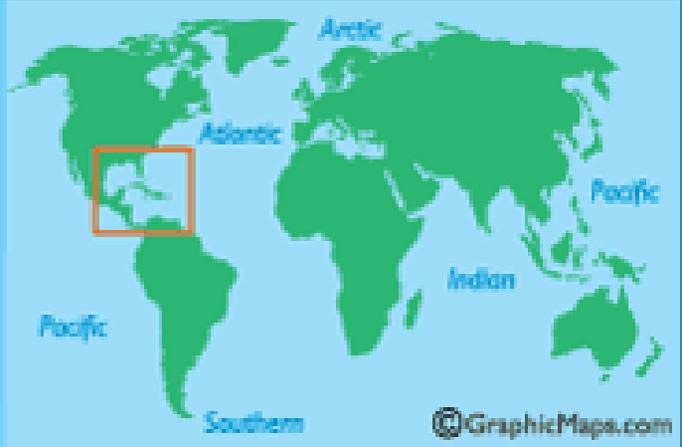


Puerto Rican Spanish and the Influence & Integration of English

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Introduction

- Puerto Rico is a Spanish-speaking territory which has a semi-autonomous political relationship with the United States known as the Estado Libre Asociado (Free Associated State or Commonwealth).



- As a result of this unique status, English is an ever-present force in Puerto Rican society.

- The over-whelming majority of residents utilize Puerto Rican Spanish (PRS) as their daily vernacular (2012 American Community Survey).



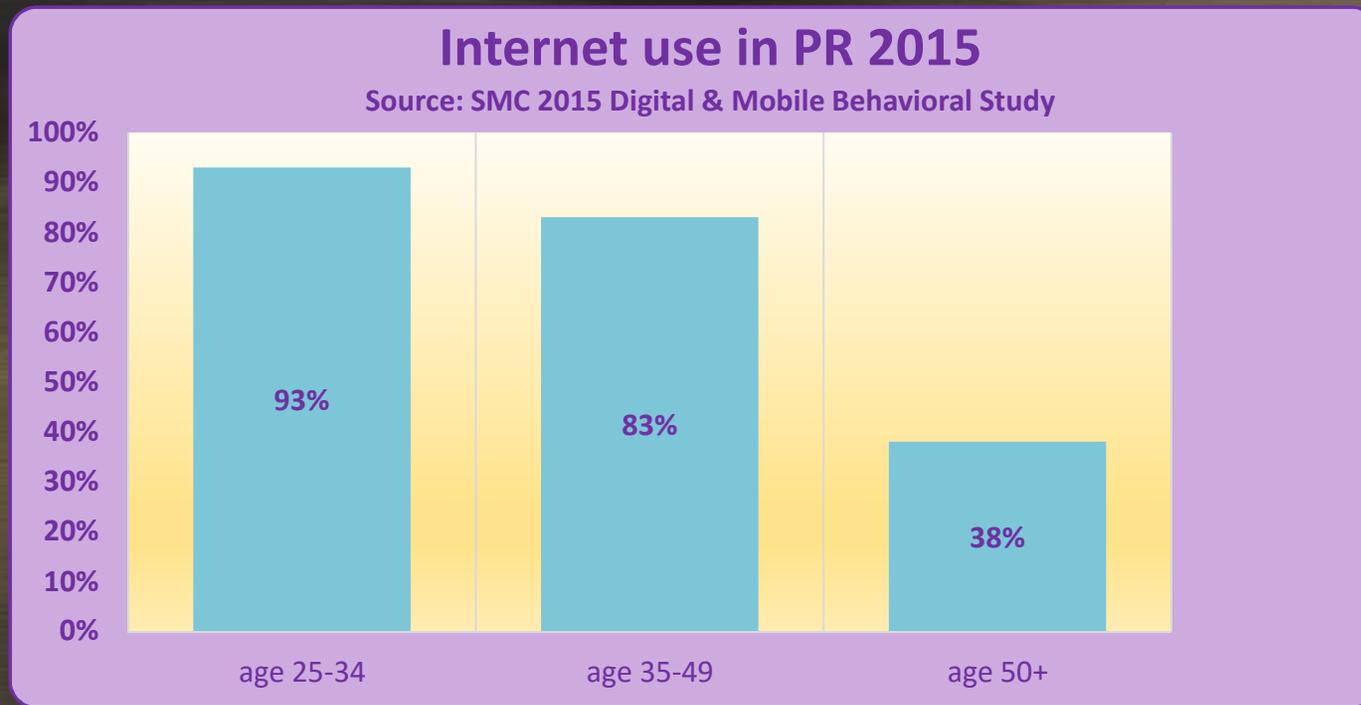
- PRS is used in all domains with the exception of federal court proceedings which are carried out in English with elaborate interpreting measures taken (Pousada 2008).

- English is defined as a statutory, national, working language in Article 1 of the 1993 Official Languages Act and is a mandatory part of the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary curriculum on the island.



- However, in the 2000 Census, 79.1% of Puerto Ricans over the age of 5 reported speaking English “less than very well.” In the 2014 American Community Survey, this number had dropped slightly to 78.8%.

