figure 1. Sentence types for bilingual national advertisements on 96.3 La Mega.

National Advertisements
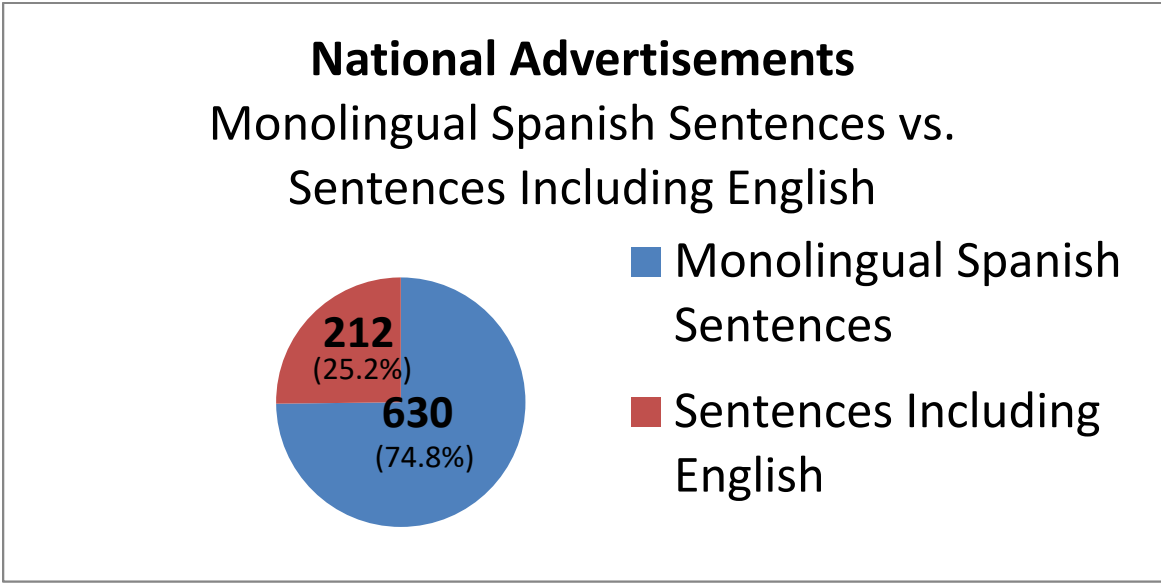Monolingual Spanish Sentences vs.
Sentences Including English

Figure 2. Monolingual Spanish sentences vs. sentences including English in national advertisements.

5.1.1. Monolingual Spanish

As seen in Figures 1 and 2, the most common type of sentence in the national advertisements is monolingual Spanish (74.8%). Examples of monolingual Spanish sentences from the corpus are presented below:

7. *Mejor protégete, y habla con un agente de Allstate, alguien que te conoce y se preocupa por ti.* (Allstate Insurance)
    'It is better to protect yourself and talk to an Allstate agent, someone who knows and cares about you'.
8. *Rosetta Stone es un programa efectivo, el cual te brinda todas las herramientas necesarias para aprender con su método que está garantizado.* (Rosetta Stone)
    'Rosetta Stone is an effective program, which provides all of the necessary tools and methods guaranteed for you to learn'.
9. *Con mil hojas, Scott 1000 es el rollo más duradero del país.* (Scott Toilet Paper)
    'With a thousand sheets, Scott 1000 is the most durable roll in the country'.

The strong tendency in this corpus for monolingual Spanish sentences seems to counter Bishop and Peterson's (2010) claim that bilingual advertisements geared towards the US Latinx community should match the medium in which they appear to result in higher evaluations of the products or services being advertised. In contrast, in the national advertisements on 96.3 La Mega, totaling all of the sentences which have Spanish as the base language (monolingual Spanish and Spanish-base sentences) it is reflective of 81 percent of the national advertisements corpus. This would seem to highlight that contemporary national advertising agencies show a preference for Spanish and believe that Los Angeles' bilingual Latinx community has this same linguistic inclination.

