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The Image of Hispanics in Advertising in the United States

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Topic: Hispanics and advertising in the United States

Summary: This study shows that in order to successfully reach the Hispanic demographic in the United States, in addition to using both English and Spanish through code switching, code mixing or what is popularly known as Spanglish, an appeal to culture must also be used.

Keywords: advertising, Hispanic market in the USA, English, Spanish, Spanglish, biculturalism, and bilingualism.

Overview¹

On the U.S. government's current website (<http://www.usa.gov> 2014), there are key figures that demonstrate the growth of the Hispanic population in the United States:

¹ These texts have been edited and formatted by Clara González Tosat, Sara Steinmetz and Francisco Moreno-Fernández.

- As of July 1, 2012, it is estimated that nearly 53 million Hispanics now live in the United States, accounting for 17 percent of the country's total population;
- It is estimated that the U.S. Hispanic population grew by 1 million between July 1st, 2011, and July 1st, 2012; roughly half of the total number of people who were added to the population during that same period of time (2.3 million);
- The Hispanic population is projected to reach 128.8 million people in the year 2060, which would account for 30 percent of the total population of the United States. The U.S. would then be the country with highest Spanish-speaking population (Retis and Badillo 2015);
- There are around 37 million people in the United States who speak Spanish.

This dynamic, emerging population, found mostly in major metropolitan areas, is largely heterogeneous: a wide array of races (blacks, mixed, etc.), classes (newly poor and newly rich) and generations (first, second, third, etc.). With respect to country of origin, each nationality has experienced a different process of incorporation into the United States. Assimilation has been impacted by political, social and temporal factors, and as such there are many different assimilation models in American society. All these circumstances have an impact on their assimilation, but also on their attitude toward the United States and the Latino community: identities are shaped with or against the Anglo-Saxon identity (Noya *et al.* 2008). Luis Rojas Marcos (2003) notes that the Hispanic community, compared with the rest of the population, is younger, prefers larger families, divorces less, and enjoys high life expectancies. And nothing defines or unites Hispanics more in the United States, according to Rojas Marcos, than the Spanish language. Many speak Spanish at home, and many others use it during their leisure activities. On the other hand, within the business and working world, English is commonly spoken, although among Hispanics they will often resort to

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their mother tongue, inserting Spanish terms in a dialog is considered a good tactic to temper a heated negotiation (Rojas Marcos 2003).

Cassinello (2004) has written about Latinos:

Initial data suggest that we are dealing with an exceptionally dynamic sociological reality. New information comes in all the time, and patterns shift rapidly, which obliges us to constantly renew our changing analysis and expectations. As already seen, this includes the fact that the actual demographic volume is changing with surprising speed. And this mutable, variable character tends to perpetuate itself through constant shifts from one situation to another, a consequence in turn of the continued migratory wave, which itself is the result of the proximity and ease of transportation.

For that reason, advertisers must find a way to reach a Hispanic market that is in full-on development. In addition to finding linguistic strategies, this advertising must reflect Latino identity and potentially present universal messages that the entire population can recognize (Carrillo Durán 2007), and of course be free of prejudice.

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Characteristics of the Latino groups in the United States

One very important characteristic of Latino groups in the United States, which differentiates them from the American population and cannot be ignored, is youth (Álvarez and Barberena 2008). According to data from these authors, the average age among Hispanics is 28 years old (the average among the rest of the US population is 37). Additionally, the average age of Hispanics who were born in the United States is 17. With respect to country of origin, two out of every three Hispanics (65%) are Mexican, followed at a distance by Puerto Ricans, Cubans and Dominicans. Furthermore, 60.1 percent of Hispanics were born in the United States, which is why it is incorrect, the authors explain, to consider them foreigners. Regardless, according to this study, speaking Spanish, in its different forms, is not an indispensable requirement for a person to self-identify as Hispanic: three out of four Hispanics speak mostly Spanish at home, while 22 percent only speak English at home.

