

MULTICULTURAL MARKETING: ADVERTISING STRATEGIES FOR THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN MARKET

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Advertising effectiveness of alternative advertising strategies currently used in print advertisements by firms attempting to target Mexican-American consumers is examined. The term alternative strategies here refers to advertisements that use ad copy containing both English and Spanish or any advertisement that portrays both Anglo and Hispanic models. The relationship between the level of acculturation of Mexican-Americans and their preferences in terms of language and models utilized in print ads is investigated in an on-site advertising experiment conducted in El Paso, Texas with 494 adult respondents. Findings show significant differences in advertising preferences according to the level of acculturation. Advertising strategies are suggested.

INTRODUCTION

The United States is the most culturally powerful nation in the world (*Economist* 1999) and has been described as a "gorgeous mosaic," in which distinctive ethnic groups make up the whole. Firms must operate in an increasingly multicultural global environment as a consequence of the rising economic and communication interdependence of the world (Penaloza and Gilly 1999). Census 2000 has spurred the growth of multicultural marketing in the U. S. in the twenty-first century, forcing firms to reevaluate their marketing efforts or be left behind. Today one out of every eight U.S. residents is Hispanic (Haegele 2000), making the United States the fifth largest Spanish-speaking country in the world with 35.3 million Hispanic residents (Travieso 2001). However, it is projected that Hispanic-Americans will represent twenty-five percent of the U.S. population by the year 2050 (Brooke 2000). Hispanics command nearly \$400 billion in purchasing power (Artze 2000), with over three million Hispanic households currently earning an income of \$50,000 or more (Yorgey 2000). Indeed, the number of Hispanic households reaching middle class status has increased by 80 percent over

the past twenty years (*Hispanic* 2001). With three-quarters of the U.S. Hispanic population concentrated in the metropolitan areas of just five states (Kelly 1997), this is indeed a very attractive target market.

Yet, not even within the U.S. Hispanic population do we note homogeneity. The common denominator among the subgroups is, of course, the Spanish language, yet Hispanics speak different dialects and share particular subcultural values and characteristics pertaining to their heritage. The three largest subgroups within the U. S. are the Puerto Ricans, Cubans and Mexican-Americans (Travieso 2001). Mexican-Americans, by far the largest subgroup accounting for approximately 70 percent of the U.S. Hispanic population (Yorgey 2000), will be the focus of this research.

Mexican-Americans are of particular interest because they offer the researcher the potential to study the impact of acculturation on marketing efforts. This ethnic group is constantly replenished with new immigrants fresh over the border, so that all levels of acculturation can be found at any point in time. Also, this ethnic group is unique in that it does not need to break its ties to Mexico due to its proximity and the ease of communications in today's technological world (*Economist* 1999). Mexican-Americans can watch Mexican television on satellite

or cable television, keep in contact with their relatives by e-mail, telephone, fax or by return visits several times a year.

As the knowledge base and sophistication level have increased in relation to the U. S. Hispanic market, firms have come to realize that to advertise all in Spanish is not necessarily the most effective means of reaching this group of consumers. In fact, a firm that blindly attempts to advertise to the Hispanic market using only Spanish may run the risk of insulting potential customers who have previously chosen to communicate in English (Haegele 2000). Depending on the level of acculturation, the optimum choice of language and models (characters) may vary (Davis 1997, Deshpande, Hoyer and Donthu 1986). An understanding of this phenomenon is demonstrated by Quepasa, a website which targets the Hispanic American market and offers its site in both English and Spanish (Solis 2000).

The underpinnings of acculturation research have been related to the idea that subcultures have unique cultural differences of their own while sharing some values and norms with the dominant culture. Significant differences in purchase behavior have been found to be related to these subculture-specific characteristics, making differential marketing campaigns essential for success (Ownbey and Horridge 1997, Roslow and Nicholls 1996, Delener 1995, Webster 1992, McCracken 1986, Hayes-Bautista et al. 1984). Laroche, Kim and Clarke (1997) examined the differences between English- and French-Canadians and found that acculturation has a significant effect on consumer deal interests. Kara and Kara (1996) state that the degree to which Hispanics have become acculturated to the host (U.S.) culture may be a more important predictor of consumer behavior than country of birth.

This research focuses on the relationship between the level of acculturation of Mexican-Americans and their preference of language and models (characters) in advertisements. It examines the advertising effectiveness of actual print advertisements currently used to target Mexican-Americans. These include alternative strategies, such as incorporating both English and Spanish in the copy of the advertisement

or both Anglo and Hispanic models (characters) in the same advertisement.