- The greatest English exposure comes via textbooks, pop music, cable television, and the Internet.



- As a result, the youngest generations are the ones who are most influenced by English, creating concern among older people as to the future of PRS on the island.

- This presentation will focus on the effects of American English (AE) upon PRS.

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- The presentation will be structured as follows:
 - the history of PRS
 - the general structure of PRS and how it compares to other dialects of Spanish
 - the integration of AE loanwords into PRS and the practice of code switching between PRS and AE
 - the future of PRS in light of local and global developments



History of Puerto Rican Spanish

- Prior to the arrival of the Spanish *conquistadores* in 1492, Puerto Rico was inhabited by the Taínos, an Arawakan indigenous group from Venezuela.





- As a people, they were greatly oppressed by the genocidal campaign of the Spaniards and within fifty years had been exterminated, driven away, enslaved, sickened, or assimilated via concubinage (Poole 2011).





- The Taíno language lost out to Spanish when the indigenous population was decimated but left linguistic traces in PRS (Fundación Puertorriqueña de las Humanidades 2005-2014)
- Examples: placenames (Utuado, Mayagüez, Caguas, and Humacao), names for flora and fauna (e.g., *maní* [peanut], *ají* [pepper], *yuca* [cassava], *ceiba* [tree], *bejuco* [vine], *guaragüao* [hawk], *iguana* [lizard], *juey* [land crab]), and personal names (e.g., Atabey, Uroyoán, Abey).

Other frequently used Taíno words in PRS are:

barbacoa - barbecue

Boricua - the people of Boriken

cacique - chief

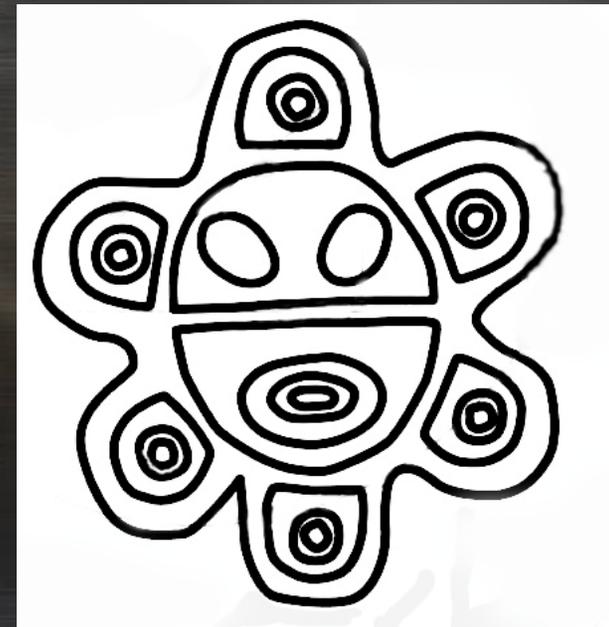
canoas - canoes

cucubano - lightning bug

hamaca - hammock

huracán - hurricane

tabaco - tobacco



- Once the Taínos were displaced, Spaniards from Andalusia and the Canary Islands became the dominant cultural force in Puerto Rico, shaping the language, traditions, and religious practices.



- 16th century Spanish in Puerto Rico was a non-standardized collection of linguistic features that varied considerably by the region of origin, social class, and extent of education of its Iberian speakers.



- The Spaniards brought African slaves to Puerto Rico to do back-breaking, menial work.
- Along with many other degradations before slavery was abolished in 1873, the Africans suffered the loss of their native languages.

- Nevertheless, enslaved Africans and their descendants left their mark on PRS, particularly in the names for food, dance, music (e.g., *guingambó* [okra], *guineo* [banana], *gandinga* [pork tripe], *gandul* [pigeon pea], *bomba* [dance], *bongó* [small double drum], *conga* [large drum]). (Alvarez Nazario 1974)



Other frequently used African words in PRS are:

bemba - full lips

bembé – an improvised party

bochinche - gossip

candungo – container

fulano – an unknown person

gongolí - a segmented worm

mofongo - mashed plantains

ñangotao – squatting

ñeñé - whining, complaining



Vejigante mask



- At the height of African slave trade in the 19th century, there were fewer African slaves in Puerto Rico than on other Caribbean islands.
- There was also considerable miscegenation, resulting in a racially mixed population.

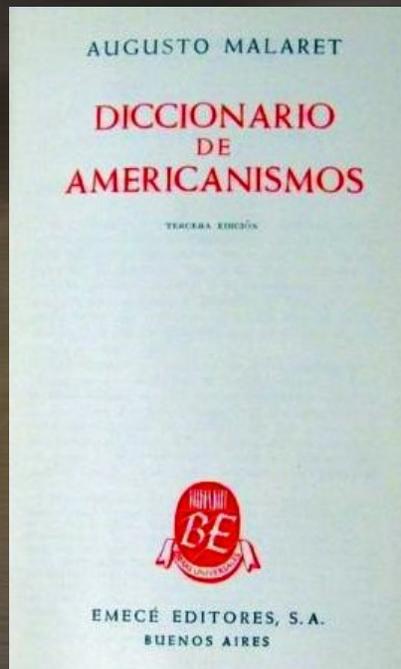
- The light-skinned *criollo* elites organized a campaign to “whiten” the population by bringing in immigrants from different regions of Spain, the Canary Islands, Corsica, and France (Rodríguez Silva 2011).



