ADDRESSING LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY: A COMPARATIVE AND CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE ENGLISH AND SPANISH LANGUAGES

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Let us start with an analogy

Mapquest or GPS?

*What are the benefits of each?
*What are the disadvantages of each?

Both work better under certain conditions ~ much like two different languages.
BICS and CALP

- Cummins (1979)
- **Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills** ~ can be developed in 2 years
  * at lunch, on the playground, before or after school:
  ex. How are you?

- **Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency** ~ can require 5 – 7 years
  *vocabulary that is content specific:
  ex. conjugate, compare, contrast, analyze
Common Underlying Proficiency

- CUP
- Cummins (1984 and 2000)
- Common Underlying Proficiency ~ skills and concepts in one language transfer to the second language and do not need to be relearned
- Ex. sequencing, directionality, shapes, sounds, meaning behind written symbols
Language has prescriptive and descriptive grammars.

Prescriptive is what we are supposed to do. Ex. I am going to read a book.

Descriptive is the language individuals use. Ex. I am gunna read a book.
Language involves 4 very different skills: reading, writing, speaking, AND listening

Have you ever been surprised by the writing that a student turned in because it demonstrated a very different level of language mastery than any of the other skills?

*b and v in Spanish
*punctuation, or lack of
*accent marks
How do we define what is or is not a language? Is *Spanglish* a language?

Ilán Staváns, a famous Mexican-American author and professor at Amherst College, says Spanglish is a language and should be recognized as such. He is currently writing a Spanglish translation of Don Quixote and compiling a Spanglish-English dictionary.
The Spanish Language has an official royal institution which regulates it.
La Academia Real, The Royal Spanish Academy, is located in Madrid, Spain and has members from all of the Spanish-speaking countries. It was founded in 1713 and oversees the grammar, orthography, dictionaries and reference sources, and vocabulary in the Spanish language. The main objective of the Academia Real is to maintain a linguistic unity for the Spanish language.

*rules for orthography: Vuestra Merced ➔ Vd. ➔ Ud.
*grammar: continued use of the subjunctive
*use of accents marks on monosyllabic words when used to distinguish them from others mi & mí, de & dé BUT not fue, vi, di
*elimination of the letters “ch” and “ll” in 1994

Is the English language “monitored” in this way?
Spanish is a very phonetic language. Except for the letter “h,” if a letter is written, it is pronounced. Furthermore, Spanish tends to consist of open-ended syllables so that the words often become linked thus creating a rapid sounding language.

Ex. Yo soy estudiante de espanyol en la Universidad de Aurora.
Ex. /yo-soi-es-tu-djan-te-des-pa-nyo-len-lau-ni-ber-si-da-de-au-ro-ra./

- English has more closed syllable words which creates a choppy sounding language that requires a speaker to pause between words.

Ex. I am a Spanish student at Aurora University.
Ex. /I-am-a-Spa-nish-stu-dent-at-Au-ro-ra-U-ni-ver-si-ty./

- Native Spanish speakers may experience difficulties with the closed, uneven syllables of the English language. Consonant clusters or letters that change pronunciation based on the letters surrounding them can also be troublesome. On the other hand, those listening to Spanish think that it sounds very fast and hard to understand.
The Spanish language does not distinguish between the spoken pronunciation of the letters “b” and “v.”

Some words which include “b” and/or “v” may be difficult for native Spanish speakers to say or spell such as van, boy, vegetables, beautiful.

Many words that begin with “s” in English begin with “es” in Spanish.

- school = escuela
- study = estudiar
- student = estudiante
- Stupendous! = ¡Estupendo!
- scholastic = escolar

Have you ever heard a native Spanish speaker talk about “eschool,” a “estudent,” or the need to “estudy?”
In Spanish, the five vowels are very pure and each one has one sound. In English there are “long” and “short” sounds. For this reason, the five English vowels produce thirteen different sounds.

Spanish:  este, señor, leer, externo, coche
English:  eight, telephone, flower, house
Spanish inverts question and exclamation marks at the start of a question or exclamation to alert readers as to where intonations should occur.

¿Cómo está usted, señor Martinez?
How are you, Mr. Martinez?

¡Qué padre!
How awesome!