ACCULTURATION AND ADVERTISING

Acculturation is the acquisition of the attitudes, values and behaviors of a dominant or host culture (Laroche et al. 1997). Valencia (1985) describes it as the process of learning a culture that is different from the one in which a person was raised. Schiffman, Dillon and Ngumah (1981) describe acculturation as the social process by which persons raised in one culture acquire through first-hand exposure the consumption-relevant values, beliefs, or customs of another culture. Berry (1990) views acculturation as a bi-directional process: the degree of adoption of the majority culture by the minority subculture and the degree to which the minority subculture retains its culture of origin. He also points out that acculturation does not occur evenly across all domains of behavior and social life, which was previously referred to by Stayman and Deshpande (1989) as "situational ethnicity," with the idea being that acculturation is not demonstrated equally in all the different roles a person plays in life. This same idea is illustrated in another way by Laroche et al. (1997) when they model acculturation as a multidimensional process, with English language use with family members being the final step in the process.

Penaloza (1994) also believes that acculturation is a two way process, but in a much different sense. She rejects the traditional acculturation model where the subculture assimilates into the mainstream culture. Instead, she postulates that both the subculture and host culture take on elements of each other, which explains some of the increasing diversity of U.S. consumer behavior. In a 1999 study, Penaloza and Gilly point out that acculturation outcomes occur on several levels: the individual marketer, which is the focus of the study, the firm, the marketplace and larger social relations. Andreasen (1990) offers a similar view in the phenomenon of "cultural interpenetration," whereby members of two or more cultures influence each other's values and behaviors through direct face-to-face contact as well as through exposure to the media. Gentry, Ju and Tansuhaj,

(1995) regard "cultural interpenetration" as one type of acculturation.

Hirschman (1981) provided the impetus for much of the research on acculturation today. She found that the degree of an individual's identification with a certain ethnic group may largely determine the individual's commitment to cultural norms and the degree of influence exerted by that culture on the individual. These differences will be reflected in how that individual reacts to his or her environment as a whole, including patterns of consumption and reactions to advertisements.

Advertising is basically a communications process. Khairullah (1995) describes it more specifically as a social communication that reflects the cultural values of a society. Indeed, an advertisement's chances for success depend upon its ability to reflect the cultural values of the target market (Cheng and Schweitzer 1996). Advertising using emotional appeals are more culturally dependent than those using a cognitive approach, since the effectiveness of an emotional appeal relies on the viewer bringing similar cultural values to the advertising situation (Ueltschy and Ryans 1997, Edell and Burke 1987). Hence, differences in levels of acculturation affect how consumers perceive and accept advertising messages. Indeed, Cui (1997) lists acculturation as one of the main factors affecting advertising responses and the appropriate selection of an advertising strategy. A study done by Lee (1993) of Taiwanese and college students from the U.S. found that acculturation among the Taiwanese affected their attitude toward advertising as a whole and decreased their reliance on word-of-mouth advice from friends. Deng, Jivan and Hassan (1994) found that acculturation was an important factor to be considered in Malaysia's heterogeneous society when creating advertising strategies for that market.

Numerous studies have noted significant differences in advertising effectiveness and media preferences between highly acculturated Hispanics and those low in acculturation. Differences were noted in relation to print advertisements by Haegele (2000), Yorgey (2000), Ueltschy and Krampf (1997) and by Adelson in 1989. Petrozello (1995), O'Guinn and Meyer

(1984) and Dunn (1975) observed differences in reactions to radio ads, as did Nicholls and Roslow (1995) and Valenzuela (1973) in relation to television commercials. Differences in general were noted by Shim and Gehrt (1996) and Deshpande, Hoyer and Donthu in 1986. As a rule, Hispanics high in acculturation prefer English and Hispanics low in acculturation prefer Spanish. Since in reality acculturation occurs in degrees along a continuum over time, this is, of course, an over-simplification. Of real interest to marketers might be the advertising strategies which would not only be effective with those Hispanics on either extreme of the continuum but also with those in between.

LANGUAGE OF CHOICE

A basic marketing tenet is that all product literature and advertising should be in the language of the market being targeted (Wilson 1997). However, in the case of Mexican-American consumers, what really is their preferred language? Bosch (2000) states that there is every reason to believe that many Hispanics in the U. S. are perfectly comfortable, at least some of the time, using English-language resources. Analysts say that 75 percent of U. S. Hispanics surf the Web in English. Nonetheless, language has very deep emotional ties and many advertisers believe that addressing someone in their native language will hit much closer to home (Haegele 2000). Guernica (1982) believes the use of the Spanish language is a direct and positive link with family and home, which are both very important to Hispanics.

Language is the primary delineator of cultural groups because it is the means by which members communicate with each other. It establishes the categories on which our perceptions of the world are organized (Ferraro 2002) and structures the way we view the world (Singer 1998). Many bilingual Hispanics are attracted to Hispanic media as a consequence of this intertwining of language and cultural orientation. Roslow and Nicholls (1996) state that Hispanics like radio and TV in their native language because the themes and characters are in tune with Hispanic cultural expectations, as well as represent their cultural heritage. Additionally, their

research utilized Spanish and English television commercials to measure which language is more effective in relaying the advertiser's main message to Hispanics and found that those viewing the commercials in Spanish reported the message correctly to a greater degree than those who viewed an English version of the same ad. Davis (1997) states that over 50 percent of Hispanics prefer to be communicated to not just in Spanish, but using a Spanish-based communication style. English ads translated into Spanish will not suffice.