As these data show, Spanish is the main language, but the use of English increases “as circumstances dictate, since it is more commonly used at work” (Álvarez and Barberena 2008: 2). Fifty-three percent are bilingual, i.e. they state that they speak both Spanish and English “very well” or “well”, while 60.7 percent of Hispanics say that they speak English very well or only speak English. Unfortunately, one of the aspects that most differentiates Spanish-speaking Americans from the rest of the English-speaking population is education. “While 23.8 percent of Hispanics age 25 or older have completed fewer than nine years of schooling, among the entire population of the United States this percentage is just 6.5%” (Álvarez and Barberena 2008: 2-3).

With respect to culture, a poll taken by *impreMedia* (2010), the leading Hispanic news and information company, shows that 63 percent of Latinos interviewed responded that in the United States, both Spanish culture and language are more accepted now than they were five years ago. This poll explains, for example, that the influence on the culture of Latino communities can be seen in the types of foods found in the United States, in the music that radio stations play, and in the sports and the type of products that consumers buy. Latinos who answered the poll in Spanish indicated “viewing the future with more optimism” than those who had answered in English (*impreMedia* 2010). Furthermore, 67 percent of those polled stated that “the culture and tradition brought with them from their countries is very important to them and they plan on raising their children within those traditions. When participants were asked if they are proud to be Latinos, 72 percent said yes” (*impreMedia* 2010; Betti 2013).

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The Latino market, language and advertising in the United States

This new Hispanic generation studies, and those who work after school, according to Holloway (2005), do so not only to help their families, but also to buy

the products that the market is selling them. At the same time, this generation influences, or can have an influence, on the family's purchasing decisions. These young people, called Millennials, make up approximately 21 percent of the entire population group). Millennials are already part of globalization; they are educated and active. They consume products and culture. They speak Spanish, English and other languages, and they maintain their own identity while interacting with other cultures, mainly through their presence on social networks.

Álvarez Ruiz *et al.* (2009) underscores that advertising messages serve to integrate Latinos, as occurs with brand consumption. That is why advertisers should not produce advertising for immigrants and advertising for the rest of the population (Álvarez Ruiz *et al.* 2009), as it has for some time, but rather advertisers need to consider these communities as an integral part of the United States. In fact, Millennials search for the best prices online as well as in brick and mortar stores, and that is why they are more open to sales from brands and messages from advertisers about products and services (Sebreros 2014).

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Sebreros (2014) has watched Honda advertise its car, the "Fit," to new generations of Latinos in the United States ever since the multinational realized that Hispanic youth in this country represent a very interesting business opportunity. This campaign, called "Un buen Fit" (literally, "A good fit"), shows ads in both English and in Spanish. The English ad includes the tagline "Un buen Fit" at the end of it, and Comedian Felipe Esparza appears in both ads. With this strategy, Honda is trying to joke around with Hispanic Millennials. These elements, i.e. the presence of a Hispanic actor and the reference to their native language, according to Sebreros, are how the brand has chosen to approach Latino youth; however, Sebreros says it remains to be seen if "bicultural 'millennials' feel as if they have been identified," especially if we feel that one of their characteristics is that they "seek out brands that treat them as unique, not as stereotypes" (Sebreros 2014).

Creating advertising solely in Spanish or solely in English is an incorrect perception of Hispanic identity as monolithic and monolingual, and therefore rejects the dual status of Hispanics in the United States. As the Nielsen Report observes (2012), commonly mistaken ideas about the Hispanic market which underestimate “the importance of its size, singularity and value” (Nielsen 2012: 1) need to be recognized, which is why one must take into consideration that:

- Latinos are essential to a business’ success, rather than a marginal niche.
- The rapid growth of the Latino population will continue, even if immigration is completely interrupted.
- Latinos have acquired significant purchasing power, despite perceptions to the contrary.
- As the largest immigrant group, Hispanics are able to maintain their culture significantly and will not disappear into the American cultural melting pot.
- Their use of technology and media is not a faithful reflection of the general market, but rather the patterns are different owing to language, culture and dynamics properties.
- Latinos have different consumption patterns and do not buy in the same manner as the market in general.

