THE BILINGUAL BRAIN

MAXIMIZING IMPACT WITH ENGLISH- AND SPANISH-SPEAKING MILLENNIALS

JUNE 2014
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hispanic bilingual Millennials are a rapidly growing and increasingly important consumer group. Defined by their ability to speak both English and Spanish, it is imperative to understand the impact of language in order to optimize messaging for this demographic.

Over the past decades, technological advances have allowed researchers to investigate how bilingualism affects our cognitive and neurological systems.

RESEARCH HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT BILINGUAL SPEAKERS HAVE A NUMBER OF COGNITIVE ADVANTAGES OVER THEIR MONOLINGUAL PEERS; HOWEVER, THE NEUROLOGICAL IMPACT OF BILINGUALISM ON ADVERTISING HAD NOT YET BEEN EXPLORED.

Utilizing Nielsen’s proprietary consumer neuroscience technology, Nielsen, Univision and SMG Multicultural collaborated to research unarticulated language preferences and their impact on advertising, answering key questions, such as:

• Does the emerging population of bilingual Millennials respond differently to messaging when it is in Spanish than when it is in English?
• What are the best ways to reach and connect with the Hispanic bilingual Millennial?
• How does the language of television programming influence how the advertisement is received by the consumer?

The results confirm that language does influence how ads are received, and introduces the idea that advertising in Spanish offers a unique advantage for brands striving to connect with bilingual Hispanic Millennials.
INTRODUCTION

Today, the Hispanic population accounts for 17% of the total U.S. population. By 2050, it is expected to increase 167%, making Hispanics the fastest growing subgroup in the American marketplace. Among younger generations, Latino Millennials (aged 21-34) comprise nearly 20% of the U.S. youth. Of those Millennials, an increasing subset identify as bilingual – in the past decade alone, the number of bilingual speakers has increased 73%, beating out English-dominant speakers to become the largest Hispanic subgroup.

With size comes influence – as the demographic profile of Hispanics evolves, language is an important cultural attribute that media companies cannot ignore. As a result, TV networks and advertisers must continually find new ways to communicate effectively and meaningfully with this audience. As such, Nielsen, Univision and SMG Multicultural collaborated to hone in on the unspoken influence of the most fundamental component of communication: language. For a bilingual audience, nothing is of more critical importance.

Source: Nielsen NPower Hispanics 18-29, English Dominant, Spanish Dominant, Bilingual Hispanics 18-29 May 2003, May 2013
SPANISH ADS RESONATE

When comparing the neurological effectiveness of identical advertisements in both Spanish and English, the Spanish version performed the same or better than its English counterpart. Of the eight ads tested, no English ad performed significantly better than the same ad in Spanish.*

GENERALLY, SPANISH ADS TREND HIGHER THAN ENGLISH ADS.

OVERALL NEUROLOGICAL EFFECTIVENESS OF ADS TESTED

* A difference of at least 0.4 is required to be statistically significant
TO CONNECT, CONSIDER USING SPANISH DURING EMOTIONAL MOMENTS, SOCIAL INTERACTIONS + BRANDING SEQUENCES.

Overall, Spanish-language advertising does a better job connecting with bilingual Millennials in a range of scenarios, particularly those in which the content is emotional in nature.

These findings also held true in the context of television programming. Spanish ads proved more emotionally engaging when following a Spanish program than English ads did when following an English program.
### SINGLE-LANGUAGE ADS FOLLOWING SINGLE-LANGUAGE TV PROGRAMMING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SPANISH CONTEXT + ENGLISH AD</th>
<th>SPANISH CONTEXT + SPANISH AD</th>
<th>ENGLISH CONTEXT + ENGLISH AD</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attention</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Engagement</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memory Activation</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the context of Spanish television programming, consumers showed increased memory with Spanish ads when compared to English.

### MEMORY DURING FIRST 15S OF AD (AD D)

![Graph showing memory activation during different scenes for English and Spanish ads.](image_url)
KEEP LANGUAGE CONSISTENT

Switching between languages is a drain and requires increased attention and focus at the expense of emotional engagement and memory. When switching from a single-language program in one language to a single-language ad in another, the viewers' focus shifts away from the content itself and toward processing the language change.

KEY MESSAGING AND BRANDING SHOULD NOT BE SHOWN WITHIN 10 SECONDS OF A LANGUAGE SHIFT

Because cognitive resources are diverted during language switches, key messaging or branded moments may escape comprehension, decreasing the effectiveness of the advertisement.