However, Hispanics living in the United States realize the importance of learning English to improve their chances for success in the job market, as well as to carry on many everyday activities in their lives. Indeed, according to a study conducted in 1999 by the *Washington Post* and Harvard University, nine out of ten Hispanics feel it is important for them to change so that they blend into American society, yet it is essential to maintain their distinct culture. Of the U.S.-born Hispanic children, only one in ten relies mainly on Spanish to communicate (Artze 2000) and within ten years of arriving in the U. S., seventy-six percent of Hispanics speak English "with high proficiency" (*Economist* 1999). Also, of those Hispanics born in the U.S., more than two-thirds are more proficient in English than in Spanish. Finally, another important aspect to be considered is that nearly 35 percent of U.S. Hispanics are under the age of 18 (*Advertising Age*, 1998) and Fisher (1995) states that if advertisers are trying to reach younger Hispanics, it is best to advertise in English.

Good marketing involves breaking down consumers into homogeneous segments, targeting the most desirable ones and developing creative, tailored programs to attract that market (Nuiry 1997). When targeting the Mexican-American audience, the choice of the appropriate language is indeed a very important element in determining the success of an advertisement.

CHOICE OF MODELS (CHARACTERS) IN HISPANIC ADVERTISING

"An advertisement's execution is effective to the extent that the product, the setting, and the 'look' of

the model convey a congruent set of meanings to the audience." (Englis, Solomon and Ashmore 1994, p. 51)." It is widely accepted that attractive people portrayed in advertising help firms sell more products (Belch, Belch and Villareal 1987) but is also well known that the ideals of both male and female beauty are cultural constructions, constituted as a result of common socialization experiences (Banner 1983). Thus, the question arises: what should be the choice of models (characters) for a firm targeting the Mexican-American market?

Only six percent of all television commercials in 1989 portrayed Hispanics as central figures (Wilkes and Valencia 1989), but in 2000 this situation has changed. Growing pride in their culture has been increasingly noted (Kanellos 1999, Trujillo 1998) and a manifestation of this ethnic consciousness is the increase in the number of television programs with Hispanics in high-profile roles (Azios 2001) as well as the increase in the number of advertisements which portray Hispanic models (characters) and are specifically directed at Hispanics (Martin 1999, Nicholls and Roslow 1995, Deshpande, Hoyer and Donthu 1986).

Hispanics are realizing that assimilation does not require the obliteration of ethnic identity (Artze 2000). As Gregory Rodriguez, fellow at the New American Foundation in Washington, D. C., puts it, "Assimilation was never about people of different backgrounds becoming homogeneous" (Rodriguez 1999). It has been demonstrated by Wells (1988), and Edell and Burke (1987) that identification with the people in the advertisement creates involvement with the ad, leading to enhanced information processing and increased positive feelings for the ad. Whittler (1989) also demonstrated that actors' race does in fact interact with the viewers' processing of message claims in advertising. Cantel AT&T in Canada found that it increased its market share significantly in the cellular market when it matched French-Canadian spokespersons with the Quebecois market (Nullmeyer 1997). Hence, it is important to investigate the impact of models (characters) being used currently in actual advertisements targeting Mexican-Americans, especially where the alternative

strategy of portraying both Hispanic and Anglo models in the same advertisement is being employed.

ADVERTISING EFFECTIVENESS

As a consequence of the dramatic increases in the size of the Hispanic population in the U.S. and its enhanced purchasing power, firms are spending more on advertising to attract the Hispanic audience than ever before. However, measuring the effectiveness of advertising is very difficult in general (Buttle 1991) and an increasingly fragmented society has made both achieving and measuring advertising effectiveness even more difficult (Spethmann 1991). Even though there is no single measure of advertising effectiveness (Johnston 1994), there are two basic approaches: communication-effect research and sales-effect research. The former will be used in this study to examine advertising effectiveness in terms of attitude toward the ad and recall.

Recall is more complex than sheer recognition. Recall signifies that a person can remember the information content of the message. Attitudes are likes (or affinities) and dislikes (or aversions) to certain people, objects, ideas or situations which lead to particular behaviors (Chaney and Martin 2000). Because attitudes are learned, they can be changed, unlearned or replaced with new ones. Attitudes reflect consumers' values and identify the things and ideas they consider important. Advertisers are particularly interested in attitudes because they influence how consumers evaluate products (Hong, Mudderrissoglu and Zinkhan 1987). Individual purchasing and product usage behavior represent the consequential behavioral effects of advertising (Vakratsas and Ambler 1999). Brown and Stayman (1992) define attitude toward the ad as a message recipient's affective feelings of favorability or unfavorability toward an advertisement. Indeed, a strong positive attitude might be turned into brand preference and loyalty. In an advertising experiment done by Tavassoli, Shultz and Fitzsimmons in 1995, it was found that viewer involvement with a television program has a positive effect on recall and attitude toward the ad, as program involvement increases from low to moderate levels. However, further increases in program involvement from moderate to high levels

actually decrease recall and cause attitude toward the ad to deteriorate.