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Therefore, advertisers who want better commercial success must focus their attention on these specific segments of Latino society. Indeed, market-study specialists should attract a specific target group, without stereotyping Hispanics with general messages² (Betti 2008). A few years ago, Isabel Valdés (2005), founder of Cultural Access Group, noted that if one looks at this market from a business point of view “whether or not the consumers were born in the United

² According to research by the Selig Center for Economic Growth at the University of Georgia, in 2007, Hispanics in the United States were considered the most powerful minority (Tornoe 2006).

States is a major distinction.” In fact, Valdés continues, Hispanics who are born in the United States are different from those born in another country with respect to cultural traits, language usage, purchasing patterns, income and media consumption (and that has an impact on communication and business strategies). In 2005, Valdés stated that the importance of the number of Latinos born outside of the United States needed to be taken into account: “In 2000, 39 percent of the Hispanic population in the United States (12.8 million people) were born outside of the country. Of that group, 43 percent entered the United States in the 1990s; about 30 percent arrived in the 1980s, and the rest (27 percent), prior to 1980.” Valdés (2005) also points out that marketing, as a science:

Assumes that consumers have knowledge, a conscience, and basic experience regarding products, services and brands. This assumption is not necessarily valid when the market to whom marketing actions are focused consists of individuals who were born or raised in another country and have limited knowledge of the market and retail systems. Due to the fact that the American Hispanic market has been growing exponentially as a consequence of foreign immigration, one must take into account the variable of those born outside of the United States vs. those who were born inside the United States. Furthermore, as mentioned elsewhere, the American economy will continue to attract new immigrants. This continued growth of the Latino population born both in and out of the United States demands a practical tool that manages the existing diversity among them.

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For his part, Solomon (2002) observed a few years ago that 35 percent of Hispanics born in the United States were under the age of 18 “and more than 20 percent of all those who will be born in the future will be the children of Hispanic mothers and will grow up bilingual and bicultural.” These young Latinos have a great deal in common with American youth. Solomon called them the “the ‘Ñ culture’ generation”, which is to say, the generation that may experience the best of both worlds. This author also found that Spanish in advertising is the language preferred by the majority of Hispanic “parents and grandparents who will have basic and significant influence on minors” (Solomon 2002). Furthermore, many of them have learned to speak English in American schools, although generally (but not all) continue to speak Spanish with their family. On this point, Valdés (2005)

noted: “The language preferences that young Hispanics have for English or Spanish may be hard to measure and manipulate. A high percentage of Hispanic teens, especially those born abroad, speak Spanish at home and ‘Spanglish’ and Spanish with their Latino friends, but use English with non-Latino peers.”

Dayelin Roman (2005) underscores that advertising in the United States targeting the Hispanic population would have to use Spanglish, since it is a code known to Latinos that can be used with other Hispanics, which distinguishes them and naturally carries emotional connotations. Roman (2005) thinks that the use of both languages in the same conversation connects culturally with the target market, which is to say, the Latino population that lives in the United States: “Ads targeted to the U.S. Hispanic population should utilize Spanglish because this code connects culturally with more Hispanics than any other code would. Ads in Spanglish would not only be understood by both Hispanics primarily proficient in English and Spanish, but because Spanglish was created by the U.S. Hispanic population, it is a code that culturally connects with the target market” (Roman 2005). Roman stresses that using Spanglish in advertising is a sign not only of belonging to both worlds, but also to the same ‘emotional realm’:

It is a code that only Hispanics understand, and is uniquely ours. Just as some Hispanics researched in Korzenny and Korzenny noted that they have an emotional connection with the Spanish language, U.S. Hispanics identify with Spanglish because it is something that we can only speak with other Hispanics. The same way that the English and Spanish languages have emotional connotations; words in Spanglish do, too. For older U.S. born Hispanics, it may remind them of their childhood when mom made arroz con pollo for their birthday and the kids who barely spoke Spanish in their homes ate it as if it was their favorite. Spanglish is also suggestive of the duality that U.S. Hispanics grow up with. We are never one, or the other; we are both (Roman 2005).