5.1.2. Monolingual English Sentences

Outside of monolingual Spanish, monolingual English represents 18.9 percent of the corpus, as noted below:

10. Every plant is carefully selected, every batch is gently matured, every drop is double distilled. Never forget where you come from, born in the highlands of Jalisco, Tequila Cazadores. (Tequila Cazadores)
11. Progressive presents mindfulness, with Flow. (Progressive Auto Insurance)
12. Your floors are under attack from overwatered plants to overflowing dog bowls, but the Home Depot has new water-resistant Pergo Outlast Plus laminate flooring starting at just $2.79 a square foot. (The Home Depot)

This second largest category represents 159 sentences of the national advertisements corpus. In examining the bilingual nature of 96.3 La Mega, in addition to including primarily monolingual Spanish advertisements, it would seem appropriate that monolingual English sentences would also appear frequently. The inclusion of this strategy would also appeal to bilingual Latinxs who are English-dominant, reaching the entirety of the diverse listenership in their linguistic preference. As Caballero notes, "I've always worked with the Hispanic audience, with advertisers or with content. And it's always been a struggle with, 'what's the right mix?' 'How do we speak to all Hispanics?' And, I mean, this debate continues today. My personal views are 'engagement over everything" (Derrick 2017) Below, I examine the use of bilingual sentences, which include intra-sentential CS.

5.1.3. Spanish-Base Bilingual Sentences

Specific to bilingualism in on-air advertisements on 96.3 La Mega, Caballero points out that, "it used to be that the agencies would only send Spanish-only advertisements, but now we are starting to see the awareness of the lifestyle and culture of Latinos in the US" (Derrick 2017). It appears, then, that there has been a shift to include more bilingualism in advertisements geared towards the US Latinx community. In the corpus, Spanish-base bilingual sentences represent 6.2 percent or 52 of the total sentences analyzed. This follows the pattern of most of the sentences having a Spanish-base as monolingual Spanish is the most salient sentence type, as shown below:

13. *Elijas como elijas, siempre ganas con* el McPick Two *de McDonald's* for only five dollars.
    'Choose however you like, you always will with the McPick Two from McDonalds for only five dollars'. (McDonalds)
14. *Eso es hacer valer tus* pennies. (JcPenny)
    'This is making your pennies count'.
15. *A las rockeras que cantan sobre* el wish wash *de la lavadera*. (Tide)
    'To the rockers that sing about the wish wash of the laundry room'.

As noted in examples (13)–(15), the on-air advertisements are inserting terms that are specific to US culture that perhaps would not translate the same way or with the same effectiveness if they were to be presented in monolingual Spanish, like fast food menu items, 'pennies', and 'wish wash'. This is on par with the findings of Hagan (2009), who comments that most advertisements, which included Spanish/English CS tend to use English when referring to the US context, as certain terms do not translate word-for-word, though there may be a Spanish equivalent. In other words, CS in these types of advertisements does not necessarily highlight linguistic hybridity and the preference of US Latinxs, but rather the American way of life, which would not easily translate in the same way within a Latin American context.

5.1.4. English-Base Bilingual Sentences

Interestingly, the corpus of national advertisements showed no occurrences of English-base bilingual sentences. This illuminates additional evidence that contemporary national advertising agencies believe Spanish should remain dominant in bilingual advertisements. This is more on par with the findings of Levitt (1983), who points out that advertisements geared towards bilingual US Latinx consumers are most successful if they use one language over the other. This might furthermore indicate as noted by Caballero that advertising agencies are not quite sure how to intermix CS into their advertisements to portray the 'right mix' of Spanish and English (Derrick 2017).

5.1.5. Hybrid Sentences

Finally, hybrid sentences, or those sentences for which a base language cannot be determined, also have a low occurrence in the national advertisements corpus. The analysis identified 0.1 percent or one sentence:

16. *Mi nombre es April*, and I love my Ford Focus. (Ford)
    'My name is April, and I love my Ford Focus'.

Although few instances of hybrid sentences are represented, based on the previous literature related to bilingual advertisements and comments by Caballero (Derrick 2017), it appears that advertisement agencies are beginning to see the value of including more CS in their advertisements to reach the bilingual US Latinx community of Los Angeles. In (16), we see that there is no preference for one language over the other, rather a fusion of both languages, which requires the audience to have fluency in Spanish and English. Examining Figures 1 and 2, it is also apparent that national advertising agencies are not yet fully on board with the idea of using Spanish/English CS as the primary mode of communication for marketing products to US Latinx bilinguals. To this point, Caballero comments that, "I often have to push back on advertising agencies that think they know what they want to do with our audience and tactfully explain why they need to do things a different way. It's often around language use and about ways they can make their vision make more sense to our Hispanic listeners and sound more organic to the way they actually speak. Advertising agencies push ad copies they feel are going to engage the audience best, but sometimes I have to school them on how to best communicate with my community. We do our best at 96.3 to select clients that we know the agency they are working with, what their brand is doing, who their target demo is and we like to be aware of the brands that are using bilingual endorsements, like Pitbull with AT&T a few years ago" (Derrick 2017). In examining the 82 national advertisements on LA's 96.3 La Mega, it stands out that marketing agencies are appealing to bilingual Latinx consumers in primarily monolingual Spanish, similar to the findings of Callow and McDonald (2005) who pointed out that bilingual Spanish/English formats should include advertisements that are mostly Spanish only.

