

Lecture 4 (Part I)

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THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: PART I. MULTICULTURALISM

1. Demographics (population).
2. Immigration.
3. Multicultural American society.
4. Assimilation.
5. Hispanics, and other ethnic groups.
6. Biculturalism & Bilingualism.
7. Spanglish.
8. WASPs, African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans.
9. Ebonics.



Ethnic Groups of the United States of America

Population: 295,734,134 (US Census Bureau, 2005)

White, (Caucasian) 68 %

Hispanic 14 %

African American 12 %


Asian American 4,5 %

Native American 1,5 %



Immigration

- bound to immigration;
- immigrants as a necessary resource for an expanding country




- Few restrictions were placed upon immigration into the United States until the 1920s. As more and more immigrants arrived, however, some Americans became fearful that their culture was threatened.




- “white“ or Euro-American

- There are three times more Puerto Ricans living in New York City than San Juan, the capital of Puerto Rico. There are more Lebanese in Chicago and Michigan than in all of Beirut.



The second largest urban Spanish-speaking population in the world is in Los Angeles, and there are more Samoans living in Los Angeles than all of Samoa.

- Illegal/clandestine immigration is still a major problem.



- **Mexicans** and other **Latin Americans** daily cross the Southwestern US borders to find work, higher wages, and improved education and health care for their families. Likewise, there is a substantial illegal migration from countries like China and other Asian nations.



- the Statue of Liberty

Frederic Auguste Bartholdi

October 28, 1886

- population increase in
the US





American “Mosaic” or
“melting pot”

heated and stirred

“melting pot”

- United States Department of

Commerce: “salad bowl”,

- pizza, “patchwork quilt”,

“mosaic”/“tapestry”



historical metaphors:

Assimilationist model

Multicultural model

easily blended into the
society



identifiably different

Many economists would say that the expansion of the American economy and its high productivity is a result of the waves of immigrants who have come to this country.

lowest class – middle class.



American Dream

Opponents of immigration

However, there are some Americans who believe recent immigrants are “bad” for America and will eventually “destroy their culture”.




Mr. Pat Buchanan, a

television commentator
and a former candidate for
President, takes these
positions in his speeches
and his writings.



1965 Civil Rights Act America

“quotas” for Asian,
African, Hispanic and
other people of color.



Samuel Huntington – a political scientist, chairman of the Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies.

Samuel Huntington *Who are we?*, *Clash of Civilizations:*

“Mexican immigration is unique and contradicts the tradition of assimilation”.



Anglo-Protestant culture vs. Catholic

David Brooks, a columnist in the *New York Times*, wrote that the most persuasive evidence is against Huntington, because Mexicans are assimilating. By the third generation, 60 % of Mexican American children speak only English at home.

José vs. Michael (1998, California, Texas)



Richard Rodriguez, Mexican

American writer: assimilation

Private and public individuality

Hispanics in the U.S.

“Between Cultures“ (*derog. pocho*)

Assimilated (*offens.*)

Vendido=sellout, Tio Taco, (fake Mexican), who lost the heritage culture

Bicultural and Bilingual



Terms: Hispanic, Latino,
Chicano

Mexicans, Puerto Ricans,
Cubans

Texas, New Mexico, Arizona,
California (1829-
1848)/increased U.S. territory
by one third



Conquest or *Reconquista*?


(E.Poniatowska: thanks to immigration, Mexico is recovering the territories it lost to the United States in th 19th c.)

“racist language” (e.g. wetback)
is used in racist discourse,
inclusive language – *is politically correct (e.g. illegal)*




Macho The Hispanic

*macho is manly,
responsible, hardworking,
a man in charge, a
patriarch. A man who
expresses strength
through silence.*



The *American macho* is
*chauvinistic, a brute,
uncouth, selfish, loud,
capable of inflicting
pain, and sexually
promiscuous .*



“Getting shot should be an experience from which you can draw some small pride. I don’t mean the macho stuff”. All I mean that you should be able to talk about it [Burke J.L. Sunset Limited. – New York: Dell Publishing, Random House Inc., 1998. – 387 p., p. 218].



- Emergence of **Spanish** – **lingua franca** of American life

- **Spanglish** is a name used to refer to a range of language-contact phenomena, primarily in the speech of the **Hispanic** population of the USA, which is exposed to both Spanish and English.



These phenomena are a product of close **border contacts** or large **bilingual communities**, such as along the United States–Mexico border, in Florida and in New York City.



Linguists refer to the various phenomena involved in "Spanglish" by a variety of terms: code mixing, code switching, loanwords, language contact, and more generally, bilingualism.




More common than that are word borrowings from English into Spanish, using false cognates with their English sense, or calquing idiomatic English expressions. **Some examples:**




- In standard Spanish


aplicación means "effort"; the word for a job or a school application is *solicitud*; that is, Spanish *aplicación* and English "application" are false cognates.




Using false cognates with their English sense, like using Spanish *aplicación* in the sense of English "application", is another form of Spanglish.




- The expression *llamar para atrás* is **calqued** literally from English "call back"; compare standard Spanish *devolver la llamada* ("return the call"). This is an example of calquing an idiomatic English phrase into Spanish.



Ebonics is a language system characteristic of certain speech communities in the United States, especially (but not exclusively) African American communities in urban areas and the South.




Although it has many features that distinguish it from various dialects of English, it also has very much in common with kinds of English all over the world. It also differs from community to community.



We must be careful to note that (a) not all African Americans speak Ebonics; (b) there are non-African Americans who do speak Ebonics, by virtue of having grown up in the communities where it is spoken.



There is a significant scientific literature on Ebonics. The field which studies it is called 'sociolinguistics'.



Within sociolinguistics,
Ebonics has been known
as **Black English**, **Black
English Vernacular** or
BEV, and (most currently)
**African American
Vernacular English** or
AAVE.

Linguists of various races (John Baugh, William Labov, John Rickford, Geneva Smitherman, and Walt Wolfram) have studied its systems of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary, as well as its origins and history, since the 1960s. The term **Ebonics** was first used in the 1970s.



Thank you!