Numerous researchers have investigated advertising effectiveness in relation to the Hispanic market. Roslow and Nicholls (1996) investigated advertising effectiveness in terms of persuasion. An experiment was conducted where degree of purchase intention of certain brands was measured before and after a variety of television commercials. The results indicated that Hispanic viewers were more persuaded when they were exposed to commercials in Spanish, embedded in Spanish television programs, than they were by similar English commercials embedded in English television programs. This finding held true for both Spanish-dominant and bilingual viewers. Maso-Fleishman (1997) found that the commercials that are most effective in targeting the Hispanic audience are very traditional Spanish-language commercials, instead of postmodern ones like many general market commercials are today. For example, when food products are being advertised, Hispanics like best to see a family and/or caring mother. In another study done by Simons Market Research of Chicago in 1998, it was found that direct marketing efforts must be not only in the appropriate language, but must also incorporate all cultural nuances in order to succeed with Hispanic consumers (Krol 1998). Thus, the Hispanic culture and the level of acculturation have been found to impact advertising effectiveness.

OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH

The objective of this research is to comprehend more fully how language and type of model (character) used in an ad impact the effectiveness of print advertisements targeted toward Mexican-Americans based on their level of acculturation. The researcher specifically wanted to investigate how print ads currently being used by firms employing alternative strategies to target Mexican-Americans are received by the different acculturation segments. Here the term alternative strategies is being used to refer to advertisements that use ad copy containing both English and Spanish or any ad which portrays both Anglo and Hispanic models (characters). The research questions to be answered are: (1) If both

Spanish and English are used in the same print advertisement, do attitude toward the ad and recall improve? (2) If both Anglo and Hispanic models are portrayed in the same print advertisement, does this make a difference in how the advertisements are viewed by Mexican-Americans?

To answer these questions, the following hypotheses will be tested:

H₁: Those Mexican-Americans high in acculturation will have the most positive attitude toward the ad and the best recall when the advertisement portrays both Anglo and Hispanic models and is written in English, as compared to the other alternative advertising strategies presented.

Support for Hypothesis 1 comes from the rising ethnic consciousness of Hispanics (Artze 2000), growing pride in their culture (Kanellos 1999 and Trujillo 1998) and empathy for ads using Hispanic models (Deshpande, Hoyer and Donthu 1986). This is coupled with the fact that this segment is English dominant (Bosch 2000, Segal and Sosa 1983) and aspires to be like other U.S. citizens in mainstream society (Artze 2000, Leo 1993).

H₂: Attitude toward the ad and recall will be more positive among those Mexican-Americans low in acculturation and among the bicultural/bilingual group than among the highly acculturated Mexican-Americans when the print advertisement is written in both Spanish and English (a simultaneous translation).

Support for this hypothesis comes from the fact that Hispanics tend to remain loyal to their native tongue (Davis 1997) because it provides a sense of identity and belonging (Roslow and Nicholls 1996), yet most Hispanics want to assimilate into the U.S. culture and learn English (Artze 2000). It is a unique culture where retaining their language is very important to them even though they have assimilated in other areas of society (Yorgey 2000).

H₃: When the copy is written part in English and part in Spanish, attitude toward the ad will be more positive among those Mexican-Americans low in acculturation and bicultural Mexican-Americans than among the highly acculturated Mexican-Americans.

Support for this hypothesis can be found in the work of Ueltschy and Krampf (1997) and Segal and Sosa (1983) who found that highly acculturated Hispanics preferred advertisements written in English. Indeed, those who have already chosen to communicate in English may be insulted by being addressed in Spanish (Haegele 2000).

METHODOLOGY

This research used an experiment in which the five treatments were designed to test the advertising effectiveness of various alternative strategies currently being used in print advertisements to target Mexican-American consumers (Figure 1). The independent variables consisted of language and models (characters) with level of Hispanic acculturation as a moderating variable. Attitude toward the ad and recall were the dependent variables. To eliminate confounding factors, each booklet contained only one advertisement for each of three products. A different experimental treatment was represented by each advertisement within a specific booklet. To control for ordering effects, order of the treatments within the booklets was varied so that each treatment was represented first, second, third, etc. in the booklets equally in frequency to all other treatments.

To aid in increasing the response rate and validity of responses (Webster 1992), each subject was given a choice of completing the questionnaire in either English or Spanish. The experiment and questionnaire were personally administered to each group of respondents by the researcher.

Color magazine advertisements were chosen for the study because color print advertisements are widely used in print media targeting Mexican-Americans. The ads chosen appeared in various issues of *Vista*, a magazine which targets Mexican-Americans and

appears as an insert in major newspapers in Southwestern states, such as Texas and California. After reviewing and pretesting a number of advertisements with 31 Mexican-American respondents, five advertisements were chosen based on respondent interest and product involvement. The ads chosen represented alternative strategies being used in advertising today for targeting Mexican-Americans, with the copy either being in both English and Spanish or both Anglo and Hispanic models (characters) portrayed in the same advertisement. The products represented were Zest soap, Kodak film, and AT&T long distance service.