Though national advertisements show a low representation of hybrid sentences and intra-sentential CS, there is evidence that national on-air advertisements are beginning to use more inter-sentential CS, as monolingual English and hybrid sentences make up almost 20 percent of the corpus. In the next section, I look at the types of sentences present in the DJ-endorsed advertisements to see if they are using CS that is more representative of the ethos of 96.3 La Mega, which brands itself as a bilingual radio station that takes pride in using both Spanish and English.

5.2. DJ-Endorsed Advertisements

Since 96.3 La Mega also uses DJ-endorsed advertisements to appeal to US Latinx consumers in Los Angeles, it is worth examining these advertisements with an interest in the ways the language use is similar or dissimilar from the national advertisements reviewed above. As noted by Bishop and Peterson (2010, p. 63), Spanish/English bilingual advertisements are most effective if the language use is reflective of the medium they are used within; so, in this vein, I examine here if there is a more balanced use of Spanish/English CS in DJ-endorsed advertisements. Figure 3 notes the types of base sentences found in the corpus composed of 61 DJ-endorsed advertisements.

As seen in Figure 4, 48.1 percent of the DJ-endorsed advertisements are composed of sentences with monolingual Spanish as the base language. These findings contrast significantly with the corpus of national advertisements, where 74.8 percent of the advertisements utilized monolingual Spanish. Below, following the same organization as the previous section, I examine the different types of sentences, which show a more even distribution across categories in comparison to the national advertisements.
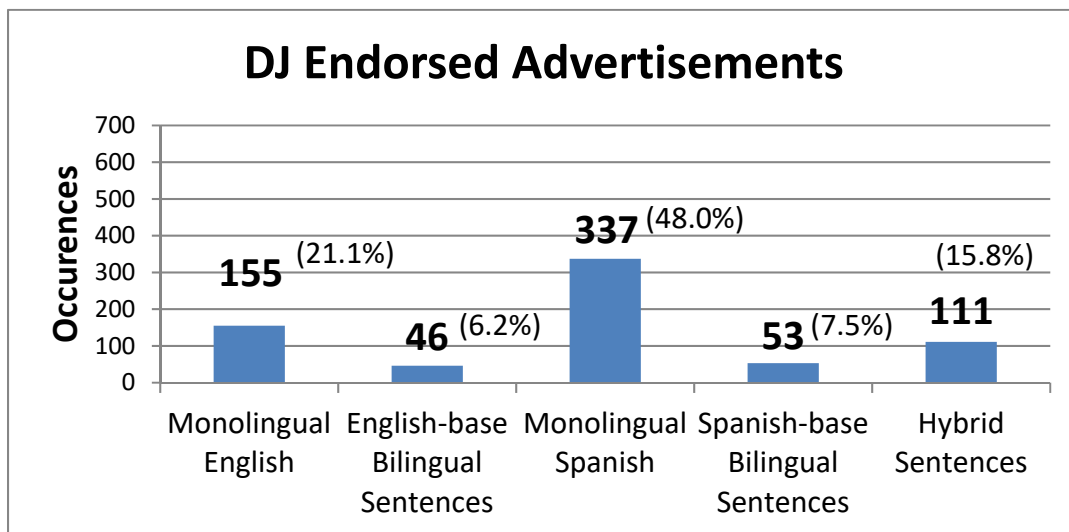
Figure 3. Sentence types for bilingual DJ-endorsed advertisements on 96.3 La Mega.
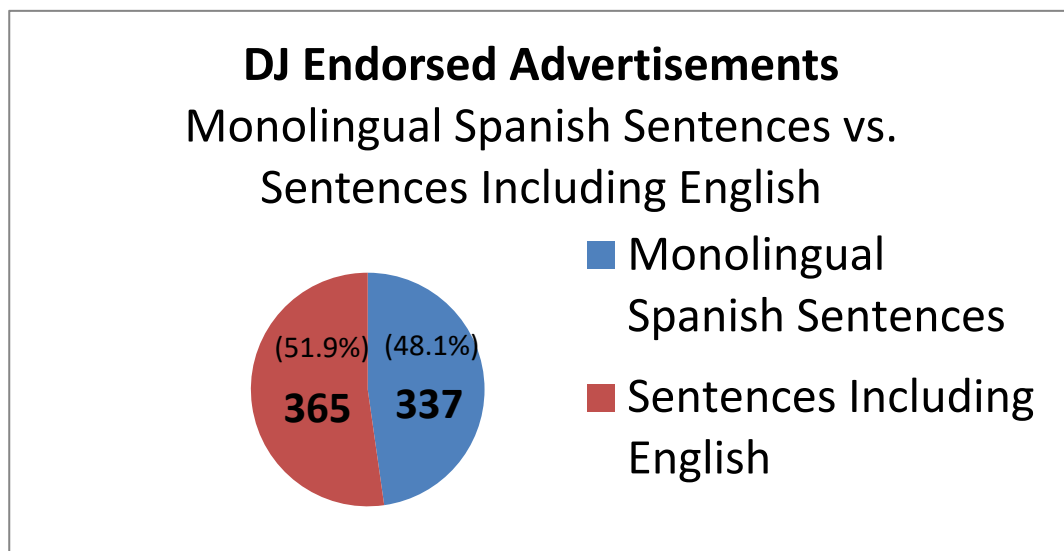