There are academics who argue that the language for advertising is currently not Spanish or English; rather culture is the new medium to be used in ads, and Spanglish will grow in importance, because this is an expressive strategy that ‘speaks to both worlds.’ Advertisers must appeal to these Hispanic groups using

their culture, their customs, and their way of being, in order for the message to work and to engage them emotionally. Major companies with a presence in the Hispanic market spent \$1.4 billion in 2011 on Hispanic media, which is to say, 29.1 percent more than the previous year. The leader was Procter & Gamble, which spent \$209.6 million, an increase of 9.1 percent over the previous year. Other key multinationals such as, for example, Kraft, Toyota, Dish Network, General Mills, Unilever, Coca Cola and Walmart increased their advertising budgets for Hispanic media, thereby positioning the Latino market as essential for their growth (Nielsen Report 2012: 3). Furthermore, communication companies are increasingly focusing on Hispanics, like Murdoch's News Corporation, and the ABC chain (Blasco 2012).

Thus, cultural aspects exert a profound influence over consumer behavior. Advertisers need to understand and decode what roles culture, subculture and social class play for the buyer. Latinos in fact are not just part of the economy; they are integral to every aspect of American life.

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And to that point, brands like Hyundai, ESPN, Corona and Dish Network have used both Spanish and English in Brazil for television campaigns since the World Cup (2014), which also attracted a huge viewing audience in the United States (*Marketing Directo.com* 2014). The online magazine *Marketing Directo.com* (2014) explains that:

Hyundai and Corona release different versions for the same ad campaign, one in English and the other in Spanish, while others like Dish or ESPN went more for "Spanglish," mixing words and phrases in both English and Spanish in the same ad. The key is to identify a universal message that is capable of capturing the attention of both audiences. For beer brand Corona, the bilingual nature of its consumers is the perfect opportunity to advertise across a much broader range of media, not just through Hispanic media, like it had traditionally. This is how promotional channels are broadening their ability to reach consumers over time.

At the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania, specialist Silvia Ortueta (2005) studied Latino profiles based upon their degree of integration into American culture through factors such as language, neighbors, friends, how they see themselves, birthplace, and market density. Ortueta then placed them into one of three categories: the acculturated, who represent 9 percent of the market and are fourth generation or more and prefer to speak English; the partially acculturated, who account for 66 percent, have lived in the United States for more than one generation and are familiar with the culture and the language, but continue to cultivate and maintain their roots and culture; and those who Ortueta calls the non-acculturated (25 percent) who are recent arrivals unfamiliar with American culture and remain attached to their country of origin. This research, presented in the magazine *Universia-Knowledge@Wharton*, showed that Hispanics consume media in Spanish based upon their level of acculturation, including Hispanics who are in the second or even third generation. Furthermore, what she finds is an effort or a desire on the part of Hispanic families that their children do not forget their language of origin. And that is, more than anything, thanks to media. Generally a person who is defined as acculturated earns well and consumes media in English, but that does not mean that they do not consume media in Spanish (Ortueta 2005). Ortueta also finds a difference between Hispanic home life and business life. For example, acculturated Hispanics usually read English-language magazines like *Newsweek* and *Time* (covering politics and the economy) “for quality and because their work environment uses English, and they have to work and interact with others in this language” (Ortueta 2005). That would explain why *Hispanic Business* and *Hispanic Magazine*, the most well-known Latino business magazines, are not written in Spanish. However, Ortueta argues that “for cultural reasons or not to lose the language, they may watch television dramas and sports like soccer or boxing, on different Spanish language television networks or radio stations. Increasingly there is this trend towards bilingualism” (2005). To that point, there is the famous example of when retailer Target ran ads in Spanish in prime-time

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during an episode of the hit TV show *Desperate Housewives* on the ABC network, and during *House* on the Fox network. Cassinello in 2004 explained:

Advertising – in Spanish and in English – is a special barometer that is continuously on the rise, and in no time at all will reach \$3 billion, owing to the incessant growth of Hispanic-focused media. The generalization of Nielsen ratings to measure the audience, the competition between Univisión/Telefutura/Galavisión and Telemundo/NBC, the appearance of CNN in Spanish, the creation of the Mexiamérica group in Texas, the establishment of a national daily newspaper network in Spanish (*La Opinión* in Los Angeles, *El Nuevo Herald* in Miami, *El Diario/La Prensa* in New York and *La Raza* in Chicago), the new weekly edition in Spanish of the *Wall Street Journal*, the peak of radio aimed at Hispanics, the launch of AOL Latina and ESPN Deportes (owned by Disney and the first cable sports channel that will be on 24 hours a day in Spanish, competing with Fox Sports in Spanish), are mere eloquent sketches of that.