FIGURE 1
Treatments

	Characters (Models)	Language
Treatment 1	none	Both English and Spanish (direct translation)
Treatment 2	none	Part in English Part in Spanish
Treatment 3	Hispanic	Part in English Part in Spanish
Treatment 4	Both Anglo and Hispanic	English
Treatment 5	Both Anglo and Hispanic	Spanish

Sample

The U.S. Hispanic population is, of course, made up of foreign-born and domestic-born residents. The metropolitan area of El Paso, Texas was chosen as a desirable location for this research because: (1) 62.3 percent of its residents are Mexican-Americans, who are the target market of this research; (2) its residents include Mexican-American families who have lived

there for generations, as well as thousands of new immigrants from Mexico each year. Thus, the differing levels of acculturation needed to accomplish the research objectives of this study were likely to be present in a sample gathered in El Paso.

The 494 respondents in this study were from varying walks of life and were representative of the El Paso metropolitan area as determined by demographic profiles. Mexican-American adult respondents were recruited from a Mexican-American Mother-Daughter program geared at families in which no one had ever attended college, employees of El Paso Electric, adult students from Lakeside Language Institute, which many new immigrants attend to learn English, and finally adult students from the University of Texas, El Paso. Diverse education levels and occupation categories were represented and the percentage of Spanish and English speaking respondents was approximately equal to that of the area. Age of respondents was also well matched, in that the mean age of respondents in this study was 28.2 years old as compared to a mean of 28.7 years old for the general population of metropolitan El Paso (*U.S. Census 2000*).

Measurement

Subjects were given the choice of a questionnaire in English or Spanish. To ensure accuracy of meaning and inclusion of all appropriate idiomatic expressions, the Spanish version of the questionnaire was translated by the bilingual researcher and then back translated by Mexican-Americans living in the United States who spoke English well and were familiar with the subject area.

The 26 item LAECA Acculturation Scale was used to measure acculturation. It was particularly appropriate for this study since it was designed for adult Mexican-Americans by Burnam et al. (1987) and is available in both Spanish and English. Burnam et al. (1987) found the scale to be reliable with a Cronbach alpha of .97. The LAECA scale is validated and multidimensional with the items loading on three factors: language use and language skills, social activities and ethnic background.

Attitude toward the ad was operationlized by a scale used and validated by Zinkhan, Locander and Leigh (1986). This scale measures global attitude toward the ad using the following three questions:

(1) I truly enjoyed the ad; (2) I found the ad to be good; (3) I really liked the ad. A 9-point Likert scale was used to register each subject's agreement or disagreement with these statements, with 1 representing strong disagreement (a very negative attitude toward the ad) and 9 representing strong agreement with the statements (a very positive attitude toward the ad).

Three unaided questions tailored for each ad were used to measure recall; these were structured after the model which was created and validated by the Burke Marketing Research Company (Wells, Burnett and Moriarty 1998). Subjects were required to link a brand name to a specific advertisement and then to remember specific facts about the advertisement.

Analysis and Results

To cluster analyze the subjects, the twenty-six acculturation variables (Burnam et al. 1987) were used in a taxonomic procedure (Kim, Laroche, and Joy 1990). This allows for the detection of groups with varying degrees of acculturation on the Anglo-Hispanic continuum and does not assume in advance any particular number or description of groups. To cluster the respondents, the Wards Hierarchical method was used. Using the Pseudo-F values, cluster solutions of two to ten group partitioning were examined. The Pseudo-F value shows the degree of homogeneity among the respondents within each group in a cluster solution. By graphing the Pseudo-F values with differing numbers of cluster solutions, it became evident that the three clusters solution was most appropriate for the sample. These were: (1) Those low in acculturation, Spanish dominant group; (2) Highly acculturated, English dominant group; (3) Bicultural group, in the middle of the acculturation continuum. The results of this clustering concur with Fitzgerald (1996) who identified three groups of Hispanics: highly acculturated, mostly assimilated and mostly unacculturated, as well as with the findings

of Deshpande, Hoyer and Donthu (1986) and Valencia (1985).

In Table 1 detailed profiles of the three clusters may be seen. Cluster 1 (Low in Acculturation, N=239) consists of those Mexican-Americans whose predominant language is Spanish. Even though they speak with their co-workers and friends in Spanish and Spanish is the language of their media preferences, most of them do not seem to be monolingual. They speak some English with their children, because it is the language they need to use in school. They live in Hispanic neighborhoods and actually read and think almost entirely in Spanish. Both the subjects and their parents identified themselves as Mexicans. They were raised in Mexico and on the average have lived in the U.S. between one and five years.