- These immigrants brought more linguistic elements that were integrated into PRS and contributed to making it what it is today.

- Between the 16th and 19th centuries, PRS coalesced, influenced and enriched by indigenous, African, and other languages.
- By the end of the 19th century, a popular dialect quite distinct from that of Madrid had developed on the island.





- The first dictionary of Puerto Rican vocabulary was published in 1937 by Augusto Malaret.
- Extensive formal linguistic study of PRS did not occur until the second half of the 20th century.
- Today it is recognized as a “radical” or innovative dialect of Spanish (Guitart, 1978) with clear similarities to Cuban and Dominican Spanish.

Typical Puerto Ricanisms

alcapurria

atrechar

babosería

bregar con algo

chavar

chillo

computadorizar

concientizar

estofón

guame

jincho

jurutungo

líंबर

memo

monga

pala

pana

piragua

pon

platanutre

For more information on Puerto Ricanisms (and also a good audio sample of PRS), go to an interview with Dr. Luz Nereida Pérez on WAPA TV:



<http://www.wapa.tv/noticias/especiales/hablemos-espanol---que-son-los-puertorriquenismos-20131122237268.html>

- Since 1898, U.S. control (direct or indirect) has had a significant effect upon Puerto Rican economic, political, and cultural development.
- Circular migration between PR and the US has also brought PRS and AE into contact as new arrivals in each location contribute linguistic forms and influences, and schools are obligated to address their needs



Characteristics of Puerto Rican Spanish

- deletion or aspiration of syllable final /s/--las agujas → lah aguja; más o menos → mah o meno
- deletion of syllable final /n/ with nasalization of remaining vowel—están → estã
- alternation of /r/ and /l/ in syllable final position –puerta → puelta; bailar → bailal
- deletion of /d/ between vowels –comprado → compraõ; dedo → deo

PRS features cont.

- Use of superfluous subject pronouns
 - Ex: Yo nací en Ponce. Instead of Nací en Ponce.
 - Ex: ¿Qué tú haces? Instead of ¿Qué haces?
- Preference for diminutives
 - Ex: Regreso 'orita. (I'll be back in a while.)
 - Ex: Un momentito, por favor. (Just a minute, please)
- Frequent use of phrases like: Ay, bendito; chévere; Ave María

Influence of AE upon PRS

- The influence of AE upon PRS has been a particular concern, since phonologically and morphologically incorporated English loanwords are widely used by all Puerto Ricans, regardless of English language proficiency.

ESPANGLISH

- However, the question is whether the influence runs deeper than lexical borrowings.

English loanwords in PRS

- Being communicatively competent in Puerto Rico includes knowing how to use English loanwords while speaking Spanish.





- The loans can be single nouns or verbs (e.g., *dona* [donut], *matre* [mattress], *bómpen* [bumper], *faxear* [to fax], etc.), or phrases (e.g. *Dame un breiuecito*. [Give me a little break. or Let me break into line/pass in front of you.]).

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100% Puertorriqueño.

Un récord para la historia

Maquillaje para
un 'look' perfecto

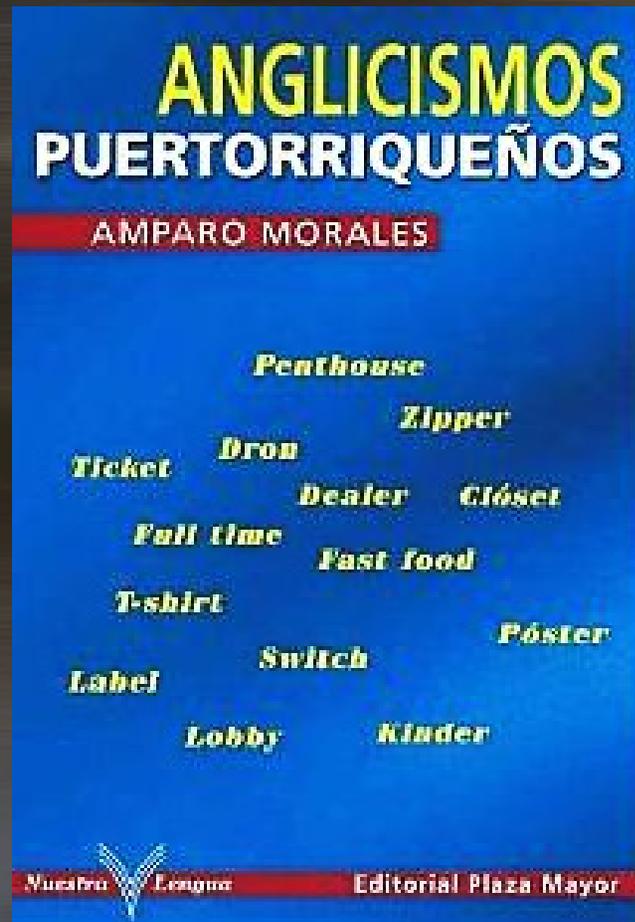
después
de un test drive



- Borrowings from English are most common among doctors, lawyers, engineers, media and least common among teachers
- People involved in auto mechanics, sports, fashion /beauty, and computer technology are highly prone to using loanwords.