Figure 4. Monolingual Spanish sentences vs. sentences including English in DJ-endorsed advertisements.

5.2.1. Monolingual Spanish

As noted above, there is a stark difference in the use of monolingual Spanish amongst national and DJ-endorsed advertisements. DJ-endorsed advertisements use monolingual Spanish significantly less. Examples of this sentences type are given below:

17. *Si no puede dejar de comer carne roja, elija cortes con poca o sin grasa y límite el tamaño de porciones. Mensaje de la Universidad de California.* (University of California Health)
'If you can't stop eating red meat, choose small cuts without or with a small amount of fat, and limit the size of your portions'.

18. *Este lunes llega a mega TV un nuevo programa. Este lunes, cuatro p.m. Te estaré esperando.* (Mega TV)
'This Monday a new program arrives to mega TV. This Monday at 4 p.m., I'll be waiting for you'.

19. *Fernando, ¿qué mensaje tiene para mi gente? Que tengan cuidado cuando compran su auto porque mucha gente está pagando intereses altos y por eso, recomiendo a Nissan de Duarte.* (Nissan of Duarte)
'Fernando, what message do you have for my people? They should be careful when they buy their car because a lot of people are paying high interest rates and for this reason, I recommend Nissan of Duarte'.

As 96.3 La Mega prides itself on not prioritizing one language over the other, it is curious that 50 percent of the sentences in the DJ-endorsed advertisements utilize monolingual Spanish. In this case, we also note Spanish as the primary base language DJs use to advertise products and services to US Latinx bilinguals.

5.2.2. Monolingual English Sentences

The second largest category is monolingual English, which represents 21.1 percent of the corpus or 155 sentences. This is on par with the findings for the national advertisements, where around 19 percent of the sentences were monolingual English. Below are some examples of these types of sentences:

20. Closet G is coming to the Promenade at Downey. Join me, Carolina Marquez, for the grand opening this Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from noon to three. (Closet G Downey)
21. DJ Eddie One. Ladies, Fellas, I'm here to remind you that now is your chance to have the body of your dreams the summer is around the corner and Pacific Med is offering super special prices on breast augmentation, tummy tucks, liposculpture, and Brazilian butt lift. (Pacific Med Health Group)
22. Your music this hour is being brought to you by Beverly Hills Physicians. (Beverly Hills Physicians)

In national and DJ-endorsed advertisements, both types of advertisements use monolingual English as a vehicle to engage bilingual US Latinxs. Caballero (Derrick 2017) comments on the importance of choosing advertisement campaigns that speak to all of their listeners noting, "It is important to create bonds amongst Hispanic listeners regardless of their competence in Spanish or English". In this vein, it is valuable to market products and services in both monolingual English and Spanish for listeners.