Cluster 2 (High in Acculturation, N=70) is made up of those Mexican-Americans whose dominant language is English. Generally, members in this group speak almost entirely in English, with their family, neighbors, co-workers and in social situations. The neighborhoods in which they live are about fifty percent Hispanic and the same is true of their co-workers and close friends. For the most part, they watch television programs in English and rarely listen to Latin music. However, this group enjoys eating Hispanic foods about half the time. Spanish American, Latin American or Hispanic American is how they refer to themselves. In general, they were born in the United States, as were their parents and grandparents.

Cluster 3 (Bicultural, N=185) consists of those Mexican-Americans who are comfortable speaking in either Spanish or English and who read the two languages equally well. English is most commonly chosen when speaking to their family. Most of their close friends are Hispanic, as are their co-workers; nonetheless, they usually communicate with both in English. English is their media preference. They like to eat Hispanic foods about half the time. They live in neighborhoods where approximately fifty percent of the residents are Hispanic, having lived in the United States an average of ten to fifteen years. Generally their parents identified themselves as

TABLE 1
Cluster Profiles

	Low	High	Bicultural
LAECA Acculturation Scale Items	Cluster 1 (N=239)	Cluster 2 (N=70)	Cluster 3 (N=185)
Language spoken	1.89	4.56	3.21
Language preferred	2.28	4.64	3.52
Language used with spouse	3.72	5.29	4.69
Language used with children	3.98	5.47	4.69
Language used with parents	1.36	4.20	3.54
Language used with coworkers	2.29	4.81	3.71
Language used with friends	1.47	4.93	3.44
Language of TV viewing	2.58	4.97	4.13
Language of radio listening	2.15	4.98	3.69
Language thinking	1.76	4.51	3.62
Language reads better	1.76	4.98	3.38
Language used when reading	1.77	4.91	3.91
Language writes better	1.76	4.21	3.15
Ethnicity of people in neighborhood	1.43	3.03	2.29
Ethnicity of coworkers	2.02	3.62	2.72
Ethnicity of close friends	1.40	3.40	2.28
Proportion of time eats Mexican food	1.98	4.39	2.77
Proportion of time listen to Latin music	2.23	4.51	3.59
Proportion of time celebrate in Mexican tradition	1.89	4.48	2.88
Ethnicity of leisure-time social environment	1.77	4.49	3.27
Ethnic background	1.09	4.82	2.86
Mother's ethnic background	1.08	4.79	2.09
Father's ethnic background	1.13	4.88	2.48
Generation	1.13	4.79	2.51
Country spent childhood	1.96	3.99	3.47
Proportion of life lived in U.S. vs. Mexico	1.98	3.98	3.26

Chicanos and the respondents identified themselves as Mexican-Americans.

Discriminant analysis was employed to confirm the statistical significance of the cluster differences. To calculate the discriminating power of the twenty-six acculturation variables, the membership information of the three cluster solution was used. An overall-all approximate F-value of 53.2 was calculated by using the original classification variables as the independent variables in the discriminant analysis. This indicates overall the groups were significantly different at a .0001 level. Each pair of groups was also significantly different at the .0001 level. The pairwise F-values for the three groups can be seen in Table 2.

TABLE 2
Pairwise F-values for Three Clusters

Levels of Acculturation			
	Low	Medium	High
Low	0	96.64	73.88
Medium		0	25.94
High			0

Testing of Hypotheses

ANOVA was utilized to determine if significant differences in attitude toward the ad and recall existed among the three groups of Mexican-Americans based on their level of acculturation when they viewed ads representing the five treatments. These treatments corresponded to the five combinations of language and models (Figure 1). Mean scores of attitude toward the ad and recall with each of the five treatments for each of the three acculturation groups are presented in Table 3.

As one can see, Hypothesis 1 was strongly supported in that attitude toward the ad was the most positive and recall the highest among those Mexican-Americans high in acculturation when the advertisement portrayed both Anglo and Hispanic models with the ad copy written in English (T_4). Hypothesis 2 was strongly supported in that recall and attitude toward the ad were significantly higher

among those low in acculturation and the bicultural group than among highly-accultured Mexican-Americans when the advertising copy was written in both English and Spanish (a simultaneous translation) (T_1). Finally, Hypothesis 3 was strongly supported in that attitude toward the ad was significantly more positive among those low in acculturation and bicultural Mexican-Americans than among the highly acculturated Mexican-Americans when the advertising copy was written part in English and part in Spanish. Hypothesis 3 was supported for ads both with and without models (characters) (T_2 and T_3).

DISCUSSION

This study makes an initial attempt to investigate the relationship between the level of acculturation of Mexican-Americans and their preferences in terms of language and models (characters) used in print advertisements. The results of this study should be considered exploratory and caution must be exercised in interpreting the results. However, in spite of the limitations of the study, the results provide useful information to marketers. The principal findings demonstrate that the Mexican-Americans surveyed do indeed differ in terms of level of acculturation and that this lack of homogeneity within the Mexican-American segment results in significant differences in advertising preferences. These results suggest that using a standardized advertising approach to reach the Mexican-American market would yield less than optimal results. Indeed, the dilemma facing the marketer attempting multicultural marketing in the United States is analogous to that which faces international marketers struggling to find that degree of standardization vs. customization in advertising which will yield the greatest profits. The results of this study show that some alternative strategies can be both cost effective and well received if appropriately matched to the correct level of acculturation within the Mexican-American market. This would concur with the opinion expressed by Hanni, Ryans and Vernon (1995) in regard to the standardization/customization debate in advertising.