Dictionary of anglicisms in Puerto Rico (2001)



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English influence in San Juan press

- Maria Vaquero (1990) examined the use of English loanwords in the newspapers of San Juan. Her findings indicated different types of loanwords.
- Spanish-looking words based on English word forms instead of the Spanish equivalent.
 - Ex: *coincidentalmente* instead of *de forma coincidente*



- Spanish words used with English meanings.
 - Ex: *bloques* [building blocks] for “street blocks” instead of *cuadras*



- Loan translations: translating literally from English into Spanish
 - *Ex: hacer sentido* to mean “make sense” instead of *tener sentido* (have sense)



- Use of English word for specific aspect of meaning of particular referent
 - Ex: *magacín* for popular magazines and *revista* for news magazines and journals.

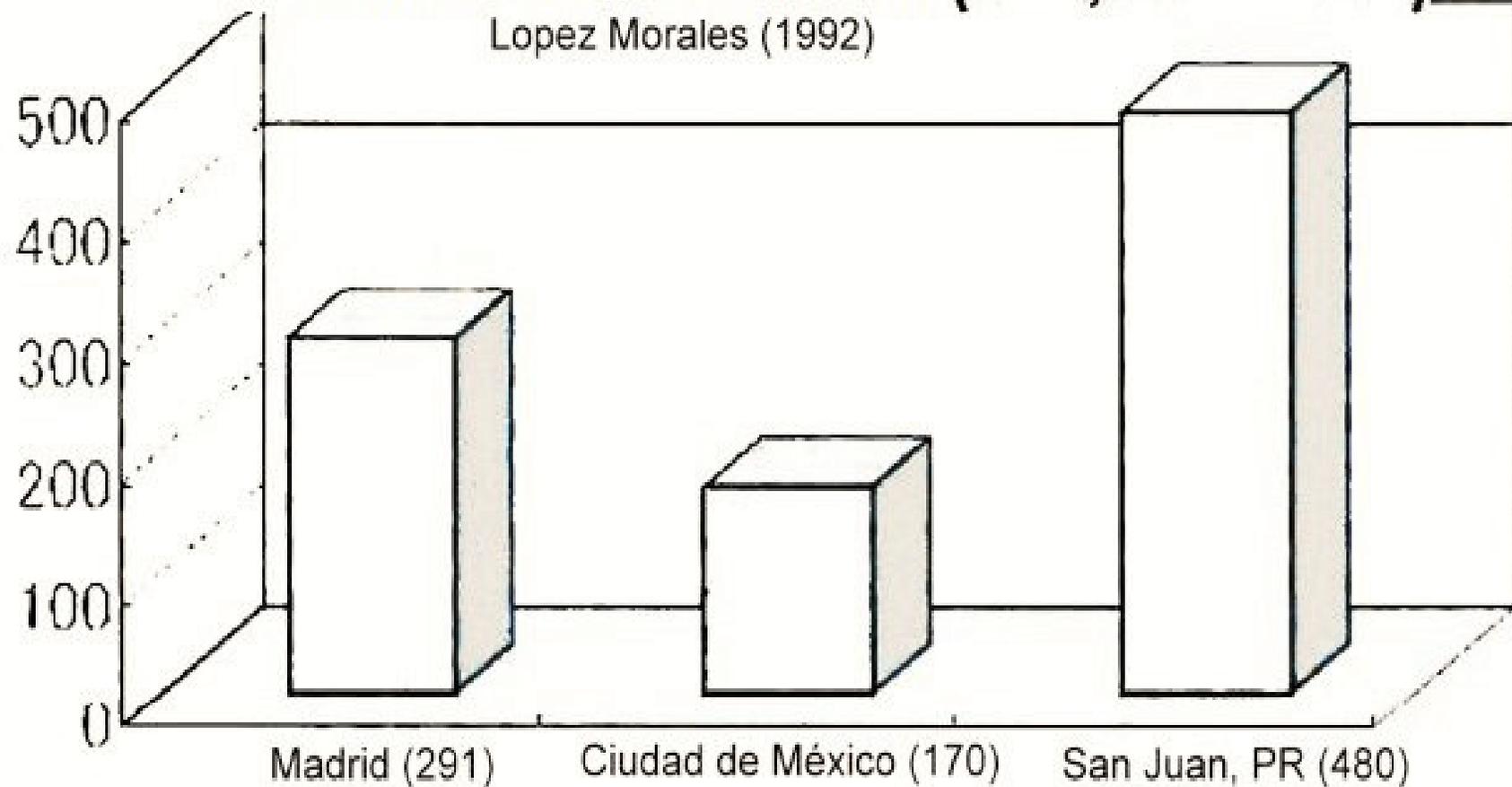




- There is a common belief among Hispanics and non-Hispanics alike that Puerto Ricans speak a mish-mash of English and Spanish and that English loanwords are everywhere in PRS.
- To check on this, linguist Humberto López Morales did a comparative study of the use of English loanwords in the Spanish of Madrid, Mexico City, and San Juan, PR in 1992.