Without these “warning signs,” a native Spanish speaking student may have a difficult time knowing when to use intonations in a sentence or question.
Spanish has no written apostrophe mark. The language does have possessive pronouns, but it is very common to use a longer structure to denote possession in Spanish.

John’s friends => the friends of John => los amigos de Juan

Spanish uses a period in large numbers where English employs a comma.
Ex. Spanish: 2.000 = English: 2,000
The Spanish language employs written accent marks as a guide for pronunciation or as a way to differentiate between two words which are spelled the same and only distinguished by that written mark.

*Sí, quiero mirar la televisión contigo el miércoles.*
(Yes, I want to watch t.v. with you on Wednesday.)

Native Spanish-speaking students enrolled in Spanish grammar classes sometimes struggle with accents. Native English speakers learn the accents with the words.
The subject of a verb is frequently deleted because the verb conjugation denotes the subject, tense, and mood.

- **Comer** To eat
- **Como** I eat
- **Comes** You (familiar, singular) eat
- **Come** He, she, you (formal, sing.) eat
- **Comemos** We eat
- **Coméis** You (familiar, plural) eat
- **Comen** They, you (formal, pl.) eat
There are four different ways to say you in Spanish. These are distinguished by the number of people being addressed as well as the relationship that the speaker has with him/her/them.

In Spanish, the four “yous” are:
- tú (familiar and singular)
- usted (formal and singular)
- vosotros/vosotras (familiar and plural)
- ustedes (formal and plural)

The vosotros/vosotras form is most common in northern Spain.

Additionally, there are regional forms of “you” such as “vos” which is found in the southern cone of South America.
Spanish does not have the auxiliary verb “do.” This means that the Spanish present tense has three English translations.

Nosotros hablamos español.

1.) We speak Spanish.
2.) We do speak Spanish.
3.) We are speaking Spanish.

Native Spanish speakers will not understand the need for the auxiliary verb and native English speakers might add an extra conjugated verb.
Writing, Speaking, Listening and Reading

- Spanish uses the infinitive form many times when English uses the gerund.

  Ex. Ver es creer.
  Ex. Seeing is believing.

  Ex. Es importante estudiar.
  Ex. Studying is important.

- Spanish uses the passive voice much more than English.

  Ex. El libro famoso, Don Quixote, fue escrito por Cervantes.
  Ex. The famous book, Don Quixote, was written by Cervantes.
Writing, Speaking, Listening and Reading

- Spanish uses more impersonal expressions.
  Ex. Se habla español.
  We speak Spanish.
  They speak Spanish.
  You speak Spanish.
  One speaks Spanish.
Spanish uses the subjunctive mood in sentences with two clauses and two subjects when expressing wishing, emotion, doubt, denial, impersonal expressions, doubt, denial, and the Arabic word ojalá.

Quiero que mis estudiantes tengan mucho éxito.
I want my students to be successful.

Espero que tengan un buen día.
I hope you have a good day.
Spanish does not capitalize days of the week, months of the year, or nationalities.

lunes, martes, miércoles = Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday
enero, febrero, marzo = January, February, March
polaco, francés, alemán = Polish, French, German

BUT,

España, Los Estados Unidos, México
Writing, Speaking, Listening and Reading

- In Spanish, all nouns are considered masculine or feminine as well as singular or plural and require adjectives that agree in gender and number.

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las ventanas nuevas = the windows new
el escritorio viejo = the desk old
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Spanish adjectives are placed before and after nouns: adjectives which limit quantity precede a noun while descriptive adjectives are placed after a noun.

dos libros interesantes = two interesting books
mi coche nuevo y rojo = my new, red car
Spanish uses the *definite article* more frequently than English.

* La libertad es un derecho importante.
* Liberty is an important right.

*La señora Hatcher es loca.*
*Mrs. Hatcher is crazy.*
In Spanish, certain nouns are always singular or plural.

la ropa = clothes
las vacaciones = vacation
Spanish has two past tenses. The *preterit* is used for completed and infrequent occurrences while the *imperfect* is used for habitual or repeated events.

Ayer llamé a mi hermana menor.
Yesterday *I called* my younger sister. (I called her once.)