TABLE 3
Attitude Toward the Ad and Recall

	Treatments				
Acculturation Segments	T ₁	T ₂	T ₃	T ₄	T ₅
Low Acculturation					
Attitude toward Ad*	6.46	6.74	6.35	7.25	7.35
Recall*	.82	.53	.59	.60	.65
Bicultural (Medium Acculturation)					
Attitude toward Ad*	6.03	6.10	5.56	6.69	6.50
Recall*	.86	.54	.69	.69	.69
High Acculturation					
Attitude toward Ad*	4.19	4.50	4.32	6.57	4.50
Recall*	.79	.57	.67	.85	.70

*Significantly different at .05 level

The impact of language is most clearly seen with treatments one and two, because these advertisements contain no characters. In the Zest ad which had simultaneous translations side by side into both English and Spanish, as well as in the AT&T advertisement which contained some English and some Spanish, attitude toward the ad was significantly higher among those Mexican-Americans low in acculturation and the bicultural group than among the highly acculturated Mexican-Americans (see T₁ - T₃ in Table 3). In fact, not only do highly acculturated Mexican-Americans prefer ads written in English, but the use of any Spanish at all in an ad seems to very negatively impact their attitude toward the ad. Haegele (2000) believes the negative reaction on the part of highly acculturated Mexican-Americans to the use of Spanish ad copy can be explained by the fact that they are very proud of their English language facility and could possibly be insulted by advertisers using Spanish to reach them, which might seem to infer that they could not speak English. This finding stresses the importance of selecting advertising venues for the highly acculturated Mexican-Americans where

the copy of the advertisement would be all in English, with these venues being separate and apart from those chosen for the Mexican-Americans low in acculturation. In the case of both the bicultural group and those Mexican-Americans low in acculturation, it appears that the best strategy for advertising a product in which no models (characters) appear is to portray the product with the advertising copy being both in Spanish and English as a direct translation (T₁ in Table 3). In this way, attitude toward the ad and recall could be maximized for both of these groups. (See Figure 2)

Of the alternative strategies evaluated, the advertisement which portrayed both an Anglo and Hispanic model (character) was positively received by all three acculturation groups. This is indeed an important finding for marketers. A strategy such as this, which appeals to all levels of acculturation among Mexican-Americans, is certainly an alternative worth exploring by firms wishing to target this market segment. Perhaps this result can best be explained by the rising ethnic consciousness of

FIGURE 2
Advertising Segmentation Strategies
by Acculturation Levels

Advertisements With Models (Characters)		
	Both Anglo & Hispanic Models Spanish Ad Copy	Both Anglo & Hispanic Models English Ad Copy
Mexican-Americans Low in Acculturation	✓	
Bicultural Group	✓ *	✓ *
Highly Acculturated Mexican-Americans		✓
✓ - best strategy - very positive attitude toward the ad and good recall * - both good strategies for this group		
Advertisements Without Models (Characters)		
	Both English and Spanish (Direct Translation)	Part in English Part in Spanish
Mexican-Americans Low in Acculturation	✓	
Bicultural Group	✓	
Highly Acculturated Mexican-Americans	no	no
✓ - best strategy - positive attitude toward the ad, good recall no - neither strategy containing Spanish produced a positive attitude toward the ad with this group.		

Hispanics (Artze 2000) coupled with their desire to be like other U.S. citizens in mainstream society (Penaloza 1994). Thus, this advertisement was very well received, possibly because it conveyed an acceptance of both ethnic groups within our society and friendliness between the two. Also, all Mexican-

Americans had someone with whom to identify, no matter what their level of acculturation, since both Anglo and Hispanic models (characters) were present in this advertisement. Marketers have learned that this ability to identify with the models (characters) in the ad is very important in creating a positive attitude

toward the ad (Wells 1988). As Rodriguez (1999) puts it, "It's no longer a matter of choosing one identity over another. Hispanicity is no longer considered at odds with being American." One does not have to give up one's culture and language to succeed in U. S. society today (Artze 2000).

Thus, to effectively reduce costs in the creation of advertisements for the Mexican-American market, while responding to preferences exhibited by the different acculturation levels, marketing managers might do well to use the same visual portion of the ad portraying both Anglo and Hispanic models, with the ad copy in English for the highly-acculturated, but then include a Spanish translation under the English ad copy for the bicultural group and the Mexican-Americans low in acculturation in order to improve their recall. However, it would be of utmost importance to place these ads in print venues distinct from those chosen by the highly acculturated Mexican-Americans. This strategy could possibly maximize both advertising effectiveness and profits by responding to the pressures that firms face for cost reductions, yet tailoring the ad copy in response to the preferences of the different acculturation groups within the Mexican-American market.