Number of English loanwords (N=4,452 words)

Lopez Morales (1992)



English in Spain



smartphone



CDs and DVDs



brownies

English in Mexico



burgers



Happy birthday

parking



thinner



Syntactic influences in PR

Lipski (1996: 358)

- ¿Cómo te gustó la playa? [How did you like the beach?]
- El problema está siendo considerado. [The problem is being considered.]
- Te llamo para atrás. [I'll call you back.]
- Él sabe cómo hablar inglés. [He knows how to speak English.]



Commonly heard in PR

- *La guagua está supuesta llegar a las 11:15.* [The bus is supposed to arrive at 11:15.]
- Standard Spanish: *Se supone que la guagua llegue a las 11:15.*



Amparo Morales (1986, 2001)

- Looked at use of present continuous verb *¿Qué estás haciendo?* [What are you doing?] instead of simple present: *¿Qué haces?*
- Is this due to the influence of English?



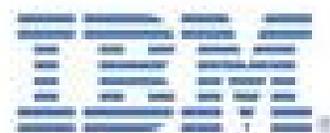
Morales' conclusions

- Syntactic influences low in frequency
- Found in other Hispanic speech communities
- Sometimes occur where little or no English influence can be documented
- May represent older forms of Spanish
- Not every variation in syntax is automatically due to English

Why use English loanwords?

- Easier than inventing new Spanish word or searching for little used already existing Spanish word.
- Everyone else is doing it (English as global lingua franca).
- Difficult to avoid English in product names, company names, broadcast media, and Internet.
- Association of English with modernity, prestige, and being “cutting edge.”





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- Sometimes the English loanword is just plain shorter than its Spanish equivalent:
 - *wiper* instead of *limpiaparabrisas*
 - *faxear* instead of *enviar un facsímile*
 - *suiche* instead of *interruptor*
 - *CD* instead of *disco compacto*
 - *tape* instead of *cinta adhesiva*



Most English loanwords in Puerto Rican Spanish are incorporated fully into the phonological, grammatical, and orthographic systems of PRS (e.g. *un mitin* [a meeting]; *un matre queen* [a queen-sized mattress]; *los escrines* [the screens]; *faxear* [to fax]; *escanear* [to scan]).



They are treated as Spanish words by speakers, who frequently do not realize their origin.

Phonological integration of loanwords in PRS

- **Final Consonant dropping**
fast food → [fah'fu]; corn flakes → [kon'fley]
- **Deaspiration of consonants**
coach [k^howč] → [koč]
- **Final nasal substitution**
steam [stim] → [es'tin]
- **Initial schwa insertion in [s]C**
sticker → estíquer
- **Bilabialization of [v]**
Vicks → [biks]
- **Defricativization of [š]**
shopper → chopper



