

People speakers of
spanish and or
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People who have learned English as a second language have had problems communicating in America for quite a long time. Communicating to various cultural groups for those speaking a second language can prove to be a challenge. As different cultures have grown in America, as Latin Americans, have had their own language, Spanish, merge with English, the so-called Spanglish, and Black English population has over the course of American history had their own dialect. With the cross influence and interaction between these two cultures a merging or bridge should evolve to decrease the tensions that exist between the two, and for those speaking a different language. The misunderstanding has grown even more. With mutual respect and acceptance of Black English and Spanglish, it would be possible to make that link grow and to bring these cultures to a peaceful coexistence for minorities and subcultures.

One of the most common concerns in the modern world is the issue of bilingual people, who, on the one hand, benefit from being immersed in these cultural variances, yet on the other hand, have to face sufficient challenges in navigating them. Another problem, which seems to have grown more significant at the current moment is the issue concerning the “ correct” English language and its “ incorrect” variation: standard American English and Black English. Despite the evident fusion of cultures, people are still reluctant to accept everything that does not suit the “ norm”, especially concerning the language issues - surprisingly, people are highly unwilling to realize that the English language can merge with the other ones. In her astounding article, Ana C. Zentella dwells upon the problem of being bilingual.

Thus, one of the most widespread issues is the problem of the language discrimination: “ Speakers of non-defined mixture of Spanish and/or English are judged as “ different”, or sloppy speakers of Spanish and/or English, and are often labeled verbally deprived, or deficient bilinguals because supposedly they do not have the ability to speak either English or Spanish well” (Zentella 215). Compared to her, June Jordan, the author of a study on the Black English, dwells upon the problem of being different as well, considering the social inacceptance of the dialect and the Black subculture: “ white standards control our official and popular judgments of verbal proficiency and correct, or incorrect, language skills, including speech” (Jordan 315). Jordan also marks that the speakers of Black English are often viewed as “ different” as well: “ Nevertheless, white standards persist, supreme and unquestioned, in the United States” (315).

It is obvious that Zentella is concerned with the social status that the language can give to a person. Being bilingual provides certain advantages and often serves as a marker of a multilateral personal development, but it also proves that living in America, where English is the standard, cultures are isolated from each other, which can lead to misunderstandings of one another because of the language and culture barriers. This then leads to stereotypes and misjudgments, and the discrimination of the people speaking in the “ low” dialect different from the “ high” English. Crossing with the topic raised by Zentella, the article written by Jordan reflects on the problems of understanding and accepting the U. S. dialects, especially the so-called Black English.

Compared to the traditional or standard American English, this dialect is neglected and underestimated in the modern society, as Jordan claims. “White English” in America, is “Standard English”(315). It is obvious that Jordan raises the issue of social conflict: “Our language devolves from a culture that abhors all abstraction, or anything tending to obscure or delete the fact of human being who is here and now/the truth of the person who is speaking or listening” (319), thus marking that the concern for the English language variations also concerns such aspect as the national culture.

Judging from the fact that both Black English and Spanglish cause problems when communicating between various language groups, particularly Standard English speakers, the issue of the languages coexistence seems to be a crucial one. Thus, for instance, Jordan drives an example from her own experience of teaching them Black English. As Jordan gave students Alice Walker’s *The Color Purple* (Jordan 316), she realized that her students were concerned not with the idea underlying the story they studied, but the peculiar language which the characters spoke: “Just about unanimously their criticism targeted the language” (Jordan 316).

Comparing this situation to the conflict which Zentella speaks about, it becomes evident that the writer pursues the same object of narrowing the gap between the two cultures, trying to make people see that the “pidgin”, that is, the Black American, version of the language is as worth appreciation as the original one. Another problem which is evident in Zentella’s article, and which can be traced if considering Jordan’s article as well, is the issue of code switching that enables us sometimes whenever there is an issue with finding the exact word to express the idea or feeling. Zentella explained “
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code switching is characteristic in many parts of the world where two or more speech communities live in close contact, but often it is misunderstood" (241). Since the original language and the one generated from it are bound to have something in common, namely the verbiage and the sentence structure, the problem of code switching might seem exaggerated. Thus, for instance, the English word " respect" can be regognized in the Spanish word " respeto".

However, it proves that the two languages presuppose different culture - often the acceptance depends on the language used: " Because of the selection of English for Don Diego would have constituted a clear lack of respeto (" respect"), children who were not confident of their Spanish ability avoided him" (Zentella 218). Thus, Zentella shows that the knowledge of the language is often a measure of the social status in the given society. Thus, despite the common vocabulary and considerable similarities of the original language and the dialect, there is always the aspect of cultural and social difference when choosing one of the languages to use. Another detail that makes the two texts closer to each other is the considerations of the state of such languages as Spanglish and Black English as well as their further development.

Both authors argue that there is no use hindering the process of the new dialects emerging and their further development into languages because they are proven to have their own structure, rules and vocabulary, as well as cultural peculiarities. Black English is a whole lot more than the four-letter words, Jordan explains (318). No matter how weird and awkward the phrases constructed in the given language might sound, appreciating the pidgin, as <https://assignbuster.com/people-speakers-of-spanish-andor-english-and/>

well as the people using it, is absolutely necessary. It seems that the cultural gap between people is narrowing as the world languages gradually fuse into a single mass. Though the process has only begun, it is bound to embrace more and more languages, enriching them with the cultural peculiarities of the other countries and the other nations. However, it must be admitted that such fusion will take certain amount of time to be accepted in the society, since at present the Native Americans are rather unwilling to accept the variations of their language, as both Zentella (215) and Jordan (315) explain.

Jordan claims that the adults do not want that their children studied the culture of the “ Roommates and family members ridiculed their studies, or remained incredulous, “ You studying that shit? At school?” (319). Jordan reveals the hard truth to people: “ Nonetheless, white standards of English persist, supreme and unquestioned, in these United States” (315). Though Zentella claims that the fusion of Spanish and English has now become accepted and even appreciated, it is remarkable that the term “ Spanglish”, which was supposed to sound diminishing for the people using it, is even now accepted to define this dialect: Milan (1982: 202-203) urged that ‘ both the researchers studying contemporary Puerto Rican speech in New York City and the practitioners striving for an equal educational opportunity for the city’s Puerto Rican population make a truly concerted effort to avoid using the term ‘ Spanglish’.’ He favored “ New York City Spanish” as less “ misleading” and “ more scientific” (215) However, there are still a lot of issues to solve. As the authors of the articles have shown that, people need some time to adjust to changes and accept them, which means that the process of getting acquainted with the other cultures might take a number of

decades, or even a couple of centuries. In spite of the fact that language is constantly developing, enriched with new words each day, it might take years for people to recognize these changes and accept them. In addition, the fact that people subconsciously fear to trust foreigners might hinder the language development even more.

Thus, it is obvious that the core linguistic problem of the modern world is acceptance. Since denying certain languages' existence will not make the problem vanish, it would be reasonable to reconsider the way in which the attitudes towards Spanglish and Black English are perceived.

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