5.2.3. Spanish-Base Bilingual Sentences

Examining the sentences, which utilize intra-sentential CS, similar to the national advertisements, Spanish-base bilingual sentences were the third most prominent category in the corpus of DJ-endorsed advertisements, representing 7.5 percent or 53 sentences of the corpus, as exemplified below:

23. *Pregunta para todos mis radioescuchas, ¿han ido a algún* car dealer *este fin de semana pasada*? (Nissan of Duarte)
    'A question for all of my listeners, have you gone to a car dealer this past weekend?'
24. *¿Necesitas* a fast auto loan? Llama al 1 800 514 CASH, o visita fastauto.com para saber más. (Fast Auto)
    'Do you need a fast auto loan? Call 1 800 514 CASH, or visit fastauto.com to learn more'.
25. *Se compraron su carrito, salieron bien contentos, se fueron para la casa y les señalaron el carro a todo el mundo, y ahora el* dealer *les está llamando y diciendo que necesitan un* co-signer, *que el pago no va a ser de $400, que va a ser de $600*. (Villa Ford of Orange)
    'You bought yourselves a car, you were very happy, you went home and showed everyone your car, and now the dealer is calling you and telling you that you need a co-signer, and that the payment isn't going to be $400, rather $600?'

Comparable to the national advertisements, (23)–(25) illustrate Spanish-base bilingual sentences, which use US specific terminology like 'car dealer' and 'fast auto loan' to code-switch. Specific to the auto industry, it is common to see different local dealerships utilize the same terms in English within their advertisements to US bilingual consumers. Hagan (2009, p. 13) mentions about the insertion of English terms in Spanish sentences within advertisements that, "Not surprisingly, however, regional variations in words ranging from the more common "bathroom" to the more specialized "layaway" complicate the goal of the American advertisers aiming for a Latino audience; for better or for worse, such advertisers are looking to access a large group of people, with little or no discrimination between consumers from Puerto Rico, and those from Mexico or Argentina. Faced with copious choices and little consensus, some advertisers likely choose to employ a different common denominator: English". In other words, marketers that employ CS in their advertisements choose to insert English terms in Spanish-base sentences to ensure inclusiveness in key words for US Latinx consumers.

5.2.4. English-Base Bilingual Sentences

Within this category, we begin to see more contrast between the national advertisements in comparison to the DJ-endorsed advertisements. In this case, there are English-base bilingual sentences, where there were none reflected in the national advertisements. Here, these sentences represent 6.2 percent or 46 occurrences within the corpus, as pointed out below:

26. I mean are you looking forward to putting on a bikini, *un traje de baño*, and strutting your stuff in front of everybody at the *playa*? (Beverly Hills Physicians)
'I mean are you looking forward to putting on a bikini, a bathing suit, and strutting your stuff in front of everybody at the beach?'
27. *Oye, sin duda* it's just going to get more beautiful which means it's time for the beach. (LA Center for Cosmetic Surgery)
'Listen, without a doubt it's just going to get more beautiful which means it's time for the beach'.
28. That's right and also J Balvin and his record release party, exclusive *boletos* only *aquí* in the morning Mega show *y en las calles con promociones*. (J. Balvin record release party)
'That's right and also J Balvin and his record release party, exclusive tickets only here in the morning Mega show and in the streets with promotions'.

As opposed to Spanish-base bilingual sentences, in this case, in (26)–(28), the Spanish insertions appear as a stylistic device to incorporate a Latinx flavor into the advertisement. In fact, Caballero points out about on-air host practices that, "the DJs use a lot of accommodation to adapt to the audience in whichever language to make them feel as comfortable as possible . . . at some point, we have to realize and consider that Spanglish is 'just the way they talk' ([Derrick 2017](#)). As highlighted above, none of the terms here are representative of a specific Latinx context and instead seem to be a strategy to attract Latinx consumers by appealing to them in both languages.

5.2.5. Hybrid Sentences

Lastly, hybrid sentences represent 15.8 percent or 115 sentences of the corpus. This category differs drastically from the national advertisements in terms of occurrence and is reflective of the bilingual ethos of 96.3 La Mega. Thus, we note here that the DJs are using CS as a mode of interaction to advertise a variety of services and products. In this case, the language use is similar to that which is used on-air in news updates, caller/DJ interactions, artist interviews, and DJ banter. Below, I point out examples of hybrid sentences from the corpus:

29. Hey it's Sandra Peña *de Mega 96.3 y me has escuchado hablar de cómo mis doctores, los doctores certificados de* Boards Cosmetic and how they get down, right? (Boards Cosmetic Surgery)
'Hey it's Sandra Peña from 96.3 and you have heard me talk about how my doctors, the certified doctors from Boards Cosmetic, and how they get down, right?
30. I mean, *nadie quiere enfrentar la necesidad de un abogado*, but hey, it's good to know that you can count on somebody. (Parker Law Group)
'I mean, no one wants to confront the reality of needed a lawyer . . .'
31. Call today for your free consultation, *hasta hay cita los sábados*, so *no hay excusa*. (California Dental Group)
'Call today for your free consultation, there are even appointments on Saturdays so there is no excuse'.