Morphological integration of loanwords in PRS

- **Spanish verb markers**

to hang out → janguear; to mop → mapear

- **Spanish nominalizers (-eo,-ero/a)**

leak → liqueo; goof → gufeo; rush → rocheo

lunch bag → lonchera

- **Spanish plural markers**

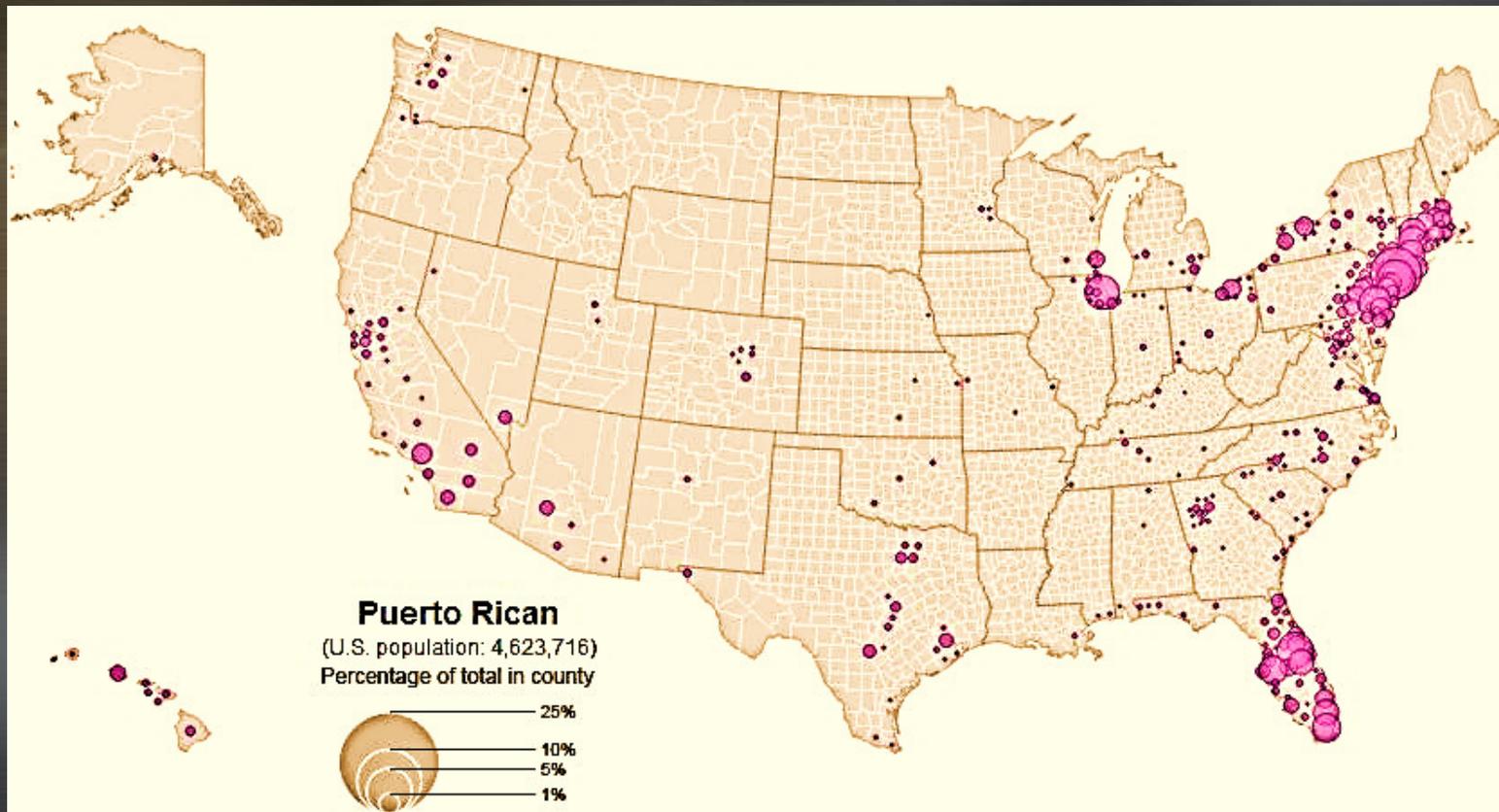
spark plugs → los espares; munchies → los monchis

- **Spanish gender markers**

bumper → el bomper; pickup → la pikop;

sweater → el suéter; cheerleader → la chirlíder

English loanwords also come in through influence from Puerto Rican communities in the U.S. and constant movement between island and mainland.