CONCLUSION

This study has given marketers and advertisers possible justification for using acculturation as an important variable when creating advertising strategies to reach the Mexican-American market. Based on the results, it is suggested that marketers use a prototype strategy of advertising with both Hispanic and Anglo models in the same advertisement to create the most positive attitude toward the ad among all three acculturation groups, changing only the language of the advertising copy according to the level of acculturation. This would allow firms to achieve some economies of scale and minimize promotional production costs by using the same visual portion of the advertisement. To target and create separate marketing programs for these acculturation based groups of Mexican-Americans could be accomplished with relative ease. Massey and Denton (1985), for example, found a strong positive relationship between the degree of ethnic

identification among Hispanics and the geographical area in which they live.

This geographic concentration of the Mexican-American segment would make direct marketing an excellent advertising choice (Krol 1998). Weiss (1988) demonstrated that where people live offers one of the best clues as to what they will buy. It allows marketers to recognize patterns in their lives and to understand the behavior of these segments. Holbrook (2001) points out that where people live helps explain who they are and provides a lens into their consumption patterns which can help in the formulation of marketing strategy. Yorgey (2000) suggests using not only the last name, but also the first name of the consumer, plus the zip code and address, to more accurately target each acculturation group of the Mexican-American segment with the appropriate brochure. Additionally, direct marketing is so underdeveloped in the U.S. Hispanic market (Hill 2001) that huge opportunities exist. Direct mail gets anywhere from a 25 percent to 100 percent greater response from the Hispanic-American market than from the population at large (Haegele 2000). This is true because this group receives 20 direct mail pieces a year, compared to 300 pieces received by the average Anglo household (Yorgey 2000), so consumers in this segment actually open and read the direct mail they receive. This is particularly true of the Spanish-dominant households, because they receive very few direct mail pieces written in Spanish. Thus, marketers could achieve economies of scale by using the same visual portion of the ad and then carefully changing the language of the ad copy to maximize advertising effectiveness with consumers of each level of acculturation. Because status is important to Hispanic cultures, Mexican-American consumers are likely to pay closer attention to direct mailing brochures that look official or expensive. Many firms have already done very well using direct mail to reach the Hispanic segment. Procter & Gamble, leading advertiser to the Hispanic market (Bittar 2000), uses its magazine *Avanzando Con Tu Familia* (*Moving Ahead with Your Family*) as one of the main parts of its advertising campaign to the Hispanic American segment. Sears' quarterly magazine *Nuestra Gente* (*Our People*) is part of its \$25 million advertising campaign aimed at Hispanics

(Artze 2000). Competitor Target has recently launched its own magazine for Hispanics, *Familia* (Family). However, firms using direct mail to target the Hispanic-American audience must follow up their advertising efforts with an integrated marketing campaign tailored to that segment, including the choice of customer service available in either English or Spanish (Richter 1999). Sprint PCS, for example, has targeted Hispanic consumers in the New York metropolitan area in an integrated campaign with much success (Krol 1998).

These suggestions are given, of course, with the caveat as to the limitations of the sample. However, it is clear that there is a relationship between levels of acculturation and consumer attitudes among Mexican-Americans toward advertising-related variables, which validates the importance of acculturation that Lee (1993) found in his research with Chinese-Americans, that Laroche et al. (1997) found with the English- and French-Canadians, and that Penaloza (1994) and Kara and Kara (1996) found with the Mexican-Americans. As Hispanics become an even bigger segment of the total market, marketers should try to learn more about the differences in the way they react to advertising (Herbig and Yelkur 1998). As Stankevich (1998) points out, in order to tap into the lucrative Hispanic market, marketers must recognize such distinctions as subcultures and varying degrees of acculturation and make the necessary changes in their marketing strategies. The implications for marketers is that even greater cultural sensitivity and understanding is required than previously expected in order to create advertisements which will appeal to various ethnic groups.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The interpretation of the results of this research is limited to the Mexican-American population residing in metropolitan El Paso, Texas. To provide a more comprehensive picture of the relationship between the level of acculturation of Mexican-Americans and their advertising preferences, similar studies could be done in other cities of the United States where Mexican-Americans are geographically concentrated, e.g., San Diego, Chicago and Los Angeles.

Also, Mexican-Americans' preferences for language used and models (characters) portrayed could be studied in relation to television commercials. These commercials could be embedded within both English and Spanish TV programming to study the impact of acculturation. Currently approximately 11.5 million U. S. Hispanics are online; this number doubled from 1998 to 2000 and is projected to increase dramatically, due in large part to the fact that more than fifty-two percent of all Hispanic households in the U.S. own computers (Ebenkamp 2001). Hence, future studies will need to investigate which type of websites attract Mexican-American consumers, as well as investigate any differences in their usage rates based on their level of acculturation. Finally, to further enhance the generalizability of the results of such studies, other Hispanic subgroups, such as Cubans and Puerto Ricans, could be studied in relation to their responses to advertisements utilized in the aforementioned media.

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