Young Latina/os and Television: Corporate Strategies to reach millennial Latinos.

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Acknowledgments

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- Spanish, English or Spanglish? (Rojas & Pinon, 2014)
- Language and Cultural Identity in the New Configuration of the US Latino TV industry (Pinon & Rojas, 2011)
Objectives

- To discuss how the television industry is targeting Young Latinos
- To analyze the particular case of the Hispanic TV and its quest to attract Young Latinos
- To discuss Young Latinos’ relationship with the media – particularly TV – targeting them
To discuss the political and social implications of using language and culture as a battleground for Latinos’ representation

To discuss the ideology of the “multicultural mainstream” as the new logic of US media industries (Madhavi Mallapragada)
Context

- Demographic changes
- Media fragmentation
- Loss of audience
- Reality TV
- Latino theme programming
- Emergence of bilingual networks
- Imagined and elusive audience
The Hispanic population of the United States grew from 35.3 million in 2000 to 50.5 million in 2010.

That increase accounted for more than half of the nation’s overall population growth during that decade.
Increasing economic power
1990    $200 billion
2007    $860 billion
2011    $1.2 trillion

Average Hispanic HH income is $35,967 a year.
HPP Represents 11% of the total spending power of the US population
Diversity of Hispanic TV networks

Categories of membership

- Diverse technologies of distribution
- Geographical coverage
- Company ownership structure
- Language and cultural identity
1. Spanish-language broadcasting networks (Broadcast Spanish)

2. Spanish-language Hispanic cable networks (Cable Spanish)

3. Bilingual and English-language Hispanic cable networks (Cable Bilingual)
4. Global–Localized Spanish-language cable networks (Global Cable Spanish)

5. Latin American and European cable networks (Latin–American/European Cable)
Bilingual–bicultural networks

Spanglish

Monolingual Spanish
Spanish as superstrate with English influence
Confluence of Spanish and English
English as superstrate with Spanish influence
Monolingual English
Structuring corporate bilingualism: The case of Tr3s and mun2
- Mun2: Sports, Mexican regional music, reality TV; network for cultural connectors.

- Tr3s: music and reality TV as vehicle of identity for young audiences based on the localizing of MTV
Shows

- Larrymania
- I love Jenni
Jenni Rivera presenta: Chiquis & Raq-C
Quiero mis quince
Quiero mi boda
Newcomers–Cable bilingual

El Rey Network

Fusion

“Just a dash of Latino flavor”

Jorge Ramos

“for young men and what we call ‘kick-ass females’”

Sheriff–Joe Arpaio
Bilingual–Bicultural Latinos

- Young population: AVG age=27 years old (37 Whites).
- Growing presence of second, third and later generations.
- What language do young Latinos speak?
  - <18 years old: 42% prefer English;
  - 28% are equally bilingual and
  - about 30% prefer Spanish
  - 96 % of 3rd and + generations of Mexican descent speak English at home
- English–speaking young Latina/os have generated a diverse potential audience to tap into.
Focus groups and in-depth interviews
- San Antonio, Edinburg and El Paso Texas
- 25 participants
- 11 males, 14 females
- 19–27 years old
- 1st generation = 1
- 2nd generation = 10
- 3rd generation = 13
- 4rd generation = 1
- Majority with Bachelors’ degrees and working
How Latino do you feel? (self concept of being Hispanic)

- “Not really”
- “Relatively Latino”
- “Moderately Latino”
- “Very Latino”
- Circumstantial “depends on the time, the moment and the people you hang out with”
“Not very much. People judge me by the color of my skin and assume I am White, so I go with it since Latinos themselves are the main ones that assume this and either say something or make an issue/thing with/out of it. Mainly my “self-concept” is White/Anglo”

My “Latinidad” is “shrinking/almost non existent”

Language is also a place of contestation
“I am Americano”

“Americanized family”
“I was told as a kid that we were Hispanics, Latinos, Mexican–American…”
“Even though… I didn’t speak Spanish… I am not bilingual… but my identity is pretty strong as Latino… that’s the way I feel when I am around a lot of White people…”
“But when I am around a lot of Hispanics, specially if they are speaking Spanish, I feel very Americanized, I feel kind of an outcast… I am in the middle…”
Still looks for the Latino connection in the media
“I feel like a modern Latino. I do carry some Latino customs but I’ve evolved with time losing some as well”

My “Latinidad” “is shrinking because we’re growing away from traditions”.
“I don’t feel very Latino because I don’t surround myself with the Latino culture”

“I feel that my Latinidad is staying consistent but for the most part I see it growing in the future”
Latinidad

- “is shrinking”
- “is growing”
- “is staying the same”
About half of the respondents expressed that their Latinidad will grow in the future

- “As I’m getting older has made me get closer to my culture and appreciate it more”
- “seeing how Latinos are perceived throughout the world has made me want to learn more about the origins”
- need to connect with family members
Language, another site of contestation

- Central to self-concept of Latinidad
- Separates them as
  - Not American enough
  - Not Latino enough
- Places respondents in difficult situations
- Spanglish is more private; conversational
- Not as is displayed in Radio and TV
Media consumption

- Phone use
- Less television, more Internet (Netflix, Hulu, Youtube)
- Customized music
  - Not along ethnic lines—BUT based on
    - Likes, interests, motivations
    - Aesthetic (production values; e.g. Breaking Bad)
    - Some dislike “cheesy TV” (novelas, Hispanic TV)
- Border effect (neighborhood; city effect)
- Family effect
Critical evaluations from first and second generations
- Orange is the new Black
- “Show more educated Hispanics/Latinos” (“Why does everyone think that Hispanics are poor?”)
- Accepted by third generations if they don’t speak Spanish (e.g. Sabado Gigante)
  - “It’s part of the joke” “Its entertainment” (George Lopez)
- Then, accent becomes a problem (exaggerated; overdoing it such as in Modern Family)
Discussion

- Are the media strategies effective in targeting Latinos?
- How are the ratings going?
- Should the media treat this group as an homogeneous group?
- Is the move of Hispanic TV networks towards English dominant and or bilingual Latinos the right one?
- What about the mainstream networks and their “multicultural mainstream” approach? (Madhavi Mallapragada)
There is a shift from “niche markets to a new multicultural mainstream” (Tr3s; Nuvo; El Rey, Univision (Fusion))

- Where is the Latinidad located in the programming?
- Does it matter for third or later generations of Latinos?
Latino-theme programming

ABC–Cristela