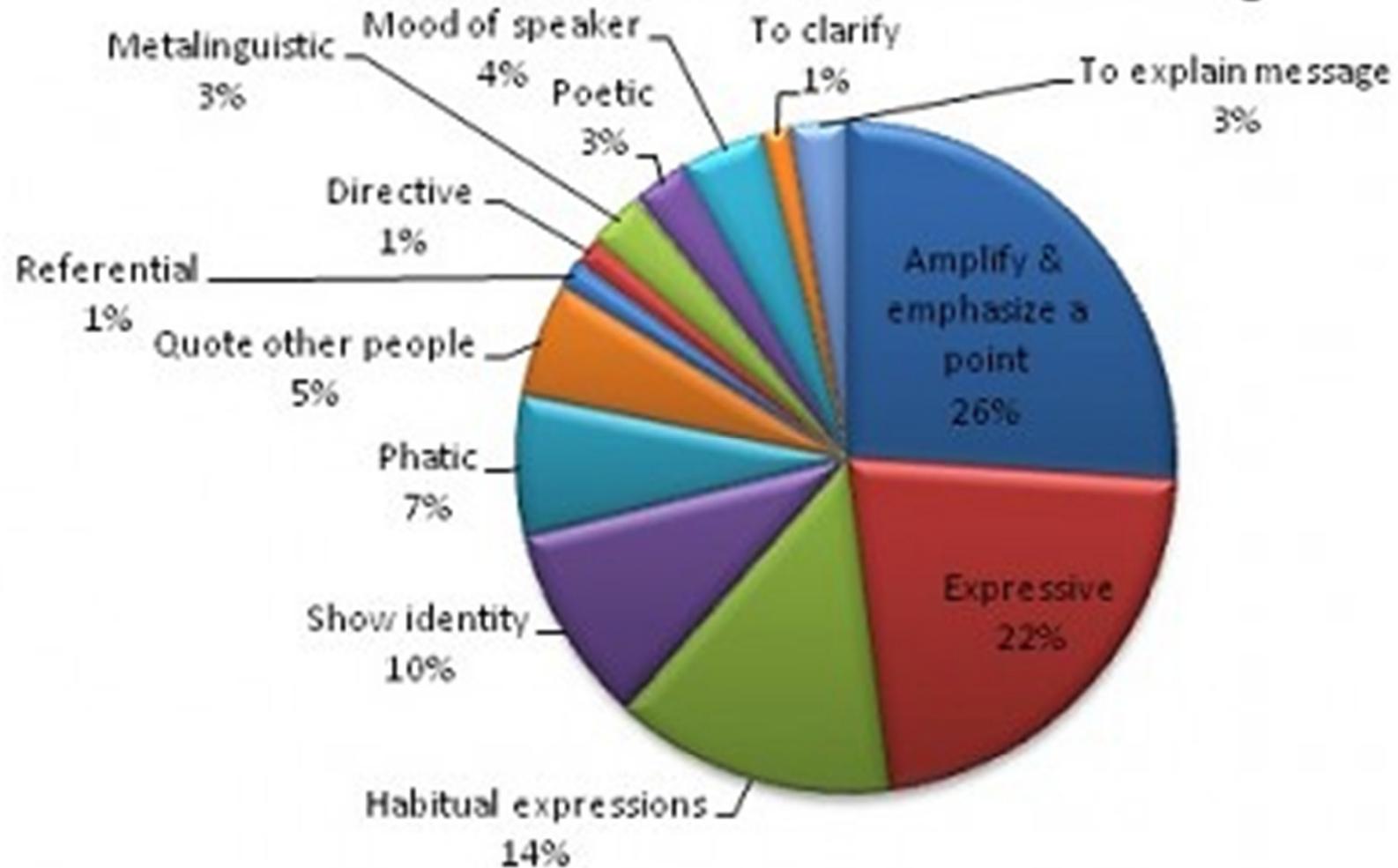


Code switching in PR



- Code switching involves smoothly alternating between elements of two or more languages in the same sentence or conversation.
 - This is what people often call “Spanglish.”
 - It is generally disapproved of by teachers and other authorities.
 - It is only practiced when speaking to another bilingual.
 - It requires considerable competence in both languages to pull off successfully.

Reasons for Code Switching

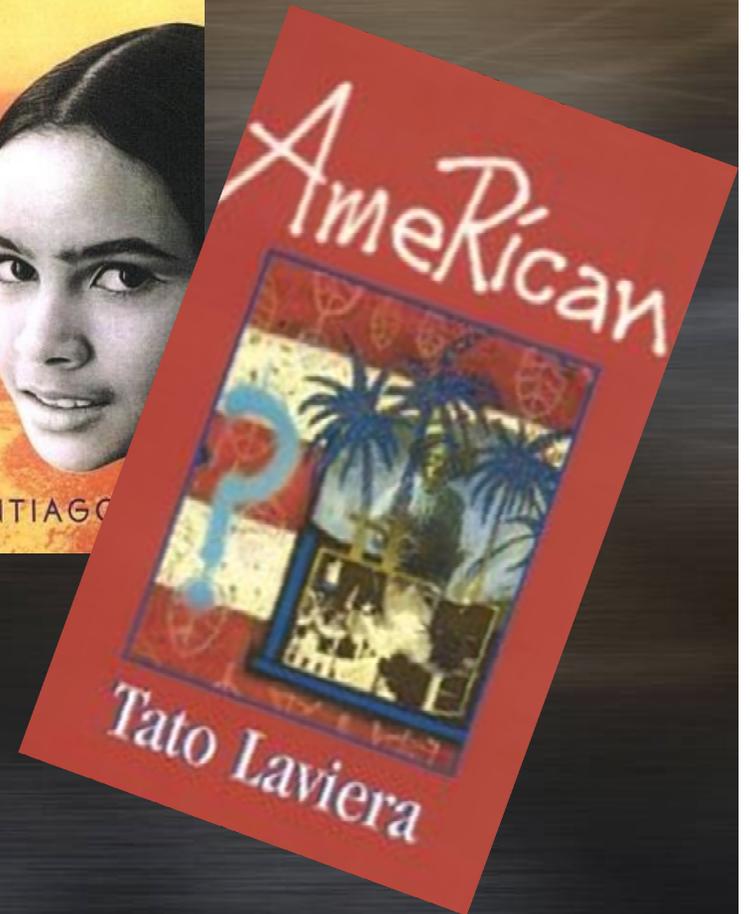
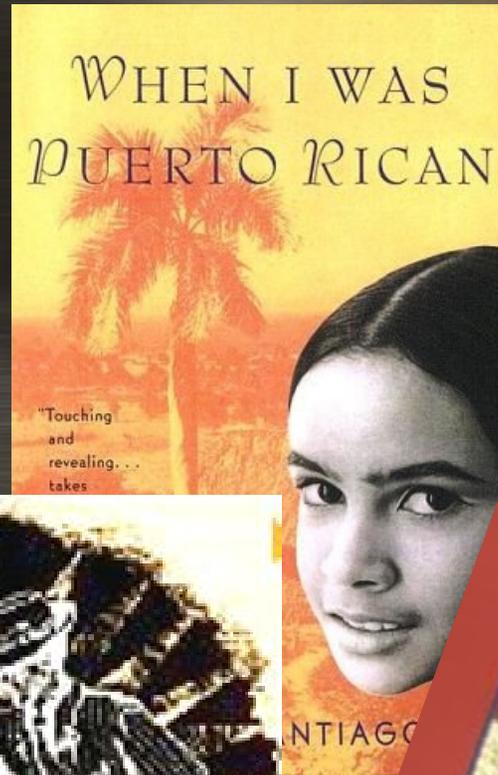
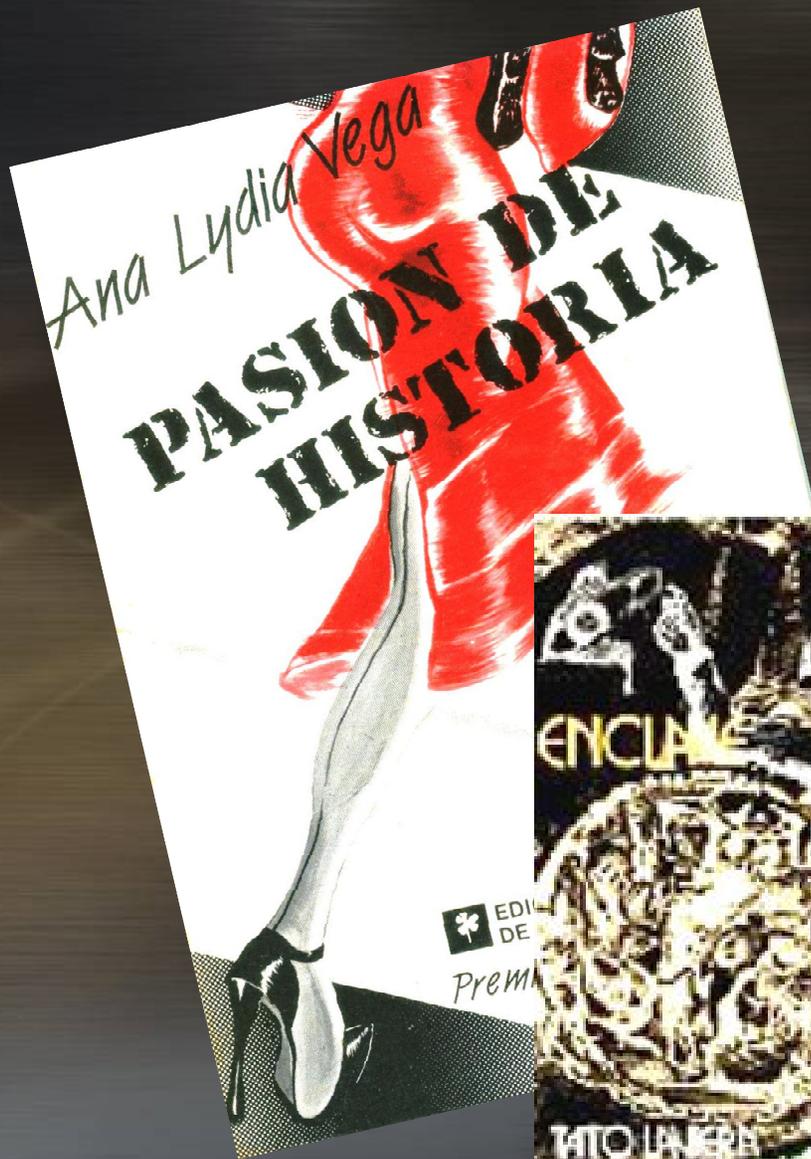