Cuando *era* niña, siempre *iba* a la casa de mis abuelos.
When I *was* young, I *used to go* to my grandparents’ home. (This was a habit and happened frequently.)
Spanish has two words with different meanings for one English word.

conocer = to know a person or a place
saber = to know specific information

ser = to be, such as a characteristic
estar = to be, such as a location or condition

preguntar = to ask a question
pedir = to ask for

hacerse = to become professionally
ponerse = to become physically
llegar a ser = to become after much effort
por = for, such as duration
para = for, such as a destination
poco = small as in quantity
   Ex. Tengo poco dinero.
pequeño = small as in size
   Ex. Quiero un perro pequeño.
Spanish allows the use of more negative words in one sentence or question than English.

No, no tengo nada interesante para decir.
No, I don’t have anything interesting to say.
Spanish has a personal “a” that is placed before a direct object that refers to a person. There is nothing like this in English.

Ex. Llamas a tu amigo.

Ex. You call your friend.
Spanish has many *tener* expressions which translate into *to be* expressions in English.

- tener hambre = to be hungry
- tener sed = to be thirsty
- tener razón = to be right
- tener sueño = to be sleepy
- tener miedo = to be afraid
- tener ... años = to be an age
Sometimes the order of expressions with numbers is different

Ex. addresses
Gladstone Ave. 347

Ex. dates
21/6/2012
June 21, 2012
Some ideas can only be expressed with more than one verb

Ex. to love

encantar (to love a thing)
querer (to love a person)
amar (to love a person with the strongest love possible)
Spanish tends to use indirect object pronouns more than English. In fact, the verb gustar and other verbs like it can only be used with an indirect object pronoun.

*Me gustan tacos.
*Tacos are pleasing to me.
Sometimes Spanish has a preposition imbedded in a word

Ex. pedir = to ask for
buscar = to look for
Sometimes words have very different meanings in English and Spanish, even if they look the same. These are known as “amigos falsos.”

x. embarazada

tener vergüenza

molestar
Languages are constantly changing
Ex. davenport
   pocketbook
trotar
hacer *jogging*
alquilar
rentar
Ragnarian
26.2
Some words or expressions are regional.

Ex. zumo
Buen día. ¿Com est?
guau guau
bubbler
soda, pop, coke
As individuals, we speak and write in ways that are meaningful to us.

Sometimes what is appropriate in one language might impede communication in another.
Our life experiences impact what we know and how we use what we know.

Language is a developing, evolving entity and what works well for one on any given day might not be what is needed in a new setting, situation or language.
Listed below are some resources that have been beneficial to me, personally.


This reference source explains some of the most common errors for speakers of the English and Spanish languages.

This case study highlights the journey of Alejandro, a fifth grade English language learner, in a Chicago public school.

*opening the mail
* going to seek medical care

Mora’s collection of forty-five poems introduces her reader to the challenges often faced by bilingual and/or bicultural individuals.

*My favorite Pat Mora poem is *Elena* which talks about why a mom is working so hard to learn English even if her family doesn’t understand her.*

This resource helps Spanish and English language learners understand and/or master some of the most common idiomatic expressions in the two languages.

Ex. cazar moscas = to do useless things
así es la vida = that’s the way the cookie crumbles
la gallina de la vecina pone más huevos que la mía = the grass is always greener.....
The protagonist, Nayeli, embarks on a trip to the United States since she feels it is the best way to save her small Mexican town, Los Tres Camarones, from which all of the capable and hard-working men have left in search of the promises of wealth and happiness in “the beautiful north.”

This collection shares the English language learning experiences of fifty-five Latinos who are well-known and have achieved professional success in their chosen careers.

* One of my favorite stories is on p. 259 and is entitled *English is Cuh-ray-zee.*
Thanks for listening. What questions do you have?

Please feel free to share your ideas with me. I can best be reached at dhatcher@aurora.edu

¡Gracias! And, thanks!
Resources

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This powerful book details what one teenaged boy survived in order to leave his home in Honduras and find his mom in North Carolina.

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The protagonist, Nayeli, dreams of a trip to the United States since she feels that is the best way to save her small Mexican town, Los Tres Camarones, from which all of the capable and hard-working men have left in search the promises of wealth in “the beautiful north.”

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