Latino purchasing power

Since 2007, the purchasing power of Hispanics has been the highest of all minority groups in America, and even eclipses that of African-Americans. In 2011, it was at \$ 1.1 billion (Instituto Cervantes 2012 Report). Thus, this group, as we discussed earlier, comprises 16.7 percent of the entire American population. With their purchasing power they are the most important minority to the country's economy, and advertisers and their agencies are looking for a better solution to reach these consumers.³ It is a broad group who can now be studied as a “target audience” by brands to tailor their branding messages to them. It is important not to view them simply as a target market, because it is a culturally complex group with very different sets of behavior, owing to variables like generation, country of origin, class, sex and age (Álvarez Ruiz *et al.* 2009). The biggest mistake made by advertising experts and market-watchers would therefore be to consider

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³ Nonetheless, we also need to keep in mind what Sánchez (2006) writes, that is that “Latino immigrants in the United States are largely poor. According to one calculation, up to three-fifths are part of the ‘working class’ or ‘lower middle class’, who earn less than \$30,000 a year. At the same time, Moreno Fernández (2004) cites: “Hispanic family incomes are growing gradually, which is rather significant in a country where the gap between the rich and the poor expands year after year. As such, Miami’s socio-economic model may serve to drive Hispanic aspirations for a better quality of life.”

Hispanics as a homogeneous, compact group, given that they contain different levels of acculturation, create different relationships within American society, and have different perceptions of themselves (Noya *et al.* 2008; Betti 2008).

Another key aspect to take into consideration is linguistics; the Hispanic community is in fact comprised of English speakers, Spanish speakers, and bilinguals (more or less 'balanced') (Betti 2013). Back in 2000, Sergio Plaza Cerezo had already noted that:

A language and a culture define a certain degree of specificity of the tastes and preferences of Hispanic consumers in the United States. Shopping centers tailored to the Hispanic public are growing. For example, "Plaza Fiesta" is about to open its doors in Atlanta with hundreds of Latino stores. Within this context, large companies are starting to discover the potential of the Hispanic market, expanding their advertising budgets for this sector, which favors bilingualism. They have discovered that Hispanics are consumers who exist beyond just being workers. As the number of Latino families with medium to high purchasing power continues to grow, we are seeing that Latinos comprise the fastest growing consumer segment, with a demand for countless goods and services. For example, that factor plus the overwhelmingly young population explains why their movie-ticket demand grew some 22 percent in 1997, way above the average. Hollywood will have to respond by including more Latino actors so that Hispanics can identify more closely with their productions.

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Culture in advertising

Advertising directed at Hispanics in the United States should therefore include cultural elements that both represent and interest them, for example, the importance of family, food or music, and gestures like greeting people with kisses and hugs (López-Knowles 2008), but without stereotyping them. Indeed, advertising aimed at Hispanics was traditionally in Spanish and employed Spanish taglines, stereotypes and clichés, based solely upon linguistics (EFE 2012). That all seems to be going away these days, and we are already seeing higher quality, more creativity, and a higher number of ads that better represent them than a few years ago. To millennials, the younger generations, ads address

them in English, but with clear references to their Latino culture. And the advertising is not translated into Spanish like it was in the 1990s, but it is conceived by directly studying and thinking about the Hispanic American market. To do so, market research and advertising experts need to accurately study the part of the market to whom they are addressing and conveying the ad, so that the message is effective and correct from a cultural, emotional and even linguistic point of view. The advertiser needs to create an emotional connection with the consumer, and as such, it is not easy to translate English into Spanish and conserve the same emotional connection if the message has not been created with Hispanics in mind and taking their culture into consideration (Betti 2008).

