

Why and when we speak spanish in public essay examples

[Family](#), [Parents](#)



The essay ' Why and When We Speak in Spanish in Public?' by Myriam Marquez, is a voice for bilingual people who are often made to feel guilty and ashamed of speaking in their native tongues in public. She explains why and when she speaks in her native language, Spanish, in public and argues that it is absolutely fine to speak in Spanish with those who know the language; however it is definitely rude when there is an only English speaking person present in the group. Marquez clearly brings out the acceptable and unacceptable aspects of the use of one' s native language in public. The tone and argument of her essay is straightforward, clear and convincing.

Even though Marquez' family has been living in the United States for forty years and understand and speak English, yet she doesn't speak in English if she's alone with her parents. She explains this very reasonably by explaining that it is purely out of respect for the parents and the comfort that they feel in communicating in their native tongue. This is also due to the deep influence of their native culture and custom, which leads them very naturally to speak in Spanish with one another. This is a very valid point and most of us who are bilingual can relate to the comfort of speaking in one's own native tongue with our parents especially. Marquez believes there is nothing wrong in doing so, but at the same time she's also conscious of how other people around them who could overhear them speaking in Spanish, might feel or react. Her understanding of people's reactions and feelings shows her concern for them. This shows the respect she has for those who don't speak Spanish and her flexibility in communicating in a common language such as English, for the convenience and understanding of others. But she explains why her family has not decided to have English as their official family

language. The reason is very simple and based on the attachment to their culture and native tongue. And it is so much easier to use the language one is born hearing all the time, because one can express and communicate better. What is wrong with that? Marquez' explanation definitely has weightage and makes sense. It also makes the readers sympathize with her as her speaking in Spanish is not intended to make anyone else feel embarrassed. Marquez' tone in the essay reveals that she must have faced oppositions or heard rude remarks from people who heard her speaking in Spanish in public. Her experience has therefore led her to explain her speaking in Spanish in public, by reasoning it out, giving evidences and explaining when it is acceptable and when its not.

Quite strongly and clearly she reasons out in her essay that America is a free country which has not adopted any language as its official language. And that English is a common language spoken in America and also in the international business world from Peru to Norway. She understands the fact that it is important to learn English in order to progress socially, professionally, economically, etc. and is being pragmatic about it. But still it does not put a stop on people from speaking in their native tongues. America is a free country which has people from different parts of the world living in it, and language has nothing to do with being an American. Speaking in any other language besides English doesn't mean that a person is less patriotic or American. Through this fact, Marquez brings out the democratic nature of America which validates her use of Spanish legitimately. Here she creates a very strong argument which is not easy to defy and challenge, as it upholds the right to freedom of speech that a citizen of America has.

Marquez is not making a strong argument just by reasoning out that she has the right to speak in her language being a citizen of a free country like America. In fact Marquez proves this point by giving evidence from the past events and going back in history. She gives examples of immigrants from Poland, Italy and other countries who kept their native language throughout their first and second generations and even spoke in their languages in public. In doing so they even got support from the states they lived in. For instance, in the 1800s the state of Pennsylvania provided its German-speaking voters with ballots written in German, to make it more convenient for them. This means that the country as such has no issues at all if people talk in their native languages and Marquez has very intelligently proved her point here. But there has also been a shift over the centuries now, as the new generation has become so “ American” that they do not speak in Spanish as much as their parents or grandparents. This can be called the influence of American culture where they are growing and being raised. It is ought to have an effect on their lifestyle, language and customs. Generations which are growing up in America will obviously and naturally follow the trends of the country and sometimes due to peer pressure also.

Towards the end of the essay, Marquez’ tone becomes strong and firm in telling the difference between when it is rude and when it is not rude to speak in Spanish or any other native language. It seems like she’s addressing that group of people here who are very judgmental and very intolerant of people speaking in Spanish (or any native language). She explains that in a group of bilingual people, if there is someone who only speaks English, then everybody must speak in English. If the bilingual folks

speak in Spanish, then it is rude as the English speaking person would feel left out. But if all are bilingual then it not rude to speak in Spanish.

The two examples given at the end of the essay by Marquez, clearly show the difference between being rude and being respectful in using your native tongue in public. Throughout the essay Marquez is very reasonable and justifies her point with evidence and clarity, that it is certainly not rude to speak in your native tongue in public as long as you are careful of the kind of people (bilingual or English speaking) you are around. One should make sure that by using one's native language one is not being offensive or embarrassing the other person around who doesn't understand the language. It is polite and respectful to use a common language such as English when there are multilingual people or those who only speak English. But at the same time it is absolutely alright and justified to speak to one's family members in one's native language in public as it is easy and more comfortable to use.

The essay is very persuasive and clear in its stance, that speaking in one's native language in public with those who know it, is not wrong or rude, provided one is mindful of what the situation is and what kind of people (bilingual or English speaking) are there. The author speaks Spanish and has therefore spoken of Spanish in this essay. However, the essay addresses the question of speaking in a native language in public, for everyone and every language. Through this essay she has clarified and justified her point to all those who might have felt or thought at some point that people are being rude by talking in their native language in public. Along with providing the clarification she also gives assurance and confidence to people that it's not

wrong to speak in Spanish (or any native language) in public, as long as they make sure everyone in their group can understand it and doesn't feel left out. This is totally in accordance with social ethics and values, and therefore completely agreeable. Thus Marquez' essay is convincing, strong, clear and validates the use of Spanish in public.

Reference

Orlando Sentinel. 2012. Why and When We Speak Spanish Among Ourselves in Public. 25 April 2012.

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