Source: <http://hubpages.com/education/Code-Switching-Definition-Types-and-Examples-of-Code-Switching>

Code Switching in Literature

A number of Puerto Rican poets and writers (both on and off the island) have opted to utilize both Spanish and English in their literary products. Good examples are:

- Ana Lydia Vega
- Rosario Ferré
- Luis Rafael Sánchez
- Pedro Juan Soto
- Pedro Pietri
- Tato Laviera
- Sandra Esteves
- Esmeralda Santiago
- Ana Castillo
- Jack Agueros
- Nicolasa Mohr



Future of PRS

- There is a great deal of concern among intellectuals that English will erode PRS and thus Puerto Rican identity.
- Pro-Spanish, anti-English sentiments arise periodically whenever laws or curricula are changed in PR.
- People go on the defensive and attribute every social or educational problem to the English language.



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Evolution of PR identity?



- Marisol Pérez Casas (2008) found that code switching constitutes an integral part of the linguistic repertoire of well-educated Puerto Rican bilinguals who employ it habitually in informal group encounters.
- Their code switching style allows them to construct and rethink social identities such as: Puerto Rican, American, elite, and bicultural.
- They have reinterpreted what it means to be “Puerto Rican.”

- This is not just an aspect of interpersonal communication, but also part of a socio-historical change in progress that bears watching...without hysteria.
- It is the nature of languages and cultures to change and be influenced by other languages and cultures.
- It is also the nature of human beings to resist change.



Conclusions

- In dealing with the sensitive issue of English influence upon PRS, linguists and teachers should provide solid information regarding the changes occurring in PRS and place them within the context of world-wide linguistic trends.
- It is vital that English be seen as a tool and not the enemy.
- If PRS continues to be used in the home and schools and is respected as an important element of PR cultural identity, influences from English need not be feared.

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