Some examples of culturally relevant ads that target the Latino market are, among others, the “*Para su familia*” line of cereals from General Mills, the “Toque de Downy: *Osito*” line by Tide, or another by Tide: “VIVID White + Bright y Boost” with the classic grandmother who speaks Spanish; the Samsung Galaxy S4 ad with “Meet the Parents (*Conoce a los padres*),” Taco Bell, McDonald’s, AT&T, etc. Mattel even created a site in Spanish for their Barbie line aimed at Hispanic girls (BarbieLatina.com).

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To reflect the reality of Latinos in the United States and reach all levels of acculturation in their homes, in 2012, Tide presented its first bilingual ad on the leading Spanish and English speaking TV channels. Sundar Raman (in *Business Wire* 2012), Marketing Director for Clothing Care at Procter & Gamble, notes that: “The launch of Tide’s first bilingual advertisement is a milestone for our brand, which will continue developing products and campaigns that address the needs of this growing demographic” (2012). Raman explains that, “although our goal is to communicate with Hispanic consumers in their preferred language, we also understand that the Hispanic identity goes beyond simple language; it involves a group of deeply rooted values that have an impact on all aspects of their life” (2012). From a cultural point of view, the bilingual television ads for the detergent

“Tide VIVID White + Bright y Boost” are rather interesting. In the 15- and 30-second spots, we see a typical grandmother who speaks Spanish and uses the detergent “Tide VIVID White + Bright y Boost” to wash her whites. But in the same ad, we also see her acculturated granddaughter, a millennial, who comments on the “not so modern” washing methods that her grandmother used to whiten the clothes, which included “traditional home remedies like bleach, salt, milk and lemon.” The ad ends with the grandmother appreciating the detergent because it leaves her whites like new. The granddaughter then adds that she agrees and ends by saying: “that part is true” (*Business Wire* 2012). As noted in the online article published by this magazine:

This fun scene exemplifies the dynamic between older and younger Hispanic generations and illustrates how older generations are replacing home remedies with modern products that are designed to make household tasks easier, like washing clothes. Although the television spots in English and Spanish are different, the strategy and message in general are consistent. The differences reflect the contextual importance, for example in the commercial for the English markets, the grandmother asks the granddaughter to translate to the audience what she is saying.

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AT&T, for example, in a bid to attract younger consumers in the United States, has introduced radio and television ads in both languages, and in Spanglish, creating dedicated pages on millennials’ favorite websites (Martínez 2014). Catherine Borda, director of youth marketing at AT&T, notes that “bilingual spots show above all the company’s attempt to focus on the ‘emotional benefit’ of wireless service “as opposed to the functional benefit” (2014). The AT&T campaign targeting the Hispanic market has a shorter video, less than four minutes, in addition to two 30-second spots where Latino youths discuss their lives through the lens of the two cultures and languages. The Spanish ads run on the Univisión and Telemundo networks, while the bilingual spots can be seen on ESPN Deportes and MTV Tr3s (*Adlatina* 2014). Therefore, it is fundamental to develop products and campaigns that can connect to these consumers more significantly and emotionally. The ability to reach Hispanic consumers more

effectively allows multinationals to learn about their tastes and preferences (Raman 2012).

Hispanic Fusion or the Sweet Point: the importance of consumers

Jaime Fortuño and Alicia de Armas, managing partner and accounts director, respectively, of Azafrán Advertising, the Hispanic subsidiary of Lopito, Ileana & Howie Inc. (LIH)⁴, designed a study in 2006 to identify the segment of the Hispanic population that they called Hispanic fusion or the “sweet point.” They identified this point as 60 percent of the Hispanic market (Betti 2008). The highlight of this research is the finding that most Hispanics in the United States are neither recent immigrants nor entirely assimilated, according to data mentioned above.