AVERAGE NEUROMETRICS DURING THE FIRST 10 SECONDS OF ADS

- **SPANISH PROGRAM + ENGLISH AD**
  - Memory: 5.0
  - Emotion: 5.2
  - Attention: 8.2

- **ENGLISH PROGRAM + ENGLISH AD**
  - Memory: 5.1
  - Emotion: 6.1
  - Attention: 6.6

- **SPANISH PROGRAM + SPANISH AD**
  - Memory: 6.0
  - Emotion: 6.7
  - Attention: 7.6
SELECTIVE USE OF SPANISH CAN BOOST AD EFFECTIVENESS

Knowing when to leverage different languages is a crucial tool to optimize your advertising. For Spanglish ads, sequences with Spanish voiceover showed higher memory scores than those in English.

Choosing when to show a multilingual ad also impacts resonance.

DURING ENGLISH PROGRAMMING, SPANGLISH ADVERTISING STRENGTHENS RELEVANCE FOR BILINGUAL CONSUMERS.

When Spanglish ads followed English programming, bilingual Hispanic Millennials were highly emotionally engaged at the beginning of the ad. However, when viewers were primed with Spanish programming, Spanglish ads were less engaging and therefore seemed less relevant.

LANGUAGE ISN’T ALL THAT MATTERS

Though it may seem tempting to increase resonance by simply translating ads into Spanish, the process is not always that straightforward. Executional elements other than language often affect how an ad is received by the viewer and its chance of success.

MATCH SOUNDS AND SIGHTS

Dissonance between the audio and visual information causes confusion for viewers. In particular, ads with English messaging and concurrent Spanish voiceover suffered. Likewise, when audio and visual information is out of sync – for example, the action represented on screen is not the same action being conveyed by the voiceover – the ad is harder to process and disengages the viewer.
# Impact of Audio Visual Alignment on Emotional Engagement (AD F)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visual</th>
<th>Audio</th>
<th>Emotional Engagement*</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young woman on tablet</td>
<td>Older woman speaking</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Disengaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product demo</td>
<td>Older woman speaking</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>Disengaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young woman speaking</td>
<td>Older woman speaking</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Disengaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older woman speaking</td>
<td>Older woman speaking</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Engaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product suite</td>
<td>Older woman speaking</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Disengaging</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Individual Key Metrics are scored on a scale of 0-10.
HISTORY IS IMPORTANT

Familiar characters should stay true to their language of origin. For example, characters that consistently speak English will seem out of place speaking Spanish. This unfamiliar situation results in confusion and decreased memorability.

NEUROLOGICAL EFFECTIVENESS OF CHARACTER’S LANGUAGE (AD C)

DON'T DOUBLE UP

Advertisements should not attempt to translate messaging for bilingual Millennials as they are already translators by default. When presented with the messaging in both English and Spanish consecutively, messaging was considered redundant and viewers’ were disengaged.
CONCLUSION

As the bilingual Hispanic community continues to grow, it is of utmost importance for marketers, media companies and advertisers alike to understand the unspoken impact of the language.

The neurological findings presented in this study reinforce the strength of language’s influence on advertising effectiveness.

OVERALL, SPANISH ADS DROVE EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT AND MEMORY ACTIVATION MORE SUCCESSFULLY THAN THEIR ENGLISH COUNTERPARTS.

This held true when the ads were tested both in isolation and in the context of single-language television programming, as well as in Spanish, in English and in Spanglish.

However, translation was not the only driving force in the success or failure of an ad. Many additional factors, such as historical context and cognitive abilities, play influential roles in the way that bilingual Hispanic Millennials receive and process advertisements.

METHODOLOGY

Nielsen consumer neuroscience testing was used to investigate the impact of English- versus Spanish-language delivery of advertising. Participants included 227 individuals who identified themselves as Hispanic, were between the ages of 21-34, were bilingual in Spanish and English and were a mix of foreign- and US-born. Participants were required to have cable and/or satellite television access, and they watched both English- and Spanish-language television.

The study tested several TV advertisements across categories, comparing them in English and in Spanish. Ads in “Spanglish” were also tested. Finally, ads in English, Spanish and Spanglish were tested within the context of English or Spanish programming to see how that affected perceptions and neurological response. A synopsis of those results is presented in this whitepaper.
STUDY DESIGN

SINGLE-LANGUAGE ADS TESTED IN ISOLATION

A B C D vs A B C D

SPANGLISH ADS TESTED IN ISOLATION

E F G H

ADS TESTED IN THE CONTEXT OF SINGLE-LANGUAGE PROGRAMMING

A A A E E

SPANGLISH ENGLISH SPANISH

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