As mentioned previously, hybrid sentences are those for which a base cannot be established. The examples above reflect a mixture of Spanish and English, and there is no primary language being used; rather, Spanish/English CS is the mode. In (29)–(31), we notice the use of tags like hey, I mean, and so as switch points. Regarding tags, Poplack notes that they "are freely moveable constituents which may be inserted anywhere in the sentence" ([Poplack 1980](#), p. 589). Furthermore, Caballero points out about 96.3 La Mega's DJ language use and station ethos that he does not tell the DJs how much to mix each language because, "I think that gets in the way of actually engaging with an audience. I think, letting the host feel comfortable with however they want to mix in the

English and the Spanish is the most effective way at trying to communicate a message, this authenticity is what is going to connect the most with our listeners" (Derrick 2017). Thus, it appears that DJ-endorsed advertisements on 96.3 La Mega are showing a more innovative use of Spanish/English CS which includes intra-sentential CS, in comparison to national advertisements that seek to attract bilingual US Latinx consumers in mostly monolingual Spanish.

6. Discussion and Conclusions

In an examination of the linguistic nature of bilingual advertisements on 96.3 La Mega and comments from previous brand manager Victor Caballero, there is evidence that Spanish/English CS is becoming more widespread in radio advertisements geared towards Los Angeles's bilingual Latinx consumers. Specific to the speech of bilingual US Latinxs in Los Angeles, Caballero comments that, "I became a Lyft driver for six months in LA and I wanted to understand how people communicate in Los Angeles. How are they speaking to each other? I learned that contrary to the beliefs at a lot of the research companies that we're working with who are showing us data that says "Spanish dominant". Like, bilingual doesn't work. You can't communicate to the masses using a bilingual approach, because they're going to tune out. So, my personal experience driving young Hispanics in LA around is that using Spanglish is just the way they talk. So, it's been a battle. These are research companies that we're paying a lot of money to that are giving us data that I feel in my heart is not truly representative of the audience that we're trying to target" (Derrick 2017).

Here, Caballero points out his professional and personal experiences related to the use of Spanish/English CS in Los Angeles as a necessary strategy to encourage the consumerism of the US Latinx community. His observations of the tendency to present Spanish-dominant advertisements are on par with the findings of this research in both national and DJ-endorsed on-air advertisements. However, there does seem to be some innovation in DJ-endorsed advertisements under the direction of Caballero at 96.3 La Mega.

Thus, it appears that 96.3 La Mega is pushing the boundaries related to best practices in Spanish/English bilingual advertisements. Though studies like Bishop and Peterson (2010) have pointed out that advertisements should match the medium context, in this case, Spanish/English CS as the primary mode of communication, national advertisement agencies still favor a Spanish-dominant advertising strategy. Currently, 96.3 La Mega ranks within the top 2 Latinx radio stations geared towards contemporary music and within the top 20 of Los Angeles overall (Nielsen Audio PPM Monthly Ratings 2023). As their on-air DJ-endorsed advertisements include a more sustained mixture of Spanish/English CS, this highlights that the use of this practice is indicative of the way that young US Latinxs identify linguistically. This strategy furthermore emphasizes the importance of Spanish/English CS as an ongoing practice that continues to evolve and become legitimatized in diverse types of US Latinx contexts and discourses.

Further research into bilingual advertisements and radio host banter could assess the language distribution of monolingual English, Spanish, and Spanish/English CS for further investigation into on-air language use practices. Query into on-air language use could provide further insight into contemporary linguistic practices within the US Latinx community. Moreover, other research on Spanish/English CS could examine its use in emerging audiovisual texts to assess language ideologies related to the motivations for using CS in texts geared towards diverse mainstream audiences.

Note

1   The term Spanglish has caused much debate amongst linguists regarding an exact definition and its relation to the US Latinx community, see (Casielles-Suárez 2017) for more discussion on the terms Spanglish and Spanish/English CS. In this research, I use Spanglish and Spanish/English CS interchangeably.

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