Many traditional advertising messages are aimed at Latinos as if they were recently arrived immigrants to the United States, or people completely assimilated into American culture and not distinguishable from Anglo-Americans (*Adlatina* 2006). Advertisers should also take into consideration those identified as “partially acculturated,” who may have been in the United States for more than a generation and are familiar with its culture and language, although they cultivate and maintain their roots and traditions, and reflect the diversity and similarities of the widely varied Latino market. The difference from traditional Hispanic marketing is that currently one needs to approach consumers through their culture, and not simply through their language, because they may speak English, Spanish or Spanglish, but their lives completely reflect their Hispanic identity (*Adlatina* 2006).

⁴ Lopito, Ileana & Howie Inc. (LIH) is Puerto Rico’s largest advertising agency, serving global companies interested in Hispanic consumers in the United States, the most rapidly growing demographic in that country and has already adopted a new strategy to reach American Hispanics.

As noted, despite the differences, there are Hispanics who also share certain similarities: a high level of adaptation to American culture which is allied with Hispanic heritage through bilingualism, belief in the American Dream, and the desire to create a bridge to Anglo-Saxon culture (*Adlatina* 2006; Betti 2008).

Conclusion

We agree with Ortueta (2005) when she says that in order to reach Latinos, in addition to using language, you also have to reach them through their culture. However, also keeping in mind that Hispanics who have lived in the United States for many decades do not feel completely Latino, nor completely American, but rather they are a mix with a defined identity (Betti 2008). Along the same line, the phenomenon of code switching, popularly defined as Spanglish, and often used in advertising, is a reflection of the multifaceted nature of this minority, including the ethnic, political, economic and individual realities that shift from one community to another and from one person to another (Carli 1996). One must also be aware of the socio-cultural, psychological and pragmatic aspects that underlie this verbal strategy. On this point, Jacobo Zabłudovsky (2001) states:

The American government employs any manner of legal and physical tools to block the furtive entry of Mexicans, Guatemalans, Nicaraguans and other Spanish speakers from the country. But once they are in, they realize that their dollars confess in English their faith in God, and they are encouraged to spend on ads in Spanish to drink more beer, smoke more cigarettes and eat more *hamburguesas*, a Spanish word that was clearly derived from English. Advertisers encourage the thirst, and all the appetites of this free-spending clientele, offering free stickers for the *mira*, that is, the *parqueo*, they hand out flyers instead of *volantes*, manual labor is offered by the *chirroquero*, that is, the stonemason, the *tailero*, that is, the tile layer, the *brickero*, that is, the bricklayer, and another who *mixtea*, that is, who does all three things at once.⁵

⁵ Francisco Moreno Fernández (2003) on the use of the Spanish language in advertising writes, “Media communication in Spanish is on an upswing and even more powerful and influential. Politicians see Spanish as an instrument to be handled with skill because ‘just uttering a few phrases in Spanish and spending millions of dollars on advertising is not enough to attract the Hispanic vote’, according to a directive from the ‘Consejo Nacional de La Raza’. Speaking of advertising, it is significant that in the United States there are 25 large communication agencies focusing on the Hispanic market and spend \$2.4 billion on this market, according to the ‘Asociación de Agencias de Publicidad Hispanas’. No, Spanish is no longer a foreign language, rather it identifies a sociological group growing in power.”

As Hispanic social influence and purchasing power continue to rise, the professional, political, and economic markets will work to capture their votes and resources, facilitating access to public and private goods and services in Spanish. This strategy has revalued Hispanic culture and the bilingual identity of the nation (Rojas Marcos 2003).

Furthermore, many advertisers make use of a more generalized Spanglish, because it is the code that would relate the best with Hispanics. The 8th “Portada” Conference on Hispanic Advertising and the Media, which just took place in New York (September 2014), had two interesting debates: one about whether it is more effective to address the Hispanic market in the United States in English, Spanish, or Spanglish, and the other about whether the Latino community reads periodicals. María López Knowles, director of Pulpo Media, argues that it is important to reflect the hybrid nature and duality of modern society. And she adds, “we have tested tweeting in English, Spanish, and ‘Spanglish.’ Without a doubt, those are the ones that have been most well-received” (López Knowles 2014).

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Therefore, thanks to this new set of strategies, it is possible to approach this group through more complex messages that do not merely take different linguistic aspects into account, but rather address cultural aspects, and all of the experiences and similarities that Latinos share.

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